The society of enmity

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Perhaps it has always been this way.[1] Perhaps democracies have always constituted communities of kindred folk, societies of separation based on identity and on an exclusion of difference. It could be that they have always had slaves, a set of people who, for whatever reason, are regarded as foreigners, members of a surplus population, undesirables whom one hopes to be rid of, and who, as such, must be left 'completely or partially without rights'.[2] This is possible.

It's equally possible that nowhere on earth has a 'universal democracy of humanity' ever existed; that, with the earth divided into states, it is within such states that one seeks to realize democracy, that is, in the last instance, a politics of the state which, by clearly distinguishing between its own citizens – those who are seen to belong – and the rest, keeps at a firm distance all those who are not seen to belong.[3] At any rate, the contemporary era is undoubtedly characterized by forms of exclusion, hostility, hate movements, and, above all, by the struggle against an enemy. As a result, liberal democracies – already considerably ground down by the forces of capital, technology and militarism – are now being drawn into a colossal process of inversion.[4]

The disturbing object

The term 'movement' necessarily implies the setting into motion of a drive, which, even if impure, is composed of a fundamental energy. This energy is enlisted, whether consciously or not, in the pursuit of a desire, which is ideally a master-desire [*désir-maître*]. This master-desire – at once comprising a field of immanence and a force composed of multiplicities – is invariably directed towards one or several objects. 'Negro' [*Nègre*] and 'Jew' were once favoured names for such objects. Today, Negroes and Jews are known by other names: Islam, the Muslim, the Arab, the foreigner, the immigrant, the refugee, the intruder, to mention only a few.

Desire (master or otherwise) is also that movement through which the subject – enveloped on all sides by a specific phantasy [*fantasme*] (whether of omnipotence, ablation, destruction or persecution, it matters little) – seeks to turn back on itself in the hope of protecting itself from external danger, while other times it reaches outside of itself in order to face the windmills of the imagination that besiege it. Once uprooted from its structure, desire then sets out to capture the disturbing object. But since in reality this object has never existed – does not and will never exist – desire must continually invent it. An invented object, however, is still not a real object. It marks an empty yet bewitching space, a hallucinatory zone, at once enchanted and evil, an empty abode haunted by the object as if by a spell.

The desire for an enemy, the desire for apartheid, for separation and enclosure, the phantasy of extermination, today all haunt the space of this enchanted zone. In a number of cases, a wall is enough to express it.[5] There exist several kinds of wall, but they do not fulfil the same functions.[6] A separation wall is said to resolve a problem of excess numbers, a surplus of presence that some see as the primary reason for conditions of unbearable suffering. Restoring the experience of one's existence, in this sense, requires a rupture with the existence of those whose absence (or complete disappearance) is barely experienced as a loss at all – or so one would like to believe. It also involves recognizing that between them and us there can be nothing that is shared in common. The anxiety of annihilation is thus at the heart of contemporary projects of separation.

Everywhere, the building of concrete walls and fences and other 'security barriers' is in full swing. Alongside the walls, other security structures are appearing: checkpoints, enclosures, watchtowers, trenches, all manner of demarcations that in many cases have no other function than to intensify the zoning off of entire communities, without ever fully succeeding in keeping away those considered a threat. Such is the case in those Palestinian towns that are completely surrounded by areas under Israeli control.[7]

In fact, the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories can be seen to serve as a laboratory for a number of techniques of control, surveillance and separation, which today are being increasingly implemented in other places on the planet. These range from the regular sealing off of entire areas to limitations on the number of Palestinians who can enter Israel and the occupied territories, from the regular imposition of curfews within Palestinian enclaves and controls on movement to the objective imprisonment of entire towns.[8]

Permanent or temporary checkpoints, cement blocks and mounds of earth serving as roadblocks, the control of aerial and marine space, of the import and export of all sorts of products, regular military incursions, home demolitions, the desecration of cemeteries, whole olive groves uprooted, infrastructure turned to rubble and obliterated, high- and medium-altitude bombardments, targeted assassinations, urban counter-insurgency techniques, the profiling of minds and bodies, constant harassment, the ever smaller subdivision of land, cellular and molecular violence, the generalization of forms adopted from the model of a camp – every feasible means is put to work in order to impose a regime of separation whose functioning paradoxically depends on an intimate proximity with those who have been separated.[9]

In many respects such practices recall the reviled model of apartheid, with its Bantustans, vast reservoirs of cheap labour, its white zones, its multiple jurisdictions and wanton violence. However, the metaphor of apartheid does not fully account for the specific character of the Israeli separation project. In the first place, this is because this project rests on quite a unique metaphysical and existential basis. The apocalyptic and catastrophist elements that underwrite it are far more complex, and derive from a longer historical horizon than those elements that used to support South African Calvinism.[10]

Moreover, given its 'hi-tech' character, the effects of the Israeli project on the Palestinian body are much more formidable that the relatively primitive operations undertaken by the apartheid regime in South Africa between 1948 and the early 1980s. This is evidenced by its miniaturization of violence – its cellularization and molecularization – and its various techniques of material and symbolic erasure.[11] It is also evidenced in its procedures and techniques of demolition – of almost everything, whether of infrastructures, homes, roads or landscapes – and its fanatical policy of destruction aimed at transforming the life of Palestinians into a heap of ruins or a pile of garbage destined for cleansing.[12] In South Africa, the mounds of ruins never did reach such a scale.

If all forms of inclusion are necessarily disjunctive, separation can conversely only ever be partial. In South Africa wholesale separation would have undermined the very survival of the oppressor. Short of exterminating the entire native population from the outset, it was impossible for the white minority to undertake a systematic ethnic and racial cleansing on the model of other settler colonies. Mass expulsions and deportations were hardly an option. Once the entwining of different racial segments had become the rule, the dialectic of proximity, distance and control could never reach the paroxysmic levels seen in Palestine.

In the occupied territories, such proximity is attested by Israel's continued control over the management of the population register and its monopoly over the issuing of Palestinian identity cards. This is also the case with nearly all the other aspects of daily life, such as regular transfers, the authorization of various permits, and the control of taxation. Peculiar to this model of separation is not only that it can be tailored to the demands of occupation (or abandonment, if need be).[13] It can also, when required, transform itself into an instrument of strangulation. Occupation is in every respect a form of bare struggle, a kind of combat between bodies in a dark tunnel.

The desire for apartheid and the phantasy of extermination are not new phenomena, however. They have continued to metamorphose over the course of history, particularly within the old settler colonies. Chinese, Mongols, Africans and Arabs – in some cases long before Europeans – were responsible for the conquest of vast territories. They established complex long-distance trade networks across seas and oceans. But it was Europe, perhaps for the first time in modern history, which inaugurated a new epoch of global resettlement.[14] This resettlement of the world, which occurred between the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries, was double faceted: it was at once a process of social excretion (for the migrants who left Europe to found overseas colonies) and a historic tipping point, which, for the colonized, came at the cost of new forms of enslavement.

Over the course of this long period, the resettlement of the world often took the shape of innumerable atrocities and massacres, unprecedented instances of 'ethnic cleansing', expulsions, transfers, and concentrations of entire populations in camps, and indeed of genocides.[15] The colonial enterprise

was driven by a mixture of sadism and masochism, applied gropingly and in response to largely unexpected events. As such, it was inclined to smash all forces standing in the way of its drives or inhibit their course towards all sorts of perverse pleasures. The limits to what it might have considered 'normal' were constantly broken, and few desires were subject to straightforward repression, let alone embarrassment or disgust. The colonial world's capacity to make do with the destruction of its objects (natives included) was astonishing. If any object came to be lost, the thought was that it could easily be replaced with another.

Further still, the principle of separation lay at the root of the colonial project. Colonialism had to a large extent consisted in a constant effort to separate: on one side, my living body; on the other, all those 'body-things' surrounding it – with my human flesh as the fundamental locus through which all other exterior 'flesh-things' and 'flesh-meats' exist for me. On one side, therefore, is me – the basic nexus and source of orientation in the world – while, on the other, are the others with whom, however, I can never completely fuse – others with whom I may relate, yet never genuinely engage in relations of reciprocity or mutual implication.

In a colonial context, this constant effort to separate (and thus to differentiate) was partly a consequence of an anxiety of annihilation felt by the colonizers themselves. Numerically inferior but endowed with powerful means of destruction, the colonizers lived in perpetual fear of being surrounded on all sides by 'evil objects' threatening their very survival and existence: natives, wild beasts, reptiles, microbes, mosquitoes, illnesses, the climate, nature as such, even witches.

The apartheid system in South Africa and the destruction of Jews in Europe – the latter, though, in an extreme fashion and within a quite different setting – constituted two emblematic manifestations of this phantasy of separation. Apartheid in particular openly challenged the possibility of a single body comprehending more than one individual. It presupposed the existence of originary and distinct (already constituted) subjects, each made of a 'race-flesh' or 'race-blood' able to evolve according to its own rhythm. It was believed that assigning them to specific territorial spaces would be enough to neutralize the otherness of one with respect to the others. These originary, distinct, subjects were called upon to act as if their past had never been a past of 'prostitution', of paradoxical dependencies and all manner of intrigues. Such was the phantasy of purity underpinning their existence.[16] Historical apartheid's failure to secure, once and for all, impenetrable frontiers between different fleshes can therefore be understood as an *a posteriori* demonstration of the limits of the colonial project of separation. This is because, short of total extermination, the Other can never be external to us: it is within us, under the double figure of the alter ego and the altered ego [*l'autre Moi et du Moi autre*], each mortally exposed to the other and to itself.

The colonial project drew a great deal of its substance and surplus energy from its basis in all sorts of instinctual drives, more or less openly acknowledged desires, in the main located below the conscious I of the agents concerned. In order to exercise a durable project on the native people they had subjugated, and from whom they wanted to differentiate themselves at all costs, the colonists had to somehow constitute them into various kinds of *physical objects*. In this sense, the whole game of representations under colonialism consisted in turning the natives into a variety of typical or type-images.

These stereotypes largely corresponded to the debris of their real biographies, their primary status preceding their first encounter with the colonizers. By producing this imagined material, an entirely artificial secondary status of psychic objects came to be fixed onto their primary status as authentic human persons. For natives within their daily lives, the dilemma thus became how to distinguish between the psychic object they had been asked to interiorize – and often forced to accept as their true self – and the human part of themselves that they had once been and that was still theirs despite everything, but which, under colonial conditions, they were now being forced to forget.

Once created, these psychic patterns became constitutive of the colonial self. Their position of exteriority with respect to the colonial self was thus always, at the same time, one of ultimate dependence. The continued psychic functioning of the colonial order rested on investment in these objects. Affective, emotional and psychic life under colonialism orbited around such objects and patterns; without them it would have lost its substance and coherence. It depended for its vitality on permanent contact with them, and indeed showed itself to be particularly vulnerable to being separated from them. In colonial or para-colonial situations, the 'evil object' (the object that has survived from initial destruction) can never be thought of as completely exterior from the self.

Divided from the very start, it is always already at once subject and object. Since it depends on me at the same time as I depend on it, I cannot simply be rid of it through sheer persecution and obstinacy. In the end, I may choose to destroy everything I abhor, but this can never release me from my link to this other entity – even as I destroy it or separate myself from it. This is because *the evil object and I can never be entirely separated.* At the same time, however, *we can never be entirely one and the same*.

The enemy, that other that I am

The desire for an enemy, for apartheid, the phantasy of extermination, such irrepressible forces can be seen as shaping the basic line of fire, indeed the decisive struggle, at the beginning of this century. As the fundamental vectors of contemporary brainwashing, they push democratic regimes everywhere into a kind of vicious stupor, and, inebriated and reeking, to a life of drunks. As both diffuse psychic structures and generic passionate forces, they are responsible for the dominant affective tonality of our times and serve to sharpen many contemporary struggles and mobilizations. These struggles and mobilizations in turn feed on a threatening and anxiogenic vision of the world, privileging a logic of suspicion where everything must be seen as secret or as belonging to a plot or conspiracy.[17] Pushed to their ultimate consequences, they lead almost inexorably towards a wish for destruction, one according to which blood (spilt blood) makes law, in an explicit application of the ancient dictum of retaliation, the eye-for-an-eye or *lex talionis* of the Old Testament.

In this depressive period within the psychic life of nations, the need, or rather the drive, for an enemy is no longer purely a social need. It corresponds to a quasi-anal need for ontology. In the context of the mimetic rivalry exacerbated by the 'war on terror', having an enemy at one's disposal (preferably in a spectacular fashion) has become an obligatory stage in the constitution of the subject and its entry into the symbolic order of our times. Indeed, it seems as if the denial of the enemy were lived, within oneself, in the form of a deep narcissistic wound. To be deprived of an enemy – or to not experience a terrorist attack or any other bloody acts inflicted by those who hate us and our way of life – means being deprived of the kind of relation of hatred that would authorize the free exercise of many otherwise forbidden desires. It means, in other words, to be deprived of that demon without which almost nothing is allowed, even at a time when calls for absolute licence, unbridling, and generalized disinhibition appear to ring out with great urgency. It is equally to hinder that compulsion to scare oneself, one's capacity to demonize, and that kind of pleasure and satisfaction one feels when a presumed enemy is shot down by special forces or when he is captured alive and subjected to endless interrogations, rendered and tortured in one of the many so-called 'black sites' that stain the surface of our planet.[18]

This is an eminently political epoch, since 'the specific political distinction' from which 'the political' as such is defined – as Carl Schmitt argued, at least – is that 'between friend and enemy'.[19] If our world today is an effectuation of Schmitt's, then the concept of enemy is to be understood for its concrete and existential meaning, and not at all as a metaphor or an empty lifeless abstraction. The enemy Schmitt describes is neither a simple competitor, nor an adversary, nor a private rival whom one might hate or feel antipathy for. He is rather the object of a supreme antagonism. In both body and flesh, the enemy is that individual whose physical death is warranted by their existential denial of our own being.

However, to distinguish between friends and enemies is one thing; to identify the enemy with certainty is quite another. Indeed, as a ubiquitous yet obscure figure, today the enemy is even more dangerous by being everywhere: without face, name or place. If they have a face, it is only a *veiled face*, *the simulacrum of a face*. And if they have a name, this might only be a borrowed name, a false name whose primary function is dissimulation. Sometimes masked, other times in the open, such an enemy advances among us, around us, and even within us, ready to emerge in the middle of the day or in the heart of night, every time his apparition threatening the annihilation of our way of life, our very existence.

Yesterday, as today, the political as conceived by Schmitt owes its volcanic charge to the fact that it is closely connected to an existential will to power. As such, it necessarily and by definition opens up the extreme possibility of an infinite deployment of pure means without ends, as embodied in the execution of murder. Underwritten by the law of the sword, it is the 'meaningful antithesis whereby men could be required to sacrifice [their] life' (*to kill themselves for others*), and, under the aegis of the state, that in the name of which such men could be 'authorized to shed blood, and kill other human beings' (*to kill others*) on the basis of their actual or supposed belonging to an enemy camp.[20] From this standpoint, the political can be understood as a particular form of association or

grouping established with a view to a combat, which is at once decisive and profoundly opaque. But it is not merely the business of the state, and hence an exercise in delegated death, since it also concerns not only the possibility of sacrifice – or self-sacrifice, the giving of one's life – but also, and very literally, the possibility of suicide.

This is because, in the end, suicide serves to brutally interrupt all dynamic of subjection and any possibility of recognition. To willingly relinquish one's existence by giving death to oneself is not necessarily to make oneself disappear. Rather, it is to willingly abandon the risk of being touched by the Other and by the world – a gesture of disinvestment that forces the enemy to confront his own emptiness. The person who commits suicide no longer wishes to communicate, neither by word nor violent gesture, except perhaps at the moment when, by putting an end to his own life, he also puts an end to the life of his target. The killer kills himself while killing others or after having killed. Either way, he no longer seeks to participate in the world such as it is. He disposes of himself, and disposes of some of his enemies as he does so. He thus discharges himself of what he once was and of the responsibilities that as a living being were once his to attend.[21]

The person who commits suicide – killing his enemies in an act in which he also kills himself – shows the extent to which, as far as the political is concerned, the true contemporary fracture is the one opposing those who cling onto their bodies, who take their bodies as the basis of life itself, to those for whom the body can only open the way to a happy life when expunged. The martyr-to-be is engaged in a quest for a joyous life, one that he believes rests only in God, and that is born of a will to truth in turn converted to a will to purity. There can be no authentic relationship to God other than through conversion, that act through which one becomes other than oneself, and, in so doing, escapes from the facticity of life – that is, impure life. By committing to martyrdom, one takes a vow to destroy such impure corporeal life. Usually, nothing is left of the fundamentalist's body but debris, scattered among other objects: bloody traces that appear more vivid against other traces, prints, enigmatic fragments such as bullets, guns, phones, sometimes scratches or marks. Today, however, there is rarely a suicide attack without its technical devices, at the intersection between ballistics and electronics – chips to unsolder, memory chips to test. In the strict sense of the term, to bring an end to one's life, to *abolish oneself*, is thus to undertake the dissolution of that seemingly simple entity that is one's body.

The contemporary age can be seen to embody the fundamental character of the political as a hatred of the enemy, the need to neutralize him, and a generalized desire to avoid the sorts of dangers and contagion he is perceived to bring. Convinced they now face a permanent threat, contemporary societies have therefore come to experience their daily lives as a series of 'small traumas' – an attack here, a hostage there, first a shoot-out, then a permanent state of alert, and so on. New technologies have also deepened access to the private lives of individuals. Thus, secret, invasive and sometimes illegal techniques of mass surveillance are able to target people's most intimate thoughts, opinions and movements. Indeed, by heightening and reproducing the affect of fear, liberal democracies have also gone on to manufacture bogeymen designed to scare their citizens – today a young veiled woman, tomorrow a terrorist novice returning from the battlefields of the Middle East, lone wolves and sleeper cells hidden away in the crevices of society, observing us, looking for the right moment to strike.

What about the 'Muslim', the foreigner or the immigrant, those about whom one has continued, beyond all reasonable bounds, to weave images that, little by little, have begun to connect into vicious chains of association? That such images do not match reality matters little. Primary phantasies know neither doubt nor uncertainty. As Freud argued, the mass is only 'excited by immoderate stimuli. Anyone seeking to move it needs no logical calibration in his arguments, but must paint with the most powerful images, exaggerate, and say the same thing over and over again.'[22]

The current epoch is marked by the triumph of mass morality.[23] Contemporary psychic regimes have brought to a maximum level of exacerbation the exaltation of affectivity and, paradoxically, within an age of digital telecommunications, the desire for mythology, a thirst for mysteries. The increasing expansion of algorithmic reason – which, as everyone knows, serves as the crucial basis for the financialization of the economy – goes hand in hand with the emergence of new modes of mytho-religious thinking.[24] Fundamentalism is hence no longer considered as antithetical to rational knowledge. On the contrary, the one serves as support for the other, as the two are put in the service of a form of visceral experience culminating, among other things, in the notion of a 'communion of martyrs'.

Convictions and firm certainties acquired at the end of a long 'spiritual' path, punctuated by revolt and conversion, reveal neither feeble fanaticisms nor barbaric madness or ravings, but rather a type of 'inner experience' only shared by those who come to profess the same faith, obey the same law, the same authorities, and the same commandments. Essentially, they belong to the same community. This community is made up of communicants, the 'damned of the faith' who are condemned to testify, by word and act, and to the bitter end if necessary, to the 'to-the-bitter-end' character of divine truth itself.

Within the mytho-religious logic of our times, the divine (just like the market, capital or the political) is almost always perceived as an immanent and immediate force: vital, visceral and energetic. The paths of faith are believed to lead to states or acts considered scandalous from the standpoint of simple human reason, or to risks, apparently absurd ruptures and bloody stirrings – terror and catastrophe in the name of God. One of the effects of faith and fundamentalism is to arouse a sort of great enthusiasm, the kind of enthusiasm that opens the door to a *great decision*.

Indeed, there are many today who live purely in wait of such an event; and martyrdom is one of the means used by the damned of the faith to bring an end to this waiting. Today, such men of faith and enthusiasm seek to make history through a great decision, namely through the enactment of vertiginous acts of an immediate and sacrificial nature. By means of such acts, the damned of the faith come face to face, and with open eyes, with a dimension of excess and loss. Animated by a will to totality, they seek to become singular subjects by scoping the depths for disjunctive forces, daemons of the sacred. Embracing a form of voluntary loss – that which destroys language as much as the subject of discourse – they allow for the inscription of the divine into the flesh of a world become gift and grace. This is no longer a matter of mere mortification, but of annihilation: a crossing from the self to God. The ultimate aim of these sacrificial acts is to master neither life nor the outside world, but an interior dimension; to produce a new morality and, at the end of a decisive (and if need be bloody, and at any rate definitive) battle, to eventually experience an exulting, ecstatic and sovereign form of affirmation.

The damned of the faith

Mytho-religious thinking is not the exclusive preserve of terrorist groups. In their effort to curb terrorism and complete their transformation into security states, liberal democracies no longer hesitate to turn to grand mythological schemas. In fact, there are hardly any today that do not appeal to bellicose enthusiasm, often with the aim of patching back together their old nationalist fabrics. For every attack that results in casualties a kind of tailor-made mourning is automatically produced. The nation is summoned to shed its tears of rancour in public and show its defiance against the enemy. And with each tear, a shining path is traced. Clothed in the rags of international law, human rights, democracy, or, simply put, 'civilization', militarism no longer needs a disguise.[25] To relight the flame of hatred, old allies are suddenly transformed into 'enemies of humanity as a whole', while might becomes right.

Having only relatively recently counted on dividing humanity into masters and slaves, liberal democracies today still depend for their survival on defining a sphere of common belonging against a sphere of others; in other words, friends and 'allies' on the one hand, and enemies of civilization on the other. Indeed, without enemies they struggle to keep themselves going alone. Whether such enemies really exist matters little. It suffices to create them, find them, unmask them, and bring them out into the open.

Still, this endeavour became increasingly onerous when one began to believe that the fiercest and most intrepid enemies had lodged themselves in the deepest pores of the nation, forming a kind of cyst that would destroy the nation's most fertile promises from within.

The problem, in this sense, is how to separate the nation from that which gnaws at it without harming its very body (i.e. civil war). Searches, raids, various forms of control, house arrests, the recording of charges under emergency laws, increases in exceptional measures, extended powers for police and intelligence services, and, if required, loss of nationality: everything is put to work, and with ever-growing harshness, in order to pin down these evils – yet not onto their true authors, our attackers, but, as if by accident, onto those who merely resemble them. In doing this, what else is one doing but perpetuating the very thing one claims to oppose? By demanding the death of all those who are not unconditionally on our side, do we not risk forever reproducing all that is tragic of a humanity in the grip of hatred and unable to free itself?

Just as in the past, this war against existential enemies is once again framed in metaphysical terms. As a great challenge, it engages the whole of being, its whole truth. These enemies, with whom no agreement is either possible or desirable, thus appear in the form of caricatures, clichés and stereotypes, granting them a figural sort of presence. In turn, this presence only serves to confirm the type of (ontological) menace we perceive as confronting us. In an age marked by a re-enchantment of blood and soil as much as increasing abstraction, the enemy therefore emerges as a spectral figure and a figural presence, while the cultural and biological elements of enmity are combined to constitute a single dimension.

With their imaginations whipped up by hatred, liberal democracies do not hesitate to feed on all sorts of obsessions about the real identity of the enemy. But who is this enemy really? Is it a nation, a religion, a civilization, a culture or an idea?

State of insecurity

Hate movements, groups invested in an economy of hostility, enmity, various forms of struggle against an enemy – all these have contributed, at the turn of the twenty-first century, to a significant increase in the acceptable levels and types of violence that one can (or should) inflict on the weak, on enemies, intruders, or anyone considered as not being one of us. They have also contributed to a widespread instrumentalization of social relations, as well as to profound mutations within contemporary regimes of collective desire and affect. Further, they have served to foster the emergence and consolidation of a state-form often referred to as the surveillance or security state.

From this standpoint, the security state can be seen to feed on a *state of insecurity*, which it participates in fomenting and to which it claims to be the solution. If the security state is a structure, the state of insecurity is instead a kind of passion, or rather an affect, a condition, or a force of desire. In other words, the state of insecurity is the condition upon which the functioning of the security state relies in so far as the latter is ultimately a structure charged with the task of investing, organizing and diverting the constitutive drives of contemporary human life. As for the war, which is supposedly charged with conquering fear, it is neither local, national nor regional. Its extent is global and its privileged domain of action is everyday life itself. Moreover, since the security state presupposes that a 'cessation of hostilities' between ourselves and those who threaten our way of life is impossible – and that the existence of an enemy which endlessly transforms itself is irreducible – it is clear that this war must be permanent. Responding to threats – whether internal, or coming from the outside and then relayed into the domestic sphere – today requires that a set of extra-military operations as well as enormous psychic resources be mobilized. The security state – being explicitly animated by a mythology of freedom, in turn derived from a metaphysics of force – is, in short, less concerned with the allocation of jobs and salaries than with a deeper project of control over human life in general, whether it is a case of its subjects or of those designated as enemies.

This freeing of psychogenetic energy can be seen in an increasing attachment to what was once called illusion. In its classic conception, illusion is opposed to reality. Mistaking effects for causes, illusion empowers the dominance of images and the world of appearances, reflections and simulacra. It draws from a world of fiction that is opposed to a real world founded in the fundamental fabric of things and of life. The *demand of an originary surplus*, which has always been necessary for life, today has not only accelerated – it has become uncontrollable. This imaginary surplus is not perceived as the complement to an existence that would be more 'real' because supposedly consonant with Being and its essence. For many, it is instead experienced as the very motor of the real, the very condition of its plenitude and radiance. The production of this surplus, which was once administered by religions of salvation, is today increasingly delegated to capital and to all kinds of objects and technologies.

The domain of objects and machines, as much as capital itself, is increasingly presented in the guise of an animistic religion. In this context, everything

is put into question up to and including the status of truth. Certainties and convictions are held as genuine truths. There is no need to employ reason. It is enough to simply believe and surrender oneself to belief. As a result, public deliberation, which is one of the essential features of democracy, no longer consists in discussing and seeking collectively, under the eyes of all citizens, the truth and, ultimately, justice. The great opposition no longer being that between truth and falsity, the worst crime becomes doubt. This is because, in the concrete struggle opposing us to our enemies, doubt hinders the total freeing of voluntarist, emotional and vital energies necessary for the use of violence and, when required, the shedding of blood.

The reserves of credulity have similarly increased. Paradoxically, this increase has gone hand in hand with an exponential acceleration of technological development and industrial innovation, the continuing digitalization of facts and things, and the almost universal advance of what might be called *electronic life and its double*, or *robotically adjusted life*.[26] A new and unprecedented phase in the history of humanity has effectively begun, in which it will become increasingly difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish human organisms from electronic flows, the life of humans from that of processors. Such a phase is made possible by advances in algorithmic computation, leading to an accumulation of know-how through the storage of enormous data flows, processed at maximum power and speed. This digital-cognitive turn will culminate in a general incorporation of microchips within biological tissues. The coupling of human and machine, which is already under way, has led not only to the emergence of new mythological conceptions of the technical object. It has also, as an immediate consequence, put back into question the very status of the modern subject inherited from the humanist tradition.

The other decisive factor in this freeing process is a lifting of inhibitions – a return of the excluded part, of the structures embracing the repressed element – and a multiplication of enhanced pleasures resulting from this freeing of psychogenetic energies and drives. Such a process also results in an adjournment – if not a wholesale suspension – of the powers of moral reflection. What gratificatory pleasures might be possible today for those whose inhibitions are lifted and whose moral conscience is withdrawn? What might explain the contemporary attraction exerted on the multitude by the idea of absolute and irresponsible power? What of many people's seeming acceptance of the most extreme actions, their receptiveness to the simplest and most confused arguments? And what of the readiness with which many appear to fall into line, and with which world powers can be led towards all sorts of crimes simply by acknowledging the force of this idea?

In order to answer these questions one needs to say something about the fundamental mechanisms of affective life under present conditions.[27] The almost total interconnection between individuals made possible by new technologies has not only given rise to new strategies in the formation of masses. Today, constituting a mass is nearly the same as constituting a horde. In truth, this is no longer an era of masses. It is rather an era of virtual hordes. In so far as the mass survives, however, it is still only 'excited by immoderate stimuli'.[28] As Freud argues, the mass 'respects strength and is only moderately influenced by the good, which it sees simply as a kind of weakness. What it expects in its heroes is brawn, even a tendency to violence. It wants to be dominated and suppressed and to fear its master.'[29]

Almost everywhere, then, the traditional field of antagonisms has collapsed. Within national borders, new forms of association and social struggles have emerged. These are motivated less by class identity than by familial relations and thus by blood. The old friend and enemy distinction is now embodied in the conflict between kin and non-kin, namely between those linked through blood or origin and those considered to belong to a different blood, culture or religion. According to this vision, these are people who, having come from elsewhere, can never be considered our fellow citizens and with whom we can have almost nothing in common.

Though they live among us, they can never be one of us. They must therefore be expelled, put back in their place, or simply led back beyond our borders under the aegis of a new security state that has come to dominate our lives. Domestic pacification, what might be termed a molecular or 'silent civil war', mass incarcerations, the decoupling of nationality from citizenship, extrajudicial executions sanctioned by new legal and criminal powers – all these factors contribute to a blurring of the old distinction between internal and external security against a background of heightened racist affects.

Nanoracism and narcotherapy

At first sight, the case is clear. Our epoch seems to have finally discovered its truth. It only lacked the courage to declare it.[30] Having reconciled itself with

its true side, it can finally allow itself to proceed naked, free of all inhibition, without any of the old masks and obligatory disguises that had once served as its fig leaves. The great repression (which never really happened) is therefore followed by a great release. But at what price, for whom, and for how long?

With nothing left to hide, the start of this century stands as if gazing out onto a wide-open expanse: vast salt marshes extending without a shadow towards the horizon. The barrel has been scraped. All taboos have been broken. Any notion of the secret or the forbidden lies face down, dead on the ground. Everything becomes see-through and called to its final consummation. The vessels are almost full and twilight cannot be delayed. Whether this ending takes place in a shower of bullets or not, we shall find out soon enough.

In the meantime, the tide does not stop rising. Racism – whether in Europe, South Africa, Brazil, the United States, the Caribbean or the rest of the world – will remain with us for the foreseeable future.[31] It will continue to proliferate not only as a part of mass culture, but also (we would do well not to forget it) within polite society, not only in the old settler colonies, but also in other areas of the globe, long deserted by Jews and where neither Negroes [*Nègres*] nor Arabs have ever been seen.

In any case, one had better get used to it: in the past it was games, circuses, plots, conspiracies and gossip that provided the entertainment. As the continent of Europe begins to turn into a sort of boring iceberg (but also elsewhere), one will soon have to entertain oneself through nanoracism, that form of narcotherapy somewhat resembling a little woodland owlet: diminutive, cute, but sporting a powerful beak that is hooked and sharp at the point. These are the bromides of our times, soothing and numbing everything into a kind of flaccid paralysis. Once everything has lost its elasticity, it now appears as if to suddenly contract. Spasms and contractions – that is what we ought to be talking about. Anywhere one finds cramps, spasms, a general shrinking of the spirit – these are the places where nanoracism treads.

Yet, in the end, what is nanoracism if not that narcotic brand of prejudice based on skin colour and expressing itself in seemingly anodyne everyday gestures, often apropos of nothing, apparently unconscious remarks, a little banter, some allusion or insinuation, a slip of the tongue, a joke, an innuendo, but also, it must be added, consciously spiteful remarks, like a malicious intention, a deliberate dig or jab, a profound desire to stigmatize and, in particular, to inflict violence, to wound and humiliate, to degrade those not considered to be one of us?

Of course, even in an era of shameless nanoracism – where everything comes down to 'us versus them', whether expressed in upper or lower case it doesn't matter – no one wants to hear about it anymore. They should stay home, people say. Or if *they* really insist on living next to *us*, in *our* home, it should be with their pants down, rears out in the open. Nanoracism defines an era of demeaning lowest-common-denominator racism, a sort of pocket-knife racism, a spectacle of pigs wallowing in dirt.

Its function is to turn each of us into callous boors. It consists in placing the greatest number of those whom we regard as undesirable in intolerable conditions, to enclose and marginalize them daily, to continually inflict on them an endless series of racist jabs and wounds, to rob them of all their acquired rights, to smoke them out of their hives and dishonour them to the point where they have no choice but to self-deport. And, speaking of racist wounds, it should be remembered that these are cuts and bruises endured by a human subject and thus of a quite specific character: they are painful blows that are difficult to forget because inflicted on the body and its materiality, but also, above all, on intangible elements such as dignity and self-esteem. Indeed, their traces are mostly invisible and their scars difficult to heal.

Speaking also of cuts and bruises, it is now clear that on this iceberg continent of Europe – as well as in America, South Africa, Brazil, the Caribbean, and elsewhere – those who suffer daily racist injuries must today be counted in the hundreds of thousands. They constantly run the risk of letting themselves be touched in the most intense manner by someone – an institution, a voice, a public or private authority – asking them to justify who they are, why they are here, where they come from, where they are going, why they don't go back to where they came from; in other words, a voice or authority which deliberately seeks to cause them a large or small shock, to irritate them, to hurt them, injure them, to get them to lose their cool and self-composure as a pretext to violate them, to slander and debase without restraint that which is most private, most intimate, and vulnerable, in them.

With regard to this sort of constant abuse, it should be added that nanoracism is not the exclusive preserve of narrow-minded 'white people', that subaltern group of individuals tormented with resentment and

rancour, who hate their own condition profoundly but who would nonetheless never commit suicide, whose nightmare is to one day wake up in the garb of a Negro or with the brown skin of an Arab, not far away in some colony, but right here at home in their own country – the worst of all nightmares.

Nanoracism has become the obligatory complement to hydraulic racism – that of micro- and macro-juridical, bureaucratic and institutional apparatuses – the racism of the state machine, one which eagerly shuffles stowaways and illegals around, which continues to confine the rabble within urban peripheries like a mass of jumbled objects, which in fact multiplies the number of undocumented people, fencing off its territories and electrifying its borders, sometimes content with merely observing the shipwrecks at high seas; a state which controls every aspect of transportation, buses, airport terminals, underground trains, streets, *unveiling* Muslim women and handling them as it sees fit, multiplying detention centres and transit camps, investing lavishly in deportation techniques; a state, therefore, which practises discrimination and segregation under the full light of day while swearing to the neutrality and impartiality of the secular Republican order – 'indifferent to difference', as the saying goes – and still talking nonsense about that putrefying miasma of 'the rights of man and the citizen', so-called against all good sense, and despite the fact that for today's state they are hardly the hard-on fodder of yesteryear.

Nanoracism is racism turned culture, a kind of all-pervading breath in its banality and capacity to infiltrate into the very pores and veins of society at a time of generalized brainwashing, automated stupidity and mass stupor. The great visceral fear is that of the Saturnalia, the moment when today's *jinns*, which are very much like those of the past – in other words, Negroes, Arabs, Muslims, and, never far away, Jews too – like the scattered droppings of a Pan-god, take the place of their masters and transform the nation into an immense dump, Muhammad's dump.

Still, the distance that separates the phobia of the dump from the camp has always been very short. Refugee camps, camps for the displaced, migrant camps, camps for foreigners, waiting areas for people pending status, transit zones, administrative detention centres, identification or expulsion centres, border crossings, welcome centres for asylum-seekers, temporary welcome centres, refugee towns, migrant integration towns, ghettos, jungles, hostels, migrant homes, the list goes on, as observed in a recent study by Michel Agier. This endless list serves to capture not only an ever-present (though often largely invisible, not to say all-too-familiar and perhaps banal) reality. The camp has not only become a structural feature of our globalized condition. It has also ceased to scandalize. Or, rather, the camp is not just our present. It is our future, namely our solution for 'keeping away what disturbs, for containing or rejecting all excess, whether it is human, organic matter or industrial waste'.[32] In short, it is a form of government of the world.

Unable to face up to the basic fact that what once belonged to the exception is now the norm (the fact that liberal democracies, like any other regime, are capable of incorporating criminality into their system), we find ourselves plunged head-deep into an endless racket of words and gestures, symbols and language, delivered with increasing brutality like a long series of blows to the head. There are mimetological blows too: secularism and its mirror image, fundamentalism. All this, every blow, delivered with perfect cynicism. For, let's face it, all the surnames have lost their first names, as it were, and there are no more names to name the outrage, no more language to speak the unspeakable. Almost nothing stands up any longer, except in the form of a kind of viscous and rancid snot, draining from the nostrils without even a single sneeze. Everywhere, appeals to good sense, to common sense, appeals to the good old Republic – as we watch it bend over, bearing the weight and grinning while its spine cracks – appeals to our old friend the humanism of cowards, and appeals to a specific type of degenerate 'feminism' for which the term 'equality' translates as duty-to-make-the-veiled-muslim-girl-wear-a-thong-and-shave-the-bearded-man.[33]

Just as in the colonial era, the disparaging interpretation of how blacks and Muslim Arabs treat 'their women' draws on a combination of voyeurism and envy – the envy of the harem. The instrumentalization of questions of gender for racist ends, highlighting the Other's tendency towards modes of masculine domination, is almost always aimed at obscuring the existence of phallocracy at home. The overinvestment of virility as a symbolic and political ingredient belongs not only to the so-called 'new barbarians'. All forms of power, including our democracies, sit on a continuum in which such symbolic investments can be seen to correspond with a gain in speed and force. Power is always in some sense a mode of confrontation with the statue [*la statue*], while investment in femininity and maternity serve to orient sexual pleasure towards a politics of rapture, whether secular

or not. Yet, to be taken even remotely seriously, it is important at some point to show that one has balls. The fact is that as part of our hedonistic culture the father is still conferred the role of first planter, and it's the man who is supposed to sow the first seeds. In a culture haunted by the figure of the incestuous father, driven by a desire to have sex with his own virgin daughter or son, the notion of annexing the woman to one's body as a complement to man's defective statue has become utterly banal. One should therefore forget all these charred mythologies with no muscle, and move on without hesitation. But to what exactly?

Despite all the horrors of the slave trade, colonialism, fascism, Nazism, the Holocaust, and other massacres and genocides, Western nations especially, even with their bowels distended by a whole variety of gases, continue to mobilize racism in the service of all manner of wacky and murderous histories. These are histories that are as new as they are old: those of foreigners, hordes of migrants in whose face our doors must be shut, barbed wire that must be hastily erected lest we be swamped by a tide of savages, histories of borders that must be established as if they had ever gone away, histories of nationals including some from very old colonies still labelled with the epithet of immigrants, intruders that must be banished, enemies that must be eradicated, terrorists who are after us because of our way of life, who must be targeted from high altitude and from a distance by drones, histories of human shields transformed into the collateral damage of our bombardments, histories of blood, slaughter, soil, fatherland, traditions, identity, pseudo-civilizations besieged by barbarian hordes, histories of national security, and all kinds of euphemistic, coarse histories, frightful histories that turn everything as black as soot, endless histories that are continuously recycled in the hope of pulling the wool over the eyes of the most gullible.

In fact, having fomented misery and death far away – far from the gaze of their own citizens – Western nations now dread the return of the law of the sword, that brand of pious vengeance demanded under the old *lex talionis*. In order to protect themselves from these vengeful drives, they employ racism like a hooked blade, the poisoned supplement to a beggar's nationalism now reduced to its last rags, as the true centres of decision-making are denationalized, wealth is offshored, the majority become disenfranchised from real power, debt accumulates, and whole territories are zoned off while entire populations suddenly become superfluous.

But if racism has become so insidious, it is also because it has now become a part of the constitutive drives and economic subjectivity of our times. It has not only become a product to be consumed alongside other goods, objects and commodities. In this epoch of salaciousness, it is also the fundamental basis for the kind of 'society of the spectacle' described by Guy Debord. In many cases it has acquired an almost sumptuary status. It is something that one allows oneself not because it is unusual, but because it provides an answer to the general call to lust and abandon launched by neoliberalism. *Out* with the general strike. *In* with brutality and sex. In an epoch so dominated by a passion for profit, this mixture of lust, brutality and sexuality gives rise to a process in which racism comes to be incorporated into the 'society of the spectacle' and molecularized by the structures of contemporary consumption.

It is practised without one being conscious of it. This explains our amazement when the other draws our attention to it or when the other calls us out on it. It feeds our hunger for entertainment and allows us to escape the surrounding boredom and monotony. We pretend that it is just a matter of harmless acts that do not possess all the meanings some would like to assign to them. We take offence when the police of another country deprive us of our right to laugh, of the right to a humour that is never directed against ourselves (self-derision) or against the powerful (satire), but always against those weaker than ourselves – the right to laugh at the expense of those we wish to stigmatize. A kind of hilarious, utterly moronic, almost dishevelled form of nanoracism that takes pleasure in wallowing in ignorance and that claims a right to stupidity and to the violence it serves to sanction – herein lies the spirit of our times.

We should fear that the switchover has not already happened. That it is not too late. That the dream of a decent society has not been reduced to a mirage. We should fear a violent return to an era in which racism did not yet belong to only the 'shameful parts' of society, which one merely seeks to hide without eradicating. In such a scenario, a hearty and bold brand of racism would become a kind of habit, and the muted rebellion against society would become increasingly open and virulent, at least on the part of the recluse.

The question of belonging still remains unanswered. Who is from here and who is not? Those who should not be here: what are they doing in our home? How do we get rid of them? And, in any case,

what do 'here' and 'there' mean in a world that is both networked and re-balkanizing? If the desire for apartheid is really one of the characteristics of our times, then in reality Europe, for its part, will no longer be as it once was – that is, monochrome. In other words, there will no longer be (if it was ever the case) a unique centre of the world. From now on, the world will be conjugated in the plural. It will experience itself as plural and there is absolutely nothing one can do to reverse this new condition. It is irreversible, irrevocable. One of the consequences of this new condition is the reactivation in many places of the phantasy of annihilation.

This phantasy is present in every context where the social forces tend to conceive of the political as a struggle to the death against unconditional enemies. Such a struggle is then called existential. It is a struggle without the possibility of mutual recognition, and even less of reconciliation. It opposes distinct essences, each possessing a quasi-impenetrable substance, or a substance that can be possessed only by those who – under the law of blood and soil – are said to belong to the same kin. The political history as much as the history of philosophy and metaphysics of the West are in fact permeated by this problematic. As everyone knows, the Jews paid its price at the very heart of Europe. Before that, Negroes [*Nègres*] and indigenous peoples, especially in the New World, were first to embark on this bloody Way of Sorrows.

This conception of the political can be understood as the almost necessary completion of Western metaphysics' time-honoured obsession with the question of Being and its supposed truth, on the one hand, and the ontology of life, on the other. According to this myth, history is seen as the unfolding of the essence of Being. In Heideggerian terminology, 'Being' is opposed to 'beings'. Moreover, the West is the crucial site of Being's disclosure since it alone could have developed this capacity to disclose an experience of repeated inception, the reactivation of existential origins. Everything else is just beings. Only the West could have developed this capacity to disclose an experience of repeated inception since it is the crucial site of Being. That is what makes it universal. As a result, its meanings must be valid unconditionally, beyond all topographical specificity, namely in all places, all times, independently of all language, history, indeed any condition whatsoever. With respect to the history of Being and the politics of Being, however, one could argue that the West has never properly thought its own finitude. It has always posited its own horizon of action as something inevitable and absolute, and this horizon has always been intended as being by definition planetary and universal. Such a conception of the universal does not necessarily correspond to something that would be valid for all humans *as* humans. Neither is it synonymous with a broadening of my own horizons or a care for the conditions of my own finitude. The universal here is the name given to the truth of the victor, or, rather, to the violence of the victor, to his wars, which are always predatory conflicts. These predatory conflicts are also and above all onto-historical conflicts, since it is through them that a history of truth is staked out in its destinal unfolding.

Pushed to its logical conclusion, the phantasy of annihilation or destruction envisions not only the bombing of the planet, but also the disappearance of humans, their outright extinction. This is not an apocalypse as such, if only because the notion of the apocalypse presupposes the survival, somewhere, of a witness whose task it is to recount what they see. It is a form of annihilation conceived not as a catastrophe to be feared, but rather as a sort of act of purification by fire. However, it remains the case that this purification would be the same as an annihilation of present humanity. Such an act of annihilation is supposed to open the way to another beginning, the inception of another history without today's humanity. It is, in this sense, a phantasy of ablation.

In these anxiogenic times, the clues of a return to the question of ontological difference are all there. Under the auspices of the 'war on terror', and through aerial bombardments, extrajudicial executions (preferably with the help of drones), massacres, attacks and other forms of slaughter, which constitute the overall tone of this new era of warfare, the idea of the West as the only province of the world capable of understanding and instituting the universal can be seen to resurface. The division of humanity into native and foreign peoples is far advanced. If the fundamental demand was once that of finding the enemy and bringing him out in the open – as Schmitt and Heidegger believed – today it suffices to create him in order to stand up to him, to confront him with the prospect of total annihilation and destruction. For, indeed, these are enemies with whom no communication is either possible or desirable. No understanding is possible with those who lie beyond the confines of humanity.

Can one truly come to presence in the world, dwell in the world, or traverse it, on the basis of this impossibility of sharing it with others, this impassable distance? Is it enough to shoot down enemies

and expel foreigners to be truly rid of them, to doom them to eternity, to forget them for all time? This attitude demands that such acts of death and banishment succeed in erasing the face (its living substance) that gives the enemy his humanity. The task of disfigurement and erasure is almost a precondition for any execution under the contemporary logic of hatred. Within societies that continue to multiply structures of separation and discrimination, the relation of care towards the other has been replaced with a relation without desire. Explaining and understanding, knowledge and recognition, are no longer necessary requirements. Hospitality and hostility have never been so opposed, a factor that serves to explain the interest in returning to those intellectual figures for whom the misery of men and the suffering of enemies were never mere 'silent remainders of politics'.[34] Instead, they were always combined with a demand for recognition, notably in contexts where the experience of being unrecognized, humiliated, alienated and mistreated was the norm.

Translated by Giovanni Menegalle

Notes

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1. As Freud argued in 1915, history 'is essentially a series of murders of peoples'. Sigmund Freud, 'Our Attitude Towards Death', in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Volume XIV (1914–1916): *On The History of the Psycho-Analytic Movement, Papers on Metapsychology, and Other Works*, trans. James Strachey et al., Vintage, London, 2001, pp. 289–300; p. 292. Lacan went further in the 1950s, remarking that 'our civilisation is itself sufficiently one of hatred'. Jacques Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book I: Freud's Papers on Technique, 1953–1954*, trans. John Forrester, Norton, New York, 1991, p. 277.
2. Carl Schmitt, *The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy*, trans. Ellen Kennedy, MIT Press, Cambridge MA, 2000, p. 10.
3. Ibid., pp. 10–16.
4. Wendy Brown speaks of 'de-democratisation' in *Les Habits neufs de la politique mondiale*, Les Prairies Ordinaires,Paris, 2007. See also Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Truth of Democracy*, trans. Pascale Anne-Brault and Michael Naas, Fordham University Press, New York, 2010.
5. Wendy Brown, *Walled States, Waning Sovereignty*, Zone Books, New York, 2014.
6. Eyal Weizman, 'Walking Through Walls: Soldiers as Architects in the Israeli–Palestinian Conflict', *Radical Philosophy* 136, March–April 2006, pp. 8–22.
7. Eyal Weizman, *Hollow Land: Israel's Architecture of Occupation*, Verso, London and New York, 2012.
8. Amira Hass, 'Israel Closure Policy: An Ineffective Strategy of Containment and Repression', *Journal of Palestinian Studies*, vol. 31, no. 3, 2002, pp. 5–20.
9. Cédric Parizot, 'Après le mur : Les représentations israéliennes de la séparation avec les Palestiniens', *Cultures & Conflits* 73, 2009, pp. 53–72.
10. Idith Zertal, *Israel's Holocaust and the Politics of Nationhood*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2010; Jacqueline Rose, *The Question of Zion*, Princeton University Press, Princeton NJ, 2007; Judith Butler, *Parting Ways: Jewishness and the Critique of Zionism*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2012.
11. See Saree Makdisi, 'The Architecture of Erasure', *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 36, no. 3, 2010, pp. 519–59. See also Mick Taussig, 'Two Weeks in Palestine: My First Visit', http://criticalinquiry.uchicago.edu.
12. See especially Ariella Azoulay, *Civil Imagination: A Political Ontology of Photography*, Verso, London and New York, 2015, pp. 125–73.
13. Adi Ophir, Michal Givoni and Sari Hanafi, eds, *The Power of Inclusive Exclusion: Anatomy of Israeli Rule in the Occupied Palestinian Territories*, Zone Books, New York, 2009; Neve Gordon, *Israel's Occupation*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 2008.
14. James Belich, *Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Angloworld*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2009.
15. See especially A. Dirk Moses, ed., *Empire, Colony, Genocide: Conquest, Occupation, and Subaltern Resistance in World History*, Berghahn, New York, 2008; Patrick Wolfe, 'Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native', *Journal of Genocide Research*, vol. 8, no. 4, 2006, pp. 387–409.
16. Cornelis W. De Kiewiet, *A History of South Africa: Social and Economic*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1957; Nigel Penn, *The Forgotten Frontier: Colonists and Khoisan on the Cape's Northern Frontier in the 18th Century*, Ohio University Press, Athens, 2006.
17. See Peter L. Geschiere, *Sorcellerie et politique en Afrique: La viande des autres*, Karthala, Paris, 1995.
18. See Mohamedou Ould Slahi, *Les Carnets de Guantanamo*, Michel Lafon, Paris, 2015.
19. Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, trans. George Schwab, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2007, p. 26.
20. Ibid., p. 35.
21. Talal Asad, *On Suicide Bombing*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2007.
22. Sigmund Freud, *Mass Psychology and Other Writings*, trans. J.A. Underwood, Penguin, London, 2004, p. 26.
23. Gustave Le Bon, *Psychologie des foules*, PUF, Paris, 2013 (1895).
24. See Jean Comaroff, 'The Politics of Conviction: Faith on the Neo-liberal Frontier', *Social Analysis*, vol. 53, no. 1, 2009, pp. 17–38.
25. Nicola Perugini and Neve Gordon, *The Human Right to Dominate*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2015.
26. On these developments, see Éric Sadin, *L'Humanité augmentée: L'administration numérique du monde*, L'Échappée, Paris, 2013.
27. The following remarks are largely inspired by Frédéric Lordon's *Willing Slaves of Capital: Spinoza and Marx on Desire*, trans. Gabriel Ash, Verso, London and New York, 2014.
28. Freud, *Mass Psychology*, p. 26.
29. Ibid.
30. The following remarks reproduce in part my 'Nanoracisme et puissance du vide', in Nicolas Bancel, Pascal Blanchard and Ahmed Boubeker, eds, *Le Grand Repli*, La Découverte, Paris, 2015, pp. 5–11.
31. See David Theo Goldberg and Susan Giroux, *Sites of Race*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2014; and David Theo Goldberg, *Are We All Postracial Yet?*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2015.
32. Michel Agier, ed., *Un monde de camps*, La Découverte, Paris, 2014, p. 11.
33. Nacira Guénif-Souilamas and Éric Macé, *Les Féministes et le garçon arabe*, Éditions de L'Aube, Paris, 2004; Joan Wallach Scott, *The Politics of the Veil*, Princeton University Press, Princeton NJ, 2009.
34. Michel Foucault, 'Face aux gouvernements, les droits de l'homme', in *Dits et écrits*, vol. 4, Gallimard, Paris, 1994, p. 708.

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