

Pale Communion

Whiteness, Masculinity and
Nationhood in heavy metal scenes in
Norway, South Africa and Australia.

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Thesis Abstract

In response to the current dynamics of the Global Metal model, this thesis draws attention to how whiteness maintains an invisibilised instrumental hegemony within heavy metal, even as research on the genre continues to grow. I address the complex problem of how whiteness is represented in heavy metal scenes and practices, both as a site of academic inquiry and force of cultural significance. I argue that the whiteness and white heteromascularity of heavy metal emerges in disparate locales as expressions of distinct nationalist projects. This research addresses the national specificity with which whiteness is valorised in heavy metal scenes, and how disparate national identities are tacitly and explicitly tied to white heteromascularity identity.

This research maps the matrix of whiteness, masculinity and nationhood through which heavy metal scenes across Norway, South Africa and Australia have produced and defended national identity. I distinguish three key forms of white nationalism—Norway’s monstrous nationalism, in which the nation is constructed as terrifying and atavistic; South Africa’s resistant nationalism, which responds to post-Apartheid claims of white victimhood; and Australia’s banal nationalism, which consecrates mundanity as an authentic national condition. Such constellations of whiteness, masculinity and nationhood have enabled tacit and explicit constructions of exclusionary communities formed through collective memory and territory. These scenes are demonstrative of the ways in which white inflections inform the practices of both heavy metal scenes and the specifically local whitenesses manifest within them.

Declaration

I certify that the work in this thesis has not been previously submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution.

I certify that this thesis has been written by me and comprises my original work. Due acknowledgement has been made in the text to any other work utilised in the writing and research.

Catherine Sheilagh Hoad

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Hoad, C. (2013). Hold the Heathen Hammer High: Viking Metal from the Local to the Global. In O. Wilson and S. Attfield (Eds.), *Flow: Selected proceedings from the 2012 IASPM Australia/New Zealand Conference* (pp. 62–70). Dunedin: University of Otago.

Introduction

Tonight is a white thing.

All you white kids out there, let me tell you something that no other motherfucking band, no other white band, in the world has any guts to say. I'm just saying right now, when you wake up in the motherfucking morning, and you look at yourself in the goddamn mirror, hey, have all the fucking pride in your heart man, have all the fucking pride in the world man. Because we are the great people and hey, you know what, maybe, just maybe, tonight is a white thing.

—Philip H. Anselmo, Montreal, March 4th 1995.

This lengthy speech by Pantera's then-frontman Phil Anselmo occurred during a break in their set on the Canadian leg of the band's 'Far Beyond Touring' world tour. Pantera were not a racist band, Anselmo declared, but he had a 'problem' with 'black culture,' which he believed advocated the killing of white people. On face value, this drunken tirade by Anselmo—one from which he later attempted to distance himself—was just another in a long line of problematic, if naïve, racial rhetoric from one of metal's biggest acts. This was a band that had capitalised upon their own self-crafted image as cowboys from hell, 'good ol' Southern boys' who espoused heritage, not hate; whose lead guitarist shredded on a custom-designed guitar bearing the Confederate flag and whose merchandise still frequently bears this symbol. This five minute monologue, punctuated throughout by loud cheering from the crowd, is perhaps more notable for its tacit assumptions than Anselmo's outright declarations that white men were victims of reverse discrimination. It was Anselmo's direct categorisation of Pantera as a 'white band', his confidence in addressing his audience as a uniformly white 'we'. Most significant of all, it was the statement that tonight, a heavy metal concert in one of the biggest cities in North America, was 'a white thing'.

Anselmo's characterisation of the performance as a 'white thing' taps in to a broader and immeasurably complex problem of how whiteness is represented within heavy metal, both as a site of academic inquiry and force of cultural significance. The demographic abundance of young white men within heavy metal is a common feature of scholarly and popular appraisals of the genre, but the political and cultural significance of such whiteness has gone largely uninterrogated. Furthermore, the global circulation of heavy metal has meant that claims as to the large-scale whiteness of metal's audience need revaluation. Metal has nonetheless remained a white-dominated discourse, and white hegemony is deeply entrenched in the dominant ways of thinking about heavy metal. Following this, I ask how, when metal bands and fans are present in every continent, has metallic whiteness maintained a significance that exceeds simple demographics? Moreover, how has white metal masculinity been affixed with a normative value even when women and persons of colour constitute a visible and vital presence within scenes? Metal is a global genre, but its whiteness is continually imbued with an instrumental significance.

The task of this thesis is therefore to negotiate scholarly ways of addressing whiteness in metal that move beyond discussions of demographics, virtuosity and spectacular racism. My thesis argues that the whiteness and white heteromascularity of heavy metal emerges across disparate locales as an expression of a series of distinct nationalist projects. The objective of my thesis is to unveil the (in)visibility of whiteness within heavy metal scenes, and indicate how such whitenesses are deployed within particular countries, as both explicit political violence and instrumental hegemony. My research maps the matrix of whiteness, masculinity and nationhood through which particular heavy metal scenes in Norway, South Africa and Australia produce and defend identity. I distinguish three key forms of white nationalism—Norway's monstrous nationalism, South Africa's resistant nationalism and Australia's banal nationalism. Such constellations of whiteness and nationhood have enabled both tacit and explicit constructions of exclusionary whiteness to foster a sense of community formed through collective memory and territory. These scenes are demonstrative

of the ways in which white inflections inform the practices of both heavy metal scenes and the specifically local whitenesses manifest within them.

This thesis is concerned with the means through which whiteness gains expression in distinct cultural contexts, the national specificity with which whiteness is valorised in heavy metal scenes, and how disparate national identities are both tacitly and explicitly tied to white heteromale identity. In doing so I do not conceive of heavy metal, nor whiteness, as inherently racist¹; such an immediate reactionary definition ignores the political and structural complexities of whiteness in its most tacit manifestations. Nor does this project emerge as a call to deny white people an existence either in heavy metal or at large. White people are a material reality—however, it is the way they are *thought of as being white* that makes the difference (Blaagaard, 2006:4). The objective here is not to refuse white people the right to group identification and belonging, or to demand that white people eradicate all identity and hereditary connections (Outlaw, 2004:167–8), but instead to observe how whiteness and its embedded ideologies operate as a central structuring framework for heavy metal culture, even as the genre continues to expand. This research is concerned with analysing how the normalisation, construction and performance of whiteness, masculinity and nationhood within heavy metal scenes can have profound, pervasive and systematic oppressive consequences for non-white people, women and Queer identities. This research also responds to the longstanding trend in Metal Music Studies wherein whiteness is perceived of as largely unified. The quest in pointing to the fragmentation and multiplicity of whitenesses across three different countries is to deconstruct the structure of white hegemony, and call into question the strategic political position that emerges in treating white selves as a uniform category. I am not suggesting that metal fans across scenes in Norway, South Africa and Australia ought to conceive of their generic and cultural histories and present as overtly (or even necessarily covertly) racist. Rather, I elucidate the ways in which representations of national pasts inform and are informed by a

¹ Responses to recent actions by Phil Anselmo, wherein he appeared to offer a white pride salute during a show (Hollywood, January 2, 2016), indicate that anti-racism is a sentiment strongly held amongst many scene members, and that racism and white pride remain a central site of conflict within metal scenes (c.f. Rosenberg, 2016).

dominant structure of power that is used to construct and affirm white supremacy and white cultural hegemony.

The current field, research problem and questions

This project tracks the linked dimensions of whiteness that emerge within heavy metal scenes and scholarship. My thesis situates whiteness as a location of structural advantage and privilege; as a 'standpoint' from which white people look at ourselves, at others, and at society; and a set of cultural practices that are usually unmarked and unnamed (Frankenberg, 1993:1). Whiteness furthermore emerges as a multiplicity of identities that are historically-grounded, class specific, politically manipulated and gendered social locations (Twine and Gallagher, 2008:6). Analyses of whiteness must address cultural sites such as music scenes as 'popular spaces where collective white identities are produced and white identities normalised' (Twine and Gallagher 2008:15). I argue that Metal Music Studies must reveal not only whiteness, but *whitenesses* as they emerge through specific geographic, demographic, cultural and political discourses. Where Metal Music Studies has gained traction as an interdisciplinary subject field committed to research and developing theory surrounding heavy metal music, scenes, communities, cultures and practices, the field lacks a sustained critique of metal's reputation as a 'white musical genre' (Bayer, 2009:185). The Cultural Studies approach which my work utilises, with a particular focus on Critical Race and Whiteness Studies, interrogates the complex yet oft-overlooked enmeshment of metal and racial identity, just as Metal Music Studies itself is of central importance to understanding the role of music cultures across the globe. There are over one hundred thousand heavy metal bands worldwide², and fans themselves number in the millions. Metal fans are the most loyal listeners worldwide (Spotify, 2015) and the centrality of metal to daily cultural life for individuals and communities across hundreds of nations indicates that it is a genre of substantial cultural significance and creative force. Heavy metal has been conspicuous in its ability to mobilise sentiments of national and ethnic identity. It is thus vital for Metal Music Studies to address the implications of such nationalism within the white cartology of heavy

² Wallach, Berger and Greene note that in mid-2007 the online *Encyclopaedia Metallum* contained listings for 47,626 metal bands from 129 countries (2011:5)—as of July 2015, it lists 102,627 bands from 145 countries.

metal, and offer analyses of heavy metal as a white-dominated patriarchal discourse which has been used to affirm the cultural hegemony of whiteness.

The research problem I define in my thesis is that heavy metal is a discourse dominated by whiteness, and white hegemony is deeply entrenched in the dominant ways of thinking about metal music, cultures and practices. Metal is a site that both enables a tradition of exclusion and nostalgic (re)production of purity, yet also defines its whiteness through the dominance of white musicians, industry workers and racialised marketing tools. Metal's whiteness has been affixed with normative value, and hence its mechanisms are rendered invisible. The task of this thesis is to dismantle the normative hegemony of whiteness within heavy metal scenes and map how such whiteness is deployed with national specificity. I take into account Robert Walser's declaration that the generic cohesion of heavy metal depends upon the 'desire of young white male performers and fans to hear and believe in certain stories about the nature of masculinity' (1993:110) and Karl Spracklen's mapping of how metal constructs a hegemonic whiteness (2013, 2013a, 2015) that is sustained along classed, raced and gendered lines which cater to a national imaginary, and sustains an imagined community (with Lucas & Deeks, 2011, 2014). While I do not deny the significance of these contributions, there is a gap within the fields of both Whiteness Studies and Metal Music Studies where the instrumental whiteness of heavy metal scenes across disparate locales has not been adequately critiqued or even acknowledged.

Previous research into the political and cultural significance of whiteness in popular music has largely focused on the cultural politics of punk (e.g. Duncombe & Tremblay, 2011), pop (Stras, 2010) and rock (Frith, [1978]1987). The understandings of the politics of whiteness in popular music that have emerged from this research situate whiteness as a cultural norm against which the musics and musical performances of 'Others' have been evaluated. Recent understandings of the functions of whiteness in leisure have been able to tease out the conscious and unconscious power structures embedded within both music scenes, industries and research itself (Spracklen, 2013; Schaap, 2015). While moves have been made to conceive of music scenes as sites of instrumental whiteness (Spracklen, 2013:63) where white discourses function in both overt and tacit ways, these

understandings have been largely absent in studies of heavy metal. Metal literature does acknowledge heavy metal as a 'white genre', though current understandings overlook the political and cultural implications of this categorisation, and obscure the structuring mechanisms of white hegemony. Where the emergent field of Global Metal Studies has provided a necessary disruption to orthodox representations of metal audiences as universally white, such approaches continue to saturate whiteness in normative value precisely through refusing to conceive of whiteness and white masculinity as anything other than a demographic.

My thesis responds to the research gap by drawing attention to the political significance of metal's whiteness and demonstrating its nationalist manifestations. My own work moves metallic whiteness beyond discussions of whiteness as purely demographic, or whiteness as a normative site against which 'global' metal can be evaluated. This project tracks narrations and formations of white patriarchal nationhood as they are expressed in disparate heavy metal contexts, and therefore offers a new line of enquiry to the fields of both Metal Music Studies and Whiteness Studies. Specifically, I proffer an alternative analysis of the notorious Norwegian black metal scene, while the analysis of heavy metal scenes in South Africa and Australia represents original research into heavy metal in countries that have been overwhelmingly overlooked in the global metal purview. This research project at large, furthermore, emerges counter to claims that the cultural significance of metal's whiteness is 'less an affirmation of whiteness than it is an absence—an obtrusive absence—of blacks' (Weinstein, 2000:111), and that metal's whiteness is overstated or, as Phillipov has suggested, that studies have centred 'primarily [on] whiteness' (2012:65). The significance of my thesis lies in not only its response to these claims and the concurrent absence of critiques of whiteness from within the field, but its capacity to address the questions and complexities that this gap provokes.

My thesis raises the following questions as a means of combatting these challenges. I ask how the normalising of whiteness creates a 'normal' scenic centre which correlates heavy metal with white, Western, heteromascularity. Moreover, how does this normative whiteness naturalise the dominance of young white men

within representations of heavy metal, to the exclusion and marginalisation of Others? In approaching these questions, my thesis also outlines broader possibilities for the field of Metal Music Studies. How, I ask, do we speak about whiteness in metal in ways that move beyond current discussions of demographics, virtuosity, and explicit racism? This forms the crux of my research, where I ask how researchers may address the significance of metallic whiteness in contexts external to the United States and United Kingdom, in disparate locations where whiteness may not be the dominant demographic, where whiteness is given ancient significance, or where whiteness is endemic to ongoing colonialist violence. My central question is concerned with how research undertaken in Metal Music Studies can reveal the hidden mechanisms of whiteness, and point to its multiplicity across global metal scenes, practices and cultures. In doing so, this thesis confronts the research problem by interrogating the means through which whiteness gains expression in distinct cultural contexts, the national specificity with which whiteness is valorised in heavy metal scenes, and how disparate national identities are tacitly and explicitly tied to white heteromale identity.

Current research—objectives and methodology

My thesis argues that the whiteness and white heteromale of heavy metal emerges across disparate locales as an expression of a series of distinct nationalist projects. The objective of my thesis is then to unveil the (in)visibility of patriarchal whiteness within heavy metal scenes, and map how such whitenesses are deployed within particular countries, for particular purposes. This research interrogates the matrix of whiteness, masculinity and nationhood through which heavy metal scenes in Norway, South Africa and Australia produce and defend identity. I point to the national specificity of whiteness as it is manifest in each country. I articulate three key forms of white nationalism—Norway's *monstrous nationalism*, South Africa's *resistant nationalism* and Australia's *banal nationalism*. These three scenes and their entrenched nationalisms simultaneously challenge and affirm the boundaries of civic identity and the borders of belonging. Investigation of the processes through which discourses of whiteness and white masculinity are translocated and translated from one context to another indicates that such identities are realised in fragmentary rather than cohesive ways. This

thesis argues that such encounters between localised and hegemonic narratives of white identity are represented and authenticated through musical experiences. The celebrations of narratives of national identity within heavy metal scenes in Norway, South Africa and Australia are simultaneously a defence of whiteness, and white masculinity. Such boundaries of identity have enabled tacit and explicit racisms to foster a sense of community formed through collective memory and territory, and allowed these heavy metal scenes to act as territories of both white hegemonic power and white victimhood.

The objectives of my research emerge in line with my own personal engagement with and experiences of heavy metal scenes. I am situated within this research in my capacity as a longtime metal fan and regular participant in Sydney's thrash and death metal scenes. In acknowledging my position within both the scene and academia, I maintain that while I have often experienced Othering by virtue of being a female metal fan within various contexts, my whiteness has conferred upon me certain forms of capital. This doctoral project at large necessitates my own awareness of my privilege as a young white woman working within an academic environment. My goal is not to further entrench the position of white heterosexual masculinity within metal by devoting an entire thesis to this topic, but rather precisely to destabilise this position by pointing to the contextually-specific mechanisms and discourses that enable its centrality across seemingly disparate locations. Within this thesis, I execute this destabilising project primarily through critical discourse analysis and textual analysis. Textual analysis is a key research method within this research, wherein texts generated by heavy metal scenes—individual songs, lyrics, album art and promotional material—provide tangible artefacts for mapping symbolic discourses of power, nationhood and their narration and representation. As Kovala suggests, 'texts constitute a major source of evidence for grounding claims about social structures, relations and processes' (2002:4).

In utilising critical discourse analysis, I am interested in not only the tangible scenic products of heavy metal, but also how discourse regulates sentiments of scenic identity and belonging. Through analysis of live concerts, fan magazines, underground zines, interviews, podcasts and online discussion spaces such as

forums and social media sites, my research critiques how the rhetoric of 'nation' and both tacit and overt appeals to whiteness are entangled in the dominant ways of speaking about and conceiving of national scenes. I am particularly interested in the significance of the internet in tracking how scene members negotiate their role physically and spatially—as Kahn-Harris has observed, 'one can be an active member of the scene from one's own home' (2007:74). The scope of my project is confined to key genre-defined scenes within three countries—Norway, South Africa and Australia. I examine Viking and black Metal, Afrikaans metal, and extreme metal scenes respectively, as all three serve as examples of how whiteness manifests within regional scenes. These three metal scenes, all largely centered in urban areas, offer a means of exploring how specific strands of heavy metal respond to nationalist rhetoric.

Structure of the research

This thesis consists of five chapters, comprising a literature review, three country-specific case studies each comprising a chapter, and a final chapter offering a comparative analysis of the three national scenes. In the first chapter, a review of the literature in the field of Metal Music Studies interrogates how the scenic logics of heavy metal and metal scholarship are dictated by the invisibilised boundaries of white heteromascularity. In this literature review I examine how such boundaries of patriarchal whiteness have allowed for the proliferation of an insider/outsider binary. This binary is realised through micro- and macro-level studies which exoticise and marginalise women and racialised bodies within heavy metal cultures through taxonomies of difference, and the implementation of a centre/periphery model represented large-scale through the discourse of 'global metal'. I observe that literature within the field of heavy metal scholarship has neglected to address the intricacies and nuances of whiteness and white masculinity, and has henceforth naturalised the position of white masculinity. I use this literature review to present the case for my own research, which addresses this gap in current research to argue that white hegemonic masculinity in metal is structured by contextual mechanisms that present whiteness, and crucially whitenesses, as simultaneously banal and sacred, transhistorical and sovereign, victimised and normalised.

The second chapter investigates how whiteness is given expression in the context of Norwegian black and Viking metal scenes, and maps how this is embedded within the wider national imperative of maintaining Norwegianness in an increasingly globalised context. This chapter argues that Norwegian black and Viking metal scenes have affixed whiteness at the apex of 'true' ethnonational belonging precisely through the monstrous forms of discontent that have greeted perceived threats to white Nordic hegemony. Affronts to and contestations over who may lay claim to Norway are realised through what I call monstrous nationalism—from corpse paint as communal masking to destructive acts of church arson, grave desecration and murder. This chapter also examines the means through which the strictures of originary Nordic whiteness have been maintained in less readily horrifying, but nonetheless significant forms through the ethnoromanticisation of the Viking and neopaganist pastoral fantasies of premodern people living off the land. This chapter builds upon the recognition of 'Norwegianness' as a particularly powerful form of subcultural capital within the field of heavy metal music, and utilises the popularity of Norway within metal studies to offer ways of thinking about nationhood that are both integrated and challenged in the proceeding chapters on South African and Australian heavy metal communities.

The third chapter explores the role of heavy metal within the cultural heritage industry of post-Apartheid South Africa, with a specific focus on the Afrikaans heavy metal scene. This chapter interrogates Afrikaans heavy metal's response to the 'loss' of Afrikaner identity through its attempts to mark out exclusionary territories defined through language and appeals to heritage, which I have characterised as resistant nationalism. Territories and discourses of white resistance emerge in claims to the rights of Afrikaners to assert their linguistic and cultural histories in a post-Apartheid context. In this chapter I analyse how the loss of patronage—and hence privilege—for white South Africans, and particularly Afrikaners, in the post-Apartheid era has led to problematic declarations of whiteness under attack. The task for white South Africans is to find a new meaning for whiteness so that it may coexist on equal terms with other forms of racial identity, and thus redraw the map of white South African nationhood in new ways.

However, as this chapter argues, the continued reiteration of racial difference within both heavy metal scenes and South African national conversation at large indicates that such a goal is an intensely problematic and potentially untenable one.

In Chapter 4, the final national case study, I investigate the ways in which the mutually supportive operations of masculinity and whiteness have shored up Australian identity within the spaces of Australia's extreme (thrash, black and death) metal scenes. This chapter argues that Australian identity has been entirely constructed around images of white men, who enter into the terrain of originary whiteness through denying the violence of the nation's colonial past. I contend that Australian scenes prize the rejection of spectacle yet also entrench it in the fierce 'everyday-ness' celebrated by scenic practices. In this discussion I locate the fetishisation of normative whiteness and banality as practices which have resulted in a banal nationalism (Billig, 1995) that enables the exclusion of Otherness from extreme metal. This chapter investigates how Australian scenes construct a sense of Australianness that is explicitly tied to whiteness; how the spatial and musical practices of scenes reproduce dominant narratives of 'authentic' national identity, and moreover, how they do so in consciously 'Australian' ways. Here I argue that such normophilia, the sanctity of 'ordinariness' and consecration of 'sameness' have established stringent boundaries of who may claim to belong, within both the space of Australian metal scenes and the nation itself.

The fifth and final chapter offers a critical comparison and synthesis of the three previous national case studies, and a reflection upon and further critique of the ways in which whiteness emerges in fragmentary ways across disparate heavy metal contexts. This chapter argues that through painting 'nationhood' as a masculinist possession, tying the 'national body' to an ontology of whiteness and gesturing to the nationalist archetypes that are deployed as a means of securing and sustaining identity, metal nationalisms patrol the boundaries of belonging. This chapter interrogates the ways in which the heavy metal scenes of Norway, South Africa and Australia attempt to both negotiate a position within an international whiteness, and point to specific iterations of national identity. This chapter argues for making visible the fragmentary nature of whiteness in heavy

metal as a mechanism through which to destabilise the greater social stranglehold of white hegemony, and leads towards the directions for future research outlined by the thesis conclusion.

Conclusion

Through the following discussions of metal scenes across Norway, South Africa and Australia, I argue that Metal Music Studies must unveil both whiteness and whitenesses, and make metallic whiteness not only more visible, but more accountable. In doing so, heavy metal literature can interrogate the white cartology of heavy metal in ways that destabilise and make apparent the invisibilised boundaries of white heteromascularity that dictate scenic logics; even as metal continues to circulate globally. In destabilising the normative position of white masculinity within heavy metal scenes and pointing to its realisations across seemingly disparate geographical locations, heavy metal scholarship may cast the same academic gaze inwards and make visible the hidden whitenesses of heavy metal scenes, cultures and practices. Ultimately the objective of my research as it proceeds throughout this thesis is not to renounce or abolish whitenesses, as they emerge as dominant markers around which identities are formed and maintained. Rather, it is to disrupt and transform white patriarchal hegemony from a site of structural privilege to one of anti-racist critiques of the Self, as a citizen of both metal and the nation.

Chapter One

Sound of White Noise: Literature Review.

Introduction

As heavy metal has developed worldwide as both a musical style and culture, the scholarly literature surrounding the genre has grown. Heavy metal literature has progressed from its earliest days of moral panics and disdainful condemnations of its musical and social worth into an academic field that engages with the increasingly complex and multifaceted ways in which heavy metal music, scenes and cultures are experienced globally. However, just as the literature has moved away from negative and often limited depictions of heavy metal music and its fans, particularly in tracking its growth beyond Anglo-American contexts, scholarship has continued to depict of the traditional 'centre' of heavy metal as the province of young white men. Heavy metal scholarship has created and constituted the default heavy metal scene member as white, heterosexual and male. In creating this default position, metal scholarship has often reinscribed the same exclusionary logics of scenic engagement that have marginalised and exscribed women and non-white Others from the spatial and cultural sites of heavy metal. This trend has been buttressed by the dominant modes of mapping identity—sexual, gendered, raced, classed—within heavy metal. Where scholarship has repeatedly noted that heavy metal is a masculinised genre, dominated by masculinist codes of representation and legitimisation, literature has largely only mapped spectacular displays of hypermasculinity and as such has allowed conventional masculine performativity to go widely uncritiqued. Furthermore, where heavy metal scholarship does map whiteness, it does so largely in ways that speak to demographics or virtuosity without offering a critique of its ideological foundations or political significance.

This chapter responds to the research problem proposed by my thesis by analysing how white hegemony is deeply entrenched in the dominant ways of thinking about metal music, cultures and practices. Heavy metal literature has enabled the conception of a 'normal' scenic centre that correlates heavy metal

with white, Western, heteromascularity. These representations have naturalised the dominance of young white men within heavy metal, to the exclusion and marginalisation of Others. In this chapter I examine how whiteness and white masculinity have been discussed in the field of Metal Music Studies. I begin by addressing the foundational literature within Critical Whiteness Studies and how its concerns are addressed by wider approaches to leisure spaces. In this literature review I critique four broad manifestations of metallic whiteness within the literature: whiteness as an absence of blackness; whiteness as Western working class identity; whiteness as a site of spectacular racism; and whiteness as creative virtuosity. I examine how in attempting to offer an alternative to the staid orthodoxy of white hegemony, the literature of 'global metal' continues to entrench whiteness as the default subject position within heavy metal cultures. I demonstrate how the Othering rhetoric of global metal may be remediated with analyses that address the structural hegemony of whiteness. Finally, having traced this genealogy of whiteness within the interdisciplinary research of Metal Music Studies, I interrogate how the scenic logics of heavy metal and metal scholarship have negotiated these invisibilised boundaries of white heteromascularity. Such boundaries have allowed for the proliferation of an insider/outsider binary realised through micro- and macro-level studies. Such research exoticises and marginalises women and racialised bodies within heavy metal cultures through taxonomies of difference, and the implementation of a centre/periphery model represented large-scale through the discourse of 'global metal'. Doing so enables a revision of whiteness as not simply a demographic category, but as an element in complex cultural practices.

Whiteness theory and white men in leisure and music

France Winddance Twine and Charles Gallagher (2008) provide a critical guide to the central concepts and trends within Critical Whiteness Studies. In tracking analyses of whiteness towards a third wave¹, they observe that research must address whiteness not as a uniform category but as a series of contextual

¹ In surveying the development of Whiteness Studies, Twine and Gallagher characterise the First Wave as research which conceptualises whiteness as a normative cultural centre (2008:8). Second Wave theorists further developed lines of inquiry into intergenerational white supremacy and systematic racism (2008:10). The emergent Third Wave of Whiteness Studies critiques how whiteness is produced, negotiated and translated in every day private and public lives (2008:12).

expressions (2008:6). Whiteness as an intellectual theory has its roots in the earliest intellectual projects of black American scholars such as W.E.B DuBois ([1899]2007), who provided the intellectual foundations for this body of scholarship. The formation of white identities, ideologies and cultural practices that were used to reinforce white supremacy were integral to DuBois' work, wherein he mapped the structural realities of racism and race relations within the US (*The Philadelphia Negro*, [1899]2007). Whiteness Studies as a focused field of inquiry emerged in the 1990s with the exponential growth of texts that examine the role whiteness and white identities play in framing and reworking racial categories, hierarchies and boundaries. Such scholarship has examined and exposed the often invisible or masked power relations within existing racial hierarchies (Twine and Gallagher, 2008:5) that allow whiteness to be cast as both a visible, victimised identity (Wellman, 1993; Gallagher, 2004; Bode, 2006) and have its power relations hidden so as to allow its position as a benign cultural signifier (Dyer, 1997). Third wave Whiteness Studies, building on the existing research of the first and second waves of the 1990s and 2000s, has taken as its analytical starting point the understanding that whiteness is not, and never has been, a static or uniform category of social identification (Roediger, 2005). In this way whiteness emerges not as a hegemonic category, but as a multiplicity of identities that are, for Twine and Gallagher, historically-grounded, class specific, politically manipulated and gendered social locations that 'inhabit local custom and national sentiments within the context of the new 'global village'' (2008:6). These 'white inflections' (Twine and Gallagher, 2008:5), the nuanced and locally specific ways in which whiteness is defined, deployed, performed, policed and reinvented, are thus crucial to unveiling the whiteness of heavy metal, but furthermore the multiple whitenesses it enfolds.

Ruth Frankenberg's *White Women, Race Matters: The Social Construction of Whiteness* (1993) offers a framework for addressing the structuring mechanisms of whiteness. For Frankenberg,

To speak of 'the social construction of whiteness' asserts that there are locations, discourses and material relations to which the term 'whiteness' applies... whiteness refers to a set of locations

that are historically, socially, politically, and culturally produced and, moreover, are intrinsically linked to unfolding relations of domination (1993:6).

Frankenberg argues that whiteness as an instrumentalisation of power contains within it particular modes of thought that structure the prerogative of 'thinking through race' (1993:14–15). Firstly, whiteness invites essentialist racism; secondly, colour blindness, or rather colour evasiveness and power evasiveness; and thirdly, race cognisance. Frankenberg's framework has invited criticisms—its 'self-satisfied moralism' (Ferrier, 2002:122) can lend her writing a particularly self-serving tone, particularly when, as Aileen Moreton-Robinson has pointed out in *Talkin' Up to the White Woman* (2009), white feminist theorists' approach to whiteness and white race privilege often fails to appreciate that 'their position as situated knowers within white race privilege is inextricably connected to the systematic racism they criticise but do not experience' (2009:xx). Furthermore, Moreton-Robinson notes that most empirical research undertaken by feminists involves researching women of their own race or white women researching non-white women (2009:129). The capacity to share information or interrogate one's analysis can be easily made from the location of privilege and power (Moreton-Robinson, 2009:129). Frankenberg tracks the perils of this herself (1993:32–35), noting that speaking about whiteness can often appear solipsistic and further the trajectory of white intellectualism (c.f. Fine et al, 2004:xii).

Moving discussions of whiteness into the context of leisure spaces and practices has necessitated a similar awareness of these criticisms. Karl Spracklen in *Whiteness and Leisure* (2013) acknowledges the potential risks in applying critical whiteness theory to studies of leisure spaces, noting that such endeavours may essentialise racial identities, or 'recreate hierarchies of belonging based on fixed ontological categories of 'race' or ethnicity' (2013:1). Spracklen argues that whiteness is always being constructed, challenged and redefined and that research should then show how whiteness and constellations of whiteness and Otherness are (re)produced in and through leisure, and how the problematic ontological category of 'race' is implicated (2013:1). For Spracklen, leisure is a form and space where inequalities of power are refracted through social structures, and material

and cultural power is at work making constructions of whiteness unproblematic (2013:1). Mapping how such cultural spaces produce and deproblematised whiteness must then be a key aspect of understanding how whiteness unfolds within sites of leisure consumption, such as music. Simon Frith (*Sound Effects*, [1978]1987) argues that popular music, and particularly rock music, has always been violently embedded within the tensions of black performance and white entertainment. The concept of entertainment itself 'has always been critical to the social relationships of blacks and whites; rock musicians, in using black musical forms, were drawing on particular conventions of emotional expression but also on an argument about leisure and freedom' (1987:22). For Frith, leisure is a site that affords privilege, entertainment and relaxation only to white bodies and allows blackness only to exist as a form of entertainment. From the beginning of slavery, he claims, 'entertainment' was established as the norm for black/white cultural relations (1987:22). This matter of 'black life and death' became a source of white relaxation, and this polemic of white leisure and black servitude is situated within a wider racist discourse that casts white identity as the norm and black bodies as spectacles for entertainment (Frith, 1987:22). Frith further argues that this depreciation of black bodies casts black cultures as sites that could be plundered for musical styles, which are subsequently stripped of their blackness (1987:23). Frith's appraisal points to the means through which the ascendant position of whiteness becomes naturalised within sites of leisure and consumption. The problem of Frith's understanding of whiteness is straightforward: rather than mapping the structural and social privilege that informs whiteness, he sees whiteness as the essential opposite to 'blackness'. In response to the wider trend of treating whiteness as the uncritiqued opposite of blackness, Twine and Gallagher argue that analyses of whiteness must address cultural sites such as music as 'popular spaces where collective white identities are produced and white identities normalised' (2008:15).

Frith's focus on young white men as the key participants in leisure spheres is not unique to his work. In scholarly discussions of music and leisure white men have been largely interpellated and represented as the default practitioners, producers and consumers. This is particularly evident in academic approaches to

music subcultures. The institution to which Subcultural Studies owes its debt, the University of Birmingham's Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS), produced work that affirmed the centrality of white masculinity within musical sites and cultures. The Birmingham School's otherwise vital discussions of youth and youth cultures were characterised by a strict focus on the cultures of young men (major examples include Hebdige, [1974]1979; Jefferson, 1973; Clarke, 1973; Clarke & Jefferson, 1973), thereby shaping much of the subsequent discourse on subcultures to exclude femininity². Race is further omitted in these studies and other examples from this period: Frith's discussion of 'girl culture' (1987:225) is only concerned with white 'girls', and does not map the intersections of gender and race for women in the same way that he (briefly) does for the male music communities that constitute the vast majority of his work. Hebdige proffers insights into a 'white ethnicity' (1979:65) asserted by punk subcultures in Britain, but again situates whiteness as the binary opposite of blackness.

Criticism of the CCCS's conception of subculture has thus focused on the narrowness of and exclusions inherent within these studies. Angela McRobbie responds to the gender imbalance in traditional accounts of subculture, noting that the masculinisation of subcultures means 'the style of a subculture is primarily that of its men' ([1980] 2006:60). Furthermore, because subcultural research took as its subjects those who were 'other' to capitalist hegemony, subcultures that did not conform to its definitions were disparaged or ignored. Heavy metal in particular is a clear casualty of the CCCS's rigid conceptual framework for resistance; as Andy R. Brown has noted, heavy metal is simply invisible to the radar of subcultural theory (2003:212). In response to the exclusory and homogenising tendencies of the CCCS's subcultural model, researchers have looked to 'scene' as an alternative. Will Straw advocates for a use of the term to address 'a cultural space in which a range of musical practices

² As Catherine Driscoll observes: 'The Birmingham School talked about new youth and new youth cultures, under which rubric they almost exclusively discussed boys or young men... Youth as a struggle with hegemonic tendencies has seemed to be more easily identified in the cultural activities of young men... [there is] a tendency to represent and discuss girls as conformist rather than resistant or at least to discuss them almost exclusively with reference to that division' (*Girls: Feminine Adolescence in Popular Culture and Cultural Theory*, 2002:11).

coexist, interacting with each other' (1991:373). Richard Peterson and Andy Bennett build upon this to use 'music scene' to designate the contexts in which producers, musicians and fans 'collectively share their common musical tastes and collectively distinguish themselves from others' (2004:1). 'Scene' is not without its criticisms: David Hesmondhalgh sees the term as fundamentally ambiguous (2005), while Mark Olson criticises Straw's depiction of scenes as 'empty vessels' (1998:271). Olson instead frames scenes as 'territorialising machines' (1998:281) which create and mobilise particular kinds of relationships in geographic locations. 'Scene', in this way, is a much more productive tool through which to understand musical practices in specific spatial and temporal locations. The concept is then a significant one for addressing the contexts in which metal practices and cultures unfold.

Deconstructing the default metal fan

Despite the academic turn to 'scene', loose theorisations of 'subculture' have been applied in conventional analyses of heavy metal. Such uses are represented within a 'wider public sphere' (Bennett, 1999:605) where disparate practices are collectively grouped together, and have hence created images of default heavy metal fans and practitioners. Dominant media representations of metal fans and practitioners continue to centre on white men. Rosemary Overell (*Brutal Belonging*, 2012) observes that media representations have historically been of 'homologously deviant' (2012:28) young white men with long hair, jeans and t-shirts. This depiction is entrenched by texts such as Penelope Spheeris' documentary *Decline and Fall of Western Civilisation Part II: The Metal Years* (1988), in which the fans and bands interviewed are generally white men with a penchant for excessive drinking, drug taking and promiscuous sex. Spracklen notes the inherent whiteness of heavy metal's popular image thus:

[H]eavy metal remains in the West a strongly white musical subculture—a music for white trash, played by white men with long hair and beards, listened to by white folk who want to be associated with its faux-outlaw status... It is sold by the industry

as white music, and black musicians playing metal have to work hard to be accepted as 'true' metallers (2013:98).

Heavy metal's commonly-disseminated image is hence one of young white men seeking deviance and rebellion. In the earliest scholarly discussions of heavy metal culture, the whiteness of metal, and its political significance therein, is near-absent in its articulation. Heavy metal was largely neglected in early cultural studies of popular music; where mentions of metal do appear, it is largely discussed in relation to class dynamics. Willis' brief mentions of heavy metal in *Profane Culture* (1978) correlate it with the working-class 'biker' youth subculture yet make no moves towards critiquing the race or gender of this group. Will Straw, in perhaps the earliest piece of academic scholarship directly focussed on metal, side-steps metal's whiteness by pointing to hostilities between disco audiences, who he explicitly racialises as black and Hispanic (1984:111) and metal audiences who, while 'heavily male-dominated' (1984:115), receive no ethnic categorisation.

Early moral-panic literature³ makes connections between white, male suburban youths and an innocence or morality endangered by metal. Such literature situates fans almost wholly as young white North American men who are vulnerable to negative influences. Tipper Gore, in *Raising PG Kids in an X-Rated Society* (1987) argues that metal audiences largely consist of adolescent 'boys' aged between 12 and 19, yet notes 'although recently girls have made up a greater percentage of the audience' (1987:51). Despite this observation she offers no discussion of how female fans negotiate the negative 'issues' of metal, and instead argues that young white males are the primary audience for heavy metal and also the primary at-risk group for suicide (1987:104). Carl Raschke (*Painted Black*, 1990), like Gore, assumes that these 'young men' are still children who are inherently innocent and unlikely to be exposed to violence in other contexts.

³ I use this term to refer to the loosely political, evangelical and psychological condemnations of heavy metal, particularly those which emerged within and immediately following the PMRC era. The Parents Music Resource Center, or PMRC, was established in 1985 by a group of women who became known as the 'Washington Wives' for their husbands' political connections. The PMRC held senate hearings into the allegedly violent, sexual and occult nature of popular music with a large focus on heavy metal, and while they did not achieve outright censorship, the group was able to institute the 'parental advisory' label on music releases.

Raschke argues that metal's 'prime listening audience' consists of adolescents aged 13 to 18 (1990:271) who form a 'neural bond' (1990:274) with the music, which in turn facilitates violence and brutality. Raschke goes on to claim that heavy metal can be seen to 'challenge directly the values of Christian civilisation' (1990:281) and becomes 'aesthetic terrorism' (1990:281). Here Raschke manufactures a correlation between white male Christianity and morality; Raschke's text is frequently similar to the doctrine of the White Citizens Council of 1950s Alabama, who saw rock music as an inherently black culture and argued that allowing black music to enter a white context would provoke 'animalism and vulgarity' (Nuzum, 2001:104). Despite the occasional differences between Gore and Raschke's texts, both share a central weakness in treating heavy metal and its fans as homogenous and refusing to acknowledge the genre's dynamism and pluralism.

Later movements away from the hysterical tone of these texts offer a more investigative approach that accounts for the influences that lead young people to heavy metal. Jeffrey Arnett's psychological studies of heavy metal fans in the early 90s, which coalesce in his book *Metalheads* (1996) again reiterate the 'norm' of long haired, young, white and male fans. The fans Arnett interviews and draws his observations from were between 13 and 25, and predominantly male. He notes that interviews were undertaken with nearly twice as many men as women (or 70 'boys' and 38 'girls' in his taxonomy). Arnett himself did not conduct the interviews with the young women, but rather enlisted female research assistants (1996:ix). Arnett further marginalises the 38 young women he interviewed by relegating them to one chapter of the book, which hinges on one female fan ('The Girls of Metal', 1996:139). He defends his decision to do so by arguing that 'the heavy metal subculture is largely male' and heavy metal 'largely reflects them [young men] and their concerns' (1996:xi). The problematic nature of Arnett's sample goes beyond gendered lines. Of the nine fans he profiles, seven are white men, one is a white woman and one a black man. 'Reggie', a black teenager, is described as 'not a typical metalhead' by virtue of 'his appearance' and 'not look[ing] the part' (1996:111). Arnett situates metal's appeal in 'adolescent

alienation', casting metal concerts as a 'manhood ritual' (1996:12), further narrowing the scope of fandom.

Donna Gaines in *Teenage Wasteland* ([1990]1998) associates metal fandom with the 'crisis' of youth culture resultant from the economic and socio-cultural disadvantages experienced by young people under the Reagan administration in the US. Gaines positions metal fans as angry white young men—'male white suburban teenagers' (1998:181)—and observes that while there are some girls who are 'macho' (1998:118), 'when the guys go to see Slayer, for the most part, the girls will stay home' (1998:118). Despite the often journalistic and paternalistic tone of Gaines' work she makes some brief yet important observations. While suburban metalheads were cast as outsiders and frequently listened to music that would condemn war and state surveillance, in turn they would never question their own position as Americans, and the privilege that accompanied such citizenry (1998:169). Furthermore, she observes the political significance of metal's whiteness—heavy metal is 'the white-race music of empire' (1998:180) and 'white suburban soul music' (1998:181). The problems with Gaines' approach are nonetheless largely the same as her predecessors. These texts offer no discussion of fans external to North America. Moreover, Gaines (re)produces a dichotomy of 'normal' society and 'metal heads', who are defined as a homogenous group through appeals to their shared white heterosexual masculinity.

The positioning of the 'default fan' as a young, white, North American or Western European male is not unique to the early moral panic literature surrounding heavy metal. Katharine Ellis, writing in 2009, argues that 'demographic research shows that the typical heavy metal fan, almost worldwide, is male, white, aged around twelve to twenty-two, and working class (or lower-middle class embracing a working class ethos)' (2009:54). 'Almost worldwide' is a somewhat bizarre quantifier given the well-documented growth of heavy metal scenes worldwide. Ellis further characterises the subculture as 'young, white, heterosexual male' (2009:54), drawn from an observation by Weinstein (1991) that was already eighteen years old at that point. Deena Weinstein, in the foundational text *Heavy Metal: The Music and its Culture* ([1991]2000) argues that whiteness, alongside youth, working-class identity and masculinity, forms a key

demographic factor in determining the structure of heavy metal as both a musical style and subcultural site (2000:102). Weinstein argues that metal is a predominantly white genre (2000:111), though the ways in which this dominance is realised have exceeded the traditional boundaries of simple demographics. As such Weinstein makes an important move when she observes that whiteness is not merely a demographic category, but has a cultural significance (Weinstein, 2000:111).

Weinstein argues that the valorisation of 'white' in metal culture emerged as both a response to the changing social position of people of colour and the severing of certain white youths from 'black' music (2000:112). Metal emerges concurrently with a desire to establish 'roots' for whiteness in an Anglo-American context (Weinstein, 2000:113). The cultural significance of 'white' in metal, she then argues, may not be overtly or necessarily covertly racist—it is less an affirmation of whiteness than it is an 'obtrusive absence' of blackness (2000:111). Weinstein makes appeals to fanbases in Japan and Brazil (2000:111), the growth of Hispanic metal audiences within the United States (2000:112–113), and an account of a black fan who was nervous about attending a Rush concert (2000:112) as proof that metal is not racist 'on principle', but rather 'exclusivist' in its insistence on upholding the 'codes of its core membership' (2000:112). Weinstein however pays little attention to the possibility that such exclusivist codes may be almost entirely an affirmation of whiteness—to argue that a genre which has, in her own description, sought to sever associations with 'black' cultural forms (2000:112) is simply coincidental in its whiteness is problematic. Discussing whiteness wholly in terms of the presence or absence of racism is reductive; furthermore, it allows a discussion of whiteness to emerge only when it manifests in xenophobic displays. Arguing that the white demographic base of metal has not been given cultural expression as a racial value, 'either in the pro-white or anti-black sense' (Weinstein, 2000:113) ignores the affirmative site for whiteness that heavy metal offers.

The scholarly understanding of whiteness as an absence of blackness is thus the first, and most comprehensive, manifestation of whiteness that I analyse within the literature on heavy metal. Reducing discussions of race in metal to

black/white binaries is not an uncommon practice within the academy. Robert Walser, in *Running With the Devil: Power, Gender and Madness in Heavy Metal Music* (1993), argues that the global spread of metal means that scene members at large are no longer 'overwhelmingly white' (1993:17); but that heavy metal nonetheless remains a 'white-dominated discourse' (1993:17). Walser's notion of metal as a 'white-dominated discourse' is a significant observation that points to whiteness and its embedded ideologies as a central structuring framework for heavy metal culture, even as the genre continues to expand. Rather than extending his argument, however, Walser parlays this into a discussion of virtuosity and black/white musicological polemics.

Such distinctions are also present within literature focused on the development of extreme metal and its nuanced subgenres, particularly death and black metal. Natalie Purcell (in *Death Metal Music*, 2003) situates metallic whiteness in a black/white binary. Purcell states that studies have found that metalheads are disproportionately white (2003:105), a demographic statistic she attributes to a combination of internet access and location (2003:105). Where Weinstein argues that 'the heavy metal subculture is less a racially based than cultural grouping' (2000:113), Purcell offers a similar appraisal of metal's demographic whiteness, arguing that it plays a role in providing a community or family for young white men in a way that is, ostensibly, otherwise denied to them by the musics of 'minorities' (2003:106). Purcell claims that heavy metal, in fostering identity and a sense of community, operates for white youth in the same way that rap music does for 'blacks' (2003:106), who are represented as a homogenous group. White people are more drawn to metal, she argues, because 'many minorities already have a scene and a community which appeals to their need for brotherhood and shared identity' (2003:106), and quotes a magazine article which declares metal music to be 'Gangsta Rap's white-kid counterpart' (2003:106). Both Walser and Purcell speak of the significance of metal's whiteness without really talking about whiteness at all; instead both situate whiteness as the opposite of blackness, enclosing all 'minorities' within the non-white position of this binary, and talking about race in ways that elude white bodies.

The idea of a community of whiteness realised through shared class identities and 'particular ethnic traditions' (Weinstein, 2000:113) treats whiteness as unraced, a practice which is manifest within metal literature. Keith Kahn-Harris, in *Extreme Metal* (2007), whilst offering an otherwise nuanced and complex interrogation of the exclusionary mechanisms of race and Otherness in extreme metal scenes, still largely broaches the whiteness of metal through discussing the absence of blackness. Kahn-Harris notes that researchers have generally asserted that metal fans are predominantly young, white working class males (2007:70). He dismantles both the 'young' and 'working class' aspects of such claims by noting that situations vary across the globe—for example, he argues that in parts of Asia and the Middle East, scenes appear to be dominated by the wealthy (2007:70). Kahn-Harris also cautions against using data that suggests metal is predominantly white, male, heterosexual and working class and applying it indiscriminately to all genres (2007:11), noting the emerging (at that time) studies of metal in non-American global contexts.

In discussing the ethnic makeup of the extreme metal scene, Kahn-Harris sidesteps whiteness to point to the absence of 'those of black African descent' aside from a few black musicians in UK and US metal scenes, the 'notable absence' and 'marginality' of those of Chinese descent, and contends that 'South Asians both within the subcontinent and in diaspora communities are also barely involved in extreme metal scenes' (2007:70). Kahn-Harris suggests that in most places scene members come from the ranks of majority groups (2007:70), and goes on to contend that 'the absence of certain ethnic groups is also linked to overt prejudice' (2007:77), a valid point that he discusses in relation to the anti-Semitism experienced by Israeli scene members (2007:25, 77, 152; see also 'I hate this fucking country', 2002). Kahn-Harris retrenches the white music/black music polemic entrenched by Weinstein, Walser and Purcell, rather blithely stating that 'the lack of black scene members has nothing to do with overt prejudice since few have ever shown an interest in joining the scene' (2007:77) and further arguing that 'self-exclusion plays a role' (2007:77). There is nonetheless a positive outcome for Kahn-Harris' work. *Extreme Metal*, unlike earlier texts, establishes a framework for exploring scenes external to the 'traditional' centre of heavy metal;

Kahn-Harris' caution against applying data that caters to particular geographic and cultural locales to all genres of metal in all places demonstrates the need for research to approach heavy metal scenes in reflexive and progressive ways.

Class, masculine transgression and individuality

Michelle Phillipov, in *Death Metal and Music Criticism* (2012), supports Kahn-Harris' call for reflexive research. She argues that until recently studies of race and ethnicity in metal 'have centred primarily on the genre's whiteness' (2012:65) and that the global growth of metal means that the genre can no longer be considered 'straightforwardly white' (2012:66). Phillipov contends that global metal studies disrupt the previous orthodoxies of metal studies which totalised the genre as an expression of white working class disenfranchisement (2012:66). Phillipov's appraisal informs the second manifestation of whiteness that I critique within metal literature: understandings of whiteness as expressions of Western working class masculinity. Just as examinations of whiteness within metal literature have largely hinged on the non-presence of people of colour, the correlation of whiteness with Western working-class identity becomes a defining trend of metal studies. Weinstein ([1991]2000) (and Walser (1993), to an extent) account for the demographic significance of white men in metal scenes through explorations of deindustrialisation and blue-collar disenchantment (this is also broached by Gaines, 1998). Class as a key determinant in the cultures and music of heavy metal is also evident throughout psychological studies, which position metal listeners and performers as overwhelmingly working class (Hanaken & Wells, 1990:62–63; 1993:60, 66).

Class has long been central to academic discussions of heavy metal. Dick Hebdige, in an earlier and disparaging critique, characterised metal as inherently working class, a 'curious blend of hippy aesthetics and football terrace machismo' that attracted aficionados 'distinguished by their long hair, denim and 'idiot' dancing' (1979:155). Deindustrialisation then becomes a key context for theorising heavy metal (Berger, 1999:283), where metal is seen to provide a conduit for anger and frustration experienced by blue-collar (white, male) workers, albeit solely in a US and UK context. Phillipov observes that 'the

frustrations of blue-collar life in a declining economy are considered a crucial context for metal' and that most substantial analyses have focused on this issue (2012:54). Weinstein (2000) maintains that 'blue collar', alongside 'male', 'youth' and 'white', is a key structuring mechanism of heavy metal subcultures, claiming that 'heavy metal has a class signification wherever it appears' (2000:113). Blue collar offers an 'ethos' that Weinstein argues has meaning and affective qualities—'Blue collar mythologies replace the romance of black culture in metal's syllabus of rebellion' (2000:114). Walser (1993) also makes a point of articulating the working class origins of heavy metal (180n.7) but notes that recent marketing studies had conflicting findings concerning the 'class' and locale of the audience, which shifted between heavy concentrations in 'blue-collar industrial cities' (1993:16) to 'upscale family suburbs' (1993:17). Walser thus criticises Weinstein ([1991]2000) for rarely moving beyond descriptions of the pleasures of metal—'musical ecstasy, pride in subcultural allegiance, male bonding'—towards placing metal fans within political contexts that make such pleasures possible (1993:24). 'Blue collar' identity and its romanticisation take on a mythic quality that caters to narratives of 'authentic' masculinity defined through manual labour in homosocial environments.

Discussions of gender within heavy metal then hinge largely on acknowledgement of metal music and its fan community as male dominated. Weinstein notes that the heavy metal audience is 'more than just male; it is masculinist [...] the heavy metal subculture, as a community with shared values, norms and behaviours, highly esteems masculinity' (2000:104). Masculinity in metal is understood as the binary opposite of femininity, and it is perilous to even question, let alone play with or breach, the boundaries (2000:104). Weinstein extends this observation to a brief discussion of the experiences of homosexual men in metal (2000:105–6) to point to the culture's heteronormativity. While important, such an observation only allows metal's sexual politics to be mapped within a heterosexual/homosexual binary that serves only cisgendered men and excises the scope of LGBTQI+ identities. The dependence on such a dichotomy, as Amber Clifford-Napoleone has argued, has denied the pervasiveness of queer identities and politics in the metal ethos, and has limited scholarship on gender

and sexuality within metal scenes so as to retrench popular and academic imaginings of metal as inherently masculine (*Queerness in Heavy Metal Music: Metal Bent*, 2015). For Weinstein, however, the 'boundaries' of metal are wholly enclosed within the logic of authentic masculinity/commercialised femininity. Weinstein goes on to speculate whether such aggressive masculinity supports the strength of patriarchy or is a defensive response to the weakening of male hegemony (2000:104), suggesting that 'heavy metal music celebrates the very qualities that boys must sacrifice [freedom, individuality, power] in order to become adult members of society' (2000:105).

Such a reading of metal's masculinist codes is not invalid; rather, it is blinded by an understanding of masculinity as an essentialist category. Weinstein makes important connections between a culture of masculinity and the construction of community—'[the] male chauvinism and misogyny that characterise the metal subculture are tempered by its sense of community' (2000:105)—but she does little to locate the discourses and contexts that enable such performative masculinity, nor does she truly articulate gender performativity at all. Rather she caters to an essentialist view that suggests masculinity is automatically conferred upon male bodies. The masculine space of heavy metal and its attendant authenticity naturalises the presence of men within the scene, but exoticises women. An initial example of this emerges within Weinstein's analysis, where she divides women between those who engage with metal 'properly' (i.e. in ways commensurate with masculine belonging) and those who are seen to reiterate stereotypical 'feminine' behaviour (2000:105).

Further instances of such authentic masculine codes emerge in the 'true fan'/'slut' binary that becomes a hugely problematic aspect of Sonia Vasan's work (2010), and Gaines' observation that male fans felt girls pretended to like metal to get attention (1998:118). Purcell (2003:105) also draws from Arnett's work to observe the tensions between women within scenes. Another illustration of this divisive rhetoric occurs within Leigh Krenske and Jim McKay's account of gender relations in a Brisbane heavy metal club ('Hard n' Heavy: Gender and Power in a heavy metal music subculture', 2000). Krenske and McKay found that the scene was largely male-dominated (in a strictly demographic, biologically-defined sense)

and defined through masculinist codes. They categorise women into groups whose distinctions are entirely based on their interactions with men (2000:295). By claiming that the few women who manage to 'infiltrate the scene' succeed by 'conforming to masculinist scripts' (2000:290), Krenske and McKay suggest that such scripts are automatically conferred upon men, who are not required to engage in the same performative identity work. Similarly, this assertion ignores the salience of male performativity in reproducing hegemonic gender narratives not only within the space of the scene, but external to it as well.

The notion that masculinist codes, rather than strictly biological bodies, determine the behaviours of the scene is an important one. Weinstein and her successors nonetheless offer no critique of the fact that within their respective samples, it is always (white, heterosexual) men who determine who is treated as an 'equal', and under what circumstances. Furthermore, they overlook how men are granted these privileges, or the codes to which they comply, whilst women are forced to prove themselves worthy of legitimate belonging. Walser, in his 1993 analysis, interrogates Western constructions of masculinity and their enmeshment within heavy metal scenes, noting that heavy metal often 'stages fantasies of masculine virtuosity and control' (1993:108), and that metal is, 'inevitably, a discourse shaped by patriarchy' (1993:109). Walser offers a much more nuanced critique of the means through which gender is experienced within metal cultures, articulating the political position of the young men who are seen to dominate the genre—lacking in social, physical and economic power yet besieged by cultural messages that insist upon such forms as vital attributes of masculinity (1993:109). Walser moves towards a post-structuralist critique, arguing that sex and gender roles are social constructions rather than normative biological functions, and that heavy metal offers a site for doing 'identity work' and 'accomplishing gender' (1993:109). For Walser, 'notions of gender circulate in the texts, sounds, images and practices of heavy metal, and fans experience confirmation and alteration of their gendered identities through their involvement with it' (1993:109). Walser himself notes that studies of metal that naturalise the position of (white) men do a disservice to female fans (1993:110)—nonetheless, he goes on to note that 'since the language and traditions have been developed by and are still dominated by

men, [his] discussion of gender in metal [is] initially an investigation of masculinity' (1993:110).

Walser argues that hegemony is enmeshed within the structuring practices of heavy metal. He contends that the purpose of a genre is to 'organise the reproduction of a particular ideology' (1993:109) and for much of heavy metal's history its generic cohesion depended not only on the exscription of femininity from metal (1993:11) but also upon the 'desire of young white male performers and fans to hear and believe in certain stories about the nature of masculinity' (1993:110). Walser urges researchers to further unpack these stories in critical and analytical ways. Walser's approach to gender is not without its faults. While Walser criticises Weinstein for overlooking women's responses to metal as an attempt to 'efface her own participation' (as though her participation is contingent upon her gender) (1993:23), he does not take aim at other researchers for the gender imbalance in their work. Furthermore, he largely associates metal's virtuosity with men (1993:57, see also his paper on metal and classical music, 'Eruptions: heavy metal appropriations of classical virtuosity', 1992) and discusses female participation almost wholly in relation to glam metal (1993:132), furthering the association of girls with commercialised and superficial mass culture as opposed to more 'authentic' styles (1993:130). Walser also echoes Weinstein's argument that women gain power in metal scenes through channelling masculine codes—he notes that he has 'observed and interviewed female fans who dress, act and interpret just like male fans' (1993:132), tacitly reinscribing male fans as the standard bearer.

Literature which decries, exscribes and is suspicious of femininity within metal scenes corresponds to, rather than critiques, the dominant practices of heteronormative heavy metal cultures. This scholarship represents a culture that prizes 'acceptable' modes of belonging—masculine, heterosexual, white, powerful—yet uses discussions of transgression and individual power as a foil. Beyond these limiting and staid discussions of gender, more empowering approaches emerge within Kahn-Harris' (2007) and Overell's (2012) analyses of gendered engagement and individual agency within scenes. Kahn-Harris argues that extreme metal's focus on transgression allows young women to exercise

agency over their own subcultural practices and thus access individual power. He then introduces the term 'transgressive subcultural capital' (2007:179) as a scenic resource that offers women (amongst others) a chance to subvert notions of mainstream femininity and therefore engage in a transgressive act that enables a sense of self and empowerment—'they prefer aggressive music that nice girls do not listen to' (2007:76). 'Nice girls' here reiterates the same problem as the 'resistance' model that plagued the CCCS: situating women 'outside' metal within such a category retrenches the compliant femininity/anti-authoritarian masculinity binary, and situates masculinity as the dominant code of behaviour.

In response to such valorisations of anti-authoritarian masculinity, Rosemary Overell (*Brutal Belonging*, 2012) introduces the term 'brutal belonging' to capture an individual's successful participation in a scene. In valuing 'brutality' (in Overell's study, the term is shorthand for a disavowal of commercialism, passivity and conformity, see also '[I] hate girls and emo[tion]s', 2013), such an approach attempts to disassociate these qualities from any essential masculinity, whiteness or heteronormativity. Instead, Overell's 'brutality' places the onus on individuals' capacity for and displays of affective intensity. Overell notes that scenes are still permeated by manifestations of misogyny, racism and homophobia. 'Brutal belonging', however, allows for a more readily accessible model of subcultural capital accumulation that does not depend on rigid somatotypes as a condition of entry, but rather an individual's capacity to prove themselves worthy of inclusion within the scene. While Kahn-Harris' and Overell's approach situate masculinist codes as the default norm that dictate scenic behaviours and acceptability, they also offer means through which scene members who would otherwise be marginalised have been able to exploit and critique such codes to mark out their own scenic spaces.

This model of individual capability is frequent in metal scholarship, and demonstrates a move away from collectivist depictions of metal fans and practices to explore individual engagement. Examples of this individualist approach within scenes include Walser's discussion of agency through 'social capability' (1993:76); Gruzelier's exploration of empowerment in the space of the mosh pit (2007:60); Rosemary Hill's analysis of the experiences of female readers of metal magazine

Kerrang!, which has interrogated women's experiences of metal fandom and community (2011; 2014); and Gabrielle Riches' studies of the mosh pit as a leisure site where women may challenge gendered norms and structures (2011, with Lashua & Spracklen, 2013). Work by Julian Schaap and Pauwke Berkers also reveals how women's engagement with metal performances in online spaces may create new modes of social conduct that might contest existing gender inequality (2014:102). Jeremy Wallach explores the notion of personal agency in relation to gender and race in a very early text (*Rites of the Condemned: Sociomusical aspects of speed metal music*, 1992), where he notes that despite the perceived white domination of the scene, heavy metal provided a venue for individual empowerment that was particularly valuable for women and non-white (male) musicians (1992:27). Wallach argues that the 'large number of prominent non-white musicians [he cites Suicidal Tendencies, Slayer and Death Angel] in speed metal' suggests that 'the music's central messages of maintaining personal integrity in the face of a repressive social order is accessible to non-white as well as white males' (1992:27). Wallach explores this question of race and agency again in much more recent work with Esther Clinton, where they argue that musicians of colour are central to the metal landscape (2015:275), and that claims to any racial homogeneity and racism within heavy metal 'both magnifies the problem and trivialises the experiences and dedication of the millions of metalheads of colour' (2015:275). Wallach and Clinton argue that conceiving of metal as universally white denies agency to people of colour; nonetheless they overlook the hostile global dialectic between people of colour, who are situated as Others, and a musical culture that defines its centre and origins in the West. Furthermore, such research pays little attention to the negative aspects of a culture that stresses individual empowerment and personal agency.

Spectacular whiteness and racism

Understanding heavy metal as a site of free-thinking, free speech and individual agency has the side effect of allowing metal scenes to be more tolerant spaces for racism, sexism and homophobia. Harris Berger maps this struggle in *Metal, Rock and Jazz: Perception and the Phenomenology of Musical Experience* (1999), noting that death metal scenes exercise a 'radical tolerance' (1999:281)

that obliges members to tolerate or excuse things they may not like, or find harmful and offensive, under the guise of defending freedom and individualism. Berger claims that this creates tensions between death metal's genuinely progressive ideology that stands in resistance to any kind of prejudice (1999:289) and the concurrent reality that such broad 'toleration/acceptance' (1999:281) has the consequence of giving space to racist imagery and larger racist perspectives (1999:289). Karl Spracklen examines the tensions that emerge in extreme metal scenes between the desire to be liberated from social convention and the conservatism of its ideologies ('Gogoroth's Gaahl's gay!', 2010a). In mapping responses to the 'coming out' of prominent black metal musician Gaahl (Kristian Espedal, vocalist of Gorgoroth), Spracklen notes the opposition between fans who saw Gaahl's sexuality as an articulation of individuality, and those who saw homosexuality as a 'liberal step too far, an acceptance of something inferior...less manly, less pure' (2010a:93). What emerges, he notes, is a tripartite conflict between the freedom of black metal, its rejection of convention, and the heterosexism of its elitist ideologies (2010a:93). 'Tolerance' in varied forms eventuates within metal scholarship as a site caught between the desire to transgress against the norms and orthodoxies of late capitalism, yet also wanting to be seen to avoid political correctness and defend free speech.

Kahn-Harris investigates the implications of such broad tolerance through his concept of 'reflexive anti-reflexivity' (2007:144), wherein extreme metal scene members 'tactically marginalise that which they don't want to know' (2007:151) and play with racist, sexist and homophobic imagery in any matter of offensive ways whilst allowing themselves to back away from the full implications of their actions. Kahn-Harris argues that much of the offensive rhetoric within scenes is not entirely serious, but this of course does not lessen the pain it might cause to members (2007:151). Berger also explores this, noting that if scene members are upset by something, they are expected to tolerate it in the interest of the scene (1999:280). An example of this broad tolerance emerges in Kahn-Harris' observation that some female scene members are reluctant to discuss sexism due to wariness of 'kicking up a fuss' (2007:144). Another illustration is Spracklen's contention that Gaahl's homosexuality was (mostly) tolerated, because he

otherwise still confined to hypermasculine gender performances (2010a:94). Despite the differences between Berger's, Kahn-Harris' and Spracklen's work, all three point to the reflexivity with which scene members may then 'play' with offensive imagery. Nonetheless, all three overlook the possibility that scene members who are able to enact performative bigotry without fear of repercussion possess the always-already conferred capital of heteromasculine whiteness.

The problem that emerges with the tendency to treat racism in heavy metal as performative play is straightforward. It erases and degrades the material and cultural consequences of racism when it is experienced by scene members. The third scholarly manifestation of whiteness that I critique is therefore the tendency to discuss whiteness only when it emerges as spectacular racism. Such is the case in Michael Moynihan and Didrik Sørderlind's *Lords of Chaos* (1998), which charts 'the bloody rise of the Satanic metal underground' and examines the racism associated with black metal in a lurid and hysterical tone. *Lords of Chaos* reflects the wider tone of panic in mass media surrounding black metal in the 1990s (examples of this include *Kerrang!* no. 436, 1993; and Darcy Steinke's 'Satan's Cheerleaders', 1996). Whiteness within Moynihan and Sørderlind's work is broached only in terms of white supremacism and Nazism, which are drawn into association with black metal's Satanism, Paganism and 'resurgent atavism' (1998:171). The relationship between black metal's central narratives of masculinity, Satanism and Paganism is a frequent theme within metal literature. Explorations of this relationship, which associates (white) men with individual power and strength, characterise violent xenophobia as a reaction against feminising Christo-capitalist globalisation (work by Sanna Fridh, 2011 and Asbjørn Dyrendal, 2008 are further examples of this scholarly trend).

The consequences of this approach are clear. Literature which frames overtly racist rhetoric and practices within black metal scenes as isolated manifestations of transgressive neopaganist identities cannot map the wider social issues that contribute to the frequency of white supremacist discourse amongst certain segments of the scene⁴ and the race-hate crimes that occurred amongst black

⁴ See for example comments made by Varg Vikernes, Bård Eithun and Jan Axel Blomberg in Moynihan & Sørderlind, 1998.

metal scene members⁵. *Lords of Chaos* casts racism as part of a broader commitment to spectacular transgression within the extreme metal scene. The struggle to define the performativity of transgressive racism is dealt with in various ways within approaches to extreme metal scenes. Kahn-Harris, for example, uses Darkthrone's infamous 'Jewish behaviour' statement on the sleeve notes of *Transilvanian Hunger* (1994) to introduce the potentiality that such bigotry acts as an attempt to 'cynically utilis[e] reflexive anti-reflexivity in order to maximise the transgressive potential of racist discourse, without becoming enmeshed in outright fascist activity' (2007:152–3). He also notes the vehement determination to keep 'politics' out of the scene (2007:153–4) despite scene members' constantly politicised behaviour. This desire to remain distant from politics is reflected in Berger's work, where he notes that metal fans and practitioners often found hardcore's political influences to be too dogmatic and 'preachy' (1999:279), while noting that this had the by-effect of making racism and sexism seem normal and acceptable (1999:281), and that scene members had difficulties condemning even the most offensive material, such as swastikas and use of slurs (1999:280), for concern over being seen to enact a political agenda.

This distancing from 'politics' has the double effect of both excusing racism and severing oneself from its most overt displays. This distancing is reflected in the scholarly treatment of National Socialist Black Metal (NSBM) and white power scenes as 'largely autonomous' and hence separate from 'true' metal scenes (Kahn-Harris, 2007:155). Sharon Hochhauser (2011) explores the development of the 'hatecore' industry and its marketing of 'Anglo-identity' in North America (2011:161). This industry has capitalised on themes of authenticity, purity and national pride to drive great recruitment and thus become a notable market in its own right, though Hochhauser situates it external to the 'legitimate' metal arena (2011:179). Hochhauser sees hatecore and associated genres such as National Socialist Black Metal (NSBM), Rock Against Communism (RAC) and Odinist metal as 'fringe' genres (2011:160) that emerge as a product of broader white supremacist media rather than from the heavy metal scene itself. The shortcoming

⁵ Moynihan and Söderlind offer accounts of Swedish black metal scene members terrorising a black man with an axe and machetes in Linköping in 1995 (1998:270). Kahn-Harris also makes note of anti-Semitism in black metal, instances of which include an Israeli scene member receiving a letter bomb in 1991 (2007:77).

of this appraisal is that in situating white supremacist media and heavy metal as two separate ideological collectives, Hochhauser overlooks the large amounts of racially exclusivist sentiment within metal scenes. Spracklen has noted that many scene members who otherwise espouse problematic rhetoric isolate NSBM from black metal at large not due to any moral concerns, but because they view it as too political and non-conducive to individual thought ('True Aryan Black Metal', 2010). Ross Hagen (2011) reiterates that direct expressions of racism often find a conflicted audience within black metal scenes where members worry that blatant politicisation will detract from the music (2011:193). Hagen argues that 'Unequivocally neo-fascist black metal can be considered an entirely separate scene' (2011:193), and the elevation of the music within the 'normal' black metal scene means that racist or fascist sympathies are rarely challenged for fear of undermining the importance of the music. Hagen nonetheless notes that even bands who do not consider themselves to be part of the NSBM scene tend to share worldviews which borrow from anti-Christianity and social Darwinism (2011:193) and that black metal's affinity for neotradition and the mystic can often cloak neo-Nazi elements which blur the boundaries between black metal and NSBM (2011:195).

Whiteness, virtuosity and majority cultures

The broad manifestations of whiteness discussed so far demonstrate that critical approaches to whiteness and whitenesses are still very much in development within heavy metal scholarship. Karl Spracklen's work has expanded discussions of metallic whiteness beyond allusions to demographics and racist spectacle, and offers greater nuance when approaching the issue of class. Spracklen interrogates how metal constructs a hegemonic whiteness ('Nazi Punks Folk Off', 2013a) that is sustained along classed, raced and gendered lines, and critiques how such whiteness appeals to a national imaginary and maintains an imagined community (in Lucas, Deeks & Spracklen, 'Grim Up North', 2011). Spracklen argues that metal creates and affirms 'heritage narratives' (Spracklen, Lucas & Deeks, 'The construction of heavy metal identity through heritage narratives', 2014), that allow for the affirmation of white self-identity through appeals to nostalgia and authenticity (2013:98–100). Another example of this

scholarly trend is Caroline Lucas' 'White Power, Black Metal, and Me' (2010), which caters to both regional histories and the symbolic boundaries of the 'white' heavy metal scene at large (2012:49). Both Spracklen's and Lucas' work has been largely centred on whiteness' emergence within the context of English extreme metal scenes, particularly those in the country's North. Kahn-Harris' caution against using data for one region and applying it broadly (2007:11) is a necessary consideration for approaching these studies. Nonetheless, they provide a starting point for analysing how localised white hegemony is manifest in romantic appeals to national identity, tradition, and heritage. These scholarly understandings of the functions of whiteness in leisure have teased out the conscious and unconscious power structures embedded within music scenes, industries and research itself. Spracklen hence argues that the most insidious forms of whiteness are not the spectacular displays that are foregrounded in discussions of heavy metal, but rather the invisible strains that work to 'preserve an instrumental hegemony' (2013:101). He contends that whiteness operates invisibly; 'it is not just the ways in which folk and metal are sold as white music' (2013:102), but also the ways in which rock and pop and classical are seen as 'normal' music against which the musics of Others are constructed (2013:102).

In the invisible racialisation process that delineates 'our' music from 'their' music, there is a 'massive disparity of power and agency' (Spracklen, 2013:102). This leads to the fourth approach to whiteness that I critique: the association between heavy metal as white music, and metal as virtuosic. Walser argues that hard rock and heavy metal, which 'began as a white remake of urban blues that often ripped off black artists and their songs shamelessly' (1993:17), echoes the wider 'imperative' for much white music-making; namely 'reproducing black culture without the black people in it' (1993:17). The systematic stripping of non-whiteness from musical cultures and forms is by no means exclusive to heavy metal. Writing in the context of migrant diasporas in 1970s Britain, Hebdige claims that 'the succession of white subcultural forms can be read as a series of deep-structural adaptations which symbolically accommodate or expunge the black presence from the host community' (1979:44). This practice extends into heavy metal literature. Wallach and Clinton assert that the tendency to discuss

metal as owing its traditions to black musicians (Robert Johnson, Jimi Hendrix and Phil Lynott, for example) limits the contributions of people of colour to metal's prehistory and elides the reality of metal's global scene (2015:275). They argue that 'metal history has been bleached by an ideological project of musical whitening' (2015:275), a position that has become 'shriller and more strident as "black" genres...have commanded a larger market share' (2015:275–276). This is a credible point; the allusion to 'black' genres nonetheless extends a complex line of enquiry that saturates metal's scholarly history. Academic texts which conceive of heavy metal as an inherently white genre (c.f. Gaines [1990]1998; Weinstein, [1991]2000; Arnett 1996; Purcell 2003) allow metal to enter a polemic in which 'white' music is contrasted as artistic and complex against the 'natural' or 'bodily' position of 'black' music (Frith, 1987:21).

Such essentialist categories are a problematic aspect of Robert Walser's work. He argues that metal's 'relatively rigid sense of the body' and 'concern with dominance' reflect the European-American transformation of African-American musical materials and cultural values (1993:17). Walser stresses metal's classically-influenced virtuosity throughout his work, which coincides with what he sees as a move away from blues-based influences. Moreover, he suggests that black people may not be attracted to heavy metal because it has little to offer those communities who may be more 'comfortable with African-American musical traditions' (1993:17). In response to the broader tradition of essentialising 'black culture', Paul Gilroy deconstructs the ways in which the global dissemination of 'black' music is reflected in localised traditions of critical writing (Gilroy 1993:75). Gilroy argues that musical heritage has been instrumental in producing a constellation of black subject positions across locales that destabilise the staid essentiality of 'blackness' (1993:82). Gilroy's perspective is a vital one, though within the context of Metal Music Studies it must be accompanied by an acknowledgement that metal is never situated just in a binary of white and black—there are numerous intersections traversed, each entailing their own contextually-significant conflicts.

The black/white polemic is nonetheless a common structuring device within the academy. Metal music's whiteness is often visited through a binary that

positions 'white' music against 'black' music and insists that the virtuosic, intellectual power of metal provides a function for white people in the way that 'tribal', community-oriented 'black' and/or minority music does for people of colour (Kahn-Harris, 2007:77; Purcell, 2003:105–106). Such a limited understanding of black and white is a product of the undertheorisation of race within heavy metal scholarship. Moreover, this binary attenuates the political significance which accompanies such categories, and further entrenches the asymmetrical power relations that inform their scholarly appraisal. Such polemic sentiment cements a correlation between whiteness and what Glenn T. Pillsbury has described in *Damage Incorporated* as 'thinking-man's metal', i.e. metal music marked by both complexity and detachment (2006:57). Pillsbury argues that separating metal music from the blues by celebrating its technicality (as opposed to the 'romantic', 'soulful' or 'rudimentary' lexicon reserved for blues music) makes the implicit gesture of marking bands as white (2006:95).

The appeals to metal's white musicality by Walser, Kahn-Harris and Pillsbury allude to how heavy metal music, and metal literature itself, can act as carriers of hegemonic whiteness. Spracklen however argues that heavy metal music is simultaneously in the tenuous position of being decried as an 'inferior' genre by tastemakers (2013:102). Metal is put to use as a site that both enables a tradition of exclusion and nostalgic (re)production of purity, yet also defines its whiteness through the dominance of white musicians, industry workers and racialised marketing tools. Spracklen further argues that musicians and the music industry in the West retain the hegemonic power to dictate global economics and popular culture, and therefore 'white forms of music are seen as the golden standards of modernity, promoting individuality and belonging and exclusion' (2013:102). Scholarship concerned with heavy metal music and practices has enabled a majority culture of metallic whiteness. The four broad manifestations of whiteness that I have critiqued—whiteness as an absence of blackness, whiteness as masculine working class identity, whiteness as spectacular racism and whiteness as creative virtuosity—all share the same weakness. In failing to address the political implications of white hegemony, all saturate whiteness with normative value.

In the following final section, I address how this position of normative white hegemony extends to the literature on global heavy metal. In attempting to offer an alternative to the 'staid orthodoxy' (Phillipov, 2012:66) of white hegemony, the literature of 'global metal' continues to entrench whiteness as the default subject position within heavy metal cultures. I critique such scholarship with an eye to how this work corresponds to Ruth Frankenberg's linked dimensions of whiteness (1993:1). First, metal literature invisibilises the political implications of whiteness; second, metal literature allows whiteness to act as the 'norm' in scenic spaces, practices and products; and third, metal literature enables depictions of scenes whose Otherness is constructed against 'white' heavy metal scenes and cultures. The combination of these three dimensions within global metal scholarship works to (re)inscribe the centrality of whiteness within heavy metal, and allow it to remain a 'white dominated discourse' (Walser, 1993:17), even when scholarship begins to map heavy metal scenes beyond the traditional white centre of heavy metal music.

The problem(s) with Global Metal

The term 'global metal' has gained currency within the last decade as metal scholarship has begun to explore scenes beyond metal's traditional centres⁶. The Global Metal model emerges as a response to what Phillipov sees as the 'staid orthodoxies' (2012:66) of metal studies which conceive of the genre as universally white. As such, whereas earlier studies within metal scholarship looked to the United States, United Kingdom and parts of Western Europe in its search for metal scenes as expressions of white working-class disenfranchisement, the new 'global' model has concentrated on the evolution and 'adoption' (Wallach & Clinton, 2015:276) of heavy metal throughout the world. Jeremy Wallach, Harris M. Berger and Paul D. Greene take this as their central purpose in their edited collection *Metal Rules the Globe* (2011). With the wide geographical growth of metal, Wallach, Berger and Greene argue, both its musical style and culture have expanded, and metalheads in diverse settings have 'sounded their own particular aesthetics and sociopolitical concerns' (2011:8). Metal fans, it is suggested, respond to the twin

⁶ Sam Dunn and Scott McFadyen's documentary *Global Metal* (2007) is arguably the originary moment for the widespread use of this term within studies of heavy metal.

challenges of globalisation—that is, finding oneself both within a new global community that challenges 'old ways' of life and also combating the rapid spread of transnational capitalism—in ways that reject conformity to a global order and simultaneously narrow ethnicity (Wallach, Berger and Greene, 2011:7).

Wallach, Berger and Greene argue that heavy metal in every setting is embedded in local cultures and histories and is experienced as part of a 'complex and historically specific encounter with the forces of modernity' (2011:4). Suggesting 'global' scenes benefit from, or are resultant of encounters with modernity is a problematic endeavour, and a discourse that shapes the trajectory of my critique. The benefits of research emergent from global metal studies are readily apparent: Emma Baulch's *Making Scenes* (2007), for example, offers a detailed ethnographic observation of the international circulation of popular music, whilst remaining mindful of cultural tourism's propensity to 'create' and fix identities and thus mapping the conflict and fluidity of 'localness' and 'foreignness' in Balinese death and thrash metal scenes. However, my concerns for the global metal model, which I elucidate in the following critique, are as follows. First, global metal situates non-white metal as an 'encounter with modernity'; second, it may look to fix non-white ethnicity as 'premodern', primitive and repressed; and third, it creates a taxonomy of 'authenticity' and 'indigenous' metal that essentialises and exoticises non-white fans and practitioners.

Speaking of metal's dissemination, rather than circulation, allows the global metal model to position Anglo-American scenes as originary sites for the mobilisation of metallic modernity. The troubling tone of 'metal as modernity' encompasses patronising and often infantilising discourse that negates the agency of music fans and practitioners, and affirms Western narratives of 'developing' nations⁷. Cosmo Lee (2011) briefly speculates upon this in his discussion of Botswanan metal, a national scene which received Western media attention for

⁷ I remain mindful here of the scholarly debates that surround the use of the term 'developing nations'; while the term represents a shift away from the first world/third world discourse rooted in Albert Sauvy's *Trois mondes, une planète* ([1952]1986), some academics have argued that the use of the binary 'developed/developing' grants privilege and a sense of utopian finality to Western capitalism. Shose Kessi argues that 'developing' implies a hierarchy between countries that idealises Western society and invisibilises the mechanisms of exploitative capitalism—'In my view, the developed-developing relationship in many ways replaces the colonizer-colonized relationship' (in Silver, 2015: para. 17).

the 'cowboy' aesthetic adopted by its fans (c.f. Frank Marshall's photographic series *Renegades*, 2010). The 'potential subtexts' of such narratives, Lee argues, are couched in exoticising and patronising rhetoric: 'Look—metal in [obscure country]! Look—black people liking metal! See the natives as they collide with Western culture!' (2011: para. 2). Lee adopts a deliberately humourous tone to indicate the problematic treatment of metal scenes external to the West, where he considers the 'colonising force' of heavy metal:

It has one narrative of rejecting colonisers—see Norwegian black metal v. Christianity. But it also has disruptive potential, altering economies (shows, recordings), fashion and perhaps even lifestyles. This Botswana example adds further complexity: black people liking and playing music dominated by white people, but which has roots in rock 'n' roll and the blues—music invented by black people. Perhaps reclamation (albeit unconscious) is occurring (2011: para. 4).

Lee's discussion of 'reclamation' raises some complex questions. This is an idea touched on by protagonist Wilker Flores in Jeremy Xido's documentary *Death Metal Angola* (2012), who argues that heavy metal shares many of the same percussive traditions as the music of the African continent. The notion is particularly engaging when considered in line with the previous suggestions that metal was inherently 'white' because it stripped the 'blackness' from rock music. The problems with situating metal's percussive traditions as a 'return' to a homogenised conception of blackness, however, are immediate: attributing authentic bodily 'roots' to black bodies and cultures in ways that do not allow such identities and communities to exercise agency over their own modernity and sense of self.

The negation of agency is a negative aspect of the 'metal as modernity' trend that tends to dominate discussions of global metal. The global metal model enters in to a discourse of conquest, which enfolds within it an explicit colonising tone. Wallach and Clinton speak of 'metal's world conquest' (2015:276). A second example of this emerges in Kahn-Harris' assertion that particular 'small corners' of

the world 'have failed to resist the global metal onslaught' (Kahn-Harris, 2010: para. 2). This discourse of metal entering or conquering 'developing' nations from the modernised West is one rooted in the broader issues of 'world music'⁸ which characterise non-Western music as exotic or pre-modern. This is particularly evident in the colonialist rhetoric that sees Africa as heavy metal's 'final frontier' (Tutton & Barnett, 2014: para. 1), or the site of the 'march' of metal (Weinstein, 2011:44). Casting global 'Others' as sites of 'unconquered territory' for the 'global metal empire' (Kahn-Harris, 2010: para. 2) entangles the global metal model within the territories of colonialism and Otherness.

A review of global metal necessitates an appraisal of the means through which it fixes a rigid dichotomy between the liberated, technologised West and the primitive, repressed 'East'. Moynihan and Söderlind, for example, in discussing metal's popularity in Eastern Europe in the 1990s, claim that 'along with every other Western pop culture phenomena, Heavy Metal made its way east, achieving added impetus from its forbidden allure in a totalitarian state' (1998:283). Metal as a liberator from oppressive political regimes is again visited in LeVine's *Heavy Metal Islam* (2008) and the documentary *Heavy Metal in Baghdad* (Moretti & Alvi, 2007) where both author and filmmakers speak of young fans and musicians accessing power through heavy metal that would not otherwise be granted to them by virtue of their social context. All three of these examples share a weakness in that they, and indeed global metal as a whole, are overwhelmingly focused on young men. Global metal's 'liberatory' qualities then seem only to benefit men, and masculine conceptions of the nation. There is of course an argument to be made for exploring the mechanisms through which young men of colour have been able to assert multiple alternative masculinities in opposition to white heteromasculine hegemony; Wallach's examination of the phenomenon of 'masculine hangouts' in Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore (2011) is an example of how scenes negotiate gender in localised ways. Current representations within global metal, however, tacitly retrench Western hypermasculinity as a key resource in liberating oneself from an ostensibly oppressive culture.

⁸ Simon Frith notes that 'while "world music" sounds like an inclusive term it is, in practice, systematically exclusive' (2007:150-1).

Having addressed my concerns that trends within global metal initially present heavy metal as an encounter with modernity, and secondly, situate global 'Others' as primitive and repressed, I will thus move on to my third concern: that global metal creates a taxonomy of 'authenticity' and 'indigeneity' that essentialises and exoticises non-white fans and practitioners. The 'nationalism' of metal for scenes in the UK and USA is bound up with discussions of the white working class as the 'true' or authentic heart of the nation (c.f. Weinstein, 2000; Berger, 1999; Phillipov, 2012; Gaines, 1998; Purcell, 2003). This discussion of labour and authenticity allows nationalism to be realised along classed and civic lines, rather than essentialised ethnic ones. This understanding grants scene members the privilege of individual pleasures that disrupt a collective identity. In contrast, global metal approaches aggregate entire regions, and cast homogenous understandings of ethnicity and group motivation over the individuals within these regions. Jeremy Wallach's discussion of metal scenes in Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore (2011), for example, studies the relationship between metal, industrialisation and 'Malayness', despite the fact that the Indonesian metal movement has interests different from those of Malaysia and Singapore (2011:88). Wallach includes the Philippines within this 'pan-Malay' approach in a brief footnote, even with acknowledgement of the vast differences in colonial history, language and religion (2011:105n.13).

Where whiteness is drawn into discussions of nationalism and ethnic indigeneity, it is usually done in ways that speak to an original purity (or an idealised narrative of such, c.f. Spracklen, Lucas & Deeks, 2014; Lucas, 2010) and is overwhelmingly discussed in relation to the 'North' (Moynihan & Söderlind, 1998; Wilson, 2010; Wiebe-Taylor, 2010; Heesch, 2010; von Helden, 2010). Weinstein argues 'the valorisation of 'white' creates an ethnic group for individuals who are perceived to be 'nonethnics' (Weinstein, 2000:113). Weinstein suggests that this is achieved through the interpellation and continuing popularity of Nordic symbolism within metal scenes (2000:113). I have argued elsewhere (Hoad, 2013) that such narratives of the 'North' often rely on a heavily romanticised vision of hypermasculine Viking warriors, whose performative rites are then denied to non-

white practitioners⁹, even as they are readily appropriated by scene members in demographically white nations with no substantial ties to Viking genealogy.

The illusory indigeneity of the 'North' within metal scholarship is not burdened with the same primitivist rhetoric of much global metal literature. The taxonomy of 'indigenous' or 'ethnic' metal and its associated discourses look to fix certain identities through a rhetoric of authentic cultural production. Music styles rooted in national customs have entered the music of many heavy metal bands. Research undertaken by Dan Bendrups (2011) and Donna Weston (2011) points to the ways in which metal musicians have used ethnonational music traditions in the Easter Islands and France. Such research has challenged conceptions of heavy metal as defined through the 'ideological project of musical whitening' (Wallach & Clinton, 2015:275). Recent research by Stefano Barone (2015) and Marco Ferrarese (2015) has also provided more far-reaching understandings of the dialectics between the local and the global in particular metal contexts. Barone's discussion of metal scenes in Tunisia stresses the agency of performers in deliberately confronting clichéd representations of 'Oriental' music (2015:189). Ferrarese further criticises the 'authenticating' impetus of global metal (2015:195), where he argues that 'locality' (in this case, Malaysian metal scenes) is arbitrated through Anglo-centric cultural imperialism.

Both Barone's and Ferrarese's approaches are explicit in locating the exoticising rhetoric of colonialism within current approaches to global metal scenes. The exoticism and essentialism identified by both Barone and Ferrarese is prevalent within approaches to global scenes. Wallach and Clinton, for example, couch such a discussion through appeals to first/third world binaries, where Brazilian band Sepultura are cited as evidence that 'a band did not need to come from a first world country to impact the global scene' (2015:277). They also characterise Death Angel as 'a group of Filipino cousins... known by some in Indonesia as the first "third world" metal band' (2015:275). This is a particularly misleading categorisation of a band that, apart from one original member, was

⁹ Elsewhere I have interrogated the aggression and criticism levelled at non-white fans and performers of Viking metal, particularly the derision of South American Viking metal bands for whom 'Viking', as a cultural symbol, may be used to articulate narratives of strength and liberation from oppression (Hoad, 'Hold the Heathen Hammer High', 2013.)

born and raised in San Francisco to Filipino-American families. Wallach and Clinton also enter into the complex territory of ethnic 'sounds'—the 'rhythmic approach' of Slayer's ex-drummer Dave Lombardo is attributed to his 'Cuban background' (2015:275). This trend is further extenuated by research that looks for the sounds of 'Brazilianness' in Sepultura's music—for example, through mapping the same 'tribal rhythms' of Igor Cavalera's drumming that allow Sepultura to be cast as 'the jungle boys' by European fans (Avelar, 2003:342).

Despite these critiques, there is a positive outcome for such global metal studies. They demolish or deconstruct the orthodoxy of heavy metal as inherently white in its demographics; furthermore, they offer opportunities to address how metal fans and practitioners navigate questions of gender, race, class and deindustrialisation in myriad ways throughout hundreds of different nations. But what at first appears to be a deconstruction of metal's hegemonic whiteness also amounts to its reinforcement. The three concerns for the global metal model that I have articulated here—global metal situates non-white metal as an 'encounter with modernity'; global metal fixes non-white ethnicity as 'premodern', primitive and repressed; global metal creates a taxonomy of 'authenticity' and 'indigenous' metal that essentialises and exoticises non-white fans and practitioners—demonstrate that the global metal model reproduces the dominant forms of power that establish Anglo-American and European metal as the 'centre' of the heavy metal scene, while enforcing the 'Otherness' of global—and importantly, non-white—heavy metal communities.

In offering an alternative to the staid orthodoxy of white hegemony, the literature of 'global metal' continues to entrench whiteness as the default subject position within heavy metal cultures. The Othering rhetoric of global metal may be remediated with analyses that address the structural hegemony of whiteness. Scholarship must problematise how a position of white structural advantage creates these logics of normality and Otherness. What is at stake, as Walser has argued, is not just the actual nature of a reality that is to be represented, but the context and purpose of the representation (2011:333). Wallach, Berger and Greene themselves note the disparity of power and agency embedded within the

global metal model, and situate it within the broader inequitable distribution of capital throughout the world:

As more scenes sprout up and thrive, [it] is possible that the current Western dominance of this music could eventually give way to a more equitable balance of musical and cultural influence in the global metal ecumene. Until then, however, global metal will exemplify not only the serendipitous consequences of the global dissemination of cultural forms, but also persistent inequalities in the world system (Wallach, Berger and Greene, 2011:21).

Mapping the disjunctures in power that inform scenic encounters between metal bands, fans and production—and significantly, academic writing about such scenic encounters—points to the nationalisms that continue to emerge and solidify within heavy metal communities. Casting the gaze inwards, furthermore, reveals the hidden mechanisms of whiteness, and points to its multiplicity across global scenes. Moving discussions of metal scenes beyond Western Europe and North America provides a necessary disruption to scholarship and popular representation that would cast the genre's fans as overwhelmingly white. When such accounts continue to be realised from an unacknowledged position of structural advantage that allow whiteness to go unmarked, they nonetheless re-tether 'true' metal to the moorings of whiteness. Global metal scholarship has done the vital groundwork of drawing discussions of race in heavy metal out of the black/white binary. What remains crucial is thus to make visible the whitenesses of metal as they unfold external to the US and UK in disparate locations.

Conclusion

The development of Metal Music Studies from its earliest forms into the current field has allowed scholarship to move beyond disparaging appraisals of the social and creative value of the music and its culture, and thus engaged with the increasingly complex and multifaceted ways in which heavy metal music, scenes and cultures are experienced globally. Despite this, heavy metal scholarship has continued to depict the traditional 'centre' of heavy metal as that which belongs to young white men, and thus constituted the personified

normative figure of heavy metal cultures. Scholarly approaches to heavy metal had largely failed to articulate the whiteness of the genre in the earliest critiques; where foundational academic texts made vital moves towards unpacking the cultural and symbolic significance of metallic whiteness, they did so largely in ways that contrasted whiteness wholly against blackness, and derived its meaning as such. The effect of this, I argue, has been to discuss metal's whiteness entirely in terms of the purported absence of people of colour, and thus to exoticise people of colour where they do emerge within the demographics of heavy metal scenes. Such literature has thus also allowed masculinity to be naturalised and prized within scenic sites and cultures, wherein women's participation and contributions to scenes are appraised against those of men. Such dominant masculine codes have gone largely uncritiqued, and hence the dominant position of white hegemonic masculinity continues to dictate scenic parameters. In doing so, metal scholarship has often reinscribed the same exclusionary logics of scenic engagement that seek to marginalise and exscribe women and non-white Others from belonging within the spatial and cultural sites of heavy metal. Within such a scope, race and femininity are hypervisibilised and made to belong to Others, while white masculinity continues to act as the dominant norm against which metal fans, practitioners, texts and cultures are measured. An inability to deconstruct the dominant positions of whiteness and masculinity allows both metal scenes and metal scholarship to be mandated and legitimated by such positions of structural advantage, and continue to permit the linked dimensions and cultural practices of whiteness to go unmarked, unnamed, and unrealised.

Scholarship concerning heavy metal has increasingly disrupted representations of heavy metal as a genre entirely comprised of young white men. This current research within Metal Music Studies has drawn attention to how metal scenes can act as sites of personal agency and empowerment for women eschewing discourses of passive femininity, and indicating how metal has provided a space of power and protest for people of colour marginalised by broader political contexts. However, while such texts have made the significant steps of broadening metal's representation, overwhelmingly they still enable this normative centre itself to go uncritiqued. Furthermore, the extension of studies of

metal beyond United States and United Kingdom contexts has pointed to the dynamism and multiplicity of the genre as it circulates the globe, yet have continued to couch such investigations in terms of 'global metal', a label that situates such scenic contributions as external to 'normal' or 'authentic' metal. Whiteness is then dislocated from the connotations of ethnic identity and has its racial status erased, a practice which is problematised in various ways across 'white' heavy metal scenes, as my thesis maps. Metal scholarship must be cognisant of the way current discourses create a centre and a margin, while allowing the centre to go largely without interrogation. The primary intention of my thesis is hence to deconstruct the intricacies and nuances of this hegemonic white centre. Through the following discussions of metal scenes across Norway, South Africa and Australia, I argue that metal's whiteness unfolds in a multitude of ways across seemingly disparate contexts, wherein it is structured by mechanisms that present whiteness and white masculinity as normative, superior, and under threat.

Chapter Two

Black Metal is for White People: Monstrous Nationalism in Norwegian black and Viking metal scenes.

We don't like black people here. Black metal is for white people.

—Jan Axel 'Hellhammer' Blomberg, 1998.

Introduction:

Few countries have been interpellated into metal mythology with the same success as Norway. The cultural capital that accompanies Norwegianness within extreme metal has enmeshed nationhood and music in ways that hold implications for the global metal scene at large. The widespread media attention given to the Norwegian metal landscape is a testament to Norway's importance in metal discourse, but also its notoriety. The musical and social phenomenon of Norwegian metal is located within a complex nexus of nationhood, ethnicity and masculinity in ways that correspond to, yet also obscure, the exclusionary whiteness of nationalist discourse. The key challenge is thus not to conceive of Norwegian heavy metal scenes as inherently fascist or racist, but rather to critique the means through which representations of glorious Nordic pasts within both metal and wider nationalist discourse work within a dominant structure of power—a structure which can and has been used to support white cultural hegemony.

Norwegian black and Viking metal scenes are cultural arenas marked by aesthetic intricacies and national anxieties. The deeply entrenched cultural histories of whiteness that underpin Norwegian identity have become ingrained in the social fabric of the nation. In their most insidious and violent manifestations, these white histories gain visibility within the daily discourse of a state marked by national racisms and strict immigration policies. The task of defending Norwegianness, and consequently whiteness, is expressed in Norway's heavy metal communities. Invocations of authentic belonging have become paramount

within scenic narratives, particularly as metal scenes negotiate identity politics with local and global implications. I argue that the construction of a white, Nordic identity within Norwegian metal scenes compensates for the perceived 'loss' of nationhood, a consequence of the alleged homogenisation of the European nation state under the European Union and contemporary flows of global capital. Such constructions have in turn authorised the violence and monstrosity of both scene and musical practices. In enabling fantasies of colonial victimhood and invasive violence, Norway's black and Viking metal scenes anchor the discourse of metal within a series of complex political projects concerning heritage, race and the troubled terrain of 'belonging'. Beyond violent projections of racial exclusivity, the tacit valorisation of whiteness has become increasingly prevalent within Norwegian heavy metal, where it echoes a larger national conversation. The Norwegian metal scene's imagining of the nation and its subsequent defence are bound up with notions of anti-Christian transgression, white supremacy and ontological hygiene, all of which combine to form a particularly harrowing vision of the world and its nationalist patriarchs.

This chapter interrogates the expression of whiteness within a Norwegian context, particularly as it emerges through black metal and Viking metal scenes. The discomfiting forms of resistance that have greeted disruptions to Norwegian racial and ethnic identity have found spectacular materialisation in the oft-cited transgression of the Norwegian scene at large. In narrowing the focus to black and Viking metal, I articulate how the oft-overlooked pastoral romanticism of these scenes obscures their exclusionary parameters of ethnicity and heritage. Mapping how the figure of the Viking has been used as a foil for exclusionary Nordic whiteness points to more insidious manifestations of discourses of national identity, authenticity, and heteromasculine violence. In this chapter I then explore the monstrous forms of discontent—what I henceforth call monstrous nationalism—that emerge through the scenic practices of Norwegian black and Viking metal. Such monstrous ethnonationalism has buttressed and affirmed the exaltation of white Nordic masculinity. This monstrous nationalism is a site of both genuine physical destruction and broader symbolic power. The fetishising of monstrous national identity within the space of the scene casts Norwegian

whiteness as horrifying and atavistic yet superior and pristine. The 'monstrosity' of Norway performed within metal scenes thus plays upon the dichotomous logic of nature and the unnatural, the civilised and the savage, and hence forces a recalibration of ideas of abnormality and Otherness realised through the lexicon of colonialism and violent anticolonial resistance. Norway's black and Viking metal scenes are underpinned by narratives which mark difference between self and other, and hence undermine colonising, modernising and globalising projects. Norwegian metal's nationalistic fetishism marks Norway and its ethnosymbolism as transgressive and unknowable, the products of an atavistic and ruthless nation.

This chapter pursues the procession of whiteness within Norwegian metal scenes and maps how Norwegian whiteness has been given form through situating Norwegians as both heroic invaders and colonised people. I begin by addressing the history and development of black and Viking metal scenes in Norway, where I argue that heavy metal has become a significant aspect of Norwegian self-identity, and Norway's international reputation. From there I address the current scholarly approaches to Norwegian metal, contending that the notoriety of the genre has resulted in a substantial body of critical work. This body of work nonetheless overlooks and obscures many of the more complex processions of ethnosymbolism within black metal, and near-completely overlooks Norwegian Viking metal. The oversights of this research inform the trajectory of my analysis in this chapter. I argue that Nordic whiteness within metal scenes has been represented as pure and originary, a complex evasion of a pre-Nordic past which presents the North as essentially Nordic and Pagan. As this chapter argues, such purity has unfolded within the matrix of nationhood, race and masculinity. 'True' Nordic men are those who have mastered other lands, while theirs remains pristine. In heavy metal scenes this veneration of territory is realised through the valorising of 'unknowable' land, fierce econationalism and the prizing of wilderness as impermeable to, yet under threat from globalisation. Contestations as to true ownership of Norwegian blood and soil then emerge between 'authentic' Nordic whiteness, colonising Christianity, and the weakening effects of modernisation, wherein black metal's ubiquitous appeals to Satanism have given

way to an ostensibly more acceptable, yet nonetheless problematic, valorisation of Pagan ethnosymbolism.

The monstrous nationalism of Norwegian heavy metal scenes is entrenched within such claims to ethnic belonging. I demonstrate that the swords, shields and Viking paraphernalia endemic to Norwegian black and Viking metal scenes are distinct modalities of nationalistic fetishism. Beyond such symbolism, affronts to and contestations over who may lay claim to Norway are realised through monstrous forms of discontent: corpse paint, church arson, grave desecration and murder. Black metal and Viking metal are figured into this nexus of the 'genuinely Norwegian' as music is nationalised in ways that demonise non-Norwegian scenes and non-white scene members. As this chapter argues, the monstrous nationalism of Norwegian heavy metal scenes presents Nordic whiteness as terrifying and discomforting, yet simultaneously pure, elite and unique. Nordic whiteness becomes explicitly tied to nationhood in presenting Norway itself as monstrous and atavistic, both threatened by and superior to the emasculating effects of globalisation. The task of this chapter is hence to investigate expressions of whiteness in the context of Norwegian black and Viking metal scenes, but also to map how this is embedded within the wider national imperative of maintaining a particular sense of Norwegianness in an increasingly globalised context. The whiteness of Norwegian metal has significant implications for metallic whiteness at large, but is also situated within the whitening mechanisms of Norwegian national discourse itself as it responds to increased flows of capital and people.

History of Norwegian metal and scholarly appraisals

The development of heavy metal in Norway echoes the politicised context in which it emerged. From its relatively innocuous origins in the late 1970s, Norwegian metal, though diverse, has become synonymous with black metal—a genre which documentarist Sam Dunn has referred to as 'Norway's largest cultural export' (2005). Norway's heavy metal scene developed from hard rock scenes centred in urban areas in the late 1970s before gaining strength in the early 1980s with bands such as Black Angels and Artch. A central consideration for the interrogation of metal's nationalist value in Norway is this growth from a

peripheral genre to one of vital importance. There is a significant disjunction between the earliest Norwegian metal bands and those that emerged from what is now known as the Second Wave of Black Metal. Until the late 1980s, for the majority of metal fans in Norway their own local scene was of limited interest. Fan allegiances within this period tended to lie with bands from the United Kingdom, United States and neighbouring Sweden, where the earliest strains of extreme metal were beginning to solidify into distinct subgenres. Despite black metal's contemporary association with Norway, the genre's roots lie external to Scandinavia¹. Nonetheless, I contend that black metal did not truly develop into a distinct genre until the rise of the Second Wave of Black Metal, or Norwegian Black Metal, in the early 1990s. The early Norwegian black metal scene grew primarily out of a community of young men—'The Black Circle'—who gathered at the record shop Helvete in Oslo². Led by bands such as Mayhem, Burzum, Darkthrone, Emperor and Immortal, the Second Wave developed the musical style of their predecessors into a form distinguishable from thrash metal. Stylistically, black metal typically incorporates high-pitched shrieking vocals, incredibly fast tempos, heavily distorted guitars, blast beat drumming and raw production qualities. Initially characterised by an anti-Christian focus and an interest in pseudo-Satanic ritual, black metal has expanded to incorporate themes of Paganism, Norse history, fascism and environmentalism. While Second Wave-influenced black metal does have a notable presence in other counties, it remains a genre of central importance in Norway, where it has become a crucial component of national and cultural identity. The genre has grown from its small, underground roots to become a national phenomenon of major cultural significance.

While Satanic Black Metal is synonymous with Norway, the rapidly increasing popularity of Viking metal as a genre in its own right points to the gradual shifts in metal trends within a Norwegian context. Viking metal does not

¹ Drawing its stylistic origins from earlier forms of speed and thrash metal, shock rock and hardcore punk, the First Wave of Black Metal emerged in the early 1980s with bands such as the England's Venom, Switzerland's Hellhammer (later Celtic Frost), Sweden's Bathory and Brazil's Sarcófago.

² The shopfront that originally housed the Helvete store is currently occupied by a small café and Neseblod Records; the latter, capitalising on the mythologising of the early Norwegian scene within the wider metal community, offers customers the chance to view the 'Black Metal room in the basement'. See figures 1.1 and 1.2.

represent a total departure from black metal, I suggest, but rather operates as an extenuation of its nationalistic elements in less readily horrifying, but nonetheless complex and exclusionary forms. As Weinstein has noted, the popularity of Northern European symbolism in Western heavy metal scenes emerged at the same time as a 'mania' for 'discovering and celebrating one's roots' among racial and ethnic groups, particularly in the United States (2000:113). The 'valorisation of 'white' into heavy metal subculture' could then be interpreted as the creation of 'the semblance of an ethnic group for individuals who were perceived to be non-ethnics in the Anglo-American context' (Weinstein, 2000:113). Viking symbolism is not unique to Norway. Arguably the earliest band to adopt the Viking figure as the primary focus of lyrics and identity was Swedish pioneer Báthory. What is important, however, is that Báthory's sense of heritage was not 'Sweden-specific' (Kahn-Harris, 2007:106) but rather embraced a pan-Nordic model of Viking culture. Viking metal as a genre-specific label is typically used to indicate the metal subgenre characterised by its chaotic sound, frequent use of keyboards and interchange between clean vocals and the more traditional screams and growls of extreme metal.

The dark and violent imagery of black metal has permeated much Viking metal and continues to play a predominant role. Lyrically, however, the concerted focus on Norse mythology, Norse Paganism and tales of the Viking age are a departure from black metal's interest in Satanism and the occult. Furthermore, the role of 'folk' music further delineates Viking metal from traditional black metal. Influences from Nordic folk music are frequently present, and as such Mulvany has suggested that Viking metal might itself be considered a sub-genre of folk metal (2000:46). As Trafford and Pluskowski note, however, there are as many definitions of what constitutes Viking metal as there are fans (2007:64). The invocation of the Viking in rock music is not a particularly new phenomenon; the use of popular Viking iconography laid stress upon the danger and chaos associated with such figures rather than locating such archetypes within national histories. This *ad hoc* appropriation of Vikings suggests that such an identity becomes a package for transmitting narratives of masculinity, freedom, adventure and chaos. However, as Trafford and Pluskowski argue, there has emerged a

secondary usage of Vikings by metal bands, which lays far more stress on their historical context and notions of heritage and ancestry (2007:61). My approach to a complex and frequently reflexive genre is then immediately concerned with Viking metal's deployment in a specifically Norwegian context, and how such figures are then drawn into the wider whitening praxis of heavy metal discourses.

The heavy metal music of Norway is notable not only for its influence on the global extreme metal scene, but its explicit engagement with geographically-specific cultural histories of whiteness. Where literature has addressed the racism and colonial discourse within Norwegian heavy metal, it has been centred primarily on the black metal genre. The largely Norwegian origins of the Second Wave of Black Metal³ have made the genre the focus of much scholarly literature exploring the heavy metal cultures of Norway. In this following section I address the current body of work surrounding heavy metal in a Norwegian context. Literature on Norwegian heavy metal subscribes to four common research trends. Firstly, scholarship on Norwegian heavy metal has addressed the relationship between Norwegian black metal and Norse and/or Germanic ethnosymbolism. Secondly, literature has examined Norwegian black metal's Satanism as a localised response to Christianity, capitalism and globalisation. Thirdly, research has explored Norwegian black metal scenes as notorious spaces of spectacular transgression. Finally, academic work has offered discussions of Norwegian black metal as a site for expressions of anti-modernism and radical elitism. In the proceeding analysis I address these four trends with reference to individual texts to demonstrate how they shape the trajectory of my analysis of nationalist whiteness within Norwegian metal scenes, and draw attention to the gaps left by the current research. Literature surrounding Norwegian metal has addressed the interplay of authenticity, masculinity and nationalism in ways that negate the material implications of such nexes. The scholarly focus on Satanism and spectacular racism reduces complex processes to symbolic transgression, and isolates these traits to certain segments of scenes. Explorations of black metal's Satanism obscures more troubling aspects of neopaganist pastoral fantasies

³ Black Metal's origins lie external to Scandinavia, emerging from established extreme metal scenes across England, Germany, and Switzerland. The 'first wave of Black Metal' originates within this movement; the Second Wave of Black Metal is however largely acknowledged as emerging near-exclusively from Norway in the early 1990s.

within both black and Viking metal, and the racial exclusivity they entail. The notable lack of academic critique of Norwegian Viking metal enables the extension of the exclusionary whiteness of black metal in cloaked forms. This absence must be taken into consideration when addressing the body of literature concerning Norwegian heavy metal scenes.

Norse ethnosymbolism in Norwegian black metal

The commensurance of black metal and Norway has ensured that the ethnosymbolism and ultranationalism of Norwegian black metal scenes has formed a central theme in scholarly literature. Ross Hagen ('Musical Style, Ideology and Mythology in Norwegian Black Metal', 2011) interrogates the significance of the 'common association' of black metal with 'heathen revivalists and neotraditionalists seeking to resurrect idealised ancient Norse and Germanic cultures and belief systems' (182). Hagen examines the musical characteristics specific to Norwegian black metal, observing that the 'Norwegianness' of bands gave them an exotic appeal to foreign customers (2011:183). Beyond such broad constructions of 'Norwegianness', the relationship between Norwegian black metal ideology and its interpellation of Germanic myth and legends, for Hagen, becomes embedded within Pagan nationalism. He argues that black metal musicians have drawn upon Norse and Germanic myth as representative of a 'romanticised heroic past' (2011:193), where Satanism could be considered part of a history of Pagan resistance to the weakening influence of Christianity (2011:193). Such mythologies can be conceived as constitutive of national and cultural identity, asserted in racist and elitist terms (2011:193). The common discourse of Norwegian black metal is one of disaffection and alienation from the 'dominant' society, wherein 'Norwegian black metal retreats to a world of fantasy and myth drawing on local cultural traditions' (2011:196). Hagen argues that much Norwegian metal is characterised by incendiary rhetoric levelled at Western urban society, multiculturalism and Christianity, and represents an attempt to channel dissatisfaction with these conditions into an extended campaign to return Norway to an idealised Pagan past (2011:196).

The 'neotraditional idea' (2011:194) of a tribal society at odds with urban multiculturalism draws Hagen's discussion towards black metal's fascination with an originary ethnic 'Norwegianness'. Such an analysis can be further extended to map the exclusionary racism that emerges from such mythologised pastoral pasts and utopian community ideals. A discussion of the broader Norwegian political and social context that informs racialised discourses could be utilised in conjunction with Hagen's focus on style and mythology. His chapter does, however, build upon tangible attempts to link the racial rhetoric of black metal to the political lives of modern Norwegians. Scott Wilson's 'From Forests Unknown: Eurometal and the Political/Audio Unconscious' (2010) explores the political motivations of Norwegian black metal's fascination with Norse and Pagan imagery. Wilson argues that the extremes of metal 'exist in the absence of any political thought adequate to the current state of affairs' (2010:149), wherein regional varieties of heavy metal have 'tracked the expansion of the European Union and its borderlands' (2010:149). Wilson suggests that heavy metal operates as a 'political/audio unconscious', allowing communities to assert nationhood as a challenge to the 'protosuperstate' (2010:153) represented by the European Union. Where globalisation has 'stripped away ethnicities' (2010:152), Wilson argues, heavy metal fills those gaps with nationalist symbols of strength and resilience. This is manifest in 'nationalist fetishism' (Wilson, 2010:152), where the nation has to find a way of giving content to its empty form, 'filling it out with some myth of ethnicity usually bound up with fetish objects' (2010:152). Wilson suggests that it is black metal's initial anti-Christian, anti-globalisation stance that gives way to the procession of Pagan simulacra that infiltrates the genre. Such iconography—swords, shields and Norse imagery—is, however, arguably less grounded in historical representations of Nordic masculinities, but rather romanticised visions of Viking warriors that fearlessly conquered lands and terrorised Christian (globalising) nations.

Satanism as a response to Christianity, capitalism and globalisation

Hagen and Wilson suggest that there is something terrifying or monstrous about the ethnic 'content' produced by black metal, the Pagan symbols and objects that are supposed to 'fill the void hollowed out by the modern Northern-European

nation-state' (Wilson, 2010:152). Both works can be situated within a broader tradition of postcolonial criticism concerned with the desire for authenticity⁴. That Wilson sees the Norwegian black metal scene attempting to reinstate a sense of 'national' culture within a postcolonial nexus necessitates critique. A further critical eye must extend to the procession of national simulacra enabled by the attempt to reverse the 'symbolic castration' (Wilson, 2010:155) of national cultures heralded by globalisation. The correlation of globalisation with castration—and moreover, feminisation—is an important consideration in metal literature's exploration of the interplay of nationhood and masculinity in black metal. Sanna Fridh reflects on this theme ('Lord Satan's Secret Rites and Satanism as Self-Therapy: The Creation of a Masculinity Gender Identity within Black Metal', 2011), arguing that 'new' forms of Satanism emerge within black metal as a response to 'consumerist culture' that is 'watering down the male into something that is no longer perceived as masculine' (2011:180). The dual trajectory of consumerism and Christianity, Fridh argues, is charged with emasculating men through the 'feminisation of masculinity' (2011:177). Fridh characterises the black metal movement as 'mostly a critique against current masculine norms and ideas' (2011:181), where the use of extreme violence and appeals to Satanism are tools for men to experience themselves as authentic in a world where 'everyone is supposed to be the same' (Fridh, 2011:177).

Exploring how Satanism becomes entrenched within broader fetishising projects of national identity is a common theme in literature on Norwegian black metal. Beyond Fridh's appraisal, Gry Mørk's earlier examination of 'old school black metal' (the period of 1990–1994) and its Norwegian connections ('With my art I am the fist in the face of God: On Old-School Black Metal', 2009) sees the genre's Satanism as 'ambiguous, flexible and vague' (2009:172) and tied to particular forms of violence utilised by male subjects who are situated in an alienating contemporary Western world (2009:172). The 'aggressive attitude of the black metal scene' (Mørk, 2009:172) is tightly interwoven with themes of alienation, pain, and violence, 'while simultaneously launching critical perspectives on Western civilisation' (2009:172). Mørk contends that the

⁴ These attempts to 'fill out the void' left by colonial invasion are a feature of Frantz Fanon's work, wherein he maps the destructive and erasory impetus of settler colonialism (1967).

construction and shaping of masculine identity is a defining feature of the subculture and its 'worship of darkness' (2009:172), wherein black metal's traditional and essentialist constructions of 'manliness' are activated through practices demanding courage, violence and pain (2009:194).

For both Fridh and Mørk, black metal's Satanism reflects a broader general attraction towards the occult (Mørk, 2009:172). Responding broadly to this approach, Asbjorn Dyrendal in *Devilish Consumption* (2008:77) critiques scholarly research that positions black metal's Satanism as Christianity inverted, and thus argues that such discourses of the occult need to be interrogated within both scenic and local frameworks. Defining black metal through its interest in broadly Satanic themes reduces any interest in Heathenism to broadly 'Satanic' signifiers, and negates the complex ethnosymbolism entrenched within these modalities. This is the central problem of Michael Moynihan and Didrik Söderlind's *Lords of Chaos* (1998). *Lords of Chaos* is entirely predicated upon the notion of the 'Satanic metal underground' represented by the Norwegian scene. This sensationalist approach to black metal (as characterised by Darcy Steinke's article 'Satan's Cheerleaders' in the February 1996 issue of *SPIN*, or Kerrang's March 1993 special on black metal) stresses Satanic violence and criminality with little critical reflection. *Lord of Chaos* cloaks itself as an 'investigation' grounded in Jungian theory, and moreover 'an explication of a modern eruption of musical terrorism' (1998:xii).

Lords of Chaos is less concerned with sound than fury (Coogan, 1999:1). Moynihan and Söderlind rarely address the 'metal' of the 'underground', but rather the criminal activities and political interests of members of the early Norwegian black metal scene⁵. Moynihan and Söderlind's text is rendered further problematic by their suggestion that the events in Norway reflect a growing tendency among alienated youth throughout the world, who allegedly blend black metal with Satanism and fascism. This speculative approach asserts that Norwegian black metal plays some part in the apparent radicalisation of late-twentieth century youth; furthermore the authors largely ignore the specifically

⁵ Despite claiming to investigate the scene at large, the text is concerned with the actions of five individuals—Per Yngve Ohlin ('Dead'), Øystein Aarseth ('Euronymous'), Bård Eithun ('Faust'), Hendrik Mobus (a German teenager) and Varg Vikernes.

Norwegian national context and socio-political factors therein which initially characterised the emergence of the scene. Moynihan and Söderlind strip Norwegian black metal of its Norwegianness, and instead position it as a site of universal violence and spectacular, transgressive fascism. Their argument hangs on a thin evidentiary thread—Varg Vikernes, who was a fascist well before he was a black metal musician (Coogan, 1999:8). Extrapolating Vikernes as a central dominating figure, and suggesting that Norwegian black metal continues in his image, allows representations of overtly racist, fascist and homophobic scene members and practitioners to simultaneously become both a norm and exception in discussions of black metal. This approach isolates such behaviour to very select areas of scenes, rather than interrogating the relationships between such positions and the specifically national and/or political contexts from which they emerged.

Lords of Chaos is best conceived of as a product of the Norwegian black metal scene (Hagen, 2011:181) rather than a scholarly analysis. Nonetheless, it reveals how members of the Norwegian scene view and articulate their history. One sound aspect of *Lords of Chaos* is Moynihan and Söderlind's discussion of 'resurgent atavism' and Odinist archetypes as foundational to Norwegian black metal's white supremacy (1998:191) Moynihan and Söderlind's characterisation of Norwegian black metal as neopagan and pro-Aryan demonstrates the racial hierarchies that emerge at the nexes of politics and national ontologies. The notion of purity is a prominent theme within *Lords of Chaos*, to the extent that notions of 'authentic' black metal culture (and therefore national culture) become bound up with narratives of racial superiority and ontological hygiene. The discussion of *Oskorei* and the enigmatic connections that can be drawn between these mythic figures and modern black metal (1998:174) offers insights into how certain branches of Norwegian black metal perform specifically Nordic horror (rather than Satanism) as a means of inverting the symbolic power of Christian colonisation. Similarly, the discussion of Satanism (1998:194–199) reveals the complex and often fragmentary nature of black metal's engagement with transgressive ideologies. These sections, however, sit uncomfortably within the larger scope of *Lords of Chaos*, and their critical stance is largely effaced within the text at large.

Radical transgression, racism, and spectacular violence in black metal

Moynihan and Söderlind's obsession with tracking a fantastical mix of Satanism and fascism reflects a broader interest in spectacular transgression within literature on Norwegian black metal. Dyrendal notes that in the early 1990s Norwegian black metal was a scene of competition for extremes of transgressive capital (2008:77). Keith Kahn-Harris in *Extreme Metal* (2007) explores the Norwegian black metal scene as a site of competition over transgressive capital. Kahn-Harris observes that the Norwegian scene is marked by self-mythologising (2007:100) wherein scene members enthusiastically compete for transgressive subcultural capital. Kahn-Harris views Norwegian black metal's commitment to transgression as part a quest for infamy and subcultural capital (2007:127). He also notes that the misanthropy of black metal's Satanism is often extended into an elitism that holds modern society in contempt, and yearns for a Pagan past (2007:40). This interest in Pagan mythology can easily become an interest in racism and fascism (2007:41). Kahn-Harris claims that black metal in particular flirts with violent racism, but has 'resisted embracing outright fascism' (2004:95). This approach to performative racism should be considered in relation to Kahn-Harris' work on reflexive politics within the genre, where he claims that many allegedly racist artists simply perform narratives of violent colonialism, believing that such a message works with the powerful image they are attempting to project (2004:101; 2007:152). Such invocations of 'play' (Kahn-Harris, 2007:152) must address the material realities of violence and radical transgression within the Norwegian scene. In 'Extreme music for extreme people? Norwegian black metal and transcendent violence' (2013), Michelle Phillipov argues that crime and violence are central to the emergence of the black metal scene in Norway, where violent imagery was employed not simply as performative transgression, 'but as a serious attempt to construct music as a springboard from which violent actions could logically emerge' (2013:154). Phillipov cautions against dismissing black metal's commitment to violence as purely performative, but rather suggests that an understanding of Norwegian black metal requires a more nuanced approach to transgression and controversy and their centrality to extreme metal practice.

The value and importance placed on the radical transgression of the Norwegian black metal scene leads Phillipov to argue that 'violence is still an important part of what black metal means' (2013:164). Approaches to Norwegian metal as a site of transgression enable widespread discussions of spectacular racism as a function of such radical rebellion. Karl Beckwith in 'Black Metal is for White People' (2002) observes how the Nordic black metal scene drew on Nazi ideology to forge a connection between the ecological 'cleanliness' of Northern Europe and distinctive white identities (2002: para. 2). Whiteness is thus experienced as both a component of a return to an idyllic Nordic pastoral fantasy and as part of National Socialism's discourse of biological purity. Laura Wiebe-Taylor extends this idea in 'Nordic Nationalisms: Black Metal takes Norway's Everyday Racisms to the Extreme' (2010). For Wiebe-Taylor, Norwegian black metal represents an intersection between locality and genre (2010:161); the locality of the scene figures it as 'a national expression within a global metal underground' (2010:161). She therefore argues that Norwegian black metal's espousals of racism and ultranationalism cannot be understood independently of a larger geopolitical environment (2010:161), where national identity becomes valorised as whiteness. Both Beckwith and Wiebe-Taylor contend that Norwegian black metal's exclusionary whiteness also emerges musically. Black metal 'emphasises a kind of whiteness in musical terms' (Wiebe-Taylor, 2010:162) through eschewing 'African American influences' (Wiebe-Taylor, 2010:162); furthermore Beckwith claims that Norwegian scene members view the 'superiority' of the music as emerging from a racial purity lacking in non-white scenes (2002: para. 7). In tracking such constructions of whiteness, Wiebe-Taylor and Beckwith both suggest that corpse paint is a visual valorising of ultra-whiteness, with Wiebe-Taylor suggesting that the 'white face paint' of corpse paint may be read as marking the 'horror of whiteness' associated with 'whites' historical power to bring about others' deaths' (2010:162).

Elitism and anti-modernity

Kahn-Harris, Beckwith and Wiebe-Taylor's approaches to spectacular transgressive racism within Norwegian black metal look to anti-modernity as a key issue within the genre. Beckwith suggests that black metal's elitist racism has

given way to more 'egalitarian' (2002: para. 13) aesthetics that eschew the pastoral fixations of Nazism for an 'urban' mindset that focuses on a commonality of adversity for all people under modernity. Nonetheless, he notes that Norwegian black metal is yet to sever its links with fascism and its subsequent constructions of racial hierarchies and constructs of colour (2002: para. 13). Karl Spracklen also reflects on the correlation between black metal and anti-modernity in 'True Aryan Black Metal: The Meaning of Leisure, Belonging and the Construction of Whiteness in Black Metal Music' (2010). Spracklen argues that black metal's turn to Heathen, Pagan and Odinist imagery is situated within an anti-modern, anti-establishment, anti-Christian paradigm that speaks to fierce elitism and individualism (2010:86). Such anti-modern elitism is nonetheless framed through constructions of a Nordic, Aryan elite. Spracklen suggests that contemporary black metal has capitalised on the racist discourses of the early Norwegian scene, and thus views the scene as an affirmative site for whiteness and white identity (2010:81). Spracklen claims that black metal creates an 'imagined white community' (2010:81) that resists postmodernity, globalisation and consumption. This imagined community is further marked by a sense of hegemonic, heterosexual masculinity that decries homosexuality but actively affirms homosociality and a sense of 'male-separateness', through seeking to create spaces free of women (2010:84). Other work by Spracklen questions the very notion of 'masculinity' and its performative nature, particularly where black metal has responded to the 'crisis of masculinity' engendered by a modern plurality of masculine identities (Spracklen, 2010a:96). The expansion of the 'proto-superstate' (Wilson, 2010:153) and proliferation of a Hegelian superculture has forced a reordering of gender, wherein projections of white, Pagan, Nordic warriors struggle to maintain their dominance. Spracklen's work nonetheless suggests that such 'authenticity' is always fluid and negotiable.

These academic accounts of the central characteristics of metal in Norway—Norse fantasies, anti-globalisation, spectacular transgression and anti-modern elitism—have provided foundational insights into the entanglement of whiteness with Norway's metallic legacy. Nonetheless, the previous scholarly discussions of how Norwegianness is expressed in heavy metal are limited to black metal. Viking metal is largely exempt from these discussions, and its nationalism downplayed as

'camp' or romanticised symbolism. Where Vikings do emerge as an aspect of scholarly inquiry into heavy metal scenes and cultures, they have as yet been understood in ways that overlook the neo-nationalism of such imagery. Connections between heavy metal, Vikings, Norse themes and masculinity are explored by Florian Heesch (2010) and Imke von Helden (2010, 2010a). Florian Heesch in 'Metal for Nordic Men' analyses the strategies through which Norse myths are transformed into metal subjects, and points to the ideological implications—particularly in relation to gender and racist ideologies (2010:71–72)—that such transformations entail. However, he does this entirely with reference to Amon Amarth, a Swedish death metal act who famously draw from Viking iconography. Imke von Helden's 'Barbarians and Literature: Viking Metal and its links to Old Norse Mythology' (2010) notes that nationality and nationalism is deeply embedded in Viking metal, which adopts and reinterprets Old Norse sagas, texts, and assorted paraphernalia (2010:258). von Helden argues that Vikings are used to cultivate auras of strength and masculine barbarity, though there emerges a second approach which stresses historical accuracy and authenticity (2010:258). Both, he argues, emphasise personal and ethnic-ancestral connections to Vikings. Nonetheless, neither of these authors approach the exclusionary nationalist rhetoric invoked by appeals to Vikings as progenitors of a pure or originary Nordic identity. The lack of literature on the ways in which 'Viking' is given expression in a Norwegian context has allowed Viking metal's rhetoric to side-step the critical interrogation that has been afforded to Norwegian black metal. In response to this scholarly trend I argue that 'Viking' has been used as a foil for exclusionary Nordic whiteness. Viking metal hence extends the violent discriminatory rhetoric of black metal in less readily explicit ways, and thus couches valorisations of whiteness in appeals to heritage and Nordic ethnosymbolism.

Peripheral whiteness and isolation in the Norwegian national image

The remainder of this chapter addresses the ways in which the white discourse of heavy metal has been given expression in a Norwegian context, with reference to both black and Viking metal scenes. Having analysed the trajectory and common themes of the academic literature on Norwegian heavy metal, I argue

that the heavy focus on the earliest years of the black metal scene in Oslo, and its central members, has allowed displays of spectacular transgression and racism to be dismissed as isolated aberrances. Doing so ignores the wider culture of exclusionary whiteness that underpins Norwegian heavy metal, and furthermore removes the scene from the complex and problematic racial politics of Norwegian national conversation at large. Similarly, the overwhelming fixation on black metal—and a specific strain of black metal—as indicative of a Norwegian national metal culture has overlooked the recent centrality of the Viking and Pagan iconography to Nordic metal scenes. The proliferation of Vikings and Norse mythology within Norwegian metal cultures has been characterised as romanticised symbolism, to the end that such appeals to the ‘romantic’ obscure the significance of such figures to claims of authentic national belonging. The ‘authenticity’ of the Viking and Paganism to Norwegian nationhood hinges on a notion of originary whiteness. The material reality of such restrictive parameters of national ontology have thus been overlooked by accounts which view such invocations of the mythologised North as a celebration of a cultural rather than racial group (Weinstein, 2000:113).

The fascination with giving ‘roots’ to contemporary white identity eschews the troubling constructions of colour that emerge at such nexes of authenticity and purity, and their defence therein. Such defence has been mobilised through the construction of monstrous nationalism, where Norway and Norwegians are presented as isolated, tenacious and ominous. This is further affirmed through the representation of Nordic whiteness as pure and originary, wherein the fierce econationalism of the music and surrounding discourses valorise the Norwegian environment—and hence its ‘authentic’ people—as pristine and untainted by modernity. These claims to authenticity are further materialised through the Nordic ethnosymbolism implemented by Norwegian scene members, enabling metal music and cultures to become figured into these constructions of the ‘genuinely Norwegian’, as sounds and practices themselves become nationalised in ways that exclude and disparage non-Norwegian scenes and non-white scene members. Such tactics position metal as a specifically Norwegian response to

modernity; aggressively talking back to globalisation from a localised position in the global metal underground.

The success with which Norwegian black and Viking metal scenes have been able to capitalise on visions of themselves as social outcasts is indicative of the wider impetus for isolation and conservation that emerges within Norwegian nationalist rhetoric. Black metal fans and musicians value individualism and isolation as a key characteristic of scene identity (Hagen, 2011). Such a sense of remoteness cannot be conceived of without casting an eye to the cultural trope of isolation that emerges as a symbol of Norwegian identity. Reflecting on Edvard Grieg's invocation of the Norwegian landscape and national identity in his compositions, Grimley (2006) notes the centrality of the remote, natural world to Norwegian cultural and musical identity. The cultural tropes of Norwegianness emergent in music are supported by such appeals to a Nordic-exotic, an other-worldly and inaccessible nation on the Northern edge of the world. Such musical formations of Norwegian culture are embroiled within longer national trajectories of self-imposed ethnic Otherness. A sense of remoteness and inaccessibility serve as a symbol of a perceived Norwegian isolation (Grimley, 2006:2). This sense of Norway as a periphery has been informed by geographical isolation, situated on the very fringe of Europe, and a sense of political isolation resultant from its history as a subject of neighbouring Scandinavian countries. Having been a subject of the Danish crown for over four centuries, the drive for an independent Norwegian cultural and political identity became a form of resistance (Grimley, 2006:24).

The Norwegian landscape became increasingly celebrated as a site of cultural and ethnic difference or uniqueness, wherein various forms of environmental labour were relocated into discourses of eternal connection with the land, and hence used to affirm the continuity of Norwegian nationalist sentiment. Norwegian cultural identity in its contemporary forms thus has its ideological roots in nineteenth century discourses of self-determination. Norwegian 'folk' culture has thus been 'defined against a perception of mainstream continental European traditions' (Grimley, 2006:53). Norwegian cultural nationalism, with its invocations of Vikings, Pagan pasts and pastoral,

anti-modern ecological fantasies, enacts an imagined community. The association of Norwegianness with communities of shared language, history, music and customs enables a cultural nationalism which offers evidence of shared ethnic or cultural origins. The material implications of such assertions of commonality of ethnicity nonetheless reveal the violent modes of exclusionary sentiment that arise from such invocations of geographic, historic, cultural, and ergo racial, commonality.

Norwegian cultural nationalism relies upon a sense of difference, or even isolation, in order to support its definition of commonality (Grimley, 2006:53). Norway's 'carefully guarded, historic self-perception' (McIntosh, 2014:74) is that of a small country composed of unassuming rural communities isolated from each other by fjords and forests; both insiders and outsiders alike consider Norway and Norwegians to be 'at once primordially European and exotically homogenous' (McIntosh, 2014:71). The consequent constructions of race embedded within such perceptions of exotic homogeneity locate 'typical', 'ordinary' Norwegians within a framework of whiteness—'white majority Norwegian nationals' are increasingly referred to in media and public discourse as 'ethnic' Norwegians (McIntosh, 2014:76). The ethnicising of whiteness entwines race with nationalism. Furthermore, such ethnonationalist approaches to Norwegian identity activate a discourse of racialisation that conflates difference—'particularly dark skin colour' (McIntosh, 2014:76)—with 'immigrant' and 'whiteness' with 'belonging'. Situating the possibilities of Norwegian national belonging within the rhetoric of kinship and descent not only invokes the earlier cultural nationalism of the burgeoning Norwegian nation state, but is also tacitly rooted in the enduring forms of European racism which owe their legacies to white supremacist ideologies and colonial and imperial violence.

Modern Norway has never truly had widespread colonies of its own; it has, however, largely imbibed racist theories from colonial Europe. Representations of Norway as a peaceful and egalitarian nation sit uncomfortably with a history of Norwegian maritime involvement in the transatlantic slave trade⁶ and restrictive

⁶ The Kingdom of Denmark-Norway was involved in the North Atlantic slave trade for over 200 years. During the period of colonial expansion, Danish-Norwegian trade monopolies across the

migration policies⁷. This history is often overlooked within the dominant narratives of Norway as an international leader in human rights. Moreover, such a national self-image allows for understandings of Norway as unaffected by and isolated from the colonial and post-imperial histories of Northern Europe, and hence historically homogenous. Such assumptions of homogeneity thus have important material consequences for constructions of 'Otherness' in Norwegian national discourse. Disruptions to the 'blanket whiteness' of Norway are relatively recent (Salimi, 1991:111), though the injustice and discriminatory mechanisms that non-white individuals have been subjected to have a long history. Norway's nation-building process in the early twentieth century exposed long-held racist tendencies. The attempted assimilation and ethnic cleansing of the indigenous Sámi people, persecution of Jewish and Romani populations during the Second World War and more recent immigration bans and subsequent amendments have then acted as mediating instruments in controlling the 'colour' of the Norwegian population (c.f. Salimi, 1991; Gullestad, 2004) .

Such intensely biopolitical projects underpin the racial rhetoric manifest in contemporary Norwegian discourse, and moreover heavy metal scenes. Conceiving of Norwegians as essentially white affirms the exclusory parameters of Norway's cultural nationalism. The primary implication of Norway's attempts at whitewashing national history is a sense of 'general majority blindness' (Gullestad, 2004:177)—a willingness to ignore the effects of racialisation and discriminatory practices largely because such mechanisms are enacted upon bodies that are not represented within the dominant hegemonic order. Nonetheless, this notion of a general majority blindness does not necessitate a nation-wide refusal to engage with racialised discourses, nor does it negate the fact that a systematic language of

Gold Coast of Africa and the West Indies incurred the demand for an enslaved labour force. Slavery was outlawed by Denmark-Norway early in the nineteenth century, and the Kingdom's colonial outposts were eventually sold on to Great Britain (McIntosh, 2014:74-75).

⁷ The rebuilding efforts of the Marshall Plan brought Italian labourers into Norway, most of whom had left by the early 1960s (Salimi, 1991:112). For much of the post-war period, Norway's immigration policies were relatively relaxed. The discovery of oil in the North Sea announced a need for workers in not only the off-shore oil industry, but also the timber, steel and service industries. Many of these jobs were filled by migrants from developing nations. This liberal approach to immigration met its end in 1975 when the first immigration ban was introduced under the pretence of '[making] conditions better for those who had already arrived' (Salimi, 1991:112). The true function of such a ban was to maintain state control over the influx of labour from developing nations.

racial abuse is manifest across multiple strata of Norwegian society. Norway's 'national racism' (Salimi, 1991:111) may be blind to its implications, but is certainly not mute in its ideologies. The vocality of Nordic racialised discourse may appear in explicitly racist ways. Mayhem drummer Jan Axel Blomberg⁸ ('Hellhammer') demonstrates this in his brief declaration that '...we don't like black people here. Black metal is for white people' (in Moynihan & Söderlind, 1998:305). However, such appeals to the sanctity of whiteness also emerge through hostility towards racial 'Others' to Norwegian daily life and culture. The 'new racism' of the modern European nation-state, Gullestad argues, is one that moves away from an understanding of racism as an unequivocal expression of hatred (2004:179) and instead looks toward notions of culture—of 'them' not being like 'us', of 'them' not respecting the same values and practices that 'we' do, and thus rendering these differences irreconcilable. The danger of such an approach, as McIntosh has argued, is an amnesia that allows horrific violence (such as the white nationalist Anders Breivik's 2011 massacre of seventy-seven people) to be treated as an aberrance rather than reflective of underlying racial tensions within Norway (2014:71).

Such narratives of Norwegian cultural hegemony disguise the rhetorical contrivances that cloak the working of racist ideology (McIntosh, 2014:71). Much of Norway's nation-building project is thus bound up with attempts to hone a distinct national character, erasing an indigenous, pre-Nordic past and constructing a sense of 'Norwegianness' that is readily discernible from their European and Scandinavian neighbours. Moral panics surrounding the 'loss' of a national character are not unique to Norway. Interrogating the means through which Norwegian political and social discourse has mobilised concern over the continual expansion of the European Union and the alleged threat of a homogenised European nation state demonstrates the rhetorical power of 'endangered' whiteness. While it is a member of the European Economic Area, Norway is not a member of the European Union. This factor, coupled with its

⁸ This statement by Blomberg/Hellhammer, while significant in itself, is given further complexity by a popular rumour within the scene of his half-Moroccan heritage. Some scene members have hence used his reportedly biracial status to dismiss his claims to Norwegianness—'I hate to break to it to you, but Hellhammer is part Moroccan Negroid [...] or something not white' (Werewolfblood, 14.2.2011).

geographic location on the very edge of 'Western' Europe, has led to the proliferation of a particular Nordic nationalism, which seeks to differentiate itself from a broadly 'European' identity while asserting the sovereignty of Norwegian whiteness.

Politics of monstrosity, transgression and counter-colonialism

The white ethnonationalist discourse of Norway's heavy metal scenes must be situated within the Norwegian political and social context from which they emerged. The nationalism of Norwegian heavy metal's self-imaginings stems from concern over an increasingly heterogeneous population, a history of Nazi occupation, pressure to join the European Union and, crucially, a tradition of cultural nationalism relying on the construction of a homogenised Nordic heritage (Wiebe-Taylor, 2010:162). It is within this environment that the Norwegian black metal scene, and later the Viking metal scene, emerged as the products of young white men expressing their contempt for modern weakness and liberalism, while attempting to reclaim Norway's pre-Christian, Viking history and to re-establish an imagined white, warrior past. Such a yearning for this mythologised past entails within it a misanthropic and self-conscious elitism based on contempt for the assumed 'weakness' of most humans (Kahn-Harris, 2007:40). The elitism that accompanies a longing for a Pagan past is bolstered by constructions of Pagan society as lacking the 'weakness' that characterises contemporary society (Kahn-Harris, 2007:40). Invocations of the Vikings and mourning the arrival of Christianity to Norway in the Middle Ages are however also underpinned by a fierce sense of victimhood and defiance—Scandinavian metal bands 'almost [claim] themselves to be colonised people' (Kahn-Harris, 2007:40). This is commensurate with McIntosh's observation that Norwegians' history, particularly in relation to that of their Swedish and Danish counterparts, is often framed in a coloniser/colonised dichotomy (2014:75). Norway's position as a subject under Danish rule allows Norway to be depicted in a subordinate relationship to Denmark, and thus a forced accomplice in histories of slavery and violence. Such contemporary articulations of Norwegian innocence allow the nation to be isolated from the crimes and legacies of colonialism; moreover, this imagining of

Norway as a forced subject allows Norwegians to talk about their past 'in almost postcolonial terms' (McIntosh, 2014:75).

Situating Norwegians as 'colonised' people allows for a complex appropriation of the discourses through which imperial subjects have been able to articulate their oppression. Within metal scenes, this claim of Norwegian repression and victimhood allows for a defensive nationalism that cloaks—often ineffectively—the valorisation of whiteness whilst evading charges of racism. Claims to Norwegian 'victimhood' largely stem from a feeling of an illustrious Viking and Pagan heritage curtailed by Christian intervention. Norway's black and Viking metal scenes exhibit a strong sense of victimisation and repression, often accompanied by a narrative of resistance and struggle. These feelings are largely linked to gender, where Nordic identity is envisioned as being 'emasculated'. The Nordic man within Norse mythology prizes 'manliness' above all else (Lönnroth, 2009:54). Colonialism is explicitly implicated here—the dichotomy that announces the 'manliness' of the Nordic man also heralds the humiliation of the feminised 'Other', positioning the defeated man—and defeated land—as womanly and thus ready to be sodomised and disgraced (Lönnroth, 2009:54).

Norwegian scenes, with their extensive focus on Nordic masculinities, thus perceive Norway to be a victim of imperialism and colonial expansion whilst erasing its compliance in the illegality and violent sovereignty of high colonialism. Gender is embroiled within such narratives, where Westernised globalisation is cast as a totalising and oppressive practice that destabilises the power of the hypermasculine figure within its 'local' environment. Colonialism itself often confronted 'local patriarchies with colonising patriarchies, producing a turbulent and sometimes very violent aftermath' (Connell, 2005:1804). This juncture between local patriarchies and colonising patriarchies is a central focus of Norwegian heavy metal's invocation of the colonial and subsequent constructions of whiteness. The 'violent aftermath' that Connell alludes to is a vital theme within segments of Norwegian metal scenes, where violence becomes a key means through which to assert the dominance of the hypermasculine figure and, in turn, the symbolic power of whiteness. This is obvious within the black metal scene in its most notorious years. The involvement of black metal scene members in the

arson of over fifty historic churches in Norway between 1992 and 1996, widespread use of corpse paint and multiple accounts of grave desecration and iconoclastic vandalism have been oft-dismissed as manifestations of black metal Satanism and desire for spectacular transgression (Moynihan & Söderlind 1998; Kahn-Harris 2007). 'Church burning' is the unfortunate topos of popular discourse surrounding black metal; such characterisations further entrench black metal scenes within the parameters of purely reactive, anti-Christian Satanism. Such Satanism, Dyrendal suggests, tends to coincide with 'adolescent Satanism' (2008:74)—that is, simplified devil-worship or 'pseudo-Satanism' (Dyrendal, 2008:74). As such, while it is exceedingly easy to locate the arson of Christian churches within this reactive 'pseudo-Satanism', I instead argue that it is much more productive to situate these events and their broader iconography within the post- and counter-colonial narratives that inform much black metal rhetoric, and Norwegian nationalist rhetoric. This is not to do away altogether with the Satanic as a framework for conceptual analysis, but rather to interrogate how the invocation of anti-Christian aggression operates within the construction of a defensive, reactive nationalism realised through displays of monstrosity, and monstrous whiteness.

The construction of Norway as violent and reactionary indicates the ease with which scene members have been able to reconfigure the colonised/coloniser binary in order to present 'Norwegianness' as a site of anticolonial resistance and horror. Horrifying practices in cultural contexts cement the irreconcilable inimicality of the ingroup, the 'us' that may lay claim to a nation and its contents, and concurrently the 'them' that may never comfortably or safely belong. This, I argue, is the element that informs violent and unsettling forms of white nationalist discontent which characterise the monstrous nationalism of Norwegian black and Viking metal scenes. I name this phenomenon monstrous nationalism in reference to the complex intertwining of the main theoretical canons from which the term 'monster' emerges, namely those of Michel Foucault ([1974–1975]2003) and Frantz Fanon ([1961]1967). Fanon's monster was one enabled by the debilitating violence of colonial language, where the zoological discourse of the colonised/savage binary created a territory of non-human animals and monsters

(1967:32). For Fanon, the inhuman figure created by colonisation was monstrous precisely because such a categorisation represented an absolute alterity that would justify the violence of the colonial mission. Comparatively, Foucault's monster was that which emerged from the domain of the 'abnormal' (2003:55). The monster is a breach of the law that automatically stands outside it; it is the spontaneous, brutal, and consequently natural form of the unnatural (Foucault, 2003:56). The monstrous nationalism of Norwegian black and Viking metal, I suggest, emerges from the common immorality and unlawfulness of the monster. However, I also maintain that the ways in which monstrous nationalism, and monstrous whiteness, are given expression within this Norwegian context force a recalibration of the ideas of otherness and abnormality embedded within postcolonial discourse. The 'monstrosity' of Norway performed within metal scenes plays upon the brutal/(un)natural relationship that Foucault explores, whilst actively reconfiguring Fanon's civilised/savage binary in order to mark difference between self and other, and hence undermine colonising, modernising and globalising projects.

Coalitions of monstrosity and colonial victimhood play out in obvious ways in the black metal scene. The earliest transgressions of Norwegian black metal scene members were born from an existing sense of disenfranchisement. A very early promotional photo shoot for Mayhem, for example, shows the band posing in front of a barn (and popular rehearsal spot) bearing the graffitied phrase '*Ingenting for Norge*'⁹ ('Nothing for Norway', see figure 1.0, ca.1986). The subsequent influence of Mayhem over the development of the black metal scene in Oslo, and later Norway as a whole, must be mapped with this foundational ideology in mind. Formed in 1984, Mayhem were pioneers of the Norwegian scene. The band gained further notoriety when vocalist Dead (Per Yngve Ohlin) committed suicide in 1991, followed by the murder in 1993 of guitarist and scene stalwart Euronymous (Øystein Aarseth) by former friend and fellow scene member Varg Vikernes. Vikernes believed that Aarseth's death was well-deserved; 'He was a parasite.... Also he was half-Lappish, a Sámi, so that was a bonus' (in

⁹ *Ingenting for Norge* is also the title given to a highly sought-after punk/hardcore EP released in 1982 featuring underground Scandinavian bands. This compilation was presumably an influence both musically and thematically on the burgeoning black metal scene, particularly in its invocations of Norwegian cultural life and its presumed loss.

Moynihan & Söderlind, 1998:125). Vikernes' casual invocation of racial difference between 'Norwegian' and 'Lappish'—and the sublimation that such a statement entails—suggests that the crusade is not necessarily the defence of a white population; but the valorisation of a whiteness that is explicitly Norwegian. The violent colonisation of the indigenous Lappish, or Sámi, people of the North further complicates the illusory victimhood of Norwegian nationalism. Under the state policy of *fornorsking* ('Norwegianisation'), Sámi religion, language and land rights have been repressed in the quest to strengthen Norway's modern national identity, a pursuit which has ultimately revealed troubling discourses concerning who may be regarded as authentically Norwegian. Norway's role in such violent assimilatory history is erased within a wider attempt to situate 'Norwegianness' as external to, and moreover victims of, colonial expansion. 'Nothing for the Norwegians' can then be analysed as a starting point for revealing how black metal has played upon notions of repression and violent resistance. The discursive disenfranchisement of 'true' Norwegians thus informs much of the retaliatory transgression of the Norwegian scene, and moreover the complex dual trajectory of invader/invaded through which Norwegian whiteness has been given form.

The monstrous nationalism of Norwegian black and Viking metal depends not only upon a divide between an originary Norwegian whiteness and imperialist forces, but also mobilising such a divide through violence and terror. Norwegian black metal has drawn extensively on what Koselleck has identified as the 'semantics of opposition' (1985:159), which have been given form in confronting and aggressive ways. Historically, heavy metal has engaged extensively with horror and invocations of monstrosity; heavy metal has long found distinction in scandalous transgression. This was a key feature of Walser's study of heavy metal, wherein he proposed alternative explanations of the significance of mysticism, horror, and violence in heavy metal, countering arguments that the genre represented unfounded and unprecedented subversion. Walser instead locates the transgression of heavy metal within much broader—and far older—accounts of the aesthetic category of the sublime (1993:160). The lyrical and musical violence of heavy metal, and Norwegian black metal, is not a new phenomenon—an unforeseen 'wrong mode', causing madness and death (Walser, 1993:137). Rather,

I argue that Norwegian black metal is not an aberration, but the continuation (albeit one of unprecedented material violence) of a long history of mysticism, horror and violence within musical cultures.

Norwegian black metal scene members have been able to give 'horror' materialisation in a specifically nationalist context. Metal's passion for transgression emerges from a longer cultural fascination with the sublime and occult (Walser, 1993:160); engagement with violence and the 'unknown' has thus become a key element of subcultural capital (Kahn-Harris, 2007:127). The global metal scene has intertwined transgression into music and cultures in ways that celebrate such points of distinction, as Weinstein's characterisation of metal scene members as 'proud pariahs' (2000:93) indicates. The terror and transgression of heavy metal itself has thus long played on ideas of horror and the monstrous. The alignment with that which is 'other'—'the dark side of the daylight, enlightened adult world' (Walser, 1993:162)—offers fans and musicians a means through which to make sense of and compensate for their own position in society. Removing black metal's displays of transgression from accounts of performative horror or deviant mysticism allows it to be relocated within the wider intersections of nation, race and gender that metal scenes traverse. Horrifying practices in nationalising contexts cement the irreconcilable inimicality of the ingroup, the 'us' that may lay claim to a nation and its contents, and the outgroup, the 'them' that may never comfortably or safely belong. This, I argue, is the element that informs violent and unsettling forms of white, nationalist discontent which characterise the monstrous nationalism of Norwegian black and Viking metal scenes.

Allowing Norway to occupy the 'colonised' position of the binary logic of colonialism hence enables the procession of confronting and aggressive counter-colonial tactics. Having identified a cultural activity that would terrify colonisers, this behaviour was subsequently paraded with vigour by a community desiring the recovery of a pre-Christian Nordic identity. Given the centrality of horror to counter-colonial resistance, I propose a re-reading of the centrality of church arson to Norwegian black metal in particular as not wholly bound up in a vacuum of isolated Satanic transgression, but rather an extension of monstrous neotradition. That the individuals involved in the church arsons were referred to

as 'Neo-Vikings' (Steinke, 1996:62) was likely a source of pride within certain segments of the metal community. Norwegian scenes continue to propagate a vision of Viking savagery not strictly based in historical fact, but rather historical tradition in which the Vikings, as romantic warriors from the North, were painted as fearsome and ruthless Others. I am aware of the perils that emerge in overemphasising the role of arson in the popular image of Norwegian black metal; rather than isolating it to a select group of scene members in the early years of the 1990s, however, I postulate that such actions can be situated within a much longer history. The burning of churches is not a new trend, nor is it an activity that took place exclusively amongst Northern Europeans. The iconoclastic act of arson occurred throughout pre-Viking Western Europe. Nevertheless, I would argue that a historical trope that links arson and destruction of religious structures with Vikings (as explored by Vestel, 1999; Trafford & Pluskowski, 2007) plays a significant role in the neotraditions celebrated and performed specifically within Norwegian black metal.

Common narratives of the terror of the Vikings often hinge on the ransacking and arson of Christian, religious structures, and the depiction of Vikings themselves as violent Heathens (c.f. Ferguson, 2009). The manner in which church burning as a phenomenon has been adapted and interpreted by modern audiences extends such mythologised histories into heavy metal scenes. The image of the burning church, particularly within Norwegian black metal, hence takes on a counter-colonial, anti-modern significance. The commonplace invocation of such imagery—Burzum's *Aske* (1993), for example, features on its cover a photograph of the remains of Fantoft Stave Church after its arson—further entrenches its iconography within the scene. Although appeals to Satanism cannot be overlooked here, I locate this expression of the Satanic within Norwegian metal's response to globalatinization. Globalatinization, for Derrida, refers to the 'strange alliance of Christianity [with] teletechnoscientific capitalism' which is seen to justify and inform the hyper-imperialist modality with which Western ideology imposes itself on global political rhetoric (Derrida, 2002:52, 66–7; see also Wilson, 2010:153). This conflict becomes articulated within metal scenes and practices that appeal to anti-Christian or pre-Christian mythology and symbolism.

How such tensions become entrenched in constructions of race and Otherness then demonstrate the ways in which the desire for ethnic difference and distinction takes a more sinister path towards monstrosity.

The violent monstrosity of Norwegian black metal therefore has greater ethnonational significance than current scholarly appraisals would allow. As such, where Wilson claims that ‘the diabolical negativity of metal’s satanic momentum... prevents it from coalescing into any reactionary ethnic or nationalist project’ (2010:156), I argue that within the Norwegian scenes ‘Satanism’ emerges as a commitment to wider metallic transgression, yet also girds the ethnonationalist project of monstrous nationalism, and furthermore monstrous whiteness, that emerges within scenes. Moreover, I extend such an approach to the corpse paint endemic to Norwegian black metal. Corpse paint refers to the black and white makeup particularly popular in the genre’s earlier years; the practice of painting the face white with black rings around the eyes and mouth works to ‘create a sense of the inhuman’ (Kahn-Harris, 2007:38). The suggestion of corpse paint as a literal representation of whiteness (Beckwith, 2002; Wiebe-Taylor, 2010) is an interpretation that obscures a more complex set of cultural practices. Daniel offers further criticism of this approach, arguing that corpse paint’s origins lie not in Northern Europe, but Brazil¹⁰ (2014:40). Corpse paint may have been necessary for bands to make themselves appear ghoulish or vampiric (and hence literally white), but, as Daniel argues, its ‘ultimate horizons gestures beyond racial legibility towards the species-being based project of turning the human face—any human face—into a skull’ (2014:41). The act of painting the face whiter-than-white could then be seen to draw attention to the insufficiency of biological whiteness (Daniel, 2014:41). Whilst both Wiebe-Taylor and Beckwith’s literal association of corpse paint with whiteness necessitate further critique, I nevertheless suggest that the subcultural capital of the corpse paint face can be interpellated into a discussion of Norwegian ethnonational whiteness. It is not as simple as situating corpse paint’s whiteness as ‘emphasising the idea of white being an ‘ideal’’ (Beckwith, 2002: para. 9), but rather locating its significance within various intersections of locality, scene capital and the aesthetics of horror.

¹⁰ Brazilian act Sarcófago are often cited as progenitors of the corpse paint style specific to black metal, as exemplified on the cover of their album *I.N.R.I* (1987).

The signifier of corpse paint can be drawn into the broader whitening impetus of Norwegian metal through analysing such displays with reference to the framework of monstrous nationalism. Correlations between the inhuman and the Satanic have a nationalist significance. Corpse paint, alongside the heavy black clothing, armour, bullet belts and swords often worn by musicians and fans (Kahn-Harris, 2007:38) becomes a means through which monstrous nationalist masculinity comes to adorn the body. The 'look' of black metal furthermore serves a community purpose beyond scenic aesthetics and subcultural capital. Beyond the literal whiteness of scholarly approaches to corpse paint, a more convincing argument for the significance of the act can be made with an extension upon the arguments proffered in Wilson's (2010) discussion of 'masking' in Northern European metal scenes at large. The black and white corpse paint ubiquitous to the genre is a deliberate display of monstrosity—an 'expression of our inner demons', as Immortal's Abbath Doom Occulta has claimed (in Davisson, 2010:181). Acts of masking, for Wilson, can be read as a performance of the concerns of specific communities, who 'want the mask, rather than the man' (2010:152). The masked figure transgresses the individual body and instead becomes the locus of communal desires and communicative action. Within black metal, nationalism and the refusal to submit to global powers become visually figured in the Satanic monstrosity of the corpse-paint mask. Corpse paint is a marker of something transgressive and unknowable, linking in with visions of an terrifying and monstrous nation, wherein social interaction is based on 'perpetual strife and mutual hate' (Wiebe-Taylor, 2010:162).

The monstrosity endemic to corpse paint, alongside church arson and other instances of Norwegian black metal's anti-Christian ethos, operates a marker of the transgressive and unknowable, products of an 'atavistic and ruthless' (Wiebe-Taylor, 2010:162) nation. The expediency with which Norwegian black metal has promoted an image of Norwegians as colonised people has affected an appropriation of colonial discourses of the civilised/savage binary. Notions of the 'monstrous' emerge throughout postcolonial literature as a key aspect through which colonisers were able to construct ontological difference. The monster within Frantz Fanon's work was one enabled by the debilitating violence of

colonial language (1967:32). The inhuman figure created by colonisation was monstrous precisely because such a categorisation represented an absolute alterity that would justify the violence of colonialism. Norwegian black metal has played upon such constructions of difference precisely through mobilising such monstrous figures as a strategy of colonial inversion¹¹. A reversal of the coloniser's monopoly on violence underpins the phantasmic nihilism visited by Norway's 'Neo-Vikings' (Steinke, 1996:62). The monstrous nationalism of Norwegian black and Viking metal emerges from imaginings of the immorality and unlawfulness of the monster, but also necessitates a reimagining of the ideas of otherness and abnormality embedded within Fanon's, and later Foucault's ([1974–1975]2003), explorations of the term. The 'monstrosity' of Norway performed within metal scenes deliberately invokes monstrous brutality and otherworldliness (Foucault, 2003:56). This is evident in the explicit violence of church arson, murder and grave desecration. However, I contend that the monstrous is extended into the instrumental hegemony of Norwegianness, and the maintenance of such an identity. Norwegian black metal redresses Fanon's civilised/savage binary (1967:132) to affirm the positions of self and other, and use the monster as a site of combative violence against colonising, modernising and globalising projects. Such monstrosity is rendered further problematic when it redirects anti-Christian aggression into contempt for modern multiculturalism and, in turn, racist and xenophobic violence.

Reactions to church arson from within the scene point to the ways in which such practices become bound up in racist violence. Samoth of Emperor views his involvement in arson as 'an extreme act towards the church and society' but one which was ultimately futile (in Moynihan & Söderlind, 1998:100); Hellhammer argues that he was 'against the burning of the Norwegian churches': 'Why not burn up a Mosque, the foreign churches from the Hindu and Islamic jerks—why not take those out instead of setting first to some very old Norwegian artworks? They could have taken Mosques instead, with plenty of people in them!' (in Moynihan & Söderlind, 1998:102). The Norwegian arsons are symptoms of a deep-seated

¹¹ Inversion, in postcolonial theory, refers to the strategy through which a dominant discourse is opposed or resisted by re-enacting asymmetrical relations and, crucially, inverting the balance of power. Such a strategy has been a popular theme in anti- and postcolonial writing (see Thomas, 1992; Guha, 1999).

religious struggle that manifest in these symbolic acts of terror; their iconography has also been used to redirect a Pagan/Christian binary into a wider dichotomy of whiteness and Otherness. The connection between Paganism and racism is an effect of the history of globalatinization itself (Wilson, 2010:153). The correlation between Paganism and horror affirms claims to ethnic Norwegian whiteness. What Moynihan and Söderlind refer to as 'native' folklore and tradition (1998:175) is viewed as a source of inspiration for bands, where such practices signify 'vital allegories which represent primal energies within man', 'a resurrection of primordial forces' (Moynihan & Söderlind, 1998:175, 176).

Both black metal and Viking metal have drawn heavily from Norwegian folklore as a means of forging connections between the music and Nordic cultural heritage. The correlation between modern metal culture (and, crucially, masculinity) and the older folk practices of Germanic people attempts to make such connections seem organic and ancestral, yet nonetheless capitalises upon the invented nature of such traditions. Kadmon's (1995) investigation of the *Oskorei* (the Norse name for the Wild Hunt, the ancient folkloric death cult who ride across the night sky) made comparisons between older Northern European traditions of folkloric haunting and traits distinct to modern black metal: noise, face painting, ghoulish appearances, the adoption of pseudonyms, high-pitched singing and even arson. Kadmon however neglects how such practices are themselves traditions constructed to serve a nationalist purpose¹². Such invocations of the 'dark sides' of Norwegian folklore (Lancelot in Moynihan & Söderlind, 1998:175) are not an ends in themselves but rather, as Erik Lancelot of Ulver claims, 'a manner to symbolise our own thoughts with pictures close to our own traditions' (in Moynihan & Söderlind, 1998:175). Emphasising a connection between the modern self and Pagan past through such transgression is further drawn upon in Moynihan and Söderlind's invocation of a 'resurgent atavism' (1998:169). Such atavism is very much an ethnonationalist project; appeals to a collective Norwegian unconscious (mobilised in Moynihan and Söderlind's work through the Jungian Wotan¹³

¹² The Oskorei, in their material manifestation, were reenactments of the Wild Hunt performed by young Norwegian men who would ride through the countryside in winter, punishing those who violated rural traditions by playing pranks and causing mischief (Hagen, 2011:191)

¹³ In his 1936 essay 'Wotan', Jung explained such resurgent cultural archetypes in Germanic and Scandinavian nations in terms of 'primordial images', which are manifest in the inherited powers

archetype) does the double work of romanticising the past whilst also affixing a primordial originality to Norwegian whiteness.

Viking whiteness in the social and genetic imaginary

Analysing the means through which horror and the monstrous give form to Norwegian whiteness thus indicates that Norway's metal scenes—and black metal in particular—are entrenched in more complex racial and colonial rhetoric than current academic approaches would suggest. Drawing black metal's transgression out of the vacuum of 'Satanism' and instead situating such practices within the wider context of Norwegian nationalist history demonstrates how metal articulates the 'pleasures, desires and discontents of numerous people across Europe [in] the face of the expansion of the EU and its borderlands' (Wilson, 2010:153). It is precisely the initial Satanic, anti-Christian position that 'gives way to the procession of Pagan simulacra that announces Viking metal, battle metal, folk metal and so on' (Wilson, 2010:156). This entwining of anti-Christianity and Paganism announces the complex double logic of Norway as both invaded and heroic invaders. Celebrations of the 'terror' of the Norsemen have thus enabled the recalibration of the colonised/coloniser binary as black metal enacts boastful narratives of Viking invasion. This ongoing reproduction of the North as a 'home of barbarian liberty' (Trafford & Pluskowski, 2007:57) is materialised through the commonplace use of the Viking and tales of Nordic glory within wider social contexts. The cultural figure of the Viking has a gendered and racial value that extends beyond music scenes, and beyond Norway. The proceeding investigations of white nationalism within South African and Australian metal scenes reveal the ubiquity of the Viking and Norse imagery within the ethnosymbolism of heavy metal scenes. Such imagery establishes the conditions for a transnational, transhistorical whiteness. The Viking narrative's ability to circulate globally invests these figures with a capacity to reach out across the ideological networks of white kinship. Viking thus has symbolic power for 'whiteness' as an ontological category that exceeds Norwegian, and indeed Scandinavian contexts. Cohen

of human imagination—'the firmly established primordial types or images [are] innate in the unconscious of many races and exercise a direct influence upon them. Because the behaviour of a race takes on its specific character from its underlying images, we can speak of an archetype 'Wotan'. As an autonomous psychic factor, Wotan produces effects in the collective life of a people and thereby reveals his own nature' (Jung, [1936]2014:187).

comments on this, noting that ‘Viking’ becomes articulated alongside racial myths of national origins (1999:268). White people outside Scandinavia are able to mobilise sentiments of ethnic blood through Viking genealogy narratives that are immediately local, yet also tied to a romantic notion of ancient, transnational whiteness—a mythical bloodline that leads straight to an ancient underworld and purified sense of origins.

The cultural image of the Viking is thus invested with transnational, transhistorical meaning that ties such figures to a romantic genealogy of whiteness. I argue that within the context of Viking metal, ‘Viking’ is given specifically Norwegian national value, yet also caters to a global imaginary. This dual trajectory of ancient whiteness is exemplified through instances within the scene. Both Helheim and Enslaved have developed musical and visual identities based on images of Viking warriors—both bands’ promotional photographs frequently feature long-haired band members dressed in chain mail, drinking mead in dark forests and log cabins adorned with Norse runes. Such depictions emerge in line with commonplace understandings of Viking imagery (Trafford & Pluskowski, 2007:61). Nonetheless, the invocation of the Viking within Norwegian contexts also serves distinctly national purposes. Bands situate Vikings as proud Norsemen, isolated from European (and indeed global) Others and defending their homelands against invasion. Darkthrone’s ‘The Pagan Winter’ (*A Blaze in the Northern Sky*, 1992) gloats of a Pagan winter and the coming of a new age from which ‘Sextons hide in fear’. Enslaved’s ‘Slaget I Skogen Bortenfor’ (*Hordanes Land*, 1993) similarly flaunts an illustrious Viking age curtailed by treachery—‘Proud men with no fear/Strokes from the sword crushed the skull of the Christian/A long time we ruled, Kings of the North [...] but, betrayed by our own brothers/We were forced down on our knees’.

Mourning for a Pagan past and premonitory visions of a resurgent age of Nordic glory, when considered alongside the spectacular transgressions of the early black metal scene in particular, exemplify how Norwegian metal has articulated the nexus of nationalism and whiteness in its monstrous forms. The alleged ‘failure’ of the nation state in the face of global capitalism exacerbates the ‘monstrous’ forms of discontent such as the burning of churches (Wilson,

2010:153). That the black metal scene has borne the brunt of such analyses, however, has allowed this particular segment of Norway's metal communities to be isolated from the broader national scene within metal scholarship, and racism positioned as endemic only to the earliest and most notorious years of the scene. The contextual and temporal confinement of Norwegian black metal then allows the subgenres that have spawned from it to have their nationalism romanticised in ways that overlook their exclusionary racial connotations. The more recent popularity of Viking metal (c.f. Spracklen, 2015:1) must not obscure the subgenre's connections to the black metal scene. Viking metal does not represent a total departure from black metal, I contend, but rather operates as an extenuation of its nationalistic elements in less readily horrifying, but nonetheless complex and exclusionary forms.

The coupling of national and cultural identities with racialised mythologies is the dominant characteristic of Norwegian black metal. The implications of this combination for the analysis and critique of Viking metal in a Norwegian context thus necessitate an understanding of the ways in which the romanticising of Viking culture and symbolism at large have obscured more complex constructions of race and essentialist understandings of Nordic ethnicity. Vikings, as previously stated, are not an anomaly within heavy metal and rock music at large. The 'familiar Viking behaviours' of seaborne voyaging, violence and exploration have been a common feature of proto-heavy metal acts such as Led Zeppelin, who 'conjure an air of romance and adventure—albeit tinged with menace— through striking allusions to [Viking] characteristic[s]' (Trafford & Pluskowski, 2007:60). The development of the Viking into a staple figure of heavy metal has been underpinned by such romanticised and ahistorical constructions. This interest in the Vikings has been largely aesthetic—the use of popular Viking iconography has stressed danger and chaos rather than locating such archetypes within a historical context. Equally, little attempt was made by bands utilising Viking imagery to capture a readily discernible Viking sound.

These nostalgic, ahistorical appropriations of Vikings present such archetypes as media for transmitting narratives of masculinity, freedom, adventure and chaos. Popular imagery of Vikings as rough and ready explorers,

gathering for the masculine pursuits of eating, drinking and fornicating following high-spirited raids, has in turn meant that metal bands that utilise such representations are often not taken seriously within the wider black metal and overarching extreme metal scene. The popular association of Vikings with folk metal (Trafford & Pluskowski, 2007; Hoad, 2013) has enabled such figures to be dismissed as pure performative play, or camp romanticism, ostensibly far-removed from the monstrosity of black metal. As Spracklen has argued, black metal fans ridicule folk metal bands for being too mainstream and populist, 'constructing fantasies of drinking and fighting that have no authentic connection to Vikings' (2015:1). To repudiate such metal scenes as jovial, boisterous fantasy sites is, however, to overlook the material realities of their exclusionary white primordial imaginings. Such metal scenes, and their appeals to ethnosymbolic patriarchs, remain central to the ongoing construction of heavy metal as a site that invisibilises the instrumentality of patriarchal whiteness; albeit, as Spracklen argues, precisely through hiding such whiteness in plain sight (2015:1).

I am then specifically concerned with how such simultaneously whimsical and violent characterisations of Vikings have enabled the procession of an 'originary' Norwegian identity that hinges on, yet obscures, its own whiteness. Viking metal, Walsh has argued, uses national Viking histories and sagas as lyrical inspiration, where nostalgic reimaginings of the past are used to 'make commentaries on modern society and hopes for the future' (2013:4). Such nostalgic reimaginings are implicated within the broader images of Vikings established in popular consciousness. Certainly, what is important about the presence of the Vikings in heavy metal is what they represent in popular cultural terms (Trafford & Pluskowski, 2007:61). The image of the Viking that exists in popular consciousness is hypermasculine—a Nordic man who ascribes 'manliness' with the highest value (Lönnroth, 2009:54), is untempered by fear or empathy, and instead focuses on the goal of violent domination. In response to this, it is significant to note the role and presence of women within Viking metal. The subculture may be largely patriarchal in its structure, but it does not necessarily follow that women are totally cowed by masculine domination of the scene. Folk metal has generally provided a more welcoming space for (white) women than

other heavy metal subgenres (Neilson, 2015:139). In mapping the gender dynamics of Norwegian Viking metal, the pronounced role of women within the scene becomes apparent. Women have featured as both vocalists and musicians within Norwegian Viking metal bands (c.f. Storm and Ásmegin). Similarly, female fans form a noticeable component of the audience for Viking metal. I proffer that the relatively pronounced presence of women within such sub-genres is what has enabled the devaluation and dismissal of Viking, Folk and Pagan metal amongst black metal fans who prize masculinist authenticity and eschew the melody and upbeat tempos of Viking metal and its associated subgenres. To dismiss Viking metal as 'feminised' is to further obscure the genre's material reality as a site of exclusory whiteness. Investigating how Viking metal asserts its masculinity, and hence reminds white men of their cultural birthrights, demonstrates how Vikings become carriers of hegemonic myths of ancient whiteness, and originary purity.

Depictions of the Vikings have represented such figures as masculine, brave, adventurous, strong, and, importantly, nearly universally white. The white hypermasculinity of the Vikings is central for mapping not only representations of gender within the Norwegian scene, as previously discussed, but also how such discursive figures work to reinscribe notions of racial difference. Norwegian Viking metal bands have drawn on the central diagnostic symbols of the Viking in very explicit ways—the cover of Enslaved's *Eld* (1997) depicts vocalist Grutle Kjellson in the regalia of a Viking chief replete with Thor's hammer and accompanied by the band logo, itself reminiscent of the zoomorphic wood carvings often represented in popular Nordic iconography. This imagery does the double work of giving both nationalist and masculinist value to the music—Kjellson's throne is decorated with dragon-headed posts identical to those found in the Gokstad Viking ship burial, a site of enormous archaeological and cultural significance to Norway. The importance of Gokstad's ethnosymbolism is again affirmed through Einherjer's *Dragons of the North* (1996), the cover of which features the dragon's head post recovered with the Gokstad ship. These direct references to distinctly Norwegian Viking themes are however girded by more tacit, yet equally complex constructions of raciality and ethnicity. Viking metal, as I have argued, has been oft characterised within the same academic and popular

discourses that position the figure of the Viking as camp, performative play. In framing the (re)presentation of Vikings as nostalgia—good-natured folkloric figures—the more troubling colonialist rhetoric within which Vikings are entangled is concealed. Furthermore, visions of Vikings as romantic vestiges of the past ignore the very tangible material and symbolic power that the Viking continues to enact upon Nordic constructions of colour.

The iconographic blueprint for ‘thoughtful explorations of ancient Viking heathenism’ (Moynihan & Söderlind, 1998:22) within Viking metal is predicated upon symbolic references to the Vikings already established in popular consciousness. The appearance of longboats, swords, shields and chainmail in album covers and promotional photos is ‘largely formulaic’ (Trafford & Pluskowski, 2007:65); the exaltation of violence and hypermasculinity, combined with a consistent focus in ancestral roots and pre-Christian heritage, nonetheless affixes the discourse of Viking metal within a series of complex political projects. The romanticisation of the primordial world and its ‘dark forces’ (Walsh, 2013:4) enmeshes the Viking age with rhetoric of ethnic blood and soil. The entanglement of blood and soil holds significant implications for contemporary understandings of Norwegian whiteness. Tethering notions of ‘pure’ Norwegian blood to the Viking allows for exclusionary mechanisms of ethnonationalism to become entrenched in daily life. The forceful implementation of a social imaginary of Scandinavian whiteness is supported by the discourse of roots and ancestry, what Blaagaard has called the ‘social genetic imaginary’ (2006:8). The social ontology of collectivity or belongingness ‘postulated through common origin or destiny’ (Anthias, Yuval-Davis & Cain, 1996:2) gives Viking ancestry a claim to authentic geographic and cultural kinship. Through imagining of the Viking as an ancestral, genetic category, the ‘common past’ of the Nordic people is constructed as a self-identity apart from other people (Blaagaard, 2006:11). Such a genetic social imaginary constructs Scandinavians as Vikings, and furthermore, Vikings as a unique and desirable ‘breed’ of people which are seen to be ‘ancient, and therefore pure’ (Blaagaard, 2006:11). The effect of this within Norwegian metal scenes has been the imagining of a ‘pure’ Nordicism which erases Scandinavian colonialist

histories¹⁴, yet also allows outright racism and xenophobia to be transformed into claims of protecting Viking identity.

Viking metal's appeals to preservation are however imbued with troubling racial rhetoric. Predicating the cultural value of the Viking upon a sense of purity enables a rhetoric that characterises non-white Others as an unsanitary threat to genealogies of whiteness. The valorising of purity has always been a central structuring practice of Norwegian metal scenes, often expressed along explicitly racialised lines. This 'chauvinistic Paganism' (Weinstein, 2014:58) has political motivation that extends beyond romantic notions of tradition and preservation, demonising those seen as a threat to ethnic heritage. Nordic metal musicians, Beckwith has claimed, have seen themselves as being superior both artistically as well as genetically (2002: para. 7). This superiority is readily reflected in statements such as former Gorgoroth frontman Kristian 'Gaahl' Espedal's claim 'There are always someone to kill or curse, especially subhumans (niggers, mullatoes, muslims and others!)[sic]' (in Krajewski, 1995:20). Scene artefacts also act as examples of racial elitism—Moynihan and Söderlind cite a flyer signed by the 'Wiking Hordes' in May of 1995 (1998:327) warning of 'the most disgusting scenes in the underground: the Asian, the South- and East-European and the South-American scenes' (1998:327). Such scenes, it was argued, 'poison[ed] our music' (1998:327) and posed a threat to the true Aryan metal community. Such straightforward monstrous racism is an anomaly within the extreme metal scene, where 'unambiguously racist statements are actually quite rare' (Kahn-Harris, 2004:100). What is significant about the political power of the Viking here, I argue, is that it allows such explicit racisms to be transformed into declarations of heritage and authenticity, and thus shrouds the racial exclusivity, monstrous nationalism and prizing of whiteness emergent within this wider genetic imaginary of the Viking.

¹⁴ A discussion in the Youtube comments for Glittertind's song 'Longships and Mead' (*Landkjenning*, 2009) demonstrates how folkloric visions of Vikings become sites for sentiments of exclusory whiteness. User lonewolf060 enmeshes a defence of Vikings with sentiments of white nationalism and ontological hygiene. In responding to the claim that the song makes one want 'to rape bitches!' (NorseWarriorFromNorway, January 2015), they respond 'Fuck that, my blood line stays pure with my own kind.... As far as I know they didn't 'rape' women. They just integrated themselves into the society' (January 2015).

Viking metal's ongoing project of reproducing notions of the North as a 'home of barbarian liberty' (Trafford & Pluskowski, 2007:57) not only influences the shift from Viking metal from local sites to global scenes, but also allows for increasingly exclusionary practices to be established. Reactions and comments from fans reflect this ongoing tension between Viking metal's liberatory narratives and its racially exclusive practices. Individuals who live outside Northern Europe who engage with Viking metal are continually forced to negotiate a cultural and geographic divide, often manifest in a near-constant practice of legitimising one's claim to this 'Viking' identity. As such, when Trafford & Pluskowski make the throwaway statement that Manowar could not have possibly claimed a racial or religious identity with the Vikings given that their lead singer 'has the less than wholly Scandinavian name of Joey di Maio' (2007:62), they are approaching a more complex and racially-charged issue than their offhandedness would suggest. Such approaches indicate that while Viking paraphernalia may be readily appropriated, the boundaries of what constitutes a 'true' Viking are in actuality quite rigid. These unyielding limits are confronted by non-Nordic (and, non-white) bands who are determined to affirm their validity, yet constantly met by resistance. Online discussions of the documentary *Pagan Metal* (2009), and an interviewee's declaration that the idea of a Brazilian Viking metal band is 'a bit funny', shifted between assertions that enjoyment should not be restricted by cultural heritage ('Derek', 2.9.2010) and declarations that only Scandinavian bands could 'legitimately' support Viking heritage¹⁵. Examples from the wider Scandinavian Viking, folk and Pagan metal scenes offer further evidence of this tension¹⁶. These appeals to 'heritage' and its protection therein emerge as modes of establishing the parameters of Nordic whiteness, albeit in ways that allow race to become secondary to broad notions of culture.

¹⁵ See the comment 'A Brazilian viking metal band would only be using it as a gimmick' ('rnrstar137', 30.8.2010).

¹⁶ Youtube comments on music videos by Faroese band Týr highlight the valorisation of whiteness frequently enacted within Viking metal scenes—the question 'Can an Asian be Viking?' ('Jacquipenar') is answered with the affirmation that 'Anyone can be a Viking if they have the right attitude' ('Muzaror'). This response is in turn criticised by another user, who argues that only people with a racial connection to the Vikings can claim to be one—'An African or Asian cannot be a Viking, that is just absurd' ('EnglishNationalist13').

The racialised discourse of Norway's heavy metal communities thus indicates that the global circulation of both black and Viking metal has in turn influenced the Norwegian scene, within which 'ethnic belonging' (Stokes, 1994:36) has become increasingly important. The institutional strategies of whiteness utilised by the nation state to preclude non-white communities from truly 'belonging' are also evident within the subcultural spaces occupied by Norway's heavy metal scenes. Such strategies allow these bands to fetishise their own perceived marginality in the face of not only global hegemony, but also to assert their unique Norwegianness within the context of wider Scandinavian iconography. 'Local flourishes' such as traditional instruments and 'ethnic melodies' (Weinstein, 2014:60) are accompanied by language. In the early stages of their career, Enslaved sang in Icelandic 'because of that language's similarity to Old Norse' (in Weinstein, 2014:60). Ásmegin utilise both Norwegian and Old Norse dialects; Windir have sung in the relatively obscure Western Norwegian dialect Sognamål. Such linguistic choices resist and disrupt the hegemony of English as the language of heavy metal. The notion of 'choice', furthermore, asserts that there is pride in turning to the local. Enslaved's later turn to a dialect from the Norwegian West Coast is explained as allowing the band to enact 'lyrical metaphors concerning our daily lives and doings' (Roy Kronheim in Weinstein, 2014:66). Native languages hence allow Viking metal bands to assert their locality, yet also articulate pride in their Norwegianness and its cultural power. The lyrics of Helheim's 'Svart Visdom' claim that it was Norwegians that once ruled the North, and will rightfully do so again—'Da vi, vikinger av Norge hersket i det kalde nord/og skapte frykt med vårt sverd' (*Jormundgand*, 1995). Viking discourse is then significant for what it is able to articulate in both explicitly local and wider national terms. The white hypermasculinity represented by this mythologising is further bolstered by a fascination with the violence and military success of the Vikings; this is a fascination which Blaagaard suggests can be paralleled with Sontag's discussion of the love for and aesthetics of the 'noble savage' in fascist imagery (2006:13). The ease with which Viking iconography has been appropriated by far-right groups and National Socialism should not be overlooked—Norwegian flags and Viking ships were common features of the jacket labels of Norway's National Socialist skinhead groups in the late 1990s

(Fangen, 1998:203). Within a Norwegian heavy metal context, such connections are further problematised by histories of National Socialist Black Metal and anti-Semitism amongst Norwegian scene members¹⁷, as well as the use of Nazi imagery in black metal¹⁸.

Pastoral neopaganist fantasies and the econational Nordic self

In its more militant incarnations, the declarations of Viking, and hence Nordic superiority within Norwegian metal are undeniably reflective of 'old' racisms that work to create unambiguously bigoted expressions of hatred. Such exclusionary tactics are not always directly and obviously intrusive in their deployment. The explicit monstrosity of fascism is augmented by tacit manifestations of nationalist romanticism and fetishism that work to maintain the white hegemony of the Norwegian nation state and cultural-genetic imaginary. National Socialism's pastoral fantasies and associations of blood, soil and nationhood, emerge within the appeals to rustic, premodern 'Norwegianness' within the scene. Burzum's *Filosofem* (1996), for example, features a Theodor Kittelsen painting of a young rural woman blowing a clarion in the forest¹⁹. This cover gives Norwegianness rustic value and draws from the canon of Kittelsen himself, whose nature paintings have been central to the Norwegian cultural imaginary. This entangling of nature with the national further affirms the 'rural' indigeneity of white Norwegianness. Furthermore, the enmeshment of the Viking within such appeals to the pastoral and its protection within Norwegian metal scenes continues to affirm exclusory nationalisms. Viking metal's elaborate and multifaceted (re)interpretations of Vikings into ancient, contemporary and future

¹⁷ In 1994, Darkthrone included the following statement in the sleeve notes for their *Transilvanian Hunger* album: 'We would like to state that *Transilvanian Hunger* stands beyond any criticism. If any man should attempt to criticise this LP, he should be thoroughly patronised for his obviously Jewish behaviour' (in Kahn-Harris, 2004:104). The album was issued without the statement; however, the final copy of *Transilvanian Hunger* was published and continues to be sold with the words *Norsk Arisk Black Metal* (Norwegian Aryan Black Metal). Kahn-Harris also recounts instances of Israeli scene members receiving hate mail from Norwegian counterparts (2002:124)

¹⁸ Mayhem prominently displayed flags bearing swastikas in their rehearsal space (Steinke, 1996:65) and released merchandise bearing the symbol of the military branch of Nasjonal Samling (the World War II-era fascist party founded by Quisling); Varg Vikernes designed a shirt for his band Burzum in 1997 that featured the German SS Death's Head logo. This, combined with a back print which bore the slogan 'Support your local Einsatzkommando', led to problems licensing and printing the shirt.

¹⁹ This cover art is drawn from Kittelsen's *Op under Fjeldet toner en Lur* ('Up in the Hills a clarion call rings out'), 1900.

contexts are predicated upon a sense of originary Nordicness, which position the scene within more complex entanglements of ancestry, masculinity and monstrosity. Furthermore, the invocation of nature within these narratives of Nordic struggle gives land monstrous value. All Viking metal bands, Trafford and Pluskowski have argued, project a common world view—‘a world of snow, frost, mountains and woods, a world of endless conflict with undertones of a universal struggle for survival... in particular the struggle against Christianity’ (2007:70). Drawing Norway into the nexus of the colonial through representing Norwegians as victims of oppression is compounded by the characterisation of Christianity as a ‘foreign, slave religion’ (Trafford & Pluskowski, 2007:63) which must be overthrown by Northern Europeans—and specifically, white, ethnically Norse Northern Europeans—to affect a return to their ‘true’ gods.

Constructions of Norwegians as colonised people not only legitimate the rhetoric of Viking resurgence, but also enable the erasure of Scandinavia’s own colonising history—of Nordic phrenology and regimes of racial hygiene in Sápmi (the traditional lands of the Sámi people), displacements of Greenlandic children, and connections to Nazi Germany (Blaagaard, 2006:8). While both Viking and black metal position Pagans as the victims of colonial repression, both genres rarely extend these sympathies to other local—and largely feminised—patriarchies, who themselves are configured as legitimate conquests for hypermasculine warrior figures. These imaginings of feminised Others and their sodomised lands are a key discourse against which the impenetrable, masculine North is constructed. The glorification of the Norwegian landscape as atavistic and incorruptible does the violent political work of wrenching Norwegian nature from Anglo-American postcolonial and ecofeminist understandings of land as feminine (Schaffer, 1988; McClintock, 1995) and instead gives ecology both nationalist and masculinist value. The intense econationalism of both Norwegian black and Viking metal is thus situated within the key motivation of Norway’s metal scenes as extreme reactions against modern Western civilisation, as well as emphasising a natural connection with the ancestral lands. The frequent backdrop of landscape

in black and Viking metal²⁰ serves a dual purpose—at once it establishes land as a noble foe against which the Norwegian man can prove his manliness, where the capacity to survive and thrive in such vast, frostbitten expanses represents a victory against the increasingly technologised world. Simultaneously, such near-spiritual relationships with the environment and the coalition of self and land work to naturalise the Viking figure, and hence indigenise his body and, crucially, his whiteness.

The enmeshment of nature and the self within both black and Viking metal elucidates the locally specific ways in which ‘Norwegianness’, and hence Norwegian whiteness, is invoked at an environmental level. The entanglement of Viking metal within folkloric and neopaganist subsets of the extreme metal scene carries with it a pronounced focus on nature. Nature as a romantic ideal is a common feature of Viking metal’s imagery, particularly for those bands with strong folk influences. Weinstein notes that the emergence of Pagan metal coincided with an increased focus on environmental issues in entertainment contexts (2014:69). The adoption of the ‘natural’ as central theme is as contentious as the appropriation of the label ‘Pagan’ within the scene. Both terms are antagonistic precisely because of the complex political work they perform. I argue that the entwining of the natural and neopaganist fantasies obscure the violent parameters of Nordic blood and soil. Scandinavian metal’s evocations of ‘Vikings’ is accompanied by a construction of Pagan society that lacks the ‘weakness’ characteristic of contemporary society (Kahn-Harris, 2007:40); drawing on romantic ideals of the natural world in opposition to the decadence of cosmopolitanism establishes a dichotomy of authentic Norwegianness against the supposed ‘weakness’ of contemporary society (Kahn-Harris, 2007:40–41). This nostalgia for an ancient, ‘more enchanted past’, a past ‘more whole and full of depth’ is the response of much Pagan and folk metal (Wilson, 2014:11) to the failures of modernity. The desire for ‘authentic’ bygone times has been mobilised by Viking metal bands through appeals to an idyllic, but ostensibly irrecoverable past in which Norway was pure. Such romanticism is evident in examples from the

²⁰ The covers of Darkthrone’s *Under a Funeral Moon* (1993), *Panzerfaust* (1995) and *Total Death* (1996), Gorgoroth’s *Under the Sign of Hell* (1997) and *True Norwegian Black Metal* (2008), among numerous others, depict forest scenes (often alluding to violence within such a space), while Immortal’s entire catalogue is concerned with the fictional frostbitten land named *Blashryhk*.

Norwegian Viking metal scene. Ásmegin's *Arv* (2008) features a photograph of a tranquil woodlands lake as its cover; the album title itself means 'heritage'. The wider use of imagery of forests and mountains within promotional photography, album art and the music itself is contrasted against the 'effete cosmopolitanism of contemporary cities' (Kahn-Harris, 2007:41). 'Nature' within Viking metal thus has an ecological significance as a site of purity and wilderness; 'nature', though, is simultaneously entrenched in marking out the territory of an ethnic group, and yearning for a primordial white past.

The treatment of the 'natural' within Viking metal can be situated as a nostalgic romanticism for a Pagan past, where the purity and simplicity of the natural world is commensurate with the pastoral authenticity of indigenous Norwegianness. Doing so, however, treats evocations of the natural as wholly phantasmic and disconnected from the contemporary conditions of Norwegian whiteness. Viking metal, in its folkloric and Paganist manifestations, has a different relationship to the natural than the misanthropy of black metal. Nonetheless, I argue that Viking metal bands which have staked their origins in black metal, and the wider Norwegian black metal scene itself, continue to invest ecology with national and ethnic value. As such, where Wilson argues that black metal at large evokes 'a landscape that is already divested of nature' (2014:5), a 'dead forest that is both mythic and material' (2014:5), I would respond to this blackened treatment of the natural by asserting what such infernal nature represents in nationalist terms. The ability of black metal to respond to environmental concerns (c.f. Collinson, 2014; Lucas, 2015) demonstrates how the genre may articulate a relationship between the self as a national subject, and the environment as a terrain of ethnic belonging. The austerity of the Norwegian landscape, with its frostbitten mountains and grim forests, has particular ethnosymbolic capital within the scene. The desolation of nature within Norwegian black metal may then be alternatively reconceptualised as a disavowal of the 'green world', and instead a valorising of the harshness—and indeed monstrosity—of Norwegian soil and Norwegian blood. Black metal then represents a site where local bodies and local environments merge. Taake, for example, takes its name from the Old Norwegian word for 'fog', a reference to the mist that settles in to the mountains of Bergen;

Ulver's *Nattens Madrigal* (1995) is surrounded by mythology that the album was recorded in the Norwegian forest²¹. These entwinings of the natural and ethnonational are emergent in the music itself—Wardruna's *Gap Var Ginnunga* (2009) explores Norse runes through a soundtrack of ancient instruments and trees, stones, water and fire. Similarly, Enslaved's 'Thoughts Like Hammers' (*RIITIIR*, 2012) is accompanied by a promotional video featuring nine minutes of panoramic footage of waterfalls overlaid with Grutle Kjellson's snarling lyrics and an ominous guitar riff, interspersed with a soaring keyboard melody and Herbrand Larsen's clear vocals. Such music is varyingly constructed as dark yet graceful, complex and melancholy. The coalescence of self and land marks the particularly Norwegian procession of whiteness; emergent through econational music traditions that cast Norway and its ancient people as unrelentingly disconcerting, nihilistic and perpetually discomfoting.

Conclusion

The matrix of nation, nature, monstrosity and masculinity through which whiteness has been given expression in the context of Norway's black and Viking metal scenes thus points to the way that race has been invisibilised in contemporary Nordic discourse. Nonetheless, the prevalence with which discussions of proud Viking heritage have been able to obscure and redirect the defence of whiteness indicate that such constructions of 'authentic' nationhood continue to operate in ways that are directly informed by conceptions of race. This chapter has argued that Norwegian black and Viking metal scenes have placed whiteness at the apex of 'true' ethnonational belonging precisely through the monstrous forms of discontent that have greeted perceived threats to white Nordic hegemony. Affronts to and contestations over who may lay claim to Norway are realised through monstrous nationalism—from corpse paint as an act of communal masking to genuinely destructive acts of church arson, grave desecration and murder. However, as this chapter has examined, the strictures of originary Nordic whiteness have been maintained in less readily horrifying, but nonetheless significant forms through the ethnoromanticisation of Viking and neopaganist pastoral fantasies of premodern people living off the land. This

²¹ Vocalist Kristoffer Rygg has denied these rumours.

chapter has pursued the procession of whiteness within Norwegian metal scenes and mapped the complex dual trajectory of invader/invaded through which Norwegian whiteness has been given form. Nordic whiteness within metal scenes has been represented as pure and originary, a complex evasion of a pre-Nordic past which works to present the North as inherently Nordic and Pagan. Such purity has been able to unfold within the matrix of nationhood, race and masculinity. 'True' Nordic men are those who have mastered other lands, yet theirs remains pristine. In heavy metal scenes this is realised through the valorisation of 'unknowable' land, fierce econationalism and the prizing of wilderness as impermeable to, yet under threat from globalisation. Contestations as to 'true' ownership then emerge between 'authentic' Nordic whiteness, colonising Christianity, and the weakening effects of modernisation, wherein black metal's ubiquitous appeals to Satanism have given way to an ostensibly more acceptable, yet nonetheless problematic, valorisation of Pagan ethnosymbolism. As this chapter demonstrates, the monstrous nationalism of Norwegian heavy metal scenes then emerges as a project that presents Nordic whiteness as terrifying and discomfiting; yet ancient, pure, elite and unique. This intimidating exclusivity becomes explicitly tied to nationhood in presenting Norway itself as monstrous and atavistic, both threatened by yet superior to the weakening effects of globalisation.

The task of this chapter has been to investigate the ways whiteness is given expression in the context of Norwegian black and Viking metal scenes, but also to map how this is embedded within the wider national imperative of maintaining Norwegianness in an increasingly globalised context. Understandings of Norwegian metal need not to conceive of scenes as inherently racist or fascist, but rather critique the means through which representations of glorious Nordic pasts within both metal and wider nationalist discourse have been affixed within a dominant structure of power which can and has been used to buttress white cultural hegemony. The whiteness of Norwegian metal thus has significant implications for metallic whiteness at large, but is also situated within the whitening mechanisms of Norwegian national discourse itself as it responds globalisation. Norwegian metal scenes, far from renouncing an ancient past, allow

for a (re)memorising of such histories in ways that hinge on deeply racialised constructions of 'us' and 'them', which are then mobilised into modern political projects. The monstrous nationalisms of the Norwegian black and Viking metal scenes then continue to dictate how narratives, symbols and images of whiteness circulate in exclusionary national formations, representations and narrations.

Figures referenced:

1.0 Mayhem pose in front of graffiti reading '*Ingenting for Norge*' ('Nothing for Norway').



1.1 Original site of Helvete, Schweigaardsgate, Gamblebyen, Oslo. June 18, 2015.



1.2 Neseblod Record store sign, advertising tours of the 'black metal room in the basement', Schweigaardsgate, Gamblebyen, Oslo. June 18, 2015.



Chapter Three

***Nobody wants to be a pale male in the new South Africa:* Territories of Whiteness and Resistant Nationalism in Afrikaans heavy metal.**

Nobody wants to be a pale male in the new South Africa.

—Jacques Fourie of Mind Assault, 2009.

Introduction

In the decades following the demise of Apartheid, the rhetoric of South Africa's 'Rainbow Nation' has advocated for inclusion and solidarity across a fractured nation. The end of white minority rule, however, has left much of South Africa's white population with a sense of loss. Once the bearers of power in South Africa, white communities have since faced the task of renegotiating a white South African identity that operates without the oppressive power structures of Apartheid. The demise of such violent racist legislation forced a recalibration of what it means to be a white South African under a black majority government. The struggle for of white identity is then a common narrative within the scenic spaces of South African heavy metal. Post-Apartheid narratives of nationhood are a central thematic concern for metal communities in South Africa, where such stories infiltrate not only the music, but the spatial politics of scenes themselves. This rhetoric of white nationalism is most prominent in the territories of resistant whiteness constructed and occupied by the Afrikaans metal scene. Prior to 1994, Afrikaners, descendants of the predominantly Dutch-speaking Protestants who first arrived on the Cape in 1652, held overwhelming power in South Africa. Afrikaner identity was predicated upon the notion of the *boervolk* as a uniform group with a strong sense of tradition and a unique culture. Since the abolition of Apartheid, these conceptions of proud Afrikaner traditions and culture have become increasingly problematised and reframed. Afrikaners are thus impelled to locate new spaces for whiteness, a challenge which has been met with increased resistance as communities feel pressure to relinquish their past. The task for

Afrikaners has then been to find a new meaning for not only South African whiteness, but specifically Afrikaner whiteness¹, so that it may coexist on equal terms with various other forms of racial identity. The continued reiteration of racial difference within leisure spaces such as heavy metal scenes, however, indicates that such a goal is an intensely problematic and potentially untenable one.

This chapter looks to the ways whiteness is given expression within South African heavy metal scenes, with a particular focus on Afrikaans metal. In contrast to the previous analysis of Norwegian black and Viking metal, here I interrogate the white inflections that emerge when whiteness is not the dominant national demographic. By focusing on how whiteness emerges within South African scenes in a post-Apartheid context, this chapter examines how the scenes, cultures and practices of Afrikaans metal enable a discourse of victimised whiteness and its subsequent defence, what I call resistant nationalism. The (re)constitution of imagined notions of 'selfhood' and 'other' has enabled a rhetoric of white victimhood amongst South Africa's Afrikaner population, many of whom feel displaced in the 'new' South Africa. The spatial practices of the Afrikaans heavy metal scene, with its emphasis on tradition and pride, enable the fortification of resistant white discourses, territories and practices. The task of reframing Afrikaner cultural and linguistic traditions is then not solely concerned with rebuilding Afrikaner identity, but reclaiming whiteness and white spaces. Afrikaans metal confronts the need to both construct an Afrikaner identity untarnished by the brutality of Apartheid and the desire to reinterpret old selves, and hence redraw the map of white South African nationhood in radically different ways. I argue that for Afrikaners, heavy metal represents a site within which 'fugitive' white identity can be reclaimed and contested. It is, nonetheless, a white identity that remains embroiled in a rigid politics of power, privilege and exclusion. I am then concerned with how Afrikaans metal gives specific cultural weight to

¹ 'Afrikaner' denotes the Germanic group amongst the white South African population, or the Afrikaans-speaking population of Dutch origin. There are small numbers of non-white people in South Africa who would consider themselves Afrikaners as a result of varying ethnic and racial admixtures and social histories. This study deploys the term 'Afrikaner' within its widely understood nomenclature as a term tied to white ontologies.

South African whiteness in ways that negate, obscure, and in some cases celebrate, the systematic racial violence of Apartheid.

In this chapter I continue the trajectory of this thesis by demonstrating the national specificity with which whiteness is given realisation within heavy metal scenes. I begin by addressing how South African scenes are situated within the broader category of 'African metal'. African heavy metal scenes have been represented within an exotifying rhetoric which is predicated upon Otherness and overlooks the mechanisms of whiteness that emerge both within scenes and the dominant modes of academic discussion. I examine how while popular accounts of heavy metal scenes across the African continent hinge on essentialist conceptions of blackness, metal within South Africa is largely a white cultural activity. Whilst non-white metal bands are very much present in South Africa, the common representations of the national metal community are overwhelmingly characterised by whiteness, and white men. By tracking the history and development of heavy metal scenes in South Africa I contend that whilst metal has frequently been a site of transformative identity work and anti-racist protest for white South Africans, it has also become constituted as a site in which claims to white victimhood and self-defence can be realised.

In addressing South African metal as a space for complex realisations of whiteness and white masculine identity, this chapter analyses how heavy metal scenes and practices produce narratives of white sovereignty, white indigeneity and crucially, white victimhood. These concerns are manifest in the resistant nationalism that characterises the Afrikaans heavy metal scene. The notion of 'resistance' is significant within postcolonial discourse, where resistance to and contestation of foreign, imperialist dominion emerges as a key strategy of survival in colonial contexts. The resistant nationalism of the Afrikaner enters a problematic terrain that reinstantiates both invasive claims to sovereignty and the subordination and demonisation of the colonised. Presenting the central signs of the colonising culture as both indigenous to and representative of the progress of the colonised nation, particularly when such signs and their associated power are perceived to be threatened, allows the once-oppressor culture to represent itself as the oppressed. In the case of contemporary South Africa, appeals to Afrikaner

nationalism are aligned with a sense that Afrikaners have been marginalised and alienated within the nation. Territories and discourses of white resistance thus emerge in claims to the rights of Afrikaners to assert their linguistic and cultural histories in a post-Apartheid context. These sites of resentment and renegotiation are therefore central to interrogating the claims to white victimhood that underpin the resistant nationalism of South African heavy metal scenes. Afrikaans metal, much like Norwegian black and Viking metal, is demonstrative of the ways in which cultural concerns become inflected in specific local contexts and musical sites. However, I argue here that analyses of Afrikaans metal proffer alternative ways for addressing heavy metal whitenesses, particularly given that although scenes have a disproportionately high white population, white bodies do not constitute a demographic majority within the national populace. This chapter then confronts suggestions that metal is thought of as being white purely due to demographic representation, and hence argues that whiteness has a cultural significance that here extends beyond statistics.

South African metal scenes reveal how a white identity, once coupled to a system of racial domination, renegotiates a resistant sense of self when those dominant mechanisms of power become obsolete. Afrikaans metal demonstrates the identity work that occurs when dominant cultures reconstitute and reassert themselves after relinquishing both power and hegemony. The linked dimensions of white hegemony—whiteness as structural advantage, a standpoint, and a set of cultural practices (Frankenberg, 1993:1) are deeply entrenched in the dominant ways of thinking about oneself as white in South Africa. The variation in whitenesses that emerge from Apartheid-era racial categorisations further complicate the dynamics of power operating in South African metal scenes. I argue that Afrikaans metal emerges as a site of a distinct whiteness that seeks to sever itself from imperialist whiteness and instead makes claims to originary ethnicity. Afrikaans metal has emerged as a site of resistant nationalism in the post-Apartheid context, where it aims to restore a sense of tradition and pride to Afrikaner identity whilst also advocating the defence of such sentiments.

This resistant nationalism unfolds through three key moves. Firstly, scenes collate the master symbols of Afrikaner history and present these within appeals

to nostalgia and heritage which obfuscate the material reality of racial segregation. Secondly, the Afrikaans metal scene articulates a rhetoric of white indigeneity which presents Afrikaners as innate to South Africa, yet also does the double work of detaching modern Afrikaners from their previous generations by invoking the importance of whiteness in the presumed harmony of the Rainbow Nation. Thirdly, Afrikaans metal presents a discourse of white victimhood which advocates for the rights of Afrikaners and white South Africans at large, and situates resistant white discourses as a necessary response to the perceived threat of white genocide. This chapter maps these three moves as they are deployed within Afrikaans heavy metal, and thus argues that heavy metal in South Africa enables the fortification of resistant nationalism and patriarchal whiteness through complex appeals to heritage. The spatial practices of the Afrikaans heavy metal scene not only affirm the cultural territories of Afrikaner masculinity, but also sanction the construction and defence of white bodies and a problematic white indigeneity. Afrikaans metal allows for the formation of collective identity grounded in physical and symbolic spaces; it is, however, a collective identity that also retrenches the violent and confronting forms of Afrikanerdom and South African whiteness rather than deconstructing them.

Metal in Africa: Deconstructing the 'Dark Continent'

The communities that constitute the heavy metal scenes of South Africa are situated within the complex dual trajectory of being located within the broad signifier of 'African metal', yet largely exempt from the exotifying rhetoric that such conceptions entail. Heavy metal scenes in individual nations in Africa have been subject to the same manifestations of essentialist racialised discourse that continues to beleaguer the African continent at large. When one speaks of heavy metal in Africa, the most frequent reaction is one of surprise, suggesting that a discourse of savagery remains pervasive in contemporary perceptions of Africa (Banchs, 2013: para. 5). The term 'African metal' itself may be endemic to the oppressive essentialist violence of Othering rhetoric; however I also remain mindful that this term is occasionally deployed by scene members themselves when addressing the current conditions of music scenes on the continent. I wish to stress, however, that the uncritical use of such a term by scene members and

researchers in the West is generally accompanied by a tendency to conflate multiple scenes with specific aesthetics and concerns into one monolithic signifier. African metal remains marginalised within the purview of global metal. Kahn-Harris (*Extreme Metal* 2007) suggests incorrectly that sub-Saharan Africa, with the exception of white South Africa and Namibia, 'appear to be metal-free' (2007:118); his own later work (2010), however, attests to the burgeoning awareness of the oft-ignored scenes of African heavy metal. Despite its lack of visibility on an international scale, heavy metal has been present across the African continent since at least the 1980s. Metal plays an important role in the lives of many individuals across multiple African nations, as documented by various photographers, film-makers and researchers (c.f. Frank Marshall's *Visions of Renegades*, 2010; Jeremy Xido's *Death Metal Angola*, 2012; Raffaele Mosca's *March of the Gods*, 2014; Edward Banch's *Heavy Metal Africa*, forthcoming). Heavy metal has become the locus of identity formation for many young people in Africa, where a strong sense of camaraderie and awareness of social responsibility are prominent features of national scenes (Marshall in Barnett, 2012: para. 8).

Through problematising images of African music as that which consists only of 'percussion circles and chanting', Banchs argues (in Nandlall, 2012: para. 5), members of Africa's diverse heavy metal scenes may combat the 'patronising' generalisation of Africa (in Nandlall, 2012: para. 5). Furthermore, acknowledgement of the distinct role that heavy metal plays in different African nations may force a dismantling of the current modes of inquiry that generalise an extremely disparate and diverse continent. Such deconstructions also allow for recognition of the colonialist rhetoric deployed in current approaches to 'African metal'. There is, I contend, a prolific academic trend of outright dismissal of race in scholarly discussions of African metal. Such an approach refuses to discuss race and ethnicity as a pertinent issue within the context of 'African metal' as a subset of global metal. For example, Wallach, Berger and Greene argue that while some perceive of the 'lack of a metal audience [in] most of sub-Saharan Africa as resulting from a racial divide' (2011:25), it is more likely that the 'industrial and technological infrastructure necessary for the appreciation of metal's affective overdrive is not sufficiently present in most sub-Saharan countries' (2011:26).

The complex alignment of metal with modernity is given an inescapably racial dimension in this instance; this is further supported by observations such as those made by Weinstein which suggest that the sub-Saharan metal scene has 'lagged behind' and is 'dominated by but not exclusive to descendants of European immigrants' (2011:44). Weinstein characterises this as 'a continuation of metal's phase-one march' (2011:44) during which metal moves from 'developed countries' to circulate amongst scenes in the 'developing world' (2011:44).

Kahn-Harris warns against this type of discussion, cautioning that Western researchers and scene members must not 'make the mistake of thinking that sub-Saharan black Africa is somehow an oppressive environment that requires saving by the valiant (white) knights of metal' (2010: para. 6). Such prescient advice nonetheless emerges alongside the discourse of conquest afforded to 'global metal', where he suggests that 'a few small corners of black Africa have failed to resist the global metal onslaught' (Kahn-Harris, 2010: para. 2). This discourse of metal entering or conquering 'developing' nations from the modernised West is one rooted in the broader issues of 'world music' which characterise non-Western music as exotic or premodern. Spracklen tracks the linked dimensions of whiteness and the rhetoric of 'world music', which he argues is embedded within complex trajectories of authenticity and Otherness, the conditions of which are judged by white hegemonic arbiters (2013:88, 93). This adjudicatory whiteness is mobilised in discussions of heavy metal via the common understanding in the West that heavy metal is 'a strongly white musical subculture' (Spracklen, 2013:98). Metal can act as a carrier of hegemonic whiteness (Spracklen, 2013:102); this is further affirmed through colonialist rhetoric which positions Africa as heavy metal's 'final frontier' (Tutton & Barnett, 2014: para. 1), or the site of the 'march' of metal (Weinstein, 2011:44). Casting Africa as 'unconquered territory' for the 'global metal empire' (Kahn-Harris, 2010: para. 2) enfolds metal scenes within the violent spatial logic of colonialism and Otherness.

This limited scholarly approach to metal in the African continent has significant implications for South African heavy metal scenes. Conceptions of essentialist blackness within African scenes, accompanied by suggestions that metal in Africa owes its debt and roots to whiteness, further entrenches the binary

metallic logic of whiteness as originary and blackness as exotic. The effect of this for the South African scene, I argue, has been to conceive of the scene as white and therefore 'normal', and hence excluded from commentary. The potential paradox of seeing whiteness as superior and hegemonic yet uninteresting or not worthy of comment has implications for how such refusals to address race enter into scenes and scene dynamics. There is extremely limited scholarly interest in the history and practices of heavy metal scenes in South Africa. When discussions of South African metal do appear, they are largely quick appraisals of the racial dynamics of the scene. Kahn-Harris, for example, situates '(white) South Africa' as the point at which the world's biggest 'metal-free zone' ends (2010: para. 2). Here he notes that while South Africa has a large scene in which certain bands have attracted international success, within the 'Rainbow Nation' the 'vast majority of the scene is white', an observation he also extends to neighbouring Namibia (2010: para. 4).

Discussions of Afrikaans metal in scholarly literature are just as infrequent. Annie Klopper examines metal in South Africa largely within the context of the burgeoning post-Apartheid Afrikaans punk movement (2011). Here she argues that rock music provided an outlet for Afrikaner youth frustrated with oppressive Apartheid institutions yet struggling to find their own identity; Afrikaans punk gave youth a means through which to appropriate their own identity, or simply express the search for one (2011:186). Klopper addresses how metal scenes have entered into what she identifies as the 'worsening identity crisis' of the 'Afrikaans music industry' (2011:184), citing metal act K.O.B.U.S! as an example of how Afrikaans rock has addressed the oversaturation of the music market (2011:184) and the frustrations of modern Afrikaners in the 'new' South Africa (2011:188). Klopper emphasises the immediately political nature of such scenes, arguing that the 'social commentary' expressed in lyrics is evident in the renewal of Afrikaans rock, punk and metal (2011:188n.40). This notion of 'social commentary' is emergent in Albert Senekal's short Afrikaans-language² article on Afrikaans extreme metal, which he argues expresses a sense of social isolation and '*Vervreemding in die ekstrem* (alienation in the extreme)' (2011:76). Here Senekal sees the young white men represented within the Afrikaans metal scene as

² Senekal's article is written in Afrikaans and quotes are presented here in English as per my own translations.

negotiating the double marginalisation of being a heavy metal fan and a modern Afrikaner. He argues that the concerns of these young men who feel alienated by the loss of patronage for white Afrikaners have found alignment with extreme metal. The visual, thematic and stylistic markers of extreme metal, Senekal notes, serve a dual function: they highlight both a 'we' that the ingroup should serve, and a 'they' that should be excluded (2011:86).

This notion of a privileged 'we' and a subordinated 'they' is a central structuring practice of Afrikaans heavy metal. While his points are significant, Senekal's article is very brief and overwhelmingly concerned with the history and characteristics of extreme metal itself. He offers only these limited asides to extreme metal's localised expression within a South African context. Furthermore, both Klopper and Senekal do very little to address the political and cultural dimensions of whiteness that enter into such constructions of Afrikaner identity, nostalgia and alienation. This blindness towards whiteness, I suggest, can be situated within the wider impetus of obscuring or neglecting whiteness in discussions of South African heavy metal and indeed heavy metal across Africa. Metal in Africa has been represented through an exotifying rhetoric which is predicated upon Otherness and omits the mechanisms of whiteness that emerge both within scenes and the dominant modes of academic discussion. Moreover, the binary constructions of exotic black Otherness and normative white identity overlook the specific ways whiteness is constructed and experienced within a South African context. Whiteness and metal in South Africa are mutually supportive discourses. Whilst metal has frequently been a site of transformative identity work and anti-racist protest for white South Africans, it has also become constituted as an exclusionary site in which claims to white victimhood and defence can be realised. The forms of power that actively sought to exscribe black, Indian and coloured South Africans from the national 'white' space in the Apartheid era are then operational in less readily discernible ways within modern heavy metal communities.

As the previous chapter has discussed, Norway's heavy metal scenes render Nordic whiteness as indigenous and hostile to difference by positioning 'white' as the originary 'colour' of the Norwegian population. In South Africa, and specifically

the Afrikaans metal scene, such conceptions of originality and difference are marked out in alternate ways. South Africa's demographic categories, along with national histories, ontologies and material realities, are markedly different from Norway's. South African scenes also enter into the complex territory of white indigeneity and white victimhood, albeit with specifically local inflections. Afrikaans metal has simultaneously cloaked whiteness in the rhetoric of heritage and ethnicity and rendered whiteness hypervisible. Through actively marking difference by the creation of 'white' spaces—not entirely institutionally or legally, but culturally and linguistically, these heavy metal communities entangle whiteness and leisure sites in restrictive ways. Such reiterations of white, specifically Afrikaner space are intimately linked to the violent history of racial separation and white privilege that characterised South Africa's international profile throughout the twentieth century. The elections of 1994, which heralded the demise of Apartheid as a legally-enforced institutionalisation of white privilege, forced the abandonment of the racial hierarchies that had allowed for the repression and non-representation of non-white populations. Such contemporary efforts to re-establish white spaces reflect broader and undeniably complex struggles to reclaim a distinct white identity in the Rainbow Nation, and thus reconnect the prior moorings of social identity for white South Africans.

Melting pots and moral panics: Heavy metal music in post-Apartheid South Africa

Heavy metal communities in South Africa have looked to ways of identifying their own place within a transnational metal community, crafting identities that oppose certain local values while strengthening their rootedness in others (Wallach, Berger and Greene 2011:7). Afrikaans heavy metal has emerged in this vein; however, the Afrikaans heavy metal scene remains a relatively marginal genre in an already small, yet well established, South African national metal scene. Mapping the trajectory of South African metal is vital for understanding the evolution of Afrikaans metal; furthermore addressing the history and development of South African heavy metal scenes allows recognition of heavy metal's position within the Apartheid struggle and its aftermath. Despite attempts by heavy metal communities to move beyond the legacy of Apartheid and broach

new forms of integrated association, the racialised politics and repressive divisions that prevented many artists from entering the country for several decades still linger within the metal community. South African metal continues to stratify rather than unite local communities. The South African scene at large is noticeably white and centred in urban areas; Kahn-Harris notes that while in some sub-Saharan metal scenes the demographic is largely black (and thus to be both white and a metal fan seems incommensurable³), 'even in the Rainbow Nation the scene is mostly white' (2010: para. 4). South Africa's metal communities are overwhelmingly urban. Heavy metal scenes are centred around the major metropolitan areas of Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban, Pretoria and Bloemfontein, in which white South Africans are the majority (even though municipalities themselves show a black majority). Cape Town in particular has retained a strong metal community and its metal output is thought to have a distinct South African 'sound', a notion that is important for mapping the role that heavy metal has to play as both the locus of communicative national desires, and a vehicle through which white South African identity may be reinvigorated.

Heavy metal in South Africa, I argue, has always been entangled with politics and nationalist concerns. South Africa's global marginalisation during Apartheid not only meant that many international bands boycotted the country, but also that the domestic scene went largely unrecognised. 'Away from the eyes of the world', Banchs observes, heavy metal scenes had been steadily developing in South Africa (2013a: para. 2). The South African metal scene developed from existing punk and alternative rock subcultures in the 1980s and continued to diversify throughout the 1990s, supported by strong live scenes in urban areas. The 1990s saw the growth of a varied national scene, encompassing thrash, death, grindcore, doom and Christian Metal. Cape Town was the major centre for South African metal in the 1990s, driven largely by bands such as Sacraphyx and Pothole (Pothole's *Force Fed Hatred* (1997) is still the top-selling South African metal album to date). The

³ In Botswana, Marshall suggests, 'rockers' have had minimal contact with white metal fans (Transition, 2012:67). As such, metal's 'inherent whiteness' is 'largely a moot point for them... They seem to be oblivious to how race figures in to metal in both the global contemporary and historical sense' (in Transition, 2012:67-68). Whiteness perhaps does not matter much within predominantly black scenes. Blackness, however, is a central point of anxiety for those that operate within overwhelmingly white scenes.

infrastructure of scenes further lends itself to the genre's largely urban demographics. The South African scene is supported through institutions such as radio stations Voice of Rock and MK Ondergrond, dedicated rock and metal clubs in metropolitan areas, the annual RAMfest, held in Cape Town, and more recently online spaces including Subterania, a merchandise store, and the comprehensive *Metal 4 Africa*. Such institutions entrench South African metal as a leisure space largely restricted to white metropolitan areas, and thus reproduce the spatial politics that beleaguer the nation at large.

Despite the limited accessibility of scenic infrastructure of metal in South Africa, the heavy metal community has acted as a site of anti-racist protest throughout its history. Heavy metal and rock scenes served as an important site of anti-government protest both during the years of Apartheid (van der Waal & Robins 2011:764, Banchs 2013a) and in its immediate aftermath, where increased awareness of the plight of black South Africans resonated in anti-Apartheid messages within the music and community. '[Our] role as metalheads during Apartheid was to speak out against Apartheid,' Clifford Crabb argues, 'and we did so blatantly' (in Banchs, 2013a: para. 3). The injustice and violence of Apartheid is manifest in the music of several bands from this period—Retribution Denied's *The Meek Shall Inherit the Earth* (1992) serves as a significant example of criticism of the National Party government⁴. This increased awareness of the uneven dispersion of power was born from perceived parallels between the disenfranchised black community and heavy metal fans. Foreign influences including heavy metal had been heavily censored and often banned outright by the ultra-conservative National Party for fear that any *volksvreemde* (alien, non-indigenous to the Afrikaner) factors would prove detrimental to national solidarity. Furthermore the United Nations' cultural boycott of South Africa during

⁴ Retribution Denied compare South Africa to a 'torture garden' ('Torture Garden', track 1) bereft of human rights and characterised by 'policies of degradation and conflict' ('March to Your Grave', track 3). The band protested international sanctions against South Africa which they believed furthered the vast inequity between white and black South Africans—while leaders lined their pockets, 'Only the blacks live in poverty' ('Multinational Shit', track 5). Furthermore, Retribution Denied points to multinational greed rather than a desire for harmony that forced the end of Apartheid—'Well, United Nations, if it's about human rights, there should have been troops here ten years ago!' (Multinational Shit, track 5).

Apartheid also extended to live music performances⁵. Heavy metal communities were closely monitored by police during the Apartheid period—'if you stepped out of line, you got messed up' (Clifford Crab of Agro, in Banchs 2013a: para. 3). Such a feeling of repression led to a complex sense of allegiance with black South Africans. As Paul Blom, the former drummer for metal act Voice of Destruction observes, 'the government was more concerned with keeping the black population under their thumb, and with that mind-set comes the fascist attitude that anyone different is an enemy, so fans and supporters were often harassed by cops' (in Banchs 2013a: para. 3). Blom's observations, though important for charting the developing political awareness of South African metal, should be visited under a more critical guise. The experience of white metal fans and musicians does not correspond to decades of institutionalised racism and widespread oppression at the hands of a white minority government. It does, however, offer a significant starting point for mapping the inequalities of power and the desire to remould a white South African identity, and the challenges therein, that form the central concerns of this discussion.

Heavy metal in the latter years of Apartheid and its immediate aftermath became one of the many voices speaking to a youth who had to find their marks in a transitional phase of a country with a problematic history (Klopper, 2011:187). South Africa's heavy metal scenes have grown and diversified considerably since their earliest incarnations, becoming part of the increasingly crowded 'cultural festival tent' (Klopper, 2011:185) of modern South African music. In the post-Apartheid era, however, heavy metal in South Africa remains a marginal genre. Bands themselves claim that 'very few South Africans are even aware that SA metal bands exist. We get zero radio, TV or media coverage' (Fourie in Ramon, 2009: para. 20). Moreover, anti-heavy metal conservatism still lingers within large portions of South Africa⁶. Heavy metal in South Africa has always occupied a

⁵ Queen's decision to play at Sun City, the 'Afrikaner Las Vegas' (Harris, 2005: para. 4) in 1985 is described by Winwood as 'turning a blind eye to Apartheid' (2008: para. 2).

⁶ Falkof discusses moral panics over heavy metal as an aspect of 'Satanism' amongst conservative white Christians during the late-Apartheid period (2015). South African bloggers Lav Nandlall and Black Metal Mentality both note that heavy metal is still a source of distrust and anxiety for Calvinist conservatives in South Africa. A blog post on Black Metal Mentality recalls a personal memory of friends wearing Korn and Marilyn Manson t-shirts being excluded from private Afrikaans schooling due to their association with heavy metal music (2013). Nandlall also makes

liminal position on the edge of acceptability; that it has consequently been utilised to mourn the perceived loss of hegemonic white sovereignty in South Africa then offers up a complex nexus of both inclusion and alienation. Despite advocating a movement towards harmony and inclusion, South African metal has enabled lines of demarcation and difference to enter the cultures, structures and practices of scenes. Through stressing the importance of specific cultural identities and neglecting or subordinating others, metal scenes have reproduced the divisive forms of discriminatory power that marked the Apartheid era. Such actions are at odds with the post-Apartheid message of unity and inclusion.

While large segments of the South African heavy metal community have nominally embraced the idealism of the 'harmony' of modern South Africa, it is also evident that other segments have mobilised dissatisfaction with the new nation through heavy metal music. The role of music in the 'new' South Africa, Ballantine has argued, is one that should be concerned with the battle against racism and ethnic absolutism (2004:107). It should then follow, he notes, that music can become a key component in a 'new' cultural politics that permits new subjects to be introduced (2004:107). These 'new subjects' were ones that could ideally reconstruct the violence and horror of South Africa's past in largely positive and progressive ways (Hall, 1997:16). This reconstruction is evident within much of the creative output of South Africa's heavy metal scene, which seeks to restore pride to a white identity divorced from the legacy of Apartheid. Nonetheless, contestations as to who may legitimately lay claim to 'Africa' were a key feature of South African national conversation before, during and after Apartheid, and continue to manifest in multiple facets of everyday life, including the creative industries. Marking territory through the spatial coding of the 'scene' then operates as a central component in legitimating claims to authentic identity. The divides witnessed within South African metal actively reinscribe racial divisions through complex and exclusionary notions of tradition, culture and 'belonging'.

note of the moral panic that surrounded Morne Harmse, an 18-year-old student who murdered a younger classmate on school grounds in 2008 (2012a). Harmse's interest in Satanism and metal music was given considerable focus by media, who routinely noted that Harmse had worn a mask reminiscent of that of Slipknot's Corey Taylor when he killed Jacques Pretorius with a samurai sword during a school assembly at Nic Diederichs Technical High School in Krugersdorp.

Whiteness, Afrikaner nationalism, and the post-Apartheid culture industry

Having addressed the scholarly approaches surrounding heavy metal in South Africa and the history and development of heavy metal communities within the country, the remainder of this chapter addresses how the white discourse of heavy metal has been given expression in a South African context, taking as the central example Afrikaans heavy metal. Afrikaans heavy metal is a marginal genre, emerging from the small but established South African metal scene only within the past two decades. Stylistically, Afrikaans metal traverses a range of genres, from the guttural vocals and downtuned guitars of death metal to mid-tempo groove, though the unifying convention of the scene is the use of the Afrikaans language for explicitly political purposes. This is henceforth what I take as the key generic feature of Afrikaans heavy metal—metal which utilises the Afrikaans language for explicitly political purposes. I argue that not all metal utilising the Afrikaans language qualifies as Afrikaans metal; I would instead apply this label to those bands—and the scenes within which they operate—for which the use of Afrikaans is deployed with immediately cultural aims. Afrikaans metal, which voices the concerns of the Afrikaner community, is bound up in an intricate network of post-Apartheid identities and identity formation within the 'new' South Africa. Bands such as Beeldenstorm, Mind Assault, Volkmag, and K.O.B.U.S! have accepted this task by writing songs in Afrikaans, speaking Afrikaans on stage and creating 'Afrikaans metal for Afrikaners'. Such a project, however, is laden with complexities.

Afrikaans metal aims to restore pride to Afrikaner identity and tradition; a problematic goal given the long and violent history of repression in South Africa at the hands of the Afrikaner population. This goal is further complicated by the rhetoric of victimhood and resistance that has permeated much Afrikaans metal. In the proceeding discussion I address the historical conditions that enabled Afrikaner sovereignty within South Africa, the patchwork of both patriarchies and whitenesses that emerged from the Apartheid era, and how the deconstruction of institutional white privilege in the 1990s has impacted upon South Africa's Afrikaner population. From these conditions, I argue that Afrikaans metal has been able to extrapolate and perform its central rhetoric of resistant nationalism in

three key ways. Firstly, Afrikaans metal scenes collate the master symbols of Afrikaner history and combine these with appeals to nostalgia and heritage which obfuscate the material reality of racial segregation. Secondly, the Afrikaans metal scene enters into a rhetoric of white indigeneity which presents Afrikaners as native to South Africa. Thirdly, Afrikaans metal also does the double work of detaching modern Afrikaners from their previous generations by invoking the importance of whiteness in the presumed harmony of the Rainbow Nation. In its most complex manifestations, Afrikaans metal presents a discourse of white victimhood which advocates for the rights of Afrikaners and white South Africans in general, and offers resistant white discourses as a necessary response to the perceived threat of white genocide.

Mapping the historical foundations of Afrikaner nationalism and white privilege in South Africa demonstrates the deep-rooted struggles for identity and sovereignty that have structured social and political life in the nation for centuries. White domination had been a central feature of South Africa even before its creation as a state in 1910. The first white settlement of South Africa came with the arrival of the Dutch under Jan van Riebeeck in 1652⁷. The parameters of white domination were further expanded with the arrival of the British on the Cape in the late eighteenth century, and the eventual British colonisation of Cape Town in 1806. The arrival of the British forms a crucial moment for understanding the development of white sovereignty in South Africa. By the time of British settlement, the European descendants of van Riebeeck's original landing had been living in South Africa for well over a century. In time they thought of themselves not as Dutch colonists, but as proprietors of African blood and soil, referring to themselves as 'Afrikaners' (van Jaarsveld, 1961:2). The division between English and Afrikaner, as well as the African population who had lived on the land for millennia, formed a violent clash of patriarchies, the aftermath of which resonated throughout South Africa for over two hundred years.

⁷ Having arrived on the Southern Cape to establish a refreshment station for the Dutch East India Company's trading ships, van Riebeeck's landing marked the beginning of permanent European settlement in South Africa. In refusing to acknowledge the Khoikhoi and San people as the owners of the land, this moment of colonisation also marked the beginning of a series of armed resistance against the Dutch invasion and appropriation of African land that was to continue for at least another one hundred and fifty years.

The birth of Afrikaner national consciousness and Afrikaner nationalism, van Jaarsveld then argues, grew mainly as a reaction to the 'Imperial Factor' in South Africa (1961:2). This rise of Afrikaner nationalism, underpinned by a reliance on common heritage, then foregrounded the rhetoric of blood, *volk* and land that came to characterise the racially exclusivist architecture of Apartheid. The Union of South Africa was legally created in 1910, establishing South Africa as a British dominion. When South Africa entered the Commonwealth, it did so with a white minority government and a black majority that was largely excluded from political participation, a factor which was not regarded as a problem by Britain or other major world powers. The delineation of South Africa's racial policies⁸ from 1910 protected three specific interests of the white community—power, privilege and prejudice (Schrire, 1992:4). White rule and black disenfranchisement remained unchanged from 1910 onwards, and were thus the preconditions of Apartheid. The Nationalist Party's contribution to these dynamics was the formalisation, consolidation and extension of the laws, customs and practices from the mid-twentieth century onward that enabled the elevation of white domination to an official ideology.

The National Party's general election victory in 1948, a moment that Giniewski once uncritically referred to as the Afrikaner's victory in 'their War of Independence' (1961:10) marked the instigation of legislation designed to separate South Africa's racial groups, and thus pave the way for a 'grand Apartheid'. The Apartheid policy of racial division and stratification encompassed not only the segregation of property and virtually all public infrastructure, but the abolition of non-white political representation and citizenship (Norval 1996:103). This marginalisation of black, coloured and Indian South Africans highlights not only the institutionalised subjugation that curtailed the rights of such groups, but the attempts to ensure a white demographic majority in South Africa by simply

⁸ The Franchise and Ballot Act of 1892 limited the black vote by finance and education; the Natal Legislative Assembly Bill of 1894 deprived Indians of the right to vote; the General Pass Regulations Bill of 1905 denied the black population the vote altogether, limited these groups to fixed areas and inaugurated the infamous Pass System; and the Asiatic Registration Act of 1906 required all Indians to register their racial identity and carry passes. These acts of legislation formed the early benchmarks for the violently segregationist policies that were to follow over the course of the twentieth century.

redefining the parameters of citizenship. As Norval notes, the 'nation' did not include anyone outside the white community (1996:185). This exscription of non-white South Africans from the national space was then not solely concerned with destroying any chance of black sovereignty, but with reinscribing the symbolic and material boundaries of white ascendancy. Much of this legislation was dismantled in 1990 with the legal abolition of Apartheid⁹. Following this demise, any possibility of continuing white minority rule was negated, and the privilege afforded to white South Africans disappeared rapidly. This paradigm shift was felt particularly hard by the Afrikaner population, who had been the de facto leaders of South Africa in the Apartheid era—as Kuper notes, 'in 1994 they handed over power to Nelson Mandela and instantly became irrelevant' (2012: para. 2). Afrikaners in particular had long-occupied an exceptional position—Afrikaners represented a small minority of the population, yet maintained wide-reaching economic, political and cultural power. While the prospects for social integration were auspicious after the first general elections but the new 'rainbow' euphoria was short-lived (Ballantine, 2004:105).

In confronting the conditions for whiteness within the 'new' South Africa, the creative industries became a key terrain upon which concerns were mobilised, and resistance voiced. 'White' popular music, Ballantine notes, responded to the post-Apartheid era in a number of ways (2004:105), including direct criticism, sharp satire and the expression of white 'fugitive' identities. Music continues to be a central site for conversations concerning the current state of South Africa, and has offered a space where white South Africans have negotiated the task of reinventing a sense of self. This challenge of maintaining personal congruence whilst also rejecting the racist detritus of Apartheid has been a central task in the post-Apartheid culture industries. White musicians have stressed the need for self-reinvention, so that music itself may operate as a hopeful signpost towards a more integrated future. Just as frequently however, music has been used as a site for protesting the allegedly liminal position of white South Africans under black majority rule. Such a notion is prevalent within much South African heavy metal, a national scene which emphasises the importance of music cultures to enabling

⁹ The official end of Apartheid is widely regarded as Nelson Mandela's victory in the democratic general elections of 1994.

new forms of identity formation or in this instance, imagining new forms of association in the post-Apartheid era. However, just as Afrikaners and the general white South African population struggle to find white identities untarnished by Apartheid, South African metal bands and fans are embroiled in a similarly complex mission. South African heavy metal represents a site within which this 'fugitive' white identity can be both reclaimed and contested, and thus negotiate the problematic task of salvaging a place for 'whiteness' divorced from the state-sanctioned violence of Apartheid.

South Africa's heavy metal scenes have performed South African identity in shifting and readily negotiable ways. This performance of nationhood can be realised through generic demarcations that attribute ownership of certain musical styles—Johannesburg's Groinchurn, for example, are proponents of South African grindcore, nicknamed 'South Africore'. South African folk metal bands such as Balyios and Raven Wolf show a more comprehensive dedication to Scandinavian musical cultures and mythology, a stylistic choice that points to more complex iterations of international whiteness and national romanticism. Such sentimental romantic themes have more readily politicised meanings for white people engaged with heavy metal in the post-Apartheid context. Such nationalism, and importantly, white nationalism, is given complex realisation within Afrikaans metal. The passion, dynamism and community-oriented nature of heavy metal in general (Wallach, Berger and Greene, 2011:8) allows for the proliferation of a metal scene explicitly concerned with the promotion of an Afrikaner identity. Afrikaans metal is bound up with what van der Waal and Robins have called the 'post-Apartheid Afrikaner culture industry' (2011:763), a market which allows for a celebration of a revamped but less party political Afrikaans identity while reasserting the imagined boundaries of white Afrikanerdom, 'speaking the legitimate language of cultural heritage' (van der Waal and Robins, 2011:763). Such a 'culture industry' responds to larger concerns about the perceived loss of Afrikaner identity in the post-Apartheid era. Prior to 1994, Afrikaners forcibly held power in South Africa—they were the leaders of South Africa and pariahs everywhere else (Kuper, 2012: para. 2).

Afrikaner identity had, for centuries, been predicated upon the notion of the *boervolk* as a uniform group with a strong sense of tradition and a unique culture (Cloete 1992:43). The notion of Afrikaner homogeneity was, however, a carefully constructed edifice maintained through the imprinting of what Cloete calls 'master symbols' (1992:43). Afrikaner identity was actively constructed with a view to crafting a distinct white South African 'character', and thus legitimising their claim to South Africa, itself a product of colonisation. The development of the label 'Afrikaner' in the eighteenth century explicitly ethnicised invasive white bodies and sought to dislocate them from a colonial past. As geographer Edwin S. Munger argued 'the Afrikaner is a man of Africa, not a settler' (Munger 1967:ix). This discourse of white indigeneity sanctioned Afrikaner sovereignty both before and during the Apartheid era. Such iterations of Afrikaner identity were dependent on demarcations between not only Afrikaners and the African population, but also white British colonialists. The Afrikaner's self-determined position as the 'chosen people', born from colonial narratives of the racial superiority of the European over the 'aborigine' (van Jaarsveld 1961:11), was one that enabled the institutionalisation of Afrikaner nationalism and hence the approval of *baasskap*, or white guardianship (van Jaarsveld 1961; Vatcher 1965; Munger 1967). Such sentiments of Afrikaner nationalism, underpinned by a reliance on symbolic unity of language, religion and blood, provided the preconditions for the state-sanctioned racial violence of Apartheid.

With the demise of Apartheid the role of the Afrikaner, and the sense of power that came from alignment with the community, was rendered virtually redundant. People who had staked much of their identity on their privileged whiteness 'are now subordinated politically' (Steyn, 2001:xxii), and must negotiate their identity within a country redefining itself as African (2001:xxii). Such sentiments of marginalisation have been compounded by the exodus of Afrikaners following the dismantling of Apartheid¹⁰, widespread poverty¹¹, and

¹⁰ Estimates suggest that as many as 400,000 Afrikaners left South Africa in the mid-1990s, nearly half of the 880,000-strong Afrikaner population.

¹¹ A fifth of Afrikaner families have incomes of below 3840 ZAR a month (approximately \$450 USD, well below the national average of \$3500 for white households) (Kuper, 2012: para. 5), while de Vries (in Kuper, 2012: para. 5) notes that there are considerable numbers of Afrikaners who are homeless or living in squatter camps (which are largely segregated from black squatter camps).

the dissolving of Afrikaner 'tribal' institutions¹². Today the Afrikaner population comprises around 6% of the total South African populace. Most Afrikaners who have remained in South Africa are flourishing. High standards of education for the white population during Apartheid still benefit much of the population, many of whom run profitable businesses and have positive relationships with the government (Kuper, 2012: para. 6). Economically, most Afrikaners are better off now than they were prior to 1994. The shift from Afrikaner villages to inner-city suburbs and secure gated communities, however, has led to a pronounced loss of community, not only spatially but also socially. This dissolution of community is then crucial to the 'decline' of Afrikaner identity. Perhaps most significantly, Afrikaans itself, which became an official language distinct from Dutch only in 1925, is losing its patronage¹³. Antjie Krog argues that the loss of language is central to understanding the Afrikaner concerns over the Rainbow Nation—'Is this not where the heart [of the debate] lies? [...] What do we do with the language of the *boere*?' (1998:149). The loss of Afrikaanse political patronage is important for considering the relationship between language, nationhood and identity, a triumvirate that holds narrative sway in much South African heavy metal.

Afrikaans, Krog observes, is the price that Afrikaners will have to pay for Apartheid (1998:149). Afrikaners not only have to come to terms with a loss of state patronage, but also find a degree of state hostility levelled towards their language and cultural forms (Louw, 2004:47). With increasing concerns over the potential loss of Afrikaans, it is then largely unsurprising that many bands have taken to writing and performing in Afrikaans—not necessarily out of any linguistic convenience, but with the express aim of restoring pride to Afrikaner tradition. Popular music performed in Afrikaans is not a particularly new phenomenon. Furthermore, it should be noted that many Afrikaans anti-Apartheid musicians

¹² For example, the National Party has been disbanded and the Dutch Reformed Church is giving way to American-style Evangelical churches.

¹³ During the 1980s Afrikaans was the dominant state language in South Africa. By the end of the twentieth century, Afrikaans had been replaced by English as the dominant state language. While one in seven South Africans speak or understand Afrikaans (Wines, 2007), Davis (2013) argues there are now more black or coloured Afrikaans speakers than there are white, and the language's bureaucratic power has virtually disappeared. Afrikaans is scarcely used in administration; at Stellenbosch University, the 'Afrikaner Oxford', only around ten per cent of lectures are now delivered in Afrikaans. Afrikaner authors increasingly publish in English and most musicians write and sing in English.

played an important role in allowing music to challenge what Grundlingh describes as '[the] staid and shackled Afrikaans cultural and political world' (2004:485). These musicians, described as the 'Voëlvry' (a word which can mean 'free' or 'outlawed') included acts such as the Gereformeerde Blues Band, Koos Kombuis and Fokofpolisiekar, who instigated a cultural movement named *alternatiewe Afrikaans* (alternative Afrikaans). Central to the protest, Grundlingh observes, was an attempt to question, and even to reformulate through the medium of music, what it meant to be an Afrikaner during the latter phases of Apartheid (2004:484). Certainly, stepping outside the narrow *laager*¹⁴ of white Afrikaans identity in a period where it was not particularly popular to do so was a significant moment in the history of the South African creative industries. However, while such Afrikaans music was here used to resist the omnipresent shadow of institutionalised white privilege and racial violence, I argue that in its contemporary iterations, Afrikaans popular music aims to restore pride to Afrikaner identity and tradition in ways that are antagonistic rather than harmonious. As such Afrikaans metal may take up the social awareness and political commentary promoted by these Voëlvry bands, yet cloaks such messages in troubling appeals to nostalgia and tradition that obscure the violent reality of South Africa's political past.

Resistant nationalism, masculinity and the master symbols of Afrikanerdom

The redistribution of power in South Africa following the demise of Apartheid has initiated a conversation within the nation at large wherein resistant whiteness figures heavily. Conceptions of the Afrikaner as a 'man of Africa' (and the gendered and raced dynamics that this entails) are fortified by rhetoric which attributes an originary, indigenous significance to Afrikaners. Invoking the rhetoric of the 'Boer' (farmer) gives a rustic, near-pastoral significance to white South Africans which eschews the oppressive political and social privilege that such communities possessed before and during Apartheid. The imagining of a rural society in conflict with the 'new' foregrounds the claims to white victimhood that underpin the resistant white discourses and ethnic symbolism of Afrikaans

¹⁴ *Laager* denotes a mobile fortification. The notion of the 'white *laager*', a protected white enclave, was a common feature of Afrikaner nationalist discourse (c.f. Vatcher (1965) *White Laager: The Rise of Afrikaner Nationalism*).

metal. The scene's fetishising of the Afrikaans language emerges alongside the nostalgic imaginings of colonial figures such as the Voortrekkers and rural Boers. Such nostalgia extends beyond colonialist pioneer narratives through allusions to the Apartheid institutions of the *Broederbond*, *Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging* and anthem *Die Stem van Suid Afrika*, and the frequent allusions to the Afrikaner nationalist discourse of blood and soil.

These narratives of heritage and indigeneity present Afrikaner culture as indispensable to yet under threat in South Africa, while also allowing for the erasure of white complicity in the state-sanctioned racial violence of Apartheid. The reiteration of master symbols of Afrikanerdom within the Afrikaans heavy metal scene are realised through the spatial coding and musical boundaries which signify the scenic structure itself. Afrikaans metal has created particular iterations of community through the use of the Afrikaans language and the promotion of Afrikaner identity. I contend here that particular iterations of whiteness enter into scenes by virtue of the capacity of musical practices to produce a sense of community within the spaces of those scenes (Straw, 1991:373). Scenes are defined by their practice of spatial coding, of embedding meaning in both physical space and the social and economic networks in which participants operate (Stahl, 2004:53). Such coding enables a sense of purpose to be articulated within the forms of communication through which the building of musical alliances and the drawing of musical boundaries take place (Straw, 1991:373). The drawing of such 'musical boundaries' is central to my discussion of Afrikaans metal as both a scene and a community that reflects broader tensions over white identity, and importantly, white Afrikaner masculinity in post-Apartheid South Africa.

The central symbols of Afrikanerdom that are drawn upon by the Afrikaans metal scene are saturated by the masculinising impetus of Afrikaner nationalism. The late nineteenth century political ideology, which saw the Boers as 'chosen people', was a rhetoric within which Afrikaner patriarchy was already deeply embedded. The nationalist discourse of *volk* (people) and *vaderland* (fatherland) carries with it a distinct masculine identity (Bozzoli, 1983:140)—what Connell refers to as the 'cultural masculinisation of the frontier' (2005a:194). It is crucial, though, not to conceive of a singular, essential hegemonic patriarchy, but rather to

confront the multiple patriarchies of Apartheid-era South Africa and the complex intersections they traverse. From the moment the earliest Europeans settled on the Cape they were confronted by localised forms of African masculinity, initiating a confrontation of 'local patriarchies with colonising patriarchies' (Connell, 2005:1804)—the violent aftermath of which continued to resonate through South Africa. Hence Bozzoli suggests that to view South Africa as under the thrall of one system of male rule is too simplistic an approach, and instead points to the coexistence, though not necessarily commensurance, of many patriarchies in the country (1983:149). Here she uses the term 'patchwork of patriarchies' (1983:149) to describe how multiple forms of dominant masculinity, 'English-speaking', 'Afrikaner patriarchy' and 'Black culture' (1983:140), intersected to shape power relations in the Apartheid era and after. Afrikaner patriarchy was thus an institution made formidable through its capacity to assert its superiority within the context of multiple South African masculinities.

The power granted to Afrikaner patriarchy during Apartheid was undeniably bureaucratic, constructed by and given patronage through political, economic and cultural institutions. The fact that white men were predominantly employers, lawmakers, possessors of bank accounts, heads of households and recipients of free and compulsory schooling produced a racially-exclusive fraternity made visible through institutions such as the Broederbond and National Party, and indeed the violent architecture of Apartheid. South African heavy metal is still a largely male endeavour. The institutions that allow for the construction and development of scenes—radio stations, clubs, websites and bands themselves—are largely populated, produced and maintained by men. This is readily apparent within the Afrikaans metal community, where women, aside from playing important roles as musicians, promoters and fans, are vastly under-represented. Heavy metal is, as much as anything else, an arena of gender (Walser, 1993:111). Metal has long been conceptualised as a male pursuit (c.f. Walser, 1993; Weinstein, 2000; Kahn-Harris, 2007) and the fact remains that scenes are largely dominated not necessarily by men, but by masculinity and particular iterations of masculine behaviour. Much like sexism, however, racism is also a discourse sustained and naturalised across

class lines. This becomes visible within Afrikaans metal, a scene that celebrates an identity that is explicitly tied to both patriarchal oppression and racial violence.

Afrikaans metal not only allows for the formation of collective identity grounded in physically demarcated spaces (realised through scene affiliation), but also plays a role in transmitting 'a shared sense of collective identity articulated by a symbolic sense of community' (Bennett 2004:4). Identification with music makers, content, messages and fans creates a space within which old identities can be contested and new ones appropriated—even if, as Kloppe notes, the identification here is with a perceived common *lack* of identity (2011:186). Afrikaans metal is a site where 'lost' Afrikaner identity can be recuperated, and the role of Africa's 'white tribe' in the twenty-first century renegotiated. The construction of Afrikaner identity within the space of heavy metal scenes is nonetheless one which relies on the ethnosymbolism of patriarchal Afrikaner nationalism. The careful imprinting of master symbols extends into the Afrikaans metal scene, which fetishises not only the Afrikaans language under the guise of preservation, but also invokes symbolic constructions of heroic Boers, colonial pioneers and state institutions themselves. Such constructions can be mobilised in reflexive ways. K.O.B.U.S!, the first South African act to release an album entirely in Afrikaans, have made frequent allusions to bastions of the past in the 'social commentary' offered by their lyrics. Their track 'Witman' (*Swaar Metaal*, 2007) invokes several of the central nationalist narratives in Afrikaner discourse:

*Witman kyk na die vrygestelde slawe/Vergete monumente, Bloedrivier,
Godsverbond/Witman loop met 'n swart agoraphobia/Soli deo Gloria,
strate van Pretoria* (White man watching the freed slaves/Forgotten
monuments, Blood River, God's Covenant/White man walking with a
black Agoraphobia/Soli deo Gloria streets of Pretoria).

Here K.O.B.U.S! illustrate the frustrations felt by the white man, or 'witman', within a nation where he had once held enormous political advantage. The 'forgotten monuments' of God's Covenant and the Blood River are references to two

foundational elements of the heroic Voortrekker¹⁵ narrative. 'God's Covenant' (*Godsverbond*) refers to the public vow Voortrekkers took prior to the Battle of Blood River (*Bloedrivier*), a battle in which a group of Voortrekkers defeated a force of Zulu fighters on the bank of the Ncome River in 1838. The Day of the Vow, which celebrated this victory, was a religious public holiday in South Africa until 1994.

Allusions to rural Boers and Voortrekkers have a political significance beyond nostalgia; invoking such figures from an 'untainted pre-Apartheid past' (Baines, 2009:4–5) enables contemporary Afrikaners to see their forebears as victims of imperialism rather than enforcers of an unjust political system. K.O.B.U.S! approach such symbols as part of a broader critical reflection upon the widespread mourning of the great monuments of Afrikaner nationalism. Invocations of the master symbols of Afrikaner whiteness can also appear in much less reflexive ways. Afrikaans metal features appeals to state institutions themselves—Cape Town act Half Past H8, for example, recorded a metal version of the Apartheid-era national anthem *Die Stem van Suid-Afrika* in 2008. The 'old white national anthem' (Nauright, 1996:70) has become a site of contested identification with symbols of cultural heritage, as black South Africans still generally dislike *Die Stem* given its role as 'the anthem of the white minority regime' (du Plessis, 2007:65). The examples of K.O.B.U.S! and Half Past H8 are thus demonstrative of the ways in which Afrikaans metal bands at large have combined leisure and nostalgia into a cultural form that retrenches the resistant discourses of post-Apartheid Afrikaner cultural industries.

References to the colonial figures of the Voortrekkers and rural Boers, the Apartheid institution *Die Stem van Suid-Afrika*, and the frequent allusions to the Afrikaner nationalist discourse of blood and soil, present Afrikaner culture as deeply imbedded within the history of South Africa. Such master symbols foreground the proud tradition from which resistant nationalism draws. I argue nonetheless that all these elements become secondary to the key signifier of Afrikaner identity; the Afrikaans language whose fetishisation is central to the

¹⁵ 'Voortrekker'—'pioneer' in Dutch and Afrikaans—refers to the Afrikaner emigrants of the 1830s and 1840s who moved from the Cape Colony into the interior of South Africa in the Great Trek.

structuring practices and ideology of the Afrikaans heavy metal scene. Much of the white Afrikaner sense of identity in the Apartheid era was coupled to a system of racial domination, as well as a cultural supremacy that was articulated through the medium of the Afrikaans language (Baines, 2009:10). The use of the Afrikaans language in Afrikaans metal scenes serves a dual function; it is at once deployed as a means of preservation and resistance, yet also has a particular aesthetic and gendered value within the context of heavy metal. The popularity and commercial viability of the Afrikaans cultural industry at large suggests a resurgent white ethnonationalism that retreats from parliamentary politics to rally around issues of language and culture. Performers within the industry have argued that Afrikaners have experienced an erosion of their language and cultural rights as a result of current ANC language policies (Baines, 2009:5). The frustration from feeling restrained from speaking one's language has been coupled with claims that affirmative action is a form of reverse discrimination and that the current generation has had enough of 'white guilt' (van Blerk in Russell, 2007). These grievances inform the *gavtol* ('pissed off') factor that underpins the desire to reassert pride in Afrikanerdom.

The hostility towards white guilt is reflected in the Afrikaans heavy metal scene. Capetonian act Beeldenstorm, who describe themselves as 'Afrikaans melodic death metal', are aware of the perilous position of the Afrikaans language. Comprised of young white South African men and women (yet not uniformly Afrikaner), Beeldenstorm¹⁶ write their lyrics in Afrikaans and speak Afrikaans on stage. Beeldenstorm's approach to the post-Apartheid Afrikaner culture industry is one entangled within the wider linguistic tensions of modern South Africa. Afrikaans, they argue, has attracted negative connotations due to its use as 'the language of Apartheid' and hence a language of oppression—"The constant negativity towards the language since this era is causing a decline in the use of this language or at least a certain guilt for speaking it' (in Nandlall 2012a: para. 1). Beeldenstorm's lyrical themes are concerned with Afrikaner identity and the current state of South African society. The band's lyrics confront the moral panics that infiltrate the rhetoric of post-Apartheid South Africa—'*Uhuru*' (2011)

¹⁶ The band name is taken from a Dutch word meaning 'iconoclastic fury', referring to a sixteenth century protest movement that sought to destroy the Catholic church.

criticises the '*wit paranoia*' felt by many Afrikaners who, even prior to Mandela's death in late 2013, believed that his passing would herald a mass genocide of whites. '*n Huldeblyk aan Mornè Harmse*' (2012) is concerned with Mornè Harmse, an 18-year-old student responsible for a fatal sword attack at his high school, who was later vilified for his interest in heavy metal and alleged Satanism. Beeldenstorm's fledgling catalogue is a small but dynamic one; their attempts to restore pride to Afrikaner tradition and cultural forms, however, are entangled in the formidable complexities of identity formation and resistant white discourses in post-Apartheid South Africa.

Musically, Beeldenstorm's style is indebted to broader trends in extreme metal. Their sound is heavily influenced by American and European death and black metal; lurching chords interlocked with fast tremolo riffing, technical drumming, and guttural vocals. The relative commensurance of Afrikaans metal with extreme metal styles, I argue, gives the use of the Afrikaans language a peculiar significance within metal that does not extend to other facets of the post-Apartheid Afrikaner cultural industry. The fusing of the Afrikaans language with rock n' roll and its associated forms is one that had been considered impossible or unpopular. Both Klopper (2011:182) and Grundlingh (2004:491) observe that many artists and industry personnel felt that Afrikaans was too guttural to be used in the creation of 'credible' rock music. Voëlvry hero Johannes Kerkorrel challenged this in the late 1980s when he made Afrikaans central to the globalising and modernising impetus of his music (Grundlingh, 2004:491). The 'guttural' sound of Afrikaans nonetheless offers specific forms of cultural capital within the field of heavy metal. This is at once an act of finding distinction; Jacques Fourie of Mind Assault, a death metal act from the Western Cape who perform in both English and Afrikaans, argues that his band's use of Afrikaans is drawn from a feeling that South African metal is isolated from the rest of the world (in Ramon, 2009: para 2, para. 12). Afrikaans thus became a way of affirming a sense of community and identity for both the band and their listeners. Eschewing English in favour of 'native' languages has been a prominent feature of much modern heavy metal—Rammstein's use of German, for example, has enabled the band to 'establish an identity that provides difference in a genre saturated by formulaic

European and American rock bands' (Burns, 2008:458). The use of first languages within heavy metal can offer audiences a chance to connect music with particular forms of nationality; moreover, Spanu argues, language within heavy metal is given gendered value (2015:125, 128). European Romance languages have experienced only marginal representation within the wider history of metal aesthetics for fears that they sounded 'too soft' and 'romantic' (Spanu, 2015:126) or 'gay' (2015:128) and thus could not express 'the true essence of metal' (2015:125).

Within Afrikaans metal, there emerges a tension between the desire to appear authentic through adhering to the hegemonic gender norms of general heavy metal culture, and the concurrent desire to preserve authenticity through maintaining originality and exclusivity. Mind Assault reflect on these dual authenticities in a way which entrenches the localised inflections of post-Apartheid Afrikaner patriarchal whiteness. Fourie stresses the harsh sonority of Afrikaans and hence claims that it is a 'great language for metal just because of how it sounds. It is much more rough and guttural sounding than English' (in Ramon, 2009: para. 12). For Fourie, Afrikaans is simply 'More true to the nature of metal' (in Ramon, 2009: para. 12). Afrikaans made expression and feeling much more 'true' for Mind Assault and their predominantly white, male audience (Fourie in Ramon, 2009: para. 12). Language is then aligned with specifically local forms of whiteness in ways that dictate the parameters of scenic belonging. This is made particularly evident in statements such as Fourie's, wherein he asserts that 'Afrikaans is still the first language of most of the metal-listening population' (in Ramon, 2009: para. 12). The importance of Afrikaans to the scene is further illustrated by examples such as a fan review of K.O.B.U.S!' *Swaar Metaal*, (2007): 'this is an essential album if you speak Afrikaans... Otherwise, you probably wouldn't like this album that much' (OuroborosSnake 2009). Language is then complicit in constructing a cultural territory; the 'specific crystallisation of such an aura' (Maffesoli 1996:135). The neotribal site represented by Afrikaans metal may be another iteration of private (white) Afrikaner space in which tradition is upheld and protected, and language itself becomes a condition of entry. In forcing a reliance on the Afrikaans language as the central sign of Afrikanerdom, such

scenes reinforce problematic identificatory boundaries. Afrikaans becomes symbolic of Afrikaner heritage and pride, a problematic correlation in which language is made to bear the burden of Afrikaner identity, and simultaneously subsumes a violent past of repression and disenfranchisement in which language was complicit.

New ethnicities, displacing blame: Metal for modern Afrikaners

That the Afrikaans language is regarded as the central component of Afrikanerdom—the 'permanently sacred signifier' (Hebdige, 1990:57)—speaks for a more complex narrative of maintaining whiteness within a nation that is increasingly redefining itself as African, in an African context. Staking Afrikaner identity on a language, rather than a history, allows for a displacement of the political past and shifts the debate to one of ahistorical tradition and community. This displacement is central to understanding the relationship between Afrikaners and their symbols of cultural heritage. The case of Afrikaans metal reveals how once-dominant cultures have to reconstitute themselves and reassert their cultural beliefs and values when confronted with the loss of the power that had made them hegemonic in the first instance. The end of white minority rule meant that cultural, racial and political identities were to be 'reframed internally, now on different political and psychological terms' (Steyn 2001:xxiv). Even so, the reluctance to problematise the conception of the 'Afrikaner', and the socially constructed nature of whiteness, has denied the possibility of deconstructing the racial categories that allowed for the implementation of Apartheid. The carefully constructed master symbols of Afrikaner identity therefore persist in the post-Apartheid era, allowing the image of the 'old-style' Afrikaner to exist beyond present realities (Cloete 1992:43). This is one of the key struggles of the Afrikaner in the 'new' South Africa: to reinterpret old selves in light of new knowledge and possibilities, while retaining a sense of personal congruence (Steyn 2001:xxi–xxii).

The economies of nostalgia represented by the post-Apartheid Afrikaner culture industry are caught in a web of attempting to find new meaning for Afrikaner whiteness, albeit in ways that allow Afrikaners to maintain a sense of self. These economies and the industry they find expression in can be regarded as

touchstones of white Afrikaner alienation from the 'new' South Africa, expressions which tap into residual cultural chauvinism that seeks to destabilise the country's fragile democracy. However, such nostalgia may also be read as an acknowledgement of the elusiveness of the past and a desire to move forward. Nostalgia depends precisely on the irrecoverable nature of the past for its emotional impact and appeal (Baines, 2009:9). For Nauright, the role of nostalgia in Afrikaner discourse has been to 'create a sense of cultural security during a loss of political, and possibly cultural power' (1998:165). Such nostalgia sanitises and idealises the past, enabling a wistful sentimentality that finds expression in Afrikaner society. This sentimentality feeds off a contradictory mood amongst many modern Afrikaners that combines a desire to dissociate one's self from a repressive past while expressing simultaneously an uncertainty over the nation's future. In this sense Afrikaner nostalgia and the desire for new selves is both backward- and forward-looking, as well as an attempt to straddle the dual trajectory of being both reflective and restorative (Baines, 2009:11).

Despite such invocations of wistful romanticism, the emotionally-charged response to Afrikaans metal suggests that a sensitive spot has been touched in the Afrikaner psyche, albeit one that is assertive rather than apologetic. The resentment among young Afrikaners at having to 'shoulder the blame' (Baines, 2009:5) for a system of racial violence that their forefathers had institutionalised is a central structuring practice of the resistant nationalism that shapes the expression of whiteness within South African heavy metal scenes. Here resistance—to a sense of guilt, remorse or repentance—emerges as a dominant discourse for post-Apartheid Afrikaners seeking to sever themselves from the violence of their ancestors. This act of distancing is a marker of the generational shift that Afrikaner whiteness has undertaken, a shift which has found expression amongst members of the Afrikaans metal scene. Particularly worrying is that a band like Beeldenstorm attempt to negate the colonial legacy of Afrikaans by positioning the language as a casualty of white guilt (in Nandlall, 2012a: para. 1). The relative youth of the band's members is a factor that must be considered. Beeldenstorm, like many of their associates within contemporary heavy metal

communities in South Africa, came of age in the period of democratic reform; the generation that Mattes refers to as the 'Born Frees'¹⁷ (2012:133).

The Born Frees 'confront a totally different world than that of their parents' (Mattes, 2012:139). Almost one-third of South Africa's electorate is too young to have any direct memory of race classification, passes, state-enforced segregation of churches, schools, residences and relationships, or the periods of armed resistance and struggle that accompanied Apartheid. Furthermore, many have no experiential memory of F.W. de Klerk sanctioning the release of Nelson Mandela or the 1994 general elections. As such, Beeldenstorm's claim that 'Our generation did not realise what Apartheid was as we were growing up' (in Nandlall 2012a: para. 1) seems comprehensible, if not wilfully naive. Nonetheless, when such suggestions are used to preface the notion that the guilt associated with Afrikaans is unwarranted, they are rendered intensely problematic. Such historical and personal amnesia erases the violence of Apartheid and effaces its brutal legacy; it seeks to create a whiteness that is reborn free from guilt and blame. Beeldenstorm's attempts to free Afrikaans from its stigma and reclaim the language for future generations of South Africans seem genuine, if not problematic. That such a project is undertaken with little or no reflection upon the violent legacy of Apartheid is indicative of the more comprehensive issues that underpin the sustainability of Afrikaans metal, and indeed the role of whiteness and white discourses within South African metal.

Afrikaans metal is then in some ways a resisting of repentance as much as it is a reclaiming of white space and white identity. The Afrikaans extreme metal scenes, Senekal has suggested, may be seen as propagating self-imposed marginalisation, rather than being marginalised by an external force (2011:96). Self-marginalisation in Afrikaans metal is implicit, but there is also a feeling that modern Afrikaners have been unfairly made to carry the burden of Apartheid. Mind Assault argue that the only way South Africa can move forward is to let go of the past: *'Wil gryp na n toekoms van vrede/Maar hande sluit om as van die*

¹⁷ There are several varying ideas as to who constitutes the 'Born Free' generation: while some sentiments suggest that it is individuals born from 1994 onwards, Mattes' definition (2012:139), which I believe to be the most appropriate for this discussion, applies to individuals born in the early to mid-1980s who came of age politically after 1996 and largely had their first voting experiences in the 1999 elections.

verlede/'N vlam wat ons steeds verbrand' (Want to look into a future of peace/but hands close the past/a flame that we still burn) (*Vrede Deur Bloed, Metal Rites* 2011). Such a desire to 'move forward'—or rather, 'forget'—is common and actively encouraged amongst the Born Free generation (Slovo, 2006:25). This notion was also prevalent amongst the Voëlvry of the latter years of Apartheid, who expressed a similar desire to liberate Afrikaans from a violent past (Laubscher, 2005:313). These attempts at liberation and progression are, however, accompanied by a tacit declaration that the nation at large must erase Apartheid from South African memory. Mind Assault, like Beeldenstorm, distance themselves from the political past by virtue of their youth: 'We are fortunate enough to have been too young to understand much of what was going on during the years of transition' (Fourie in Ramon, 2009: para. 9).

This sense of distance from the past is furthered by the suggestion that modern white South Africans should not have to compensate for the misdeeds of their ancestors. Mind Assault visit this lingering charge of violence in the track 'Vrede Deur Bloed' (*Metal Rites*, 2011), suggesting that post-Apartheid Afrikaners and white South Africans will continue to be unjustly held accountable for a past that is not theirs—'*Sal vir altyd moet vergoed/Vir die voorvaders se dade*' ('Forever will compensate/For the ancestor's actions'). Fourie further attempts to sanitise the past with the suggestion that those same ancestors who benefitted from and were compliant in the institutionalisation of racial segregation were themselves victims of oppression:

[Our] fathers and grandfathers were oppressed from a different kind of enemy—it is well known that our former government used all sorts of techniques and methods to engage in a form of social engineering essentially, this means to have control over people's perceptions of things and to influence their actions as a result of those perceptions (Fourie in Ramon 2009: para. 13).

Mind Assault's first E.P is hence titled *Social Engineering* (2005). This rhetoric of power and influence is at once situated within heavy metal's rejection of authority and dialectic of freedom and control (Walser, 1993:49). However, I argue that

such sentiments constitute problematic attempts to efface the debilitating racial violence of Apartheid by displacing blame. Furthermore, they speak for a generation of young South Africans attempting to renegotiate a white identity untainted by the legacy of Apartheid; and moreover, the frustrations that emerge within such a complex pursuit.

For Afrikaners, who had staked much of their sense of self on their whiteness and the privilege that accompanied such an identity, the challenge of the 'new' South Africa has since been to locate methods of expressing whiteness in both nostalgic and reinventive ways. The premises for being a white Afrikaner have changed considerably and previous notions of Afrikaner identity must be discarded and replaced with more acceptable and relevant content (van Zyl, 2008:138). Both van Heerden (2009) and Marx and Milton (2011) note that Afrikaner identity, which had once considered itself fixed and unproblematic, is now being challenged, renegotiated and configured through the arts and cultural expression. Music, musicians and audiences have a formidable role to play in such reconstructions and renegotiations of South African identity. In the immediate aftermath of Apartheid, musicians and music communities helped shape an emergent cultural formation in the new South Africa (Drewett 2003:163). Music itself is a site where racialised national views may be subverted—musical cultures 'imagine new types of association that transcend the divisions of race, class and gender' and thus redraw the 'map of nationhood' in radically different ways (Back 1996:10). Marx and Milton locate an instance of this in the 'Zef' culture exemplified by alternative act Die Antwoord, whose international success has been predicated upon their appropriation of black cultural forms in pursuit of a less formal, more urban Afrikaner identity (2011). Back's notion that music may imagine new types of association (1996:10) is evident not only in this example, but is a key component in approaching Afrikaans metal, and indeed the heavy metal scenes and practices of post-Apartheid South Africa at large. A rhetoric of unity is pervasive within many of South Africa's heavy metal scenes, which ostensibly aim to show solidarity with a 'proud rainbow nation' (in Nandlall 2012a), 'preach[ing] change and seek[ing] to unify South Africans under the umbrella of music' (in Nandlall 2012a). The African metal scene has seen broader

attempts to consolidate 'African' music and tradition with heavy metal. African mythology and folklore are common themes for Botswana's Skinflint (Barnett 2012) for example, while Azrail, a death metal band from Cape Town, take their name from the West African Hausa people's god of death. These examples nevertheless enter into a problematic sphere of appropriation, particularly when such references are given expression in largely white contexts.

Regardless of claims that Afrikaans metal unifies South Africans, non-Afrikaner histories and traditions figure much less prominently within the scene. Where it does exist, this unification between Afrikaner and African practices is imagined through the extrapolation of 'traditional' African mythology or references to broader African politics. Beeldenstorm's '*Uhuru*' shares its name with the Swahili word for freedom and the Kenyan national day of independence, a term chosen with the hope that it would foreshadow new forms of independence for South Africa (Nandlall 2012a: para. 3). The new association foregrounded by such 'African' themes feels tokenistic. Moreover, such moves towards harmony are still largely sanctioned by white men, to the widespread exclusion of women and non-white Others. Heavy metal is inevitably a discourse shaped by patriarchy (Walser, 1993:109); in South Africa's metal scenes, this is realised not only through its aesthetic performance, but the hierarchies of power, gender and race that characterise interactions within the space of the scene. South Africa's heavy metal scenes are largely white; this is not to say, however, that the nation's other demographics are not represented within the scope of South African metal. Bands such as Ree-Burth and Demorgoth Satanum, both comprised of young black African men, have found moderate success within heavy metal communities. Heavy metal's masculine ethos, while problematic, has allowed these young men to reclaim a masculine identity based in power and strength that is divorced from the infantilising rhetoric of Apartheid. What is significant, though, is that these bands very rarely share bills with white bands, and even less so with Afrikaans metal bands. Similarly, online interactions and reporting on live performances reveals that fanbases are similarly segregated along racial, geographic and class lines. In light of this segregation of leisure sites, markets and patterns of consumption, such new associations are thus unable to reinvent the Afrikaner, or

to conceive of whiteness in genuinely progressive ways. Moreover, in roughly consolidating both broadly African and white Afrikaner identities, such approaches do little to acknowledge the vast disjunctures in power that allowed white South Africans, and Afrikaners in particular, to claim sovereignty over and enact systematic institutional violence against these very communities.

White indigeneity, victimhood and genocide in Afrikaans Metal

These attempts to find new ways to express Afrikanerdom do little to deconstruct racial categories or indeed critically engage with white identity itself. Mobilising such broadly 'African' signifiers within heavy metal music and offering limited invocations of African identity reinforce and maintain essentialised notions of blackness and whiteness. These nominal moves towards reconciliation reflect what Ballantine recognises as a trend amongst contemporary South African music; of making allusions, musically or verbally, to Africa, 'but in such a way as to make the continent an abstraction, without real content' (2004:112). Typically this is done through the use of indistinct, floating signifiers—signs that connote 'Africa' amorphously, non-specifically' so as to create a 'vague Pan-Africa' (Ballantine 2004:112). Mind Assault, for example, sell shirts with the phrase 'African Metal' superimposed over a map of the continent (figure 2.0), despite their lyrics displaying little interest in identities beyond South African borders. Nonetheless I argue that such attempts at new forms of associations are significant in their desire to forge a localised sense of belonging through music. In purporting themselves to be in harmony with the Rainbow Nation, Afrikaans metal can then be seen to symbolically renounce Afrikaner cultural superiority and become 'just another ethnic group'—and crucially, an ethnic group that is able to indigenise its whiteness in opposition to invasive British whiteness.

This discourse of white ethnicity and indigeneity forms one of the central concerns of negotiating the place of Afrikaner whiteness and white identities in post-Apartheid South Africa. Fears of being excised from national history, or simply being dissolved into the wider populace, continue to permeate contemporary Afrikaner conversation. The Afrikaner writer Rian Malan (who writes in English) thus prophesises that one day Afrikaners will be remembered as

'that mythical race that once lived here' (in Kuper, 2012: para. 11). Such classification of Afrikaner as a racial category then allows narratives of heritage and ethnicity to propagate. Furthermore, it allows individuals to stage a point of difference between the Afrikaner and the British 'colonialists', casting Afrikaners as not only 'sociologically indigenous' (Stone, 1985), but also cementing British-descended South Africans as alien. Ethnicising the label of 'Afrikaner' encourages the deployment of an identity that holds intrinsic ties to Africa, but is simultaneously exempt from the destructive colonial discourses that have been ascribed to African communities for centuries. Afrikaners find themselves occupying a complex position, confronting the problematic dualism of what it means to be both white and indigenous to Africa. Casting the Afrikaners as an ethnic group allows for the naturalisation of such an identity. However, this act of naturalisation also negates the history of colonial violence that afforded ascendancy to the Dutch-descended Afrikaners in the first place.

Representations of Afrikaners as 'just another tribe'—and furthermore, the ethnicising rhetoric that accompanies the frequent use of the word 'tribe' in association with Afrikaners (e.g. Harrison, 1983; Nauright, 1996)—legitimises the claims that the Afrikaans metal scene makes to alienation and marginalisation. Furthermore, one of the great failings of the 'Rainbow Nation' and its rhetoric of harmony is that it did little to deconstruct the social category of 'race' itself (Ballantine, 2004:106). In assuming racial identity to be natural and fixed, understandings of race in South Africa still largely revolve around demarcations of difference. As such white South Africans continue to conceive of themselves in opposition to the Apartheid categories of black, coloured, and Indian, and thus perceive themselves as not afforded the same rights as these groups. Modern Afrikaners frequently find themselves at odds with the rhetoric of harmony, believing they were better off—economically, culturally and politically—during Apartheid, and that the relaxation of white minority rule has led to South Africa's moral decay. Notions of whiteness and white masculinity under threat are manifest in much South African metal. Nobody wants to be a 'pale male' in the new South Africa, Mind Assault suggest (in Ramon 2009). Even so, it is these 'pale males' (young, white, European-descended men) that make up the vast majority of

the South African metal fanbase (Senekal 2011:86). Creating music, for Mind Assault, is a process of crafting songs that such demographics can 'relate to' (in Ramon 2009) through the transmission of collective frustrations and concerns.

Mind Assault have been able to capitalise upon the social unrest of South African whiteness and masculinity, and channel this through their music. Young white men feel that it is increasingly hard for them to find work in South Africa, a problem which the band blames on 'politics' (in Ramon, 2009). The redistribution of social power post-Apartheid also led to a widespread redistribution of wealth—now, Kuper notes, 'many of these people have plummeted from first to third-world' (Kuper, 2012: para. 5). Coupled with this marginalisation is the sense that white South Africans are discriminated against as a result of Apartheid: 'It often feels like people are trying to dig up the past rather than focusing on the future, so that they can twist current situations to their own advantage' (Fourie in Ramon, 2009: para. 13). Mind Assault's lyrics, Fourie argues, 'reflect the oppression of one who grew up as an outsider, always rejected by society because of what you stand for' (in Ramon, 2009: para. 13). This is again reflective of what Senekal refers to as the 'social isolation' of Afrikaans extreme metal (2011:76), or '*Vervreemding in die ekstrem*'—alienation in the extreme. The visual, thematic and stylistic markers of extreme metal, Senekal notes, serve two functions: they highlight both a 'we' that the group should serve, and a 'they' which should be excluded (2011:86). This designation of 'us' and 'them' indicates how metal scenes at large create boundaries that allow particular forms of identity creation. Furthermore, it reiterates the notion of whiteness and white identity under attack. Mind Assault are active participants in the resistant white discourses that have greeted the demise of Apartheid. Fourie (in Ramon, 2009: para. 13) proudly notes that their ethos is neatly surmised on the back of an official t-shirt: '*Ek sal bloie vir alles wat ek in glo*', or 'I will bleed for all in which I believe'.

Mind Assault's declaration is demonstrative of 'White Talk' (2008:25), resistant white discourses that inform much of sense-making about living in post-Apartheid South Africa (Steyn & Foster, 2008:26). Not all white South Africans avail themselves of 'white talk'; and those that do may not do so all the time on all issues (Steyn & Foster, 2008:26). Nevertheless, there are well-rehearsed

repertoires for 'talking white' which are frequently evidenced in the characteristic ways that white South Africans talk about issues¹⁸. Dominant white representations of contemporary South Africa attempt to 'fix' groups relative to one another, reproducing and extending the mechanisms of whiteness into post-Apartheid society. In doing so, such representations take up the problematic stance of casting white men as moral arbiters in an increasingly crime-ridden nation. The 'social observation' (Blom in Kalis, 2007: para. 8) of K.O.B.U.S!' music offers reflection upon such stances. The previously mentioned track 'Witman' (Swaar *Metaal*, 2007), for example, tracks the gendered dynamic of the post-Apartheid restructuring of power—'*Witman kyk na die vrygestelde slaw*', '*Witman loop ongemaklik in sy vel*' ('White man looking at the freed slaves', 'White man walking uncomfortable in his skin').

K.O.B.U.S!'s invocation of the white man under threat is represented within a wider and generally unapologetic political commentary that informs their catalogue. Their outlook echoes a broader conversation amongst white South Africans in which the failure of the African National Congress to combat crime and corruption figures heavily. Calls to reinstate the death penalty are visited in '*Doodstraf*' (Swaar *Metaal* 2007). Uncertainty about the future and a sense of hopelessness emerges in 'N.J.S.A' (*Lied van die Nuwe Jong Suid Afrika*/Hymn of the New Young South Africa, Swaar *Metaal*, 2007), which attacks epidemics of famine, AIDS, rape, homelessness and unemployment. K.O.B.U.S! argue that the mismanagement of the government results in the retrenchment of Apartheid-era segregation—'*Orania, Azania*' directly contrasts the private white Afrikaner community of Orania against Azania, the term used by African nationalists to refer to their homeland. These divides and their resultant resentment, for K.O.B.U.S!, are negatively geared towards white South Africans and the 'burden' of Apartheid—'*O ja, Ons weier om die sondes te dra van jou ma en pa/O ja, Die Lied van die Nuwe jong Suid Afrika*/ Oh yeah, we refuse to carry the sins of your mother and father/Oh yeah, The Hymn of the New Young South Africa' (Swaar *Metaal*, 2007).

¹⁸ The differences between white and black perspectives on racism in the 'new' South Africa are often so divergent that Ansell introduces the notion of 'two nations of discourse' (2004:3) so as to map the meaningfully different ways in which issues are approached.

This sense of resisting accountability for the 'sins' of past generations and pushing back against those that would seek to curtail rights—'*O ja, Knip ons vlerke en ons groei weer 'n nuwe paar*/Oh yeah, clip our wings and we will grow a new pair' (N.J.S.A, *Swaar Metaal*, 2007)—entails within it the resistant nationalism which shapes the whitening trajectory of Afrikaans metal. Furthermore, while K.O.B.U.S! generally invoke such rhetoric with an eye to engaging in political conservation as opposed to outright reactionary violence, Afrikaans metal still finds itself implicated within the menacing terrain of white supremacist movements in post-Apartheid South Africa. Beyond the 'miracle' of the Rainbow Nation and the influence of Mandela's dream for peaceful unity, it has only recently become clear just how close South Africa came to civil war only two decades ago, when 50, 000 white conservatives were poised for war (Ballantine, 2004:106). As recently as the last decade, disgruntled arch-conservatives continue to fund movements to recolonise South Africa and Zimbabwe and thus restore 'civilised' rule (Ballantine, 2004:106).

In their most extreme manifestation, fears over the eventual loss of the Afrikaner and white slavery have led to violent reactionary movements. In the metal scene this sentiment is evident in pro-Aryan bands, including black metal act Volkmag. Volkmag—loosely translated, 'People Power'—are immediately focused on themes of Afrikaner pride, heritage and resistance. While the South African metal scene frequently confronts the brutal legacy of Apartheid and white and/or Afrikaner compliance in state violence, Volkmag's oeuvre is problematic in a way that other bands' are not. Volkmag fanbase appears to stem largely from the National Socialist Black Metal (NSBM) scene, which points to a problematic, if liminal, correlation between the two communities. Volkmag have issued split-releases with NSBM act Freitod (*Northern Southern Heritage*, 2009) and South African bands Blackcrowned and Nicatas Drumer¹⁹ (*Far Beyond the Cosmos*, 2011). Some South African fans bemoan the inability to craft a homegrown National

¹⁹ Neither Blackcrowned nor Nicatas Drumer have explicitly stated their music to be NSBM; their fanbase, however, seems to largely emerge from fans of the genre, and furthermore those with ideological affiliations to white supremacist movements. Volkmag, Blackcrowned and Nicatas Drumer are all referenced as preferred bands in discussions on the web page of the South African branch of Stormfront, an organisation with the slogan 'White Pride World Wide'.

Socialist Black Metal movement within the nation, blaming the vague epithet of 'political correctness'. BME, a poster on the SA Stormfront forum, attests to this:

The political situation and general public touchiness here makes it EXTREMELY difficult for an NSBM band to emerge. Appearing live would be completely out of the question considering the media's absolute love of publishing bullkuk [bullshit] on white "racists". Should the government catch on, hosting venues might as well close down now and save face/death threats (Stormfront, 28.10.2009).

BME's obvious scorn towards the label 'racists' is notable and speaks for the 'two nations of discourse' that Ansell (2004:3) approaches. The charge of 'racism' is one that is particularly difficult for most modern South Africans to confront. Similarly, there is a sentiment amongst segments of disgruntled white communities that simply attempting to preserve a white identity is automatically labelled racist, or that the term 'racist' itself is one that conveniently gets used to quell dissent, and hence justify and legitimate any and all actions by the ANC that may prove detrimental to white communities. Suggestions that the term 'racist' may be inappropriately or rashly applied to National Socialist Black Metal, are, however, at best counter-intuitive given the nature of the movement. BME's comments do, however, offer an important insight into the current manifestations of reconciliation discourse in the South African metal scene, which take the form, they argue, of misplaced and ill-informed overcompensation. As they claim:

The metal public here also really get defensive and supportive of an all black (men not genre) death metal band from Botswana even though they are shockingly bad. That sort of liberal effect is the mainstay of the metal scene here too, it makes the progression of NSBM or RAC even harder (Stormfront, 28.10.2009).

These comments establish the parameters for broader accusations of 'race traitors' (Steyn, 2001:xxxvi) in post-Apartheid South Africa. The preference of some white South Africans for 'bearing the suffering of the oppressed rather than the guilt of the oppressor' (Steyn, 2001:124) has led to the desire to dislocate oneself from the

homogeneity of white South Africa and the perceived essential racism that such a category entails. This is not to say that white South Africans are inherently racist; the suggestion is deliberately reductive. Equating whiteness with racism effaces a more complex socio-political history of race relations within South Africa. White South Africans were the immediate benefactors of centuries of privilege actively conferred along racial lines, a fact about which much of the white community is acutely aware, and, as Steyn indicates, even ashamed of (2001:1). Such support for a 'death metal band from Botswana'²⁰, particularly as it is framed by critical voices such as BME's, may be a direct result of such feelings of guilt, or an attempt to identify with an oppressed group. Furthermore, while the reasons for the lack of support for National Socialist Black Metal and RAC²¹ as genres may seem obvious, these difficulties may in some part be attributable to South Africa's complex relationship with National Socialism itself²².

The alliance of Afrikaner nationalism and National Socialism is a difficult point for many modern Afrikaners. Nonetheless, to overlook these networks of transnational fascist ideology is to ignore how their legacies continue to circulate in contemporary reactionary circles in South Africa. Many pro-Afrikaner groups sympathetic to National Socialism emerged during the Apartheid period and gained much attention in its latter years. The stigma of Nazism is rife amongst contemporary white communities—Ansell notes that the extreme Afrikaner right wing 'has for the most part jettisoned [the] discourse of white supremacy' (2004:22). Nevertheless, increasing disillusionment and anger towards the ANC

²⁰ Given the context of BME's comment, one would assume they are referring to the well-known death metal act Wurst from the Botswanan capital of Gaborone.

²¹ Rock Against Communism, more commonly known as RAC, is a genre (generally hardcore punk, though its stylistic origins also lie in folk music, Nazi punk and Oi!) that emerged in response to Rock Against Racism movements in the late 1970s. RAC lyrics typically feature nationalist, neo-Nazi and white supremacist politics.

²² The NSDAP/AO (*Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei/Auslands-Organisation*, or National Socialist German Worker's Party/Foreign Organisation) arrived in South Africa in 1932, heralding the emergence, or at least formal recognition of, a number of groups sympathetic to Nazism. The *Ossewabrandwag*, founded by pro-Nazi Afrikaners opposed to South African participation in the Second World War, were particularly successful in mobilising widespread support. The OB harmonised the 'romantic-heroic appeal of Nazism and the mythology of the Afrikaner *voortrekker* tradition' (Norval, 1996:79), both of which stressed activism, national character and the *volk's* rootedness in the fatherland's soil. More immediately dangerous than this ideological union was the formation of the *Stormjaers*, a paramilitary offshoot who engaged in widespread sabotage throughout WWII. The *Ossewabrandwag* was absorbed into the National Party at the end of the war.

amongst certain groups has seen a return, however marginal, to the rhetoric and activism that foregrounded white separatist organisations and resistance movements. National Socialist Black Metal, BME believes, will form another rallying point around which white South Africans can voice their discontent:

I still think that the situation is bound to change as more and more extreme whites get frustrated with the current situation. I expect that when the first SA NSBM band comes out, the potential for NSBM to explode here is high. I personally encourage it, it's another method for disillusioned whites to stick together (Stormfront, 28.10.2009).

BME's comments, however, neglect the fact that by 2009 South Africa already had a vocally pro-Aryan band that fell under the umbrella of National Socialist Black Metal—Volkmag. Volkmag's first EP was released in 2008 and did not, it should be noted, trigger an 'explosion' of South African NSBM. Volkmag remain something of an anomaly within the South African heavy metal scene at large; nevertheless, they offer a powerful and frequently confronting insight into the manifestations of extremist politics that have greeted black majority rule.

Volkmag's music reflects a minor yet nonetheless important trend within modern Afrikaner discourse, which sees Afrikaners as persecuted people who must enact violence to reclaim their rightful ascendancy. Volkmag's logo is based on that of the *Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging* (Afrikaner Resistance Movement) (see figures 2.1 and 2.2). This logo, coupled with a catalogue that extols white revolution and widespread violence, affirms a relationship between Afrikaner pride, National Socialism and paramilitaristic violence. Volkmag's music is then not only concerned with white resistance and genocide, but a victimhood that is distinctly assigned to the Afrikaner. Volkmag situate white Afrikaners not only in opposition to South Africa's black majority—the cover of their 2011 release *Keelvolk* (figure 2.3) features political signage opposing 'black domination'—but also in conflict with Anglo-African whiteness. Album art for *Op Oorlogs Vlerke* (2009 figure 2.4) features photographs of fatalities of the Boer War. *Oorlede, Nooit Vergete* (2013, figure 2.5) has as its cover art an infamous photograph of Lizzie Van

Zyl, a child inmate and eventual fatality of Bloemfontein prison camp during the Second Boer War (1899–1902) who became a symbol for Boer victimisation under British rule. The single '*Rus in Vrede*' (*Eendracht Maakt Macht*, 2015) has as its cover an image of a 'concentration camp baby', a Boer infant laid in a coffin (figure 2.6).

Volkmag's overarching narrative of Afrikanerdom stresses the resilience and strength of a persecuted community. The construction of resistant Afrikaner whiteness within this segment of the Afrikaans metal movement is also situated within the wider context of the white pride musical movement worldwide. This narrative of white persecution has gained circulation beyond South Africa, particularly within extreme right-wing music scenes. Polish RAC band Nordica, for example, has a track called 'Afrikaans' (2012). French RAC act Kontingent 88 has a track named 'Afrikaner' that celebrates the 'fierce Boer' (2007), which was later covered by Canadian NSBM/Oi! called Arianrhod (2010). The international dissemination of such narratives points to the way in which the political currency of Afrikanerdom, and furthermore, the political capital associated with 'rightful' white struggle, has asserted itself beyond South African borders. This construction of whiteness that is at once victimised yet resistant is demonstrative of the inflections of whiteness that gain expression within a South African context—inflections which are at once localised, yet disseminated across international lines of whiteness.

Conclusion

The message of white persecution and resistance points to broader discourses of white victimhood in post-Apartheid South Africa. The extreme right-wing element of the Afrikaans heavy metal scene represents the extreme manifestations of these narratives, but such sentiments are upheld in less radical forms within white communities. Like many young Afrikaners, the members of the post-Apartheid Afrikaans metal scene resist the 'blame' and responsibility for the Apartheid system that their forefathers institutionalised. Somewhat inconsistently, however, scene members are prepared to see their Afrikaner contemporaries as victims of both a bygone imperialist era and the current black majority

government. This desire to remould a whiteness that is absolved of past sins yet simultaneously victimised acts as a barricade for the progressive renegotiation of whiteness. South Africa's 'non-racial' future may have been realised in some abstract way in the transition period with the juridical outlawing of race as a moral basis of citizenship and government, but race and racial identity remain central to life in the Rainbow Nation.

The post-Apartheid culture industry, van der Waal and Robins argue, is one that taps into the profoundly unsettled identity politics of many white Afrikaans-speakers whose continued commitment to a racially exclusivist identity is no longer politically acceptable (2011:763). South African heavy metal then, particularly that which calls for white South Africans to assert themselves politically and culturally in a post-Apartheid context, is representative of such desires to reaffirm white South African identity in a nation that no longer provides patronage for such communities. Territories and discourses of white resistance therefore emerge in Afrikaans metal's claims to the rights of Afrikaners to assert their linguistic and cultural histories in a post-Apartheid context. This chapter has demonstrated that the Afrikaans metal scene has capitalised on the success of the post-Apartheid Afrikaans cultural industry and thus performs its central rhetoric of resistant nationalism in three key ways. Afrikaans metal scenes collate the master symbols of Afrikaner history and present these within appeals to nostalgia and heritage which obfuscate the material reality of racial segregation. From this, the Afrikaans metal scene enters into a rhetoric of white indigeneity which presents Afrikaners as indigenous to South Africa, yet also does the double work of distancing modern Afrikaners from their previous generations by invoking the importance of whiteness in the presumed harmony of the Rainbow Nation. In its most complex manifestations, Afrikaans metal presents a discourse of white victimhood which advocates for the rights of Afrikaners and white South Africans at large, and situates resistant white discourses as a necessary response to the perceived threat of white genocide.

The central question for whiteness in post-Apartheid South Africa, Steyn and Foster claim, can be put simply: how to maintain privilege in a situation in which black people have achieved political power (2008:25). Whiteness and blackness as

constructed categories of identity developed together throughout the centuries of colonialism and Apartheid (Ansell, 2004:7), constituting imagined notions of 'selfhood' and 'other'. Such imagined notions are central to the structuring practices of Afrikaans heavy metal, a scene that enters into the territory of resistant white nationalism. By exaggerating white victimhood and reactivating constructions of the inimical nature of Africa and Africans to whiteness, resistant elements in white South Africa are able to underplay the dominance of their whiteness in the larger scheme of past and present global arrangements (Steyn & Foster 2008:46). The ideological allegiances of whiteness within musical cultures retrench problematic conceptions of originary, localised whiteness even as scenes act as sites of transformative identity work. Music enables the creation of community rapport founded in affective sharing and links forged between musical practices and musical heritage (Straw, 1991:373); furthermore, it also has the potential 'to enact some ideal communities' (Keil 1994:20). Such creation of ideal communities is always predicated on the production of certain boundaries of identity. The focus on white heritage and resistance within South African metal indicates an ongoing project of rewriting the narrative of oppression and victimhood in South Africa. The privilege that accompanied whiteness has not been problematised in modern South Africa, but rather reiterated in contemporary discourses that posit whiteness as under threat while continuing to stress the salience of white African identities.

While the post-Apartheid cultural industry aims to negotiate a place for the nostalgic celebration of whiteness and Afrikanerdom removed from the violent politics of South Africa's recent past, it has become readily apparent that the desire to conceive of 'whiteness' in such a way that power is not invoked is near impossible. The largely white scenes of South African metal, which seek to locate a place for white identities in the new South Africa, are engaged in an ongoing process of adjustment and identity (re)formation. In creating a community space that aims to rebuild 'selves' both by reappropriating the image of the old-style Boer and allowing for a sense of personal congruence, South African metal forms a cornerstone in post-Apartheid music. It becomes apparent, however, that re-tethering the prior moorings of social identity through music may also re-tether

prior prejudices. The rise of the more extreme segments of the South African metal scene suggests that while the discriminatory mechanisms of Apartheid may have been dismantled over twenty years ago, their legacy is still front of mind for much of the South African population. Such politically charged rhetoric manifest in metal indicates that while localised expressions of whiteness continue to be reinvented in contemporary South Africa and recalibrate a role for the 'white tribe' in the twenty-first century, the continual reiteration of racial difference, realised through the arbitrary demarcation of white space, makes the goal of equal accommodation increasingly unrealisable.

Figures referenced:

2.0 Mind Assault 'African Metal' shirt.



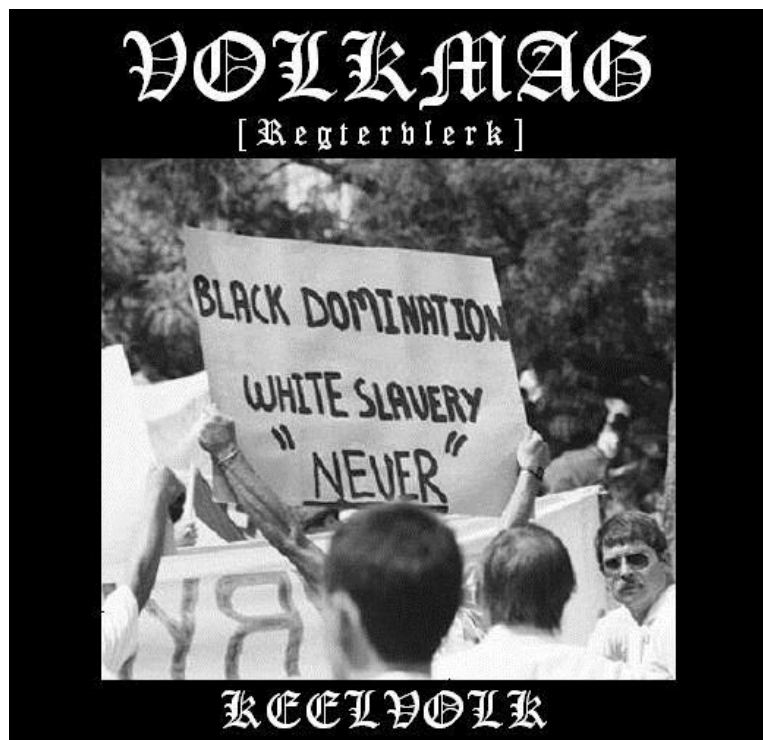
2.1 Volkmag logo.



2.2 Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging logo.



2.3 Volkmag, *Keelvolk* album cover, 2011 (Note — *regtervlerk* is Afrikaans for 'right-wing').



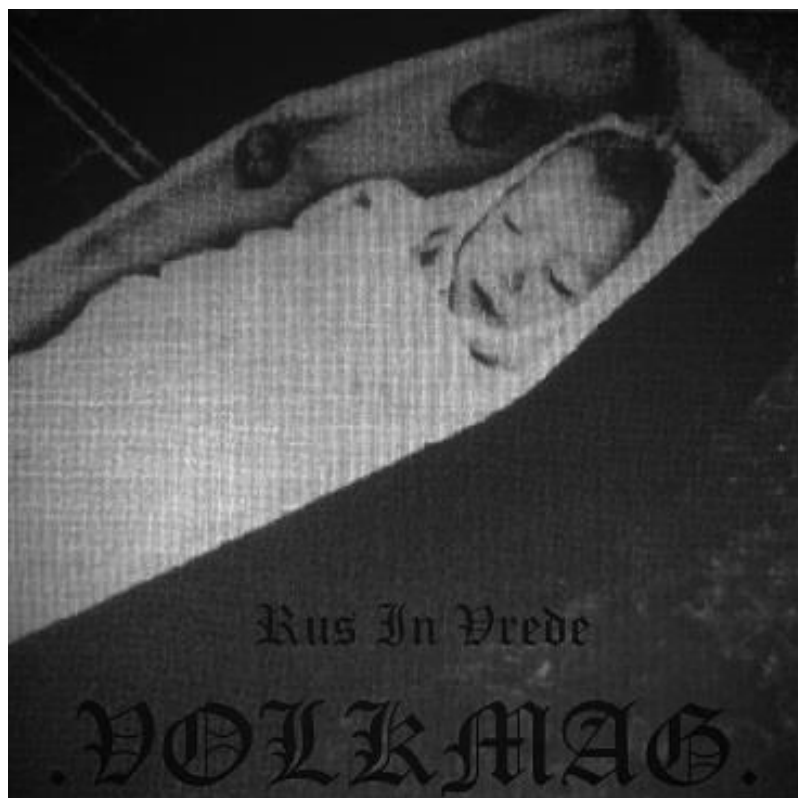
2.4 Volkmag, *Op Oorlogse Vlerke* album cover, 2009.



2.5 Volkmag, *Oorlede, Nooit Vergete* album cover, 2013.



2.6 Volkmag, '*Rus in Vrede*' single, 2015.



Chapter Four

We are the foundations of this modern land: Normophilic Whiteness and Banal Nationalism in Australian extreme metal.

In unity we will fucken stand
We are the foundations of this modern land
We are the sons of the Southern Cross
—Dead Kelly, 'Sons of the Southern Cross', 2014.

Introduction

The story of Australian national identity is, in large part, a story of isolation. The frontier myth of national belonging is reflected in the tales the nation tells itself; the propagation of nationally-honoured histories of struggle, courage and triumph that coalesce in the creation of a discursive outpost which locates white Australia, and white Australians, as unique within an undifferentiated field of Otherness. Such isolation is itself an imperialist conceit. Australia was founded through invasion, conquest and dispossession. Any approach to 'Australian identity' must begin with problematising the categories of nation, race and gender, drawing attention to the politics of their making within the context of relations of domination, subordination and resistance. The task of inventing Australia is a site of struggle over different definitions of national identity and the boundaries of belonging. Australia's colonisation disrupted old identities and social relations, but it also provided space to develop new ones, redefining the means through which national subjects could be rendered, represented and recognised. The ideological collectivities that construct modern Australia as a white possession, and furthermore a white masculine possession, have naturalised the relations of dominance and subordination that dictate national identity.

Australia is a nation deeply entrenched in the violent and annihilatory politics of white guardianship and Indigenous¹ erasure. Furthermore, Australian identity has been almost entirely constructed around images of white men. This chapter investigates how the mutually supportive operations of masculinity and whiteness shore up Australian identity within the spaces of Australia's extreme metal scenes. Australian metal is located in the interplay of local and global considerations; simultaneously isolated from yet tethered to the international scene. However, despite a wealth of music cultures and audiences within Australia, heavy metal music has struggled to find a foothold in the national imaginary. As such, while numerous metal scenes exist throughout the country, 'Australian metal' itself is realised through a complex procession of disjunction and consolidation. The intersection of these domestic scenes provides fertile ground for charting how white masculine identity is constructed and maintained within an Australian context. Australia's extreme metal scenes have developed largely in isolation from not only the rest of the world, but also one another. The vast geographic distances between local scenes and practices means that the national culture of heavy metal within Australia is marked by fragmentation and a sense of remoteness. Nonetheless, extreme metal scenes throughout Australia share common sentiments of national identity that allow for the formation of an imagined community across disparate locales.

Such nationalistic sentiment, realised through the reiteration of the master symbols of Australian identity, sustains an imagined community across extreme metal scenes. However, whilst the flow of nationalist narratives across intranational borders may herald a sense of community, it is also a community marked by rigid parameters of what, or who, may constitute 'Australianness' in the image of such communion. This chapter analyses the mechanisms through which Australian extreme metal scenes construct and maintain a sense of nationhood and community in exclusionary rather than conciliatory ways. Australian extreme metal locates narratives of national identity in appeals to the masculine master symbols of colonial Australia—bushrangers, diggers, blokes and brothers. The repeated inscription of these figures within the practices of

¹ In this chapter I use a capital letter to refer specifically to Australian Indigenous/Aboriginal persons in deference to the preferred mode of address asserted by these communities.

Australian extreme metal scenes mythologises white men as the core of the nation. This is a move further compounded by the exscription of femininity and Indigeneity from scenic narratives. Australian metal's glorification of nationalist masculine archetypes has the combined effect of exalting Australian men as legends while simultaneously crafting a transhistorical essence of 'normal' masculinity that shapes nationalist narratives. Such normophilia, the consecration of 'sameness', and the subsequent exscription of difference, establishes stringent boundaries of who may claim to belong. These scenes therefore negotiate a national narrative of belonging legitimated through the violent terrain of hegemonic sameness.

This chapter interrogates the expression of whiteness within Australia's heavy metal scenes, particularly its thrash, death and black metal scenes. I refer to these scenes collectively as 'extreme metal'; a condensation which has particular significance within the scenic structure of Australian heavy metal. The great distances between urban areas means that scenes coalesce around several subgenres and hybrid styles; such convergence becomes an important mechanism for marking out the much-prized local within Australian extreme metal scenes. Such localism, and its distinctly suburban settings, has further implications for the inflections of whiteness emergent within Australian metal. In this chapter I distinguish the whiteness of Australian heavy metal from the whitenesses of Norway and South Africa by situating such white inflections within the parameters of banal nationalism. Building on the work of Billig (1995), I argue that assertions of white hegemony within an Australian context emerge not through explicit nationalist celebrations, but through the everyday representations of the nation. In analysing how whiteness and white masculine identity has been complicit in the ongoing colonialist project of modern Australia, I argue that the dominant hegemony has been enabled not through spectacular displays of monstrosity and resistance. Rather, hegemony has proceeded through the fetishising of banal white identity, or normophilic whiteness. This fetishisation of both mundanity within Australian metal is predicated upon the enshrining the banality of everyday life. Such invocations of banality are central to the structuring practices of the Australian extreme metal scene and its analysis.

By constructing white hypermasculine figures as the locus of Australian national identity, Australian heavy metal scenes have articulated a rhetoric of everyday, ordinary Australianness which girds exclusionary nationalistic boundaries. In ascribing 'ordinary' men with an originary significance, Australian extreme metal exscribes Indigenous persons from the space of both the scene and the nation, and presents Otherness as a threat to white sovereignty. Glorifying the 'ordinary' within metal scenes contributes to the normative whiteness that dictates the parameters of belonging. In this chapter I further the contention of my thesis by demonstrating how whiteness emerges as a series of localised expressions. I begin by addressing how Australian scenes are situated within the broader context of Metal Music Studies, where discussions of metal nationalisms have hinged largely on overt nationalistic displays or jingoism. Here I argue that Australian extreme metal offers an opportunity for addressing ideas of 'nation' in metal that emerge not through spectacle, but mundanity. Previous searches for explicit displays of 'Australianness' have hence eclipsed the foundational brutal banality at the heart of Australian metal. Australia has been largely overlooked in discussions of heavy metal, perhaps precisely because of overwhelming banality with which nationhood has been articulated within the scene. Nonetheless, I argue that it is important to address the very serious political work that banality performs. Such banal nationalism authorises the procession of normative Australian identity. Interrogating the ethos of ordinariness that permeates Australian extreme metal scenes demonstrates how such discourses construct and maintain the banal whiteness of masculine identity within an Australian context.

In addressing Australian extreme metal as a site that affirms banal white nationalism, this chapter investigates how Australia's extreme metal scenes prize nationalist masculine heroes, but do so in ways that enshrine ordinariness, or banal nationalism. Much like those of South Africa, Australia's heavy metal scenes have developed largely in isolation from the rest of the world. Rather than defining itself through a sense of resistance and reactionary discourse, Australian metal has emerged from a broader nationalist tradition in which Australia conceives of itself as defined through struggle and remoteness. Australian self-imaginings have positioned the nation as a product of 'the tyranny of distance' (Blainey,

[1966]2001), where 'distance' itself becomes a foundational characteristic of Australianness (Blainey, 2001:1) A sense of Australia as a remote white outpost, underpinned by a culture of toughness and brutality, has been a characteristic feature of Australian rock music and therefore drawn upon by Australian metal scenes in distinct ways. Such distinct ways, however, are not immediately conspicuous and often deceptive. As such in this chapter I address the quandary of whether there is 'anything particularly 'Australian' about Australian metal' (Phillipov, 2008:217). I acknowledge previous research which suggests that a 'genuine' Australian identity may not be permeable in ways other than tropes (Phillipov, 2008:217); and furthermore whether there is such a thing as the genuinely Australian. Instead, I argue that it is precisely through reaffirming Australian identity through performative gestures to white hegemonic masculinity that Australian heavy metal scenes constitute themselves within a nationalist discourse.

In the following discussion of Australian extreme metal I argue that the 'Australianness' of Australian heavy metal has been asserted through exclusory fantasies of authentic working-class white men. Australian identity at large has been almost entirely constructed around images of white men, a rhetoric that has been interpellated into the nationalist narratives and performativity of Australian extreme metal. In this chapter I investigate how Australian extreme metal conceptualises Australia; how the spatial and musical practices of scenes reproduce dominant narratives of 'authentic' national identity, and moreover, how the lexicon of 'brutality' in an Australian context has mobilised both aggression and mundanity. In crafting a transhistorical essence of normal masculinity that shapes nationalist narratives, Australian extreme metal scenes demonstrate how invocations of banality establish the parameters of national belonging. In doing so, metal scenes situate Australianness, and hence whiteness, within the violent terrain of normophilia and the systematic violence of policing sameness. Through the symbolic capital of the 'ordinary' man and the mundane suburban spaces in which he operates, the spatial and musical practices of Australian metal scenes enable the formation of a transhistorical essence of not only Australian masculinity, but Australian whiteness. While the majority of the Australian metal

scene may not be explicitly or overtly racist, the scenic practices of staging Australian identity as that which is divorced from Aboriginality and instead begins at the moment of colonial invasion erases non-white Others from the national space. The stock legends of Australian nationalist masculinity emerge within Australian metal, whose national identity is foregrounded by white everyday heroes whose transhistorical essence becomes the hegemonic narrative in mapping the true sons of the nation. This consecration of sameness and the subsequent exscription of difference establishes stringent boundaries of who may claim to belong, both within the culture of the scene and the nation itself.

Scenes Down Under(ground): Metal in Australia

Australian heavy metal has long existed on the peripheries of the global heavy metal scene. Even within a national context the genre has always been 'resolutely underground' (Fischer-Giffin, 2008:i), rarely attracting the attention afforded to other local music scenes. Within the wider sphere of Metal Music Studies Australian scenes have been treated as a remote outlier, a characterisation that has in turn informed the dominant ways in which the scene conceives of itself. Scholarly literature on heavy metal in Australia is extremely scarce. Where discussions of heavy metal in Australia have emerged, these have largely been located within the broader moral panic period of heavy metal literature. Discussions of the role of heavy metal in youth violence and self-harm in Australia (Martin, Clarke & Pearce, 1993) operate within the same earlier framework that establishes heavy metal's audience as young men who are at a higher risk of suicide; the authors indicate nothing particularly 'Australian' about this scholarship beyond the location of its sample.

Maggie Brady's *Heavy Metal* (1992), despite its title, limits its discussion of heavy metal music to a brief section exploring the relationship between metal music and youth rebellion in Australian Indigenous communities. Here Brady makes some significant comments as to the communal power of heavy metal within the context of Indigenous communities maligned by cultural and political power. Aligning themselves with heavy metal allowed young Indigenous people to stake out an identity external to 'mainstream Aboriginal society' (1992:88); loudly

playing heavy metal on cassette players in public spaces also provided a point of contrast to the Christian pop music favoured in Indigenous settlements (1992:91). Brady notes that it is against this backdrop of a strong Christian presence (a result of the Church Missionary Society of the Anglican Church that sought to 'civilise' Indigenous communities) that 'juvenile Aboriginal gangs' have emerged, and hence used heavy metal as a form of deviance that allows for the development of an alternative source of self-esteem (1992:93). This notion of Indigenous youth using heavy metal as an identity marker to deviate from instrumental Christian colonialism is a compelling one; it is nonetheless lost within the hubris of demonising tone of the text, where young Indigenous men are labelled 'sniffers' (a reference to the act of petrol sniffing) and the discussion of metal itself is couched in negative terms and associated with drug use (1992:95). Both these accounts of heavy metal in Australian contexts miss the local circumstances under which scenes form. Furthermore, the negative appraisals of heavy metal in both cases lend themselves to the wider malignment and censorship of metal music within Australia (c.f. Pettman, 1996), itself an important factor in the history of the community.

Academic work on the 'Australianness' of Australian metal is only a relatively recent contribution to the field. The potential national inflections of Australian metal have formed only a tangential theme in the sparse literature that deals with the genre. Krenske and McKay's claim to examine the gendered dynamics of heavy metal in a Brisbane club (2000) problematically relies on fieldwork conducted in 1993; moreover their findings are largely indistinguishable from other studies of this period. Krenske and McKay note the audience for heavy metal is 'Anglo-Celtic men aged between 18 and 24' (2000:292) and further suggest that club patrons were drug users (2000:292). McKay, for her part, notes that 'although tertiary-educated, my working-class and rural background helped consolidate rapport with respondents' (2000:293). This observation alludes to important demographic components amongst Brisbane's heavy metal scenes; nevertheless the suggestion that the two (tertiary educated and working class) are mutually exclusive amongst metal fans is problematic. Despite their context, Krenske and McKay's study offers no considerations of national identity, instead reproducing dominant readings of

heavy metal's semiotic codes that allow white men to maintain an uncontested or unquestioned position of privilege. Michelle Phillipov's 'Metal Downunderground' (2008) thus represents the first significant scholarly appraisal of Australian heavy metal. Here Phillipov argues that the Australian scene is caught in an interplay of local and global considerations. Heavy metal scenes in Australia hence acknowledge both individual specificity and a shared national context (Phillipov, 2008:217) as a means of staking out their own territory in a community that is increasingly oriented towards the global.

In 'Metal Downunderground', Phillipov questions whether Australian bands have been able to assert their 'Australianness' within a global scene (2008:217). Individual bands have deployed tropes of Australianness in their music, she argues—Alchemist, for example, have utilised Indigenous music and lyrical references to the Australian landscape (2008:217). However, Phillipov contends that few Australian bands attend to geographic and cultural particularities (2008:217). I instead suggest that while Australian metal may musically cater to more global trends, interactions within Australian scenes themselves rather than musical output alone offer more complex and multifaceted insights into the manner in which 'Australia' comes to be represented within Australian metal—and crucially, *who* represents such Australianness. As such, Phillipov's suggestion that 'metal has not become "indigenised" in Australia in the way it has in some other parts of the world' (2008:217) requires further investigation. I suggest that Australian metal bands have in fact attempted to indigenise metal precisely through effacing the meaning of 'indigeneity', erasing a deeply problematic and violent colonial history and instead situating 'authentic' Australianness as that which corresponds to and challenges particular archetypes of white Australian identity.

Phillipov's contribution to academic literature on Australian heavy metal therefore provides the necessary starting point for subsequent research. This question of what may be considered 'Australian' about Australian metal is one also visited by Rosemary Overell's ethnographic study of specific Australian and Japanese grindcore scenes (2012). Here Overell offers significant insights into the nature of both gender and racial structures within Australian metal, and addresses

the centrality of white masculinity to Australian metal identity. Her investigation of grindcore scenes in Melbourne and Osaka found that the national subject interpellated by scene members was overwhelmingly male (2012:266) and, in the case of Australian scenes, white (2012:267). The broader cultural, personified image of the nation, Overell observes, is often male and constructed through the amalgamation of wider national stereotypes to represent Australian identity within metal scenes (Overell, 2012:266–267). Her study of grindcore scenes in Melbourne, for example, contends that the 'wider national archetype' (2012:267) used to represent Australian identity within the space of the scene emerges in the interplay between 'white, sporting, bloke identity' (2012:271) and the 'white, heterosexual male 'Aussie bogan'²' (2012:267). Both the sporting practice of sledging³ and bogan identity are played upon in reflexive ways within the space of the Melbourne grindcore scene, where they '[undercut] the Australian patriotism they both connote' (2012:278). Nonetheless, Overell notes, such representations are more complex than blunt signifiers automatically interpellating nationalist subjects (2012:278).

This acknowledgement that nationalism emerges in forms beyond immediate and explicit invocations supports the central contention of this chapter, which argues that whiteness and white nationalism as they are given expression in Australian heavy metal rely not on spectacle, but banality. Responses to whiteness and patriarchal nationhood in Australian heavy metal scenes can appear in outright displays of racism, homophobia and misogyny. I argue that what has been overwhelmingly absent in the already minimal investigations of Australian metal is an awareness of the mechanisms of mundanity in affirming national identity. The nation constructed within Australian extreme metal is one largely maintained through tacit reproductions of hegemonic Australian identity. Nationalism, as Overell points out, 'manifests itself in ways apart from waving a flag and openly

² 'Bogan', in Australia, is a pejorative term used to refer to the white working class who are perceived as vulgar, poorly educated and engaging in uncivilised behaviour (Nichols, 2011). Dave Snell's research on heavy metal in New Zealand (2013) liberally utilises the term 'bogan' as a key form of positive identification within the national scene, though I argue that the term has different regional connotations that distinguish its use in Australian scenes from its deployment in a New Zealand context.

³ 'Sledging' is a term usually used in cricket, though its uses extend to other sports, to denote the on-field practice whereby players seek to gain advantage over an opposition player through insults and verbal intimidation.

denouncing migrants' (2012:267). What is 'Australian' about Australian heavy metal is a white heteromale identity which continues to be realised through banal forms of nationalism. Australian identity within heavy metal is entangled within a territory of whiteness that is invisibilised yet omnipresent. Australian metal scenes bear witness to the privileging and consecration of extremely mundane forms of white capital; capital which nonetheless becomes an central bartering tool in the field of whiteness represented by domestic extreme metal scenes.

The performative gestures of white masculinity within Australian scenes are an example of the intrusion of regional differences into ostensibly universal practices (Homan, 2000:32). Australian heavy metal is located within an interplay of local and global considerations; simultaneously isolated from yet tethered to the international scene. Despite a wealth of music cultures and audiences within Australia, heavy metal music has struggled to find a consolidated following within the nation at large. Locally produced metal music, and indeed metal at large, is still a relatively marginal genre in a nation that prides itself on its rock output. Heavy metal in Australia has its origins in late 1960s hard rock and psychedelic acts such as Buffalo, Lobby Loyde and the Coloured Balls and Blackfeather. Australian metal further owes a stylistic debt to harder pub rock acts of the 1970s and 1980s such as AC/DC, The Angels and Rose Tattoo. 'Pub rock' or 'Oz rock', the colloquial labels for rock n' roll music played in crowded inner-city and suburban pubs, is an important generic forebearer for mapping the growth of Australian heavy metal. Furthermore, such categories reveal how Australian metal articulates its relationship to and performance of certain iterations of national identity. Rock n' roll in an Australian context has historically been defined through its 'toughness' (Evans, 1998:125), where rock music bolstered elements of Australian working-class life, 'adding a dimension of specularly to the world of the ordinary' (Evans, 1998:126).

Working class toughness is a common theme within Australian rock music. Ian Belshaw (formerly of Trench Hell) contends that 'Australians have traditionally had a fairly staunch, uncompromising nature, and I think this has flowed into the way our music—right back to AC/DC, Buffalo, and Rose Tattoo—

has been performed' (in Haun, 2010: para. 24). Pub rock, McFarlane argues, fused combinations of hard rock, blues and rockabilly that were 'defiantly Australian in outlook' (1999:130), imbued with a sense of space and place reflected in lyrics. The sound of pub rock itself, it follows, was also heavily influenced by its surroundings—the 'Australian pub rock tradition' was one underpinned by 'no-frills, hard-driving boogie rock' (McFarlane, 1999:17). Venues at the peak of pub rock's popularity in the 1970s and early 1980s were small and lacked high-quality acoustics and sound equipment. Australian pub rock's emphasis on rhythm-based songs is likely a result of this environment. The tendency towards repetitive riffs, bass-driven rhythms and exaggerated snare- and kick-drum sounds is thus not only born from environmental necessity, but also established a precedent for Australian rock music as straightforward, unaffected and energetic. These characteristics have become central to Australian heavy metal's own sense of self, which prides itself on honesty, purity and brutality.

The earliest Australian heavy metal bands emerged in the late 1970s, heavily influenced by both existing pub rock scenes and the emergent New Wave of British Heavy Metal. Such acts were largely unsuccessful and had limited audiences; support emerged primarily from a small number of community radio stations in Melbourne (3PBS and 3RRR). While some local bands gained support slots on Australian tours with larger international acts (Sydney band Heaven, for example, opened for Judas Priest, KISS and Mötley Crüe before their breakup in 1985), the domestic scene itself remained underground. The increasing success of thrash metal in the late 1980s raised the profile of heavy metal in Australia and ushered in a wave of Australian thrash metal acts heavily influenced by Bay Area and Teutonic Thrash bands. This period was a turning point in the development of Australian heavy metal and arguably marks the first moves towards crafting an identifiably 'Australian' sound. Hobbs' Angel of Death from Melbourne and Mortal Sin from Sydney were the two most high-profile bands to emerge from the Australian thrash scene; Mortal Sin in particular were Australia's most well-known band, gaining a respectable following in Europe and the United States. While Mortal Sin's sound was heavily influenced by American thrash metal, a central component of their position within the Australian scene, and a common

feature of Australian heavy metal, was that the band had a larger audience overseas than at home.

This relationship between domestic and international audiences is a central characteristic of how scenes define Australian heavy metal. Many Australian acts have found greater support in foreign markets—Decaylust of Denouncement Pyre notes that 'Most of the interest and support comes from overseas' (in Haun, 2010: para. 36). As such, while numerous metal scenes, institutions and bands exist throughout the country, many Australian heavy metal acts have found greater success in foreign markets. 'Australian heavy metal has enjoyed a real surge in popularity and acceptance [since 2002]', argues Fischer-Giffin, leading him to suggest that 'the Australian metal scene has finally come of age' (Fischer-Giffin, 2008:i). It may be the case that Australian metal is more commercially viable than ever—evidence of this can be seen in the international and domestic success of metalcore acts such as Northlane, Parkway Drive and I Killed the Prom Queen. What is left, however, is an Australian metal scene that exists as a duopoly: one with international success, largely dislocated from the geographic confines of the national space, and the other, a domestic community constrained within and influenced by these parameters. This sense of simultaneous connection and isolation is manifest in particular iterations of Australian identity that tie Australian heavy metal to a wider international scene and locate a performance that is distinctly 'Australian'. The marginalisation and migration of Australian metal music, however, forces the question of what it is to perform 'Australianness' within a scene that may be disconnected from not only a consolidated national scene, but also the geographic parameters of Australia itself.

This challenge of representing 'Australianness' in a scene that is not only fragmented by vast distances within the nation, but also largely relies on overseas audiences for commercial success, becomes one of the key struggles of Australian metal. Despite this, extreme metal scenes throughout Australia assert common sentiments of national identity that allow for the formation of an imagined community across disparate locales. This nationalistic sentiment, realised through the ubiquity of the master symbols of Australian identity, sustains an imagined community across extreme metal scenes. Nonetheless, whilst the movement of

nationalist narratives across intranational borders may signal a sense of inclusive community, it is also a community marked by rigid parameters of what, or who, may constitute 'Australianness' in the image of such communion. Australian metal deploys symbols that gesture back to an overarching hegemonic masculinity which is represented in the 'white heart' of the nation (Schech & Haggis, 2000:232). I argue that the musical spectrum represented by heavy metal music produced in Australia—and particularly grind, black, death and thrash metal—caters to these archetypes lyrically, aesthetically and musically, presenting visual and verbal symbols that draw upon the canon of white Australian identity while reflecting the desire for independence, authenticity and power through the self-styled 'brutality' of the music itself. Examination of Haun's (2010) interview with long-term performers within Australian metal scenes reveals that common descriptors of Australian metal rest on the purity and ferocity of the genre. 'Loud', 'chaotic', 'ugly', 'ferocious', 'bestial' and 'brutal' are repeatedly used in discussions of the Australian scene. Phrases such as 'heavy as fuck' and 'brutally aggressive' are used to separate 'true' Australian metal from 'overpublicised, glamourised, commercial shit' (in Haun, 2010).

Australian metal makes a point of distinguishing itself aesthetically from more stylised strains of metal. Norwegian black metal's corpsepaint and gothic, militia-inspired ensembles, for example, would be disparaged in this context. In many ways this reflects the normophilia that permeates Australian culture—a desire to not stand out, to be 'authentic'. Furthermore, this legacy of brutality is central to marking the territory claimed as 'Australian' within the scope of global metal. Ben Wrecker (drummer of Hotel City Wrecking Traders and the owner of Bro Fidelity records) argues that the fierce do-it-yourself ethic of the Australian scene is underpinned by 'the 'Aussie Battler'⁴ mentality that nothing's supposed to be that easy' (in Haun, 2010: para. 7). This sense of 'doing it the hard way'—and taking pride in such efforts—is pivotal to the central identities of Australian metal scenes and, I argue, underpins many nationalist narratives of Australia. The notion of locating some form of 'purity' or 'truth' through creating styles of heavy metal

⁴ 'Aussie Battler' is a common trope of nationalist discourse in Australia. Bode argues that the 'Aussie battler' is the central icon of Australian masculinity, and is used to denote a hard-working man who receives little reward for his struggles and courage (2006:2).

that are brutal and ferocious, true to the alleged ethos of metal, finds correlation with older colonial and settler narratives. Such representations of men living off the land in violent and hostile conditions, challenging the authority of the colonial father, sustains a democratic nationalist tradition and produces the 'heroes' that enable the myth of the typical Australian to become a valued cultural currency.

The notion of 'purity' has been crucial to the development of Australian metal's self-identity (Phillipov, 2008:218). Hobbs' Angel of Death (generally regarded as the progenitors of Australian extreme metal) described themselves as 'virgin metal' in reference to their 'purist' approach (Phillipov, 2008:218). This shift towards metal fundamentalism (Weinstein, 2000:48) was typical of European and American scenes in the mid-1980s, but appears particularly rampant within Australian extreme metal scenes. Early Australian extreme metal acts became renown internationally for their 'uncompromising brutality' (Phillipov, 2008:218). Bands such as Bestial Warlust (formerly Corpse Molestation), Deströyer 666 and Sadistik Exekution were notable proponents of this style—short, fast songs, 'chaotic' sounds (heavy distortion, rapid tremolo picking, blast beats and growled or screeched vocals), a disavowal of melody, and low-quality production are all generic conventions. This combination of thrash and death metal influences and the lyrical themes common to early black metal is regarded as a 'particularly Australian one' (Phillipov, 2008:219). These ferocious bands were labelled 'war metal' (denoting the combination of black, death and thrash and its interest in warfare)—both Decaylust and Ian Belshaw note that this label is particularly associated with Australia (in Haun, 2010: para. 16, para. 18) despite the small number of bands to which it refers. The correlation of war metal, and later blackened thrash, with Australian heavy metal scenes, then offers a starting point for charting how bands have been able to articulate their Australianness through both generic conventions and lyrical and visual narratives. Thrash, death and black metal are long-established genres in their own right, but their combination within 'war metal' is, for Phillipov, Decaylust and Belshaw, an Australian style. The international recognition of an 'Australian sound', as contested as this may be (for example, Glenn Destruktor of Destruktor (in Haun, 2010: para. 20) argues that there were not enough chaotic, violent bands from Australia to warrant a 'war

metal' scene), has ensured the continued dominance and prestige of a 'brutal' aesthetic (Phillipov, 2008:219) in Australian extreme metal scenes. I argue that musically, this valorising of violence and ferocity foregrounds the importance of authenticity within the scene; furthermore these notions of authenticity, honesty and truthfulness become central foundations for the banal nationalism which characterises expressions of whiteness in Australian heavy metal.

Violence and mundanity: Conditions for Australia's exclusionary whiteness

The history and development of Australian extreme metal shows that scenes have drawn heavily from existing rock scenes and their institutions, which had long been steadily white, male and working class in the demographics of both bands and fans alike. I argue that such identities have a significance beyond demographics, which is bolstered by the broader conditions for nationalist belonging within Australia. Australia is a nation both historically and contemporaneously tied to whiteness. The official colonial policy of *terra nullius*, 'land belonging to no one', legitimised white invasion and settlement, and formed the plateau upon which white dominion was grounded, erasing and effacing Indigenous sovereignty over the land. Furthermore, such policies were debilitating to Indigeneity itself. In declaring Australia devoid of any recognisable political organisation, and moreover, any civilised subjects, British colonialists not only disenfranchised Indigenous communities through the disavowal of existing tribal legal systems, but staged a crippling dehumanisation of Indigenous peoples through the routine demarcation of 'natives' or 'savages' and settlers. Such violent territorial logics formed the precedent for the institutional oppression, abuse and murder of Indigenous Australians in prisons, orphanages, and domestic and reformatory schools for the two centuries to follow.

The most insidious, and hence simultaneously the most invisibilised, aftermath of such subjugation was the enactment of a dichotomy in which race was inexhaustibly entangled. Staging 'civilised' Europeans in opposition to 'savage' Indigenous populations allowed for the continuation of the colonialist 'white against black' opposition. Presenting whiteness as the positive opposite of an invented and negative blackness (Brodin, 1999:15) maintains white

sovereignty over an Indigenous 'Other'; furthermore, the hegemonic view of Australian whiteness has been accompanied by an erasure of an Aboriginal presence (Gray, 1999:82). Australia's narrative history of its own whiteness is one concerned with the gradual erasure of indigenous identity and the (sub)conscious desire to render the nation white—not only physiologically, but morally (Stratton, 1999:165). This complex commensurance between whiteness and morality underpins not only historical encounters between colonisers and Indigenous communities, but still permeates contemporary discussions of race relations in modern Australia. These discourses of morality, or rather the invented incompatibility of 'Others' with a distinctly Australian morality, have hence been used to justify the gradual destruction of Indigenous cultures within Australia. Doing so relegates Aboriginality to a mystical past, 'transforming the myth of terra nullius into a myth of Aboriginal antiquity' (Secomb, 2003:93) and hence ensuring a futural white eternity.

The grounding of white Australian identity upon 'morality' is an intensely problematic and contradictory process. The history of Australia is a history of displacements (Pettman, 1992:1). White Australia was founded through invasion and dispossession, and sustained through discriminatory and violent immigration policies that continue to reify the borders of national identity. Representations of Australia as extraordinarily peaceable are only possible by denying the violence of colonisation and the turbulent histories that underlie many migrations (Pettman, 1992:1). Nonetheless, the crafting of narratives of Australia, particularly from the twentieth century onwards, is a task explicitly concerned with the moral character of the average Australian (Stratton, 1999:165). Racial policy within Australia relies on the distinction between whiteness and 'other' races. However, whiteness is frequently abstracted into claims of moral assumptions, and articulated in terms of acceptable moral difference. Claims to common morality were used to disguise the racial discrimination of Australia's immigration policies throughout the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. By the 1880s, 'white' came to identify the defining characteristic of what was becoming thought of as the national group (Stratton, 1999:174). The colonial legislation prior to Federation was thus

concerned with the regulation of exclusion of particular groups⁵ with a view to maintaining whiteness as a core identity. By 1901, whiteness had become the defining racial marker of the Australian nation (Stratton, 1999:175). The Immigration Restriction Act of 1901, also known as the White Australia Policy, is the most visible attempt to create a uniformly white Australia. Limiting migration to only white persons sought to maintain a culturally homogenous nation realised through common morality, and hence ensure Australia remained a 'white outpost' within the Commonwealth. Between the end of the Second World War and the late 1960s the legislative architecture of the White Australia Policy was gradually dismantled as increasing numbers of non-white communities were permitted to immigrate to Australia. The shift in migration policies was from assumptions of racial homogeneity to cultural homogeneity (Stratton, 1999:178), a feature that Pettman claims underpinned later policies of assimilation under the guise of multiculturalism (1992:95). What was really at stake in the twentieth century preoccupation with whiteness was the set of moral and cultural assumptions that came embedded within it; assumptions that point to the notion of a 'unitary Australian culture' (Stratton, 1999:178) and hence enable the articulation of 'authentic' Australianness.

The construction and maintenance of Australian whiteness depends upon socially engineered notions of shared values and morality. Such 'shared values' continue to be sanctioned from a position of white structural privilege. The notion of a unitary Australian culture, characterised by shared values and morals, allows for an institutionalisation of the boundaries, histories and myths of Australian whiteness, and the prizing of its defining characteristics. I argue though, that in contrast to the whitenesses of Norway and South Africa, such values and morals are given expression not through appeals to ancient pastimes or religiously-inflected pioneer narratives, but rather precisely through their banality. As such,

⁵ In 1861 New South Wales passed the Chinese Immigration Restriction Act which severely restricted the ability of Chinese persons to work or live within the colony; this was followed by the passing of the 1876 Goldfields Amendment Act in Queensland which attempted to curb immigration from Asia and Africa by charging a higher license fee to 'Asiatics and African aliens' (Willard, [1923]1967:42). In 1897 New South Wales passed the Coloured Races Restriction and Regulation Bill which generalised the provisions of earlier anti-Chinese legislation to include persons from Asia, Africa and islands in the Pacific and Indian Oceans. Shortly after an Act was passed requiring an 'education test' for potential migrants, which formed the basis of later federal legislation.

where Stratton argues that the 'morality' of Australian whiteness was made commensurate with Christianity (1999:165) I instead contend that the preconditions for Australian whiteness become mobilised through appeals to hard work, loyalty, and the decrual of spectacle. These values are discursively allied to whiteness and white communities in ways that present Others as incompatible with such seemingly mundane attributes. These are attributes, moreover, which are continually inscribed with gendered value. White Australia itself is a masculinist construction (Wadham, 2004:192). The 'myth of the typical Australian' (Schaffer, 1988:79) is preoccupied with images of white men who dominate the processes and practices of nation building. The archetypes of Australian masculinity are comprised of elements encoded in and by myths of national identity; in doing so these figures produce and reproduce notions of 'typical' Australians.

Images of white men are commonplace in the national narrative—the convict, the heroic explorer, the bushman, the digger⁶, the athlete, the ANZAC⁷ (Connell, 2003:9; Nicoll, 2001:113; Schaffer, 1988:20). Such narratives are overwhelmingly marked by the exscription of women and Indigenous persons. Masculinity and whiteness are mutually supportive discourses in ideas about Australian national identity, a relationship which extends into the discourses and practices of Australian extreme metal. Nonetheless, one must acknowledge the multitude of masculinities within Australia that operate at the intersections of race, class and sexuality. Some masculinities are dominant while others are marginalised or discredited (Connell, 2003:14); the most 'honoured or desired' form of hegemonic masculinity may be the most visible, but not necessarily the most common (Connell, 2003:15). Australian extreme metal scenes have negotiated this potential paradox precisely through saturating heroic or honoured patriarchal figures in the rhetoric of 'ordinary' masculinity. In situating the 'typical' Australian man entirely within the constraints of every day masculinity, extreme metal scenes divorce hegemonic masculinity from plutocracy. Instead, such constructions allow white men to position themselves as possessing an anti-

⁶ Slang in Australia and New Zealand for a soldier. It has been suggested that the term has its roots in the goldmining period of the mid-to-late nineteenth century; the term is closely associated with the practice of digging out a trench on the battlefield.

⁷ A member of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps.

authoritarian working class masculinity that defines itself in opposition to institutional power, whilst continuing to entrench its staid orthodoxy. Such images of the 'nation' establish rigid boundaries that tie Australianness explicitly to whiteness, and continue to entangle the nation within the hegemony of white masculinities.

Australian identity and its realisation across classed, gendered and racialised lines is caught within a terrain of whiteness. The ongoing fetishisation of the local within Australian metal is predicated upon processes of enshrining the banality of everyday life. Through the symbolic capital of the working-class bloke, the digger and the miner, the spatial and musical practices of Australian metal scenes enable the formation of a transhistorical essence of not only Australian men, but Australian whiteness. Collective ideology and practices allow whiteness to operate as the dominant norm and hence naturalises not only the boundaries of identity, but also the role and power of dominant groups. By representing a dominant group's culture as the norm, and others deviant, where they are represented at all, allows racism and its representations of Others to become common sense (Pettman, 1992:3). The task of protecting Australian whiteness from such 'Others' had been a common feature of national legislation throughout much of the nation's history. This is a narrative that has become mobilised into Australian extreme metal scenes in varied and consistently troubling forms. There are segments of the Australian metal community who stage a defence of whiteness in readily identifiable and deliberate ways. Australia's extreme metal scenes do host a small but vocal community concerned with the 'sanctity' of white identity. While such groups are by no means definitive of the Australian scene, they do constitute the most vocal manifestations of the field of whiteness (Hage, 1998:57) within a scene that is largely marked by its tacit valorisation of such identities. Extreme right-wing metal in Australia, much like in Norway and South Africa, has expressed concerns over the loss of 'white' nationhood via a rhetoric of white supremacy and racial purity. RAC, National Socialist Black Metal and other bands that advocate white power or neo-Nazism have had a particularly low profile within the

Australian metal scene, elevated by periodic media scandals⁸. The political marginality of neo-Nazism and fascism in Australia reinforces this relative obscurity of white power metal in an Australian context, as does the limitation of the scene to a largely virtual presence, and the desire of performers and followers to remain anonymous. Bands such as Wolfsblood, Arysk, Reich of the Black Sun and others have nonetheless utilised the space of the extreme metal scene to enact reactionary white discourses and assert of racial superiority.

The extreme right-wing sentiment in Australian heavy metal reasserts the most confronting forms of metallic whiteness across the global metal community. Much like the corresponding scenes in Norway and South Africa, such communities attempt to establish an arrangement for ancient and noble whiteness. Situating Australian whiteness within the same appeals to transhistorical and transglobal white identities enables bands and fans to reach out to their racial kin in the white fatherlands through the ideological allegiances of whiteness. Overwhelmingly these bands gesture to Germanic and Pagan or Norse symbolism (baldr, valkyries, Ragnarok), reiterating the international whiteness grounded in the 'North' that finds itself represented and translated within specific national contexts. Blood Red Eagle, for instance, make direct connections between Australian whiteness (and its ostensible struggles) and the cultural tool of the Viking—album titles such as *Return to Asgard* (2005), *Teutonic Atavism* (2005) and *Burning Down the Churches* (2007) all construct a relationship between the North and Australia based on perceived mutual struggles for white domination. The battle for white heteromascularity is embedded within such reactionary rhetoric. Axis of Blood's 'Under the Holy Swastika' (*Triumph of the Will*, 2013), for example, is concerned with the supremacy of white masculinity:

Under the Holy Swastika/Lies the mission of the struggle
Under the Holy Swastika/For the victory of Aryan man.

Axis of Blood draw obvious connections to National Socialist ideologies within both their lyrics and their performance aesthetic. Their appeal to the 'Holy Swastika' and the 'mission' parlays a particularly religious ideological approach

⁸ For example, the nationally-syndicated *The Saturday Paper* published an investigative journalism piece entitled 'The Nazi Hunter' (April 5-11 2014:1, 10-11).

that suspends such a 'struggle' in time—Axis of Blood's agenda is then not located solely within Australia, but with white 'racial consciousness' worldwide. Thrash act Death's Head (in reference to the Nazi *totenkopf*) are explicitly focused on Australian racial politics—'Keep Australia White' (*Hang the Traitors*, 1999) is explicitly oriented towards Australia's immigration policies while other tracks from the album celebrate racial genocide ('More Dead Niggers'). The band have utilised symbols which situate Australian whiteness within a wider international whitening impetus—Death's Head have performed with both a Eureka flag⁹ and a Blood Honour banner alongside the Nazi triskele, a symbol that is also used by far right-wing groups in South Africa. In forging an allegiance between the symbolic capital of Australian whiteness and the signifiers of a broader reactionary movement, such bands attempt to establish the conditions for transnational white consciousness. The notion of transnational whiteness takes on new levels of importance as whites conceive of themselves as experiencing a loss of political dominance within local contexts.

Despite the potentiality of transnational white consciousness enacted within heavy metal scenes, extreme-right wing scenes are not definitive examples of the whitenesses that emerge amongst local metal communities. Members of Australia's wider metal scenes have been instrumental in confronting and critiquing the influence of such acts. The anonymous blogger *Slack Bastard*, for example (the eponymous 'Nazi Hunter' profiled by *The Saturday Paper*, see note 8) has observed that how seriously the histrionics associated with RAC and White Power metal acts should be taken is an open question (2010: para. 23). Australian RAC and white power-aligned bands do not represent a core of the Australian metal scene; moreover, the presence of such bands as a consolidated scene has declined significantly since the 1990s. Most of these acts and their audiences are very reluctant to associate themselves with the title of National Socialist Black Metal or even admit their participation within the scene. Nonetheless, I argue that

⁹ The Eureka Stockade flag (a stylised Southern Cross on a navy blue background) was first used in the Eureka Rebellion of 1854 by goldminers revolting against the colonial authority of the United Kingdom. It has gained notability in Australian culture as a symbol of nationalism, democracy and protest, but has controversially been taken up by some radical groups, among them the white supremacist 'National Action' organisation.

the themes exacerbated within such extremist manifestations of Australian whiteness have their origins in the discourse of the 'favourable normative climate' used to conceive of white Australia (Louis et. al. 2010:653), which seeks to maintain normative hegemony.

Extreme right-wing heavy metal music is deliberately divisive and confronting, violent and encased within the caustic rhetoric and ideology of white supremacy. To deny this is to trivialise the very serious calls for reactionary fascist violence advocated by these bands. However, to suggest that racism only exists within such extreme-right wing scenes, and hence divorce it entirely from the scenic structures of Australian metal, would be to allow for an excusal of even the most mundane, seemingly harmless racisms where they do occur. It is important not to situate white power metal in Australia as the definitive example of the racial politics of the national scene at large. Rather, I argue that instead of situating extreme right-wing and white supremacist scenes as the 'end' point for reactionary white violence in heavy metal, as they have been treated in the previous two chapters, within this context these extremist sentiments provide only a starting point for interrogating sentiments of exclusionary whiteness in Australian scenes. Such right-wing scenes are spectacular expressions of the normative whiteness that structures daily lived realities in Australia. In exploring the banal nationalism of Australian heavy metal, this chapter demonstrates how such extremist manifestations emerge from the tacit valorisations of white identity that shape every day interactions.

Soldiers, Sappers, Saints: White men as symbols of banal nationalism

In Australia's extreme metal scenes white patriarchal nationalism largely takes the form of a more mundane, unspoken national condition; what Billig (1995) calls 'banal nationalism'. The very idea of nationalism itself entails some notion of extremism (Billig, 1995:1) and limited temporality or transience. Billig thus introduces the term 'banal nationalism' to conceive of nationalism in its every day, lived forms. Banal nationalism addresses the ideological habits which enable established nations to be reproduced (Billig, 1995:6). These habits are not removed or abstracted from daily lives—rather, the nation is continuously

indicated, or 'flagged' in the lives of its citizens (Billig, 1995:6). Nationalism, far from being an 'intermittent mood in established nations' (Billig, 1995:6) is the endemic condition. There are extremist nationalistic elements within Australian metal scenes; these are the most hypervisible narrative performances of white Australia within heavy metal. However, I argue that what is 'Australian' about Australian heavy metal is an expression of national identity and pastimes which continues to be realised through banal forms of nationalism. Australian identity within heavy metal is caught within a territory of whiteness that is invisibilised yet omnipresent.

Extreme metal scenes within Australia privilege and consecrate extremely mundane forms of white capital; capital which nonetheless becomes an impressive bartering tool in the 'field of whiteness' (Hage, 1998:57) represented by domestic metal communities. Locating what is Australian about Australian heavy metal requires not necessarily investigations of explicit nationalism, but the tacit nationalisms of daily life which foreground white subjects in representations of Australia. The performative gestures towards white masculinity within Australian scenes work to reinscribe 'ordinary' white men as constituting the authentic core of national identity, yet also do the complex double work of presenting these same men as unique and under threat from loosely defined 'Others'. This double logic, I argue, becomes the key structuring practice of the banal nationalism that can be identified within Australia's extreme metal scenes. Centralising the ordinary white man as the foundation of normative Australian life, yet also a figure 'at risk', allows banality to paradoxically become a valued means of expression. The simultaneous mundanity and spectacle of the 'everyday bloke' provides the crucial preconditions for the procession of banal nationalism within Australian extreme metal scenes.

Narratives and images of white men are central to the construction and maintenance of Australian identity (Connell, 2003:9). Apart from pandering to images of egalitarian bushrangers, heroic resistance on the goldfields and wartime sacrifice, Australian identity is defined in terms of a 'masculine emphasis on mateship' (Vasta, 1993:212), a definition that works to exscribe Indigenous peoples, women and migrants. The 'longstanding affiliation of nationhood and

masculinity' (Bode, 2006:1), which enables the procession of a 'specifically Australian system of cultural signification for the common man, whose values [are said to] shape the national character' (Schaffer, 1988:20), affirms the masculinist outlook of narratives of Australianness. Within Australian extreme metal, white hegemonic masculinities are mobilised through both romanticised historical archetypes and celebrations of daily realities. What is privileged in these representations, I argue, is not the phantasmic aura of past heroes, but rather the ways in which these positions are located within the simultaneous mundanity and exceptionalism of 'every day' Australians. This normophilia and privileging of the ordinary is the most tacit yet most powerful process through which Australian whiteness is interpellated and performed by domestic metal scenes. Normative national discourse, which celebrates hegemonic national identity is, in this context, even more insidious and powerful than racially-exclusive jingoistic patriotism. Furthermore, positioning hegemony as both authentic and favourable yet simultaneously under threat from the very figures it excludes is central to understanding how it informs Australian extreme metal's own sense of self.

The banal nationalism of Australian metal circulates through an assertion of struggle against both remoteness and the hardship of Australian life itself. This is exemplified within the scene precisely through scene members' equation of 'purity' with brutal aggression (Haun, 2010). This notion of 'brutality' is central to my discussion; as such I acknowledge that where Overell has deployed her concept of 'brutal belonging' (2012) to give name to the affective intensity that accompanies a sense of belonging within grindcore scenes, here I wish to offer another use of 'brutality' for studies of metal scenes. The lexicon of 'brutality' in an Australian context mobilises both aggression and mundanity. These claims to 'brutality' as a central feature of normative Australian life inform the procession of whiteness that characterises Australian scenes. Banality as 'brutality' within Australian metal has been used to mobilise violence and hypermasculine aggression. However, in situating suburban Australian life as defined through hardship and struggle, brutality also affirms the banal whiteness that underpins the dominant hegemony of Australia's extreme metal scenes.

The nation constructed within Australian extreme metal is one largely maintained through tacit reproductions of hegemonic Australian identity, and ratified through the violent 'sameness' of a culture of unaffected ordinariness. The commensurance of whiteness with 'Aussie-ness', or 'Australian' with men, in locating the national character of Australian heavy metal indicates the stringent narrowing of acceptable boundaries of national identity. It is through reaffirming Australian identity through performative gestures to white hegemonic masculinity that Australian heavy metal scenes constitute themselves within a nationalist discourse. The banal nationalism of Australian metal is underpinned by the circulation of a hardship myth that informs nationalist imaginings. Australian masculinity is a political trope overwhelmingly represented through the image of the 'Aussie battler'—a man whose life is defined through hardship and struggle, but nonetheless maintains his courage, strength and masculinity (Bode, 2006:3). The discourse of the 'battler' has become ingrained in Australian political conversation (Bode, 2006:2), where it is used to affirm valued forms of masculinity to the exclusion of Others.

The notion of the 'battler' also becomes imperative to the discourses of heavy metal within an Australian context. A sense of independence and self-reliance are key self-defining features for Australian metal communities. The 'metallic legacy' of the country is one 'characterised by a tenacious DIY work ethic and a desire to run over or through any obstacle that gets in the way' (Haun, 2010: para. 7); musician Ben Wrecker argues that 'the 'Aussie Battler' mentality' affirms the fierce do-it-yourself ethic of the Australian scene (in Haun, 2010: para. 7). This sense of struggle in isolation from the rest of the world is pivotal to Australian scenes' self-image. The discursive formation of 'true' Australian metal as that which is performed in ordinary settings as a result of hard work and loyalty caters to a wider nationalist imagining of normal men triumphing against adversity. Furthermore, this allows Australian extreme metal scenes to situate themselves in opposition to other regional scenes; and in doing so claim to be protecting and nourishing something 'pure' against possible contamination. A defensive exclusivist imagining of white Australia has been a central feature of public discourse throughout the twentieth century. Australia has nurtured its difference

in isolation from its geopolitical location within Asia, while (re)positioning itself as a victim of the relentless claims of its domestic Others (Schech & Haggis, 1998:616). The 'lonely white outpost' mentality (Yarwood & Knowling, 1982:248) that underpins Australia's self-image finds itself discursively reimagined within the infrastructure of domestic metal scenes. Through investing the banality of Australian life with sacred and endangered value, such defensive exclusivist imaginings allow white men themselves to personify the lonely white outpost represented by Australian extreme metal scenes.

The affinity with the struggles of battler figures within heavy metal scenes is represented within the main rhetoric of masculinity in contemporary Australia, which is overwhelmingly concerned with the crisis of white, heterosexual men and their need for reaffirmation and support (Connell, 2003:10). The symbols that Australian metal deploys gesture back to an overarching hegemonic masculinity which is represented at the core of the nation. As such, where scholarly work on Australian masculinities has looked to the role of 'camp' in questioning notions of gendered and sexualised national identities (Thomas, 1996:103), I argue that Australian extreme metal, far from embracing a self-consciously camp performance, continues to affirm dominant narratives of masculinity. Nonetheless, the performative banality of Australian extreme metal also offers, much like camp, an opportunity to interrogate how performers articulate their relationship to cultural power. It is necessary to critically analyse the manner in which the figures of ordinary white men ubiquitous to the scene are used to translate Australianness, and moreover, how they are figured within the defence and reaffirmation of normative patriarchal whiteness. The sense of struggle and isolation, as aforementioned, informs the brutal banality valued by Australian extreme metal scenes. The notion of locating some form of 'purity' or 'truth' through creating styles of heavy metal that are brutal and ferocious, true to the alleged ethos of metal, correlates with older Australian colonial and settler narratives. Representations of men living off the land under violent and hostile conditions, challenging the authority of the colonial father, sustained the democratic nationalist tradition that Ward pointed to in his construction of the 'typical

Australian' ([1958]1965), and produced the 'heroes' that enabled the myth of ordinary men to become a valued cultural currency.

Australian metal scenes are dominated by masculinity in some broad sense, but they are more accurately described as a series of conflicts between particular kinds of masculinity. The task of representing the national space within metal scenes is the burden carried, superficially, by the national archetypes that shore up hegemonic masculinity. These archetypes are more realistically mobilised through 'ordinary' men who are interpellated into these varying historical moments. Constructing Australian identity through music relies not on one central figure, but rather gestures back to a collection of archetypes that underpin white hegemonic masculinity within an Australian context. The bushman, the soldier and the battler all find themselves represented within Australia's extreme metal music, which seeks to tether contemporary Australian identity to the icons of the past, and negotiate a place for Australian metal within a broader global scene. That these icons are overwhelmingly personified through 'typical' Australians—i.e. white working class men—further entrenches foundational narratives of white men as the true sons of the nation. Such representations foreground 'Australia' as that which exists only from the moment of British (white) colonisation; the violent erasure of Indigenous persons, both politically and physically, is unspoken yet insidious within such depictions of national identity. This is a manifestation of the white settler practice of defining the beginning of historical time, and the beginning of Australia. It is with this in mind that I approach the master symbols of Australianness that Australian metal scenes deploy. Such archetypes divorce nationhood from a precolonial past and instead locate Australian identity as that which can only ever be marked by its whiteness. This boundary in time supports the facade of white originality, 'the coming of the light into darkness (Garbutt, 2003:113), and a 'lost' BC that resigns Aboriginality to antiquity and a 'redemptive' AD' (Garbutt, 2003:113) which obscures the genocide necessary to affirm Australian whiteness.

The dominant representations of Australian national identity within extreme metal scenes are located within the context of the imperial project; a project which, through its denial of Indigenous sovereignty, constructs the nation to be a white

possession (Moreton-Robinson, 2005:21). In conceiving of Australia as a white possession, it then follows that the celebrated national subjects it produces are white; and furthermore, that such whiteness is underpinned by an adherence to common morality dictated by the catch-all phrase of 'national values'. One of the most common ways in which ordinary men are strategically deployed in this girding of national values is in the reification of the 'digger', the Australian soldier central to the mythologised ANZAC legend. The digger, Nicoll has argued, is imperative to the conscious control of Australia's national register; she thus utilises the term 'digger nationalism' to elucidate the centrality of these masculinist figures to Australian identity (2001:113). Through his embodiment as a white, heterosexual male, the digger comes to 'facialise the nation' (Nicoll, 2001:97), and made to represent what former Prime Minister John Howard identifies as the core, conventional national values of Australia: mateship, egalitarianism and a 'fair go' (in Moreton Robinson, 2005:22). The imputation of the ANZAC soldier into a national subject is ubiquitous within Australian metal music. The commonality of the soldier as a projection of normative white masculinity within lyrics and album art supports the nationalistic ethos projected by such bands.

Australia's involvement in the First World War in particular forms a common theme within Australian metal, where it is bound up with narratives of the 'pride of the nation', 'sacrifice' and national coming of age. Such notions of the 'birth of the nation' and 'national awakening' have been fixtures of the commentary surrounding the ill-fated Gallipoli campaign since 1915 (Garton, 1998:86). Within extreme metal scenes, these discourses cement soldiers as foundational figures for Australian masculinity. Blackened thrash act Gospel of the Horns consecrate such myths through a rhetoric of remembrance and legacy—

Face the west at sunset, hear the bugle's call/The spirit of the
ANZAC code will live on in us all/At the dawn of each new day,
turn and face the east/Hail for those who died, remember the
deceased.../All hail... the legends of Lone Pine ('1915' *Realm of the
Damned*, 2007).

Gospel of the Horns' narrative is one that privileges the wartime bravery of ANZACs and simultaneously locates such characteristics in a transhistorical 'ANZAC code', the 'spirit' of which 'will live on in us all'. Their lyrical rally to 'hail for those who died/remember the deceased' ('1915' *Realm of the Damned* 2007) indicates how the wartime sacrifice of white men is exalted as the core provision of nationalist meaning-making, a narrative that extends into scenic practices of Australian extreme metal. Such eulogising of the ANZAC figure is central to the perpetuation of the myth. Gospel of the Horns approach the soldier as at once fixed in time (as the allusion to the Battle of Lone Pine suggests) and within a post-war project of national mourning. Gospel of the Horns' approach to the ANZAC or digger features within a much wider catalogue of Australian metal which uses such figures as a lyrical or aesthetic focus¹⁰. I am further concerned with how banal masculinity becomes privileged within these narratives. Sacriphyx, a blackened death band from Canberra, have staked their entire musical career on histories of Australia at war. The lived realities of Australian men are a key focus for Sacriphyx. Situating soldiers as 'blokes' ('The Nek', *Peninsula of Graves/Black Mass of Pazzuzu*, 2010) and 'cobbers' ('Victory of Withdrawal', *Lone Pine*, 2007) in opposition to officers enables a binary of 'good' and 'bad' masculinities to inform perspectives on war. Furthermore, the characterisation of Victoria Cross recipient Captain Alfred J. Shout as a good-natured 'carpenter at Resch's brewery' ('A.J. Shout, VC', *A.J. Shout, V.C./Tryaal by Obsidian*, 2009) again mobilises a vision of the inherent bravery and heroism of working-class men.

The preoccupation with ANZAC soldiers is the most widespread example of how nationalist archetypes of whiteness are rendered explicit within Australian extreme metal. In locating the ANZAC legend in white, male bodies, such embodiment 'implicitly excludes non-white migrants and indigenous people from holding such core values' (Moreton-Robinson, 2005:22). Moreover, this myth of an 'egalitarian national community' which underpins digger nationalism is, for Nicoll, defined precisely through the expulsion 'Other' Australians from these narratives (2001:113). The living patriotism of the ANZAC legend has been projected onto

¹⁰ See for example Slaughter Thou—*Lest We Forget* (2003) and *The ANZAC Hammer* (2005); HMAS Vendetta—*HMAS Vendetta* (2009) and *The Lighthorsemen* (2011); and The Furor—*Advance Australia Warfare* (2005).

the white, masculine body throughout Australian history, charging it with the purpose of defending a nation against an enemy that is 'not from here' (Johns 2008:6). Deploying the digger or the ANZAC in nationalist rhetoric reaffirms Australia as a white possession while simultaneously distancing such figures from their colonial origins. The power relations that support and nurture white dominance are implicit yet invisibilised under the guise of protecting other people's land and sovereignty; a protection which was never granted to Indigenous populations at the time of colonisation. This, I argue, is the violent nexus of the intersecting discourses of loss in an Australian context; wherein the massacre of thousands of Indigenous persons becomes collateral damage in the myth of Aboriginal antiquity, and the wartime sacrifice of white men is exalted as the core provision of nationalist meaning-making.

What is significant about the image of the soldier, however, is not necessarily a preoccupation with war, but an obsessive eulogising of the 'sacrifice' made by ordinary men and their mates which underpins much of the music. Metaphors of manhood, courage and sacrifice litter this commentary. 'Loss', furthermore, becomes a defining feature of such narratives. War, Garton argues, sanctified soldier sacrifice (1998:90). The immense loss of life incurred by Australian troops served to place Australian soldiers within a classical warrior lineage, where such enormous numbers of fatalities could be rationalised by seeing such sacrifices as part of a 'rich tapestry of history' (Garton, 1998:91). References to 'mateship' and 'brotherhood' enshrine masculinity within the mythology of the ANZAC, a 'sacrificial bond of brotherhood' which enfolds notions of loyalty and comradeship. Dead Kelly's 'The Diggers' (*Sons of the Southern Cross*, 2014) encapsulates such narratives through stressing such filial ties—'Why?/Cause he's ya mate/He's ya brother/He's a digger'. Imploring the audience to 'Remember what they did for you' further reifies the transhistorical essence of the wartime 'legend'. Such invocation of masculine relationships indicates the manner in which the mundanity of white masculine homosociality becomes reconfigured within the mythology of the ANZAC, where such fields of meaning both ennoble and justify ANZAC sacrifice. Emphasising not only the sacrifice made by these 'normal' Australian men, but also broad bromides to remember 'what they did for you',

mobilises contemporary calls to protect the Australian way of life, and the exclusivist politics embroiled within.

Anti/Colonial whiteness and Indigenous displacement

The historical and contemporary eulogising of the ANZAC within extreme metal scenes allows such images to become a domain through which Australian masculinity has been constituted. The white masculine body is a potent site for the inscription of the ANZAC values of 'mateship', 'chivalry' and 'sacrifice', inscriptions which enfold individual bodies into the idea of the nation as a body itself (Johns, 2008:7). This co-option of the white male body into the transhistorical myth of ANZAC serves two functions: firstly, it has consolidated a white ontology against which is pitted the racialised Other, and secondly, it enables the creation of an Australian identity severed from the colonial father. This second function is particularly important in mapping the assemblage of white national identity. The rhetoric of the ANZAC is paramount because it establishes Australian 'loss' as that caused not only by wartime 'Others', but also imperial authority. Dark Order, a thrash act from Sydney, explore the familiar theme of Australian wartime casualties in the tracks 'Attrition of Fear' (*5000 Years of Violence*, 1998). Here Dark Order suggest that 'ANZAC soldiers were forced to fight/In a war that wasn't theirs'. Dark Order's treatment of the ANZAC is a notable example for several reasons. Initially, when asked about the track, songwriter Raul Alvarez states that 'Attrition of Fear' was written about 'The infamous story about the birthplace of A.N.Z.A.C. I suggest you read about it, as this is sacred to ALL Australians' (in EvilG 2003). This consecration of the ANZAC by Alvarez is significant, particularly given that Alvarez himself is the Australian-born child of Chilean migrants, and the band at the time of the interview included two other musicians whose families had migrated to Australia (Alvarez in EvilG, 2003). Such comments can then be seen to affirm the dominant conditions for assimilation in Australia, where the digger is made to represent the core, conventional values of the nation.

Dark Order's lyrical eulogy to the ANZAC is further significant because of its allusion to 'a war that wasn't theirs'. This line is a pivotal moment of displacement that allows for the propagation of a white masculine 'hero' that is simultaneously

immersed in the violence of war, yet simultaneously excused from its consequences. The history of white masculine archetypes within the Australian metal narrative is arguably not underpinned by dominance or supremacy, but rather sustained by myths of the 'Australian' resisting the colonial father, in whatever form such a figure may take. Such opposition to authority figures is central to Australian heavy metal's negotiation of national identity, both through its music and its institutional and spatial practices. The obsessive focus on 'ordinary' men fighting for 'our' rights mobilises a discourse of normative white masculinity that continues to organise and define national identity. Notions of struggle and resistance are central to discussions of Australian masculinity and continue to imagine Australian identity in terms of whiteness. The effect of staging normative white men against a colonial foe is to enact multiple iterations of whiteness and white masculinity.

Divorcing hegemonic whiteness from imperialist plutocracy enables Australian whiteness to conceive of itself as possessing an anti-authority working class masculinity that defines itself in opposition to institutional power, whilst continuing to entrench the orthodoxy of white patriarchy. Furthermore, it continues the victimising impetus of banal nationalism which sees mundanity as favourable yet endangered. The battle between the Australian man and the land (Schaffer, 1988), the Australian settlers and Indigenous communities (Bode, 2006) and the Australian people and colonial authorities (Schaffer, 1988) have all been discursively integrated into the nation's history so as to create a white male victim (Bode, 2006:2). Such 'struggles', in their metallic representations, are made transhistorical through the transpositioning and renegotiation of nationalist archetypes. Dead Kelly's 'What the Bushrangers are Doing Now' (*Sons of the Southern Cross*, 2014) positions the band as modern-day bushrangers¹¹ fighting the authoritarian 'machine'; the repeated refrain 'Don't tell us we can't/Tell us we're wrong cunt/Tell us there's no other way, but your only way/Fuck what you say, cock/We have a say' reflects antiauthoritarian sentiments within a context that is at once immediate and historical. Such rhetoric is deployed within a cross-

¹¹ Outlaws, usually former convicts, who lived off the land and sought refuge from colonial authorities in the bush, Dead Kelly's band name is a play on that of infamous bushranger and national icon Ned Kelly.

generational, anticolonial process of nation-building. In constructing banal masculinity as a site of counter-colonial resistance, Australian metal allows for the mobilisation of Australian 'struggle' that corresponds to metal's broader narratives of marginalisation (Weinstein, 2000) and rebellion (Walser, 1993; Kahn-Harris, 2007).

Australian extreme metal acts have deployed white masculine archetypes so as to sustain myths of ubiquitous Australians resisting the colonial father. Such opposition to authority figures is central to the ways in which such areas of Australian extreme metal scenes negotiate national identity. Blackened thrash band Bastardizer's interpolation of the Eureka Stockade and its associated flag¹², for example, highlights the myth of rebellion that underpins masculine nationalist imaginings. 'Eureka' (*Enforcers of Evil*, 2014) implores listeners to 'Raise the fucking flag/Under Victorian skies/Unchain the shackles/The rebellion is nigh'. The isolation of the flag in the Eureka narrative is important for mapping the manner in which traditional symbols of Australian masculinity are perceived to be somehow under threat, and hence reprised within metal scenes. The Eureka Stockade flag itself is a nationalist symbol of enfolding within it traditions of working-class men asserting themselves against authority. Bastardizer hence play with a Eureka flag draped across their speaker stacks (see figure 3.0) and enact lyrical narratives of rebellion and the 'fight to defend/Our rights and liberties' ('Eureka', *Enforcers of Evil*, 2014).

Bastardizer's assertion of loyalty to the Southern Cross, I argue, is a further movement towards rendering Anglo-Australian identity distinct from that of British colonialism; a means of displacing allegiance to the Crown and instead locating fidelity and unity in the Southern Cross. Bastardizer proclaim 'We swear by the Southern Cross/To stand truly by each other' ('Eureka', *Enforcers of Evil*, 2014). Filial ties are further stressed when Dead Kelly refer to themselves as 'the sons of the Southern Cross' (*Sons of the Southern Cross*, 2014). The symbolism of the Southern Cross is manifest in scenic practices as well as musical ones. The Australia Day weekend metal fest hosted by the Bald Faced Stag hotel in Sydney's inner-west since 2008 is named 'Under the Southern Cross', and is marketed as

¹² See note 9.

'the most patriotic day of the calendar year' (Rose, 2014: para. 1). The Southern Cross is a vital symbolic commodity not only within the space of Australian metal scenes but Australian whiteness at large; a central image through which discourses of identity may be represented.

The severing of Australian identity from the colonial culture of Britain is thus one of the central paradoxes of nationalist discourse in an Australian context. The attempt to stage an identity separate from that of the Imperial father is a problematic task in a nation that both historically and contemporaneously defines and names its whiteness almost entirely in relation to its Anglo-Celtic origins. Discourses of whiteness in Australia have largely hinged on a reductive understanding of the relationship between whiteness and a particular culture, often thought of as British culture (Stratton, 1999:163). Casting white men as the 'true sons', or 'foundations of this modern land' (Dead Kelly, 'Sons of the Southern Cross', *Sons of the Southern Cross*, 2014) creates an originary white identity severed from imperialist whiteness. By pitting 'Australian' masculinity against a colonialist foe, who seeks to repress and kill 'ordinary' men on the gold fields or through the exploitation of ordinary bodies as instruments of war, this conflict announces the second move. Creating an oppressed/oppressor binary within the conditions for white masculinity allows white men to erase their own compliance in imperialist violence and position both themselves and Indigenous persons as victims of British imperialism. This problematic identity work seeks to disconnect Australia from the titular colonial father, through constructing a sense of nationhood that exists only from the moment of white settlement and furthermore, denies any chance of Indigenous sovereignty. It is through such processes that Australia becomes configured as a white possession, and importantly, a white possession which maps its national identity and history through masculine figures. This, I contend, entails the homogenising whitewashing of Australian sociality for which music can act as a vehicle. Situating Australian whiteness as distinct from 'other' whitenesses informs the sense of isolation and seclusion that enables conceptions of Australia as a remote white outpost with a unique culture and history that must be defended. Situating the origins of Australia as entirely

entangled with British settler invasion displaces millennia of Indigenous histories and further condemns Aboriginal nations to abstractions in a mythic past.

The project of displacing and usurping Indigenous persons as victims allows metal scenes to enact a contrived mourning for a precolonial past. Dominant metallic discourses, capitalising upon this rhetoric of victimhood, present Aboriginality as lost to the past at the hands of a violent coloniser. In asserting the might of ordinary men against the same violent coloniser, ordinary whiteness is seen to maintain the core values of Australianness and safeguard against future colonising violence. Situating Indigenous nations as victims of the very same colonisers that ordinary masculinity rebels against is further used to foreground cautionary tales of foreign invasion. This exploitation of Aboriginal genocide is at best disingenuous and misleading; furthermore such characterisations ignore the material reality of life for Indigenous communities and individuals within contemporary Australia. Moreover, Australian extreme metal's representation of Aboriginality enters into colonialist rhetoric which equates Aboriginal bodies with native land. Metal scenes have further exploited this relationship through resigning Indigeneity to antiquity with token symbolism. Such abstractions of precolonial identity and originary white belonging coalesce in the tendency to imbue colonised cultures with a broadly 'mythic' value that relegates Indigeneity to antiquity. This mythologising of an Aboriginal presence 'lost' to the ages is a key form through which a precolonial past enters the lexicon of Australian metal music.

Australian metal music has made attempts to assert its distinctly national character through broadly 'Indigenous' symbolism. Phillipov argues that Indigenous music and lyrical references to landscape are demonstrative of how individual bands have deployed 'tropes of Australianness' (2008:217). Positioning Indigenous music as a trope of Australianness is a complex statement that necessitates further interrogation. Representations of Indigeneity within the space of Australian scenes have largely occluded Indigenous people themselves. This by no means seeks to erase the contributions of Indigenous persons to the Australian heavy metal community—NoKTuRNL, for example, have been an important part of the music landscape. Work by John Mansfield has also addressed the social meanings of heavy metal in the Indigenous community of Wadeye (2014) Rather, I

argue that representations of Indigenous Australians within the national metal scene have been realised through particularly effacing tactics. Where 'Indigenous' themes are broached, they are represented through broad signifiers which are performed by white men. Lord, for example, sampled a didgeridoo for the opening track of their album *A Personal Journey* (2003), entitled 'The Dreaming'. 'The Dreaming', significantly, is the name given to the varied creation narratives of many Indigenous Australians. Alchemist are notable for their prolific use of didgeridoo music, evident in the track 'Austral Spectrum' (*Organasm* 2000). These nominal moves towards reconciliation within the spaces of the scene are immensely problematic. The effect of reducing the presence of Indigenous Australians to familiar tropes is to distance an Aboriginal Other from the white enclave of Australian history and culture (Garbutt 2004:113). Such tactics ensure a white future which severs modern whiteness from imperialist whiteness and entrenches 'ordinary' white identity as authentic to Australia. Stripping Indigenous bodies of agency or contemporality, and instead installing masculine master symbols as 'authentic' Australian identity, further ensures the perpetuation of the favourable normative culture of Australian whiteness.

Brutality in the backyard: Sacred suburbia and exclusory 'everyday blokes'

Australian national mythologies have almost entirely been constructed around images of white men who both defy and are defined by the colonial/colonised 'Other'. The most insidious forms of Australian nationalism are based in distinctly homosocial relationships and icons; 'the almost exclusively male worlds of convict experience, bush culture, gold mining, and itinerant labour' (Smyth, 2009:187). This national identity of exclusively male mateship works to not only establish tropes of loyalty and brotherhood, but to excise women almost completely from the national scope. Dixon thus suggests that Australian national identity 'centres around a special *style* of masculinity [that] reeks of womanlessness' (1983:24). 'Womanlessness' is crucial to the archetypal narratives of men struggling against other men in the bush, on the goldfields and on the battlefield. What remains significant is to address how such aggressively banal masculinity becomes mobilised and celebrated in the most mundane contexts, and moreover how whiteness is entrenched within such representations.

Notions of what constitutes Australianness may have been predicated upon rural myths of soldiers, goldminers and stoic frontiersmen conquering the land (c.f. Horne, [1964]1998:51; Schaffer, 1988), but the empirical reality of Australia is one of 'suburbanism' (Horne, 1998:16) and ordinariness. To appear ordinary, argues Horne, is a necessary condition for success in Australia (1998:39–40). Rather than uncritically accept this contention that ordinariness is a definitive attribute of the Australian character, however, I am interested in examining the constitutive parts of such ordinariness, and furthermore, articulating what this ordinariness might occlude. The rhetoric of the 'local' is well-established in the dominant narratives of Australian metal scenes, which encourage fans to support Australian acts at a local level. However, I argue that such prizing of the local is simultaneously embedded within the broader spatial politics of Australia's banal white nationalism. The ongoing fetishisation of the local within Australian metal is predicated upon processes of enshrining the banality of every day life. Through the symbolic capital of the 'ordinary' man, the spatial and musical practices of Australian metal scenes form a transhistorical essence of not only Australian men, but Australian whiteness.

Banal nationalism emerges as a defensive whiteness that cloaks itself as a celebration of normative Australian life. Australian nationalist discourse is not unique in its fostering of a protective national self-image. All nationalisms invite a defensive position (Hage, 2003:31). The fostering of hope and community sentiment by default simultaneously incurs a rigid policing of identity and boundaries. The defence of national and masculine identity within Australian extreme metal is concurrently a defence of whiteness itself. People strive to accumulate nationality (Hage, 1998:52) and do so through aspiring to and occupying the 'field of whiteness' (Hage, 1998:57). The field of whiteness for Australian extreme metal, I argue, accrues its capital, or 'accumulates nationality' through the consecration of banal symbolism which signifies Australianness. The dual effect of privileging mundane forms of capital and reinventing them as sacred allows whiteness and white practices to operate as the norm. Such collective ideologies hence naturalise the boundaries of identity and the role and power of dominant groups. Such powers may not always emerge through direct and explicit

racism and misogyny. Ordinary masculinity, defined through its authenticity and brutality, has particularly pronounced cultural capital not only within Australian extreme metal scenes, but the broader working-class conception of heavy metal (Gaines 1998; Weinstein 2000; Purcell 2003).

'Authentic' masculinity is given expression in an Australian context through situating 'local' metal in opposition to glamourised or commercialised music scenes. This staging of difference affirms wider trends within music subcultures, which require an 'Other' to maintain a sense of scenic identity (Thornton, 1996:5). These distinctions enable processes of envisioning social worlds and hence discriminating between social groups through binary oppositions between 'us' and 'them', the 'real' and the 'fake' and the 'underground' and the 'mainstream'. The notion of the 'mainstream' itself is one that has particularly tenuous incarnations within Australian heavy metal communities. Overell's (2013) discussion of Melbourne's grindcore scene found that band members make a point of distinguishing themselves from 'emo'¹³ music by stressing the genre's passive feminisation (as opposed to their own 'brutality') (Overell, 2013:215). Furthermore, members of grindcore band Blood Duster position emo as shallow, manufactured pop music, referring to it as 'Kmart metal' (Leon in Overell, 2013:217). Blood Duster's opposition to emo is realised largely through gendered and commercialised codes—to be both feminine and commercially successful is counter to their own ethos of 'brutality'. Such oppositions are realised along multiple lines, however. Thrash act In Malice's Wake's call to 'punch a Brunswick St hipster in the face' and receive a free copy of their album and 'a shot of JD' (Facebook, 19.7.2013, see figure 3.1) articulates a specific sense of place (Brunswick Street being Melbourne's hipster centre, and the label itself being shorthand for young men and women associated with such subcultural institutions) and reaffirms particular scenic logics of heavy metal 'belonging'. Such affirmations of masculinity, brutality, violence, and drinking establish the conditions for banal white masculinity within Australian scenes.

¹³ Emo, as Overell outlines, is a type of punk music characterised by lyrical depictions of emotions, punk riffs, melodic sections and wailed or screamed vocals (2013:215). It is often referred to as 'scene' (i.e. 'trend') music in conjunction with deathcore or metalcore, a label frequently used disparagingly by metal fans with no correlation to the wider academic debates over the use of the term.

These understandings of Australianness as defined through everyday unaffected mundanity characterise the localised white inflections within extreme metal scenes. A common feature of Australian metal acts is the articulation and predication of a sense of the local; a local derived from images of ordinary, unpretentious, working-class masculinity. A trope of Australianness that emerges within scenes, argues Phillipov, is the invoking of 'hard-drinking Aussie "yobbo" [an uncouth working class person, usually male] stereotypes' (2008:217, my interjection) that are played on in both unreflexive and playful ways. Overell suggests that the 'wider national archetype' (2012:267) used to represent Australian identity within the space of the scene emerges in the interplay between 'white, sporting, bloke identity' (2012:271) and the 'white, heterosexual male 'Aussie bogan''¹⁴ (2012:267). Both the sporting practice of sledging and bogan identity are played upon in reflexive ways within the space of the Melbourne grindcore scene, where they '[undercut] the Australian patriotism they both connote' (Overell, 2012:278). The regular stage attire of sporting jerseys and trackpants is hence taken to be a satirical expression on the cultural currency of working class masculinity, and the problematic politics enfolded within such figures. Nonetheless, Overell notes, such representations are more complex than blunt signifiers automatically interpellating nationalist subjects (2012:278). Nationalist subjects are drawn upon in Australian extreme metal in both humourous and satirical ways. Here I am concerned with how both jocular and prosaic iterations of working class masculinity are given value within the spaces of Australia's extreme metal scenes. The banality of every day Australianness becomes mobilised in various ways within Australian metal scenes, all of which are underpinned by wider institutional and cultural structures which shore up the 'field of whiteness' (Hage, 1998:57).

Banality and its representations are imperative to the expression of white masculinity within the space of Australian extreme metal scenes. Removed from the goldfields and war-torn foreign shores, Australian masculinity asserts its authenticity precisely through emphasising its everyday, localised ordinariness. 'Ordinariness' is a necessary condition for Australianess (Horne, 1998:39–40).

¹⁴ Thrash band Shrapnel, for example, embrace a sense of 'Australianness' within the figure of the 'bogan'—their 2008 demo is entitled 'Bogan Thrash Attack'

Nonetheless, such ordinariness can have profound implications when its ideology is able to permeate areas of power (Horne, 1998:39). I have shown how exclusory parameters of nationhood are enacted through the ubiquity of white working-class men within the imagery of Australian extreme metal. I am further concerned by the spatial, domestic dimensions of this exclusory ordinariness. The procession of banal ordinariness is predicated upon the specifically local inflections of the daily lives of 'true' Australians—inflections which are given value through their invocations of suburbia. Where Horne comments upon a certain cultural anxiety surrounding Australia's 'essentially suburban character' (1998:16), I argue that Australian extreme metal has taken advantage of depictions of Australian suburbia as unintellectual, vulgar and opposed to progressive change (Rowse, 1978:7) to present the suburban mass as the province of 'real' Australia. Suburbia's 'apparent authenticity' as a description of the Australian way of life (Rowse, 1978:12) allows suburbanism and its 'spiritual banality' (Rowse, 1978:7) to become a defining characteristic of the nation. In contrast to the frontier narratives of pioneering hardship and struggle, the suburbs thus usurp the bush as the terrain of authentic Australianness. Despite prevalent and enduring images of the bushman and the 'ocker'¹⁵, the 'real' Australia is more likely to be located in Australia's vast suburban tundra (Turnbull, 2008:15). This glorification of the suburban and its manifestations in Australian extreme metal, I argue, is what makes Australian expressions of localism distinct from those of Norway and South Africa. Far from eulogising monuments and sublime natural landscapes, Australian extreme metal has located its iconography in the images of banal suburbia. From the post-war period on, Rowse asserts, 'suburbia' became accepted as an authentic image of the way ordinary Australians lived (1978:8); Australian suburbia, Turnbull further contends, is deeply rooted in the national imaginary (2008:17). Suburbanism is then at once homogenously national, but also immediately local.

This double logic of suburbia as both local and national extends into the signifying practices of Australian extreme metal. The local, and its immediately suburban manifestations, has remained a key source of capital and site of identity work throughout the history of the Australian extreme metal scene. Thrash metal

¹⁵ Slang denoting an Australian who speaks and acts in an uncultured manner. The term is generally fondly deployed.

act Mortal Sin predicated their national identity on particular iterations of Australianness that corresponded to their own geographic and cultural surroundings. This was at once immediately visual—the cover art of Mortal Sin's first album *Mayhemic Destruction* ([Australian release 1986]1987), for example, featured a winged demon overlooking a post-apocalyptic vision of Sydney. The liner notes on the same release offer more nuanced allusions to the distinctly suburban settings through which the band defined themselves:

Extra special thanks to: Fosters Lager, Vic Bitter, Tooheys Draught, Jim Beam, Johnny Walker, UDL & cheap wine and also mull & dakka, steroids (Wayne doesn't use them), those things that kept us awake in the studio (what was that stuff anyway?) & the Pill. Also pizzas, McDonalds, parra burgers. Bill where's all the chocolate gone from the machine? Vegemite and of course Aussie sun & Aussie beaches & the 301 pool table and rec room. (Mayhemic Destruction, LP inner sleeve, 1987).

Here Mortal Sin utilise textual markers that are both specifically local and broadly national. Their invocations of suburbia emerge in references to the distinct banalities that characterised the sociality of 'ordinary' young men in Western Sydney. 'parra burgers' alludes to the Western Sydney suburb of Parramatta from which the band originated; 'the 301' was a recreational club located at 301 Church Street in Parramatta. A further example emerges in drummer Steve Hughes' wearing of Canterbury rugby league club socks¹⁶ during live performances. These specifically suburban impulses also entered in to the music itself. Mat Maurer notes that the track 'Lebanon' (*Mayhemic Destruction*, 1986), for example, emerged from his experiences working in a Sydney industrial factory alongside Lebanese migrants. Mortal Sin's suburbanism was hence a key aspect of their own self-image—their identity as a band was predicated not only upon their 'Australianness', but an Australianness authenticated through their white, working class origins.

¹⁶ Here I argue Hughes is allaying a symbolic relationship between sport—specifically, a violent contact sport, the Canterbury-Bankstown Bulldogs being one of the biggest rugby league clubs in Australia—and Australian hegemonic masculinity (see Rowe and McKay, 2003).

Mortal Sin's performance of 'Australianness' was one tied at once to the Western Suburbs of Sydney and their population. Nonetheless, I argue that it is also one which projects the convincingness of the suburbia ideology beyond municipal borders. Beyond the stock clichés of Vegemite, sun and beaches, the commensurability of Australianness with suburbanism further emerges through allusions to distinctly banal pastimes. The explicit references to alcohol foreground a relationship between Australian masculinity and drinking, what Horne refers to as the 'test of manliness' (1998:27) realised through the 'brutal pleasure' of violent pub culture (1998:28); 'mull & dakka' was popular slang at that time for packing a marijuana pipe. Just as bands such as Mortal Sin construct a national subject that becomes amplified within the space of the scene, so too does the ideology of suburbia. Such amplifications of authentic suburbanism suggest the homogeneity of Australians (Rowse, 1978:4), and furthermore, the terrains of normative whiteness they traverse. Mortal Sin's good-natured representation of Australian masculinity as that which was comprised largely of beer and sports enabled the reiteration and validation of 'blokey' forms of socialisation, made permissible through the mechanisms of white absolution. The acceptance of the popular idea of the suburban knock-about, hard-drinking, sports-loving, down-to-earth 'bloke' as the typical Australian male, Thompson argues, also enfolds within it the occasional violence and bigotry that accompanies such positions (2007:180). The 'whitewash of sentimentality' (Thompson, 2007:178) renders such potentially harmful behaviour as excusable and even fondly looked upon for young white men; even when young men of colour are criminalised for the same actions. Furthermore, a 'particularly perverse confusion between manliness, criminality and Australianness' (Coad, 2002:55) means that drunkenness and a defiance of law often becomes a dominant Antipodean conception of what it means to be a man. For certain segments of contemporary Australian scenes, national identities are then demarcated by violent heterosexism and threatening hypermasculine behaviour. The menacing territorialism embedded within such archetypes (Thompson, 2007:177–178) allows scenes to act as spatial and social mediums for the construction and maintenance of aggressively heteromale practices, made palatable through this whitewash of sentimentality.

The whitewash of sentimentality thus obscures the violence and exclusory fantasies that underscore suburbia and suburban ordinariness. Australia's 'unquestionably suburban fate' (Rowse, 1978:5) furthers the trajectory of the brutal banality of white working class identity. Such brutal suburbanism is a defining scenic practice within Australian extreme metal. Melbourne act King Parrot are a contemporary example of how the white suburban masculinity of earlier metal bands continues to be extenuated within Australian scenes. King Parrot have predicated their image on dark humour, violence, mayhem and a rough masculine characterisation cultivated through cultural markers that are read by scene members as distinctly Australian. Live shows feature teasing abuse from the band directed towards the audience ('Shut the fuck up', 'This fucking wanker up the front', field notes, 6.2.2014). Such discursive violence is compounded by a performative hypermasculinity: 'Sometimes you've just got to say this is my cock, and it's what you need' (field notes, 6.2.2014). King Parrot's narratives of identity are reflective of Berger's 'stances' (2010), ways of marking out their own position in relation to an increasingly globalised heavy metal scene. King Parrot's approach is illustrative of this, as they join their own band to a wider international scene by catering to popular narratives of the brutality of heavy metal, while remaining distinctly Australian.

The relationship of Australian heavy metal to both local and international scenes can be demonstrated through one of King Parrot's most popular items of merchandise, the *Blaze in the Northern Suburbs* t-shirt. This shirt connects King Parrot to a transnational metal community by relying on particular forms of cultural capital—'Blaze in the Northern Suburbs' (based on their song of the same name) is a clear reference to Norwegian black metal band Darkthrone's album *A Blaze in the Northern Sky* (1992); these allusions to the Norwegian black metal scene are furthered by the image of a blazing house on the front of the shirt. The shirt also binds King Parrot to Australia—and specifically Melbourne—by alluding to specific forms of localised knowledge. The reference to the Northern Suburbs locates a definite geographical point, i.e. the Northern municipalities of Melbourne and their suburbs. These suburbs are traditionally industrial and working class; furthermore there is a common association (perpetuated largely by media) of

these areas with theft, gang violence and arson (White et al. 1999; Baum & Gleeson, 2010). The phrase itself is also one that positions King Parrot within a local history of heavy metal music in Melbourne—*A Blaze in the Northern Suburbs* was also the name given to a 1997 demo by local grindcore band Filth. The phrase 'Blaze in the Northern Suburbs' is hence a multilayered one comprised of multiple textual modalities that rely on certain ways of reading; in doing so, such texts allow King Parrot to both enter a dialogue with a broader transnational scene, and anchor their own Australianness within a distinct suburban location.

Both Mortal Sin and King Parrot's narratives of Australian identity, like those of other bands and audiences in extreme metal scenes, are situated in the interplay of local and global considerations (Phillipov, 2008:217). Both bands assert an 'Australianness' that may be amplified within the space of a global scene; I argue, however, that their invocations of suburbia have specifically national implications. Predicating an image of Australianness upon suburban, working-class white masculinity allows such figures to become default subject positions. Moreover, the treatment of Australia as undifferentiated suburbia imagines a homogeneity that ignores various racial, gendered and class differences that continue to circulate through the daily realities of life in Australia. Nonetheless such durable images of white, working class men allow for the transposition of recognisable cultural narratives within both Australian and international contexts. This can emerge in obviously playful ways. Dead Kelly, for example, have capitalised upon the image of normative, mundane white masculinity through lyrical gestures to cars ('Red Torana'), specific places ('4561', i.e. the postcode for Yandina, a suburb of the Sunshine Coast) and slang ('Yeah Nah It's All Good') to assert the brutal banality of everyday life. This is buttressed by the band's ethos of 'fucken brutal Aussie heavy metal' (2013), their mission of creating 'Aussie metal for Aussie people' (TripleJUnearthed, 2013), and the pseudo-uniform of balaclavas, blue work singlets, board shorts and thongs. Dead Kelly show how mundanity, in contrast to the fierce normativity of working class identity represented by Mortal Sin and King Parrot, can be mobilised in spectacular and performative ways. Dead Kelly nonetheless straddle a problematic boundary between jocular performativity and antagonistic nationalism. To dismiss the central symbols they

appeal to as purely flippant or facetious is to overlook the banal nationalism entrenched within the discursive construction of 'every day' Australians.

Calls to protect the 'Australian (white) way of life' have largely been realised in banal ways within Australian metal scenes, as Mortal Sin, Dead Kelly and King Parrot demonstrate. The ongoing fetishisation of the local within Australian metal is predicated upon processes that enshrine the banality of everyday life. Through the symbolic capital of the working-class bloke, the digger and the miner, the spatial and musical practices of Australian metal scenes enable the representation of both Australian men and Australian whiteness as transhistorical and sacred to the nation. Such practices have the dual effect of privileging mundane forms of capital and reinventing it as exceptional. In doing so, such collective ideology and practice allow whiteness and white practices to operate as the dominant norm, and further exscribe bodies not represented within Australia's dominant hegemony. As such, while the Australian extreme metal scene claims to be a place of plurality and acceptance, such claims overlook the exclusionary parameters that dictate the ways in which these (quite literal) choruses of nationalist sentiment are 'joinable in time' (Anderson 1991:145). Dead Kelly, for example, claim that their agenda is to 'make Aussie metal for Aussie people.... no matter where you come from, what colour you are, what you believe in' (TripleJUnearthed 2013). These communal sentiments are promising, but nonetheless superficial. In constructing Australian identity as that which is defined through masculinist imaginings of historical time, these narratives of nationalism deny plurality and instead affirm the staid orthodoxy of dominant white hegemony. To call upon the enfolding and welcoming of individuals 'no matter where you come from' into a nation founded on Indigenous genocide and violent assimilatory legislation unveils a glaring contradiction in scenic narratives. Australian extreme metal scenes are situated in a struggle between occupying a genre that prizes individual empowerment and exceptionalism, and a collective nationalist context that is foregrounded by the violent policing of sameness, mundanity and hegemonic belonging.

While the majority of the Australian metal scene may not be immediately racist, I argue that such scenes are continually undergirded by a fierce sense of

exclusionary normophilia. The scenic practices of staging 'Australian' identity as that which is divorced from Aboriginality and instead begins at the moment of colonial invasion establishes Australia as a white possession, maintained through the brutal banality of everyday life. This has the effect of erasing women, Indigenous persons and non-white Others from the national space, and presents such figures as threats to sacred normophilic whiteness. In recent times, the emergence of a discourse of masculinity crisis in Australia has allowed for the formation of what Bode calls a 'white male victim' (2006:4) whose claims of disempowerment have been used to justify declarations of the 'threat' posed to white masculinity by women and non-white Others. The traditional Australian construction of white masculinity is perceived as being jeopardised by the nominal awarding of Native Title to Indigenous persons and threatened by supposed waves of refugees. The notion of terror in a post-9/11 context has provided fertile ground for the idea that white men are in crisis—'like Indigenous Australians and refugees, terrorists are seen as having 'invaded' Australian soil, threatening to destroy our [white men's] way of life' (Bode, 2006:5). Such rhetoric is replicated within Australian extreme metal scenes. The 'patriotic twist' (in Haun, 2010) of blackened thrash act Gospel of the Horns is one that, for its members, isolates immigrants and multiculturalism from Australia's core traditions. This is evident in the following quote from vocalist and bassist Mark Howitzer:

I'm very proud of my country and of my heritage ... I think it is important to be aware of your past and to have pride in ones' own identity. Once you lose your sense of self (identity), you then lose all sense of direction... Stand your ground, and don't be ashamed of what you are... There are far too many individuals in my country who are falling to the way side, almost giving up in a sense. It almost feels like we Australians are losing our core traditional ideals and becoming engulfed by today's multiculturalism and mass immigration (in Ngolls 2003).

Howitzer's quote emphasises how Australian extreme metal's appeals to identity and traditional ideas affirm the parameters for 'belonging' in Australia. The notion of the threat posed to white Australia and the need for its defence is largely

realised in tacit and mundane ways. The declarations of a threat posed to the 'favourable normative climate' (Louis et. al., 2010:653) of the nation nonetheless exemplify the ways in which Australian whiteness has been constructed as a superior identity. The marginalisation of non-white voices and non-white concerns is underpinned by an unconscious desire to 'render Australia pale' (Gray, 1999:82); to make the nation 'great' is hence to make the nation white.

Conclusion

The defensive position that banal nationalism invites ensures that whiteness maintains overarching social privilege within the context of both Australian extreme metal scenes and the nation. History in Australia is 'served up by the dominant white sector of Australian society as something that is digested with great familiarity' (Birch, 2001:20). The stock clichés of Australia's white history—the 'Australian character', the 'battler', 'a nation forged through collective adversity' (Birch, 2001:20–21) shore up Australia's self-image as a liberal democracy, founded on struggle. It follows that such practices of dominant white representations and stock legends emerge within the national archetypes celebrated by Australian metal. The national identity of Australian metal is foregrounded by banal white heroes and a transhistorical essence of normative masculinity, which becomes the hegemonic narrative in mapping the true sons of the nation. The desire for brutality, authenticity and purity espoused by scene members corresponds to nationalist narratives of the Australian as fiercely independent, tough and unpretentious. Such fetishisation of the 'normal' has enabled Australian scenes to enshrine 'local', white, masculine, practices, and hence allowed these images to become the norm against which national identity is measured. In privileging mundane forms of capital, such scenes and their participants reinvent the normality of 'every day' Australian life as exceptional.

Such constructions of white Australia and white Australians underpin the lonely white outpost mentality that informs nationalist narratives, casting Australian whiteness as unique in a geopolitical field of Otherness. The maintenance of Australian exceptionalism is manifest in Australian metal, which locates itself in an interplay of local and global considerations, simultaneously

isolated from yet tied to the international scene. The canonisation of Australian whiteness, however, has the dual effect of situating Australia within a colonialist history, and ensuring the subjugation and annihilation of Indigenous presence. Australian extreme metal produces narratives of national identity through consecrating the master symbols of white Australia—soldiers, bushrangers, diggers, blokes and brothers. The ubiquity of these figures within both songs and album cover art mythologises white men as the core of the nation. The celebrations of the archetypal Australian work to erase Indigenous sovereignty and identity, and instead construct Australia as a nation that only exists from the moment of British settlement. This in turn constructs white men as the 'true sons' of the nation, a move further compounded by the exscription of women and non-white Others who provide the crucial counter-standard against which 'true' Australians are measured.

Australian extreme metal scenes negotiate the tensions between a genre that prizes individual empowerment and a national narrative of belonging that hinges on the construction of an imagined national community; and furthermore, one legitimated through the violent terrain of hegemonic belonging. The task of representing the national space within Australia's extreme metal scenes is the burden carried by the 'ordinary' masculinities of Australian narrative identity, all of whom gesture back to the national archetypes that shore up hegemonic masculinity. Scenes interpellate national subjects in different ways and to different extents (Overell 2012:267). Thematically, the 'Australianness' in Australian metal panders to wider national archetypes of the national character, those which have been sustained and reproduced through the careful imprinting of master symbols. The cult of the ordinary finds itself represented within Australia's extreme metal music scenes, which seek to tether contemporary Australian identity to the cultish 'everyday-ness' of icons of the past, and negotiate a place for Australian metal within a broader global scene. However, making authentic Australian identity contingent upon such banal subjects is intensely problematic, and allows for the creation of a nominal white hegemonic patriarchy and the erasure of Others from the national story—namely women, Indigenous persons and non-white migrants. Heavy metal's worldwide spread and the increasing number of stances available to

metal fans worldwide does have the capacity to allow for increasingly fluid and flexible constructions of Australian identity within the space of domestic scenes. Many Australian bands have taken up this challenge, advocating a search for nationhood that may exceed the stringent boundaries of patriarchal whiteness, and hence attempt to open up the possibilities for Australian whiteness so that it may reject the detritus of colonialism. Nonetheless, the inability to alter the perception of the nation as a white possession remains the central challenge.

Figures referenced:

3.0 Eureka flag on Bastardizer's speaker stack, The Hi-Fi, Sydney, February 6, 2014.



3.1 In Malice's Wake's Facebook post June 19, 2013.



In Malice's Wake

Punch a Brunswick St Hipster in the Face before/during or after the show on Friday 16th of August and receive a free copy of 'The Thrashening' and a shot of JD...

<https://www.facebook.com/events/410777119035827/>



Unlike · Comment · Share · 5 · 4 minutes ago ·

You and 4 others like this.

Chapter Five

My blood line stays pure with my own kind: Translocal Terrains of Whiteness across Norway, South Africa and Australia.

The white man is sealed in his whiteness.

The black man is sealed in his blackness.

....How do we extricate ourselves?

—Frantz Fanon, 1952.

Introduction

While heavy metal's global spread has allowed communities worldwide to communicate and negotiate their own individual sounds, narratives and tensions, within Norway, South Africa and Australia, this spread has enabled the construction and affirmation of national identities historically and contemporaneously tied to whiteness. It is paramount to address the ways in which these national scenes ritualise and reproduce whiteness, even as metal itself diversifies. The discourse of 'global metal' as a series of unifying encounters and engagements (Dunn, 2007; Wallach, Berger and Greene, 2011) is then a problematic one realised through the reification of binaries that highlight whiteness and Otherness. The supposed unification of global metal, I argue, continually refers and defers to the white centre of heavy metal music. The global metal rhetoric of sharing and inclusion in turn affects moments of fragmentation and divergence, allowing for the construction and maintenance of white spaces in which tradition is upheld and protected. Within these heavy metal scenes, national identity is bound up in the master symbols of the nation which are made to bear the burden of belonging. These imaginings of nationhood stage phantasmic national identity as 'authentic', and allow consequently the erasure and displacement of indigenous cultures and people. The excision of non-white, non-masculine bodies constructs these nations as white possessions founded upon

men and masculinity, which are presented as under threat from a dangerous and destabilising 'Other'.

This final chapter maps the matrix of whiteness, masculinity and nationhood through which heavy metal scenes in Norway, South Africa and Australia produce and defend identity. In offering a synthesis and critical comparison of the three scenes, I point to the national specificity of whiteness as it is manifest across each national scene. Narratives of white masculine identity have been deployed in heavy metal scenes in Norway, South Africa and Australia, but whiteness and its expressions vary across contexts as a result of different colonial histories, intellectual traditions and empirical realities. These scenes simultaneously challenge and affirm the boundaries of national identity and the borders of belonging. Interrogation of the processes through which discourses of whiteness and white masculinity are translocated and translated from one context to another point to the expression of such identities in fragmentary rather than sequential ways. Like this thesis as a whole, this chapter is interested in how encounters between a localised sense of self and globalised narratives of identity may be represented through musical experiences. The celebrations of certain narratives of national identity within the heavy metal scenes of Norway, South Africa and Australia are simultaneously a defence of whiteness, and white masculinity. Such boundaries of identity enable overt and tacit racisms that foster a sense of community formed through collective memory and territory. These heavy metal scenes therefore act as both arenas of white hegemonic power and sites of internal conflict.

In these three countries hegemonic national identity is built upon the mutually supportive discourses of masculinity and whiteness. Such longstanding affiliations are central to charting how the heavy metal scenes of these countries reflect and problematise a national agenda. Interrogations of the means through which national identity is both tacitly and explicitly tied to white heteromale identity thus reveal the mechanisms of power that work to not only normalise or 'seal' (Fanon, [1952]1986:11-12) whiteness, but to present it as simultaneously exceptional, and hence under threat. Norway, South Africa and Australia have complex histories of patriarchal whiteness tied to the historical project of nation

building, and crucially, nation-building predicated upon the marginalisation and erasure of indigenous persons. In painting the nation as a masculinist possession, tying the national body to an ontology of whiteness and gesturing to the nationalist archetypes that are deployed as a means of securing and sustaining identity, metal nationalisms police the parameters of ethnic kinship. The heavy metal scenes of Norway, South Africa and Australia negotiate a position within an international whiteness, and point to specific iterations of national identity. In doing so, however, such discourses invariably present whiteness as threatened by Others. Such a sense of disenfranchisement and resistance are manifest in the more extreme sectors of national metal scenes, which host reactionary movements founded on the need to protect whiteness and subordinate non-white Others. These movements are not definitive of their respective national scenes; I argue, however, that metallic whiteness is formed in these intersections of mundane and spectacular racisms. Sentiments of exclusory nationalism allow metal scenes to become sites of struggle for white capital, and scenic discourses and practices hence patrol the borders of the field of whiteness. Precisely what constitutes white capital, however, is different across locations.

As such, while white nationhood is central to the scenic identity of the heavy metal communities of Norway, South Africa and Australia, nationalisms take on different forms, and propagate different narratives of whiteness, dependent on their context. These heavy metal scenes, as the previous three chapters have argued, correspond to particular epistemologies of national whiteness. Concerns over the loss of an 'authentic' Norwegian national identity manifest in the monstrous forms of discontent that have characterised the development of black and Viking metal scenes in Norway. In South Africa, the redistribution of power post-Apartheid has initiated a conversation within the Afrikaans metal scene in which resistant whiteness figures heavily. In Australia, the fetishisation of white 'sameness' and banality has enabled the narrative exclusion of Otherness in extreme metal. This chapter consolidates and compares the three different forms of white nationalism that have emerged from this research—Norway's monstrous nationalism, South Africa's resistant nationalism and Australia's banal nationalism. While scaffolding and narrating whiteness in different ways, these three forms are

manifest in the archetypes of national identity that police the borders of sovereignty. These three heavy metal scenes thus reproduce dominant white narratives that are underwritten by a myth of community grounded in the promotion of white identity—a union which is, for many, bound up in collective memory, identity and history rendered explicit through musical celebrations of national identity.

Finding the (white) nation in metal: Ethnonationalism and narrative belonging

The nation is omnipresent in the dominant narratives of metal scenes across the globe. Even when not explicitly marked such scenes carry with them the discourses of identity formation and tradition. Heavy metal, argues Bayer, ‘embodies the changing importance of national culture’ (2009:191). Heavy metal scenes bear witness to the waning of the nation state as it is translated into nostalgic references; they may also create playful references to tradition beyond the search for national identity (Bayer, 2009:191). Returns to national musical traditions are seen as expressions of a post-national dissatisfaction with the globalised world by Bayer (2009:190); moving away from a national context of political investment and toward a transnational focus on globalisation. The suggestion that heavy metal has become a part of a more widespread movement towards ‘post-national art’ (Bayer, 2009:190) is one with which I would take immediate issue. The notion of the post-national itself is problematic in that it assumes that there was at some point fixed, essentialist nations, as opposed to a recognition that the ‘nation’ has always been constructed discursively and symbolically. Furthermore, I would argue that even in the advent of seemingly generic musical styles or thematic content, heavy metal as a genre and a culture is always already situated within a nexus of differing identities that dictate production and reception. Bayer may be confident in asserting that metal has ‘shed its national identity’ within the context of ‘Britishness’ (2009:182), but to claim metal operates within a post-national paradigm free from political intrusion, particularly when scene members in multiple countries are marginalised, criminalised and even detained for their engagement with heavy metal (c.f. Levine, 2008), overlooks the ongoing complexities of metal’s relationship with the nation.

Rather than asserting the end of the nation-state, the task is to interrogate the means through which nationalism is packaged within these cultural texts, in both overt and tacit ways, even as (and potentially precisely *because*) metal continues to spread across cultural territories and political borders. Doing so combats the notion that heavy metal is a strand of 'travelling consumer goods' (Bayer, 2009:190) or any kind of homogenous, globalised entity, and instead acknowledges the 'increasingly diverse musical pathways' (Hjelm, Kahn-Harris & LeVine, 2013:1) that have characterised the growth of heavy metal scenes and cultures since the 1970s. Heavy metal, much like modernism and globalisation, has unfolded in complex and frequently uneven ways. Mapping the disjunctures in power that infuse scenic encounters between metal bands, fans and production—and significantly, academic writing about such scenic encounters—points to the nationalisms that continue to emerge and solidify within heavy metal communities. As such, rather than to speak of metal as global or post-national, I instead argue for a model that understands heavy metal as a glocalised phenomenon. Appadurai argued over twenty-five years ago that the global cultural economy could not be simply understood in a centre-periphery model (1991:296); moreover, he suggests, global cultural politics are able to turn locality into a staging ground for identity (1991:306). This caution against thinking of globalisation in strictly homogenous terms leads to Roland Robertson's concept of 'glocalization' (1994) as a critique of the cultural imperialism of globalisation. Using glocalization to address the diverse localities and markets for the consumption and production of heavy metal then eschews the global cultural homogeneity of globalisation. To speak of glocal metal, rather than global metal, allows for a recognition of the dialectical relationship between multiple local scenes worldwide and their relationship to one another, specifically in ways that don't hinge on a centre/periphery binary. Heavy metal in every setting is embedded in local cultures and histories (Wallach, Berger and Greene, 2011:4). However, the tendency within metal scholarship to represent metal produced in the West as 'post-national', while fixing music produced in non-Western countries as essentialist or 'traditional' reproduces the dominant forms of power that establish Anglo-American and European metal as the 'centre' of the heavy metal scene. This trend further enforces the 'Otherness' of global—and importantly, non-white—

heavy metal communities. Such approaches detach whiteness from the moorings of ethnic identity and instead fix 'Others' as the locus of essentialist cultural production.

The task of this chapter, much like this thesis as a whole, is to dismantle the (in)visibility of whiteness within heavy metal scenes and map how such whiteness is deployed with national specificity. Doing so demonstrates how nationhood emerges within predominantly white metal scenes, and furthermore, combats characterisations of 'tradition' within such scenes as camp or playful (c.f. Bayer, 2009). This research instead indicates how such symbolic nationhood relays more complex discourses of privilege, heritage and community within metal contexts. This chapter interrogates the ways in which metal's whiteness has maintained its hegemony across disparate nations, even as heavy metal continues to circulate globally. Metal fans are no longer, nor have ever truly been 'overwhelmingly white' (Walser, 1993:17). Nonetheless, white hegemony remains deeply entrenched in the dominant ways of thinking about metal scenes, practices and cultures. Whiteness is not merely a demographic category but has a cultural significance (Weinstein, 2000:111). Such significance may not be overtly or necessarily racist—the abundance of white bodies in metal scenes is possibly less an affirmation of whiteness than an 'obtrusive absence' of blackness (Weinstein, 2000:111). I however argue that the significance of such whiteness has been historically and contemporaneously constituted through a continued process of exscription: of non-white bodies, non-white voices, and the non-racial status of whiteness itself. Heavy metal has therefore found itself both reflecting and refracting a whiteness that is hypervisible yet simultaneously normalised, and hence 'unraced'. The whiteness of heavy metal scenes functions so that whiteness itself is largely rendered invisible, while difference is made immediately conspicuous. As such, while the growth and dynamism of the global metal scene may ostensibly challenge the overwhelming whiteness of popular conceptions of metal communities, metal remains a discourse dominated by whiteness. Approaches to heavy metal cultures that allow whiteness to be represented as unremarkable, and hence ignore the infrastructural power of whiteness, have

allowed for the discursive and material reiteration of racial difference and hierarchies within scenes.

Norway, South Africa and Australia all have complex histories of patriarchal whiteness tied to a historical project of nation building predicated upon the marginalisation and erasure of indigenous persons. The erasure of indigenous Others from the national space constructs territory as a white possession and relays a narrative of originary whiteness in which the nation only exists from the moment of white settlement. These metal scenes may act as arenas of white hegemonic power, but are all defined through binaries that dictate inclusion and exclusion within scenic infrastructure. If heavy metal communities are seen to belong literally to a nation, as the global metal model has a tendency to argue, it is certainly not the kind of spatially-defined homogenous nation that earlier visions of nationalism had projected. Metal scenes in Norway, South Africa and Australia are embedded within dominant discourses of white nationhood that support the façade of an authentic identity. However, they are also deeply dependent on a sense of inner conflict and kinship that enables the emergence of discourses of liminality and marginality.

Representations of Norwegian masculinity within local metal scenes interpellate broader criticism of migration and the expansion of the European Union which centre on the 'loss' of an idealised Nordic identity. South African metal scenes in predominantly white metropolitan areas voice resistance to the leadership of the African National Congress and fears that the black majority government may endorse white genocide. Communal myths of the 'ordinary Australian' abound within Australia's heavy metal scenes, where such figures are thought to be threatened by a multicultural future. These scenes show that discourses of liminality and marginalisation differ in expression across all three countries, yet all three enter into the familiar narrative territory of white struggle and the casual amnesia of white victimhood. The panicked discourses of declining white patriarchy across metal scenes in all three nations allow white men to conceive of themselves as oppressed people, and stress the need for pride, reaffirmation and support—as Australian act Deströyer 666 assert, 'I'm not ashamed to be white' ('Australian and Anti-Christ', *Unchain the Wolves*, 1997). The

defensive narrative site offered by metal scenes has enabled a (re)appropriation of the means through which subaltern groups have been able to articulate their experiences, and hence control the means of their own representation. In conceiving of themselves as victims, white men within metal scenes in Norway, South Africa and Australia have appropriated the position of 'subaltern', and hence situate themselves as in need of defence and resistance.

This narrative of white male victimhood is a complex one that sits uneasily within the broader possibilities of agency within heavy metal. The cultural and political movement of heavy metal scenes may allow subaltern communities of colonised and oppressed persons to 'speak back' to power—to establish conditions where the prisoners themselves would be able to speak', to borrow from Deleuze (as interviewed by Foucault, ([1972]1980:206). Doing so has the potential to dismantle the Hegelian master/slave dialect seen to characterise colonialism, and invalidate the notion that the 'colonised' have a fixed or essential inferiority. There is great potential here to redress the essentialising impetus of the global metal rhetoric. Critiques of essentialism that challenge notions of universality and mass consciousness can create new possibilities for the construction of self and the assertion of agency (hooks, 1991:28). Narrative is the central component in this construction of self; but, as Said observes, narrative has resonated with echoes from the imperial context (1989:221). Tracking how this rhetoric of agency and repression is represented within the contexts of white hegemony reveals the blindness and amnesia in claims of white victimhood. Nationalism, resurgent or new, fastens on narratives for structuring, assimilating, or excluding one or another version of history (Said, 1989:221). The history of Western imperialism is one whose underlying contest is that between white and non-white. The reconfiguring of white men as victims of the postcolonial era allows such nationalist subjects to appropriate the discourse of self and Other. The articulation of white male victimhood within metal scenes in Norway, South Africa and Australia almost universally exscribes the voices of women and non-white Others in responding to the 'threat' posed to the nation. The 'permission to narrate' (Said, 1984:27) within these metallic contexts is almost always granted by and defined through the whiteness of the interlocutionary act.

Within each of these metal scenes there emerges a nationalism that does not stringently adhere to a politically and spatially-defined nation as such, but rather one which caters to an idea of a nation threatened by a conflict between authentic selves and invasive others. The site-specific ways in which sameness and difference are realised across these scenes points to whiteness' emergence as a series of localised inflections. When metal fans and musicians align themselves with a transnational metal community, they begin to stake out what Berger refers to as 'stances' (2010) and identities that are sharply opposed to certain national visions and pastimes, while strengthening their rootedness in others (Wallach, Berger and Greene, 2011:7). Such stances are dictated by a violent and exclusory localism that communicates a politics of 'us' and 'them'. Yet the most striking thing about 'otherness' and 'difference' is how profoundly conditioned they are by their historical and worldly context (Said, 1989:213). National identity, and white identity, unfold in ways more complex than the simple identification of binarisms—of gender, race or class—that structure social antagonism (Bhabha, 1994:292). Rather, the national specificity with which whiteness is valorised informs the disjunctive forms of representation that signify the national subject across metal scenes in Norway, South Africa and Australia.

In these countries, hegemonic national identity is built upon the mutually supportive discourses of masculinity and whiteness. Heavy metal communities within Norway, South Africa and Australia are supported by distinct nationalisms that reproduce and maintain white patriarchy, but they do so in different ways. All three scenes, however, create symbolic Others, erase indigenous Others from the national space, and construct territory as a white possession. In the case of Australia and South Africa, presenting whiteness as the positive opposite of an invented and negative blackness (Brodkin, 1999:15) maintains white sovereignty over a racialised 'Other'. Similarly, Norwegian black metal's focus on Christian invasion mobilises contemporary disdain for immigration and manufactures a fetishised Viking indigeneity. Such imperialist conceit is highlighted through the modes of nationalist representation in heavy metal scenes. The various ways femininity is decried, defeated or simply exscribed across all three scenes underpins the masculinist dialectic of the colonial project. Furthermore, the

tensions that emerge between the treatment of national subjects as an *a priori* and the subjects that become constituted in the development of the nationalist narrative point to the fractured logic of white sovereignty, the façade of originality that supports white ownership of land and, ultimately, the casual everyday amnesia of white subjectivity and violence.

Confronting such complexities of nationhood and indigeneity necessitate the unveiling of whiteness itself. Interrogating the social construction of whiteness is central to comprehending its embeddedness within nationalist narratives. Understanding whiteness as a 'communication phenomenon' (Nakayama & Martin, 1999:viii) rather than an essentialist identity, allows one to confront seemingly normative practices of racialisation and privilege and expose functions of whiteness. Mapping how the social spaces of whiteness offer moments of both similarity and difference across contexts draws whiteness into the wider postcolonial discussion about the constructed nature of racial identity. As Supriya has argued, postcolonial theory has long looked to how the identities of the Other are represented and hence constructed through a nexus of discursive and social power and practice (1999:134). However, she observes, one of the shortcomings of such arguments is that they rarely examine how the same forms of power 'explicitly and implicitly construct white male identity through similar discourses' (Supriya, 1999:135). This oversight encourages a conception of 'whiteness' as monolithic or homogenous; this in turn allows the notion of a metaphysical essence of 'whiteness' that comes about through ascribing race only to Others. In leaving whiteness as an unconstructed, undifferentiated category we reinscribe binaries which fix racialised identity to Others. Furthermore, this same logic of colonial oppositionality has enabled the subordination of the 'native' to the coloniser (Hall, 1997a). Allowing whiteness to go unraced supports the colonial project that enabled depictions of whiteness, and specifically white maleness, as naturally ascendant, superior and morally and physically pure (c.f. McClintock, 1995; Stoler, 2002). Analysing how whiteness, and white masculinity, emerge through social practices and discourses facilitates an understanding of the constructions, complexities and contradictions of whiteness itself, those which constitute 'the terrain of white and white male identity over time and across space'

(Supriya, 1999:136). The analysis of white male identity thus disrupts and resists the notion of an atemporal and ahistorical essence of whiteness, and instead reveals how whiteness and white masculinity emerge as historically and geographically specific constructions.

The previous chapters of this thesis have demonstrated methods of speaking about whiteness and white masculinity in metal that move beyond discussions of demographics, and shown how the white discourses of metal are realised in contextually specific formations, representations and narrations. The search for specificity to white identity leads to a multiplicity of whitenesses (Nakayama & Martin, 1999:xii). The processes through which whiteness asserts and reproduces itself within metal scenes unfold in dynamic and nation-specific ways. When such whiteness is tied to national identity, it takes on a new range of complicating factors. Conflating whiteness with national identity is one means through which to erase its racial status. Making whiteness commensurate with national identity legitimises the rhetoric of territorialisation by creating borders of whiteness, and presents white identities as ‘natural’ rather than cultural. Invisibilising whiteness in discussions of nationhood establishes the preconditions for the normalisation, and hence valorisation, of whiteness within the heavy metal scenes of Norway, South Africa and Australia. To conflate whiteness with nationality is an expression of power; it ‘relegates those of other racial groups to a marginal role in national life’ (Nakayama & Krizek, 1999:100). A nation’s white centre is constructed via a rigid lexicon of inclusion and exclusion, complete with spatial tropes of boundaries and margins. Furthermore, the maintenance of such white centres is entangled with broader processes of national tradition and symbolism that work to establish ‘authentic’ national subjects and identities. Within heavy metal scenes around the world, national identity is bound up in the master symbols of the nation which are made to bear the burden of ‘belonging.’ Such use of nationalist artefacts is not limited to the predominantly white scenes of Norway, South Africa and Australia—the scholarship conducted by researchers across numerous metal communities have tracked scenes’ use of cultural traditions (both real and exaggerated) in order to solidify the territorial identity of a scene (c.f. Bendrups, 2011; LeVine, 2008; Varas-Díaz et. al. 2014). Furthermore, the long history of

inversion and modalities of resistance in postcolonial literature and subaltern studies (c.f. Fanon, 1967; Guha, 1999) indicate that this is not a new phenomenon, nor one exclusive to music cultures. My contention here, however, is that the national traditions and symbols embedded within the dominant narratives of locally-focused heavy metal scenes in Norway, South Africa, and Australia have emerged in more problematic guises. When used to fortify the boundaries of white nationalism, these traditions and symbols enter into a complex dialogue with Indigenous claims to land, colonial invasion and regimes of racialisation.

Heavy metal communities within Norway, South Africa and Australia each narrate nationalism differently, though all these attempts generally centre on the valorisation of white identity as the true core of the nation. National identity is represented or encoded in the collating of symbols such as language, institutions, songs, literature and artefacts. Each national scene co-opts these in different ways, in different performances and with different aims. I again use the term 'national scene' here loosely, with an eye to such a term's broader implications—such scenes are national in the sense of operating within the borders of a nation, while some, though not *all*, may take on 'big-N' Nationalism as an ideology (as per Anderson, 1991:5) in much more explicit and calculated ways. This is not to say that all scenes are inherently and directly nationalistic, but rather to interrogate, as this thesis has, the ways scenic practices, from the most overtly jingoistic to the seemingly banal, are embedded within larger social categories of gender, ethnicity and nationality. Metal musicians and fans are deeply concerned with the role of their local or national scene in the broader context of metal around the world (Wallach, Berger and Greene, 2011:20). Metal scenes operate across thousands of sites worldwide—however, the fact that metal exists in all these places does not imply that it means the same thing or does the same things across all those different cultural contexts. Heavy metal in diverse locales serves as 'a medium for distinctive and specific forms of the performance of identity' (Wallach, Berger and Greene, 2011:24). Furthermore, Wallach, Berger and Greene have argued that it may also '[provide] alternative cultural identities to those offered or projected by the cultural traditions, nationalisms and religious movements that are influential in the locales where the music takes root' (2011:23). This is very much the case in

certain contexts—Wallach’s work on how heavy metal scenes in Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore respond to rapid industrialisation (2011) or Guibert and Sklower’s exploration of the relationship between metal scenes and Catholic discourse in France (2013) are recent examples of this. In some cases, however, metal scenes, cultures and communities reproduce dominant nationalisms in ways that extenuate exclusory regimes of nationhood. The central narratives of Norwegian black and Viking metal, South African Afrikaans metal and Australian extreme metal all circulate through infrastructures that are rooted in pre-existing patterns of masculinity and whiteness. These particular scenes draw from the broader social conditions for white national identity and patriarchal sovereignty; they do so, however, with specifically local inflections.

Metallic nationalisms correspond to ideas about nationhood in ways that simultaneously reference ‘the past’ and experiences of transgressive empowerment. The notion of transgression from dominant cultural norms whilst simultaneously reinscribing them is underpinned by illogicism and metaphorical blindness. It is nonetheless important to map how such ideas of transgression emerge. Traditions, as Hobsbawm has argued, emerge in ‘invented’ ways (1983). While not entirely fabricated, traditions—particularly those of a ritual or symbolic nature—are constructed so as to ‘inculcate certain values and norms... which automatically implies continuity with the past’ (Hobsbawm, 1983:1). The glorious past conjured by the rhetoric of tradition is realised through the recursive indoctrination provided by encounters with ubiquitous national symbols. These are located not just in flags and anthems, but also in the countryside, popular heroes and heroines, forms of etiquette and styles of architecture—‘all those distinctive customs, mores, styles of acting and feeling that are shared by the members of a community of historical culture’ (Smith 1991:77). Such appeals to a ‘community of historical culture’ attempt to establish continuity with not just the past, but a *suitable* historic past. Within Norwegian, South African and Australian heavy metal scenes, I argue, appeals are made to an idealised past in which white men were allowed to be more powerful than they currently perceive themselves to be. Conceiving of such imagined histories engenders the celebration of the romanticised mythopoeia of white nationhood, and furthermore, the declaration

that such nationhood is under threat. These abstractions of whiteness, masculinity, nations and nationhood are constructed and affirmed through the ethnosymbolism of the state; national symbols that crystallise an aura of nationhood and the community within it, however *ex post facto* they emerge. Asserting an originary whiteness within metal scenes is implicated within the wider colonialist project of white sovereignty—as Anderson notes, even the newest nations have a tendency to regard themselves as somehow ancient (1991:109). This simultaneous distance and intimacy of present realities and phantasmic pasts is necessary for the procession of imagined national identities.

Monstrous, resistant and banal nationalism in perspective

Multiple nationalisms create multiple subject positions within which ethnic and racial nationalisms proliferate (Smith, 2010). The previous three chapters of this thesis have mapped the localised ways in which whiteness is constructed, consumed and lived within heavy metal scenes. White nationalism emerges in plural form rather than as a consolidated position of white homogeneity; nonetheless, I argue, each of the white nationalisms I interrogate affirm the position of white patriarchal hegemony. A comparative analysis of Norway's monstrous nationalism, South Africa's resistant nationalism and Australia's banal nationalism elucidates how each of these strains have conjoined nationhood with white masculinity in complex and frequently violent ways. Metal communities across Norway, South Africa and Australia have substantiated their nationalisms through staging difference between an ingroup (overwhelmingly constituted by specific forms of white heteromascularity) and an outgroup thought to pose a threat to the continued dominance of the former. The contrasting of difference between 'us' and 'them' informs ultimately the white nationalism of these heavy metal scenes. Self-representation never takes place in isolation and is frequently oppositional and reactive (Thomas, 1992:213). The idea of a community cannot exist in the absence of some externality or difference, and identities and traditions are often not simply different *from* but constituted in opposition *to* others (Thomas, 1992:213). For both Fanon (1967) and Thomas, these acts of naming and resisting difference through objectification and broad representation were important modalities of colonial resistance. I do not wish to trivialise these

modalities, but rather acknowledge the deep complexities that emerge when these mechanisms are adopted by a hegemonic and/or colonising group. Breaking the (literal) shackles of white colonial violence and dominion often necessitated abstracting a pre-colonial national history into its most visible and formidable elements to substantiate its value (Fanon, 1967:182). Tracking how this abstraction of dominant culture is enacted within metal scenes points to the complex and discomfiting modes of resistance and oppression within sites of white hegemony.

The value of culture as a factor of resistance to foreign domination is immeasurable (Cabral, 1973:39). When culture is utilised as a mechanism of resistance by colonisers and their descendants, however, such uses can legitimate violent and oppressive consequences. The appropriation of the subaltern's modes of expression is an act of colonial violence which enfolds within it the genocidal erasure of indigenous cultures, whilst simultaneously co-opting the narrative territory of victimhood and defiance. The appropriation of the language of resistance does little to destabilise relations of power, but rather allows it to remain aligned with the dominant group. Difference in colonial contexts is resisted, inverted and played upon in ways that emphasise hostility and inimicability between a homogenous group and its Others. Interrogating how these notions of difference and victimhood are capitalised upon across Norway, South Africa and Australia demonstrates how questions of power, and threats posed to it, are used to legitimate a position of white sovereignty. While monstrous nationalism, resistant nationalism and banal nationalism all correspond to geographically specific histories and identities, they also all maintain whiteness in a position of originary ascendancy. Mapping the key function of each of these three nationalisms, the methods used to assert it within heavy metal scenes and practices, and the consequences of such nationalist discourses, reveals the similarities that emerge across all three countries.

Monstrous, resistant and banal nationalisms take as their central focus the task of representing the 'true' heart of the nation within their respective metal scenes, and therefore assert the hostility between 'authentic' national subjects and their Others. Hostile and exclusory practices in cultural contexts cement the

inimicality of the ingroup, the 'us' that may lay claim to a nation and its contents, and the outgroup (in whatever form that it may take), the 'them' that may never comfortably or safely belong. This is the element that informs violent and unsettling forms of white, nationalist discontent within metal, particularly those which characterise the monstrous nationalism of Norwegian black and Viking metal scenes. The monstrous nationalism emergent in these scenes constructs Norway and its ethnosymbolism as transgressive and unknowable: the products of an atavistic and ruthless nation. This construction draws upon a longer history of anticolonial discourse—colonised communities registered foreign perceptions of what is horrifying, and paraded those horrifying practices in a taunting manner (Thomas, 1992:213). The complex relationship between coloniser and colonised in Norway, however, complicates binary depictions of invasive forces and counter-colonial modalities. Norwegian black and Viking metal nonetheless extenuates a discourse of Nordic repression and rebellion precisely through playing upon notions of brutal/(un)natural monstrosity (Foucault, 2005:55). Moreover, such monstrous nationalism reconfigures Fanon's civilised/savage binary (1967:32) in order to denote difference between self and other. This act of demarcation is the key function of Norway's monstrous nationalism, and the presence of such discourse within black and Viking metal scenes asserts itself as a response to colonising, modernising and globalising projects.

The mechanisms of monstrous nationalism present Norway as powerful and inhospitable, yet increasingly under threat from modernity and globalisation. This sentiment of rarity and protection is also central to interrogating the claims to white victimhood that underpin the resistant nationalism of South African heavy metal scenes. In contrast to Norway's monstrous nationalism, which constructs violent monstrous fantasies from Nordic Pagan mythologies, South Africa's resistant nationalism emerges as an affirmation of white sovereignty, institutions and traditions within the context of a period of social and political uncertainty. The dismantling of Apartheid in the early 1990s and the end of white minority rule meant that cultural, racial and political identities in South Africa were to be 'reframed internally, now on different political and psychological terms' (Steyn 2001:xxiv). The signifier of 'The New South Africa' has become a trope over which

battles of representation are fought and through which interests are contested (Steyn & Foster, 2008:27). While many white South Africans are committed to the non-racism of 'New South Africa Speak' (Steyn & Foster, 2008:28), rhetoric that pushes for progress and equality within the nation at large whilst still casting whiteness as 'the conscience of the nation' (Steyn & Foster, 2008:33), another dominant repertoire of resistant whiteness emerges in what Steyn and Foster refer to as 'White Ululation' (2008:35). White ululation rallies white consciousness through appeals to emotions and legitimates the promotion of white privilege beyond Apartheid. This sentiment permeates metal scenes in South Africa that are explicitly concerned with the current position of 'whiteness' in the nation, particularly the Afrikaans metal scene. Such scenes bear witness to the construction and defence of resistant white territories, which emphasise hostility towards the new social order and warn of white, particularly Afrikaner, genocide.

Cautions against disruptions to white hegemony across all three nations demonstrate how whiteness legitimates itself as idyllic but in need of affirmation. Discursive histories of accommodation and confrontation shape understandings of Others, and thus determine which specific practices, traditions and symbols become emblematic of entire ways of life, and those permitted to carry the burden of identity within heavy metal scenes. Where the white nationalism of the Norwegian and South African scenes is tied to ethnonationalist mythology and folkloric imaginings of the state and its heritage, in Australia's extreme metal scenes it largely takes the form of a more mundane, unspoken national condition: 'banal nationalism' (Billig, 1995:6). Responses to whiteness and patriarchal nationhood in Australian heavy metal scenes can appear in outright displays of racism, homophobia and misogyny. However, the nation constructed within Australian extreme metal is one largely maintained through tacit reproductions of hegemonic Australian identity. Because nationalism manifests itself in ways other than overt chauvinism and xenophobia (Overell, 2012:267), it becomes important to conceive of its mundane, lived forms. What is 'Australian' about Australian heavy metal is an Australianness which continues to be realised through banal symbols of nationalism. The symbols that Australian metal deploys gesture back to an overarching hegemonic masculinity which is represented at the 'white heart' of

the nation (Schech & Haggis, 2000:232). Australian extreme metal scenes privilege and consecrate extremely mundane forms of white capital; capital which nonetheless becomes an impressive bartering tool in the 'field of whiteness' (Hage, 1998:57) represented by domestic scenes.

Monstrous, resistant and banal nationalism hence maintain a central focus on sustaining the sovereignty of white patriarchal hegemony. In Norwegian black and Viking metal scenes this is assured through the production of horror and atavism; in South Africa's Afrikaans metal scenes, through staunch rebellion and spatial and rhetorical assertions of resistance; and in Australian extreme metal through the policing of banal normality. The key functions of each of these three nationalisms are mobilised within metal scenes through the deployment of nationalist narratives, traditions and symbols. In Norway, the over-exaggerated use of Viking, Pagan and Nordic imagery within black and Viking metal illustrates how an imagined white, warrior history becomes located in phantasmic objects of ethnicity that are made to represent the nation. Drawing on the central signs that 'mean' Vikings—longboats, weapons, chainmail (Trafford & Pluskowski, 2007:58) allows such paraphernalia to crystallise in the form of a recognisable central figure of white Nordic hypermasculinity. Beyond the Pagan simulacra represented by Viking imagery, the corpse paint mask of black metal, alongside the more spectacular transgressions of murder, suicide, arson and iconoclasm that form the locus of moral panics over the genre, alludes to the simultaneous anonymity and communality of nationalist monstrosity. The masking of Norwegian metal, I argue, can then be seen in both the demonic aesthetic of corpse paint and Viking livery. The donning of such masks enables a collective national identity to form (Wilson, 2010:151). The act of 'masking', for Wilson, is a performance of the concerns of specific communities, who 'want the mask, rather than the man' (2010:152). Thus the masked figure that runs the gamut from the rampaging neo-Viking to the Satanic monstrosity of the corpse paint demon, and the material forms of arson and grave desecration, transgresses the individual body to become the locus of communal desires for whiteness, and the communicative action which asserts its dominance.

Norway's phantasmic reimaginings of a heathen past sit in contrast to the conservative propagandist narratives of the Afrikaans metal scene. In South Africa, the Afrikaans heavy metal scene has drawn upon a wider white sentiment of exceptionalism, replete with the tropes that emerged from the racist colonial imagination. Afrikaner identity had been predicated upon the notion of the *boervolk* as a uniform group with a strong sense of tradition and a unique culture (Cloete 1992:43) in opposition to the essentialist conceptions of 'Africa' or a singular, undifferentiated 'African culture'. The notion of Afrikaner homogeneity was a carefully constructed edifice maintained through the imprinting of 'master symbols' (Cloete, 1992:43). Such symbols are manifest in Afrikaans heavy metal. The fetishising of the Afrikaans language itself, alongside the colonial figures of the Voortrekkers and rural Boers, as well as the *Broederbond*, *Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging*, the Apartheid anthem *Die Stem van Suid Afrika* and the frequent allusions to the Afrikaner nationalist discourse of blood and soil, present Afrikaner culture as vital to South Africa, while also allowing for the erasure of white compliance in the state-sanctioned racial violence of Apartheid. Afrikaans metal is bound up with the 'post-Apartheid Afrikaner culture industry' (van der Waal and Robins, 2011:763), a market which allows for a celebration of a revamped but less party political Afrikaans identity while reasserting the imagined boundaries of white Afrikanerdom, 'speaking the legitimate language of cultural heritage' (van der Waal and Robins, 2011:763). By shifting the debate from recent history to heritage, the master symbols of Afrikaner identity may persist in the post-Apartheid era, allowing the image of the 'old-style' Afrikaner to exist beyond present realities (Cloete 1992:43).

In comparison to the monstrous nationalism of Norwegian black and Viking metal scenes, and the resistant nationalism of South African Afrikaans metal scenes, which have found their roots in romantic fantasy violence and the solemn defence of historical tradition, in Australia the symbolism of banal nationalism has been mobilised through appeals to the central signs of domestic normativity. Beyond the political symbols that constitute Australia as a nation-state—flag, anthem and system of honours (Warhurst, 1993:101), the ethnosymbolism of Australian extreme metal becomes bound up in the masculine figure

representative of the 'typical Australian'. The 'myth of the typical Australian' (Schaffer, 1988:19) is realised through the authorial Man who comes to represent the national character (Schaffer, 1988:79). The archetypes of Australian masculinity comprise elements encoded in and by the myth of national identity to produce and reproduce notions of 'typical' Australians. Images of men are commonplace in the national narrative—the convict, the heroic explorer, the bushman, the digger, the athlete, the ANZAC (Connell, 2003:9; Schaffer, 1988:20). I contend that of much greater significance are the claims of such masculine archetypes to fierce normality. Australian metal's nationalist narratives are dominated by these archetypes, yet all emerge in the form of the 'everyday bloke' and icons of masculine socialisation—pub culture, sports, and a sense of pride in the local. The acceptance of the popular idea of the knock-about, hard-drinking, sports-loving, down-to-earth 'bloke' as the typical Australian male (Thompson, 2007:178) allows such figures to possess the transhistorical essence of normal masculinity that shapes nationalist narratives, and denies the violence of the nation's past. Australian extreme metal scenes thus fall back on tired notions of tradition that reassert the problematic aspects of Australian identity, rather than reconciling them.

Each of these three nationalisms, and the locally specific symbols through which they are expressed, have significant and oppressive consequences for the ideological structures of these heavy metal scenes. Metallic representations of normative national hegemony have complex implications, both within and beyond the imagined communities proffered by heavy metal scenes. The monstrous ethnosymbolism deployed by Norwegian black and Viking metal scenes demonstrate how processions of white ethnosymbolic monstrosity are able to appropriate from Fanon's conceptions of the savage-as-monster (1967), and thus represent Norwegians as colonised people. The rejection of Christianity as the religion of the coloniser (namely the Anglo-Saxon missionaries responsible for the Christianisation of Norway in the eleventh and twelfth centuries) is compounded not only through the tangible acts of arson and destruction directed at Christian churches in the early 1990s, but more insidiously through the Satanism that characterised the early development of black metal. More recently, the shift away

from Satanic themes towards a stronger econationalism within Norwegian black and Viking metal scenes is indicated by strident appeals to Scandinavian wilderness and the natural world in opposition to the technologised modernity of globalisation. The neotraditional idea of a homogenised tribal society at odds with urban multiculturalism has been a frequent trope in fascist and racist literature (Hagen, 2011:194). Nationalist mythologies that emphasise the strength, violence and unknowable atavism of 'true' Norwegians are thus a central component of such forms of Norwegian heavy metal. Staging Norway as the victim of colonial dominion, however, is a complex project that ignores the genocidal erasure of the pre-Nordic indigenous Sámi people. Furthermore, the rejection of globalisation and modernisation entails with it aggression towards not only global flows of capital, but global flows of people. Norwegian metal communities as both neotribes and sites of constructions of whiteness and white identity have traditionally been imbued with great tension (Spracklen, 2010:81). Valorising heritage and laying a foundation for an anti-Christian, anti-urban, pro-nationalist crusade by emphasising a romantic nationalist link between the self and 'the North' reveals the ease with which declarations of heritage can become valorisations of whiteness, and white identities.

Just as monstrous nationalism legitimates a vision of 'true' Norwegians under threat, the resistant nationalism enfolded within South African metal scenes is key to understanding how resistant white discourses dictate identity work in modern South Africa. These discourses have shaped encounters between not only white and black communities in South Africa, but the umbrella categories of 'coloured' and 'Indian' persons also disenfranchised by Apartheid, and interactions between the whitenesses, both contemporary and historical, of South Africa. This stratification of whitenesses delineates white British-descended South Africans from Afrikaners, and presents Afrikaners in solidarity with black South Africans, conceiving of themselves as also victims of British colonialism. Such appeals to a shared 'African' history reiterate the role of the white South African in the racial harmony of the Rainbow Nation; just another ethnic group, yet one with a distinct place in the new democracy. Nonetheless, ethnicising the label of 'Afrikaner' through cultural symbols encourages the deployment of an identity tied

intrinsically to Africa, yet simultaneously exempt from the destructive colonial discourses that have been ascribed to Africa. Afrikaners then find themselves confronting the problematic dualism of what it means to be both white and 'ethnically' African. Casting a white colonising population as an ethnic group not only allows for the naturalisation of such an identity, but sanitises the colonial violence that afforded ascendancy to the Dutch-descended Afrikaners. The fetishisation of Afrikaner cultural emblems continues to underscore whiteness' apparent rehabilitation of African 'savagery'. Even as white South Africans conceive of themselves as marginalised under South Africa's black majority government, they do so within a discursive repertoire that presents whiteness as morally ascendant, and the nation itself as one that only exists from the moment of white settlement. This fiction of white originality, accompanied by the familiar narrative territory of white struggle and the casual amnesia of white victimhood, supports the continued dominance of such narratives across white settler-colonial communities worldwide, even as they become localised in different ways across contexts.

The consecration of both historical and contemporary whiteness establishes stringent boundaries of who may claim to belong, and furthermore, who is *allowed* to belong, both within the space of heavy metal scenes and the nation. The subsequent exscription of difference, realised through the continual deployment of ethnonationalist symbols, continues to have profound and oppressive consequences for nationalist discourses across Norway, South Africa, and Australia. In Australia, the most complex consequences of banal nationalism emerge through the obsessive policing the grinding monotony of ordinary domesticity. Ordinarity is entrenched in understandings of Australianness. Horne's now fifty-year-old argument that to appear ordinary is a necessary condition for success in Australia ([1964]1998:39–40) thus extends into the present. This contention that banal ordinariness is a definitive attribute of the Australian character is central to understandings of Australian extreme metal. The interrogation of Australia's celebration of normative domesticity reveals what this ordinariness might occlude. The combined effect of privileging mundane forms of capital and sacralising them allows whiteness and white practices to operate as

the dominant norm. Such collective ideologies naturalise not only the boundaries of identity, but the role and power of dominant groups. Casting a dominant group's culture as the norm and Others as deviant, if represented at all, allows racism and its representations to become common sense (Pettman, 1992:3). A generic 'Other' is created by the erasure of histories, symbols, traditions and diversity (Brodkin, 1999:15). The banal nationalism of Australian extreme metal therefore affirms the literal whiting out of colonial violence within which is implicated the genocide and institutionalisation of Indigenous cultures and bodies, and further maintains the invisibility of women and non-white migrants in Australia's self-image.

Declarations of white sovereignty in Norway, South Africa and Australia encapsulate both claims to victimhood and compliance in the erasure and domination of pre-colonial indigenous cultures. The Norwegian focus on Christian invasion and the debilitating effect of globalisation ignores the near-obliteration of pre-Nordic Sámi cultures under the policy of *fornorsking* (Norwegianisation). Similarly, casting Afrikaners as victims of both British colonialism and the policies of the African National Congress displaces the blame of not only Apartheid, but the centuries of institutionalised racial violence that provided its necessary preconditions. Australian extreme metal's focus on 'typical' Australians presents white masculinity as originary and authentic, and denies the colonial violence upon which the nation's existence is predicated. When heavy metal scenes invoke such rhetoric they ensure the continued devaluation of national life that exists outside the parameters of permissible whiteness. The domination of a culture, as Cabral has argued, can only be maintained through the permanent, organised repression of the cultural life of the people concerned (1973:39). For Fanon, colonialism is not satisfied simply with 'emptying the native's brain of all form and content' (1967:169), but turns to the past of oppressed people and 'distorts, disfigures and destroys it' (1967:169) in order to ensure the continued imposition of rule upon the present and future of a dominated country. The paralysis, neutralisation and destruction of colonised cultures can (and has, as history as shown) incur the 'physical liquidation' (Cabral, 1973:39) or genocide of an indigenous population to create a void which empties foreign domination of its

content and its object. The ongoing marginalisation and dehumanisation of non-white bodies and non-white cultural icons entails their gradual destruction and further affirms the position of white ownership.

Masking such erasure under the guise of 'everyday' nationalism is just as destructive as the eugenic attempts to eradicate non-whiteness from the national ontology. Heavy metal scenes are engaging in the ongoing transmission of such 'everyday' whiteness, where the 'lived' nationalism of Norway, South Africa and Australia sustains colonial dominion over non-white Others, and extends the nullifying mechanisms of high colonialism into an ostensibly postcolonial epoch. It is however perhaps too simple to position whiteness purely as the positive opposite of a negative colonised Other. Rather one must acknowledge how, in each of these three national scenes, multiple forms of whiteness are implicated in a binary that situates its 'us-ness' in relation to Otherness. Whiteness maintains difference not only through positioning those marked as 'white' as essentially different from and superior to those marked as 'non-white', but furthermore through marginalising ways of 'being white' that fail to exemplify dominant ideals (Hughey, 2010:1290). Moreover, whiteness does not always confer privilege, and the lived reality of whiteness, as witnessed in certain heavy metal scenes, often envelopes conflict at the intersections of whiteness and gender, age, class, religion, location and so on. Nonetheless, the whiteness that emerges through the ethnosymbolism deployed by heavy metal scenes in Norway, South Africa and Australia, whether monstrous, resistant or banal, is an idealised hegemonic whiteness. Such whiteness is invisibilised (Frankenberg, 1993) and permitted to function as equivalent to racial normativity (Delgado & Stefancic, 1997). However, whiteness is also made hypervisible through claims to its contextual (national) importance, and its visibility further extenuated by entering the problematic territory of white indigeneity and authenticity.

Authenticating authenticity: Crafting white indigeneity through displacement, appropriation and obliteration

Narratives of authenticity are central to the perpetuation of the authority of whiteness, without naming it as such. I argue that where metal scene members

define themselves through specific cultural identities, rather than ‘white’ itself—Norwegian, Afrikaner, Australian—they ethnicise such labels. In claiming ethnicity, rather than racial difference or supremacy, communities assume the right to defend such identities without appearing explicitly racist. Furthermore such notions of authenticity inform conceptions of whiteness as ontological and originary (Liera-Schwichtenberg, 2000:371), rather than culturally, historically and politically variable. The effectiveness with which heavy metal scenes have capitalised on themes of authenticity, purity and national pride (c.f. Hochhauser, 2011) indicates that the rhetoric of the ‘authentic’ permeates aspects of cultural life, such as the leisure spaces of music scenes, just as it infiltrates political contexts. Authenticity has long been an essential narrative for heavy metal fans and practitioners attempting to prove their autonomy from the corrupting influences of the commercial mainstream (Walser, 1993:11, 13, 100). Claims to authenticity in rock and metal music are a ‘fable’ (Avelar, 2011:158n.10). Such fables provide a ‘reenchantment of the world mediated by the grand apparatuses of mass media and technology’ (Ochoa¹ in Avelar, 2011:158). Exploring how claims to authenticity emerge from the context of global metal reveals how bands and fans both engage with and disengage from the ‘local’ as a reaction to globalisation. The fable of authenticity has been appropriated in the ‘simultaneous movement of transnationalisation and regionalisation of the record industry’ (Ochoa in Avelar, 2011:158) coded as ‘world music’, the systematically exclusive semantics of which underscore my own critique of the global metal model. I am nonetheless interested in the constitutive parts of ‘authenticity’ as it emerges in the nationalist rhetoric of heavy metal scenes in Norway, South Africa and Australia, and how it informs, or rather, *authenticates* (Moore 2002) the position of white patriarchal sovereignty. Authenticity does not directly inhere in any form of cultural expression, rather, as Moore argues, authenticity is a matter of interpretation which is made and fought for from within a cultural and historicised position (2002:210). Authenticity is ascribed, not inherent; the discourse of authenticity is then not one of total integrity or honesty, but rather an ongoing project of ‘authentication’ (Moore, 2002:209).

¹ Ochoa’s original article [1999] is written in Spanish; I use Avelar’s cited English translations of her work.

Moore then proposes the central question of the role of authenticity in music scholarship, which is to ask not *what* is being authenticated, but rather *who* (2002:210). Acknowledging that authenticity is ascribed to, rather than inscribed within a performance, instigates questions of who is being authenticated by performances of nationalism within select heavy metal scenes. This is a two-pronged endeavour—firstly, bands and fans situate their authenticity through references to archaic and esoteric national symbols that may only be comfortably read by a person with the cultural literacy to do so. An example of this emerges in the fan summation of Kobus!'s *Swaar Metaal*—'this is an essential album if you speak Afrikaans... Otherwise, you probably wouldn't like this album that much' (OuroborosSnake 2009). Locating fluency in Afrikaans as a privileged form of capital authenticates the unique position of Afrikaans speakers within both South Africa and the heavy metal community at large. Secondly, scene members may actively embrace national identity in such a way that it is directly aimed for an international audience, and hence validate and legitimise particular codes of nationhood through affirming them in a global context. This has the effect of staging national identity as 'authentic' while simultaneously allowing the erasure and displacement of indigenous culture. Such narratives of national identity, performed through the use of these master symbols, are underpinned by amnesia towards the invasive origins of these modern nation states. Metal scenes in Norway, South Africa and Australia which are focused on the ethnosymbolism of white nationhood all celebrate a national identity that occludes pre-colonial histories and instead support the façade of white originality.

The fantasy of a white indigeneity has long been the marker of nativist discourses that striate and reformulate themselves within settler narratives (Mullaney, 2007:99). The construction of originary whiteness establishes the right-to-ownership of white colonisers and their descendants by erasing or forcefully renegotiating the conditions of indigeneity itself. The 'crisis of belonging' (Mullaney, 2007:99) that emerges in the tensions between indigenous sovereignties and the discursive practices of the settler imaginary supports claims to an authentic white indigeneity. The concepts of indigeneity and belonging, Mulcock argues, are woven together in conversations about attachment to place,

nationalism, love of country, and 'soil, blood and identity' (2007:63). This meshing and merging leads to slippages of meaning, and the necessary conflict that emerges from contrasting definitions of indigeneity. Displacing the meaning of indigenous from the autochthonous to a loose rhetoric of ancestry and belonging is a violent disavowal of aboriginal sovereignty. When such slippages of meaning emerge within metal scenes, they continue the troubling groundwork of indigenous erasure, and the reimagining of the conditions for non-indigenous belonging.

The need to 'become native', and thus legitimise white sovereignty within a non-white space is reflected in what Goldie refers to as the process of 'indigenisation' (1993:13). The task of 'indigenising' heavy metal is hence a complex one. I have already critiqued the taxonomy of 'indigenous metal' that emerges within the rhetoric of global metal, arguing that broadly situating terms such as 'indigenous' or 'traditional' in opposition to 'Western' perpetuates a modern/primitive binary. I am nonetheless concerned with interrogating how heavy metal scenes in these 'Western' contexts authenticate whiteness through appeals to indigenisation, and the ways in which they are informed by broader national projects of indigenising invasive whiteness. Making authentic belonging within a nation contingent upon whiteness represents white bodies as a spatial and cultural norm, and highlights the uncomfortable Otherness of non-whiteness. Heavy metal scenes in Norway, South Africa and Australia thus execute this project in ways that both invisibilise whiteness, through synthesising elements of nationalism with metallic sounds and styles in ways that seem 'normal' (especially within the context of 'Western' music), and through appeals to sentiments of belonging. In doing so, these scenes represent the ways in which metal's 'affective power' (Wallach, Berger and Greene, 2011:19), much like the affective nature of the discourse of 'belonging' and 'home', can be given seemingly distinctive local meanings.

In the following section of this chapter I interrogate how the whitening praxis of metal scenes in Norway, South Africa and Australia authenticates particular forms of national identity, and how this is situated within a broader history of indigenous erasure and displacement within these countries. I do so

with reference to Johnston and Lawson's (2000) framework for the representational erasure of indigenous communities in order to achieve whiteness in settler-colonial (or rather, settler-invasive) societies. The violence of settler colonies fundamentally involves the elimination of the majority status of the indigenous population and its replacement by an emigrant, largely European population (Johnston and Lawson, 2000:362). The processes through which emigrant European settlers displaced indigenous occupants took multiple forms: physical, spatial, cultural and symbolic. White settlers displaced indigenous persons physically and spatially through moving groups from their traditional lands onto less desirable tracts of country. This was not a process unique to high colonialism, but continued well into the twentieth century for many settler-invasive states. The Norwegian policy of *fornorsking*, relocating Sámi people under the guise of 'Norwegianisation' is a stark example of this—the Sámi are indigenous to Sápmi, land which stretches across Northern Scandinavia. The spatial politics and resources of Sápmi have now fallen victim to changing geopolitical forces, divided by the imposed borders of not only Norway, but also Finland, Sweden and Russia (Albury, 2014:2). The complex relationship between land and Norwegianisation also sought to discriminate against Sámi in other ways—For example, only those proficient in Norwegian were permitted to purchase or rent land (Salvesen, 1995:132). This complex enmeshment of language and territory has implications for colonialist meaning-making which are replicated across national contexts.

Space itself is a necessary tool in renegotiating the conditions of indigenous belonging. Apartheid-era South Africa's townships and *bantustans* sought to ensure a white demographic majority in South Africa by literally redefining the parameters of citizenship. All non-white South Africans were relocated to townships on the peripheries of towns or cities, while black South Africans were moved to self-governing *bantustans*, territories considered external to and thus not granted the civic privileges of the nation state. As Norval notes, the 'nation' did not include anyone outside the white community (1996:185). This exscription of non-white South Africans from the national space was then not solely concerned with destroying any chance of black sovereignty, but with reinscribing the

symbolic and material boundaries of white ascendancy. Australia's recent history of Aboriginal missions and reserves maintains the 'total structure of domination orchestrated by the state' (Beckett, 1988:8). Huge tracts of land were taken from Indigenous people, who were forced into 'protected' reserves and missions away from their homelands. These Aboriginal camps constituted a super-exploited segment of the labour force (Pettman, 1992:19), both economically and sexually, as women in such reserves were frequently abused (Pettman, 1992:19; Beckett, 1988:7). In this situation, Pettman observes, Indigenous people's place in 'Australia' was ambiguous and contradictory (1992:19). They were excluded from citizenship, the labour market, and legal and social entitlements, yet totally entrapped within such institutions. These violent movements of indigenous peoples from their lands have often been memorialised and romanticised in settler cultures, where they are used to support the historical fictions of European arrival into alien physical and cultural space, and, importantly, their hard-earned sense of belonging.

Colonisation did not end with the annexation of land, but includes the cultural colonisation that continues to remove indigenous culture and ontologies. Colonial displacement is cultural and symbolic as well as physical (Johnston and Lawson, 2000:363), entailing within it the erasure of history and traditions. Displacement, furthermore, also unfolds within the spatial and textual practices of heavy metal scenes in ways that extenuate the dispossession preceded by exclusionary whiteness. Whiteness in metal is a force of cultural significance (Weinstein, 2000:111). This significance 'is not overtly or even necessarily covertly racist' (Weinstein, 2000:111), and, in this reading, emerges not as an affirmation of whiteness insomuch as an absence—'an obtrusive absence'—of blackness (2000:111). I nonetheless argue that this absence itself is an affirmation. The obtrusive absence of 'blackness' in heavy metal is always already political. This absence takes on further complexity when taken as a form of displacement. Hard rock and heavy metal, Walser argues, which 'began as a white remake of urban blues that [...] reproduce[ed] black culture without the black people in it' (1993:17). The systematic erasure of non-whiteness from musical cultures and forms not unique to heavy metal—Hebdige has noted the succession of white

subcultural forms in 1970s Britain which relied on the accommodation or expulsion of black presence (1979:44). These acts of appropriation and exclusion bear similarities with Johnston and Lawson's wider discussion of displacement and its implications (2000). The devaluing and erasure of precolonial cultures, as previously discussed, allowed white settlers to refer to themselves and their own cultural narratives, symbols and traditions as 'indigenous' to this 'new' space. The whitening mechanisms of heavy metal do not enfold the same genocidal violence of such colonialist enterprises, but, I argue, nonetheless succeed in dislocating non-white ontologies from the field of metal music.

This construction of heavy metal as an inherently white genre (Gaines 1998; Arnett 1996; Purcell 2003) allows it to enter a polemic in which 'white' music is contrasted as artistic, complex and developed against the 'natural' or 'bodily' position of 'black' music (Frith, 1987:21). Metal's relatively rigid sense of the body and concern with dominance, Walser argues, reflect European-American transformations of African-American musical materials and, importantly, cultural values (1993:17). I would interrogate Walser's suggestion that black people may not be attracted to heavy metal because it has little to offer those communities who may be more 'comfortable with African-American musical traditions' (1993:17). I remain mindful here of the very real potential for essentialism that emerges through Walser's statements; while they are useful for the purposes of expediency, such wide-reaching appraisals of 'black culture' work to fix problematic strictures of 'essence' and 'affect' to black subjectivities in ways that negate agency and diversity. Gilroy has made the important point that musical heritage has been instrumental in producing a constellation of black subject positions across locales that disrupt notions of essential 'blackness' (1993:82). It is not as simple as claiming that 'black people just don't like metal', but rather to situate metallic discourses of 'black' and 'white' music (and in turn black and white bodies) within broader debates over the ways in which the global dissemination of 'black' music is reflected in localised traditions of critical writing (Gilroy 1993:75). Moreover, metal is never situated just in a binary of white and black—there are numerous intersections in which conflicts emerge, with variable tensions that are equally prescient. Investigating the scenic practices that 'whiten'

metal reveal how scenes can become spaces that exile non-white presence, and are hence uncomfortable for certain bodies to occupy. Mapping how exclusionary scene politics unfold in relation to a colonising trajectory in Norway, South Africa and Australia demonstrates the means through which whiteness in metal scenes is simultaneously invisibilised, yet also given cultural expression.

Displacement, for Johnston and Lawson, is the first step in the 'indigenising' project of whiteness (2000:362). From there, they argue, white settlers referred to themselves and their cultures as indigenous, focused on the cultivation of native skills and attributes, and in this way 'cemented their legitimacy, their own increasingly secure sense of moral, spiritual and cultural belonging in the place that they commonly (and revealingly) described as "new"' (Johnston and Lawson, 2000:363). Transplanting a culture into an allegedly 'empty' space and appropriating indigenous narratives of land and nature has the distinct effect of recasting the rhetoric of roots and origins. This rhetoric is central to the archetypes that shape early settler narratives in all three countries at the centre of my thesis. The fierce econationalism of Norwegian black metal is realised through the personified Pagan Viking warrior; South Africa's Boers (farmers), Voortrekkers, and the foundation narrative of 'trekking' that accompanies Afrikaner nationalism underpin the claims to rural tribalism in Afrikaans metal; and the bushranger, in the Australian lexicon, embodies the white man successfully living off the land and resisting the authority of the colonial father. Separating the 'settler' from the 'coloniser' stresses the relationship between settlers and land while simultaneously dispossessing indigenous people of the same privilege. Staking out territory in a 'new' land is underpinned by a logic that distances settlers from their geographic origins and often resulted in limited allegiance to the home country (Johnston and Lawler, 2000:363). In time, settler-invaders thought of themselves not as colonists, but as proprietors of 'native' blood and soil in their new nations.

In the case of South Africa and Australia, conceiving of white settlers as 'native' necessitated the marking out of symbols and narratives that were different from, or even directly opposed to, those of the 'old' country. Doing so causes a fissure between invader and settler, and ostensibly fills out or gives meaning to

the supposed emptiness of colonial identity. In the case of Norway, this notion of the 'old country' takes on a new set of complicating factors. The 'old country' being supplanted here is not a colonial fatherland, but rather Sámi land itself, which was destroyed in the pursuit of an indigenous Nordic identity. This process of enshrining the 'new' as ancient and sacred emerges in multiple ways in heavy metal scenes across Norway, South Africa and Australia. Nonetheless, all three nations are concerned with giving meaning to whiteness in ways that both normalise and fetishise white, masculine ethnonationalism. The valorisation of whiteness in heavy metal subculture can be interpreted as the creation of the semblance of an ethnic group for individuals who are perceived to be 'nonethnics' (Weinstein, 2000:113). Such valorisation becomes a central tool in the attempts to navigate and destabilise what Hebdige refers to as the 'virtual impossibility of authentic white identification' (1979:64).

Heavy metal scenes in Norway, South Africa and Australia hence confront the 'impossibility' of authentic whiteness, and renegotiate the conditions for authenticity in complex and frequently disingenuous ways. The musical practices of metal attempt to secure a sovereign place for whiteness in the broader history of these countries by appropriating non-white signifiers, albeit through means that antiquate and essentialise indigenous cultures. This process unfolds differently in all three nations as a result of disparate regional histories, aesthetic traditions and empirical realities. I contend nonetheless, that all these practices affirm the ingrained history of hegemonic white nationhood and its presumed vitality in each region. In the case of Norwegian black and Viking metal, communal histories of national whiteness emerge through pastoral, neopaganist fantasies. The Paganism and appeals to romanticised heathenism in Norwegian black and Viking metal form a philosophical and visual foundation that may not always permeate the music itself (Hagen, 2011:194). However, bands in Norway have flirted with 'traditional' musical affirmations of an indigenous Norse cultural nationalism.

The affirmation of Norwegian ethnonationalism can be realised through explicit inferences. The 1995 album *Nordavind* by Storm recast traditional Norwegian songs in an extreme metal context, while Enslaved quote directly from

Aksel Sandemose's *Horns for our Adornment* ([1936]1938) in the chanted introduction to 'Havenless' (*Below the Lights*, 2003). Windir also drew much of their lyrical content from local sagas, deployed traditional folk tunes in their music, and sang in the archaic rural dialect Sognamål. The folk neotradition, however, also emerges through broad interpolations of what tradition 'sounds' like—Enslaved end their *Monumension* (2002) album with a track that attempts to reproduce ancient Viking music, for example. Hagen further argues that some Norwegian black metal bands demonstrate an affinity with traditional folk in their guitar parts, 'utilising drones and modal melodic figures reminiscent of the style' (2011:185). The heathen revivalist strains of Norwegian metal also appear in more esoteric forms. The common mythologising of the harshness of Ulver's *Nattens Madrigal* (1997) and the oft-repeated legend that it was recorded in the snowy forest echoes the econationalist, anti-modern rhetoric of much Norwegian metal, where nature's pristine beauty and unforgiving brutality are often promoted as part of an idealised Nordic existence. The effect of this, I argue, is to position ancient Norse and Germanic cultures as autochthonous by emphasising this relationship to the wilderness—a relationship which is only afforded to Norse whiteness.

The use of nature and neotraditional themes in the service of national identity, as Hagen notes, does not come without ideological baggage (2011:194). Appropriation of the relationship between indigeneity and land in the context of the Norwegian black metal scene works to enshrine white, Nordic hegemony as the 'true' culture of Norway. These conceptions of ancient whiteness are confidently executed in Norway, a nation which has built its own sense of self on images of both heroic Vikings and a primordially European rural culture (c.f. McIntosh, 2014). As the following discussion indicates, however, allusions to the ancient are much less tenable in South African and Australian settler-colonial contexts. This discussion reveals the tensions between a Norwegian conception of white antiquity in contrast to South Africa and Australia, and furthermore the complicating issues that emerge when Norway is understood as a settler colonial state. Norway's history of invasive settlement and occupation is generally not one considered within the matrix of European colonisation; the Anglo-Saxon

Christianisation of Scandinavia adds another complicating factor into the discussion. The Norwegian black metal scene, which mobilises aggression towards Western urban society, multiculturalism and Christianity, then attempts to channel this dissatisfaction into an 'extended campaign to return Norway to an idealised pagan past' (Hagen, 2011:196). Attempts to return to an idyllic 'pre-colonial' past for both South Africa and Australia, however, are a much less tenable endeavour. Metal scenes instead legitimate the position of whiteness in the longer histories of these countries through emphasising a link between modern white subjects and a precolonial past. They do so, however, in ways that conflate varied and multifaceted indigenous communities into a monolithic culture, which is resigned to antiquity.

Redrawing the map of nationhood in ways that emphasise broad appeals to community and equal claim to belonging severs indigenous persons from pre-colonial ownership, and emphasises white sovereignty. This is evident in the largely white scenes of South African metal, which ostensibly aim to show solidarity with a 'proud rainbow nation' (in Nandlall 2012a). The African metal scene has seen broader attempts to consolidate 'African' music and tradition with heavy metal: African mythology and folklore are common themes for Botswana's Skinflint (Barnett 2012); Azrail, a death metal band from Cape Town, take their name from the West African Hausa people's god of death. Pre-colonial history figures much less prominently within the Afrikaans metal scene, despite its claims to unity. Where it does exist, this unification is imagined through the extrapolation of 'traditional' African mythology or references to broader African politics. Beeldenstorm's '*Uhuru*' shares its name with the Swahili word for freedom and the Kenyan national day of independence, a term chosen with the hope that it would foreshadow new forms of independence for South Africa (Nandlall 2012a). These attempts at 'new associations' founded through music (Back, 1996:10) are tokenistic. In consolidating both African and Afrikaner identities, such approaches do little to acknowledge the vast disjunctures in power that allowed white South Africans, and Afrikaners in particular, to claim sovereignty over these very communities. This reflects what Ballantine recognises as a trend amongst contemporary South African music; of making allusions, musically or verbally, to

Africa, 'but in such a way as to make the continent an abstraction, without real content' (2004:112). Typically this is done through the use of indistinct, floating signifiers—signs that connote 'Africa' amorphously, non-specifically' so as to create a 'vague Pan-Africa' (Ballantine 2004:112). Mind Assault, for example, sell shirts with the phrase 'African Metal' superimposed over a map of the continent, despite displaying little interest in identities beyond South African borders. What is perhaps most significant about such attempts at new forms of associations is the desire to forge a localised sense of belonging for whiteness through music. Such associations reiterate the role of the white South African in the racial harmony of the Rainbow Nation; just another ethnic group, yet one with a distinct place in the new democracy.

The principal function of indigenising narratives such as these is to legitimise white settlers, to put whiteness in the cultural and discursive place of the indigenous person whose space has already been invaded. The hegemonic view of whiteness within the spaces of Australia's extreme metal scenes is accompanied by an erasure of an Aboriginal presence. Such 'unconscious desire[s] to render Australia pale' (Gray, 1999:82) are realised through what Secomb refers to as 'the homogenising white-washing of dominant antipodean society' (2003:86); a project which transforms the myth of *terra nullius* into a myth of Aboriginal antiquity. This mythologising of an Aboriginal presence 'lost' to the ages is a key form through which a precolonial past enters the lexicon of Australian metal music. Attempts to project a distinctly Australian identity within the nation's heavy metal scenes, according to Phillipov, are problematic because they fail to indicate anything particularly 'Australian' (2008:217). Tropes of Australianness may be deployed by individual bands—Phillipov cites Alchemist as an example of a band which has utilised indigenous music and lyrical reference to the Australian landscape (Phillipov, 2008:217). Positioning Indigenous music as a trope of Australianness, however, is a complex statement that necessitates further interrogation. Representations of Indigeneity within the space of Australian scenes have largely occluded Indigenous persons themselves. Where 'Indigenous' themes are broached, they are usually done so through indistinct token gestures. These token gestures, moreover, are usually provided by white men. Lord, for

example, sampled a didgeridoo for the opening track of their album *A Personal Journey* (2003), entitled 'The Dreaming'—also the name given to the varied, incredibly sacred, creation narratives of many Indigenous Australians. Alchemist are notable too for their prolific use of didgeridoo music, evident in the track 'Austral Spectrum' (*Organasm*, 2000). These moves towards reconciliation, however nominal, within the spaces of the scene are nonetheless immensely problematic. The hundreds of Indigenous nations that existed prior to and were forcibly destroyed by colonisation are reduced to simplistic tropes that resign Aboriginality to antiquity and ensure a futural white eternity.

Colonial ecologies of white mastery and black alienation

The 'package deal of white civilisation' included the rights of both appropriation and obliteration (Steyn, 2001:11). These moments of essentialisation and antiquation, particularly as they manifest in heavy metal in South Africa and Australia, are complicit in the 'colonial alienation of the person' that denies individuality (Bhabha in Fanon, 1986:x). The depersonalisation of colonial dislocation emerges through its displacement of time and personhood, its defilement of culture and territory, and the perpetual stereotyping of the 'native fixed at the shifting boundaries between barbarism and civility' (Bhabha in Fanon, 1986:x). Reducing colonised cultures to monoliths that become appropriated in the toolbox of musical 'styles' not only denies any possibility of a positive sense of personhood, but entrenches indigeneity within a binary of the familiar and the exotic at best—and, at worst, the civilised and the savage. Where Hebdige maps 'frozen dialectic between black and white cultures' (1979:69–70) as it unfolds within youth subcultures, I argue that this fixity tracks the wider history of depersonalisation that dislocates non-whiteness, and particularly 'native' non-whiteness, from national ontologies. The European colonisation of South Africa carried with it the central notion that 'Africans', as a broad, all-encompassing category, were to be 'assimilated into reasonless nature, smudged into a semi-humanity, arrested in a shadowy past without history, without cultures of their own' (Steyn, 2001:8).

Whiteness brings the power to define both self and other, a power that white colonisers could wield to name the 'primitiveness' and 'disorder' of a continent and hence justify its exploitation and violent regeneration (Mudimbe, 1988:20). The alignment of the 'primitive' with the natural indicates how nature is employed in the cause of colonial conquest. Within an Australian context, Aboriginal people were (and continue to be) represented within an objectifying 'hierarchical schema of vegetable, animal, Aborigine, Man' (Schaffer, 1988:95). Indigenous people are excluded from representation in any positive or progressive sense, but rather disappear into the concept of the natural, and, furthermore, are repressed by its conquest. In conflating land and indigenous populations as something to be conquered, the foundational narratives of both South Africa and Australia present the nation as something that was won through (masculine) struggle and hardship, and hence only exists in a meaningful way from the point of invasive colonial victory onwards. Heavy metal scenes in all three countries reflect and refract dominant colonial narratives of nations as possessions. They do so, however, in ways that continue to elucidate the variable historical relationships between white nationhood and the natural world, and the ethnosymbolic value of land itself.

The landscape of heavy metal, in both literal and symbolic forms, is hence entrenched in multiple understandings that dictate the procession of white patriarchal nationalism. Landscape functions as the nexus of a network of meanings which allow a series of identifications between men (Schaffer, 1988:94); it becomes the territory through which 'man' names and confronts the alien 'Other'. The lands that settlers occupied were themselves given special discursive treatment, Johnston and Lawson note (2000:364). Emphasising the vastness and alleged 'emptiness' of land allowed such territories to be filled with 'words and herds' (2000:364); physical manifestations of occupation, but also stories of the 'triumph' of white men that legitimated settlement and claims to ownership. Such claims to pre-colonial emptiness however enfold within them the celebration of indigenous genocide. Colonialism itself often confronted 'local patriarchies with colonising patriarchies, producing a turbulent and sometimes very violent aftermath' (Connell, 2005:1804). This juncture between local patriarchies and colonising patriarchies is a central focus of heavy metal's relationship to the

colonial, and permeates the foundational narratives of metallic nationalisms across Norway, South Africa and Australia. While Norwegian black and Viking metal enshrine land with monstrous, masculinist value, in contrast to this South African and Australian metal scenes envelope land within colonial conquest. Mastery of the land and the life within it is a crucial narrative within heavy metal, which largely hinges on 'spectacles of male potency' (Walser, 1993:110). It is also significant to note that within such narratives land is feminised. Colonial conquest, as McClintock has explored, is 'mapped in male body fluids' which bequeath patrimony to white heirs (1995:3).

The feminisation of land reflects heavy metal's wider practice of the almost total exscription of women and femininity (Walser, 1993:110). Walser's twenty-year-old declaration continues to be salient in addressing the disavowal of the feminine in metal cultures: this omission is compounded by the overwhelming absence of women in the foundational narratives of the three countries discussed here. Furthermore the reduction of defeated patriarchies to the position of the 'feminine' extends the violence of hegemonic masculinity. This emerges in metal's celebrations of archetypal men who 'conquered' the harsh, hostile wild and thus made colonised environments into 'a body open to mastery' (Schaffer, 1988:95)—the penetrative narrative of the Afrikaner Voortrekkers, or the plundering of land by Australian goldminers, for example—but also through narratives that stress self-representation and identification with land. The Nordic man within Norse mythology, as Lönnroth argues, prizes 'manliness' above all else (2009:54). The dichotomy that announces the 'manliness' of the Nordic man also heralds the humiliation of the feminised 'Other', positioning the defeated man—and defeated land—as womanly and thus ready to be sodomised and disgraced (Lönnroth, 2009:54). The Norwegian wilderness, conversely, is celebrated precisely for its inability to be tamed—its vast frostbitten expanses, snow-covered mountains and dark forests. To survive—and thrive—in such an environment represents the victory of the Nordic man against the increasingly technologised world. Norwegian metal's interest in the natural world is thus not entirely based in environmental concerns, but rather in using the natural as a marker of strength and authentic masculinity in a post-modern, technologised world, promoting an

idealised existence as part of a mystical wilderness (Hagen, 2011:194). The mastery of 'alien' lands is written into colonial narratives as the victory of European progress; a rhetoric that further affirms the supposed triumph of white heteropatriarchy.

Heavy metal scenes across Norway, South Africa and Australia draw out the relationship between whiteness and mastery by entrenching the dominant narrative position of white maleness within the music itself. Emphasising the superiority of heavy metal's technicality and purity against the idea of a homogenous, bodily, 'black' music canon embeds metal within the dualistic opposites of mind and body that legitimates the devaluation and degradation of non-white cultural heritage. This binary becomes increasingly apparent through the terms that fans and bands themselves use to describe the music emerging from each national scene. Characterisations of Norwegian black and Viking metal are largely bound up in discussions of darkness, grace, complexity and melancholy (O'Malley 1994; Gotrich 2012; Bansal 2014), marking the particularly Norwegian procession of ethnonational music traditions as unrelentingly disconcerting, nihilistic and discomfiting. Afrikaans metal is described as tough and aggressive, yet expressive and technical (Nandlall 2012a; Darkfiend 2014). Australian extreme metal bands are intent on isolating themselves from what they are not (commercial, overly technical, pretentious) and stress the patriotism, ferocity, brutality and unaffected nature of their music (Haun 2010). There are generic differences that account for some of the disparity across these responses—lengthy progressive metal experiments would likely not be welcomed within an Australian thrash scene that prizes hypermasculine brutality, for example. The perceptions and characterisations of these scenes nonetheless tie heavy metal to white nationhood in explicit ways. Positioning heavy metal as pure and technical in opposition to a homogenous notion of bodily, 'black' music traditions emphasises a polemic of mind and body, which situates whiteness and white cultural forms as superior.

The exclusion of non-whiteness from the musical spaces of heavy metal is therefore not solely achieved through overt hostility, although examples of this are present. Moynihan and Söderlind, for example, note that members of Norway's

black metal scene made a point of distancing themselves from rock n' roll, arguing that rock's roots in Afro-American culture made it 'alien to white people' (2003:175). The complexity and melancholy of black metal, it is argued, represents a reclaiming of 'European' musical sensibilities. This exclusory sentiment is apparent in the rhetoric of Hellhammer's notorious declaration—'...we don't like black people here. Black metal is for white people' (in Moynihan & Söderlind 1998:351). South African bands, aside from the broadest conciliatory gestures, have largely ignored the musical dynamics of a country increasingly defining itself as African, and instead pushed for 'white' Afrikaans music divorced from an African history and context. Mind Assault, for example, distinguish their music from styles which are popular or 'feasible' with the 'ethnic' population (in Ramon 2009: para. 2). This rhetorical binary operates within a long and problematic history of defining 'black' culture as the antithesis of the 'bourgeois mind' (Frith 1996:127). Moreover, separating metal music from 'black music' such as blues by celebrating its technicality (as opposed to the 'romantic', 'soulful' or 'rudimentary' lexicon reserved for blues music) makes the implicit gesture of marking bands as white (Pillsbury 2006:95). This technicality also marks a complex move between whiteness as a mechanism of intellectual elitism, and whiteness as a definitive form of authentic working-class masculinity. Australian metal has prided itself on unaffected simplicity and strength. The notion of locating some form of 'purity' or 'truth' through heavy metal that is brutal and ferocious finds correlation with older Australian colonial and settler narratives which prize toughness and resilience. Correlating whiteness with strength, intellectualism and virtuosity continues the trajectory of white cultural elitism and enables the ongoing erasure of non-white ontologies from the musicological spaces of heavy metal. When heavy metal scenes invoke such rhetoric, saturated in the central markings of a culture and framed in local terms and symbols, they devalue national life that exists outside the parameters of permissible whiteness.

Understandings of white musicality as superior to the musics of 'Others' positions whiteness at the apex of cultural and intellectual life. However, this notion of white musicality, particularly as it emerges within heavy metal, entails within it fragmentations and multiplicities of whiteness. The tension that emerges

between working-class whiteness—the ‘defensively organised collective’ (Clarke, [1976]2011:117)—as representative of the authentic roots of heavy metal, and the progressive elitism that often underpins the Northern European metal attitude is a complex and contradictory conflict that continues to unfold in increasingly intricate ways. Metal, as Weinstein notes, has a class signification wherever it appears (2000:113). These internal contradictions underpin the means through which whiteness, as a dominant subject position, may be translocated and translated from one context to another, albeit in fragmentary rather than sequential ways. The unity that forms in defence of white nationhood, and the divisive rhetoric that precedes such appeals to white victimhood, nonetheless foregrounds the markedly similar ways in which whiteness across all three nations references symbols of white ethnonationalism. Furthermore, this ideological kinship of whiteness under threat has global implications. In their most extreme manifestations, calls to protect the sanctity of ‘traditional’ national identity have resulted in the emergence of extreme right-wing metal groups who defend whiteness in much more readily identifiable and deliberate ways.

The National Socialist Black Metal of Norway, Aryan Pride Metal in South Africa and Australia’s White Power Metal movements are underpinned by violent racial rhetoric that depict whiteness as desirable and superior yet under threat from various Others. Such music is deliberately divisive and confronting, violent and encased within the fascist rhetoric and ideology of white supremacy. However, to suggest that racism only exists within such extreme-right wing scenes, and hence divorce it entirely from the scenic structures of heavy metal, would be to excuse even the most mundane, seemingly harmless racisms where they do occur. It thus becomes increasingly important not to situate white power metal in Norway, South Africa and Australia as the definitive example of the racial politics of their national scenes, for it most certainly is not, but to come to an understanding of how such extremist manifestations emerge from the tacit valorisations of white identity that shapes every day interactions. Heavy metal emerges as an attempt to give cultural expression to a white demographic in ways that are ostensibly non-racial, or more explicitly pro-white (Weinstein, 2000:113). I nonetheless contend that practices of giving cultural expression to whiteness

unfold in ways that deliberately shroud pro-white sentiment. These extreme right-wing heavy metal scenes reassert the most confronting forms of metallic whiteness across the global metal community. Across Norway, South Africa and Australia, such communities attempt to establish an arrangement for ancient and noble whiteness, which may reach across national borders to find communion.

Despite the widespread decry of the explicit fascist violence of extreme-right wing scenes, heavy metal still entrenches whiteness with exclusory nationalist value, albeit in much more tacit ways. I argue that even the seemingly innocuous pastime of interpellating national archetypes into metallic narratives has the same total effect of enshrining whiteness, and validating the threats to which white identity is supposedly exposed. Situating three national iterations of whiteness within the same appeals to global, transhistorical white identities enables bands and fans to reach out to their racial kin in the white fatherlands through the ideological allegiances of whiteness. Gestures to Germanic and Pagan or Norse symbolism across all three scenes reiterates an idealised international whiteness grounded in the 'North', which finds itself represented and translated within specific national contexts. The frequency with which Nordic symbolism and mythologies are invoked particularly within extreme right-wing metal scenes, but also within the textual aesthetics of heavy metal communities across all three countries, should not go unacknowledged. The valorising of the 'North' in metal discourse across international scenes draws on the symbols of particular ethnic traditions to give historicity and local meaning to white identity. I must speculate, however, as to whether such romanticised appeals to the 'North' as an idyllic heterotopia are embedded within a wider desire to celebrate whiteness in ways that do not appear explicitly racist; even when they hinge on the fetishisation of a world victorious over and hence devoid of non-white Otherness. In forcing an allegiance between the symbolic capital of Norwegian whiteness, Afrikaner whiteness and Australian whiteness and the signifiers of a broader reactionary movement, these scenes attempt to establish the conditions for transnational white consciousness. The notion of a transnational whiteness takes on new levels of importance as whites conceive of themselves as experiencing a loss of political dominance within local contexts.

Conclusion

The matrix of race, gender, nationhood and musicality through which both bands and fans have made ideological sense of heavy metal is important for understanding not only how whiteness within metal unfolds not merely as a demographic category, but as a force of cultural significance (Weinstein, 2000:111). However, where Weinstein has argued that this is less an affirmation of whiteness than it is the by-product of a 'cultural grouping' (2000:113), I argue that the significance of such whiteness in metal scenes has been affirmed through a continued process of exscription: of non-white bodies, non-white voices, and crucially, the racial status of whiteness itself. In Norway, an emphasis on a romantic nationalist link between the self and the North as a means of valorising heritage—and, crucially, heritage foregrounded by whiteness—becomes realised through phantasmic objects of ethnicity, and furthermore, the monstrous nationalisms that operate within the sites of melancholy, horror and transgression occupied by Norwegian metal. Afrikaans metal utilises the Afrikaans language in such a way that it becomes symbolic of Afrikaner resistance, heritage and pride, a problematic correlation in which language is made to bear the burden of Afrikaner identity, and simultaneously subsumes a violent past of repression and disenfranchisement in which language was complicit. Australian metal's glorification of nationalist masculine archetypes—bushmen, goldminers, diggers and working-class men—has the twin effect of exalting Australian men as legends while simultaneously crafting a transhistorical essence of 'normal' masculinity that shapes nationalist narratives. Such complex interweavings of elitism, resistance and normophilia establish stringent boundaries of who may claim to belong, both within the space of the scene and the ethnonational territories of these countries. The ethos of heavy metal music at large may operate as an important site of negotiation and resistance for its fans and practitioners. However, it also falls back on tired notions of tradition and prejudice that reassert the problematic aspects of white colonial identity rather than reconciling them.

In Norway, South Africa and Australia, hegemonic national identity is built upon the mutually supportive discourses of masculinity and whiteness, a longstanding affiliation that reproduces and maintains white patriarchy in

different ways. In doing so, however, all three scenes continue to enable the creation of symbolic Others, the erasure of indigenous Others from the national space, and the construction of territory as a white possession. This façade of white originality, accompanied by the familiar narrative territory of white struggle and the casual amnesia of white victimhood, supports the continued dominance of white narratives, even as they become localised in different ways across contexts. This chapter, like my thesis as a whole, has dismantled the (in)visibility of whiteness within heavy metal scenes and mapped how such whiteness is deployed with national specificity. Doing so enables a revision of the ways in which nationhood emerges within predominantly white metal scenes, and furthermore, combats the narrative which characterises 'tradition' within such scenes as camp or playful (c.f. Bayer, 2009) and instead points to the ways in which such symbolic nationhood relays more complex discourses of privilege, heritage and community.

Understanding how whiteness continues to be entangled with heavy metal provides new perspectives on the local-global dialectic of 'global' heavy metal. Over twenty years ago Walser made the claim that the global spread of metal means that fans at large are no longer 'overwhelmingly white' but heavy metal remains a 'white-dominated discourse' (1993:17). This statement remains of central significance in contemporary approaches to heavy metal. White hegemony is deeply entrenched in the dominant ways of thinking about heavy metal music, practices and cultures. My research has interrogated not only metallic whiteness itself, but demonstrated ways of speaking about whiteness and white masculinity in metal that move beyond discussions of spectacular racism, virtuosity and simple demographics, and investigated how the white discourse of metal is realised in contextually specific formations, representations and narrations. It is henceforth necessary to explore how contemporary narratives of national and scenic identity predicated upon sameness and Otherness may be renegotiated and reconstructed, and hence allow for the rethinking of identity, difference and nationhood in ways that might decentre the white heart of heavy metal music.

Conclusion

Beyond the Pale.

[Metal is] not exclusive, it's inclusive... the concepts of martyrdom, alienation, or your relationship to history and culture should speak to you no matter if you are from Palestine or Peru.

—Alan Averill, *Pagan Metal*, 2009.

Heavy metal has changed significantly in the twenty years since Philip Anselmo declared that it was 'a white thing'. With the wide geographic growth of heavy metal, both its musical style and culture have expanded as metalheads in diverse settings sound their own particular aesthetics and socio-political concerns (Wallach, Berger and Greene, 2011:8). Metal as a genre and culture has continued to act as a potent source of meaning for fans and musicians across countless locales, where it provides a site for doing identity work and negotiating social and political change. Heavy metal is thus a phenomenon of aesthetic and cultural complexity. The existence of heavy metal across myriad contexts therefore does not necessarily imply that metal scenes share the same communal sentiments, nor that heavy metal fulfils the same purposes, across widespread geographies. Varied cultural meanings surround the production and reception of metal music itself, just as difference pervades the social dynamics of the territories in which heavy metal is created, consumed and lived, and in turn the diverse, situated performances of identity within heavy metal.

One common meaning of heavy metal that consistently emerges from the genre's canon is heavy metal as community; a site where the world's disenchanting and alienated can find solidarity in a genre that promises powerful emotions and amplified sounds. The 'affective overdrive' of heavy metal offers listeners and practitioners musical experiences invested with serious, weighty or powerful emotions (Wallach, Berger and Greene, 2011:10). Heavy metal is widely perceived as giving a voice to the voiceless, articulated through a music and culture for outsiders who cannot or choose not to conform to societal standards (Weinstein, 2000; Dawes, 2012). Many fans have found in metal an emotional anchor lacking

in other aspects of their lives, in what is understood as a community based on shared musical preferences for loud and abrasive sounds and attitudes (Dawes, 2012:1). Metal's ability to explore the extremes of human expression is thus conceived as the key to the music's global appeal. Heavy metal's central narrative is constructed through gestures towards escape, empowerment and transgression, gestures that allow the genre to be visualised as a site of solidifying encounters between individuals and communities the world over.

This thesis has addressed the often overlooked aspect of such utopian metal rhetoric, namely the tensions that emerge when musical spaces that pride themselves on solidarity and inclusion are both tacitly and explicitly marked by stringent exclusionary parameters. This thesis has demonstrated how heavy metal offers a site for doing identity work in spaces that are regularly thought of as being inclusive and centred on community spirit, yet which also act as vehicles for complex race and gender issues that circulate through wider social and political contexts. I have taken as a starting point the contention that Anglo-American sites have been given originary significance within heavy metal discourse, and their patriarchal whiteness thus normalised and rendered invisible. My research has interrogated the implications of this naturalising of whiteness not only for the people who suffer from its pervasive and oppressive consequences, but furthermore, how it affects those who actively benefit from the invisibilised mechanisms of white hegemony. This thesis has argued that whiteness has been normalised within heavy metal discourse, wherein metallic whiteness is rarely given significance beyond demographics, an approach that makes difference hypervisible. Moreover, this thesis has argued that claims to the large-scale whiteness of metal's fans and practitioners (Purcell, 2003; Ellis, 2009) must be countered not only through reference to the global circulation of heavy metal, but furthermore through critiques of the dominance of white discourses in metal.

White hegemony remains deeply entrenched in the dominant ways of thinking about metal music, cultures and practices. In providing critical analyses of whiteness' expression within heavy metal scenes in Norway, South Africa and Australia, this project has shown that whiteness is deployed through different nationalist mechanisms in each country to police and construct parameters of

white masculinity. By drawing discussions of metal's whiteness beyond Anglo-American contexts and instead situating such discussions across disparate locales, this thesis proposes an understanding of whitenesses in heavy metal as a response to a solidifying conception of whiteness and the political positions that emerge through such uniform perceptions. This research therefore provides the groundwork for future approaches to whiteness in heavy metal, and addresses the current shortcomings of the treatment of race, ethnicity and constructions of authenticity within the global metal model. Few genres have been able to mobilise sentiments of national and ethnic identity with the same widespread vigour as heavy metal. It is thus important for Metal Music Studies to address the implications of such nationalism within the white cartology of heavy metal, even as scenes continue to unfold across the globe.

Reflections on of the research

The objective of this thesis has been to unveil the (in)visibility of whiteness within heavy metal scenes, and map how such whitenesses are deployed in different countries. I identified as my research problem the gap that emerged within the fields of both Whiteness Studies and Metal Music Studies, where the instrumental whiteness of heavy metal scenes across disparate locales had not been adequately critiqued or even acknowledged. I argued that current academic modes of addressing the whiteness of heavy metal were limited to discussions of demographics, virtuosity and spectacular racism. I have contended that the effect of this is to normalise whiteness and white masculinity within heavy metal and obscure its cultural and political significance. My research contended that heavy metal scholarship has constituted the default scene member in heavy metal cultures as white, heterosexual and male, and thus exoticised scene members who had been marginalised by such constructions. In taking into account these problems, my thesis combatted these issues precisely through interrogating the 'norm' in heavy metal and tracking how the normalising of whiteness creates a 'normal' scenic centre which correlates heavy metal with white, Western, heteromascularity. In doing so I addressed how this normative whiteness naturalises the dominance of young white men within representations of heavy metal, to the exclusion and marginalisation of Others.

In approaching these questions, this thesis outlined broader possibilities for the field of Metal Music Studies by proposing alternate ways of addressing the social and political significance of whiteness in metal in ways that can move beyond discussions of demographics, virtuosity, and explicit racism. This negotiation of a new set of coordinates for metallic whiteness formed the crux of my research. In taking discussions of whiteness into heavy metal scenes external to the 'traditional' centres of the United States and United Kingdom, my thesis has demonstrated that current modes of inquiry were not sufficient for addressing the complex political work that whiteness performs the world over. As such my research has examined the significance of whiteness in Norway, South Africa and Australia precisely to draw attention to the multifaceted mechanisms of whiteness in disparate locations; where whiteness may not be the dominant demographic, where whiteness is given ancient significance, or where whiteness is endemic to ongoing colonialist violence. The findings of my research have made visible the hidden mechanisms of whiteness, and point to their multiplicity across global metal scenes, practices and cultures.

This thesis argues that the whiteness and white heteromascularity of heavy metal emerges across disparate locales as an expression of a series of distinct nationalist projects. I conducted an analysis of the mechanisms of whiteness, masculinity and nationhood as they manifest across separate heavy metal scenes in Norway, South Africa and Australia. From this analysis, I articulated three key forms of white nationalism that characterise each scene: Norway's monstrous nationalism, South Africa's resistant nationalism and Australia's banal nationalism. These nationalist rhetorics narrate nationhood in different forms and for different ends, nonetheless all three metal scenes and their constructions of national identity are anchored in understandings of whiteness as commensurate with authentic belonging, and furthermore, under threat. In each of these analyses of the matrix of whiteness, masculinity and nationhood across Norway, South Africa and Australia, I revealed how patriarchal whiteness was tied to sentiments of nationalist belonging. In interrogating the circumstances of such belonging and the strategic political positions that accompany such rhetorics of inclusion, this

research isolated how the distinct nationalisms of each scene have emerged in response to perceived threats to white masculine hegemony.

In black and Viking metal scenes in Norway, I argued that whiteness is given ancient and environmental value, wherein monstrous nationalism operates as a mechanism through which scene members can combat the 'colonial' oppression represented by Christianity and modern globalisation through the invocation of horror and wilderness. I further argued that romanticised visions of the Vikings and neopaganist pastoral fantasies are used as an exclusionary foil for the enforcement of hegemonic whiteness. In the Afrikaans metal scene in South Africa, I contended that whiteness is affixed with ethnic value that seeks to legitimise the colonisation of South Africa and protest the loss of identity for white South Africans, particularly Afrikaners, in the post-Apartheid era. I demonstrated that resistant rationalism provides a mechanism through which Afrikaners assert their right to nationhood and territory. Through invocations of the master symbols of Afrikanerdom, Afrikaans metal has expressed whiteness as a resistant identity against an integrationist enemy. In the extreme metal scenes of Australia, whiteness finds expression as banality and normophilia, where banal nationalism works to enshrine whiteness as originary and assigns it with normative value. I argued that banal nationalism consecrates sameness through celebrations of 'everyday' men and their heroic actions within the nationalist narrative, where whiteness is granted a timelessness that overlooks colonial violence and suggests that threats to such ordinariness emerge from disruptions to normophilic whiteness. In each of these chapters, I offered a sustained critical analysis of how whiteness was given expression in each of these scenes, and showed how the complex entanglement of white and national identities enables problematic sentiments of inclusion and exclusion to structure the lived daily realities of life as both a scene member and national citizen.

From these separate analyses, I interrogated how whiteness was expressed in each scene, and thus offered a framework for tracking the matrix of whiteness, masculinity and nationhood as it emerges in heavy metal scenes. In deploying this framework I demonstrated how the white discourse of metal is realised in contextually specific formations, representations and narrations. I found that in

each scene, national identity is bound up in the master symbols of the nation which are made to bear the burden of 'belonging.' National identity was represented or encoded in the collation of symbols such as language, institutions, songs, literature and artefacts. Each national scene co-opts these in different ways, in different performances and with different aims. Such narratives of national identity, performed through the use of these master symbols, allowed white national identity to be staged as originary and 'authentic', while simultaneously allowing the erasure and displacement of indigenous cultures. These metal scenes celebrated a national identity that occluded pre-invasive histories and instead supported the façade of white originality—and crucially, specific kinds of whiteness. The excising of non-white, non-masculine bodies constructed these nations as white possessions founded through men and masculinity. In conflating land and indigenous populations as something to be conquered, each country presents the (feminised) nation as something that was won through (masculine) struggle and hardship. This claiming of national ownership positions land, and hence national identity, as something that is fiercely guarded but constantly under threat.

Metal scenes in these three nations each corresponded to wider discourses of the 'loss' of an authentic national identity. This narrative of white victimhood belies exclusionary politics and divisive rhetoric which establish 'Others' who would challenge not only the hegemony of national identity, but the wellbeing of the white nation itself. This research showed that by isolating the nationalisms of each scene, distinct nationalist rhetoric emerged as a series of stances (Berger, 2010) which were sharply opposed to certain national visions and pastimes, while strengthening their connection to others (Wallach, Berger and Greene, 2011:7). Such stances are dictated by an exclusionary, violent localism that parlays a politics of 'us' and 'them'. Moreover, the research also found that these constructions of difference were profoundly conditioned by their historical and worldly context (Said, 1989:213). It is therefore apparent that national identity, and white identity, unfolds in more complex ways than the simple identification of binarisms—of gender, race or class—that structure social antagonism (Bhabha, 1994:292). Rather, the national specificity within which whiteness is realised is

necessary to understanding the disjunctive forms of representation that signify the national subject across metal scenes in Norway, South Africa and Australia, and hence crucial to addressing how whiteness is emergent across disparate contexts.

Drawing implications: Consequences and effects

In revealing the hidden mechanisms of metallic whiteness and pointing to its multiplicity across global metal scenes, practices and cultures, this research has significant implications for the fields of both Metal Music Studies and Whiteness Studies. Through drawing discussions of metallic whiteness out of current models, I demonstrate the pervasive and often oppressive implications of such whiteness. This thesis offers an original approach to the white hegemony of heavy metal and its destabilising therein, and proposes new lines of inquiry for the discussion of metallic whiteness. A primary effect of the research is the desire to bring whiteness into discussions of metal and race, and thus disrupt previous tendencies to erase the racial status of white individuals in heavy metal. In directly addressing and problematising whiteness, rather than situating whiteness as an uncritiqued counterpoint entirely in relation to blackness, researchers can respond to the consequences of such hegemony, not only for those who experience its negative effects (such as racism and sexism), but also those for whom hegemony is beneficial. In drawing attention to the position of privilege granted to whiteness within metal scenes, this research also points to the current shortcomings of the Global Metal model. The rhetoric of 'global metal' as an academic model enfolds within it a troubling neo-colonial tone that echoes broader issues within world music.

My thesis has argued that the global metal model reproduces the dominant forms of power that establish Anglo-American and European metal as the 'centre' of the heavy metal scene, while enforcing the 'Otherness' of global—and importantly, non-white—heavy metal communities. This approach, which fetishises certain national identities and ethnicities and invisibilises others, detaches whiteness from the moorings of ethnic identity and instead fixes 'Others' as the locus of 'indigenous' cultural production. My thesis thus argues that

scholarly approaches to heavy metal have allowed whiteness in metal scenes to go unmarked, which positions 'white' as the 'norm' in scenic spaces, practices and products. Furthermore, this simultaneous privileging and invisibilising of whiteness has enabled representations of Others to be depicted against the normative standard of white heavy metal cultures. This has implications for the future trajectory of Metal Music Studies, which I argue must remain mindful of the ways these dimensions of self and Other work to (re)inscribe the centrality of whiteness within heavy metal, and allow it to remain a 'white dominated discourse' (Walser, 1993:17), even when the literature begins to map heavy metal scenes beyond metal's 'traditional' geographic centres.

My research contribution to the field of Metal Music Studies is a sustained critique of whiteness and unprecedented research into metal scenes in South Africa and Australia. Furthermore this thesis offers a new line of inquiry to Whiteness Studies, as this research brings music scenes and communities into focus as a terrain of whiteness (Frankenberg, 1993:1). This project interrogates how the entwining of music and whiteness both structures and is structured by daily lived experiences, discursive repertoires, and cultural identities, and thus addresses heavy metal as a cultural site wherein 'collective white identities are produced and white identities normalised' (Twine and Gallagher, 2008:15). However, it also destabilises the unifying structure of white hegemony by pointing to whitenesses that emerge from specific nationalisms. In doing so, it confronts a common tendency to treat whiteness as a uniform social category and instead posits the fracturing of whiteness into whitenesses. This fracturing and multiplexity also has vital implications for the treatment of masculinities within Metal Music Studies. Masculinity, as Connell notes, is not an isolated object but rather an aspect of a larger structure (2005a:67). Analysing how men and male bodies are drawn into the nexus of whiteness and nationhood points to the multiplicity of masculinities that emerge in the wake of patriarchal violence—colonised/colonising, feminised, Christian, Viking, Afrikaner, Aboriginal and so on. This thesis takes as one of its central tasks the drawing of masculinity out of a rigid masculine/feminine binary, and talking about gender in metal in terms of its intersectionality. In doing so this thesis acknowledges the wider need for

intersectionality in studies of heavy metal, and proposes the vital disruptions to monolithic categories of 'male' and 'white'. This move allows for a more comprehensive understanding of how such presumably staid social categories are constantly undercut by invocations of race, class, sexuality, mobility and so on. In the context of this thesis, this intersectionality is necessary for the wider project of fracturing whiteness. Pointing to the fragmentation and multiplicity of whitenesses across three different countries deconstructs the structure of white hegemony, and calls into question the strategic political position that emerges in treating white selves as a uniform category. This study is therefore significant for third wave Whiteness Studies' commitment to addressing how cultural sites such as leisure spaces act as arenas for hegemonic whiteness; it does so precisely through contesting whiteness and white masculinity as uniform social categories and interrogating how such identities correspond to distinct national discourses, pastimes and imaginaries.

Coda: Looking to the future

Analysing how whiteness, and white masculinity, emerge through social practices and power-laden discourses within heavy metal scenes facilitates an understanding of the constructions, complexities and contradictions of whiteness itself, those which constitute 'the terrain of white and white male identity over time and across space' (Supriya, 1999:136). The analysis of white male identity thus disrupts and resists an essential whiteness, and instead implements an understanding of the ways in which whiteness and white masculinity emerge within heavy metal as historically and geographically specific constructions. Naming whiteness and addressing its operations within heavy metal opens up a new range of possibilities for discussions of race and ethnicity within the genre. Future approaches can extend this theoretical groundwork into greater ethnographic studies, particularly in addressing fans themselves. Global metal scholarship has done the vital groundwork of drawing discussions of race in heavy metal out of the black/white binary. What remains crucial is to make visible the whitenesses of metal as they unfold both within and external to Anglo-American contexts. Furthermore, unveiling whitenesses can also make visible the position of Anglocentric cultural imperialism that may unconsciously dictate representations

of heavy metal scenes in 'far-flung locales' (Wallach, Berger and Greene, 2011:4). By acknowledging how whiteness is situated within wider discussions of 'authenticity' and the 'traditional' or 'indigenous' in heavy metal, future research may look to how categorisations of 'authentic' or 'traditional' music have worked as a redescription of the exotic (Frith, 2007:152). Future research with a focus on aesthetics—particularly as analyses of aesthetics are a glaring omission in studies of metal (Clinton, 2010)—will prove an effective way of interrogating conceptions of the 'exotic'. The danger of 'assimilating the Other', as Walser has argued, has been allowed to overshadow its opposite, namely the 'fetishising of difference' (2011:333). Researchers may come to conceive of 'difference' not as a fixed or stringently bounded notion tied to some 'authentic' essentialism, but rather consider the intricate nuances of how social and cultural identities may be articulated in music.

In looking to the future, my hope for my own research is that it makes whiteness in heavy metal not only visible, but also self-aware. This is particularly significant in light of recent scene dramas such as '#metalgate', a largely-online discussion that emerged in late 2014. '#metalgate' coalesced around claims that heavy metal was under attack from 'social justice warriors' coordinating a mass effort to enforce widespread liberalism upon heavy metal and persecute white men, who were 'denied a right to have any pride in their ethnic identity' (Naso, 2014: para. 4). This short-lived episode was particularly pertinent within the context of this research; not only because #metalgate's proponents situated heavy metal as something that belonged to white men, but also because this question of those same white men being denied a relationship to history and culture was one with which I had grappled with for the entirety of my research process. In making whiteness self-aware, I propose a two-pronged approach. Initially, to realise that heavy metal is not, nor has ever been, a truly 'white' genre, but rather that the dominant ways of representing metal, its aesthetics, its cultures, and its practices, have been steeped in white hegemony. Secondly, to allow whiteness and white masculinity in metal to be a site not of uniform social privilege, but a series of spaces for doing identity work. A visibility of whiteness should bring with it an analysis of the impacts of white hegemony on the people who perpetuate it, and

thus transform such hegemonic constructions into anti-racist structures of thinking of the Self (Blaagaard, 2006:4). Future research on patriarchal whiteness within heavy metal, and indeed within leisure sites such as music scenes at large, can commit to exploring and reconceptualisations and revalorisations of whiteness as an 'identity-setting aid to group formation and culture-making without aspirations for white racial supremacy or hegemony' (Outlaw, 2004:167–8). This research has been concerned with making visible the hidden mechanisms of metallic whiteness and pointing to its multiplicity across global metal scenes, practices and cultures. In doing so, this project brings into awareness the ways in which representations of national pasts in three separate countries fit in with a dominant structure of power that can and has been used to construct and affirm white supremacy and white cultural hegemony.

My hope for future research is that Metal Music Studies and Whiteness Studies can begin to negotiate strategies for thinking through how white people can narrate their histories and sense of self in ways that do not effect an exclusionary politics of racialisation or colonialist misogyny. It nonetheless remains central to maintain awareness of the ways in which whiteness—and whitenesses—function as ever-changing categories within which nuances persist, which has ongoing consequences for attempts to deconstruct the structures of power. The potential futility of any attempt to enact a restructuring of white hegemony then brings with it the reality that the normalisation, construction and performance of whiteness, masculinity and nationhood within heavy metal scenes will continue to have profound, pervasive and systematic oppressive consequences.

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Image Credits

Chapter 2:

Black Metal is for White People: Monstrous Nationalism in Norwegian black and Viking metal scenes.

- 1.0 p. 106: 'Ingenting for Norge' photograph, retrieved from <http://vamolian.tumblr.com/post/100957615679/high-resolution-of-the-infamous-picture-of-mayhem>.
- 1.1 p. 107: Original site of Helvete, Schweigaardsgate, Gamblebyen, Oslo. Author's own photo, June 18, 2015.
- 1.2 p. 108: Neseblod Record store sign, advertising tours of the 'black metal room in the basement', Schweigaardsgate, Gamblebyen, Oslo. Author's own photo, June 18, 2015.

Chapter 3:

Nobody wants to be a pale male in the new South Africa:

Territories of Whiteness and Resistant Nationalism in Afrikaans heavy metal.

- 2.0 p. 156: Mind Assault shirt, retrieved from http://www.subterania.co.za/components/com_virtuemart/shop_image/product/MIND_ASSAULT_A_4c07b2f00f267.jpg.
- 2.1 p. 156: Volkmag logo, retrieved from http://www.metal-archives.com/images/3/5/4/0/3540280329_logo.jpg?4501.
- 2.2 p. 156: AWB logo, retrieved from <http://www.posklip.co.za/wp-content/uploads/logo3-300x218.jpg>.
- 2.3 p. 157: Volkmag, *Keelvolk*, retrieved from <http://www.metal-archives.com/images/3/1/8/0/318040.jpg?4918>.
- 2.4 p. 157: Volkmag, *Op Oorlogs Vlerke*, retrieved from <http://i1.ytimg.com/vi/G6FzoIWISAE/maxresdefault.jpg>.
- 2.5 p. 158: Volkmag, *Oorlede, Nooit Vergete*, retrieved from <http://www.metal-archives.com/images/3/6/5/7/365702.jpg?1256>.
- 2.6 p. 158: Volkmag, 'Rus in Vrede', retrieved from <http://www.metal-archives.com/images/4/8/8/7/488729.jpg?1217>.

Chapter 4:

We are the foundations of this modern land: Normophilic Whiteness and Banal Nationalism in Australian extreme metal.

3.0 p. 208: Bastardizer with Eureka flag across their speaker stacks, author's own photo. February 6, 2014.

3.1 p. 209: In Malice's Wake Facebook post, viewed and screenshotted June 19, 2013. (Since removed from the band's Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/inmaliceswake/?fref=ts>).