BLACK SKIN WHITE MASKS

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“A strange, haunting mélange of analysis, revolutionary manifesto, metaphysics, prose poetry and literary criticism—and yet the naked essence of human cries.”
—NEWSWEEK
Slave Drum (collected in colonial Virginia), late 17th century. Wood & deerskin.
Anonymous (Mexican), Las Castas (the Castes), late 18th century. Oil on canvas.
1. Black Diasporal Cultures struggle against claims, both from within and without, of racial quintessence, as well as against dominant cultural and political forces.

2. Black Diasporal Cultures have sufficient demographic numbers and critical mass to proclaim common beliefs, value systems, and goals towards building community-based institutions and products.

3. Black Diasporal Cultures are structurally dependent upon an acknowledged collection of life experiences, social encounters, and personal ordeals; the sum of which promote a solidarity and camaraderie that creates community.
4. Black Diasporal Cultures are defined, in part, by their adherence to something that might be described as a “black aesthetic” or, rather, a philosophy grounded in the idea of a post-Emancipation and post-colonial black identity that proliferates in black communities where artistic creativity and performance are key cultural currents.

5. Black Diasporal Cultures are proactive and aggressive in their desire to articulate, testify, and bear witness to their difference vis-à-vis what might be described as a European American cultural mainstream.