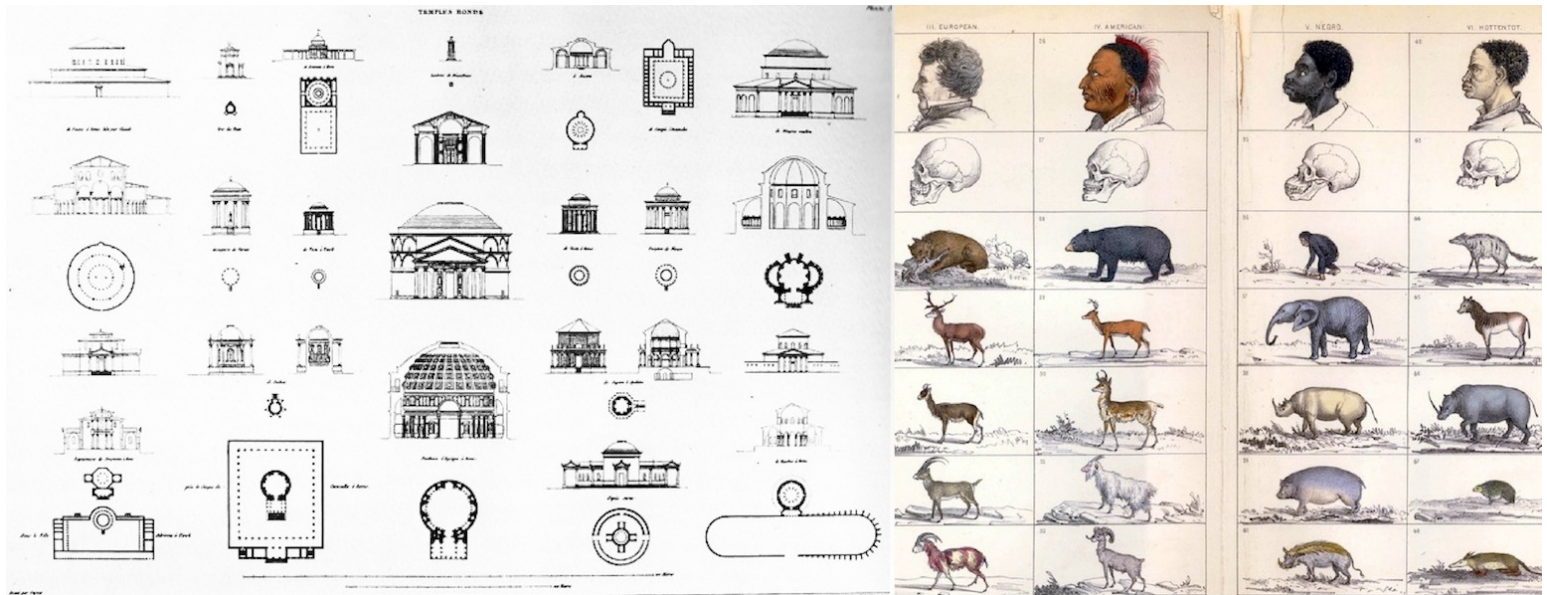


THINKING RACE, READING ARCHITECTURE



[L. Round Temples, *Recueil et Parallèle* (1800), J.N.L. Durand; R. *Types of Mankind* (1850) Josiah Nott & George Gliddon

Jazz, like the skyscrapers is an event and not a deliberately conceived creation. They represent the forces of today. The jazz is more advanced than the architecture. If architecture were at the point reached by jazz, it would be an incredible spectacle. I repeat: Manhattan is hot jazz in stone and steel. The contemporary renewal has to attach itself to some point. The Negroes have fixed that point through music. Their simple spirit has caused the reformation to spring up from the depths and has situated it in our times. Le Corbusier, *When the Cathedrals Were White* (emphasis in original text).

Philosophies of human variation remain a fundamental catalyst for subject and social formation in the West. The racial, a formidable tool for determining human difference was mobilized by Europeans to differentiate them from those peoples encountered through colonial expansion in the Americas, Asia, and Africa; through these categories and others the modern world would be discovered, conquered, and known. Over the course of the Enlightenment, the comparative frameworks and methods of categorization of people, things, and processes, such as those formulated by the French Encyclopedists, were critical for the development of Post-Enlightenment ideas of history, rationalism, positivism, and science. In early part of the nineteenth century, for example, theories of typologies in architecture that utilized taxonomic comparison of buildings to determine their most desirable characteristics also parallel the taxonomic logic foundational to mid-century racial science. In either case, these various taxonomies were a means for *Man*, in the process of becoming a rational being (a citizen, an architect), to conceive and represent *his* place in the world. With this in mind, one can ask how did the racial influence architectural discourse from the Enlightenment onward? One should also note that racial thinking was productive within the works of modern architects. For Le Corbusier, a racialized "blackness" represented in his *When Cathedrals Were White* as the syncopated movement of African American lindy hoppers and the regal performance of jazzman Louis Armstrong in Harlem, provided a base material—a Corbusian machine of primal energy—that would fuel the regeneration of his rational Radiant (re: White) City back home in Europe. As a representational tool and one of spatial regulation, how does the racial, a category that mobilizes concepts human difference in service of creating hierarchies of power and inequalities, become a productive means for organizing of the spaces of modernity, i.e. the nation, the society, and the city?

Thinking Race, Reading Architecture will examine the nascent topic of the racial in architecture. The class will closely read primary treatises and manifestos, scholarly essays and books, along with reviewing drawings, models, buildings, and urban plans to trace a genealogy of how concepts of human and racial difference shaped modern architectural discourse and practices. Critical for the seminar will be to understand how and why the racial evolves in western philosophy. These concepts are found in the writings Kant, Hegel, and others from which architectural theory and history derives its conceptual frameworks. The course will also chart a history of the racial in order to understand its presence in the writings and projects of various of architects, theorists, and historians including Thomas Jefferson, Viollet Le Duc, Gottfried Semper, Adolf Loos, Le Corbusier, and others. One key objective of the seminar will be to understand why the discipline and profession of architecture has been resistant to recognize how the racial has been part of its discursive genealogy. The study of gender and sexuality in architecture will serve as a model for how to interpret the category of the racial in these readings and projects. Over the course of the semester, scholars in architectural history who are undertaking innovative research on the topic will share their work with the seminar.

Course Admission

There are no prerequisites to this course, but students should have an interest and/or a basic understanding of social and critical theory. Those students who would like to enroll in the course must submit a one page statement (PDF) that outlines why this course would be relevant to his/her current work or research in his/her respective field. **Please send the statement PDFs to Prof. Mabel O. Wilson (mow6@columbia.edu) no later than Thursday, September 4, 2014 at 5pm.** In order to prepare to discuss the readings in our next seminar meeting, I will notify those who are admitted to the course by Friday, September 5, 2014 at noon. Remember to include your name, Columbia e-mail, academic program, school, and year on your statement. Please attend the first seminar meeting on Tuesday, September 2, 2014 from 4-6pm Buell 300 South for the introductory class.

Readings

All readings are available online at Columbia Courseworks. All books are on reserve in Avery at main desk. E-book indicates that the reading can be found on the E-book database (see Clio).

For this course students are expected to have some familiarity with foundational theoretical texts of critical and social theory. Excellent sources for these writings include (also see various resources on-line):

Critical and Cultural Theory by Dani Cavallaro

A Dictionary of Cultural and Critical Theory by Michael Payne, Meenakshi Ponnuswami

Critical Theory Today: A User Friendly Guide by Lois Tyson

Course Requirements

This course is a seminar run as a series of discussions and therefore all students are responsible for completing all reading assignments. Each student will be responsible for contributing one critical question per reading to the weekly discussion. These questions are due at noon on the Tuesday before the seminar meets and can be posted on the Courseworks discussion board.

Analysis Paper - due 10.21.14

You are required to write one short analytical paper—2500 word text + images—in response to the first half of the semester's themes. All students are expected to be able to write in a clear concise well-developed essay format. This essay should use one or two of the course's readings to analyze a topic related to the themes of the seminar. This paper should not be a summary of the readings, but instead apply the critical insights to a new object of analysis. The analysis paper is due by midnight 10.21.14 (PDF or MSWord document). Please include visual material, appropriately captioned and cited, to further illustrate your argument.

Remember *an analysis is not a summary, but a critical perspective* on the readings and an expansion of the authors' themes. Please consult a writing guide such as the *MLA Handbook* or the *Bedford Writing Handbook* for assistance with grammar and structure. All papers must be written in a legible font (typically 10-12pt. Helvetica, Times Roman, or Courier) *double-spaced*, 1-1.25 inch margins, and paginated. Please include your name and date. Use endnotes or footnotes. All images, quotes or referenced material must include citations formatted according to a writing manual of style (*MLA Handbook* or *Chicago Manual of Style*.) This essay will count toward 25% of your grade.

Final Research Presentation and Paper - due 12.12.14

All students are required to make a 20-30 minute presentation and develop a paper (5000 words + images for PhD students; 3500 words + images for master's level students) of their final research. The presentation and paper should take the critical insights on the racial and architecture and expand them into the analysis or comparison of a particular text, theory, building, architect, city, landscape or event. All research should present a clear comprehensible thesis and demonstrate thorough research by utilizing primary sources. During the first week in November each student will meet with the professor to discuss the direction of the research topic. The final presentations will take place on the last 2-3 classes of the semester. The final research paper will be due by midnight 12.12.14 via e-mail (PDF or MSWord document) no later than 6pm. This final research paper will count toward 50% of your grade.

Papers will be evaluated on the following criteria: strong thesis; clear, logical, and original argument; critical and creative analysis of theoretical texts and visual material; serious effort, preparation, and engagement in the subject matter. Please consult a writing guide such as the *MLA Guide* or the *Bedford Writing Handbook* for assistance with grammar and structure. All papers must be written in a legible font (typically 10-12pt. Helvetica, Times Roman, or Courier,) *double-spaced*, 1-1.25 inch margins, and *paginated*. Use endnotes or footnotes. All images, quotes or referenced material must include citations formatted according to a writing manual of style (*MLA* or *Chicago Manual of Style*.)

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Plagiarism is the theft of someone else's thoughts, writings, or work that you claim as your own—this includes copying the work of a classmate or resubmitting an essay prepared for another course. The purpose of utilizing a writing handbook is to fully understand when a thought is an original idea or when and how it should be accredited to someone else through a reference, footnote, or endnote. Those caught plagiarizing will automatically fail the assignment and potentially fail the course.

Attendance and Participation – Attendance is mandatory. Students are required to attend the full length of all classes and participate in weekly discussions. Please be on time so that we can start promptly at 4pm. Participation will count toward 25% of your grade.

Readings

WEEK 1 – 09.02.14

Is the formation racial difference relevant to architecture and architectural discourse?

INTRODUCTION

WEEK 2 – 09.09.14

Why and how should we rethink the racial?

Bindman, David. "Preface and Introduction" in *Ape to Apollo*. London: Reaktion Books. 7-21. [Ebook]

da Silva, Denise Ferreira. "Preface, Introduction, and Chapter 1" in *Toward a Global Idea of Race*. Borderlines. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007. xi-xli; 1-16. [Ebook]

Jefferson, Thomas. "Laws" and "Colleges, Buildings, & Roads" in Notes on the State of Virginia. Richmond: J. W. Randolph, 1853. 148-55; 163-66.

WEEK 3 – 09.16.14

How does racial difference produce Man?

Bindman, David. "Chapter 1" in *Ape to Apollo*. London: Reaktion Books. 23-78. [Ebook]

da Silva, Denise Ferreira. "Chapter 2 & 3" in *Toward a Global Idea of Race*. Borderlines. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007. 17-36. [Ebook]

Kant, Immanuel. "On the Different Races of Man," "On National Characteristics" and *Physical Geography*, in *Race and the Enlightenment*, edited by Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze, Cambridge: Blackwell, 1997. 38-58.

WEEK 4 – 09.23.14

How and when does racial difference become foundational to nation formation?

Bindman, David. "Chapter 2" in *Ape to Apollo*. London: Reaktion Books. 79-150. [Ebook]

Silva, Denise Ferreira da. "Chapter 4 & 5" in *Toward a Global Idea of Race*. Borderlines. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007. 69-113. [Ebook]

Herder, Johann Gottfried Von. Excerpt "Ideas on the Philosophy of History of Mankind" and Kant, Emmanuel, "Review of Herder" in *Race and the Enlightenment*, edited by Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze, Cambridge: Blackwell, 1997. 65-78.

WEEK 5 – 09.30.14

When did racial science emerge?

Bindman, David. "Chapter 3, 4 & Epilogue" in *Ape to Apollo*. London: Reaktion Books. 151-221. [Ebook]

da Silva, Denise Ferreira. "Chapter 6" *Toward a Global Idea of Race*. Borderlines. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007. 115-151 [Ebook]

Teyssot, Georges. "Figuring the Invisible." In *A Topology of Everyday Constellations*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2013. 31-82.

WEEK 6 – 10.07.14

How is blackness/whiteness productive of racial difference?

Fields, Dorell Wayne. "Introduction, Chapter 1, 2, & 3" in *Architecture in Black*. London; New Brunswick, NJ Athlone Press, 2000.

Hegel, George Friedrich. "Lectures of the Philosophy of History" in *Race and the Enlightenment*, edited by Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze, Cambridge: Blackwell, 1997. 109-149.

WEEK 7 – 10.14.14 – NO CLASS – [Makeup 11.17.14]**WEEK 8 – 10.21.14 - ANALYSIS PAPER DUE**

What is Modernism's racialized surface?

Cheng, Anne Anlin, and Josephine Baker. "Her Own Skin" and "Housing Baker, Dressing Loos." *Second Skin: Josephine Baker and the Modern Surface*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. 1-15; 49-82.

da Silva, Denise Ferreira. "Chapter 7 & 8" *Toward a Global Idea of Race*. Borderlines. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007. 153-196. [Ebook]

Loos, Adolf. "Ornament and Crime." *Spoken into the Void" Collected Essays 1897 - 1900*. Cambridge: MIT Press and Opposition Books, 1982.

WEEK 9 – 10.28.14

How is racial difference productive within Modernism?

Cheng, Anne Anlin, and Josephine Baker. "Radiant Bodies, Dark Cities" in *Second Skin: Josephine Baker and the Modern Surface*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. 83-100.

Wilson, Mabel. "Dancing in the Dark: The Construction of Race in Le Corbusier's Radiant City." In *Places through the Body*, edited by Heidi J. Nast and Steve Pile. London: Routledge, 1998. 133-152

Le Corbusier. "Searchings and Manifestations of the Spirit" in *When the Cathedrals Were White*. Trans. Francis Hyslop. London: Routledge. 1947. 121-166.

WEEK 10 – 11.04.14 - NO CLASS (Fall Break)**WEEK 11 – 11.11.14**

How did racial difference inform the recent foreclosure crisis?

Chakravartty, Paula and Denise Ferrerira da Silva, "Accumulation, Dispossession, and Debt: The Racial Logic of Global Capitalism—An Introduction" *American Quarterly*, 63 no. 3 September 2012, 361-385.

da Silva, Denise Ferreira. "Chapter 9, 10 and Conclusion" *Toward a Global Idea of Race*. Borderlines. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007. [Ebook]

Harris, Dianne. "Introduction," *Little White Houses*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013.

WEEK 12 – 11.17.14 [Make up class Monday 6:30 – 9pm, rm. TBA]

Guests – Prof. Charles L. Davis, University of North Carolina, Charlotte and Prof. Irene Cheng, California College of the Arts
Davis, Charles L. "Viollet-Le-Duc and the Body: The Metaphorical Integrations of Race and Style in Structural Rationalism." *Architectural Research Quarterly* 14, no. 04 (2010): 341-48.

— — —. "The Racial Epistemology of the Semperian Construction." Unpublished paper.

Michael Camille, "Monsters of Race: the gargoyles of science," in *The Gargoyles of Notre Dame: Medievalism and the Monsters of Modernity* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 115-133. [Ebook]

Cheng, Irene. "Antinomies of American Utopia: Thomas Jefferson's Grids and Octagons." Unpublished paper.

Jefferson, Thomas. "Laws" and "Colleges, Buildings, & Roads" in Notes on the State of Virginia. Richmond: J. W. Randolph, 1853. 148-55;163-66.

Upton, Dell. "Chapter 1" in *Architecture of the United States*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press 1998.

WEEK 12 – 11.18.14 – Research Presentations

WEEK 13 – 11.25.13 – Research Presentations

WEEK 14 – – **NO CLASS** [Final Reviews GSAPP]

WEEK 15 – 12.09.14 – Research Presentations (if needed)

FINAL PAPER DUE – 12.12.14 at 6pm

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Barthes, Roland. *Mythologies*. Translated by Annette Lavers. 1984.

Barton Craig. *Sites of Memory: Perspectives on Architecture and Race*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2001.

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Campt, Tina. *Image Matters : Archive, Photography, and the African Diaspora in Europe*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2012.

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Colomina, Beatriz. *Privacy and Publicity : Modern Architecture as Mass Media*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1994.

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Crary, Jonathan. *Techniques of the Observer - on Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996.

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