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On How We Mistook the Map for the Territory, and Re-Imprisoned Ourselves in Our Unbearable Wrongness of Being, of *Désêtre*

Black Studies Toward the Human Project

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I

An Argument

> [T]he idea that Western thought might be exotic if viewed from another landscape never presents itself to most Westerners.
>
> *—Amiri Baraka (1963)*

> It is the opinion of many Black writers, I among them, that the Western aesthetic has run its course.... We advocate a cultural revolution in art and ideas.... In fact, what is needed is a whole new system of ideas.
>
> *—Larry Neal (1971)*

> I would like to refer you to an essay by the late Dr. Du Bois where he ... says that, up until the point that he really came to terms with Marx and Freud, he thought "truth wins." But when he came to reflect on the set of lived experiences that he had, and the notions of these two men, he saw ... that if one was concerned about surviving ... about ... "the good life" and moving any society

> toward that, then you had to include a little something other than an interesting appeal to "truth" in some abstract, universal sense.
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> *—Gerald McWhorter (1969)*

The emergence of the Black Studies Movement in its original thrust, before its later cooption into the mainstream of the very order of knowledge whose "truth" in "some abstract universal sense" it had arisen to contest, was inseparable from the parallel emergence of the Black Aesthetic and Black Arts Movements and the central reinforcing relationship that had come to exist between them.* As with the latter two movements, the struggle to institute Black Studies programs and departments in mainstream academia had also owed its momentum to the eruption of the separatist "Black Power" thrust of the Civil Rights Movement. It, too, had had its precursor stage in the intellectual ferment to which the first southern integrationist phase of the Civil Rights Movement had given rise, as well as in the network of extracurricular institutions that had begun to call for the establishment of a black university, including, *inter alia,* institutions such as the National Association for African-American Research, the Black Academy of Arts and Letters, the Institute of the Black World, the New School of Afro-American Thought, the Institute of Black Studies in Los Angeles, and Forum 66 in Detroit. The struggle for what was to become the institutionalization of Black Studies was to be spearheaded, however, by a recently enlarged cadre of black student activists at what had been, hitherto, almost purely white mainstream universities, all of whose members had been galvanized by Stokely Carmichael's call, made in Greenwood, Mississippi, for a turning of the back on the earlier integrationist, "We shall overcome" goal of the first phase of the Civil Rights Movement, and for the adoption, instead, of the new separatist goal of Black Power.

All three movements had been moved to action by the 1968 murder of Martin Luther King, Jr., and by the toll of burning inner cities and angry riots that followed in its wake. These events were particularly decisive for the Black Studies Movement. The new willingness of mainstream university administrators to accede to the student activists'

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*This chapter is the original, full-length version of an essay bearing the same name that appears, in significantly shortened and revised form, in *A Companion to African-American Studies* (2006). (It appears with apologies to June Jordan, riffing on Milan Kundera, and to Aimé Césaire for the term *désêtre* [translated as *dysbeing* on the model of *dysgenic*]).

demands for the setting up of Black Studies programs and departments was made possible by the trauma that gripped the nation. Once established, these new programs and departments functioned to enable some of the major figures of the then far more powerful and dynamic Black Arts and Black Aesthetic Movements to carry some of their work into the academic mainstream, even where they, too, like Black Studies as a whole, were to find their original transgressive intentions defused, their energies rechanneled as they came to be defined (and in many cases, actively to define themselves so) in new "multicultural terms" as African-American Studies; as such, this field appeared as but one of the many diverse "Ethnic Studies" that now served to re-verify the very thesis of Liberal universalism against which the challenges of all three movements had been directed in the first place.

The destinies of the three movements would, in the end, differ sharply. The apogee years for all three movements (1961–1971) were to see the publication of a wide range of anthologies of poetry, theater, fiction, and critical writings, but also the publication of three scriptural texts specific to each. Whereas 1968 saw the publication of *Black Fire: An Anthology of Afro-American Writings,* edited by Leroi Jones and Larry Neal, as *the* definitive anthology that crystallized the theoretical discourse and practice of the Black Arts Movement, the year 1969, which saw the publication of *Black Fire* in the paperback version, marked the publication of the proceedings of a 1968 symposium, "Black Studies in the University," which had been organized by the Black Student Alliance at Yale University. The conference was financed by the Yale administration. In 1971, the edited collection of essays by Addison Gayle, Jr., *The Black Aesthetic,* as *the* definitive text of what was to become the dominant tendency of that movement, was also published.

The paradox here, however, was that despite the widespread popular dynamic of the Black Arts and Black Aesthetic Movements, they disappeared as if they had never been. They were done in by several major developments. One was a tapering off of the movement of social uprising that had been the Black Civil Rights Movement, in the context of affirmative action programs that enabled the incorporation of the black middle and socially mobile lower-middle classes into the horizons of expectation of the generic white middle classes (if still at a secondary level), ending with the separation of their integrationist goals from the still ongoing struggles of the black lower and under classes. This separation had itself begun to be effected in the wider national context, both by the subsiding of

radical new-left politics subsequent to the ending of the Vietnam War and by the rightward swing taken by the society as a whole in reaction against the tumultuous years of the 1960s.

Second, their demise was hastened by the defection of the most creatively original practitioner of the Black Arts Movement, Leroi Jones/Amiri Baraka, and his conversion from Black Power nationalism (of which the Black Arts and Black Aesthetic Movements had been the "spiritual arm") to the Maoist wing of Marxism-Leninism as a universalist counter to the universalism of Liberalism. The Black Nationalist Movement had arisen to contest the latter, which he hoped would avoid the trap of the cognitive and psycho-affective closure into which the Black Arts and Black Aesthetic Movements seemed to have fallen.

A third development—the rise of black feminist thought and fiction, which took as one of their major targets the male and macho hegemonic aspect of the black nationalist aesthetic and its correlated Black Arts Movement, even where black women had played as creative a role as the men—also took its toll.[1]

Jones/Baraka's Maoist-Leninist defection as well as the feminist defection by black women were serious blows. The *coup de grace* to both the Black Arts and the Black Aesthetic Movements, however, was to be given by the hegemonic rise of a black (soon to be "African- American") poststructuralist and "multicultural" literary theory and criticism spearheaded by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. It was this thrust that would displace and replace the centrality of the Black Aesthetic Movement, redefining the latter's Reformation call for an alternative aesthetic able to contest what Pierre Bourdieu (1984) was later to identify as the "monopoly of humanity" of our present mainstream bourgeois aesthetics, with the reformist call for an alternative "African-American" literary canon ostensibly able to complement the Euro-American literary one and, therefore, to do for the now newly incorporated black middle classes what the Euro-American literary canon did and continues to do for the generic, because white, and hegemonically Euroamerican middle classes.

In her book entitled *Black Women Novelists and the Nationalist Aesthestic* (1994), Madhu Dubey perceptively summarizes Gates's critique of the two movements whose disappearance he was instrumental in effecting. While not refuting this critique—which argued, *inter alia,* that the black aestheticians had been duped by the tropes of figuration

of the "text of blackness"—Dubey nevertheless poses a fundamental question, one that gave rise to both the title of this chapter and the thrust of my Argument. While she first notes that both the Black Aesthetic and Black Arts Movements had sought to "unfix the notion of Blackness from the traditional color symbology of the West" and to challenge the "Western equation" of blackness "with ugliness, evil, corruption, and death," Gates's poststructuralist critique had now come to accuse practitioners of Black Aesthetics and Black Arts, in Derridian terms, of putting forward a "metaphysical concept" of blackness as presence and, thereby, instead of displacing an essentialist notion of identity, of having merely installed blackness as "another transcendent signified." This had then caused them to become entrapped by "racial essentialism," which by its "reversal of the Western definition of blackness," had come to depend "on the absent presence of the Western framework it sets out to subvert" (Dubey 1994: 28–29). The fact that Gates's poststructuralist activity itself depends on the "absent presence" of the very same Western framework that it was also ostensibly contesting did not detract from the success of his ongoing attacks on the Black Arts/Black Aesthetic notion of identity in terms of poststructuralism's "critique of the humanist subject."

However, while admitting the effectiveness of Gates's counter-discourse in putting the seal on the demise of these two earlier movements (as well as of Black Studies in its original 1960s conception rather than in the pacified, ethnically re-christened *African-American* Studies that it has now become), Dubey then poses the following question: Why, she asks, had it been that with all its undoubted "theoretical limitations," the Black Aesthetic "rhetoric of blackness" should so powerfully have "exerted an immense emotional and ideological influence, transforming an entire generation's perception of its racial identity"? What had lain behind the "remarkable imaginative power" of the nationalist "will to Blackness," "bristling with a sense of the possibility of blackness" that had characterized the writings of political activists like Stokely Carmichael and Eldridge Cleaver; writer activists like Leroi Jones/Amiri Baraka, Don L. Lee, Sonia Sanchez, Jayne Cortez, and Nikki Giovanni; cultural nationalists like Maulana Karenga; and literary critics and theoreticians like Carolyn Gerald, Hoyt Fuller, Addison Gayle, Jr., and Stephen Henderson? What had been the unique dynamic that had enabled the rhetorical energy of the black nationalist discourse so powerfully "to mobilize the sign of blackness"?

If Dubey's question can be answered only by making visible what Gates terms the absent presence of the very Western framework in whose terms *blackness,* like its dialectical antithesis *whiteness,* must be fitted onto a symbology of good and evil—"The white man," Fanon writes, "is sealed in his whiteness, the black man in his blackness.... How do we extricate ourselves?" (Fanon 1967b: 9–10)—and, therefore, with any attempt to unfix the sign of blackness from the sign of evil, ugliness, or negation, leading to an emancipatory explosion at the level of the black psyche, then Leroi Jones/Amiri Baraka's implicit proposal that Western thought (and therefore the cultural framework of this thought) needs to be exoticized—that is, viewed "from another landscape" by its Western, and indeed in our case, Westernized, bearer subjects—can provide us with the explanatory key to the answering of Dubey's question.

In addition, recall that the Black Arts and Black Aesthetic Movements were themselves historically linked to a series of other earlier such movements across the range of the Black African Diaspora: not only the United States' own Harlem Renaissance Movement but also the Negritude Movement of Francophone West Africa and the Caribbean, the Afro-Cuban and Afro-Antillean Movements of the Hispanic Caribbean, and the ongoing Rastafari-Reggae religiocultural movement—an invention of the endemically jobless underclass of Jamaica, which explosively flowered at the same time as the Black Arts and Black Aesthetic Movements, musically interacting (by means of the transistor radio) with the "Black Power" musical popular expressions of the 1960s and '70s as iconized in the archetypal figure of James Brown. They were also linked synchronically to the global field of the anti-colonial movements as well as to the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa. Any attempt to "exoticize" Western thought by making visible its "framework" from "another landscape" links us, then, to a related paradox defining all three movements. This paradox was that of their initially penetrating insights gained by the very nature of a wide range of globally subordinated peoples moving out of their Western assigned places and calling into question what was, in effect, the structures of a global world system, as well as the multiple social movements of other groups internal to the West, such as feminists, gay activists, Native Americans, Chicanos, Asian-Americans, and students, all mounting similar challenges—insights, therefore, into the nature of that absently present framework which mandated all their/our respective subjections.

All this led, for a brief hiatus, to the explosive psychic *cum* political emancipation not only of blacks but of many other non-white peoples and other groups suffering from discrimination, yet also, on the other hand, to their ultimate failure, in the wake of their politically activist phase, to complete intellectually that emancipation.

The literary scholar Wlad Godzich (1986) perceptively identifies the nature of this paradox when he notes that although it should have been obvious at the time that the great sociopolitical upheavals of the late 1950s and '60s, especially those grouped under the names of decolonization and liberation movements, would have had a major impact on our ways of knowledge, this recognition has not occurred for two reasons. The first is due to the "imperviousness of our present disciplines, to phenomena that fall outside their predefined scope"; the second, to "our reluctance to see a relationship so global in reach—*between the epistemology of knowledge and the liberation of people*—a relationship that we are not properly able to theorize." This reluctance was, therefore, not an arbitrary one, as proved in the case of the Civil Rights Movement in the United States. For while the earlier goals of the movement as it began in the South, because directed against segregation and therefore couched in terms of the universalist premises of mainstream Liberal discourse, could be supported (once the move to include the North and the West and therefore the economic apartheid issue of an institutionalized jobless and impoverished underclass, all interned in the inner-city ghettoes and their prison extensions, had led in the direction of the call for Black Power), the situation had abruptly changed. Godzich suggests that an epistemological failure emerged with respect to the relation between the claim to a black particularism over against Liberalism's counter-universalism, on the one hand, and over against that of Marxism as a universalism, on the other. Since in the case of the latter, because based on the primacy of the issues confronting the Western working classes postulated as the globally generic working class, this in the same way as their issue, postulated as that of the struggle of labor against capital, had also logically come to be postulated as *the* generic human issue. While given that Liberal humanism is itself based on the primacy of the issue of the Rights of Man as *the* defining premise that underlies both our present order of knowledge and its correlated mainstream aesthetics, the claims to the particularism of a Black Arts and a Black Aesthetic as well as to

Black Studies in its original conception—these are the correlates of the claim to Black Power, which had itself been based on a return to the earlier recognition made in the 1920s by Marcus Garvey that, in the later words of the Barbadian novelist George Lamming, "'the Rights of Man' cannot include the 'Rights of the Negro' who had been institutionalized discursively and empirically, as a different kind o' creature to 'Man'" (Lamming 1970 [1953]: 297)—were to find themselves met with outright hostility on the part of mainstream intellectuals/academics and aestheticians.

The implacability of this hostility was to lead swiftly, as Godzich further notes, to a "reterritorialization," whose goal was to reincorporate these movements, sanitized of their original heretical dynamic, into the Liberal-universalist mainstream. However, while this reincorporation was effected, in the case of Black Studies, by its re-invention as "African-American Studies," and as only one "Ethnic" Studies variant among a diverse range of others, all contrasted with, at the same time as they were integrated into, the ostensible universalism of Euro-American-centered mainstream scholarship, the other two movements—by the very nature of their self-definition as a black particularism, which called into question the mainstream art and aesthetics together with their "monopoly of humanity"—were not amenable to such pacification and reincorporation. As a result, their rapid disappearance, their extinction even, hastened along by Gates's neo-universalist, poststructuralist critique, logically followed. For it had been precisely their original claim, as Godzich notes, to a black particularism over against the universalist premises of our present mainstream aesthetics and order of knowledge—their claim, in Gerald McWhorter's terms, to "something other than 'truth' in an abstract universal sense," or, in Neal's terms, to a post-Western aesthetics based on a new system of ideas, with these claims, linked to their insistent revalorizing of the negative-value connotations that both the mainstream order of knowledge and the mainstream aesthetics placed upon all peoples of Black African descent, thereby imposing upon us "an unbearable wrongness of being"—that can be identified, from hindsight, as *the* dynamic that was to exert what Dubey defines as the immense emotional influence on an entire generation's self-conception (including the kind of intellectual self-confidence that a Gates, for example, as a member of the beneficiary generation, would now come to possess).

Nevertheless, the eventual defeat both of the Black Aesthetic and Black Arts Movements as well as of Black Studies in its original conception resulted from the very process that had occasioned their initial triumph—that is, from their revalorization of their "racial blackness" as systemically devalorized by the logic of our present mainstream order of knowledge, its art, and its aesthetic. For while this strategic inversion had functioned for a brief hiatus as a psychically emancipatory movement, by its calling into question of the systemic devalorization of our physiognomic and original ethno-cultural being as a population group, its eventual failure can be seen not only in the psychic mutilation of the tragic figure of Michael Jackson, as expressed in his physically mutilated face, but also in the widespread use of plastic surgery not only by blacks but also by a wide range of other non-white groups, as well as by white non-Nordic groups themselves.[2] This latter instance provided a clue to the fact that the systemic devalorization of racial blackness was, in itself, *only* a function of another and more deeply rooted phenomenon—in effect, only the map of the real territory, the symptom of the real cause, the real issue. This was the territory that, for example, Eldridge Cleaver had glimpsed when, in his book of essays *Soul on Ice* (1968), he tried to account for the almost reflex-instinctual nature of his attraction to white women as contrasted with his lukewarm response to, for him, the always already devalorized black woman; that Gwendolyn Brooks had charted, in trying during an interview to account for the reason that successful black men also seemed instinctively to prefer lighter-skinned black women (Tate 1983); that over half a century earlier W. E. B. Du Bois, in trying to come to grips with his own double consciousness that made it difficult for him to be an American without being anti-Negro, had recognized as a new frontier with respect to the study of the still-unresolved issue of what determines—indeed, what structures—the nature of human consciousness; that Larry Neal had identified in agonistic terms as "the white thing within us." Yet, and this is *the* dilemma, all this is so as a territory or issue that cannot be conceptualized to exist in terms of the *vrai* or "regime of truth" of our present order of knowledge. Any more than—as Foucault also pointed out in the case of the eighteenth-century Classical episteme or order of knowledge that preceded our contemporary one, which was to displace/replace it during the nineteenth century—the conception of biological life

could have been imagined to exist in terms of its *vrai* or "regime of truth" (Foucault 1980: 78; see also pp. 109–133). Nevertheless, as a territory, an issue—to whose empirical existence the particularity of the black experience, and therefore of our necessarily conflictual and contradictory consciousness, together with the occasional emotional release from such a consciousness—attests, as definitively as a Geiger counter attests to the empirical presence of radioactive material. This, therefore, as a hitherto unknown territory, the territory of human consciousness and of the hybrid nature-culture laws by which it is structured, was only to be identified, in the context both of the global anti-colonial struggles and of the social movements internal to the West itself, by the political activist and psychiatrist Frantz Fanon in his book *Black Skin, White Masks,* doing so from the ground of the particularity of the black experience. "Reacting against the constitutionalist tendency of the late nineteenth century," he wrote, "Freud insisted that the individual factor be taken into account through psychoanalysis. He substituted for a phylogenetic theory the ontogenetic perspective. It will be seen that the black man's alienation is not an individual question. Beside phylogeny and ontogeny stands sociogeny" (Fanon 1967b: 11).

Fanon's book was published in its original French version in 1952, one year before the publication of the Watson/Crick paper cracking the DNA code specific to the genomes of all species, including the human being. This therefore helped to emphasize that, given the genetically determined narcissism that would be endemic to all living beings in their species-specific modality, the fact that a black person can experience his or her physiognomic being in anti-narcissistic and self-alienating terms (as iconized in the tragic figure of Michael Jackson) means that human beings *cannot* be defined in purely biogenetic terms—that is, from a purely phylogenetic *cum* ontogenetic perspective, or, in other words, from the perspective of the purely physiological *conditions* of being human (i.e., phylogeny and ontogeny), as we are now defined to be in terms of our present liberal or bio-humanist order of knowledge. Indeed, as we are induced, as contemporary subjects, to psycho-affectively experience ourselves to *be,* in terms of our also bio-humanist mainstream aesthetics.

However, if, in Fanon's terms, the prognosis for black self-alienation is to be favorable, the human must be redefined in terms of

the hybrid phylogony-ontogeny *cum* sociogeny mode of being that it empirically is, which is composed of descriptive statements or modes of sociogeny—in effect, of *genres* or *kinds* of being human, in whose always auto-instituted and origin-narratively inscribed terms we can alone experience ourselves *as* human. Let us note here, in passing, that the term "genre," meaning *kind* of human (as in the case of our present *kind* of human, *Man,* which *sociogenically* defines itself, in biocentric terms, on the model of a natural organism), as the model that aprioristically underlies all our present disciplines (Foucault 1970 [1973]), stems from the same etymological roots as the word "gender." This, given that from our origins on the continent of Africa until today, gender role allocations mapped onto the biologically determined anatomical differences between male and female have been an indispensable function of the instituting of our *genres* or sociogenic *kinds* of being human. This latter is so as a process for which our species-specific genome as uniquely defined by the co-evolution of language and the brain has bioevolutionarily preprogrammed us.

In effect, because the systematically induced nature of black self-alienation is itself (like that, correlatively, of homosexual self-alienation) only a function (a map), if an indispensable one, of the enacted institutionalization of our present genre of the human, *Man* and its governing sociogenic code (the *territory*), as defined in the ethno-class or Western bourgeois biocentric descriptive statement of the human on the model of a natural organism (a model that enables it to over-represent its ethnic and class-specific descriptive statement of the human *as if* it were that of the human itself), then, in order to contest one's function in the enacting of this specific genre of the human, one is confronted with a dilemma. As a dilemma, therefore, it is a question not of the essentializing or non-essentializing of one's racial blackness, as Gates argues, but rather of the fact that one *cannot* revalorize oneself in terms of one's racial blackness and therefore of one's biological characteristics, however inversely so, given that it is precisely the biocentric nature of the sociogenic code of our present genre of being human that imperatively calls for the devalorization of the characteristic of blackness as well as of the Bantu-type physiognomy—in the same way as it calls, dialectically, for the over-valorization of the characteristic of whiteness and of the Indo-European physiognomy. This

encoded value-difference then came to play the same role, in the enactment of our now purely secular genre of the human *Man,* as the gendered anatomical difference between men and women had played over millennia, if in then supernaturally mandated terms, in the enactment of all the genres of being human that had been defining of traditional, stateless orders. This therefore led, in our contemporary case, to the same asymmetric disparities of power, as well as of wealth, education, life opportunities, even mortality rates, and so on, between whites and blacks that—as the feminist Sherry Ortner has pointed out in her essay "Is Female to Male as Nature Is to Culture?"—were defining of the relations between men and women common to all such orders (Ortner 1974).[3]

If, therefore, it is the very institutionalized production and reproduction of our present hegemonic sociogenic code—as generated from its Darwinian origin-narratively inscribed biocentric descriptive statement of the human on the model of a natural organism—that calls, as the indispensable condition of its enactment, for the systemic inducing of black self-alienation, together with the securing of the correlated powerlessness of its African-descended population group at all levels of our contemporary global order or system-ensemble, then the explosive, psychic emancipation experienced by black peoples in the United States and elsewhere—as in the case of the indigenous "black fellas" people of Australia and Melonesia, as well as the black peoples of the Caribbean and of the then still apartheid South Africa—can now be seen in terms that explain the powerful emotional influence of the three movements that arose out of the sociopolitical black movements of the 1960s (i.e., the Black Aesthetic, Black Arts, and Black Studies Movements in their original conception), with this experience coming to an end only with their subsequent erasure and displacement. And this logically so, given that while the psychic emancipation that these movements' revalorization of the characteristics of blackness had effected was an emancipation from the psychic dictates of our present sociogenic code or genre of being human and therefore from "the unbearable wrongness of being," of *désêtre,* which it imposes upon all black peoples and, to a somewhat lesser degree, on all non-white peoples, as an imperative function of its enactment as such a mode of being, this emancipation had been effected at the level of the map rather than at the level of the territory. That is, therefore, at the level of the

systemic de-valorization of blackness and correlated over-valorization of whiteness, which are themselves only proximate *functions* of the overall devalorization of the human species that is indispensable to the encoding of our present hegemonic Western-bourgeois biocentric descriptive statement of the human, of its mode of sociogeny. In other words, because the negative connotations placed upon the black population group are a function of the de-valorization of the human, the systemic revalorization of black peoples can be fundamentally effected only by means of the no less systemic revalorization of the human being itself, *outside* the necessarily devalorizing terms of the biocentric descriptive statement of *Man,* over represented as if it were by that of the human. This, therefore, as the territory of which the negative connotations imposed upon all black peoples and which serve to induce our self-alienation as well as our related institutionalized powerlessness as a population group are a function, and as such, a map. As, correlatively, are all the other "ism" issues that spontaneously erupted in the United States in the wake of the black social liberation movement, all themselves, like the major "ism" of class also, specific maps to a single territory—that of the instituting of our present ethno-class or Western-bourgeois genre of the human.

Nevertheless, because it is this territory, that of the instituting of our present biocentric descriptive statement of the human on the model of a natural organism that is elaborated by our present order of knowledge and its macro-discourse of Liberal humanism, as well as enacted by our present mainstream aesthetic, together with the latter's "monopoly of humanity" (Bourdieu 1984), with our present order of knowledge being one in whose foundational "regime of truth," objects of knowledge such as Fanon's auto-instituted modes of sociogeny or Bateson's "descriptive statements" at the level of the psyche (Bateson 1968), in effect, our *genres* or *kinds* of being human, cannot be imagined to exist, neither McWhorter's call for another "truth" able to secure the good life for black and all other peoples, nor, indeed, Larry Neal's call for a post-Western aesthetic, could have been incorporable, as they themselves had hoped, in terms of our present order of knowledge and its biologically absolute conception of the human. That is, in the way in which a later re-territorialized and ethnicized "African-American Studies," as exemplarily elaborated and brilliantly put into place by Harvard's Henry Louis Gates, Jr., would prove to be.

In this context, Jones/Baraka's implied call for the exoticization of Western thought, in order to make this thought itself, its presuppositions, together with, in Gates' terms, the "absent presence" of its framework, into new objects of knowledge, to be examined from the landscape or perspective of the *blues* people—and therefore from the perspective, not of the-people-as-*Volk* as in the cultural nationalist aspects of the Black Aesthetic and Black Arts Movements, but, as in the *popular* aspect of these movements, of the people as the movements of people who are logically excluded, as "the waste products of all modern political practice whether capitalist or Marxist" (Lyotard 1990, citing Grand 1990: 93), with their exclusion being indispensable to the reproduction of our present order—links up with Fanon's recognition that "black self-alienation" cannot be detached from the de-valorized conception of the human on the purely phylogenic/ontogenetic model of a natural organism, that is as defining of this thought as, indeed, of its correlated aesthetics. In the case of the former, as an episteme, one whose biocentric order of truth calls for the human to be seen as a "mere mechanism," and as such, one whose members are all ostensibly naturally dyselected by Evolution until proven otherwise by his/her or that of his/her population group's success in the bourgeois order of being and of things: "The advancement of the welfare of mankind," Darwin wrote at the end of *The Descent of Man* (1981 [1871]: 403), "is a most intricate problem: all ought to refrain from marriage who cannot avoid abject poverty for their children.... [A]s Mr. Galton has remarked, if the prudent avoid marriage, whilst the reckless marry, the inferior members of society will tend to supplant the better members of society." Against this biocentric, eugenist thought, and the "absent presence" of its bio-evolutionary framework or conception of the human, Fanon wrote:

> What are by common consent called the human sciences have their own drama. *Should one postulate a type for human reality and describe its psychic modalities only through deviations from it,* or should one not rather strive unremittingly for a concrete and ever new understanding of man? ... [A]ll these inquiries lead only in one direction: to make man admit that he is nothing, absolutely nothing—*and that he must put an end to the narcissism on which he relies in order to imagine that he is different from the other "animals."* ... Having reflected on that, I grasp my narcissism with both hands and I turn my back on the degradation of those who would make man a mere mechanism. (Fanon 1967b: 22–23)

II

On Exoticizing Western Thought, Visibilizing Its Framework(s), Its Invention of Man, and Thereby Also of Our "Unbearable Wrongness of Being," of Désêtre: Modernity, Secularism, and Its Epochal Transformation of the "Supreme Source of Legitimacy"

> The modern collapse of "Reason" and "History" into all things European represented a failure of Reason and History that required a self-deception regarding Europe's scope. Put differently: Europe sought to become ontological; it sought to become what dialecticians call "Absolute Being." Such Being stood in the way of human being or a human way of being. It thus presented itself as a theodicy ... : If God has the power to do something about injustice and evil, why doesn't He? ... Theodicy does not disappear with modern secularism. Whatever is advanced as a Supreme Being or Supreme Source of Legitimacy faces a similar critical challenge.
>
> —*Lewis Gordon*

> Man: A human being (irrespective of sex or age).... An adult male person.... The male human being.... To be at one's own disposal, to be one's own master.
>
> —*Oxford English Dictionary*

> Native: One of the original or usual inhabitants of a country as distinguished from strangers or foreigners: now especially one belonging to a non-European and imperfectly civilized or savage race.... A coloured person or Black.... Born in a particular place or country: belonging to a particular race, distinct etc. by birth. In mod. use espec. with connotation of non-European.
>
> —*Oxford English Dictionary*

> Negro: an individual (esp. a male) belonging to the African race of mankind which is distinguished by a black skin, black woolly hair, flat nose and thick protruding lips.... Negress ... A female negro ... negro dog. A dog used in hunting negro slaves.... Nigger ... A negro (coll. and usu. contemptuous ... loosely incorrectly applied to members of other dark-skinned races).
>
> —*Oxford English Dictionary*

Miranda: Abhorr'd slave,
Which any print of goodness wilt not take,
Being capable of all ill! I pitied thee,
Took pains to make thee speak, taught thee each hour
One thing or another. When thou didst not, savage,
Know thine own meaning, but wouldst gabble like
A thing most brutish, I endowed thy purposes
With words that made them known. But thy vile race,
Though thou didst learn, had that in't which good natures
Could not aside to be with. Therefore wast thou
Deservedly confined into this rock, who hadst
Deserved more than a prison.

—*Shakespeare's* The Tempest

The argument proposed in this section is that if post-medieval Renaissance Europe was to usher in the world of contemporary modernity on the basis of the epochal secularization of human identity, which it effected by means of the intellectual revolution of lay humanism, this as a revolution that, by taking to its logical conclusion St. Thomas Aquinas's medieval Christian-Aristotelian thrust toward the making of *Christian* and *Man* into conceptually different notions, was thereby to initiate, together with the religious movement of Reformation, the gradual privatization of its formerly Judaeo-Christian identity. This privatization was also of the identity that, because then functioning as the *public* identity of medieval Latin Christian Europe, had underpinned and legitimated the ostensibly supernaturally guaranteed hegemony of the institution of the Church and its celibate Clergy over the institutions, the non-celibate laity, including those of commerce and of the political state. Nevertheless, the thinkers of Renaissance Europe were to effect this secularization of its public identity in terms that were themselves generated from the monotheistic framework of Judaeo-Christianity. In consequence, if, as Jean-François Lyotard (1990: 81) has noted, the "Greco-Christian Occident" could not, and cannot, conceive of an Other to what it calls God, this characteristic was to be carried over in secular terms as the humanist intellectuals of Renaissance Europe replaced the earlier public identity *Christian* with that of their newly invented *Man* defined as *homo politicus,* and, as such, primarily the political subject of the state. It was therefore to effect this secularization of its public identity by over-representing both

its first variant of *Man,* defined as political citizen and/or subject of the state, and, from the end of the eighteenth century onward, its second variant of *Man*—defined in now purely secular, because biocentric, terms as *homo oeconomicus,* and, as such, primarily as the Breadwinner/Investor subject of the nation-state—*as if* each such definition of *Man* were at the same time definitions of the human itself. In consequence, the intellectuals and creative artists of Western Europe were able to bring together their hitherto theocentric notion of *Christian* and that of their now-secular notion of *Man* (in its two variants) into conceptually different notions into the contemporary world of modernity, both in its dazzling triumphs and achievements and in its negative underside. But they were able to do so only on one condition: that they would make their culture-specific notions of *Man*—both in its first still partly secular and partly religious form, and in its now purely secular, because biocentric, form (i.e., one whose origin was now narrated as being in Evolution rather than as before, in Divine Creation)—into notions that were and are ostensibly conceptually homogenous with the reality of being human in all its multiple manifestations. With this, they were thereby making it impossible for themselves to conceive of an Other to what they called and continue to call *human.*

This central over-representation was to be effected by means of two foundational strategies, both of which function to reinforce each other, and a challenging third. The first is that of a sustained rhetorical strategy, which enables the similarity of sound between the words *Man* and the *human* to suggest the empirical existence of a parallel similarity between, on the one hand, the West's definitions or descriptive statements (Bateson 1968) of the human—i.e., Man^1 and Man^2—and, on the other, what the descriptive statement of the human, as one able to incorporate both of these definitions as members of its class of all possible such definitions/descriptive statements, would have to be. Second, as if a parallel similarity also existed between the real-life referent categories of each such descriptive statement and their Fanonian modes of sociogeny (i.e., as in the case of the referent category of contemporary *Man,* who comprise, at the global level, the wealthy, developed countries of the North, or of the First World), and the real-life referent categories of that descriptive statement's Human Other: those of the Third World/Underdeveloped nations and the jobless underclasses whose

members are made to function as the "waste products" of their respective nation-state's order. Third, the imperative of securing the interests and well-being of contemporary Man and its real-life referent categories need to be the same as securing the interests of the human species as a whole.

It is, however, the second foundational strategy to which the title of my argument directly refers. What is this strategy? At the end of *The Order of Things,* Foucault makes the point that *Man* is an invention not only of a recent date but one that had been specific to a "restricted geographical area"—namely, that of "European culture since the sixteenth century." As the anthropologist Jacob Pandian (1985) has also pointed out, however, this invention of *Man* had been made possible only by means of a parallel invention. And it is this invention that would define the second foundational strategy by means of which the over-representation of *Man* as if it were the human was to be institutionalized in the wake of Western Europe's expansion from the early decades of the fifteenth century onward, together with its post-1492 putting in place of the structures of what was to become our contemporary world system, the first truly global system in human history.

This second strategy, as Pandian defined it, was one by means of which Western intellectuals were to be enabled to reinvent the terms—as well as the real-life referent categories that had functioned for medieval Latin-Christian Europe as *its* theocentric metaphysical category of Otherness and, therefore, of symbolic death,[4] to the symbolic life embodied in their Judaeo-Christian matrix as the *True Christian* Self, and as a category of Otherness whose real-life referent categories were those groups classifiable as being, *inter alia, heretics, infidels, pagan, idolators,* or *Enemies of Christ* (i.e., those who having been preached the Christian word had refused it)—into new, and now secularizing, terms. That is, as a category of Otherness or of symbolic death, now defined as that of *Human* Others to the True *Human* Self of Western Europe's self-conception as *Man,* and, as such Others, logically classifiable and thereby only seeable and behavable toward as the Lack of this ostensibly only possible conception of what it is to be human.

The real-life referent categories of the discursively and institutionally invented Human Others to Man in its first *homo politicus* conception as the rational citizen or subject of the now-hegemonic

monarchical European state system (which had come to reoccupy the earlier hegemonic place of the pre-Reformation Church) were to be two peoples, forcibly uprooted from their own indigenous genres of being human and, therefore, from their once-autocentric self-conception and classified instead, as now subordinated groups, in Western Europe's new secularizing classificatory terminology, as *Indians* and *Negroes* (i.e., in the original Spanish as *indios,* men, and *indias,* women; and as *negros,* men, and *negras,* women).[5] It was therefore to be the peoples of the Americas and the Caribbean who—after being conquered, Christianized, and enserfed in the imposed *encomienda* labor system, with their lands and sovereignty forcibly expropriated—were now to be made discursively and institutionally into, as Pandian points out, the embodiment of an ostensibly "savage and irrational humanity," and, as such, the Human Other to *Man,* defined as the rational political subject or citizen of the state. Nowhere was the dialectic of this epochally new, Western-imposed identity system to be more dramatically configured and enacted than in Shakespeare's play *The Tempest,* as expressed in the plotline dynamics of the relation between the "reasons of state" hero character Prospero and his daughter Miranda, on the one hand, and the expropriated and enslaved Caliban, on the other. With the latter, therefore, having logically to be seen by the former *not* as the alternative, because a geographically, ecologically, and geopolitically *different* genre or mode of the human than he empirically embodied, but rather as the Lack of what they themselves were; as such, as the "vile Race" Other to *their* "true" humanness, the evil nature as opposed to their "good natures."[6]

This was also to be the case, even more extremely so, with the population group of blacks of African descent transported in chains as slaves across the Atlantic and made to provide the fixed and coerced labor for the large-scale export plantations owned by Western-European settlers. In that these latter were once classified not only as Negroes but as trade goods denominated as piezas[7] or pieces, they were, as Pandian points out, to be also assimilated to the category of Human Otherness embodied in the "Indians," as, however, the latter's most extreme form; as, ostensibly, the furthest boundary limits of irrational humanity, and the "missing link" between humans defined by their rationality and apes defined by their Lack of it, in what was then defined, in Western classificatory

logic as "the Great Chain of Being" that supposedly reached from the highest forms to the lowest (Mosse 1985); and with the Western European population's ruling class being placed at the apex of the Chain. Toward the end of the eighteenth century and during the nineteenth, however, as Pandian also points out, a mutation in terms of Human Otherness was to occur. This, not only in the empirical context of the abolition of African slavery in the Caribbean and the Americas linked to the second wave of Western imperial expansion, but also and, centrally so, in the wake of the Western intellectual's reinvention of *Man,* in now purely secular because biocentric, *homo oeconomicus,* and therefore specifically bourgeois-capitalist terms, as distinct from the earlier landed-gentry mercantilist ones, which had come to underpin the eighteenth-century variant of the first civic humanist *homo politicus* conception of *Man.* As Pandian further notes, while the real-life referents of the Human Other to *Man* in its new conception were to be all non-Western population groups, once colonized and discursively and institutionally classified (outside the terms of their own once-autocentric self-conceptions and kinds of being human), as "Natives," it was to be the population groups of sub-Saharan Black African descent (including the now-free New World descendants of the former Middle Passage slaves) who would now be made discursively, as well as institutionally, into the primary referent of racially inferior humanity.

In consequence, our imposed and experienced "wrongness of being" and of *désêtre* (i.e., dys-being), together with its systematically induced self-alienation, would directly result from our Human Other role in the identity apparatus of the Western bourgeoisie in terms of its then new biocentric and *homo oeconomicus* descriptive statement of the human. In our role, therefore, as the primary empirical referent category of the idea, central to the now purely secular, half-scientific, half-mythic Origin Narrative as elaborated in Darwin's *The Descent of Man* (1981 [1871]), that some human beings can be, as ostensibly naturally dysselected by the processes of Evolution, in the same way as other human beings can ostensibly be naturally selected. It was therefore to be as a function of the materialization of this idea that, as Fanon points out, two population groups, one classified as white, the other as Negro and/or black, were to find themselves, the one locked into their whiteness, the other into their blackness. In that, in the same way as in the

allegedly "proven case" of the "backward," primitive, and atavistic population groups of Black African descent, all therefore now held "to be a mere stage" in the slow process of evolution from monkey into man, and, as such, totally dysselected, so all members of the population group of European descent, classified as the white race, allegedly proven by the very nature of their dominant position in the global order over all other groups, now classified as non-white "native" races, that they had been, as a "race," optimally selected by evolution to embody ostensibly the biological *norm* of being human. With, therefore, this institutionalized dialectic between the two groups, each discursively and institutionally represented, one as the norm, the other as the anti-norm, now made indispensable to the enactment of the new *eugenic/dysgenic* sociogenic code, as the code in whose terms the Western bourgeoisie, unable hitherto to legitimate its role as a ruling class on the basis of the noble blood and birth model of the landed aristocracy, was now to legitimate itself as a *naturally selected* ruling class, because the bearers and transmitters of an alleged eugenic line of descent. Hence the logic of the bourgeois male titles—so and so the first (I), so and so the second (II), so and so the third (III), and so on, or, alternatively, as Senior and Junior.

Hence, also, the power and force of negation of the term "nigger" as ostensibly the dysgenic negation of what it is to be an autonomous, fully evolved human being in the ethno-class terms of Darwinian *Man* over-represented as the human. Hence, too, the logical correlation between blackness and poverty, given that, as Darwin reveals in *The Descent of Man,* the ostensibly selected most "able," who were economically successful, should be encouraged to bear many children, whereas the "poor," as a dysselected, inferior kind of human, should be discouraged from giving birth to many children, thereby reducing the transmission of their alleged biologically determined inferiority and/or dysgenicity (Darwin 1981 [1871]: 403). This is so at the same time as, at the global level, the discursive representing, as well as the empirical instituting, of all the then-colonized non-white categories of peoples, classified as *Indians, Negroes, Natives, Niggers,* as well as the "underdeveloped" Third World, the South, and, therefore, as such, made into the embodiment of the ostensible Lack of Man's True Human Self, itself represented as optimally embodied, no longer in the "reasons of

state" landholder figure of Shakespeare's Prospero, but instead in the no less imperative "reasons—of the economy" figure of the global capital-accumulating Stockholder. This latter, as the new hero-figure who, by providing capital as the means of production of the then-new techno-Industrial system thereby serving to enable the mastering of the threat of the ostensibly empirical threat of "Natural Scarcity," as put forward in the Malthusian-*cum*-Ricardo economic discourse, was now made to embody iconically the new bread-winning criterion of being that is indispensable to the class supremacy of the Western, as well as the globally westernized, bourgeoisie. While if it were by their represented successful "mastering" of such scarcity (as a condition now attached, as Hans Blumenberg perceptively notes, for the first time in human history to reality as a whole)—"Mankind has always known want and the distress of being hard-pressed by nature, but the generalization of such experiences to the evaluation of reality as a whole" is linked to "a motif of modern intellectual history unknown in previous epochs[:] ... the [Malthusian] idea of *overpopulation,* of growth of a number of men beyond a natural living space (considered to be constant), and beyond the quantity of food (considered to be growing at a rate less than proportional to that of the population)" (Blumenberg 1983: 221)—that the bourgeoisie legitimated the economic projection of capitalism, a logical corollary had also followed. This was that it was precisely by such mastering that the wealthier members were/are held to have "proved," retroactively, the fact of their having been "naturally selected" by evolution to belong to the no less represented to be, in terms of the then new Darwinian Origin Narrative complex, "naturally scarce" category of fully evolved and, thereby, eugenic or "able" human beings. With the upper-class, because wealthier, members of the bourgeoisie thereby being logically represented as having been extra-humanly, because bio-evolutionarily, mandated to be the ruling class, parallel to the way in which the rule of the Emperor of Imperial China had been represented as having been as extra-humanly, if then supernaturally, ordained to be by the Mandate of Heaven (Krupp 1992).[8]

In this context, the invention of the global category of Human Others on the basis of the institutionalized inferiorization and subjugation of those human beings classified as *Indians, Natives, Negroes, Niggers* was indispensable not only to the enactment of the new sociogenic code and its dialectic of evolved/selected "symbolic

life" and non-evolved dysselected "symbolic death" but also to the over-representation of this ethno-class or Western bourgeois genre or mode of being human, *as if* it were that of the human itself. An over-representation, which therefore had to repress the reality of the quite different self-conceptions and sociogenic codes of the multiple groups now subordinated and classified as *natives,* in order to enable their multiple societal orders to be studied by anthropologists, *not* as the institutions of the alternative genres of the human that they were (as studies that would have called for the relativization of the perspective of the biocentric *homo oeconomicus* genre of the human as the perspective that alone makes the discipline of anthropology itself possible) but, rather, in Western classificatory terms, as "cultures." The latter as a term taken from the agrarian, agricultural era of history of the West itself, and generalized to apply to all humans, even though not applicable, as a term, to the hunter-gatherer societies that had instituted themselves as such for the earliest and longest period of human history (Waswo 1987: 547–564).

Further, given that it was not only anthropology but also all the disciplinary discourses of our present order of knowledge, as put in place from the nineteenth century onward, that had to be elaborated on the *a priori* basis of this biocentric, *homo oeconomicus* descriptive statement and its over-representation as if it were that of the human, what McWhorter challenged as their "truth" in "some universal abstract sense," necessarily functioned and functions to effect the retroactive conflation of *Man* and the *Human,* as if they were conceptually one and the same notion; as if, therefore, Western Man's Project—one put in place in the wake of the epochal revolution of Renaissance humanism based on its separation of *Christian* and *Man* into conceptually different notions, as a separation that was to fuel both its global conquests and expansion and its invention of an entirely new mode of cognition, that of the natural sciences—was and is what a truly, and therefore inclusively, Human Project would have to be.[9]

If the use by academic scholarship of the pronoun "he" as if it were a *generic* term, which suggests that its real-life referent categories were both male and female scholars, can only be empirically validated, as Jane Gallop—coming from the perspective of Feminist Studies, which arose in the wake of multiple social movements of the 1960s—pointed out, by "veiling" the male attributes of the perspective that makes it possible for this "he" to be seen as an ostensibly

neutral term as inclusive of female scholars as they were/are of the male ones, a parallel strategy with respect to the term "Man" can be seen to be at work here. If, as Gallop further proposes, this "veiling of the male attributes" had only been made possible by women scholars' acceptance of their non-generic assigned roles, until the rise of the feminist movement put an end to this acceptance, nevertheless, that earlier acceptance itself been enabled only because of the acceptance by middle-class women, both Western and westernized, of their pre-assigned role as homemakers, one complementary to their male peers' acceptance of *their* pre-assigned roles as breadwinners. This therefore meant that the attributes of the perspective that would have to be veiled in order to enable the pronoun "he" to be used as a neutral term—ostensibly inclusive of men and women scholars, at the same time as it ensured the male's superior status as the generic sex—were not only *male* (the issue of gender) but also *bourgeois* (the issue of class) and *ethnic,* and/or "local cultural," that is, the issue of *genre* classified in *Man*'s terms, as that of *race.*

Hence the fact that when Western feminist scholars came to use the pronoun "she" as an ostensibly neutral term inclusive of both Western and non-Western feminist scholars, of both Western and westernized women, of both middle-class and lower/underclass women, some feminists, such as, for example, Carole Boyce Davis and Elaine Savory-Fido (1990: vii–xix), in their collection of essays *Out of Kumbla: Caribbean Women and Literature,* challenged the neutrality of that "she" by insisting on correlating, and thereby unveiling, the attributes of "race" and "class" alongside of gender: since gender, when taken by itself, at once transformed Western middle-class feminists, for whom gender is the *only* issue that blocks their full incorporation into the Western-bourgeois global structures of power, into generic feminists—indeed, into generic women.

If we see our present noun "Man" as playing a parallel role at the level of genre—and, here, the shared etymological roots of both terms, *genre* and *gender,* need to be recognized as the non-arbitrary ones that they are, given that in all human orders the narratively mandated gender roles are everywhere a central function of the enacting of our no less narratively instituted genres or modes of being human—a logical corollary follows. That is, the noun "Man" now also functions as an ostensibly neutral and universal term, whose real-life referent categories are imagined to include, at the level of gender, all women

as well as all men (thereby transforming the latter into the *generic sex*); at the level of class, all classes (thereby making the Western and westernized members of the bourgeoisie into the *generic class*); at the level of sexual preferences, all sexual preferences (thereby making heterosexual preference into the *generic* preference); and, at the level of "race" or human hereditary variations, together with their genres of being human classified as "cultures" and "religions," all such "races," their hereditary variation and genres or "cultures"/religions, thereby making the Indo-European race or hereditary variation into the generic "race," at the same time as it makes its contemporary Western civilization, and/or its culture and now-privatized Christian religion, into the *generic* civilization, culture, religion. With these altogether, making its globally instituted ethno-class, or biocentric *homo oeconomicus* genre of being human, into the ostensibly *generic* or "true" human.

At the same time, it is a given that our present techno-industrial capitalist mode of economic production, as the mode of material provisioning indispensable to the continued processes of auto-institution of our present hegemonic biocentric, *homo oeconomicus Man,* over-represented as if it were the human, is thereby also represented as an economic system that is ostensibly inclusive of the interests of the "developed" and wealthy countries of the North, together with those of the Western and westernized middle classes—as interests specific to the real-life referent categories of *Man*—as well as the interests of the impoverished "underdeveloped" countries of the South/the Third World, together with the interests of the global category of the jobless Poor both North and South, who are the real-life referent categories, in *economic* terms of *Man*'s ostensible non-breadwinning Human Others, subordinated to Natural Scarcity, and, as such, imperfectly evolved. In the same way, therefore, as Jane Gallop's observation with respect to the pronoun "he," and of its over-representation as a neutral term able to include both male and female scholars, had been made believable only by the veiling of its male attributes, so in the case of the noun "Man," and its over-representation as a neutral term able to include all of the categories cited, and as an inclusion that then enables it to represent the imperative securing of *its* interests, the imperative that now governs our collective behaviors, as if it were the same as that of the securing of the interests of the human species itself, continues to be made believable only by means of a parallel systemic "veiling." By the veiling, that is, of *Man*'s specific ethno-class attributes, a veiling

effected by the projected truth, "in a universal abstract sense," of our present order of knowledge, as well as by the psycho-affective closure effected by our present mainstream aesthetics. And, therefore, with both our present epistemological order and mainstream aesthetic now coming to function, in Lewis Gordon's terms, as a purely secular form of theodicy. More precisely, perhaps, as a *biodicy,* which, by replacing *Evolution and Natural Selection* in the re-occupied locus of Christian theodicy's Divine Creator, enables these bio-agencies to serve as the now de-supernaturalized Source of Legitimacy that serves to validate the functioning of our contemporary order, thereby enabling the injustice and evil of the large-scale costs to which its functioning leads—as costs that are the negative underside of the dazzling triumphs and achievements of its now purely biologized order of being and of things—to be explained *away* rather than to be explained, recognized, and confronted.

These costs have been summed up by Gerald Barney, as cited by Loyal La Rue in his book *Everybody's Story: Wising Up to the Epic of Evolution.* Calling these overall costs "the global problematique," Barney had defined it in these terms: "As we humans have begun to think globally, it has become clear that we do not have a poverty problem, or a hunger problem, or a habitat problem, or an energy problem.... What we really have is a poverty-hunger-habitat-energy-trade-population-atmosphere-waste-resource problem" (La Rue 2000: 3). "We humans," however, have not created this "problematique." Nor indeed, have we humans created the brilliant achievements and triumphs of which the global problematique is the negative underside. Rather, as Gordon's seminal insight here suggests, both are the creations of a Western Europe that sought to become *ontological*—to become, for both good and ill, what dialecticians call "Absolute Being" (Gordon 2002c: 10).

III

Unveiling the Ethno-Class Attributes of Man's "Inner Eyes" for Which Alone Other Humans Can Exist as "Natives," "Negroes," and "Niggers" Rather Than as Other Humans: On De-Universalizing Its Project, Its Genre, Its Aesthetics, Its Truth

> I am an invisible man. No, I am not a spook like those who haunted Edgar Allan Poe; nor am I one of your Hollywood-movie ectoplasms. I am a man of substance, of flesh and bone, fiber and