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The Not-Yet Counterpartisan: A New Politics of Oppositionality

> It is rather hard work: there is now no smooth road into the future: but we go round, or scramble over the obstacles.
> —D. H. Lawrence, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*

> She invested a variety of significances in the word "there," a concatenation of linked associations with space, time, and place too.
> —Nuruddin Farah, *Secrets*

The argument in *The Nomos of the Earth in the International Law of the Jus Publicum Europaeum*, Carl Schmitt's work that was first translated into English in 2003, is founded upon the title's central term, *nomos*. It is salient that, for a concept that is so fundamental to the project, the German political philosopher struggles to define it, to hold it in theoretical place for very long; he is certainly, despite his best efforts, not able to make it mean only one thing. Nomos reveals itself to be a philosophically palimpsestic term, given to eluding the philosopher even as he seeks to pin it down. Deeply grounded in discourses about national sovereignty, about law—and especially international law insofar as it is European, profoundly concerned with colonial history and the "land appropriation" so endemic to that pro-

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cess, with the development of Britain as a naval power that made the sea a new legal realm—it may be appropriate that the *nomos* proves such a polyvalent concept. Schmitt's *nomos* is, in truth, less a fixed concept than a way to understand the transformation from one historical epoch to another.

In *The Nomos of the Earth* Schmitt seeks to map three *nomoi*, the first two of which are explicitly based on a Eurocentric order (and the last of which is nostalgic for that order): the transition from Respublica Christiana (the Rome Papacy; Jerusalem, politically a Muslim city; and Santiago de Compostela in northwestern Spain, all serving as symbolic centers of Respublica Christiana—with the German emperor functioning as another symbolic center, one that was outside of Rome), to the formation of the European interstate system that the "Age of Discovery" begins and that lasts until 1917, to the post-1945 era—the bipolar Cold War moment that has become, for want of a better term, unipolar American hegemony. Schmitt's work is grounded in the asymmetrical Europe/non-Europe distinction, a concept that is first enunciated as Christian/non-Christian and then as civilized/un- or less-civilized dichotomy. During the nineteenth century the latter distinction was increasingly translated in terms of race, white/nonwhite (especially black or, occasionally, Jew). Instantiated in Africa, this distinction provided the legitimacy for nineteenth- and twentieth-century colonialism and, in South Africa, for the apartheid laws; these laws that, post-1945 (the age of decolonization, formally inaugurated by Indian independence in 1947), were no longer ethically—or politically—sustainable anywhere else in the postcolonial world.

Although the white/nonwhite Manicheanism persisted as a political force after 1945, it was no longer ideologically tenable and was replaced by a formal "democratic" ideology that guarantees formal freedom (independence for the anticolonial movement), regardless of race, gender, religion, class, and so on. The liquidation of this primary nomic distinction marks the "triumph" of a postcolonial discourse that girds the international critique of apartheid after the National Party (NP) came to power in 1948. The struggle against apartheid represents, in Schmitt's terms, the battle between an old (in truth, an only recently ideologically anachronistic) legitimacy and a new one; a campaign against apartheid laws based on race that were, in the second half of the twentieth century less "illegal" (since they had the force of apartheid law) than "illegitimate," but nevertheless—or, precisely for that reason—ideologically intolerable within the new nomos of the postcolonial earth.

The determination to explicate the new nomos, be it the post–World War II era, the post–Berlin Wall or post-apartheid era, girds Schmitt's book: "As long as world history remains open and fluid, as long as conditions are not fixed and ossified; in other words, as long as human beings and peoples have not only a past but also a future, a new *nomos* will arise in the perpetually new manifestations of world-historical events."[1] Inasmuch, however, as Schmitt's nomos is produced out of historical flux, so also it inscribes within itself (or, betrays itself as) as teleological desire, the historical march toward the nomos to end all nomoi; for this reason the argument moves chronologically, with a deliberateness, toward a new, definitive if not "final" (a term Schmitt would certainly not endorse) "nomos of the earth." This is not because Schmitt seeks to "fix" or "ossify" history, but rather because his thinking, his philosophical intent, his political goal, his ideal state of (global) affairs, is the existence and maintenance of "order and orientation"—not just in this, but in every nomos that was or will be.[2] The preoccupation with "order and orientation" may explain why for Schmitt every nomos is experienced simultaneously as a loss and an anticipated, potential, "utopia" (if utopia can be conceived of not as an ideal political paradigm but as a political moment in which war is effectively contained by order); the paradox of every nomos is that it is that moment in which order obtained and in which it failed to hold; every nomos is subject to the bracketing (the historical "control") of its own failure.

Order, in *The Nomos of the Earth,* depends on not so much the elimination of conflict but its "bracketing": the action of the *katechon* (the "restraint," that protracted or gnomic modality through which wars can be contained and conflict can be delimited). The *katechon* allows for order, that modality most valued by Schmitt: that moment in the second nomos in which there is a general agreement among (European) nation-states about the organization of the political, when friends can be distinguished from enemies, when rules of economic conduct are clearly discernible, when colonial enterprises operate according to established and honored agreements. If the new nomos is to be the one that will end all nomoi, order and orientation must be so fully manifest as to render them indistinguishable from the nomos itself, they must render the very notion of the *katechon* redundant. The moment of containment must establish itself as the very order of the nomos; in this process, containment must itself be liquidated. The ultimate nomos is that one which is not subject to "katechonization," that which is not bracketed by its own failure.

Apartheid South Africa was a society preoccupied with containing its own disenfranchised black populace and obsessed with imposing “law and order,” albeit one laden with historical paradox. In apartheid South Africa, the white minority’s determination to maintain (an immoral, if not an illegal) order produced the “dis-order”—the peaceful and violent protests, the workers’ strikes, and the school boycotts—that made the law unworkable, the system of constitutionalized racial discrimination unsustainable. Black opposition stands, from the vantage point of a post-apartheid society, as the interrogation of how law can be linked to order; the post-apartheid nomos marks the dissolution of the apartheid order and the production of an entirely new political order; black resistance represents a commentary on how *ex justa causa* (“from just cause”) the law provokes and incorporates violence, of how violence—against protesting black (and occasionally white) bodies—constituted apartheid law.

Anti-apartheid resistance worked to do more than overthrow a racist system of government (and not simply the governing NP): it was philosophically instrumentalist in that it transcribed the history of black opposition to apartheid as a critique of the apartheid state’s fallacious belief in its own telos—its sense of its capacity to exist infinitely in the face of the disenfranchised majority’s growing resistance. Black oppositionality rejected, and sought to make inconceivable, the unproblematic coupling of concepts such as law and order by revealing the racist violence that enabled this yoking of law to order in the first place.

The propensity for the teleological, to think post-apartheid South Africa as the disarticulation (and possibly even evacuation of) and triumph over its apartheid predecessor, the narrative of “progress” from a racist past to a nonracial present (and future), is a critical modality that has significant purchase in the post-1994 society. The event of the nation’s first democratic elections, April 1994, signals—in this teleological rendering—the “end” of one era and the beginning of a new, democratic one that aligns South Africa—almost half a century later—with a global post-1945 nomos. With, of course, the provisos that past economic inequities, cultural differences, and racial tensions, to mention but three, would have a (powerful) residual life in the new, post-apartheid nomos—the new order of the South African being. In Schmitt’s terms, the old illegitimacy has been replaced by a new, substanceless legitimacy, a formal equality that simply displaces social hierarchy from race into economics; the white/black distinction is transfigured into rich/poor, or “creditor/debtor.”[3] There is already a tension inherent within the new legitimacy: the marking of epochal progress, from apartheid to post-apartheid, quickly showed itself to be less a march toward an ideal political future—let alone present—than a new democracy living in a double temporality.[4] Post-apartheid South Africa has produced a consciousness of the history that preceded and informs the current conjuncture, an awareness of living with the apartheid past in the post-apartheid present—and into the foreseeable future, for that matter. The moment that went before, which will not permit a historically "uncontaminated" newness, is an issue addressed in "After the Thrill Is Gone" by a number of its contributors—Emmanuel Eze, Rita Barnard, and Zine Magubane, to name a few—from a range of disciplinary locales. These authors produce, in Somalian novelist (now based in Cape Town, South Africa) Nuruddin Farah's terms, a "concatenated" critique—one that spans and joins together philosophy, literature, and sociology and produces out of it a different kind of philosophical intervention. Their work is "associatively linked" by not only a temporal discomfiture (inhabiting the post-apartheid nomos intensely aware of how it is failing the South African and the African populace), but also a critical sense of dis-ease about how the "space" of the post-apartheid nation and its "place" in the Afrikaner and African imaginary are being expropriated into the new national orientation.

In the post-apartheid double temporality, the key modality in these concatenated critiques, the present can be understood as the moment that is insistently not the past but that can only function politically—as a politics—because there is the historic epoch that went before—the past. Or, in Alberto Moreiras's terms, the past is history. Following Moreiras's argument, the present can be conceived of as not-yet history. The present is the moment that becomes history, historic even, only after it has passed. It is the remarkable conjuncture that is lived while understanding, however imperfectly it is grasped, that the now is an era that will come to constitute a significant history, that it articulates itself as the future-perfect mode. It is, in part, this historicity (thought or felt together with the future), the unprecedentedness, the absolute newness of the moment, that makes palatable for South Africans the large-scale violence and massive economic trauma of the present's double temporality. This historicity makes possible, as the originary moment of post-apartheid history, the condition of living with contradictions: the reality of violence and discontent is mediated by the still (but not interminably) resonant achievement of nonracial democracy. This is how the post-apartheid moment can be conceptualized: as a historic (future) temporality that is unusually aware, like the occasion of postcolonial independence or the event of the revolution, of itself as history. In this way history (apartheid) and not-yet history (post-apartheid) coexist within the same temporality in post-1994 South African society.

South Africa is, within this paradigm, a nation living with a dual orientation: it looks, sometimes simultaneously, sometimes discretely, to its past and its present; it has a historical vision that is alternately bifurcated and cyclopean—split in its visual outlook or too trained on a single moment. The new nomos of the South African earth is haunted by the old nomos; the old nomos is inveterately part of the new one, a source of concern, regret, and anger to some, a source merely of chagrin and inevitability to others. A case not so much of acute double temporality, but of postcolonial *c'est la vie*—the inevitable fruit of the failed decolonization project. The new nomos of the South African earth, like all Schmitt's other nomoi, is experienced as a lack. Or, paradoxically phrased, as a lack that is produced by historical excess: the failure of the present emerges not from what is absent, but from how the present is overburdened by the incursion of the past, the ways in which the past inscribes itself onto the present. The past is too constitutive of the present.

The very title of this collection, "After the Thrill Is Gone," signals a ruptured, critical, discontented relationship to the present. The essays explore, through their variously political readings, the effects of this double temporality—this living in two "histories" simultaneously, awkwardly—in post-apartheid society. Moreover, the title is grounded in the temporal as an enunciation of the postlapsarian. The title (negatively) inscribes the moment after the "thrill" of the fall of apartheid, after the achievement of nonracial democracy, after the post-apartheid state had revealed how it inhabited, often with insufficient self-reflexivity, a double temporality. It signals, in this way, that the post-apartheid dispensation is experienced as a lack—especially by still impoverished, under- and unemployed and unemployable blacks who have seen no palpable improvement in their quality of life and often find their lives to be more physically vulnerable under the new dispensation than it was under the old—and as an affective, psychologically encoded loss—the too-rapid passing of the thrill experienced when apartheid was symbolically toppled (1990) and constitutionally liquidated (1994). The thrill, the ecstatic moment of liberation from racism and the entry into full, equal citizenship did not last very long; the thrill that it marked for blacks has been replaced by a confrontation with continuing inequity—whites, and the ruling black comprador class, are the only constituencies who have benefited materially from the end of apartheid—and an ever-growing sense that the new South African nomos is not sufficiently distinct from its predecessor. The thrill has, in the terms of Lacanian psychoanalysis, been experienced as *jouissance*—the pleasure of the post-apartheid state was interrupted too soon, cut short before the promises of genuine socioeconomic reconstruction could be delivered.

The thrill of anti-apartheid triumph, which was implicitly founded on the promise of redress to black (African, coloured, and Indian) South Africans, has failed to deliver the redistributive socioeconomic justice implicit in the claim of its temporal difference—"post"-apartheid, the moment after that should be recognizably different from the moment of apartheid, *but is not*. It is in this moment, after the initial, heady thrill of freedom and democracy is gone, that for the historically disenfranchised the double temporality collapses, if only for a brief period, into a recognizable singularity: that occasion when the apartheid past and the post-apartheid present are experienced as an undifferentiated temporality, the reality of a black majority government notwithstanding—which, by force of its significance, allows the double temporality to retain its historical but not material difference; post-apartheid South Africa is a moment without a distinct historical innocence. The post-apartheid present, for this reason, manifests itself as insidious—as a political Trojan horse for the historically disenfranchised—precisely because of its historic/al legitimacy. It has shifted the fundamental distinction from black/white to rich/poor, a distinction that cannot be attacked, as apartheid was, within the new nomos as "illegitimate" because economic discrepancies are no longer, as they were during apartheid, "illegal"—grounded in unjust, racist laws. A political critique of the chasm that separates (predominantly) white rich from (the largely) black poor, obvious and ethical in the old nomos, is now difficult to conceptualize—even as it is repeatedly made by ANC critics, and in this collection most emphatically by Patrick Bond, Ashwin Desai, and Richard Pithouse, and more implicitly by Michael MacDonald. Moreover, this critique is now mainly articulable as an observation of internal discrepancies rather than as a demand to change the order—or the political orientation of the ANC government.

These essays are a critique of the euphoric moment—or (pre-*jouissance*) moments even—that have marked South African society since February 1990. On that historic occasion, Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners were released, and the ban on black political organizations such as the

African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan African Congress was lifted, all of which made possible the negotiations between the white apartheid regime and the representatives of the black majority. The apogean moment in the process was, of course, the historic April 1994 elections in which the ANC, headed by Mandela, swept to power and South Africa became the last state in the continent to achieve (official) democracy. South Africa, the exceptional state by virtue of the white minority's apartheid policies, out of place in the continent, shunned by the rest of Africa, was not only suddenly welcomed—accepted within its (geographical) "place"—but its status was instantly transformed into a very different kind of African exceptionality. South Africa, with the wealth of its economic resources, its highly developed infrastructure, its links to the world of international capital and politics, its newfound commitment to democratic (and transparent) governance, home to two consecutive free and fair elections (1994 and 1999), and its iconic post-apartheid leader Mandela, became the exceptional African state. Democratic South Africa was the one nation on the continent that everyone, or so it seemed, wanted to emulate, to which a significant amount of Western capital flowed, and to which Africans from several other states wanted to come.

South Africa could be situated in, to invoke Giorgio Agamben, a "*relation of exception*" to the rest of Africa.[5] South Africa relates to these other states from the position of continental authority: it is in Africa but it is not (always) like Africa: it relates from its exceptional locale, its difference, what Agamben deems its "extreme form of relation," a localization that belies its socioeconomic and historical place, a relation that marks an emphatic removal from the rest of the continent.[6] So removed from the continent and so exceptional is South Africa that these other Africans would, having made their way south in search of better economic opportunities, soon find themselves less than welcome. These other Africans have been dubbed *amakwere-kwere*, the undesirable foreigners. The *amakwere-kwere* are those who, with clear echoes of U.S. rhetoric here, take jobs away from the locals, those who are nefarious, who deal drugs from their besieged inner-city enclaves in Johannesburg, those refugees from Mozambique and Zimbabwe, those whose language, ethnicity, and culture make them alien to South Africa; yet they are precisely those who historically supported the anti-apartheid struggle. In this (ongoing) modality, South Africa's exceptionalism resembles nothing so much as its U.S. corollary, where the exceptional, dominant international state wants to publicly flaunt its difference—politically and ethically superior because it boasts of a functioning democracy, an efficient system of government, the system of governance it wants to trumpet and export to other parts of the world, its inclusive culture,[7] its secularity and tolerance—while policing its borders with increasing vigilance and intolerance for the Other.

Post-apartheid South Africa recalls, in these exceptional predilections, not only its apartheid predecessor (which traded on its difference from black Africa), but also how the apartheid dispensation bore disturbing specters of Agamben's "state of exception." Apartheid produced its own version of the "camp" in the notorious prisons (Robben Island, John Vorster Square, Victor Verster), the training camps for "death squads," both internally and in a state such as Namibia (then South-West Africa) that it illegally occupied and in Angola and Mozambique where it fought unjust wars against the governments of Angusto Neto and Somara Machel respectively, all in the name of conducting a "just war" against the "Red Menace" of Soviet "communism." And, in the "squatter camps" where "illegal" blacks took up residence (and still do, as the Desai and Pithouse essay demonstrates), the violence perpetrated against those communities spoke of an especially reactionary, even fascist, politics. According to Agamben, the "state of exception is thus not the chaos that precedes order but rather the situation that results from its suspension."[8] However, the causes that produced the (anti-)apartheid chaos were never addressed so that the NP government fluctuated between ("black-inspired") "chaos" and the "suspension" of the law in the attempt to (re-)produce apartheid-style order. In Agamben's terms, apartheid South Africa represents the state of permanent exception—the state that disguised the desire for racist repression as a commitment to a "law-and-order" society—the (ethically) lawless society that must emphatically articulate itself in the face of dis-order. The parallels of the double temporality are striking: the apartheid regime believed that it was, through preventing the "chaos" of potential black rule, imposing the kind of "order" only white minority rule can enact, an order reminiscent of the old colonialist nomos that considered imperial rule the "white man's burden"; the post-apartheid government, while rhetorically situating itself firmly within the orbit of African discourse (with the notion of the "African Renaissance" as its beachhead), implicitly rejects the "chaos" that holds in states to the north (both near and far, neighboring Zimbabwe and tumultuous, war-torn Sierra Leone) and, for this reason, polices (largely unsuccessfully) the entry of other Africans in search of nothing more than "bare life." The Mbeki government is intent on keeping out political refugees, starving from the aftereffects of unjust wars the apartheid regime fought against the Mozambican government, vulnerable to landmines planted by the South Africa/U.S.–created counterinsurgents, Renamo, who now desperately cross the border into the post-apartheid state; these foreigners represent the intrusion of a new mode of disorder into South African society.

It is the "suspension" into a particularly dystopic "order" that produces the camp, in Agamben's *Homo Sacer*, and the insidious negation (of black humanity, local as well as foreign) that procures its equivalent in apartheid and post-apartheid society. In both instantiations, the exceptional state ex-cepts—removes, excises—itself from Farah's "there"—the geopolitical location that is Africa, a critique of the post-apartheid nomos undertaken here by Neil Lazarus in "The "Myth of (South African) Exceptionalism." However, much as South Africa posits its democratic exceptionality, it is increasingly revealed to be a democracy without a choice: the tyranny not of no-choice, the one-party state, the military dictatorship, but of the pretense of choice that is no-choice. There are, effectively, no choices for the South African electorate, especially the historically disenfranchised, other than the ANC. There are no costs for exceptionality—as in exceptionally democratic—when the ruling ANC has constituted itself as the nomos of the South African earth. Within the new order, in this orientation away from antistate violence and toward "democracy," all legitimate political activity has been reduced to party politics. As the historic party of the dispossessed (so that any opposition to it, especially black, trade union, or socialist opposition is deemed "reactionary"), the ANC has negated—for now, and the foreseeable future, it seems—the prospect of any effective, politically viable opposition party; the ANC has appropriated to itself all political legitimacy. In post-apartheid South Africa the ideological enmity lines have been largely obscured, eviscerated even, by the preponderance of amity lines; in the new nomos the friend-enemy distinction has been superceded by the all-encompassing, single category of (to apply Schmitt's terms) the South African partisan. Because the term, and position, of the partisan is still nostalgically—and expediently—occupied by the ANC, any oppositional notion of the political makes imperative both a reconceptualization of partisanship and a thinking about in what post-apartheid "time, place, and space"—all of which are precarious and rapidly shifting in *Secrets*' Somalian landscape—an oppositional politics can be lodged.

Conceived as a reflection on the first decade of post-apartheid society, written just prior to the third democratic elections (following the historic 1994 and then 1999 elections, when Mandela was replaced by Thabo Mbeki) anticipating the inevitable result of April 14, 2004 (before which the ANC controlled eight of the nine provinces after the 1999 elections), “After the Thrill Is Gone” represents more than a historical stock-taking (though it is that, too, by the very nature of its moment of enunciation). It is an intervention into the new nomos, per force an understanding of how it came to be, a disarticulation of this nomic politics, and an identification of where the historical openings can be located, of where the society is most fluid, and of where the new “amity” and enmity fault lines are, what constitutes these lines, and how they might be utilized to produce a different envisioning of post-apartheid South Africa. This essay seeks to frame the friend/enemy distinction in the new nomos into a different articulation: the partisan/(not-yet) counterpartisan.

The origins of the new anger are to be found in this new political subjectivity. This is made evident, each in its own way, in the poetry of Lesego Rampolokeng, Shaun Irlam’s critical reading of nation and ethnicities, Michiel Heyns’s rendering of contemporary Afrikaner culture, Adam Sitze’s delineation of the AIDS pandemic, and Eze’s incisive critique of the failings of the much-vaunted Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The black unemployable, the white gay subject, the trade union activist, and the female rape or AIDS victim has produced a whole new tabula rasa of antipathy toward the post-apartheid state. It is an antagonism that is, through its public speaking, through its understanding of the post-apartheid condition as not a series of sociopolitical gains but an aggregate, as a concatenation of losses that have been experienced in several South African ideological “spaces” and African socioeconomic “places,” that is—in part through its variegation, in part through its potential conjoining at some future moment, through potential design, or, more likely, accident—disrupting the new nomos through the implicit politics of discontent that it represents. In the process of disarticulating the new nomos, another project becomes imperative: not only the reinscription of the partisan but the act of investing that political agent with a legitimacy that can effectively counteract the ANC’s historic, nostalgic monopoly on that subject of the political.

The anger, the discontent, the dissatisfaction with the new nomos was not envisaged as intimate to the post-apartheid experience, though that itself was a utopic fantasy, considering how the Fanonian *damnes de la terre*s have never historically inherited the postcolonial earth—this despite the grand narrative of anticolonial promises. The ways in which the very nature of enmity—which is too often consumed into an insufficiently problematic post-apartheid South African amity, the suppression of ideological, racial, and cultural difference through the depoliticizing (in Schmitt's sense of the political) rhetoric of conciliation—now makes imperative more than just a new definition of *friend* and *enemy*. The politics of nomic discontent demand not only a repeated public speaking but a theorization of the post-apartheid partisan, that subject of the political that compels another complex doubling: to understand how the black anti-apartheid partisan has been transcribed in the post-apartheid nomos, and to configure the white apartheid partisan in its post-apartheid instantiation.

"There can be no politics, for Schmitt," Moreiras argues, "unless the new partisan is sustained in her or his struggle by a legality, present or potential, that would then be constitutive of friendship."[9] The struggle over who is friend, and who is enemy, is persistently present in South African politics. Always has been, in both the apartheid and the overburdened post-apartheid temporalities. In the 1980s the apartheid regime identified as its friends Chester Crocker and the euphemistic policy of "constructive engagement" advocated by the Reagan government; in the preceding decade it was Augusto Pinochet's Chile and the generalissimos of the Argentine juntas (Jorge Videla, Leopoldo Galtieri) who were fighting their *Guerra sucia* ("Dirty Wars") with their very own instantiation of the "camp" in Buenos Aires and beyond; it was also the apartheid state's relationship to Israel, two "rogue states" (*etat voyous*, as Jacques Derrida names them) swapping various repressive technologies. From the moment the apartheid regime came to power in 1948, its enemies were always the black partisans, those disenfranchised subjects fighting relentlessly, if always unequally, against the white partisans—metonymized as the South African Police, the South African Defence Force, and the notorious Bureau of State Security. South Africa has always been lived on the terrain of Schmitt's formulation of the political: the (absolute) friend counterposed by the (absolute) enemy; it has always been lived on the tumultuous topography of the partisan; apartheid created the (black) partisan, which it understood as the counterpartisan (by virtue of opposing the apartheid state), as the definitive subject of the post-1948 political. (The partisan can, in part, be distinguished from the friend by the depth of the former's ideological investment in a political project; the partisan is an active—even activist or agitator—political subject, always acting on behalf of a political project. The friend, while not indifferent or ideologically neutral, does not share the partisan's proclivity for political participation.)

South Africa has always engaged in partisan politics: the Hobbesian war of white all (with some exception) against black all (with rare exception).

The politics of the partisan continue to hold in the post-apartheid era. For the Mbeki government, more so than for its racially and ideologically conciliatory Mandela predecessor, there is no room for the "nonfriend" (Moreiras's term). There is only friend and enemy of the ANC. The ANC instantiates, of the variety of the sovereign nation that restricts, katechonizes within itself, all sovereignty (to itself): the "other partisans, the enemy, are the absolute enemy."[10] For the ANC government, these subjects of the new nomic political order constitute what we may understand as the "not-yet but soon to be" absolute enemy, those (insufficiently post-apartheid) partisans who must be watched as they become, inevitably, the absolute enemy. It is for this reason that J. M. Coetzee's 2003 Nobel Prize for Literature caused such conflict in the ANC ranks. Coetzee is author of the Booker Prize–winning novel *Disgrace* (1999), a work deeply critical of the new dispensation and that the ANC submitted to the Human Rights Commission in 2000 as an instance of racism in the media.[11] The government's congratulations to Coetzee, now living in exile in Australia (not even the apartheid state, of whom he had been equally critical, had been able to drive him out), was criticized for its hypocrisy by opponents after it had castigated the laureate for "misrepresenting" the new South African nomos. By virtue of its antipathy to the author, the ANC implicitly positioned—precisely because of its tepid endorsement of his Nobel triumph—Coetzee as a fully fledged counterpartisan: the disaffected white author who disparaged the new black nomos of the earth but who now had to be reincorporated into the nation from a distance. Within the new nomos, Mbeki's political rivals such as Tokyo Sekwale, Matthews Phosa, and Cyril Ramaphosa, accused of threatening the stability of the ANC government, can only, for the moment, be defined as incipient counterpartisans—that is, not-yet counterpartisans but certainly not nomic partisans.[12] (All of these figures, with their historic ties to the ANC and their current connections to the higher echelons of government and capital, especially in the case of Johnnic chairman Ramaphosa, make unlikely not-yet counterpartisans; so does Tokyo Sekwale, who established and is executive chairman for Mvelaphanda Holdings, a mining and energy company. Sekwale also served as a director of the ABSA Group, the primary banking establishment in South Africa. It is, in Marx's sense, about the need to make a not-yet counterpartisan history under nomic conditions not of the South African left's choosing.)

Vigilance is the watchword for the synecdochal ANC state in its endless struggle against the counterpartisans. However, political actors such as Sekwale, Phosa, and Ramaphosa (and Winnie Mandela, iconoclastic political actor that she is, could, in moments, be incorporated in this category), are now reluctantly recruited to the not-yet counterpartisan cause; veterans of the internal campaign against apartheid cannot easily by constructed as Schmittian "enemies" because they were only too recently (political) "friends"; they cannot be cast as counterrevolutionaries because apartheid was not, in any substantive or traditional sense, destroyed by a revolution; Ramaphosa, in any case, contributed far more to the local revolt against apartheid than many other current members of the government. For this reason those opposed to the Mbeki regime have to be understood, and rendered politically liable, as counterpartisans in a society where, despite all the socioeconomic devastation (AIDS, massive un- and underemployment, rape, continuing racial inequity), the figure and discourse of the partisan—which retains its heroic splendor—still enjoys significant currency.

As a collection, "After the Thrill Is Gone" offers a reinscription of the positionality, the political potentiality, of the counterpartisan who emanates from the overdetermined space of the not-yet ex-partisan—the precariously occupied Sekwale/Phosa/Ramaphosa, not the (exhilic) Coetzee, position. The position being claimed here is neither that of the counter- nor the nonpartisan, but of the partisan who is opposed to the ANC, has garnered legitimacy, and refuses to be silenced by the government, those who espouse a politics only metaphorized by Ramaphosa and Sekwale; the not-yet counterpartisan maintains a critique of its politics and makes public its dissatisfaction with the nomos that is being established in the name of post-apartheid South Africa. Or, more disturbingly, has already been established. The politics of the ANC is to render those opposed to it unproblematically counterpartisan, manifestly distinct from the partisans it has constructed out of the friendship produced by the post-apartheid nomos—the moral order of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the economic equity imagined by the soon-abandoned GEAR, the political order that gave rise to a fictitious, incorporative (noncombative, non-Hobbesian) "all." To elaborate the position of the not-yet counterpartisan is to recognize the limited temporality of the not-yet counterpartisan. The possibility for a new form of political opposition in the post-apartheid nomos is katechonized by history on both sides.

As a product of the moment before (apartheid), this positionality is limited by the number of political actors whose not-yet counterpartisanship is "validated" by their anti-apartheid credentials (their participation in that historic struggle); anticipating the passing of that moment, of that generation (of those generations) with a memory of struggle and a history of opposition, means that the new nomos has, as it were, (the too-rapid passing of) time on its side. The ANC government, with no substantive political opposition on the horizon, simply has to exhibit historical patience: the time and political modality of the not-yet counterpartisan is historically circumscribed; the not-yet counterpartisan's moment, which may have come when it was not prepared, may go before it has a chance to act upon its politics. Once that moment (/generation) passes, as it surely will, with it goes historic political possibility. It also signals a major transition from the not-yet counterpartisan to the fully fledged counterpartisan, a potentially radical political actor but also one who is extremely vulnerable to the repressions of the new, partisan (politics)-only state; once this transition is complete, a new politics of opposition, one evacuated of anti-apartheid history, will have to be constructed, a new legitimacy and autonomy (from the past and the present) will have to be obtained, an onerous project for any political subject.

The position of the not-yet counterpartisan represents an argument against the ANC's "tendentially unchecked striving for (absolute) power, and for absolute power against an absolute enemy."[13] The ANC requires an "absolute enemy" or, failing that, at least a committed cadre of counterpartisans. Without that its politics of enmity shows itself to be nothing other than that of the postcolonially discredited comprador class grubbing for "unchecked power." In Moreiras's formulation, in the "historical dispensation of actually existing globalization, the friend/enemy division is insufficient to capture the specificity of the political."[14]

To invoke Schmitt, and Moreiras's (and Agamben's) use of him, in a critique of the first decade of post-apartheid democracy is not only to implicitly militate against the existing nomos; it is also, as has been argued, to undertake the theoretical project of thinking a different conception of the political in South Africa: it is to imagine how the politics of the not-yet counterpartisan could disrupt the existing nomos and rearticulate it from a position that is tangentially, fragilely inside and incipiently, provocatively outside. This project will require the disruption, the discursive breaking of the political, historical, ideological, and ethical concatenations that constitute the new nomos. This deconcatenation will demand a speaking about, of, and beyond the moment this collection names "post." After the thrill of democracy has been enunciated, how can a new politics of resistance be constructed within—or against—the confines of the new nomos? Will it depend on not only the memory of the defeat of apartheid but also the animation of a more recent political experience: the structural nonfulfillment of anti-apartheid aspirations? Or, can those two moments, these different modes of political subjectivity, be conflated into the positionality of the not-yet counterpartisan? Or, better still, can this oppositionality produce the historically legitimated subject of the fully fledged counterpartisan?

If this political subject is indeed possible, then Agamben's "zone of anomy," that nomic terrain where political meaning is struggled over, often antagonistically, can be conceived as the only space from which the counterpartisan can conduct politics. If, in this formulation of politics, the (anti-apartheid) partisan is not (now presumed to have been) in excess of the nation (even as it was outside of the apartheid state), then neither is the counterpartisan—not in excess or outside of the nation. The partisan and the counterpartisan are the political figures who make up, are partially constitutive of, the nation. It is also, however, to posit these two figures as intimately related: the anti-apartheid partisan, named "subversive" or "Communist" or "terrorist" by the white state, finds its equivalent in both the disgruntled, historically enfranchised white subject (in an antagonistic relation of exception to the post-apartheid moment) and the discontented black subject (not-yet counterpartisan); these constitute very different kinds of partisans, and counterpartisans, for that matter, but they are bound by the difficulty of their standing as (erstwhile) friends and enemies of both the anti-apartheid and post-apartheid states. These are political subjects who operate from within a "zone of indistinction,"[15] the only political territory that has not yet been ascribed either friend or enemy. It constitutes, this temporally and ideologically precarious space of the political, the zone of the not-yet political that is intensely political precisely because it has not yet been politically identified in nomic terms.

This collection works in this zone of indistinction, demonstrating the fluidity and the nonfixedness of the positionalities available, where the identities of the partisans and the counterpartisans are complicated. It is only by elaborating and expanding, by rethinking and reinscribing the "indistinguishability" of the partisan from its counter, that it becomes possible to create an oppositional place that is, by its very definition, the only space for the post-apartheid political. It is—the "zone of the not-yet political" where the not-yet counterpartisan operates—the only place from which the current nomos can be critically undone, the only space from which a new nomos of the South African earth can be thought, the only concatenation of historical forces that can produce a new orientation of the political.

Notes

This introduction could not have been conceived without the philosophical challenges and provocations offered by Alberto Moreiras. My thanks to Alberto, insistent interlocutor, voracious intellectual. I would also like to thanks Bill Rasch, Schmittian extraordinaire, who gave me keen insight into the work of Carl Schmitt.

1 Carl Schmitt, *The Nomos of the Earth in the International Law of Jus Publicum Europaeum*, trans. G. L. Ulmen (New York: Telos Press, 2003), 78.

2 Schmitt, *Nomos of the Earth*, 42.

3 The “creditor/debtor” distinction is more systematically explored by Schmitt in his *Concept of the Political*, trans. George Schwab (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996) and *Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy*, trans. Ellen Kennedy (Boston: MIT Press, 1988) than in *Nomos of the Earth*.

4 I am invoking the term *double temporality* here as it is used in my essay, “The Double Temporality of *Lagaan*: Cultural Struggle and Post/Colonialism,” *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* (Spring 2004) and also borrowing from the way in which Alberto Moreiras deploys it in his forthcoming essay “Beyond the Line,” *American Literary History* (Summer 2005).

5 Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 18.

6 Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 18.

7 In South Africa, the former archbishop Desmond Tutu coined the phrase the “rainbow children of God” to describe the multiracial tolerance of the post-apartheid state.

8 Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 18.

9 Alberto Moreiras, “Preemptive Manhunt: A New Partisanship,” *positions* (forthcoming 2004).

10 Moreiras, “Preemptive Manhunt,” 13.

11 See “J. M. Coetzee Incites an ANC Egg-Dance,” www.hsf.org.za/focus32/focus32laurence.html (accessed April 20, 2004) and “DA, ANC Clash over Coetzee’s Nobel Prize,” http://iafrica.com/news/sa/275456.htm (accessed April 20, 2004). Both articles delineate the complicated, even disingenuous way in which the ANC tried to maintain its critique of *Disgrace*’s ostensible racism while offering Coetzee congratulations on his award.

12 See “The Plot Against Mbeki,” for an overview of the “threat” offered by these three figures, www.sabcnews.com/features/plot_mbeki (accessed April 14, 2004).

13 Moreiras, “Preemptive Manhunt,” 14.

14 Ibid., 23.

15 Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 21.