point for considering what should be the next step for scholars and activists alike working on this once celebrated democratic bastion in Africa.

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Drawing the Line: Toward an Aesthetics of Transitional Justice by CARROL CLARKSON

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Carrol Clarkson's book promises an inquiry into the aesthetics of transitional justice in South Africa. Aesthetic acts, she suggests, drawing on Rancière, are incidents that 'bring about a different perception of one's standing in relationship to others' (p. 2). These acts 'have the potential to bring new cognitive possibilities to light, challenging and reimagining existing lines of division and limitation, breaking new paths of meaning and communication, and initiating new lines of inquiry' (p. 6). The focus on lines is intriguing. Transitional justice – addressing past state violence, civil war, and human rights violations with the view to a more just, less violent future – is about drawing a line between the past and the present, to make the past into 'another country' (Judt 2000: 293).

Clarkson locates *Drawing the Line* within the field of Law and Literature. She offers literary analyses not of transitional justice institutions, laws or politics, but of other texts that speak to the transition in South Africa. She examines writings by Plato and Darwin, novels by South African authors, Nelson Mandela's speech in the 1962 Rivonia Trial, and visual art. The cultural texts under purview are largely located within a European high arts tradition, whether it be publicly displayed visual art or novels by a range of authors. A painting purchased from an African street vendor, in contrast, is described as a 'craft item' (p. 20) where, the author concludes after a brief discussion with the artist, 'no ordinary rules of aesthetics would apply' (p. 89). The rift between African and European genres and artistic traditions still seems too deep; the return of artists such as Abdullah Ibrahim and Hugh Masekela to South Africa after apartheid and their decades-long artistic engagement with South African politics do not register in this book that seeks to analyse the aesthetics of the transition in and through South African cultural life.

In her book that incorporates material from ten separate articles published between 2005 and 2012, Clarkson relies on the figure of the line to connect the chapters structurally and intellectually. A line, she writes, 'divides yet juxtaposes two entities; it connects two distant points' while 'it includes some and excludes others; it marks a boundary between standing for and standing against, or it traces a path along which places are invested with significance, words are understood, and lives are lived' (p. 1). 'All of these lines', she argues, 'could have been drawn somewhere else' (p. 1). The book offers an engaging philosophical and literary engagement with lines of different kinds, though not the lines usually discussed in the literature on transitional justice. While the book devotes a chapter to the line between animals and humans,

two lines that were crucial in the political transition remain underexplored: one the one hand, the line between the old regime and the new 'rainbow democracy' – as Richard Wilson has pointed out, 'the most significant site of otherness for the new South Africa has not been other nations, it has been itself' (Wilson 2002: 16); and, on the other hand, race.

First, despite the promise of the title, the book's engagement with transitional justice as a political project of forging a new united South Africa through reconciliation, human rights and a marked contrast with the past remains limited. For example, there is no significant mention of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that was a central expression of this project (see Wilson 2002; Cole 2010). Clarkson expresses hope that the 1996 Constitution would 'change social perceptions of who and what ought to be seen and heard' (p. 182), but no textual or contextual analysis to substantiate any such hope. The book is better appreciated as a study of different lines in arts and philosophy than as a book about transitional justice.

Second, South Africa under apartheid was infamous for violently drawing lines between people by separating them into designated racial groups and apportioning access to land, employment, education, healthcare and housing according to these lines. These lines live on in different shapes, whether in people's self-identification as Black or Coloured (Jung 2000) or in litigation on whether the Chinese can be considered Black for the purposes of South African law (Park 2011). Clarkson skirts these lines – or rather abysses – by writing about racism, or about 'inhabit[ing] worlds apart – economically, socially, professionally' (p. 91), but not about race. Her own encounters in urban landscapes – interacting with street vendors, or trying to walk through the part of Johannesburg she remembers from her student days – show all too clearly how race configures spatiality and how security, access and belonging are racialised. Race is all present and rarely discussed. An engagement with the histories of race would add important layers to analyses in various chapters. For example, while Clarkson's reading of Darwin with Levinas on the question of the line between humans and animals is sensitive and original, the issue of lines within humanity, of races, of ideas about civilisation and barbarism loom too large to not disturb the picture. When Darwin exclaims with excitement that he recognises certain non-Europeans as 'ancestors' (see p. 122), he acknowledges kinship but simultaneously establishes a hierarchy in which the non-European 'ancestors' are of a different time and less developed than the contemporaneous Europeans (see Jeynes 2011; 536). In South Africa and elsewhere, the lines between animals and humans have never not involved race.

Drawing the Line delivers an elegant meditation on questions about a variety of lines in South Africa. It offers analyses of selected philosophical and cultural texts, alongside tacit understandings of which texts count, which artwork merits analysis, and which lines have been left undisturbed. As such, the book offers only limited hope that the examined 'aesthetic acts' will have the effect of 'challenging and reimagining existing lines of division and limitation' (p. 6). Still, there might be other, less visible and less analysed acts of art, imagination, activism and politics that shifted perceptions of who and what counts in a country entangled in complex lines, silences, and – despite all – hope.

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