1

The Transparency Thesis

They seem to me people of such innocence that, if we understood them and they understood us, they would become Christian soon; for they do not have nor understand any faith, it seems to me; and, therefore, if the banished, who will remain here, learn well their language and understand them, I have no doubt, according to the holy desire of Your Highness, they will become Christian and believe in Holy Faith, . . . for it is sure this is a good and humble people, which will absorb anything given to them; and Our Lord gave them good bodies and good faces, as to good men, and he, who brought us here, I believe, was not without a cause.

—PERO VAZ DE CAMINHA,
"CARTA A EL-REI DOM MANUEL"

Not the conversion of "such" peoples' souls, it would turn out, but the cataloguing of their minds, undertaken about three hundred years later, produced the strategies of power governing contemporary global conditions. Early colonial texts, like Pero Vaz de Caminha's letter of 1 May 1500 to King D. Manuel, are mostly tales of conquest: letters and diaries that provide the European traveler's point of view; write the "native" first as "innocent" and "brute," then as "irrational" and "savage"; and narrate the mishaps of the trips, the beauty and wealth of the newly appropriated royal lands, and the need to teach natives not to "reveal their *vergonhas* [sexual organs] with the same innocence they show their faces" and how to fear God. Each account narrates a political event, a double movement,

dislocation and engulfment, in which conqueror's and native's "beings" emerge as subjected to the divine author and ruler. Later accounts of European conquest would describe this political event as a moment in time, a fact of history. Nevertheless, Europe's conquest of the American continent has been first and foremost a spatial, that is, a global event—the dislocation of Europeans to the Americas and other parts of the planet and the engulfment of natives, their lands, and the resources of those lands. For this reason, because European juridical and economic appropriation of other lands and resources has from the outset required the symbolic appropriation of natives, the indigenous peoples, one cannot ignore that this beginning is always already mediated by a rearrangement of the modern grammar and the deployment of projects of knowledge that address man as an object, which took place over the first three hundred years following the "first encounter." For it was only in the post-Enlightenment period, when reason finally displaced the divine ruler and author to become the sovereign ruler of man, that human difference became the product of a symbolic tool, the concept of the racial, deployed in projects to "discover" the truth of man, which (trans)formed the globe itself into a modern ontological context.

Before describing how I have charted modern representation to identify the context of emergence, conditions of production, and effects of signification of the racial, in this chapter I indicate how the sociohistorical logic of exclusion splits the field of critique of modern ontology into two halves: postmodern interventions and critical racial theorizing. Both postmodern critics of modern thought and critical racial theorists, I think, engage the crucial challenge of describing how global subaltern subjects emerge in representation. Nevertheless, although they correctly address the symbolic as a privileged moment of modern power, the sociohistorical logic of exclusion prevents them from thoroughly unpacking modern mechanisms of signification and subjectification, a necessary move if one seeks to understand why an ethical crisis does not ensue from the consistent, numerous, and recurrent indications that the "others of Europe" are not comprehended by universality and self-determination, the principles governing post-Enlightenment social configurations. For it is because this prevailing account of racial subjection retains the presupposition that the racial is extraneous to modern thought that it prevents these proverbial twins from moving toward the point where

they meet. Although this fracture could be attributed to theoretical-methodological differences, it seems to me that it reflects a profound similarity, which is the fact that, even in postmodern critical analyses that challenge transparency, the sociohistorical logic of exclusion (re)produces the post-Enlightenment version of the subject.

Throughout the last five centuries or so, Europeans and their descendants have crossed the globe over and over again appropriating lands, resources, and labor. No doubt these dislocations have instituted the global economic and juridical formations historical and social scientific literatures apprehend with the concepts of colonialism, imperialism, modernization, and globalization. Although we know so much about the sociohistorical determinants of racial subjection, we are at pains to describe how precisely the racial institutes the others of Europe as subaltern subjects. Failing to grasp how the racial produces modern subjects (even though we have no doubt that it does so), I think, results from how we know it. For underlying the sociohistorical logic of exclusion is the dismissal of the project of knowledge usually termed "race theorizing," "scientific racism," or "race theories" and the insistence on attributing the notion of race to the fact that, in nineteenth-century Europe,[1] science fell prey to "subjective" (psychological, cultural, ideological) elements, anachronistic and unbecoming "beliefs" or "prejudices" it erroneously validated (Stepan 1982). No doubt a rehearsal of the modern desire for freedom and truth, the statement that disqualifies and invalidates this early project of knowledge has failed to achieve its goal, that is, to erase the racial from the modern lexicon because it does not explore how it constitutes the modern grammar.

For this reason, I have chosen the less traveled road and address the racial as a scientific construct. Not, however, by assessing the "truth" of the statements of the scientists of man; I am not concerned with evaluation of methods and theories, nor do I follow the logic of discovery. My intent here is to address the apparatus the racial guides, the *analytics of raciality,* as a productive symbolic regimen that institutes human difference as an effect of the play of universal reason. My analysis of the context of emergence, the conditions of production, and the effects of signification of the racial shows how the writing of modern subjects in the post-Enlightenment period would also require the deployment of scientific tools, strategies of symbolic engulfment that transform bodily and social configurations

into expressions of how universal reason produces human difference. By doing so, it provides an account of racial subjection that, by displacing historicity, the post-Enlightenment privileged context, situates the *transparency thesis,* that is, the ontoepistemological account that institutes "being and meaning" as effects of interiority and temporality. What this reading provides is the delineation of an other ontoepistemological context, globality, in which being and meaning emerge as an effect of exteriority and spatiality, a mode of representing human difference as an effect of scientific signification. By showing how the *transparent "I,"* which the representation of the subject historicity presupposes and (re)produces, emerges always already in a contention with others that both institute and threaten its ontological prerogative, my reading displaces the transparency thesis to refashion the modern subject as *homo modernus,* the global-historical being produced with tools yielded by both fields of modern representation, namely, history and science.

PARTIAL DEPARTURES

My point of entry into this fractured field is the ubiquitous question that, I think, concerns both postmodern critics and racial theorists: What sort of theoretical account of the contemporary political landscape, with its corresponding criteria for truth and ethical claims, would avoid repeating the exclusionary effects of modern grand narratives of science and history? When considering how postmodern remappings of the social that privilege plurality and contingency—such as, for instance, that of Laclau and Mouffe (1985)—would contribute to the understanding of racial subjection, I could not locate racial subaltern subjects in their portrait of the social.[2] Would they be "moments" (discursively instituted subject positions) or "elements" ("antagonistic parts") in their reframing of the social as a contingent "structured totality"? Under what conditions, what sort of "partial fixations," do they move into (as a "moment") and/or out (as an "antagonistic part") of this discursive field? Or is raciality a "total" fixation, that is, the sole always already feature of the field itself, which in this case would contradict their account of the social or force them to name it racial? With these unanswerable questions, I am not marking a failure of Laclau and Mouffe's theoretical project per se. For they introduce a notion of differentially constituted (open and incomplete) subjectivities or identities without attending

to whether and how the formulation of "difference" it deploys reinstitutes transparency, and with it the "the category of the 'subject' as a unified and unifying essence" (181), which they seek to displace. This happens, I think, because the sociohistorical logic of exclusion—and the transparency thesis it presupposes—conjures up the subject when critical texts (re)produce the racial others as already differentially constituted historical beings before their entrance into the modern political spaces where they become subaltern subjects.

My point is that, without addressing the regimen of production of such subaltern (postmodern) subjects, the subjects of cultural difference, one ends up attributing to them a self-defeating kind of transparency. For instance, in "Restaging the Universal: Hegemony and the Limits of Formalism," Judith Butler (2000) returns to Hegel to provide an account of hegemony that, displacing universality, rewrites the subject as an inherently social (historical or contingent) thing. She charges Laclau and Mouffe's (1985) Lacanian rendering of the "incomplete subject" with retaining a "quasi-"Kantian (formal or universal) foundation that colonizes their reformulation of the notion of hegemony by reinstituting a given particular (the West) as a universal limitation and excluding other particulars that sustain it. Her solution is to return to Hegel, where she finds a reformulation of the universal I as always already committed to the plurality that characterizes the social, the domain of the concrete, the particular, the contingent, and so on—which sustains her own (liberal) version of hegemony.[3] The advantages of her Hegelian portrayal of the postmodern landscape appear in Butler's description of how it would resolve the challenge cultural difference poses to a global feminist project.

Though she consistently insists that the excluded particulars constitute the Universal, Butler provides a partial reading of Hegel, one that does not indicate how the excluded—the ones the Lacanian quasi-universal bar fails to recuperate—figures in Hegel's account of "true universality." Because she does not follow the trajectory of Hegel's self-consciousness to the moment of resolution, the final step in the trajectory of "Spirit," Butler argues that Hegel's notion of individuality (concrete, contingent, etc.) immediately includes the kind of (historic) particularity the notion of cultural difference institutes.[4] How? Through translation, she says: "Without translation,

the very concept of universality cannot cross the linguistic borders it claims," so any universal claim thus conceived—here she refers to international feminism—risks repeating a "colonial and expansionist logic." Not surprisingly, her deployment of cultural difference, one that celebrates historicity as the basis of an ethical (the intrinsically good, just) global political project, troubles her version of the global feminist discourse, which, unlike academic Anglo feminism, would "[override] the problem local cultures pose for international feminism [which] does not understand the parochial character of its own norms." Without explaining why open and fluid local cultures would need translation and how these "linguistic borders" have been produced, Butler moves on to place postcolonial critics at the forefront of the battle against imperialist feminism. From these self-knowing critics she seems to have learned that "by emphasizing the cultural location of universality one sees . . . that there can be no operative notion of universality that does not assume the risk of translation" (35).

Definitely, the postmodern debate seems stuck in modernity's constitutive oppositions. Where is the alternative when all that is offered is an old account of domination in which a self-described (abstract) universal precludes any transformative opposition through a founding exclusion of (concrete) local cultures and a new account of hegemony in which the political field is inhabited by already constituted culturally different others of the West who are dominated because of the identification of a particular local [Western] culture with the Universal? If one opts for the "abstract" universal, particularity becomes an annoyance, that which needs to be excluded for a universal account to be sustained; if one opts for the "concrete" universal, the particular will flourish, but a viable political project will need to rely on always already historic (linguistic or cultural) others who will aid in their own emancipation as "cultural translators" informing their universal (Western feminist) other by telling her how it works at home, in the recess of their "local cultures," where, before entering the political struggle for hegemony, her people rest peacefully in oblivious cultural transparency.

Whenever they alone guide the critical task, historic strategies such as culture and ideology necessarily produce transparent (interior-temporal) subjects while scientific constructs such as cultural difference proceed without disturbance to replace the others of Europe

before transparency. That is, historicity cannot dissipate its own effects of power; it cannot institute subjects that signify otherwise. What I am suggesting is that racial subjection should not be conceived as a process of othering, of exclusion, in which an already historic racial or cultural other becomes the site of projection of unwanted attributes that, once specified, reveal the ideological (false or contradictory) basis upon which European particularity has been constructed. Without an examination of how the racial and the cultural institute (as scientific signifiers) the subjects crowding the global saloon, without a critical engagement with disciplinary (productive) power beyond the naming of the subjects of interiority Foucault traces, I contend, such critical remappings of the social will be at best irrelevant for the project of racial emancipation. For a relevant critique of the present global (juridic, economic, and moral) configuration in which raciality rules unchecked necessitates a full engagement with universality and historicity, one that would not stop at a critique of (the failure of juridical and economic) universality just to hold onto the promises of historicity. Instead of projects of inclusion, then, it would attempt to turn the transparency thesis on its head. For, I argue, it is precisely the failure to conceive the cultural and the racial as productive (scientific) signifiers that limits the understanding of how they govern the contemporary global configuration, instituting modern privileged and subaltern subjects.

"THE HISTORIC 'VEIL'"

Following the sociohistorical logic of exclusion, critical racial theorists write the racial subaltern as barred from universality and the conception of humanity (the self-determined subject of history) that the transparency thesis sustains. That would not be a problem if, as Fanon teaches us, the position this subject inhabits could be apprehended in the ontological accounts the transparency thesis authorizes. And yet, in writings of the black subject, one consistently meets a transparent I, buried under historical (cultural or ideological) debris,[5] waiting for critical strategies that would clean up the negative self-representations it absorbs from prevailing racist discourse.[6] No doubt symbolic and actual violence (enslavement, lynching, police brutality) marks our trajectory as modern subaltern subjects. Nevertheless, the privileging of historicity limits accounts such as Cornel West's (1997) construct of the "historic 'Veil'" that writes the black

subject as an effect of the "interiorizing" of violence limited.[7] What is behind the veil? Is there a racial subject, a black sovereign that precedes our modern trajectories? If this is so—if before racial violence there is a pristine black subject fully enjoying its "humanity," thriving in self-determined (interior or temporal) existence, that can refuse to "interiorize" and actualize violence—why does it not do so? I think that this desire to lift the veil to reveal an original self-determined black subject fails to ask a crucial question: How did whiteness come to signify the transparent I and blackness to signify otherwise? Because it does not ask such questions, the metaphor of the veil rehearses the sociohistorical logic of exclusion, which writes blackness and whiteness as the "raw material" and not as the products of modern strategies of power. And, in the case of West's account, it (re)produces the black subject as a pathological (affectable) I, a self-consciousness hopelessly haunted by its own impossible desire for transparency.

My point is that the metaphor of the veil reproduces the effect of power of the sociohistorical logic of exclusion—which, as I show in Part 2, consists in a powerful tool of the analytics of raciality—which is to render racial emancipation contingent on the obliteration of racial difference. In *Against Race,* Paul Gilroy (2000) provides perhaps the best example of the perverse effects of this desire to recuperate the racial subaltern into an unbounded humanity. When advancing another claim for the erasure of the racial from modern political grammar, Gilroy announces that the demise of race is already under way, thanks to the radical alteration of bodies promised by genetic manipulation and the commodification of the black male body as an object for global and suburban white consumption. Any impulse to celebrate this "emancipation" from the (racial) body dies when one learns the answer to the question of how biotechnology ushers liberation from race in Gilroy's interpretation of "the tragic story of Henrietta Lacks," a working-class U.S. black woman whose cervical cells have been crucial to the advancement of cancer research, which exemplifies the passage from the "biopolitics of 'race'" to "nano-politics." For Gilroy, the fact that her blackness is irrelevant to medical research suggests a redefinition of the idea of humanity, for the "awareness of the indissoluble unity of all life at the level of genetic materials" displaces the idea of "specifically *racial* differences" (20, italics in the original). It would be all too easy

to stop at pointing to the irony of how humanist desire needs science (genetics) to once again denounce race's scientific irrelevance. But it is more interesting, I think, to point to how this desire cannot reduce or sublate the *materiality* (body and social position) of the economically dispossessed black female, which resists the liberating powers of "transfiguration," "commodification," and biotechnology.

How did Henrietta Lacks's cervical cells become available to scientific research? Why did the cellular biologist at Johns Hopkins University see it as ethical to appropriate her cells without her consent? How has the use of economically dispossessed black neighborhoods as testing camps ensured advances in public health research at that university? What cells do not reveal is how the female racial subaltern has been consistently (re)produced as a kind of human being to whom neither juridic universality nor self-determination applies. Not only does her femaleness place Henrietta Lacks under patriarchal (divine or natural) law, away from the domain of the laws of the body politic. Her blackness also produces her as radically distinct from the kind of subject presumed in the ethical principles governing modern social configurations. Across the earth, women still die of cervical cancer despite the advances Lacks's stolen cells have enabled, but they do not die the same way. Economically dispossessed women of color, like Lacks, die with more pain and no hope. Not only do they lack the financial means to access even the basic technologies available for the prevention and treatment of cervical cancer; in many cases (as in the case of a Brazilian federal program for the treatment of economically dispossessed cancer patients), when given access to this technology they are treated as little more than test subjects. This is not because blackness determines the kind of cells that will grow in their bodies, but because it determines how they live with or die from cancer. That cancer cells do not indicate dark brown skin or flat noses can be conceived of as emancipatory only if one forgets, or minimizes, the political context within which lab materials will be collected and the benefits of biotechnological research will be distributed.

Whether inspired by humanism or not, any critical ontoepistemological account couched upon the transparency thesis will ignore the conditions of production of modern subjects, how the arsenal of the modern "Will to Truth," tools of reason, institute social (juridical, economic, ethical) subjects, the men and women who produce

and reproduce (and the institutions that regulate) their own social trajectories. Whatever else can be said about the critical position Gilroy inhabits, it certainly holds onto the promises of historicity and universality, which animate postmodern humanist desires for a postracial, transparent future: "The spaces in which 'races' come to life," Gilroy laments, "are a field from which political interaction has been banished" (41). What would be left, I ask, to the project of social or global justice if modern subjects were freed from raciality? This is not just a rhetorical question. It requires a critique of modern thought that addresses scientific knowledge as a major productive site of power, one that addresses how the racial, the scientific signifier, produces social subjects who stand differentially before the institutions the transparency thesis sustains.

Perhaps it is evident now that the answer to the question of what lies behind the veil is more complicated than it appears to be. At least for the economically dispossessed racialized gendered person for whom, as for Henrietta Lacks, physical death is only the most evident effect of the post-Enlightenment desire for transparency and the historical and scientific signifying strategies that (re)produce it. What I am suggesting is that the moral ease with which the sociohistorical logic of exclusion captures racial subjection derives from how it (re)produces the transparency thesis by translating the obliteration of the kind of particularity the latter postulates into a demand for the obliteration of the signifier that institutes it, namely, the racial—a gesture that consistently reinstitutes the transparent subject of science and history, the proper name of the man. For this reason, I claim, only an excavation of modern thought, an analysis of the economy of signification governed by the transparency thesis and the analytics of raciality, will enable critical ontoepistemological projects and the ethical principle that usually accompany them, which can aid in the project of global justice.

THE NAMING OF MAN

Many racial theorists have recently undertaken this excavation, gathering instances of philosophical formulations of juridical universality and humanity that exclude the others of Europe. Although they remain in the grip of the sociohistorical logic of exclusion, they indicate why the answer to the question of how the racial operates as a strategy of power is buried in the founding texts of modern thought

(Fitzpatrick 1992; Goldberg 1993 and 2002; Mills 1997; and Eze 2002, among others).[8] Nevertheless, although these theorists have explored how the racial delimits the reach of the law and humanity, they have yet to ask how it produces the principles—universality and self-determination—these notions comprehend. How precisely does the racial (re)produce the universality of the law? How can the racial be reconciled with the ethical privilege, self-determination, historicity assures humanity? Asking these questions, I fear, would signal a questioning of universality and self-determination—a move too risky to make, it seems. With this statement, I am suggesting that postmodern critics of modern thought and racial theorists resist abandoning the transparency thesis, which so evidently undermines our understanding of how the racial operates as a strategy of power. But I am not intimating that they eagerly embrace transparency. For it is because they hold onto the sociologic of exclusion, I think, that the transparency thesis sneaks in on them.

Perhaps discussion of a text that could be placed at the very center of the critical field can help me to elaborate this point. In *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason,* Gayatri Chakraborty Spivak (1999) traces how the exclusion of the others of Europe from founding modern philosophical works has produced the ethical (cultural) narrative that has instituted the figure of man. What she finds in Kant's, Hegel's, and Marx's texts are rhetorical moves in which the articulation and expulsion of the "native informant"—what she refers to as the "rejection of [its] affect" (4–5)—instituted "the name of Man," the symbolic move that has sustained the various moments of European juridical and economic domination of other regions of the globe—colonialism, neocolonialism, imperialism, and so on. These "great narratives of ['German'] cultural self-representation," she argues, provide the material "for a narrative of crisis management," that is, "the 'scientific' fabrication of new representations of self and world that would provide *alibis* for the domination, exploitation, and epistemic violation entailed by the establishment of colony and empire" (7, my italics). What I want to highlight in Spivak's account is how she misses that these "master narratives" constitute the context of emergence of the racial when she immediately dismisses the latter as an "alibi"—an ideological construct, a false representation of the relationship between man and the "native informant"—for economic exploitation and juridical domination.

Why, I ask, was "'scientific' fabrication" necessary at all if the "master narratives" had already foreclosed the "other of man"? If "the (im)possible perspective . . . [of] the native informant" has been written (in "the source texts of European ethico-political self-representation") in its failure to replace the proper signifier of man (9), the "'scientific' [which the scare quotes cannot but name false] fabrication" of the other seems unnecessary. Unless, of course, what has been expelled in the master narratives had some sort of pristine (precolonial) "true" essence or existence before its foreclosure, prior to its becoming the "mark of expulsion" that false science would later fabricate.[9] For if one forgoes the desire for a Real that holds a historic (cultural subaltern) I and engages the Symbolic as the moment of production of the transparent I and its other, the scientific mill will have to be taken seriously as the very locus of production of the "name of Man" and of the "others" who fail to signify it and ask how scientific strategies, the alibis that sustain racial and colonial juridical domination and economic exploitation, populate the global space with a variety of modern subjects, who neither preceded nor are coetaneous with man, but have been produced using the same raw material assembled during the long period of his gestation.

When describing how they play out in the contemporary global configuration, Spivak belies how historical-materialist strategies, such as ideology, provided but partial critiques of modern (self-)representation. "In various guises," she contends, "they still inhabit and inhibit our attempts to overcome the limitations imposed on us by the newest division of the world, to the extent that, as the North continues ostensibly to 'aid' the South—as formerly imperialism 'civilized' the New World—the South's crucial assistance to the North in keeping up its resource-hungry lifestyle is forever foreclosed. In the pores of this book will be the suggestion that, the typecase of the foreclosed native informant today is the poorest *woman* of the South" (7, italics in the original). What I am suggesting is that only by relinquishing the desire to include "local cultures," through the unveiling of truth and/or the recognition of history, is it possible to address the questions racial subjection imposes: What is the ontological context inhabited by the transparent I and the others that institute and interrupt it? Under what conditions do they emerge as such, as dominant and subaltern, that is, as political subjects? Asking these questions would certainly prevent Spivak from fully

embracing historical materialism, but it would also avoid a conflation that performs another troubling foreclosure. I am referring here to the conflation suggested in the immediate connection between ideology and political economy nicely compounded in her construct "axiomatics of imperialism," which evades an engagement with the heterogeneity of the "oppressed."

Before and beyond the gendered and self-interested economic alliances with imperialism and global capitalism, Spivak's global or postcolonial (economic and juridical) dominant and subaltern are also racial subjects, that is, effects of raciality. For the advantages of a critical position that scratches off the erasures, the place of silence, one that avoids the reinstitution of a transparent subject by rewriting the "native informant" as a "name for that mark of expulsion from the name of Man—a mark crossing out the impossibility of the ethical relations" (6, italics in the original)—can be lost if one does not acknowledge that the juridical and economic mapping of the global space is but one instance of the political relationship that institutes Europe and its others. While such a contentious relationship has been effaced by the common gendered self-interests of the colonizer and the colonized (I am not sure whether it is a curse or a blessing for feminist theorizing), the privileging of political economy and patriarchy misses the subtleties of the contemporary global political play.

How can one map a political context in which the U.S. political and economic interests both select (Islamic) Pakistan as an ally in their "war against (Islamic) terrorism" and the domination of Muslim women and allow for the continuing violence against Muslims in India and Palestine—while on the home front Christian Arabs, Latinos, light-skinned blacks, South Asians, and slightly darker Jews may fall prey to domestic "terror fighting"? Whatever "old" religious and geopolitical signifiers are brought to bear in the twenty-first century's renderings of "evil," the conspicuous figure of the (bearded or not) brown man on airplanes indicates how the racial all too easily overrides political-economic interest as well as national, regional, and global borders. What do Spivak's "postcolonial," "South," and "poorest woman of the South" have in common besides being economically exploited and juridically dominated by the "North"? How do the rhetorical strategies she identifies relate to the explicit exclusions noted by Goldberg (1993), Mills (1997), Eze (2001), and

others?[10] Narcissus, I am convinced, ought never gaze at his own face. That the political-economic (capitalism in the shape of colonialism, imperialism, or globalization) and the political-symbolic (the racial and the cultural) engulfment of the globe produce the same peoples and places as "the oppressed," "the dominated," the subaltern, and "the South" seems a self-evident truth that should be left alone lest there remain no self-assured position for the critic to take. For the pervasiveness of the tools of the analytics of raciality in the contemporary global political grammar threatens the radicality of political-economic critiques and the righteousness of (anti-)racial statements in defense of "real," truly all-encompassing (as opposed to "ideological," "false"), universality and humanity, precisely because they consistently play the crucial role, which is to rewrite their indigenous place.

TOWARD AN ANALYSIS OF PRODUCTIVE POWER

Though I recognize the relevance of statements by Hobbes, Locke, Hume, Kant, and Hegel that explicitly place non-Europeans outside the trajectory of universal reason, I find the explicit exclusions they deploy insufficient to institute racial subjection. To map the locus of emergence of today's global subaltern subjects, one should ask: After the consolidation of the rule of reason in the nineteenth century, which new political-symbolic arsenal accompanied the apparatuses of juridical domination and economic exploitation of the others of Europe? My response is that, after the demise of the divine ruler and author rendered conversion an inappropriate mode of engulfment, what else if not scientific universality could produce an ethical position consistent with the attributes of universality and self-determination the early modern philosophers have given to man. My engagement with the founding statements of modern thought departs from postmodern critics' and racial theorists' approaches precisely because I am interested in the most subtle and yet powerful tools of racial subjection, the ones that the sociologic of exclusion (and its resilient metaphors "double consciousness," the "veil," and "the color line") can never capture precisely because of its privileging of historicity—that which nurses projects of a "post-racial" future where the expansion of universality would finally include the others of Europe in the conception of being human that the transparency thesis produces. For racial subjection is as an effect

of the desire that writes post-Enlightenment Europe in transparency and necessarily demands the obliteration of the others of Europe, historic strategies that cannot help the critical task.

Because I am convinced that the critical arsenal still lacks an engagement with modern representation that addresses this onto-epistemological context as a productive regimen governed by universal reason, the analytical strategy I introduce in the following chapter guides an excavation of modern thought through which I gather the statements that prepared the terrain for the formulation of the productive apparatus governing contemporary global political configuration. Much like Foucault's excavations of the modern episteme, the critical analysis of modern representation that I propose departs from Kant's definition of analysis because it considers not only the principles and conditions but also the consequences of knowledge, its political (productive) effects. When charting modern representation, like anyone who forfeits the comfortable grounds provided by a concrete and/or ideological outsideness, I am aware of the risk (and the necessity, I might add) of, as Jacques Derrida (1976) says, "falling back within that which is being deconstructed" (14). Taking from this risk the critical edge necessary to engage that which disallows anything from standing outside its determination, I gather certain statements that organize modern thought, which, set against each other, become useful tools for excavating the territory of transparency.

My small contribution to this task here is to situate the tools of the analytics of raciality, to describe the context of emergence, the regimen of production, and the effects of signification of the productive apparatus instituted by the scientific signifying strategies that transformed the descendants of yesterday's "natives" into modern subaltern subjects. With this I hope to unravel the contradiction haunting critical analyses of racial subjection, which, while recognizing the political significance of the racial, repeat the moral mantra that it is extraneous to modern ethicopolitical grammar. To do so, I pursue a question preempted by the lament for the scientific minds that let "prejudices" and "ideologies" colonize the domain of "truth": Why was it necessary, and why does it remain so, to deploy a concept that demarcates the limits of transparency if the latter's transcendental determinant is without limits, encompassing time and space, here and there, past and future, everything and everywhere?

This question, I think, requires that the racial be placed at the center of the critique of modern representation, which should begin with an account of how scientific universality institutes man. My point of departure is the acknowledgment that historicity is haunted. And it is not because man houses at his core the phantasm of an "other" historic "being." I deploy an analytical toolbox to decenter the transparency thesis, the ontological assumption that still governs the critical arsenal, to produce a modern contra-ontology, that is, an account of the transparent I that shows how it can emerge—in a relationship, always already contending with its others.

I

Homo Historicus

Ontology—once it is finally admitted as leaving existence by the wayside—does not permit us to understand the being of the black man. For not only must the black man be black; he must be black in relation to the white man. Some critics will take it on themselves to remind us that his proposition has a converse. I say this is false. The black man has no ontological resistance in the eyes of the white man.

—FRANTZ FANON, *BLACK SKIN, WHITE MASK*

What Fanon's account of the "fact of blackness" suggests is a formulation of the modern subject in which speech announces the precedence of the text, of language, of writing—a promise not undermined even when he refuses dialectics but embraces eschatology to reposit humanity at the horizon of racial emancipation. Holding onto this promise, I find in Fanon's ([1952] 1967) account of racial subjection indications for a rewriting of the modern play that would reconcile his seemingly contradictory statements: "The black man is *not* a *man*" (9, my italics) and "The Negro *is not. Anymore* than the white man" (231, my italics). Following the road Fanon sighted but would not pursue, I excavate the founding texts of modern thought, from which I gather the outlines of two ontoepistemological contexts: the one Fanon refutes, which the black man fails to signify, and the one the *analytics of raciality* produces, in which the black man and the white man emerge as signifiers of an irreducible difference. What I find in this excavation are precisely statements that allow me to situate the *transparency thesis,* the ontological assumption guiding modern representation, that is, the components of historical and scientific signification that would later be assembled in accounts of universal reason that emerged in the nineteenth century—Hegel's narrative of the trajectory of *"Spirit"* and the scientific projects that attempt to "discover" the truth of man—which consolidate reason as the sovereign ruler or producer of modern representation.

My description of the context of the emergence of the analytics of raciality suggests that the warnings of the mind without reason anticipate the version of the modern drama Fanon envisions but does not pursue. Though Nietzsche's madman probably guessed it, he never articulated that the killing of "God" condemned the subject to be haunted by universal reason. Modern philosophy has been moved by the need to reconcile a conception of reason as the new ruler of the universe with the most cherished attribute of man, that is, self-determination. Following the trajectory of self-consciousness from its initial outline, I indicate why the racial would constitute such a prolific strategy of power. I show how the statements that write it as the thing that thrives in the *stage of interiority* also delineate another ontoepistemological moment, the *stage of exteriority.* Not surprisingly, Hegel's *transcendental poesis,* which consolidates self-consciousness as an interior/temporal thing, the transparent "I," the one that always already knows that it houses that which is not itself, also renders the nineteenth-century deployment of the racial both possible and necessary. Without that other moment in which "being" is always less than, farther from, an "other being," that is, exteriority/spatiality, the ontological priority of the interior/temporal thing would be meaningless, as Derrida (1976) argues. For the racial emerges in projects of knowledge that presume scientific universality, for which universal reason plays the role of an exterior determinant; in modern representation, it governs an ontological context in which man emerges as an exterior or spatial thing, that is, globality, the one that escapes critical analysts of modern thought precisely because the ethical grip of the transparency thesis does not allow the decentering of historicity that its sighting demands.

In the following, neither a Foucauldian archaeological or genealogical exercise nor a straightforward use of Derrida's deconstruction, but somewhere between the two, I chart the context of the emergence of the analytics of raciality, the scientific arsenal that consistently rewrites post-Enlightenment European consciousness and social configurations in transparency. As I do so, however, I show how it accomplishes that which has haunted modern thought since the initial ascension of universal reason, namely, the writing of the mind in outer determination, that is, always already before, in a relationship, contenting with "others," a version of the self-determined "I" that necessarily signifies "other"-wise.

2

The Critique of Productive Reason

The ghost has its own desires, so to speak, which figure the whole complicated sociality of a determining formation that seems inoperative (like slavery) or invisible (like racially gendered capitalism) but that is nonetheless alive and enforced. But the force of the ghost's desire is not just negative, not just the haunting and staged words, marks, or gestures of domination and injury. The ghost is not other or alterity as such, ever. It is (like Beloved) pregnant with unfulfilled possibility, with the something to be done that the wavering present is demanding. This something to be done is not a return to the past but a reckoning with its repression in the present, a reckoning with that which we have lost, but never had.

—AVERY GORDON, *GHOSTLY MATTERS*

Following the ghost, seeking the lost treasures it announces, reason's accursed offerings that refigure no-thing, require an exploration of the grounds it haunts—the recuperation of the site where the *transparent "I"* and its "others" emerge as such, necessarily before each other. My task in this chapter is to describe analytical position and the toolbox I deploy to write modern representation "other"-wise. Both enable the refashioning of modern representation as the *modern text,* an account of the symbolic that describes how the "being and meaning" universal reason institutes are manufactured as byproductive strategies that both presuppose and institute a relationship—as presumed in Marx's (1956), Schmitt's (1976), and Foucault's (2003) renderings of the political in terms of contention, that is, as a moment

of human existence defined by (the possibility of) violence. What distinguishes my approach is the fact that it recuperates scientific signification to introduce a conception of political subjects as an effect of symbolic, productive violence. When doing so, it brackets the *transparency thesis,* thus abandoning the moral ban that entails fast rejections of raciality to show how, as a tool of productive reason, the racial produces both the transparent I and its others as modern political subjects.

When delimiting the analytical position and assembling the tools necessary to accomplish this task, I borrowed from the critical arsenal but more particularly from Foucault's critique of power/knowledge and Derrida's account of signification. Both allow me to show how the sovereign ruler of modern representation, universal reason, institutes the subjects inhabiting the contemporary global configuration. To those who may tremble before my reconciliation of Foucault's and Derrida's critical formulations, I can only say this: I am not reinventing gunpowder here. In *Society Must Be Defended,* Michel Foucault (2003) proposes an account of the political that indicates that these two postmodern critics were moving parallel to one another. In the lectures on which the book was based, he introduced the idea of a "race war" against both disciplinary power and the theory of sovereignty to capture another moment of modern power.[1] While many may read Foucault's "race struggle" as an immediate reference to the notion of the racial deployed in the nineteenth century—and he suggests as much—I prefer to read it as a metaphor that allows him to return the view of power as a "relationship of force," thus recuperating the possibility of violence as a dimension of the concept of the political. He asks, "If power is indeed the implementation and deployment of a relationship of force, rather than analyzing it in terms of surrender, contract, and alienation, or rather than analyzing it in function terms as the reproduction of the relations of production, shouldn't we be analyzing it first and foremost in terms of conflict, confrontation, and war?" (15). When entertaining a positive answer to this question, Foucault makes a move that suggests a mode of analysis of power that I find akin to Jacques Derrida's account of signification and Immanuel Levinas's critique of representation in that it conceives of violence as a dimension of power beyond the liberal formulation, which restricts the use of force to the state and considers only political acts

of violence that target the state. This reconciliation is but a resolution of Foucault's notion of productive power, Derrida's notion of writing, and Levinas's rendering of representation as "partial violation." With these tools I delineate a critical position and assemble an analytical arsenal that addresses globality as an ontological context, whereas they describe the subject of universal reason as an effect of acts of productive violence, forcé, or power, as an outer determined thing always already in a relationship with (im)possible others.

THE CRITIQUE OF PRODUCTIVE "TRUTH"

In Michel Foucault's critique of modern thought I find the suggestion that attention to scientific signification can situate historicity (interiority-temporality), the ontological descriptor the transparency thesis authorizes. When addressing the modern episteme, modern representation, as the regimen of signification governed by the "will to truth," his analyses of power show how knowledge institutes the subject, that is, how the transparent I, the subject of freedom, is but an effect of the rules of production of truth, of the mode of power, which, Foucault (1980) argues, "produces effects" at the level of desire and knowledge (69). When describing how "discourses of truth" produce modern subjects—the fundamentally political things, which are "subjected to the production of truth and [yet] cannot exercise power except through the production of truth," and "we *must* speak the truth" (93, italics in the original)—he introduces a notion of productive power that brackets the juridical and economic moments privileged in the liberal and the historical-materialist ontology. Nevertheless, while his rendering of power/knowledge—which I term here *productivity*—suggests the possibility of addressing the racial as part of the arsenal of the modern regime of "truth," it has not animated such exploration because, beyond the explicit Eurocentrism many identify, Foucault's analyses of the power retains interiority as the distinguishing feature of man.

What I am arguing here is that Foucault limits his critique of historicity to an engagement with temporality, thereby addressing but one dimension of the transparent I. In *The Order of Things,* Foucault (1994) describes the modern episteme emerging with the deployment of an "analytics of finitude," the enveloping of the things of the world by temporality, which institutes man as the sovereign subject and privileged object of knowledge. Although he notes that

the apprehension of the "things of the world" also results from that which in man is "finite"—the contingent, "empirical, positive (body and language)"—he stops at the realization that the positive is continuously brought back into the "figure of the Same" (315). Lost in the assumption that thought (reflection) returns, and reduces everything it addresses, to the temporality of the self-determined (interior) subject of knowledge—the knowing mind, man's transcendental moment—is an engagement with how knowledge (science) addresses human beings and social configurations as phenomena, as extended (exterior/spatial), "empirical" things. What has no place in Foucault's description of the "analytics of finitude," due to his decision not to navigate the territory opened up by his critique of modern ontology, is a consideration of how shifts in knowledge relate to economic and sexual moments of modern power/desire.[2]

Precisely because it addresses the intersection of two productive political moments—the economic and the sexual—of deployment of European desire across the globe, the racial indicates that any critique of the figure at the center of modern representation should engage interiority, the attribute it has exhibited since its articulation in the founding statements of Western thought. In *The History of Sexuality,* Foucault's (1978) considerations of race and sex as referents of power indicate why this is a thread he would not pursue. Although biopolitics indicates precisely the moment when the machinery of the racial and the arsenal of sexuality meet, he does not pursue the subject because, for Foucault, the racial belongs to another mode of power, the "symbolics of blood," one that does not operate via the production of minds. From "the second half of the nineteenth century," he argues, "the thematics of blood was sometimes called on to lend its entire historical weight toward revitalizing the type of political power that was exercised through the device of sexuality. Racism took shape at this point . . . it was then that a whole politics of settlement, . . . accompanied by a long series of permanent interventions at the level of the body, conduct, health, and everyday life, received their color and their justification from the mythical concern with protecting the purity of the blood and ensuring the triumph of the race" (149). What prevents Foucault from fully incorporating the nineteenth-century concept of the racial in his critique of modern thought, I think, is not an empirical limitation—though such limitations are significant, as indicated in

Stoler's (1995) examination of how the discourse of race participates in the formation of bourgeois European sexuality—but his partial engagement with modern representation.[3]

In his critique of "truth," Foucault challenges self-determination with the Kantian argument that, rather than the liberating ground, universal reason is the (interior) ruler or producer of freedom.[4] My point is that, because he locates that which escapes the reductive powers of the "Same" in a domain not yet charted by modern thought (the it-self, the unconscious, etc.), Foucault's excavations do not reach the place where European particularity is but an effect of the strategies of this productive ruler. For this reason, though a crucial contribution to the critique of modern representation, his own deployments of the thesis of productivity remain within its limits because he does challenge the ontological prerogative of interiority that guides accounts that locate man in transparency.[5] Had he relinquished interiority, Foucault would have contributed to our understanding of how the productive force of the racial ensues from the haunting spatiality he spots at the core of modern thought, but would never fully explore.[6]

THE HORIZON OF DEATH

What Foucault's analyses of power—as both disciplinary power and a "relationship of force"—signal but he does not explore is an analytical position that recuperates extension (exteriority-spatiality) from the statements that outline historicity as man's sole and exclusive horizon of existence. It is only from such a position that it is possible to dismantle interiority precisely because of how it addresses an ontological horizon that does not presuppose a "being" that precedes the context it shares with that which it is not, namely, "other beings." From what position does the transparent I contend with that which delimits its particular place? From the critical analytical position I delimited, I spot the ontological context where the Subject stands before the horizon of death. In globality, the ontoepistemological descriptor by which "the scientific" attempts to discover the truth of man, resides the racial. From there, I will show, it sustains the writing of post-Enlightenment Europe as the moment of transparency. As this critical position decenters historicity, the ontoepistemological context the transparency thesis institutes, it displaces interiority, the portal to self-determination,[7] to refashion modern representation

as a productive context of power, the signifying strategies of which institute the subject as an effect of ontoepistemological contexts, namely, historicity and globality, instituted respectively by the texts of history and science.

In *Of Grammatology,* Jacques Derrida (1976) offers an account of signification that enables the carving out of this critical analytical position. His decisive move is to reject the symbolic prerogative of *interiority,* the assumption of an immediate connection (transparency) between speech and truth. By giving the trace—the unstable link between signifier and signified—signifying primacy, he provides an account of signification that indicates the possibility of recovering exteriority from the belly of Hegel's Transcendental Subject.[8] When proposing that spatiality (writing, *différance*) is the fundamental locus of signification and subjectification, Derrida adds to the critical arsenal a tool that refuses this absolute referent, the transcendental I, that precedes and institutes signification. With this, it rewrites the transparent (interior/temporal) I as an effect of differentiation or relationality, of the symbolic regimen where "being and meaning" emerge always already in exteriority and violence, out of the erasure of other (im)possible beings and meanings the trace hopelessly signifies. What spatiality offers is the possibility of recuperating from the debris of the founding statements of modern representation the effects of its productive violent acts, that which, according to the transparency thesis, the subject is not but without which it cannot be.

Through the reconciliation of Foucault's notion of productivity with his own framing of the political as a "relationship of force," which allows me to resolve both in Derrida's rendering of spatiality, I have identified an analytical position that centers relationship, outer determination, that is coexistence, contemporaneity, and contention. From this stance I engage modern subjects as the effect of a political-symbolic arsenal that situates them as always already before the horizon of death, the one instituted by spatiality that does not house I's and the others that can be resolved—reduced or sublated—in dialectical, phenomenological, or psychoanalytical accounts of negation or projection. Because "being and meaning" here result from the deferring, the postponement, the erasure of other possible "beings and meanings"—which can be spotted only in the trace that both produces and threatens signification—the ontoepistemological context that spatiality demarcates displaces interiority

to establish exteriority as the ruler of signification. Before the reader attempts to resolve this position back into an account of nothingness, I repeat that I am not constructing death as negation, as always already comprehended by being—as in Sartre's ([1943] 1984) statement that "Being is *that* and outside of that, *nothing*" (36, italics in the original)—which would consist in another rehearsal of Hegel's narrative of "Spirit," which writes being, self-consciousness, as that which always already is everything that is not itself. Nor is it a "post"(colonial, modern, or racial) version of Hegel's lordship and bondsman passage because, it does not presuppose self-consciousness as a transparent I that has to contend with an always already racial or cultural transparent other. That is, I do not assume that those in contention, political subjects, precede their emergence in representation. Instead I conceive of them as political, because they emerge in signification, which, as Derrida suggests, itself presupposes and inaugurates a "relationship of force."

More specifically, I draw from Levinas's (1996) critique of modern representation the statement that the impulse to comprehend the "Other" *(Autrui),* necessarily establishes a relationship with another being that becomes both an "object of representation" and an "interlocutor." To speak of the Other, he states, presupposes the possibility of speaking to the Other; it is to invoke the Other, which, in itself, is a productive moment. In Levinas's statement, then, I find the suggestion that modern political-symbolic strategies can be read as productive acts that address (articulate and disavow) the Other and, in doing so, institute the "face of the other." Though this analytical position recognizes productivity as a dimension of scientific signification, it also reads it as a "partial" violent gesture, that is, as engulfment. Put differently, I read the other to mark the writing of the others of Europe in a mode of representation that privileges interiority. That is, I read modern representation as a regimen that produces beings that refigure, as they postpone, the Other—"the sole being whose negation can only announce itself as total: as *murder*"; this "Other . . . is that which escapes comprehension in the other *(autrui)* . . . that which I cannot negate partially, in violence, in grasping him within the horizon of being in general and possessing him" (9). I read modern representation not as a total appropriation or obliteration of the Other, that mode of being that remains outside representation, which it both threatens and institutes. Fully

retained before the horizon of death, this Other, I claim, threatens another ontology it is the "Other of the [narrative of the] Same." As such, it refers to the mode of representation—before and beyond modern thought—to which the distinction between interiority and exteriority belongs, and for this reason, it indicates that universal reason can exercise its sovereign rule only as productive force.

When addressing the racial as the political-symbolic tool that institutes the global itself as an ontoepistemological signifier, I do not, as Chakrabarty (2000) does, read the other of man as another historical (interior-temporal) I. The critical analytical position I adopt does not presuppose preexisting or coexisting (interior) beings the (textual) erasure of which enables the writing of Europe in transparency. My intent here is to target what modern thought has defined as the moment of exteriority, that is, scientific signification, to chart the conditions under which the others of Europe can be represented as such, and to indicate why this exercise is necessary if one is to rewrite modern social configurations "other"-wise. What allows me to give analytical primacy to the horizon of death is precisely my refusal to rehearse the ethical condemnation of scientific signification as a moment of production of the truth of man. For the signifiers of death I gather refer precisely to that which modern thought deems the moment of outer determination, precisely because, as Derrida suggests, they produce an account of difference as neither sublatable nor reducible to the Transcendental I. That is, the I and the (actual, possible, or potential) others it institutes emerge before one another—in contention, in a relationship that always already presumes the horizon of death. For this reason, the retrieval of exteriority, of the moment of outer determination, allows a contra-ontological argument, one that reads modern representation as a political-symbolic apparatus, that is, as at once violent and productive.

When delimiting the ontoepistemological location the pair exteriority-spatiality institutes, I borrow and reformulate Roland Robertson's (1995) account of "globality" as a privileged site of differentiation, "the general conditions which facilitated the diffusion of general modernity" (27).[9] My rendering of the term, however, maintains but reverses the relationship between present ontoepistemological conditions and modernity that Robertson suggests. Instead of the context of deployment of claims for universalization and differentiation, I deploy globality to situate historicity, the authorized ontological stance, to refashion the latter as *one* moment in which one can trace the emergence of modern subjects. With this, I introduce a critical account that captures how scientific signifiers enable and unsettle the writing of the proper man, the post-Enlightenment European subject, the only one to enjoy the privilege of transparency. For I will show how in this ontological context, globality, the horizon of death, scientific signification has deployed the racial to produce modern subjects that emerge in exteriority/affectability and exist between two moments of violence: (a) *engulfment,* that is, "partial negation," the productive violent act of naming, the symbolic appropriation that produces them, inaugurating a *relationship* precisely because, in the regimen of representation interiority governs, it institutes unsublatable and irreducible subjects, and (b) *murder,* total annihilation, that which obliterates the necessary but haunting relationship between an I instituted by the desire for transparency (self-determination) and the affectable, always already vanishing others of Europe that the scientific cataloguing of minds institutes. When the racial writes Europeans and the others of Europe as subjects of exteriority, it institutes the body, social configurations, and global regions as signifiers of the mind. Therefore, the racial is an effect and a tool of the productive violent act that produces the global as a modern context of signification, one that refers to a mode of existing before historicity, the horizon of life, that the ontological context transparency thesis produces.[10] That is, the deployment of the racial as a political/symbolic weapon institutes globality as an *other* ontological context.

My critique of modern representation, then, recuperates the Global as a signifying context constituted by the materializations (effects and products) of scientific signifying strategies. Though I acknowledge the centrality of the human body, my reading of the science of man will show that, as a signifier of irreducible and unsublatable mental difference, the racial is relevant only to mark the difference between post-Enlightenment European and other contemporaneous, coexisting social configurations, when it transforms yesterday's religious conquerors and natives into modern subjects, racial (biological) things, to define the boundaries of that which has neither beginning nor end without displacing the transparency thesis. When describing globality as the horizon of death, I highlight how the ethical and ontological primacy of the transparency thesis,

which emerges in Hegel's narrative of self-actualized "Spirit" that institutes beings and meanings that gaze solely at the horizon of life, both necessitates and rejects the I's and the others the *analytics of raciality* produces. For the racial constitutes an effective political-symbolic strategy precisely because the subjects it institutes are situated differently, namely, in globality. While the others of Europe gaze on the horizon of death, facing certain obliteration, the racial keeps the transparent I in self-determination (interiority) alone before the horizon of life, oblivious to, because always already knowledgeable (controlling and emulating) of, how universal reason governs its existence. Not surprisingly, critical analyses of racial subjection cannot explain the effects of power of the racial. Spreading before historicity, the effects of raciality are inaccessible to the arsenal that the sociohistorical logic of exclusion informs precisely because the latter assumes that the transparency thesis constitutes the sole modern ontological presupposition.[11]

READING "OTHER"-WISE

From the analytical position productivity and spatiality demarcate, I engage the racial as a modern political-symbolic strategy by asking what the reader may consider counterintuitive questions such as: What needs to be articulated in the text of man, but can never become his locus of emergence? What needs to be postponed, for otherwise it would erupt to render the speech of the transparent I troublesome? Relinquishing the moral shelter of historicity, these questions guided my tracing of the path of self-consciousness—from its outline in Descartes's inaugural statement, which maintains the mind in interiority, to its consolidation in Hegel's formulation of the Transcendental I—where I found that exteriority was consistently articulated to write its particularity but immediately disavowed lest its exclusive attribute, self-determination, vanish. What I gathered in this return to the founding statements of modern thought, then, were formulations that enabled me to locate the place exteriority occupies in modern thought. By reassembling these formulations, I was able to reconfigure modern representation as the modern text, for I show how the play of reason is described in two moments of signification, the *stage of interiority* and the *stage of exteriority,* the strategies of which constitute the "metanarratives" of history and science that bring modern subjects into representation.

What the modern text allows me to do is decenter the transparency

thesis as I describe the signifying gestures—displacement, negation, and engulfment—that render exteriority an (im)possible ontological moment. When reading the founding statements of modern thought deployed between the seventeenth and the nineteenth centuries, I borrow Jacques Lacan's (1977) symbolic structures, "displacement" and "negation," symbolic tools that at once articulate and disavow signifiers of the Name of the Father, to describe the signifying gestures deployed to describe how universal reason plays its sovereign role.[12] Each allows me to show how the effort to secure the exclusive attribute of self-consciousness, self-determination—the ability to know and decide about one's essence and existence—resulted in the outlining of two symbolic regions, the stage of interiority and the stage of exteriority, in which universal reason plays its sovereign role. The challenge facing early modern philosophers, I will show, was how to sustain the writing of man as a self-determined (interior) thing in a mode of thought grounded on the assertion of the possibility of knowledge with certainty, that is, scientific universality, to establish that the mind has access to, relates to, and is affected by things other than itself, that is, exterior things, and yet the latter play no role in the determination of its essence or existence; that is, they consistently managed not to write the I as an affectable thing. In other words, this statement that inaugurates modern representation has held through the postponement—displacement and negation—of the moment of the "Thing," the "Other," that is, the recurrent articulation and disavowal of that which is not the *interior* thing, the writing of that which fails to signify self-determination, *exterior* things, as ontoepistemologically irrelevant. What I spot in these founding statements are the components of the two symbolic regions of modern representation: (a) the stage of exteriority, where reason plays its sovereign role, that of *universal nomos,* as the regulative (constraining) force that governs the things of the world that are subjected to outer determination, that is, affectable things, and (b) the stage of interiority, where universal reason plays its sovereign role as *universal poesis,* the productive (representing) power that founds the tools housed in the mind of man.

When I turn to Hegel's statements, I describe the consolidation of these two stages in the third symbolic gesture, engulfment, the one that transforms exteriority into a moment of the version of universal reason he deploys, that is, *transcendental poesis,* which consolidates the transparency thesis as the ruling ontoepistemological assumption.

This reconciliation, I contend, enabled the nineteenth-century projects of knowledge that would finally locate self-consciousness in the stage of exteriority. There I locate the emergence of the racial as a *strategy of engulfment,* the political-symbolic strategy that apprehends the human body and global regions as signifiers of how universal reason institutes different kinds of self-consciousness, that is, as an effect of productive tools that institute irreducible and unsublatable differences.

With the notion of engulfment, then, I describe how modern subjects emerge out of the simultaneous deployment of two signifying strategies that correspond to two regions of modern representation, namely: (a) the *field of history,* whose particular mode of signification I capture with the construct *historical text,* the one in which the subject emerges as an effect of the unfolding of transcendental poesis, in which historicity (interiority-temporality) constitutes the privileged ontological context, and (b) the *field of science,* whose particular mode of signification I capture with the term *scientific text,* in which self-consciousness and social configurations are represented as an effect of the tools of *productive nomos,* in which globality (exteriority-spatiality) constitutes the privileged ontological context. With the modern text, I propose a reading of modern representation that recuperates the racial as a political-symbolic weapon, a strategy of engulfment, whose crucial effect is to produce human bodies and global regions as signifiers of the productive play of universal reason. Each corresponds to a perspective from which I engage the analytics of raciality: (a) the analysis of its context of emergence, which I reconfigure by deploying the modern text in the excavation of the founding statements; (b) the analysis of its conditions of production, which I specify as the scientific text guides my analysis of the projects of knowledge of man and society that, deploying the racial as a tool of productive *nomos,* institute globality as an ontological context; and (c) the analysis of its effects of signification, which I gather when I deploy the historical text, which presumes historicity as the ontological context of emergence of modern subjects, in the reading of national narratives. What my analysis of postcolonial enfigurings of the juridical-historical thing—in a particular kind of historical text, namely, the *national text*—shows is how modern political subjects emerge through the simultaneous articulation of scientific and historical signifiers.

From an analytical position that engages modern representation as a political-symbolic context composed by strategies of engulfment, I show how the spelling of the proper name of man, the writing of the transparent I, is also an effect of raciality. For I choose engulfment to describe the productive effects of modern (scientific and historical) signifying strategies precisely because, as a spatial metaphor, it brackets the transparency thesis, the ontological assumption consolidated in Hegel's transcendental poesis. Because it situates power and desire in "the place of interval"—which, as Luce Irigaray (1993) proposes, conveys a sense of "the displacement of the subject or of the object in their relations of nearness or distance" (8)—engulfment as an account of productive power, "partial" violence, opens up a critical position that does not describe modern subjects and social configurations in transparency. Used here purportedly because it refers to one possible account of female power/desire, engulfment brackets the phallocentric narrative—informing conceptions of power as domination, penetration, and oppression—that writes post-Enlightenment Europe as the last act of the play of universal reason that resolves, hides, or dissipates everything else in the self-unfolding transcendental I.

For this reason, because the gesture that swallows, (trans)forms, without destroying, the critique of engulfment does not write yesterday's natives as *affectable "I's,"* nor does it uncover signs of what-was-before as resistances, a gesture that attempts to recuperate the native as always already self-consciousness, as a historical thing, an other minor transparent I. Because yesterday's conquerors and natives have been (trans)formed by the political-symbolic apparatus, the analytics of raciality, which carves them as global subjects, I hope this critique of modern representation shows how, precisely because it threatens and guarantees the coherence and consistency of the transparency thesis, the racial necessarily institutes the transparent I and its others as unstable subjects; therefore, it announces (the possibility of) ontoepistemological accounts that do not (re)produce the regions of transparency and the regions of affectability that compose the contemporary global configuration.

WHAT LIES AHEAD

I hope the following will show that my rejection of the sociohistorical logic of exclusion may constitute an ethical violation, but it is not

a radical departure from modern representation. By refashioning it as the modern text, I move to erase the distinction forcing the choice (haunting "post" critiques of modern thought) between universality and historicity. Not because I deem it irrelevant, but because it becomes significant only when both are comprehended in the principle of transcendentality that Hegel's resolution of exteriority into interiority introduces. My point is that universality and historicity gain ethical authority only when transparency is assumed as an attribute of the collectivities they institute as modern subjects: as an attribute of reason, as the grounds for Habermas's speech acts, as an attribute of Butler's translatable "local cultures," or even as Laclau and Mouffe's new political subjectivities. That is, these writings of moral collectivities united by rationality (universality) or contingency (historicity) presume the transparency thesis, for they assume that interiority holds all that is necessary for the manufacturing of modern subjects.

For this reason, any radical remapping of the contemporary global configuration should neither rely on nor reassemble universality and historicity. Today's global subalterns inhabit the ethical place the arsenal of raciality produces. Facing the horizon of death, they stand perilously before the moment of transparency. Hence, the critical task is to engage the regimen of signification that composes this horizon of existence. For this reason, I acknowledge the productive powers of the modern "Will to Truth" and move to chart the modern text, the signifying context it produces, where I will gather the arsenal and effects of scientific signification. What I do in this mapping of the context of the emergence of the arsenal of raciality is to displace the transparency thesis, the ontological assumption informing both (a) critiques of juridical universality, which deploy the sociohistorical logic of exclusion to account for social subjection, and (b) critical racial analyses premised upon historicity, the ones that attempt to lift "the veil" and exhibit the racial subaltern in transparency. This gesture requires the retrieval of scientific universality from the waters of transcendental poesis, the one that institutes transcendentality as the ethical principle that guides the writing of post-Enlightenment European consciousness and social configuration in transparency. As I excavate the locus of the play of reason that scientific reason composes, the stage of exteriority, I find the regimen of production of raciality in the scientific projects that

attempt to discover how the "laws of nature" produce mental and social configurations. I will show that without this political-symbolic arsenal it would be impossible to hold onto what transcendental poesis promises but cannot deliver because it is constrained by interiority, that is, the delimitation of the moment of transparency. For the arsenal of raciality does precisely that when it produces both (a) the affectable (subaltern) subjects that can be excluded from juridical universality without unleashing an ethical crisis and (b) the self-determined things who should enjoy the entitlements afforded and protected by the principle of universality said to govern modern social configurations.

Disregarding how scientific universality governs strategies of racial subjection enabled the 1980s celebrations or mourning of the demise of the Subject, which all too quickly and uncritically constructed the now "liberated" cultural others as minor transparent subjects. Two decades later, these cultural (historical) subalterns, still subjected to economic exploitation and dispossession, meet the force of law (juridical universality) almost exclusively in its punitive instantiation, in the policing of immigrants and refuges and the threat of self-righteous neoimperial violence. Haunted by what lies before it, this book spells out its own limitations. But I claim no innocence. My project is indebted to recent critiques of modern thought—here I include postmodern, poststructurist, and feminist contributions and the finest specimens of postcolonial writings (with all the overlappings) that decenter and "provincialize" Europe. I hope to push the critical task further, with an engagement with modern representation that does not remain prisoner to its terms. I do not claim to have located a critical position outside modern representation. I merely offer a modern contra-ontology, that is, a selective excavation of modern thought that seeks for what has to be postponed, but never obliterated, in fashionings of the transparent I, the *homo historicus,* to write its trajectory "other"-wise.

3

The Play of Reason

What I seek in speech is the response of the other. What constitutes me as a subject is my question. In order to be recognized by the other, I utter what was only in view of what will be. In order to find him, I call him by a name that he must assume in order to refuse to reply me. I identify myself in language, but only by losing myself in it like an object. What is realized in my history is not the past definite of what was, since it is no more, or even the present perfect of what has been in what I am but the future anterior of what I shall have been for what I am in the process of becoming.

—JACQUES LACAN, *ÉCRITS*

What does history realize when "becoming" unfolds before the horizon of death? Precisely because it introduces an answer to this question, Frantz Fanon's "Fact of blackness" offers a powerful point of departure for the critique of transparency. Not, however, as the ruling historicity imposes, because it describes a black or white subject of the frightened gaze trembling behind the veil of elusive transparency. Whatever blackness threatens to bring into (modern) representation will render the speech of man one, and just one, possible reference to the ontological context in which the black and the white man emerge as such. For if the subject of the "race problem" is a "double consciousness," as W. E. B. Du Bois describes it, it is only because he or she announces an "other" man, that is, one whose emergence, as Fanon's statement recalls, rehearses the haunting that institutes self-consciousness, inviting a return to the founding statements of

modern representation to retrieve the formulations that have outlined the subject.

My task in this chapter is to describe the first moment of this excavation, the charting of the context of emergence of the *analytics of raciality.* Here I gather the assemblage of the horizon of death in statements that describe how reason plays its sovereign role. Following the early path of self-consciousness, beginning with Descartes's inaugural statement, I trace the signifying gestures, displacement and negation, that have ensured the mind's ontoepistemological prerogative while securing its writing as an interior thing in a universe of representation sustained by the scientific refashioning of reason as a universal (exterior) ruler. What I do here is to show how the articulation and disavowal of exterior things in ontoepistemological considerations postpone the threat that the mind itself would be subjected to the new sovereign, *universal nomos,* that the framers of modern science introduced into Western thought. When engaging the predicament of self-consciousness, I find in seventeenth-century philosophical statements how the displacement of exteriority is performed in the manufacturing of two scenes that describe how reason plays its sovereign role, namely, the *scene of regulation,* where it becomes *universal nomos,* a constraining or regulative force, the one refigured by universality and the *scene of representation,* where it becomes a productive power, the one that historicity refigures. From each I gather the formulations that compose two ontoepistemological moments, the *stage of exteriority* and the *stage of interiority,* assembled by descriptions of how the mind and the things of nature are situated before universal reason. Each corresponds to a region of signification—respectively, *science* and *history*—that together compose modern representation. What I find in eighteenth-century rewritings of the scenes of reason is another gesture, the negation of exteriority, in the statement that universal reason acts on the universe only because its tools of knowledge and pillars of the morality reside in the human mind:[1] in Kant's reformulation of the scene of regulation, it takes place when he locates the conditions of possibility for scientific knowledge, for knowing with certainty, in the understanding, and in Herder's rewriting of the scene of representation, it occurs in the postulate that reflection and language constitute the conditions of possibility for moral unity. Here I gather the montage of the stage of interiority, where the themes of the Transcendental and the Historical consolidate universality and historicity as the privileged ontoepistemological descriptors. Though in Kant's and Herder's rendering they acquire the attributes they refigure when deployed in modern ontoepistemological accounts, they are finally authorized when resolved in Hegel's formulations, which describe the play of reason as *transcendental poesis,* that is, the self-unfolding, self-representing, transcendental "I."

With this refiguring of modern representation it becomes possible to situate the epistemological rearrangement, the manufacturing of the analytics of raciality, when self-consciousness finally enters the stage of exteriority, in the projects of knowledge of man and society deployed about three hundred years after Descartes's inaugural statement. Neither version of the play of universal reason—as I will show in this and the next chapter—allowed for the possibility that the tools of scientific reason could be deployed to "discover" the "truth" of the interior thing. For the assertion of its ontoepistemological primacy depended not only on its intimacy with this new refiguring of the logos, but also on the fact that reason had to remain a universal (exterior) regulator from which modern representation derives its particularity. Not even Hegel's formulations that resolve the *nomos* and poesis in *transcendental poesis*—which, as I show in the next chapter, refashions self-consciousness as the *homo historicus,* the *transparent (interior-temporal) I*—fully dissipates this founding threat. Not surprisingly, a few decades after its deployment, the *homo historicus* would itself become an object of scientific reason in the projects of knowledge that attempted to discover the truth of man. What this charting of the context of emergence of the analytics of raciality does is to retrieve exteriority from Hegel's transcendental poesis. This is necessary groundwork that recuperates the *field of science* as a domain of production of modern political-symbolic strategies if one wishes to capture the effects of signification of the racial, to specify the role it plays when deployed in modern ontological accounts. From this reassembling of the founding statements of modern representation, then, I gather both ontological horizons, historicity and globality, to refashion self-consciousness as the *homo modernus,* that is, as the product of both arsenals—the narratives of history and science—of productive reason.

THE PREDICAMENT OF SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS

Though self-consciousness has been outlined in statements that dismiss metaphysical and religious considerations, the *homo historicus,*

the transparent I, owes its privileged ontoepistemological position to how, over three hundred years, when attempting to keep the mind outside the determinations of all-powerful reason, modern philosophers consistently rewrote the defining premise of Western thought, namely, the ontoepistemological primacy of interiority. Western philosophy's self-attributed task has been to expose the "truth of things," which became possible after Parmenides distinguished between things as apprehended by the senses and things as entities *[ón]*, as apprehended by the mind *[nôus]*, and postulated a fundamental connection between the *ón* and the *nôus*. The statements that attribute ontoepistemological supremacy to the mind, the interior thing, would be consolidated into Plato's distinction of a world of phenomena (deceiving appearances) and a world of ideas (the "true being" of things) and Aristotle's specification of the tools necessary for knowing things as entities. From the very beginning, then, the prerogative of the mind as a knowing thing would rest on a postulated intimacy with the logos (reason and word), but it was rather late in its trajectory, in the writings of Stoics such as Epictetus and Cicero, and those of Augustine, that self-determination would be added as the rational thing's exclusive (moral) attribute. Precisely the need to secure this exclusive attribute, I argue, has occupied modern philosophers since the refashioning of reason as the secular ruler and producer of the universe, as an exterior (constraining or regulative) force, threatened to transform the mind into such an other thing of the world.

Following Aristotle's postulate that the happy life is the life of the "rational man," the Stoics declared that the "virtuous man" lives according to divine (rational) nature, that self-determination (self-sufficiency and self-discipline) distinguishes the good life.[2] In Stoicism, reason and freedom are joined because the mind participates in the nature of a divine author and ruler, which is "the vital force which created all things in this internally connected universe" and "the cosmic intelligence, which governs it from within" (Albert et al. 1969, 86). From that derives human beings' unique place among created things, for they alone can lead a "virtuous life," a rational, self-determined, and self-disciplined existence. In the fifth century, Augustine's merging of Stoicism and Catholicism rendered rationality (self-regulation) and will (self-determination) attributes exclusive to the soul, that interior dimension of human beings from

which they access the now Judeo-Christian divine author and ruler. For Augustine, victory in the struggle for self-determination consists in a release from the passions of the body, for the rational soul finds freedom when the human will realizes itself in the supernatural creator's.[3] In the seventeenth century, the relationship between reason and freedom became central, as the mind's self-determination was resignified in a reformulation of the quest for the "truth of things,"[4] in which the grounds for knowing with certainty could rely neither on a supernatural ruler and author nor on common properties shared by the mind and other worldly things. Now man could rely solely on the mind's intimacy with reason, its exclusive quality as a self-knowing thing, to support the claim that he alone could decipher the ordered whole of created things, the universe designed by the divine rational will, namely, nature.

As I trace the trajectory of self-consciousness, I gather statements that ascertain the mind's self-determination and seek to secure it in interiority, unaffected by the determinations of the secular ruler and the extended things it regulates and controls, by rewriting its intimacy with universal reason. What I show is how this gesture itself inaugurates a haunting, the possibility that exteriority would acquire ontological priority because in science, the version of the quest for "truth" upon which modern thought grounds its particularity, knowledge with certainty, that is, "true" knowledge, rests on both (a) the use of the human body, that exterior dimension of the knowing subject through which it relates to the things it seeks to know, and (b) the rewriting of reason as the universal (exterior) foundation shared by the mind and these things. Because from early on Western thought has attributed to the body an inferior position and qualities (extension, matter, the concrete, etc.), while it has written the mind to signify the logos's proper qualities (thought, form, the abstract, etc.), it is not surprising that the rewriting of man in interiority has required the disavowal of the human body and everything else that shares its chief attribute, namely, extension.[5] Though consistent, and I concede necessary, this gesture has not been sufficient. Because the human body's ontoepistemological irrelevance had to be reproduced in each later statement, each would repeat this gesture by writing the mind in its difference from the human body and the things of the world. In doing so, each recalled that which remains without, outside, the seat of form or "spirit." Consequently, the statements that

sketched the stage of interiority as the privileged holdings of self-consciousness also provided the blueprint of the stage of exteriority (nature), the domain inhabited by extended and therefore affectable things scientific knowledge addresses, that is, the one that threatens to assign a place to man, to undermine his writing in (rational/self-determined) interiority.

The Interior Thing

What I find in the outlining of self-consciousness is a statement that establishes the ontoepistemological primacy of *interiority,* once again reasserting that the mind's ability to know with certainty rests on its intimacy with the logos. In his *Meditations,* René Descartes ([1641] 1986) inaugurated the modern account of the self-determined mind in a statement that conflates being and knowledge when he gives ontoepistemological primacy to the *res cogitans,* the thinking thing, the only existing thing whose essence lies in its ability to determine, to decide upon, its own essence and existence. Put differently, Descartes's inaugural statement unites being and truth when ontology and epistemology are resolved in a purely interior (formal) act, namely, thinking. This was an accomplishment that required a bold signifying gesture, the displacement of exteriority, the declaration of its ontoepistemological irrelevance, in two formulations that articulate and disavow extended (exterior/affectable) things. In the first formulation, Descartes reasserts the ontological irrelevance of that which in man does not share in the mind's privilege, namely, the human body. Though he describes man as a mind-body composite, he postulates that "simply by knowing that I exist and seeing at the same time that absolutely nothing else belongs to my nature or essence except that I am a thinking thing, I can infer correctly that my essence consists solely in the fact that I am a thinking thing. . . . Accordingly, it is certain I am really distinct from my body and can exist without it" (54). This statement at once articulates and disavows the human body, for it recognizes its need to define, but affirms its inability to signify, the essence and existence of man.

Nevertheless, the assertion of the ontological primacy of the interior thing, the mind, does not settle Descartes's main concern, that is, to establish its ability to know with certainty the extended (material, sensible, etc.) things. The second formulation, the postulate that everything outside of and distinct from the mind plays no role in the determination of being and truth, that is, the declaration of the ontoepistemological irrelevance of extended things, requires three other steps that further establish the thinking thing's epistemological supremacy: (a) the statement that the human body's and the things' *affectability* renders them, respectively, an unreliable tool and the basis of knowledge; (b) the assertion that thinking (reflection, understanding, judgment) alone plays the determining role in knowledge; and (c) the determination of a formal criterion for truth and its justification. The assertion of interiority's ontoepistemological primacy requires that knowledge depend neither on a human body through which the subject relates to what it seeks to know, by receiving impressions from them—that is, being affected—nor on the exterior things themselves. First, Descartes postulates that what can be known with certainty are not the changeable, unreliable attributes of things—shape, taste, odor, and so on—which are known through the senses, but their lasting (abstract) qualities of being "extended, flexible, and movable," which only the rational mind comprehends. "For knowledge of the truth about such things seems to belong to the mind alone," he argues, so he errs when he threats these impressions "as reliable touchstones for immediate judgment about the essential nature of the bodies located outside us" (57). Second, Descartes also dismisses volitions and emotions, postulating that the question of certainty in knowledge, of "truth," concerns the intellect alone. Hence, he moves to establish why truth or falsity relates only to judgments, that is, the operations of intellect. These alone fall within the scope of his resolution of the problem of certainty. Third, when determining the criterion and basis of truth, Descartes postulates that the sole criterion for truth resides in what the mind can perceive as "clearly and distinctively" as it perceives itself and mathematical ideas. Nevertheless, because the thinking, interior thing, man, is an imperfect and finite formal substance, he cannot constitute the sole ground for asserting truth. For this, the mind depends on the divine author and ruler, now transformed into a rational figure, that is, the idea (form) of perfection, the essence and cause of that which is clearly and distinctively apprehended by the mind, that is, the true. From this "supreme substance" the mind receives the clear and distinctive perceptions, the abstract attributes of extended things (length, shape, motion, etc.), mathematical objects, and so on (48).

When outlining self-consciousness, Descartes refashions the mind as the formal "I," the thinking thing, the sole ground for ontological and epistemological accounts. This recentering of the mind, the interior thing, is accomplished through three moves that perform the displacement of exteriority: (a) the ontological disavowal of the human body in the argument that thinking alone defines the existence and essence of man; (b) the epistemological disqualification of the human body and the things that affect it; and (c) the ontoepistemological disavowal of the "matter": of knowledge, the extended (exterior or affectable) things, the essence and existence of which is determined by the divinity that, now stripped from supernaturality, becomes form. What these formulations that articulate and disavow exterior things indicate, in a text concerned with the conditions of the possibility of knowing the "truth of things," is why it was necessary to write the failure of exteriority to signify the proper ("true") mode of being of man: the attribution of affectability—man's lacking the ability to decide on his essence and existence—that is, outer determination. Put differently, Descartes needs to articulate extended things (the human body and the sensible objects of knowledge) to write their ontoepistemological irrelevance lest man, the subject of knowledge, also become a thing whose existence and essence is determined from without, that is, an affectable thing. Nevertheless, man is a thing of the world, for his body locates him in that which cannot be resolved in the mind's distinguishing quality, interiority; he also belongs in exteriority, where he is and exists as any other affectable worldly thing; that is, because man neither is nor exists without his body, exteriority would remain a ghost haunting every later refashioning of self-consciousness.

Neither the Greek disregard for nor the Christian dismissal of the human body, to be sure, precluded exteriority's "return" in the interventions that reensure the mind's ontoepistemological primacy, nor would Descartes' inaugural displacement of exteriority prevent it from retuning in later refashionings of the I, for the simple reason that without the idea of exterior things, the mind's distinguishing attribute, interiority, cannot be articulated. Until the seventeenth century, this necessity appeared in the oppositional pairs—mind/body, reason/sensation, form/matter—that establish the mind's access to the sovereign of being and meaning, the Logos or God. In modern philosophy, however, this necessity became a threat that

could be postponed only in statements that ensured the mind's intimacy with universal reason by keeping it out of the stage in which it performs the play of power. This is so because modern thought is sustained by an approach to truth, scientific knowledge, that relies on the very possibility of engaging exterior things; put differently, in modern thought, the ontoepistemological disavowal of exteriority becomes a necessity.[6]

Scientific Reason

After the "discoveries" of Copernicus, Galileo, and Kepler, the "Will to Truth" would neither address the things themselves nor contemplate the intentions of the author of the universe. Seeking more than to describe the texture of the universe, in science, knowledge would address the motions (affections) of things, that is, the (material) effects of the actions, of the play of the rational will that orders the universe. Although they do not reject Aristotle's postulate that knowledge should address principles, conditions, and causes, the writers of scientific reason are not concerned with "being," "essence," and "final causes." Instead, the statements that delineate the field of science establish that the knowing subject is interested in that which determines that the "world of things" appear as it does, seeking to discover how its governing power or force, universal reason, works because it would help the project of submitting existing things to the human will. What I find here is the montage of the stage of exteriority, where reason plays the role of the exterior (constraining or regulative) force governing how things appear, that which causes a thing to affect itself (change) and others (motion). That is, in this first articulation of reason as a secular sovereign, universal *nomos*—that is, in scientific universality—the knowing subject remains outside the scope of knowledge, for the truth of self-consciousness remains beyond the reach of the tools of knowledge. Nevertheless, because to know the world of things, the subject of knowledge counted with that which he shares with them, his body, the possibility is open that the self-consciousness could also be subjected to the powerful ruler, to be refashioned as an affectable thing. A possibility that would be explored only about two centuries later, by the writers of raciality, after Hegel resolved "causes" into "essences," "truth" into "being," and, more important, exteriority into interiority, when he refashioned the mind of man as the product, tool, and raw material of a

transcendental mind. Neither a thing as any other nor the receptacle of divine information, in the outline of the field of science, the mind appropriates the impressions collected by the affectable body and combines the unique powers it receives from the divine author and ruler, understanding and will, to discover the tools, the "laws," the latter uses in the ordering of its lesser creations, that is, the things of nature.

In his *New Organon,* Francis Bacon ([1620] 1960) provides a general plan for the scientific journey. Explicitly dismissing ancient and medieval concerns with metaphysics and religion,[7] he argues that the aim of knowledge is to advance human power, to discover the "formal causes" operating in the world of things in order to render the replication of their effects possible. "For though in nature nothing really exists beside individual bodies performing pure individual acts according to a fixed law," he states, "yet in philosophy this very law, and the investigation, discovery, and explanation of it, is the foundation as well of knowledge as of operation. And it is this law, with its causes, that I mean when I speak of Form" (119–20). In order to uncover this law, the knowing subject counts with what it shares with the phenomena it addresses its own affectable body, which here becomes a tool of the rational mind. "The sense, which is the door of the intellect," Bacon argues, "is affected by individuals only. The images of those individuals—the impressions which they make on the senses—fix themselves in the memory, and pass into it in the first instances entire as it were, just as they come. These, the human mind proceeds to review and ruminate; and thereupon either simply rehearses them, or makes fanciful imitations of them, or analyses and classifies them" (292–93). Unlike the Cartesian formal I, who thrives in oblivious abstraction to apprehend the order of the universe, the scientific subject welcomes immersion into the confused, indistinct world of exterior things. For this reason, because in scientific signification affectability—which I use here to refigure change or motion—plays a central role, the displacement of exteriority as an ontoepistemological moment could be performed only in two dangerous formulations, which rewrite nature as the scene of regulation. First, the human body is at once called on and disavowed as a necessary instrument of knowledge. To engage the play of appearances, the subject of knowledge counts with its body—more accurately, the senses—which now become the

appropriate tools to use to gather in the phenomena of the universe, the impressions the mind would use to discover the laws governing the world of things. Second, the immediate objects of knowledge, phenomena, the observation of which would give access to the order of nature, are also at once named and dismissed as mere "effects." That is, because it seeks the hidden, invisible, fixed causes, physics portrays the world of things, the domain of matter, as inhabited by affectable things, that is, beings subjected to outer determination. What emerges here is a conception of causes, laws of nature, as constraining commands, the tools of reason, the exterior (objective or abstract) forces, that affect things and determine how they affect each other. When rewriting reason as the secular regulative force acting on every existing thing, the framers of science transform nature into the holdings of a power that acts solely as law, that is, universal *nomos.*

From now on, the thinking thing can discover the secrets of nature but also translate them into the abstract (mathematical) instruments it has confectioned only because it is made of the same stuff the divine ruler deployed to order the universe. Not only is the knowing subject now interested in what it gathers with the senses, in experience, that is, the confused and contingent happenings of the world of things; it conceives of these events as the manifold, particular effects of general causes, the laws of nature, the forces deployed by the rational (divine) will. When turning its attention to moving (affectable) matter, the knowing subject seeks to decipher the regularities—the particular expressions, the effects of the acts of universal *nomos*—but it is not determined by nor does it determine what it seeks to know; knowledge remains the result of the abstract (formal) tools the mind produces to discover how reason, as an *exterior* (universal) force, controls and regulates the motions (the affections) of the things of the world. That is, exteriority governs scientific signification. In his *Principia,* Isaac Newton ([1686] 1995) translates the movements of the universe into the abstract language of knowledge, mathematics, which becomes the crucial instrument of physics, the study of the efficient causes governing the play of appearances. Physics, or "experimental philosophy," Newton states, is concerned with causes and effects; it moves from the particular to the universal, aware that nature may hold greater mysteries than the laws of motion, but those are beyond its scope. "In this philosophy,"

he posits, "particular propositions are inferred from the phænomena, and afterwards rendered general by induction. Thus it was that the impenetrability, the mobility, and the impulsive force of bodies, and the laws of motion and of gravitation, were discovered. And to us it is enough that gravity does really exist, and act according to the laws which we have explained, and abundantly serves to account for all the motions of the celestial bodies, and of our sea" (3).

What I gather in the statements that fashion reason as universal *nomos,* the law (the sovereign will), is the writing of the world of things, the manufacturing of nature as the stage of exteriority: the plenum is now inhabited by moving things, bodies, which obey the invisible forces or powers that determine how they affect and how they are affected by other bodies. That is, it introduces a conception of the universal as law (regulation) and a conception of the particular in which things matter not in themselves, but as objects of the exterior will that regulates or controls their motions (affections). Nevertheless, though privileging affectability, scientific universality constructs the relationships it observes in phenomena as the deed of a universal ordering (constraining or regulative) force, that is, law. In other words, in scientific signification, exteriority rules both postulates: (a) the defining statement of modern thought, that is, that reason is the exterior, hence universal, sovereign of the world of thing and an attribute of the mind of *man;* and consequently, (b) the defining statement of scientific knowledge, that is, that nature, now approached as the universe ordered by a secular force, is inhabited by affectable, outer-determined things, that is, those whose internal and external affections, change (inner motions) and movement (outer motions), result from the sovereign acts of their common ruler. Though confirming the mind's ability to know with certainty, which it derives from being the only existing thing with reason, even if it could be certain only of the causes of motion (affection), the discovery of the laws of nature marks the beginning of the ascending movement of universal reason, which inaugurates a threat, the henceforth thinkable possibility that order in the world of men is but an effect of an exterior (regulative and constraining) will.

THE SCENES OF REASON

When describing Descartes's outline of self-consciousness I highlight how the possibility of knowing that which lies outside itself—exterior things—with certainty sustains the writing of the mind's

self-determination. Such a possibility, however, would be established only when the framers of scientific signification removed the divine ruler and producer from considerations of knowledge by asserting that the thinking thing could decipher the workings of the secular ruler of the world of things. Because the early formulators of scientific universality deployed the version of the play of reason as universal *nomos,* their radical gesture was to forfeit inquiring into questions of essence and being. Expectedly, the same move that would inaugurate a radically distinct moment in Western thought, modern philosophy, did not preclude—actually, it immediately required—considerations of how universal *nomos* operates in the "world of men," of how it operates in the collective entities constituted by the only rational existing thing.

In my reading of seventeenth-century refashionings of self-consciousness, under this new configuration of Western thought I identify two accounts of how universal reason performs its sovereign role: namely, through the scene of regulation and the scene of representation. Each corresponds to the attributes of the divine sovereign—will and design—whom, at this moment, reason had just begun to remove from the arena of truth. In both, the displacement of exteriority and the reasserting of its ontological irrelevance are performed in statements that rationality, the divine's gift to man, ensures that, unlike merely affectable things, the thing of interiority knows and emulates the will or design of the creator. In Locke's version of the scene of regulation, the deployment of the version of the play of reason as the workings of universal *nomos* enables the formulation of another rendering of universality, juridic universality. Still an exterior ruler, universal reason here constrains or regulates rational things that have two powers the objects of scientific knowledge lack, namely, understanding and will; that is, they can comprehend and decide to follow and emulate divine will. While the framing of juridical universality enables a social ontology that displaces the king's claim of divine power and asserts human beings' ability and right to decide on the basis and direction of their social existence, the idea that in exterior regulation, law, rests the possibility of collective life seriously threatens the very attribute of "inner freedom" that the mind acquires in Stoic morality. This is no small threat. In Leibniz's statements I identify the outline of the scene of representation, in which this threat is addressed through a return to considerations of "final causes"—to "essences" and "being." What

we find here is another version of the play of reason, *universal poesis,* in which existing things (man and the things of the world) become the actualization of the self-producing "force" and the unique "essence," which the divine author places in the interiority of each created thing, that is, "souls" or "monads."

What I identify in these scenes of reason are outlines of the two descriptors—universality and historicity—that correspond to the social ontologies which, from the nineteenth century on, would guide accounts of the modern social configuration, the ones that constitute the modern political subject as the juridical-moral thing. Both descriptors were consolidated separately in the eighteenth century, when Kant and Herder rewrote these scenes to situate the play of universal reason fully in interiority, but they were reconciled when Hegel's version of the play of reason, transcendental poesis, resolved regulation into representation, *nomos* into poesis, the solution that consolidates the *transparency thesis* as the privileged modern onto-epistemological assumption.

The Scene of Regulation

When self-consciousness is fashioned as a juridical subject, the "individual" emerges as the basic ontological unit, the rational will that embraces *exterior* regulation to protect its life and self-determination.[8] In his *Two Treatises of Government,* John Locke ([1690] 1947) specifies the particular way in which the will of the divine author and ruler operates in the "world of men," the "political society." Not, however, before, in the *First Essay,* dismissing the argument that grounds political authority on a divine mandate and, in the *Second Essay,* precluding any possibility of conceiving the ordered world of men along the same lines as scientific signification produces the world of things. Against Hobbes's description of the "state of nature" as wrought by competition among individuals moved by uncontrolled desire, Locke offers an account of the conditions under which the political emerges, in which *man* is already subjected to a kind of universal regulation, the divine law of "self-preservation." Not, however, as the intrinsically affectable inhabitant of the world of things—the stage of exteriority—but as a self-determined thing, one able to know and follow the commands of his divine creator.

Three attributes of man, equality, freedom, and property, testify to the fact that the "natural law [divine will]" has endowed him with self-determination. First, Locke argues, before the institution of "political society," man existed in a state of "equality, wherein all the power and jurisdiction is reciprocal," where everyone is "born to all the same advantages of nature and the use of the same faculties" and "should also be equal one amongst another without subordination or subjection; unless the lord and master of them all should, by any manifest declaration of his will, set one above another, and confer on him by an evident and clear appointment an undoubted right to dominion and sovereignty" (122). Second, unlike in the world of things, where universal *nomos* operates from without—for things decide neither the application nor the direction of their intrinsic powers—in the world of men, regulation operates from within. In the "state of nature," Locke says, men are in a "state of perfect freedom to order their actions and dispose of their possessions and persons as they think fit, within the bounds of the law of nature, without asking leave or depending upon the will of any other man." For man in this state of perfection has the right, given by reason, Locke argues, to ensure "his own preservation" and that of "the rest of mankind," a right he will use only for self-protection (126). Third, from the argument that each human being is ruled solely by the "[divine] law of nature"—for "every man has a property in his own person; this nobody has any right to but himself"—Locke derives a notion of private property, which, besides life and freedom, includes every thing a particular human being modifies in his surroundings. "The labor of his body and the work of his hand," Locke argues, "are properly his. Whatsoever then he removes out of the state that nature has provided and left it in, he has mixed his labor with, and joined to it something that is his own, and thereby makes it his property" (134).

When describing these attributes, which are universal because the divine author and ruler gives them to all rational creatures alike, Locke introduces the notion of the "individual" as the basic moral unit—the one who decides and acts according to the divine will, which at this point remains the sole moral determinant, the measure of goodness and perfection. Because its action is restricted solely by the divine will, through the law of "self-preservation," the thinking thing retains self-determination. Here, however, the notion of self-determination gains another meaning. For just as the account of the universal *nomos* privileges the determinants of action, the writing

of man's uniqueness required the statement that the mind also holds active powers, attributes it shares with the ruler of nature, namely, the will and the understanding. These, Locke argues, testify to man's freedom, which he ties to his power, his ability, to decide on (design and control) the course of—that is, to determine—his action. Not surprisingly, the founding question of this social ontology becomes Why does the self-determined thing subject itself to an exterior ruler, the "political society"? Because, Locke answers, acknowledging that an "individual" may desire to appropriate another's life, freedom, and possessions—instituting a "state of war" that may lead to "state of slavery," being under another's absolute power—individuals recognized the need for regulation beyond natural (divine) law. Because "freedom from absolute, arbitrary power is so necessary to and closely joined with a man's preservation that he cannot part with it but by what forfeits his preservation and life together," by freely deciding to sacrifice the power to execute the "law of self-preservation," the rational thing is doing no more than following divine determination. That is, the political body results from free, independent, rational acts, the objective of which is to ensure rather than hinder self-determination. "For law, in its true notion," Locke argues, "is not so much the limitation as the direction of a free and intelligent agent to his proper interest, and prescribes no farther than it for the general good of those under that law. . . . The end of law is not to abolish or restrain but to preserve and enlarge freedom; for in all the states of created beings capable of laws, where there is no law, there is not freedom" (132).

What one finds in Locke's description of the political society, the artificial body that individuals institute, is the articulation of the first modern ontological descriptor, *universality*. Here self-determination sustains a social ontology that produces the ordered world of men as the scene of (self-)regulation, that is, as a juridic (legal) unity. The "political society," Locke argues, ensues from "individuals'" consent, that is, rational and free decisions to create an artificial rational body, the "political society," the function of which is to enact and administer rules that will preserve individuals' property (life, liberty, and estate) by punishing acts of unrestrained wills. Nothing beyond the recognition that exterior (outer) determination is necessary for the preservation of life and freedom and property, no sense of metaphysical or religious unity (of origin or ends), but

judgment, which is but the obedience of the "natural [divine] law of self-preservation," leads individuals to institute the body politic. Though as a juridical (rational) body the "political society" holds the "authority to decide controversies between them and punish offenders" (163), Locke argues, political power derives from the "will and determination of the majority; for that which acts any community being only the consent of the individuals of it, and it being necessary to that which is one body to move one way, it is necessary the body should move that way whither the greater force carries it, which is the consent of the majority" (169). Because this sacrifice results from a rational (free) decision—namely, consent—being subjected to the expression of the will and determination of the majority, to exterior rules, which are so because they apply indiscriminately to all members of the body politic, does not constitute a relinquishing of self-determination, the ability to design, decide on, and control one's action.

In the scene of regulation, the displacement of exteriority occurs in the postulate that in rationality, the "natural" (God-given) distinguishing attribute of man, resides the condition of possibility for social existence. Though instituted laws constrain individuals' actions, preventing and punishing only those that affect another's freedom, the determinants of freedom reside inside man, in the mind, which, unlike the bodies of nature—the ones without thought, will, or volition—has been endowed with self-determination. Consistently, affectability has no ontological significance, because rationality, through instituted (universal) laws, mediates the relationships among the members of the political society. While imposed by an exterior will, the juridic (collective) body, the political society, is a mere institution, a creation of the thinking thing, the only one able to decide, because it recognizes and appreciates the necessity to subject itself to exterior (outer) determination. Thus, Locke's version of liberal ontology protects *man*'s self-determination by rewriting exterior determination as an effect of individuals' (interior and rational) decisions. Yet it does not dissipate the danger introduced by the writing of reason as universal *nomos*. Just as the framers of science abandon (the desire to discover the essence of) the thing in itself, in Locke's account the individual sacrifices more than the power to execute the divine mandate. For according to early and later critics of universal *nomos*, liberal ontology also forfeits the dearest divine gift to man,

the one that testifies to the profound intimacy human beings enjoy both with the divine author and with each other.

The Scene of Representation

Precisely the talent that *his* participation in the divine nature favors in *man,* representation (autopoesis) is recuperated in the version of reason as a universal productive force. In Leibniz's statements, the universe becomes an effect of fundamentally interior things, "souls" or "monads," which share in the productive power of the divine author and contribute to the realization of its design, perfection, by actualizing, manifesting, and displaying the intrinsic and unique qualities with which it endowed them.[9] In various pieces collected in his *Philosophical Essays,* G. W. Leibniz (1989) recuperates what his contemporaries—Descartes, Newton, and Locke, among others—have forsaken when rejecting metaphysics. For seeking to know how divine will is deployed, he laments, they have missed why it is so. When exploring how divine motives are inscribed in the texture of the universe, Leibniz rewrites the play of reason as universal poesis in a statement that consolidates temporality as a proper ontoepistemological moment. Recuperating Aristotle's notion of simple substances, Leibniz defines monads—"individual substances," "souls," or "spirits"—as the basic created things endowed with three interrelated attributes, namely, "intrinsic difference," "inner force," and self-productivity. All existing, exterior, things, he postulates, are actualizations of self-representing (productive or developing), "intrinsically different" "souls," effects of the deployment of their "inner forces," whose goal is perfection, that is, the realization of the divine design. With this he refashions the universe (the "world of things" and the "world of men") as the scene of representation, an account of the play of reason that describes how all existing things constitute actualizations of the "inner force" and "intrinsic difference" housed in their "souls" or "spirits." For "the universe," he postulates, "is in some way multiplied as many times as there are substances, and the glory of God is likewise multiplied by as many entirely different representations of his work" (42).

In this version of the play of reason, the ontoepistemological displacement of exteriority occurs as the universe becomes but the receptacle of all that is possible and potential, all that always already is in interiority. Not only does this statement fully recuperate interiority—

as "intrinsic difference" (inner particularity) and "inner force" (inner determination)—without dismissing affection. Also, because the determinants of motion now reside in the things themselves and self-production (development) displaces dislocation as change enters the horizon of time, affectability—an attribute of extended (exterior/spatial) things—plays no role in the determination (the account of the essence and existence) of things. In the scene of representation, the relationship between the universal (reason) and the particular (things) will change. "Intrinsic difference" corresponds not only to a position in, but also to that which each particular thing ("soul") adds to, the universal. More important, the universe is now the stage of actualizations, the rendering real of "intrinsic difference," which is an effect but of each particular thing's "inner force"; that is, existing things are not approached as "effects," as reactions to or consequences of the working either of an exterior force or of actual relationships with other things. While each particular thing is a product of a universal force, it is also self-producing and "inner-" determined, that is, affected solely by the force residing at its core. "Each substance," Leibniz postulates, "bears in some way the character of God's infinite wisdom and omnipotence and imitates him as much as it is capable" (42); each "includes once and for all everything that can ever happen to it" (44). And, more important, each "is like a world apart, independent of all other things, except for God, thus all our phenomena, that is, all the things that can happen to us, are only consequences of our being" (47). Further, he states, each particular thing is a "unit of multiplicity," both as each comprehends and represents from a particular position all the existing things of the universe and as each houses all future (possible and potential) ones. Not only does each correspond to a particular mode of representing the universe, but they affect one another only as pieces of an infinite puzzle, because substances "act upon one another and are required, so to speak, to accommodate themselves to one another" (48). Finally, Lebiniz's nature is not static, but rather is an unfolding and contingent order composed of independently self-producing, self-transforming things. Here reason becomes universal poesis; it plays the role of a productive power, the principle that guides the temporal realization, the coming into existence, of the unique force it places in the interiority of each particular thing.

When considering how universal poesis operates in the world of

men, Leibniz introduces the second ontological descriptor, historicity, the one which renders social unity contingent upon morality, the collective principles that each human being houses in its particular intelligent "soul" or "spirit." The "intelligent soul," Leibniz postulates, "knowing what it is—having the ability to utter the word 'I,' a word so full of meanings—does not merely remain and subsist metaphysically, which it does to a greater degree than the others, but also remains the same morally and constitutes the same person. For it is memory or the knowledge of this self that renders it capable of punishment or reward" (65). In the scene of representation, a social ontology emerges in which the I gains attributes ignored in the Cartesian outline and displaced in Locke's appropriation of universal *nomos*. On the one hand, it acquires an "essence," "intrinsic difference," and "inner determination." Being self-producing while at the same time encompassing the whole of existing (actual), possible, and potential things and their transformations, the interior thing is no longer a mere abstract, formal (thought) thing; it becomes a thing that represents (reproduces) itself in time, that is, a temporal thing. Not surprisingly, the disavowal of the human body is here as ontologically decisive as it is epistemologically consistent. Having virtually no relevance to knowledge, the human body now becomes an aid in the realization of designs of the "soul." For Leibniz, the body is that which is "accommodated to the soul for the situations in which the soul is thought to act externally" (211). On the other hand, in the scene of representation the individual is resolved in the collective as "individual" freedom becomes always already an effect of collective inner determination.

In his refashioning of the I as a self-representing thing, Leibniz highlights three dimensions disregarded by the writers of the social as a juridic (self-regulating) body, namely, (a) *morality,* in the view of self-consciousness as fundamentally accountable for its actions; (b) *representability,* in the conception of particularity, individuality, in which "intrinsic difference" corresponds to a particular point of view, representation of the universe; and (c) *temporality,* not merely as memory and insensible perceptions of continuity, the past, but also in the sense in which each mind or soul always already houses its future, that is, its possible and potential actualizations.[10] With this, he outlines a social ontology premised upon historicity (interiority-temporality). By resolving freedom into morality and representability—"inner force" and "intrinsic difference," that is,

interiority—Leibniz rewrites self-consciousness, the I, as a moral thing without allowing for a consideration of the relationships among the members of the social whole. In the scene of representation, freedom (self-determination) becomes the "inner force" of the actualizations actualizing a divine "end" ("intrinsic difference"). Every existing thing, but the rational thing in particular, neither is nor exists as an effect of outward determination, for each and every existing thing moves toward the actualization of its interior (exclusive) force. Morality, as conformity to the divine design, guides ontological accounts that construct human actions and ideas as the actualizations of divine wisdom, not as the expressions of divine will. What this version of the play of reason as universal poesis introduced was the ontological descriptor *historicity,* which would later concern moral philosophies and projects of knowledge that, in the following centuries, would search in the facts and representations of the human past for the actualizations of the "ends," that is, the principles guiding human action (Taylor 1975).

From this initial excavation of the context of emergence of the analytics of raciality, the modern text, I gathered, in the scenes of reason, statements that secure self-consciousness in interiority through the displacement of exteriority, that is, statements that deny exterior things any ontoepistemological relevance. Though in both scenes universal reason remains a manifestation of the figure of the divine ruler and creator, in each the assertion that self-consciousness is a thing with reason sustains the mind's ontological prerogative. Each protects the mind's self-determination from the possibility introduced in the framing of scientific reason, containing the threat it announces with signifying gestures that produce affectability as the effect of one and only one exterior *(nomos)* or interior (poesis) determinant, namely, universal reason. When, in the following century, Enlightenment philosophers chose universal *nomos* over universal poesis to announce the culmination of the trajectory of man, new versions of the scenes of reason were deployed that, by consolidating the interior as the location from which universal reason plays its sovereign role, secure the mind's self-determination without forfeiting that which distinguishes modern thought.

THE STAGE OF INTERIORITY

No one disputes the assertion that the Age of Enlightenment consolidated scientific reason as the force of intellectual, moral, and

economic "progress" and "development" (Cassirer 1951).[11] Reading Condorcet (1995) and other French Enlightenment philosophers, who despised the metaphysics lingering in the Cartesian thinking thing and praised the accomplishments of the English framers of science, one comes across many statements that announce the demise of the divine ruler and author, celebrating the fact that universal reason is finally alone to guide the human mind on the road to "progress" and "happiness."[12] My charting of two statements that consolidate universal reason's greatest accomplishment, Kant's formulation of the Transcendental and Herder's account of the Historical, highlight another bold gesture, the negation of exteriority, that is, the affirmation of its inexistence as an ontoepistemological moment. While each rewrites a particular version of the play of reason—universal *nomos* and universal poesis, respectively—and the corresponding scene of reason that explicates how it operates in the universe, both declare the nonexistence of exteriority when postulating that it is precisely because of how it operates in interiority, as an attribute of the mind, that the secular ruler and producer of the universe constitutes the sovereign master of epistemological and ontological accounts. Put differently, Kant's and Herder's formulations consolidate, respectively, universality and historicity as the privileged descriptors of modern social configuration, the montage of the stage of interiority, in statements that assert that reason plays the part of a universal regulative or productive force because of how it does so in (the mind of) man.

Nevertheless, my reading will show that neither Kant's identification of the tools of the transcendental nor Herder's naming of the pillars of the historical would provide a definite solution to the threat of affectability, because neither could relinquish exteriority. For both Kant's knowing subject and Herder's moral subject fashion the mind as always already mediated by the universal (exterior) determinant, namely, universal reason. So what they accomplish is to postpone this threat by postulating once again that because man is a thing with reason, because he is affected only by something that lies inside himself, he remains the only thing of reason that enjoys self-determination. My point, then, is this: neither can relinquish the grounding of freedom on reason, which is both necessary and unstable precisely because it requires the full montage of the stage of exteriority—a deed accomplished in the following century by the

framers of the analytics of raciality—where it is possible to situate, to represent (think and imagine), post-Enlightenment Europe as just an "other" moment (spatial-temporal locus) of human existence, the task the racial has performed since the nineteenth century.

The Tools of the Transcendental

When refashioning universal *nomos* as transcendental (pure) reason, Kant ensures the universality—"objectivity and necessity"—of "truth" statements even as he locates the tools of scientific reason fully in interiority. In his *Critique of Pure Reason,* Kant ([1781] 1990) ascertains reason's sovereignty in a statement that unceremoniously, though very systematically, once again dismisses the divine author and ruler as well as metaphysics from epistemological considerations. More important, by locating the conditions of possibility of knowledge before and beyond sense perception, postulating that terms such as *time, space, substance, totality,* and so on are the tools "pure reason" provides to the understanding, he establishes that now scientific knowledge could progress independent of subjective (psychological) and purely empirical concerns and without principles derived solely from either of them. With this he settles the questioning of certainty Hume reopened to assert not only the mind's ability to know "laws" governing the play of phenomena, to "discover" the acts of reason in the stage of exteriority, in nature, but to know them a priori, that is, before and beyond experience. "That all knowledge begins with experience, there can be no doubt," Kant states at the opening of the First Critique. But he adds that "it by no means follows that all arise out of experience." His self-attributed task, then, is to describe the conditions of the possibility of a kind of knowledge "altogether independent of experience, and even of sensuous impressions" (1). Needing no common physical (body), supernatural (the divine author and ruler), or metaphysical ground for the mind that knows and the things to be known, this kind of knowledge, a priori, depends but on mediators, the tools of universal *nomos,* which exist only in the mind.

In this reading of Kant's rendering of the universal *nomos,* I am interested in his statements regarding scientific universality. More precisely, I gather in his rewriting of the scene of regulation the outline of the stage of interiority as the proper and sole location from which reason plays its role as the regulative force of the "world

of things," insofar as they concern knowledge. Taking place here is not a dismissal of affectability as a crucial moment in scientific knowledge but its resolution in interiority in the statement that the necessary conditions for sense perception, the "pure intuitions" of space and time, reside in the mind. "Time," Kant postulates, "is the formal condition, *à priori,* of all phenomena whatsoever. Space, as the pure form of external intuition, is limited as a condition *á priori* of external phenomena alone. On the other hand, *because all representations, whether they have or have not external things for their objects, still in themselves, as determinations of the mind, belong to our internal state;* and because this internal state is subject to the formal condition of the internal intuition, that is, to time—time is a condition *à priori* of all phenomena whatsoever—the *immediate* condition of all internal and thereby the *mediate* condition of all external phenomena." Although he postulates that space is the condition of possibility for representing external (exterior) things, the objects of knowledge, Kant further renders knowledge an effect of interiority when he places all phenomena in time. "If I can say *à priori,*" he proceeds, "'all outward phenomena are in space, and determined *à priori* according the relations of space,' I can also, from the principle of the internal sense, affirm universally, 'all phenomena in general, that is, all objects of the sense, are in time, and stand necessarily in relations of time'" (30–31, italics in the original).

In his *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics,* Kant ([1783] 1950) more explicitly postulates that as a condition for knowledge, exteriority is always already an effect of the tools of the mind. His crucial move is to render the senses (the human body) all but irrelevant to knowledge when he states that, because the things that affect the senses, phenomena, are already modified by the "pure intuitions" of time and space, experience addresses things as "objects of possible experience," such as nature, which encompasses "the existence of things, so far as it is determined according to universal law" (44); or better, that which "denotes the conformity to law of determinations of the existence of things generally" (45). For even before being seen, touched, or felt by the human body, and even before displacing, obliterating, of changing another thing, insofar as they are objects of knowledge, exterior things are already an effect of regulating reason. In these statements, I find a radical gesture, the negation, the declaration of the ontoepistemological inexistence

of, exterior things, that is, the affirmation that, as objects of knowledge, phenomena, they constitute but effects of the interior tools of "pure reason."

Two other formulations mark the disavowal of exteriority as a dimension of knowledge. First, Kant postulates that exteriority in itself does not concern knowledge, because the latter addresses phenomena, which is an effect of the "pure intuition" of space. No longer an attribute of the thing itself, spatiality now belongs in the mind; it is the "pure intuition" that enables us to conceive of an "object as without us," to have a sense of exteriority. It is, in short, the (interior) condition of possibility for phenomena. "If," Kant states, "we depart from the subjective conditions, under which alone we can obtain external intuition, or, in other words, by means of which we are *affected* by objects, the representation of space has no meaning whatsoever" (26, my italics). With this statement, Kant dismisses Bacon's statement that affectability, unmediated sense perception, is a first necessary moment in scientific knowledge. Without the rational observer, no discrete bodies, no extended (exterior/affectable) things, nothing that could affect or be affected by the knowing subject or any other existing thing has any relevance to knowledge. Second, the negation of exteriority is further accomplished when Kant locates the subject of scientific knowledge itself in time. For Kant, the "pure intuition" that enables the mind to conceive of coexistence, succession, change, and motion also provides the very experience of interiority; hence, it is not just a condition of phenomena, but the condition of possibility for representation in general. "Because all representations," he posits, "whether they have or have not external things for their objects, still in themselves, as determinations of the mind, belong to our internal state; and because this internal state is subjected to, determined by, the formal conditions of their internal intuition, that is, to time—time is a condition *à priori* of all phenomena whatsoever—the *immediate* condition of all internal, and the *mediate* condition of all external phenomena" (30, italics in the original). With this Kant introduces an account of self-consciousness as the knowing I in which self-determination itself is always already an effect of universal *nomos*'s most powerful tool, that is, time.

In the account of the interiorized *nomos,* self-consciousness is once again conceived as a formal thing but, unlike in Descartes'

outline, this not because it has thought, but because the mind is also determined by a tool of the transcendental, namely, the "pure intuition" of time.[13] "If the faculty of self-consciousness is to apprehend what lies in the mind," he observes, "it must affect that, and can in this way alone produce an intuition of self. But the form of this intuition, which lies in the original constitution of the mind, determines, in the representations of time, the manner in which the manifold representations are to combine themselves in the mind, since the subject intuits itself immediately and spontaneously, but according to the manner in which the *mind is internally affected,* consequently, as *it appears,* and *not as it is*" (41, my emphasis).

With this statement, Kant fashions both self-consciousness and exterior things, the objects of knowledge, as always already phenomena, as subjected to a universal ruler that operates in the mind. Hence, along with the possibility of knowing things in themselves, he submits the mind's self-determination to universal *nomos,* for the declaration of the essence and existence of the Cartesian formal I is also an effect of a tool of scientific reason, that is, the "pure intuition" of time. From the point of view of the trajectory of universal reason, this is a victorious statement that seems to unite self-consciousness and the things of the world in a way that does not challenge the former's exclusive attribute; after all, the universal foundation of truth now resides fully in interiority. To the self-determined thing that starts its trajectory contending with the threat, outer determination, introduced by its need to declare itself (essence and existence) a thing of reason, that is, that it shares the same ground with the things after all, there could not be a bitter victory.

The Pillars of the Historical

From the point of view of the trajectory of self-consciousness, Herder's greatest contribution was the reformulation of universal poesis, which also recaptures precisely the attributes of the mind, feelings and sensations, left out of accounts of universal *nomos.*[14] What I see in his formulations is a revision of the scene of representation in which he refashions self-consciousness as a moral thing when he introduces a social ontology that attributes social bounds to language, religion, culture, and so on. Focusing on collective "self-development," Herder's version of the play of reason performs the negation of exteriority when it (a) submits individual and collective

inner determination and difference to the guiding or unifying principles actualized in cultural products and institutions and (b) introduces a social ontology grounded on the Historical, one that institutes the subject, the nation, or the people as an effect of temporality. In the pieces collected in his *Philosophical Writings,* Herder (2002) repeatedly charges modern philosophy with failing to perform its most important task. Not mesmerized by the achievements of scientific reason, its spiritless logic of understanding and its concerns with the rules of the world of things, he advocates a philosophy of the "healthy understanding," one that recognizes that "the people" have a sense of the good and right, and it is their self-attributed task to contribute to "the moral [self-]development *[Bildung]* of ('spirit of the) people.'" What this moral theory, which aims at the full development of the human "spirit" and not just the perfection of the understanding, looks like one learns in Herder's rewriting of the play of universal poesis, in his delineation of history as the movement of life, as "self-development" (self-representing), in which the centering of language in the fashioning of self-consciousness produces the thinking thing as a being with "spirit," that is, one endowed with inner (productive) force.

When rewriting the scene of representation, Herder outlines historical signification when describing the moral subject as always already the effect of the principles that guide a people's temporal trajectory, the "forces and inclinations" expressed in language and symbols, that is, cultural products. I have selected three statements that indicate how his version of the universal poesis writes the moral subject as a historical (universal, interior, or temporal) thing. First, he adds language to reflection and freedom to mark the uniqueness of human beings, a gesture that refashions self-consciousness as an intrinsically moral (social) thing. Herder (2002) argues that language and reflection are necessities because, as a social thing, the human being needs to communicate its sensations, feelings, and passions (66) and, because the senses of human beings are "inferior in sharpness," their "forces of representation" and need for representation are more ample (83). This incompleteness, he argues, determines that reason, freedom, and language must constitute human "intrinsic difference," rendering self-consciousness, the interior thing, a thing of reflection and representation (language) (87). Though he postulates that universal poesis—or "mother nature," to use his language—

produces human beings as things *with* feeling and sensation, Herder does not construct them as things *of* feeling and sensation.[15] "I cannot think the first human thought," he states, "cannot set up the first aware judgment in a sequence, without engaging in dialogue, or striving to engage in dialogue, in my soul. Hence the first human thought by its very nature prepares one to be able to engage in dialogue with others! The first characteristic mark that I grasp is a characteristic word for me and a communication word for others!" Here the negation of exteriority results from both the placing of the conditions for social or moral unity in the mind and the rewriting of sensation not as the effect of things upon the human being but as a moment of its own representation: the "sensing human being feels his way into everything, feels everything from out of himself, and imprints I with his image, his impress" (97).

Second, Herder firmly establishes temporality as the moment of actualization of the "inclinations and forces" that distinguish and unify a given people or nation. On the one hand, he delineates the historical as the terrain in which humanity actualizes its "intrinsic difference," the one that gathers how each particular nation has contributed to human *Bildung*. With regard to the human species, Herder (2002) postulates, "nature has linked a new chain: traditions from people to people! 'In this way arts, sciences, culture and language have refined themselves in a great progression of the course of the nations'—the finest bound of further formation that nature has chosen" (160). For this reason he advises the historian to seek among the diversity of people's cycle "a thread and plan of formation *[Bildung]* for developing in the human heart little by little certain inclinations and forces for which people previously and on another path saw no clear trace" (269). For the philosophy of "healthy understanding" aids in human formation (self-development) by tracing the various creations of each particular people, throughout its trajectory, to identify the inclinations that respond to its fate. When naming his project a "geography of humanity" or a "physics of history," Herder suggests that, although these creations are spread through the globe, they are fundamentally things of time; the historical alone comprehends the universality of differentiation.

Third, then, to comprehend these spatially and temporally separated actualizations of human self-productive force, Herder reintroduces the figure of the divine author as an "exemplary model,"

which sustains his view that an interiorized authority provides the basis for both a given nation's and humanity's moral unity. By conflating the two moments of the divine, author and ruler, resolving them into "the family," he indicates how patriarchal authority ensures moral unity. "Wherever the original father has his cognitions, inclination, and ethics from," he states, "whatever and however few these may be, round about a world and a world of posterity has already formed itself, and formed itself to firmness, in these inclinations and ethics merely through the quiet, forceful, eternal observation of his divine example!" (274). With this, he accounts for human (moral) difference without reinstating exteriority as the determinant of the universality of differentiation.

The negation of exteriority, the declaration of its impossibility as a determinant of a nation's particularity ("intrinsic difference"), occurs in Herder's postulate that the principle of patriarchal authority—informing a people's tradition—governs human history, that is, "the progress in the inclination of the human species," which begins in the despised despotic "Orient," where he locates the "infancy of humanity," the origins of moral unity, in the "so-called prejudices and impressions of upbringing" (276). There he finds the "*foundation pillars* of everything that is supposed to be built upon them later, or rather already through and through the *seeds* out of which everything later and weaker, however glorious it may be called, *develops*" (277, italics in the original). From there he follows the upward steps humanity has taken as exemplified in Egypt's creation of agriculture, the Phoenicians' invention of trade, the Greeks' appreciation of beauty and reason, up to the Roman world, which provided humanity with "an art of statecraft, military art, and international law of peoples" (290). Though in each of these historical moments Herder notes how specific geographical circumstances modified inherited achievements, what concerns him is how each people transform them according to their own particular (new) inclinations. Beginning in its "infancy" in the Orient, he describes humanity's "intrinsic difference," self-representation, as marked by the appropriation and transformation of products of collective invention, its tradition, according to a collectivity's particular inclinations.

What I gather in Herder's statements is the building of the pillars of the historical, the consolidation of historicity as a modern ontological descriptor, through the recuperation of feelings, emotions,

and inclinations, in the refashioning of self-consciousness as a moral (rational or representing) I. In Herder's version of *universal poesis,* in which reason guides the productive force of human "self-development," the Historical becomes the signified of both universal (humanity's) and particular (nations' and individuals') *poesis*. Though sharing the universal (human) mark, "self-development," the realization of the "inclinations" and "dispositions" of the "human heart," are modified according to external facts of "land" and "place," as each nation, having "its center of happiness in itself," will develop its own. Moreover, this universalization of differentiation also furthers the unity of the nation. From contacts with other peoples arise "prejudice," the role of which, Herder argues, is to "force peoples together into their center, [to make] them firmer on their tribal stem, more blooming in their kind, more passionate and hence happier in their inclinations and purposes" (297). In this rendering of the scene of representation, the particularity of each nation constitutes but a possible and potential effect of human "intrinsic difference."

Recall that Herder is writing against "enlightened" Europe's celebration of sickly scientific reason; hence, his account of universal poesis is a rewriting of the notions of humanity and "progress," the favored themes of his contemporaries, one that he offers against what he sees as the latter's own articulation of European "prejudice." Is the "universal, philosophical, human friendly tone of our century," he asks, "such a unique judge as to pass judgment on, condemn, or beautifully fictionalize their ethics according to its own measure alone?" (299). What is noble in this version of the play of reason becomes apparent against the Enlightenment's arrogant self-definition as the end (the final goal) of human history and its claim that it had the ability to comprehend history in its entirety as a work of a universal *nomos*. What I want to highlight is how Herder's formulation of the Historical occurs in the statement that rewrites the play of reason by locating universal poesis in the mind of man. Therefore, his fashioning of self-consciousness consistently manages to defer affectability through the interiorizing of poesis, by conceiving of the social, moral unity, as an effect of guiding principles that are first and foremost products of the mind's ability to represent. For this reason, because he resolves the "unity and diversity" of nations (and their particular cultures) in interiority, neither Herder's recourse to geography as a basis for national "intrinsic difference,"

nor his notice of Enlightenment's arrogance, and not even his recognition of the deadly effects of the colonial projects it upholds, could prevent his version of historicity from being appropriated in the twentieth-century anthropological reformulation of the cultural in a later moment of European colonial desire.

THE GIFT OF REASON

In his outlining of self-consciousness, Descartes reasserts the interior things' ontoepistemological prerogative and secures it in self-determination, in the statement that the rational thing could alone uncover how reason institutes (founds and orders) nature, the construct that encompasses everything it seeks to know—the earth and the cosmos, the body and the soul, rules and principles—that is, the ordered (created) universe. When the framers of science refashioned reason as universal *nomos,* the claim to knowledge with certainty was sustained by the assertion that the subject can "discover" the forces, "fixed laws," governing the motions of the extended (exterior and affectable) things of the world. Now this access to the truth of the world of things depends on that which man shares with the things he seeks to know, his affectable body—a necessity that threatens to submit man, the mind-body composite, to outer determination. Neither the scene of regulation nor the scene of representation produced under the seventeenth century's versions of the play of reason, universal *nomos* and universal poesis, engages this possibility, because each resolves their respective principles of unity, law and morality, in the powers of the mind, the thing with reason.

At the closing of the Age of Enlightenment, through the articulation of signifiers that indicate otherwise—the senses, the things of the world, and the feeling subject itself—the revisions of the play of reason returned it to interiority without relinquishing its construction as the ruler and author of the universe. Nevertheless, something was lost, for experience and nature were resignified as effects of the tools of science and feelings and emotions were resolved as the pillars of history. In both accounts, human beings' relationship to things (Kant) and each other (Herder) is mediated by a regulative (tools of the understanding) or productive (forces of tradition) power that, though housed in the mind, constitutes the universal ontoepistemological ground. Foucault (1994) locates the emergence of the modern episteme, modern representation, at this moment,

when, after Kant's manufacturing of the transcendental, the "being" of the things of the world would be captured in a temporality of the knowing subject, acquiring their own historicity. I would add that it was so also because of how Herder's formulation of the historical consolidates the locating of human difference in temporality. What happened then? How would the themes of universality and historicity merge in such a way that the it-self (interior) of things would be articulated in the same gesture that writes the thing itself as a moment of man?

When answering this question, Foucault (1994) focuses primarily on the new projects of knowledge in which man emerges as both a subject and an object of investigation. Because it is in the "new empiricities" ("labor," "language," and "life") that he locates the placing of man at the center of the modern ontoepistemological accounts, he could not but ignore a crucial question: What was the process through which the consolidation of the ruling of universal reason resulted in things' acquiring their own interiority, now subordinated to the temporality of the interior I? For Kant's account of universality could not expand Augustine's achievement, because it is not interested in the interiority of things. The condition of possibility for this achievement does reside, as Foucault argues, in Kant's Transcendental—and, I add, in Herder's Historical—but, as we will soon see, it was not an immediate effect of either. It could be achieved only by the version of universal reason that unites the exterior and the interior, the Transcendental and the Historical, by resolving *nomos* and poesis in transcendental poesis. Though Hegel's solution resolves "truth" into "being" by transforming cognition into recognition and reason into freedom, the rewriting of reason as "spirit," the Transcendental I, would not dissipate the threat that is the gift of universal *nomos* to modern thought.

4

Transcendental Poesis

Civil society is the [stage of] difference which intervenes between the family and the state, even if its formation follows later in time than that of the state, because, as [the stage of] difference, it presupposes the state. . . . Moreover, the creation of civil society is the achievement of the modern world which has for the first time given all determinations of the Idea their due. If the state is represented as a unity of different persons, as a unity which is only a partnership, then what is really meant is only Civil society. . . . Since particularity is inevitably conditioned by universality, the whole sphere of Civil society is the territory of mediation where there is free play for every idiosyncrasy, every talent, every accident of birth and fortune, and where waves of every passion gush forth, regulated only by reason glinting through them. Particularity, restricted by universality, is the only standard whereby each particular member promotes his welfare.

—G. F. W. HEGEL, *PHILOSOPHY OF RIGHT*

Refashioning the modern subject without the desire that renders racial emancipation contingent on something hidden behind an ideological veil—just waiting for the "right" tools to "free" it from the alienating debris over which modernity was built—is not the declaration of the death of the "other of modernity." By approaching the racial as the productive tool of reason that writes the "I" and its "others" before the horizon of death, I seek to understand the ways in which what has gone remains. For I am convinced that it exists in another fashion, that it does so because, as Jean-Luc Nancy (1993)

says, "the 'West' is precisely what designates itself as limit, as demarcation, even when it ceaselessly pushes back the frontiers of its imperium," hence it cannot but "open the world to the closure that is," to representation, to "what determines itself by its own limit," and, more important, that not only the "West" itself but also the "irrepresentable" it delimits "is also an effect of representation" (1). With the notion of the *modern text,* I approach modern representation as the ontoepistemological context in which engulfment constitutes the privileged (violent) productive act. My goal here is to capture how scientific knowledge mapped the trajectory of yesterday's "natives" and European conquerors after the "first encounter." That is, it enables me to trace how the modern "will to truth" has transformed both "knowledgeable" conquerors and yesterday's "innocent creatures" into modern political subjects that stand differentially before transcendentality and themes, universality and self-determination, with which it governs modern social (juridic, economic, and symbolic) configurations.

My task in this chapter is to complete the excavation of the context of emergence of the *analytics of raciality,* the critical analyses of the statements that consolidated the modern text, through the description of how Hegel's version of the play of reason, *transcendental poesis,* resolves the threat writers of self-consciousness have contended with since Descartes's inaugural statement. In Hegel's version, the possibility that it could contemplate the horizon of death, of becoming a thing of outer determination—*affectability*—will no longer threaten the *interior* thing because, in the *scene of engulfment,* exteriority becomes a moment of the trajectory of the transcendental (interior or temporal) subject. What I find in Hegel's statements is the completion of the figure of self-consciousness, which now becomes the *transparent (interior-temporal) "I,"* the only one that overcomes the founding dichotomy, interiority/exteriority, when recognizing that the universal foundation it shares with exterior things has always already been it-self. My analysis of Hegel's formulations shows how, when assembling the horizon of life, he manufactures the ethical principle transcendentality, and introduces a notion of freedom (self-determination or inner determination) as transparency, the one that provides the ground for modern ontological accounts and is the basis of ruling conceptions of the right and the good, that is, of justice.

Although the critical field is packed with denunciations and rejections of transparency and intimations that transcendental poesis restricts the transparent I to the boundaries of post-Enlightenment Europe, none relates this version of the play of reason to nineteenth- and twentieth-century scientific projects that attempt to "discover" the truth of man. My reading shows that these result from the fact that Hegel's statement resolves but does not dissipate exteriority and the ontological context it announces when it describes how reason plays its productive role in the scene of engulfment, in which it becomes a desiring, living, or productive force. Because from the beginning scientific reason has established the mark of modern thought, Hegel's, like previous versions of the play of reason, engages the *stage of exteriority* even as it reduces it to a moment of self-unfolding "spirit." Nevertheless, because engulfment apprehends but does not obliterate what it appropriates, it is possible to retrieve the stage of exteriority from the waters of transcendental poesis.

THE SCENE OF ENGULFMENT

Whatever other motives may have animated Hegel's project, it was constrained by the fact that, after almost two centuries, modern philosophy would not relinquish the figure whose outline marks its inauguration. Nor could self-consciousness retain its privileged place as the ground for ontological and epistemological accounts if its intimacy with universal reason was denied. Hence, if self-consciousness could not be transformed, if forfeiting the markers of its particularity, reason and freedom, would result in the loss of what distinguishes modern thought, which, by the late eighteenth century, already organized the post-Enlightenment portrait of modern social configurations, the solution had to be, once again, to rewrite the play of reason. Hegel's successful reformulation produced an account of the trajectory of self-consciousness in which inner determination and self-productivity become the two attributes it shares with universal reason. Put differently, drawing from Kant's and Herder's interiorizing of universal reason, Hegel reconstituted the Kantian formal ("pure reason") universal, the transcendental, as a historical (desiring or living) thing, namely, productive (interior-temporal) force, "Spirit," the transcendental "I." By resolving Reason into Freedom, Nature into History, Space into Time, things of the world into the (thinking, knowing, acting, desiring, or living)

subject, Hegel rewrote the play of reason as transcendental poesis, thus consolidating the fields of modern representation, namely, science and history, the productive contexts that provided the signifying strategies that composed post-Enlightenment ontoepistemological accounts.

Nevertheless, I will show that the operative signifying gesture, here, engulfment, comprehends but does not obliterate exteriority, and in doing so it merely pushes back the horizon of death even as it recuperates that whose renunciation sustained the assertion of the possibility of knowing with certainty, the search for the in it-self ("final causes" or "essences") of things.[1] After almost two hundred years, one could easily read this accomplishment as a necessary outcome of the trajectory of self-consciousness. Perhaps this is so, but it would not have been possible if Hegel had not rewritten *universal poesis* itself in such a way that it precluded the return of Leibniz's notions of contingency and infinity and Herder's conception of tradition. Had he retained the former, his version of self-consciousness would not have retained self-determination, for it would have been unable to claim that it knows all that it could become or all possible and potential future modifications of things. Had he retained the latter, his reformulated self-consciousness would have been unable to alone decide its essence and existence, for it would have remained bounded to principles emerged in the "infancy of humanity." Neither an unbounded nor a predetermined temporality could preserve that which had been ensured by universal reason. To this effect, Hegel rewrote the acts of universal reason as the play of engulfment—the dialectical formulation of temporality that ties together beginnings, means, and ends—to produce a teleology that did not fall back into supernatural or secular metaphysics.[2] In Hegel's transcendental poesis, the theater of reason became the arena of history as the universe became the product of the temporal trajectory of a self-producing and self-moving transcendental (interior-temporal) I, namely, "Spirit," that in which form and content, essence and existence, the substance and its modifications, cause and effects are resolved. Though everything that is and can become is at once its raw material, instrument, and goal, only one thing, the one that shares reason's powers, the mind, can recognize that this is so.

What I find in Hegel's formulations is the statement that secures self-consciousness in self-determination by bridging the difference

between regulation and representation in the moment of transparency, when self-consciousness recognizes that nothing is exterior to itself because, like itself, every existing thing is a moment, an actualization of spirit, the cause and end of the universe with which it enjoys a profound intimacy. With this Hegel addresses, because it is crucial for securing self-determination, the question of how to sustain the mind's ability to know extended (exterior-affectable) things: How can we resolve the immanent (material, concrete, and contingent) nature, the universe that stands before the mind, into the transcendent (the formal, abstract, and necessary) without recourse to universal reason as an exterior or interior constraint or focus on unmediated relationships that would retrieve *affectability?* That is, how can we preclude the eruption of that which the trace contains, whose deferment enables the writing of self-consciousness as an interior thing and which previous accounts of universal reason had kept at bay by risking self-determination itself? When addressing these questions, Hegel introduces two notions, namely, actualization and recognition, the effect of which is to provide an account of the trajectory of Spirit as the temporal (self-productive) process through which self-consciousness learns of a profound intimacy between itself and things. Though both are crucial to the writing of the "Same," each gains a particular meaning when deployed in Hegel's account of how self-consciousness is positioned in relation to the "world of things," the one given to it, and the "world of men," the one it produces. Through the engulfment of exteriority, in the movement of actualization and recognition, the version of the play of reason as transcendental poesis institutes the *transparency thesis,* the ruling modern ontoepistemological assumption, while allowing for projects of knowledge that produce modern subjects that remain before it.[3]

In *Phenomenology of Spirit,* Hegel ([1807] 1977) describes how self-consciousness comes to recognize that the profound intimacy between itself and exterior things resulted from the fact that both constitute distinct moments of the actualization of spirit. By recuperating knowledge's concerns with being or essence, the metaphysical mistake Locke criticizes, Hegel reunites the self-determined thing and that which stands before it—the external, the exterior, the extended—in an account that (trans)forms the thinking thing into a desiring thing. For Hegel, the "antithesis of its appearance

and its truth has, however, for its essence only the truth, viz. the unity of self-consciousness with itself; this unity must become essential to self-consciousness, i.e. self-consciousness is Desire in general. Consciousness, as self-consciousness, henceforth has a double object: one is the immediate object, that of sense-certainty and perception, which *for self-consciousness* has the character of a *negative*, however; and the second, viz. *itself*, which is the true *essence*, and is present in the first instance only as opposed to the first object. In this sphere, self-consciousness exhibits itself as the movement in which this antithesis is removed, and the identity of itself with itself becomes explicit" (105, italics in the original). Here "abstract" essence and "concrete" existence of objects (things and other I's) do not constitute limits to self-determination, for both need to be engaged for the completion of self-consciousness' trajectory toward freedom, which occurs when it moves from "simple universality," the moment of "being in-itself," in its initial shape in the Cartesian outlining, into "true universality" at the completion of its trajectory—after it recuperates death, negation, as a dimension of itself—the moment of "being for-itself," that is, the moment of transparency.

When rewriting previous fashionings of consciousness, Hegel introduces an ontological account, the scene of engulfment, which reconciles the *scene of representation* and the *scene of regulation*.[4] In it, self-consciousness learns that scientific reason has misapprehended the play of phenomena, that knowing things consists in the recognition that the universe is the stage of actualization of a transcendental consciousness, the self-determining because self-producing force whose "essence" it shares. Through this movement of engulfment—actualization (exteriorization) and recognition (interiorization)—self-consciousness becomes the subject of transcendental poesis; its function is to actualize the possibilities and potentialities of Spirit, to bring it into existence by realizing its "inner force" (essence). Here the knowing subject is a desiring thing because the realization of its "intrinsic difference," self-determination, requires that first it move outside of itself, where it finds negation, the moment of regulation in things, and then recuperate them back into interiority, now conceived fully in the scene of representation. In this account, mediation takes a different role: the means of knowledge are neither the human body nor the tools of scientific reason, but the things to be known, namely, consciousness and exterior things, which are

external to each other only as long as consciousness ignores that its truth is to become consciousness for-itself, that is, when it recognizes that self-regulation is only a vanishing moment in its trajectory toward recognition.

Previous versions of the play of reason preempted affectability, outer determination, that is, the possibility that self-consciousness is situated before the horizon of death, in statements that articulate and disavow exteriority to establish its ontoepistemological insignificance. In Hegel's account, exteriority is but a moment in the temporal trajectory of the self-producing thing, which ends with its emergence as an independent, transparent consciousness, that is, as self-consciousness. Further, self-consciousness is again able to access the thing-in-itself, essence, precisely because it acknowledges that the thing in-itself is but a moment of universal reason that is not yet aware of itself, that does not know that it is Spirit. In this montage of the stage of interiority, the play is the mode of production, for the principle of transcendentality (and the narrative it guides) produces the scene of engulfment (actualization and recognition) that resolves regulation into representation. Here the deferment of affectability results from an account that recuperates exteriority, the ontological moment negated in the statements that located the tools of universal *nomos* and the pillars of universal poesis in the mind, and redefines the pairs universal-particular, universality-historicity, exteriority-interiority, and space-time by resolving the first term into the second as the former becomes a vanishing step of the temporal trajectory of the transcendental I. Regarding exteriority, the attribute the human body shares with the objects of knowledge, it becomes a "vanishing," necessary but not determining moment of the movement of transcendental poesis. For immediate recognition cannot fully sustain the I's claim to know the world of things unless it risks becoming an object of universal *nomos*. Hegel introduces a notion of particularity that encompasses the material, contingent, immanent moments that need to be engulfed for consciousness to recognize the cause and end of every existing, possible, and potential thing as Spirit. Hegel's style constitutes but a deployment of his own dialectics; the structure of every section, part, and chapter of his *Phenomenology* rehearses the trajectory it writes. Instead of seeking for examples in appropriate passages in various moments of his text, I read his account of "observing reason," scientific reason, to

show how he redefines the scene of regulation as the "Fall," the moment of dead reason, which is necessary for the realization of spirit, and his account of "world history," which engulfs the globe, which becomes the space where spirit deploys, represents, the effects of its productive play.

DEAD REASON

Throughout the little over one hundred years since Newton's and Locke's formulations, the search for the truth of things has been free of any concern with "being"—a move that constituted the emergence of science itself. Hegel's transcendental poesis returns to considerations of "being," establishing the task of knowledge as bringing about the realization of the Spirit's goal, which is the moment of actualization, when it comes into exteriority to become its own object. His is not an easy project. This accomplishment requires something that modern thought has rejected since at least Descartes, that is, extension needs to be brought back into, recognized by, and reconciled with thought. It demands an eternal engagement with exteriority (a sacrifice, Hegel acknowledges), which robs the mind of the certainty that it is the sole determinant of human conditions but necessary for learning that Spirit is "the absolute notion" that unites human consciousness and the things of the world. For this reason, Hegel's account of scientific reason enabled attempts to discover the "truth" of self-consciousness. This is so because it articulates exteriority as a necessary moment of the self-unfolding spirit, for it can complete its trajectory only in successive moments of contention with and sublation of immanence. The movement of Spirit is an eternal engagement with its own exterior self, namely, nature, that is, with extension ("pure negativity," death), which is a limit at the core of the transcendental I. Precisely because Hegel's account defers exteriority by apprehending it, his version of modern representation, the one that consolidates the modern text, provides the point of departure for a reading of the racial, the scientific signifier that produces self-consciousness as an effect of exteriority, which produces a modern contra-ontology.

When Hegel ([1807] 1977) describes the moment of scientific reason, he names it a vanishing moment in the process of actualization of spirit, when universal reason finds itself in the world as a "Thing," self-consciousness learns of objectification—that is, it becomes aware that the independent other, the thing, is also itself, but it does not know that thingification is a crucial aspect of "ethical life." For though "observing reason" conceives the "outer" (external or exterior) as the "expression" of the "inner" (the interior or thought) and mistakes the former for the latter, Hegel postulates, it fails to acknowledge that the one is necessarily the other. At this point, Hegel states, reason acts instinctively. It observes, describes, and experiments with the goal of showing how the existing things express the operation of universal (exterior) determinants, that is, laws. Because at this moment the law is immersed in the things as they exist, the universal appears only as immediate, even though consciousness now learns of the notion of law itself and of two other notions that indicate the proximity of the realization of "Spirit," namely, "matter" and "End." With the notion of "matter," it learns that law, universal *nomos,* is not merely "sensuous" and that things have universality, while with the notion of "End," it captures the idea of teleology, of the fact that what seems to be merely necessary is the culmination of a process that is a return to the beginning. Yet scientific reason sees only cause and effect, an external relation between two independent things, not recognizing that that which comes into being—the "effect" or "End"—was always already *in* there. Moreover, here "observing reason" learns the notion of self-consciousness, which "likewise distinguishes itself from itself without producing any distinction" (157). Mis(self)-recognition has serious consequences.

Through this mistake, scientific reason performs a double displacement: the "End" is conceived as exterior to the thing and as exterior to consciousness itself. In the first case, "the instinct of reason" fails to *recognize* that the "essence" of the thing is the act of becoming what it has always been, that is, that this action is not something produced by an exterior force, but is the thing itself. This "activity" is, according to Hegel, "nothing but the pre-essenceless form of its being-for-itself, and its substance, which is not merely a determinate being but the universal, or its End, does not fall outside of it" (159). Hence, instead of capturing that essential being of the thing, its "Notion," consciousness separates the two, conceiving the "Notion" as the "inner" and the actuality (the realized thing) as the "outer," and "their relation produces the law that the outer is the expression of the inner" (160)—that is, the "inner" becomes the universal, and the "outer" is its particularization.

What the "instinct of reason" does not comprehend in the observation of organic (living) beings, for instance, is that the "outer," the actual, is the manifestation, the actualization properly speaking, of the "inner," which, according to Hegel, is the proper mode of establishing their connection. In scientific reason, he concludes, the thing is "only something 'meant'"; "and if Reason can take an idle interest in observing this 'meant' thing, it is restricted to the description of the 'meanings' and fanciful conceits it finds in Nature" (179). In short, in scientific reason the relationship between the universal (interior, "essence") and the particular (the existing [extended] thing) is still conceived in terms of exteriority. Hegel deplores this moment of reason because, even though it has found universality, it has been unable to understand the true relationship between the universal and the particular. The particular remains immersed in immanence, a shape, a fixed form, not yet a moment of a self-transforming, living thing. In the second case, regarding consciousness, the assumption of exteriority entails another mistake. Failing to recognize that the "laws of thought" are part of the movement of thought itself, "observing" self-consciousness "converts its own nature into the form of being"—that is, it approaches itself as an object, as in Kant's formulation (181). The mistake is that "observing reason" takes the actual thinking "individual" on the one hand and the world on the other, severing the two without recognizing that whatever the thinking individual is is but a manifestation of given conditions of the world, that "individuality is what *its* world is, the world that is its own" (185, italics in the original).

For Hegel, "observing reason," dead reason, cannot know actuality other than as an external thing, as exteriority. "Observing reason," scientific reason, does not know Spirit. Hence, it views shapes as signs and conceives of the "outer," the exterior, the extended, as the expression of the "inner," of the interior, of thought. Failing to conceive what exists and is given to knowledge as temporality, as actuality, it reads it as a fixed, independent, particular thing. That is, science can uncover the universal laws that determine how things appear; it can even conceive of force as something internal, and perceive that infinite appearances of things can be captured by artificial constructs—mechanical instruments, mathematical instruments, the categories of understanding. However, because what experience presents to self-consciousness is extension, the things of the world

as they affect each other according to universal laws, the scientific consciousness does not know of temporality; it can only conceive of thought as another fixed thing, an unmoving universal, as a form (an intuition) of the thing. This, Hegel proclaims, is alienated reason, and "this final stage of Reason in its observational role is its worst; and that is why its reversal becomes a necessity" (206). Awaiting consciousness, after the "Fall" of reason in complete thinghood (that of the existing independent thing and its own independence as self-consciousness), is the realization that self-moving reason is itself "reality."

This fall into nothingness precedes the moment when free self-consciousness finds itself objectified in an "other" free self-consciousness, when the liberal (Lockean "individual") subject finally realizes that the sacrifice that institutes the political, the collective, is no sacrifice. The moment of recognition, when in the particular "individual" it is recognized that "this existence unchangeable essence [the nation] is the expression of the very 'individuality' which seems opposed to it; the laws proclaim what each individual is and does; the individual knows them not only as his universal objective thinghood, but equally knows himself in them, or knows them as particularized in his own individuality, and in each of his fellow citizens" (213). No need for mediation. Unlike in Kant's Transcendental and Herder's Historical, in Hegel's Transcendental the merging of both recuperates exteriority to resolve it into interiority, in that which Augustine called the privilege of the rational soul. Thought is the "essence" of everything that exists, but only insofar as the interior thing also recognizes itself as a thing—not as an extended thing, for we just saw that at this point it still thrives in alienation—but as a thing that is fundamentally of time, always actuality, because it enjoys a profound intimacy, transparency, with that universal force that comes into being in time as it engulfs space, the Transcendental I, namely, "Spirit." This is the moment of "world history."

THE STAGE OF LIFE

Whatever answer is given to the question What is history? will more likely than not resonate with Hegel's philosophical account of "world history," the one in which history "reaches its culmination in a community which is in conformity with reason; or we could also say, one which embodies freedom" (Taylor 1975, 389). With this, I am not

repeating Hegel's formulae to reduce every or any statement on history to a manifestation of the (Hegelian) "Same." My point is simpler. From the earlier delineation of the scene of representation, which remains at the basis of later rewritings of universal poesis and is at the core of the concepts—such as the nation, culture, ethnicity—designed to capture a historical consciousness, the descriptor *historicity* presupposes an ethical principle, transcendentality, the foundation and end, actualized in a collectivity's temporal trajectory. In his blueprint of the arena of history, Hegel sidesteps both grounds for social ontologies, the universal *nomos,* in which the basic moral entity, the "individual," sacrifices its "natural freedom" (God-given self-determination), and universal poesis, in which freedom is also an attribute of the moral collectivity to which he belongs. Rejecting Kant's formalism, Hegel refashions transcendental (pure) reason as "Spirit," that is, he rewrites it as transcendental poesis, which, as living form and content, will and action, is not merely the ground and guide but self-determination (freedom) itself. With this, he rearranges history itself, which now becomes not only an account of past facts and deeds, but the scene of life, which, along with the products of creative imagination (culture, arts, science, religion, etc.), constitutes the actualization of "Spirit."

What I find in Hegel's revision of the scene of representation, which replaces the divine ruler and author with the self-determining and self-producing figure of "Spirit," is a social ontology in which transparency becomes the "end," the final purpose, when the designs of the new author and ruler, Spirit, are actualized in human institutions and products. For, unlike other existing things, the human being has the ability to measure the rightness and goodness of its actions; as a thing with free will, it can decide whether its activity will bring the realization of the "Ends" of the ruler or producer of the universe. In Hegel's rendering of the scene of representation, *perfection* corresponds to the moment when Spirit becomes fully realized in social conditions, an accomplishment of human action that only the thinking thing can recognize. From this rewriting of representation as the scene of engulfment (actualization and recognition, exteriorization and interiorization) results a narrative of history in which, though assuming that it is its eternal and infinite inner force, the temporal unfolding transcendental subject has an "End," but it is not exactly the one to which Hegel refers in the earlier critique of

scientific reason. Hegel writes modernity as marking a qualitative shift in "world history."

In the version of reason as transcendental poesis, human consciousness and action are conceived as things of reason and freedom, the actualizing instruments Spirit deploys to bring the possible and potential into actuality, which here is but man's recognition that Spirit is the "inner [transcendental] force" guiding his history and that self-determination is its nature and purpose. Nevertheless, it happens only in post-Enlightenment social (juridic, economic, and symbolic) configurations, when freedom is claimed as the sole ground for thought and action, when universality is actualized in law and morality. When every product of human poesis—social institutions and cultural products—is recognized as also a product of Spirit, when it acknowledges that profound intimacy with the transcendental productive force, self-consciousness achieves the moment of transparency.

In his *Lectures on the Philosophy of History,* Hegel (1900) argues that the cause and force, the shape of consciousness operating in "world history," has always been self-consciousness, that is, "Spirit." Since "Spirit" is the very movement of coming into being, History as its theater does no more than bring Spirit into being, to render it actual, to realize the "Notion," that is, reason as freedom. Perhaps it would not be an overstatement to say that Hegel's greatest accomplishment was no more than to deploy a common ground for man and the things of the world that the apologists of universal *nomos* had insisted on keeping at bay. However, from Hegel's statement that the "thinking Spirit only *began* with the revelation of divine essence" (17, italics in the original), it would not be a mistake to say that his privileging of reflection, as opposed to the "feelings and inclinations" Herder prefers, sidesteps any religiosity that is not conceived under the idea of universal reason. This would account for the fact that Hegel reformulates the question that sets up Herder's account of history. Instead of asking about the "origins" of the force actualized in human temporal trajectory, he returns to Leibniz's question about the "purpose of the world." With this, he moves from a conception of history as mere repetition of an "original" authority, which takes hold of human hearts and souls from the outset, to an account of history as constituted by the many steps of the struggle of an "absolute power" that moves in and out of itself

in order to learn what it has been all along, namely, everything that comes into being. Though the religious connection that is spotted as spirit can achieve its purpose only in human action, what changes is the fact that Spirit comes into existence not as a supernatural author and ruler taking a particular human shape and sacrificing itself to prove its power, but in the actions of every human being who knows reason. "The realm of Spirit," Hegel postulates, "consists in what is produced by man" (20). Not that which is produced by any and every human being, but only that which is by those who recognize freedom as the distinguishing human attribute. Hegel's Spirit, the productive force, the cause, effect, and content of human history, is a thing of interiority. "Spirit," he explains, "is Being-within-itself (self-contained existence). But this precisely is Freedom. For when I am dependent, I refer to myself as something else which I am not. I cannot exist independently of something external. I am free when I am within myself." Spirit is "I." It is still a Cartesian subject: "This self-contained existence of Spirit," Hegel proceeds, "is self-consciousness, consciousness of self" (23).

How does Spirit achieve this goal in time? According to Hegel, spirit uses three means for its realization, namely, the individual, the state, and the people. Each reveals Spirit's nature in a particular manner, but the individual is the starting point for the other two. For Hegel "individual" will is that which renders actual the law, the principle, the concept of "world history." "The will, man's activity in general," renders "Spirit" real (active, actual) because "it is only through this activity that the concept and its implicit ('being-in-themselves') determination can be realized, actualized; for of themselves they have no immediate existence" (28). Nevertheless, when explaining how it is possible, Hegel rewrites Kant's moral law by resolving inner regulation into self-actualization. Through actions geared toward particular, subjective aims, the self-interested rational will becomes the "subject of history." Regardless of its immediate moral implications—good or bad, selfish or sacrificial—an individual's action is not "necessarily opposed to the universal," because individual action just fulfills that which is in the nature of the universal, which is that it "must be actualized through the particular" (35). The universal, that which exceeds subjective determinants of action, is a juridical and a moral moment of the unfolding spirit. "In the course of history," Hegel states, "two factors are important.

One is the preservation of a people, a state, of well-ordered spheres of life. This is the activity of individuals participating in the common effort and helping to bring about its particular manifestations. It is the preservation of ethical life. The other important factor, however, is the decline of the State. The existence of a national spirit is broken when it has used up and exhausted itself. World history, the World Spirit, continues on its course. . . . This is the result, on the one hand, of the inner development of the Idea and, on the other, of the activity of individuals, who are its agents and grin about its actualization" (38–39).

The state and the people constitute two distinct modes through which human will and action actualize the designs of Spirit, but Hegel does not separate the two. He conceives of the constitution as a formalization of a people's stages of "spiritual development," which is but a moment of "its consciousness of itself, of its own truth, its own essence, the spiritual powers which live and rule in it" (52). Although the "Idea" (reason as freedom) is that which is to be brought into being, the state is its externalization, its mode of existing as exteriority. Hegel argues that it is "the union of the universal and essential with the subjective will, as such it is *Morality*" (50, italics in the original). That is, in Hegel's formulation, the state includes both a juridical dimension (law, the constitution) and a moral dimension (the particular spirit of a people): it "is rational and self-conscious freedom, objectively knowing itself" (60). Here again the reunion of form and content comes into being in human collective activity. "The universal which appears and becomes known in the state, the form into which is cast all reality," Hegel teaches, "constitutes what is generally called the culture of a nation. The definite content, however, which receives the form of universality and is contained in the concrete reality of the State, is the spirit of the people. The true State is animated by this Spirit in all its affairs, wars, institutions, etc. But man must himself know of this—his own—Spirit and essence and give himself the consciousness of his original union with it. For we said that all morality is the unity of subjective and general will. The Spirit, then, must give itself an express consciousness of this unity, and the center of this knowledge is religion. Art and science are only different aspects of this very same content" (63–64).

In Hegel's account of "world history," in which the Global becomes the Transcendental I's exhibition hall, the subject of transcendental

poesis does not merely mediate between the knowing self-consciousness and the things it seeks to know (in science), the rational will and the things it wills (morality), the rational agent and the things it acts upon (action), the rational sovereign and the laws it creates. It comes into being in mediation, because science, morality, action, and law are its modes of existence. "World history," then, rewrites the scene of representation as the scene of engulfment, the movement of the realization of "Spirit" in time in the living and dying of states, the emergence and obliteration of ethical (juridical-moral) wholes that result from the actions of individuals who are the means for the actualization of these collectivities' particular essence, that is, the people (the nation), who represent a particular stage of "Spirit." Individuals' minds, Hegel sates, "are full of it and their wills are their willing of these laws and of their country. It is this temporal totality which is One Being, the spirit of One People. To it the individuals belong; each individual is the son of its people and, at the same time, in so far as his state is in development, the son of his age. No one remains behind it; no one can leap ahead of it. This spiritual being is his—he is one of its representatives—it is that from which he arises and wherein he stands" (66). For Hegel, the purpose of "world history," the past, present, and future accomplishment of man, is the realization of Spirit, the self-determined, inner-determined, transcendental I, which can become aware that it is everything only in time, the only condition for a claim for being the absolute; if it were a thing of space, it would be a thing only among others.

As noted before, the temporal self-realization of Spirit is a dialectical process. In the scene of engulfment, human [auto]poesis brings Spirit into existence, that is, the being whose "truth" is becoming is neither Sisyphus nor Job; it is not condemned to fruitless, dead repetition. The direction, the goal of "world history," is "Progress." "Only the changes in the realm of Spirit," Hegel argues, "create the novel. This characteristic of Spirit suggested to man a feature entirely different from that of nature—the desire toward perfectibility" (68). When universal reason becomes transcendental poesis, self-consciousness assumes the shape of the *homo historicus,* which, when playing its productive role, actualized in post-Enlightenment social (juridical, economic, and cultural) configurations, recognizes that it has always already been Spirit, that each individual's thoughts and actions participate in the nature of the absolute (temporal) subject. "Spirit," Hegel

postulates, "is essentially the result of its own activity. Its activity is transcending the immediately given negating it, and returning into itself" (94).

Unlike Herder's account, which resolves all spatial difference into the always already interior, the Historical, the productive signifying gesture here, engulfment, introduces a fundamental but sublatable and reducible difference when it circumscribes the place of the realization of spirit. For it writes post-Enlightenment European social configurations as the only ones in which it has completed its trajectory in its recognition of universality and self-determination. What this gesture institutes is the principle informing the transparency thesis, namely, trancendentality. When producing the scene of engulfment, Hegel builds the stage of life when he identifies the various moments of the trajectory of spirit: the "East," the "Greek World," the "Roman World," the "German World," and finally modernity, which compose a rather small portion of the world. Neither precolonial America nor Africa participates in this trajectory; only the "East" and "Europe" represent distinct moments of the actualization of spirit, while the new nations erected by Europeans on the American continent are not yet important actors in the stage of temporal reason. In the East and in Europe, then, Hegel finds expressions of the unfolding "Spirit": "The History of the World travels from East to West," he says, "for Europe is absolutely the end of History" (103). Nevertheless, only a few events in history, that is, the Reformation, French Revolution, and the emergence of the state, mark the realization of transcendental poesis, that is, moments when individual self-consciousnesses recognize their fundamental intimacy with the subject of *nomos* and poesis. In post-Enlightenment Europe, Spirit "first arrives at an abstract knowledge of its essence, ethical life is submerged in the formal universality of legality or law" (265); it divides itself into two domains, "culture" and the "realm of essential being," and takes hold of both. "They are," as Hegel describes them, "confounded and revolutionized by the insight [of the individual] and the diffusion of that insight, known as Enlightenment [returning into] self-consciousness, which now in the form of morality, grasps itself as the essentiality and essence of the actual self; it no longer places its world and its ground outside itself, but lets everything fade into itself, and as conscience, is Spirit that is certain of itself" (265). All other regions of the globe

remain elsewhere in time, either awaiting or hopelessly unable to recognize that human mind and action are but the raw materials, tools, and products of Spirit.

THE MARK OF TRANSPARENCY

Both in his account of transcendental poesis and in the explicit exclusions that restrict the play of reason to the geographic limits of European space and the temporal boundaries of Greco-Judeo-Christian thought, Hegel writes post-Enlightenment social (juridical, economic, moral) configurations as the place of realization of "Spirit," that is, the moment of transparency. His decisive contribution to modern representation, I argue, is not to establish how post-Enlightenment European configurations depart from other previous and coexisting ones, but to establish why this is so. In Hegel's formulations, modernity is not just the most advanced stage of the human trajectory. It is the culmination of a temporal trajectory, the moment where human consciousness realizes its intimacy with the transcendental (active, self-productive, and self-determined) reason—that is, the moment in which individual consciousness and social (juridical, moral, and economic) conditions reveal themselves as the actualization of transcendentality. This is the place of transparency, where the transcendental subject is now conscious of itself as a (interior and exterior) thing of the world, and the (interior and extended) things of the world are recognized as the transcendental subject. How was it accomplished? How could the recognition of transcendentality be limited to particular human beings located in a rather small corner of the globe?

In transcendental poesis, the reunification of self-consciousness and the things does not presuppose the kind of universality provided by a divine author and ruler—Locke's "[divine] law of nature," Leibniz's "divine wisdom," and Herder's "divine example." For though the idea of divinity includes a fundamental equality or inequality among all created beings derived from how close a creature is to the perfect being, it also assumes a profound intimacy, the knowledge of which is contingent on the supreme being, that is, revelation. In Hegel's account, on the other hand, the shape-shifting self-consciousness not only thinks and acts, even if unaware, as a moment and the instrument of Spirit; it also holds the privilege of revealing to itself and to Spirit that the latter is the matter and the

form of the world. "Spirit," Hegel (1900) posits, "being the *substance* and the universal, self-identical, and abiding essence, is the unmoved solid *ground* and *starting-point* for the action of all, and it is their purpose and goal, the in-itself of every self-consciousness expressed in thought. This substance is equally the universal *work* produced by the action of all and each as their unity and identity for it is the being-for-self, the self, action" (164, italics in the original).

Which self-consciousness? Whose actions? Whose works? Entertaining these questions will reveal how Hegel asks and answers the question of why post-Enlightenment European consciousness and social configuration mark the "end" of the self-unfolding "Spirit." What guides my reading of Hegel's answer is his distinction between two kinds of universality, universal reason (as *nomos* or poesis) and the "true" universality (universal reason as "Spirit"), namely, transcendentality. Precisely here the particular violent productive force of engulfment, the signifying gesture performed in Hegel's version of the play of reason, becomes all the more evident, of course, if one agrees with Žižek's (1999) statement that "Hegel is fully aware that the positive form in which this abstract universality gains actual existence is that of extreme violence: the obverse side of the inner peace of Universality is the destructive fury towards all particular content, that is to say, the universality 'in becoming' is the very opposite of the peaceful neutral medium of all particular content—only in this way can universality become 'for itself'; only in this way can 'progress' take place" (94). In my view, then, it is precisely because the resolution of regulation in representation does not destroy exteriority but surrounds and encloses it between "abstract universality" and "true universality"—between self-consciousness just before the moment of the lordship and the bondsman and self-consciousness in the moment "ethical life," rendering it the "stuff" of which the further unfolded "Spirit" is made—representation, as Levinas (1991) postulates, remains but a "partial violation," that is, the play of engulfment. For had Hegel privileged "actual existence"—as Marx did later when he rewrote History as an eschatology—the account of transcendental poesis would not have provided a symbolic (universal or historical) appropriation of the global, which was later remapped by the racial. In the narrative of universal poesis, the signifying gesture, engulfment, institutes modern representation by resolving universality and historicity in transcendentality and provisionally containing

the threat introduced in the outlining of self-consciousness in a figure, the *homo historicus,* which is both the producer of science and a producer or product of history, that is, the transparent I, the self-determined subject of universality.

When Hegel consolidates the structures of the stage of interiority, social configurations also become moments of actualization of the coming into being of self-consciousness as such—as a thing of reason as freedom. Precisely because this writing of history establishes a fundamental connection between consciousness and the products of human action, Hegel's formulations enable the identification of the main dimensions of the particularly modern mode of signification—the one that, Foucault (1994) argues, has placed the temporality of man at the core of exterior things. By postulating the recognition of Spirit as the cause and end of human will and action, Hegel once again postpones the threat posed by the grounding of freedom upon reason. The move here is to rewrite Nature and History as stages where the play of engulfment is enacted. For engulfment is nothing but a productive and violent act of spirit, the process through which the mind relates to itself and to what lies outside (here including other consciousness) as it continuously engages exterior things, which it recognizes as a moment of itself (as an exteriorization/actualization), which it takes back (through interiorization/recognition) until it finally realizes that universal reason (thought or science) and freedom (action or history) are one and the same thing. To repeat, the solution here is a reconciliation produced by the resolution of the universal *nomos* into universal poesis that results from actualization, which transforms the particular into the exteriorized universal, and recognition, in which the particular is interiorized, resulting in a transformation of the ("pure') universal into the "truly universal," that is, the transcendental. In other words, in "world history" the *homo historicus,* the free, rationally acting individual consciousness, is a thing of "Spirit."

For Hegel, post-Enlightenment Europe testifies to the realization of "Spirit" when the "Idea," reason as freedom, is realized in social configurations, when "Spirit" is recognized as the transcendental (ruler and producer) I, when self-consciousness learns its cause and essence, namely, transcendentality, that is, at the moment of "ethical life." In other words, when Hegel refashions self-consciousness as the *homo historicus*—the self-determined (interior-temporal) thing,

the one whose will and action actualize but "Spirit"—he also establishes that universality and historicity constitute the principles that mark post-Enlightenment Europe's "intrinsic difference." Hegel's social subject is quite distinct from the Lockean and the Kantian formulations of the liberal subject; the "individual" is the moral entity alone in the presence of the divine and civil laws and the determinations of morality. In place of Locke's rational agent, the self-interested entity, we find a living I, a particular self-consciousness, whose "truth," whose freedom, always already resides in a transparent (interior-temporal) collective I. Instead of Kant's ([1788] 1993) subject of duty, who feels the moral law as a constraint because he is not thoroughly ruled by universal reason, still subjected to the affections of the body and inclinations of the will, we find a self-knowing, desiring consciousness that, unlike Herder's moral thing that remains subjected to patriarchal authority, has learned that affections and inclinations are but the means to its self-realization, as that which actualizes the fundamental attributes of the higher (secular) consciousness.

Far from rejecting earlier social ontologies, Hegel builds the stage of life in his description of "ethical life," which, by unifying them in transcendentality, recuperates universality and historicity as the "intrinsic difference" and establishes the particularity of post-Enlightenment social configurations. His account of "world history" as the coming into being of the living "ethical substance" resolves human consciousness into the particular "Spirit" of a people. No doubt Hegel was not the first to deploy a conception of history that conceives of the political subject by combining *nomos* and poesis in the notion of the nation; Vico's "new science," Montesquieu's historical account of the nature of laws, and Bousset's and Voltaire's writings are a few examples of similar attempts. Similarly, as discussed earlier, Herder and other German ("romantic") critics of the Enlightenment introduced a conception of language and history that poses a "concrete" universality of differentiation against the idea of "abstract" humanity celebrated by the apostles of scientific reason. Nevertheless, post–World War II examinations of modern political conditions have stressed the irrationality of the German romantic account, pointing—as they obviously emerged in the post-Nazi period—to the risks of a conception of moral unity that is not exclusively and explicitly premised on the universal *nomos.* What

they do not systematically consider is why the nation, the historical-transcendental signifier, would so easily share with the racial (the scientific signifier) statements that institute the body politic as a "spiritual" (moral) unit. To address this question, I intend to describe the conditions of the production of the racial by engaging the projects of knowledge that deployed the tools of scientific reason to uncover the truth of man.

II

Homo Scientificus

A new species would bless me as its creator and source; many happy and excellent natures would owe their being to me.

—MARY SHELLEY, *FRANKENSTEIN*