Remains of the Social

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CHAPTER 1
TRAVERSING THE SOCIAL
Maurits van Bever Donker, Ross Truscott, Gary Minkley and Premesh Lalu

What is South Africa? We have perhaps isolated whatever it is that has been concentrated in that enigma, but the outline of such analyses has neither dissolved nor dissipated it in the least. Precisely because of this concentration of world history, what resists analysis also calls for another mode of thinking. If we could forget about the suffering, the humiliation, the torture and the deaths, we might be tempted to look at this region of the world as a giant tableau or painting, the screen for some geopolitical computer. Europe, in the enigmatic process of its globalization and of its paradoxical disappearance, seems to project onto this screen, point by point, the silhouette of its internal war, the bottom line of its profits and losses, the double-bind logic of its national and multi-national interests (Derrida, ‘Racism’s Last Word’ 297–298).

The blackmail of whiteness
As Jacques Derrida reminds us, it is not possible to ‘forget about the suffering, the humiliation, the torture and the deaths’, in short, the weight of lived experience that was and is apartheid. At the same time, particularly when we consider apartheid as a question that extends beyond its own borders, it remains both necessary and urgent to distil the question of what he calls ‘South Africa’, to shape it and focus it as a problem for thought, so as to enable the possibilities of thinking what we in this volume call, without hyphenation, the postapartheid, neither a point in time nor a political dispensation, but rather a condition
that names the labour of coming to terms with and working through the desires, principles, critiques and modes of ordering that apartheid both enabled and foreclosed. One of the tasks that we set for ourselves in this introduction is to provide a sense of this terrain on which the postapartheid unfolds.

Let us begin, then, by turning to a recent intervention into the social. Introducing their edited volume, *Re-Imagining the Social in South Africa: Critique, Theory and Post-Apartheid Society*, Peter Vale and Heather Jacklin argue that ‘when apartheid ended, critical thinking ended’ (1). The conditions of this ‘shift from critique to subservience’ (2) are to be found, they argue, in ‘post-apartheid South Africa’s incorporation into the logic and exigencies of global neo-liberal capitalism’ (7). With this ‘incorporation’, the value of humanities scholarship was reduced to its capacity to contribute to economic growth, always subject to tests – often in terms of ‘impact’, ‘efficacy’ and ‘efficiency’ – against the imperatives of the market. It is a counterintuitive claim – South Africa’s freedom has coincided with a constraint of thought – by the editors of *Re-Imagining the Social*, with which we are, to an extent, in agreement.

However, there is a jarring line in Vale and Jacklin’s introduction that makes this volume necessary. They write: ‘Even the most casual reading of these chapters will confirm that this collection, like most writing in critical social theory, is an exercise interested in promoting Enlightenment values’ (11). Precisely what values might this mean? As if to respond to the question, they refer, further on, to the ‘counter-Enlightenment authoritarian tendencies’ (17) which the state assumed in South Africa during apartheid. So, in their construction of it, ‘promoting Enlightenment values’ is an antidote to apartheid as an ‘authoritarian’ impediment to the ‘Enlightenment’, leaving the postapartheid to come as the Enlightenment’s fulfilment. To point out the Eurocentrism of this view is hardly necessary.

As for the question of which Enlightenment they are ‘promoting’, we are left guessing, for the Enlightenment was not a unified project. Given their subtitle, and their leanings, it is likely a call for those forms of critique that take their point of departure from Immanuel Kant. If we
take Michel Foucault’s reading of Kant’s elaboration of the concept of the Enlightenment as a touchstone, the itinerary to which Vale and Jacklin commit the postapartheid must be read as a ‘way out’ of the ‘immaturity’ of humanity with respect to the proper use of reason, that is, reason’s autonomous use as ‘humanity’s passage to its adult status’ (‘What is Enlightenment?’ 308–309). This presents what Foucault famously called ‘the “blackmail” of the Enlightenment’ (312), for the only way to counter the Enlightenment is on the very terrain of reason. That the game is rigged presents, in Foucault’s words, a ‘philosophical question that remains for us to consider’ (312–313, emphasis added). Rather than being for or against ‘Enlightenment values’, it is perhaps more apt to say that we are both constrained and enabled – conditioned – by this double bind, this false choice.

The question of Enlightenment – of the autonomous use of reason – is inseparable from questions of race. Kant’s Anthropology was, as Foucault argues in Introduction to Kant’s Anthropology, central to his critiques, the two projects traversing each other. Both the philosophical and the political project produced race as a necessary function rather than as a timely accident, as Gayatri Spivak in A Critique of Postcolonial Reason and Tony Brown in The Primitive, the Aesthetic, and the Savage have argued. Apartheid here is not an impediment to but is, rather, coextensive with the Enlightenment, for apartheid is not purely an anomaly, a perversion of ‘Enlightenment values’, but their fulfilment. This is not a small issue, for it informs how we might clear the ground for the arrival of a sense of difference that will not be apartheid’s difference.

It is, arguably, in response to a version of this ‘blackmail’ that Steve Biko in ‘Black Souls in White Skins?’ offers a diagnosis of the problematic named by apartheid. On the apartheid policy of separate development, Biko states: ‘Everyone is quite content to point out that these people – meaning the blacks – will be free when they are ready to run their own affairs, in their own areas’ (20). His specific concern, however, is not this indefinitely deferred autonomy, but the tutelage under which liberals place blacks, treating them as children, ‘claiming a “monopoly on intelligence and moral judgment”’ (22–23). As he continues: ‘There
is nothing the matter with blacks. The problem is WHITE RACISM and it rests squarely on the laps of white society' (25). Here, Biko takes a position 'against integration' if it means 'an assimilation and acceptance of blacks into an already established set of norms' that will keep in place 'the superior–inferior white–black stratification that makes the white a perpetual teacher and the black a perpetual pupil' (26). While explicitly dealing with the relations between liberals and the black consciousness movement in apartheid South Africa, what Biko is drawing attention to in this formulation is the very question of racial formations as these structure the present in South Africa, both his and ours. If we consider the invisibility of whiteness, apart from accusation, in the framing of the postapartheid, the course opened by Biko's intervention acquires a fresh and purposive urgency. To state this intervention more pointedly, liberals, rather than concerning themselves with 'helping Blacks', must rather 'fight for their own freedom' (27) through confronting 'the real evil in our society' (25). To grasp the force of this injunction we need to briefly invoke, as Biko does, Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks*.

Fanon similarly argues that 'there is no black [noir] problem' (13). Rather, he suggests that the problematic that structures the social derives from a deeper terrain. That Fanon refuses the definition of the problem as 'black' does not mean that he defines it as 'white', nor does it mean that he is dismissive of, or ignores, what he calls the 'lived experience of the black man' (89–119) – this in fact orders his intervention. For Fanon, however, the problem has to do with the 'metaphysics' of blackness and whiteness as these come to structure society in relation to the concept of Man. As he argues, Man is the concept on which both blackness and whiteness are articulated, as well as the function that 'brings society into being' (xv). It would, however, be too quick to focus only on dismantling Man and producing a new terrain for humanity (the focus of most critiques of Eurocentrism); the question of blackness is not so easily dismissed. For Fanon, Man as a concept does not designate an entity in itself; rather, Man is a becoming that in modern society is produced through the operation, the differential function, of whiteness/blackness. As he phrases it: 'The black man wants to be white. The white man is
desperately trying to achieve the rank of man’ (xiii). This relationship, where black and white are both ‘locked’ in place (xiv), where ‘whites consider themselves superior to blacks’ and ‘blacks want to prove’ their equality with whites (xv), and where blackness is relegated to a position of ‘non-being’ (xii), has produced a ‘massive psycho-existential complex’ (xvi) which Fanon’s intervention attempts to destroy. In short, it is the conceptual terrain produced through the mechanism of blackness/whiteness that leads Fanon to declare that ‘an individual who loves Blacks is as “sick” as someone who abhors them’ and that, conversely, the black man who strives to whiten his race is ‘as wretched as the one who preaches hatred of the white man’ (xii).

It is because whiteness and blackness constitute a mechanism in the project of Man which produces blackness as non-being and whiteness as the potentiality of man that any relation to whiteness or blackness as such is a sickness. Biko directs our attention to this structural formation when he invokes the ‘real evil’ in our society. What he names with the signifier ‘evil’ is the mode by which the white man is produced as Man through the objectification of the black man. As an injunction that is laid in the laps of whites, this enables a reinscription of Biko’s formula that ‘the most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed’ (74). While clearly dealing with the question of a mental attitude, this statement also indicates the process of objectification outlined by Fanon in which whiteness becomes mind and blackness becomes body. Here it is both the mental condition of viewing the self as white or non-white that is a potent weapon, and the existence of those who claim to be white as such.

Itinerary
In this volume we seek to address the problem of the social as it is diagnosed by Fanon and reoriented by Biko. In what follows, and as a way of anticipating the chapters in this volume, we turn to two interventions into the postapartheid social which we have found productive to think with and against, one by Mark Sanders, the other by Achille Mbembe. We select these two texts for the way their juxtaposition brings into
view the shifts in the social that are under way and the conceptual turns we seek to make. Despite our clear equivocation over their recourse to psychoanalysis, our initial invitation to contributors to write on the remains of the social was framed largely in psychoanalytic terms, and several of the contributions stage their chapters, at least in part, in or against psychoanalytic language. Thus, critically assessing these two texts is useful in underlining the wager of the volume itself.

We take the work of Sanders and Mbembe as an invitation to begin to elaborate what we call the remains of the social. Rather than advancing Kantian critique – and we cannot be sure that this is what was called for in *Re-Imagining the Social* – we turn, in framing this volume and as a point of departure, to an heir to the Kantian problematic: Sigmund Freud, to whom Fanon also turned. We do so not as a means of imposing a different Enlightenment figure – the best word to describe Freud’s relation to the Enlightenment is, perhaps, troublesome – on the social after apartheid, but as a means of making adequate what is immanent in the discourse on the social in South Africa; that is, there is already a form of austere psychoanalysis in the air, a weak psychoanalytic sensibility lodged in, and ordering, the social, largely as an effect of the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in the 1990s and, it has been argued, its most immediate precursor, the colonial Commission of Inquiry, which the TRC inherited and had to make function in a new way. Within this frame, we aim to traverse the social in the wake of apartheid.

Traversal, in the psychoanalytic sense, is an act of passing through repetition after repetition – acting out – until the signature of the unconscious has been written in the rhythm of a transferential relation, the production of a repetition without which no new configuration of desire would be possible. To traverse the social in the wake of apartheid, in this sense, is to attend to the repetitions that impede but also make possible another social beyond the horizon of apartheid, beyond apartheid’s ordering of extrinsic difference. And if traversal is a means of grasping the social as a series of repetitious acts, it is also an act through which the social is constituted. We are not ‘promoting’ psychoanalytic ‘values’, then, nor do we wish to close off the potential of the psychoanalytic
as a discourse adequate to the question of the postapartheid social. We take a position neither pro nor contra psychoanalysis, but versus it, which suggests, for us, not only to turn against, but also to face, to turn towards, to return to, even (simply) to turn, to turn the soil of and, thus, to till, to renew, and – in its etymological link to the German werden – to turn it into what it might become, turning it away from its therapeutic, institutionalised uses so as to activate its critical potential. We abide by psychoanalysis, then, reading it for its productivity despite what we see as its several false turns.

If a crude form of psychoanalysis was set to work in and around the TRC, producing a form of mournful sociality that marked the end of apartheid, we want to turn the conception of mourning towards a wakefulness, not that of reason, but rather as a question of our present, a visceral articulation of a lived experience ordered by the undercurrents of apartheid. These undercurrents – and we discuss some of their symptoms below – persist in this time named by the adjective ‘postapartheid’ as a form of remainder: as the remains of apartheid, as those remains that apartheid produced and, indeed, continues to produce, as the very conditions through which the social coheres in this time and, as such, as that which produces this social as (perhaps) already out of time, even before it has properly begun. All of this, the contributions to this volume suggest, shape what is grasped as life, shaping life to such an extent that, now as a noun rather than only an adjective, the postapartheid operates as a signifier for a condition. The postapartheid, a condition of life, not only an adjectival signifier: this is one of the moves that this volume makes, a move that asks that we grasp difference as a marker of life that is, precisely – and, to repeat ourselves – not apartheid’s difference.

Following the next section, ‘The wake of apartheid’, we dwell on the concept of ‘global apartheid’, particularly as it is figured in the work of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri (Empire and Multitude), as a means through which to rethink the category of difference as this operates in the social. The concept of global apartheid, we argue, asks that we rethink the social lived in the wake of apartheid, that we rethink apartheid itself and thus rethink what a postapartheid social will be.
The wake of apartheid
The work of Sanders on the TRC serves as a useful starting point in conceptualising social acts and the remains of the social. In ‘Remembering Apartheid’, Sanders argues that apartheid was and continues to be an ‘interdict against the development of a social formation’ (61), the essence of apartheid being the ‘foreclosure of the other, and thus of any historical possibility of another social formation’ (61). The question of a social to come is at the forefront of his concerns. Though the parameters of such a foreclosed social formation against which Sanders writes were never clearly stated by the theoreticians of apartheid, at the heart of apartheid’s discourse – Sanders argues – there is ‘a proscription on mourning, specifically of the other’ (60). For Sanders, ‘mourning, as the giving up of a loved object, presupposes desire for that object’ (65), and it is for this reason, he argues, that mourning the other was proscribed. The conclusion Sanders draws for a postapartheid social is that ‘apartheid would be undone through condolence’ (72).

Sanders turns to Freud’s ‘Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego’, traditionally read in order to critique the psychology of Fascism and its persistence. For Freud, it is identification with the figure of the leader that produces secondary identifications between individuals who love the same object and are, thus, a part of the same social formation. Sanders makes two key moves. Firstly, he underscores the importance of Freud’s earlier ‘Totem and Taboo’ to ‘Group Psychology’ and its conception of the social. In ‘Totem and Taboo’, the revolt against, and the murder of, the primal father is the constitutive act through which the social emerges, an act recalled by the totem meal, re-enacting and forgetting the murder, the meal as a sacrament through which reconciliation with the father is brought about. Secondly, Sanders highlights the point that mourning (the pain of relinquishing the lost object) and melancholia (the pain of that loss lived as a part of oneself through identification with the lost object as a means of refusing the loss), while often opposed to each other, are for Freud inseparable. There is no mourning without a structurally anterior, constitutive melancholia: it is loss that inaugurates the subject, a subject that, paradoxically, does not pre-exist the losses it is to bear. Loss
hollows out the subject, as it were, engenders the very psychic interiority within which the lost object is incorporated. In sum, loss conditions not only sociality but subjectivity, a theme elaborated upon by several contributions here.8

By discerning the centrality of mourning to Freud’s group psychology, and the inseparability of mourning and melancholia, Sanders argues that we have here a means to grapple not only with authoritarianism but also ‘the social formation in general and its lines of fissure’ (75–76), a social formation, that is, produced through identification with the dead. As Sanders argues, ‘The dead one – not necessarily the “father” – can occupy the place of the ego ideal’ (76). The object mourned, identified with, could well be a slain activist. What is intriguing here is the constitutive function of remains to this formulation of the social, as well as the constructedness of the social, a social produced through acts of mourning, the social as an assemblage of egos bound together through a common introjection of an object.

Sanders also draws attention to the wager of mourning as a social act, most notably the rivalry that attends mournful sociality, an inevitable rather than exceptional eventuality. To mourn is not only to have loved, to have desired, it also, as an identificatory act, sets in play ‘lines of fissure’ over the parameters of who may mourn and, thereby, be a part of the social thus constituted.9 As he suggests, the person refused the right to mourn is effectively barred from the social. Refracted through Sanders’s argument if read at the limit of what is for us its productivity, the title of this volume would set out to abide, in some way, with those who have been excluded in the production of the social under apartheid and who, to the extent that the difference that constituted that social is still the grammar of the social that is ostensibly ours, remain still excluded: those policed by apartheid’s difference, who refuse to inhabit that difference, persist as the remaindered in this social as well as perhaps the markers of its death.

The lens of mourning offers one way to think the remainder. This volume, however, articulates a hesitancy around such an argument’s figuration of difference, which we can begin to sound out through
a discussion of Mbembe’s ‘The State of South African Political Life’. Mbembe argues that postapartheid South Africa is facing ‘a crucial moment in the redefinition of what counts as “social protagonism” in this country’. While Sanders is, in his own terms, interested in ‘the makings of a minor group psychology or general psychoanalytic theory of social formation’ (76), Mbembe’s widening and deepening of the problem of the social after apartheid suggests that the terms for such a social are, in themselves, in flux.

Mbembe begins by drawing attention to the protests that erupted and reverberated across South African university campuses in 2015–16. The problem to which these events were a reaction is, however, both wider and deeper than the immediate framing assumes. The ‘winds blowing from our campuses’, Mbembe states, ‘can be felt afar, in a different idiom, in those territories of abandonment where the violence of poverty and demoralization hav[e] become the norm’. We have here, then, a somewhat different articulation of social acts, ‘lines of fissure’ and, as we will see, of remains of the social. The state of which Mbembe writes is being called in different quarters, as he notes, ‘decolonisation’. It is, as he puts it, ‘a psychic state more than a political project in the strict sense of the term’ (original emphasis), and he marks three shifts that characterise this ‘cultural temperament’ (each of which entails the elements of time, affect and value or, rather, libidinal economy): a politics of waiting has been supplanted by one of impatience, for people can no longer wait; an identity politics of pain, suffering and anger has replaced the affirmation of blackness, worldliness and cosmopolitanism, which characterised the early 1990s; and the ideal of reconciliation, through which the postapartheid nation was constituted, has been dislodged in favour of the settling of accounts.

Referring to this, as Mbembe does, as an ‘age of fantasy and hysteria’, suggestive of acting out rather than social acts, might be said to echo Jacques Lacan’s observation in The Seminar of Jacques Lacan that student protesters in May 1968 risked, in their ostensibly hysterical revolt, reinstalling a new master. Mbembe is clear, though, that this is a new threshold even as it recalls the past. Nor is South Africa on the same brink
of revolution that Fanon wrote of in *The Wretched of the Earth*, however much those vaunting ‘decolonisation’ invoke it.11 The tensions across the country, of which campus protests are one manifestation, are reactions to a problem at once old and new. They are, as Mbumbe puts it, ‘structural repetitions of past sufferings in the present’, a repetition, a stumbling, produced by an apartheid past not adequately worked through.

It is worth pausing over the difficulty of diagnosing the condition of anticipating a postapartheid social. ‘If we cannot find a proper name for what we are actually facing,’ Mbumbe writes, ‘then rather than simply borrowing one from a different time, we should keep searching.’ Caught beneath the gaze of authoritarian images from the colonial and apartheid pasts, words ready to hand are grasped for: “They speak in allegories and analogies – the “colony”, the “plantation”, the “house Negro”, the “field Negro”, blurring all boundaries, embracing confusion, mixing times and spaces, at the risk of anachronism.” As we argue in this volume, rather than rushing to name that around which or through which the social might cohere, it is necessary to undertake the slow work of reading, of marking limits, abiding by their motile edges, and constructing concepts that might be adequate to their demand.

Among those names given to the problem within this discourse of ‘decolonisation’ is whiteness. Mbumbe seeks to listen, attentively, to the indictments of white privilege and the structures that uphold it. With the subtlety of an analyst he attends to the more symptomatic iterations of the problem, to the address of bodies tense with revolt and to the language of the wounds of bodies occupying university spaces, to the hieroglyphics, as one might say, of excrement-covered statues. At the same time, however, he issues a caution over whiteness being installed as an ‘erotogenic object’, keeping the problem firmly in place. To name the problem as one of whiteness, he argues, will not offer an easy exit to the script that has produced a politics of impatience, which is also a politics of pain and anger; at least, it may keep those who rail furiously against whiteness libidinally cathected to it, continuing to orient and shape life in the wake of apartheid. This is certainly one problematic that several contributions in this volume explore.
Rather than disagreeing with whiteness as the problem, Mbembe offers a more rigorous definition. For him, the problem of whiteness has a South African particularity, though it cannot be confined to South Africa. The problem is at once local and global, whiteness understood as ‘a necrophiliac power structure and a primary shaper of a global system of unequal redistribution of life chances’. The crux of Mbembe’s argument comes when he speculates on whether cathexes of whiteness, pain and suffering are ‘typical of the narcissistic investments so privileged by this neoliberal age’. Therein lies the wager, not only of a repetition of the past in the very attempt to move beyond it, of remaining passionately attached to whiteness, even if in hatred, but also the possibility that what is being called ‘decolonisation’ shares certain traits with whiteness itself, a politics of pain, upon which identitarian claims are increasingly staked, leading to ‘self-enclaving’, finding its reflection in a form of whiteness that has sought to ‘fence itself off, to re-maximize its privileges’ – two markedly different and, at the same time, isomorphic symptoms of ‘an astonishing age of solipsism and narcissism’.

Mbembe’s diagnosis of the present is not without hope. If, as he puts it, ‘the capacity to resume a human life in the aftermath of irreparable loss’ – a task as urgent as it is difficult and slow – is to be nurtured, it will be necessary to abide by an ‘ethics of becoming-with-others’ (original emphasis). He states: ‘The self is made at the point of encounter with an Other. There is no self that is limited to itself. The Other is our origin by definition. What makes us human is our capacity to share our condition – including our wounds and injuries – with others.’ Mbembe situates a hope for a future social adequate to the postapartheid in the realm of ethics, in the encounter with the other as such, conjuring most immediately the work of Emmanuel Levinas, for whom the encounter with the other always confronts the self with an excess of the idea of the other in the self – the Other is not simply another ‘I’ like me – a confrontation with what he calls ‘infinity’ that always puts the consciousness of the self into question. The key point here, given this Levinasian current in Mbembe’s diagnosis, is that the other is always similarly affected; there are no whole selves in play.
Mbembe’s intervention calls for new kinds of social acts, beginning with a deconstructive reading of the myths of whiteness as well as the snares of its libidinal economy. ‘There will be no plausible critique of whiteness, white privilege, white monopoly capitalism,’ Mbembe argues – and this is where we circle back to our opening comments about the neoliberal university – ‘that does not start from the assumption that whiteness has become this accursed part of ourselves we are deeply attached to, in spite of it threatening our own very future well-being.’ Moreover – and this is the crucial point – the repetitions of which Mbembe writes are not produced by repression of desire or a failure of mourning; rather, they have to do with the production of desire, which employs such repression and mourning as its mask.

It is here that we mark a departure, through our reading of Mbembe, from the concept of remains in the work of Sanders, which is also an attempt to clear the ground to affirm the possibility of a social different from the one he was reading over a decade ago. What Sanders calls a proscription on mourning the other, and thus on desiring the other, takes the other as already constituted as such.14 This field of extrinsic difference – what we have been calling apartheid’s difference – determines the terrain in such a way that critique often results in amplification. Addressing apartheid within the terms of its expression, it seems to us, can only return that expression to itself. This, we might say, is what remains apartheid’s trap.

Contrary to this, the work of traversing the social is what enables, in the Fanonian language that Gilles Deleuze uses in his reading of Freud in *Difference and Repetition*, a ‘primary sense of repetition’ (25) that posits a difference altogether more common. The primary repetition invoked here is articulated by Deleuze through the language of masks. It is not that a mask covers over an original or primary substance held in common. Rather, what exists is always a multiplicity of masks whose existence as such is repressed in the selection of particular masks. As Fanon makes clear both in his *Black Skin, White Masks* and *The Wretched of the Earth*, ‘the native’ is produced through the thingification of colonialism as the damned of the earth, as less than human, and as sliding into the category of ‘the animal’ due to an apparent ‘insensibility
to ethics’ that the European is said to embody (*The Wretched of the Earth* 32). For Fanon, while violence enables a certain ‘taking of place’ (47) in the moment of decolonisation, it is not able to deal with the ‘Manichean problem’ (31) of Man as the conceptual terrain that produces the native as such – it maintains the binary, the mask of whiteness, even if it shifts positions within it. More urgent is what might come after the moment of decolonisation: the project of ‘working out new concepts, setting afoot a new man’ (255). Such a construction requires the production of a difference that is not apartheid’s difference. This difference can be neither ontological nor extrinsic; it amounts to an affirmation of becoming at the limit. Such a difference is not accessible, or rather available, in the field of mourning, where mourning parries a loss. It is produced on the screen of transference as an encounter in which such a selection takes place. At stake in its articulation is the very understanding of difference on which a postapartheid might be constructed, a difference, to use Deleuze’s term, resistant to the ‘deafness’ (217) that characterises repetition as it takes place within the mask of resemblance.\(^{15}\)

**After global apartheid**

Central to the task of thinking the social in the postapartheid is, we have suggested, grasping precisely what this social might come after. The concept of global apartheid, first coined by Gernot Köhler, has recently gained critical currency as a way to critique neoliberal politics (see, for instance, Bond; Dalby; Fregoso; Loyd; Žižek), resulting in race being foregrounded where other approaches may leave it in the background.\(^{16}\)

Within most deployments of the concept, global apartheid functions as an analogy that enables the global West and North to hold up a mirror to itself in a gesture towards self-critique.\(^{17}\) For many, the corollary is hope for a different world, for if apartheid has been dismantled in South Africa, the logic goes, it can be dismantled globally. Not simply the analogue of the world, the story of apartheid functions as an allegory, a tale of an unjust order rehearsed to give to the structure of an unfair, rapidly changing world a face or, at least, a familiar name, as well as the possibility of a resolution.
Along this line of thinking – which, admittedly, we reduce to some of its bare turns – the path that global apartheid leads down, hopeful as it seems, is circular, for the end of apartheid in South Africa coincides precisely with the country’s entry into the neoliberal order of global apartheid; the ending, upon which hope hinges, leads back to the very problem it is supposed to lead out of. It is this version of global apartheid we would want most rigorously to resist – yet another symptom, perhaps, of the ‘age of solipsism and narcissism’, the Eurocentrism of the world staring into the screen of South Africa, projecting, as Derrida puts it, ‘the silhouette of its internal war, the bottom line of its profits and losses, the double-bind logic of its national and multi-national interests’ (‘Racism’s Last Word’ 298). There is, however, another line, which is discernible from the first elaboration of the concept of global apartheid, but which has in most cases dropped out, wherein the genealogy of apartheid stretches back to the dawn of modernity and to the beginnings of European colonialism. Although it is given almost no sustained attention (cf. Dalby; Köhler, ‘The Three Meanings of Global Apartheid’), it is this that we find most productive and attempt to draw out here, the idea that apartheid was always already global or, rather, is lodged within a genealogy of the modern world system.

Among the various renderings of global apartheid, Hardt and Negri’s Multitude is, for our purposes, the most provocative:

We are living in a system of global apartheid. We should be clear, however, that apartheid is not simply a system of exclusion, as if subordinated populations were simply cut off, worthless, and disposable. In the global Empire today, as it was before in South Africa, apartheid is a productive system of hierarchical inclusion that perpetuates the wealth of the few through the labor and poverty of the many. The global political body is in this way also an economic body defined by the global divisions of labor and power (166–167, emphasis added).

In a shift from the analogous to the emblematic, apartheid here is one name for what Hardt and Negri call Empire, apartheid exemplifying its
REMAINS OF THE SOCIAL

logic of ‘hierarchical inclusion’. This system is different, they insist, from
the logic of colonialism, which includes in so far as it can exploit but,
failing this, exterminates the ‘worthless, and disposable’. For Hardt and
Negri, the world we currently inhabit is no longer colonial; it has been
superseded, they argue, by a new global order. And they are emphatic
on the point: ‘Empire is not a weak echo of modern imperialisms but a
fundamentally new form of rule’ (Empire 146).

In Empire, Hardt and Negri’s previous book, it is interesting to note
the different figuring of apartheid as ‘one form, perhaps the emblematic
form, of the compartmentalization of the colonial world’ (125). Apartheid
is, on the one hand, the emblem of the modern world, the world where
European nations extended their borders through colonisation, and, on
the other hand, one name for the current state of a postmodern world, a
fundamentally new world of global Empire.

Given their insistence on the paradigmatic difference between
Empire and colonialism, on their incommensurability, this is not a small
contradiction. Nevertheless, the key point is that apartheid is utilised
to name systems of exploitation and inequality. It is, however, not only
the structure of apartheid’s violent inclusions that repeats in our global
present, but also the modes of resistance that it elicits, a point to which
Mbembe also draws attention. Resistance operates, for Hardt and Negri,
along an axis of tension between centralism and network, between
guerrilla war and people’s army, a tension that they suggest has continued
into the postapartheid present. The terrain for the emergence of a subject
that might exceed Empire is found in what they call Multitude. Quite
simply, if modernity required the emergence of a subject coterminous
with its socioeconomic and political moment, then they suggest this new
moment, which is shot through with ‘immaterial labour’ (109), produces
a subject adequate to it, expressed in a class of the ‘properly alienated’
(as labour is not only productive, but is now also affective, immaterial) –
articulated in the South African protest slogan ‘we are the poors’ (152).

Thus, their formulation – ‘Empire today, as it was before in South
Africa’, echoing earlier formulations like ‘apartheid, as formerly practiced
in South Africa’ (Dalby 137, emphasis added), ‘as is South African apartheid’
(Köhler, ‘Global Apartheid’ 266, emphasis added) – uses apartheid in order to ‘remember that another world is possible’, apartheid standing between ‘our desire for a better, more democratic world’ (Hardt & Negri, Multitude 227) and its arrival. That is, they are interested in the productivity of Multitude, the image of which is flesh: “This common social being is the powerful matrix that is central in the production and reproduction of contemporary society and has the potential to create a new, alternative society. We should regard this common social being as a new flesh, amorphous flesh that as yet forms no body’ (159). Hardt and Negri invoke here modern political philosophy and its body politic – a body with various heads, arms and organs – but also Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s body without organs. Thus, Empire not only includes and exploits, but also, recalling Empire as a ‘global political body’, organises the flesh of the Multitude into a body, ‘transforming its singularities into divisions and hierarchies’ (212). In short, the flesh of the Multitude is constantly being organised; in turn, it resists, organising itself in ways that allow singularities to encounter one another, enabling networks of communication, new habits to form, new performativities to emerge, which break down hierarchies and call into question sovereignty, all of which might be called ‘symptoms of the common dreams, common desires, common ways of life, and common potential that are mobilized in a movement’ (213).

Hardt and Negri use flesh in two senses that they claim are derived from Maurice Merleau-Ponty. On the one hand, ‘flesh’ is understood as ‘elemental’ and shared; on the other hand, it is taken as ‘singular’ (193–194). In this way, Multitude allows differences, and does not reduce difference to any single category, whether nation, class or race. As they phrase it, ‘the multitude is the subjectivity that emerges from this dynamic of singularity and commonality’ (198). It seems to us, however, that the concept of the flesh might be pushed further in their argument, towards the constitution of new senses of difference and desire, which can be outlined through a brief consideration of how Merleau-Ponty comes to flesh.

For Merleau-Ponty, the body is not simply a physical thing (meat and bones) that can be located inside a field of extrinsic difference; rather,
REMAINS OF THE SOCIAL

it is an ‘intertwining of vision and movement’ (‘Eye and Mind’ 353). Stated differently, it is a place of the intertwining of senses so as to leave them with no strict division. As such, the body would be considered as a quilting point with sense. Within this understanding, which goes against the dominant understanding of the subject since, at least, René Descartes, Merleau-Ponty argues that it is in fact perception which is primary, not thought. In positing the ‘flesh’ as primary, Merleau-Ponty displaces the possibility of a self that can know its existence internally (cogito ergo sum); instead, the self exists always already in relation to other existents, different from them owing to a matter of style. The emphasis on style is important as in it is maintained an element of an ‘I’ that is unique to itself due to its particularity as a peculiar kind of object in perception.

The swerve from the Cartesian subject that Merleau-Ponty enables is crucial. For Hardt and Negri, the genealogy of apartheid can be traced to the early modern world, which for them emerges with a new and radical concern with immanence and its possibilities in terms of desire, democracy and freedom, among other things. The foreclosure of desire, the reinstallation of a transcendental principle and, thus, sovereignty – largely, national sovereignty – is one of the tragedies of the crisis of modernity, the crisis through which modernity has been revealed. What we know of modernity, they argue, is in fact a reaction, a second phase coextensive with the first, a foreclosure of this radical potential that took place first in Europe and then in the colonies. The key philosophical figures in Hardt and Negri’s itinerary of modernity are Baruch Spinoza and Descartes, the latter’s significance being that he reinstates a transcendental principle against the insurrectionary potential of a field of immanence: God is the guarantor of knowledge, as it is God who laid down the law of nature. To trace apartheid’s genealogy, and thus to track what the social was and is under apartheid, it is necessary to read not only widely, across the globe, but back to at least Descartes: the thinking upon which apartheid is grounded finds one of its beginnings there, in the division, the separation, the apartness of mind and body, and the subjection of body to mind he inaugurates.
In contrast with the positing of an understanding of subjectivity open to learning from the other, which, as we saw in our reading of Mbembe, is central to the constitution of a social to come, here in the Cartesian itinerary, through the insistence on an always already individuated subjectivity endowed in itself with the sovereign properties of knowledge and freedom, the subject which holds the social field is endowed with what we might figure as the obligation to instruct the other – to reduce the other to the self. Without even the preliminary uncertainty of the Hegelian subject, whose movement towards Spirit is necessitated by its internal contradiction between the ‘for-itself’ and the ‘in-itself’ (Hegel 104), the subject here stands forth, already self-recognising, ordering a field to its own predetermined measure.22

It is in the haunting of language, brought about through intercorporeality, that Merleau-Ponty locates the social field as something that comes after and is ‘held’ by the ‘flesh’ (‘The Intertwining’ 411), and it is this sense that is taken up by Hardt and Negri in their concept of Multitude.23 For Merleau-Ponty, however, language haunts the flesh, language touches and is touched in the intertwining of the flesh, which is primary. In language, the ‘I’ recognises the other, which is held in the world in the same manner as it is. As such, the other in language is for the ‘I’, not one of its phenomena; it ‘imposes itself not as true for every intellect [ideal], but as real for every subject who shares my situation’ (94).24 This social world is neither ‘personal’ nor ‘ideal’; the subject is lodged in it through its interactions with others only, as Merleau-Ponty phrases it: ‘History is others, it is the relationships we establish with them, outside of which the realm of the ideal appears as an alibi’ (‘The Primacy of Perception’ 101). This understanding of flesh would enable a very different reading of both Multitude and the concept of global apartheid that Hardt and Negri develop in relation to it. Here the subject is outside itself, a constellation of singularities resistant to its ordering within subjective certainty. Global apartheid is, then, an ordering of desire and not only its structuring, an ordering from which Multitude might try to escape.

The Multitude is described by Hardt and Negri in two ways, as an ontological and as a historical conception of insurrection. There has
REMAINS OF THE SOCIAL

always been, through the ages, a Multitude in revolt and yet there is still a Multitude to come, which is latent within contemporary political praxis: ‘The multitude, then, when we put these two together, has a strange, double temporality: always-already and not-yet’ (222) – resonant with Fanon’s formulation in *Black Skin, White Masks*. But contrary to Hardt and Negri’s casual dismissal of the necessity of the subaltern in the political constitution of the Multitude, we suggest that it matters from where and in what articulation difference is broached. Anticipating the deconstructionist critique, Hardt and Negri state: ‘Every identity, such critics say, even the multitude, must be defined by its remainder, those outside of it, call them the excluded, the abject, or the subaltern’ (225). To which they reply: ‘Its boundaries are indefinite and open. Furthermore, we should remember that the multitude is a project of political organisation and thus can be achieved only through political practices. No one is necessarily excluded but their inclusion is not guaranteed: the expansion of the common is a practical, political matter’ (226). This practical political resolution of the question of the Multitude that finds it palatable to make the ‘inclusion’ of the ‘subaltern’ ‘non-necessary’ (226) misses in our view both how the destruction of the world produced through global apartheid is ordered precisely through the lived experience of that subaltern, and how it is that lived experience which guards against, which orders, the arrival of a future which might produce a difference that is not apartheid’s difference. In other words, ‘the poors’ are not only a local articulation of an abstract category; the poors live. As Deleuze phrases it in his discussion of the Hegelian dialectic, this is the difference between ‘the point of view of the slave who draws from the “no” the phantom of an affirmation, and the point of view of the “master” who draws from “yes” a consequence of negation and destruction’ (54). The resonance in this statement of a project such as negritude is unmistakeable. This is, however, not an argument for a repetition of extrinsic difference from the perspective of the subaltern. Such an expression would amount to a conservation of ‘old values’, what we have termed the remains of apartheid. Rather, we need a sense of difference that might enable ‘the creation of new values’
(54), a difference that carries, in an echo of Aimé Césaire, a ‘freedom for the end of the world’ (293).

If the only way that Hardt and Negri can render apartheid as emblematic of paradigmatically different systems of exploitation is through taking apartheid as a concept of world history, it repays the effort to turn to Derrida’s ‘Racism’s Last Word’, where apartheid is the name of a worldly racism, ‘the unique appellation for the ultimate racism in the world, the last of many’ (291). Here, apartheid ‘exists within a worldwide network’ (292) and is, echoing the terms of Hardt and Negri’s Multitude, ‘a sinister swelling on the body of the world’ (294). That is, rather than an analogy, apartheid is a ‘concentration of world history’ (297), unthinkable without the armature of a Western concept of Man. Yet, as Derrida notes, despite its worldliness, apartheid is an ‘untranslatable idiom’ – or, rather, an untranslated idiom – ‘as if all the languages of the world were defending themselves, shutting their mouths against a sinister incorporation of the thing by means of the word’ (292). Thus, if the cardinal feature of apartheid is its obsessional logic, if its primary objective is to differentiate and to keep apart, as Derrida puts it, a ‘compulsive terror, which above all forbids contact’, then worldwide denunciations of apartheid enact the same logic, the denunciators ‘refusing to let themselves be contaminated’ (292), keeping such a heinous crime against humanity over there, in South Africa, repeating the obsessional logic railed against. In this sense, to speak of global apartheid allows the delocalisation of the problem of apartheid’s persistence after the demise of official apartheid, but the concept performs a double move: on the one hand, it recalls the worldliness of apartheid, its place in a long genealogy of modern colonialism, but, on the other, the detachment of apartheid from its South African inscription is effectively crossed out by leaving apartheid untranslated, marking it as South African. Indeed, there is something irreducibly South African about apartheid, which is perhaps why it is left untranslated even as it is used to speculate on the world’s future. The knot in the concept of global apartheid is that apartheid both must and yet cannot be detached from South Africa. It is necessary that apartheid be detached from
South Africa and, at the same time, impossible to fully detach it, leaving an untranslatable remainder.

**Interventions**

In arranging the chapters, we have not set up ‘reserved domains’ for disciplines (Derrida, ‘But Beyond, … ’ 170). Nor have we created designated areas for the separate development of themes, those concerned with mourning, precarity, futurity in their allocated neighbourhoods, those explicitly focused on South Africa over here, those on pure theory over there, in their respective homelands. This was advised, and the temptation to go that route was great, not just to organise the body of the text more rigidly but to follow through this obsessional impulse so thoroughly to its conclusion that its logic is laid bare. This is not the line we have taken. Rather, we have sought to arrange the chapters in a way that sets in play their multiple currents, so that they might encounter and run up against, interrupt and lean on each other.

Opening the volume is Derek Hook’s chapter, ‘The Mandela Imaginary: Reflections on Post-Reconciliation Libidinal Economy’, which engages several themes discussed thus far, most notably mourning and the constitution of the social around a totemic father figure, namely, Nelson Mandela. Hook considers the notable anxiety expressed around Mandela’s ailing health in 2013 and the tendency towards hagiographic memorialisation. Not only does such idealisation run contrary to Mandela’s own political thought, Hook argues, but it also bears the marks of the mortifying repetitiousness of obsessional neurosis. This is another familiar theme, though Hook gives obsession a specifically Lacanian gloss, considering Mandela as a master signifier that stabilises multiple libidinal investments in the postapartheid social, traversing Mandela as a ‘shared social fantasy’ (53). Hook concludes his deft analysis with the suggestion that if the primary role delegated to Mandela since the 1990s has been to make possible the bridging of inherited social divisions, if the name ‘Mandela’ has had the function of sheltering within its associative field various meanings of the social after apartheid, then the task of producing common grounds that do not homogenise the social, that
allow the coexistence of multiple singularities, will in his absence have to be assumed, identified with; but, consonant with Mbembe, this is a caution against narcissistic identification.

Ross Truscott’s chapter stays within the psychoanalytic in order to think through some of the predicaments of postapartheid psychosocial transformation. While attentive to what Foucault called in *The Order of Things* the ‘calm violence’ (376) of the psychoanalytic transference, this chapter also poses the question of what a postcolonial psychoanalysis would entail, doing so through a reading of the ambiguous place of empathy within psychoanalytic discourse. The significance of this chapter to the themes of the volume is underlined by the fact that the concept of empathy has been set to work, across a range of fields, to mark a break with the relational patterns of apartheid, frequently in the language of psychoanalysis. Similarly, empathy has been identified historically as that which, within apartheid and colonial rule more generally, exceeded or escaped relations of domination, a relation to be recuperated and enabled.31 Taking empathy as a concept embedded in colonial thinking, Truscott focuses on the incorporation of empathy in Freud’s work, specifically in Dora’s case and his analysis of Michelangelo’s Moses, which are read alongside the images and installations of contemporary South African artist, Nandipha Mntambo. Three scenes are conjured wherein empathy confronts its own violence. But rather than foreclose on empathy, it is through the disclosure of the irresolvable contradictions of empathy, Truscott suggests, that it might be brought into the realm of the ethical through a practice of reinscription and through the figure of Echo that attends the narcissism and penetrative violence of empathy. It is thus, despite all, a defence of empathy as an impossible social act.

Mari Ruti’s chapter, ‘The Ethics of Precarity: Judith Butler’s Reluctant Universalism’, carefully outlines and ultimately – although within certain limits and with a good deal of caution – affirms the potential of Butler’s Levinasian ethics of precarity, an ethics that has much in common with many of the contributions to this volume, as well as the position advanced by Mbembe. It is an ethics, as Ruti reads Butler, that, in seeking to respond to the other within a global context of uneven distributions
of precarity, forgoes universals in favour of a relational ontology. Such an ethics turns on a shared condition of human vulnerability – shared, however, in different ways; in Butler’s terms, not all lives are equally grievable and, thus, liveable. Ruti then locates a difficulty with this as a terrain for ethical action. The care that Levinas takes in structuring the encounter of the face-to-face through the realm of the third, justice, is absent in Butler’s ethics of precarity. As Ruti notes, for Levinas ‘justice places limits on our ethical accountability’, whereas Butler ‘for the most part ignores the distinction between ethics and justice, attempting, as it were, to apply Levinasian ethics to questions of global justice’ (104). This absence, in turn, is accounted for through an implicit turn to the *a priori* norms of the Enlightenment in Butler’s pronouncements on political questions, a scenario that, Ruti argues, might in fact unravel the very force of Butler’s own critique of such norms. This is not to suggest that precarity is something to be rejected. Instead, the task is to find a mode through which the critique expressed in precarity can be performed while holding onto the capacity to order the social that might arrive in its wake. What Ruti’s chapter does so powerfully for the volume is draw out how this same tension runs through the analogy of global apartheid.

Jaco Barnard-Naudé’s chapter, ‘Hannah Arendt’s Work of Mourning: The Politics of Loss, “the Rise of the Social” and the Ends of Apartheid’, can be read as giving Hardt and Negri’s notion of Multitude a serious precursor in Arendt’s writings. It is a figuring of Multitude – as plurality, freedom and acting in concert – that is quite different from what we find in Hardt and Negri. Arendt, as Barnard-Naudé points out, is frequently read as yearning for a form of politics, in the classical Greek sense of the term, lost with the modern rise of the social question as a concern with poverty. As Barnard-Naudé argues, Arendt conceives the mourning of this loss of politics as a form of political action in and of itself that can and does abide by the other, that can and does concern itself, politically, with poverty. Mourning, as it is understood here, drawing on the Derridean reworking of the distinction between mourning and melancholia, enables Barnard-Naudé to offer an alternative sense of a social act or, rather, political act in the wake of apartheid. While recalling Arendt’s
ontological distinction between the social as necessity and politics as freedom, Barnard-Naudé suggests a reading of Arendt that inaugurates a ‘politics of the social’ (117) by force of the very mourning for politics that animates her work. Political acts, he suggests, occur in the remains of a loss of politics (Arendt’s social) that stands to be mourned and yet can never fully be mourned, this failure being the condition (and here he follows Derrida) of all political responsibility and action. At stake here for Barnard-Naudé is a relation to the other, fidelity to the otherness of the other that can only be carried out through a form of mourning which, of necessity, as a matter of ethics, must fail. Thus, Barnard-Naudé, following Arendt, traces Multitude back further than Hardt and Negri, to antiquity and, unlike them, perhaps because of this different genealogy, he affirms coming to terms with this loss as, paradoxically, the only grounds upon which to act in accordance with what has been lost. To mourn politics is precisely, and paradoxically, a form of fealty towards its lost possibilities. Barnard-Naudé’s notion of mourning as the condition of the postapartheid social is resonant with, but also calls into question, Sanders’s mournful sociality. If there is a concept of remains mobilised here, it is as an encounter, through Arendt, with the ancient Greek concept of political action that, in being mourned, that mourning always failing, is also, as Barnard-Naudé argues, narcissistically appropriated. While Sanders designates apartheid as a proscription on mourning the other, Barnard-Naudé offers a somewhat different reading of apartheid (140): ‘What is it if not a homogenising logic that attempted to deny at all cost the plurality of the human condition?’ It is precisely this plurality as politics that we might mourn, that we will always fail to mourn, and that we might abide by.

Annemarie Lawless’s chapter can be placed in relation to a mode of the postapartheid social outlined by Truscott’s chapter, a social that has congealed around calls for empathy between those apartheid divided – empathy as the supposed threshold of a postapartheid social – a figuring that, like the mourning discussed above, entails desire for the other. It is precisely such a capacity for empathy that is at stake in Lawless’s chapter, ‘Souvenir’, which begins from a consideration of
the uncomfortable performance of an encounter with the other located in the work of Alphonso Lingis, asking what that discomfort might express and how it might be read as a haunting placed under the name of ‘love’. Lawless, however, offers a call for an encounter of empathy that is starkly different from those made around the TRC, and that is also quite unlike those forms of anthropological empathy that critics take as predatory, penetrative and grounded on a colonial temporality and spatiality. In particular, Lawless asks ‘what it is for one thinking, feeling, breathing body to encounter another thinking, feeling, breathing body – not a subject-to-subject encounter, still less a human-to-human one, but rather a creaturely one, epidermis to epidermis’ (147). And through her lucid reading of the touches between the texts of Walter Benjamin, Roland Barthes, Spinoza and Deleuze, Lawless conjures what apartheid, from the seventeenth century, foreclosed. (Recall that the philosophical figures in Hardt and Negri’s itinerary of modernity are Spinoza and Descartes.)

Aidan Erasmus, in his chapter, ‘Re-Cover: Afrikaans Rock, Apartheid’s Children and the Work of the Cover’, considers the articulation of whiteness in the postapartheid as a question of inheritance through reading it as a script that is worked through the ‘angst of a community’ (182). In Erasmus’s reading, whiteness – in the epistemic project of apartheid as this came to be expressed in popular culture, particularly music – was always already a question of repetition, of what comes after. This futurity is what he suggests the rock group Van Coke Kartel (VCK) trouble in their repetitions of traditional Afrikaner singer Carike Keuzenkamp’s utopic misrepresentations of the 1980s in South Africa. Through the lack of a sense of futurity, this repetition marks VCK as the passive inheritors of an anxiety that the apartheid regime struggled to repress. The epistemic structure of apartheid is maintained in this repetition: there is no new sense of the social affirmed in VCK’s music. And, by implication, this anxiety might still order the present named by the postapartheid.

If the concept of global apartheid has turned on the notion that global geopolitics find their analogue in the relation between the South African
state and its homelands, then the reading offered in Gary Minkley and Helena Pohlandt-McCormick’s chapter, ‘The Graves of Dimbaza: Temporal Remains’, has direct bearing on how we think global apartheid. They attempt, as they put it, to ‘refigure the South African bantustan as constitutive of a South African “empire”’ (196), elaborating a concept of what they call an ‘empire of liberation’. It is anything but a recapitulation of Hardt and Negri’s ‘Empire’. Minkley and Pohlandt-McCormick attend to the ways in which race is embedded, archaeologically as it were, in the overdetermined discourse of liberation, a global discourse to which the postapartheid has adhered. In short, that race haunts the postapartheid is not, in their montaged reading of the archive of Dimbaza, a failure to have delivered on liberation. Rather, the spectre of race has been internal to the promises and premises of liberation as such, an ‘empire of liberation’. Minkley and Pohlandt-McCormick find one opening onto this predicament through Foucault’s 1975–1976 lectures at the Collège de France, *Society Must Be Defended*. The genealogy Foucault sketches begins with ‘race war’, an insurrection at the end of the Middle Ages when the concept of history became not simply the praise of kings or the re-establishment of mythical ties with Rome, but a form of counter-history from the perspective of those subject to the violence of the sovereign’s rule, a history that was for the first time prospective, offering ‘prophecies of emancipation’ (80). Foucault distinguishes, but discerns a filiation between, the discourse of ‘race war’ and its transmutation into modern racism, ‘born at that point when the theme of racial purity replaces that of race struggle’ (81) – totalitarian politics and the bureaucracy of Fascism bearing a distant echo of a liberatory discourse. With this genealogy, recast as an ‘empire of liberation’, Minkley and Pohlandt-McCormick abide by the figure of the ‘native’ subject, reading for what they term (via Arendt) social acts, ‘the act’ as that which articulates the subject and the social as co-constitutive expressions. Acts, as formulated by Minkley and Pohlandt-McCormick, are neither about arriving at nor about fleeing a scene but rather about engaging in its creation. In an echo of Louis Althusser’s aleatory materialism, social acts have a virtual existence that may be actualised under certain conditions and, in that actualisation,
produce a potential rupture along which a newly constituted expression of the subject might become possible.

It is precisely the potential for such an opening, produced in the fragility of the touch of writing, that is constructed in Maurits van Bever Donker's chapter, 'The Principle of Insufficiency: Ethics and Community at the Edge of the Social'. Beginning from a consideration of Maurice Blanchot's troubling of the concept of community in *The Unavowable Community*, Van Bever Donker suggests that being adequate to the postapartheid requires the ethical task of thinking the social in a more conceptual and yet rigorously lived sense. A key element in this is what he calls 'the principle of insufficiency' as a condition with which to abide, rather than from which to depart, in the becoming expressive of community. As such, he suggests that the task is not to recover, to redeem or to rediscover community, but to abide by the edge of its concept so as to open the possibility of the new. Community, in the formulation against which his chapter works, is an integral element in what we have termed 'global apartheid', both in respect of the subject that it encloses and the social that it envisages. The ethical weight of unsettling this terrain of community through abiding by the principle of insufficiency is brought into focus through a brief consideration of the character of Antigone in the Oedipus myth. In Van Bever Donker's reading, the character of Antigone works to maintain the disjuncture between autochthony and copulation, between the fixing of the human through either the land or the state, so as to open the potential of a sense of the subject, and hence of the social, that might be resistant to such a closure. It is in Phaswane Mpe's reworking of the principle of insufficiency in relation to the weight of lived experience in postapartheid South Africa that the ordering potential of this opening is perhaps most clearly worked out. Reading Mpe's novel, *Welcome to Our Hillbrow*, as an intervention into the social, Van Bever Donker argues that the tensions of autochthony, copulation, community, nation and race are all dislocated and reworked in the ethical potential of a community of the touch constructed through the 'unworking labour' of writing. This, he suggests, constitutes an opening that presses beyond the figuring of the principle of insufficiency.
in Blanchot, or the mediating role of Antigone, precisely to the extent that it is ordered by the weight of lived experience, the ethical burden of ‘not owning life’.

If Van Bever Donker situates this opening as a possible site through which to rethink the postapartheid, Premesh Lalu, in his chapter, “The Trojan Horse and the “Becoming Technical of the Human””, similarly begins to ask what duration is necessary for the thinking of life now. Proceeding on the philosophical terrain opened up by Bernard Stiegler and Gilbert Simondon, Lalu intervenes in the relation between technicity and a condition of life that he designates as a ‘memory of the future’ (250). Lalu asks after the work of naming as this has been brought to bear both on the student movement of the 1980s and on the acts of violence against these movements and their subsequent memorialisation. Dwelling on the ‘movement’ at work in ‘student movements’, Lalu asks after a rhythmic potential he locates in ‘the cinematic notion of interval’, not merely a break between two films but ‘the interval as an opportunity to change directions’ (263). While the ways in which the ‘student movement’ sought to change the course of schooling cannot be reduced to the filmic apparatus that provided the basis for an aesthetic education in Athlone, Cape Town, Lalu’s intervention suggests that ‘student movement’ marshalled the force of the interval and its capacity to effect the movement of a swerve, a potential that was foreclosed in the 1985 Trojan Horse massacre. It is the double articulation of ‘schooling’ and ‘bioscope’ that lends a grammar to the work of remaining with the ‘memory of the future’ that, Lalu suggests, the ‘movement’ sought to make possible. This is a grammar of the interval, of a Bergsonian dilation of time that might enable an alternate trajectory, one resistant to the closure of the interval by the naming of this movement as ‘violence’ and as ‘anti-school’. As a desire for a return to the interval, Lalu brings his argument to bear on the ‘condition of the human as undulating sadness’ in which the human has already folded into the ‘industrialisation of memory’ (269). For a social to come, Lalu argues, it is this folding – a fold against the fold of duration – that must be resisted.
NOTES

1. We assume that this amounts to an affirmation, following Martha Nussbaum, that ‘Kant more than any other Enlightenment thinker, defended a politics based upon reason rather than patriotism or group sentiment, a politics that was truly universal rather than communitarian, a politics that was active, reformist and optimistic, rather than given to contemplating the horrors, or waiting for the call of Being’ (3). Of course, we may fall into a trap here of making Kant’s ‘What Is Enlightenment?’ stand in for an entire heterogeneous field of thought.

2. If, however, by ‘promoting Enlightenment values’ Vale and Jacklin mean taking it to its deconstructive limits, we are in sympathy. In different terms, there is a tendency to auto-destruction in the Enlightenment that Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno discern in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*: ‘The curse of irresistible progress is irresistible regression’ (28). While freedom, for Horkheimer and Adorno, *is* dependent on Enlightenment thinking, all the cautions against totalitarianism sounded out in their opening chapter are directed not at ‘counter-Enlightenment’ forces but at those forces within the Enlightenment itself.

3. Put in the barest possible terms – Freud’s own – Kant’s categorical imperative finds its cognate in the Oedipus complex. Here, the superego, as the agent and enforcer of morality, provides a portion of the very enjoyment it forbids; the superego begins to sweat with the forbidden wishes it supposedly keeps in check, Enlightenment accruing, on Freud’s reading, a sadistic element.

4. On the talking cure elements of the TRC, see Ross Truscott’s chapter in this volume. On the relation between the TRC and the colonial Commission of Inquiry, and their mutual reliance on a psychotherapeutic discourse, see Adam Sitze.

5. On the psychoanalytic conception of traversal, see also Derek Hook’s chapter in this volume.

6. To traverse also retains an archaic meaning of opposition. Thus, the traversal of the social is an act that forms the social by questioning it, interrogating it; a social act, then, of abiding by and inhabiting repetition whose wager is precisely antisociality, a wager shared by movements that, more recently, have gathered under the banner of ‘decolonisation’ – though
this is not what we are calling for, even if it is a call we hear and to which we respond.

7. It is possible to read in Sanders’s formulation an unstated resonance with Fanon’s formulation of racism in *Black Skin, White Masks* as a defence against desire for the other.

8. That is to say, psychoanalysis works against any notion of a unified, preconstituted subject. However, it presents the same ‘blackmail’ to the subject: one is never at home, always split, doubled, alienated; indeed knowledge of the world, of others and self-knowledge is torn from certitude, but that impossibility of certitude remains within the psychoanalytic frame, about which there is limited doubt. Anticipating this, Freud produces the concept of epistemophilic pleasure, within which he counts psychoanalysis.

9. Sanders implicitly operates in a Derridean mode of reading Freud as a proto-deconstructionist, as a dismantler of accepted binaries: if there is sociality on the one hand and antisocial violence on the other, Freud shows, for example in ‘Totem and Taboo’, that violence, murder, is inherent, indeed constitutive of, the social; similarly, if narcissism, as an immature stage of development, is opposed to the maturity of social bonds, Freud refuses this opposition, in this particular instance as melancholia, as a form of narcissism, is inseparable from, even making possible, the mourning of the social bond.

10. Mbembe’s article was published online in the forum *Africa Is a Country*. It is, nevertheless, an exceptionally concise, accessible and clear statement on the social in South Africa today. The forum does not define the weight of its intervention.

11. Mbembe himself uses the Fanonian language of bodily tension that anticipates the explosion of anticolonial revolution.

12. This understanding of ‘becoming-with-others’ is explored in Chapter 9 in this volume.

13. For Levinas, who sets his philosophy against that of René Descartes, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel and Martin Heidegger, the central problem is resisting ‘the transformation of the other into the same’ (‘The Trace of the Other’ 348). As he continues: ‘The I loses its sovereign coincidence with itself, its identification, in which consciousness returned triumphantly to itself and rested on itself. Before the exigency of the other, the I is expelled from this
REMAINS OF THE SOCIAL

rest’ (353). This loss of identity in the self situates the self as an ‘I’ that is not its own adequate cause. While the self is still ‘riveted to itself’ (On Escape 66), is still absolutely responsible, it is no longer at rest in this responsibility as though it emanates from its own goodwill (Otherwise than Being 114).

14. There is additionally a nagging sense that Sanders’s formulation may confuse an effect, a proscription on mourning, for a cause, apartheid; that is, it sets to work on the very terrain that, in our reading, apartheid sought to produce in the first place.

15. As Deleuze phrases it: ‘The mask, the costume, the covered is everywhere the truth of the uncovered. The mask is the true subject of repetition. Because repetition differs in kind from representation, the repeated cannot be represented: rather, it must always be signified, masked by what signifies it, itself masking what it signifies … I do not repeat because I repress. I repress because I repeat, I forget because I repeat’ (18). This truth of repetition is what Deleuze locates in his reading of Freud’s positing of the death instinct. On the proximity of this understanding of the construction of the subject to Fanon’s discussion of the mask as a fixing in place, as a covering over of repetition so as to locate the subject within the realm of representation constituted through the figure of Man, see Black Skin, White Masks, particularly the Introduction as well as the fifth chapter, ‘The Lived Experience of the Black Man’.

16. The term that recurs through Köhler’s initial formulation, and several after it, including his own subsequent essay, is structure, the idea being that ‘the structure of the world is very similar to the structure of South Africa’ (‘Global Apartheid’ 266). This is, as we saw above, similarly Mbembe’s reading of the postapartheid as the manifestation of a structural repetition.

17. Köhler argues that, from a statistical point of view, ‘the income inequality of the world is even worse than that of South Africa’ (‘Global Apartheid’ 268).

18. Invoking the language of Thomas Kuhn, Hardt and Negri call the shift from imperialism to Empire a ‘paradigm shift’; the emergence of modernity, itself a revolutionary discovery of the plane of immanence, was a ‘paradigmatic and irreversible change’ (Empire 14, 74).

19. An integral element in the development of this idea of the body is the concept of the gaze. For Merleau-Ponty perception, or what he later terms the gaze,
envelops and palpates things: ‘It is not simply a thing seen in fact (I do not see my back), it is visible in principle, it falls under a vision that is both ineluctable and deferred’ (The Intertwining’ 398). In order to understand the gaze in this way, it is necessary to ‘emigrate’ into the outside, into what he terms ‘flesh’. In other words, being is moved outside of the self or, rather, the self is located on the other side of the body. The gaze emanates from the intertwining of the flesh which leaves no self-sufficient ego; rather, there is only an ‘I’ due to touching, to the palpation of the gaze. It is in this formulation of the ‘flesh’ that Merleau-Ponty situates his concept of a pre-individual field, a field of singularity that might be available to the repetition of difference as such. This ‘I’, which exists due to being entwined with other ‘I’s’ in ‘flesh’, leads to a notion of ‘inter-corporeal being, a presumptive domain of the visible and the tangible which extends further than the things I touch and see at present’ (403).

20. Hardt and Negri are of course alert to the violence of colonialism, though they are at pains to recall ‘the utopian tendencies that have always accompanied the progression toward globalization’ (Empire 115), a utopian tendency shared by Vale and Jacklin, an idea that will surely be met with resistance from those whose thought is routinely bracketed as ‘postcolonial’.

21. See, for example, Meditations on First Philosophy in which Descartes enables a relation to the world and the other taken as fact on the subject’s own terms and in relation to a subject that is always already there – there is no world apart from his thinking. This basic assertion of subjective certainty structures the terrain on which the modern concept of the subject, and the social that follows, are lodged, even if the particularities of its expression differ in meaningful ways across this itinerary. This is evident in Hobbes’s Leviathan, written a decade after the publication of Descartes’s Meditations and critical to Kant’s understanding of the movement of reason across the world as set out in his Perpetual Peace. For Hobbes, as for Descartes, the subject is taken as primary; in fact, it is through an understanding of ‘man’ that you come to the necessity of the ‘common-wealth’. Understanding, ‘being nothing else but conception caused by speech’ (25), is derived from sensory encounters which are then held in thought and placed into a form of causal relation (deduction, science) – the subject applies itself to the sensory.
It is this aptitude to apply itself so as to deduce the cause of things which characterises the subject, in Hobbes’s formulation, as human and which produces the subject as a capable agent with an independently active will that it applies to the world so as to make sense of it. See also John Locke’s *Second Treatise on Government* and John Stuart Mill’s *On Liberty* for two iterations of this itinerary that take the separation between mind and body, and the subordination of the latter to the former, as constitutive assumptions in the construction of their respective socials.

22. Of course, as Hobbes declares toward the end of his section on the commonwealth, causing this ordering to take hold is the problem — that is, unlike Vale and Jacklin, he anticipates the failure of what he sees as the Enlightenment’s productivity.

23. The potential of this concept, however, can be located in Lacan’s reading of Merleau-Ponty in relation to the Real and desire. He suggests that his concept of the Real should be thought in relation to the concept of the ‘flesh’ (*The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis* 68). More particularly, it is in his discussion of the gaze, as a non-total ontology, that Lacan draws on Merleau-Ponty’s concept of the ‘flesh’ as the locus both of perception and language. For Lacan, we are ‘beings who are looked at’; in other words, we are located as patients within perception, we are ‘in the spectacle of the world’ (75). This necessitates that Lacan formulate a distinction between the Sartrean gaze and the gaze in psychoanalysis. Principally, the Sartrean gaze emanates in the realm of Others, from Others as subjects. It is thus always locatable, even if it carries an ethical imperative that is not easily answered. On the other hand, the gaze for Lacan is more primordial, ‘presented to us only in the form of a strange contingency, symbolic of what we find on the horizon, as the thrust of our experience, namely, the lack that constitutes castration anxiety’ (72–73). In other words, the psychoanalytic gaze is that of the Real from which ‘I’ am extracted as ‘eye’ (84); this extraction, this emergence of a subject, situates it within the realm of resemblance and representation, as a field for a certain rendition of desire. The gaze in which the subject occurs, which is located in the Real (flesh), is the ‘underside of consciousness’ (83) in which Lacan locates the lack by which the subject emerges as fixed to itself. As he later asserts, ‘the *objet a* in the field of the visible is the gaze’ (105).
24. Merleau-Ponty’s concept of the ‘flesh’ is near to Levinas’s encounter with the other, though, of course, not reducible to it. Although Levinas in *Otherwise than Being* very quickly shifts this relation to the other into the realm of language, and particularly that of discourse (spoken language for Levinas), it is important to note that it is first a relation that occurs in sense – on the surface of the body, being in one’s ‘own skin’ (110). In his discussion of this being at the edge of oneself, in one’s ‘skin’, Levinas suggests that his understanding of ‘skin’ is akin to that of the ‘oneself’ which he posits in discourse (195, n. 11). His shift to language from sense seems to indicate that, for Levinas, sense is always already foreclosed in language.

25. ‘The explosion will not happen today,’ Fanon states, ‘it is too soon, or too late’ (*Black Skin, White Masks* 7).

26. For a reading of negritude that resonates with the reading of the postapartheid social that we develop here, see Souleymane Bachir Diagne, *African Art as Philosophy*.

27. ‘Racism’s Last Word’ was first published in the catalogue to *Art contre/against Apartheid*, assembled by the Association of Artists of the World Against Apartheid.

28. Derrida goes as far as to suggest, ‘The survival of Western Europe depends on it’ (‘Racism’s Last Word’ 295).

29. It is not that Derrida’s essay is without hope; not only is apartheid ‘the most racist of racisms’, but it is also the name for what, in the future perfect, ‘will have been abolished’ (‘Racism’s Last Word’ 291). The problem Derrida allows us to isolate in formulations of global apartheid, however, is that South African apartheid is known in advance, whereas, with Derrida, we might ask, ‘But hasn’t apartheid always been the archival record of the unnameable?’ (291). This point in particular was objected to by Anne McClintock and Rob Nixon, to which Derrida responded in an open letter (‘But Beyond, … ’ 155–179).

30. Derrida accuses his interlocutors, McClintock and Nixon, of a form of apartheid logic, in what he reads as their adherence to strict academic disciplines, chiding them that they are arguing for ‘reserved domains, the separate development of each community in the zone assigned to it’; in short, that ‘apartheid remain or become the law of the land in the academy’ (170).
31. One frequently reads of new empathic relations since the end of apartheid or of the presence of empathy despite apartheid rule.

32. Lawless’s chapter offers one response to the question an anonymous reader asked about the significance of Deleuze to the volume. Deleuze is the best of Spinoza’s readers. And grasping Spinoza’s thought is central to thinking the postapartheid.

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REMAINS OF THE SOCIAL


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