The (E)merging Bodies of Defence Nationalism: Flesh, Land, Law

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Abstract

This thesis examines emerging (and possibly subsiding) far-right ethnic nationalist groups in Australia and the UK, including the English Defence League and the Australian Defence League. For reasons outlined in the thesis, I refer to these groups as defence nationalists: as nationalists who imagine themselves as defenders of the nation and as national subjects par excellence. Throughout the thesis, I explore the narratives, imaginaries and subjectivities that sustain these groups, as well as the narratives, imaginaries and subjectivities these groups sustain. I argue that defence nationalism subsists in intersecting fantasies of flesh, land and law, which work to construct the nation and nationality as a 'fact' of the body for nationalists. I hold that through these fantasies, defence nationalists imagine a symbiotic relationship with the nation, whereby the nation is a part of the nationalist only insofar as the nationalist is a part of the nation. I argue that for defence nationalists, both the body and body politic penetrate and are penetrated by one another; contain and are contained by one another; possess and are possessed by one another; inhabit and are inhabited by one another; and, care for and are cared for by one another. Throughout, I explore how and why defence nationalists attempt find the self with/in the nation and the nation with/in the self.

The task of this thesis is to explore entanglements of flesh, land and law that do not constitute a mere linking, but an elision such that it is impossible to distinguish where one body ends and another begins. I consider how these entanglements of flesh, land and law provide nationalists with the defence league as a body that functions as a prosthetic that both authors and authorises practices of embodiment, speech, violence and identification. Drawing on a range of critical and psychoanalytic theorists, most notably the work of Jacques Lacan, I ultimately argue that unlike other nationalist groups, defence nationalists are not primarily concerned with realising their avowed political projects. Instead, I show they are primarily concerned with constructing and then enjoying themselves as the self-ordained defenders of the nation—that is, as privileged national subjects who get to do the nation's defending. As I demonstrate, this means that that which threatens the nation can paradoxically have a fortifying effect upon defence nationalists, legitimising and securing both the way they see themselves and the position they see themselves occupying with/in the nation.
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Chapter 1: Scenes of Violence

Certainly there is a bone here...


Scene One: “When the Sands Ran Red”

On 11 December 2005, approximately 5000 people turned up to Cronulla Beach, a 'community' beach south-west of Sydney. The gathering, which culminated in the infamous Cronulla Riots, followed reports from the previous weekend of an assault against the patrolling life-savers by “persons of Middle-Eastern appearance” (NSW Police 2006, p.7). Both events were preceded by rumours of the “threatening” behaviour of “Middle-Eastern youths” towards everyday beach goers (NSW Police 2006, p.7).

In response to the alleged assault on the life-savers, a call to arms was circulated by mass text-message:

Aussies: This Sunday every fucking Aussie in the shire, get down to North Cronulla to help support Leb and Wog bashing day. Bring your mates down and let’s show them that this is our beach and their [sic] never welcome back (Wilson 2005, my italics).

Anthropologists and sociologists have observed that the beach is heavily implicated in narratives about what it means to be an 'Australian', and that as such, the beach holds a privileged status in the Australian cultural landscape (Fiske 1983; Fiske et al. 1987; Bonner et al. 2001; Evers 2008; Ellison & Hawkes 2016). National pastimes such as surfing, swimming and tanning are heavily associated with the beach and the Australian 'way of life' (Fiske 1983); moreover, in Australian culture, life-savers are imagined as emblematic figures of these practices (Fiske 1983). “We all dream of the sand and the sea, in Australia”, write Frances Bonner, Susan McKay and Alan McKee (2001, p.269), who conclude that the beach holds a “secure place in the national identity” (2001, p.270). In light of this, it seems that for those who rioted in Cronulla, the alleged assault against the patrolling life-savers had occurred deep within the symbolic national heartland of Australia—on the beach (Fiske 1983; Fiske et al. 1987; Bonner et al. 2001; Evers 2008).
In Australia, the beach is tied to more than just practices that reflect the so-called Australian ‘way of life’. So too, the beach is associated with one of the most culturally revered and celebrated aspects of Australian (military) history: the Battle of Gallipoli. Fought by the Anzacs\(^1\) on the shores of the Gallipoli peninsula, in Turkey, the Battle of Gallipoli is often mythologised in Australia as the ‘birth’ of the ‘Anzac spirit’: a term that functions as a metonym for the so-called *Australian spirit* itself. During this battle, the Anzacs are said to have first embodied what would supposedly become quintessential ‘Australian’ values: courage, mateship, and resistance. Accordingly, the Battle of Gallipoli is often referred to as “the birth of the nation”, and the beach, “the place where it all began” (Holbrook 2017). The Australian War Memorial website, for example, reads:

The legend of Anzac was born on 25 April 1915, and was reaffirmed in eight months' fighting on Gallipoli. Although there was no military victory, the Australians displayed great courage, endurance, initiative, discipline, and mateship. Such qualities came to be seen as the Anzac spirit. Many saw the Anzac spirit as having been born of egalitarianism and mutual support. According to the stereotype, the Anzac rejected unnecessary restrictions, possessed a sardonic sense of humour, was contemptuous of danger, and proved himself the equal of anyone on the battlefield. Australians still invoke the Anzac spirit in times of conflict, danger and hardship (Australian War Memorial n.d.).

In the week leading up to the Cronulla Riots, a second racially charged text-message was widely circulated that *directly* referenced the above national mythology and iconography. It read: “Who said Gallipoli wouldn't happen again! . . . Rock up 2 Cronulla this Sunday were [sic] u can witness Aussies beatin Turks on the beach” (Hayes & Kearney 2005). Through the invocation of a second Gallipoli, the attack against the life-savers of Cronulla Beach was portrayed *not* as a mere assault against particular individuals, but instead, as an attack on Australia itself, including its very “way of life” (NSW Police 2006, p.6). Prior to the riots, the alleged attack on the life-savers was editorialised by the Daily Telegraph as “an attack on us all” (as cited in Hartley & Green 2006); similarly, the Guardian ran a front-page article titled “When the sands ran red”, which declared that “the attack on the

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\(^1\) The term “Anzacs” refers to and celebrates all members of the ‘Australian and New Zealand Army Corps’ (Australian War Memorial n.d.).
lifeguards, *the most iconic of Australian symbols*, went too far for many people” (O’Riordan 2005, my italics).

The above ‘calls to arms’ were widely disseminated in the week leading up to the riots, most (in)famously on talk-back radio by ‘shock-jock’ Alan Jones. During his broadcast, Jones invited listeners to phone in and share their stories of what had been “going on” at Cronulla Beach. One respondent opined:

> Alan, it’s not just a few Middle Eastern bastards at the weekend, it’s thousands. Cronulla is a very long beach and it’s been taken over by this scum. It’s not a few causing trouble, it’s all of them (Marr 2005).

Another caller, ‘John’ phoned in to state that his local football club intended to go to the beach to take the law into their own hands: “If the police can’t do the job, the next tier is us”, he declared, to which Jones replied, “Good on you, John” (Marr 2005). Following these calls, Jones implored his listeners to participate in “a rally, a street march, call it what you will. A community show of force” (Marr 2005).

Bolstered by Jones’ exhortations, the call to arms proved portentous. Seemingly, the mythologies and iconographies they invoked resonated with those who heeded them. Referencing Australian cultural mythology, those who rioted compared the ‘heroism’ of the life-savers of Cronulla Beach to that of the Anzacs (NSW Police 2006, p.6). In doing so, they (re)invested “the values traditionally associated with the Aussie Digger...in the lifesaver” (Evers 2008, p.418). Those who rioted proclaimed their desire to “Save ’Nulla” (NSW Police 2006, p.8), voicing a range of racially motivated chants as they rioted. Among these chants were: “Love ’Nulla-Fuck Allah”, “Wog-free zone”, “Lebs go home”, “we grew here you flew here” and “Osama don’t surf” (Evers 2008). In the violence that followed, it was reported by the New South Wales Police that although “Lebanese youths” had

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2 For comments made on his radio show, Jones was found guilty of “racial vilification” and of “[stimulating] listeners to hatred” (Gardiner 2014).

3 ‘Digger’ is a colloquial term used to refer to Australian soldiers. The term refers both to the digging of trenches, as well as the notion that Australian soldiers (the Anzacs) ‘dug in’ to ‘make a stand’, as one stubbornly digs in one’s heels to resist, refusing to retreat or surrender.
allegedly assaulted the life-savers, that all persons of “ethnic appearance” were attacked indiscriminately:

Public disorder was realised when the predominantly Caucasian Australian crowd, fuelled by racial prejudice and excessive alcohol consumption became violent. People of ethnic appearance were attacked on sight (NSW Police 2006, p.7).

**Celebrating Cronulla**

Exactly ten years on from the riots, another call went out in Cronulla. This time, it was not explicit violence that was called for, but instead, a newly coined celebration dubbed “Cronulla Memorial Day”. The call came from a number of far-right ethnic nationalist movements, who have, as in much of the Western world, risen to prominence in Australia in the past decade. Included among them were the Australian Defence League (ADL), the Party for Freedom, the United Patriots Front (UPF) and Reclaim Australia. Together, they devised Cronulla Memorial Day as a day for the commemoration of Australian *resistance* and a celebration of those who “dug in” at Cronulla Beach (just as the Anzacs dug trenches), to “[stand] against years of physical, verbal and even sexual abuse perpetrated by Muslim gang members” (The Party for Freedom 2015).

Anzac mythology was again invoked in the call to action. In advertising the event—to be celebrated with a “halal-free BBQ”—the Party For Freedom claimed that “for many Australians, the Cronulla Riots represent a time ‘when Aussies stood their ground’”, as did the Anzacs (The Party for Freedom 2015). Similarly, Shermon Burgess, the leader of Reclaim Australia, called upon all true “patriots” to attend Cronulla Memorial Day, urging

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4 While this police report can be read sympathetically as a report that refers to the *logic/s* of those who rioted, it can also be read *symptomatically* as a report that reflects and re-articulates the racial logics of those who rioted. The notion that “Lebanese youths” (or *anyone*) can be identified through visual and corporeal information alone is problematic. The phrase “people of ethnic appearance” is deeply problematic because it is used (by the report and elsewhere) *only* to designate persons who are *not-white*. The report can therefore be read as reproducing a racial gaze that ‘sees’ non-white persons in terms of race and ethnicity, but depicts persons of white appearance as being both Australian and racially and ethnically ‘neutral’. The complex, intersectional logics that underlie this gaze will be explored and critiqued throughout this thesis.

5 This phrase not only invokes popular cultural imagery of the Anzacs digging their trenches into the beaches of Gallipoli, but also a cultural notion that is related to the Australian Coat of Arms, which features two of Australia’s most iconic animals: the kangaroo and emu. As neither of these animals are able to walk backwards, it has become an Australian colloquialism to say that ‘Australian’s cannot take a backwards step’, meaning that they do not back down or surrender; instead, they stand their ground, sometimes even ‘making a stand’.
them to “spread the word and let everyone know that we are going to be standing for our rights in the very place where it all began” (Donelly & Hall 2015). Just as, in popular culture, Gallipoli stands as the 'place' where the Australian spirit began, so too, for Burgess, it appears something else began at Cronulla Beach.

Scene Two: “Taking Back Our Streets”

On 22 May 2013, Lee Rigby, a drummer and machine-gunner of the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, the British Army, was attacked and killed by two men outside the Royal Artillery Barracks in Woolwich, south-east of London. His two attackers, Michael Adebolajo and Michael Adebowale, declared that they sought vengeance for the deaths of Muslims by British armed forces. Following reports of Rigby’s death, as many as 1000 members of the English Defence League (EDL), a street-based, far-right protest movement in England, held an impromptu wake at a local pub. After some hours, they took to the streets, marching from Admiralty Arch onto Parliament Square. Along the way they damaged property and assaulted numerous people whom they deemed 'non-white'. As they marched, they chanted “Taking Back Our Streets!”6, “Muslim killers off our streets”, “Extremists out! Britain Safe!”, and “There's only one Lee Rigby” (“EDL And UAF March Through London In Wake Of Lee Rigby Murder”, 2013). They also held banners reading “GB R.I.P.” (Great Britain Rest in Peace), ostensibly implying that through the death of Lee Rigby, some part of the nation had also come under attack and had possibly died.

It appears, prima facie, that the response to Lee Rigby’s death and the EDL march that followed share a number of themes and dimensions in common with the Cronulla Riots. In both events, a prominent national symbol, tasked with the protection of the nation and its members, was attacked (Australian life-savers and a member of the British Army). Just as life-savers are invested with national significance (i.e. with the Australia 'way of life' and the spirit of the Anzacs), so too, for those who marched, Lee Rigby represented national values, including devout military service, selflessness, sacrifice, public service

6 This is the most famous EDL motto, and is chanted at almost every EDL march or protest.
and duty. It seems that in each instance, the nation itself was imagined as coming under attack by a 'foreign' enemy on the inside: hence, “Lebs go home!” and “Extremists out! Britain Safe!” Moreover, participants in both events sought to emphasise their perceived ownership of the land: those who rioted at Cronulla declared their intention to “show them this is our beach”, while the members of the EDL who marched chanted “Muslim killers off our streets” (my emphasis).

Throughout this thesis, I will argue that the juxtaposition of events and groups outlined to this point is not only informative, but that it can be taken further. To facilitate this in later chapters, I will first describe the emergence of some of the central actors, including, in particular, the EDL and the ADL. By doing so, I also canvass, in an introductory sense, the political aspirations of these groups.

The English Defence League

The EDL first came to prominence in Luton, a large town in the county of Bedfordshire, north-west of London. According to the EDL’s founding member, Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, prior to the establishment of the EDL, “British” residents often felt “threatened” and outnumbered in Luton, which is one of only three towns in the United Kingdom with a white minority (Hill 2013). According to Yaxley-Lennon, this feeling was most apparent to supporters of the Luton Town Football Club (the local football team in Luton), which, for Yaxley-Lennon, provides its supporters with a sense of community. As Yaxley-Lennon puts it, “most of the friends I’ve got now, I’ve met through going to Luton Town” (Hill 2013). But as Yaxley-Lennon laments, Luton Town’s stadium is “slap bang in the middle of Bury Park”, an area of Luton with the most significant Muslim population (Hill 2013). It is here, according to Yaxley-Lennon, that he and other football supporters first began to experience tension between “their” community and the Muslim community:

You get in trouble outside a nightclub here, they’ll get out of their taxis, their chicken shops, they’ll come from everywhere. They don’t need to know each other. Just cos they’re a Muslim and you’re not (Hill 2013).
According to Yaxley-Lennon, these tensions left him with a general feeling that something ought to be done; however, as he tells it, when he heard that some Muslim men were trying to recruit people from Luton to fight for the Taliban, it suddenly “clicked” that he needed to be the one to do it:

I was like, they can't do that! In working class communities, we all know somebody in the armed forces. I've got a mate who lost his legs. And these lot were sending people to kill our boys...I always knew there was a hostility coming from that community, and I never really knew what it was. I didn't know anything about the religion. It's only when I looked into the religion that I thought, this is what it is. It's got to do with Islam (Hill 2013).

Soon after his realisation, Yaxley-Lennon established the English Defence League under the alias of one of his childhood icons, 'Tommy Robinson' (O'Brien 2009). Conceiving the EDL as a uniting force levelled against a common enemy, the EDL’s founding 'Mission Statement' reflects Yaxley-Lennon’s account of the experiences described above:

The English Defence League (EDL) is a human rights organisation that was founded in the wake of the shocking actions of a small group of Muslim extremists who, at a homecoming parade in Luton, openly mocked the sacrifices of our service personnel without any fear of censure.

[...]

Our armed forces stand up and risk their lives every day in order to protect our culture and democratic way of life. They are also reflective of England’s diversity, and are a shining example of what a people can achieve when united together. The EDL is therefore committed to opposing any and all abuse that our men and women in uniform are subjected to, and will campaign for legal remedies to ensure that those working within these important institutions are not exposed to abuse or aggression from within our country (English Defence League 2016a).

The chief political project of the EDL, as described by both Yaxley-Lennon and the EDL Mission Statement appears to resonate with its members, lending national significance their participation in EDL activities. As 'Heath', the leader of EDL's Essex Division claims:

The time to stand up and take our country back is long over-due if you feel the

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7 Tommy Robinson was an infamous football hooligan and the leader of Luton's 'Men in Gear' football firm. Robinson wrote a number of books about his experiences with the Men in Gear, which Yaxley-Lennon reports reading in his childhood (O’Brien 2009). For more detailed accounts regarding the links between football hooliganism and the EDL, see: Copey (2010) and Treadwell & Garland (2011).
need to make a stand for everything ENGLISH then join the EDL Dover division. we will never surrender and i hope that none of you will either [sic] (Essex Division of the EDL 2011).  

In an interview with researchers Treadwell and Garland, one EDL member, referred to only as 'Chris', describes stories of the “special” violence he participated in with the EDL:

*Chris:* I hit this Paki in the face and he just looked so shocked. So I hit him again and that put him down, then we gave him a fucking good kicking.

_Interviewer:_ How did you feel afterwards?

*Chris:* [Looks perplexed] Now I feel good, because most of the time I see them I feel this internal rage, like anger at them. I see them as the enemy to be truthful, no different to them in Afghanistan fighting with the Taliban. I remember one of my older mates who was inside [prison] telling me how, while he was inside on the day of the London bombings, and a load of them [Asian inmates] were smiling and joking about it. That just makes me angry, and now I see what I done, when I did that Paki, as special.

_Interviewer:_ Special?

*Chris:* It was personal, you know, in a way that football violence is not. I’d say I was...I was proud afterwards. It made me feel like I’d made a stand [laughs]. (Treadwell & Garland 2011, p.629-630).

Here, Chris describes his violence with the EDL as something that is _unlike_ football violence because it feels “personal”; as something about which he can be “proud” because he “feels like [he's] made a stand”.

**The Australian Defence League**

A number of years after the establishment of the EDL, Ralph Cerminara, a former member of the _Australian Defence Force_ (ADF), founded the Australian Defence League. Cerminara's passage from the ADF to the ADL begs a somewhat obvious question: why transition from one to the other? Moreover, what relationship, if any, does Cerminara

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8 Although Heath is the leader of the Essex Division of the EDL, in the above passage he was calling for residents of Kent to join their local county division—the Dover Division of the EDL—in preparation for an upcoming march that was held there.

9 The 'ADF' consists of the Australian Army, Navy and Air Force.
imagine a between the ADF and ADL?\textsuperscript{10}

Cerminara cites his status as a returned soldier from Afghanistan as his motivation for establishing the ADL, emphasising his intimate appreciation of “the enemy” and his concern for his “mates” still serving overseas (Cerminara 2013). Cerminara's self-proclaimed proximity to defence-force personnel and his self-professed knowledge of “the enemy” are reminiscent of Yaxley-Lennon's claims that “we all know somebody in the armed forces” (and the perceived obligation to “do something” that comes with this knowing); however, Cerminara’s claims of having served in Afghanistan are highly questionable (Young 2014). Indeed, it is widely reported that Cerminara never fought in Afghanistan, but instead that he was dishonourably discharged after only two years of service (Young 2014). This disparity prompts a question as to why Cerminara feels the need to overstate his involvement with the Australian Defence Force and “the enemy”. In light of his discharge from the ADF, what, if anything, does Cerminara recuperate by forming the ADL?

When asked why he established the ADL as a specifically anti-Islamic movement, Cerminara’s reply is reminiscent of Yaxley-Lennon’s account. Cerminara recalls a time when he was shopping for clothes with his mother and girlfriend “around Christmas time”, in Bankstown (a suburb south-west of Sydney). Whilst shopping, Cerminara noticed that there were no Christmas carols playing in the store. When he asked an attendant why this was, “they said, ‘You’re not in Australia any more here—Christmas carols upset Muslims’” (Collins 2014). The notion that without the audioscape of Christmas carols, one is no longer “in Australia”, provides some initial indication as to the way that various iconographies and signifiers function as support structures for the fantasy of the nation (without which, the nation is not only rendered different or unrecognisable, but ceases to exist).

\textsuperscript{10} This question presages a theme this thesis will later explore: the desire among these nationalist groups to be perceived as being comparable to the military both in terms of remit (that of defending the nation) and structure (hierarchical, disciplined, and with an established chain-of-command).
Soon after this experience, Cerminara reports that he established the ADL with the aim of preserving and protecting the Australian “way of life”:

The ADL is an Association built upon the foundations of the Australian way of life and seeks to defend the Australian people by maintaining our way of life. Inclusive of separation of church and state, the belief that all are born free and equal, and have certain natural, essential, and unalienable rights; among which may be reckoned the right of enjoying and defending their lives and liberties; that of acquiring, possessing, and protecting property.

[...] We stand together, as one people, to protest and confront all those who seek to pervert our way of life. [...] We stand together, with one voice to keep Australia the great land we were all born into (Australian Defence League n.d., my italics).

In September 2014, it was revealed that Cerminara was caught photographing Muslim women and posting the photographs on the ADL website and its YouTube and Facebook pages. Accompanying the photos were threats of a highly sexualised and racialised nature, including threats of gang-rape, to “rip off the veil”, and guessing games as to what exists beneath the veil; these threats included the claim that those photographed “would be ravaged if [they] took that Hijab off” (Young 2014). On another occasion, in December 2014, Cerminara was involved in a melee when he was again caught taking photographs of Muslim women. Following this, Cerminara uploaded a YouTube video declaring that the “assault” against him would not go without retaliation. “Prayer rooms and mosques will burn”, Cerminara proclaimed; “I’m coming for you...there’s nothing you guys can do about it. Simple and plain. The law’s on my side, not your side” (Young 2014). Finally, Cerminara declared: “Another Cronulla is coming, and I can’t wait until it does, because this time, we’re going to show you who’s boss” (Young 2014, my emphasis).

Defence Nationalism: Initial Impressions

This thesis develops a critical theory of defence leagues like the EDL and the ADL. It does this because, as shown in the preliminary account above, defence leagues themselves raise an array of equally preliminary (albeit more specific) questions. How and why, and under
what circumstances, are events like the assault of Cronulla life-savers and the attack on Lee Rigby interpreted as fully-fledged attacks on the nation itself, and by whom? A ‘mob’ of disparate, previously unconnected individuals does not typically form in response to the multitude of ‘ordinary’ assaults that occur across the nation. One often hears the assaults that occur on a daily basis on the streets and in nightclubs described as ‘senseless acts of violence’ (Pilgrim 2013). With respect to the Cronulla Riots however, the assault against the life-savers was *not* perceived by those who rioted as being ‘senseless’ at all. On the contrary, a very *particular* sense of the violence that occurred was made by those who rioted; specifically, they ‘sensed’ *collective violence*, “an attack on us all” (Hartley & Green 2006). But why did they perceive it in this way? How and why are these perceived attacks—and the responses to them—experienced as “personal” for some subjects? How and why do some subjects imagine themselves as ‘rightfully’ occupying the subject-position of ‘defender’ of the nation? (Indeed, as *the* defenders of the nation, as the definite article in *the* English/Australian Defence League seems to imply). How do these self-ordained defenders determine the particular others against whom this defence ought to be exercised? If those who participated in the Cronulla Riots sought to “Save ‘Nulla”, what about it were they really trying to save? When those who marched following the death of Lee Rigby declared their desire to make “Britain safe”, what ‘safety’ did they envision, and *for whom* was it intended? What is it that Reclaim Australia seeks to reclaim, and who do they imagine has possession of ‘it’?11 What did Cerminara mean when he claimed that “another Cronulla is coming”, and what does Cronulla signify for him and other defence nationalists? In summary: *what* are the EDL and the ADL trying to defend, against *whom*, and *why*?

In the 1990s, Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein asked whether the then contemporaneous “upsurge of racist movements” could be characterised as being “new” in terms of themes and social significance, or whether instead, they were merely tactical

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11 This question can also be asked when members of the EDL chant their most well known motto, “taking back our streets!”
adaptations of older forms of racism (1991, p.17). Throughout this thesis, I apply Balibar and Wallerstein's question to the present (re)emergence of far-right ethnic nationalist movements in the UK and Australia (among whom are included the EDL, the South East Alliance (SEA), the British National Front (BNF), the ADL, Reclaim Australia, the UPF and the Party For Freedom). Like Balibar and Wallerstein, I conclude that the present upsurge of movements are novel. Throughout the thesis, I will refer to these emerging far-right ethnic nationalist groups as 'defence leagues' (lower case) or as 'defence nationalists'. I will refer to their nationalism as 'defence nationalism'. As I demonstrate throughout the thesis, I take these three terms—defence leagues, defence nationalists and defence nationalism—as encapsulating and reflecting the function(s) that these particular nationalists imagine and assume for themselves. These terms should not be understood as referring only to the Australian Defence League or the English Defence League, as these are merely two prominent 'defence leagues' (I will however refer to the EDL and the ADL specifically as such). Additionally, although the term 'defence nationalism' is a general term, it should not be taken as referring to all contemporary ethnic nationalists and forms of ethnic nationalism; rather, as I show throughout the thesis, defence nationalism is merely a particular manifestation of ethnic nationalism which has become prominent.

Jack Katz has influentially maintained that crime and violence are typically motivated in defence of 'the Good' (2008). What then is 'the Good' for defence nationalists? Is it shared by the multitude of defence nationalists and defence nationalist organisations in Australia and the UK? Yaxley-Lennon, who appears to have arrived at something of a cross-roads, posed to himself a similar set of questions:

> Going to prison was the best thing that ever happened to me...I started to question, where's the EDL going? Because, you know, we march up and down this country, but *what is it we want to get out of it?* And how do we succeed? (Hill 2013, my italics).

By closely investigating these questions through psychoanalytic and critical theory, I explore the ways by which defence nationalists become invested in the nation, not only
through national mythologies, iconographies and narratives, but through the intersubjective *processes* by which the nation is narrativised as well. I argue that for defence nationalists, the processes of the nation’s narrativisation encode and sublimate an aggressive ethic that structures the defence nationalist’s encounter with collective violence and with others deemed non-national others. By understanding these processes and their function, I claim that we can understand the violence that occurred on the beach on December 2005, and later in the London 2013, not simply as discrete ‘acts’ nor as ‘effects’ of the events that preceded them, but instead, as expressions of subterranean ideological structures that operate on a daily basis *within* the nation and *upon* its subjects. Understood in this way, those who rioted on the beach of Cronulla, ostensibly as an ad hoc ‘mob’, are not so easily distinguishable from the more explicitly formalised defence league movements.

In the preliminary account of events above, it appears that similar modes of identification were at work during both the Cronulla Riots and the riots that followed the death of Lee Rigby. It also appears as if similar modes of identification are at work within the various defence nationalist organisations thus far introduced. Those who participated in the Cronulla Riots, for example, can be read as having identified with both the life-savers who were attacked *as well as* with the Anzacs to whom the life-savers were compared. By comparing the ‘heroism’ of the life-savers on the beach to that of the Anzacs (NSW Police 2006, p.6), those who rioted envisaged a powerful symbolic agency: just as the Anzacs defended the nation by storming the beach of Gallipoli (in popular Australian mythology), *so too*, the life-savers *and* subsequent rioters had encountered and stood up to an ‘enemy’ on the beach. When those who rioted proclaimed their desire to “Save ’Nulla” (NSW Police 2006, p.8), they cast themselves as Anzac-like defenders of the nation, aligned their cause with that of the nation, and located themselves *within* the national narrative as the nation’s ordained defenders (much like the Anzacs). Similarly, during the EDL march that followed the death of Lee Rigby, it appears that those who rioted imagined themselves to be *like* Lee Rigby. While those who participated in the march chanted “there is only *one*
Lee Rigby”, they nevertheless assumed *his* mandate to make Britain “safe”. By doing so, the rioters can be read as having formed symbolic identification with ‘*him* qua the (now empty) social place to which he was retroactively elevated, through their mourning and chanting, as a martyr.

These observations stand as preliminary remarks that prompt the development and refinement of the questions posed above. Specifically, these remarks prompt us to consider why it is that these familiar patterns of identification (ostensibly) emerge. By extension, they also prompt us to consider how these patterns of identification might be theorised. Throughout this thesis, I explore the questions outlined above by interrogating the narratives, imaginaries, and (political) subjectivities of Australian and British defence nationalists groups. At least initially, particular emphasis is placed on the EDL and the ADL, as the narratives of both movements are intertwined.

**Bodies that (E)merge: The Ins and Outs of Defence Nationalism**

‘I should like to eat this’ or ‘I should like to spit it out’ … ‘I should like to take this into myself and to keep that out’.


We must be extremely xenophobic to maintain our own right to *grant* hospitality. The ‘place’ must be ours, not there’s, such that we can grant a right to visit it, to the foreigner.


Balibar and Wallerstein write that racism is a “total social phenomenon” that seeks to preserve and purify the *social* body: what is “ours”, and what is “one’s own” (1991, p.17-18). It has also been observed that people who could be described as being ‘racist’ are often inclined towards experiencing “deep-rooted fears of intrusion” (Robinson & Gadd 2016, p.197). In turn, these fears have a tendency to manifest as preoccupations with various forms of “contamination”, including those pertaining to “differences addressed to food, size, shape, skin colour, even smell” (Robinson & Gadd 2016, p.197). Accordingly, fears regarding contamination are expressed in racist discourses “perniciously as fear of miscegenation and dilution of racial purity” (Robinson & Gadd 2016, p.197).
Defence nationalism fits into the above reading of racism and the related anxieties of contamination. As one EDL member put it:

They [Muslims] live under the land of the Umar. The Umar, the Islamic nation. Holds no borders. Islam is here, in our country, this Trojan horse is parked up. They're in our politics. They're in our food, they're in our schools. They're everywhere (EDL 2015).

For members of the EDL and the ADL, Muslims, immigrants and refugees should not be inside the nation; “Sharia law”\textsuperscript{12} should not exist alongside or within the nation and the nation’s laws; Islam should not be taught in schools; halal should not feature in shopping aisles; bodies should not be inside the veil; and mosques should not be inside “our” communities (EDL 2016a). For defence nationalists who articulate their views as those above, each of the above phenomena should remain outside of the nation and none should contaminate it. The narratives, imaginaries and (political) subjectivities of defence nationalisms can therefore indeed be understood as subsisting with/in the “total social phenomenon” that Balibar and Wallerstein describe: that phenomenon characterised by the desire to keep certain things—that which is “ours” and “one’s own”—separate from that which is correlative \textit{theirs} and belongs to them.

I maintain however that defence nationalism can be conceptualised in terms of an \textit{additional} (albeit related) peculiarity. This peculiarity—which is explored throughout this thesis—can be introduced in relation to the passage quoted above. What this passage reveals, is that defence nationalists are not \textit{only} concerned with \textit{which} bodies are kept outside or inside of the nation, but rather, that they are also concerned with what the 'outside' of those particular bodies \textit{conceals and yet simultaneously serves to announce}: namely, an 'inside' of their own—an inner 'truth' of both the self and nation (the values, beliefs and desires which are \textit{mine} and \textit{ours}), and an inner truth of 'them', the other ('\textit{their}' values, beliefs and desires). Defence nationalist narratives of insides and outsides—which serve to render bodies as either belonging or not belonging—are also therefore determined by what those bodies themselves are imagined to contain (such as their values, beliefs and

\textsuperscript{12} This phrase is a tautology that translates to 'law law'.

desires). As such, I argue that defence nationalism is not only characterised by anxieties about what the body politic contains (or does not contain), but by anxieties about what the body of the other contains as well (as evinced in the “Trojan horse” metaphor above, or in Cerminara’s guessing game as to what exists beneath the veil).

It is the contention of this thesis that in defence nationalist imaginaries, the other not only threatens to intrude, contaminate and get ‘inside’ the nation, but to intrude, contaminate and get inside the ‘individual’ body as well. Accordingly, defence nationalists describe near comprehensive intrusions of the body and its senses. For the EDL, non-national others intrude visually: “our landscapes are marred by hideous mosques and their minarets” (EDL 2016a); they intrude aurally: “the so-called ‘call to prayer’ is an audio intrusion inflicted on increasingly more communities” (EDL 2016a). For EDL member Chris, non-national others intrude upon his sense of smell: “I smell their fucking stinking food everywhere I turn” (Treadwell & Garland 2011, p.629-630). Similarly, the other inhabits the food nationalists put inside their own bodies: “our food, often without our knowledge and consent, is subject to the incantations and animal brutality of the halal process” (EDL 2016a). Finally, the other even inhibits, and thus psychologically inhabits the speech that nationalist bodies emit: “our speech concerning Islam and its ‘perfect man’ Mohammed, is stifled by constant threats of death” (EDL 2016a). Correlatively, for defence nationalists, the nation is imagined as already inhabiting the body from the inside, as the chants “its in our DNA!” and “With St. George in my heart” suggest (my emphasis).

In response to the anxieties of the bodily instability of both that of self and nation outlined above, it is the contention of this thesis that defence nationalists seek to provide bodily stability by raising and resurrecting the (b)orders and boundaries of national bodies—including those of self, other and nation. Defence nationalists seek to do this by policing the (b)orders of self, other and nation with the specific intention of preventing (unwanted) forms of bodily exchange and interchange, such as those the EDL Mission Statement describes as its chief concerns (EDL 2016a). Included among these forms of exchange are
“the stealthy incursion of halal meat” into restaurants and supermarket aisles; the “encroachment” of mosques on “our landscapes”; and “the creeping Islamisation of our country” (EDL 2016a).

I contend that the narratives, imaginaries and (political) subjectivities that sustain the defence nationalist discourses of insides and outsides described above, can be approached and interrogated thematically, insofar as they implicate three equally social bodies: those of flesh, land and law (the specific meanings of which are expounded throughout this thesis). I contend that within defence nationalist discourses, each of these bodies—flesh, land and law—(e)merge and become imbricated with one another so as to resemble a Borromean knot: each overlapping, trespassing and becoming essential to the others, albeit without a clear or fixed hierarchy manifesting between them.

The task of this thesis is not so much to ‘untie’ the knot of entangled bodies—flesh, land and law—but instead, to examine their interlacing narratives, imaginaries and subjectivities, and the bodies and boundaries by which they are both constituted and constituting. In framing the thesis in this way, I forward the body as an index that conceptually arranges the research questions outlined above. I do this however without intending to confer special status or significance upon the body. What follows in the remainder of this introductory chapter is a thematic overview of the core themes of this thesis (flesh, land and law) as each relates to defence nationalism. Subsequently, I provide an outline of the methodological approach taken towards the interrogation of the questions, themes and problematics that this thesis pursues.

**Chapter Progression**

In Chapter 2, I examine the notion that for defence nationalists, 'land' is imagined as a reification of the nation to which the ostensibly 'individual' bodies of nationalists are thought connected. Connections between the nation, its land, and its 'individual' bodies are most evident at key spatial sites within the nation that are bound with/in national
narratives (such as the beach in Australia and the football stadium in the UK). As some of the previously cited chants, such as “Love ’Nulla, Fuck Allah”, “Wog-free zone”, “Lebs go home”, “we grew here you flew here” and “Osama don’t surf” indicate, it is at these sites that belonging or not belonging to the nation becomes most apparent.

The above chants each imply that the body of the other lacks an affinity with the Australian beach (which, as discussed, is tied intimately to Australian iconography and mythology). The chants imply that “’Nulla” and “Allah” are not compatible; that the body of the “Wog” ought to be absent from the nationally significant beach-space; and that the body of the “Leb” is not at “home” on the beach. Similarly, the signifier “Osama”, taken as a crude metonym for the body of the racialised other, is said to be unable to surf. In turn, I will argue this inability is imagined as disclosing an absence of belonging to land qua nation.

Each of the above chants about the other also features an underside: a correlative, positive articulation of the subject who chants: whilst the other does not belong, the subject who chants does; whilst the other does not enjoy affinity for key national spatialities, the subjects who chants does. Osama can’t surf....but I can. This positive underside is made most explicit in the chant “we grew here you flew here”. While the body of the racialised other is said to have ’flew’ to the nation—thereby invalidating any of its claims to ‘natural’ affinity and belonging—the body of the white nationalist is said to have grown ’here’, implying a natural affinity with ’here’.

With the above observations as its starting point, Chapter 2 examines the function that imaginary naturalisations and (de)naturalisations of body and place play in the narratives, imaginaries and subjectivities of defence nationalism. I claim that among defence nationalists, imagined affinities between land(scapes) and bodies construct a sense of ironic indigeneity and possession. This ironic indigeneity allows defence nationalists not only to move about more ‘freely’ than others within the nation, but to embody the nation
more freely as well. Finally, I maintain that the imagined motility that ironic indigeneity facilitates enables defence nationalists to *traverse* key physical sites within the nation, and to imagine a mandate to *police* those spatialities in accordance with their own desires as well.

In Chapter 3, I critique some of the existing literature on the contemporary ethnic nationalist movements this thesis examines. As shown in Chapter 3, the existing literature tends to examine these groups through class and gender analyses that hold that members of defence leagues are typically aggressive, alienated, disenfranchised men. In Chapter 3, I demonstrate that although these existing analyses are *useful* for understanding defence nationalism, they are nevertheless lacking because they fail to elucidate an understanding as to *why* specific subjects—the vast majority of whom are aggressive men—turn *specifically* to defence leagues (rather than elsewhere). Moreover, existing analyses do not adequately articulate *how* subjects identify with defence leagues (that is, the modalities of their identification). Throughout Chapter 3, and the remainder of the thesis, I hold that it is by understanding defence nationalist fantasies of flesh, land and law that this gap in the existing literature can be filled.

To begin to address these gaps in existing literature, in Chapter 3, I historicise defence nationalist anxieties and alienation in relation to the psychosocial effects (and affects) of late-capitalism, or neo-liberalism. Specifically, I examine anxiety and alienation in relation to neo-liberal constructions of the mythical 'individual subject' (a term that, we shall see for Lacan, is an oxymoron). Following this historicisation, I then move to examine the status that law holds in defence nationalist imaginaries, narratives and subjectivities, maintaining that defence nationalists drawn upon fantasies of law to allay neo-liberal alienation and anxiety. I observe that although defence nationalists often *explicitly* invoke the 'Rule of Law', that what they implicitly invoke is a sense of a 'cultural' or 'national' law and its moral and ideological 'authority'. I maintain that defence nationalist fantasies of law strongly articulate with Carl Schmitt's theory of law as *nomos*, whereby Schmitt
As I demonstrate, Schmitt’s articulation of *nomos* articulates with defence nationalist *fantasies* of both the nation and law insofar as for defence nationalists, the nation is articulated as a spatially-defined legal entity—as encapsulated by the phrase, 'the law of the land'. As I show, this invocation of law by defence nationalists is steeped in a profound sense of imagining oneself as knowing what is and what ought to be within the nation (both within its land and it law). I maintain that defence nationalists also imagine themselves as knowing what ought *not* to be within the nation: namely, the law(s) of the other, which stand not only as the codification of the other’s cultural practices, but the other’s desires as well (that is, as a codification of the other’s otherness).

As outlined in the sections above, defence nationalists not only fear that the other will intrude upon and contaminate the nation and its land—they also fear that the other will intrude upon and contaminate the individual body (with which nationality is performed) as well. But from where does this fear originate? To address this question, Chapter 4 outlines a psychoanalytic theory of the body, which is, after all, where racism and ethnic nationalism partially subsist.¹³

“Racism”, Vicki Kirby writes, is ultimately “wrought with/in flesh” (1997, p.128). Indeed, Balibar and Wallerstein observe that bodily stigmata typically occupy a *central place* within

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¹³ Developing a theory of the body in relation to defence nationalism is also useful insofar as researchers of political conflicts—particularly those relating to ethnic nationalist violence—often reference, both explicitly and more often implicitly, the way that 'us' and 'them' determinations are made on the basis of the body and what the body is contingently determined to mean and represent (Beiner 2003; Brown 2000; Ignatieff 1999; Kok-Chor Tan 2004; Feldman 1991; Yack 1996). For example, critics of the notion of civic nationalism—nationalism built purely on the basis of civic and political principles—are often sceptical of the notion that nationalism can emerge without the existence of subterranean ethno-cultural communities. For Bernard Yack:

no matter how much residents of the United States might sympathise with political principles favoured by most French or Canadian citizens, it would not occur to them to think of themselves as French or Canadian. An attachment to certain political principles may be a necessary condition of loyalty to the national community for many citizens of contemporary liberal democracies; they are very far from sufficient condition for that loyalty (1996, p.196).

However, just as subjects from one nation are unlikely to claim belonging to another nation on the basis of shared civic principles alone, so too, white nationalists are unlikely to imagine the self as belonging to another predominantly white nation on the basis of whiteness alone. It is therefore pertinent to theorise how bodily affinities with the nation and fellow nationals originate and are maintained.
the phantasmatics of racism (1991, p.204). By extension therefore, bodily stigmata typically operate within ethnic nationalism as well (of which defence nationalism is but one manifestation). This said however, the way that these phantasmatics operate is arguably more transparent with respect to racism. In racist logics, the way the body is perceived determines how the subject to whom that body supposedly belongs is perceived. Amongst other things, racist logics define subjects as having certain natural attributes, proclivities, (in)abilities, opinions and patterns of thought on the basis of their perceived race. However, ethnic nationalist logics entail an additional step, which is that the way the body is perceived determines where the subject to whom that body supposedly belongs, belongs, and that in turn, this inferred belonging then determines how the subject to whom that body supposedly belongs is perceived. The white body, for example, is imagined as 'belonging' both in and to the white nation. In turn, this perceived belonging to a nation is imagined as defining what the white subject of the white nation subject is like—as Ghassan Hage notes, 'national' qualities come to be imagined as 'individual' qualities (2004, p.13).

Drawing on Lacanian psychoanalysis, Chapter 4 develops a theory of the body precisely as that which is imagined as disclosing one’s identity not only to others but also to one’s self (indeed, as I demonstrate, for defence nationalists it is the body that partially discloses what the self is imagined to be in the first instance). Chapter 4 unpacks this theory of the body in relation to common defence nationalist practices of bodily adornment, including draping the body with the national flag as a cape or mask, writing and painting temporary messages on the body during protests and events, and tattooing. In reference to such practices, I argue that for defence nationalists, bodies—including that of the self—serve to authenticate otherwise unstable national identities by reifying nationality and nationhood in the flesh (just as key spatialities are thought to reify the nation). Moreover, I maintain that defence nationalism provides its subjects with specific articulations of the body with which nationalists can identify and with which nationalists can then in turn 'act'. Thus, whereas Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 examine the way that the nation provides spatialities in
which identities can be performed, embodied and enacted, Chapter 4 outlines a theory of
the way in which, for defence nationalists, the nation also provides the very body with
which such performances, embodiments and enactments can be facilitated.

Following this, Chapter 5, expands upon the theory of defence nationalist bodies by
considering the practices by which defence nationalists care for the body. Throughout the
chapter, I argue that defence nationalism provides nationalists with forms of bodily care
that amount ultimately to practices of curation of the self. Just as subjects can augment
their bodies and corresponding identities by subscribing to the imaginaries and narratives
attached to various practices of consumption (Pugliese & Stryker 2009; Murray & Sullivan
2012), so too, nationalists can alter their bodies and corresponding identities by
subscribing to the imaginaries and narratives of defence nationalism (which augment the
body in terms of its imagined qualities and its belonging). Defence nationalism provides
fantasies of bodily care both through its imagined capacity to defend the nation, but secondly
through its capacity to provide convincing imaginaries that bind the body of its
subject to the body politic itself. I will argue that by serving both of these functions
simultaneously, defence nationalism enables the fantasy that 'individual' bodies can be
cared for and cultivated providing that the nation to which those bodies belong is also
'defended' (that is, cared for and cultivated). The extrapolation that the nation's defence is
equivalent to the body's defence converts the onus of caring for the individual body into a
collective political enterprise; it also means that defence nationalism can be characterised
not only as a form of collective investment in the defence of the body politic, but as a
collective investment in the care of 'individual' bodies as well.

In Chapter 6, I forward a theory of defence nationalist violence through a close reading of
Elaine Scarry (1985) and Louis Althusser's (1971) respective theoretical frameworks. I hold
that the violence of defence nationalists constitutes a set of practices of inscription upon
the bodies of others deemed non-national others. In line with Scarry and Althusser, I
maintain that these practices serve to both un-make and re-make the body of the other,
ensuring its imagined non-nationality. However, in un-making and re-making the other, I hold that defence nationalists simultaneously re-make their own bodies as well. Specifically, I hold that through violence, defence nationalists effectively nationalise themselves as the positive obverse of the others they seek to de-nationalise.

In Chapter 7, I explore the way that defence nationalists seek not only to defend the nation against particular others, but to defend the purity and continuity of the nation’s history as well. Like the nation itself, the national ‘spirit’ is an artefact that is imagined to endure over time; moreover, both are founded through myths of origin (Anderson 1991). For this reason, Chapter 7 revisits the concept of ‘ironic indigeneity’ introduced in Chapter 2, in order to explore the ways in which defence nationalists imagine their connections with/in the nation’s history.

Throughout Chapter 7, I explore the way that defence nationalists not only locate their bodies within the nation’s history, but the nation’s history within their bodies as well. I hold that through this formation, the historical ‘national spirit’ is constructed as an undeniable ‘fact’ of the body, such that the national ‘spirit’ is imagined as merely reflecting qualities of the self that always-already existed within the flesh qua self (as opposed to constructing the self’s ‘national characteristics’ as having been discursively and contingently acquired). This formation, which I expound in detail in Chapter 7, is illustrated in the following preliminary example of an image often shared among Australian defence nationalists:

![Image 1: Anzac Skull (Reclaim Australia 2015)](image-url)
As elucidated above, the 'Anzac spirit', which supposedly began during the Battle of Gallipoli, has come to stand as a metonym for the *Australian spirit* itself. In the meme above the 'Anzac spirit' is depicted as an *undeniable fact of the body*: something contained in the very DNA and bones of Australian nationalists, as a dormant and aggressive force that lies dormant but ready to be awoken.

After articulating the way that defence nationalists imagine nationality as an enduring and *timeless* fact of the body, the second part of Chapter 7 examines the way that defence nationalists seek to 'defend' the nation not only spatially, but also along its temporal axis (which they locate in their bodies and *in which* they locate their bodies). In Chapter 7, I show that defence nationalists seek both to secure the nation's *'past'* by purifying and mythologising its origins, as well as to secure the nation's *'future' for themselves*, as encapsulated by the BNF’s motto, which is dubbed “the 14 Words”: "We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children".14

Through critical readings of Benedict Anderson, Ghassan Hage and Roberto Esposito, I maintain that in prosecuting their defence of the nation’s past and future, British and Australian defence leagues appear to adopt what Esposito refers to as “*immunitary logics*” (2012). For Esposito, these 'logics' paradoxically compromise the very communities they seek to immunise by magnifying the anxieties experienced by those within them (2012, p.61). Indeed, Ghassan Hage has influentially argued that Australian white nationalists become “*paranoid*” in relation to the threats they perceive against the nation to the point that the nation can no longer be enjoyed (2004). Ostensibly, Hage’s argument applies to defence nationalists; it could be argued, for example, that defence nationalists ultimately 'compromise' the nation through their attempts to 'defend' (*qua* immunise) it from external forces. However, in Chapter 7, I argue that what defence nationalists seek to defend is *not* communities within the nation at large, nor the nation as a singular community itself; instead, I argue that defence nationalists seek to defend *their own* 'inner' community of

14 See the homepage of the BNF’s website: <http://www.britishnationalfront.net/>
defence nationalists. I argue that by so doing, defence leagues seek to defend the privileged status of their own members within the nation, and the nation’s past, present and future.

To substantiate the claim that defence leagues seek to defend the status of their own members within the nation—rather than the nation itself per se—I examine the way that defence leagues work to construct their subjects as occupying a privileged status of 'hyper-nationality'. I employ this term to refer to a status of belonging to a (nationally) privileged community of nationalists within the nation that functions as an ‘inner’ body within the body politic (resembling an internal organ). I hold that while the ‘immunitary’ logics adopted by defence nationalists may compromise the nation in ways described by Esposito, that nevertheless, the same immunitary logics paradoxically and simultaneously work to maintain the hyper-national community to which defence nationalists construct themselves as belonging. More than this, I maintain that the ‘immunitary logics’ of defence nationalists work to maintain hyper-national communities not in spite of but because of the ways that they erode the nation. In Chapter 7, I therefore argue that it is by ultimately constructing the nation as compromised by outside forces, that the discourses of defence nationalism effectively endow nationalists with their own imagined immunity. This ‘imagined immunity’ is an immunity with respect to the perils faced by the nation proper; it functions, I will argue, such that nationalists themselves remain ‘immune’ by virtue of the fact the nation is thought to be compromised.

In Chapter 8, the final chapter of this thesis, I bring together the arguments of the preceding chapters. I offer my final theses, and show how defence nationalist fantasies of flesh, land and law are interconnected. I demonstrate that when the connectedness of these fantasies is understood, that so too, the narratives, imaginaries and subjectivities of defence nationalism can be analysed and understood. By analysing contemporary defence league movements in this way, I demonstrate that defence nationalism can be understood as a form of nationalism that is distinct from those that have come before, and, moreover,
that it is accompanied by equally unique subjectivities and (symbolic) agencies.

**Methodology**

When formulating this research, I initially proposed to interrogate the narratives, imaginaries and (political) subjectivities of defence nationalists by conducting a series of 1-to-1 interviews with members of various Australian and British defence leagues. However, this proposal quickly encountered a number of challenges. As these challenges were in and of themselves informative, they are briefly described below.

I first contacted members of Australian defence leagues—specifically, the ADL, UPF and Reclaim Australia—via the avenues of communication these organisations have made available online (such as by contacting their designated ‘media liaisons’ on their websites). Initially, a number of members expressed their willingness to participate in an interview; however, this changed when I contacted the then-leader of the Victorian & Tasmanian Division of the ADL.\(^\text{15}\) When the leader became aware that the interviews would be conducted in a public place—an ethical requirement of the research—he became suspicious that I was attempting to lure defence league members into a public place to commit a Lee Rigby or ‘Lindt Cafe Siege’\(^\text{16}\) style attack. The leader advised he would “send out the warning signal about you” to members of the Victorian & Tasmanian Division of the ADL and other defence leagues, cautioning them against participating in the interviews (personal communication, 10 March 2015). Soon after the “warning signal” went out, those who had initially agreed to participate withdrew their consent. One member, who apologised for withdrawing explained: “you have contacted many of my people we have been having major trolls and infiltrators and threats of death” (personal communication, 11 March 2015). Another wrote: “Please FUCK OFF and I will be contacting the university about you as well” (personal communication, 13 March 2015).

\(^{15}\) For privacy reasons, this person's name and those cited immediately below will not be published.

\(^{16}\) The so-called ‘Lindt Cafe Siege’ refers to an event that occurred in December 2014, whereby a number of employees and patrons of the Lindt Café in Sydney were taken hostage by Man Haron Monis. Two of the hostages were killed, as was Monis, whose stated motivation was his commitment to the 'Islamic State'.

The suspicion that someone would lure members of defence leagues into a public place to commit a terrorist attack is revealing of some aspects of defence nationalism in and of itself. The suspicion indicates that although defence league members assert ownership and control over public spaces, that they are nevertheless only willing to come to those places on their own terms. It also implies that members of defence leagues see themselves as potential targets for an attack on the nation itself, just as the attacks on Lee Rigby and the Cronulla life-savers were seen as attacks on the nation. Just as Lee Rigby's position within the nation amplified the effects and affects associated with his death, so too, perhaps defence league members see themselves as figures of national significance whose deaths would also resonate with the community? Here, it is useful to recall Cerminara's belief that "another Cronulla" would result from the alleged attack against him. It is worth considering whether Cerminara perceived the alleged attack on him as being as nationally significant as that on the emblematic Australian life-savers?

Following my failed attempts in arranging interviews, I next sought to organise interviews by attending numerous marches and protests held by defence nationalist organisations. This was also met with a number of difficulties. Firstly, due to my own bodily appearance, I was often mistakenly identified as a member of the counter-protest movements that often protest against defence league events (such as the Anti-Fascist Alliance). During an EDL protest in Aylesbury, for example, a police-officer who was monitoring the situation stated that he was unwilling to speak to me because he believed I would use the information he provided to "head to twitter" to inform counter-protesters where to meet in order to attack the EDL members. A second issue that arose was an ethical concern, which was that during the protests, rallies and marches I attended, participants were often in what I considered to be an heightened, aggressive and/or agitated state. As it is an EDL tradition to begin organised events at traditional English 'pubs', often this state of agitation appeared magnified by the consumption of alcohol, posing possible issues not only of safety, but consent.
In light of the above difficulties, the process of conducting a significant number of 1-to-1 interviews was abandoned. As an alternative, this thesis instead pursues its central questions by analysing material available in the public domain. Included in this analysis are examinations of events, speeches, slogans, chants and banners either observed by the researcher during field-trips to defence league events, protests, marches and rallies, or that are otherwise accessible online, be it through the media, defence league websites and social media, or in existing academic literature. I have chosen, in particular, to analyse a considerable number of images, videos and other forms of written material shared by and among defence leagues members online. Typically, this material is accessed via the same mediums through which defence leagues communicate and disseminate their material, and through which they interact with one another (such as through the Facebook, YouTube and Twitter accounts held by defence leagues and their members).

By analysing this material (using the methodological approach outlined below), I pursue the core contentions of this thesis. Foremost, I interrogate the contention that defence nationalism subsists in a range of equally social bodies, including those of flesh, land and law. Throughout, I claim that each of these bodies penetrates and is penetrated by the others: that defence nationalists imagine that both the body and body politic contain and are contained by one another; possess and are possessed by one another; inhabit and are inhabited by one another; care for and are cared for by one another. In short, I explore the contention that defence nationalists imagine a symbiotic relationship with the nation, whereby the nation is a part of the defence nationalist only insofar as the defence nationalist is also a part of the nation. I argue that defence nationalists are characterised not only by the desire to know what is inside the body politic and what flows between its social bodies, but so too, by a desire to control and regulate these flows by controlling and authorising who and what is allowed inside, and who and what is kept outside of the body politic.17

17 This desire is not only a feature of nationalist defence leagues, so too, it seems to be one of mainstream political institutions in Australia and the UK. This was evinced most clearly in the UK by discourse that underpinned the successful 'yes' vote for the referendum of 2016, which proposed that Britain leave the European Union (the so-called 'Brexit'). Where members of the EDL seek to “[take] back our streets”, a central theme for proponents of the
The task of the chapters that follow is to explore the entanglement of these bodies whose enmeshment constitutes not a mere linking, but an elision such that it is impossible to distinguish where one body ends and another begins. Throughout, I consider how the entanglement of flesh, land and law itself constitutes a body that comes to function as a prosthetic for defence nationalists, authoring and authorising practices of embodiment, speech, violence and identification. I explore the patterns and technologies of identification with this body through which defence nationalists construct themselves as self-ordained defenders of the nation. I consider why those who rioted in Cronulla identified with the life-savers, and why those who march for the EDL identify with Lee Rigby. I also examine why it is that defence nationalists seem to find 'themselves' with/in the nation and the nation with/in themselves.

Through its examination of defence nationalist subjectivities, this thesis focuses primarily on men, and on male and masculine nationalist subjectivities; this is because, as will be shown throughout the thesis, the vast majority of defence league members are men who subscribe to and assert aggressive, nationalistic forms of masculinity. As Geden elaborates, “organizations of the extreme right are clearly dominated by men” (2005, p.397) who identify with “specific cultural [ideals] of masculinity” (2005, p.405). The predominance of men and masculine subjectivities in defence leagues and defence nationalist events is evident in the mythologies and iconographies that nationalists invoke.

In the introductory scenes outlines above, for example, those who participated in the Cronulla Riots, who were mostly men, invoked Anzac mythology and other mythologies associated with the Battle of Gallipoli. These mythologies are masculine mythologies because the Anzacs who fought during World War I and II, in the supposedly formative

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Brexit was national security and the 'taking back' of national borders. Similarly, in Australia, 'national security' and immigration have been constructed as being intimately tied to one another at least since the supposed connection became a cornerstone of John Howard's 2001 election campaign in which the now (in)famous sound-bite, “we will decide who comes to this country and the circumstances in which they come” was repeatedly delivered. Border defence has since been a central theme of Australian elections. Some have even sought to replicate and reinvent Howard's sound-bite. Former Prime Minister Tony Abbott, for example, introduced the now equally (in)famous slogan “stop the boats” (a reference to the arrival of refugees to Australia by boat). The term “boat people” has since been normalised in public discourse in Australia as a derogatory term used to refer to refugees.

years of the nation, consisted almost exclusively of men (as women were prohibited from serving in the Armed Forces); thus, it was only men who defended the nation with violence during the Battle of Gallipoli, the supposed “birth of the nation” (Holbrook 2017). According to these mythologies, it was therefore men who gave “birth” to the nation through violence. Like their Australian counterparts, so too, the mythologies invoked by members of the EDL are almost exclusively aggressive, masculine mythologies (indeed, they are also aggressively exclusive). These mythologies include iconographies the EDL has transposed from hooliganism firms (Lowles 2009; Treadwell 2008; Treadwell & Garland 2010; Treadwell & Garland 2011; Back et al. 2001), as well as cultural fantasies regarding 'knights in shining armour', to whom EDL members compare themselves (as will be discussed in later chapters). Like the Anzacs, these figures are portrayed as male, masculine figures who defended the nation (and empire) with violence.

In light of the above mythologies and iconographies—which, thus far, have only been outlined in a preliminary sense—it appears that defence leagues are not only dominated by men, but that they are dominated by men who see themselves in particular ways. What I explore in this thesis is precisely how they see themselves and why. By focussing mostly on men and aggressive, masculine subjectivities, this thesis does not intend to marginalise women (as there are members of defence leagues who are women); rather, it intends to focus critically on those who do the marginalising: aggressive men who belong to defence leagues, who (re)produce national narratives that not only exclude on the basis of race, but on the basis of sex and gender as well.

The above questions, contentions and proposed avenues of pursuit raise a number of methodological considerations: specifically, how can these lines of inquiry be pursued through analyses and interpretations of the types of materials outlined above? Seshadri-Crooks has influentially described notions of ‘race’ as “resilient non-sense” that lacks an empirical basis (2000, p.2). If this observation is extended from race to racism, and indeed, to ethnic nationalism as well, then a secondary set of questions also arises: how does one
analyse 'non-sense'? How does one respond (if indeed one presumes that one can)? Keeping these difficulties of non-sense in mind, this thesis interrogates the narratives, imaginaries and (political) subjectivities of defence nationalists in Australia and the UK by drawing upon the theoretical contributions and insights provided by a number of critical and social theorists. Most notably, this thesis draws on the psychoanalytic frameworks of Jacques Lacan. The thesis utilises psychoanalytic methodologies foremost because psychoanalysis does not dismiss non-sense out of hand; nor do psychoanalytic methodologies seek to 'rationalise' non-sense by claiming it to be 'factually' or 'empirically' wrong. Instead, psychoanalytic methodologies—be it those of the clinic or of social and cultural analysis—seek to uncover the anxieties, affects and aporias that underlie 'non-sense'.

Psychoanalytic methodologies seek not to 'correct' non-sense that we may not like, but instead to interpret the internal logics and anti-logics that underlie non-sense. Psychoanalysis provides rich frameworks for reading (into) the non-sense of speech: for reading between the lines, discerning what is said through omission, and interpreting what speech serves to hide rather than what it serves to 'say'. Psychoanalysis is therefore resilient in its usefulness towards (interpreting) non-sense. It is with this view in mind that I draw upon psychoanalytic methodologies of social, cultural and political analysis in order to interpret the narratives, imaginaries and (political) subjectivities of defence nationalists, all the while, exploring the forms of identification that underpin them. I do this by examining the discourses, ideologies and 'activities' of defence nationalists, looking to uncover latent anxieties, affects and aporias; and to identify repetitions, hidden investments, and so-called 'slips of the tongue'.

In addition to its capacity for analysing non-sense, the psychoanalytic approach adopted by this thesis is also especially useful for honing in on what sets defence nationalism apart from other forms nationalism (recalling Balibar and Wallerstein's question regarding the novelty of such groups (1991, p.17)). Throughout the thesis, I not only argue that defence
nationalism can be distinguished from earlier forms of nationalism; I also argue that these differences are best illustrated not by examining the socio-political conditions of their emergence (as much of the existing literature seeks to do), but instead, by exploring their psychoanalytic and psychosocial underpinnings. The reason for this is two-fold. The first, which I elaborate upon considerably, is that defence nationalism can be differentiated from other forms of nationalism by the narratives, imaginaries and subjectivities that sustain it, as well as by the narratives, imaginaries and subjectivities it sustains. The second, is that broadly speaking, defence nationalists are not primarily concerned with realising the political projects for which they advocate (such as by fortifying national borders, halting immigration and preserving so-called national values). Instead, I will argue, they are more concerned with enjoying the defence of the nation, and with enjoying and realising themselves as the privileged national subjects who get to do the defending. That is, they are most concerned with enjoying the identity of being hyper-national subjects: (self-)ordained, privileged defenders of the nation. As I will show, because of this, that which threatens the nation can paradoxically legitimise and fortify defence nationalists, insofar as the more the nation is perceived as being threatened, the more the nationalist's perceived role of defending the nation is legitimised and secured. I will argue that these intricacies and peculiarities set defence nationalism apart from other forms of nationalism, and that these distinguishing features can be productively interrogated through psychoanalytic theory.

While this methodological outline is not intended to serve as an exposition of Lacanian psychoanalysis per se, it is useful here to provide some further initial qualifications regarding the approach I adopt before proceeding with the thesis proper. While psychoanalysis can be drawn upon to facilitate social, political and cultural analysis, this does not make it immune to misuses. Like any theoretical framework or method, psychoanalysis has limitations, and can be overextended. Like any methodology or discipline (indeed, like any discourse), psychoanalysis is a contingent artefact: it has a genealogy and bears residue from the conditions of its emergence. Psychoanalysis is not a
private' entity, but a social, cultural, historical, political and economic artefact (McClintock 1995, p.8).

Adopting psychoanalytic methodologies—be it in the 'clinic' or as a tool for social and cultural analysis—without keeping the above limitations and contingencies in mind could easily lead to a number of issues. Like any methodological approach, psychoanalysis is a way of looking at the world that is produced with/in and by that world (Frosh 1999 & 2016; Lane 1998; Phillips 2007). If one fails to keep this in mind, one may be inclined if not tempted to reproduce that world uncritically. Indeed, one of the Foucauldian critiques of clinical psychoanalysis is its tendency to take the existence of the 'individual' subject as a given and subsequently to 'treat'—as it were—its articulation of the subject as the human subject on this basis (Dreyfus & Rabinow 2014; Rose 1985; Rose 1988; Grosz 1990). On a Foucauldian reading, this error enshrines the 'individual' subject within the confessional space of the clinic, thereby serving, simultaneously, to reproduce both the individual subject as an ontological 'fact', as well as the Judaeo-Christian discourses that lie within the genealogy of psychoanalysis itself (Grosz 1990).

Through its contingency and capacity to reproduce its own origins, psychoanalysis can, somewhat ironically, be referred to as a 'symptomatic' cultural object; however, this need not be one of its pitfalls (Phillips 2007, p.1). By keeping its limitations in mind, one can draw upon psychoanalysis without positing 'the human subject' as an ahistorical, universal or transcendental 'Being'. Indeed, as I unpack in significant detail in Chapter 4, Lacanian psychoanalysis is predicated on a radically opposite approach, which maintains that subjectivity is neither stable nor given, but instead a radical void—an illusion achieved only as a temporary, unstable social accomplishment through a countless number of complex processes and interactions. When used judiciously, psychoanalytic methodologies are useful insofar as they articulate with and are produced by the very same psychological, political, social, and legal configurations, processes and interactions that produce the subjects of its analysis (Rogers 2014, p.21). What Lacanian psychoanalysis
provides then, is not a 'diagnosis' of the subject as some final articulation of who s/he is, has been, and always will be, but rather, a framework for interpreting how it is that the social achievements of subjectivity, subjection and subjection emerge; how it is that meaning 'catches' and temporarily stabilises; and, how it is that subjects come to be invested in these meanings such that they are seen as 'truth'.

For psychoanalysis, meaning is not only a social achievement—it is also diachronic. For psychoanalysis, meaning does not inhere to words in and of themselves. Instead, meaning is always the retroactive effect of punctuation. It is only with the last word of a sentence that the meaning of the first is 'delivered'. But this meaning is never quite perfect, and it never quite says what it was intended to say. It is never what it proclaims to be. For psychoanalysis, the same can be said of the subject, whose sentences are not only punctuated grammatically, but by intrusions from the unconscious as well. For psychoanalysis, meanings, narratives, imaginaries, identities and subjectivities are therefore not only punctuated, but punctured, and inclined at some point(s) to unravel entirely.

With the above in mind, the psychoanalytic methodology employed throughout this thesis is not concerned so much with unlocking the final 'truths' of defence nationalist phenomena (for such truths do not exist). Nor is it concerned with finding universal answers to the questions outlined above (for such answers cannot be presumed to exist). To commit to such an investigation would be to commit to a search for the Lacanian 'Real', which, as I explicate shortly, is for Lacan both radically unknowable and inaccessible in principle. Instead, the questions outlined throughout this chapter serve as the starting point for a psychoanalytic inquiry conducted as a means of reflexive deciphering and reading—one that proceeds without ever settling into the illusion that it ever has deciphered finally. Such a process is analogous to the structure of Gabriel Garcia Márquez's One-Hundred Years of Solitude, a generational narrative whose own narration and reading is included in its narrative, and whose world finally 'ends' and comes undone precisely as the narrative
comes to an end: as the final page, paragraph, sentence, and, ultimately, word is read. Here, the final full stop literally 'spells' the end. Throughout this thesis I seek not to say the final word on defence nationalism; instead, I seek to investigate the ways by which defence nationalist narratives, imaginaries and subjectivities attempt to settle before they too also inexorably come undone.
Chapter 2: Ironic Indigeneity

It is possible to attain knowledge which is very useful in life...and thus render ourselves the masters and possessors of nature.

René Descartes (1901, p.154).

Map-making became the servant of colonial plunder, for the knowledge constituted by the map both preceded and legitimized the conquest of territory. The map is a technology of knowledge that professes to capture the truth about the place in pure, scientific form, operating under the guise of scientific exactitude and promising to retrieve and reproduce nature exactly as it is. As such, it is also a technology of possession, promising that those with the capacity to make such perfect representations must also have the right of territorial control.


On 5 September 2015, an EDL march and protest was held in Dover, Kent. According to one of the leaders of the Dover Division of the EDL, 'Morgan', the march was held there because it is through the Port of Dover that many refugees and illegal immigrants enter Britain from Calais. On the day the march was held, the title-page of the EDL Facebook page read, “ACCESS DENIED. Islam, not welcome on our beaches!” (Essex Division of the EDL 2015). As per EDL custom, the march began at a local pub, the Dover Priory Hotel, which is on the opposite side of the street to Dover Priory Station. Upon exiting the station, I noticed that rather than gathering on the ample footpath outside the hotel, instead, most had congregated on the road between the hotel and the train station. By doing so, they ensured that those passing the station were required to slow to a near halt, thereby functioning as an audience for a longer duration.

Many who gathered wore military apparel. Some wore what members of the EDL often refer to as 'full kit', an 'urban camo' outfit consisting of pants and jacket, camouflaged by a collage of various 'urban' grey tones. 'Half kit' appeared more popular, as many wore military gear from the waist down, including the camouflaged pants, leather utility belts and black military style boots. This military garb, a feature of most if not all EDL rallies, seems to reflect the paramilitary 'feel' of EDL events. Most who wore 'half kit' completed their outfits with EDL merchandise from the waist up, usually hooded jumpers bearing various EDL logos, as well as insignia indicating the specific locations and counties of the
EDL divisions and their members. Among these, were Birmingham, Grimsby, Kent and Colchester. Numerous participants also wore the national flag as a cape, as well as plastic face-masks bearing the St. George colours (both are commonly seen during defence league events). These masks, shown in Image 2, effectively anonymise the 'individual' identity of the wearer by concealing the face, while simultaneously disclosing the body's belonging to the nation.

Image 2: St. George Masks (MDI 2011).

The EDL 'stewards' who would guide the march through its predetermined course could be distinguished from other EDL members by their high-visibility fluorescent vests, as shown in Image 3. These vests typically feature the title 'EDL Steward' or 'EDL Head Steward'; moreover, stewards could be further distinguished by the radios attached to their utility belts, which are used to communicate to other stewards, and contributed to the organised, military feel of the march.


Another prominent form of adornment was football scarves. This surprised me, as I
assumed such paraphernalia would imply disunity within the group, as it was unlikely all members would follow the same team. In England (and Australia), particular sporting teams are often thought to disclose something about their followers. One’s place of residence or socio-economic status is sometimes inferred from the town or region a particular team represents. During the protest, I spoke with an EDL member who was wearing a West Ham United scarf. As I asked him about his scarf, his friend, who was standing alongside him, interrupted by pointing out the “poo brown” of the West Ham colours (which are light blue and maroon). He elaborated that his friend was “covered in shit”. I asked the member who had interjected how he felt about West Ham and the fact his friend barracks for them. In reply, he indicated that he hated West Ham, and some disparaging but friendly banter ensued.

Although ostensibly trivial, this football banter provides an insight into the way that internal fractures within the nation and defence league are sometimes negotiated by EDL members. While a fracture between these two EDL members existed—and indeed, a significant fracture in the context of football hooliganism—the division was nevertheless entirely transcended by their membership to the nation and the EDL. Through their shared belonging to the EDL, it seemed as if their differences and departures were smoothed over, and rendered as those that exist between adversaries rather than enemies. As Hage notes, whereas enemies seek to “erase” one another entirely:

adversaries...no matter how antagonistic to each other they may be...remain committed to the reproduction of the social or at least the spatial-environmental common grounds where such divergence and antagonism are played out (2015, p.22).

As I interpreted it, this adversarial division was not only transcended by their joint membership of the EDL, but transcended in a way that was productive of a deeper sense of group membership. Their group membership was deepened insofar as their very capacity to enter into a particular rivalry, staged along the fault-line of the 'national sport', facilitated, in and of itself, a particular type of bond, whereby their differing football scarves
demonstrated that the respective wearers were fellow-nationals because of the particular way in which they were adversaries. That is, whereas indifference to the national sport would be un-national, their passionate dislike of each other’s teams was itself interpreted as a symptom of national belonging.

Whilst observing the congregation described above, a number of small mini-buses continued to arrive, bringing with them more EDL members from various locations and divisions. While these vehicles provided their occupants with the mobility to traverse borders, they also constituted borders in and of themselves, encasing the contained bodies within a limited albeit mobile territory. Crammed into these cars and vans, pressed up against one another, I was reminded of the trope of the bonding road-trip, often a feature of American coming-of-age movies, whereby a rite-of-passage is experienced as a right of passage.¹⁹ Like the individual members of the EDL, so too most of the arriving vehicles featured visual displays of national and county flags, as well as various other EDL paraphernalia such as scarves and stickers.

In addition to these visual displays, most of the arriving vehicles emitted loud music, typically the EDL theme-song or various songs by ‘Alex and the Bandits’ (a band comprised of EDL members).²⁰ The arriving EDL members were therefore not only encased within the metallic vehicular bodies that surrounded them, but were also encased by the mobile audioscapes of their vehicles. Like all borders, those of the arriving vehicles functioned as an interface between inside and outside, encasing yet simultaneously announcing their subjects, projecting outwards and filling and occupying the spaces through which they moved. Through the emission of sound, these projections were not only spatial and visual, but aural, ensuring that they penetrated the bodily-borders of all of those within earshot—for as Lacan often remarked, “the ears have no lids” (as cited in Dolar 2006, p.78).

¹⁹ For a detailed anthropological analysis of ‘rites of passage’, see Van Gennep (2011).
²⁰ The EDL theme song can be accessed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wxASFTAkRyA>. A selection of songs by Alex and Bandits can be accessed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m7mIrZn-Ipg>
Once the march began, the EDL’s claims of spatial ownership became more explicit. A Portable Announcement (P.A.) system continued to play the EDL theme song and other songs by Alex and the Bandits. I was told by one organiser of the Dover protest that in order to substantiate the desired military feel of the protest, they had attempted (unsuccessfully) to organise a military-style snare drummer to play as the EDL marched. Between songs on the P.A., members also filled the sound-space with two alternating chants, each of which claimed direct ownership of the land. The first of these two chants was chanted in the military ask/answer format, in which one person, usually the highest ranking officer, yells a question to which the group responds in unison. This chant went as follows: “Whose streets?” / “Our streets!” / “Whose streets?” / “Our streets!” After a number of repetitions, the chant crescendoed with a final: “Whose fucking streets?!” / “Our fucking streets!”

The second chant was paraphrased from the chorus of the EDL’s theme-song. It consisted of a number of repetitions of: “E—E—EDL! / E—E—EDL!” After some time, a further line was added: “E—E—EDL! / E—E—EDL! We’re comin’ down the road!” The final line not only emphasised the spatial dominance and mobility of those “comin’ down the road”, it also served as a warning of their pending arrival. At the conclusion of one round of the latter chant, one voice, with a deep, melancholy tone and slower cadence sung: “We’re the infantries of the EDL comin’ down the road”, to which another voice added “we go where we want!”

Present in each of the above chants is an emphasis on land-ownership and a derived sense of mobility. These are “our streets” so “we go where we want!” Claims such as these are a central theme of the EDL, as articulated by its most famous tag-line, “taking back our streets!” As one member of the EDL’s Walsall division elaborated during an EDL protest in Aylesbury:

We’ve all come here today to prove a point. Our streets belongs to us. We march them whenever we want, no matter what the Muslims say. No matter what the
police say, no matter what the Lefties say: they are our streets! We control them! They’re our streets! (EDL 2015c).

The entwined themes of land ownership and mobility are common among most if not all of the defence nationalist movements examined throughout this thesis. Prior to a protest held against the proposed building of a Mosque in Bendigo, Australia, for example, the United Patriots Front declared: “The police have been instructed to minimize and inconvenience us. BUT THE LAND BELONGS TO US, AND WE’LL GO WHEREVER WE LIKE” (United Patriots Front 2015a). Similarly, the mass text-message circulated prior to the Cronulla Riots called upon “every fucking Aussie in the shire” to go to Cronulla Beach to “show them that this is our beach and their [sic] never welcome back” (Wilson 2005, my italics).

If, as discussed in the previous chapter, both nationality and national belonging are most apparent in symbolically overdetermined national spaces—such as the beach, the football stadium, and indeed, even the streets—then why is it that defence nationalists feel the need to claim and enforce ownership over spaces they already identify as theirs? To answer this question, throughout this chapter I develop something resembling a phenomenology of defence nationalism. I consider what relationship—if any—exists for defence nationalists between the way the nation and nationality are experienced in the ‘everyday’, versus the ways the nation and nationality are experienced during what could be described as nationalist events (such as the Cronulla Riots and the EDL and UPF protests described above). To do this, I first examine how defence nationalists spatially enact nationality with/in key spatialities of the nation. I claim that in defence nationalist imaginaries, perceived ownership of the land is closely related to a perceived status of privileged nationality (a notion that in Chapter 7, I will develop into a theory of hyper-nationality). I claim that for defence nationalists, ownership of the land and privileged nationality exist in a symbiotic relationship: one owns the land because one imagines oneself as a privileged national subject; and yet, one can only be a privileged national subject if one imagines oneself as already ’owning’ the land with/in which one's status of
nationality is performed and confirmed.

As I demonstrate, performances of nationhood are most readily apparent in the spatial domains most closely associated with national narratives, such as the beach in Australia and the football stadium in England. This is partially because these spaces occupy a central 'place' in national mythology (as for example, the beach is imagined in Australia as synonymous with 'the Australian way of life'). Another reason, however, is that these places themselves are central to the production of the national mythologies through which particular spatialities come to function as metonyms for the nation proper. That is: privileged national spatialities both produce and are produced by national mythologies. In turn, these spatialities enable performances of nationality to be recognised within them. Such spaces might therefore be accurately dubbed 'hyper-national spaces'.

By focusing on performances of nationality in these key spatial domains—such as the Australian beach—I show that it is not only mobility that stems from perceived ownership of the land, but so too, an ironic sense of indigeneity. This indigeneity is ironic insofar as those who subscribe to it purport to own that to which they imagine themselves as belonging, and to possess that by which they are possessed (the nation). This 'ironic indigeneity' I will argue, is accompanied by an incentive to 'protect' and 'defend' the land that one perceives oneself as owning, and to which one perceives oneself as belonging (just as, for example, those who participated in the Cronulla Riots declared their intention not only to protect the life-savers, but to protect and “Save 'Nulla'” as well). More than a mere incentive to protect and defend, I claim that through their imagined connections to national land, defence nationalists imagine a mandate to do so as well—the contours of which I spend the subsequent chapters of this thesis examining in detail. To begin, however, I first (re)turn to “the place where it all began”: the Australian beach.

**Subjects Adrift: Of Surfers and Surfaces**

The Australian beach is an intriguing place. It is somewhere that Australians go to play,
but it is also something with which they play—a substance they mould. The sand-castle presents a neat metaphor for this assemblage, made from individual granules that cannot be discerned or separated, but that when fused together, form and hold a shape of their own (albeit temporarily and with the aid of an *invisible* supplement: moisture). The beach is a place where beach-goers engage *haptically* with land (Obrador-Pons 2007 & 2009; Paterson 2009). As an interactive, lively geography, the beach breaks with typically ocular-centric depictions of land (Obrador-Pons 2007 & 2009). The beach is a moving place of rhythms and flows, and of tides that literally come in and out.

Invisible lines on maps notwithstanding, it is at the beach that one encounters, in a tactile sense, the *physical* limit(s) of the nation and the practical reification of its border. Sand and sea are “two sides of the same coin”, where “one foot back connects you to the land and one foot forward carries you into the sea” (Redmond 2013, p.727). Like the lines on a map, so too the physical incarnation of the border is perpetually shifting: a liminal ‘space’ that moves in and out with the tides, receding, rising and eroding. One encounters this ‘fluid’ border on unstable footing—the sand that shifts underfoot.

Dorsett and McVeigh observe that historically, “the realm [of the British Empire] and hence the common law, ended at the low-water mark” (2002, p.305). Historically then, “the shoreline appeared as a frontier that the sovereign could not cross, leaving the common law behind at the water’s edge” (Dorsett & McVeigh 2002, p.305). To avoid limiting their sovereignty, as the British Empire expanded, colonialists decided to incorporate ‘sea-bed’ and ‘sub-soil’ into the Empire as its “land under water” (Dorsett & McVeigh 2002, p.305). As Dorsett and McVeigh note, therefore “even in stepping off-shore the law could not let go of the identification of territory and land” (2002, p.305).

Long before the Cronulla Riots, anthropologists had documented the importance of the

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21 As will be explored in the following chapter, for Carl Schmitt, law functions as a spatiality that is tied inextricably to land (2003). For Schmitt, it is for this reason that historically, the sea remained outside of the spatial order of law, as a lawless non-space (2003).
beach in Australian culture (Fiske 1983; Fiske et al. 1987; Bonner et al. 2001; Taussig 2000). Ellison and Hawkes write that the beach “[stands] in for the desirability of Australia at large” (2016, n.p.), while others have observed that the beach is a “privileged site” for the production of national mythology (Bonner et al. 2001, p.270). For James, the Australian beach has “displaced the Outback or the bush as a stock image or theme” for representing what it means to be Australian (2000, p.12). Accordingly, the beach holds “a secure place in the national identity”, and functions as a rich textual landscape for the exploration of Australian identities (Bonner et al. 2001, p.270), as Image 4 illustrates graphically.

Image 4: Aussie Pride (Australia First Party n.d.).

Following the Cronulla Riots, researchers resumed the above lines of inquiry in an effort to understand the riots alongside the contemporary status of the beach in Australian mythology (Hartley & Green 2006; Evers 2008; Poynting 2006; Inglis 2006; Noble ed. 2009). As Hartley and Green observe, the present-day importance of the beach in Australian culture can be understood alongside forms of urbanisation that have rendered older myths about the outback, the bush and seclusion—as encapsulated by the figure of the bush-ranger—redundant (2006). In the face of increasing urbanisation—where urbanisation entails alienation from the land—they maintain that the beach functions as an interface between nature and culture, an “important myth generating mechanism” that enables “suburban-dwelling Australians [to bring] nature into culture and vice versa” (Hartley & Green 2006, p.348). This interpretation of the bush articulates with Hodge and Mishra’s account of the Australian bush as a “not-here” that functions as “the negation of the suburban experience” (1991 p.147).
Following the above observations regarding the status of the beach and the apparent redundancy of myths about the Australian bush, it appears as if national myth-making in Australia has been ‘pushed to the edges’ (as it were); that is, to the beach and the border. It appears as if the Australian centre, formerly referred to as the ‘red centre’ (the ‘outback’), has itself become de-centred. The emphasis here is deliberate. ‘De-’ not only implies that the nation is not currently centred: it also implies an anterior scene—a fantasy that the nation once was centred (as de-criminalisation implies annulment of a prior status).

I want to characterise the above scene—the fantasy of a previously centred, whole nation—as the illusory target at which (defence) nationalists sometimes aim, and in which nationalists locate themselves (historically, spatially and contemporarily) vis-à-vis phrases like “old Australia” (Soutphommasane 2006; Howard 2003) and “traditional England” (EDL 2016a). These terms (and others like them) take as their referent a prior, ideal state of the nation that is at once fantasised, valourised and melancholic. In the language of psychoanalytic theory, these terms imply loss rather than lack. As Frosh elaborates, ‘loss’ implies that which “must once have been owned” and which can therefore be returned or taken back forcefully (as the EDL seeks to “[take] back our streets!”), and the name ‘Reclaim Australia’ implies); by contrast, that which is lacking “is so from the start” (2016, p.7).

As I show throughout this thesis, by using terms such as “old Australia” and “traditional England”, nationalists beckon the 'good old days' they like to imagine existed before the nation was beset by globalisation, multiculturalism, widespread immigration and the 'age of political correctness' (a phrase I will soon discuss). When defence nationalists make these fantasised scenes the object of the nation’s defence, they ultimately hope to re-create and re-instate the national 'wholeness' that supposedly accompanied them (for as Frosh notes, yearning for the supposedly 'lost' object is frequently channelled into “a call back to

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22 This phrase was employed by former Australian Prime Minister John Howard during his 2003 election campaign. It has since been adopted by a number of far-right Australian defence leagues, including the UPF and Reclaim Australia. The discourses that underpin this phrase and others like it are discussed in more detail in Chapter 7.

23 For Walter Benjamin's influential reading of melancholia, see Benjamin (1977 & 1994). For Benjamin, melancholia refers to a lamentation and yearning for a prior state which is inaccessible.
an imagined time” (2016, p.7)). Such 'restoration' fantasies are not a unique feature of defence nationalism; indeed, they are a common theme of many conservative political movements.24 Recent examples include the 'Brexit' movement, which promised to restore Britain to its pre-European Union glory, as well as Donald Trump’s 2016 presidential election campaign, which was built around the promise to “Make American Great Again” (my emphasis); that is, to make America as great as it once supposedly was.

As we will see throughout this thesis, defence nationalist imaginaries often revolve around the notion that the nation’s wholeness can be re-instated (or in the case of Reclaim Australia, 'reclaimed') only if racialised others, as an unwanted 'excess', are discarded. In this light, the oft repeated phrase, “fuck off we're full”25 is informative, and can be interpreted not only as a declaration that the nation is literally full (as in full of people, over-populated), but also as a declaration that the nation is metaphorically full: that the image of the (racially pure) nation is full—that it is whole, or rather, that it will be whole—and that it cannot bear excess. Throughout, I will show this 'shedding' of excess to be one of the central goals defence nationalists pursue in prosecuting their defence the nation (as the chants “Muslim killers off our streets”, “Lebs go home” and “Wog-free zone” imply).

The beach is an appropriate place to develop the above inquiry owing to the special place it occupies in Australian mythology. It is also a suitable site because the beach is a place where the nation's 'excess', at least according to defence nationalists, is literally bared and reified via the bodies of racialised others who are deemed, by defence nationalists, not to belong. To develop the argument thus far introduced, I first draw upon the Australian beach in the following sections as an example that illustrates that for defence nationalists, embodied affinities to the land are glossed as affinities to the 'authentic' nation proper. Defence nationalists imagine these affinities as bestowing a type of ownership of the land that I describe as an 'ironic indigeneity'. In turn, I will show that this 'ironic indigeneity' is

24 For an analysis of the function of nostalgia and the left during and after George W. Bush's American presidency, see Little (2010).
25 This phrase features on a 'bumper sticker' that opponents of immigration sometimes attach to their cars.
accompanied by an equally imagined mandate to 'defend' the nation by managing it in ways that are favourable to the self. That is, in ways that (re)construct the image, imagery, and imagination of the 'whole' nation alongside the privileged position of the defence nationalist within it.

The Law of the Land: Right of Wave

What turns the soil into a prolongation of the body of the individual is agriculture. Karl Marx (1965, p.92).

As Fiske notes, sand and surf can be read as text (1983). One’s ability to read or translate this text discloses knowledge of the land which in turn discloses belonging to the land qua the nation itself. Knowledgeable subjects, including proficient surfers, can, in local parlance, 'read' waves in order to predict their size and frequency. This land literacy—a form of cultural capital—plays a significant part in (re)confirming national authenticity and belonging. As Evers notes, local surfers are able to move about more freely than others:

Their bodies are relaxed as they negotiate safety and expectations at the beach without thinking. They know that cloudy dusks and cold water mean big sharks are more prominent. The surfers also know that turbulent sandy-colored water signals a rip. If caught in a rip, a surfer will let it carry him or her out to sea and deposit him or her beyond the breakers. Then the surfer will paddle back to the beach through calmer water. The local surfers complain about how newcomers try to swim against the rip, tire, and have to be saved (2008, p.417).

Experienced, albeit 'foreign' surfers are able to quickly determine who is part of the “local crew” by recognising their confident body language and their knowledge of “the wave” (Evers 2008, p.411). Through these patterns of bodily comportment and recognition, 'locals' effectively belong to the beach more than others. By extension, locals can 'police' others in everyday matters, such as by determining a queue from the seemingly disordered, floating surfers and allocating to whom the next waves belong (Fiske 1983; Evers 2008). Through this policing of “the wave”, locals and proficient surfers are given priority with the best waves.
When indexed alongside myths of the land, bodies with the appropriate qualities are interpreted as belonging to the land more so than others. Through the ability to 'judge', interpret and confidently navigate the land, body-space and social-space achieve synchronicity. When a surfer successfully predicts and catches a wave, s/he effectively 'catches' its meaning; moreover, because the beach functions as a metonym for the nation, proficiency over “the wave” (supposedly) demonstrates national belonging. As shown above, subjects deemed in synchronicity with the land are awarded authority within it, insofar as they are entrusted with the capacity to enforce the law of the land, such as by determining the queue or who has the right to the best wave. It seems that although the sand and tides of the beach are unstable, that national hierarchies nevertheless fossilise there, etched indelibly into its moving landscape. Through this fossilisation of meaning(s), so too the social space congeals, allowing subjects to adopt dominant positions which become entrenched. Through this rigid, normative geography, beach mythologies not only connect 'individual' bodies to the beach ('beach bodies' as it were), so too, they connect subjects who are well versed in this beach 'lexicon' to the nation proper.

What I have described above is effectively a chain of signification in the Lacanian sense, whereby the body functions as a synecdoche for the subject proper, and the beach functions as a synecdoche for the nation proper. By connecting the body to the beach—the part of one, to the part of the other—the subject of the body becomes connected to the nation as well. And so just as particular bodies are capable of safely 'navigating' the beach, so too, subjects of particular bodies are constructed as capable of safely navigating the symbolic rips and undercurrents of the nation as well.

Whilst surfers enjoy a symbiotic relationship to the beach, it is perhaps the iconic life-saver that offers the ideal image of the Australian body: tanned, strong, and possessing extensive knowledge of their 'turf'. Live-savers, perhaps more than anyone else, can **read**

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the land—its currents, rips and waves—for it is upon this land literacy that the life-saver’s ability to protect and defend—to save lives—depends. The body of the life-saver stands as a pre-eminent artefact of myth-production at the Australian beach. As Evers elucidates:

The values traditionally associated with the Aussie Digger [were] reinvested in the lifesaver. Through the lifesaver, humanitarianism, mateship, ablebodied-ness, racial purity, heroic sacrifice, and public service/duty continued from the rhetoric of war to public safety (2008, p.418).

The perception that the alleged attack on life-savers was an attack on the nation itself can be understood as a byproduct of this (re)investment of meaning into particular individuals.

The notion that racialised hierarchies of belonging—themselves reliant on narratives of land-literacy—were deployed in the violence of the Cronulla Riots is evident in the police reports regarding the events that occurred. Whilst many conservative media outlets referred to the antagonists as “Lebanese youths” (rather than say, “Australian youths”), according to the NSW Police Report, those who rioted attacked anyone of “ethnic appearance” indiscriminately (NSW Police 2006, p.7). Similarly, many of the previously cited slogans and chants that circulated during the riots refer to notions of land-literacy. Included among these were “Wog-free zone”, “Lebs go home”, and “Osama don’t surf” (Evers 2008). By declaring the beach a “Wog-free zone” and demanding that “Lebs go home”, nationalists implied that the brown body lacks a connection to the beach—that it is not “home”, but belongs elsewhere. For these nationalists, “Osama”, which is taken as a crude, substitutable signifier for the Muslim body, “don’t surf”, meaning he lacks land-literacy and does not belong. Contrary to the white body, the Muslim body is constructed as having no affinity for the land: it is out of place at the beach and does not belong there. For defence nationalists, this means that the brown body can be removed from the land by those who do imagine themselves as belonging.

27 In the police report (which, as previously discussed, is deeply problematic), the term “persons of ethnic appearance” is used to refer to persons who are not-white. The report therefore reproduces a discourse that constructs non-white persons in terms of race/ethnicity, while invisibilising the race/ethnicity of white persons. For extended discussions, see: Pugliese (2003) and Seshadri-Crooks (2000).
Ironic Indigeneity as 'Telling'

The above analysis of the role prominent public spaces play in (re)producing bodies and belonging leans on the ethnographic fieldwork of Allen Feldman, who has conducted detailed research in communities in Northern Ireland (1991 & 2003) and South Africa (2003). Feldman's work is chiefly concerned with examining the extent to which spaces, bodies, rituals and myths form “a unified language of material signification” which profoundly effects manifestations of violence within the community of their circulation (1991, p.1). According to Feldman, perceptions and interpretations of bodies function as a form of transcription, which imparts authenticity (or lack thereof) upon subjects, determining who belongs and who does not. For Feldman, following Nietzsche and Foucault, bodies are “histio-graphic surfaces”: texts that circulate ideological codes (1991, p.6). These ideological codes provide coordinates of Being, which allow subjects to see themselves as particular kinds of subjects, with particular identities, who (can) belong to particular communities and spatialities.

It is clear that which specific “ideological codes” a body circulates can differ, sometimes drastically, as the body itself circulates and is gazed upon by others. If the meaning of a particular body is inferred from the spatiality within which it is placed, then the particular meaning of a particular body will change as the mobile subject traverses symbolic spaces. On the beach, accompanied by a surf-board, a body might surface as a surfer's body—an 'Aussie body'. But on the streets of America, what one perceives as the 'same' body, perhaps adorned with a camera and a map, might surface as a tourist body. Here, the word “surface” is invoked as both a noun and a verb in the sense that a body is both a 'surface' (the flat, outermost layer or exterior of something) and something that surfaces (comes to appear or manifest). Importantly, it must be emphasised that bodies are transcribed differently and differentially both in and by the spatialities they navigate. For example, brown bodies are surveilled more often and more rigorously at airports—particularly if they are bearded—compared to white bodies (Medovoi 2012; Morsi 2014; Pugliese 2003); while other bodies are objectified, infantilised, pathologised, marketed,
marketed to, covered, uncovered, spat on and yelled at to varying degrees, depending on the situations in which they find themselves. These variations are governed by familiar categories of race, sex, gender and class, which re-surface in order to re-surface: emerging and converging to re-constitute the bodily surfaces that subjects 'readily' perceive.

To describe how subjects attempt to manipulate the way their bodies are perceived, Feldman develops the concept of “telling”, which entails conscious efforts towards disclosing one’s body to others as a particular kind of body belonging to a particular kind of subject. When defence nationalists drape their bodies with flags, for example, they engage in acts of “telling” by which they seek to demonstrate that their bodies belong to the nation. Through the dynamics of telling, signifiers such as clothing, language, body-language, political, cultural and religious insignia cohere into narratives that “[regulate] informal encounters with particular others” (Feldman 1991, p.56-57). Through encounters between subjects, telling functions as “a reciprocal ideological formation” that colonises the senses of both the self and the other such that subjects come to literally 'see' and 'hear' the ideological world that envelops them (Feldman 1991, p.56-57). Just as for Foucault (1977), the gaze of the panoptic regime operates 'on its own', irrespective of whether or not the prison tower is occupied by a guard, for Feldman, so too the ‘scopic regime’ of the senses operates 'all on its own' through the ideology that ultimately occupies them (Feldman 1991 & 1997).

This “colonisation” of the senses functions prominently on the beaches of Australia—both within surfer-culture and Australian culture more broadly. Through a body’s haptic engagements with the beach, belonging to the 'local' beach (and by extension the nation proper) can be cultivated through numerous acts of telling, including tanning, working out, and learning to surf proficiently. Bodies that are disciplined in these ways—tanned and muscular bodies—come to be seen, in local vernacular, as 'beach-fit', meaning they are fit for the beach because they are fit. By extension, these bodies belong with/in the nation because the beach functions as a metonym for the nation itself.
For Feldman, the dynamics of telling seek not only to disclose one's own body as a particular body (such as a national body). Rather, they also encode and feed off of the other's body as well. As Feldman elaborates, telling therefore entails “the sensory identification of the ethnic other through the reception of the body as an ideological text” (1991, p.56-57). Such processes of “telling” came to the fore during the Cronulla Riots. When those who rioted chanted “Lebs go home”, “wog-free zone” and “Osama don’t surf”, they not only depicted the body of the racialised other as not belonging to the beach qua nation (as outlined above): they also tacitly implied their own belonging to the beach and therefore the nation (for example, those who chanted “go home” implied that they themselves were home). The underlying message of these chants was made explicit in the means by which rioters (re)fashioned their bodies as “ideological texts” (to use Feldman’s phrase). The images below show a number examples.

Image 5: We Grew Here You Flew Here (Vermeer 2015).
In Image 5, the subject has “we grew here you flew here!” written on his body in temporary ink, followed by the Cronulla postcode (or zipcode), “2230”. In Image 6, the central subject has “Shire Boiz” (meaning the boys who belong to the Shire of Cronulla) written on his chest. He too bears the Cronulla postcode on his arm, and he and those behind him bear the image of the Southern Cross on their shoulders. Each of these images—the postcode, the flag, the Southern Cross—are signifiers that point to a signified (that which supposedly exists and is represented by the sign); in each instance, that which is signified is the same: an imagined ‘fact’ of nationality, and the ‘fact’ the body belongs within the nation.

Unlike the body of the ‘Leb’, the ‘wog’ and ‘Osama’, the above bodily adornments depict the rioters and their bodies as belonging to the land qua nation. Through these acts of adornment (telling), the rioters constructed themselves as belonging to the land and bearing an affinity for it; in short, they constructed themselves as being indigenous to the land. However, as I will elaborate, this ‘indigeneity’ is ironic insofar as it is not articulated through terms that are constructed as ‘natural’ terms, but rather, through terms that belong to the (coloniser) state, such as flags, areas of governance (the shire), and the purely administrative, bureaucratic designation of the numerical the postcode.

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28 The Southern Cross is a star formation that features on the Australian flag. It has become a key symbol for Australian nationalists as a demonstration of national pride. It is often tattooed on the body or features on banners held at nationalist events. Nationalists often attach a sticker of the Souther Cross to the rear windscreen of their cars.
Sensory Others and Outposts

Sight and sound are not the only senses that contribute to the web of sensory colonisation underlying nationalism and defence nationalism. So too, smell, taste and touch play a part in reifying communities and belonging to them. As EDL member Chris lamented, “I smell their fucking stinking food everywhere I turn” (Treadwell & Garland 2011, p.629-630). From seemingly banal sensory experiences, defence nationalists infer entire territories. One Luton resident, for example, described a redolent otherness whereby one can tell which streets belong to which community based “entirely on the smell of the food”.

Bodies are not the only medium through which others are sensorily identified and received as “ideological texts” (Feldman 1991, p.56-57). During my field-trips to Luton, bodies were indeed central to some of the modes of telling that were apparent: for example, clothing and religious insignia were used to disclose belonging to particular communities and locations. However, other non-bodily forms of 'telling' were also evident in Luton. Among them, were the various ways that homes, shop-fronts and vehicles were adorned with a variety of paraphernalia that served to disclose the communities of those within. These forms of adornment included stickers, signs, flags, music and window-dressings. Cars in Luton were also employed as 'vehicles' of telling through the music they broadcast or the nationalist stickers and paraphernalia, including flags, national colours and slogans with which they were adorned. Australian nationalists also often use their cars as mobile bill-boards. During one UPF protest for example, it was reported that members used their 'utes' (an Australian slang term for 'utility vehicles', which are quintessentially Australian cars that often belong to blue-collar workers) to drive laps around the gathering, loudly playing 'Waltzing Matilda', which is often described as Australia’s 'unofficial' national anthem, from their speakers (Tilley 2015).

One particular abode illustrated the function of non-bodily forms of telling in Luton. The house was located on Westbourne Road, near Luton Town Football Stadium, the same area that Yaxley-Lennon described as being “slap bang in the middle of Bury Park”, the area of
Luton with the highest Muslim population (Hill 2013). A number of features made this particular abode noticeable. Firstly, a large St. George flag adorned the outside of the residence. Unlike any other house on Westbourne Road, there was a tall, incongruous black gate, which was made from metal and topped with reams of barbed wire erected across the drive-way to the property, preventing outsiders from entering. A set of privately owned and controlled CCTV cameras also pointed towards both the gate and the front door, which, like the windows, was externally reinforced, giving off the impression of an inverted prison—one that projects outwards rather than inwards, towards those passing by. A number of stickers on the doors and windows made this architectural message explicit: “Trespassers will be shot!”, “Guard dogs patrolling”, “Warning! Vicious Dogs!”

As my guide through Luton—a friend and fellow researcher completing a doctorate on Luton—explained, this house belonged to an elderly member of the EDL who was also rumoured to be the last remaining white person living on Westbourne Road. As he elaborated, the inhabitant of this residence ‘hated’ what had happened to Luton, but also refused to move. This residence was therefore an outpost that both disclosed and enclosed its occupants simultaneously (just as the vehicles described above both disclosed and enclosed nationalists). As a form of telling, this disclosure was two-sided, serving not only to disclose the affective disposition of its occupants (that of ‘hating’ Luton and wanting to keep outsiders out), but also the very message that its occupants are enclosed, and that they, like the life-savers and rioters of Cronulla, have 'dug in'.

**National Embodiments of Everyday and Event**

Thus far, I have maintained that through national narratives, mythologies and iconographies, certain spaces are produced as national spaces. *In turn*, I have shown that ‘national spaces’ (re)produce and reify the very nation that is imagined to have produced them in the first instance. Through national(ised) spatialities, subjects are literally able to see, hear, feel, smell, taste and touch the nation (*with/in* those spaces). When their bodies are contained within spaces that are recognised as national spaces, subjects are better able to perform their nationalities and to have those nationalities (and their performances)
recognised. Moving forward, I suggest that this relationship between national spatialities and performances of nationality explains, at least in part, why it is that defence nationalists appear so invested in cultivating, maintaining and policing national spatialities, such as in the example of the 'outpost' above, and with respect to the Australian beach during the Cronulla Riots as well. Throughout the remainder of this section, I return to the Australian beach to explore this argument regarding the cultivation, maintenance and policing of national spatialities by defence nationalists.

I have characterised the beach in Australia as one spatial site in which national iconographies manifest clearly in the 'everyday' cultural life of Australia (such as when surfing), as well as during events that ostensibly stand out from the everyday, such as during the Cronulla Riots. I have examined the place of the beach in national myth-making in Australia, noting that it is governed by clear rules which are both hierarchical and spatial. These rules not only organise subjects in reference to the body, but also play a hand in constructing the body—because subjects (re)fashion their bodies in reference to the national narratives, mythologies and iconographies that both construct and govern national spatialities. For example, on the beach in Australia, subjects tan their bodies in accordance with images of the ideal Australian body, which is hardened and bronzed by the Australian sun. Whilst all bodies—and not just those of the beach—are perpetually open to the vagaries of transcription, it is at the beach that bodies are most readily and easily perceived in their 'nudity': not only conspicuously but constitutively exposed, and as surfaces that are not only tanned, adorned, displayed and disciplined, but so too, if one is not careful, burnt.

Given that the beach is both central in the production of national mythologies, taxonomies and hierarchies, and a site where exposed bodies meet, it is not surprising that the beach is also a place of contest within the Australian landscape—a place to “dig in”, as it were. Such notions of the beach as a site of contest repeat throughout Australian mythology. As shown in the previous chapter, iconographies of the beach are often invoked through the
(re)telling of national narratives surrounding the Battle of Gallipoli, which is often iterated as the 'birth of the nation'. Similarly, defence nationalists have also recently sought to incorporate the Cronulla Riots into Australian narratives, calling for celebration of "Cronulla Memorial Day", and recognition of Cronulla Beach as “the very place where it all began” (Donelly & Hall 2015); that is, a place where nationalists “dug in” and “made a stand” against enemy others in the beach (The Party for Freedom 2015). Such iterations of the beach as a site of conflict can be traced back to the primordial conflict upon which 'Australia' was founded: the invasion of indigenous land by British colonisers, and the erroneous declaration 'terra nullius' (Ellison & Hawkes 2016, n.p.). In light of this, it can be said that the transition from coloniser to nationalist entails a shift from the position of looking 'in' from the sea (to the land) as a mysterious source of others and otherness, to a position of looking 'out' from the land to the sea as a mysterious source of others and otherness.

In contrast to the outer national border, which appears murky, shifting, unclear and difficult to delineate, the internal borders of the nation, the so-called 'fault lines' between groups, could not be clearer than on the Australian beach. Indeed, such borders are sometimes literally inscribed into the landscape, where they can then be contested, resisted, negotiated and re-negotiated. The events that preceded and followed the Cronulla Riots clearly illustrate this point. According to witnesses, the initial confrontation between lifesavers and so-called “Lebanese youths” occurred because the latter had inscribed a soccer pitch into the sand (Noble ed. 2009). According to the same witnesses, those playing soccer had subsequently prevented others from sun-bathing within the space they had outlined and claimed for themselves (Noble ed. 2009). Effectively, these “Lebanese youths” literally sought to carve their own enclosed space within the nation, etching its border, albeit temporarily, into 'sacred' national land—the sands of Cronulla. Furthermore, these racialised soccer players also allegedly sought to police the borders of their new territory, by allegedly preventing others from laying their towels—an alternative but acceptable way of marking one's own space on the sand with a neat square—within the borders of the
soccer pitch.

At the time of the riots, it was reported that in playing their game of soccer, the “Lebanese youths” had kicked sand up over people who were sun-bathing nearby in an attempt to move them along (Noble ed. 2009). Through these accounts of sand kicking, the gendered aspects of defence nationalism emerge. As one participant of the Cronulla Riots, ‘Scott’, explained: “They were playing soccer I think. And they kicked the ball at some girls and started harassing the girls” (Jackson 2006). “We had to respond”, another participant elaborated, “Your mum, your sisters and all that, they’re going to be scared to walk in the street. Because there’s no-one to protect them” (Evers 2008, p.422, my italics). These statements portray the ‘defence’ of women as a nationalistic pursuit. Other statements like them are also commonly made by defence nationalists and defence nationalist groups.29

One group, the Bra Boys, make this imagined connection between performances of nationalism and masculinity particularly apparent. Cohered through nationalism and their mutual love of surfing, the Bra Boys are an infamous, self-described ‘surf gang’ that patrols Maroubra Beach (the beach after which they are named, which is also a few suburbs away from Cronulla).30 The Bra Boys not only demonstrate the perceived connection to land typically evinced by defence nationalists, they also illustrate the mandate defence nationalists typically imagine to ‘defend’ and ‘protect’ the nation and ‘its’ women. As Koby Abberton (the leader of the Bra Boys) elucidated with respect to the Cronulla Riots:

The reason why it's not happening at Maroubra is because of the Bra Boys. Girls go to Cronulla, Bondi, everywhere else in Sydney and get harassed, but they come to Maroubra and nothing happens to them. I read all this stuff about kids getting harassed because they want to have a surf and I say ‘are you kidding?’ The beach should be for Aussie kids. But if you want to go to beaches and act tough in groups you better be able to back it up. If these fellas come out to Maroubra and start something they know it's going to be on, so they stay away (McIlveen 2005).

Many EDL members harbour similar sentiments to those that Abberton describes above. The EDL’s Mission Statement, for example, articulates the goal of ‘liberating’ women from

29 For an overview of the gendered dimensions of the EDL, see Treadwell & Garland (2011).
30 For an exploration of the Bra Boys and their members, see their self-made documentary, Bra Boys (2007).
an Islam that “keeps British Muslims fearful and isolated, especially the women that it encases in the Burqa” (EDL 2016a). In statements that bear comparison to those of Abberton, ‘Heath’, a member of the EDL’s Dover Division, draws on notions of gender in beseeching nationalists to ‘take a stand’:

If your sick and tired of your mum, sister, nan, girlfriend, kids or anyone you know not being able to walk through certain parts of hers/his//yours/OUR town at night even during the day, due to risk of molitious attacks from muslim extremists then take a stand, tell your friends and family to unite and take a stand, t...e...ll your neighbours to take a stand!! [sic] (Far-right English Defence League recruiting for Dover division on Facebook, 2011).

Similarly, the Soldiers of Odin—a far-right ethnic nationalist group in Finland—regularly holds ‘night-patrols’ in the streets of major cities on the basis that they need to do so “to keep women safe” (Soldiers of Odin, Finland: Vigilante group of men ‘protecting women’ 2016).

The EDL references its ‘need’ to keep women safe into other areas of its discourse. As one update published on the EDL Facebook page elucidates: “Our men leave children and women in safe country. Go to war-torn country. Their men come to a safe country. And leave women and children in a war-torn country” (EDL 2016d, my italics). Here, “our men”, the nation’s men, are depicted as heroic, military men, who expose themselves to risk in order to defend and save women and children (just like members of the defence force, ‘knights in shining armour’, the Anzacs and life-savers). On the other hand, “their men” are emasculated: they flee danger and violence for their own safety, disregarding that of women and children. In a video posted on their Facebook page, the leader of the United Patriots Front, Blair Cottrell declared that the majority of “Muslim refugees” fleeing to Australia “are fighting age men, who should be defending their own countries” (UPF 2015b). What these depictions suggest, is that for defence nationalists, protecting and defending women is a national pursuit; these depictions also show that according to defence nationalists, we protect our women (against them), while they do not protect theirs. For defence nationalists, masculinity and nationality are therefore not only performed
together, but are instead imagined synonymous, in that nationality is performed as masculinity and masculinity is performed as nationality.\(^{31}\)

**Confrontations on Shifting Sands**

It is not an exaggeration to claim that for some, when so-called “Lebanese youths” outlined a soccer field in the sand and ‘attacked’ the nation’s women, the playing field of the beach changed not only literally but symbolically. In marking out and controlling a space for themselves, these others deemed non-national others had disrupted the usual beach hierarchies (which cut multi-directionally across national, political, cultural, class-based and gendered fault-lines). *Non-whites* were now ‘policing’ the beach and hindering the mobility of national subjects—particularly *vulnerable* female national subjects—in ways that were contrary to the accepted, mundane forms of policing the nation and its spaces (such as by surfers and life-savers as discussed above). For those participating in the Cronulla Riots, “Lebanese youths” had ultimately crossed a line by drawing one.

In interviews following the riots, the local life-savers noted that negotiations and renegotiations of public space were *already* a long-standing issue prior to the riots (Noble *ed.* 2009). As a result of these negotiations, the life-savers reported sectioning off less-populated areas of sand to allow the youths to play soccer without disturbing other beach-goers. However, these segmentations of the beach led to a further issue, in that after playing soccer in the heat, the youths would swim in the water directly in front of the areas that had been sectioned-off. By doing so, they were not ‘swimming between the flags’\(^{32}\) that designated the areas patrolled by life-savers (where beach goers are allowed to enter the water). Consequently, once they had finished playing soccer, the life-savers would then order the players to return from the areas to which they had been relegated so they could swim between the flags (Noble *ed.* 2009). What occurred then was a literal

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\(^{31}\) For more extended discussions regarding entangled performances of masculinity, violence and nationalism, see: Garland & Treadwell (2010), Keskinen (2013), Messerschmidt (1993), Twine & Gallagher (2008), and Winlow & Hall (2009). For further discussions regarding relationships between masculinity and ethnic nationalism, see: Copsey (2010), Garland & Treadwell (2010), Goodwin (2013), Mulinari & Neergaard (2012) and Puar (2007).

\(^{32}\) The phrase, ‘to swim between the flags’ is an Australian mantra that promotes ‘safe’ behaviour at the beach. The phrase can also be used colloquially to refer to ‘playing it safe’ or ‘doing things by the book’.
toing-and-froing: effectively, 'go and play soccer over there, but come back here to swim'.

By refusing to comply with the life-savers’ directions, the so-called “Lebanese youths” not only failed to “swim between the flags”, they also failed to stay within the cultural parameters that construct acceptable ways of utilising beach-space (qua nation-space). To describe these complex tensions and circumstances as a “confrontation”, however, is to imply the occurrence of an event; that is, the occurrence of something distinct that can be carved out and isolated from the ordinary and everyday (as, for example, that which comes to be designated by the signifier, “the Cronulla Riots”). However, as Brian Massumi articulates, attempts to isolate an “event” from the “event-space” from which it emerges can prove very problematic (2002, p.269). Indeed, as Alain Badiou articulates in his influential text, Being and Event (2005), in order for an authentic event to occur, a rupture of, or rip in, the everyday must also occur. Using this definition, the Cronulla Riots would not be conceptualised as an event, in that rather than rupturing the everyday, the riots instead constituted an aggressive variation of the everyday (whereby the ‘everyday’ ways that Australian beach-space is policed were asserted more aggressively and explicitly than they ordinarily are).

If that which at first appears as a national event (such as the Cronulla Riots or the violent march that follow the death of Lee Rigby) is ultimately connected to the everyday of the nation (à la Badiou and Massumi), then ‘sudden outbursts’ of nationalism or racially motivated violence are not so ‘sudden’, nor such ‘outbursts’ after all.33 Indeed, if overt forms of nationalism (such as the Cronulla Riots) are intimately linked to the everyday processes that constitute the nation (such as national myth-making on the Australian beach), then ‘outbursts’ of nationalism, or ‘eruptions’ of nationalism, might be characterised more accurately as irruptions—that is, as inwardly, rather than outwardly directed explosions. To comprehend nationalist ‘events’ that seemingly ‘burst’ out of

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33 As I demonstrate in Chapter 7, violent ‘outbursts’ of nationalism can be understood as being intimately tied to the quotidian workings of the nation insofar as the very idea of the nation is necessarily predicated on exclusion.
nowhere then, it is also necessary to understand the non-events that constitute the everyday of the nation—that which is not typically distinguished from its own surroundings and made discrete as event.  

As I have thus far shown, for defence nationalists, performing nationality entails a range of embodied practices within hyper-national spatial domains (including, for example, surfing, traversing, and policing the beach). But if national 'events' are linked, at least in some way, to the 'everyday' of the nation—if the 'race riot', for example, cannot be dissociated from the nation in which it occurs—then it is also worth exploring how the modes of embodiment enacted during events relate to those of the everyday. It is worth considering, for example, how performing 'Australian-ness' on a typical day at the beach, is connected, if at all, to performing 'Australian-ness' on the beach during the Cronulla Riots. In the remainder of the chapter, I consider what connections, if any, exist between the way(s) nationality is embodied and performed in the everyday, in contrast to that which is typically perceived as an 'event'. I also consider whether the Cartesian exactitude with which nationalists cut up and allocate space during events can be reconciled and/or thought alongside the more subtle forms of embodiment typically enacted through(out) the everyday of the nation.

I Am Therefore I Can

One way of investigating the above questions is through a reading of Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological account of embodiment. Indeed, the subjective embodiment that I have elucidated with respect to the Australian beach—that of an everyday 'belonging-in-the-world'—is, at least ostensibly, comparable to Merleau-Ponty's account of being-in-the-world (1962). For Merleau-Ponty, the phenomenological body should not be thought as a distinct 'object' that is both in and at the same time removed from the world; instead, for Merleau-Ponty, the body is thoroughly and irreducibly enmeshed “in-the-world” (1962, p.115).

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34 It is acknowledged that this characterisation sets up an antinomy with which it is difficult to grapple, because identifying and analysing the 'everyday' must in some ways entail converting the everyday into a manageable sequence of distinct (micro-) 'events' that can be articulated and conceptualised, as an hour is dissected and understood as the accumulation of discernible minutes and seconds.
Contrary to Descartes, for whom the cogito's participation in the world is irrelevant to being (1901 & 1968), for Merleau-Ponty, consciousness must be of something; as he elucidates: “in order that there may be consciousness, there must be something to be conscious of, an intention object” (1962, p.139-140). For Merleau-Ponty, consciousness towards something is only consciousness at all insofar as it “throws itself into” that ‘something’ (1962, p.139-140). Merleau-Ponty does not conceive the subject’s relationship to the world as that between a distinct, a priori subject on the one hand, and various objects in the world, from which the subject is independent, on the other; instead, Merleau-Ponty sees the subject’s “world” as an extension of her or his “being”. Merleau-Ponty explicitly poses his phenomenological framework in direct opposition to Descartes’ cogitating subject (summed up by Descartes’ famous “I think therefore I am”), by claiming that “consciousness is in the first place not a matter of ‘I think that’ but ‘I can’” (1962, p.159).

Drawing on Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology, Rasmus Jensen explicates the significance of Merleau-Ponty’s “I can” and the notion that being “extends” into the world, in relation to an example relevant to the ‘world’ of the beach: namely, the sport of surfing (2013). Jensen maintains that once the relevant motor-skills have been acquired and mastered, that in order to surf proficiently, conscious reflection on the relevant skills is no longer necessary, as those skills come to be experienced as a “second nature” (2013, p.11). Indeed, anecdotally, it appears that consciously thinking about the skills required for a specific task can sometimes have the opposite of the desired effect; in my own experiences, for example, consciously “cogitating” about the act of balancing can sometimes be detrimental to one’s attempts to surf (hence the common sporting injunction, “don’t overthink it”).

There are however some important nuances lacking from Jensen’s reading of Merleau-Ponty which are useful for thinking through how Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenological framework can be applied to embodied experiences of defence nationalism. Firstly, as surfing becomes ‘second nature’, one acquires more than the ability to surf and balance without having to consciously think through one’s efforts. What this analysis omits, is that the (proficient) surfer’s haptic engagement with the surfboard not only obviates the need to
consciously think, but also effectively alters the subject’s bodily-schema. Extending the work of Heidegger (1962), for whom the subject is able to experience some objects as “ready-to-hand” (ready for use without the need for conscious reflection), Merleau-Ponty claims that the subject can also incorporate objects into the bodily-schema such that the subject navigates her or his being-in-the-world through these 'objects' (1962, p.159). The surfboard as an object is exemplary here. Just as one feels the ground underfoot through the various tactile sensations of the lower extremities, one also 'feels' and navigates the wave—sensing its rhythms, flows, and fluidity—through the medium of the surfboard, as though the board were an essentially 'organic' prosthetic endowed with the necessary nerve endings and synapses required to feel. By learning to surf proficiently, one not only acquires the ability to surf: so too, one acquires the surfboard itself as an extension of one's own body.

Elaine Scarry has outlined an important aspect of Merleau-Ponty’s 'I can', showing its implications not only for relations with objects, but with entire spatialities as well. Drawing on the example of a stereotypical room, which is square, with four walls and a ceiling, Scarry expands Merleau-Ponty’s formulations:

In normal contexts, the room, the simplest form of shelter, expresses the most benign potential for human life. It is, on the one hand, an enlargement of the body: it keeps warm and safe the individual it houses in the same way the body encloses and protects the individual within; like the body, its walls put boundaries around the self preventing undifferentiated contact with the world, yet in its windows and doors, crude versions of the senses, it enables the self to move out into the world and allows that world to enter. But while the room is a magnification of the body, it is simultaneously a miniaturisation of the world, of civilisation. Although its walls, for example, mimic the body’s attempt to secure for the individual a stable internal space—stabilising the temperature so that the body spends less time in this act; stabilising the nearness of others so that the body can suspend its rigid and watchful postures; acting in these and other ways like the body so that the body can act less like a wall—the walls are also, throughout all this, independent objects, objects which stand apart from and free of the body, objects which realise the human being’s impulse to project himself out into a space beyond the boundaries of the body in acts of making, either physical or verbal, that once multiplied, collected, and shared are called civilisation (1985, p.38-39).
Scarry’s observations about the generic room can also apply to the nation. Like the room, the nation is “an enlargement of the body” that “encloses and protects the individual within”. So too, the nation prevents “undifferentiated contact with the world”, limiting and controlling what flows inside and outside (through its ports and its airports). Through its borders, and their policing and enforcement, the nation provides “a stable internal space” for nationalist bodies, allowing them to “suspend [their] rigid and watchful postures”.

Merleau-Ponty’s and Scarry’s respective arguments regarding objects and spatialities have implications for understanding the way in which embodiments of nationality are ‘felt’ and experienced ‘on the ground’ by defence nationalists. These readings offer some clues towards understanding the way in which nationalists feel affinity for the land and various other spatialities within the nation, including the beach, streets, pubs and sporting stadiums. On Merleau-Ponty’s terms, a number of everyday objects can be considered examples of prostheses that endow their subject with a particular agency—an “I can”. For example, prescription glasses improve eyesight, the walking stick and wheelchair facilitate movement, and the surfboard allows one to ‘catch’ a wave. On Scarry’s terms, the function of the room is to provide room: to allow those ‘inside’ to move about freely and unencumbered within the spatial domain that the room itself defines. However, these respective albeit connected arguments can be expanded, because it is not only physical objects and spaces that are incorporated into bodily-schemata, but symbolic prostheses as well. For example, one’s ability to move about ‘freely’ within a room is strongly inflected by the symbolic associations one holds (or is thought to hold) with that particular room. For example, in a room one owns (or perceives oneself as owning), one moves about more freely than one does in a room in which one perceives oneself as a visitor or outsider. Similarly, just as a surfer navigates the wave through the medium of the surfboard, so too, (defence) nationalists navigate spatial sites within the nation by using nationality as prosthetic appendage that is imagined as endowing the senses with ‘intuition’ and ‘feeling’ within the nation, and ultimately, I will argue, ‘knowledge’ of the nation. Recall, for example, the
notion that one can tell which streets belong to which community based “entirely on the smell of the food”, or that for Ralph Cerminara, the sensory absence of Christmas carols at Christmas time indicated an absence of the nation itself: as Cerminara put it, “You’re not in Australia any more here” (Collins 2014).

If symbolic associations allow subjects to move about more or less freely within the nation, and to see, hear, smell, taste, touch and feel certain things, one can then consider how these symbolic associations and their correlative mobilities and associated sensorial experiences are distributed among subjects (and why). Moreover, if these symbolic associations and their correlative mobilities and sensorial experiences are distributed differently and differentially, one can also inquire as to the basis of their distribution. What is at stake here is more than a question as to who can move their body freely within the nation and who cannot; rather, the question is who can feel they belong while doing so. Throughout this chapter I have provided an initial response to these questions, by maintaining that national myth-making and place-making play a role in determining these distributions, insofar as myth-making and place-making privilege some subjects over others. Surfers and life-savers, for example, are more readily and more easily able to experience the beach as “an enlargement of the body” than so-called “Lebanese youths”.

What I have sketched thus far, by drawing upon Merleau-Ponty’s framework, is something of a ‘phenomenology’ of defence nationalism. I have shown that defence nationalists perceive the nation in a way that is approximate to the way a proficient surfer perceives the surfboard—as something that can be incorporated into the bodily-schema so seamlessly that it is as if the board really is a natural part of the body, something through which one can literally feel the wave or the land or the nation below. What this phenomenology also demonstrates, is that through national myth-making and place-making the nation’s land comes to be constructed as an extension of the defence nationalist body, thereby allowing those bodies to move about the nation ‘freely’ and unencumbered, and seemingly as they desire.
The above phenomenology of defence nationalism also provides a way of reconciling the apparent gap between the everyday of the nation and the events that seem to constitute, by definition, a departure from the everyday. While the 'intuiting', feeling modes of nationality seem at first to be a product of passive immersion rather than conscious 'cogitation', instead, I maintain that the capacity to immerse oneself in the nation is predicated on the enforcement of the strict social and cultural taxonomies of the nation, such as those emphasised with exactitude during nationalist events. Only with national taxonomies (re)established do nationalists recline and immerse themselves with/in a nation that is favourable to them, enjoying the social field of the nation as a non-ambivalent social field—as a field that always-already was and always will be. What this relationship between the everyday and the event means is that an alternating pattern of strict enforcement and immersion emerges among nationalists: once the national hierarchy is established spatially and symbolically, nationalists can then enjoy it passively, until such time as it needs to be 'explicitly' re-articulated (such as when, for example, Lee Rigby was murdered on the streets of London, or when “Lebanese youths” decided to inscribe a soccer pitch in the sand). Thus, although events seem to solicit a theoretical world-view starkly counterposed to and characteristically partitioned off from the embodied immersion of 'being-in-the-world' in the everyday (which is, by definition, a non-event), this immersion itself is predicated, at least at times, upon conscious “cogitation” (in Descartes' terms).

As shown, the position of being able to enforce national hierarchies—should they require enforcing—does not stem from some pre-existing 'fact' of national ownership; instead, it is embodied practices of enforcement—which, as detailed throughout this chapter, entail concerted, ongoing arrangements of sensory stimuli—that retroactively construct a sense of an already-existing ownership—that is, an ironic indigeneity. In other terms, the mobilities that defence nationalists are able to enact and perform within the nation (their 'able-bodied-ness', as it were), only stem from ownership of the nation insofar as they (re)produce that ownership. We should therefore not understand defence nationalists as simply “comin'
down the road” as the subjects they always-already were (and always will be); rather, it is *through their very ambulation* that defence nationalists produce themselves as subjects who ‘own’ the nation; or, to again borrow from Descartes, it is through their ambulation that defence nationalists come to imagine themselves as “the masters and possessors of nature” (1901, p.154). If they are masters however, they are only masters in an encumbered way—masters who derive *enjoyment* from (national) mobility only insofar as the nation is leant upon as a crutch: a symbolic prosthetic that endows its subjects with an imagined motility.

In this chapter I have examined some of the ways defence nationalists perform nationality in spatial sites within the nation. I have maintained that defence nationalists anchor the self to the land of the nation, which is experienced ‘phenomenologically’ as a bodily extension. Taking the beach as a case-study, I examined the way that national mythologies and taxonomies are (re)produced against the veritable backdrop of national landscapes. I also considered the way that bodies acquire meaning in reference to the land in and against which they are assessed. Drawing on Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenological frameworks, I showed that not only objects, but spatialities can be incorporated into bodily-schemata as prostheses. I considered the way that *national* objects and spatialities are incorporated into the body not merely as simple ‘extensions’ of the body—as articulated in Heidegger’s well-known characterisation of the pen as an object that is “ready-to-hand” (1962, p.98)—but rather as a *sensory* extensions, *à la* Merleau-Ponty, that literally enable subjects to see, hear, smell, taste and touch the world of the nation that 'surrounds' them. Nationalists *feel* the nation underfoot, sensing rhythms and flows through their haptic engagement(s) with the land. I claimed that through sensory immersion, nationalists experience the self as *indigenous* to the nation, whereby the self’s belonging to the nation appears reified and validated.

In providing an initial sketch of a phenomenology of defence nationalism, I have outlined one aspect of the forms of embodiment that are central to defence nationalism. This account highlights some of the ways that defence nationalists acquire ways of moving
their bodies within the nation to which they imagine themselves indigenous. This way of moving one's body is approximate to Merleau-Ponty's “I can”, in that it accounts for a perceived ability to do certain things (such as to move one's body freely within the nation). However, as I will show in the coming chapters, in and of itself, this account lacks an explanation of an important aspect of defence nationalism, because although it partially explains how defence nationalists imagine themselves able to defend the nation by defending, controlling and possessing key national spatialities, it lacks an explanation as to why they feel permitted and entitled to do so. This aspect of entitlement was foreshadowed in an earlier example, in which we saw that proficient surfers are not only able to use their surfboards as bodily extensions that 'feel' the waves and currents underfoot, but that they can use this bodily proficiency as a form of symbolic authority that allows them to determine, with perceived legitimacy, to whom the best waves ought to be allocated. Just as land literacy enables proficient surfers to police waves, so too, in the coming chapters, I claim that defence nationalists perceive their own imagined indigeneity as enabling them to police the nation with authority. To demonstrate this aspect of entitlement, what is needed is not an elucidation of the phenomenological “I can”, which translates to the declaration “I am able”, but instead, an elucidation of the psychoanalytic “I can”, which translates to the declaration “I am permitted”. To address this second “I can” qua “I am permitted”, in the coming chapter I develop a theory of law as invoked by defence nationalists. I also turn to Lacan's psychoanalytic frameworks, which I use to explore defence nationalist fantasies of flesh, land and law. By doing so, I will demonstrate how these fantasies provide nationalists with ways of using their bodies within the nation, often against others, to which they see themselves as entitled.
Chapter 3: The Laws of Inclusion and Exclusion

The onus should always be on foreign cultures to adapt and integrate. If said cultures promote anti-democratic ideas and refuse to accept the authority of our nation’s laws, then the host nation should not be bowing to these ideas in the name of ‘cultural sensitivity’. Law enforcement personnel must be able to enforce the rule of law thoroughly without prejudice or fear. Everyone, after all, is supposed to be equal in the eyes of the law. EDL Mission Statement (2016a).

One Land, One Law, One People. Ibid.

The previous chapter explored defence nationalist anxieties and fantasies in relation, primarily, to land. I explored anxieties and fantasies regarding the ownership and possible dispossession of land (hence “let’s show them that this is our beach” and “taking back our streets”). These fantasies about the nation’s land are also fantasies about the nation’s law(s). As shown in the epigraph above, defence nationalists fantasise about the existence of a singular “One Law” that corresponds to and reflects “One Land” and “One People” in the singular. As the EDL Mission Statement asserts: “We demand one legal system—one law—for all” (EDL 2016a).

When defence nationalists invoke law they tend not to appeal to specific laws, but rather to an overarching notion of law. This overarching notion of law, the “One Law”, refers to a singular system of law in its totality (a system captured above by the generic phrase “the rule of law” (EDL 2016a)). For defence nationalists, law functions as both a map of the nation (through which the nation is conceptualised and represented), and as a tool for (re)mapping the nation. Law is a tool for ‘drawing a line in the sand’ (as those who rioted during the Cronulla Riots claimed to do (Noble 2009)). Law is both a basis and a tool for excluding unwanted others. As one EDL member put it, the British government should “stop...mass immigration and deport Muslim extremists along with those who can't abide by British law” (Thornton 2017, n.p.); similarly, another called for the government to

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35 The notion of being “one” is a common theme for defence nationalists, who typically posit their own ‘oneness’ with themselves. Recall, for example, the passages from the ADL Mission Statement discussed in Chapter 1, which speak of a singular community that “[stands] together, as one people, to protest and confront all those who seek to pervert our way of life” (ADL n.d., my italics); the statement continues: “We stand together, with one voice to keep Australia the great land we were all born into (ADL n.d., my italics).
implement laws that will “STOP REWARDING” and “START DEPORTING” Muslims (Stonham 2016). These invocations of law show that for defence nationalists, law functions as an edifice that holds the collective body together as a cohesive unit (within its land); moreover, these invocations show that for defence nationalists, law keeps the collective body together by keeping other bodies apart (through expulsions, deportations and the prevention of “mass immigration”). By regulating the inside and outside of the nation through borders, barriers and expulsions, law functions, for defence nationalists, as theorised by Costas Douzinas: as a tool for maintaining a symbolic and imaginary sense of 'wholeness', which is derived from the guarantee that the other, such as the figure of the Muslim or the refugee, is kept 'outside' of the nation (2000, p.357-358).

The ideological apparatus of law organises bodies and makes them (whole) by determining boundaries and jurisdictions (Douzinas 2000; Rush 2005); in turn, law provides a stage upon which those bodies can 'appear' and be recognised whole (Rogers 2014, p.19). Corporations, nations, communities and the bodies of 'individual' subjects, each of which have their own 'jurisdictions', can be included among the bodies made by law. While there are multiple bodies of law, Western law itself can also be referred to as a body in the singular—as the “One Law” that the EDL and other defence nationalists invoke. Indeed, in Western ideology, law, as a singular body, is always whole, because despite the inevitable amendments that occur to specific laws over time, the underlying idea of law itself remains constant (as something comparable to the 'Grundnorm' in Hans Kelsen's theory of law (1967)).36

In the West, when specific laws change, the law itself remains intact and constant, even in its apparent inconstancy. To undermine or amend a specific law is not to undermine law itself, but the opposite: to reinforce, reaffirm and venerate the totality of law and its rule. Even if, over time, every individual law were to change, the Western 'rule of law' could

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36 Kelsen's theory of the Grundnorm—the 'ground norm' or 'basic norm'—refers to the foundation of the legal system itself, which remains as the constant backdrop upon which jurisprudential debates and amendments occur (1967).
remain, because although ephemeral and in perpetual flux, the body of Western law remains as a constant, total body: a singular body that is never incomplete, and an *ideal* body that is never fragmented but is “One” (as the EDL puts it).

Throughout this chapter, I draw on Lacanian theory to show how (and *why*) fantasies of law hold collective and individual bodies together as “One” for defence nationalists. I will show that a theory of law—specifically *as it relates to subjectivity*—is useful for addressing gaps in the existing literature on contemporary nationalist defence leagues. As outlined below, this existing research tends to characterise members of defence league as alienated and disenfranchised men of working class backgrounds, who identify with aggressive masculinities which they perform *through* defence leagues (Bartlett & Littler 2011; Busher 2016; Copsey 2010; Garland & Treadwell 2010; Garland & Treadwell 2011; Goodwin 2013; Kassimeris & Jackson 2015; Keskinen 2013; Meadowcroft & Morrow 2017; Messerschmidt 1993; Mulinar & Neergaard 2012; Oaten 2014; Pilkington 2016; Puar 2007; Twine & Gallagher 2008; Winlow & Hall 2009). I argue that while these interpretations are useful, they are also lacking because they fail to explain *why* alienated, aggressive men turn *specifically* to defence leagues (rather than elsewhere); nor, I show, do they articulate *how* nationalists identify with defence leagues (that is, the modalities by which they identify).

Throughout this chapter I argue that a Lacanian theory of law as it relates to subjectivity is crucial for supplementing existing analyses for a number of reasons. The first, is that conceptualisations of law pertain to the *very means* by which defence league members conceptualise *their own* alienation from and within the nation. As one EDL member explained:

> You’ve got interracial law...they’re trying to get their law over our country... You’ve got the Iraqi law that they’ve put down on London...they’re just trying to put their law down on us (bs09b2s 2011).

37 For an example, see Rush (2005) for a discussion of *Mabo and Others v. The State of Queensland*. As Rush elaborates, although the High Court of Australia ruled against the colonial declaration “*terra nullius*”, upon which contemporary Australia and Australian law is founded, nevertheless, Australian common law—and its “rule”—continued.
When asked which specific laws had been imposed, the EDL member replied: “They’ve got their law. Obviously it’s their law, isn’t it?” This notion that the other’s law will be imposed on “us” is also conveyed in the EDL Mission Statement:

The European Court of Human Rights has determined that ‘sharia is incompatible with the fundamental principles of democracy’. Despite these problems, there are still non-Muslims who condone the intrusion of sharia norms, and who believe that sharia can operate compatibly with our existing traditions and customs. In reality, sharia cannot operate fully as anything other than an alternative to our existing legal, political, and social systems. The primacy of British courts must be maintained and defended (EDL 2016a, my emphasis).

In the above examples, the other's law is depicted as an “incompatible” system that threatens to be imposed “over our country”. “Their law” threatens to replace our law; their norms (“sharia norms”) threaten to replace ours. Hence, Stephanie Banister, a candidate for the far right One Nation political party declared: “their laws should not be welcome here in Australia” (Olding 2013). In depictions such as these, the other’s law functions not only as a legible index of the other's threatening and “incompatible” difference, but as a symptom of the nationalist's (possible) alienation from the nation as well. Accordingly, for defence nationalists, it is not only “our land”, but our law that “must be maintained and defended” (EDL 2016a).

A theory of law as it relates to subjectivity is also crucial for understanding defence nationalism because it can complement theories of class alienation. This is because, under contemporary neo-liberalism, both class and law converge upon bodies to individuate and alienate them (Bowsher 2018; Brown 2015). Using Lacan’s work, throughout this chapter I will explore the particular way(s) that law and capitalism converge upon and constitute ‘individual’ bodies contemporarily; I will show that Lacan’s theories of subjectivity and alienation are apt to analyse this convergence for two primary reasons: firstly, because for Lacan, law plays a role in alienating subjects in first instance; and secondly, because for

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38 For extended discussions of contemporary neo-liberalism, see: Bowsher (2018), Brown (2015), and Dardot & Laval (2013).
Lacan, subjects are not merely alienated within societies by social, economic and political forces, but are instead inevitably alienated from themselves and their own presumed identities as well. Using Lacan, I will argue that subjects are not merely pre-existing individuals who belong to a particular class who are then disenfranchised and alienated under the auspices of neo-liberalism. Rather, I will show that subjects are made into (hyper)individuated subjects by the very structures of neo-liberalism itself, through processes of individuation that carry psychosocial implications that are expressed in defence nationalism.

I argue that by using Lacan to understand the psychosocial effects of neo-liberalism, a more nuanced theory of defence nationalism and the subjectivities and fantasies that underpin it can be developed (beyond the line that defence league members are alienated men). Using Lacan’s formulations, I explore not only why particular subjects identify with defence leagues as defence nationalists, but so too how they identify with defence leagues (that is, the modalities by which they identify). My contention—which I introduce in this chapter and develop throughout the thesis—is that subjects who identify with defence leagues as defence nationalists elevate the nation to the status of the Lacanian 'big Other' (a concept I will describe at length). As I show, for Lacan, the big Other provides and guarantees the existence of a stable field of meaning by providing and guaranteeing the imagined existence of “knowledge” (Lacan 2007, p.12-15). By constructing the nation as the big Other (the guarantor of meaning), defence nationalists attempt to alleviate their alienation and anxiety by ensuring that the nation exists and functions as a stable social field for them: as a singular, albeit collective body comprised of their flesh, their land and their law. In short, by elevating the nation to the status of the big Other, defence nationalists ensure that the nation provides “One Land, One Law, One People” for them to the exclusion of all others.

Towards the conclusion of this chapter, I introduce Schmitt’s theory of nomos to

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39 For Lacan’s extended discussion, see “Production of the Four Discourses” (Lacan 2007, p.11-26).
demonstrate how the singular and totalising land and law of the nation are connected as “One” through the fantasies of defence nationalism. According to Schmitt, law and land are inseparable insofar as they *co-substantiate* one another (2003). Schmitt maintains that law is predicated on land as its jurisdiction, and land is predicated on law insofar as law defines land as it comes to be known (for example, as a nation, territory or property). Schmitt refers to this co-constitution of law and land as *'nomos'*: a concept that holds that together, law and land constitute a *spatial* order of reason (2003). I hold that Schmitt’s theory of *nomos* articulates strongly with defence nationalist conceptions of law and land because *for both Schmitt and defence nationalists*, nations are *juridical* entities that both produce and are produced by law, and that both uphold and are upheld by law. (To reiterate, I am not arguing that land and law *really are* what Schmitt says they are, necessarily; rather, I am arguing that Schmitt’s theory of *nomos* articulates with what land and law are *for defence nationalists*).

By reading Schmitt's theory of *nomos* alongside Lacan, I explore the way that defence nationalist fantasies of law and land as *nomos* assist in the *personification* and *reification* of the nation as the big Other, whereby land provides the physical 'body' of the nation and law its language.40 By providing nationalists with imagined 'access' to the nation (through its land and law), I show that defence nationalism works to alleviate the anxieties of alienated nationalists by enabling them to (re)conceptualise their bodies and identities as connected to the nation's land and law. Moreover, I show that defence nationalist fantasies provide subjects with specific, supposedly empowering pathways for *using* their bodies within the nation *in accordance with the ‘national’ law, qua* the desire of the big Other. That is, defence nationalist fantasies provide nationalists with ways of using their bodies within the nation *to which they are entitled*.

40 This elevation of the nation to the Other is enabled by constructions of the nation in Western Liberal Democracy. In these settings, nations are personified insofar as they are said to possess a 'will' of their own; in theories of popular sovereignty, this 'will' is said to reflect the collective will of the People, and is supposedly enshrined and protected in law. On this point, a number of foundational Western theorists of the nation and sovereignty can be read, including Locke (1698), Hobbes (1968), and Rousseau (1968).
Defence Nationalism: Class and Gender Analyses

Given the recency of their emergence, there is a dearth of established research that examines Australian defence leagues such as the ADL, UPF and Reclaim Australia. There is, however, a considerable literature that examines the EDL (including Allen 2011; Bartlett & Littler 2011; Busher 2013 & 2016; Copsey 2010; Garland & Treadwell 2010; Garland & Kassimeris & Jackson 2015; Meadowcroft & Morrow 2017; Pilkington 2016; Treadwell 2011; Lowles 2009; Oaten 2014; Winlow et al. 2015; Treadwell 2008) and other European defence leagues (including Geden 2005; Goodwin 2011; Keskinen 2013; Zúquete 2008).

As presaged above, existing work on contemporary ethnic nationalist groups tends to focus on conducting class analyses of defence league members (Allen 2011; Bartlett & Littler 2011; Busher 2013 & 2016; Copsey 2010; Garland & Treadwell 2010; Garland & Kassimeris & Jackson 2015; Meadowcroft & Morrow 2017; Pilkington 2016; Treadwell 2011; Lowles 2009; Oaten 2014; Winlow et al. 2015; Treadwell 2008). Oaten, for example, suggests that the contemporary resurgence of groups like the EDL “is based on a sense of collective victimhood” stemming from “economic alienation” and political disenfranchisement (2014, p.331). Similarly, Treadwell and Garland observe that the EDL has “garnered considerable support from marginalised and disadvantaged white working-class communities” by actively appealing to a sense of alienation and political disenfranchisement (2011, p.1). These observations seem to accord with the EDL and various statements made by its members. The EDL Mission Statement, for example, refers to migrants as “health-tourists” and “education-tourists” who are drawn to “Benefit Britain” to receive welfare payments (EDL 2016a). As one EDL member put it, “migrants crowding at Calais are attracted by Britain’s generous welfare system” (Murphy 2015); while another asserted “these Paki lads...they like our benefits, but not our laws” (Treadwell & Garland 2011, p.630). Another EDL member declared:

I do not believe that we have failed these communities. It seems some members have no intention of feeling part of Britain, except when it comes to integrating

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41 These analyses continue trends in earlier examinations of ethnic nationalist movements. For examples, see: Allahar (2008), Berberoglu (2005), Balibar & Wallerstein (1991) and Holmes (2000).
with our benefits system. Then they are quite happy to be a part of Britain. (McCudden 2015)

Emerging analyses of defence nationalist movements focus not only on class, but on the gendered world-views of these groups as well (Copsey 2010; Garland & Treadwell 2010; Garland & Treadwell 2011; Geden 2005; Goodwin 2013; Keskinen 2013; Messerschmidt 1993; Mulinari & Neergaard 2012; Puar 2007; Twine & Gallagher 2008; Winlow & Hall 2009). Such analyses focus on gender *not only* because contemporary “organizations of the extreme right are clearly dominated by men” (Geden 2005, p.397), but because they are typically dominated by men who subscribe to heavily gendered views about the world (Copsey 2010; Garland & Treadwell 2010; Garland & Treadwell 2011; Geden 2005; Keskinen 2013). Members of these groups typically believe, for example, that it is *their responsibility to defend the nation as men*, because, as they see it, “men are more naturally inclined” (Geden 2005, p.405) towards protecting the family and nation “from external enemies” with violence (Geden 2005, p.405). By examining the gendered world-views of contemporary ethnic nationalists, the existing literature builds on the foundation of earlier work that has shown that performances of right-wing ethnic nationalism are *also* performances and expressions of aggressive masculinity (Geden 2005; Keskinen 2013; Messerschmidt 1993 & 1997; Puar 2007).

Gendered analyses of contemporary ethnic nationalist movements tend to overlap with class analyses, because both class and gender intersect within the discourses of these movements. Through interviews with EDL members “from working class backgrounds”, for example, Treadwell and Garland have demonstrated that EDL members construct and enact “a specific form and style of violent masculinity” (2011, p.1). Similarly, Copsey (2010) observes that EDL members are typically young, unemployed or under-employed men who have a propensity towards resolving conflicts with violence, much like the members of the now defunct football hooliganism movements from which the EDL emerged (Lowles 2009; Treadwell 2008; Treadwell & Garland 2010; Treadwell & Garland 2011; Back...
et al. 2001).

Although, as presaged in the introduction to this chapter, existing class and gender analyses of contemporary nationalist movements are useful for understanding defence nationalism, they are nevertheless incomplete insofar as they fail to elucidate an understanding as to why specific subjects—the vast majority of whom are aggressive men—turn specifically to defence leagues (rather than elsewhere). Moreover, existing analyses do not adequately articulate how subjects identify with defence leagues (that is, the modalities of their identification). Put differently, although the existing literature identifies the types of subjects who typically identify with defence leagues (alienated, aggressive men who espouse heavily gendered world-views), they fail to explain how defence leagues (promise to) alleviate alienation among nationalists. Throughout this chapter and the remainder of this thesis, I will argue that Lacan’s theories of subjectivity, alienation and law can be drawn upon to address this gap.

Subjects Before the Law

Law plays a central role in (re)producing alienated subjects. For Lacan, there is no pre-juridical subject: one does not pre-exist the law, but comes 'before' the law to be recognised as such (2006, p.229). For Lacan, law constitutes subjects by providing the framework and coordinates by which they will come to be known as particular subjects (for example, as subjects who are male or female, masculine or feminine, Australian or English, etc). By dispensing recognition, law, for Lacan, “reveals itself clearly enough as identical to a language order” (2006, p.229, my italics). One therefore does not come 'before' the law temporally, but as one comes before a mirror spatially: facing it to receive a reflection of one’s self as a particular kind of subject. As Judith Butler writes: “we start to give an account [of ourselves as subjects] only because we are interpellated as beings who are rendered accountable by a system of justice and punishment” (2005, p.10).

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Insofar as law produces subjects as particular kinds of subjects, law does not police existing differences so much as it creates the differences it comes to police (Butler 2005; McManus 2016). As McManus observes, “law does not have the function of managing difference”, rather, it “produces difference through the very processes that are designed and implemented to manage [difference] through the legal system” (2016, n.p.). Law is therefore criminogenic in that it produces ‘criminal’ subjects by producing types of criminality. As McManus elaborates:

in the process of creating...restrictions and legal categories [law] encourages subjects to identify with these legal labels and appropriate them as part of their identity. The thief, the drug user, and the illegal immigrant are all seen as deviations from the norms law is designed to uphold. But this gets the chicken and the egg scenario wrong since these persons are directly the products of the law (2016, n.p.).

Through its identity-producing capacity, law not only produces a taxonomy of ‘criminal’ subjects through categories of criminality, it also produces articulations of the individual subject before the law, the 'law-abiding' citizen, and, I will argue, the national subject as well.

The bodies and subjects that law produces are contingent. These bodies and subjects, and their subjectivities, can be historicised and understood as emerging from particular contexts. As I discuss within this chapter, existing work has shown that by constructing the sanctity of the individual body as its telos, contemporary (Western) law and capitalism work in tandem (through neo-liberalism) to cast the subject not only as an 'individual subject', but as a radically 'private', entirely enclosed individual who is wholly responsible for her or his own decisions and actions (Bowsher 2018; Brown 2015; Foucault 2010; Agamben 1998). As Brown has argued, by producing bodies and subjects as such, neo-liberalism heralds and inaugurates novel forms of subjectivity, subjectionhood and subjection (Brown 2015).

In the following section, I argue that the forms of subjectivity, subjectionhood and subjection that neo-liberalism occasions are accompanied by novel and historically contingent forms
of alienation: that if one gives an account of oneself only because one is called to give an account, à la Butler (2005), that the individualising interpellatory architecture of neo-liberalism ensures that the account given is a juridical account enunciated from the perspective of a radically private, alienated hyper-individual. Throughout the chapter and remainder of the thesis, I examine how these contingent forms of neo-liberal subjectivity, subjecthood and subjection, and the alienation that accompanies them, are implicated in defence nationalism. Turning to Lacan’s theories of subjectivity, I show how nationalists attempt to alleviate this alienation by draw on intersecting fantasies of flesh, land and law.

**Corpus Capitalis**

It is argued that neo-liberalism, which has been referred to as “hyper-capitalism” (Rifkin 2001, p.7), “capitalism on steroids”, and “capitalism with the gloves off” (Chomsky 2008, p.7-8), has transmogrified subjects’ relationships to law, society, culture, politics and the political (Foucault 2010; Brown 2015; Dardot & Laval 2013; Chandler & Reid 2016). Through these transformations, neo-liberalism has transformed subjects’ relationships to one another and to the nation itself; indeed, for defence nationalists, neo-liberalism has transformed the nation from a vessel of land and law that contains “One People”, to a loose assemblage of radically private, disconnected (hyper)individuals besieged by non-national others (refugees and migrants).

In *Undoing the Demos*, Wendy Brown charts the rise of neo-liberalism and the neo-liberalisation of capital(ism). Brown maintains that neo-liberalism constitutes not a singular ideology, discourse or mode of governance, but instead, a complex and diffuse set of “rationalities” (2015, p.52-56). For Brown, these rationalities (ways of thinking) are the hallmark of late-capitalism, permeating and influencing the conduct of governments, legal institutions, schools, prisons, homes and selves (2015, p.10). The corporation is left absent from this list only because it is the corporation itself that constitutes the template and telos upon which the others are increasingly modelled and formed into their own respective bodies (Brown 2015, p.10).
In the late 1800s, Marx already conceptualised the habitus of capitalism as productive of the so-called ‘individual’, noting that “the human being is in the most literal sense...not merely a gregarious animal, but an animal which can individuate itself only in the midst of society” (1971, p.84, my italics). Where the defining feature of Marx’s society was individualism, the defining feature of neo-liberal society is hyper-individualism.\(^{43}\) For Lacan, this transition from individualism to hyper-individualism not only changes society and the way that subjects relate to one another, the nation, commodities, law, culture, politics and the political: so too, it transforms the way that subjects relate to the 'self' (or, in Lacan’s terms, the way that subjects represent the 'I that I take myself to be' to themselves and possibly others). As Lacan saw it, society’s transition from individualism to hyper-individualism occasioned a shift from an era of “ce suis-je”, to “c’est moi” (2006, p.233).\(^{44}\) As I will elaborate, this production of hyper-individual subjects is implicated in the anxieties and alienations that members of defence leagues experience.

In his later work, Foucault sought to historicise the emergence of neo-liberal individualism and governmentality. In doing so, Foucault articulated the emergence and production of the figure of “homo economicus”: the mythical, individual subject, the “atom of freedom” in whose name the neo-liberal Sovereign purports to govern (2010, p.271). Homo economicus, Foucault writes:

> represents one of the most important mutations, one of the most important theoretical transformations in Western thought since the Middle Ages. What English empiricism introduces—let’s say, roughly, with Locke—and doubtless for the first time in Western philosophy, is a subject who is not so much defined by his freedom, or by the opposition of soul and body, or by the presence of a source or core concupiscence marked to a greater or lesser degree by the Fall or sin, but who appears in the form of a subject of individual choices which are both irreducible and non-transferable (2010, p.271-272).

For Foucault, homo economicus—the original subject of liberalism—came to function as an historical predicate and enabling condition of the neo-liberal Sovereign, sanctioning an

\(^{43}\) For extended discussions on this point, see: Bowsher (2018); Brown (2015), Chandler & Reid (2016), Chomsky (2011), Dardot & Laval (2013), and Foucault (2010).

\(^{44}\) From “it is I”, to “it is me” (2006, p.233).
“art” of governance “determined according to the principle of the economy” (2010, p.270-272). For Foucault, the ultimate goal of this Sovereign is to provide and maintain a ‘free’ market, which is enshrined in law, and through which supposedly free subjects can pursue their rationally—that is, ‘freely’—chosen interests (2010, p.270-272). However, on Foucault’s reading, it is neo-liberalism and neo-liberal governance that actively produces the very subjects upon whose prior existence the neo-liberal Sovereign itself is predicated. Put differently, for Foucault, the Sovereign retroactively constitutes the very subjects whom and for whom it allegedly governs. To borrow a phrase from Žižek, neo-liberal ideology can be said to ‘posit its own presuppositions’: the existence of a ‘free’, borderless market within which ‘free’, albeit heavily bordered—that is, private and privatised—human subjects exist. It is this construction of the subject as a radically private individual, who is hyper-responsibilised for her or his own self-governance, that is implicated in contemporary experiences of alienation, including those of defence nationalists.

For Foucault, neo-liberalism and the free-market work in tandem to establish ‘veridiction’, a term Foucault uses to refer to the ‘truth’ that subjects come to see through their subjection to discourse (2010, p.224). This ‘truth’ can be understood as the necessity of the free-market through which homo economicus pursues and realises her ‘rational’ interests (which are nevertheless, for Foucault, a product of the Sovereign’s inscription in the first instance). Here, the figure of homo economicus is concomitant with homo juridicus, insofar as the subject’s need for the free-market is interpreted as a right to the free-market. Through this elision between homo economicus and homo juridicus, the provision of the free-market comes to function normatively and as a litmus test of (universally) ‘good’ state action (alongside the notion that more economic ‘activity’ is always good for all, hence the aphorism that ‘a rising tide raises all boats’).

While the confluence of homo economicus and homo juridicus transmogrifies the economic into the Sovereign’s final cause, within this telos the Sovereign’s role is posed in an obfuscatory way, because although neo-liberal ideology seemingly imposes a limit upon
the Sovereign (articulated *vis-à-vis* law and the economy), the category of the limit is always of dual nature (Brown 2008, p.36). The category of the limit is of dual nature because by drawing a line, one not only determines a point of transgression (the point of the line's crossing), but so too, one simultaneously and implicitly legitimises that which falls short of the line's stipulation. Brown illustrates this point with respect to the concept of the border, which she argues not only demarcates “the boundaries of an entity (as in the jurisdictional sovereignty)”, but by so doing, also “[organises] the space both inside and outside the entity” (2008, p.36). By way of analogy, fans of competitive sports will know that the setting of rules and boundaries foreshadows the testing of the limits of those rules and boundaries. In sporting parlance, this is known as playing 'line ball', whereby participants attempt to play as aggressively as they can but just below the threshold that would constitute a 'foul'. Although line ball often occasions the adjudication of a foul (which comes with a penalty), this enforcement of the rule merely provides further clarity as to the threshold of acceptable behaviour (a definition that can then be pushed and tested again). This dual-sided nature of borders and rules is comparable to that of law, in that by necessity, law both prohibits and legitimises simultaneously, as one cannot prohibit one thing without implicitly legitimising that which falls short of the stipulated threshold.

With the dual-sided nature of the limit in view, Brown (reading Foucault) argues that although neo-liberal ideology claims to limit the role of the Sovereign to that of a 'caretaker' who respects the sanctity of the subject and the economy (and the subject of the economy), the Sovereign nevertheless does not actually recede from the body of its subjects in neo-liberalism, but rather, intrudes and encroaches upon contemporary subjects in novel and paradoxical ways (2015, p.17). For Brown, one of the reasons for this 'intrusion' is that neo-liberal ideology not only constructs the market as sacrosanct and as something the Sovereign must preserve, but as ubiquitous as well (2015, p.17). The market is ubiquitous, for Brown, because neo-liberal ideology seeks to commodify and economise *all things* as potential sources of capital (from one's education, health, fitness, fashion, friends). Thus, even though neo-liberal ideology explicitly claims to limit the Sovereign's jurisdiction to
economic realms, thereby setting its subject 'free', it nevertheless implicitly legitimises the state's intrusion into all realms (Brown 2015, p.17).45

There is an aspect of the Sovereign's intrusion that Brown elides: which is that neoliberalism's attempt to render everything 'inside' the economic fold can also be considered a double intrusion, because the very positing of the free-market in and of itself amounts to a claim regarding what is assumed to already be there to be intruded on or retracted from in the first instance. Through its naturalisation of the market, neo-liberal ideology disavows its first order intrusion (its founding claim to capture things as they always-already are); in turn, this disavowal legitimises the second order of intrusion(s) that stem and follow on from the first (whichever specific acts must be undertaken to ensure that the market functions 'freely'). This disavowed intrusion inaugurates a form of mystification that is distinct from the forms of mystification elucidated by Marx—that between the modes of production and classes—because the Sovereign's intrusion into everything not only comes with tacit legitimacy, but also a complex masquerade of retraction from the 'private' life and the privatised body of the subject (supposedly so as to enable his or her self-governance).

On Brown's reading, contemporary subjects internalise neo-liberalism's disavowed intrusion, such that like the ideologies of neo-liberalism, they too seek to "entrepreneurialize" and economise all domains, whether they are "studying, interning, working, planning retirement, or reinventing [themselves] in a new life" (2015, p.36). Thus, although the Sovereign intrudes upon the privatised body, subjects of neo-liberalism are nevertheless constructed as the sole caretakers of their bodies and selves, the so-called 'masters' of their own destinies (Brown 2015, p.36). As I will show—both in this chapter and coming chapters—this onus of caring for the self as a radically private, hyper-responsibilised individual falls heavily upon defence nationalists, and so, is implicated in

45 This argument regarding the intrusion and extension of neo-liberalism articulates with Peter Sloterdijk's analysis of widespread conceptualisations of globalisation. For Sloterdijk, these conceptualisation depict the 'globe' as an economic whole: "an enclosure so spacious one would never have to leave it" (2013, p.175), nor, it might be added, could one leave it if one desired.
the anxieties and forms of alienation they experience (meaning their alienation exceeds forms of alienation that can be attributed to class alone). One of the reasons this onus falls so heavily on defence nationalists is because the very forces that interpellate subjects as hyper-individuals also diminish the means by which nationalists attempt to articulate their 'individual' identities; this is because the same forces that produce subjects as heavily bordered, hyper-individuals also erode the borders of the nation—the symbolic resource from which 'individual' national identities are built and maintained. Put differently, neo-liberalism fractures and fragments the ideal “One People” that defence nationalists seek to (re)assemble and from which individual defence nationalist identities are derived.

The above analysis of neo-liberalism and its production of radically private, hyper-responsibilised, alienated individuals, articulates with Agamben’s argument regarding contemporary Sovereignty. For Agamben, one of the hallmarks of contemporary Sovereignty is that it is founded upon that which it claims to exclude but includes accidentally: the body of its subjects (1998, p.9). For Agamben, despite its claims to emancipate subjects by retracting from their bodies and ‘private’ lives, the Sovereign nevertheless offers historically particular forms of subjection (1998, p.6). According to Agamben, this subjection is “the original activity of sovereign power” (1998, p.6), which comes in the form of “the production of a biopolitical body” (1998, p.6). One aporia of contemporary democracy, for Agamben, is that the Sovereign seeks to print “freedom” and “rights” on the very bodies it claims to set free (1998, p.9). For Agamben, this subjection in the guise of emancipation—which is another phrase for ‘disavowed intrusion’—constructs the body as both “the place for the organisation of State power and the subject’s emancipation from that power” (1998, p.9).

On Agamben’s reading, the contemporary neo-liberal Sovereign is more than a mere regulator of the legal and moral rights and freedoms that govern political life; instead, it is the Sovereign that makes the very decision as to what constitutes ‘life’ itself. As I will elaborate, it is this aspect of the contemporary Sovereign—the capacity to decide what a
body *is*—that is especially relevant in understanding defence nationalism and the importance defence nationalists ascribe to the law. Crucial to Agamben’s argument is the category of “bare life”, which, Agamben maintains, constitutes “the new biopolitical body of humanity” (that the Sovereign produces) (1998, p.9). As Agamben elaborates, the category of bare life can be explained in relation to the figure of “*homo sacer*”: the figure in Roman law who is nevertheless excluded entirely from Roman law (who is “banned” from law, as it were). Through this “ban” qua exclusion, Agamben argues that the figure of *homo sacer* is the one that can be killed with impunity—that is, killed *without* the commission of homicide—but who, by virtue of this, is therefore also *unfit* for ritual sacrifice (due to her or his lack of worth). For Agamben, the decision as to who is included or excluded in and from law—and how they are included or excluded—determines who can be killed without the commission of homicide (as is the case, for example, for the contemporary refugee, to whom the nation’s laws and onus of care are deemed not to apply).

For Agamben, the Sovereign’s decision as to how to apply (or not apply) law to the body literally *passes over* the physical body, determining, as it does, what that body *is* as bare life—a body reduced to a *biological* body (1998, p.162). Agamben illustrates this power in relation to a number of examples of technical, medico-legal decision-making regarding the status of life and death (including decisions such as when a life-support machine can be turned off, or euthanasia administered). Agamben observes that through various advances in medicine and technology, in conjunction with a number of hallmark legal rulings, death itself has been redefined so that ‘somatic death’, rather than ‘brain death’, is now its defining characteristic (1998, p.162). For Agamben, this ability to *redefine life* (and death) demonstrates the power of the Sovereign decision, which is so potent that the comatose body enters a state of “radical indistinction” (1998, p.164), whose ontological status “wavers between life and death according to the progress of medicine and the changes in legal decisions” (1998, p.186). What such examples illustrate, is that the Sovereign no longer merely decides how to enforce law in a given factual setting, but rather, that

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46 For discussion, see: Douzinas (2000).
through its decision, the contemporary Sovereign creates the factual setting itself (Agamben 1998, p.170). In the example above, for instance, the Sovereign first decides the definitions of life and death, and by doing so, comes to alter the 'factual' setting regarding which bodies are considered alive or dead. For Agamben, it is thus not only the life of the subject that wavers at the whim of the Sovereign's decision, so too, it is the very 'factual' status of reality (1998, p.170). With the 'factual' status of reality established, the particular life-support machines that can be turned off, and those that cannot, then follows automatically, without the need for a further decision. So too, and importantly for defence nationalists, the Sovereign determines, through law, who belongs to the nation and who does not; who is a citizen and who is not; and who can be deported and who cannot. This means that for defence nationalists, it is the nation itself that decides who belongs and who does not (rather than the nationalist), leaving the nationalist merely to enforce the Sovereign decision.

**Law and (B)order**

To reprise briefly, law plays a role in the way that both collective and individual bodies are formed—be they corporations, nations, subjects or otherwise. For Foucault (2010), Brown (2015) and Agamben (1998), the neo-liberal Sovereign founds the 'individual' bodies upon which neo-liberalism itself is predicated. The neo-liberal Sovereign appropriates these bodies as wholly individuated bodies, the sanctity of which is both the foundation and telos of Western law (that is, both the starting point and the end game). Although the neo-liberal Sovereign inscribes law upon bodies to establish them as private bodies that exist independently in the world, it nevertheless claims to 'retract' from them as it does so (even enshrining this supposed retraction in law). The Sovereign therefore inhabits the bodies from which it claims to retract through the very biopolitical processes that posit the existence of those bodies in the first instance. The formation of bodies as individual bodies influences the way subjects conceptualise their own identities (Foucault 2010; Brown 2015, p.36). Put differently, when subjects internalise neo-liberal rationalities they see themselves as neo-liberalism sees them: as hyper-individual subjects who act as such
(Brown 2015, p.36). This is not to say, however, that subjects are merely passive tabula rasa within which power is inscribed and internalised, unmodified, unadulterated, and without resistance and interpretation. It is on this latter point that psychoanalytic theory can expound and illuminate.

On a Lacanian reading, the (bio)political Sovereign that inhabits the subject is the big Other (hereafter 'the Other'). For Lacan, the Other is the symbolic fiction that presides over the entirety of the symbolic field, guaranteeing its apparent truth and coherence (Lacan 2006, p.358; Lacan 2006, p.364-383; Lacan 2007, p.11-26). Although the specific apparatus of the Other can differ among subjects—for some, it may be God, Science, Law, Nature, a cult, a president or a nation—the function of the Other is to make sense of the world (in Agambenian terms, to establish the 'factual status' of reality). The original schema for the Other is 'God': some higher power that can supposedly guarantee the inexplicable, even if this knowledge remains beyond the subject's comprehension (hence the need for 'faith' in God/the Other). For Lacan, the Other provides and guarantees coordinates of Being (how subjects conceptualise their own socio-cultural roles and identities); more than this, the Other also structures the subject's desire (Lacan 2007, p.11-26). The Other structures desire because it is the Other that provides the language in which desire is formed and into which desire is translated and articulated (Lacan 2006, p.222; Lacan 2006, p.575-584). For Lacan, desire therefore ultimately belongs to the Other, because it is the Other, and not the subject, that possesses language (Lacan 2006, p.10; Lacan 2006, p.676-677; Lacan 2007, p.13).

For Lacan, the subject's primordial desire—the desire that structures all of the subject's other desires—is to be recognised by the Other (Lacan 2006, p.582; Rogers 2014, p.19). Recognition from other subjects and the Other quells anxiety because it provides certainty: a guarantee that a subject is who s/he thinks she is, and belongs where s/he thinks s/he belongs. The subject's primordial desire is to be recognised by the Other because it is the Other that

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47 For Lacan's extended discussion, refer to: “Production of the Four Discourses” (Lacan 2007, p.11-26).
guarantees the stability of the symbolic world. Put simply: however the Other recognises me, I (believe I) really am. Throughout the coming chapters, I argue that those who identify as defence nationalists elevate the nation to the status of the Other, and, moreover, that they desire to be recognised by the nation qua Other as privileged subjects of the nation—specifically, as its defenders.

As I will show, one of the reasons the nation can be readily elevated to the Other is because the nation has a clear, 'official' and authoritative language—law—which is capable of recognising subjects as they desire to be recognised: as individual subjects who belong to the nation (e.g. through citizenship). Law is a powerful tool for the delivery of the subject's primordial desire because law conceptualises subjects as they see themselves in neo-liberalism: as individual subjects with individual identities and desires (Rogers 2014, p.19). On a Lacanian reading, subjects invest themselves in law not only because law functions as an authoritative discourse of the Sovereign, but because law functions as the language of the Other, dispensing the Other's recognition authoritatively (Rogers & Ghumkhor 2015).

Another reason the nation can be elevated to the status of the Other so readily is the relationship(s) the nation cultivates between land and law (and eventually flesh as well). For defence nationalists, nations not only have clear laws, borders, and an 'official' language, so too, they have supposedly clear, 'official' bodies as well—their land, which is defined, at least partly, by law.48 To understand how law and land relate to one another to reify the Other, I will now turn to Schmitt's theory of law as 'nomos', which constitutes a spatial order of reason that both produces and is produced by law (2003). As I will show, Schmitt's articulation of nomos resonates strongly with defence nationalist fantasies of both the nation and law insofar as both are always-already spatio-juridical entities that both produce and are produced by land and law (and flesh, as well).

48 Although nations and their boundaries are fundamentally contingent and contested, this is not the case for defence nationalists, for whom the nation is self-evident; a theme I explore in detail in Chapter 7.
(De)Limitations of Law

[S]oil that is cleared and worked by human hands manifests firm lines, whereby definite divisions become apparent. Through the demarcation of fields, pastures, and forests, these lines are engraved and embedded [...] In these lines, the standards and rules of human cultivation of the earth become discernible [...] the solid ground of the earth is delineated by fences, enclosures, boundaries, walls, houses, and other constructs. Then, the orders and orientations of human social life become apparent.


In the passage above, Schmitt shows how manifestations of law and land are intertwined: when land is “cleared and worked”, “firm lines” and demarcations manifest, and “the orders and orientations of human social life become apparent”. Put in Agambenian terms, when land is worked and law established, the ‘factual setting’ of reality emerges (i.e. “the orders and orientations of human social life”). My contention is that Schmitt’s theory of law (nomos) resonates strongly with defence nationalist fantasies of land and law as they relate to the nation qua Other. Schmitt’s theory of nomos aligns strongly with the fantasies of land and law that defence nationalists mobilise when defending the nation and when managing others within the nation, because by 'managing', 'working' and 'clearing' the land (of others), defence nationalists seek to establish “orders and orientations of...social life” within the nation that are favourable to them. It is my contention that for defence nationalists, the 'whole' body of law qua nation functions not only as a normative regime, but as a spatial regime as well. I hold, moreover, that land and law function efficiently together as the nation, appearing to codify and make legible the Other's desire because the nation is, in principle, always-already a spatio-juridical entity that both produces and is produced by law.

Schmitt writes that “in mythical language, the earth became known as the mother of law” (2003, p.42, italics in original):

She contains law within herself, as a reward of labor; she manifests law upon herself, as fixed boundaries; and she sustains law above herself, as a public sign of order. Law is bound to earth and related to earth (2003, p.42).

For Schmitt, law and land work together in a way that constitutes “the objectification of
the *polis* (2003, p.9). Together law and land are *nomos*: a force that organises and reifies the social and the political. As Schmitt elaborates, *nomos* is “the immediate form in which the political and social order of a people becomes spatially visible” (2003, p.70, my italics).

As Schmitt elaborates, *nomos* entails “a constitutive act of spatial ordering”, a founding moment of land appropriation through which that which becomes the jurisdiction of law is declared (2003, p.71, my italics). Schmitt writes that:

> The constitutive process of a land-appropriation is found at the beginning of the history of every settled people, every commonwealth, every empire. This is true as well for the beginning of every historical epoch. Not only logically, but also historically, land-appropriation precedes the order that follows from it. It constitutes the original spatial order, the source of all further concrete order and further law. It is the reproductive root in the normative order of history. All further property relations – communal or individual, public or private property, and all forms of possession and use in society and in international law – are derived from this radical title. All subsequent law and everything promulgated and enacted thereafter as decrees and commands are *nourished*, to use Heraclitus’ word, by this source (2003, p.48).

For Schmitt, law only becomes possible through the appropriation of the very land upon which it is founded (2003, p.48). As Dorsett and McVeigh elaborate, the very claiming of a *jurisdiction* entails “an inaugural gesture of enunciation” that “[gives] voice...to sovereignty and to the order of *nomos*” (2002, p.298). For Schmitt, law is not only made possible and sustained through the declaration of land, but through the forms of ownership of land that stem from its division and allotment as *property* (2003, p.48). The continuation of the regime of law and its order is predicated on the ongoing possession through dispossession of the appropriated land.⁴⁹

While for Schmitt, law is dependent on and predicated on land, the reverse also holds: land, defined and *designated* as a distinct ‘thing’, to be *possessed* as (a) territory, is dependent on law for its delineation (the “radical title” to which Schmitt refers above). Put differently, *nomos* as a spatial body not only *inhabits* and rules over the land (as in the

phrase, 'the law of the land'), it also *founds* land *as it will come to be understood* as well (as a nation is founded through declarative violence). Law—understood as *nomos*—is therefore not only a discursive apparatus used to *manage* the spatial, it is also an apparatus that *founds* the spatial as well.

Schmitt's theory of *nomos* is useful for understanding both how and why defence nationalists seek to manage land and law together, and their conceptualisations of “One Land, One Law, One People”, because for Schmitt, *nomos* captures precisely how law and land work *together* as “the immediate form in which the political and social order of a people becomes spatially visible” (2003, p.70): that is, according to Schmitt's theory of *nomos*, land, law and people (e)merge *together* such that one cannot be (easily) dissociated from the others. Moreover, like all defined and delineated objects, the spatiality of *nomos* (of land, law and people) is most evident *and most fragile* at its edges, because where one territory ends, an-other begins (for example, when one crosses the national border, one leaves behind one's nation whilst simultaneously entering another). This theoretical point contextualises the preoccupation defence nationalists have with the border (as explored in the previous chapter, and as will be explored in the coming chapters).

**The Mandate of Law**

To briefly reprise, for Schmitt, law and land are co-constitutive in that each founds the other through a constitutive act of enunciation (2003, p.71). For Schmitt, law is founded through an inaugural moment of land appropriation, and land is founded through law insofar as law defines land *as it comes to be known* (as a jurisdictional nation or territory); law and land therefore both found and are founded by one another (Schmitt 2003, p.71).

With Schmitt's theory of *nomos* in view, the land-related anxieties examined in the previous chapter—that the other will take over 'our beaches' and 'our streets', thereby limiting our mobility—can also be understood as *juridical* anxieties, because it is law that

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50 For a discussion of this, see: Derrida (1992). For an exemplary discussion, see: Rush (2005).
defines, enshrines and protects land and its various spatial domains. Here, I am not making the point that the nation merely presupposes land and law in a related way; nor am I observing only that land cannot be conceptualised as territory without the juridical. Rather, I am claiming that for defence nationalists, land *is* (the) juridical, and that this fusion of land and law is central to the fantasies that underlie defence nationalism, including the fantasy that the nation satisfies the function of the Other, providing a stable field of meaning and thereby a stable field of subjectivity and subjectionhood—a point I will expound in detail in the coming chapter.

Just as for both Foucault, Brown and Agamben, subjects of neo-liberalism internalise the notion that the 'individual' body is sacred and must remain intact, so too defence nationalists internalise the notion that the body politic—which is constituted by *nomos* and to which the individual body is imagined connected—is sacred and must remain intact. In the coming chapters I will argue that it is from this belief that defence nationalists imagine a mandate (or entitlement) to enforce the nation's 'wholeness' as a body of flesh, land and law. Here, Schmitt's theory of *nomos* is again illuminating. For Schmitt, the simultaneous appropriation-come-founding of land, such as that of a nation, not only renders conceptualisations of property and property ownership *possible* through the division and subsequent 'allotment' of land: so too, it serves to *legitimate* those forms of ownership (2003, p.48). In Western parlance, when one *owns* land as property, one is said to possess a 'title' to the land. This title manifests as a supposedly legitimate claim upon the object of the title: that is, a literal *entitlement* to property which comes with tacit authorisation to pursue one's claim.51

It is my contention in the coming chapters that defence nationalists imagine an entitlement to defend the nation that comes with the tacit authorisation of the Other, and that they substantiate this entitlement to (defend) the nation's land and law through fantasies of

51 In liberal law, this property claim plays out not only with land and other objects, but with the body as well, which is often conceptualised, although sometimes implicitly, as a kind of property of the self with which one is entitled to do as one pleases (as enshrined by concepts such as freedom, and freedom of speech, movement and association).
flesh and its imagined connection to the nation. The defence nationalist mandate is deployed, I will argue, primarily in ways designed to alleviate the alienation and anxieties that defence nationalists experience through exposure to the ideologies of neo-liberalism (anxieties and alienations that the existing literature commonly understands as 'class' alienation). Neo-liberalism has a profound effect on defence nationalists not only because it constructs them as radically private, hyper-individuals, but because it also erodes the means by which nationalists attempt to articulate their own individual identities—through the collective vehicle of the nation. As foreshadowed in the introduction to this chapter, subjects are not merely pre-existing individuals who belong to a particular class who are then disenfranchised and alienated under the auspices of neo-liberalism; rather, they are made into (hyper)individuated subjects by the very structures of neo-liberalism itself, through processes of individuation that carry psychosocial implications which are expressed in defence nationalism.

In the coming chapters I will show in greater how defence nationalists employ intersecting and overlapping fantasies of flesh, land and law to overcome these anxieties and alienations. I will show that defence nationalists draw upon these fantasies to substantiate and personify the nation as the Other: spatialised and reified as land, with a language made legible in law, and with its own desires that can be animated through the flesh of its subjects (specifically, that of defence nationalists); in short, I will claim that these fantasies promise to function as an antidote to anxiety and alienation by recuperating and providing “One Land, One Law, One People”.
Chapter 4:  
*In hoc signo vinces* [In this sign you will conquer]52

Obviously we do not have to pay for the body we have...*It costs us nothing.*
Michel Foucault (2010, p.227, my italics).

A body is something that enjoys itself.

Like many of its counterparts in Australia and the UK, the Australian anti-halal group 'Halal Choices' has assumed as its mandate the task of revealing and disseminating the 'truth' about halal (food prepared and slaughtered in accordance with Islamic law). As its name implies, Halal Choices seeks to disseminate this truth in order to empower fellow Australians to make more 'informed' choices about their practices of consumption. Halal Choices claims that one of its reasons for opposing halal, is that “halal certifying bodies” are supposedly responsible for “funding terrorism” and sending “a constant stream of funds to support Islamic projects which contribute to the advancement of Sharia (Islamic law)”.53 Knowledge of the other’s law is therefore essential, because in its absence, even the most devout nationalist could find themselves supporting terrorism or contributing to the spread of the other's law unwittingly (if not “recklessly”, in the words of the Anti-Terrorism Act 2005 (Australia)).54

Like other defence league groups, the EDL also laments the “silent” spread of halal across the nation. As the EDL Mission Statement elaborates: “Our food, *often without our knowledge and consent,* is subject to the incantations and animal brutality of the halal process” (EDL 2016a, my italics). For the EDL and other defence nationalist groups, halal functions not only as an instantiation of the other’s law, but as an instantiation of the other's brutality and lack of civilisation. This dynamic is illustrated below in *Image 7,*

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52 EDL motto.
53 As cited in the “What is Halal?” section of the Halal Choices website, which can be retrieved from: <http://www.halalchoices.com.au/what_is_halal.html>
54 As per Section 102.3 of Anti-Terrorism Act 2005 (Australia), “a person commits [a terrorism] offence if (a) the person intentionally: (i) makes funds available to another person (whether directly or indirectly); or (ii) collects funds for, or on behalf of, another person (whether directly or indirectly); and (b) the first-mentioned person is reckless as to whether the other person will use the funds to facilitate or engage in a terrorist act”.


which depicts a poster that is often held aloft at EDL rallies and protests:

![Image 7: Ban Cruel Halal Brutal Slaughter (EDL – English Defence League 2013).](image)

In defence nationalist discourses, the “cruel” and “brutal slaughter” of halal not only demonstrates the other’s lack of civility, so too it signifies the other’s lack of belonging to the nation. As one post to the EDL Facebook page elaborates:

Nothing made from Halal slaughtered meat can be classed as traditionally British! Britain is a civilised country where the unnecessary barbaric slaughter of animals to appease an outdated superstition is simply not acceptable. BAN HALAL IN THE UK. It’s simply NOT BRITISH and never will be (EDL 2014).

In the passages above, defence nationalists construct halal as being incommensurate with the nation firstly, because it (supposedly) funds terrorism and the nation’s enemies, and secondly, because it encapsulates the other’s cruelty, barbarousness and lack of civilisation as well. However, throughout this chapter I will argue that there is more at stake for defence nationalists in opposing halal. Stated simply, what is at stake is that if “our food” is unknowingly “subject to the incantations...of the halal process” (EDL 2016a), then so too, upon consuming that food, defence nationalist bodies are subjected to the brutality and “incantations” of the law of the other as well, “without...knowledge” or “consent” (EDL 2016a).

In a speech to the Australian Parliament, the elected member Luke Simpkins provided one elucidation of the significance of this bodily subjection to the law of the other.
Complaining that Australians can no longer buy meat for their “Aussie barbecues” without the influence of “a minority religion”, Simpkins first petitioned a demand for all halal meat to be clearly identified by law (transcript cited in Butterly 2011). He then revealed that his anxiety went beyond the issue of the visible identification of halal food, elaborating that:

By having Australians unwittingly eating Halal food we are all one step down the path towards the conversion, and that is a step we should only make with full knowledge and one that should not be imposed upon us without us knowing (Butterly 2011).

As in the passages above, here, the theme that something could unknowingly enter the body again emerges. According to Simpkins, by consuming the other’s food, prepared in accordance with the other’s laws, one might not only find oneself unwittingly supporting the other (such as by funding terrorism), but so too, one might “unknowingly” (or unconsciously) support the other by internalising the other’s laws to the point of “conversion”.

The EDL Mission Statement expresses a similar anxiety to that of Simpkins:

In order to ensure the continuity of our culture and its institutions, the EDL stands opposed to the creeping Islamisation of our country, because intimately related to the spread of Islamic religion is the political desire to implement an undemocratic alternative to our cherished way of life: the sharia (EDL 2016a, my italics).

In this passage, as in Simpkins’ statement, it appears that for the EDL, when the law of the other spreads unknowingly (by “creeping”), that so too, desire spreads (specifically, the “political desire to implement an undemocratic alternative to our cherished way of life”). What these passages show, is that when the other’s law spreads covertly, it potentially enters the bodies and minds of national subjects to the point that their desires and identities are made other (through “the conversion”).

The defence nationalist practice of depicting Islam, Sharia and halal as a virus—a
contagious entity that can infect other entities and spread entirely on its own—reflects this anxiety that the laws and desires of the other could enter the body. As one EDL member put it: “Islam is like a virus who want [sic] to eat all of the world and it is infecting Europe first of all” (Khuraijam 2015). Similar depictions of Islam as a virus can be found elsewhere. For example, Pauline Hanson, the leader of the Australian One Nation Party declared that “Islam is a disease” that “we need to vaccinate ourselves against” (Remeikis 2017); while Katie Hopkins, a notorious British journalist, popular among members of the EDL, has described migrants as “a plague of feral humans” that are spreading like the “norovirus on a cruise ship” (Hopkins 2015). Similarly, former Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott described “[Islamism as] the contagion that's infecting people, grooming them for terrorism” (“Prime Minister Tony Abbott's full national security statement” 2015), while popular conservative journal Psychology Today describes Islam as “a virus of the mind...a self-replicating, virulent mental parasite” (Azarian 2016).

Seemingly in response to these depictions of the Muslim other as a contagious other, members of defence leagues have adopted the widespread practice of wearing ‘pig masks’ during their marches, protests and demonstrations because, according to halal, consumption of pork is forbidden. This practice is particularly common among members of the EDL, an example of which is shown below:

![Image 8: A Non-Halal Body (Gillespie 2015).](image-url)
By adorning the face in this way, the subject beneath the mask declares that his body is non-halal certified, making its consumption by the Muslim other ‘illegal’ according to the other’s very own laws. That is, by wearing the pig mask, nationalists demonstrate that consumption of their bodies is forbidden for the other.

Whereas the previous chapter explored alienation from the nation through neo-liberal constructions of the self, what appears immediately above is a different form of alienation, whereby a foreign element enters one’s body and makes it foreign to oneself, effectuating a “conversion”. But how can this apparent anxiety—that the other will enter my individual body and alienate me from it—be understood? Throughout this chapter, I claim that the answer lies in the way defence nationalists construct their own ‘individual bodies’ from the nation and the way they construct the nation as inhabiting their bodies (as examined in the previous two chapters in reference to defence nationalist mythologies, iconographies and practices of bodily adornment). In this chapter, I argue that if the nation is constructed as inhabiting the body, that that which enters the nation can also be perceived as entering the body (including, for defence nationalists, halal, Sharia and Islam).

Throughout this chapter I contextualise the anxiety that one will be alienated from one’s body in reference to Lacanian psychoanalysis. By developing a Lacanian theory of the body, which holds that one’s body never belongs to oneself, but is instead assembled from pieces that are not one’s own (Lacan 1988, p.54; Lacan 2006, p.78), I will show that the anxiety that the other will contaminate the body masks the fact that the body is always-already foreign to begin with. Throughout, I will hold that the narratives of defence nationalism that depict the other as a “virus” or “contagion” upon the body, construct the non-national other as a scapegoat to explain the body’s foreignness or potentiality for foreignness, providing, by so doing, an illusion that the body can be defended or recuperated for one’s self if only the other is removed.
In This Body You Will Defend

As articulated in Chapters 1 and 2, for defence nationalists, the bodily phantasmatics of ethnic nationalism (of which defence nationalism is one manifestation), not only indicate the perceived qualities of the other (as in racism), but so too those of the self. This dual-sided aspect was evinced by defence nationalists during both the Cronulla Riots and the march that followed the death of Lee Rigby, as well as during a plethora of other protests, marches and riots held by defence nationalist groups in Australia and the UK. Chants such as “We grew here you flew here” are emblematic of the dual-sided aspect of defence nationalism, because they express the belonging of the self alongside the non-belonging of the other simultaneously. Defence nationalists often hurl these chants, which racialise and de-nationalise the body of the other, while actively nationalising their own bodies by adorning them with nationalistic iconography (as shown in Images 2-5). Through embodied practices such as these, defence nationalists perform their bodies as much as they perform with their bodies.

As foreshadowed in Chapter 2, the embodiments of defence nationalism entail more than a mere ‘able-bodied-ness’ (an “I can” qua I am able); rather, they entail an embodied “I can” qua I am permitted. Articulated in relation to Merleau-Ponty’s terms (as discussed in Chapter 2), defence nationalism provides a bodily-schema that not only makes certain actions possible—as a walking stick, reading glasses and surf-board enable one to walk, see and surf—but permissible as well. As I will show, this element of entitlement stems not from the objects of incorporation in and of themselves, but from the symbolic relationships defence nationalists imagine they incorporate into their own bodies (including the very nation itself). Recall, for example, the argument made in Chapter 2, whereby it was observed that the effect a room has on one's body depends on the symbolic relationship one has with that particular room (as one moves differently through the rooms one owns, compared to the rooms in which one is a guest).

In order to elucidate the symbolic aspect of embodiment and entitlement, I now turn to the
theoretical formulations of Lacan. As I show in this chapter, for Lacan, contrary to Merleau-Ponty, subjects do not simply incorporate previously distinct objects into the bodily-schema as physical prosthesis (thereby enabling themselves to do things); rather, they incorporate signifiers into the bodily-schema as symbolic prostheses. As we shall see in this chapter, for Lacan, the relationship one has with one’s own body is fundamentally and constitutively symbolic; indeed for Lacan, the body itself is but a signifier to which other signifiers relate and can be attached (including flags, postcodes, national colours, pig masks and nationalist masks).

What I show throughout this chapter is that the narratives and imaginaries of defence nationalism provide particular signifiers through which nationalists represent the body not only to others but to the self as well. Specifically, these signifiers represent the bodies of nationalists as being in possession of a mandate to defend, protect and police the nation and those within it. The EDL motto, “*in hoc signo vinces*” [in this sign you will conquer], can therefore be read quite literally through Lacan as a promise: ‘in this *body* (as a signifier) you will conquer’. As I will show however, this symbolic relationship to one’s body leaves the body open to symbolic contagion through the capacity of signifiers to change over place and time.

To develop the argument outlined above, it is first necessary to establish how this thing we call the ‘human body’ comes to be inflected by defence nationalist fantasies; indeed, it is necessary to establish how this thing we call the ‘human body’ is always-already inflected by fantasy in the first instance. To do this, I now turn to Lacan’s formulations regarding the subject’s relationship to the body, starting with the mirror stage and moving into Lacan’s account of the Symbolic, the Imaginary and the Real. Drawing on Lacan, and later Judith Butler, I explore how subjects come to form “passionate attachments” to what they perceive to be their own ‘individual’ bodies (Butler 1997; Butler 1995; Butler 2006, p.20). In turn, I consider how subjects form similarly impassioned attachments to the various collective bodies within which their apparently ‘individual’ bodies are contained and through
which they are understood. Read through Lacan, this “passionate attachment” can be understood as a passionate binding to the signifiers through which the body, self and subjectivity are represented to self and other. Through Lacan’s psychoanalytic formulations, I maintain that neither the ‘individual’ nor ‘collective’ bodies of defence nationalism function as the straightforward reifications of identity that they purport to be. Instead, I maintain that the symbolic relationships subjects have with their bodies—be they individual or collective—are radically unstable, and that as such, they inevitably undermine the very identities they seemingly facilitate.

Specular Re-imag(in)ing: Lacan and the Mirror Stage

There is nothing that this nature teaches me more expressly, or more sensibly than that I have a body. [...] Nature also teaches me by these feelings of pain, hunger, thirst etc., that I am not only lodged in my body, like a pilot in his ship, but, besides, that I am joined to it very closely and indeed so compounded and intermingled with my body, that I form, as it were, a single whole with it.

René Descartes (1968, p.76).

Symbols in fact envelop the life of man with a network so total that they join together those who are going to engender him ‘by bone and flesh’ before he comes into the world.


For Rogers and Ghumkhor, “[w]hen we imagine a body we imagine it whole” (2015, p.200). As shown in the epigraph above, for Descartes, one enjoys continuity in and of the body, subsisting ‘there’ over time. Bodies are not only conceived as stable mediums of ‘self’, but so too as the stable mediums through which subjects come into contact with the outside world. This is how bodies are imagined by defence nationalists: as singular entities withdrawn upon themselves, which are nevertheless connected to one another through the nation (to which each individual body is connected).

In Descartes’ formulation, “cogito ergo sum” (I think therefore I am), it is doubt about existence confirms existence: in short, that I can doubt that I am implies that I am. For psychoanalysis however, the Freudian discovery of the unconscious lays waste to any such certainty, because “I am”, let alone what or who I am, cannot be inferred from the place
where conscious doubt occurs. As Lacan puts it: “I am not where I am the plaything of my thought...I am thinking where I am not, therefore I am where I am not thinking” (2006, p.430). By this, Lacan means that both the subject and subjectivity are irreducible to conscious thought.

One of the consequences of Freud and Lacan's observations is that all 'truths' one purports to know of one's self—including the Cartesian priority of mind over body—are radically unstable. Indeed, for psychoanalysis, the existence of one's mind and body cannot be guaranteed (Lacan 2007, p.29-39). As Lacan often remarked during his seminars, Freud's insight implies “knowledge that does not know itself” (Lacan 2007, p.29-39). For Lacan, there is an “horrendous discovery” in this instability (1991, p.154-155):

There's a horrendous discovery here, that of the flesh one never sees, the foundation of things, the other side of the head, of the face, the secretory glands par excellence, the flesh from which everything exudes, at the very heart of the mystery, the flesh in as much as it is suffering, is formless, in as much as its form in itself is something which provokes anxiety. Spectre of anxiety, identification of anxiety, the final revelation of you are this—You are this, which is so far from you, this which is the ultimate formlessness (Lacan 1991, p.154-155).

For Lacan, the presumption a stable identity exists arises through the subject's apparent awareness of the self; however, in Lacan's formulation, Descartes' dictum, “I think therefore I am” is effectively reformulated as “I think, therefore I think I am”. Lacan's supplementary “I think” not only encapsulates the subject's self-certainty (how could 'I' not be if 'I' am thinking that I am?), but so too the question-mark that, for psychoanalysis, hangs over the subject: is the 'I' that speaks identical to the 'I' of which it speaks? As Lacan puts it: “The point is not to know whether I speak of myself in a way that conforms to what I am, but rather to know whether, when I speak of myself, I am the same as the self of whom I speak” (2006, p.430). In other words: I think... but I could be wrong! As we shall see for Lacan, this destabilisation of self-certainty extends even so far as to include the convictions one might hold regarding one's very own body, which is not 'whole' but in pieces (Lacan 1988, p.54; Lacan 2006, p.78; Berghoffen 2006, p.53), and indeed, is “always in
Lacan maintains that the presumption of stable selfhood arises in the 'mirror stage', which provides a theoretical account of the subject's *primordial* (in the sense of both first and fundamental) identifications with the body (2006, p.76). According to Lacan, the subject enters the mirror stage when s/he first encounters her or his specular image (2006, p.75-76). Lacan maintains that despite the infant's lack of motor and sensory coordination, the scene of encounter with the specular surface presents the infant with an image of bodily unity, held together and *framed* by the mirror; in turn, the subject internalises the image of the whole body as if it were an image of *it-self* (Lacan 2006, p.92).

For Lacan, the mirror 'stage' is not so much a 'stage of development' as it is a metaphorical *staging* of experience that facilitates a scene of encounter with the 'whole' (as opposed to fragmented) body in which the subject will recognise the self, and as which the subject will come to recognise its 'self'. The framed encounter of the mirror stage comes to be verified *intersubjectively* when and where the gaze of the infant subject, the gaze of an-Other, and the 'gaze' of the specular surface meet. This tripartite encounter (in)forms, as it were, an infinite, positive feedback loop—such as when two mirrors are set opposite of one another—in which the subject simultaneously 'sees' the self seeing the self, sees the Other seeing the self, and sees the self seeing the Other seeing the self infinitely. For Lacan, this scene enables the subject to form a primordial identification with the “visual gestalt” of the body, in which the conscious ego declares 'that is *me*', and in so doing, establishes the body as a synecdoche for the self *qua* subject proper (2006, p.92).

Lacan's account of the mirror stage, whereby the subject’s primordial identification with the body is formed and *apparently* substantiated, describes the *inauguration* of the subject's 'staging of experience'. For Lacan, the identity confirming dynamics of the mirror stage

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55 Although my focus throughout this chapter will be on the political subjectivity of a body in pieces, for the purposes of later chapters it is relevant to note here that a nation is also a 'body in pieces', whose maintenance is predicated on its imagined capacity to hold together the individual pieces—the bodies—of which it is supposedly comprised.
continue throughout the subject's adult life, in that subjects continue to imagine that their identities are confirmed and validated by others. Rather than the mirror reflecting and confirming one's identity, it is instead the gaze of others that reflects and confirms identity. Defence nationalist practices of bodily adornment provide an example of this apparently identity-confirming intersubjective dynamic. Take, for example, Images 9 and 10 below:

![Image 9: Australian Beneath the Mask (Khan 2015).]

![Image 10: English Beneath the Mask (Lynn 2010).]

Just as the Lacanian subject's encounter with the specular surface forms a positive feedback loop, whereby the subject simultaneously 'sees' and is seen by both self and other infinitely, so too, in these images, the subject sees the self as a national self, and sees the self being seen as a national self by others—including by the fellow nationals with whom they march, by those against whom they march, and by those who are merely incidental spectators (note: examples of this same dynamic were also provided previously in Images 2-6).
For Lacan, it is through the *appearance* of the 'whole' body and the corollary assumption of a unitary identity that the subject comes to anticipate a mastery of self (Lacan 2006, p.76; Verhaeghe 2001, p.66). As the subject comes to locate the 'self' in the body through the mirror stage, so too its promise of self-mastery extends to the body, resulting in an unquestionable certainty of control over one's own body. However, this mastery of self as mastery of body (and vice versa) never arrives, and for Lacan *can never arrive*, because the conscious ego's jubilant affirmation (“I *am!*”) is a fundamental misrecognition (Lacan 2006, p.76). Indeed, as a misrecognition, the subject's false mastery constitutes a 're-cognition' of the subject: a re-thinking, re-figuring and re-ordering of the subject's psychic life that places the conscious 'I' at the centre of experience. Lacan therefore supplements Freud's claim that 'the ego is not master in its own house' by adding, 'but it thinks it is' (for an extended discussion, see Lacan 1991). Although the subject's misrecognition of the ego as centred augurs the 'I that I take myself to be' into an illusory existence, for Lacan, the subject nevertheless remains 'decentred' because a gap must persist between the sense of self and the subject, because both subjectivity and subject are irreducible to conscious life (Stavrakakis 1999, p.14). For Lacan, the centralisation of the 'I' through the presumption of the mirror image therefore provides nothing but a *semblance* of mastery.\(^\text{56}\)

Although in Lacan's account of the mirror stage, the body is *purportedly mastered*, self-conceptualisations of the body—even in their 'death-drive-like certainty'—nevertheless remain fluid and ever-changing. As Grosz maintains, bodily borders are osmotic and are endowed with “the remarkable power of incorporating and expelling outside and inside in an ongoing interchange” (1994, p.79). Obvious examples of this include fashion-styles and prostheses, which can be incorporated into bodily-schema only to be later removed or substituted (including the flags, masks and other nationalistic signifiers employed by defence nationalists, as shown in *Images 9* and *10* above). Despite the fluidity and flux of bodies (be they individual or collective), and their propensity to overflow (whether

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through defecation, vomiting or the shedding excess skin; or through the expulsion of excess others, including migrants and refugees), nevertheless, the body itself does not necessarily 'disintegrate' as a result of its fluidity, flux and overflow; instead, the body remains conceptually intact as the 'that' from which overflow occurs.

Lacan maintains that the gap between ego and subject is constitutive of the subject, insofar as it is the gap, which corresponds to the subject's failures at self-mastery, that motivates the subject to constantly produce and reproduce positive articulations of the 'I' that it mistakenly takes itself to be (Stavrakakis 1999, p.29). As none of these articulations could ever erase the gap between the self and the subject (as subjectivity is irreducible to conscious life), the psychic life of the subject, both as a child and adult, entails a Sisyphean task: one's attempt to prove one's own self-identical essence. As an 'infant' (which translates in English to 'one without speech') these attempts occur in the Imaginary register (to which, given the infant lacks language, the primordial ego 'belongs'). As the subject enters the Symbolic register (first acquires language, then speech), the subject's attempts to articulate selfhood become bound to the Symbolic Order (Lacan's term for the totality of language).57 It is by binding, investing, and alloying the self to the categories that belong to the Symbolic Order—a process Lacan calls 'symbolic identification'—that the subject can make positive articulations of her or his own identity recognisable to others.58 As Lacan writes, “the symbolic provides a form into which the subject is inserted at the level of his being. It's on the basis of the signifier that the subject recognises himself as being this or that” (1993, p.179). Indeed, as Stavrakakis points out, for Lacan, in order to represent identity to the self, the subject must inhabit language, submitting to its laws in order to gain recognition (1999, p.20). What Lacan thereby elucidates is a revision of Freud's well-known claim that “Man has...become a kind of prosthetic God” through the use of

58 While the Symbolic Order reinforces the psychic formation/s inaugurated by the mirror stage, in that it allows the subject both to recognise the self and to be recognised by others, it also enables the subject to 'recognise' those others by whom one imagines oneself to be recognised, because the signifiers and categories of the Symbolic Order are shared. The Symbolic Order therefore not only provides a network through which identities are intersubjectively verified, but negotiated and contested as well—a point to which I soon return.
technological supplements, such as motor vehicles and aircraft, spectacles, telescopes and the microscope (Freud 1929, p.90-92); instead, for Lacan, it is mastery over symbolic prostheses that facilitate the body’s navigation of the world, including its physical, social and cultural realms—just as, for example, bodies adorned with “Shire Boiz” and the Cronulla postcode navigate Cronulla Beach with ease (see Images 5 and 6).

Recalling that for defence nationalists, the symbolic fiction of the nation informs the body, and is perhaps even written into the depths of the body (in the DNA), defence nationalism can be said to furnish its subject with a particular signifier—a place where the subject is inserted into the Symbolic Order—through which the body, as a synecdoche for the subject, can be conceptualised and ‘mastered’ qua mastery of self. This is not to say that the identities of nationalists are captured exhaustively by the signifiers of the nation (nor by any other single signifier exclusively); however, the fantasy that the self is accounted for at least in part nevertheless assists in maintaining the fantasy that an underlying whole, enduring self exists. These signifiers, which in adult life come to frame the corporeal image, both take and replace the function of the specular surface in the Lacanian mirror stage, in that once language is acquired, it is an array of signifiers that (pr)offers an image of the subject to the subject (e.g. as a national subject), while maintaining the illusion that they merely passively reflect the subject as s/he ‘really is’ (as ‘confirmed’ in and by the gaze of others). Recall, for example, Images 1-3, 5-6, and 9-10. In each of these images, the subject’s body is re-presented, to both self and other, as if it belongs naturally to the nation, as indicated through refrains like ‘we grew here’, ‘Shire boiz’, the southern cross and the national flag. For defence nationalists, the nation provides an articulation of the subject as both a national body and a self, and therefore as a national subject as well. In Image 1, for example, nationality is depicted as a property that exists naturally within the body (as exemplified by the “Anzac Spirit”); Image 2 and Images 5-6 and 9-10 show the inverse, depicting bodies as bodies that exist naturally within the nation (as a body that “grew” in the nation and belongs to a ‘Shire Boy’). Through these related depictions, the nation is constructed as something that exists naturally with/in the body, and the body is
constructed as something that exists naturally with/in the nation.

Images such as those I have described above fulfil a similar function to that of the specular surface in Lacan’s account of the mirror stage—including its intersubjective function—because these images, as signifiers, allow the subject to see the self as a ‘whole’ subject in the eyes of the nation and fellow nationals. This is because by alloying national signifiers to the body, nationalists are able to see the self as a whole, national body (and self). Importantly, nationalists not only see the self as a national self, they also see the self being seen by others as a national self. It is this intersubjective aspect of the Symbolic Order that is, for Lacan, integral to its functioning (noting that for Lacan, the mirror stage presages intersubjectivity because by duplicating the subject’s image infinitely, the specular surface allows relations to form ’between’ those images).

The reflexive and intersubjective function of the images discussed immediately above is also demonstrated, and not ironically, by the ADL’s self-description, the ‘About Us’ section of its website, which reads: “The ADL is an Association built upon the foundations of the Australian way of life and seeks to defend the Australian people by maintaining our way of life” (ADL n.d.). Examining these propositions sequentially reveals a notable periphrasis. The description first claims that the ADL is “built upon the foundations of the Australian way of life”. It then claims that what the ADL seeks to defend is “the Australian people” (my emphasis) “by maintaining our way of life”; that is, the very “way of life” from which the ADL itself is supposedly built. Here, the ADL assumes a position that is structurally comparable to Lacan’s account of subjectivity in the mirror stage, because what the ADL ultimately seeks to articulate and then defend is itself, through its own description of itself (just as the Lacanian subject seeks to prove his or her own self-identical essence by articulating that essence through a tapestry of signifiers in the Symbolic).59

59 This dynamic is not unique to the ADL. Similar self-descriptions can be found on the websites of the EDL, the SEA, Reclaim Australia and the UPF.
The EDL’s founding motto, “In hoc signo vinces” (“in this sign you will conquer”), can also be interpreted in the same way as the ADL’s self-description. This is because the EDL provides its subjects with an array of “signs” (signifiers) through which the self can be represented (or described) to others and thereby to the self as well. Being a member of the EDL conveys, both to self and other, that one is a member of a particular group (the EDL). In turn, EDL membership implies a range of other characteristics about the subject: it implies, for example, that one is (quintessentially) ‘English’, and a proud nationalist and patriot; it also implies that one is both capable of and willing to defend one’s nation, and to ‘make a stand’ against the nation’s enemies and against that with which one disagrees. When subjects represent the self to the self through particular signifiers (such as those above), they also imagine that they ‘conquer’ those signifiers, because those signifiers merely correspond to and describe the self. Through a perceived proficiency over these signs/signifiers, it appears, retroactively, as if one can also conquer what those signs are taken to represent—namely, the ‘I’ that the subject takes the self to be, as inferred through the body which is encountered and mediated through the sign (or signs). Such a range of signifiers—in the examples above, ‘EDL member’, ‘English’, ‘nationalistic’, ‘strong’—are collated to indicate one thing, namely, one subject: a singular, whole subject, located in a singular whole body. The promise of a sign (in) which one will conquer, therefore ultimately amounts to the promise of a signifier in which the subject can locate the self as whole, and through which the whole body can be realised. And so the question that the EDL motto begs—what is it you will conquer?—might be answered thus: by conquering the signifiers that represent and mediate the body you will “conquer” qua master the self that is supposedly “lodged” (to use Descartes’ phrase) within that body.

In a Lacanian reading, if the body is but a signifier imagined as a reification of the self, then like all signifiers, it must be an indexical sign whose meaning changes over time and place, and is determined by the other signifiers by which it is surrounded. This flux problematises the notion that subjects possess a stable political agency embedded within the apparent ‘permanence’ of the body, because if the meaning of the body is derived from
its embeddedness within the symbolic network, then the (political) agency a subject
derives from the body must shift as the symbolic network (and the subject’s position
within it) shifts. Put differently, as subjects traverse various symbolic contexts, they must
also traverse a range of subject positions—for example, as a body voyages from one nation
to another, its symbolic status potentially shifts from that of citizen to migrant or tourist.

The above point is painstakingly illustrated in Frantz Fanon’s *Black Skin, White Masks*
(1991). Fanon’s autobiographical account demonstrates that as one traverses symbolic
contexts, there is more at stake than one’s relationship to relatively ‘simple’ binary
positions, such as national/migrant. In recounting his physical movement from the French
colony of Martinique, where he was born and raised, to France, Fanon writes of a symbolic
shift—a comprehensive recoding of identity through the “white gaze” that befalls him
(1991, p.109). As Fanon elucidates, this gaze prevents him from experiencing himself “in
the first person” (1991, p.109), because not only fails to confirm the identity he previously
took to be his own (the Lacanian ‘I that I take myself to be’), but also projects upon him an
identity with which he does not immediately identify. As Fanon puts it, upon relocating to
France, he instead discovers an enforced imago “in the third person” (1991, p.109). As
Fanon elaborates:

> In the white world the man of color encounters difficulties in the development
of his bodily schema. Consciousness of the body is solely a negating activity. It
is a third person consciousness (1991, p.110).

Fanon illustrates this third person consciousness anecdotally, by recalling his differing
experiences when viewing the then contemporary Tarzan films in Martinique and then in
France. Fanon observes that when he viewed the films in Martinique, he identified with
the protagonist, Tarzan, who saves Jane from the wild “black beasts” (1991, p.118);
however, Fanon recalls that when he viewed the same films in France, he felt that the
white audience viewed him as the “black beast” from which Jane was in need of saving
In Lacanian terms, Fanon recognises that in France, he is alienated from the traits and signifiers through which he was able to appear likeable to himself in Martinique. Coded as he is in France, Fanon discovers that pathways of identification that were previously open to him have now become foreclosed by a colonial gaze that upholds an array of associations between Whiteness as a symbolic category and whiteness as a colour. Whereas in Martinique, Fanon could experience himself as being “White” in a symbolic sense (as 'privileged', 'civilised', 'educated' and 'enlightened'), under a White, racializing gaze in France, he discovers that in order to be 'White' (as a symbolic category), one’s skin must be white. As Fanon elaborates, these feelings of alienation and despair in France are soon compounded when he realises he was always-already alienated from the traits with which he identified because they always-already reflected what he refers to as the “White Mask” proffered by the coloniser (1991).

Fanon demonstrates that how a body is seen impacts how it can be experienced (and enjoyed). He also shows that traversing symbolic contexts not only alters what a body does and is permitted to do, but what a body is and is imagined to be as well, because if bodies are signifiers, then like all signifiers, their meaning shifts in relation to the other signifiers around them (put differently, Fanon illustrates that all signifiers are indexical). The implication of Fanon’s argument is that any pretension towards the permanent and ultimate mastery of signifiers, including those that represent the body, is illusory (as Fanon discovers through his 'symbolic' journey from Martinique to France). The importance of contextualising and historicising the particular identifications that subjects form with particular signifiers at particular times therefore emerges, because the identities and agencies that subjects generate through patterns of identification are contingent and in perpetual flux, irrespective of the subject’s presumptions toward self-mastery.
Empty Promises: The Revulsion to Repeat

Speech is in fact a gift of language, and language is not immaterial. It is a subtle body, but body it is. Words are caught up in all the body images that captivate the subject.


For psychoanalysis, illusions of self-mastery or a mastery of signifiers are bound, inexorably, to fail. For psychoanalysis, the body is not a ‘whole’ that can be conquered or mastered, but is instead fragmented and non-unitary (Lacan 1988, p.54; Lacan 2006, p.78; Berghoffen 2006, p.53).60 This is because for psychoanalysis, pure recognition—tantamount to the self-mastery that the I anticipates—is constitutively impossible because the Symbolic Order—the conduit through which the I would master—can itself never master the third of Lacan’s registers: the order of the Real. For Lacan, the Real is that which language and the Symbolic and Imaginary registers seek to narrate, and that which in principle always escapes language and consciousness and can never enter into it (1988, p.66). As Lacan proclaims, the Real “is that which resists symbolization absolutely” (1988, p.66).

The failure of the Symbolic to capture the Real is not straightforward. For Lacan, the signifier not only fails to capture the thing it supposedly signifies (the signified qua the Real); instead, the signifier ‘reaches in’ to the signified, and in so doing, not only creates the imagined meaning of the object, but the notion that there is any object at all.61 Put differently: not only does the word necessarily fail to capture the thing at which it aims, it also manufactures the illusion that there is something distinct and meaningful at which to aim in the first instance. To illustrate this point, Lacan takes an everyday example, asking the reader to imagine two identical ceramic toilets (2006, p.416). As Lacan observes, although both objects are identical in that they are produced at the same factory, each nevertheless comes to acquire a different meaning after signifiers—in this case, gendered toilet signs—are attached (2006, p.416). In Lacan’s example, it is the signifier that creates difference while simultaneously reinforcing belief in the a priori existence of distinct objects in the world (that is, in Lacan’s example, the a priori existence of distinct objects

60 Indeed, for the body to be ‘whole’, the ‘I that I take myself to be’ would have to be equivalent to subjectivity itself.
behind the gendered toilet doors).

An understanding of the 'gap' between the Symbolic and the Real is important for theorising subjectivity—and thus for theorising defence nationalist subjectivities—because for Lacan, the gap not only mirrors that between the signifier and the signified, but also that between the ego’s sense of 'its-self' and the imagined 'true self' that the sense supposedly represents (2006, p.162). As shown in Images 1-3, 5-6 and 9-8, the embodied practices of defence nationalism allow defence nationalists to simultaneously construct the nation as something that exists naturally within the body, and the body as something that exists naturally within nation. However, perception of the object—in these examples, the body as 'national' body, a 'Shire Boy', and a body that "grew here"—relies on its objectification as an object by the sign. In the case of nationalism, this 'sign' (body) is a discursively constructed identification, which is taken from and references other signifiers within the subject’s symbolic repertoire. Not only is the sense of self an effect of the discursive symbolic field in which a subject 'finds' the self (e.g. the nation), so too, the subject who produces that sense is an effect of the Symbolic Order. This means it is not just the meanings ascribed to bodies that are contingent (such as, for example: male/female, masculine/feminine, national/non-national, religious/irreligious), but the body to which meaning is ascribed as well. Although identification with the nation must constantly fail to produce and consolidate an identity, subjects nevertheless assume that the signifiers that represent and mediate the body do point to something meaningful: to a 'true' stable self that must exist directly as that flesh without any mediation at all (as the subject's presumed access to her or his own body renders mediation and representation redundant).

Ostensibly, there is a contradiction in the notion that the subject’s imagined centredness of self is bestowed and validated externally. However, by highlighting the link between the self and the signifier—which, for defence nationalists, corresponds to the link between self and the signifiers of the nation—one can account for this apparent contradiction. The social world of signifiers, which produces subjects through practices of identification, also
creates an intersubjective mirror in which those identifications can be recognised. Another
way of putting this, is that subjects *suppose* that the reflection in the mirror exists *only* by
virtue of an already-existing object which is there to be reflected. Lacan illustrates the
fallacy of this logic in the following diagram, which shows an optical illusion whereby the
reflections of a spherical mirror re-present a bouquet of flowers inside empty vase.

![Figure 1: (Lacan 2006, p.565).](image)

For Lacan, *Figure 1* graphically depicts how subjects manage to 'stumble' across the 'true
self' in the reflection, without realising that it is the discursive symbolic context into which
the subject is 'thrown' that regulates what it is that is being 'discovered' (as the flowers are
'discovered' within the vase). Just as in *Figure 1*, the flowers are 'found' inside the vase
through an optical illusion, so too, through the discursive, symbolic apparatus of the
nation and its many signifiers, defence nationalists find *nationality* inside the body (as
shown in *Images 1-3* and *5-6* and *9-10* above). As I will elaborate, so too nationalists can
become anxious they will find something entirely *other* within the body—such as, for
example, *halal*, as discussed in the introduction to this chapter.

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62 For Lacan's discussion of *Figure 1*, see Lacan (2006, p.543-574). For the translator's commentary and explanation of
*Figure 1*, see Lacan (2006, p.859-861).
For Lacan, the relationship a subject has with her or his image resembles that between the signifier and the signified. Neither the signified and the signifier (the object and its ‘reflection’) necessarily precedes the other; rather, the apparent emergence of each is interrelated because it is through the apparent ‘match’ between each that subjects maintain the illusion that the Real is accurately represented. It is through the architecture of the national Symbolic Order, for example, that nationalists come to believe not only that the national self is represented, but that the national self—and indeed, any self—even exists at all. Take Image 6, for example, in which a number of subjects depict themselves, and their bodies, as “Shire Boiz”.

That one can be a ‘Shire Boy’ is evinced intersubjectively through the coming together of multiple bodies who see and are seen by one another, and who verify and are verified by one another. The coming together of these multiple ‘Shire Boy’ bodies implicitly declares ‘we are all Shire Boiz’ (where the signifier “Shire Boiz” functions as a metonym for national subjects). The same logic applies when multiple flag-draped bodies come together and congregate in defence nationalist protests, marches and riots (examples of which are shown in Image 2, 6 and 9).

While the Symbolic Order ostensibly provides pathways toward the realisation of identity—such as the realisation of the ‘Shire Boy’ identity—the failure of the Symbolic to ever adequately capture the Real traumatically forecloses the possibility of arriving at the destination the Symbolic promises: that of the stable, self-identical subject; the 'I that I take myself to be' and the 'me' that I really am! While the Symbolic permits the individual subject to exist and to pretend to exist conceptually, it also simultaneously prohibits and bars the manifestation of the 'I' that can subsist or insist entirely on its own (that is, as one). This is because in order to represent the 'I' both to the my-self and to others, 'I' must draw on the Symbolic Order; 'I' therefore depend on and indeed cannot exist without the Symbolic Order, which is something outside of myself. This dependence undermines identity—which is (a) pure difference—because, as Butler articulates, 'I' must “make myself substitutable in order to make myself recognisable” (2005, p.37). In other words, to be

63 The term “boiz” is a phonetic articulation of the word “boys”, as expressed in a strong Australian accent.
recognised and recognisable, I must be intelligible, and to be intelligible, I must translate and transpose myself into the language of the Other. In short, I must name myself in the language of the Other (Santner 2011, p.72).

For Butler, the subject's reliance on the Symbolic Order results in an ontological precarity to the Symbolic Order (1997). This precarity is dual-sided. Its first aspect, is that to “persist in one's own being”, one must submit to the terms of the Symbolic Order; however, by submitting, one limits oneself to a life articulated through “a world of others that is fundamentally not one's own” (Butler 1997, p.28). What this means, is that while the Symbolic Order enables the subject to articulate existence, it also simultaneously undermines the pure 'me-ness' of that existence, because the language through which I articulate my-self does not belong fundamentally to me, but instead to the Other, to whom 'I' become subordinate and therefore precarious (Butler 1997, p.28). The second aspect of symbolic precarity relates to the Lacanian subject's alloying of the self to the signifier. On the one hand, subjects depend on signifiers to represent the self to the self; but on the other hand, signifiers are precarious—fluid and liable to change. When subjects alloy self to signifier, they therefore become beholden to that signifier and its flux and capacity to change. This is why Butler maintains that subjects become “passionately attached” to their own subordination, as it is only through the unstable categories and terms of language that the self becomes legible (1997, p.28).

The 'legibility' of the self comes at a price. The decentred subject's submission to the Symbolic Order means that her or his activities are never entirely her or his own, but that they instead belong to the Symbolic Order itself. For example, when defence nationalists substantiate national identities through signifiers such as the national flag, the Southern Cross, the 'Anzac Spirit', the postcode, or the English Rose, they effectively re-inscribe their reliance on the Symbolic Order and the world it (re-)produces, which is contingent and temporary. When affinities for national spatialities and national past-times are invoked as being indicative of belonging to the nation then those affinities and the
experiences, memories, emotions and affects associated with them are ascribed national meaning through the retroactive effect of signification. Personal identifications, which supposedly come to the subject from the 'inside', actually come from the 'outside' (from the Symbolic Order), meaning the subject is liable to become alienated from the self and from the body in which the self is supposedly localised.

For Butler, rather than dissuading the subject from submitting to the Symbolic Order, the failure of the self to manifest perfectly only prompts further submission, because “the subject pursues subordination at the promise of existence” (1997, p.20-21). Here, Butler’s phrase, “the subject pursues”, is misleading to the extent that it masks the notion that both the subject's 'submission' and 'pursuit' are indirect (or in properly psychoanalytic terms, unconscious). A subject could not say, for example, “I will not submit to the Symbolic”, for the “I” that this sentence postulates, in its centrality, denotes an already subjected, subordinated subject, who, through the manifested presence of intersubjectivity, has already come to assume the existence of a fixed underlying self. In other words, for a subject to be seeking or avoiding subordination, some other fundamental subordination must already have occurred.

On my reading of Butler, the above paradox as to why subjects 'pursue' subordination can be understood in Lacanian terms, in that Butler's concepts of 'subordination', 'precarity' and 'passionate attachment' can all be understood in relation to the Lacanian concept of symbolic identification. As articulated above, for Lacan, symbolic identification is the mechanism by which subjects become passionately attached to the particular signifier(s) through which the self is articulated; given signifiers are unstable, symbolic identification is also the mechanism by which subjects become alienated, subordinate and precarious to particular signifiers (to those through which the self is articulated). For Lacan, 'identification', 'subordination', 'precarity' and 'passionate attachment' are therefore inseparable, as it is through symbolic identification that subjects come to both love and

loathe the signifiers to which they are alloyed (as these signifiers are simultaneously the imagined locus of the stable self and the site where identity ultimately fractures).

That subjects are invested in *particular* signifiers explains why subjects differ as to which signifiers they are anxious will change. Subjects who do *not* identify strongly as nationalists, for example, are likely to be *less* anxious that the signifiers of the nation will change (because they are less invested in them). On the other hand, subjects who identify strongly as nationalists are more likely to be strongly invested in the signifiers of the nation. If one constructs one's body from the nation—as the nationalists in *Images 1-6* and *9-10* appear to do—then by the signifiers of the nation changing, so too one's body can potentially change. Put differently, if one constructs one's body from the body politic, that which enters the latter, *including halal*, can potentially enter the former (hence nationalist anxiety regarding halal as an instantiation of otherness).

The above Lacanian reading of (nationalist) precarity allows us to redirect the question as to why subjects pursue subordination, to a question as to why subjects pursue symbolic identification. One Lacanian answer is that the pursuit occurs because subjects form a *primordial identification* with the body *prior* to the acquisition of language (as described in Lacan's account of the mirror stage), and yet must nevertheless rely on language to substantiate that identification once the Symbolic Order has been entered. This 'fundamental subordination' then, which entails a passionate attachment to the body-image, is *not* a subordination to the Symbolic Order of the kind articulated by Butler; rather, it is a *pre*-Symbolic subordination that occurs in the Imaginary register *as the subject is founded*. Put differently, it is the subject's *primary identification* and subordination to the body that *enables* secondary identifications (subordinations) to occur in adult life. What we might say then, is that as the subject acquires language and enters the Symbolic Order, the infant's difficulties in coordinating the body (an Imaginary precariousness), come to be replaced with the adult's difficulties in coordinating the tapestry of signifiers through which the body is (re)presented by the subject to both the self and to others (Symbolic
By reading the body in this way, Butler’s notion of “submitting to a world of others” can be understood as the invitation of those others to enter the subject’s most private of domains, the body, as prompted by the subject’s primordial identification with the body. Lacan developed the notion of the body’s foreignness through the concept of “extimacy”: an inner alterity that eventuates through the unwitting introduction of the outside to the inside (2013). For Žižek, the subject’s reliance on language—the ‘outside’—means that subjects do not speak through language as much as language speaks through its subjects. Žižek illustrates this point in relation to the well-trodden example of a judge speaking in a court of law:

I know very well that...this person is a corrupted weakling, but I nonetheless treat him respectfully, since he wears the insignia of a judge, so that when he speaks, it is the Law itself which speaks through him (2007, p.33).

Thus, it is not only the intimate faculty of *speech* that does not truly belong to the subject, but so too the *voice*. As Mladen Dolar elaborates:

Every emission of the voice is by its very essence *ventriloquism*. Ventriloquism pertains to voice as such, to its inherently acousmatic character: the voice comes from inside the body, the belly, the stomach—from something incompatible with and irreducible to the activity of the mouth. The fact that we see the aperture does not demystify the voice; on the contrary, it enhances the enigma (2006 p.70).

When one speaks, one’s voice ostensibly comes from *inside* of the body; however, if not for language, which exists outside of the body, a voice would not be voice at all, but instead merely noise and meaningless sound (Dolar 2006). It is only through a language that does not belong to us that the noises and sounds that emanate from within our bodies are animated with meaning and converted into this thing we call a voice (Dolar 2006). Once sound is animated as a voice, it is in turn able to animate the body from which it supposedly originated—the voice speaks for the subject and the body, articulating its thoughts, feelings, desires. The voice therefore creates and animates the individual body by speaking for it; so too, when the sound that comes to be recognised *as a voice* 'leaves' the
body, it also potentially creates a collective body—namely, that of its audience.\(^{65}\)

While language animates 'sound' through the bestowal of meaning—thereby ostensibly giving the subject a voice and the capacity to speak—when the subject actually 'speaks', the voice does not so much 'animate' some radically pure identity as much as it animates language itself. As Žižek elucidates:

> An unbridgeable gap separates forever a human body from 'its' voice. The voice displays a spectral autonomy, it never quite belongs to the body we see, so that even when we see a living person talking, there is always a minimum of ventriloquism at work: it is as if the speaker's own voice hollows him out and in a sense speaks 'by itself', through him (2001, p.58).

It is because the subject is fundamentally reliant upon language to conceptualise an identity and assume a voice that Derrida claims, albeit in slightly different vernacular, that subjects are simultaneously both a “host” and “hostage” to language (2000, p.109). Lacan elucidates this notion through the concept of repetition automatism: the compulsion to re-enact and re-perform the social structures that are associated with the signifiers to which the 'I' is bound (such as, in the above example, the judge's insignia).\(^{66}\) The subject's reliance on language to assume a voice therefore occasions an unwitting and unconscious imitation of the accents of another, a kind of echolalia, mimesis, or a compulsion to repeat.

The compulsion to repeat can be traced back to the body, which, as we have seen for Lacan, is always-already 'in pieces' (Lacan 1988, p.54; Lacan 2006, p.78; Berghoffen 2006, p.53; Rogers & Ghumkhor 2015, p.200). This is because the subject's primordial identification (that is, imaginary identification) with the body(-image) constructs the body as a unitary 'whole'; however, as outlined above, the perceived wholeness of the body is but

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\(^{65}\) It should also be noted, moreover, that an audience can be manufactured as a collective body irrespective of whether or not its members consent to their becoming an audience. As Lacan often said, “the ears have no lids” (as cited in Dolar 2006, p.78).

\(^{66}\) For Lacan's discussion, see “Seminar on 'The Purloined Letter'” (2006, p.6-48) in which Lacan analyses Edgar Allan Poe's famous short story, “The Purloined Letter”. As Lacan observes, the filched letter—which, in Poe's story, is a written piece of correspondence that contains sensitive information—insists on the various subjects who come not only to possess it, but to be possessed by it. For Lacan, the letter of correspondence in Poe's story functions in a similar manner to the way he conceives the function of the literal letter, which, Lacan maintains, comes to insist upon the subjects who both possess and are possessed by the signifiers to which the self is alloyed.
a misrecognition that compels the subject to sustain it—to (re)assemble the fragmented pieces of the body so as to resemble one’s self (the I that the subject takes the self to be). However, rather than a mere compulsion to repeat, I claim a revulsion to repeat and to have repeated manifests—a revulsion situated in one’s discovery that one has always-already betrayed oneself not merely by imitating an-other, but by being an-other in the ‘place’ marked out for the mythical self; as Lacan puts it: “the body in pieces finds its unity in the image of the other, which is its own anticipated image” (1988, p.54). The revulsion is that in attempting to (re)assemble myself from the body-in-pieces, I inevitably come to resemble an-other whom I have unwittingly invited ‘inside’ and suddenly can no longer tolerate. This revulsion is Symbolic alienation: a fleeting (re)collection of the body’s pieces—some of which remain missing, and some of which are incorporated and yet still do not belong. This ‘revulsion’ is precisely the aforementioned “horrendous discovery” of which Lacan speaks (1991, p.154-155). The ‘discovery’ is that the ‘pieces’ of oneself are only temporarily and imperfectly held together in the illusion of a body through the processes of signification; the horror this discovery heralds refers to the instability of one’s body and the presumed self/identity that resides there.

Throughout the ensuing chapters of this thesis, I will demonstrate that defence nationalism—which is itself collage of symbolic fictions—provides ingenious ways of alleviating the ‘revulsion’ of resembling an-other (the “horrendous discovery”). It alleviates this revulsion, I claim, by providing its subjects with a peculiar kind of body and voice. Whereas most identity claims, such as those of the body and the voice as described above, actively disavow the ‘fact’ of their own ventriloquism, a peculiarity of nationalism is that it actively purports to articulate a collective body and voice that does not belong exclusively to its ‘subject’, but that is instead shared and belongs to the nation. When nationalists speak in their capacity as national subjects, for example, they do not imagine themselves speaking as singular individuals, but rather, as speaking on behalf of the nation. Thus, if the voice, the body and subjectivity are premised on their belonging to the nation, the “discovery” that they do not belong exclusively to one’s self ought to be
mitigated (that is, made less “horrendous”). This argument was demonstrated by George Christensen67 in a speech addressed to the audience of a Reclaim Australia rally, in which Christensen declared:

My friends. I am proud to be a voice for North Queensland today. We all have a voice: Notwithstanding our choice to use it or not. Notwithstanding the best efforts of those who would render us silent. We have a voice – not a voice of hatred, violence, and extremism – but a voice of warning, defiance, and of hope. Our voice does not go unchallenged but that is the beauty and appeal of the free and open democratic society our voice speaks out to defend.

[...]

Our voice says: 'We will not surrender'. We will not sit idly by and watch the Australian culture and the Australian lifestyle that we love and that is envied around the world be surrendered and handed over to those who hate us for who we are and what we stand for (Christensen 2015). Christensen concluded the above speech with the lines: “The choice is ours. The voice is ours. Thank you for allowing me to share in your voice today” (2015).

The above passages illustrate one of the paradoxes of nationalism, which is that the explicit affirmation that one speaks in a voice that does not belong to one’s self, and that one acts on behalf of desires that do not belong to one’s self, is not alienating, but instead identity affirming. In concluding as he does, Christensen explicitly affirms the ventriloquism of his own voice: for him, it is the collective voice that speaks from and through him (i.e. “Our voice says”). However, Christensen is able to cast this ventriloquism as a positive feature; he is able to speak ‘proudly’ in and of a voice that is consciously not his own. Ostensibly, this explicit ventriloquism should be alienating, because the ‘fact’ his voice does not belong exclusively to him is manifestly apparent. However, nationalism appears to have a soothing effect upon such anxieties precisely because it does not disavow the extent to which its articulations of identity come from ‘the outside’ (language) to reaffirm the existence of a unique ‘inside’ (an identity). On the contrary, the collective voice that nationalists adopt explicitly disavows the individual and her individual desires (whatever they may be), by translating those desires into the desires of the collective,

67 Christensen is a serving member of the Queensland Liberal-National Party; he was elected into the Australian Parliament in the House of Representatives in 2010.
thereby purportedly legitimising them as a shared political project. The notion that a stable, individual identity exists can nevertheless be bolstered throughout this process, because for nationalists, one’s individual identity as a national subject is evinced by the subject’s capacity to form identification with the collective—the national body. For example, in claiming to speak in the national voice, Christensen simultaneously claims to speak as a singular embodiment of the national voice. What this illustrates is that nationalism can alleviate the anxiety that I resemble another by re-casting that resemblance as a fact of individual identity.

Although defence nationalism may have some purchase in deferring the revulsion of resembling an-other, nevertheless, for Lacan, its return is inexorable. Symbolic alienation can never be ultimately and finally deferred because no matter how ingenious a subject’s significations and identifications, they must remain significations and identifications that are bound to the signifier by definition, including its instability and flux. This is the “horrendous discovery” of which Lacan speaks (1991, p.154-155), which comes with the realisation that the subject is not sublime ‘whole’ but a temporary assemblage of borrowed pieces (signifiers) that are merely sewn together to resemble a whole, and which thereby resemble an-other. The metaphor of the ‘sewing’ and ‘stitching’ signifiers is somewhat misleading, as sewing and stitching create a seam—which functions as a perforation—where clothing, skin, or some other surface is always-already weakened and primed to come apart. A seam—be it on clothing, a football, toilet paper, or a wound—pre-empts its own undoing as the defined place where one can predict, with relative certainty, that an assemblage would come apart if placed under sufficient stress. Unlike a seam however, the subject’s identity and corporeal schema—those two assemblages produced and held together through the processes of signification—do not come apart in any way that could ever be anticipated by the subject; instead, they come apart where coming apart is imagined as being constitutively impossible, at the level of the ‘I that I take myself to be’.

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68 The “About Us” page on the ADL’s description also makes a similar assertion, claiming: “We stand together, with one voice to keep Australia the great land we were all born into” (ADL n.d.).
The wholly unexpected coming apart of the I amounts to a total destabilisation of the subject: a recognition that one is not whole and unitary.

The recognition that one’s self is not whole, and that one’s articulation of the self is borrowed, is not a positive recognition of one’s “formlessness” per se. Rather, it is a recognition of absence: a formlessness recognised only from the edges of consciousness (just as a void, which is defined as a pure ‘nothing’, is inferred, rather than encountered, because there is ‘nothing’ there to be encountered). What I mean by this, is that the discovery that the body “is always in pieces” (Rogers & Ghumkhor 2015, p.200) is not a discovery of those pieces, but a liminal experience of absence and repulsion that cannot, in principle, be conceptualised in conscious thought. Just as to ‘discover’ a void is not to encounter it, nor to know it in any positive sense, so too, the traumatic discovery that the body is in pieces is not a discovery of those pieces; indeed, these pieces cannot be discovered—revealed—insofar as they belong to the Real and not to the subject. These ‘pieces’ must therefore remain undiscovered and undiscoverable: known only insofar as they are known to be missing.

The significance of this missing flesh is articulated by Lacan through the concept of the objet petit a, which belongs to the Real and stands for the unattainable object of desire which is both a lost and part object. The subject’s search for the objet petit a is tantamount to a search for a signifier that could perfectly capture the subject’s desire, and thereby (re)present the self to the subject without reproducing the traumatic gap between Symbolic and the Real (Fink 1995, p.94). As Fink elaborates, the objet petit a enables this search insofar as the a functions as “a reminder that there is something else, something perhaps lost, perhaps yet to be found” (1995, p.94). Although subjects can never possess a signifier that perfectly represents the body (for like the body, the objet petit a is mythical), subjects nevertheless seek to ‘recuperate’ the lost signifier in order to (re)form the body they never

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69 See Kirshner (2004) for a literature review of the concept of the objet petit a in Lacanian theory.
had, so that its unity can be represented both to the self and to others (Fink 1995, p.94).

The “body in pieces” is not only a story of the body’s mythical ‘missing’ pieces and the subject’s attempts to find and (re)integrate them. It is also a story of excess pieces. Of pieces that remain leftover and un-integrated even when the body is imagined whole. These excess ‘pieces’ are revealed by psychoanalysis as the thoughts, emotions and affects that subjects do not recognise as pertaining to the self but that nevertheless insist and cannot be disavowed. The horrendous discovery of the body in pieces therefore cuts in multiple directions, rendering the subject both in search of the missing pieces to cover a lack, and in search of a way to integrate, cover and/or erase the affects, emotions, and thoughts that are other, and remain as an excess to the ‘I’ that the subject imagines the self to be.

**Innervating Innovation**

Although the subject’s attempts to find the whole self with/in the body must nevertheless fail, the promise of the body as the site of such a discovery remains compelling because the body, which is encountered only through signification, is a signifier that explicitly disavows its own status as a signifier. As a signifier, the body supposedly signifies that which belongs to the subject prior to signification; that which the subject fundamentally is on the inside, prior to the outside being invited in. While symbolic identification can be alienating because the Symbolic Order comes from ‘without’ and pre-exists the subject's entrance into it, the body apparently resists this alienation insofar as it is constructed as existing and belonging to the subject prior to the subject's entrance into the Symbolic Order. Ostensibly, the body is simultaneously experienced both ‘from within’ (such as through pain, pleasure, affect) and from ‘without’ (through the apperception of oneself as a ‘solid’ object). One can simultaneously ‘see’, ‘feel’, and ‘be’ the same flesh. The body therefore appears as that to which the subject enjoys immediate—that is, un-mediated—access.

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70 The “bodily horror” (Lacan 1991, p.154-155) of missing pieces therefore resists an explanation in terms of the Foucauldian concept of biopower, because whereas biopower entails the making of the bodily-schema through the incorporation of existing power structures (Foucault 1978, p.151-152), here, the bodily-schema in unmade despite the subjects efforts to incorporate power.
The above description of the body—as something that pre-exists and Symbolic and is experienced from the inside—is none other than a description of the Symbolic and Imaginary content of the thing that is signified 'body'. In other words, the signifier of the body explicitly claims to signify something that exists prior to the very processes of signification itself (in the register of the Real). To this end, Seshadri-Crooks has observed that categories of race must disavow their own historicity in order to assert their authenticity (2000, p.8); that is, for race to be made 'reality', it must not be constructed merely as an effect of cultural practices of the signification of bodies, but rather, as something that exists truly and authentically within bodies prior to any processes of signification (Seshadri-Crooks 2000). So too, for a body to be 'the real me' (the Lacanian 'I that I take myself to be'), the historicity, contingency and flux of that body must be disavowed, meaning that signification itself must be disavowed.

What makes the signification of the body so compelling—hence both innovative and innervating—is its capacity to displace symbolic alienation by providing an illusion of authenticity. In Lacanian terms, this illusion of authenticity is achieved through a tethering the Symbolic and Imaginary orders in a temporary synthesis. Lacan explains this temporary synthesis through the concept of the 'point de capiton', a term that translates roughly to an “upholstery button” (Bowie 1991), such as those that can be found, as it were, on a couch (Lacan 1993, p.268-269). On Lacan's account, the point de capiton pins and holds the stuffing of the couch cushions together to prevent the stuffing from shifting about inside the upholstery. Through this “pinning”, the couch retains a stable form even though it has no anchoring point to the ground, which, in Lacan’s metaphor, stands for the Real (Lacan 1993, p.268-269). Just as the point de capiton holds the couch-stuffing and upholstery together, so too, psychic points de capiton pin particular significations to signifiers, preventing metonymic slippage. The point de capiton therefore provides signifiers with an illusory stability; as Lacan elaborates, the point de capiton is that "by which the signifier stops the otherwise indefinite sliding of signification" (2006, p.681).
As the Symbolic/Imaginary content of the body is the very idea that the body does not belong to the Symbolic and/or Imaginary, the body can function precisely as a point de capiton. As a point de capiton, the body can end the Lacanian subject's search for identity (albeit temporarily) by localising (pinning) the subject's identity to the body and thereby short-circuiting the indefinite cycle of metonymy that is the subject's quest for identity. Examples of this 'pinning' are shown in Images 1-3, 5-6 and 9-10, in which various national symbols are draped, stamped and even tattooed onto and into the bodies of subjects, signifying the identities imagined to exist within. Through this tethering of the Symbolic and the Imaginary Orders, the body provides an illusion of authenticity (in the Real) that exists beyond the instabilities of language. These meanings however, which supposedly belong to the Real, must remain in the Imaginary and Symbolic, which are all subjects have at their disposal. What appears as the Real through the tethering of the Symbolic and Imaginary is none other than the effect of the latter's collusion. If the body, with which symbiosis is primordially and precariously formed, can only be understood through the Symbolic Order, then one does not so much 'have' an original body of one's own, as much as one is given a body by the Symbolic Order. This ultimately is the body that ethnic nationalism and defence nationalism (pr)offers to its subjects in the form of a signifier to conquer and in whose name to conquer. However, defence nationalism can nevertheless function as an effective identification precisely because its provides a point de capiton that ties the Symbolic and the Imaginary together, bringing the amorphous bits and pieces of the subject into a new frame—the national frame—in which nationalists can locate the I and see the fragmentary pieces of the body pinned together as (a) 'whole'. However, this 'whole' body is but a collage of imperfect signifiers whose lack of an anchoring point in the Real presages its inevitable undoing. However, if the nation works as a frame that (supposedly) allows nationalists to discover identity within themselves—both within the individual body and the collective body—then that which enters the nation from the outside, including that which is foreign, can also be found within. This includes, for defence nationalists, non-national others and manifestations of their otherness, such as halal, Sharia and Islam. For defence nationalists, if these symbols of otherness enter the
nation so too they may enter the body and then one's desires, effectuating “the conversion”. However, because the body's undoing is always-already presaged, defence nationalist narratives regarding the other's ability to contaminate the body provide a convenient explanation as to the body’s potential undoing, masking the fact that the body is always-already foreign to begin with.
Chapter 5: The Body as Real – Nostalgia Without Memory

The Lacanian subject’s self-certainty—the certainty of the integrity, stability and the radical, pure difference of the I—comes with what Slavoj Žižek describes as a tacit, biopolitical injunction to simply *be* one’s self, and, as shown in *Image 11*, to be “*proud*” of being one’s self (1999, p.373). However, this injunction occasions an intractable dilemma, because the decentred subject is dogmatically potentiated with respect to her or his ‘individuality’, but is nevertheless radically unsure how to pursue and optimise the individuality of the I (Žižek 1999, p.373). This uncertainty can be understood in relation to Lacan’s argument that in attempting to articulate the self’s *pure difference*, the subject is reliant on a shared language that precedes them (Lacan 1993, p.179; Lacan 2006, p.76; Stavrakakis 1999, p.20). As shown in the previous chapter, for psychoanalysis, this reliance inevitably leads the subject to the “horrendous discovery” (Lacan 1991, p.154-155) that ‘I’ am *not* a whole body, but a fragmented, non-unitary 'body in pieces' (Lacan 1988, p.54; Lacan 2006, p.78; Berghoffen 2006, p.53). Moreover, in attempting to (re)assemble my-self *as* whole, I recoil to find ‘I’ resemble an-other in the place that ought to be mine and mine alone (owing to my presumed radical irreducibility). Thus, subjects encounter the intractable paradox that the body is either in pieces, or ‘whole’ but not ‘mine’.
How then does one care for a body that falls apart? And why is it that contemporary Western practices of 'care' increasingly appear to reverse the traditional renunciation of 'flesh' (understood pejoratively)? I am not referring to unchecked hedonism or Bacchic excess (at least not in the conventional sense), but rather to the idea that for many in the West, the emphasis seems to have shifted from spiritual to bodily practices of care of self.\(^1\)

Whereas historically, the 'spirit' or 'soul' has functioned as the centrepiece of care of self, subject(ed) to time-consuming rituals, including religious observance, praying, and 'cleansing' through confession (all forms of spiritual hygiene/cultivation), it is now the body that is central to practices of care and the subject of a plethora of everyday rituals and practices (Murray & Sullivan 2012; Pylypa 1998); moreover, these time-consuming routines far exceed the necessities of hygiene, which, according to the platitude, supposedly separate humans from animals (Pylypa 1998).

Throughout this chapter, I argue that defence nationalists pursue the biopolitical injunction to 'be one's own self' through practices of bodily care,\(^2\) which, I contend, amount ultimately to practices of curation of the self, insofar as subjects who invest in their bodies through practices of care also invest in the augmentation of their bodies.\(^3\) After all, what better way of cultivating the Cartesian certainty that “I am” (and that I am at all) than by simultaneously optimising what “I (think I) am”, by optimising the body. There are at least two reasons why an understanding of the way that practices of care amount to

\(^1\) Included among these are an ever-increasing number of fashion trends, diets, body modifications and 'somatechnics'. For extended discussions, see: Pugliese & Stryker (2009), and Murray & Sullivan (2012). False teeth, 'botox' injections, tattoos, cosmetics, piercings, body-building, laser hair-removal, waxing, steroids and testosterone replacement therapy are all salient examples.

\(^2\) This is not to say that there aren't others who attempt to take a diametrically opposite route, fantasising, as Kirby puts it, about “having everything amputated” (1997, p.132). As Kirby articulates, this fantasy features prominently in the 'sci-fi' genre, in which bodies are often augmented with metal, microchips, computer circuitry and alien technologies; indeed, sometimes the body is vacated altogether when the subject is uploaded to the internet or into some other virtual reality (1997, p.129). As Kirby points out, such fantasies reproduce Cartesian dualism insofar as they produce the notion that the body itself can be 'amputated' and left behind, while the subject and subjectivity nevertheless continue because both are constructed as inhering to the mind alone (1997, p.138).

\(^3\) These trends of defence nationalism follow trends of late-capitalism, because, as Renata Salecl maintains, when people buy clothes, health-products, cosmetics and gym-memberships, they also buy and buy into the imaginaries associated with those products, investing in them not only financially, but psychically as well, in terms of the ways these products are imagined to augment the body (2006, p.56-57). This observation articulates with Jeremy Rifkin's analysis of late-capitalism, whereby he claims products are increasingly marketed not as products in and of themselves, but in terms of the experiences and 'life-styles' imagined to accompany them (2001, p.7).
practices of bodily cultivation is useful to the theorisation of defence nationalism. The first of these, is that some of the modalities of defence nationalism are structurally similar to the modalities of bodily care *qua* cultivation that occur through practices of consumption. Just as subjects can augment their bodies and corresponding identities by subscribing to the imaginaries and narratives attached to various practices of consumption, so too, nationalist subjects can alter their bodies and corresponding identities by subscribing to the imaginaries and narratives of defence nationalism (which augment the body in terms of its imagined qualities and its belonging). A further reason is that defence nationalism offers its own forms of bodily care (*qua* bodily cultivation), which stand as structurally comparable alternatives to those described above. Defence nationalism provides a fantasy of bodily care *firstly* through its imagined capacity to defend the nation, and *secondly* through its capacity to provide convincing imaginaries that *bind* the body of its subject to the body politic (through the binding of the body-image to the signifier, as described in the previous chapter). By serving *both* of these functions simultaneously, I maintain that defence nationalism enables the fantasy that ‘individual’ bodies can be cared for and cultivated providing that the nation to which those bodies belong is ‘defended’ (that is, cared for and cultivated). The extrapolation that the nation's defence is equivalent to the body's defence converts the onus of caring for the individual body into a collective political enterprise; it also means that defence nationalism can be characterised not only as a form of *collective investment* in the defence of the body politic, but as a collective investment in the care of ‘individual’ bodies as well.

Some of the events examined earlier in this thesis—including the respective attacks on the life-savers of Cronulla and Lee Rigby—serve as a kind of exemplary inverse of what I am here seeking to illustrate. Whereas in each of these instances, attacks on individuals were interpreted by defence nationalists as attacks on the nation itself, what I examine throughout this chapter is the opposite: the notion that if the nation is cared for, then so too, the nationalist will be cared for. This preliminary outline fits, at least partially, into Foucault's framework of biopower as it relates to practices of care of the self. According to
Foucault, rather than punishing bodies (as in medieval sovereignty), the contemporary Sovereign instead cares for its subjects, providing them with the infrastructure through which to care for and optimise the self (1978, p.136). The result of this is a pliable subject who is tethered to the Sovereign for security, health, wealth and welfare. This, for Foucault, is the very definition of biopower, which:

[works] to incite, reinforce, control, monitor, optimise, and organise the forces under it: a power bent on generating forces, making them grow, and ordering them, rather than one dedicated to impeding them, making them submit, destroying them (1978, p.136).

Because the biopolitical Sovereign provides the means by which subjects can acquire better quality of life, biopower 'optimises' the subject correlative to the extent to which the subject binds the self to existing power structures (Foucault 1978, p.139). In doing so, the Sovereign ensures that its subjects participate in the structures of society that serve to perpetuate the Sovereign itself, merely by caring for their own bodies (Foucault 1978, p.142). What the relationship between care of self and existing power structures means for Foucault, is that with care of the self comes 'docility' toward established power structures, because it is participation in these power structures that is conceived as the bearer of "health" and "well-being" (as conventionally understood).

Foucault's account of biopower is clearly useful for conceptualising some aspects of defence nationalism. Alongside what I have outlined above, it can be said that defence nationalism seeks to 'optimise' the body of its subject by optimising the body's belonging to the body politic as well as its national qualities. Similarly, in a Foucauldian fashion, defence nationalism produces in its subjects a 'docile' disposition towards the legitimacy of the nation, which nationalists actively seek to reproduce and reinforce. However, these features notwithstanding, a number of caveats remain to be elucidated. The first, is that although defence nationalists 'tether' themselves to the nation, they are not at all docile with respect to the nation's existing power structures and institutions; indeed, as I will show throughout this chapter, defence nationalists tend to be actively hostile towards the
nation's traditional political structures and institutions, articulating the belief that a disconnect has emerged between the *authentic* nation and its contemporary political leaders and institutions. An example of this is shown above in *Image 11*, in which an EDL member holds a sign, written in the colours of the Union Jack, that claims he is "proud of my identity" (meaning his *national* identity), but is "disgusted" by the nation's formal political leaders. As I will show throughout this chapter, defence nationalists typically frame this disconnect between the 'authentic' nation and its contemporary institutions as a betrayal or treason of the nation.

A further caveat that relates to the first, is that the particular forms of the 'care' and 'docility' that defence nationalists practice, appear to be paradoxically *aggressive* in that they come at the expense of the racialised other. Indeed, as events such as the Cronulla Riots (and more recently, the Charlottesville Riots74) demonstrate, it is the very *processes* of excluding the racialised other from the nation that purportedly constitutes care of the nation. Throughout this chapter, I maintain that the effectiveness of defence nationalism as a means of care of the self stems *not* from its positioning of the nation as the Foucauldian biopolitical Sovereign, but instead from its ability to position the fiction of the nation as the Other. I argue that it is with the nation established as the Other that defence nationalism promises to act as a *salve* to the distrust and disaffection its subjects feel towards existing political structures, even while it covertly works to keep those feelings of distrust *intact*, such that they serve as an inbuilt excuse for the failure of the nation to provide and guarantee perfectly symbolised identities.

In order to expand upon the arguments outlined above, it is first necessary to make some preliminary comments regarding the way that defence nationalism functions as a collective response to the various risks that nationalists perceive (noting that many of these risks are deemed to have arisen in the contemporary era as a result of globalisation). Many researchers have dedicated themselves to outlining the risks to which defence

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74 For an overview, see: Smithers (2017).
nationalism purportedly responds; most notably, these researchers include theorists of the 'risk society' and the 'Anthropocene' (Beck 1992; Beck & Levy 2013; Bauman 2013; Walsh & Karolis 2008; Caplan 2000; Ericson & Haggerty 1997; and Giddens 1990, 1991 & 1999). By way of an introduction, this chapter will briefly examine some of the general theses of these theorists. Throughout this chapter I am not concerned with the empirical accuracy of these claims per se (although I do necessarily dispute them); rather, I am concerned with how these theses reflect the ways that defence nationalists conceptualise risks to self and nation in the contemporary era. In short, I am primarily concerned with defence nationalist fantasies of risk in the psychoanalytic sense (which I claim articulate with the general theses of risk society theorists).

In the sections that follow, I analyse some of the psychosocial implications that fantasies of risk have for defence nationalists. I focus specifically on fantasies that globalisation has destabilised previously stable social meanings. While the notion that the taxonomies of the social field were ever stable is itself a fantasy, I examine the effects that this apparent destabilisation has had on the relationships defence nationalists imagine with the Other. As presaged above, I characterise defence nationalism as a psychically efficient response to the perceived risks to which self and nation are imagined exposed, insofar as defence nationalism offers its care to both the 'individual' body and the body politic simultaneously, as one and the same thing. I characterise defence nationalism as an efficient response to perceived instabilities of social meaning insofar as it promises to 'return' the subject to the body by constructing nationality within the body as a permanent fixture. As I elaborate throughout this chapter, defence nationalism achieves this fantasy of a return to the body by actively transmogrifying the gaze of an increasingly unstable big Other into a stable, undeniable fact of the body.

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75 Throughout this chapter, I draw from Žižek's interpretation of fantasy in the Lacanian sense. As Žižek elaborates, for Lacan, the function of fantasy is to hide the fact that like the subject, the Symbolic Order itself is structured around the impossibility of the Real (2008b, p.138); that is, “fantasy” hides the fact that it hides nothing at all (Žižek 2008b, p.148). Although fantasy is structured around a void, it nevertheless structures the social sphere by articulating intersubjective “reality”; as Žižek notes: “at its most fundamental, fantasy tells me what I am for my others” (2006, p.49). For Lacan's account, see the unpublished seminar series, Seminar XIV: The Logic of Fantasy (1966-67). For an overview, of Lacan's theory of fantasy, see Žižek (2008b), Glynos & Stavrakakis (2008), Stavrakakis (1999).
Fantasies of Risk and the Risk Society

Theorists of the 'risk society' provide a number of general theses regarding apparent increases in distrust of traditional political structures in tandem with apparent increases in risk-consciousness in late modernity (for extended discussions of the risk society, see: Beck 1992; Beck & Levy 2013; Bauman 2013; Walsh & Karolis 2008; Caplan 2000; Ericson & Haggerty 1997; and Giddens 1990, 1991 & 1999). Risk society theorists generally define the risk society as a society whose primary concern, on both an existential and empirical level, has shifted from 'scarcity' to 'risk', meaning that 'natural' risks are thought to be eclipsed by those generated by contemporary means of production. For such theorists, the result of this is a society that is less focused on fulfilling 'basic needs', than it is with innovating to overcome the risks generated in fulfilling those needs (Beck 1992, p.2).

Accompanying the sense that technological advancement incurs greater levels of risk and proximity of threats, is a sense that the life-world of late modernity is also increasingly 'virtualised' (Žižek 1999). The modern marketplace for example, is less a physical site than a 'virtual', electronic market of 0s and 1s. This apparently increasing virtualisation is intimately linked to an uncanny sense of risk, in that the 'virtualisation' of the world (or rather, our consciousness of it) is understood as manufacturing risk, while society nevertheless remains reliant on the very technologies that effectively render all threats in the globalised world immanent and proximal (Beck 1992, p.1-2).

In the risk society, globalising forces have effectively contracted the world by erasing the difficulties of time and distance through contemporary technologies of travel and

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76 Although an appreciation of these general risk society theses is useful to this thesis, they are nevertheless in some respects highly problematic. It is difficult to plausibly claim, for example, that modernity is a uniform experience for all of those that live within it, as clearly the struggle for basic subsistence remains a daily hurdle for many. Moreover, 'scarcity' and 'risk' need not be disarticulated from one another in the way that is typically portrayed by risk society theorists. Indeed, I argue that with respect to defence nationalism, scarcity and risk are instead intimately bound to one another, insofar as for many defence nationalists, the pre-eminent risk of our time is the notion that the very nation itself and its 'way of life' has become a scarce resource. As we shall see, this presumed state of national scarcity is itself often imagined by defence nationalists as one of the defining signatures of modernity. In other words, defence nationalists imagine that the nation is changing and becoming scarce because the world itself is changing through the forces of globalisation and modernity. These themes are examined in detail throughout the coming chapters.
communication. Accompanying this physical diminution, is a general sense of “society’s shrinking capacity to provide a good life to everyone”, resulting in widely-held defensive attitudes (Hage 2003, p.86), of which nationalist defence leagues are but one instantiation. Hage refers this culture as an *anthrax culture*, “where every breath of fresh air we take becomes a threatening border” (2003, p.86). Anxieties such as these seem to function, at least in part, as a backdrop to many defence nationalist narratives. For example, one belief that defence nationalists often propagate is the notion that due to modern technologies (such as international travel, markets, and labour) people have become increasingly disjointed from their ‘natural’ place. Accordingly, defence nationalists often depict the nation as being under siege by ‘foreigners’ who do not belong. As one member of the English Defence League put it, “If the migrants don’t like their countries then they are going to destroy the countries they are going to” (Joseph 2017, n.p.). Similarly, in a comment on Australia’s refugee intake, former Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott surmised that “Jesus knew that there was a place for everything and it is not necessarily everyone’s place to come to Australia” (Knott 2015).77

In the face of these apparent erosions of borders through globalisation, defence nationalists seek to re-articulate and police their own borders (as was explored in Chapter 2 in relation to nationalised spatialities, such as the beach and streets). Such thinking is encapsulated by the (in)famous sound-bite of former Prime Minister John Howard’s 2001 Australian election campaign: “we will decide who comes to this country and the circumstances in which they come”; so too, it is evinced by former Prime Minister Tony Abbott’s now equally (in)famous political slogan: “stop the boats” (a reference to refugees who seek to arrive in Australia by boat).

A core component of risk society world-views, is that rather than purporting to describe

77 Similarly, speaking on the threat of ‘home-grown’ terrorism during his ‘National Security Address’ in 2015, Abbott remarked “we know that this message [Islamism] of the most primitive savagery is being spread through the most sophisticated technology”; Abbott continued: “lone actor attacks are not new...All too often, alienated and unhappy people brood quietly. Feeling persecuted and looking for meaning, they self-radicalise online” (Prime Minister Tony Abbott’s full national security statement 2015).
the world as it really is, they instead explicitly describe the world as rapidly changing and unknowable (Beck 1992; Giddens 1999; Bauman 2013; Caplan 2000; Žižek 1999). Put in Lacanian terms, the certainty that risk society fantasies provide is the certainty that the world is uncertain. As shown throughout this thesis, defence nationalists mobilise this uncertainty as a means of legitimising their defensive dispositions; their wariness of the other (as instantiated by refugees, migrants, and foreigners); and, ultimately, their defence of the nation. The above narratives of uncertainty typically entail fantasies that Nature has been distorted, corrupted and augmented by modern modes of production, with potentially catastrophic but unknown and unknowable consequences. The subtext of the above example, for instance, holds that “Jesus knew” there was a correct and natural place for everyone, and that it is therefore unnatural for everyone to come to our nation.

For many risk society theorists, one hallmark of the risk society era is the erosion of social trust, whereby subjects no longer trust official institutions to keep them insulated from risk, as it is those very institutions themselves that generate risk (Žižek 1999; Castoriadis 1987; Putnam 2000; Hay 2007; Salecl 2006; Giddens 1990; Beck 1992; Brown 2015). For Cornelius Castoriadis, this lack of trust has occasioned a “crisis of identification”, where subjects are unwilling to trust traditional social and political institutions, instead maintaining a cynical distance (1987). Similarly, Santner maintains that a lack of trust in society has led to “a general investiture crisis in society at large”, whereby subjects struggle to “locate” the self with respect to available signifiers and identifications (2011, p.11).

The more theoretically-minded observations of Žižek (1999) Castoriadis (1987) and Santer (2011) articulate with broad-scale empirical analyses conducted by researchers such as Robert Putnam (2000) and Colin Hay (2007), both of whom have observed increasing

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78 Noting that the fantasy that we live in a radically uncertain age provides its own kind of death-drive-like certainty—that we live ’at the end of times’, and so on.

79 This observation regarding the function of ’Nature’ as a fantasy relates to one of the core arguments of Chapter 7, which explores the way that defence nationalists draw upon fantasies of the nation as a supposedly ‘natural’, authentic entity that can be restored, returned and reinstated as the Real.
levels of social disaffection and distrust in contemporary Western Liberal Democracies, particularly with regard to formal political institutions and processes. Such notions of distrust are often conveyed by members of defence nationalist movements in the UK and Australia (as shown above in Image 11). The idea that the nation is headed for collapse, and that the nation’s formal political leaders have betrayed the nation (and therefore its subjects) are common refrains in defence nationalist discourse. Regarding Australia’s refugee intake, for example, members of Reclaim Australia observed: “So very sad. How can governments let this [immigration and multiculturalism] happen. Betrayal of its people at its very worst” (Doogs 2017); another added, “The collapse of society is fast approaching. Heading back to the dark ages” (Cook 2017). In 2017, members of two Victorian councils were widely condemned by defence nationalists for “treason”, following their decision not to hold citizenship ceremonies on Australia Day (which is held on January 26, and marks the official day that the colonisation of Australia begun). As one Reclaim Australia member lamented: “Who is running these council s [sic] in Australia they need to be charged for treason” (Stewart 2017), while another elaborated, “They should be hung for treason” (Mac 2017).

The notion that the nation’s formal political systems have failed to insulate the nation from risk is typically couched by defence nationalists in terms of their failure to insulate the nation from non-national others. Defence nationalists typically conceptualise this failure as betrayal or treason, because, as defence nationalists see it, formal political systems have facilitated and sometimes encouraged immigration and multiculturalism. For defence nationalists, this “treason” and “betrayal” is typically conceptualised in terms of race, as per the Birmingham Division of the EDL’s slogan, which, shown in Image 12, declares: “Denying your race is treason!”
Similarly, following the death of Lee Rigby, the EDL produced a sign that implies that the nation’s immigration policies were to blame for Rigby’s death. The sign, which is still used at EDL rallies and protests, features a picture of Lee Rigby in his military uniform; below it, a caption reads: “Time To Rethink Migration Policies! STOP ISLAMIC MIGRATION”.

Likewise, on ‘Cronulla Memorial Day’, the Party For Freedom sought to depict itself as an "alternative to the major treasonous political parties"; in advertising its events, it declared:

The scars [of the Cronulla Riots] will only heal when our state and federal governments acknowledge the failure of state sanctioned multiculturalism coupled with incompatible Islamic immigration and apologise to all Australians for forcing genocide upon the great people of this nation (Donelly & Hall 2015).

In this passage, “state sanctioned multiculturalism” and “incompatible Islamic immigration” constitute a betrayal of the nation (indeed, a “genocide”) which is imposed by the government on its own people. For defence nationalists, these state-based policies of multiculturalism and immigration have not only betrayed and failed to protect specific individuals—such as Lee Rigby and the life-savers of Cronulla—so too, they have failed to protect the very nation itself and its “way of life”; as the EDL Mission Statement laments: “Our so-called leaders...refuse to protect our traditional way of life” (EDL 2016a).

For Castoriadis (1987), Žižek (1999), and Santner (2011), ‘mistakes’ on behalf of the big Other reduce symbolic efficiency by diminishing the efficacy of symbolic identifications—potentially to the point at which the very symbolic community itself disintegrates. Indeed,
as shown above, for defence nationalists such ‘mistakes’ can constitute treason and total betrayal. However, the extent and type of disintegration of collapse is questionable. To say that a symbolic community ‘disintegrates’ is not to say that the formal political systems of those communities necessarily disintegrate as well (indeed, somewhat paradoxically, it appears as if disaffection and distrust towards the status quo can nevertheless maintain it); nor does the reverse necessarily follow. Rather than formal political systems and the communities those systems supposedly sustain collapsing and ‘disintegrating’, for defence nationalists, the result seems to be that both the subjects of these formal political systems, and the political systems themselves, dis-integrate from one another, and that consequently, the role that formal political systems play for defence nationalists as an organising symbolic fiction becomes less efficient.

Žižek reads the “investiture crisis” described above not only as a collapse of symbolic efficiency—that is, as a collapse of the efficiency with which subjects can form identity-sustaining identifications with the signifiers available to them—but also as an instantiation of Lacan’s famous aphorism that “the big Other does not exist” (quoted in Žižek 1999, p.322). For Lacan, “the big Other does not exist” precisely because, irrespective of how strongly a subject maintains “faith” in the Other, the gap between the Symbolic and the Real cannot be eclipsed. Providing that the subject does ‘believe’ (in) the Other however, the Other fulfils an important function, which is alleviating the subject’s anxiety by providing a fantasy of “reality”. As Lacan elaborates:

What is called logic or law is never anything more than a body of rules that were laboriously worked out at a moment of history, duly dated and situated by a stamp of origin...thus, I won’t expect anything from these rules without the Other’s good faith (2006, p.358).

For Žižek, the risk society chronically undermines the Other, because in the risk society, previously stable knowledge is constantly undermined (1999, p.336). For Žižek, the notion

80 Recalling that the Other is the symbolic fiction that presides over the entirety of the symbolic field, guaranteeing its ‘truth’ and coherence despite the failure of the Symbolic to capture the Real (Lacan 2006, p.358; Lacan 2006, p.364-383).
that contemporary society is a risk society erodes symbolic efficiency because technological advancement is conceptualised such that the Other is constantly depicted as having made mistakes and decisions based on information that new discoveries have overturned or invalidated (1999, p.336). This collapse of the Other can be read into the fixation that defence nationalists have regarding state-based policies of immigration and multiculturalism, and the related notion that these policies have constituted the nation’s “betrayal” and “treason” (as discussed above).

For Žižek, the collapse of symbolic efficiency burdens subjects with the task of deciding matters for themselves, because the anxiety-alleviating function of the Other is compromised (1999 p.332). In the so-called ‘risk society’, this burden to decide is doubly problematic because the same narratives that produce a sense of risk and disaffection also apply to many of the alternatives one might pursue. For Žižek, this leaves many subjects feeling exposed to both inherent risk and to the consequences of one's own decisions (1999, p.338). Understood in this way, subjects of the 'risk society' occupy an inverse position to that of the mythical subject of the Enlightenment. Contrary to the latter, who is supposedly guided by pure reason alone, the former must decide for themselves from a position of knowing that they do not know.

This paradox of knowing that one does not know, but being forced to make a decision anyway, manifests quite clearly among nationalists with respect to the issues of migration and refugees. For defence nationalists, a general paranoia exists that terrorists will enter the nation through “mass migration” or as refugees (Waters 2015); accordingly, the process of deciding who to allow in and who to keep out is too risky, because, as one Australian nationalist observed, “It seems that the countries with the most tolerance for these monsters are being attacked the most” (Aleksandra 2015). As such, for defence nationalists, the nation's borders ought to be entirely closed to outsiders, as one EDL

81 For Žižek (1999), this 'collapse of symbolic efficiency' provides a psychoanalytic interpretation of the widespread distrust and disaffection that both Putnam (2000) and Hay (2007) observe, as outlined above.
member declared:

[I wish] this government would wake up and do what the British public ask of them. Stop the mass immigration and deport Muslim extremists along with those who can’t abide by British law. Bull doze the breeding ground mosques (Thornton 2017, n.p.).

In light of the perceived failure of the Sovereign to perform this role, defence nationalists and defence leagues have assumed the burden of defending the nation's borders, and deciding who to let in, for themselves.

Aside from some of the more explicitly anxiety-inducing effects such as those described above, according to theorists such as Žižek (1999), Castoriadis (1987), and Santner (2011), a collapse of symbolic efficiency is accompanied by a number of other psychosocial implications. One of these, is that for subjects to see themselves as something, they must see themselves through something. As shown in the previous chapter, for Lacan, this 'something' is the co-ordinates provided by the Symbolic Order (Lacan 2006, p.694). This means that a collapse of symbolic efficiency—which is a collapse of the trustworthiness of the regimes of knowledge traditionally curated by official political institutions—leaves subjects not only unable to care for the self, but also unable to adequately articulate the self for whom one would care. The focus of this chapter moving forward, is precisely how defence nationalism both emerges and proceeds as a response to this difficulty of self-care.

Nostalgia Without Memory
Žižek observes that one effect of the apparent 'virtualisation' of the social world and the risks it induces is an increased inclination towards romanticising the past and its imagined 'authenticity' (2002 p.12). Žižek refers to this romanticisation as a desire to return to the "Real Thing" (2002 p.12). For Žižek, subjects imagine the return of the 'Real Thing' as an antidote to the 'virtual' world of the risk society and the collapse of the Other (2002 p.12). Throughout the remainder of this chapter, I examine the phenomenon of defence nationalism as an attempted (re)turn towards the body qua the Real Thing. This attempted
return is somewhat comparable to Žižek’s analysis of the phenomenon of “cutters” (people who cut themselves), in that for Žižek, far from suicidality per se, non-lethal acts of cutting can sometimes be interpreted as a subject’s efforts to “(re)gain a hold on reality” by “[grounding] the ego firmly in bodily reality” (2002, p.10, my italics). For Žižek, such attempts at grounding one’s self in one’s body ultimately represent “a desperate strategy to return to the Real of the body” (2002, p.10).

Put in the above language, many common defence nationalist practices—such as adorning and tattooing the body with national iconography, and imagining that nationality exists in one’s ‘DNA’—can be understood as attempts towards ‘escaping’ a reality that is increasingly perceived as ‘virtual’ by grounding the ‘reality’ of the nation in the undeniable material(ity) of the body. This desperate bid to ‘return’ to the Real (of the body) manifests as something approximate to a nostalgia without memory. The desire to ‘escape’ the virtualisation of the social by ‘returning’ to the Real Thing manifests in a multitude of settings; many tourists, for example, seek to escape the inauthenticity of their usual surrounds by going elsewhere to “gaze upon...a set of different scenes, of landscapes or townscapes which are out of the ordinary” (Urry 1990, p.1). Similarly, a number of diets have risen to popularity that advocate eschewing ‘inauthentic’ contemporary eating habits, claiming to ‘return’ their ‘consumer’ to authentic ways of eating; the so-called ‘paleo diet’, for example, espouses and aestheticises the eating habits of Palaeolithic era ‘man’ [sic], claiming to return its subject to the authentic eating habits for which subjects are said to have evolved (see, for example, Meat and Livestock Australia’s advertisement featuring Sam Neil, which claims, “Red meat – we were meant to eat it”). While these tourists and dieters seek a return to the Real Thing through travel, escape and consumption, defence nationalists seek a return to the Real via nostalgia for a nation they imagine once existed, as shown by the Brexit movement (which called for a return to British sovereignty) and Donald Trump’s slogan, “Make America Great Again”.

82 For an extended discussion of the “staged authenticity” of touristic experience, see MacCannell (1973).
83 As Smithers observes, “Trump’s rhetoric as a candidate, and now as president, paints a picture of an America under siege from migrants, ‘political correctness’, and a host of foreign and domestic advisories” (2017, n.p.).
Defence nationalism provides an attractive pathway towards this 'return' (to authenticity) for two primary reasons. The first, is that defence nationalism directly promises to function as an antidote to both the apparent 'virtualisation' of the social world and to the distrust that subjects harbour towards established political institutions. For example, defence leagues promise to rectify the inauthenticity of the contemporary nation by overturning the aforementioned “treasonous” policies of multiculturalism and immigration (Donelly & Hall 2015). The second reason, which is related to the first, is that by constructing nationhood as an incontestable 'fact' of the body (as the words of the previously cited slogans, “it's in our DNA” and “denying your race is treason” suggest), defence nationalism seeks not only to return the nation to its authentic state, but to return its subject to its authentic state: to the idealised 'whole' body that enjoys a privileged status with/in the nation. This apparent explication of the national body provides something approximate to a nostalgia without memory, in that the promised body is none other than the mythical body that pre-exists the subject's entrance into language (as described in Chapter 4). While the whole body is a fantasy, defence nationalist narratives nevertheless appear to fulfil their promise by allowing others to gaze upon and witness the imagined national properties of the body, providing, by so doing, 'external proof' regarding the factual status of the body (through the intersubjective verification of identity that the nation affords to nationalists).

By allowing others to gaze upon the body in ways that are favourable to defence nationalists—as was explored, for example, in Chapter 2 with respect to the belonging of nationalist bodies on the beach—defence nationalism provides something approximate to 'exosomatic memory': that is, it provides narratives about the body that exist 'outside' of the body but that nevertheless narrate and construct the supposedly 'inner' and innate qualities of the body and the subject. Through the recognition defence nationalist bodies receive through the gaze of others, these 'exosomatic memories' can then be internalised (remembered), allowing the 'outside' of the body to be incorporated into the bodily-schema, which is imagined as capturing and contouring the inner kernel of identity that
supposedly subsists in the bodily Real. Defence nationalists therefore take the opposite approach to the authenticity-seeking figure of the tourist described by Urry (1990) and MacCannell (1973), albeit while hoping to arrive at the same destination. Whereas—according to McCannell and Urry—tourists search for 'authentic' encounters with difference elsewhere, defence nationalists seek 'authentic' encounters with sameness at 'home', within the nation, so that the national qualities of the self can be mirrored back to the subject through the authentic bodies of the fellow nationals that surround them.

The Production of Exosomatic Memory Through Practices of Care

To have their bodies recognised as desired—so that imagined, underlying identities are intersubjectively confirmed—subjects cultivate the body-image through practices of care. These practices of bodily cultivation reflect the discursive construction and valorisation of bodies (as discussed in detail Chapter 2 in reference to Feldman's concept of “telling” (1991)). The bodily attributes that are idealised, and what those attributes are deemed to represent, differs drastically across space and time, as well as among subjects within the same socio-cultural setting (Feldman 1991; Grosz 1994; Kirby 1997). Although the specific 'messages' subjects seek to convey about their identities through bodily cultivation can differ, disavowal of the body's cultivation remains constant, because although bodies are consciously produced and cultivated, they are also nevertheless imagined as naturally existing entities that pre-exist and resist culture and cultivation (Grosz 1994; Kirby 1997). As Grosz elaborates, the body has “generally remained mired in presumptions regarding its naturalness, its fundamental biological and precultural status”, and, “its brute status as given” (Grosz 1994, p.x). From these presumptions, stems “a base/superstructure model in which biology provides a self-contained 'natural' base and ideology provides a dependent parasitic 'second story' which can be added—or not—leaving the base more or less as it is” (Grosz 1994, p.17). Consider, for example, the occurrence whereby a person references markings on the body, such as callouses on the hands or the 'weathered' appearance of the skin, as evidence not only of the life they have lived, but of their fundamental, underlying
identity as well. A recent advertisement for Victoria Bitter\(^{84}\) provides an example. Replete with national iconography, the advertisement shows an example of Australian ‘mateship’, whereby a group of men assist each other in completing hard, manual work. A voice-over observes: “every scar is a memory, every callous is a job well done”. This advertisement demonstrates the concept of *exosomatic memory*, insofar as it depicts the bodies of its subjects as historiographical museums, which stand as a testament not only to the subjects’ experiences (in this case, their hard work), but as a testament also to their supposedly underlying identities—that they are tough, masculine, resilient *Australian* men, bound together through mateship and hard work (in addition to the ‘*objective fact*’ that they ought to purchase and consume the thirst-quenching product).\(^{85}\)

Just as in the examples above, despite its array of consciously performed practices (such as flag-draping and tattooing), defence nationalism purports to articulate a bodily Real that has always-already existed *without the need* for cultivation. As shown in Image 1, for example, for members of the ADL, the “Anzac spirit” exists naturally within the body. So too, when participants in the Cronulla Riots painted their bared chests with phrases like “we grew here you flew here” and “2230” (the Cronulla postcode), they sought to *naturalise* affinities of body and place. Similar practices occur across other defence nationalist movements. It is common for defence league members to inscribe their flesh with tattoos featuring national iconography, such as flags and postcodes, or with other iconography through which nationalities, residential linkages, neighbourhoods and jurisdictions can be inferred. Among Australian nationalists, this often includes the signifiers of the Southern Cross and Ned Kelly\(^{86}\), as shown in Image 13:

\(^{84}\) Victorian Bitter, often referred to simply as ‘Vic’ or ‘VB’, is a quintessential Australian beer known for its harsh, bitter taste. As one of the cheapest Australian beers, ‘VB’ is associated with working class, blue-collar Australians, hence the famous slogan: “A hard earned thirst needs a big cold beer, and the best cold beer is Vic”.

\(^{85}\) This interpretation accords with Feldman’s analysis of “telling” (1991), as previously discussed.

\(^{86}\) Ned Kelly is the most iconic white Australian ‘bushranger’, an outlaw gang-leader who became famous for wearing self-made bullet-proof armour. Following his death in 1880 in a shoot-out with police, Ned Kelly has become a key figure in Australian mythology, signifying Australian ‘resistance’ and ‘emancipation’ from the British Empire; as Graham Seal elaborates:

Ned Kelly has progressed from outlaw to national hero in a century, and to international icon in a further 20 years. The still-enigmatic, slightly saturnine and ever-ambivalent bushranger is the undisputed, if not universally admired, national symbol of Australia (2011, p.99-100).
Similarly, imagery of Knights and the English Rose, as shown in Image 14, feature prominently among members of the EDL, including in their tattoos, banners, websites and digital images posted and shared online.

My thesis is that defence nationalists undertake these practices of bodily cultivation and identification partly as a response to the apparent 'virtualisation' of the social world and the associated collapse of symbolic efficiency (as outlined above). Through these practices, defence nationalists seek to recuperate the stability and authenticity of the social field which they imagine is lost. The above practices seek to do this, by transmogrifying the gaze

87 In adorning their bodies with signifiers such as those shown in Images 13 and 14, defence nationalists not only display their loyalty to their nation, movement and group, so too, they demonstrate the imagined affiliation of their nation, movement and group to the spatial domain/s they take to be their own (as explored in detail in Chapter 2).
of the increasingly unreliable Other—who (over)sees and verifies the social field—into reliable, undeniable facts of the body. This transmogrification of the Other's gaze occurs because the cultivation of meaning within the body not only refashions and author(ise)s the body, but so too the gaze that 'sees' the body. This entwined refashioning of body and gaze is self-referential: it is effectuated because the cultivation of meaning with/in the body produces a gaze that 'sees' those meanings. When subjects cultivate their bodies, they therefore also cultivate the gaze so that the 'eye' is co-opted and split from 'itself', and converted from a regular 'organ' to a symbolic organ that 'sees' desired meaning within the body in lieu of the Other's imagined capacity to do so.

An example of what I have described immediately above occurs among members of certain gangs in Philippines. Within these gangs, members are required to have a portrait of the gang leader—their guarantor of meaning—tattooed onto the body. By doing this, the subject's fidelity to the gang leader and the group is reified as an objective fact of the body. This dynamic can be interpreted as an example of biopower par excellence, whereby the internalised gaze of the Other is literally inscribed into the flesh, rendering loyalty an 'objective', 'external' fact of the body that others, including the subject, can witness and verify. What the practice of tattooing of the face of gang leaders renders literally apparent, Images 1-2, 5-6, 9-10 and 13 evince more subtly. Crucially, the practices of bodily adornment (or bodily (re)printing) contained in these images not only convert imagined 'facts' about the subject's identity into bodily facts, they also augur the One who will verify—the Other—into (somatic) existence. That is, the (im)printing of the gang leader or nation onto the 'individual' body not only verifies the subject's loyalty to the gang or nation, so too, it incarnates the gang or nation (qua the Other) into three-dimensional space, thereby appearing to provide the Other a body of its own.

By ostensibly auguring the Other into existence, subjects enter into a relationship with the Other that is paradoxically reciprocal.\(^{88}\) Whereas in the usual Lacanian formulation, it is the

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\(^{88}\) Noting, however, that the subject's relationship to the Other is, by definition, always 'reciprocal' insofar as it is from
fiction of the Other that confirms the subject’s apparent existence, in this formation, it is (also) the fiction of the subject’s body that confirms the Other’s apparent existence. In other words, it is not only the body that is cultivated such that it is primed for a desired and likeable recognition (one that aligns the subject with the Other); so too, the Other, who is increasingly seen as lacking, is also cultivated. Through this disavowed cultivation of both the self and the Other, subjects (re)commit to the Other and the Symbolic Order over which the Other presides, thereby overcoming the investiture crisis at large, as outlined by Castoriadis (1987), Žižek (1999) and Santner (2011).

**Symbolic Castration: Unwanted Returns**

In the previous two sections, I drew on the Lacanian argument that subjects harbour fantasies of a ‘return’ to the Real. I maintained that this desired return manifests among defence nationalists through fantasies of a return to the bodily Real, which is analogous to ‘nostalgia without memory’. I then claimed that defence nationalists seek to overcome the ostensible ‘virtualisation’ of the contemporary social world—the collapse of symbolic efficiency through the collapse of the Other—by cultivating the body in ways that not only reify a desired identity, but that reify the Other as well. Throughout this section, I explore Lacan’s notion of symbolic castration, which calls into question the permanence of any such attempts towards cultivating and reifying the self by cultivating and reifying the Other.

Žižek explains Lacan’s theory of symbolic castration through the example of the king’s sceptre (2007, p.34).89 The king’s sceptre, which comes from beyond the body, comes to adorn the body as a symbolic apparatus, allowing it to be recognised as the body of a king. By doing so, the sceptre functions as an external mask that offers the subject an enjoyable image of the self, granting the subject an experience of her own power by facilitating recognition of what becomes her image to others (Žižek 2007, p.34); however, in bestowing

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this image from without, the sceptre simultaneously institutes a gap between the subject and that power and its enjoyment (Žižek 2007, p.34), an observation that led Lacan to claim that "if a man who thinks he is a king is mad, a king who thinks he is a king is no less so" (Lacan 2006, p.139). Just as the signifier of the crown is invested with meaning that allows subjects to appear likeable to themselves (as kings), so too, the signifiers of the nation—including the Southern Cross, postcodes and national flags—allow nationalists to appear likeable to themselves as national subjects (as shown in Images 2-3, 5-6, 9-11 and 13). However, just as the sceptre bestows the qualities of being a king from without, thereby instituting an intractable gap between the subject and the qualities of being king, so too, the signifiers of nationality institute a gap between the nationalist and the imagined qualities of the nation.

There is an important distinction to be made regarding Lacan’s example of the king’s sceptre above, which is that it is not simply how I adorn my body that potentially occasions symbolic castration; nor is it merely that I apply symbolic categories to my body which castrate me. The point, rather, is that the very notion of the body, as the objective (and objectified) ‘substance’ of the human subject, is, in and of itself a symbolic category that potentially occasions the intractable gap that symbolic castration inaugurates—including its associated anxieties. The way the body figures in the dynamic of symbolic castration is therefore two-fold, because the body is first imagined as a place where identity can appear to be ‘dis-covered’, and second, is the place where this ‘discovery’ can itself be exposed as a potentially traumatic miscovery, because far from the raw substance of life—the Real—flesh is also a symbolic category to which other categories are applied, as a signifier that interacts with other signifiers. Žižek touches upon this, without pursuing it to its end, when he says that:

Far from resulting in total predictability and certainty...this very radical self-objectivisation (the situation in which, in the guise of the genetic formula, I will be able to confront what I ‘objectively am’) will generate even more radical uncertainties about what the actual psychosocial effects of such knowledge and its applications will be (1999, p.335).
Here, Žižek omits an ontological dimension of the “radical uncertainties” he perceives, by failing to note that how we theorise and posit flesh—on the pretence that in doing so, we are dealing with the raw, objective, pre-, or non-ideological material of ‘the human subject’—determines which other ideological clothes or categories will fit in the subject’s explicitly symbolic life.

Andrew Niccol’s Gattaca (1997), which depicts a dystopian future ruled by eugenics and genetic-enhancement technologies, explores the above ontological uncertainty. In the world of Gattaca, social status and employment prospects are determined entirely by genetic testing. The film’s protagonist, Vincent Freeman, is an ‘in-valid’: one born without the aid of genetic enhancements. Freeman’s status as a “de-gene-erate”, and his predicted life-span of 30 years, precludes him from employment opportunities, including his dream of becoming an astronaut and travelling into outer-space. The central plot focusses on Freeman’s attempts to realise his dream by duping the genetic testing regimes of his desired profession, a feat he seeks to achieve by borrowing DNA samples from his friend, Jerome Eugene Morrow (‘Genome Eugenics Tomorrow’), a genetically enhanced former athlete who, despite his genetic gifts, was tragically paralysed in a car accident. What the plight of each of these characters illustrates, is that the very positing of the body as an underlying, ‘natural’ entity that precedes culture and its various symbolic adornments, can itself institute a traumatic gap between the sense of self and subject by potentially foreclosing various manifestations of identity. Re-phrased in terms of Lacan’s concept of symbolic castration, the very positing of bodies, upon which a king’s crown could potentially sit, potentially imposes as much of a symbolic gap (and the associated anxieties) as the crown itself. What Gattaca illustrates, is that illusions of accessing the ‘Real’ of the body—that is, of achieving perfect ‘objective’ knowledge about the body—mask and disavow their own prejudice; as Freeman laments: “I belonged to a new underclass, no longer determined by social status or the color of your skin. No, we now have discrimination down to a science” (Niccol et al. 1997). Here, for Freeman, social status and race pertain to culture (the Symbolic Order and the Imaginary), while science claims to articulate the Real
while simultaneously imposing a system of social, political and cultural prejudices which are thereby made all the more difficult to resist (given those prejudices supposedly precede culture by belonging to the Real).

Claims of accessing the bodily Real—such as those explored in *Gattaca*—are not only a function subjects can apply and impose upon *others* (for example, 'you are really *This*!', 'you are really *That*!'); rather, *subjects apply the same function to their own articulations of the self as well*. Examples of this 'self-application' as it pertains to defence nationalism are shown in the way defence nationalists depict their bodies and identities *Images 2, 5-6, 9-10, and 13*. Although these identities *supposedly* subsist in the incontestable 'real' material of the self—the body *qua* the Real—the content they articulate nevertheless belongs to the Symbolic Order, and therefore leaves the subject vulnerable to symbolic castration. As Santner elaborates, vulnerability to symbolic castration is not biological, but *ontological*, "[permeating] the human being as that being whose essence it is to exist in forms of life that are...contingent, fragile, susceptible to breakdown" (Santner 2011, p.6). Put differently, when subjects seek authenticity in the flesh—anticipating an encounter with the Real: the 'true' self—what they encounter will necessarily assume "the status of another semblance" (Žižek 2002, p.19), because a subject's attempts to address ontological vulnerability must occur through the Symbolic Order. Moreover, the 'gap' between the Symbolic and the Real—between the semblance and the 'thing' at which the semblance *supposedly* aims—occurs *precisely* where a gap is imagined constitutively impossible: between my 'self' and my body, my very own flesh. Due to this impossibility, Santner maintains that attempts to (re)articulate identity in the flesh paradoxically serve to redouble the subject's exposure to ontological precariousness (2011, p.6).

Understood alongside the concept of symbolic castration, the body and its flesh can be considered sites of both the sublime and the abject (the latter of which, I understand in Julia Kristeva's sense of the term (1982)). While in the English language, the terms 'body' and 'flesh' are often used interchangeably, the former tends to be used metaphorically,
such as in phrases like 'the body of man', 'the body of Christ', 'a heavenly body', or a body of work, water or stars. Each of these bodies connotes wholeness and containment: that which is enclosed or enfolded within the body's borders. When gazed upon, the subject as body is Gestalt, an 'outside' surface that implies an inside: a stable, internal self and identity which is contained wholly within the body. The body is sublime because it is imagined as the site where one discovers oneself 'whole', and where one imagines oneself discovered whole by others (à la Lacan's account of the mirror stage, as discussed in Chapter 4). As elaborated in Chapter 4, is it the imagined wholeness of the body that enables one's recognisability—or the fantasy of one's recognisability—both to the self and to others as a subject, be it as a national subject or otherwise.

Contrary to the body, which generally designates things 'whole', in its everyday uses, 'flesh' refers to the imagined substance or substances of the body and its parts, such as bones, blood, skin, muscle, tendons, ligaments and fat. Flesh, as a 'substance', is supposedly shared by humans and animals alike (and sometimes by fruit as well). Although it can sometimes be used interchangeably with the word 'body', 'flesh' can also be used as a substitute for the word 'meat', or to signify that which has transitioned from subject to object, such as flesh that has been cut from the bone, has been exposed beneath the skin, or that has been separated from the body and has therefore become inert and (supposedly) dead and non-lively. Flesh, so removed from the body, is nevertheless lively in its own way, even and perhaps especially as it decomposes. Flesh, which is usually 'wet', implies mobilities and flows: flesh seeps, creeps, enters and dissolves. In spite of its mobility, flesh—perhaps a pound of it as the saying goes—seems dead, and to lie still on the ground like a corpse. In everyday usage, the term 'flesh' is fundamentally ambivalent. One has flesh and one eats flesh. Flesh can be inside or outside, subject or object, alive or dead, or raw or cooked. Flesh can also enter liminal states of radical indistinction between these binaries: one never knows exactly if and when flesh is alive or dead, or cooked or uncooked.

90 In Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, Shylock demands a pound of Antonio's flesh as a guarantee for a loan.
Contrary to the body, which appears whole, flesh both appears and remains when the body’s supposed wholeness unravels and comes undone, such as when the body is opened or cut, or when it dies. It is in its liminality and ambivalence that flesh aligns with Kristeva’s notion of the *abject* (1982). For Kristeva, the abject is that which blurs the distinction between subject and object, and by doing so, threatens the subject’s conceptualisation of the self (1982). The abject threatens the sense of self because it sits awkwardly between subject and object as simultaneously both but neither (Kristeva 1982, p.3-4). The abject is that which is “other than the subject”, but only *just:* it is on “the other side of the border”, but “next to it, too close for comfort” (Young 1990, p.144). The abject is confronting because when one encounters it, “I am at the border of my condition as a living being” (Kristeva 1982, p.3). Kristeva cites faeces, pus and vomit as rudimentary examples of the abject that confound the subject/object distinction (1982, p.2-3). Bodies contain these substances most of the time, within the bile duct, the intestinal tract and so on; however, *when and as they are expelled,* such as through defecation, vomiting or a wound, they become confronting and disgusting substances: examples of the abject *par excellence* (Kristeva 1982, p.3).

Like faeces and vomit, flesh can be abject because it functions as a mark of a body’s undoing, and of its one-way passage from life to death. However, herein lies a paradox of flesh, which is that flesh *also* functions as the structural possibility of the body arising, as it is from flesh that the body is *made.* Flesh therefore functions in much the same way as Lacan’s theory of the letter, in that for Lacan, the letter provides the *structural possibility of language*—the “material medium” of signification—without signifying anything in and of itself *other than the capacity for signification* (2006, p.413). Put differently: letters are *necessary* for the formation of words that signify things, but in isolation, they are insufficient for signification to occur; likewise, flesh is necessary for the formation of the body, but alone it is insufficient for the body to remain whole. Moreover, just as letters remain when one dissects a word into its constituent parts, so too, flesh is imagined as the

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substance that remains when a human body comes undone.

Just as letters lend themselves to the formation of words, so too flesh lends itself towards the formation of the body and to the establishment of the body’s truth. Santner observes that through its capacity to denote both life and death, flesh functions as a “sublime substance” that is endowed with the capacity to animate social, political and theological life (2011, p.ix). As Lacan maintains, flesh is both a sacred or sacralising substance from which “everything”, including truth, “exudes” (1991, p.154). When one’s word(s) or voice—which emanate from the ‘whole’ body—are insufficient to establish truth, flesh arrives as an extra-ordinary surplus that confers truth upon one’s word(s), desire(s) or identity. As Martha Reineke writes, “flesh offers facticity” (in Trigo 2013, p.75, my italics). In Abrahamic scripture for example, flesh denotes truth such that when God uttered ‘His’ words, “the Word became flesh” (John 1:14), meaning the ‘truth’ of God’s word was supposedly reified. Similarly, to ‘sign in blood’ is to enter the most serious of binding contracts, ‘the blood pact’, via the most serious and truthful of signatures (Gottlieb 1997, p.41-42). These examples highlight a paradox of flesh, which is that although flesh is an “ultimate formlessness”, it nevertheless allows the structural possibility of the body to arise, including the possibility of the identity the body supposedly contains (Lacan 1991, p.155). Moreover, these examples show the further paradox that although flesh is exposed as a symptom of the body’s undoing, it is nevertheless sometimes called upon as an obscene supplement to verify the truth and wholeness of the body (such as in the blood pact). So too, for defence nationalists, flesh substantiates the facticity and truth of the body and the identities those bodies supposedly contain; specifically, for defence nationalism, flesh substantiates the imagined ‘fact’ that the nation and nationality lie within it, as demonstrated by the depictions of nationality in Images 1-2, 5-6, 9-10 and 13.

Conclusion

As shown throughout this chapter, for defence nationalists, meanings and identities within the social field of the contemporary nation have collapsed due to a collapse of symbolic
efficiency, which is tantamount to a collapse of the Other who guarantees the stability of the social field. Defence nationalism promises to return its subjects to a stable field of meaning by returning them to their bodies, and to the alleged truth and facticity of the body. By returning subjects to the body—specifically, to bodies articulated as nationalist bodies, in which nationality is imagined to exist and to be contained—defence nationalism promises to act as a prophylactic against the collapse of symbolic efficiency; this is because fantasies about the body render the symbolic redundant, insofar as access to the body is constructed as an im-mediate fact: that is, as a truth that does not require mediation through the Symbolic Order. Defence nationalism is effective towards this end because it provides its subject with a range of embodied practices through which they can (re)fashion their bodies such that nationality is constructed as an internal fact of the body to which others and the Other can bear witness.

Despite the malleability of the body and its capacity to be altered through practices of care and cultivation, the body is nevertheless imagined as something that exists 'authentically' and prior to adornment. Indeed, the body and flesh remain plausible symbolic fictions only insofar as their status as fictions is disavowed. It is only when the body is constructed as an objective, a-cultural and pre-cultural entity that the fantasy that one's body represents one's 'true' identity in the Real can be maintained. However, because the gap between the Symbolic and the Real is insurmountable, defence nationalism's promise to return the subject to the authentic body—the Real—is a false promise, and instability and alienation must return through symbolic castration. By searching for, 'dis-covering', and imagining to uncover a 'true self' in the body, nationalists merely assume another discursively produced, rather than ultimately 'true' subject position. A return to the body qua a return to the 'Real Thing', therefore amounts ultimately to a call for a nation that operates as a more convincing symbolic theatre than the one to which subjects have already become suspicious. Defence nationalists are therefore nostalgic for a return to a body, both individual and collective, that has never existed and can never exist.
Chapter 6: Violent (Con)fusions of the Body

One need but listen to the stories and games made up by two five year olds, alone or together, to know that pulling off heads and cutting open bellies are spontaneous themes of their imagination, which the experience of a busted-up doll merely fulfills.


No medical instrument or procedure is guaranteed against abuse; if a knife does not cut, it cannot be used for healing either.


Just as one is not born with a body, but is given one, so too, the pathways of caring for and cultivating the body are given. For defence nationalists, the nation provides pathways towards bodily care by enabling identifications between the singular body and the nation as collective body (as outlined in Chapter 5). The nation bodies defence nationalists by enabling embodiments of the self as a national self. While nationalist identifications provide their subject with an image of the self that is likeable to the self (as shown in Chapters 4 and 5), these pathways come at the exclusion of the other imagined non-national other, because just as the king's crown would be meaningless if everyone were to wear it, so too, not every-body, nor just any-body can be recognised as a national body. Nationality and nationhood are therefore scarce resources (Hage 2004).

Throughout this chapter, I outline a theory of defence nationalist violence that conceptualises acts such as hitting, cutting, maiming and bruising as efforts to manage this scarcity by de-nationalising others. I argue that through such practices, defence nationalists seek not only to exercise aggression, but to exorcise non-national others from the nation as
well. I characterise defence nationalist aggression as a means of restoring and recuperating the 'lost' efficiency of the symbolic apparatus of the nation as outlined in Chapter 5. I claim that damaging the flesh of (non-national) others in the name of the nation can be understood as a way of proving that the nation does not provide access for everyone—that is, of re-asserting the idea that the nation provides me with my identity, not you with yours. To elucidate this argument, I pursue two core questions. Firstly, if identities supposedly exist 'in the flesh', what role does physical violence—the altering of the flesh—play in the making and unmaking of identities? Secondly, what role do acts of physical violence play for the national identities of the defence nationalists who perform them? I pursue these questions through close readings of Scarry (1985) and Althusser (1971), building on the frameworks developed by this thesis thus far.

Violence\textsuperscript{92} is typically conceived as the penetration or transgression of bodily borders, such as the cutting open of a belly or the removal of a head (or indeed, the removal of a head-scarf\textsuperscript{93}); however, as I will show using Althusser (1971) and Scarry's (1985) formulations, adequately theorising defence nationalist violence requires more than theorising the unmaking of bodies—so too, it requires theorisation of the making and remaking of bodies as well. This is because the forces that render a body a body in the first instance—those which allow a body to appear 'whole' enough for its unmaking to become a possibility—can themselves be violent. Moreover, if a body is unmade with some purpose in mind, then it is not simply unmade, but is remade as well (toward the image of the desire of the unmaker). In sum, violence simultaneously makes, unmakes and remakes bodies, infecting and inflecting them.

The medium of the tattoo encapsulates and graphically depicts the entanglement of the making, unmaking and remaking of bodies (of self, other, subject and nation). Tattoos penetrate the body's apparent surface (the skin), etching it indelibly. Tattoos form a second

\textsuperscript{92} Here, I am referring only to the term 'violence' in its crude, everyday sense. For discussion on the complexities of the term, see Žižek (2008a).

\textsuperscript{93} Many instances of 'scarf pulling' have been perpetrated by nationalists in both Australia and the UK.
skin that penetrates the first, and then morphs, morphs with, and morphs into the first. Through this rupturing of the body’s border, the border is simultaneously made anew—transmogrified into an ideographic, often colourful surface (as depicted in Image 15). The scarification of the tattoo constitutes an *ekphrases*—both an image as text and a text as an image. This scarification remakes the body in ways that are thought to reveal something about the 'inside' of the subject on the 'outside'. In Image 15, for example, a body is opened up to reveal what is on the 'inside' (in this case, the nation, its flag, and its colours). When the skin, which functions here as an *apparent* interface between the inside and the outside, is peeled back, both nation and nationality are revealed inside for all to 'see' on the outside.

While the tattoo depicted in Image 15 shows the imagined 'inside' on the imagined 'outside', tattoos also *elide* and problematise the very distinction between inside/outside. This is because tattoos constitute a writing both *on* and *of* the body—a writing that (re)constitutes the very thing *in* and *on* which the writing occurs. As the ink seeps beneath the surface, blood rises above it, and from this dual-permeation emerges a tattoo that resists erasure. A further paradox of the medium of the tattoo therefore, is the question as to whether a tattoo constitutes an inscription or a transcription. Whereas to transcribe is to copy the same text from one document to another, to *inscribe* is to go further: one scribes *within* something, such as within stone tablet by cutting into it.

Where transcription entails copying an image or text onto the surface of another medium, inscriptions go beyond the surface, implying *depth*, and a passage from an outside to an inside. Whereas a transcription can be erased, washed over, or even transcribed over again, to erase an inscription, the inscribed medium *itself* must be cut again. Through cutting, inscriptions imply a kind of permanence. They also often carry the normative assumption that that which is inscribed ought never be erased, as the names and dates that are typically commemorated through inscriptions on plaques and statues 'ought' not be forgotten. Through the tattoo, the distinction between medium and message not only
collapses but forms a symbiotic relation. In this relation, both the well-known adage, 'the medium is the message', and its inversion, 'the message is the medium' apply. On the one hand, it is the medium itself that imbues the message with some of its meaning, because the same words written on both paper and in flesh assume different meanings (given the inherent normativity of inscriptions); on the other hand, however, it is also the message itself that constitutes the very making of the medium.

Despite the alleged difference between transcriptions and inscriptions, I suggest that Image 15 nevertheless ultimately depicts a transcribed image (albeit one that intentionally blurs the distinction between transcription and inscription). This is because although the tattoo itself penetrates the body, it does so in a way that implies that nationality also penetrates the body and exists naturally within. In this sense, the function of the tattoo in Image 15 is comparable to that of the message “we grew here you flew here”, as shown in Image 5. While many of those who participated in the Cronulla Riots wrote this message on their bodies in temporary ink, the meaning that underlies this message is that of a fundamental inscription, because although the message itself may wash off, the content it signifies (supposedly) cannot, because when the ink disappears, the indelible 'fact' that the body “grew here” will remain (put differently, it is imagined that the thing supposedly signified will remain even after the signifier washes off).

While tattoos (im)print their subject by constituting the very medium in which they are inscribed, this 'making' is not always of one's own choosing. In concentration camps, for example, prisoners are commonly tattooed with serial numbers (Langer 1991). In the Auschwitz concentration camp, prisoners were tattooed not only so they could be quantified and identified—irrespective of whether or not they were living or dead, or clothed or unclothed—but so they could be dehumanised as well (Langer 1991). These numerical significations not only quantified what was already there by counting existing bodies, they qualified them as well, by dehumanising them. In an ostensibly opposite example, in 2007, Chris Hudson, a member of the Australian Hell's Angels motorcycle
gang, was expelled from his group for committing an unsanctioned act of high-profile violence—the murder of a tourist in Melbourne. As a result of Hudson's insubordination, which brought increased scrutiny upon the group from law enforcement agencies, Hudson's fellow gang members used a blow-torch to remove the Hell's Angels tattoos, which affiliated him with the gang, from his arm. Whereas prisoners in concentration camps were forcibly tattooed, Hudson's were forcibly removed. Nevertheless, alongside one another, each of these examples point toward the same paradox: that marking is also always a form of unmarking, and that unmarking is always also a form of marking. This two-sided dynamic applies not only to the practice of tattooing, but to the function of designating identities as well, insofar as to designate something as something, is to simultaneously designate it as not everything else (Derrida 1978). To mark the prisoners of Auschwitz as mere numbers, for example, is to simultaneously un-mark them as human (Langer 1991). Similarly, to de-affiliate Hudson from the Hell's Angels through the violent melting of his flesh, is to mark him as not one of Hell's Angels any longer. Bodies are thus made and unmade simultaneously through forms of (un)marking that perform.

The examples above illustrate the point that flesh provides more than the illusion that one's identity can be witnessed by the self, through the self, and in a way that obviates the need for an intermediary (such as others or the Other). These examples show that the illusion of the body also allow others to 'see' and potentially manipulate our identities as well. Put differently, if the body is imagined as representing an underlying identity, then the altering of that body through violence can also be seen as a means of altering the identity of which it is an imagined reification. Through his ethnographic work in Northern Ireland, Feldman has charted entire taxonomies of violence by symbolic means—methods of wounding, maiming and killing which are designed to 'mark' and designate the identity of their subject (Feldman 1991; Feldman 1997; Feldman 2003). As Feldman shows, for example, during the period of The Troubles, in Northern Ireland, public tarring and feathering

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94 See also the semi-autobiographical fiction of Yehiel De-Nur, a former prisoner of the Auschwitz concentration camp. Many of De-Nur's works are penned under the pseudonym 'Ka-Tsetnik 135633', a reference to the serial number with which he was tattooed in Auschwitz.
persons with boiling bitumen was a practice inflicted only on those deemed most abhorrent, such as those accused of rape and paedophilia (2003). This form of punishment was limited to such persons, Feldman shows, because the practice left distinctive scarifications, which thereby allowed other members of the community to identify rapists and paedophiles, even if they moved on from one town to the next (Feldman 2003).

What the above examples of the tattoo and tarring and feathering illustrate by analogy, this chapter develops theoretically. Throughout, I claim that the making, unmaking and remaking of bodies cannot be easily parsed, and that analyses of violence—and indeed racism and ethnic nationalism—that fail to recognise this entanglement, also fail to go deep enough in their analysis, insofar as they conceive violence as occurring on a singular plane: on bodies imagined as passive surfaces that pre- and post-exist the violence that is done to them. Through close readings of Althusser and Scarry, I seek to examine the psychosocial and intersubjective depths of defence nationalist violence. Just as various forms of tattooing and scarification purport to 'mark' the other in ways that allow fundamental identities to be 'seen' (such as that of the prisoner, the rapist, the paedophile), so too, I contend that the defence nationalist gaze marks the other as a non-national other in ways that allow defence nationalists to imagine they can see meaning in the other's flesh, as clearly as tattoos and scars can also be 'seen'.

Freud once contemplated the notion that pain functions as “a model of the way in which in general we arrive at the idea of our body” (1923, p.25-26); however, in this passage, Freud does not mention whose pain—nor does he specify that the pain must correspond to the body to which the idea 'arrives'. This ambiguity opens a general question for consideration: can the pain of an-other aid the subject in forming and reforming the bodily-schema of the self? With respect to Feldman's example above, for instance, it seems as if the pain of the body that is scarred in particular ways, such as with boiling bitumin and feathers, not only allows subjects to identify pedophiles and rapists, but that it also

95 For examples, see: Minow (1998) and Kappeler (1995).
enables them to 'see' themselves as the structural opposites of those who are tarred and feathered. Similarly, throughout this chapter I argue that defence nationalist violence not only works to de-nationalise the other, but that it also works to nationalise defence nationalists as well. I maintain that if, as per Feldman, scenes of violence prescribe and proscribe reality by transforming bodies through inscription (1991), they also transform the body of the 'doer' as well.

Toward the conclusion of this chapter, I contemplate the performative function of violence for defence nationalists. I claim that at least sometimes, violence is given away in much the same way as Lacan describes subjects as giving away their speech—so that it may 'return' and be received in an “inverted form” (Lacan 2006, p.291; Lacan 2006, p.349). Similarly, acts of defence nationalist violence can be conducted as embodied performances of nationality through which the bodies of nation and nationalist are (re)made as the other's is (un)made. Understood in this way, violence can be interpreted as a technique towards recuperating the lost image of self in a non-specular setting; indeed, this is the 'return' defence nationalist violence promises: a (mis)recognition of the self as the positive obverse of the de-nationalised other.

**Racisms of Mind and Body**

Every lesion bears witness to the graphic nature of the body, as site of inscription. Every lesion traces the fault-lines that fissure this subject and disseminate my identities.

Joseph Pugliese (2003, n.p.)

The ontologies of the body examined in Chapter 4 resonate strongly in racism (and therefore defence nationalism), which claims to 'see' a world of distinct and enclosed bodies, each with their own inherent characteristics (see, for example, Seshadri-Crooks' analysis of race (2000)). As Balibar and Wallerstein note, the phantasmatics of racism are typically marked with a Cartesian tinge, insofar as they typically flesh out bodily stigmata in reference to perceived cultural differences and dispositions (1991, p.21). Similarly, in elucidating the famous 'friend/enemy' distinction, Schmitt cites an imagined interplay
between the body and mind of both friend and enemy, noting that even the strongest categories must draw upon others for support (1996, p.27).

The observations of Balibar and Wallerstein (1991), Seshadri-Crooks (2000), and Schmitt (1996) are evident in the West post 11 September 2001, in which narratives regarding the supposed 'body' and 'mind' of the other are drawn upon to prop up Islamophobic distinctions of the 'friends' and 'enemies' of the nation (Medovoi 2012). This is because, as Leerom Medovoi observes, while “the very idea of color registers [the] presumption of visual perceptibility”, racism nevertheless cannot subsist in the imagined visibilities of race alone (2012, p.47). Instead, “colour-line racism”, which can be understood as racism of the body, requires a supplement, what Medovoi calls “dogma-line racism”, which can be understood as racism of the mind. Medovoi notes that “historically speaking, these two axes of race have not operated separately upon mutually exclusive populations”, but rather, have “propped one another up and comingled in complex ways” (2012, p.45). For Medovoi, these two forms of racism work together to ensure that the racialised other is rendered 'known' on both sides of the Cartesian coin, primarily in “reference to mind rather than body, ideology rather than corporeality”, and “according to theologies, creeds, beliefs, faiths, and ideas, rather than...color, face, hair, blood, and origin” (Medovoi 2012, p.45).

For Medovoi, the effects of the coupling of these two forms of racism can clearly be seen in the way that Islamophobia has proceeded in the West post 11 September 2001 (2012). On the one hand, Islamophobic forms of dogma-line racism make particular judgements regarding the beliefs, desires, ideologies, intentions and national allegiances of Muslims; in turn, these judgements are projected onto particular bodies—specifically, those deemed to be Muslim, Arab, or 'Middle-Eastern appearance'. The sum of these projections is to create what Joseph Pugliese refers to as the “figure of Middle-Eastern appearance” (2003). For Pugliese, this 'figure' functions as a trope in the contemporary West that entails the “serial deployment of Orientalist stereotypes” (2003, n.p.). As Pugliese elucidates, these
stereotypes work to establish “a logic of adjacency and complementarity where various figures, bodies and subjects can be classified and catalogued, and thereby positioned, ‘known’ and regulated” (2003, n.p.). So constructed, the body of the figure of Middle-Eastern appearance functions as “a screen upon which is projected a complex economy of fears and desires that [congeal] into stock representations” (Pugliese 2003, n.p.). As shown below, this dynamic is apparent among Australian and British defence nationalists, who typically project a range of fears and anxieties, as well as beliefs and values onto the particular bodies they deem to be ‘Muslim’ and of ‘Middle-Eastern appearance’. In turn, these particular bodies are deemed incompatible with the nation due to the beliefs, values and desires they are thought to contain, hence the defence nationalist call to stop “incompatible Islamic immigration” (Donelly & Hall 2015, my italics), and the widespread dissemination of messages such as those found in Image 14, which states: “Join EDL. Make A Stand Against Militant Islam”. Similarly, in Image 16 and 17, the EDL depicts Islam as an incompatible, unwelcome presence within the nation, and as an entity against which they stand “united”.

Image 16: ACCESS DENIED. Islam, not welcome on our beaches! (Essex Division of the EDL 2015).
Through the coupling of colour-line and dogma-line racism, certain bodies, namely, those of 'Middle-Eastern appearance', and the desires, intentions, beliefs and allegiances they are imagined to contain, have come to be seen by nationalists as inherently suspicious and non-national (Medovoi 2012; Morsi 2014; Pugliese 2003). It has been noted that this 'suspiciousness' pervades everyday life in the West, particularly through everyday practices of surveillance which subjects internalise (Medovoi 2012; Morsi 2014; Pugliese 2003; Feldman 2004; Flynn 2016). As Pugliese explains: “as a political technology of racialised identity”, the figure of Middle-Eastern appearance “has enabled the project of surveillance to become part of the routine of everyday life” (2003, n.p.). It has also been noted that due to their racialised frameworks, regimes of surveillance affect bodies disproportionately, resulting in disproportionate levels of surveillance and imprisonment for Muslims in the West (Medovoi 2012, p.44; Pugliese 2003). As Morsi notes, one of the subtle effects of this surveillance is that those deemed 'of Middle-Eastern appearance' are enjoined to “confess”: to reveal their desires, motivations and intentions by publicly declaring their allegiance to the nation (Morsi 2014). Conversely, Morsi notes that the allegiance of white bodies to the nation is merely assumed by default (Morsi 2014).

Medovoi’s analysis of the inter- and intra-actions of colour- and dogma-line racism is not only useful for understanding how Islamophobia operates in the contemporary West, it is also useful for analysing some of the strategies and tactics employed by defence
nationalists in Australia and the UK. Medovoi’s framework is useful because defence nationalists not only subscribe to entwined narratives of dogma- and colour-line racism, but because they shift seamlessly between both forms of racism for tactical purposes as well. During one EDL rally I attended in Dover, for example, a member of the EDL shouted: “brown Muslimes96 should go back where they came from”. In footage of the rally that the EDL later uploaded to its Facebook and YouTube accounts, however, such overtly racist aspects of the rally were absent, seemingly due to their unpalatability to wider audiences. In the speeches the EDL uploaded to its websites, it was ideology, rather than race that was emphasised. Indeed, the EDL typically portrays itself as an anti-racist “human rights organisation”, that does not oppose race, but “radical Islam” (EDL 2016a); accordingly, the EDL’s Mission Statement repeatedly states that “the English Defence League is not racist. Islam is not a race” (EDL 2016a). This disconnect between claims like “brown Muslimes should go back where they came from” and “the English Defence League is not racist” articulates with existing work that examines the online behaviour of EDL members (Cleland et al. 2017; Copsey 2010; Goodwin 2013; Treadwell & Garland 2011). Despite the EDL’s explicit disavowals of racism, for example, it has been observed that when overtly racist material is posted to EDL message boards, it is usually neither contested nor challenged, but instead is either tolerated without comment if not actively encouraged (Cleland et al. 2017).

What I now move to consider with respect to defence nationalism, is the underside of Medovoi’s framework of colour- and dogma-line racism—something I claim is approximate to a form of colour- and dogma-line nationalism. I take this term as signifying one of the productive function(s) of defence nationalism. In particular, I take this term to refer to nationalism’s encoding of a ‘self’, and a collective to which that self is imagined as belonging, which is constructed as the positive obverse of the denigrated other. That is: where racism encodes an understanding of the other along the axes of both the ‘body’

96 This term, which is sometimes used by members of defence leagues, consists of a fusion of the words ‘Muslim’ and ‘slime’.
(colour) and the 'mind' (dogma), so too, defence nationalism (can) encode an understanding of the self along both axes. In this formation, for example, the white body functions as a reification of the incorporeal attributes that nationality is imagined to imply and confer. Accordingly, white nationalists valourise the white body as a material signifier that symbolises the 'inner' qualities of both the nation and the national subject; a signifier, moreover, that is imagined as both containing and disclosing national values, as depicted by the tattoo in Image 15 above, in which the body's skin peels back to reveal nationality within. In the following section, I will consider how acts of physical violence committed by defence nationalists—such as hitting, bruising, kicking and punching—work not only to (en)code the imagined 'minds' and 'bodies' of racialised others, but so too those of the nationalists who ostensibly 'do' the (en)coding.

Resurrecting Pieces

He is a dead muzrat from Birmingham, killed in Allepo [sic] by a coalition airstrike...Now he is just a smelly bag of meat and bones, covered in fly maggots.

Member of the EDL Birmingham Division.

When the Irishman’s chest is shattered, when the Armenian boy is shot through the legs and groin, when a Russian woman dies in a burning village, when an American medic is blown apart on the field, their wounds are not Irish, Armenian, Russian, or American precisely because it is the unmaking of an Irishman, the unmaking of an Armenian boy, the unmaking of a Russian woman, the unmaking of an American soldier that has just occurred, as well as in each case the unmaking of the civilisation as it resides in each of those bodies. Scarry (1985, p.122).

“Now he is just a smelly bag of meat and bones” is the proclamation made by an EDL member upon learning of the death of Junaid Hussain, who was killed by a drone-strike in Syria. According to this member, Hussain, a former resident of Birmingham, was reduced to nothing but decomposing flesh—his body unmade and emptied entirely of its contents, like the Irishman, the Armenian boy, the American soldier and the Russian woman described by Scarry above. I argue, however, that in being emptied of its contents, Hussain’s body is made anew. As I will show, Hussain’s body does not merely go from something to nothing; rather, it goes from something to a purported ‘nothing’ that means something.
Prior to his assassination, Junaid Hussain was listed as the third highest priority on the Pentagon’s ‘kill list’, superseded only by ‘Jihadi John’ and Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of Islamic State (Gadher 2015). For politicians, government and public alike, Hussain occupied the Symbolic (and Imaginary) position of a public enemy. For defence nationalists especially, including members of the EDL, Hussain was an enemy against whom the nation ought to be defended. Contrary to the “dead” meat he supposedly became, as an enemy, Hussain was a body of lively “meat and bones”: a body animated through the projection of meanings upon it.

In the EDL’s proclamation, the specific meanings attached to Hussain’s body—as an enemy of the nation—were purportedly erased through the destruction of the body. In the above depiction, Hussain is portrayed as an enemy no longer; instead, he is merely “a smelly bag of meat and bones”. Hussain thereby loses both his literal and symbolic life. His body, which was formerly held together as an image of an enemy, now lies in pieces about which there is no ambivalence—every atom of his flesh is accounted for as a rotting, “smelly” nothing. As Hussain’s body is destroyed, so too is any ambivalence about it: one no longer need worry where the enemy is, because he is in pieces. Hussain’s erasure is depicted as a return to the Real: to a space where meaning insists itself entirely without any need for mediation, and where ambivalence cannot exist. However, meaning and mediation are not erased; indeed, it is through the supposed erasure of meaning that new meanings simultaneously emerge. In the proclamation that purports to render Hussain’s flesh both literally and symbolically dead, a Symbolic function is nevertheless performed: the designation of the abject and ‘empty’ space as that of the vanquished and obliterated enemy-other. In performing this new function of signification, the proclamation, which purports to articulate the Real, sabotages itself in that it remains thoroughly oriented in the Symbolic and Imaginary Orders. Although Hussain’s body loses its particular Symbolic life, it does not lose Symbolic life in its entirety; rather, a new Symbolic life emerges through the erasure of the former. The destruction of the body, at least in Hussain’s case, therefore not only entails “the unmaking of the civilisation as it resides in each of those
bodies” (Scarry 1985, p.122), so too, it can entail the injection meaning into the (broken) body. Hussain is therefore both erased and revitalised simultaneously.

In sum, as the body of Hussain is 'unmade', it is re-assembled and resurrected so as to resemble something else: a dead enemy (just as Scarry depicts the Irishman, the Armenian boy and the American soldier above). The focus of this chapter hereafter, is on the correlative change that occurs in the subject who both does and perceives the other's remaking through un-making (à la Hussain's body). Specifically, I examine defence nationalist fantasies that arise through witnessing the erasure and disavowed resurrection of an enemy-others. I claim that the unmaking of enemy-others not only entails the remaking of the other, but so too that of the self, as s/he who stands as the 'whole', positive obverse of the pieces of the enemy-other. To elucidate this argument, I draw upon Althusser's theory of interpellation to claim that through the unmaking as remaking of the other, something approximate to an 'inverse' interpellation occurs: a hailing of the other's body through which the position of being the one who hails is both imagined and enjoyed.

The Address of the Gaze

Althusser's classic example of interpellation is that of a police officer's hail (1971). For Althusser, the officer's hail—such as "Hey! You there!"—functions as an authoritative appellation that creates that which it names—in this example, a subject of the law who responds to the law. For Althusser, the subject's (mis)recognition of the 'self' as the target of the hail ensures that the subject is created in accordance with the hail (which is itself governed by ideology). The subject who is 'hailed' by the officer qua the law, does not pre-exist the hail, nor ideology; instead, it is through the hail that the self comes to be conceptualised ideologically by both the officer who hails and the subject who responds to the hail (Althusser 1971, p.174). As Althusser elaborates, it is through this “180-degree physical conversion” that the subject who responds “becomes a subject” (1971, p.174, italics in

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97 For Althusser, ideology refers to the world of meaning (1971); it is therefore approximate to Lacan's concept of the Symbolic Order.
original). Althusser further elucidates: “Why? Because he has recognized that the hail was ‘really’ addressed to him, and that ‘it was really him who was hailed’ (and not someone else)” (1971, p.174, italics in original). Althusser’s interpellative ‘hail’ relates to the intersubjective dimensions of the Lacanian subject’s submission to the Symbolic Order, insofar as it is the ‘hailing’ of the subject as a particular kind of subject that seemingly provides ‘external’ verification of the categories of the Symbolic Order that subjects internalise and adopt as representations of the ‘I that I take myself to be’. For example, when defence nationalists subscribe to the categories of the nation, it seems they really believe they belong to the nation, and that nationality really is a fact of the body—as has been discussed at length throughout this thesis in relation to Images 1-2, 5-6, 9-10, 13 and 15, as well as to defence nationalist claims such as “denying your race is treason” and “we grew here you flew here”.

Medovoi maintains that it is not a coincidence that Althusser’s example of interpellation involves a subject who wields abstract violence (law) in a clear relation to the manifest capacity to mete out ‘real’ violence through the baton and gun that s/he also wields (2012, p.25).98 The hypothetical officer’s ability to transition seamlessly from ‘abstract’ violence to ‘real’ violence is illustrated emphatically in a famous scene from John Sturges’ The Great Escape. As the escaped British soldier Eric Ashley-Pitt runs across a crowded train-station platform, the officers pursuing him yell “duck!” or its equivalent in German. In response to this request—which, insofar as it demands a response, parallels Althusser’s “Hey! You there!”—a paradox emerges. Firstly, everyone other than Ashley-Pitt, to whom the hail is directed, immediately accedes to the hail by dropping to the ground. In doing so, those who respond identify themselves as fellow nationals through their very capacity to recognise the hail at all. Paradoxically, by responding to the hail, they reveal themselves as not being its target; however, by revealing themselves in this way, they simultaneously reveal the intended target of the hail in reverse: Ashley-Pitt, the only non-national subject. To

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98 Noting that the distinction between ‘real’ violence (as physical violence) and ‘abstract’ violence is not itself ‘real’ but constructed. See Žižek (2008a) for discussion.
complete the paradox, it emerges that the target of the authoritative shout—the interpellative 'hail'—was the only one who could not actually 'hear' or understand it; however, despite Ashley-Pitt’s inability to 'hear' the hail (which amounts to its refusal), the hail nevertheless serves its ideological function, in that it succeeds in finding the one to whom it was addressed. Left as the last one standing, Ashley-Pitt’s alterity emerges for all to 'see' in plain sight: and so, he is easily sighted and shot.

For Althusser, the gaze of the interpellator (such as that of the police officer) has always-already been appropriated by ideology prior to the moment(s) in which it interpellates. Put differently, in Althusser’s example, the identity-conferring 'hail' of the police officer is itself governed by ideology. The officer ‘sees’ and subsequently hails an-other subject as a subject of the law only because the officer has already internalised the law—that is, been 'hailed'—her or himself. For this reason, Althusser maintains that “the existence of ideology and the hailing or interpellation of individuals as subjects are one and the same thing” (1971, p.175). For Althusser, one 'sees' and in doing so 'hails' a subject as a particular subject precisely because one already sees the world through ideology as such (1971, p.175). If not for the various ideologies of the nation, for example, one would not see an-other as having a particular nationality, or indeed, as having any nationality at all.

Despite the contingency and fluidity of the ideological world that subjects 'see', and through which they see, the world of ideology appears 'real' (Althusser 1971, p.175), and to really exist in the bodies of self and other that the subject gazes upon. Put more explicitly in Lacanian terms, it can be said that through the moments of interpellation and the internalisation of ideology that Althusser describes, the 'eye' as a sensory organ is appropriated as an 'organ' of the Symbolic and Imaginary registers. On a Lacanian reading, the 'eye' is split from itself so that the ocular is donated to the world of ideology; moreover, it is donated in a way that (re)produces a 'gaze' that really sees the world of contingent ideological meanings enacted tangibly around the subject. When subjects are hailed, they are hailed into ways of 'seeing' the world (of ideology); however, they are
hailed as such without seeing what it is that makes them see what they see—namely, the ideology through which they see. When an-other appears, that other really is accountable to the law (as in Althusser’s example), and they really do (or really do not) belong to the nation.

For my purposes here, there is an important aspect of interpellation to be emphasised (one that Althusser perhaps misses). If, following Althusser, all subjects see through ideology, then it follows that as one subject is hailed by another, that so too, the subject that ostensibly does the hailing is also interpellated albeit reflexively and retroactively. In Althusser’s example of the dynamic between police officer and citizen, at least as Althusser describes it, the interpellative hail seems to go in one direction: from the officer to the citizen; however, both subjects are nevertheless on its receiving end, in that the identities and agencies of both the officer and the citizen are formed and encoded discursively and ideologically within the order given by the Symbolic. If, for example, the same two subjects were to encounter each other in a different ideological setting, the identities and agencies enacted between them would likely be entirely different (imagine, for example, the subjects encountered one another on the street while the officer was ‘off duty’). Nevertheless, in moments of mutual interpellation, the police officer really is an officer to whom the other is accountable, and the subject really is a citizen who is subject to the law. So too, for subjects who ‘see’ through a nationalist gaze, one really is a national subject (as evinced by the body in Images 1-2, 5-6, 9-10, 13 and 15), while non-national others really are not (hence, per Image 12, “denying your race is treason”).

Acts of physical violence, understood for now, in the crude and uncritical everyday sense of the term, work to reify identities that are encoded mutually in the interpellative scene. When, after shouting “Hey! You there!”, Althusser’s hypothetical police officer ultimately handcuffs and imprisons the hailed subject, it is not just the identity and agency of the subject who is overtly hailed that is enacted and reinforced (and indeed, enforced); so too, the identity and agency of the officer is enacted as a subject who is ideologically and
symbolically endowed with the 'legal' authority to stop, search, detain and arrest.\textsuperscript{99} So too, when defence nationalists commit violence against others deemed non-national others—such as when patrolling streets and beaches during their rallies, marches and protests, as well as during events such as the Cronulla Riots and Cronulla Memorial Day—they not only mark the other's imagined lack of nationality, so too, they reify and enact their own national identities as well, by performing nationality and their spatial and cultural dominance within the nation (as outlined in Chapter 2). In short, defence nationalists perform their national identities by 'defending' the nation with violence, just as, in defence nationalist imaginaries, the Anzacs and Knights Templar defended the nation. As such, for defence nationalists, defending the nation is the national act par excellence.

Just as a police officer's identity is performed through an arrest, so too, defence nationalist identities are performed and confirmed through the production of violence performed in the name of the nation. This production transforms the body of the other by force, such that the non-national body comes to function as a non-specular surface that nevertheless reflects and ratifies the nationalist's own image of the self as belonging with/in the nation, because by defending the nation against the other, one implicitly constructs oneself as a defender of the nation (a member of the nation par excellence). The notion that interpellation, whether through physical violence or the violence of naming, not only makes, unmakes and remakes both the hailed subject and the subject Althusser positions as interpellator, articulates strongly with Lacan's theory of speech. Speech, as Lacan maintains:

manifests itself as a communication in which the subject, expecting the other to render his message true, proffers his message in an inverted form, and in which his message transforms him by announcing that he is the same (2006, p.291).

For Lacan, speech is therefore given so that it can be returned: proffered for recognition so that through that recognition, so too, the one that spoke may be recognised. As Lacan elaborates, speech is ultimately “given back to the speaker in an inverted form” (2006, p.349). I argue that just as for Lacan, subjects give their speech to the other so that they

\textsuperscript{99} For Robert Cover's influential thesis on violence and law, titled “Violence and the Word”, see Cover (1986).
themselves can be recognised (by self and other), so too, defence nationalists proffer violence to the other for recognition. That is, they give violence as defenders of the nation so that their status as defenders of the nation can be returned and confirmed with the stamp of intersubjective verification that the other provides. When defence nationalists mark bodies through physical or verbal assaults, for example, they mark them other: as not belonging to the nation. This marking is the very point of articulation by which the 'speech' of violence returns to the defence nationalist “in an inverted form” (Lacan 2006, p.291), whereby the defence nationalist receives his or her own message back as an inversion of that which is written in the bruised flesh of the other. Defence nationalist violence effectively says 'you are not a national, but I am; your body is not national, but mine is'. This is another way of interpreting defence nationalist refrains such as “we grew here you flew here” and “go back to where you came from”\textsuperscript{100}. you belong elsewhere, but in you and your 'foreigness' I recognise my authentic nationality and my-self as belonging.

Defence nationalists who perceive identity confirming and affirming messages in the flesh of the other recognise an image of self that is desirable to the self. In the flesh of the other, an image of self is reflected back to the self as the positive obverse of the other (for example, I am not bruised, discoloured and non-national; I am therefore whole and national). In this function, violence against the other is textual in that it constitutes the signing of a literal ‘autograph’ (the etymology of which denotes ‘self representation’, as derived from the Ancient Greek 'auto', meaning 'self', and 'gráphō', meaning to depict something by inscribing it into a surface, typically clay, with a stylus).\textsuperscript{101}

Insofar as violence (en)codes the identity of the 'doer' as well as that of the one to whom violence is ostensibly 'done', violence upon the body of the other constitutes a signature: a representation of one’s self as the positive obverse of the other that exists on and in the body of the other. This signature augurs the one who signs, and to whom the signature is

\textsuperscript{100}This line is often used by nationalists, and is the title of an Australian documentary series \textit{Go Back To Where You Came From}, which explores racism and xenophobia in Australia (O'Mahoney 2011-2015).

\textsuperscript{101}For discussions regarding these etymologies, see the entries for 'auto' and 'graph' at etymonline.com, retrieved from: <https://www.etymonline.com/>.
imagined as always-already belonging, into an illusory Being. The subject's autograph *qua* self-representation on the other's body functions as an artefact that, although outside of the body, nevertheless points *inwards* towards a fundamental identity (just as a fingerprint on an 'outside' surface can nevertheless remain representative of a unique 'internal' identity). This signing of the name, which implies a unique identity as its referent, simultaneously *(co)signs* the other to a non-lively symbolic life within the nation: a dismemberment through which the other is rendered non-national, and a re-membering through which the nationalist’s belonging to the nation is (re)affirmed.

Just as the 'policeman's hail' reinforces the identity of the police officer *through the same manoeuvre that interpellates the hailed citizen*, so too, scenes of violence encode relational identities by facilitating the unmaking and remaking of self and other, both corporeally, psychically, and in relation to the perceived minds and bodies of self, other, nation. This reading of interpellative scenes of defence nationalist violence articulates strongly with Scarry's reading of the function of State violence, in that for Scarry, the State (regime) implements violence, such as institutionalised torture, in order to reproduce itself through the unmaking *qua* remaking of the subject (1985, p.49). The tortured body, for example, stands as a testament to the authority and power of the regime, which is so overwhelming that it can literally turn the body of the subject against the subject (Scarry 1985, p.49). As Scarry explains:

> The ceaseless, self-announcing signal of the body in pain, at once so empty and undifferentiated and so full of blaring adversity, contains not only the feeling 'my body hurts' but the feeling 'my body hurts me' (1985, p.47).

To apply Scarry's argument to the above discussion of *The Great Escape*, for example, it seems that the State's authority is exercised and (re)produced as Ashley-Pitt is exorcised from the nation. However, here, Scarry's analysis fails to encapsulate an important dimension of the interpellative scene—namely, the quality and function of those who *witness* the scene in which the identities of interpellating and interpellated subject are mutually encoded. In *The Great Escape*, these witnesses are the bodies on the ground—
those subjects who accede the State's hail when the officers yell “Duck!”, and who thereby enable Ashley-Pitt's body to be identified as a non-national body, insofar as it is the only body standing. In acceding the hail by throwing their bodies on the ground, these subjects tacitly enable, witness and verify the un- and re-making of Ashley-Pitt; moreover, they simultaneously witness and verify the State's power to re-make Ashley-Pitt. However—and herein lies the significance of Scarry’s omission—just as Ashley-Pitt’s body is un- and re-made, so too, the 'bodies on the ground' are un- and re-made through their own “180-degree physical conversion” (to borrow Althusser’s phrase (1971, p.174)). Through the act of throwing themselves on the ground, those who submit to the hail mark themselves not-other (that is, as nationals); by so doing, they simultaneously mark Ashley-Pitt other (as non-national). However, those on the ground also mark themselves in another way, as something outside of the overly reductive national/non-national pairing: specifically, they mark themselves witnesses to Ashley-Pitt’s destruction, and therefore witnesses to the State's productive and destructive power as well.102 The significance of this addition to Scarry’s argument can be considered in the context of defence nationalism—for it is not that one entity simply (re)produces itself through the destruction of another entity, such as when the State (re)produces itself by destroying the body of the tortured subject (in Scarry’s argument), or when an 'individual' nationalist (re)produces the self as a nationalist by de-nationalising the other through violence (such as, for example, during defence nationalist protests and events). Rather, those that witness such events also participate in them insofar as their presence serves to verify. To this end, those who attend defence nationalist events and who witness specific scenes of violence also effectively function as 'bodies on the ground': they are bodies that verify the scenes they witness, and bodies that are converted (into defence nationalists) because of what they witness. Through their presence and complicity, these 'bodies on the ground' qua the body of the nation, ensure that the violence they 'see' functions not as that from one 'individual' to another, but as that from the nation, as a collective, against the very other(s) it produces.

102For discussion regarding the State's capacity to reproduce itself through violence, see “Part One: Torture” in Foucault's Discipline and Punish (1977).
Chapter 7: Imagined Immunity

In the lead up to the 2004 Australian federal election, conservative Prime Minister John Howard made a number of influential statements regarding the threat that multiculturalism and immigration posed to the nation’s solidarity. For Howard, Australia’s commitment to diversity, multiculturalism and immigration had, in decades gone by, resulted in levels of introspection so forensic as to occasion a national “paralysis” (2003). In closing his address to the Liberal Party’s National Convention in June 2003, Howard asserted his belief that his election in 2001 had marked the time for such reflections coming to a close:

We no longer navel gaze about what an Australian is. We no longer are mesmerised by the self appointed cultural dieticians who tell us that, in some way, they know better what an Australian ought to be than all of us who know what an Australian has always been and always will be (2003, my emphasis).

Howard asserted his belief that his election demonstrated that Australia had:

come back from being too obsessed with diversity to a point where we are very proud and conscious of those ongoing, distinctive, defining characteristics of being an Australian, which we tend to identify with what I might call the old Australia (audio transcript quoted from Soutphommasane 2006).

Howard’s assertions about “old Australia” imply not only a particular nation, but a particular national subject as well: a national subject who is not “mesmerised”, and who need not “navel gaze” about the nation’s past, present and future. In Lacanian terms, Howard cites a “subject supposed to know”.103

Throughout this chapter, I explore the way that defence nationalists construct themselves precisely as subjects who possess intimate knowledge about the nation: as subjects for whom “what an Australian has always been and always will be” is self-evident, and for whom introspection regarding the qualities of the nation—its past, present and future—is unnecessary. Whereas in Chapter 2, I examined the way nationalists defend the nation by

defending key national spatialities, in this chapter, I examine the way defence nationalists defend the nation conceptually by defending ideas of the nation's past, present and future. I argue that by defending conceptualisations of "old Australia", nationalists simultaneously defend their imagined status within the nation, both in the present and into the future.

First, I outline the way defence nationalists conceptualise their (temporal) connection(s) to the nation. To do this, I examine Anderson's theory of the nation as an "imagined community" that works to establish a communion between past, present and future members of the nation by positing the existence of a shared national 'essence' that endures over time (1991, p.35-36). Anderson's theory of the nation stands poetically alongside Lacan's theory of the subject, because whereas for Anderson, the nation is an imagined communion between subjects, for Lacan, the subject is an imagined communion between the 'I that I take myself to be' and the body. Moreover, like the imagined essence of Anderson's nation, the imagined essence of Lacan's subject is also imagined to endure over time.

Drawing on both Anderson and Lacan, I maintain that defence nationalism entails fantasies of another kind of 'enduring', imagined communion: specifically, that between the body politic (its community and its land), and the 'individual' body with/in which (for defence nationalists) the national essence is imagined contained. I argue that for defence nationalists, this communion between body and body politic is symbiotic, insofar as defence nationalists simultaneously imagine that their bodies are contained within the nation's history and that the nation's history is contained within their bodies—that is, in their flesh (this symbiotic relation has previously been discussed in relation to Images 1-2, 5-6, 9-10, 13 and 15).

Throughout this chapter, I read this dynamic of simultaneous containing and containment alongside Hage's work on nationalism. Hage argues that the capacity to 'tap into' the imagined communion is not distributed evenly, but is instead open or closed to varying
degrees (1998, p.52). This is because, for Hage, pathways of national identification are not distributed evenly, but differently and differentially (1998, p.52-54). As a product of this differential distribution, Hage maintains that a class of symbolically dominant subjects emerges within the nation, who in turn, attempt to maintain their privilege (Hage 1998 & 2004). Recalling that for Lacan, the subject's self-professed 'mastery' (over the self) is derived and maintained intersubjectively, I argue that these attempts towards maintaining symbolic privilege can be understood as efforts to maintain favourable pathways of recognition through which one can appear likeable (that is, desirable) to one's self. For example, subjects who conceptualise themselves as national subjects—as subjects who identify strongly with the nation—appear likeable to themselves when they are recognised 'correctly' as national subjects.

Throughout this chapter, I interpret defence nationalists as but one manifestation of Hage's argument regarding the emergence of symbolically dominant groups within the nation. This is not to say, however, that defence nationalists are a 'class' upon themselves; nor is it to suggest that all defence nationalists belong to the same class as each other. Rather, I argue that defence nationalists either are, or construct themselves as being symbolically dominant in ways that accord with Hage's conception of symbolic dominance (albeit with key differences, which I outline throughout the chapter). Reading Anderson, Hage and Lacan together, I claim that one of the ways defence nationalists seek to maintain their (presumed) dominance (thereby hoping to secure favourable recognition), is by leveraging their symbiosis of body-body politic. I argue that by positing a privileged, corporeal link to the nation and its history, defence nationalists imagine themselves in possession of intimate 'knowledge' of the nation's past, present and future, including possession of privileged ideas as to what the nation is and ought to be (à la Howard above). As I demonstrate, for defence nationalists, such fantasies of knowledge about the nation are intimately connected to fantasies of knowing the self, insofar as for passionate nationalists,

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104As per Lacan’s theory of the mirror stage, as outlined in Chapter 4. It should also be noted that for Lacan, the desire for recognition is also always a call for the inverse: the recognition of one's desire.
the self is imagined known through the conduit of the nation. Put differently, nationalists imagine that they know the nation merely by purporting to know the (national) self.

While the imagined relationship between body and body politic allows defence nationalists to purport to know the nation merely by knowing the self, so too, it allows nationalists to maintain the opposite: that the self can be mastered by mastering the nation. As I demonstrate, one of the mechanisms by which nationalists seek to achieve this mastery, is by attempting to master narratives about the nation's historical trajectory: its past, present and future. As the 'essence' of the nation is imagined to endure over time, nationalists seek to monopolise narratives about the nation’s history, often positing the existence of a singular national arc, with a single point of origin that is connected to and persists in the present, and which extends into an equally singular, non-ambivalent future horizon. Indeed, such attempts to master the body politic parallel the Lacanian subject’s attempts to master the self, in that for Lacan, the subject posits a singular, originary identity in the present—that of the body and the self—which is then thought to endure over time.

As I elaborate throughout this chapter, each of these two temporal arcs—those of the nation and the self—are, for defence nationalists, intimately entwined with one another such that they are inseparable. Moreover, defence nationalists adopt a similar disposition towards both arcs, in that they attempt to erase all traces of ambivalence, be it that of the nation or the self, by effacing the pluralities in the present. By interpreting defence nationalist fantasies in this way, I argue that the ‘imagined communion' constitutes a communion not only of the members of the nation, but of the past, present and future horizons of the nation as well, all of which defence nationalists imagine as converging upon their bodies. I argue that just as for the subject, the ‘I that I take myself to be’ is connected to the ‘I that I take myself to always have been’, for defence nationalists, who infer the ‘I’ from the nation, the ‘I that I take myself to be’ is intimately connected to the ‘I that I take myself to always have been, as inferred from the nation as I take it to have always
Just as for Lacan, the 'I that I take myself to be' (and to always have been) is necessarily compromised, so too for Hage, the nation is compromised by and for nationally dominant subjects. The nation is compromised, for Hage, because when dominant subjects attempt to protect their privilege within the nation, they produce a collective paranoia that compromises life within the nation for them, because "the aggressive politics of the border takes over the very interior it is supposed to be protecting" (2004, p.32). As Hage elaborates elsewhere, when one focusses on defending oneself, one inevitably "produces a gaze that sees threats everywhere and ends up reproducing the very vulnerability it is supposedly trying to overcome" (2003, p.81). Hage's theory of paranoid nationalism articulates strongly with Esposito's theory of 'immunity', because like Hage, for Esposito, attempts to defend or 'immunise' society from threats can paradoxically negate or constrain the very life they seek to preserve; that is, they have a tendency to lapse into "autoimmunity" (2012, p.61). For both Hage (2003 & 2004) and Esposito (2012), attempts to protect, preserve, defend and immunise the nation can paradoxically compromise the very nation that is supposedly defended. For both, logics of 'immunity' stand in fundamental opposition to 'community' (Esposito 2012, p.58).

In the second half of this chapter, I will outline an alternative formulation to those of Hage and Esposito, as outlined briefly above, that applies specifically to defence nationalism. I show that although at first glance, defence nationalists seem to compromise the nation through their efforts to defend it, that upon closer examination, the opposition that both Hage and Esposito posit between immunity and community does not hold for defence nationalists. As I demonstrate, this opposition does not hold for defence nationalists, because in purporting to defend and preserve the nation, they do not seek to preserve the nation as it already is; instead, it is through their very processes of mobilising to 'defend' the

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106 For Paul Ricoeur's highly influential work on the phenomenology of time, narrative, memory and "nostalgia" for that which never existed, see Ricoeur (2010).
107 Here, Esposito borrows from Derrida's theory of autoimmunity; see Derrida (2003) for extended discussion.
nation that defence nationalists retroactively create the supposedly already-existing community they seek to defend. Moreover, within their attempts to 'defend' the nation, defence nationalists stake an implicit claim to belong to an imagined communion within the imagined communion: namely, a communion of defence nationalists, who, by constructing themselves as the nation's defenders, also construct themselves as a privileged, hyper-national group within the nation.

By providing defence nationalists with a privileged communion within the communion—a body within the body politic—defence leagues provide a sense of belonging that is imagined more 'secure' than the nation itself. As I show, defence nationalists construct this belonging in terms of a symbolic privilege that exceeds that of 'regular' national subjects; this symbolic privilege, as I elaborate, elevates nationalists from a regular members of the nation to bona fide defenders of the nation. In light of this privileged communion within communion, I claim that it is not the nation per se that defence nationalists seek to preserve, but rather, an image of the self that is desirable to the self: an image of the self as a defender of the nation. Whereas for Hage and Esposito, one's attempts to defend one's position within a community, paradoxically compromise one's enjoyment of that community, instead, for defence nationalists, one's position within the community can be enjoyed (and validated) precisely through the paranoid discourses of immunology that compromise the nation itself. Put differently: the more the nation is compromised, the more one can actively enjoy and aggressively assert one's status as a defender of the nation.

The Imagined Communion

For Anderson, nations are “distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined (1991, p.6, my emphasis); indeed, for Anderson, the nation itself is an “imagined communion”:

because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives
the image of their imaginary communion (1991, p.6).

For Anderson, subjects of this “imaginary communion” feel as if their identities are, at least in part, captured and explained by their belonging to the communion (that is, to the nation); they feel bound to one another, Anderson writes, through a shared identity and in “a deep, horizontal comradeship” (1991, p.7). On Anderson’s reading, the body politic is formed through the incorporation of ‘individual’ bodies as one. As presaged above, Anderson’s theory of the nation articulates with Lacan’s theory of the human subject, in that for Lacan, the subject is formed through an imagined communion between the ‘I that I take myself to be’ and the subject. (Moreover, as shown in Chapter 4, the assumption of the ‘I that I take myself to be’ occasions an additional ‘communion’, whereby the subject binds the self to the signifier(s) through which the self is imagined as being (re)presented).

For Anderson, the “feeling” of a shared and explanatory essence is substantiated materially through the quotidian workings of the nation, through which national subjects are “continually reassured that the imagined world is visibly rooted in everyday life” (1991, p.35-36). For example, when a subject picks up a daily newspaper, such as the national news, the nation is reified insofar as the national newspaper both presupposes and perpetuates its own audience: the collection of subjects to whom the newspaper is marketed, and for whom the contents of the newspaper, its news, is imagined especially relevant. Moreover, in reading the newspaper, national subjects encounter a supposedly coherent narrative of what is happening in the nation ‘today’, and which is, at least in principle, common to all of the members of the communion. This examples shows one of the ways that the “feeling” of a shared and explanatory national essence is substantiated through the everyday workings of the nation. In a circular dynamic, banal practices, habits and rituals are nationalised, and in turn, these practices, habits and rituals are ratified by the gaze of national subjects as being authentically national. In sum, the imagined existence of the nation is reified retroactively through everyday practices.
For Anderson, the nation is not only reified in the present through daily practices, habits, and micro-events: rather, its essence endures over time, connecting the nation’s past, present and future horizons, and so too, those of its subjects (1991, p.35-36). To continue the above example, not only is the national newspaper aimed at a (supposedly) distinct audience (for whom its content is presumed relevant), so too, the newspaper (supposedly) tracks the nation over time, articulating the nation’s goings on in the present and archiving them as the nation’s history. By accessing this archive, one can supposedly read about the events that occurred in the very same nation, decades, if not centuries earlier. Similarly, when those who rioted on the beach of Cronulla saw themselves as embodying the national spirit—by displaying imagined national characteristics such as heroism, courage and selflessness—they saw themselves embodying the same, enduring national spirit as that which the Anzacs are imagined to have embodied on the beaches of Gallipoli. The men who rioted on the beach of Cronulla therefore saw themselves not only as being connected to past nationals (the Anzacs), but as connected to the enduring essence of the nation as well (specifically, to the Anzac spirit qua national spirit).

On my reading of Anderson, it is through the symbols and practices associated with the nation, which are encountered in everyday life, that subjects tangibly enact the ideological relations that are structured by the fiction of the nation. As these symbols and practices are wholly contingent, the cultural artefacts that ‘evince’ the nation serve merely to reify its initial conceptualisation. This point can be thought through in relation to the battle for the ‘Kokoda Trail’—one of the most valourised episodes of Australian military history—in which members of the Australian Defence Force defended colonial Australia against a land invasion for the first time. In contemporary Australia, the Kokoda Trail occupies a special place in both Australian military history and the cultural landscape; indeed, travelling to Papua New Guinea to hike the Kokoda Trail has come to function as a pilgrimage for many Australians. By travelling to the Kokoda Trail, participants are said to “follow the footsteps of the Anzacs” (Australian War Memorial n.d.), insofar as they are offered an embodied experience that supposedly mimics that of the Anzacs, hiking the same rough
terrain under the same unrelenting humidity, heat and fatigue as did the Anzacs before them. Through this haptic journey, participants are supposedly able to feel a bodily connection to the nation, to the Anzacs, and to one another. Like the Anzacs, they too purport to experience a bond of ‘mateship’ as they complete the pilgrimage. Just as, for Althusser, subjects relate the material conditions of their own existence to themselves through ideology (1971, p.165), so too, nationalists relate their own material conditions to themselves through discursive narratives about the nation (such as those of the Anzacs and the Kokoda Trail). These ideological narratives, although imagined, are nevertheless felt through the body, with the body, and in the body. Such experiences ensure the continuity of the nation and reify it retroactively, insofar as the narrativisation of experience in the present maintains the presumed prior existence of the nation.

For Anderson, the banal workings of the nation are always tied to more overt, aggressive forms of nationalism, because the very idea of the nation is predicated on necessary exclusion. As Anderson elaborates, the imagined communion as “inherently limited” because even the largest nations have:

finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations. No nation imagines itself as coterminous with mankind…nationalists do not dream of a day when all the members of the human race will join their nation (1991, p.7).

This observation articulates with the characteristic position of defence nationalists, many of whom typically conceptualise the imagined communion as subsisting, at least partially, in fantasies of ethnicity. As fantasies of ethnicity are inherently exclusive, defence nationalists often perceive immigration and multiculturalism as threats to national solidarity (as discussed previously at length); as Andrew Bolt, one of Australia’s most widely read columnists has surmised, “multiculturalism and high immigration is succeeding in dividing us [Australia] into a nation of tribes” (2010). Understood in Anderson’s terms, for defence nationalists, immigration and multiculturalism threaten to

108Noting that as discussed, defence nationalists typically seek to disavow the racism that underlies such fantasies, hence the frequently used slogan, “Patriotism is not racism” (Image 12), and the EDL’s claims that “Islam isn’t a race so we can’t be racist as we oppose an ideology!” (EDL 2016c).
divide if not fracture the imagined communion, insofar as they threaten to disrupt the imagined continuity of its essence. For defence nationalists then, immigration and multiculturalism threaten to render the body politic a body in pieces. From this interpretation, it can be inferred that just as national subjects share an imagined communion with their fellow national subjects (à la Anderson), that they also share an imagined departure from those who are not of the nation. Although Anderson implies this subjective departure by noting that the “feeling” of communion is exclusionary and shared only by fellow nationals (1991, p.6-7), he does not offer any insight into the potential psychic topography (or topographies) that this disjuncture might take. To to canvass this gap, I now turn to the work of Hage.

Fantasies of Dominance

Hage has interpreted the work of Anderson with specific reference to nationalism in Australia. Hage expands Anderson’s idea of the imagined communion by maintaining that it is constructed and functions as a causal cultural category, meaning that simply by virtue of being, for example, an Australian, the subject comes to imagine they share the nation’s imagined properties (2004, p.71-72). By identifying with signifiers that are associated with the nation, subjects are able to tap into the national ‘we’. By doing so, subjects acquire and sustain the fantasy that the nation reflects their own individual qualities. As Hage elucidates, the subject’s ability to utter the national “we” allows the subject to account for the self through the nation by enabling “the ‘I’ of the nationalist to do things it can never hope to be able to do as an individual ‘I’” (2004, p.13). For example, when the national subject says “‘we’ are a sporting nation”, they claim a share of the national essence irrespective of their own, individual sporting proficiencies (Hage 2004, p.13). That is, by tapping into the national ‘we’, subjects claim ownership of ‘national’ traits as individual traits (Hage 2004, p.13), such as when the rioters of Cronulla or those who hike the Kokoda Trail claim ‘national traits’, such as the Anzac traits of heroism, courage and mateship for themselves.
Beyond Hage, I maintain that the national ‘we’ not only allows nationalists to claim particular traits for the self, but that it also allows those who can identify with the national ‘we’ to assume a powerful symbolic agency.\textsuperscript{109} For example, as discussed in Chapter 1, those who ‘made a stand’ by rioting in the streets of London after the death of Lee Rigby, not only assumed Lee Rigby’s perceived traits for themselves, such as his heroism, they also assumed his \textit{symbolic position} within the nation, and like him, were thereby able to act as defenders of the nation. Similarly, as discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, those who responded to the ‘call to arms’ that preceded the Cronulla Riots, assumed the symbolic position of both the Cronulla life-savers and the Anzacs. Like the life-savers, they too sought to protect ‘beach goers’ and indeed, the very beach itself.

Access to the national ‘we’ is unevenly distributed because the ‘enduring essence’ of the nation, the imagined communion, is narrativised along ethnic, cultural, gendered, economic, linguistic and religious lines (Hage 1998, p.48). What this means, is that the capacity to tap into the national ‘we’ and its presumed legitimacy and authenticity becomes determined on the basis of these markers, which are themselves overlapping and mutually reinforcing. As identification with national markers and signifiers are converted into national ‘belonging’, the national ‘we’ privileges subjects who can more readily identify with those markers over those who cannot, thereby enabling them to assume dominant positions within the symbolic field of the nation (Hage 1998, p.48).

The current political landscapes in both the UK and Australia attest to the notion that ethno-cultural signifiers can both facilitate and impede national acceptance and belonging. For example, Julia Gillard and Tony Abbott, both of whom are former Australian Prime Ministers, were born in the United Kingdom; despite this, their allegiance to the nation has rarely been questioned on this basis. As white immigrants, no impediment to the accumulation of national capital and its conversion into belonging was experienced. By

\textsuperscript{109}Later, I explain the way that this symbolic agency comes to function as a mandate to act—and indeed to defend—on behalf of the nation.
contrast, when Australian-born Ed Husic was sworn into parliament with his hand placed on the Koran (rather than the Bible, as is standard practice), a public furore ensued regarding Husic’s national allegiance and political motivations. As one comment to The Age newspaper petitioned: “Come on Ed. Flag and nation first. Religion second” (2013). The logic of this appeal, which is exemplary, is that placing one’s hand on the Koran elevates religious motivations over those of nation, while the standard practice of putting one’s hand on the Bible does not.\(^{110}\)

When the ideological structures of the nation are (in part or whole) imagined in ethnic or religious terms, then these terms become pathways of symbolic identification with/in the nation. Whether those pathways of identification are open or foreclosed to a particular subject is dependent on that subject’s ability or inability to identify with those categories, and how strongly they may do so. For Hage, in Australia, “whiteness” has come to function as the “valorised racial causal category” that determines the “symbolic access” one has to the nation (2004, p.50). When one has “symbolic access” to whiteness (which is aided by possession of a white body), one is more readily thought to embody the socio-cultural traits attached to whiteness as a *symbolic category*, which itself exemplifies national traits. As Hage elaborates, the symbolic prioritisation of whiteness as a “racial causal category” prioritises white subjects within the nation (Hage 2004, p.50), while creating barriers to national belonging and identification for subjects that do not possess the most highly valued symbolic capital within the nation, but have never known any other ‘home’ but the nation in which they were born (Hage 1998, p.52).\(^{111}\) Moreover, symbolically dominant groups may be blind to the impediments faced by those who are constructed as being less national than others, because for subjects for whom access to the nation is ‘naturalised’, the nation is not experienced as a socially, culturally and historically

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\(^{110}\)Much like the example of Ed Husic, a similar controversy erupted among members of the EDL when Sadiq Khan was elected as mayor of London in May 2016. In another case, One Nation candidate Stephanie Banister committed what could be described as a ‘Hage-ian slip’ (a conflation of ethnic, national and religious markers), when she said: “I don't oppose Islam as a country...but I do feel that their laws should not be welcome here in Australia” (Olding 2013).

\(^{111}\)Hage is here drawing on Pierre Bourdieu's concept of “symbolic capital” as indicating that which is valued and valourised in a given socio-cultural setting. See Bourdieu (1977) and Hage (1998) for extended discussions.
contingent social formation, but instead, as a symbolic field that poses *no impediment* to the realisation of identity (Hage 1998, p.62).

The complex interplay and overlapping of multiple, mutually reinforcing narratives, means that individuals are not simply sorted into strictly dichotomous categories (for example as being either national or non-national, as either belonging or not-belonging); instead, nationality functions in degrees, because subjects can be or become 'more' or 'less' national through their varied and varying capacities to identify with the national signifiers (Hage 1998, p.52). As Hage maintains:

> In the daily life of the nation, there are nationals who, on the basis of their class or gender or ethnicity, for example, practically feel and are made to feel to be *more* or *less* nationals than others, without having to be denied, or feel they are denied, the right to be nationals as such (1998, p.52).

Hage maintains that subjects who are more dominant than others try to leverage their existing symbolic capital to acquire *more* (1998, p.52-53). They do this by reproducing narratives which are constructed as national narratives, and in which *their own* socio-cultural markers are reflected (Hage 1998, p.52-53). As such, Hage argues that symbolically dominant subjects attempt to bolster their dominance by using their privilege to produce a national order that reflects and re-articulates their own interests (1998, p.48). For Hage, pathways of national identification and belonging can be bolstered by dominant subjects if they are able to successfully increase the visibility and authority of their other symbolic markers. To do this, dominant subjects manage the nation and its subjects both spatially and symbolically in ways that privilege the categories with which *they* identify (such as colour, culture, language and religion) as *national categories par excellence* (Hage 1998, p.48). This circular trend, whereby symbolically dominant subjects leverage their dominance to (re) produce a nation that reflects and (re) produces their dominance, can be understood as implicated in the opposition of defence nationalists to multiculturalism and immigration, halal, Sharia, the veil and the building of mosques, examples of which have been discussed at length throughout this thesis.
That certain socio-cultural markers come to be produced as *national markers* reflects who is *already* dominant in the telling and re-telling of national narratives (Rutherford 2000, p.15). The association of particular socio-cultural signifiers with the nation not only plays out in the quotidian workings of the nation, *à la* Anderson (1991) and Hage (1998 & 2004), by facilitating or foreclosing belonging, so too, they play out in defence nationalist events as well. The NSW Police report on the Cronulla Riots reflects these racialised constructions, noting that during the riots, the predominantly white rioters attacked *all* persons of non-white appearance, despite the precipitating rumours that claimed it was “persons of Lebanese appearance” that had attacked the life-savers (NSW Police 2006, p.7). For those who rioted on Cronulla Beach and in London, it mattered little if those who had attacked the life-savers and Lee Rigby were 'officially' national citizens; for the rioters, the *racialised* attackers were *non-nationals* by default, whose actions against particular individuals were perceived as constituting attacks on the very nation itself (as demonstrated at length in earlier chapters).

That nationalistic efforts towards securing symbolic dominance are conducted in reference to the *other* socio-cultural markers with which nationalists identify is indicative of the way in which a multitude of signifiers, none of which are sufficient in isolation, interlock and intersect to sustain fantasies of the nation and national identities (*à la* Lacan’s theory of the signifier, as discussed in Chapter 4).112 Particular markers are visibilised and naturalised within the nation *intersubjectively*, so that the nation is constructed as a ‘white’ nation, a ‘Christian’ nation, a ‘free’ nation. By strengthening the association and visibility of particular markers within the nation (such as skin colour, values, and religious orientation), subjects who identify with these markers thereby increase the viability of the nation as an identification for *themselves*. That is, dominant national subjects maintain their symbolic dominance by increasing the nation’s capacity to dispense recognition for *them*, at the expense of its capacity to dispense recognition to *others*. This articulates strongly with Lacan’s argument that signifiers function essentially as a finite resource (see Lacan

2006, p.412-441), whose efficacy is diminished should the 'I' come to resemble an-other
unduly, through shared reliance on the same signifiers (as discussed at length in Chapters 4
and 5). The emphasis here is on an 'undue' resemblance because, as discussed in Chapters 4
and 5, nationalism functions as an efficient symbolic fiction precisely because it has the
capacity to explain and tolerate resemblance to some degree, because a resemblance, or re-
semblance between fellow nationals can be constructed as a 'fact' that confirms the existence
of a (shared) national identity.

As the imagined communion rests on the assumption that the community retains its
originary character over time, the genealogy of the nation's signifiers plays a key role in the
creation and maintenance of symbolically dominant subjects within the nation. Given that
'Australia', at least as it is imagined by white nationalists, has had a short and predominantly
white, Christian history, which is imagined paradoxically as both the product of an
emancipation from Great Britain and as a continuation of British institutions and
traditions, when contemporary nationalists perform the same activities as their national
ancestors, they perceive themselves as achieving a more authentic national activity
providing they share common markers of ethnicity, religion and culture with those
ancestors (Hage 1998, p.60-61). Additionally, if national activities occur and are created
within an ethnic or religious context, subjects who also share those traits can more readily
claim an inherited ownership of those national activities (as was discussed for example, in
Chapter 2, with respect to white bodies who surf at the beach).

Just as, for defence nationalists, the histories of particular socio-cultural signifiers bears a
relation to their perceived national 'authenticity', so too, the perceived histories of the body
to which those signifiers are applied is deemed relevant. As Hage observes, although
migrants (and perceived migrants) can accumulate national capital by assimilating to
dominant cultural cues (such as by taking on language and participating in certain
practices), the national capital they accumulate is nevertheless devalued for its having
been accumulated (1998, p.54). This devaluation hinders the conversion of symbolic capital
into belonging (Hage 1998, p.54). An example of this phenomenon is the question ‘where are you from?’ When this question is asked of a white person in Australia or the UK, the subtext is often ‘where are you from within the nation?’ The question therefore asks the respondent to name the highly localised domain from within the nation from which they hail, such as the particular state, city, county, suburb or town. Recall, for example, the “Shire Boiz” in Image 6, who identified themselves with the Cronulla postcode; recall also the distinction Abberton made between the Bra Boys, who are from Maroubra Beach, and the Shire Boiz, who are from Cronulla Beach. Although these distinctions convey highly particularised iterations of the national subject, both presuppose that the subject is a fundamentally national subject, because to belong to either the Shire Boiz or the Bra Boys, one must belong to Australia. By contrast, when the same question, ‘where are you from?’, is asked of a non-white person, the subtext of the question shifts to focus on which nation other than Australia or the UK the respondent ‘originates’. As Georgia Mokak anecdotally observes, “replying with, ‘I am Australian’, only invites the following question ‘But where are you really from?’” (Mokak 2017).

The capacity to acquire national capital is not only split unevenly between ‘migrants’ and ‘non-migrants’; rather, the capacity to acquire national capital can be dispersed unevenly among migrants and perceived migrants (Hage 1998, p.54). As Hage notes, some migrants (and perceived migrants) are constructed as having greater initial impediments to the accumulation of social capital than others (1998, p.54). It is clear that for defence nationalists, those who are perceived to be of Muslim backgrounds are interpreted as facing a far greater impediment to the accumulation of national capital than others. Hence, for example, the previously discussed EDL slogan, “Time To Rethink Migration Policies! STOP ISLAMIC MIGRATION” (for more examples, see Images 12, 14 and 16-17). In outlining the purpose of the ADL’s Facebook page, for example, Ralph Cerminara explained:

This is ADL. If you think muslims are good people or you think there are moderate muslims you are in the wrong place. Educate yourself. If anyone in
this group tries to say otherwise let me know. ADL is a defence league against muslims and Islam. We promote Australia and australian values. If you don't like this I suggest you pack your bags and leave. Appeasers of muslims will not be tolerated. This group is a forum for everyone to voice their anger without fear of facebooks muslim rules. If anyone at anytime has questions please let me know. ADL NFSE\textsuperscript{113} (Cerminara 2015).

In this passage, Cerminara depicts “muslims and Islam” as being incompatible with “Australia and australian values”, to the point that they cannot be reconciled, hence, “If you think muslims are good people or you think there are moderate muslims you are in the wrong place”. For Cerminara, there is no such thing as a Muslim who can identify with the signifiers associated with being an Australian; that is, there is no Muslim who can acquire the most highly valued national capital: the values, traits, characteristics and dispositions which embody the nation and its narratives and mythologies.

While on the one hand, nationalists emphasise the extent to which the capital possessed by migrants is acquired (thereby devaluing it), on the other, they seek to naturalise their own access to national capital by denying its socio-historical acquisition (Hage 1998, p.62). Through this disavowal of acquisition, they seek to reinforce the nation as a favourable symbolic field for themselves. For defence nationalists, accumulations of national capital and the correlative acquisition of nationality are explicitly denied by fictions of the body that construct the body as a wholly natural entity. The reason that this denial of acquisition is achieved is because for defence nationalists, national identity is simply a ‘fact’ of the body one is born with, rather than something one acquires (as previous discussions of the importance of tattoos and messages such as “we grew here you flew here” indicate). For defence nationalists, the self, the nation, and the national essence endure over time symbiotically, insofar as the nation endures within the body and the body endures within nation (as was discussed at length throughout Chapters 2-6). As the ‘I’ is imagined lodged in a body from which it cannot be dissociated, the nation is constructed, through the

\textsuperscript{113}’NFSE’ stands for ‘Never Fucking Surrender Ever’. The term widely used by both the ADL and EDL, as well as other defence nationalist organisations. The EDL and ADL often use ‘NFSE’ as it is used here: as a way of signing off blog posts and Facebook posts, and concluding banners and signs used at protests and marches.
interconnectedness of body and body politic, as a symbolic field that merely reflects the 'I that I take myself to be', and to always have been, naturally and by default (as, for example, with respect to the 'Anzac spirit' in Image 1).

While, for defence nationalists, nationality is imagined as a set of characteristics, traits, beliefs, values and dispositions that are lodged permanently inside the body, the underside of this logic is that so too, otherness remains lodged permanently inside the body of the other, even if an 'official' status of belonging, such as citizenship, is acquired. Speaking on Australian radio, Blair Cottrell, the then-leader of the UPF, described this permanent otherness. Cottrell outlined his view that the world is headed towards collapse, “either economic or total” (Tilley 2015). When this happens, he continued, “Australian Muslims will be radicalised very quickly”, and will turn on Australia despite their status as Australians; this is because, Cottrell elaborated, the “true” allegiances of Australian Muslims lie “dormant” (Tilley 2015). Just as the Anzac spirit lies within the body, ready to be awoken (as in Image 1), so too, the “true” characteristics, traits, beliefs, values and dispositions of the other remain lodged indelibly within their bodies.

As shown throughout this thesis, national narratives, mythologies and iconographies that implicate the body allow the fantasy that the body is an immediate reification of self to be applied and extended to the nation, such that the symbolic field of the nation functions as a reification _qua_ confirmation of self: of the 'I that I take myself to be'. For Hage, it is through a similar symbiosis between self and nation that the ideals of nationalists come to be conflated with those of the nation itself. As Hage notes, “a group succeeds in imposing its symbolic violence on the national field by naturalising its aspirations and ideals into national aspirations and ideals” (1998, p.65). The conflation of these ideals effectively creates a logic among nationalists: 'what is good for the (ethnic/religious) nation is good for me, and therefore what is good for me is good for the nation'. However, I argue that dominance itself soon becomes the idealised aspiration.
**Remembering as Re-membering**

In light of the theoretical formulations outlined above, the question as to who can remember “old Australia” can be refined and restated as such: who is permitted to imagine they remember “old Australia” (or the origins of any nation)? One answer, is that symbolically dominant subjects, who (con)fuse their own ideals with national ideals, are the one who construct themselves as being empowered enough to 'remember' and 'know' the authentic nation. I claim that nationalist defence leagues, such as the EDL and the ADL, are comprised precisely of subjects such as these who imagine themselves, as John Howard described, as being “conscious”, without ambivalence “of [the] ongoing, distinctive, defining characteristics” of what it means to be a national subject, and who, therefore, imagine themselves as the custodians of knowledge about the “old” qua authentic nation.

This 'remembering' of the nation itself constitutes a form of national defence, insofar as this supposed 'knowledge' about the nation works to reproduce and preserve the purity and unity of the imagined communion, which, as discussed, only subsists in the minds of its subjects. However, further efforts to defend the nation also stem from this purported national knowledge. Blair Cottrell provided some insight into this dynamic when he described the ambitions of the UPF:

> The idea is not so much anti-Islam or Anti-this or that, as it is pro-Australian. We don't want our people to be in a state of guilt and shame, particularly historically guilty for what's happened in the past, because if you're going to have two very distinct cultures you're going to blend them together and one is guilty and ashamed and sort of self-abnegating, but the other culture is quite...ah, expresses quite a good amount of solidarity and pride, then what do you suppose the end result is going to be? The strong is going to dominate the weaker (Tilley 2015, my emphasis).

Here, “historical guilt” stands as a remnant of an un-purified national past: that is, an imperfect imagined communion. Such national impurities are problematic for Cottrell because, as for Howard earlier, they threaten to compromise the “solidarity” and unity of the imagined communion and the “pride” that subjects can feel by locating themselves therein. Cottrell thereby outlines one of the reasons that defending and preserving the old
nation is important to defence nationalists: for Cottrell, the nation’s solidarity and strength is predicated on the extent to which contemporary national subjects can feel proud about the nation’s history and the national characteristics, traits, values and dispositions that are produced as a byproduct of that history, and which in turn, are imagined to continue in the present. Put in Hage’s terms, the symbolic dominance that nationalists experience within the nation can only be experienced as properties of the self (albeit as national properties of the self), insofar as those properties are imagined by nationalists as being inherited from the nation ‘naturally’. Put simply, it is important to defend the nation and its history because whatever the nation is and has been, nationalists are a part of as well.

Just as nationalists share in what the nation is and has been, so too, they imagine they will share in what the nation will be. Just as they seek to (re)construct the nation’s past so that they may (re)construct a ‘present’ in which they are dominant, so too, they seek to produce a present in which the continuation of their dominance is projected and guaranteed into the future. The motto of the National Front, a far right-wing political party in the UK, encapsulates this desire to ensure the continuation of the nation qua the continuation of symbolic dominance. The motto, referred to as the founding ”14 Words”, holds that ”We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children” (Layzell 2017). This desire to ensure the “existence” and “future for white children” can be read, on Hage’s terms, as a desire to “secure” the symbolic dominance of whiteness within the nation now and into the future. By positing and seeking to construct this future, nationalists connect the nation’s past, present and future in a singular national arc, envisioning a future in which their dominance is always remembered and thus can never be forgotten.

As argued in earlier chapters, one imagines that one knows one’s own body intimately, from the inside. I have argued that for defence nationalists, the ‘individual’ body is also imagined as bound inseparably to the body politic, for it is ‘inside’ the individual body that ethnicity and therefore nationality are thought to reside. Given the imagined
relationship between body/body politic, the body functions as an index that determines who can purport to know and remember the authentic nation (what Howard refers to as "old Australia" (2003)). That is, the body stands as an irrefutable 'fact' as to for whom the nation and national subjects “has always been and always will be” self evident (Howard 2003). This observation explains, at least in part, why defence nationalists continually attempt to demonstrate the link between their 'individual' bodies and the national body, whether through flag-draping (as in Image 2 and 9-10), or by adorning the body with national iconography and nationalist messages, whether by way of tattoos and temporary ink (as in Images 5-6, 13, and 15), or by otherwise implying a link between the body and the nation's history (as in Images 1 and 12). For these nationalists, the imagined connection between the body and the body politic demonstrate that the subject is, to quote John Howard, “conscious of [the] ongoing, distinctive, defining characteristics” of what it means to be a national subject (2003, my emphasis); that is, the corporeal link demonstrates that the subject possesses knowledge of what it means to be a national subject, because s/he is a national subject.

The 'connection' defence nationalists establish between body and body politic not only enables them to imagine that they can 'remember' the old qua authentic nation, it also affords them the authority to re-member the 'present' and future of the nation as well by deciding and enforcing who belongs and who does not. Symbolically dominant subjects within the nation achieve this process of re-membering—deciding who belongs—partly through their imagined capacity to (re)construct narratives of the nation's past, present and future, always ensuring the reproduction of their own national dominance. Thus, whilst nationalists see themselves as belonging to the nation's history through transmission of national traits that supposedly endure over time, they also see the nation's history as an artefact that belongs to them, as something they can curate, manage and purify in the present and into the future.

Because the nation's imagined 'essence', which supposedly endures in the present and
continues into the future, *empowers and enshrines* symbolically dominant subjects as symbolically dominant subjects within the nation, the origins of the nation’s essence are idealised; this is because the nation’s origins are imagined equivalent to the origins of nationalists themselves (as demonstrated, for example, through the valourisation of the Anzac spirit). For nationally dominant subjects—of which defence nationalists are but one aggressive manifestation—the nation’s essence functions normatively, in that how the nation was imagined to be in the past, becomes how the nation *ought* to be now and into the future. This logic underlies many of the defence nationalist narratives examined by this thesis, including the ways defence nationalists construct their opposition to immigration and multiculturalism; their pride when remembering past military triumphs and days of national celebration; and their efforts towards preserving national values. The same logic underlies many defence nationalist slogans, such as the EDL’s ”Keep Britain British”, which implies that there is something about Britain that ought to be retained but which is under threat of changing. What the slogan recommends is a (re)modelling of the British ‘present’ on an idealised, quintessentially British ‘past’. The slogan also tacitly recommends that the British essence be reproduced indefinitely into the future, hence, ”*Keep Britain British*”.

By ensuring that the ‘essence’ of the nation is reproduced in the past, the present and the future, so too, defence nationalists seek to ensure the indefinite reproduction of their dominance as well. In their efforts to re-member the nation, both past- and future-oriented gazes intersect and entwine in the present. It is by exerting control over national narratives in both temporal directions that defence nationalists find an antidote to the thinning effects of John Howard’s “cultural dieticians” (2003) in the present. Through this recourse, so too nationalists purport to discover a means of fattening the body politic *qua* a fattening of their own symbolic dominance.
The Autoimmunity of Paranoid Nationalism

For Hage, symbolically dominant national subjects become paranoid that they will lose their privileged position within the nation (2004, p.31). Hage maintains that dominant national subjects are inclined towards a disposition of “worrying” about the nation and its capacity to dispense care for all of its subjects (2004, p.20-21; p.31). For Hage, this worry manifests as an anxiety among symbolically dominant subjects that their privilege within the nation will be lost to others (Hage 2004, p.21-22; Hage 2003); accordingly, for Hage, the nationalist’s worry is converted into a paranoia that is expressed through hostility and aggression towards others; that is, it manifests in “paranoid nationalism” (2004, p.21-22).

For Hage, the aggression of paranoid nationalism reaches its apex “when the aggressive politics of the border takes over the very interior it is supposed to be protecting” (2004, p.32); for Hage, this occurs because the subject’s “search for zero vulnerability produces a gaze that sees threats everywhere and ends up reproducing the very vulnerability it is supposedly trying to overcome” (2003, p.81). Here, Hage's observations resonate with Esposito's theory of ‘immunity’. For Esposito, hyper-defensive positions deemed essential to the protection of life, can, when carried past a certain point, paradoxically end up negating or constraining that life (2012, p.61). By characterising immunity in this way, Esposito establishes ‘immunity’ in fundamental opposition to ‘community’: a set of biopolitical processes that render communities ‘dead’ (2012, p.58). This articulates with Santner’s observation that anxious attempts to immunise social life from vulnerability often serve to diminish its robustness (2011, p.6); for Santner, such attempts can therefore ironically intensify vulnerability, whereby “immunity becomes autoimmunity, self-preservation becomes a mode of mortification, life drive becomes a kind of death drive” (2011, p.7).

The aggression that manifests through nationalistic efforts towards preserving communities are commonly described as being ‘xenophobic’, and as being characterised by fear of the other's difference (Hage 2003, p.88); however, for Hage, this ‘xenophobia’ can be
conceptualised more accurately as ‘homoiphobia’: as fear of the other’s *sameness* (2003, p.88). In examining the role of nationalism in the conflict between Serbia and Crotia, for example, Michael Ignatieff observes that when conflict lacks the presence of concrete difference, such as language, religion or culture, that *sometimes* “the emotions stirred up within commonality are more violent than those aroused by pure and radical difference” (1999, p.47). What Hage (2003) and Ignatieff (1999) demonstrate here, is that it is not *necessarily* perceived differences between national and non-national subjects that occasions hostility, but rather, that it is sometimes the possibility of a *lack* of meaningful difference that is experienced as threatening.

When defence nationalists encounter the excess other within the nation, it is not the self, but the *nation* they construct as compromised. That is: they do not interpret the self, but instead the socio-cultural object from which the sense of self is derived as being vulnerable to the threat (*qua* presence) of the other. Despite this *displacement* of threat (from self to nation), defence nationalists nevertheless seek to defend the nation by referencing and propping up other aspects of the self that they *associate* with the nation (such as language, race, ethnicity, values and religion). In a speech given at an EDL rally in Leicester, for example, Tommy Robinson claimed that the EDL exists to defend England’s “Christian culture”, tantamount to defending the nation itself (EDL Leicester 2010). Nationalists seek to defend the nation in this way, because, *à la* Anderson (1991) and Hage (1998 & 2004), the nation is imagined and enacted through ethnic, racial, cultural, linguistic and religious signifiers on a daily basis. Defence nationalists seek to strengthen the presence of the signifiers with which they identify by diminishing the presence of those with which they do not. Examples of this include widespread calls by defence nationalists to halt immigration and multiculturalism, and to ban the veil, mosques, Sharia and halal. Nationalists therefore seek to defend the nation by promoting some signifiers while diminishing others.

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114 I cite Ignatieff here only by way of example, acknowledging that the vehemence and universality of his claim is problematic and cannot be applied to all conflicts.
As argued in Chapters 4 and 5, defence nationalists can externalise and displace the Lacanian subject’s ever-present psychic vulnerability to the Symbolic Order by constructing the other, and the signifiers that represent the other, as a threat to the nation’s unity and stability, rather than to the unity and stability of the self. Through this externalisation of vulnerability, the other becomes the origin of instability, rather than the Symbolic Order itself. As shown in Chapter 5, moreover, damaging qua de-nationalising the other in which vulnerability is located can appear to function as a solution to that vulnerability. But what is the quality of this vulnerability in the first instance? Contrary to Hage, I maintain that ‘homoiphobia’, or fear of the other’s sameness, can be more accurately re-framed as the obverse: as a fear of the self’s otherness; that is, as autoimmunity. Whereas Hage and Ignatieff maintain that it is the threatening sameness of the other that motivates nationalist aggression, I maintain that this particular defence nationalist anxiety can be attributed to a more fundamental betrayal: that of the Symbolic Order, which promises a place for the T—albeit one understood on the terms of the Symbolic Order—and in doing so, promises that there is actually a stable T for whom a place can be allocated. As discussed in Chapters 4 and 5 however, this promise cannot ultimately be kept, because no absolute, final articulation of difference between self and other can be made despite the subject’s efforts to organise life around the presumed existence of radical, essential difference.

With respect to the above, a Lacanian framework acutely highlights what is at stake for nationally dominant subjects in their efforts toward maintaining dominance: while for Hage, dominant subjects become paranoid that they will lose their privileged position within the nation, my thesis is that subjects are also afraid that they will lose what that dominance assists in providing them: specifically, mastery of the self. Contrary to Hage then, what is at stake for nationalists in defending the nation is not merely the maintenance of a specific national order which is perceived as being favourable to the nationalist, but so too, the maintenance of the illusion that social order provides: namely, that of a stable national self. Following Lacan, the very assertions of dominance made by symbolically
dominant subjects inevitably undercut the exact identities they aim to substantiate, insofar as the 'gap' between the self and subject is irreducible and emerges irrespective of one's symbolic position among other subjects. This means that even as nationalists assume dominant positions within the nation, that *in and by so doing*, they (re)assert their subordination and vulnerability to the Symbolic Order. However, subjects who encounter this void as the gap re-emerges do not necessarily experience the realisation, 'oh no! The other is taking my place!' (as in both xenophobia and homoiphobia), but rather, the realisation 'oh no! I am not the same as myself!' This encounter with the self's otherness amounts to the Lacanian subject's realisation that 'I' am not the 'I that I took myself to be', nor was I ever, nor will I ever be.

**A Body of Anti-Bodies**

If, rather than defending their symbolic dominance per se, defence nationalists ultimately defend against the *re-emergence* of the void around which subjectivity and selfhood are structured, then the efforts of Hage's “paranoid nationalists” are the tip of the iceberg of a much larger, unconscious political community. If, by 'defending' the nation, defence nationalists seek to defer the void of the Real, then this 'defence' should not be deemed a failure simply because the community, which nationalists only *ostensibly* seek to defend, is itself compromised. Indeed, if symbolic 'life' within the nation is always-already compromised—given the irreducible and ineradicable gap between the Symbolic and the Real—then it is questionable as to whether Esposito's opposition between immunity and community holds true for all nationalists.

Following Hage and Esposito, defence nationalist imaginaries can be understood as compromising life within the nation insofar as they posit that the nation is under imminent threat (hence the need that it be defended); however, while the aggressive practices of defence nationalism can potentially compromise *the nation* they ostensibly seek to protect, it does not automatically follow that defence nationalists *themselves* lapse into what Esposito describes as 'autoimmunity'. Indeed, I maintain that Esposito's argument
regarding immunity/community does not apply to defence nationalists; and, moreover, nor does that of Hage, who writes that through discourses of immunity, “a defensive attitude of guarding whatever good life there is left supplants the enjoyment of that good life” (2003, p.86). I hold that neither of these arguments apply to defence nationalism, because although perceived national threats may compromise the nation, nevertheless, for defence nationalists, *jouissance* can be derived from the *fantasy* that the nation needs to be defended and that it is *they* who ought to be the ones to do the defending.

Defence nationalists derive *jouissance* from the idea the nation is under attack, because as they posit national threats and enemies, they *simultaneously* posit and produce a communion *within* the imagined communion: that of those whose collective task it is to respond and do the defending. This ‘inner’ community is comprised of those who posit it: defence nationalists, who are joined together through their shared capacity to recognise the very ‘fact’ that the nation is under siege; moreover, membership to this ‘inner’ community bestows privileged national status on its subjects: a *hyper-nationality* that functions as the basis of the inner-communion. Recall for example, Koby Abberton’s commentary on the Cronulla Riots:

> The reason why it’s not happening at Maroubra is because of the Bra Boys. Girls go to Cronulla, Bondi, everywhere else in Sydney and get harassed, but they come to Maroubra and nothing happens to them. I read all this stuff about kids getting harassed because they want to have a surf and I say ‘are you kidding?’ The beach should be for Aussie kids. But if you want to go to beaches and act tough in groups you better be able to back it up. If these fellas come out to Maroubra and start something they know it’s going to be on, so they stay away (McIlveen 2005).

In this passage, Abberton not only depicts the nation’s ‘way of life’ as under attack from other cultures, he also positions his group, the Bra Boys, as the defenders of their own localised domain (Maroubra Beach). What this example demonstrates, is that rather than simply gathering amorphous anxieties and distilling them in the other, thereby compromising the nation by constructing it as vulnerable, instead, defence nationalism draws together and *links* its subjects’ anxieties such that a communion between them is
formed (as that between the Bra Boys and Maroubra Beach). In this way, the 'paranoia' of defence nationalists is productive even as it is destructive: while it may jeopardise the national 'community' in a broader sense, at the same time, it links defence nationalists to one another through their shared anxieties and paranoia. Thus, while on Esposito’s terms, immunitary logics may be opposed to communities in general, they are not necessarily opposed; indeed, they may actively sustain the specific community of defence nationalists. Therefore, although defence nationalism may compromise the national community, it does not necessarily occasion autoimmunity for its own subjects by default. It does not occasion autoimmunity by default, because it is the very possibility of the collapse of the nation itself that provides defence nationalists with a communion among themselves. As the 'communion' of defence nationalists is only engendered as a retroactive effect of the nation's collapse, defence nationalism thereby provides its subjects with an imagined immunity to its own 'cause'—the collapse of the imagined communion.

In attempting to 'defend' the nation, defence nationalists seek to resuscitate a life of the nation that is and was always-already dead to begin with (insofar as the Symbolic must always fail to capture the Real). Although defence nationalist efforts toward restoring the nation's idealised origins may ultimately compromise the national community, these efforts simultaneously keep alive a fantasised return to the whole nation. Contrary to Hage, I have argued that there is more at stake for nationally dominant subjects than the privilege that symbolic dominance affords. Whereas in Hage’s conception, symbolically dominant subjects become paranoid that they will lose their privileged grasp on the nation, I have argued that what is really at stake is the stable sense of self that positions of dominance ostensibly provide. The 'paranoia' of defence nationalists can be further understood as a fear of losing what one can never have anyway: access to the Real (of the self). To this end, the imagined community provides its subjects with both a surplus and a deficit. The surplus is the inevitable contamination of the imagined communion by others, an excess which is created by the style in which the nation, which is predicated on exclusion, is imagined. This necessary surplus—the non-national other upon whom the
nation is predicated—announces the nation’s deficit: its inability to perfectly capture the pure, radical difference it posits between its subjects and those who are other.

The paranoid attempts of defence nationalists to ‘defend’ and ‘immunise’ the nation against its inevitable surpluses and deficits may seem, at least ostensibly, to further jeopardise the nation; however, given the nation is, for the reasons stated above, always-already jeopardised, the efforts of defence nationalists to immunise the nation may serve to recuperate the fantasy space that the nation initially provides. By positing the nation as a lost object, nationalists gain the nation as an object for which they can search, and which in turn they can defend. Contrary to Hage, nationalists are therefore not always motivated by the paranoia that they will lose their already-existing enjoyment within the nation; rather, it is through the very performance of defending the nation that enjoyment—and indeed, jouissance—can be found.

I have claimed that defence nationalist narratives regarding the potential ‘collapse’ of nation give birth to a privileged community to which defence nationalists purport to belong: a community of hyper-national subjects who enjoy an imagined immunity within the nation’s alleged collapse. Here, we are returned to the question posed at the beginning of this chapter: who can remember “old Australia” (or any “old” qua authentic nation)? One answer is defence nationalists, who imagine themselves as hyper-national subjects who are empowered to defend the nation by remembering and re-membering it. Such nationalists are not paralysed, in the words of John Howard, by “introspection”; nor are they “mesmerised by...self appointed cultural dieticians” who would have them question themselves (Howard 2003). Instead, they gaze at themselves merely to confirm what they already (suppose to) know: namely, the ‘fact’ of their own nationality, the ‘facts’ of the state of the nation, and the ‘fact’ of their own status as its defenders.
Chapter 8: Sovereign Bodies Unto Themselves

A hierarchical body with absolute power of decision residing in the individual shall be expressed, in abstract fashion, by a strong and healthy body: a body of proper defences and designed to live through the many assaults bound to be made against it.

Blair Cottrell (2018)

Bodies—including those of flesh, land and law; self, other and nation—simultaneously contain and are contained; possess and are possessed; inhabit and are inhabited. A nation, at least conceptually, is both a singular body and a collective body; a body made from ‘individual’ bodies. So too, nationalist defence leagues are collective bodies made from individual bodies. However, for Blair Cottrell, the leader of the United Patriots Front, defence leagues are not just any type of body: they are “hierarchical”, “healthy” bodies with “proper defences”; able to resist and withstand “the many assaults bound to be made against [them]” (2018).

Throughout the thesis, I have argued that these bodies (defence leagues) and the nationalism that underpins them, can be distinguished from the forms of nationalism that preceded them. I have shown that their novelty is best highlighted through an exploration of the psychoanalytic and psychosocial underpinnings of defence nationalism, rather than through an account of the socio-political conditions of their emergence alone (as much of the literature that comes before has sought to do). This is because, I have argued, it is the narratives, imaginaries and subjectivities that sustain defence leagues, as well as the narratives, imaginaries and subjectivities they sustain, that sets them apart.

I have argued that unlike other nationalist groups, defence leagues are not primarily concerned with realising their ostensible political projects (such as fortifying national borders, halting immigration and preserving so-called national values). Rather, I have argued that they are more concerned with constructing and enjoying themselves as the privileged national subjects who get to do the defending. That is, they are most concerned with (en)acting, embodying and enjoying their perceived identities as hyper-national
subjects: privileged, (self-)ordained defenders of the nation who enjoy an imagined indigeneity and immunity therein. This enjoyment means that paradoxically, that which threatens the nation can legitimise and fortify defence nationalists and the way they see themselves. This is because the more the nation is perceived as threatened, the more the nationalist can perceive the imagined role of defending the nation as secure. Indeed, the more the nation is imperilled, the more the nationalist can purport to fulfil and thereby enjoy the task of defending the nation; the more they can enjoy their imagined identity as a defender; and the more they can substantiate and embody the fantasy that they really are a privileged national subject: a (self-)ordained defender of the nation. It is this distinguishing feature that makes the concept of defence nationalism an original and meaningful contribution to the field.

The contention of this thesis is that what underpins defence nationalism, and works to hold its bodies together, be they individual or collective, are intersecting fantasies of flesh, land and law. I have argued that although Australian and British defence leagues have emerged from different contexts, geographies and histories, that nevertheless, in each case, flesh, land and law have (e)merged as symptoms of defence nationalism. These fantasies are the “proper defences” of defence nationalists, working to ensure their bodies—those of the nationalist, the defence league, and the nation—remain whole and “healthy”. Throughout the thesis, I have drawn upon psychoanalysis to examine how the bodies of ‘individual’ defence nationalists and defence leagues are formed in, by, and between these symptoms of flesh, land and law. I argued that through their identification(s) with the nation and the defence league, as substantiated in fantasies of flesh, land and law, defence nationalists also form particular fantasies about their own bodies. Specifically, I have argued that defence nationalists imagine their bodies as containing and reifying the self articulated as a national(ist) self, and that it is through flesh, land and law that nationalists attempt to substantiate both the nation and the (national) self simultaneously.

Like all bodies (which are predicated on borders), the forming of defence nationalist
bodies—including those of the nationalist, the defence league and the nation—engender anxieties of penetration and contagion. I have shown that through the relationships they imagine between the individual body and the body politic, defence nationalists conceptualise penetration of the nation as penetration of the self. Consequently, defence nationalists are concerned not only with what flows in and out of the body politic, but with what flows in and out of the 'individual' body as well. I have argued that the anxieties of bodily (over)flow that typify defence nationalism can be historicised in relation to the social and cultural fantasies that dominate the contexts in which Australian and British defence leagues have (e)merged. As such, defence nationalist fantasies and anxieties emerge and converge within a space that is *culturally defined* and narrativised as an 'historical moment'; accordingly, the fantasies and anxieties that typify defence nationalism—at least in Australia and the UK—are reflexive, insofar as they produce and reify the point in time in and from which they purportedly emerge *through their very attempts to narrate (and thereby curate) their own origins* (just as the origins of both subject and nation must be fictionalised).

In analysing the narratives, imaginaries, subjectivities and fantasies of defence nationalism, I have shown that defence nationalism coheres the amorphous anxieties of its subjects into a singular narrative by cultivating an autopoietic fantasy space that externalises anxiety by externalising that which is deemed 'foreign': namely, the concrete phenomena and figures onto and into which defence nationalist anxieties are projected and cathected. Among these phenomena are halal, Sharia and Islam, and among these others are the figure of Middle-Eastern appearance, and the figure of the terrorist, the migrant and the refugee. I have also noted that defence nationalism typically conflates and collapses these phenomena and figures into one.

I have argued that for defence nationalists, *land* emerges as an imagined reification of the nation. I held that through their imagined connection(s) to key spatial sites within the nation, such as the beach, the streets and the football stadium, defence nationalists not
only see themselves as merely belonging to the nation, but that they construct a sense of ironic indigeneity with respect to the nation as well, whereby they belong to the land only insofar as the land belongs to them. I argued that this ironic indigeneity enables defence nationalists not only to traverse the nation's spatialities ‘freely’ and unencumbered, but to police those spatialities as well (in accordance with their own desires).

I argued that the mandate defence nationalists imagine to police qua ‘defend’ the nation subsists in fantasies of the enmeshment of flesh, land and law. In Chapter 3, I examined the function of fantasies of law in defence nationalist imaginaries, narratives and subjectivities. I argued that although defence nationalists often explicitly invoke the 'Rule of Law', that what they implicitly invoke is a sense of a cultural or national law and its presumed moral and ideological authority. I showed that this invocation of law is steeped in a profound sense of imagining oneself as knowing what is and ought to be within the nation (both within its land and it law). I showed that defence nationalists also imagine themselves as knowing, intimately, what ought not to be within the nation—specifically, the law(s) of the other, which stand not only as the codification of the other’s cultural practices, but as a codification of the other’s desires as well (that is, a codification of the other’s otherness). I explored defence nationalist fantasies of law by interrogating defence nationalist discourses regarding Sharia, halal and Islam. I showed that for defence nationalists, Sharia, halal and Islam, as allegories for the other, are depicted as a threatening contagion upon the nation’s land and law, as explained in detail through Schmitt’s concept of nomos.

I argued that defence nationalists not only harbour anxieties that the other’s law will spread to the nation, but that the self, which for defence nationalists is connected intimately to the nation, will be contaminated by extension as well. I historicised this anxiety in relation to some of the psychosocial effects of late-capitalism (neo-liberalism) and its mythical ‘individual subject’. I argued that the other constitutes a bodily threat of contamination for defence nationalists because they harbour fantasies of their own private,
bodily access to the nation’s land and law in the first instance. Through their imagined relationship to law, I held that defence nationalists imagine law not only as an ideal tool for the management of the insides and outsides of the nation, but as an ideal tool that authorises, sanctions and mandates their own desires as those of the very nation itself.

In Chapter 4, I further elucidated this imagined mandate in relation to a theory of the body, which I developed by drawing on Lacanian psychoanalysis and by examining a range of practices of bodily adornment that defence nationalists commonly perform, among which are included references and beliefs about whiteness and other corporeal attributes, the practice of using the national flag as a cape or mask during defence nationalist events, and the writing, painting or tattooing of nationalistic messages, imagery and iconography on the body during protests and rallies. In reference to such practices, I argued that for defence nationalists, the body serves to authenticate otherwise unstable national identities by reifying nationality and nationhood in the flesh (just as the nation is thought to be reified key spatialities). Moreover, I maintained that defence nationalism provides its subjects with specific articulations of the body with which nationalists can identify, and with which, in turn, they can ‘act’ (so as to defend the nation).

In Chapters 5 and 6, I applied my theory of defence nationalist bodies to other defence nationalist practices, including practices of care of the self and practices of physical violence. In Chapter 5, I argued that defence nationalists ‘care’ for their bodies by caring for qua cultivating the nation to which they imagine their bodies are symbiotically connected. In Chapter 6, I examined how defence nationalists use violence to de-nationalise the other’s body. I held that these practices simultaneously serve to make, un-make and re-make the other as a non-national other. More than this, however, I showed that through their attempts to de-nationalise certain bodies, defence nationalists simultaneously re-make their own bodies as well. Specifically, I showed that defence nationalists re-make their own bodies as the positive obverse of the others that they de-nationalise: that is, they re-make their bodies as national bodies.
In Chapter 7, I examined the way that defence nationalists seek to defend *qua* cleanse the nation’s temporal horizons—its past, present and future. I argued that by doing so, defence nationalists attempt to position themselves as dominant subjects in the nation’s present, as reinforced by narratives of the nation’s past and confirmed by its presumed future existence. By constructing themselves as symbolically dominant subjects, defence nationalists produce a fantasy of knowledge: a fantasy that they *know* the nation without ambivalence, including what the nation is, was, and ought to be (recall, for example, John Howard’s remarks about “old Australia” and the claim that “all of us...know what an Australian has always been and always will be” (Howard 2003, my emphasis)). Through critical readings of Anderson, Hage and Esposito, I showed that by constructing the nation as in need of defending (as being threatened and compromised by outside forces), defence nationalists construct themselves as privileged subjects of the nation: that is, as *hyper-national subjects* who purport to possess knowledge of the nation, and who are therefore the mandated defenders of the nation. In Chapter 7, I showed that despite their claims, it is not the nation that defence nationalists ultimately seek to defend, but rather, that they seek to preserve their own imagined status as hyper-national subjects and national defenders. I showed that in effect, defence nationalists defend their own ‘inner’ communion within the imagined communion. Moreover, I showed that this inner communion is kept alive, sustained and *nourished* by the notion that the nation itself is compromised.

The fantasies of defence nationalism furnish nationalists with a complex array of signifiers *through which* the self can be represented and re-presented to self and other. Moreover, defence nationalism provides an array of signifiers through which the bodies of self and other, and the bodies of the defence league and the nation, can be understood. By furnishing these bodies, defence nationalism provides its subjects with forms of symbolic agency that they can *and do* enact within the symbolic space of the nation. As outlined above, I have argued that this agency can be described as a form of *hyper-nationality*, which, when enacted, manifests as an imagined *mandate* to defend the nation *in the name of the nation*. This mandate to defend the nation is substantiated by defence nationalists...
retroactively: that is, through the symbiotic, co-informative relationship nationalists imagine between their own bodies (as a reification of self) and the nation's land and law (as a reification of the body politic).

Through fantasies of the enmeshment of the nation's flesh with their own, defence nationalists imagine themselves in possession of a private national lawscape, in which their own desires always correspond to the 'will' of the nation qua the desire of the Other. Through the imagined synthesis between body and body politic, defence nationalists are furnished with a body whose actions in defence of the nation are (always-already) permitted and endorsed by the nation itself, and are performed by a self whose very desires are misrecognised as those of the nation itself. Insofar as fantasies of flesh, land and law enable nationalists to represent the self to the self as a defender of the nation, I consider these fantasies as both authoring and authorising the narratives, imaginaries and the subjectivities of defence nationalists. In short, defence nationalist fantasies sanction defence nationalist identities.

For psychoanalysis however, a permanent, final identity can never arrive, due to the irreducible gap between the Symbolic and the Real; thus, the perfect synchronicity and unity nationalists imagine between themselves and the nation—and their desires and the nation's desires—is inexorably precarious. Enter defence nationalism, which offers to salvage the failed promise of the nation by (re)imagining the subject's privileged link to the nation qua the Other through intersecting fantasies of flesh, land and law, which author and authorise nationalists as defence nationalists: as instruments of the Other who possess a mandate to enact the 'will' of the nation qua the desire of the Other.

The defence nationalist fantasies I have described throughout this thesis—those pertaining to the inseparability of nationalist and nation—are such that they produce fantasies of a 'private lawscape': a fantasy space in which nationalists enjoy privileged, private and unfettered access to the nation's flesh, land and law through the body. It is through this
private lawscape—the imagined reciprocity and synchronicity between the subject’s desires and those of the nation qua Other—that the imagined authority to judge, decide and enact law and violence on behalf of the nation stems. Put differently, from their imagined position of knowing the nation’s land and law, defence nationalists posit themselves as conduits through which the national will is enacted. That is, they posit themselves as agents through which the Other acts. The notion that nationalists posit themselves as agents of the nation articulates with Žižek’s concept of “perverse self-instrumentalisation”, whereby subjects posit the self “as the instrument of the big Other” (1999, p.380). Framed in and as the desire of the Other (through “perverse self-instrumentalisation”), defence nationalist desires assume the authority of the Other within the Symbolic Order of the nation. Despite their own investments in the nation and its ‘law’, the elision between body and body politic enables defence nationalists to conduct their defence of the nation not only on behalf of themselves, but on behalf of the nation as well. Defence nationalism is therefore not conceptualised as being motivated in accordance with the desires of any one nationalist, but instead, as a suite of collective actions enacted on behalf of the nation for the good of the nation itself. Although the national ‘Good’ coincides with the ‘Good’ of the (hyper-)nationalist—as outlined in Chapter 7—this ‘coincidence’ is nevertheless both justified and disavowed: for if the nationalist’s own desires are given by the nation (the Other), then those desires carry the authoritative sanction of the Other within the symbolic field of the nation.

As Žižek elaborates, perverse self-instrumentalisation “necessarily becomes violence as an end-in-itself”: a “staging” of “the fiction of the big Other in order to conceal the jouissance he derives from the destructive orgy of his acts” (1999, p.380). This jouissance—of instrumentalising one’s self as the Other’s agent—is approximate to that which defence nationalists derive in ‘defending’ the nation as the nation’s privileged defenders. As shown, defence nationalists enforce and inscribe the supposed ‘will’ of the nation not only into the nation’s land, but into the body of the self and the other as well.
The *jouissance* derived from the nation’s defence functions in a way that is approximate to Walter Benjamin’s argument that all violence is either “law-preserving” or “law-making” (Benjamin 1978; see also: Auerbach 2007). As shown throughout this thesis however, for defence nationalists, violence can be *both* nation-making and nation-preserving simultaneously. The *nation-making* and *nation-preserving* violence of defence nationalists, which is written into bodies and landscapes, bears a structural affinity to the “violent tautology” of law in Franz Kafka’s famous short story, *In the Penal Colony*, in which the *punishments* handed down by law are enacted precisely through “the mechanical inscription of the law on the body of the guilty victim” (Auerbach 2007). In Kafka’s story, law therefore *literally* hands down its ‘sentence’. The writing of law in Kafka’s short story is a double writing, because *both* the body that is punished and the body of the one who punishes, the ‘writer’, are written into a new existence simultaneously: the former as a particular kind of criminal, and the latter as one who *possesses* knowledge of the law sufficiently enough to enforce it (that is, to mete out its punishment). The function of law in Kafka’s story is comparable to the function of defence nationalist violence explored in Chapter 6, whereby marking the other as a non-national other serves also to mark the self as a national subject *par excellence* (as the one who enacts violence on behalf of the nation). Like the subject who enacts violence on behalf of the nation, the writer *qua* enforcer of law enjoys the inverse position of the subject who is punished, because *as* law-makers enforce the law, they also author(ise) *their own* positions *as* law-makers. Just as for Benjamin and Kafka, law is (re)created as it is enacted, so too, when defence nationalists ‘defend’ the nation, they (re)create the nation that *they* desire, ensuring the (re)production of their own privileged positions therein.

To enact their mandate to defend in the name of the nation, defence nationalists direct their aggression towards the concrete others *onto* and *into* which defence nationalism (dis)places the amorphous anxieties of its subjects. For defence nationalists, *exercising* one’s mandate in accordance with ‘the national law’ entails *exorcising* others deemed non-national others. In exercising their imagined mandate to defend the national body—*its*
flesh, *its* land and *its* law—defence nationalists risk their own bodies, exposing them not only to potential cutting or bruising, but to imprisonment and potentially to death as well. In a psychoanalytic sense however, defence nationalists simultaneously *secure* their bodies and identities *through the very processes by which they are risked*, because by 'defending' the nation, they actively produce and perform hyper-nationality, deriving *jouissance* as they do so. Ultimately then, law that is taken into the defence nationalist body is soon taken into their own hands.
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