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Commemorative Bodies: (Un)Making Racial Order and Cuban White Supremacy in Little Havana's Heritage District

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FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Miami, Florida

COMMEMORATIVE BODIES:
(UN)MAKING RACIAL ORDER AND
CUBAN WHITE SUPREMACY IN
LITTLE HAVANA'S HERITAGE DISTRICT

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

GLOBAL AND SOCIOCULTURAL STUDIES

by

Corinna Jeanne Moebius

2019

To: Dean John F. Stack, Jr.
Green School of International and Public Affairs

This dissertation, written by Corinna Jeanne Moebius, and entitled Commemorative Bodies: (Un)Making Racial Order and Cuban White Supremacy in Little Havana's Heritage District, having been approved in respect to style and intellectual content, is referred to you for judgement.

We have read this dissertation and recommend that it be approved.

Andrea J. Queeley

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Guillermo Grenier, Co-Major Professor

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Date of Defense: June 18, 2019

The dissertation of Corinna Jeanne Moebius is approved.

Dean John F. Stack, Jr.
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Andrés G. Gil
Vice President for Research and Economic Development
and Dean, University Graduate School

Florida International University, 2019

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DEDICATION

To Eddy Campa-Elegguá, for every poem-gift you gave to Little Havana,

and for all the love you gave to people who lived and died

in the cemeteries and crossroads of La Saguesera.

To the rumberas and rumberos

who activate constellations of rhythms and memories--

and possibilities.

To my parents and step-parents, who supported me every step of the way

with love and patience and encouragement.

To my grandmother Jeanne, fearless border crosser and anti-racist,

who inspired me to pursue my Ph.D. I follow in your footsteps.

And to all the men whose labor made the Tamiami Trail

(and thus Calle Ocho)

while burdened with the ball and chain.

Convicted without cause,

imprisoned for profit:

You are not forgotten.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

COMMEMORATIVE BODIES:

(UN)MAKING RACIAL ORDER AND CUBAN WHITE SUPREMACY

IN LITTLE HAVANA’S HERITAGE DISTRICT

by

Corinna Jeanne Moebius

Florida International University, 2019

Miami, Florida

Professor Jean Muteba Rahier, Major Professor

This dissertation unearths memory- and place-making practices, processes and “racializing regimes of representation” in Little Havana’s heritage district, now a major tourism destination in Miami, Florida. It draws on extensive ethnographic fieldwork, interviews, and consultations of various archives that span decades back to the 1960s and trace the origins of the district in plans for a “Latin Quarter.”

My analyses borrow from and combine various bodies of scholarly work to examine and deconstruct the use of always multi-vocal “commemorative bodies” for the production of racial narratives that are embedded in--and give shape to--acts of memorialization and commemoration.

By examining the intimate relationship existing between the development of the district from the 1960s on, and the repeated narrative of Cuban success, this ethnohistorical study reveals how Cuban emigre civic elites and militant anti-Castro groups have been using the district (including its Cuban Memorial Park) to assert white

dominance and build Anglo-Cuban solidarity while reifying “Cuban culture” as a colorblind entity that accommodates everyone.

I argue that the commemoration of exceptional blacks like General Antonio Maceo and Celia Cruz, alongside policing and surveillance tactics that publicly humiliate and exclude criminalized black people from the 1980 Mariel boatlift, also protect the Cuban success narrative by diverting attention away from the documented history of Cuban emigre terrorism in South Florida and beyond.

This dissertation also uncovers the numerous ways Cuban and non-Cuban Afrodescendants have been intervening in the district with their own memory- and place-making practices, subverting dominant narratives that denigrate and marginalize blackness. It relocates South Florida practices within some of the webs of transnational and transcultural connections that make the greater Miami what it is.

Keywords: White supremacy, Cuban diaspora, Miami, white supremacy, Latino white supremacy, memorialization, commemoration, race, racism, black placemaking, Afro-Cubans, scenario.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

APN	Afro-Latino Professionals Network
CAMACOL	Latin Chamber of Commerce and Industry of USA
CHC	Cuban Heritage Collection (University of Miami)
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
GSS	Global and Sociocultural Studies
HWA	Howard Weisberg Archive
KKK	Ku Klux Klan
LHDA	Little Havana Development Authority
LHMPOA	Little Havana Merchants and Property Owners Association
LQA	Latin Quarter Association
NET	Neighborhood Enhancement Team
OCC	Office of the City Clerk (Miami, FL)

I. INTRODUCTION

In Miami's Little Havana neighborhood, hundreds of tourists descend daily into a five-block strip of the famous *Calle Ocho* (Southwest 8th Street) (see Figure 1). These tourists usually include in their visits the exploration of a small section of the adjacent Cuban Memorial Park on Southwest 13th Avenue (Cuban Memorial Boulevard).¹ Together, these two areas comprise what I call the "Little Havana heritage district."²



Figure 1: Tourists visiting the Little Havana heritage district. Photo by the author.

Hailing from all parts of the world, and sometimes visiting before or after trips to Cuba, visitors arrive on tour buses that pull into one of the district's multiple "official" tour bus stops (see Figure 1). Armed with smartphones and cameras, they partake in

¹ The linear park extends from north to south in the meridian of Southwest 13th Avenue (co-designated as Cuban Memorial Boulevard), between Southwest 8th Street and Southwest 22nd Street (Coral Way).

² In 2011, Florida geographers Hilton Cordoba, Ivy Russell and Maria Fadiman (2011) stated that the City of Miami described the "Latin Quarter" as Southwest 8th Street between Southwest 12th and 17th Avenues, coinciding closely with the boundaries of the Little Havana heritage district as I define it. An official map of Little Havana produced in 2006 but now out of print refers to the area as the "cultural core." See "Walking Tours Map/Mapa de Lugares Historicos, Historic Little Havana," 2006, personal collection.

rituals marketed as “Cuban culture”: sipping a mojito, smoking a cigar, eating a *sandwich Cubano*. Often accompanied by a guide, they take photos in front of six-foot rooster sculptures, watch domino players inside the gated Maximo Gomez Park (Domino Park) and walk by murals with the smiling face of Celia Cruz or a serious portrait of Jose Martí. At some point during a tour, groups usually gather around a *ventanita* (walk-up window) to partake in *café Cubano*. While sipping the sugar-laced espresso from tiny plastic cups, they hear once more the story of Cuban emigre accomplishment.

According to this popular script, Cuban emigres arriving in Miami prior to 1980 (and especially the 215,000 privileged enough to be called “Golden Exiles”) fled communist tyranny (and made a heroic escape from the Castro regime), “discovered” the land that is now Little Havana, built Miami, and achieved their success as a result of self-sacrifice, a strong work ethic, and an entrepreneurial spirit (Mirabal 2003; Grenier and Pérez 2003; Croucher 1997; de La Torre 2003, 59).³ With its worldwide recognition as the symbolic heart of *Cubanidad* in Miami, Little Havana’s heritage district is the most popular and symbolically significant site wherein this “master narrative” is delivered, acted out or performed, and also always complicated (Connerton 1989, 70; Boswell and Curtis 91; Grenier and Moebius 2015; Nijman 2011; Feldman and Jolivet 2014). In less than a decade, the district has become one of Miami’s most popular tourist destinations,⁴ with an estimated two million visitors (and likely more) visiting the area annually, and

³ For examples of the “Cuban success story” as it appears in academic scholarship, see Boswell and Curtis 1984; Boswell 2000, 142; Alberts 2005; Gallagher 1980; Levine 2000; Olson and Olson 1996.

⁴ According to the 2017 Greater Miami and the Beaches Visitor Industry Overview produced by the Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau, 12.8% of the 15,860,000 overnight visitors to Greater Miami in 2017 said they visited Little Havana. See <https://www.miamiandbeaches.com/Miami/media/GMCVB-Corporate/Research%20Statistics/2017-GMCVB-Annual-Report.pdf>.

thousands attending both its annual Calle Ocho Festival (billed the “largest Hispanic festival in the nation”), and a new annual Gay8 Festival (billed the “largest Hispanic/Latino LGBTQ festival in America”).

The Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau promotes Little Havana as a “heritage neighborhood,” one of “Miami’s rich multicultural neighborhoods,” but few tourists venture outside the heritage district, which is bordered by a gas station, a payday loan store, fast food restaurants and a chain pharmacy. Within the five blocks of Calle Ocho that comprise the district, however, one can find five Cuban restaurants, seven cigar shops (including a cigar factory), seven bars with live music, a half dozen souvenir shops (and more than a dozen art galleries), and both official and unofficial visitor centers. The district also includes the famous Domino Park (Maximo Gomez Park) and a portion of Cuban Memorial Park. Besides the Calle Ocho Festival and the Gay8 Festival, the district also hosts the monthly Viernes Culturales arts festival (Cultural Fridays) and the annual Three Kings Parade (*La Parada de los Reyes Magos*) and Jose Martí Parade. Miami’s history museum, HistoryMiami, has announced plans to open a “Museo de Little Havana” in the district in 2019, although these plans appear to be on hold.

The district comprises a portion of the historic Latin Quarter, a zoning overlay project launched in the 1970s by Cuban emigre businessmen aiming to make Little Havana as popular among tourists as New Orleans’ French Quarter. Indeed, it has achieved such fame, as evidenced by The National Trust for Historic Preservation designating Little Havana a “National Treasure” in 2017. Even during summer months, which are typically the slow season for Miami tourism, crowds of tourists spill out of double-decker tour buses and form lines out the door of the district’s popular ice cream

shop. Multiple walking tours will take place at the same time, the guides explaining the rooster sculptures, the murals, the monuments, the local residents.

Scholarly and popular accounts of Miami's Cuban diaspora typically point to the transformation of Little Havana as "evidence" of the Cuban success story (Croucher 1997, 115). Heike Alberts (2005, 233), for example, uses Little Havana's heritage district as a material example of how Cuban business owners "laid the foundation" for the Cuban success story, mentioning their successful revitalization of a "declining Anglo neighborhood." Juan Clark (1991, 49) describes Calle Ocho as "testimony to the entrepreneurial and progressive spirit of the Cuban emigres." Monuments and public art in the district's Cuban Memorial Park, Domino and Azucar Plazas, and other public spaces are convenient props in narrations of a script now delivered by tour guides, historians, journalists, scholars and multiple private and public institutions. Civic rituals, political speeches, parades and festivals further underline the message of Cuban emigre exceptionalism.

In the past few decades, scholars of Cuban migration have interrogated the Cuban success story for its silences, distortions and inaccuracies, however. First, it ignores the history of Cubans who arrived in the U.S. prior to 1959 (Abreu 2015; Horne 2014; Mirabal 2003; Greenbaum 2002; Callejas 2010; Guridy 2010). Second, it obscures the legal, political, and social privileges that favored the Golden Exiles, who tended to be "urban, middle-aged, light-skinned, and white-collar workers," in the words of Jorge Duany (1999). María Cristina García (1996, 2) has described this early cohort as a beneficiary of the "most comprehensive refugee assistance program in American immigration history." In general, Cuban emigres who arrived prior to 1980 received far

greater levels of federal government assistance than those who arrived in later years (Duany 1999; Croucher 1996; de la Torre 2003). The Cuban success story also ignores the socioeconomic, geographic and racial diversity of the U.S. Cuban diaspora, in Miami and beyond (Aja 2016; Dixon 1982; Poyo 1989; Torres 1999; Ojito 2001). As sociologist Sheila Croucher (1996) concludes, “the claims that comprise the Cuban ‘success story’ are not well-grounded in an objective, empirical reality, but do reflect the historical interplay of power and politics locally, nationally, and internationally.”

More recently acknowledged and addressed in scholarly literature is the reliance of the Cuban success story on an invisibilized Cuban whiteness (Aja 2016; Mirabal 2017; Stephens 2016). Cuban emigre scholar Alan Aja (2016) remembers growing up in Little Havana and leaving it behind for Miami’s suburbs, all the while hearing the mantra that white Cuban exiles deserved their success, but black and brown people, including Afro-Cubans, struggled because it was their own fault. This “success,” he contends,

ignores the intersections and privileges of selective migration, occupational advantage, political and economic support by the state, exclusive ethnic networks that relied on the exploitation of women and subsequent waves of immigrants, and as consistently overlooked as a determinant, our *whiteness*. (Aja 2016, x)

Aja suggests that the popular argument that Afro-Cubans *chose* to stay behind in Cuba obscures the role of the U.S. government in crafting a refugee policy that privileged white Cubans (6).

As I document in this research study, Miami’s Cuban civic elites developed Little Havana’s heritage district as a symbol space for “reclaiming” an island-rooted whiteness (Ibid. 11). Yet they adapted the Cuban success story—and the heritage district—in response to the 1980 Mariel boatlift, which brought a greater number of young male

Afro-Cubans than in earlier arriving cohorts (Poyo 1989; Boswell and Curtis 1984; Portes and Stepick 1993). The revised success story narrative as told in the district itself excluded the history and contributions of “Mariels,” as if they were criminal anti-citizens not worthy of full membership in a diasporic body politic. As Alexander Stephens (2016, 9) cogently argues: “the ‘success story’ was predicated on an unspoken presumption of Cuban whiteness. At the same time, mentioning Mariel migrants’ blackness helped perpetuate dominant narratives about Cuban migrants by characterizing the newcomers as aberrations.” This dissertation contributes to the interrogation of the Cuban success story by highlighting the practices of anti-black violence and white supremacy that it conveniently attempts to cover up.

The “presumption of Cuban whiteness” underlying the success story may be unspoken, as Stephens contends, but Little Havana played a vital role in making Cuban white supremacy tangible, visible, and “real”—and yet when necessary, disguised. How did the (re)development of Little Havana’s heritage district help to secure Cuban whiteness to the Cuban success story? Is Little Havana’s “clear manifestation” of “Cuban culture” an “unwitting autobiography,” as Thomas Boswell and James Curtis (1984, 91) suggest in their book, *The Cuban-American Experience*, borrowing the term from geographer Peirce Lewis (1979, 13, 15)? If the district has an autobiography, whose autobiography is it? What does that body-with-a-history look like? What’s hidden from this autobiography? And who occupies it, dresses it up, and tells its stories?

While I could have approached this study by focusing on tour narratives alone, I realized from my own experiences in Little Havana that the success story is not just told to visitors from out of town. During my fieldwork in Little Havana in 2016 and 2017,

again and again I would see the same familiar faces at civic ceremonies in the district (see Figure 2). The story of (white) Cuban success, repeated endlessly, began to strike me as a parable or a mantra, aimed at cementing feelings of collective belonging. In fact, these civic rituals began to remind me of religious gatherings. Was the Mayor not like a priest, preaching to his flock, and the men besides him his fellow clergy? Were we standing in plazas, or in shrines?



Figure 2: Civic ceremony in Domino Plaza, Mar. 17, 2016. Photo by the author.

Like the guayabera-clad participants at these ceremonies, I sipped café Cubano from tiny plastic cups filled not with wine but with espresso loaded with white sugar. I felt, viscerally, what anthropologist Michael Taussig calls “the magic of the state,” what Miguel de la Torre (2003) calls the religion of Miami (*La Lucha*), and what Thomas Tweed (2002) calls “diasporic nationalism”: a bridging of faith, nationalism and popular culture. Gatherings such as these fueled my understanding of nationalism (including diasporic nationalism) as a form of religion and racialized solidarity, transmitted and experienced through what I call “commemorative bodies” (Angrosino 2002; Tweed 1999; Taussig 1997; Hooker 2009). These civic events also felt like reunions of a brotherhood: the contemporary sugarocracy (Fraginals 1976; Duany 1998), a white Cuban fraternal

order of the extra-state, now built on the profits of tourism and real estate. In the district, men were renewing histories... and themselves.

Colonial powers in the Americas and the Caribbean used rituals of the Church and other official performances, in addition to archival materials, to legitimize racial hierarchies and communicate messages of European (later “white creole”) racial superiority to themselves and to the colonized and enslaved populations they portrayed as degenerate or less evolved on the basis of racial origin (Taylor 2003; Bhabha 1983; Lane 2005; Horne 2014). After christening rituals for new Cuban sugar plantations, for example, the priest would tell the slave owner and his family to go on and prosper “in the name of God.” Then the enslaved persons forced to watch the ritual would return to the body-crushing grinding of sugarcane in the mill (Fraginals 1976, 68; Beliso-De Jesús 2014, 510). Repeated performances as “discoverers” and rightful “masters” also helped Latin America’s plantocracy to mark new identities and claim territory by covering up their pasts (Niell 2015; Stoler 1995; Autry 2012). In 18th century Cuba, for instance, creole members of the plantocracy sought to erase memories of Cuba prior to 1761, even referring to earlier years as “primitive time,” as a strategy for elevating their status as the country’s rightful elites. By purchasing Spanish titles of nobility and thus their *limpieza de sangre* (cleansing of the blood), they re-invented themselves as both undeniably “white” and as “inherently” upper class (versus *nouveau riche* with potentially suspect bloodlines), a practice that would continue even into the twentieth century (Fraginals 1976, 59; Pérez 2003).

Similarly, the tellings of history in the “ethnic space” of Little Havana’s heritage district make and re-make bodies and silence the past as needed (Trouillot 1995; Smith

2006). This dissertation unearths the memory- and place-making practices, processes and “racializing regimes of representation” (Hall 2013) that helped Cuban civic elites and militant anti-Castro groups make the district a stage of white supremacy in a seemingly inclusive “ethnic enclave.”

Cuban diaspora scholars portray the influx of Cubans who arrived with the Mariel boatlift as the single most significant threat to the Cuban success story, as many of them were labeled as criminals (Stephens 2016; Portes and Stepick 1993; Fernandez 2007). I contend that Cuban emigres also wanted to protect the success story from the realities of white violence enacted through Cuban emigre terrorism, including acts of violence, intimidation, silencing and exclusion that targeted blacks (and whites perceived or portrayed as sympathetic to blacks or the cause of Civil Rights) in Little Havana specifically. I argue that the development of Little Havana’s heritage district transformed it into a crossroads for five primary purposes, which are my theses. It provided a symbolic and material space where white Cuban emigres could (a) step into a “blackening” underworld (and maintain the specter of violent blackness) and yet step back into the privileges of whiteness; (b) showcase their proximity to Anglo whiteness and yet their ability to retain “Cuban culture”; (c) act out solidarity with other Latinos and yet promote whitening and Cuban superiority over other Latinx groups; (d) use exceptional blacks as proof of colorblindness but as “debt” require them to serve as mouthpieces for white Cubans; (e) evoke scenes of black terror in order to invert them and justify overt acts of white racial dominance and symbolic reconquest.

This dissertation does not fall into the trap of invisibilizing black placemaking and memory-making efforts, however. As I reveal in the pages that follow, the creation of the

district as a symbolic “heart” of Cuban Miami also makes it a stage where blacks and others have re-interpreted or re-claimed scenarios (Taylor 2003) and commemorative bodies (like Antonio Maceo) appropriated by white Cuban emigres. In alternate articulations of these scenarios, they are affirming and celebrating blackness, critiquing anti-black racism, and building transcultural black and interracial solidarity.

I have delved into this crossroads of Little Havana by focusing on specific commemorative bodies and tracing their roots/routes. I define commemorative bodies as material objects, bodies or land embodied—through ritual (civic or spiritual)—with “spirited things” (Johnson 2014) like historic and mythic figures; saints, spirits or divinities; and stereotypes imagined to embody (permanently or temporarily) these “materials” of public memory, such as monuments or the bodies of people enacting civic rituals.

For the purposes of this dissertation, I focus on the commemorative bodies with well-documented histories as racial signifiers in Cuba and/or the Cuban diaspora: the black Antonio Maceo and Celia Cruz, the white Jose Martí and Christopher Columbus, popular Cuban saints (such as La Caridad del Cobre and La Virgen de Regla⁵), and Orisha divinities of Santería (typically described as an Afro-Cuban religion), such as Elegguá (see Figure 3) and Ochún (Utset 2003; Gonçalves 2012; Mirabal 2017; Miller 2000; Brown 2003; Tweed 1999; Greenbaum 2002; Callejas 2010; Nathan 2012; Zuñiga 2011; Gosin 2016; Aparicio 1999). I introduce these figures in the chapters that follow.

⁵ Our Lady of Charity and Our Lady of Regla.



Figure 3: Sticker of Elegguá on back of sign in Little Havana heritage district (July 5, 2017). Photo by author.

My dissertation’s theoretical framework brings together Diana Taylor’s (2003) theory of the scenario with Critical Race Theory and critical heritage studies, and includes scholarship on whiteness, race and representation (Ahmed 2007; Mills 1997; Fanon 1986; Roediger 2005; Johnson 2014a, 2014b; Brown 2003; Hartman 1997; hooks 1992; Savage 1997; Nederveen Pieterse 1998; Trouillot 1995; Smith 2006). Taylor (2003) brings together perspectives from performance studies (Turner 1974a, 1974b, 1982; Schechner 1988, 1993) and Latin American/Latinx studies, and understands performances as acts of transfer (Roach 1996)—of memory, knowledge and a sense of identity. A performance can include civic or religious rituals, parades, dance, processions, or other practices that involve behaviors that are theatrical, rehearsed, or conventional/event appropriate (Taylor 2003, 3). Taylor challenges characterizations of embodied forms of public memory (which she calls the repertoire) as ephemeral and unmediated. Performances involve a “process of selection, memorization or internationalization, and transmission takes place within (and in turn helps constitute) specific systems of re-presentation,” as she explains (Ibid., 21).

The scenario is one means in which knowledge transfers through the repertoire. Taylor defines the scenario as a “paradigmatic setup that relies on supposedly live

participants, structured around a schematic plot, with an intended (although adaptable) end” (Ibid., 13). Scenarios of discovery and conquest are evidence of their “staying power,” but while scenarios may appear to pass as universally valid, they always have localized meaning and are open to subversion from within (Taylor 2003, 28; Rahier 2013). There are six elements involved in the transmission of a scenario.

First, it needs to conjure a “scene”—requiring conscious strategies of display.

Second, it involves the meanings made based on the interpellation of the social actors involved and the stock “characters” they perform (Taylor 2003, 29), which in the case of Little Havana are the commemorative bodies I refer to, such as Jose Martí or Celia Cruz.

Third, scenarios may seem stereotypical because they are coherent paradigms, but they refer to “specific repertoires of cultural imaginings” (Taylor 2003, 31). In the case of Little Havana, the repertoire I refer to can also be understood as a “racialized regime of representation” (Hall 2013).

Fourth, the transmission of the scenario can draw on a variety of modes from the archive (supposedly permanent forms of memory, such as monuments, buildings, land and bones) and/or the repertoire (Taylor 2003, 31). I examine the scenario’s transmission “into” the archive through text and images in calendars, posters, and written texts (including the minutes of city commission meetings), which reinforce (or subvert) the messages interpreted from scenarios performed (and archived, as in monuments) within the district itself. As Taylor (2003, 33) emphasizes, both the archive and the repertoire work to transmit knowledge.

Fifth, the scenario forces the “viewer” to be situated in relationship to it—as a participant, spectator or witness (Ibid., 32). In other words, those who watch a civic ritual are part of it, too—there is no “distancing” with the scenario; the “viewer” is part of its meaning-making.

Lastly, scenarios work through reactivation, not duplication (Ibid.).

Parody often occurs through the frictions between the social actors and those they embody, and the plot and the character inserted to play a role in the plot. For example, in colonial Mexico, indigenous people were forced to perform in staged re-enactments of the *reconquista* (against the Moors) in Spain; in one performance, they substituted the conquered Muslim king with the conquistador Cortés (Ibid., 30). As my findings illustrate, the social actors activating a scenario can subvert it to critique the power of those perceived dominant, and at the same time exploit it to dominate others.

Taylor’s concept of the scenario has been very helpful to my analysis of practices of white supremacy. Ricky Lee Allen (2002), building on Charles Mills’ (1997) concept of the “Racial Contract”, makes five theses related to white supremacy, all of which are relevant to this study.

First, “the white race was and is a global opportunity structure for European ethnics” (Allen 2002, 477). In other words, “becoming white” offers benefits. European ethnics had to maintain proximity with whites and distance themselves from blacks in order to be read “as white,” as David Roediger (2005) and Robert Orsi (1999) have found in their respective studies of whitening practices among U.S. immigrants. Since non-white populations comprised the majority of Cuba and other Latin American nations during Spain’s colonial reign, many creole elites publicly embraced an ideology of national

identity that reifies particular kinds of race mixing as a national identity prototype. These race mixings, *mestizaje* or *mulataje*,⁶ were ideologically constructed to emphasize the benefits of whitening “mixed” bloodlines over time, as if ever whitened bloodlines provide paths upward towards a domain where whiteness equals progress (Martinez-Echazabal 1998; Goebel 2014; Rahier, 2003; Dick and Wirtz 2011; Allen 2002). The hierarchies of *mestizaje*/*mulataje* situate white Latinos who claim strictly Iberian descent (*peninsulares* and *criollos* or creoles) above mestizos, and mestizos above darker-skinned groups, such as Afrodescendants (blacks and mulattos) and indigenous people (Katzew 2005; Reid Andrews 2004).⁷

“Global white identity was founded on false images of the ‘civilized’ self and the ‘uncivilized’ person of color,” is Allen’s (2002, 478) second thesis. Representations of blackness through stereotypes like the mammy (Perez, Jr. 2013, Wallace-Sanders 2008; Gosin 2016; Hall 2013; Manring 1998); the mulatta (Costa 2000; Betancourt 2000; Fernández-Selier 2013); African warriors, “bucks,” and runaway slaves (Hall 2013; Nederveen Pieterse 1998; Blanchard 2011), and loyal slaves (Savage 1997) reinforce these and related ideas that depict as “good” the black persons who do not frontally challenge the supremacy of whiteness and who behave in ways that generate benefits or resources for whites, and that paint as “bad” those who in any way appear to challenge white supremacy’s many narratives.

⁶ In certain countries, *mestizaje* refers to exclusively European and Indian mixings; *mulataje* refers to European and African mixings (see Martinez-Echazabal 1998; Rahier, 2003, 45).

⁷ In colonial Havana, these racial categories included *blanco/a* (white), *mestizo/a* (mixed Spanish and Indian), *pardo/a* (mixed Spanish and African), *negro/a* or *moreno/a* (black) and *indio/a* (indigenous) (see Carrera 2005).

For creole elites and intellectuals in Latin America, including Cuba (and still to this day), *mestizaje/mulataje* offered an alternate response to a North Atlantic ideology that denigrated racial mixing and positioned non-Anglo-Saxon people below Anglo whites in racial hierarchies. Cuba's elites resented the U.S. treatment of Cuba as a non-white colony (Skwiot 2012; Pérez 1999); those who lacked purely European bloodlines wanted to portray themselves as "white" and modern, too, able to "civilize" the rest of the nation's mixed and non-mixed brown and black population segments (Pérez 2003). As Alejandro de la Fuente (1999, 41) explains:

Miscegenation was perceived as the way to "regenerate" a population unfit to perform the duties associated with a modern polity, with white immigration serving as a precondition for progress. The idea that regeneration was possible at all subverted biological determinism, but the expressed need for regeneration presupposed acceptance of the idea that "race" explained the "backwardness" of Latin American societies. Whitening became the way to remove a surmountable, albeit formidable, obstacle on the road to modernity.

Cuba was not exceptional in its project of *blanqueamiento*. Across Latin America, countries shaped their immigration policies to favor the immigration of Europeans (Andrews 2004; Martinez-Echazabal 1998; Goebel 2014).

According to the logic of *blanqueamiento*, mulattos or blacks could also achieve a level of "whitening" by refusing to transmit (and denying and denouncing) forms of cultural memory associated with blackness and Africanity. For example, Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz ([1906] 1973)⁸ suggested that eliminating "Afro-Cuban witchcraft" and other "African" practices would make Cuban blacks superior to others of their race (Palmié 2013; Bronfman 2004). Black or mulatta women could whiten future

⁸ Notably, *Los Negros Brujos* was re-published in 1973 by a Little Havana-based publisher.

generations through intercourse or marriage with white men, but unions between black men and white women were frowned upon, revealing the gendered nature of blanqueamiento (Guevara 2005). Cuban scholar José Antonio Saco argued that “preserving” color (blackness) led to immobility, rendering one stuck in a primitive past. Mobility—social and otherwise—required proximity to white bodies and the imagined movement towards “civilization” (Ibid., 106; Ahmed 2007).

From the mid-nineteenth to early twentieth centuries, Cuban and other Latin American intellectuals—like their U.S. counterparts—were looking for scientific proof of white supremacy. European theories of racial science shaped how they understood race and justified racist practices. Scientists pointed to their “evidence” as proof that European heritage exemplified the highest levels of cultural and technical progress (Helg 1999; Rahier 2003; Pérez 2003; Bronfman 2004; De La Fuente 2001). Argentinean scholar José Ingenieros wrote that Argentines—thanks to blanqueamiento—were becoming “a new variety of the European white races” (Helg 1990, 43).

Schooling in the United States, regular visits to neighboring nations like the U.S., and the experiences of Cubans in exile also influenced thought about race and racial difference in the decades leading up to the Cuban Revolution (Mirabal 2017, 1998; Abreu 2015; Greenbaum 2002; Pérez 2003). Latin American elites and scholars perceived the U.S. as modern due to racial segregation and other discriminatory practices. Domingo Faustino Sarmiento claimed that the “extermination” of “savages” in the U.S. was the reason it was “today occupied by the Caucasian race, the most perfect, the most intelligent, most beautiful and most progressive of races that populate the earth” (quoted in Martinez-Echazabal 1998). Racial theories were used to explain the dramatic

differences between white Cuban creole elites, most of whom lived in urban centers and traveled frequently to the U.S., and Cubans in outlying regions who were illiterate and poor, and mulatto, black or mestizo (Pérez 2013; Pérez Jr. 1999; Helg 1990).

Historian Jorge Cañizares Esguerra (1999) argues that theories of scientific racism originated in Latin America, and not in Europe as is often assumed. In the seventeenth-century, Latin American intellectuals defended Spanish America from negative European characterizations by articulating a science of race grounded in biological determinism. These thinkers proffered the Biblical story of Noah's curse of Ham (specifically, a curse upon Ham's son Canaan) to justify their claims that Indians and blacks lacked advanced physical and mental traits (see also Pérez 2003).

The story of Noah's Curse of Ham was tied to notions of *limpieza de sangre* (blood purity) that circulated in the Iberian Peninsula during and after the Reconquista, fueled by nearly 800 years of battle against Muslim rule. The conquest of the entire region by Christian rulers after 1491 involved expelling Muslims and Sephardic Jews unless they converted to Christianity. To prove *limpieza de sangre* (literally, the cleanliness of their blood), individuals had to demonstrate the "purity" of their heritage and thus the absence of Jewish or Muslim blood that could eventually "contaminate" their bloodline (Wade 2008; Martínez 2008; Goebel 2014).

The tale of Ham continued to re-emerge in the racial discourse of the Americas, as did stories about the overturning of Muslim dominance in the affairs of Europe. In fact, Columbus received his royal warrant for his first voyage just three months after Spain's final victory over Granada (and thus Muslim dominance of Spain) in January 1492 (Sardar, Nandy and Davies 1993, 6). Blood purity began to reference a broader "Spanish

heritage” in Spanish America, with Indians and Africans as the “re-embodiments” of Muslims and Jews (Pérez Jr. 2003; Esguerra 1999; Martínez 2008). In Cuba, creole elites eagerly bought titles of Spanish nobility in order to prove their genuine “whiteness” and social class (Fraginals 1976, 16), revealing how whiteness itself is a property (Harris 1993): part of what Charles Mills (1997) calls a Racial Contract that makes whites “more equal” and blacks “less equal.”

“The world system of nation-states territorialized and continues to re-territorialize global white supremacy” is Allen’s third thesis (2002, 479). Establishing nation-states helped territorialize white supremacy (477), as exemplified the actions of Spain and Portugal following the Reconquista. While Benedict Anderson famously theorizes the nation as an “imagined community,” he does not acknowledge the persistent representations and treatment of blacks—in Cuba, the U.S., and anywhere else in the Americas—as less than full citizens. As Felipe Smith points out, “diaspora histories are filled with instances of people denied full national affiliation on the grounds of racial difference (2010, 7),” and somehow Anderson is mute about that. Moreover, for Smith, when Anderson claims that print-capitalism “destroyed the national religious communities of the premodern era,” he assigns the “migratory subject” to either “a retrograde tribalism or a post national alienation” (2010, 8). Anderson’s mention of “pre-modern religions” conjures the uncivilized/civilized binary to reinforce white supremacy; it also “justifies” why religions like Santería and other African diasporic religions are often treated as if stuck in a primitive past (Wirtz 2014; Palmie 2013). As Smith (2010) notes, blacks were not part of Anderson’s “imagined community” (Anderson 2006): they

were imagined as part of a separate outside, the archetypal “Darktown” and unruly, threatening body.

The territorializing of white supremacy can also be understood through “dead body politics,” where nationalism is related to “kinship, spirits, ancestor worship, and the circulation of cultural treasures” (Verdery 1999, 26). Grounded on my work in Little Havana, I contend that these circulating “cultural treasures” include whiteness as a property. Dead bodies of iconized figures (like Columbus and Jose Martí) are often associated with racial lineages (Mirabal 2017; Abreu 2015; Savage 1997; Nathan 2012; Johnson 2004; Connerton 1989; Nathan 2012). Memorialized bodies make ideas of the nation—and race—more tangible and real. As Verdery contends, terms like “nationalism” become more meaningful and “gain life” when lifted from a flat and abstract realm and re-imagined within webs of kinship, ancestor worship and spirits.

Because of the use of bodies to signify race and blood lineage, it is also relevant to consider ideas about the possession of whiteness as a valuable property that can be inherited and passed down (Harris 1993; Ahmed 2007) and the ownership of black bodies as fungible property. As I discuss in the chapters to follow, the statue of black Cuban national hero Antonio Maceo in Little Havana’s Cuban Memorial Park is an example of a black body made into property for a theater of white supremacy. Anthropologist Paul Christopher Johnson (2014) argues that the term “spirit possession” is an occidental category grounded in the rationale of colonialism and slavery, which held that only white, male, citizen-subjects had the freedom to “take possession.” Sixteenth century Spanish scholar Juan Ginis de Sepulveda rationalized colonial slavery (Martinez-Echazabal 1998) by characterizing enslaved people as things instead of persons. The Code Noir of 1685—

the law that governed the France's slave trade—declared slaves incapable of possessing anything: whatever an enslaved person “owned” actually belonged to the slave master, including the slave's own body (article XXVI11) (Johnson 2014a, 5). As Christopher Johnson explains, defenders of slavery emphasized that spirit possession was “proof positive of deficient personhood or capacity to act as agents or to act as rational authors of present and future contracts” (Ibid. 6).

Western thinkers circulated theories of “spirit possession,” the idea that an unseen agent (a spirit) could occupy or own a human body, to justify European “occupation” of bodies and land, and thus the territorializing of white supremacy. According to Western logic, whites were protecting society by owning blacks, because Africans or Africans in the Americas lacked a “properly bounded self” and became a “swarming horde” when in groups, vulnerable to possession by the “wrong” spirits.

White possession of black bodies can appear like spirit possession, too, however. As Saidiya Hartman (21) writes:

the fungibility of the commodity makes the captive body an abstract and empty vessel vulnerable to the projection of others' feelings, ideas, desires, and values; and, as property, the dispossessed body of the enslaved is the surrogate for the master's body since it guarantees his disembodied universality and acts as the sign of his power and dominion. Thus, while the beaten and mutilated body presumably establishes the brute materiality of existence, the materiality of suffering regularly eludes (re)cognition by virtue of the body's being replaced by other signs of value, as well as other bodies. Thus, the desire to don, occupy, or possess blackness or the black body as a sentimental resource and/or locus of excess enjoyment is both founded upon and enabled by the material relations of chattel slavery.

Acts of white possession of blacks who are legally “free” include “eating of the other” as described by bell hooks (1992); blackface minstrelsy (Lane 2005; Lhamon, Jr. 2005); the claiming of lynching “souvenirs” (Young 2005; Patterson 1998); and what Stephan

Palmié (2013) calls “white Africanity” in Afro-Cuban religion, to name a few examples, which I discuss in detail in this study.

In his treatise on Afro-Cuban criminality, *Los Negros Brujos*, Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz ([1906] 1973, 9) argued that blacks were prone to a *mala vida* (“a life of immoralities”) of prostitution, crime and vice caused by lingering African spirits; true citizens were those with the proper civil comportment of *vida honrada* (“honorable life”). Yet as Michael Taussig (1997) contends, “spirit possession” is a foundational act of new states. Indeed, (national) heroes (like Columbus) turned into statues can become treated as if religious or magical figures (Verdery 1999, 15). In my analyses of performances, I draw upon the interrelated understandings of possession—possession as property and spirit possession—and point to similarities between civic and secular rituals of commemoration and the religious rituals of Afro-Cuban spirit possession religions like Santería and Palo.

J. Lorand Matory (2009) argues that Afro-Atlantic religions are culture-specific, materially conditioned, physically embodied, and fetishistic. They are based on a consciousness that multiple beings (usually originating in faraway places) inhabit, hover around, and periodically take control over bodies. The divinities of Santería and Palo have multiple avatars, including Catholic saints (Sandoval 2007; Beliso-De Jesús 2014; Brown 2003; Ochoa 2010), opening up the possibilities for subversion. As my concept of commemorative bodies is meant to illuminate, a single monument can also have more than one “body” affiliated with it, allowing for social actors to re-orient a monument’s significance for the benefit of servicing multiple racial narratives.

Scholars of Cuba and the Cuban diaspora have analyzed the use of fetishistic figures for racial narratives, and my work builds on their contributions. João Felipe Gonçalves (2011) writes about the “Cult of Martí” that began in the United States during the lifetime of the Cuban national hero, continuing until today on both sides of the Florida Straits. Afro-Cubans in New York, Tampa and Cuba have faced numerous obstacles in their efforts to commemorate the Afro-Cuban general Antonio Maceo in comparison to Jose Martí, however, as documented in Mariel Iglesias Utset’s (2011) study of Cuba during U.S. Occupation (1898-1902); Nancy Mirabal’s (2017) investigation of New York’s Cuban community from 1823 through 1957; Christina Abreu’s (2015) study of popular culture in Cuban New York City and Miami from 1940 to 1960; Susan Greenbaum’s (2002) research on Afro-Cubans in Tampa from the 19th century to the late 20th century; and Linda Callejas’ (2010) investigation of contemporary Afro-Cuban heritage-making in Tampa.

Allen’s fourth thesis states that, “Global white supremacy is the structural manifestation of the more localized practice of global white territoriality” (Allen 2001, 480). The creation of landscapes is part of this territoriality, especially when they are treated as an “exhibit space” of Others. Perhaps the best-known work on spatial Othering is Edward Said’s (2003) work on Orientalism. Especially related to this dissertation are studies of ethnic districts similar to the Latin Quarter—the project that resulted in the creation of Little Havana’s heritage district. Isar Godreau (2015) investigates the scripts of blackness associated with the development and restoration of Ponce’s Historic Zone in Puerto Rico. Lynell Thomas (2014) compares the tour narratives of New Orleans’ French Quarter with those delivered on “disaster” tours of black neighborhoods devastated by

Hurricane Katrina. Kay Anderson (1987) traces the development of Chinatown as a Western (racial) idea and not just as a place-type, and the impact of changing European ideologies of race on its status as an “ethnic neighborhood.” Paul Niell (2015) offers a fascinating look into the creation of urban space in Havana and the use of urban and monumental design to emulate the racial ordering of people and places.

Foucault’s (1980) notion of the *dispositif* is useful to tracing white territoriality. A “dispositif” consists of an ensemble of elements and of the relations between these elements, which always include the strategically said and un-said, visible and occluded (Deleuze 1992; Stoler 1995; Pløger 2008). I trace interrelated forces and practices of regulation and coercion (policing, code-making and enforcement, terrorism), urban design and planning, and tourism as elements of the district’s *dispositif* of white territoriality; other elements of this *dispositif* are scenarios and a racialized regime of representation (Hall 2003, 259) made legible through commemorative bodies. As John Pløger explains:

dispositif space could not and cannot have effect without a specific constellation of the discursive and non-discursive. This constellation is shaped by such things as experiences (including the embodied) and collective schemes of significations involved, ‘telling’ people about how to use space. (2008, 67)

Whites are the surveyor of the Racial Contract (Mills 1997); people of color are the surveilled. Non-white bodies “possessing” white spaces violate what Jean Muteba Rahier calls the “racial/spatial order” (1998). When they arrive in a space marked as “white,” their proximity is interpreted as “out-of-place” and “disorients” those who were able to “line up” (Ahmed 2007). Thus, they are less able to move easily through it; their bodies are marked (Fanon 2007). In the words of Nirmal Puwar, “People are ‘thrown’ because a

whole world view is jolted” (2004, 43). In colonial Cuba, and even after independence, ancestry, occupation, wealth, appearance (including dress), and the nuances of performed identities influenced perceived whiteness and how one was interpellated within the contestable and ambiguous space of “mestizaje” (Guevara 2005); consequentially, elites had to constantly visualize and perform *calidad* (quality or status) (Rahier 2003, 47; Wade 2008; Carrera 2005) and *vida honrada* (Ortiz [1906]1973, 9).

Nonetheless, blacks have also engaged in the production of space and in various disruptions of white territoriality. As geographer Katherine McKittrick (2007, x) contends, blacks are too often “rendered ungeographic.” Blacks have subverted, challenged and maintained their resilience in the face of white supremacy, sometimes in “plain sight”: making place, making memory and re-making their bodies through religious processions, carnival traditions and coded forms of public memory, for example (Utset 2011; Fernández-Selier 2013; Wirtz 2017; Knauer 2009; McKittrick 2011; Nieves and Alexander 2007; Nathan 2012; Schmidt 2015; Perez 2013).

Allen’s last point is that “white group membership is based on a shared cognition that actively and necessarily constructs blindnesses to global white supremacy” (2002, 481). These active constructions can take place through “formulas of silencing” (Trouillot 1995) that either occlude histories altogether or distort them through strategies of dividing historic time and only highlighting certain historic moments, for instance. Latin American scholars have written extensively about the use of a discourse of colorblindness to target any people of African descent who dare bring up issues of racial inequality. If they do so, they are charged with divisiveness because supposedly racism does not exist (Benson 2016; Helg 1995; de la Fuente 1998, 2001; Rahier 1998). Eduardo Bonilla-Silva

(2002, 2010), Ian Haney-López (2003, 2014) and Michelle Alexander (2010) are among the scholars who have discussed the use of this discourse in the U.S. (see also Aranda, Chang and Sabogal 2009; Dick and Wirtz 2011).

A number of scholars have investigated the intersections between performance, race, and memory-making. These include Steven Hoeschler's study of Confederate pageants (2003, 2006), Stephen Berrey's (2015) analysis of the everyday performances that whites and blacks learned to enact in the Jim Crow South; Jean Muteba Rahier's (1998) analysis of a beauty pageant to supposedly validate the discourse of colorblindness while at the same time reaffirming racial order's status quo; Orlando Patterson's (1998) research on lynching as a spectacle that built white solidarity; and Saidiya Hartman's (1997) writing on the use of "scenes of subjection" and public performances of anti-black violence as reinforcements of racial order. Latin American and Latinx scholars have investigated the ways in which parades, comparsas, and religious processions reaffirm the racial order, or eventually challenge it (Deverell 2004; Wirtz 2017; Rahier 1998; Moore 1997; Bodenheimer 2015; Skwiot 2012; Schmidt 2015; Utset 2011; Andrews 2010; Brown 2003).

Two examples are worthwhile to help illustrate how scenarios, commemorative bodies and racial signifying come together. At the 400th anniversary celebration of Columbus's "discovery" of America, held at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, the 65-foot high statue towering over the edge of the fair's artificial lake depicted a white woman as the embodiment of the Republic. She presided over the primary section of the Exposition, or "The White City," which was lined with white neoclassical buildings (Domosh 2002, 183-184). Like other symbolic "mothers of the

nation,” she lacked agency and the name of a once-living woman (McClintock 1995, 354). In a separate area of the exposition, attendees could meet “Aunt Jemima” in the flesh, embodied by a black woman who stood in a booth decorated to look like a flour bag (Manring 1998, 75). They could wear souvenir buttons with her likeness and buy an “easy-to-make” pancake mix: an embodiment of the black mammy that allowed white women to “own” a new form of the laboring black female body, or a “slave in a box” as the mix was originally advertised (Manring 1998, 141).

The second example takes place five years later, on December 7th, 1898, in Cuba, on the second anniversary of General Antonio Maceo’s death. On that day, hundreds of black Cubans participated in a procession that historian Mariel Iglesias Utset (2003) has described. Since Cuba’s military governor Leonard Wood was away visiting the U.S. mainland, black general Quintín Bandera and other Cubans (most of them black) seized the opportunity to conduct a requiem mass and funeral rites Maceo, whose body was buried at a secret location on the island. Church bells began to ring the day before the event, which took place in Santiago de Cuba. On the morning of the ceremony, the bells rang twice, fifty times: a colonial-era ceremonial practice that signified the death of Spain’s highest authority in Cuba, the captain general/governor general, and the beginning of official mourning. The most notorious man to hold this position was the Spanish Governor-General Valeriano Weyler, nicknamed “the Butcher.” The funeral service honored Maceo in a way that would have infuriated the still living Weyler and others who represented or had supported Spanish colonial powers. It offered the black general the same rites exclusive to Spanish nobility during colonial times.

The subversion did not end here. At the center of the cathedral, in places of honor once reserved for nobles of the Spanish crown, stood the famous black generals Quintín Bandera⁹ and Silverio Sanchez Figueras. As Utset remarks, holding such funeral rites for a black man (regardless of his rank) in the Catholic church—the most “colonial-minded, pro-Spanish, and hidebound institution on the island—is scarcely conceivable” (2011, 130). Weyler and his men had hacked black bodies to pieces, yet in this moment and at this site, living (and free) blacks were re-assembling the dead through their own bodies, binding them with their own through the force of memory. Armed troops from the predominantly black Mambí army stood outside, later joining a crowd of hundreds in a ceremonial procession to the Maceo residence on Calle Providencia, later renamed Calle Antonio Maceo. The crowd then passed the entrance to the government of occupation’s headquarters. One can imagine the reaction of U.S. authorities discovering Cuban soldiers and civilians, most of them black, marching through the city’s streets behind black soldiers armed with Remington revolvers and machetes (Utset 2003, 129-131). This battle involved no physical confrontation, but it did involve dead bodies: commemorated bodies, joined with the living, to keep alive the ties between the past and the present.

Methods and Sources

This dissertation is based on two years of archival research and twenty-one months of ethnographic research in Miami’s Little Havana neighborhood. From August 2016 through May 2018, I engaged in ethnographic fieldwork in the area most frequented by

⁹ Although scholars have often used the spelling Banderas, Ada Ferrer (1998) notes that biographies of the black general confirm that the spelling is Bandera, without the additional “s.”

tourists in Little Havana’s heritage district, which is also one of Miami’s arts districts and “cultural districts.” The district is comprised of two linked “sections”: (a) the commercial corridor of the one-way (from west to east) Southwest 8th Street (Calle Ocho) between Southwest 17th and SW 13th Avenues and (b) a portion of the linear Cuban Memorial Park extending from Calle Ocho to Southwest 10th Street (see Figure 4). Within the Calle Ocho section of the district, I concentrated my data-gathering at the intersection of Southwest 15th Avenue and Calle Ocho: the site of Domino and Azucar Plazas and the popular Maximo Gomez Park (Domino Park).



Figure 4: Map of Little Havana Heritage District. Map by Joel Bernal.

Despite serving as a major gateway city for immigration, Miami—the largest and most densely populated municipality in Miami-Dade County—is highly segregated by race (Dunn 2016; Connolly 2014; Mohl 1995a, 1995b). Like other urban core neighborhoods in the U.S., Little Havana faces development pressures and resident concerns about displacement. Its boundaries have varied over time (Grenier and Moebius 2015; Cordoba,

Ivy and Fadiman 2011). I consider Little Havana's limits based on boundaries most often used on official city maps (see Figure 5). The eastern edge of Little Havana borders the Miami River, which separates the northern portion of the neighborhood from the slowly gentrifying area once called "Colored Town" and now named Overtown, where most residents are non-Latinx African American. The north-south I-95 expressway sliced through the neighborhood in the early sixties, displacing an estimated 30,000 residents and contributing to the concentration of poverty and persistent exploitation of its residents by real estate and other interests (Dunn 1997, 156-158; Connolly 2014; Mohl 1989).

The expressway follows the Miami River south, becoming the east-west border between Little Havana and downtown Miami as well as Brickell. The east-west border also coincides with Southwest 4th Avenue. Little Havana's northern border is SR 836/Dolphin Expressway and the Miami River, and its western border is 27th Avenue. The southern border runs just a few blocks south of Calle Ocho (SW 8th Street/US 41). Two middle to upper-middle class neighborhoods border Little Havana to the south: Shenandoah and The Roads.



Figure 5: Map of Little Havana. Map by Joel Bernal.

According to the 2010 Census, Little Havana (within these approximate boundaries) has 53,470 residents and is 89.5 percent white Hispanic (a number which likely includes mestizo Hispanics), 7.2 percent African American and 5.9 percent Afro-Latinx. Seventy-five percent of residents were born outside the U.S., most in Cuba, Nicaragua and Honduras. Nearly fifty percent lack citizenship. Median income in the area is below the U.S. Census Bureau poverty threshold. Nonetheless, the demographics of the area have likely shifted in recent years due to rapidly rising rents for both residences and commercial space, as well as the pressures of rising rental, housing and leasing costs in other parts of Miami.

In the district, I began by surveying monuments in Cuban Memorial Park (see Figure 6), public art and posters or other visible-to-the-street (or audible-to-the street) references to black figures (like Antonio Maceo or Celia Cruz), archetypes (such as the Mammy figure), or African/Afro-Cuban figures or divinities (Santería's Orishas).



Figure 6: Map of Cuban Memorial Park. Map by Joel Bernal.

Then I looked for the names of civic elites in the public spaces of the district and considered the positioning, condition and relationship of black figures to the “presences” of prominent white figures like Jose Martí and Christopher Columbus. I photographed these forms of archival memory and analyzed them based on their location, their relationship to other symbolic figures nearby, their symbolic content and form, their producer (if known, as in the entity or entities that funded, designed and approved the monument), and the temporal context of their installation or appearance. I also considered the positioning and presence of monuments in relation to similar historic monuments or spaces in Havana, Cuba, even though fieldwork in Cuba was outside the scope of this research study.

In order to conduct a historical ethnography of public memory in Little Havana, I delved into the collections of various institutional archives. Of these, the University of Miami’s Cuban Heritage Collection (CHC) gave me access to some of my most relevant sources. A 2017 Goizueta Graduate Research Fellowship allowed me to spend a full month immersed in its collections, the most useful of which included Little Havana-based Continental National Bank’s illustrated calendars; Carnaval Miami/Calle Ocho Festival posters; the newsletters of CAMACOL (the Latin Chamber of Commerce) and the Little Havana Development Authority (LHDA); the short-lived *Enjoy/Disfrute* bilingual Miami travel magazine; and Cuban exile newspapers.

In the Florida Collection of the Miami-Dade Public Library, I found urban planning reports, including those with extensive details about Little Havana and the Latin Quarter. Little Havana Neighborhood Enhancement Team administrator Tony Wagner also let me borrow one of the only surviving copies of the original Latin Quarter report. From the

archive of Miami's City Clerk's Office, I explored pre-2008 City Commission meetings' minutes; more recent meetings' minutes are available online. The most valuable digital collections referenced for this study include the Lynn and Louis Wolfson II Florida Moving Image Archives, from which I accessed numerous television clips of Little Havana-based commemorative events; the Harold Weisberg Archive, which has rare copies of early Little Havana brochures; the National Security Archive; the archives of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and Historical Collections of the Central Intelligence Agency.

I also conducted fifty-three semi-structured interviews with individuals who have produced forms of archival or embodied public memory in Little Havana's heritage district, whether official and unofficial. Purposive sampling (Bernard 2006, 145-146) helped me to find my initial sample, and I identified additional subjects during fieldwork based on recommendations from interlocutors. I used maximum variation sampling (a subset of purposive sampling) in order to ensure that my sample was (1) racially diverse; (2) included both Afro-Cubans and other Afrodescendants; and (3) diverse in terms of "arrival" date for Cuban-born interlocutors.

In fourteen cases, I conducted walking interviews (Clark and Emmel 2010). This method involves walking alongside participants during an interview to better understand how individuals conceptualize and interpret historical landscapes while creating and experiencing them through socio-spatial practices. I walked with these fourteen individuals through the district, letting them determine the itinerary. I found this mode of interviewing to be extremely insightful, as it allowed me to better understand how subjects were interpreting the landscape. On these walks, they described their reactions

to, memories of, or personal relationship with specific forms of archival memory, such as monuments or public art, or ritual and embodied memory, such as the district's monthly rumba and annual parades and festivals.

Those I interviewed included social actors who are "regulars" in the district, as well as those who visit it very rarely if at all yet remain powerful influencers over its monuments or commemorative events through their involvement in Little Havana decision-making entities. Members of Cuban civic elite interviewed for the study include three former commissioners, two former mayors, an urban planner, a commissioner's chief of staff once heavily involved in Little Havana, one current and one former director of the Little Havana Neighborhood Enhancement Team (NET), and current and former members (and directors or founders) of entities including the Little Havana Development Authority, the Latin Quarter Association, the Calle Ocho Chamber of Commerce, Viernes Culturales, and the Kiwanis Club of Little Havana. In addition to the NET staff, I also interviewed individuals with roles as "enforcers" in the district, including two police officers (one retired) and a manager at Maximo Gomez Park (Domino Park). I also interviewed Little Havana tour guides, influencers within the Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau's heritage tourism department, current or former retail business owners, visual artists, musicians, dancers, and event producers.

At civic and commemorative rituals in the district, I did ethnographic participant-observation (Bernard 2006), paying especially close attention to (a) tellings or enactments of the Cuban success story and (b) representations or enactments of Maceo, Cruz, Martí, Columbus or Orishas. I attended ground breaking and ribbon cutting ceremonies, political speeches, festivals (Viernes Culturales/Cultural Fridays, Calle Ocho Festival), rallies,

parades (Jose Martí Parade, Three Kings Parade). I also participated in saint processions (for Santa Barbara and La Virgen de Regla) and free walking tours. Because my topic examines racial narratives, I attended events (open to the public) in highly accessible “private” spaces of the district where topics related to the development or history of the district or Little Havana more generally, or where the gathering was organized by Afro-Cubans, as in the case of a monthly gathering of Afro-Cuban rumba, Afro-Cuban dance classes, and meetings of groups like Afro Cuban Forum, the Asociación Cultural Yoruba U.S.A., and the Afro-Latino Professionals Network.

For a minimum of twenty hours every week, on various days of the week and hours of the day, I would visit Cuban Memorial Park or the central “crossroads” of the district (at Southwest 15th Avenue and Calle Ocho), documenting in notes how people used these spaces in the everyday. I also engaged in numerous informal conversations with acquaintances, friends, tourists and passersby, which helped me identify popular racial and racist tropes and narratives, learn about experiences of racial profiling, and understand the meaning that people give to the district and its sites and rituals of public memory.

I had lived in Little Havana since 2006 and continued to live there during the period of my research. My previous experience and involvement in the neighborhood and in Afro-Cuban religious and cultural activities helped me significantly. I was better able to identify who to interview and what questions to ask; my established reputation also helped me secure interviews. For instance, I first met members of Little Havana’s civic elite through my role as director of Viernes Culturales/Cultural Fridays, Inc. in 2006. This is one of the organizations wielding the most influence over the heritage district for

nearly two decades. Many of its board members in 2006 had played prominent roles in the neighborhood, serving with entities like the Little Havana Development Authority (LHDA) and Latin Chamber of Commerce (CAMACOL). Besides my stint with Viernes Culturales, I co-founded the Little Havana Merchant Alliance and briefly owned a retail business in the heritage district. For years I have worked as a Little Havana tour guide, gaining recognition as a Little Havana ambassador who has spoken about the district to numerous media outlets. I founded a popular Little Havana Facebook group and also co-authored the book, *A History of Little Havana* with Guillermo Grenier (2015).

I am well-aware of the social privileges that my U.S. citizenship, Anglo whiteness, fluency in English, level of education, and socioeconomic status may have played throughout the research process. As such, I have constantly sought to “interrogate myself” (hooks 1992), remaining attentive to dynamics of power and race in my interactions with interlocutors and my interpretation and analysis of data. It is important to mention that my familiarity with Afro-Cuban religion (Santería) and its complex, multi-sensory and multi-layered religious/racial symbols and embodied iconographies is informed not only by my extensive research but also through my experiences as an initiate in the religion, and as a long-time student of Afro-Cuban sacred dance.

In addition to more than twenty years studying sacred Orisha dances,¹⁰ in 2008 I was initiated as a Santera¹¹ and “crowned” with the Orisha Ochosi (“the hunter”),¹² after

¹⁰ My teachers have included Marisol Blanco, Oscar Rousseux, Neri Torres and Marietta Ulacia.

¹¹ Priestess of Santería.

¹² Initiates into the priesthood are said to be “crowned” with their guardian Orisha or divinity: the divinity that “rules their head.”

nearly a decade of initiation into the religion itself.¹³ One experience played a vital role in shaping how I have approached my research topic. At a ritual drumming, I watched a famous Santero as he apparently became “possessed” by Ochosi. The black man/Orisha moved through the crowd wearing a straw hat and chomping on a cigar. Minutes later I decided that his possession was just an “act.” But that is when he threw what is called the *mazo* (a multi-stranded, consecrated beaded necklace) around my neck, thus “catching” me. When this happens, the Orisha is said to have put you “in jail,” and you are supposed to become initiated as a priest as soon as possible. I had become a possession—a slave—of a black divinity: an experience that led me to reflect on the relationship between spirit possession and the bodily material possessions of slavery. In fact, my awareness of racial dynamics within the practice of Afro-Cuban religion in Miami was formative to my understanding of memory, the workings of race, racism, and the racial order. As an *Iyawo* (newly initiated priest of Santería), I had to dress in white for a year, among other restrictions, which stripped me from some of the advantages I had enjoyed based on the invisibility of whiteness (Ahmed 2007). I was not eligible for all of these privileges when fellow whites marked me (and denigrated me) based on my perceived proximity to blackness and Africanity.

Visits to Cuba have also influenced my research. Although the scope of my dissertation research did not include formal research conducted in Cuba, my “behind-the-scenes” access to Cuba’s tourism industry illuminated the connections between the narratives of Little Havana (and its heritage district) and those of Cuba and Havana

¹³ In 2016, for personal reasons, I discontinued all active participation in the religion, although I maintain cordial relationships with practitioners.

specifically (a topic for future research). Moreover, I better understood the placement and presence of monuments in Little Havana when I saw related counterparts in Cuba.

One of the limitations of this dissertation is that I give little attention to the role of Central American immigrants and Little Havana's LGBTQ population in the development of Little Havana. Unfortunately, the scope of my research prohibited a more detailed discussion of these two populations. I recommend that future studies investigate the influence of both groups on Little Havana's memorialization and racial politics.¹⁴

A Note on Terminology

Throughout this dissertation, I have had to wrestle with how to define certain terms. My interlocutors practicing Afro-Cuban religions used varying terms to identify their faith. Some used the term *Santería*, others *Regla de Ocha* or *Ifá*, others self-identified as *Lukumí*. For the purposes of this dissertation, I use the term *Santería*, since it encompasses both *Regla de Ocha* and *Ifa* (each of which uses its own divination system) and because it is a widely used term both among practitioners and in academia. Priests of *Regla de Ocha* are called *olochas*, *babalochas* or *iyalochas*; a high priest is called an *obatoriate*. A priest of *Ifa* is called a *babalawo*. All of them are priests of *Santería*.

I also use the terms "Afro-Cuban" and black Cuban interchangeably. All of the Cubans I interviewed (of African descent) identified as Afro-Cuban, and as black, but some also used *mulatto*/*mulatta* or *mulatta* to describe themselves (or others). They also proudly identified as Cuban, and often noted experiences of being misrecognized as non-

¹⁴ See Marcos Feldman and Violane Jolivet (2014) for an excellent study of regulating practices targeted at Central Americans in Little Havana.

Cubans by white Cubans. As Alan Aja (2016, 38) has documented, the racial self-perception among Afro-Cubans in Miami-Dade County may shift over time, wave and generation. Racial self-identification may also vary by degree of spatial proximity to white counterparts and degree of economic incorporation, influenced by “transplanted or forwarded disdain or abjection toward blackness, or negrophobia” (Aja 2016, 38).

Afrodescendants may “distance” themselves from blackness in a localized context like Miami, where the dominant group (in this case, white Cubans) “controls the ever-expanding parameters, claims, and privileges of whiteness” through its dominance in economic and political realms (Ibid., 39). Nonetheless, Afro-Cubans and other Afro-Latinx I interviewed for this study did not shy from claiming their blackness, which supports Aja’s findings that a black consciousness has arisen among those Afro-descendant exilic arrivals who arrived with middle-class privilege and who had been taught to identify themselves as Cuban first and foremost (Ibid., 11).

I have avoided as much as possible using the term “exile” to describe early cohorts of Cuban emigres, for reasons detailed by Nancy Raquel Mirabal (2003). Instead, I use “emigre” to describe Cubans born in Cuba. I never use the term “Marielito” to describe emigres who arrived in the Mariel boatlift, as I find the “ito” (a suffix which means “little”) to be insulting. I use the term “Mariel” instead, simply to distinguish those who were targeted because of their arrival during a specific time frame, or simply identify the year of arrival for specific individuals, when known.

Organization of the Dissertation

The research for this ethnohistorical study focuses on the period from 1959 to 2018; it is organized chronologically. Nonetheless each chapter weaves in accounts of Cuba, the United States and the Cuban diaspora (including the diaspora outside of Miami) prior to 1959 in order to avoid what historian Nancy Raquel Mirabal (2003) calls “the exile model,” or a forgetting of the linkages (and differences) between Cubans and Cuban emigres prior to the 1959 exodus. By making connections across space and time, I use a hemispheric approach that brings to light historical processes of contact across national boundaries, the interconnectedness between the U.S. and Latin America, and under-recognized stories, memories and struggles (Taylor 2013, xviii, 20; Beliso-De Jesus 2014; de la Torre 2001). Each chapter spans a decade except for the last chapter, chapter five, which spans nearly two decades and is primarily ethnographic in content.

In chapter one, which spans 1959 to 1969, I introduce six scenarios that will continue to circulate into later chapters, and which I call Independence, Slavery, Black Revolution, Emancipation, Reconquista and Reunion. I capitalize the first letter of a scenario name, following the practice of Diana Taylor (2003) in her book on scenarios. I discuss how militant Cuban emigre groups like the Antonio Maceo Battalion inverted scenarios of Slavery and Independence by representing themselves as runaway slaves and Mambises. They appropriated Antonio Maceo as an iconic “black warrior” and hero for those involved in violent acts associated with the counter-revolution and with Cuban emigre terrorism. I argue that militant Cuban emigres were projecting violence onto black bodies so they could retain their access to white privilege and association with civility once they returned from violent missions. In this chapter, I also discuss the ways in which white

Cuban emigres expected Afro-Cubans to remain silent about racism in Miami's Cuban community, especially since they received privileges not afforded African Americans. I tie this to a scenario propagated after emancipation in the U.S. and Cuba. This scenario highlighted figures such as Abraham Lincoln in the U.S. and Carlos Manuel de Cespedes and Jose Martí in Cuba as "great white heroes" to whom all blacks should be indebted for their "freedom." In an implied exchange for this freedom, blacks were expected to adopt the discourse of colorblindness and not point to the persistence of racial inequality. Afro-Cubans in Miami were also expected to criticize the Civil Rights movement (as racially divisive) and to evoke a threatening scenario of Black Revolution in order to justify the scenario of Reconquista, as enacted not only against the Moors in Spain and Portugal but also during the 1912 massacre of blacks in Cuba, when whites "took back" Cuba from blacks portrayed as unruly and dangerous. The other key scenario discussed in chapter one is Reunion, which in this case refers to the early interest of Anglos and Cubans in developing a Latin Quarter for mutual profit.

Chapter two spans the 1970s, during which "Little Havana" became recognized as a "Cuban neighborhood." I discuss the formation of Cuban civic groups like the Little Havana Development Authority (LHDA), which worked in public-private partnerships to develop the "Latin Quarter" of Little Havana as a tourist destination for Anglos, fostering the scenario of Reunion and a solidarity of whiteness, and yet allowing Cuban emigre elites to showcase their preservation of "Cuban culture." The Cuban success story became an oft-repeated script in the 1970s, evoking scenarios of Discovery and Conquest, in which Anglos helped portray Cuban emigres as modern-day crusaders, conquistadors and colonists. Chapter two describes in great detail the Cuban emigre

terrorism that worried Cuban civic elites seeking to maintain their ties to Anglos, and that targeted not only the Cuban government but also Cubans in the diaspora portrayed as disloyal to militant. I suggest that these militant groups imagined themselves as temporarily black, as if “spiritually” possessed, in order to justify their participation in violent acts and further reinforce associations of violence with blackness.

In chapter two, I also introduce a version of the Reunion scenario tailored for fellow Hispanics. Celia Cruz became an idealized figure during the district’s Calle Ocho Festival, used to promote ideas of mestizaje/mulataje (racial mixing) but also blanqueamiento. As an exceptional black figure, Cruz was expected to voice the dominant views of Miami’s predominantly white Cuban community.

Chapter three moves into the 1980s. I argue that Cuban emigres activated the scenario of Black Revolution so they could justify the scenario of Reconquista. By depicting Mariels as a specter of dangerous and unruly blackness, white Cuban emigres (and Anglos) justified a ranging of disciplinary measures targeting Mariels, and especially black Mariels. These included racial profiling, police brutality, illegal searches and seizures, and even murders. I discuss the Foucauldian dispositif in which policing and code enforcement were but two elements. Cuban emigres also used public-private partnerships to regulate and monitor public space, and public humiliation and intimidation of Mariels to reinforce a scenario of Reconquista. Columbus was the iconic figure of the scenarios of Discovery, Conquest and Reconquista.

As they put these disciplinary measures in place, Cuban emigres reactivated the scenarios of Discovery and Conquest to keep mobilizing the Cuban success story. These scenarios helped shield the Cuban success story from the realities of Cuban emigre

terrorism and the violent policing methods of the Miami River Cops by linking acts of violence with Mariels who themselves became symbols of blackness (and black people). New regulations were part of the “acting out” of scenarios, including rules that effectively excluded Mariels (including of course black Mariels) from Domino Park. City employees proved that they could “bend the rules” without consequence, protected as they were by white privilege.

Cuban emigres reenacted Reunion with Anglos through walking tours of the district, which portrayed white Cubans as modern compared to primitive Afro-Cubans. Because the liberal Antonio Maceo Brigade was also “speaking through” the symbol of Antonio Maceo, Cuban emigre militant and terrorist groups found a new Maceo in the form of African American hijacker Tony Bryant. Tony Cuesta helped free Bryant (in a scenario of Emancipation) in exchange for Bryant’s service as an emblem of colorblindness and as a condemner of African American activists.

During the 1990s, discussed in chapter four, Cuban emigres continued to activate the scenarios of Discovery, Conquest and Reconquista but also Reunion, making plans to turn Little Havana into a theme park and working with Anglos to get the Cuban success story into the archive of public memory and not just the repertoire. The snub of Nelson Mandela by Miami mayors had led to a black boycott of Miami (Grenier and Pérez 2003, 79-80), but a Summit of the Americas Mural painted by an Afro-Costa Rican man helped maintain the image of colorblindness in Little Havana. It also helped bring images of Latin American and Caribbean leaders of African descent into the park.

After his statue in Cuban Memorial Park was destroyed and its replacement took years to re-install, the Cuban terrorist group Acción Cubana installed a statue for Afro-

Cuban mercenary Tony Izquierdo in Cuban Memorial Park, making him the new Maceo through which they would express their views and the new image of the “black warrior” on which to project acts of violence. They continued to highlight Jose Martí as the brains versus Maceo as brawn and began to erase Maceo’s actual history.

Chapter five spans 2000 to 2018 and is primarily ethnographic. It reveals the many ways that Afro-Cubans, African Americans and Afro-Latinos;; made interventions in the heritage district, although throughout the dissertation I highlight the various ways that blacks asserted their agency in earlier years. I mention the various civic, social and cultural-religious gatherings that have taken place in a venue within the heart of the heritage district, bringing together Afro-Cubans, Afro-Latinos, and Afro-Cuban religious practitioners—including people from Cuba and other parts of the world. I discuss the Afro-Cuban rumba and sacred music gatherings that began at a black-owned business in the district, until being effectively shut down by police and code enforcement. I argue that blacks took back scenarios that had been inverted—like Slavery and Independence, to activate them in liberating ways that remembered pasts but also imagined futures. Blacks also engaged in commemorations that remembered the actual figure of Antonio Maceo and portrayed him as an intelligent, global abolitionist versus a fixed, violent brute. In chapter five, blacks use the district as their own space of Reunion.

Nonetheless, chapter five also reveals the ways in which practices and discourses of white supremacy continue to this day, and perhaps more overtly than ever. Through rallies, rooster sculptures, civic rituals and other forms of memorialization and commemoration, white Cuban emigres continue to assert control over the Cuban success story--and the district itself, acting out once again the scripts of a Reconquista.

In my conclusion, I suggest that while the heritage district may appear to be a racial inclusive oasis, it remains a place for dog-whistle politics (Haney López 2014). I suggest that in light of growing involvement of white Latinos in white nationalist movements, it is time to consider the ways in which discourses of white supremacy are being disseminated in Latinx contexts and tourist destinations such as Little Havana's heritage district. It is also time, I suggest, to uncover the histories buried in order to prevent claims for racial justice in the present.

II. CHAPTER ONE: BUILDING BODIES, BATTALIONS AND BONDS (1959-1969)

In the 1950s, well before Miami's Riverside/Shenandoah area became known as Little Havana, its residents included those who had not always counted as "white" in the U.S. Census, including Jews, Italians, Greeks, Syrians and Lebanese (Roediger 2005; George 2001, 2006), as well as more securely white "Anglos." Cubans were also living in the neighborhood, having left Cuba during Machado or Batista regimes; some may have arrived in Miami from earlier Cuban diasporic communities like Key West, Tampa or New York (Sicius 1998; Abreu 2015).

After Florida outlawed racial zoning in 1946, and the U.S. Supreme Court banned restrictive real estate covenants in 1948, Riverside's working class, Anglo and "honorary white" (Bonilla-Silva 2004) residents strove to protect their property values by enforcing the color line, worried about blacks leaving Miami's over-crowded "Colored Town"¹⁵ adjacent to Riverside (Mohl 1995a, 395; Connolly 2014). Property owners, civic associations and other real estate influencers reached out to the police and Ku Klux Klan (KKK) to assist them (Mohl 1995a, 405; Rose 2015). Luminally white residents wanted to protect themselves from violence by protecting the valuable property of whiteness they believed they owned.

As Critical Race Theorist and legal scholar Cheryl Harris (1993, 1993) argues,¹⁶ the period immediately following desegregation was a moment of transition between what

¹⁵ This neighborhood is now known as Overtown.

¹⁶ 1993 is the page number, just to clarify.

she calls whiteness as a status property and whiteness as a modern property. After slavery and conquest, legalized segregation had concretized “whiteness” as a status property:

According whiteness actual legal status converted an aspect of identity into an external object of property, moving whiteness from privileged identity to a vested interest. The law’s construction of whiteness defined and affirmed critical aspects of identity (who is white); of privilege (what benefits accrue to that status); and, of property (what legal entitlements arise from that status).

After the end of legalized race segregation, whiteness remained a property: white privilege became legitimated as the status quo.

Whites in Riverside/Shenandoah would fight to preserve that property. Turf wars involved KKK cross burnings, white protest marches with racist signs, bombings, and police harassment (Mohl 1995a, 405; Mohl 2004; Rose 2015). KKK members were known to beat and flog blacks on Miami streets (Rose 2015, 38; George 2006, 53). While public outcry against lynching had made it taboo, overt racial terrorism persisted, and KKK and police forces would work together to transition lynchings into more overtly “legal” practices such as expedited trials and executions (Pfeifer 2014, 836; Rose 2015, 59; Dunn 1997; Berrey 2015) and to transition whiteness as status property into whiteness as modern property (Harris 1993).

The Miami Police Department had long ties to the KKK, and many officers were members; both entities sought to safeguard white supremacy (Rose 2015, 59; Dunn 1997). In the 1920s, the KKK had set up its headquarters in Riverside (George 2006). The department’s record for anti-black police brutality received national exposure under the notorious police chief Leslie Quigg (a KKK member himself) in the late 1920s. Despite three hundred testimonies exposing the department’s “under world alliances, summary exceptions, revival of the tortures of the Middle Ages and despotism of such

nature as to destroy the freedom of our citizens,” Quigg was reinstated in 1937 (Rose 2015, 57-59).

Southern Patriot magazine described bombings attributed to the KKK as a “reign of racial terror,” but police chief Walter Headley (who served from 1948 through 1968) blamed communists for the bombings, as did the grand dragon of the Florida Klan.¹⁷ The Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) tied at least one bombing to the leader of a Miami civic association who had tapped the Klan to assist in intimidating blacks trying to move into her neighborhood. Like other homeowner groups, the Riverside Improvement Association understood democracy as requiring, in the words of historian N.D.B. Connolly (2014, 34), “the violent management of Negroes.” Meanwhile, the Klan continued to propagate fears that blacks, Jews and liberals were part of a communist conspiracy and threat (Mohl 2004, 24-25).

Cuban emigres entered this “scene” when they began settling in Riverside and Shenandoah, which they called *La Saguesera* (Grenier and Moebius 2015; George 2006).¹⁸ They received a warm welcome from the U.S. government, which assisted them with food, housing and assistance finding jobs and other resources (Garcia 1996; Portes and Stepick 1993), but some of them encountered “No Cubans Allowed” signs (Grenier and Moebius 2015). Fewer than three percent identified as black (Benson 2012, 13). At the same time, the arrivals had to re-orient themselves to a new environment where they too—like earlier immigrant arrivals--had become “honorary” white, inhabiting liminal

¹⁷ Bill Hendrix.

¹⁸ Spanglish for “the Southwest area.”

racial space (Bonilla-Silva 2004).¹⁹ Many were focusing on returning to their homeland, anticipating the moment when they could re-claim the island that they had called home.

In chapter one, I discuss the circumstances, like those I have just mentioned, which made the district a space where the “underworld” of violence met the Riverside Improvement Association. Whiteness allowed the illegal to shift into the legal, and “revival of the tortures of the Middle Ages” to receive sanction, because dominant historical accounts linked brutality, violence and “savagery” to non-whites versus whites (Hall 2013; Fanon 1986; Bhabha 1991). If socially white Cubans were going to enter the “underworld” and the “black market,” they wanted to ensure their ready ability to return to the world associated with order, civility, and whiteness—and thus privilege.

Militant Cuban exiles moving into the world of terrorism (or perhaps already familiar with it based on work in Batista’s underground) imagined the underground as the *hampa* as described by Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz ([1906] 1973, 9) in his book, *Los Negros Brutos*. In Cuba, this underworld was historically associated with blacks who had *la mala vida* (“a life of immoralities”) (Ibid.). I suggest that their imaginations of blackness as a property—with its own sorts of benefits—contributed to the ways in which they navigated between the worlds of the illegal and the legal, and the reasons why they embraced Afro-Cuban independence hero Antonio Maceo as a symbol of white exile rebellion. I suggest that the popularity of scenarios like Cuban Independence and Slavery—in which white Cubans imagined themselves as black

¹⁹ The 1960 U.S. Census classified all 29,000 foreign-born Cubans living in Florida at the time as “white.”

independence fighters and runaway slaves—speaks to this idea of “borrowing” the property of blackness when “savage” work was necessary.

In chapter one, I also briefly discuss the early interest in Little Havana as a “Latin Quarter” from which white Cubans and Anglos could mutually benefit. The idealized space of the Latin Quarter could help distinguish it from the “Darktown” (Smith 2010) of Miami’s black Overtown neighborhood, portrayed as outside the “imagined community” (Anderson 2006) of the nation. I argue that the scenario of Reunion – a scenario conjured after the emancipation of slavery in the U.S. and Cuba (Blight 2001; de la Fuente 1998), put white Cuban emigre men and Anglo men in roles as brothers committed to the mutual protection of one another’s white privilege.

Using Black Bodies as “Proof”: The Memorialization of Maceo in Cuba

After overthrowing Cuba’s U.S.-backed government in 1959, Fidel Castro appealed to Afro-Cuban supporters by announcing an end to racial discrimination on the island. He made discrimination illegal, closed private clubs and schools known for discriminatory practices, and promoted the image of Cuba as a racially egalitarian nation (De La Fuente 2001; Helg 2005; Dominguez 1979).

Castro buoyed his message of racial tolerance by portraying the U.S. as a racist nation. He attacked Jim Crow policies, accused Cuban exiles of racism, and offered asylum to black American radicals (Benson 2016, 2012; Sawyer 2006). Freddy Cardenas, a 45-year-old black Cuban musician who lives in Little Havana (interviewed July 11, 2017) still remembers the films he was forced to watch in school when he was just seven years old:

For instance since I'm black, I'm a black Cuban, they would show you movies about the U.S. government, putting the dogs on the African Americans, and they would say, "See, if you go to the United States, since you're black, this is what's going to happen to you. If your parents try to leave this country, if they try to go to the United States, this is what they do to you in the United States."

While Cuba's white elite and upper-class citizens fled to the U.S. in part because of their fear of Castro's integrationist policies, black Cubans who remained on the island heard promises that Cuba would be their safe haven: a place for *all* Cubans, regardless of color. Re-mobilizing Cuban icons of independence, including Antonio Maceo and Jose Martí, helped portray the Cuban Revolution as an extension of Cuba's anti-colonial battles, reactivating the scenario of Cuban Independence (Helg 2001, 1995; Benson, 2016). These icons appeared in the form of new statues, monuments and street and building names; one of the grand gestures of Castro's commitment to end racial discrimination in Cuba was the expansion and upgrading of Havana's Maceo Park in 1960.²⁰

For decades, champions of Maceo had advocated for improvements to the park, which was not complete until 1919, three years after a monument to Maceo was inaugurated in 1916.²¹ In Miami's Cuban community, Cuban emigres pointed to this statue as evidence of racial democracy in Cuba prior to the Cuban Revolution, and they would use a statue of Antonio Maceo erected in Little Havana's Cuban Memorial Park

²⁰ "Parque Maceo," EcuRed, accessed August 2, 2018, https://www.ecured.cu/Parque_Maceo. Even after the original park was finally renovated in 1925, it remained disappointing to Emilio Roig de Leuchsenring, the first historian for the City of Havana, and other citizens, especially Afro-Cubans, who wanted a more fitting honor to Maceo. See Lazaro Numa Aguila, "El monumento Que Nunca Cumple Años, Parque Maceo, Cuba," Monografias.com, accessed Nov. 7, 2017, <http://www.monografias.com/trabajos109/monumento-que-nunca-cumple-anos/monumento-que-nunca-cumple-anos.shtml>.

²¹ The sculptor was Italian-born artist Domenico Boni, who took four years to complete the equestrian monument.

(in the 1970s) for a similar reason. As the rest of this chapter illustrates, the statue of this black hero was treated as a property onto which white Cubans could project their own stories: a commemorative body for the denials of racism which had begun well before the Cuban Revolution (Nathan 2012). The treatment of Maceo's body as a site for stories of racial orders is well illustrated by what occurred nineteen years before his statue was unveiled.

In 1900, Cuban President Tomás Estrada Palma ordered the exhumation of Maceo's corpse. Scientists Carlos de la Torre and Luis Montané examined the general's remains and measured his skull. They racially mapped his body, applying the techniques and logics of scientific racism in vogue at this time. Montané drew in part on the findings of French doctor Henri Dumont, who had moved to Havana to analyze the racial characteristics of living and dead bodies. Cutting up corpses into pieces, Henri Dumont and his assistants looked for proof of similarities between the bodies of blacks and the bodies of apes (Bronfman 2004; Gates 2011, 194-195; Helg 1995). Dumont also influenced Cuban criminologist Israel Castellanos, who analyzed and photographed the corpses of recently executed black men in order to justify theories of scientific racism (Ojeda 2009).

The ritual dismemberment and possession of black body parts as scientific relics echoes the distribution of African American fingers, ears and other body parts after lynchings in the U.S. (Young 2005; Arnold 2009; Patterson 1998). In the case of Maceo, the ritual involved the magical act of "whitening" parts of his body posthumously, while the act of cutting up abject black bodies after lynchings effectively "whitened" the crowds that gathered to watch and participate (Hale 1998, 208-215; Patterson 1998, 169-

175). The Havana scientists determined that Maceo's skull resembled a European's, which they took as the explanation for his intelligence. The rest of his body, "below" the skull, revealed bones comparable to "African blacks," they concluded (Utset 2011, 24; Helg 1995, 104-105; Ferrer 1999, 168; Bronfman 2004). The findings served as an orientation: a way to understand and remember racial order through the space of the body itself. In the name of progress, and with ritual incantations of science, scientists—like priests—attributed his leadership skills and intelligence to whiteness, and his military strength and courage to blackness.

If, as Ricky Lee Allen's (2002, 481) posits, "white group membership is based on a shared cognition that actively and necessarily constructs blindnesses to global white supremacy," then the treatment of Maceo's body—as a corpse, and later as a monument, was a prop for that denial. In Miami, the statue of Maceo in Cuba was also implicated in formulas of silencing aimed at burying inconvenient histories (Trouillot 1995). These silences included the history of the statue itself, which I will share briefly next.

The statue was unveiled on Cuban Independence Day, May 20, 1919, in what had once been a "garbage-strewn lot" (Aguila n.d. "El monumento"). Joyous crowds cheered and veterans (most of them black) marched in the streets after camping out all night long. In his speech at the event, José Miro, Maceo's former chief of staff, emphasized the black general's patriotism and his commitment to the Cuban nation. Yet Miro never mentioned the thousands of black Cubans massacred in 1912, just four years earlier (Benson 2016, 171).²² *La masacre racista* (the racist massacre) began when members of the Partido

²² I describe the 1912 massacre later in this chapter.

Independiente de Color²³ (PIC), who had spearheaded the effort to memorialize Maceo with a statue, protested a new law that made the formation of their political party illegal (Helg 1995, Fernández 2002; de la Fuente 1999).

The PIC was comprised primarily of veterans of the Cuban Army of Liberation. Critics of the all-black political party assumed it promoted black domination of whites, black isolation from Cuban society, or a separate Afro-Cuban or African culture (Helg 2005, 203; Helg 1995; Horne 2014; De La Fuente 2001). The party did not promote black separatism, however; it promoted equal opportunity and an end to racial discrimination; it exposed the emptiness of rhetoric about egalitarianism. Most of the PIC's demands were shared by other political parties; those that related specifically to race included, for example, an end to racial discrimination, an end to the ban on "nonwhite" immigration, and equal opportunities for Afro-Cubans to access public service positions and the diplomatic corps (Helg 1995, 147).

In response to the PIC, press accounts kindled hysteria among white Cubans with descriptions of a black uprising, blacks caching arms for their revolt, and "black witches" raping and cannibalizing white women (Helg 1995; Fernández 2002; de la Fuente 1995, 1999). No evidence exists that proves any of these accounts were true, but they re-activated the scenario of the Haitian Revolution. In fact, these accounts spread to Florida. As Andrew Gomez (2015, 171) has documented, "The invocation of the Haitian Revolution was a common trope throughout the Western hemisphere and was used in Southern Florida to raise suspicion of potential traitors in Key West and Ybor City."

²³ The Independent Party of Color.

Jose Martí's son, José Martí y Zayas-Bazán—the Major General of the Cuban army—petitioned Cuban President Jose Miguel Gomez to hunt down PIC members so that “white civilization” and Cuba’s “cultured” society could win against “black barbarism,” “primitivism” and “ferocious savagery.”²⁴ By representing blacks as inherently primitive and violent, in a colonial trope of blacks as an unruly swarm (Johnson 2014b; Nederveen Pieterse 1998)—they justified the elimination of people treated as property that was out-of-bounds, and conjured the feared scenario of Black Revolution. The army and vigilantes lynched and massacred thousands of black Cubans, including men, women and children who were unaffiliated with the PIC (Helg 1995, 177-215; Horne 2014; Fernández 2002; Bongiovanni 2013). Whites would not be stained with this violence; it would be blamed on those who had dared to threaten white civilization.

By pointing to the persistence of racial discrimination, the PIC contradicted a discourse of colorblindness that emerged in Cuba and other parts of Latin America during the early twentieth century, influenced by Jose Martí’s calls for a racially unified Cuba, Fernando Ortiz’s writings on transculturation, and writings by other Latin American scholars, like Jose Vasconcelos. Colorblindness re-articulated *mestizaje* (racial mixing) as the achievement of a relatively homogeneous, raceless national identity within racially democratic societies (Martinez-Echazabal and Vásquez-Dávila 1998; Van Dijk 1992; Rahier 2003). In Cuba, however, the discourse of colorblindness served as a political tool

²⁴ The original letter was shared online by Julio Cesar Guanche and is re-posted by Sandra Abd’Allah-Alvarez Ramírez, “José Martí y Zayas-Bazán y su rol en la Masacre de los Independientes de Color,” blog, 7 Jan. 2018, *Negra Cubana Tenía Que Ser*, accessed Jan. 7, 2018, <https://negracubanateniaqueser.com/2018/01/07/jose-marti-y-zayas-bazan-y-su-rol-en-la-masacre-de-los-independientes-de-color/>.

to silence Afro-Cubans who dared to ask for equal opportunity. It operated to silence claims that institutionalized racism continued to persist.

From the beginning of the twentieth century, Cuba's white elites facilitated processes of memory-making that reinforced the discourse of racial democracy and colorblindness. They circulated a memory of Maceo as the embodiment of racial equality achieved in the sacrifice and struggle of Cuba's wars of independence, as well documented by anthropologist Robert Nathan (2012), who notes that the process demanded "constant reinforcement." Even after the massacre of 1912, those who dared challenge the narrative about Maceo, or the belief that shared sacrifice had overcome racial categories, were accused of "blasphemy and sacrilege against the sacred memory of the Liberation Army" (264).

For Cuban elites, adding the statue of Maceo to Havana's urban landscape served as "evidence" that racial equality had been achieved, making the PIC's demands baseless. In the same year as the 1912 massacre, the Cuban government appropriated \$50,000 to erect the statue ("Buckeye Letters," Jan. 27, 1912). Similarly, in the years following the Cuban Revolution, black Cubans on the island risked accusations of being ungrateful if they pointed to still-persistent, systemic forms of racism in Cuba: they were labelled divisive, backward and counter-revolutionary. According to official accounts, the government had ended discriminatory practices as a part of its state-sponsored campaign (Benson 2016; De La Fuente 1995; Benson 2012; Helg 2005; Sawyer 2006). Blacks in Florida were also affected by these claims (Gomez 2015, 171). Officially, racism did not exist.

Maceo—as a bronze statue—sits astride a horse rearing up on its hind legs and faces not the sea but the citizenry of Havana. His left hand holds the reins, his right hand

readies a machete at his side, and he gazes towards Cuba itself, and all the injustices that remain: legacies of its plantation economy. He turns his back to the United States. The positioning of Havana's Maceo monument in relationship to Martí's is revealing: Maceo does not sit in the city's central park, where the city had elected to put the statue of Jose Martí, and where an unofficial rule confined mulatto and black Cubans to the park's outer edges (Benson 2016, 92). Instead, like other "warriors," his statue marks the borders of the island and nation itself. Positioned next to the Malecon seawall, it stands on a pedestal so high that no pedestrian can easily see any of his distinguishing features.

The Cuban government, dominated by whites, had placed the statue of Maceo away from the city's (and capital's) center, associated with the nation's head or heart. In life, "a thousand times Maceo's color was given as a limiting factor, as a fact that devalued his greatness," wrote critic Juan Marinello in a 1942 essay. Living in "a perilous crossroads" as "a revolutionary and as a mulatto," Maceo felt "the anguish of living on the border" (1942, 14-16, 39). In death, Maceo defended Cuba while situated in borderlands, in a liminal space: next to the street, next to the ocean. In the role of the vigilant warrior, he was still the body taking orders from central locations. The position of the commemorative body of "El Titan de Bronce" situated blackness—and "warriors"—in the realm of the skin: not just in the body (oriented below the head) but on the surface, the outer edges, the places that function like skin and are most vulnerable to violent acts, mediating between inner/outer realms.

Nonetheless, the statue also served as material testimony to the struggle for racial equality and to the leadership role of blacks in this struggle. The *Chicago Defender*, a black newspaper, exclaimed that Cuba was one of only four countries in the world where

“can be found official monuments honoring black citizens” (“Maceo Immortalized” Jan. 27, 1934). In Cuba, an Afro-Cuban activist published his “conversation” with the statue. Thanks to Maceo’s effort, the Cuban Constitution says we are all equal, he said, but “all Cubans are not treated as equals” (De La Fuente 2001, 39). Esteban Montejo, who escaped slavery and later fought in Cuba’s wars of independence after abolition (and knew Maceo), recalled his first reaction to the statue. He saw it after passing by the statue of Maximo Gomez (also positioned along the Malecon) (Barnet 2003[1968], 160, 200):

I went through the park and saw that he [Gomez] had been mounted on a bronze horse. I went on, and a half mile down, they had Maceo mounted on a horse just like it. The difference was that Gómez faced the north and Maceo faced the town and the people. Everybody should pay attention to that. It’s all there.

Warriors and Runaway Slaves: Launching the Counter-Revolution

In seeming defiance of Castro’s depictions of Cuban exiles as racist, recruiters for Cuban counterrevolutionary forces in Miami emphasized the racial inclusiveness of their units, and thus their own colorblindness. According to the website for Brigade 2506 (veterans of the Bay of Pigs invasion), for example, its members are “whites, black, mulattos, chinese [sic], moorish [sic], and also from different sectors of the economical means of life” (“Who We Were”). The depiction of the brigade as a racial *ajiaco* (stew) reflective of Cuban society as a whole²⁵ contradicts the fact that the brigade was and is in fact predominantly white/white-mestizo, reflecting the racial demographics of Miami’s Cuban emigres prior to the Bay of Pigs invasion (Campbell 2011, 9-14; McCoy 1985). In the counterrevolutionary movement, the narrative of inclusiveness fit Miami emigres’ own

²⁵ Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz famously described Cuba as an *ajiaco*.

appropriation of the wars of independence, and heroes like Maceo, into a scenario, in which they would make themselves the new Mambises (members of the Cuban Liberation Army). Yet the actual army during Cuba's wars of independence was overwhelmingly black (Beidler 2013; Horne 2014; Foner 1977). If counterrevolutionaries imagined themselves as the new Mambises, then the famous General Antonio Maceo belonged to them, not to Fidel Castro.

The *ajiao* of Miami's militant Cuban organizations was more diverse in terms of class than based on race, bringing together men who might not have connected or mingled socially back in Cuba. In the 1960s, the vast majority of those who called themselves "exiles" could at least "pass" as "white" Cubans, like most Cubans who had arrived before them and settled in Miami. Miami sociologist Edward S. Cooke estimated that only 2,000 black Cubans were living in Miami by the end of the Sixties (Egerton Dec. 14, 1969). Although the earliest arrivals after 1959 earned the label "the Golden Exiles" based on their image as successful, economically self-sufficient, mobile, and well educated (Portes and Stepick 1993; Skop 2001; Grenier and Pérez 2003; Alberts 2005, 233), fewer than forty percent of this cohort belonged to Cuba's elite. Three thousand hailed from Cuba's upper class; they enjoyed profitable business relationships with U.S. Americans, navigated easily within transnational networks, and had direct connections to the Batista regime. Yet of the fifty thousand others who arrived within the first year, most hailed from the middle class, and included merchants, professionals and business executives (Boswell 2000, 143; McCoy 1985; Aja 2016; Rogg 1974).

Preparation for the invasion of Playa Girón (Bay of Pigs) gave young Cuban emigres a chance to demonstrate patriotism and willingness to sacrifice themselves in the name of

La Lucha (de La Torre 2003), or the counterrevolution—and build solidarity with fellow emigres regardless of socioeconomic differences. Participation also brought income to men lacking English language skills, connections, or resources to access other, safer options. The Central Intelligence Agency recruited 2,000 men from the streets of Riverside/*La Saguesera*; it trained them in the art of bomb-making, demolition, killing and assassination (Leroux Feb. 18, 1984).

When the invasion failed spectacularly in 1961, a sense of betrayal consumed Brigade 2506 veterans and their allies within Miami’s Cuban exile community (Drouillard 1977). “I believe that the United States has betrayed freedom fighters around the world,” said Brigade 2506 veteran Frank Castro. “They trained us to fight, brainwashed us how to fight and now they put Cuban exiles in jail for what they had been taught to do in the early years” (Marshall 1987, 134).

Brigade members had relied on the U.S. government to support *La Lucha*, but President Kennedy himself had not permitted air cover during the invasion of Playa Girón, and thus they blamed him for the failure of the mission. Some even whispered that the Bay of Pigs invasion was a setup: Kennedy’s plan to rid the U.S. of politicized exiles (Campbell 2011, 11; Kornbluh 1998; Gutiérrez-Boronat 2005). For militant exiles, their enemies were not simply Fidel Castro, Che Guevara and “communists” the world over; for some, their enemies also included Anglos and U.S. institutions that misunderstood their struggle, investigated them, jailed them and—in their eyes—misrepresented them. Like Frank Castro, these emigres directed their anger at President Kennedy as well as the local police officers and FBI agents who were investigating Cuban exile terrorism.

Their experiences of betrayal evoked the public memory of Cuba under the First U.S. Occupation (1898-1902). In that historic moment, American emissaries made it very clear that they were watching Cubans. In a form of racial surveillance, they looked for proof of “civility” and fitness for self-rule: proof that Cubans were abiding by the Racial Contract (Mills 1997). Popular U.S. representations of Cubans during the wars of independence emphasized their Otherness, and depicted them as “dark, sometimes violent and sometimes childlike, savages” (Ferrer 1999, 189). The rebels were “a lot of degenerates...no more capable of self-government than the savages of Africa,” according to a U.S. Officer in U.S.-occupied Cuba (Pérez 1983, 218), thus associating Cuban rebels with blackness in a discourse of white supremacy.

Similarly, Anglo officials treated Cuban emigres involved in the Bay of Pigs “with condescension or contempt,” and as “incompetent children whom the Americans are going to rescue for reasons of their own,” according to the U.S. Inspector General in his 1961 report assessing the results of the attempted Bay of Pigs invasion; he added that some of the contract employees, including ships’ officers, “treated the Cubans like dirt” (“CIA Historical Review” 1998, 96-97). Like U.S. military forces after the wars of independence, the CIA saw its role as “overseeing” transition. U.S. National Security agencies had used Cuba as their “staging area” for covert operations prior to the Cuban Revolution. The CIA put its operations in the hands of Americans because it mistrusted Cubans’ intellectual capacities. In a secret CIA study, a psychologist described “the Cuban” as “only loyal to himself.” The FBI helped create Cuba’s Military Intelligence Bureau in the 1940s (half of its members were FBI agents); in 1955, the CIA created the Bureau of the Repression of Communist Activities (Arguelles 1982, 292-293).

Bay of Pigs veterans likely felt treated as “less than white” by Anglos in the CIA and other U.S. institutions, regardless of their skin color, demonstrations of patriotism, or self-perceptions as white. Militant Cuban emigres may have perceived themselves as contemporary Mambises (Cuban independence fighters), but they did not want to lose the privileges of whiteness. In Miami, however, even white Cuban men from privileged families were treated as if an expendable “skin” on the surface of the State. White and white-mestizo Cuban men had become the warriors--the body--directed by unseen white, Anglo “Central Intelligence” operations. They had become the bodies treated as property “owned” by the CIA because they were perceived as unfit to “rule” themselves (Johnson 2014b). They—and not the Anglo men delivering orders from Washington, DC—were on the front lines, and they were expected to use any violent means they could in order to “prove” that they deserved the full benefits of whiteness and membership in the Anglo nation-state. Mambises in Cuba—including many who had been emancipated from slavery so they could fight in the wars--had also risked their lives in hope that they would receive the rights of full citizenship in the Cuban nation (Horne 2014; Ferrer 1999).

The Cuban government claimed ownership over the symbols of Cuban independence, however, which it made clear through civic spectacles. A year after the failed Bay of Pigs invasion, Ernesto “Che” Guevara used the anniversary of Antonio Maceo’s death (December 7th, 1962) for a display of military power aimed perhaps more for Miami’s exile community than for Cubans on the island. The parade took place at the Monumento El Cacahual: the mausoleum where the remains of General Maceo are buried alongside those of Lieutenant Francisco Gómez (also known as Panchito), son of

Generalísimo Máximo Gómez.²⁶ In brief remarks, Guevara linked the “new Cuba” to heroes of Cuba’s wars of independence, including Maceo, Martí and Gomez (Barraque Dec. 8, 1962).

In the parade, a racially diverse marching band preceded rows and rows of infantry units (including an all-female unit) wearing steel helmets and carrying automatic weapons, including new machine guns recently received thanks to Cuba’s new relationship with the Soviet Union. The parade also flaunted the government’s new anti-tank guns. While the parade took place on the anniversary of Maceo’s death, Maceo’s birthdate of June 14th coincided with Guevara’s. The shared birthdates helped Guevara (and other living Cuban leaders, like Castro) portray themselves as re-embodiments of Cuba’s beloved heroes of independence. When the *Miami Herald* published an article (in Spanish) describing the military parade, members of Miami’s burgeoning Cuban exile community likely read it, infuriated that Guevara was taking the role of Maceo in a scenario of Independence. The editors of *Bohemia Libre* (a newspaper distributed in Miami) charged that the communist infiltration in Cuba must have Maceo “rolling in his grave” (Benson 2012, 14).

Becoming Antonio Maceo

Militant Cuban emigres embraced Antonio Maceo as a hero in part because of his lead role in a famous historic moment: the Protesta de Baragúa, when Maceo—unlike his white *criollo* compatriots—refused to accept the peace treaty (the Treaty of Zanjón)

²⁶ According to popular legend, “Panchito” had died trying to defend Antonio Maceo from the Spanish (see Foner 1979).

offered by Spanish General Arsenio Martínez Campos. Maceo would not be deterred from his goals: Cuban independence *and* emancipation. His refusal to give in to the truce paved the way for the independence struggle to continue in 1895 (Foner 1977; Franco 1989).

For militant Cuban emigres, including Bay of Pigs veterans, U.S. authorities were not going to stop them from finishing their own war: their own Protesta de Baraguá. They too would refuse a truce with Fidel Castro. Miguel de la Torre (2003) suggests that they also wanted to possess Maceo's force: his *cojones*.²⁷ Maceo exemplified the "macho qualities of honor, bravery, patriotism, and the best that Cubans can hope to be," contends religious studies scholar Miguel de la Torre (2003, 88-89). When a Cuban man uses the Cuban compliment "*como Maceo*," praising boldness, he also typically uses a gesture: he upwardly cups his hand at his crotch, according to de la Torre, who identifies the phallic signifier of machismo as the *cojones*.

Militant anti-Castro emigres wanted to "reinstate the machismo lost by their fathers" during and after U.S. military occupation, argues de La Torre 2003 (92), who describes "very machos" as typically white and rich Cuban men who emphasize their ability to dominate others, especially women, nonwhites and the poor. The members of militant anti-Castro terrorist groups were not necessarily wealthy, or elite, and in Cuba they may have been interpellated as "less-than-white," but they had ways to show their *cojones*, too. If Miami's Cuban elite were modern-day versions of Christopher Columbus or Ponce de Leon ready to take back Cuba in a scenario of Reconquest, the emigres ready to bear

²⁷ Although literally this word translates as testicles, the definition used here (by Miguel de la Torre) draws upon the word as metaphoric signifier, akin to "balls" symbolizing courage and manhood.

arms and wear military fatigues could act out roles as Mambises and Maceos in a scenario of Independence.

Several months after Che Guevara's parade on December 7th, 1962, a Miami group calling itself the Batallón Antonio Maceo (Antonio Maceo Battalion) held its own commemoration. The brigade planned its event to take place on February 24th, the anniversary of insurrections that took place across Cuba in 1895, launching Cuba's final war of independence (Southworth Feb. 25, 1963). As such, the battalion was putting in place the symbolic props needed to reinforce the scenario of Independence. The battalion inaugurated its new training camp on another symbolic day later in 1963, on September 7th: the *vispera*²⁸ for Cuba's patron saint, La Virgen de la Caridad del Cobre (Our Lady of Charity) and the feast day of Cuba's black Madonna, La Virgen de Regla (Our Lady of Regla). Our Lady of Charity was a popular figure among the Mambises (Schmidt 2015). In Spanish and English, Father Manuel Lopez of Gesu Catholic Church blessed the battalion, the camp, and its flags ("Batallon Maceo Inaugura Campo," Sept. 6, 1962). Radio announcer Ofelia Fox promised the camp would prepare men for war and women for roles in First Aid.²⁹

Members of the Antonio Maceo Battalion trained five hours a day, every day but Sunday, on the grounds of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 1608 at 1608 Southwest 27th Avenue, on the borders of the neighborhood that would become known in later years as Little Havana (Southworth Feb. 25, 1963). Battalion trainer and VFW

²⁸ On the eve of a saint's feast day, believers (of the saint and/or the Orisha with which it is associated) also hold rituals and celebrations.

²⁹ Translated from Spanish. Broadcast on June 5th, 1963 from WMIE (Fox 2007, 302).

member Ronald Von Klaussen said that volunteers spent their time in “close order drills, calisthenics, officer training.” Battalion members did not “talk politics,” he said, although he admitted that trainings included “patriotic talks” (Ibid.).

“Patriotic talks” also included announcements broadcast on the Spanish radio station WMIE, which urged listeners to visit the Battalion’s training camp at Fort McAllister. These appeals claimed that men would receive “military instruction” and would turn into “Superman.” Imbued with the rhetoric of civil religious nationalism (Angrosino 2002; de la Torre 2003), they portrayed involvement in the battalion as a matter of worthiness in a macho, patriotic ideal:

They showed you their faith, if you are short of it. There you will look at our flag as today every refugee must look at it. You will meet generous men of spirit who are willing to fight for the reconquest of a free Cuba. So that these children of today are free men in the Cuba of tomorrow, not simply children of refugees. I speak to the Antonio Maceo Battalion because they are waiting for us all there. The man will feel more man, more Cuban, more worthy of the country that suffers and waits.³⁰

Battalion leaders denied that members owned or used automatic weapons or live ammunition, or that the group was doing anything that impinged on the United States’ Neutrality Act. Nonetheless, in a clip of a Spanish-language newscast preserved in the Lynn and Louis Wolfson II Florida Moving Images Archives (“Cuban Battalion Antonio Maceo” Dec. 22, 1963), the men of the battalion train in the Everglades with live ammunition (“Antonio Maceo Battalion: Case CI 93-F,” Sept. 9, 1963, CI Archives). In one scene, they crawl on their elbows across sand and gravel, wearing helmets and cradling their rifles, while two men shoot live ammunition directly above their heads.

³⁰ Translated from Spanish. Broadcast on June 5th, 1963 from WMIE (Fox 2007, 302).

Stumps lining both sides of their “path” hold up drooping strands of barbed wire. Another shot shows the men rushing down a small slope and quickly dropping to their stomachs, shooting; yet another shows the men holding their guns in position as they stand in neat rows. In one scene we see a group of women kneel on the ground, with First Aid boxes by their side; an “officer” shouts “Adelante! Detras!” to men in uniform as they perform their drills.

An unidentified reporter stands near them, introducing (in Spanish) the scene as dawn on Christmas eve, with “fit male cadets”—members of the Antonio Maceo Battalion—conducting their weekly exercises. With a tone of reverence, he emphasizes that these men hail from all walks of life—some of them working in offices, others driving taxis, and others picking tomatoes or cutting sugarcane, but all making the personal sacrifice to serve in defense of “la patria,” and doing so as volunteers. The reporter is narrating a scene of *ajiaco* and inclusion, reproducing the battlefields of Cuba’s anti-colonial wars. Truly manly men of any background could reenact battles against the Spanish, and at the same time imagine battles against the blacks and disloyal whites imagined as taking over their homeland. They could forge brotherhood through 21st century guerrilla warfare: the “black arts” of covert operations.

Beyond the scene of the battlefield, and beyond the realm of dirtied men (even those who cut sugarcane, like slaves), other scenes assured these fighting men that they could reach whiteness. A fundraiser for the battalion took place at a benefit performance by the Florida Ballet Guild on May 17th, 1964, sponsored by the McAllister Volunteer Post of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (“Benefit Show” May 7, 1964). Sacrifice for the Cuban exile nation offered its rewards in the form of transnational white solidarity. In fact, the

battalion was likely sponsored by the CIA, according to FBI reports (“Ronald Von Klaussen,” Feb. 16, 1964, NA). Battalion Major Donald A. Miller said the group was sponsored by the Americanism Program of VFW Post 1608 (“Antonio Maceo Battalion: Case CI 93-F,” Sept. 9, 1963, CI Archives).

The supervisor of Miami’s Criminal Intelligence-Rackets and Frauds division³¹ was concerned about the battalion, however. Bombings had been exploding across Miami, with each bomb accompanied by a neatly typed letter signed “Antonio.” The letters identified the group behind the bombings as the “7th of December Movement.” The bombings, which exploded in the home of the Mexican consul and in a Cuban exile social club, all took place on September 8th, the feast day for Our Lady of Charity (Cuba’s patron saint). December 7th is the date of Antonio Maceo’s death (Ibid.). Acts of violence—likely committed by predominantly white (or all-white) Cuban exile groups (and quite possibly the Antonio Maceo Battalion itself)--were thus enacted in the name of a mulatto (black) man and a saint that in Cuba had traditionally been depicted as mulatta (Zuñiga 2011; Schmidt 2015). Antonio Maceo, Our Lady of Charity and Our Lady of Regla were divine protectors, straddling the worlds of whiteness and blackness: the bronze armor necessary for “dirty work,” thus protecting white bodies.

Violence permeated intricate translocal and transnational shadow networks where no discernible line separated the legal from the illegal, but where whiteness was also a form of protection, as I will explain. “Exile Terrorist Bombers: Who Are They?” screamed the headline on the front page of *The Miami Herald* of September 10, 1968. All year long,

³¹ Lieutenant L.J. Van Buskirk.

bombs had been exploding in Cuban-owned businesses and in the headquarters of Cuban exile organizations, in embassies and consulates and travel agencies, on ships, in cars, in homes. The violence would continue in the years to follow. Between January and September 1968, thirty-six bombs had exploded or were set to explode in Miami-Dade County. Police said the attacks were extortion in the guise of politics. One method? Leaving unfused dynamite in Cuban-owned establishment, and the warning that without a payoff, the next time it would explode (Montalbano and Jones, Sept. 10, 1963). Meanwhile, the transnational battle over Maceo's commemorative body continued.

In 1969, the Cuban Institute of Cinemagraphic Art and Industry announced that it was producing a historical film about Ernesto "Che" Guevara and Antonio Maceo. According to the filmmakers involved with the institute, Guevara and Maceo not only shared the same birthday, June 14th, but were also born with the "same ideas of revolution." The filmmakers hoped their work would demonstrate the "generational call" that "brings forth fighters for independence" ("Guerilla Warfare," Aug. 21, 1969). After learning about the film, Miami's Dr. Antonio Maceo, the grandson of Antonio Maceo (who lived in Miami), responded with outrage; he and others called the film propaganda.

"My grandfather may have been born on the same date as Guevara," he remarked, "but my grandfather died to free his homeland from Spain. Guevara died after helping enslave Cuba under Russia" (Soler Sept. 8, 1969). He provided the *Miami Herald* with copies of letters in which his famous grandfather told Martí he was a "believer in democracy, the freedom of expression and of individual liberty and an enemy of any form of government that enslaves Cuba" (Soler Oct. 6, 1969). The black Dr. Maceo--a signifier of Maceo himself--evoked the scenario of Slavery in order to portray

communism as slavery in its newest form; he was also linking the scenario of Independence to the scenario of Slavery. In this scenario, white Cuban emigres become both Mambises and *cimarrónes* (runaway slaves).

Miami Cubans responded to the film by unveiling a fiberglass statue of General Antonio Maceo a month later, on the anniversary of the Grito de Yara that had begun Cuba's first war for independence. "The statue's unveiling in Hialeah will mark the first time a monument to a Negro hero of Latin America's independence struggles is displayed in the United States," said the organizers, who were angry about the Cuban film's intent to depict Maceo as a "sympathizer of communism." The ceremony took place in the City of Hialeah, a Cuban community of Greater Miami, with an additional celebration at Little Havana's San Juan Bosco Church. President Nixon was among the invitees, as well as Florida's Governor Claude Kirk (Ibid.). Numerous Miami organizations would celebrate the anniversary of Maceo's death that same year (Soler Dec. 8, 1969).

Living "Proof": Making Antonio Maceo Speak

Some militant emigre groups were linking acts of violence to the historic figure of Antonio Maceo, which in effect transformed themselves into re-embodiments of Maceo. Afro-Cuban men in Miami, however, were especially exalted if they expressed strong anti-Castro views and were affiliated with counterrevolutionary efforts. They became the "truest" re-embodiments of Maceo as long as they served as a mouthpiece for the views of Miami's predominantly white Cuban community. They were Maceo only if they never brought up Cuban racism in Miami and only if they criticized the U.S. Civil Rights Movement and "unruly" African Americans. Like Maceo's monument in Cuba and now

in Hialeah, they were supposed to remain possessed, like property, with the voice of Cuban white supremacy, serving as “proof” that Cubans in Miami were colorblind and that racism had not existed in Cuba in the decades leading up to the Cuban Revolution. They were indeed, “commemorative bodies.” I tie their roles to the scenario of Emancipation, the roots of which will describe in more detail next before returning back to Miami.

In 1863, President Abraham Lincoln consecrated the national soldier’s cemetery in Gettysburg, where he also proclaimed the “new birth of freedom.” Despite the popular themes of freedom, liberty and unity in memorial landscapes, battles over public memory revealed underlying tensions over who counted as “the people” and which versions of history would be remembered. As Kirk Savage (1997, 5) explains: “Ultimately the [Civil War] turned on the question of who belonged to the nation: who had a claim on the national possession of liberty, and what did the possession imply.” While “freedom” became a unifying concept for the nation, seemingly concretized by the statues in monumental landscapes, Confederate rebels were liquidating or transferring their own “possessions”—living black bodies—and sending or selling them in Cuba, where the slave trade continued (Horne 2014, 7).

A year after his assassination in 1876, Lincoln’s body re-appeared in Washington, DC, preserved in the form of a bronze statue. Lincoln had become something of an “American Christ figure,” according to Michael Angrosino (2002, 251). Black Americans raised funds to erect The Freedmen’s Memorial to Abraham Lincoln (the Emancipation Monument); they too wanted to make the principals of freedom tangible and thus imaginable. The monument depicts Lincoln standing over a kneeling and shirtless black

man. Lincoln extends his left hand as if a god, able to magically transform this anonymous black man from slave to free man, giving him a “new birth.” From a different orientation, however, the monument signifies enduring white supremacy. “Frozen forever in this unfortunate juxtaposition,” writes Savage (1997, 90), “the monument is not really about emancipation but about its opposite—domination.”

During the U.S. occupation of Cuba, the U.S. government constructed monuments that extended the reach of Lincoln’s symbolic white (and U.S.) hand. Despite the extensive participation of black Cubans in Cuba’s wars of independence, and the significant role of black generals like Antonio Maceo, the first official monuments installed in Cuba after 1898 commemorated U.S. soldiers and their role in what one memorial described (in English) as “America’s War with Spain,” even though U.S. forces fought in Cuba for little over a month. The only two units that received their own monuments were the all-white 2nd Massachusetts Infantry and the 71st Massachusetts Militia (neither of which fought in the major battle of San Juan Hill), when two-thirds of U.S. troops were in fact drawn from “colored” ranks (Beidler 2013; Carlson-Drexler 2006). The monuments installed during U.S. occupation made concrete an idea of freedom as debt: Cuba owed the U.S. for its “emancipation” from Spain (Pérez 1999); just as blacks in the U.S. and Cuba supposedly “owed” whites who gave them freedom. These monuments also made dead black bodies seemingly disappear, forgotten, as if they had been sacrificed so that whiteness could live on, and whiteness could be “re-born.”

In Cuba, the symbolic counterparts to Abraham Lincoln were Carlos Manuel de Cespedes and Jose Martí. On the fortieth anniversary of the Grito de Yara, Havana newspaper *La Discusión* published a tribute to Cespedes, depicting him as the hero who

abolished slavery and launched the wars of independence (Pérez 2003). In an illustration of Céspedes, the white plantation owner stands before a shirtless and kneeling black man, his left hand outstretched over and nearly touching the black man's head. The shackles next to the kneeling man signify that Céspedes has just freed him from slavery, reinforcing popular narratives of Céspedes as the first plantation owner to free his slaves and exhort them to join the revolution against Spain.

The resemblance of this illustration to The Freedman's Memorial is uncanny. In the Cuban illustration, however, the black man grasps the hand of his white emancipator, while behind them both towers a royal palm—the national tree of Cuba; in front of them stands a Cuban flag (Nathan 2012, 61). In this new nation, the illustration implies, “we are all Cuban.” At the same time, this staged scene of racial democracy preserves a subtext: “*todos somos Cubanos, pero no todos somos iguales*” (we are all Cuban, but not all of us are equal” (Clealand 2017).

These stagings of the scenario of Emancipation as debt occurred in embodied forms, too. A year before the tribute to Céspedes, Cuba's conservative press wrote enthusiastically about vice-presidential candidate Rafael Montero's embrace of the black General Jesus Rabi at the opening ceremony of Cuba's presidential campaign. The Partido Conservador (Conservative Party), for whom Montero was the candidate, claimed it did not recognize race or color. They described Montero's embrace as if it were proof that Jose Martí's dream of an inclusive republic had indeed been realized. Nonetheless, black Liberals had not forgotten Montero's enthusiastic reaction to the death of Antonio Maceo. After hearing about Maceo's death, Montero shook the hand of Spanish Military

Governor Valeriano Weyler—known for his hatred of Maceo and his brutality towards blacks—and gave his hearty congratulations (de la Fuente 1999, 58).

In 1Miami, Afro-Cubans were continuing to serve as living symbols of Maceo. In 1964, one of the last living generals during Cuba's wars of independence, residing in exile in Miami, fell ill at age 91 years old and was transferred to Jackson Memorial Hospital, on the borders of what is now Little Havana. Generoso Campos Marquetti, a black Cuban veteran, was Miami's living link between the counterrevolution and Cuba's wars of independence. He told the public what many white Cuban emigres wanted to hear, evoking Independence when he described himself as part of a "group of Cubans who want to take to the island the war against communism," but also activating the scenario of Emancipation. Members of the Antonio Maceo Battalion and Brigade 2506 were among those who stood guard "permanently" in the hospital while he received flowers, letters, telegrams and numerous visitors. A group of Cuban women created a guestbook titled, *Al General en Campaña* (to the General in the campaign). The veneration of Campos Marquetti was taking place in the midst of attacks against revolutionary Comandante Juan Almeida, a prominent Afro-Cuban leader in Cuba's new government. As documented by Devyn Spence Benson (2012, 14), Miami reporter José Correa Espino described Almeida as a "puppet" and a "clown," and criticized him for "thinking [that] he was the Maceo of today."

Campos Marquetti lived two more years, however, dying on May 19th, 1966: the anniversary of Jose Martí's death. He died in Washington, DC while on a trip to commemorate Cuba's independence (Barraque Dec. 10, 1964; Bellamy Feb. 24, 1966; "Parte de Cortejo Funebre," May 25, 1965). His funeral took place in San Juan Bosco

church, the Little Havana church where he had prayed before an image of Our Lady of Charity. Hundreds attended his funeral, and more than a thousand joined an hours-long funeral procession along Flagler Street.³² Campos Marquetti was buried at the Catholic Cemetery of Miami (Monte, “Muere Desferrado,” May 27, 1966, CHC).

Obituaries highlighted his role as a black warrior but downplayed his role as a leader. A nearly half-page obituary published in the Catholic-focused *The Voice en Español* referred to Campos Marquetti as a general only once—as a part of his title. Elsewhere, it described him as “*el negro mambi*” (the black Mambi) who had “fought a new battle for the liberty of his country.” He was still fighting, even in his moment of death (Ibid.). The title of another obituary described him as, “A Fighter for Cuba in 1895—And Now” (Bellamy Feb. 24, 1966).

Cuban emigres also used Campos Marquetti as living “proof” that Cubans weren’t racist (“Revolution,” May 22, 1961; McGowan Jan. 27, 1963). For instance, when the *Miami Herald* published articles stating that blacks in Cuba had an improved quality of life as a consequence of Castro’s new policies, letter writer “L. Lamadrid” insisted that blacks were better off *before* the Revolution (Lamadrid July 19, 1964), repeating the narrative of colorblindness and an “official” public memory of Maceo (Nathan 2012; de la Fuente 1998, 1999). “Negroes fought for the independence of Cuba on an equal basis with white natives,” wrote Madrid, comparing an article of the 1940 Cuban Constitution as “tantamount to the Civil Rights Bill just passed here.” Emphasizing the participation of blacks in high-ranking government positions, Lamadrid noted that the “majestic

³² Flagler Street runs parallel to Southwest 8th Street (Calle Ocho), and was the first major commercial corridor where Cubans set up businesses after 1959. See Grenier and Moebius (2015).

monument still standing on the Havana waterfront was erected half a century ago to a Negro, General Antonio Maceo, and this same Negro was portrayed on \$20 bills before Castro.” As if saving the best evidence for last, Lamadrid concluded by mentioning General Generoso Campos Marquetti (the “only living survivor of Cuba’s founding fathers”) and Dr. Antonio Maceo (Lamadrid July 19, 1964), as if both were re-embodiments of Maceo.

According to the narrative repeated by Lamadrid, black Cubans obtained civil rights when slavery was abolished, independence achieved, and a new constitution gave them the right to vote and participate in public office and in other high-ranking positions. Of course, all of these pieces of “evidence” were aimed at the denial of Cuban white supremacy. At the same time, prominent depictions of Campos Marquetti diminished the significance of his twelve years in Cuba’s House of Representatives. He had served as a Congressman. He edited and wrote for three Cuban newspapers (Barraque Dec. 10, 1964; Bellamy Feb. 24, 1966). Transforming him into a living representation of Maceo made Campos Marquetti a warrior, and a warrior only, reinforcing long-held stereotypes about black men as brute bodies only fit for work and fighting and thus a scenario of Slavery, too (Ferrer 1998; Nederveen Pieterse 1998; Hall 2013).

As evidenced by the analysis of his corpse, Maceo was also treated as “brawn” versus “brain.” At the inauguration of his statue in 1916, editor and compiler Néstor Carbonell distributed a paperback edition of Maceo’s papers (Montero 1999). Called *De La Campaña* (a title echoed in the name of guestbook given to Campos Marquetti, *Al General en Campaña*), the volume began with Carbonell’s acknowledgment of Maceo’s heroism: “Maceo lacked the time to obtain a degree or learn grammar and arithmetic, but

not for becoming a professional in heroism [...] he was not a thinker but rather a brilliant warrior, the Hero par excellence.”

Maceo was also treated as exceptional, however, and as if an inner whiteness dominated his outer blackness, just as racial scientists had described his (black) body as dominated by his “white” head. Carbonell portrayed Maceo as if his brown skin covered a white interior, describing his life as “a straight line from dawn to dusk; [he] was bronze on the outside, yet inside, [he was] pure marble, without a single black streak” (quoted in Montero 1999). Maceo after death was portrayed as “inhabited” or occupied by inner whiteness that secured his right to be memorialized. Filling him with a white interior coincided with the systemic “whitening of the nation” in Cuba (and Latin America more broadly) (Andrews 2004; Helg 1990; Bronfman 2004). With its pronouncement that “All Cubans are equal before the law,” Cuba’s 1901 constitution legitimized a discourse of Cuba as an inclusive nation. Nonetheless, inclusion was a threat to white Cuban creole³³ elites and intellectuals, who feared losing the benefits of white supremacy and their presumed role as the leaders of the new republic, well aware of racial attitudes in the U.S. Some supported annexation to the United States and wanted to maintain fruitful alliances with U.S. allies; they wanted to highlight and secure the “white side” of Cuba’s body politic. Cuban professor José Antonio Saco wrote that Cuba had no alternative “but to whiten and whiten” if it wanted a place in the world (Guevara 2005, 105-106). Maceo’s interior had to “whiten and whiten” to secure his place in history.

³³ Cubans born in Cuba.

Interior whitening also involved the removal of Maceo's interior black self, which is described by scholars of race as "dispossession" (Hartman 1997; McKittrick 2011; Mills 1997). Similarly, obituaries cut out an entire portion of Campos Marquetti's life, as it did not fit the underlying purpose of commemorating him. He was still stuck in the service of the scenario, his dead black body—like Dr. Maceo's living black body--linking the scenario of Independence to contemporary battles against Castro.

In Miami, the ceremonies enacted over Campos Marquetti's body required a silencing and forgetting of his years after independence was achieved, and thus the implications of these years, which helped "keep him in his place" in an imagined racial/spatial order (Rahier 1998; Trouillot 1995; Hooker 2009). After all, Campos Marquetti was one of the first black Cubans to lead a collective effort to end racial discrimination after the wars of independence. As Aline Helg (1995, 125) documents, he organized a meeting where two hundred veterans and the leaders of *sociedades de color* met to discuss how to end racial discrimination, including segregation in institutions like the security forces, where many black veterans had hoped to find employment.

In other words, "cut out" from the obituaries about Campos Marquetti were stories about his efforts to challenge racial order. Campos Marquetti and other black leaders were angry at the lack of job opportunities and advancement offered fellow black veterans. Historians Louis Pérez (1999a, 1999b, 2003), Alejandro de la Fuente (1999, 2001) and Melina Pappademos (2011), among others, have documented the nepotism, favoritism and patronage sinecures that characterized all levels of government in the years following Cuban independence, funded by growing bureaucracies and influential foreign investors, and excluding most Cubans of color from jobs in the public sector (see

also Reid Andrews 2004; FitzGerald 2014). After a meeting with newly elected President Estrada Palma to discuss these concerns, Campos Marquetti remarked, “The truth is, Mr. President, this is not what we [blacks] expect from the Revolution and things cannot continue like this.” At a second public meeting held in response to blacks’ growing anger about exclusion from employment opportunities, Campos Marquetti told the crowd that he and other representatives had been called “racists” for raising the issue of state employment (Pappademos 2011, 67). If Campos Marquetti and his black peers dared to point to still-existing racial exclusion, they were treated as if possessed by the dangerous spirit of black rebellion and as if betraying the unspoken debt of Emancipation.

Although he did attempt to speak out against racial injustice, Campos Marquetti—like other educated and privileged blacks—distinguished himself from the masses (Ibid., 142). He and other blacks in politics had to constantly prove their loyalty to the state as well as their capacity for leadership, and thus they battled stereotypes of blacks as culturally backward and uneducated. White Cubans closely monitored them for any evidence that they were too aligned with black solidarity, an operation of surveillance in the service of white supremacy (Helg 1995; De La Fuente 1999; Horne, 2014; Pappademos 2011; Foucault 1975, 1991).

Campos Marquetti likely experienced the effects of racial segregation in Miami, despite the benefits he received by his involvement and support of La Lucha. While most socially white Cubans were settling in the Riverside/Shenandoah area, or in areas further south or west of Little Havana (Boswell 1993; Grenier 2015), Campos Marquetti lived in Allapattah, the neighborhood where many Afro-Cubans, Afro-Latinos and African Americans settled after informal racial segregation hindered them from finding homes

south of Flagler Street (as discussed by Lazaro [pseudonym], interviewed Oct. 27, 2017; Aja 2016; Winsberg 1979). In the 1950s, Miami planned all new low-income housing developments—apart from those exclusively for seniors—in northwest Miami neighborhoods like Allapattah, which became predominantly black and poor, or what historian Raymond Mohl calls Miami’s “second ghetto,” thanks to redlining and other practices of disinvestment (Mohl 1995a; Connolly 2014, 265). In the 1960s, the building of Interstate 95 through the middle of Overtown forced 10,000 African Americans to lose their homes and move north into newly developed areas like Liberty City and Carol City (Mohl 1995a; Connolly 2014). By 1970, fewer than one percent of blacks (including black Cubans) lived in what was then called Little Havana (“Community Development” 1978, MDPL, 78).

Campos Marquetti’s home served as the headquarters for The Association for the Headquarters of Cuban Exiles of the Colored Race. This group might be the same group the *Miami Herald* described as Miami’s first Cuban refugee organization based on race: the Cuban International Fraternal Union, formed in June 1963 as “a militant organization” to fight Castro and fight for “progress, peace and justice for all men and races” (Egerton Dec.4, 1969). The association’s director, Oscar Paez Zamora, estimated that 6,000 to 7,000 black Cubans had already left Cuba. He charged that Castro was “doing every kind of pressure” to prevent blacks from leaving the island. As proof, he claimed that Castro had destroyed 200 passports of black Cubans in 1961, a black friend of his had been executed for wanting to leave, and relatives of black Cuban exiles had not had the opportunity to leave on the first airlift. “We’ve been criticized for forming a separate organization,” he said, suggesting concerns that he was organizing another PIC,

“but as long as Fidel Castro keeps telling the big lie that all Cuban Negroes support him, we feel it is our duty to expose that big lie to the world” (Bellamy Feb. 24, 1966). His “protection” was to voice the dominant views of Miami’s Cuban community.

By criticizing Castro for racial discrimination, Paez Zamora could critique racial inequality without losing the benefits (and safety) of Cuban exile solidarity. After all, he was supporting the scenario of Slavery conjured by Dr. Maceo to describe the situation in Cuba. At the same time, he could disrupt a narrative that portrayed all blacks in Cuba as communist and as the enemy (Lopez 2012; Benson 2012; Aja 2016). While he framed the enemy as communism, he imagined communism as embodied in the white and racist Fidel Castro--not in black Cubans portrayed as defending the Cuban leader.

Recruiting an Army of Spirits, Orishas and Runaway Slaves

The public memory of Maceo as a rebellious “black warrior” resonated with Cuba’s historical (and racial) representations of Mambises, cimarrones (runaway slaves) and Oggún, Orisha of war, labor and the machete (Brown 2003; Blanchard 2011; Ferrer 1998). In the decades to come, Cuban emigres would often activate the symbolic repertoire of these figures in Little Havana’s Cuban Memorial Park: a space that could conjure the scenes of war. The runaway slave is “an unofficial orisha in the aggregated pantheon of Afro-Cuban culture,” explains Marc Blanchard, representing the “underground history of flight, resistance, and the guerrilla” (7). It is not unlikely that militant anti-Castro emigres had varying levels of familiarity with myths, stories and other representations of these popular figures.

Cuban presidents including Fidel Castro, Fulgencio Batista and Gerardo Machado used and appropriated the coded symbols of Cuba's African-inspired religious systems as a means to show their power, gain votes and support, and intimidate rivals (Miller 2000; Routon 2010; Hartman, 2011). As Ivor Miller (2000, 37) has documented through extensive fieldwork among religious practitioners in Cuba, numerous stories tell of Cuban politicians using Santería and other Afro-Cuban religions in order to "remain one step ahead of their enemies," as he puts it. According to Mercedes Cros Sandoval (2007, 327), "the mystery of 'black magic' has strengthened Castro's aura of invincibility," and "many Santería believers relish these rumors about Castro since they do give great credibility to the efficacy of Santería's magical practices."

Imagine the reaction of Havana's elites to the arrival of Castro's guerrillas, as described by religious studies scholar Miguel de la Torre (2001, 846). The fighters wore the beaded necklaces of Santería (*elekes*) and waved the 26th of July Movement flag, its red and black colors coinciding with those of the divinity Elegguá—the trickster Orisha and determiner of destiny, and the first of the three main warrior Orishas (the others are Oggún and Ochosi). The guerrillas left for the city on January 1st, the feast day for Elegguá's Catholic counterpart, *El Niño de Atocha*, and thus also for Elegguá; this is also the day when priests (babalawos) do their annual reading (oracle) for the year. Some Cubans believe Castro used divination to predict the location of the Bay of Pigs invasion (Miller 2000, 45).

Castro was rumored to have had a *nganga* that had once belonged to Fulgencio Batista, and it's quite likely that emigres close to Batista were aware of these stories. Ngangas are used in Palo, the Afro-Creole practice often portrayed as "bad" or "black"

magic in contrast with Santería (Ochoa 2010; Sandoval, 2007). According to a Cuban Santera (female priest) interviewed by anthropologist Kenneth Routon (2010, 1):

No one really knows, but they say he keeps it in a room somewhere in that big Jose Martí monument or in one of those government buildings in the Plaza of the Revolution. All of his bones of the dead are there, spirits that do anything he orders them to do.

If Castro was harnessing the spiritual forces associated with black Cubans on the island, forces that centuries of anti-black propaganda had portrayed as primitive and dangerous, certainly the warriors in Miami would need to recruit their own forces, symbolically freeing (and yet still controlling) spectral slaves to fight in new wars of independence, and becoming like “dangerous blacks” themselves.

During his lifetime, General Antonio Maceo and members of his rebel army benefitted from connections with paleros, members of the Abakuá fraternal order, Freemasons and runaway slaves, and the material/spiritual reinforcements they claimed to possess (Miller 2009; Arroyo 2013). As Maceo’s rebel army moved across the Cuban countryside, it sheltered at *palenques*. Taino and Arawak Indians had formed the original rural camps, which later incorporated runaway slaves and fugitive whites. Palenques existed within local and transnational networks: local networks of supporters and larger illicit trade networks connecting Cuba with other islands, like Haiti and Jamaica, through European merchants (Miller 2009, 146; Benitez-Royo, 252; Foner 1977, 27). They were also a spiritual crossroads, where guerrilla fighters engaged in the African-inspired practices of Santería and Palo. A reporter in Cuba during the wars of independence described witnessing what he called “Voudou dance” ceremonies at every encampment he visited (O’Kelly 1874, 274); accounts also mention that Maceo used the sounds of

drumming in the encampments to determine the locations of his troops (Blanchard 2011, 18; Bettelheim 2001, 147).

Archeological digs at former palenques have revealed traces of religious objects, such as the *calderas*, iron cauldrons used for ngangas. Maceo let his troops carry *calderas* into battlefields, where rebels beat them like cowbells, to terrifying effect (Blanchard 2011, 8). According to stories handed down from participants in the wars, Maceo and fellow black general Quintín Bandera were devotees of Palo Monte, and invoked the Kongo divinity of war, or Sarabanda, to assist them (Miller 2009, 147, 279 note 80; Blanchard 2011, 18). Within their black, rounded, iron exteriors, ngangas are miniature worlds. They are meeting places where entities live and interact with the living human beings who believe in them, remember them, talk to them, offer sacrifices to them, and occasionally are possessed by them. Palo initiates pack the inside of the nganga with natural substances like soil and sticks, man-made objects like machetes and handcuffs, human bones, and spirit and magical forces, like *Nfumbe*--spirit/nature entities (Cabrera [1981] 2009, 112).

During the wars for Cuban independence, calderas conjured tremendous fears among Spanish and Cuban creoles who believed that black Cubans ritually sacrificed whites for their cauldrons (beliefs that persisted during the republican era). For believers, the machetes and chains and blood sacrifices that helped make ngangas “activate” manifested scenarios of Slavery but gave the dead agency to aid those in the present (Bronfman 2004; Helg 1995; Ochoa, 2010). Historically, images associated with black warriors conjured a longtime colonial trope of the African warrior used in justifications of white violence. As Nederveen Pieterse (1998, 79) explains:

The contrast between the warrior and the soldier, the colonial enemy image and the self-image, is a version of the rhetorical contrast between savagery and civilization. Soldiers are sometimes referred to as warriors, but not the other way round [sic]. The stereotype of the warrior is a virtually naked native, ferocious, equipped with archaic arms, shown more often as an individual than in a group (but if a group is shown it is a disorganized group).

According to the legend of Castro's nganga (Routon (2010, 1-2), Cuban rebels seized it when Batista accidentally left it behind while fleeing Cuba. Batista paid a high price to obtain the legendary nganga, rumored to have belonged to a group of runaway slaves at a palenque. He had it taken to the Belgian Congo so paleros there could restore and "recharge" it.³⁴ According to a Cuban emigre palero who claims personal knowledge of the nganga (translated from Spanish):

Great witch or black king, dictator Batista or Commander of the Revolution with phases unknown, without knowing in whose hands this fetish was, it is no longer a curiosity that it is part of our history in one way or another and it reaffirms our African roots in a mestizo nation, where Santa Barbara is also Changó. ("La Nganga de Batista," June 5, 2014)

To maintain their power, Cuban presidents Batista and Castro embodied the great witch or black king. Vives likens the great witch/black king to Cuba's religious syncretism, where the white female saint ("witch") Santa Barbara is also Changó, or is in other words syncretized (and thus recognizable) as the very masculine divinity of Santería, depicted as a black man. In this imagination of blackness and Africanity, blackness is something moveable that can be possessed and owned, like a slave, and yet it can also be embodied

³⁴ Curiously, a variation of this story appears on a blog published by the Espacio Español Para La Preservación del Palo Mayombe (The Spanish Association for the Preservation of Palo Mayombe). The blog post shares the version told by Juan Vives, the pseudonym for a Cuban emigre now living in Paris. Malembeweb, "La Nganga de Batista," *Espacio Español Para La Preservación del Palo Mayombe*, June 5, 2014, accessed December 9, 2016, <https://mayombe.net/2014/06/05/la-nganga-de-batista-2/>.

within: in either case, it is meant to serve the interests of powerful white or whitened men.

Counterrevolutionaries—even those who were likely descendants of plantation owners—were also trying to harness the invisible powers of the dead, if one considers how they deployed the black commemorative bodies of Maceo and his avatars for the scenarios of Independence and Slavery. Through rituals and rhetoric of civil religion (Angrosino 2002), they could activate an ontological and phenomenological experience: a “feeling” and recognition of black bodies as “occupying” themselves or others. Michael Taussig (1997) describes how spirit possession makes “real” the metaphorical representations of state power. For anti-Castro militants, possessing black bodies made real their own power--a “non-state” power--in the liminal realm of Cuban exile nationalism (Gutiérrez-Boronat 2005). The place to demonstrate this rebel power would become Little Havana, and specifically Cuban Memorial Park.

Mission Oggún: Becoming the Orisha of War

In Santería, the avatar of the Palo divinity Sarabanda is Oggún: both rule the domain of war, work, iron, and the machete/knife (Castellanos and Castellanos 1992, 33). In Santería, cauldrons are consecrated as container-homes where two of the warrior (*guerrero*) Orishas, Oggún and Ochosi, “live”; miniature or full-size machetes are among the metal implements put into the pot, as well as hammers, horseshoes and other implements of iron. Religious rituals, dances, and *pataki* (sacred stories) depict Oggún as raw, violent and unwaveringly focused on a mission. Cuban emigre terrorists Luis Posada Carriles and Orlando Bosch called their own mission “*la guerra por los caminos del*

mundo” (the war for the paths of the world), a phrase strongly resembling the language of Santería, which often refers to *caminos* (paths) of “*guerreros*” like Oggún, who is known as an Orisha who “clears the path” or road (Cabrera [1981] 2009; Sandoval 2007); Carriles titled his autobiography, “Los Caminos del Guerrero,” or “The Roads of the Warrior” (Carrilles 1994).



Figure 7: Oggún dance performed by Maikel Pineda, CubaOcho (July 17, 2015). Photo by the author.

In the Atlantic world, Oggún is a racial signifier of violent blackness: his machete evokes scenarios of slavery and sugarcane plantations, as well as Cuba’s wars of independence (see Figure 7). He is consistently depicted as rough and brutal, strong and aggressive, shirtless, wearing a straw hat and a skirt of raffia fiber (called a *mariwo*), smoking a cigar, and holding a machete (Brown 2003, 172; Castellanos 1992, 33-35). Oggún is the patron of the soldier, the rebel, the guerrilla fighter. In the cosmology of Santería, he is at the bottom of a hierarchy, with “more deified” and “heavenly” creator Orishas, like Obatala, represented by the color white (Brown 2003, 172). Oggún (and warrior Orishas Elegguá and Ochosi) live outside, writes David Brown (2003, 173), “in

the thick of ‘material’ struggle: *la calle* (the street), hard labor (the plantation), violence (drunken brawls and revolution) and social unpredictability (precipitous changes, sudden attacks)” (see also Ortiz 1981, 305-306, 333; Brown 2003, 172; Lefever 1996, 321-322; de La Torre 2003). All of these domains, however, fit within the aforementioned colonial stereotype of the African warrior.

The recruiting propaganda for the Antonio Maceo Battalion promised that men—even those who cut sugarcane—would turn into supermen...like Oggún. Possessing as property and being “spiritually” possessed by Oggún promised communion, protection, internal and external transformation. As de la Torre (2001, 849) contends, “Both exilic and resident Cubans have followed Oggún, who protects those who work with iron (the militia).” The counterrevolutionary as Oggún or Sarabanda was cutting down his enemies. He was lured back into the palenque of Little Havana for drinks of sweet coffee and strong rum after exhausting days and nights training in the bush (e.g., the Everglades), resembling a famous patakí of Ochún (Orisha of love and sensuality) tempting Oggún out of the forest by smearing herself with honey.

Anti-Castro guerrilla fighters operated in translocal and transnational networks, and Little Havana was a popular “home base” of covert operations: the new palenque. One of these base sites was the second floor of the building adjacent to the present-day Azucar Plaza, where exiles planned their next operations against Cuba (George 2006). They were also immersing themselves in an “underworld” long associated with blackness and with violence. In Cuba, those involved in the “black market” and other criminal activities were assumed to be practitioners of Santería and Palo, or to have contact and access to practitioners (Ortiz [1906] 1973; Bronfman 2004; Arguelles 1982; Bongiovanni 2013;

Alberts 2005). In his 1906 ethnography, *Los Negros Brujos*, Fernando Ortiz argued that the black criminal underground, called the *hampa*, retained primitive and violent African practices associated with Afro-Cuban religions, tainting those involved with *mala vida*. Police used his book as a manual when investigating allegations of *brujería* (witchcraft) crimes (Bronfman 2004, 48).

Militant Cuban emigres did not need to go to a formal religious ritual, such as a *tambor* or *cajon* (religious drummings), to possess the “black warrior” body as a fungible resource that could be possessed within (Hartman 1997; Johnson 2014a, 2014b). They could “eat the other,” as described by bell hooks (1992), who uses the plot of *Heart Condition* as an example. In the film, a white, aging (and racist) police officer receives a heart transplant from a young (and well-endowed) black man he has been trying to destroy. He is jealous that the black man is a suitor of the white woman he desires. As hooks (1992, 31) explains, the film “insists that white male desire must be sustained by the “labor” (in this case the heart) of a dark Other. The fantasy, of course, is that this labor will no longer be exacted via domination but will be given willingly.” The ghost of the black man haunts the officer, but eventually they become like brothers through their patriarchal and homosocial bonding and mutual possession of the white woman, which becomes the basis for eradicating racism, explains hooks.

Militant Cuban emigres could imagine themselves as “becoming” runaway slaves, Mambises or Maceo himself, but if socially white, however, they held on to their “white power” and “white magic”: the modern property of whiteness (Harris 1993). They could always perform what Stephan Palmié calls “white Africanity” (Palmié 2013, 162, italics in the original):

Not unlike “incoherent” or “discontinuous” gender performances, “white Africanity” calls into question, *and yet* reaffirms, precisely those routines and regulatory practices by which North American racial subjectivities are formed and become habitable.

To possess blackness, like the relationship of master to slave, was to reproduce racial/spatial order as Latin American “racism without races” (Palmié 2013, 162; Rahier 2003; Martinez-Echazabal 1998). White emigres who conjured imaginations of black violence could at the same time call upon the special powers of “white magic” to erase their associations with violence in other contexts, especially if they performed “enough” loyalty to Anglo whites and their institutions in service of the Racial Contract (Mills 1997).

The imagery of black warrior divinities, Mambi guerrillas, black “witches” (e.g., paleros) and cimarrones also contributed to an enduring historical-racial schema (Fanon 1986, 91) and color line (Du Bois, [1903] 1996) built on legacies of slavery and colonialism: legacies that reverberate into even the most quotidian and intimate of experiences. These legacies made their way along the *caminos del mundo*, marching forward with propaganda about “race wars” and savage black men taking over the country, raping or seducing white women, or unleashing powerful and primitive African magic. These images were tied to what I call the scenario of Black Revolution. For example, David Brown (2003) points to the relationship between warrior Orishas and scenarios such the Haitian Revolution (and other slave revolts), the Three Kings Festival (when blacks took over the streets), the wars of independence and the Cuban Revolution. Arguably, the formation of the PIC and its acts of rebellion were also incorporated into a scenario of Black Revolution. Brown (2003, 173) also notes the terror that the holders of

western, slave-driven wealth on the western side of Cuba had towards Oriente, on the eastern end of the island, during the Ten Years War, thanks to “the dramatic gains of the Afro-Cuban hero Antonio Maceo, with his ranks of poor whites and blacks, former slaves, and cimarrónes.”

The stereotypical black warrior/witch has long been evoked to rationalize anti-black violence (Horne 2014; Helg, 1995; Ferrer 1999, 146-147; De La Fuente 1999), and what I call the scenario of Reconquista. Anthropologist Kristina Wirtz (2014, 78) argues that “this racialization of particular character types—slaves, maroons, paleros—and particular cultural objects—Palo, its prendas—as black/African is necessary to the project of appropriating such subaltern power for the state and the nation.” She suggests that performing and embodying historicized black figures in ways that mark them as powerful and extraordinary, “emanating somehow from beyond the usual regime of matter, subjectivity, and agency,” also risks reproducing blackness as different, caricatured, and apart from the body politic.

Il/legal Crossroads

In Miami, emigres involved in Cuban terrorist groups were becoming experts in “black ops,” or the “black arts,” where funding comes from a “black market.” Yet they relied on training from and connections with the CIA, as well as previous involvement in Batista-era criminal networks involving entities like the Mafia. Black operations and black markets evoke imagery of unruly former colonies and present-day ghettos and slums, yet they are intimately connected with seemingly separate spaces associated with whiteness,

law and order, and the state. Little Havana was itself a crossroads, a space where the world of “black ops” intersected with whiteness, law and order, and the state.

Anthropologist Carolyn Nordstrom (2004, 112) references the trickster Orisha of the crossroads, Eshú (Elegguá in the Yoruba-Atlantic),³⁵ to illustrate the complex, shifting interactions of the non/state and extra/legal. No easily determinable borders separate the legal and illegal, and state and non-state, she contends; instead, what is visible and invisible intertwine in the palimpsest of what Michel de Certeau describes as the “infinitesimal movements” (1988, 201) of urban landscapes. Similarly, Gilles Deleuze (1992, 2) describes Foucault’s *dispositif* as having a “regimen of light, the way it falls, softens and spreads, distributing the visible and the invisible, generating or eliminating an object, which cannot exist without it.”

The networks and relationships of the overt and covert, the official and plausibly deniable, materialize(d) in the trainings of the Antonio Maceo Battalion and the gatherings around La Saguesera’s *ventanitas* for *cafecitos* made with coffee and sugar. As Orlando Gutiérrez-Boronat (2005, 3) explains, these relationships exist “within an uncharted spiritual territory of memory, myth and aspirations that seem to flow continuously from the living rooms of exiled families to the offices of anti-Castro groups and the municipalities in exile through the meeting halls of Masons and Odd fellows, the basements and pews of Catholic and Protestant churches, and the backyard rituals of Santería followers.”

³⁵ Elegguá is the trickster Orisha.

Nordstrom's emphasis on relationships and networks aligns with geographer Doreen Massey's understanding of space as a "throwntogetherness" of flows, networks and linkages (2005, 167). She defines a place as "a meeting place, where the difference of a place must be conceptualized more in the ineffable sense of constant emergence of uniqueness out of (and within) the specific constellations of interrelations within which that place is set" (69). Massey warns about the implications of discourses (such as nationalist ones) that romanticize places as coherent, enclosed and homogeneous, places of the past, and in opposition to an outside Other. Places are dynamically circulating, globally interconnected space.

The shadow alliances that flow through and meet in the crossroads we understand as places, like the palenque of Little Havana's heritage district, are not so much outlaw offshoots of the state but, as Nordstrom (2004, 234) contends, "a competing set of regimes of accumulation, control, and action." Governments exist because people believe in *their* power, she argues. They are invested in portraying themselves as having power and as being the legitimate possessors of that power. Global white supremacy operates not only through the official arms of the state but also through the "unseen" shadow networks (what Kenneth Routon describes as the "hidden powers of the state") necessary for the denials of anti-black violence, as in the relationship between the KKK and the police. Michael Taussig (1997) argues that the "fetish power of the state" is not unidirectional—it is not an official manipulation from the state or the projection of popular imaginations onto the state. It is back-and-forth between the state and the popular, with mutual appropriations, seductions and reflections. Peter Dale Scott (2010, 8) agrees that the state is not a coherent entity as it is typically imagined. He describes the

“*negative space* in which overworld, corporate power, and privately organized violence all have access and utilize each other, and rules are enforced by powers that do not derive from the public state.”

Militant anti-Castro groups appropriated and performed blackness and Africanity in perceived rebellion *against* the state, even while serving its interests. They did not want “order,” symbolized by the state, and by Anglo whiteness, especially after the Bay of Pigs fiasco; they wanted their own form of “disorder,” which they could associate with blackness and “black magic.” Acting out the scenario of Slavery made them rebellious slaves against both Castro’s government and the U.S. government. They would possess “black power” to fight black power and the whites who dared threaten their access to the benefits of white supremacy.

Conquering Blackness for White Power

In the 1960s, the “we are all Cuban” discourse in Cuba and Miami’s Cuban community aligned with an emerging U.S. discourse of colorblindness (Bonilla-Silva 2002, 41). Little Havana would become the “scene” used as evidence of Cuban colorblindness in Miami. In contrast with the apartheid discourse of Jim Crow, this discourse highlighted cultural rather than biological traits (as if cultural reasons explained persistent racial hierarchies), the naturalization of racial phenomena such as segregation, and claims that race was irrelevant as discrimination had all but disappeared (Bonilla-Silva 2002, 42; Aja, 2016; Benson 2016). If black Cubans in Miami wanted access to some of the privileges of their fellow white Cubans, they had to prove that they had “conquered” blackness and any impulses to battle white supremacy. Black Cubans were expected to

act as the “loyal slave” in a scenario that historian David Blight (2001) describes as Reunion (see also Foner 2014), and which is linked to (and sometimes overlaps) the scenario of Emancipation.

The Reunion scenario emerged in the U.S. South during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, when Faithful Slave monuments depicted the nurturance of white supremacy through the figure of the faithful black slave, including the black mammy figure (Savage 1997; Blight 2001; Wallace-Sanders 2008). Figures like the mammy and loyal slave built on even earlier colonial tropes of the submissive African. As Jan Nederveen Pieterse (1998, 88-89) explains, as projects of colonialism stabilized in Africa, colonial imagery shifted from portrayals of Africans as “warriors” to those of Africans as childlike. Scenes of subjection dominated these images. An example is a monument erected in South Carolina in 1896 by a Confederate veteran and former slaveholder, Captain Samuel White. It consists of a stone obelisk located near a monument to Confederate soldiers. The following words are inscribed on the monument (Blight 2001, 288):

Dedicated to the faithful slave who, loyal to a sacred trust, toiled for the support of the army, with matchless devotion; and with sterling fidelity guarded our defenseless homes, women and children, during the struggle for the principles of our “Confederate States of America.”

The monument has two representations of slaves: a black field laborer and an archetypal “black mammy” holding a white child.

“Loyal slave scenes” depicted through monuments served dual purposes: to concretize black servility for the next generation of southerners, and to “prove” to the nation that white Southern men were the “negro’s best friend” (Blight 2001, 287-288;

Savage 1997, 158-159). Statues of faithful slaves paired with Confederate soldiers began to appear in numerous Southern memorial landscapes after the Civil War: props in broader efforts to justify the Southern plantation and emphasize slave loyalty. These monumentalized scenes replaced the scenario of slavery as one of domination and violence with a scenario of interracial harmony and black contentment with bondage. These scenes integrated with Cuba's narrative of Antonio Maceo as the embodiment of racial harmony.

In 1960s and 1970s Miami, black Cubans interviewed by the press emphasized racial harmony by de-emphasizing racial difference, affirming that they were Cuban before they were black (see also Aja 2016). Antonio Maceo's grandson, Dr. Antonio Maceo, embodied a version of Maceo as whitened and socially upright; lighter skinned than his grandfather, his mother hailed from Syracuse, New York and he had traveled frequently between Cuba and the U.S. in the years leading up to the Cuban Revolution (Egerton Dec. 14, 1969). Dr. Maceo was one of five men present at the first meeting of a group called the Frente (the Front), in 1960 (Torres 1999, 56-57),³⁶ which initially received \$81,000 monthly from the U.S. government in support of strategies to eliminate Castro (Burt Feb. 3, 1963). Maceo became acting president in 1963 but resigned that same year and moved away from politics. He chose to isolate himself from "any political or social or racial issues" ("Cuba Council," April 24, 1963; "U.S. Cash," May 1, 1963; Egerton Dec. 14, 1969).³⁷

³⁶ It was later called the Cuban Revolutionary Council or CRC.

³⁷ Maceo became acting president when the previous president resigned.

Although no longer involved in politics, at least officially, Dr. Maceo publicly articulated an ideology of colorblindness. Interviewed for *the Miami Herald* in 1969 (Egerton Dec. 14), he said he thought of himself as neither black nor white but simply Cuban. He claimed that race barriers had lowered after the wars of independence. African Americans clamoring for Civil Rights, however, risked fomenting a race war, he warned: “I have the impression that Cubans look upon American Negroes as people flirting with communism. The social and political activism, the left-wing activity, reminds us of what we saw before in Cuba. The discontent of the Negroes is being fanned by the communists.”

Similarly, the black Cuban leader of the Committee for the Aid of the Resistance, Luis Gonzalez-Grajales, also blamed Miami’s racial tensions on Castro and the Civil Rights movement; he also shared Maceo’s actual last name, inherited from his mother, Antonio de la Caridad Maceo y Grajales, making him another suitable re-embodiment of Maceo. “It is Castro’s doing, this pitting of black Americans against whites and Cubans,” he charged. “The communists are trying to turn the Negroes against us—they are planning and inspiring the black unrest. Castro stirs it up on the radio. But it is not working. Only with a few.” Gonzalez-Grajales said he had not experienced racism in Miami. Blacks did not experience racial inequality in Cuba during Batista, he claimed, and they had no experience of segregation. “We are hard-liners against communism, against Castro and Batista and the likes of them,” he blasted, critiquing not only the “blackened” Castro but also the not-so-white Batista (Egerton Dec. 14, 1969). “We have seen this protest against authority before—it is how our troubles started. It should not be allowed to happen here.” The white Cuban members of his organization, surrounding him

at the table where he was interviewed, nodded in agreement when he made his statements. By tying the Civil Rights movement in Miami to the Cuban Revolution, and portraying communists as those who spark “black unrest,” Dr. Maceo and Gonzalez-Grajales tied white communists to imagined unruly blackness and conjured the scenario of Black Revolution.

Dr. Maceo and Gonzalez-Grajales were protecting their solidarity with white Cubans and their own symbolic white marble interiors by distinguishing themselves from African Americans and attacking Castro and other whites portrayed as disloyal.³⁸ They were re-making pasts and presents in ways that preserved the Racial Contract of white supremacy (Mills 1997). Non-Cubans also reinforced these distinctions. They too linked the U.S. Civil Rights movement to the scenario of Black Revolution. In a 1960s paper published by Miami’s Community Relations Board, sociologist Edward S. Cooke concluded that Cubans in Miami wanted to assume the dominant white and anti-black attitude of the U.S. He blamed racial tensions on “crime in the streets, riots, campus disorders and demonstrations” and “Castro’s professed encouragement of a black revolution” (Egerton Dec. 14, 1969).

Dr. Maceo and Gonzalez-Grajales were not among the first Afro-Cubans in Florida to feel pressured into condemning efforts to achieve racial equality. In early twentieth century Cuban communities like Ybor City and Key West, white Cubans regularly harassed black Cubans and pressured them to prove they were not co-conspirators with

³⁸ A third “Maceo”-like figure was Tomas Cruz, a Bay of Pigs veteran and former U.S. Navy officer who headed the Executive Committee of Liberation. The committee organized as many as forty exile organizations, and sponsored classes in military operations like aviation and parachute jumping. See Inclan June 30, 1972.

the PIC. Members of La Union Cubana in Key West had to provide lengthy defenses of individual members suspected of funneling money to the PIC. “Blacks don’t want you because you’re Cuban, and Cubans don’t want you because you’re black,” complained a member of Ybor City’s Union Martí-Maceo member, recalling this period (Gomez 2015, 44; Greenbaum 2002; Abreu 2015; Brock 1998; Mirabal 1998, 2017).

In Miami, Gonzalez-Grajales claimed to have had no trouble with the police; he said he had found housing without difficulty. What he failed to mention was differential treatment towards black Cubans compared to African Americans. Prior to desegregation, Cuban blacks and mulattos in Miami were allowed to attend all-white schools, unlike African Americans; their Cubanness “whitened” them (García 1996, 29; Connolly 2014). Aligning with whiteness not only protected Afro-Cubans from charges of communism and disloyalty; it also helped give them contingent access to certain properties of “white power.” When Antonio Grizzell, who is black, visited the area that would become known as Little Havana, he pretended not to speak Spanish simply to “test” the outcome. He received a chilly reception until speaking Spanish (Egerton Dec. 14, 1969). His experience confirmed to him the advantages of being a black man from Cuba instead of a black man from the U.S. He had to perform these distinctions in order to maintain his advantages: his “reach” towards the benefits of whiteness depended on his loyalty to whiteness (Aja 2016; Ahmed 2007).

Both Dr. Maceo and Gonzalez-Grajales referred to Castro, and communism, as if coded words for disloyal whites and unruly blacks who threatened the life-force of (white) Cubanidad and its rules of racial order: its Racial Contract (Mills 1997). In Cuba, the massacre of 1912 helped to quell racially separate protests, leading Afro-Cuban

intellectuals and labor organizers to work through more established multiracial organizations (like the Communist Party) in order to pursue their demands for equal rights (Benson 2013, 247). Blacks and mulattos critiqued racial discrimination by emphasizing national unity devoid of racial markers. While some black elected and state officials made plans to end racial inequality, most learned to avoid bringing up issues associated with race and tolerated the status quo (Benson 2016; De La Fuente 1995; Helg 2005a, 2005b).

The narrative of racelessness and inclusion thus required a cautionary tale: blackness so “good” it disappears into a (white) body politic or becomes a token signifier of racial harmony and inclusion (which could mean extra privileges doled out by whites), and blackness so dangerous and marked it requires violence to quell. The scenarios of Reunion/Emancipation privileged white solidarity by only offering “benefits” to blacks who played their roles.

Fertile Markets

While some Cuban emigres were delving into the world of bullets and guns, Miami’s Cuban civic elites sought a stage where they could showcase both “whiteness” and the uniqueness of “Cuban culture.” In a scenario of Reunion, they hoped to forge ties with Anglos, recreating the bonds of “North” and “South.” Several forces helped spark interest in the development of Little Havana’s Calle Ocho as an “ethnic district” prior to the 1970s. First, Cuban emigre leaders realized they could play a role in connecting U.S. companies to the “Latin market.” Second, emigres wanted to prove that they hadn’t lost touch with their cultural roots and were thus distinct from Anglos despite their ability to

assimilate. Third, they wanted to distinguish themselves from African Americans. Little Havana provided the stage for all three agendas.

In 1969, Susquehanna Broadcasting published a report on Miami's Cuban media market, titled "Market within a Market: The Latin Quarter" (1969, CHC). Several years earlier, in 1966, the multi-million-dollar media company had bought Miami's WMIE radio station—the same station that had broadcast announcements about the Antonio Maceo Battalion. Later in 1966, Congress passed the Cuban Adjustment Act, allowing Cuban citizens admitted (or paroled) in the U.S. to qualify for permanent residence within a year and a half after entry. Cuban emigre elites recognized the opportunity to act as the brokers of U.S. trade in Latin America—and the "Cuban market" in the U.S. (Rieff May 18, 1987, 66). Although they were moving to suburbs, Cuban civic elites had a vested interest (economic and political) in remaining attached to Little Havana.

By 1968, Susquehanna had turned WMIE into an all-Spanish radio station it renamed WQBA. In its 1969 report, the Pennsylvania-based company waxed enthusiastic about Miami's Cuban market, describing "Latin Dade County" as "the most economically fertile market this country has seen in decades" and "Spanish people in South Florida" as an "economic miracle." The report was one of the first documents to use the term "Little Havana" to describe areas of Miami transformed by concentrations of Cuban businesses, like the Tamiami Trail (now Calle Ocho). "Think of this market as a living, growing thing," advised the author of the report.

Indeed, the Cuban market was like the body of a sanctified female: a mother, fertile and miraculous, living and growing, and able to give birth to new and transformed bodies. Which bodies were transforming in this fertile market? White Anglo and Cuban

male bodies, it seems. The report's author, likely Herbert Levin, then WQBA's Managing Director and later a major force in Hispanic radio nationwide, emphasized the similarities between (white) Cubans and Anglos. He claimed that the main difference between the two groups was language (Ibid., 8), not race or economic level. In other words, he suggested the proximity of whiteness between Anglos and (white) Cubans, regardless of social class or seeming "ethnic" difference. To "Americanize" or to "assimilate" became another way of saying that a group was eagerly "whitening" itself to gain all the benefits of white solidarity, including the modern property of whiteness (Hooker 2009; Harris 1993; Aja 2016; Hale 1998; Roediger 2005).

Others, however, warned about the risks of assimilation. Writing about black and Cuban relations for the *Miami Herald*, John Egerton (Dec. 14, 1969) argued that the "cultural" domination of whiteness was at risk of "eroding" Cuban culture. He suggested that African Americans and Cubans unite. Cubans "are experiencing exclusion, exploitation and the dissipation of their culture," he said. "Assimilation" meant conforming to an Anglo idea of whiteness that rejected Cuban culture and diasporic national identity. Edward S. Cooke, an African American member of Miami's Community Relations Board (Ibid.), predicted that solidarity between African Americans and Cuban emigres would increase as discrimination against Cubans increased. He portrayed "discrimination" as assimilation away from cultural roots: a forgetting of Spanish and Cuban heritage. Cooke used notions of "culture" and "cultural preservation" to portray whiteness as a loss of both culture and Cubanidad, suggesting that upper-class Cubans had sacrificed their ethno-national identity at the altar of whiteness. His warnings provided even further inspiration for creating a "Latin Quarter" to highlight "Cuban

culture” and refute these claims. The staging of the “Cuban enclave” in the 1970s would offer “proof” that Cuban civic elites had not lost touch with cultural roots in processes of assimilation.

By portraying themselves as “ethnic” or “cultural,” Cubans could also (as needed) de-emphasize racial differences with African Americans, a strategy supported by Dr. T. Willard Fair, the executive director of Miami’s Urban League chapter. He suggested that Cuban emigres form alliances with African Americans in order to combat Anglo racism against both groups. In a speech to fifty delegates at the fall meeting of the Hispanic American section of the National Council of Churches, he announced that an alliance of Cubans and blacks could dominate Miami’s politics by 1980. After all, he said, “white racists” were moving north to the suburbs (Taft Sept. 25, 1969). When Cubans demonstrated solidarity with African Americans, they could “prove” their commitment to ending racial inequality. Cuban civic elites aspiring to enter Miami’s political arenas knew they would need the support of African American leaders if they wanted to fight the Anglo establishment. As I argue in this dissertation, the commemorative bodies of figures like Antonio Maceo and Jose Martí were necessary to staging both colorblindness and alignment with whiteness.

Exiles insisted that Miami’s Cuban community was racially tolerant (Aja 2016; Lopez 2012; Benson 2012). Nonetheless, a young Tomás Regalado, then the Latin news editor for a Miami TV news station (later the Mayor of Miami), admitted that “Many Cubans in this country have a belief that Cuban Negroes are good, but American Negroes are bad. They fear them—but it is not the same as the white American’s resentment” (Egerton Dec. 14, 1969). When asked about black Cubans, he replied, “There was no

racial discrimination in Cuba. Class discrimination, yes, but not race.” According to African American activist Bernard Dyer, “Many Cubans are so eager to Americanize that they take on the worst habits of white Americans” (Ibid.).

Abiding by the Racial Contract (Mills 1997), and continuing to receive the benefits of white supremacy, required a black Other, represented in seemingly bounded and barren spaces of Miami’s black neighborhoods meant to contain people portrayed as violent and unruly. Places like Overtown served as the archetypal Darktown (Smith 2010), so often associated with the primitive and uncivilized. Like other European ethnics (Roediger 2005; Orsi 1999), Cuban emigres wanted their showcase space to serve as contrast to “the ghetto.” As the “Market within a Market: The Latin Quarter” (1969, CHC, 3) noted, “Where do the Cubans live? Well there are two areas in Miami where you won’t find Cubans -- the central Negro district and the Liberty City District.”

Conclusion

Following in the footsteps of socially Cubans that had arrived prior to 1959, and other liminally white “ethnics” living in Riverside/Shenandoah before they arrived, white Cuban emigres had to negotiate where they stood in the midst of Miami’s racial politics. If they supported the Civil Rights movement or appeared in too close proximity with a group of blacks, they risked the same treatment that Jews had received before them: the threats of bomb attacks, acts of intimidation, and treatment as if they had been “blackened.” In other words, they could lose the modern property of whiteness. If they attacked the Civil Rights movement, however, they could demonstrate their solidarity with Anglo whites concerned about the growing demands of Miami’s African American

population. They wanted to prove that they could assimilate so they could claim all the benefits afforded Anglos based on white privilege. They would do what they could to prove that they “owned” their own modern property of whiteness (Harris 1993).

Some white Cuban emigres were living in the realm of the *mala vida* (Ortiz [1906] 1973, 9), however, meaning that they were involved in bombings and other forms of terrorism they believed was necessary to fight Castro...or to make a living. Ortiz would have said that their violence was enacted due to lingering African spirits. Yet if these spirits came in the form of celebrated figures like Antonio Maceo or the cimarrón, would that perhaps make their actions more obviously patriotic? After all, notions like “freedom” and “liberty”—embraced as signifiers of whiteness (Mills 1997)—needed people in the role of enforcers, and people who could take what they believed was rightfully theirs. They might be doing “bad things,” but if these acts were portrayed as supporting the rightful domination of whites, then—according to this logic—these acts were justifiable.

I have made four key arguments in this chapter, related to the ways in which both Cuban emigre elites and militant anti-Castro groups used spaces like Little Havana (as La Sagesera) to deploy scripts (and claim possessions) of blackness and whiteness. First, militant Cuban emigres portrayed themselves as black in scenarios of Slavery and Independence. As if performing blackface, white Cuban emigres could appear black (because they already felt “blackened” by Anglos), but they could always take their seeming “blackness” off. By acting as if runaway slaves or independence fighters, they distinguished themselves from Anglos who in their opinion had betrayed them and underestimated their power. They thought that Anglos treated them as “runaway slaves”

anyway and did not give them the same benefits of whiteness Cuban emigres believed they deserved. In other words, militant emigre groups appropriated and performed representations of blackness, machismo and Africanity in perceived rebellion *against* the state, even while serving its interests.

Second, by treating Maceo and other black men as “black warrior” figures that could be owned like a magical resource, white Cuban emigres re-activated racial stereotypes of black/African men as brawn, not brains; treated blacks as property, and erased their individual histories.

Third, by committing acts of violence in the name of the black Antonio Maceo, militant Cuban emigres reinforced the binary of savage/civilized (Allen 2002; Ferrer 1998; Nederveen Pieterse 1998; Hall 2013). They could claim only temporary “possession” by the “African spirit” of Maceo, evoking Ortiz’s ideas about black criminals in the hampa being spiritual possessed by dangerous African spirits. Still, they could always reclaim their whiteness and affiliation with civility. When white emigres “embodied” Maceo (or his warrior avatars), they were in a sense “mastering” a loyal slave, or “eating the other” (hooks 1992) so they could successfully cut down enemies in the streets of Miami and support the racial order. By projecting terrorist violence onto black bodies, they furthered the idea of blackness as unruly and dangerous—and whiteness as inherently civilized. After all, they knew that the CIA and other entities needed them to do “dirty work.” Just as white Cuban presidents appropriated Afro-Cuban religious artifacts and iconographies to project their access to “black power,” as if a special weapon in their arsenal, militant Cuban emigres advertised their owning of “black power.”

Antonio Maceo became the stand-in for a variety of historic black archetypes (like the *cimarrón* or runaway slave, Ogún and Sarabanda) appropriated by white Cubans prior to the revolution (and by Afro-Cubans themselves) to stimulate fear of blacks and imaginations of black brutality, unruliness and violence. By linking acts of terrorism to Maceo, militant groups like the Antonio Maceo Battalion re-activated imaginations of blackness as violent and dangerous, and transferred these images to representations of African Americans and unruly blacks--especially those actively involved in the Civil Rights Movement.

Fourth, by making inclusion in Miami's Cuban community contingent on Afro-Cubans condemning the Civil Rights Movement (and comparing it to the Haiti Revolution), white Cuban emigres intimidated Afro-Cubans into roles as mouthpieces of white supremacy. In the 1960s, Miami Afro-Cubans received benefits unavailable to African Americans. As Fernando Ortiz ([1906] 1973, 9) had theorized in his treatise on criminology, *Los Negros Brutos*, black Cubans could elevate themselves if they got rid of dangerous "lingering" African spirits. Nonetheless, receiving some of the benefits of white supremacy implied that they had a "debt" to pay to Cuban whites and Anglos: they had to condemn those imagined to be tainted by dangerous African spirits. Leaders like Dr. Maceo implied that "unruly" African Americans involved in Civil Rights movement were fomenting a Miami (or U.S.) version of "Black Revolution" which could result in a massacre much worse than what had occurred in 1912. As a consequence of this "debt," Afro-Cubans were hindered from forming alliances with African Americans, meaning that their bodies were regulated by a white surveilling gaze. They had to remain silent about racism in Miami—whether Cuban or non-Cuban. Nonetheless, some Afro-Cubans

focused their attention on condemning racism in Cuba, which allowed them to critique racism without appearing divisive.

Fifth, by elevating only blacks who were dead and couldn't speak for themselves (like Maceo) (Savage 1994) or living blacks whose bodies were treated as mouthpieces (like Campos Marquetti) (Hartman 1997), white Cuban emigres used blacks as props for denying racism (Nathan 2012) and distinguishing Cuban blackness from African American blackness. As a dead man transformed into a statue or image, Maceo could not speak for himself, but these living black men were expected to speak for him—or rather, for the interests of white Cubans. Blacks who played the role of “loyal slave” or “grateful freed slave” would receive rewards, including some of the “wages of whiteness” (Roediger 2005).

Last, by activating the Reunion/Emancipation scenario, white Cuban emigres demonstrated their solidarity with Anglos and joint interest in the domination of blacks. They could collaborate on a future “Latin Quarter” that showcased “Cuban culture,” but they could also highlight their whiteness and thus their possibility for fruitful partnerships with Anglos. They would have to distance themselves from the symbolic “ghetto,” in any case. African American leaders, nonetheless, suggested that Cubans form alliances with black Miamians in order to enhance their political power and collectively fight “Anglo racists.” Black leaders warned that assimilating into a U.S. whiteness would require the sacrifice of their heritage, and the abandonment of their “culture.” Cuban civic elites began to realize the symbolic, cultural and economic potential of Little Havana, wary of the accusations of black leaders and seeking solidarity with Anglos interested in an

emerging “Latin market.” Little Havana needed to remain the “opposite” of its neighbor, the iconic black “ghetto” of Overtown, but it also had to “prove” colorblindness.

Chapter two--which spans the decade of the 1970s--documents the planning for this new cultural and economic “market”: a “Latin Quarter” in Little Havana. Civic groups like the Little Havana Development Authority and CAMACOL began to lay out their vision for Little Havana’s Latin Quarter, but militant Cuban emigres were engaging in activities like terrorism and drug smuggling, which threatened the Cuban success story. The differences between these two groups became spatialized in the two attached spaces that comprised the district: Calle Ocho and Cuban Memorial Park.

III. CHAPTER TWO: BLACK OPS, ETHNIC MARKET, CUBAN COLONY: LAUNCHING THE LATIN QUARTER (1970-1979)

By the mid-1970s, Miami's city planners had given Riverside and a portion of an adjacent neighborhood (Shenandoah) a new name: Little Havana. They referred to Calle Ocho (Southwest 8th Street) as the "heart" of the newly designated neighborhood, placing its borders as Northwest 7th Street to the north, Coral Way (Southwest 22nd Street) to south, the F.E.C. railroad to the east, and Southwest 37th Avenue to the west.³⁹

Approximately 93,000 persons lived in this zone in 1970 (Wallace 1976, 117). Little Havana was changing, though, with Central American immigrants moving into the eastern portion and many middle and upper-class Cuban families leaving for historically Anglo suburbs south and west of downtown (Portes 1987; Firmat [1995] 2012).

Miami's Cuban civic groups were planning a showcase space for Little Havana. They called it the "Latin Quarter," a tourist destination where Anglos (in particular) could experience "Cuban culture." Framing space into an exhibit "landscape" has its roots in the Trans-Atlantic slave trade and the colonization of the Americas. Scholars incorporated the concept of landscape into an empiricist tradition linked to the control of space (and bodies) as property, the linear perspective (the visual "mastery of space"), and moral commentary about social groups (Cosgrove 1985; Osborne 2001; Mills 1997). Reducing landscapes to "place types" occludes the multiple, contested and fluid relationships, processes and practices that comprise and produce space (Lefebvre 1991; Massey 2005; Low 2009a, 2009b).

³⁹ This is where Interstate 95 is located now.

Working in collaboration with Anglo-dominated private and public institutions, Cuban emigres planned Little Havana as a colorblind (yet whitened) “ethnic space” of racial harmony (Thomas 2014; Deverell 2004) (Aja 2016) in contrast to Coral Gables and the suburbs, which were constructed as the purer “white world” (Ahmed 2007; Maly and Dalmage 2016; Hoelscher 2006), and Miami’s Overtown and Liberty City neighborhoods, taken to be archetypal ghettos or “Darktowns” (Smith 2010; Linke 2013; Nassy Brown 2005). Cuban civic elites wanted to manage the Latin Quarter so that it remained distinct from “ghettos” coded as black (and “uncivilized”), as suggested in the “Latin Quarter” report mentioned in chapter one. The conceptual framing of the Latin Quarter as an “ethnic space” obscured the ways in which it functioned to make race and racial/spatial orders.

In this chapter, I demonstrate how Little Havana became the space where white Cuban emigres could enact the scenario of Reunion with Anglos, proving their proximity with Anglos, their colorblindness to influential African Americans (including elected officials), and a sense of diasporic nationalism and Cuban white supremacy to themselves. Public rituals like the Calle Ocho Festival, Three Kings Parade and Jose Martí Parade; the walking tours of the Little Havana Development Authority; the exhibits at the Cuban Arts and Culture Museum; and monuments in Cuban Memorial Park (like the Maceo monument) were opportunities to prove Cuban white supremacy *and* colorblindness, but in different ways to different audiences (Gregory 1994; Pred 2004; Smith 2010; Rahier 1998; Neely and Samura 2011; Nightingale 2012; Anderson 1987).

The scenario of Emancipation emerges in this chapter, too. As I explain, loyal blacks (like Celia Cruz and Tony Izquierdo) received rewards for proving their “debt” (and

loyalty) to whiteness. Whites who displayed disloyalty, however, were depicted in a scenario of the Black Revolution as comparable to “unruly blacks.” Cuban elites and militants came together to condemn the anti-embargo Antonio Maceo Brigade (not to be confused with the Antonio Maceo Batallion), comparing it to a cause of disorder that required every kind of disciplining (including violence) to “get in line.” By linking the name of Maceo to young (and white) Cuban Americans tied to communism, the Antonio Maceo Brigade was in effect threatening the modern property of whiteness (Harris 1993) for all white Cubans, as well as their “possession” of Antonio Maceo as a symbol and resource for the rhetoric of La Lucha or anti-Castro struggle.

Chapter two also provides additional evidence of the district’s role as a space of symbolic transition for militant Cuban emigres wanting to reclaim whiteness after their time “in the bush.” Nonetheless, blacks were also drawing on scenarios of Slavery and Independence for purposes of individual and collective benefit. Drawing on conceptualizations of spirit possession proposed by Paul Christopher Johnson (2014a, 2014b) and Todd Ramón Ochoa (2010), I argue that Afro-Cubans (and African Americans) found ways to re-possess (re-claim) Maceo and the symbol of the “black warrior” for their own interpretation of Independence, which sometimes meant aligning with whiteness (as needed) to access benefits of “white power.” In other cases, it meant aligning with blackness to assert a collective “black power”: black bodies joined together for a common purpose, in an affirming scenario of Black Revolution.

Reign of Terror

Steps away from Calle Ocho’s iconic Tower Theater, a motley assortment of Cuban men honed battle skills around tables in a dirt parking lot. Men had gathered here since 1962

to flaunt machismo, skill and luck, in battles that involved a lot of slamming of the *fichas* on the wooden tables (Luis Sabines, Jr., interviewed by author, Oct. 31, 2017).⁴⁰ The lot straddled the southeastern corner of Southwest 8th Street and Southwest 15th Avenue, in the heart of what would later become the heritage district. When the city turned the lot into a 50 foot by 70 foot mini-park for domino playing in the 1970s, locals simply called it Domino Park (Fabricio and Perez Oct. 30, 1997). They played *doble nueve* dominos in games that lasted well into the evening. More than a hundred people would gather in and near the park during weekends, with thirty to fifty people most weekdays.⁴¹

An ever-present threat of violence kept the domino players on edge, however. The players whispered about men like Ricardo Morales, who in broad daylight used his M-3 submachine gun to shoot a man exiting his Little Havana apartment. Morales was never arrested or convicted, seemingly untouchable because of his CIA connections (Cummings June 20, 1982, 12). Graffiti marked walls, streets and sidewalks. Frente de Liberación Nacional de Cuba (FLNC) used its initials as a sign, like a gang tag; on local walls and in intimidating notes it threatened to pursue “anyone, anywhere,” who had ties to Cuba (Fabricio and Buchanan Dec. 15, 1974).

Battles in the park were not meant to be dangerous, but some regulars were rumored to be armed terrorists and drug smugglers. Miami of the 1970s had already achieved status as the world’s capital of the \$8-billion-a-year cocaine business, linked to sources from Latin America (Russell Oct. 29, 1976). On June 21, 1970, federal agents executed

⁴⁰ No women were allowed into this masculine territory. For at least a decade, however, women have been allowed to play.

⁴¹ Ibid.

what they called “the largest roundup of major drug traffickers in the history of federal law enforcement.” Approximately seventy percent of the 150 suspects arrested were members of Brigade 2506 (Scott [1992] 1998, 26). Exiles involved in the drug trade capitalized on training they had received from the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) for their 1961 invasion of Playa Girón (the Bay of Pigs), as well as their continuing contract work in security and military operations (Scott [1992] 1998, 27). “These people came out knowing how you do it,” said one of the former commando leaders who trained Brigade 2506 veterans. “They found [drug smuggling] absolutely child’s play...” (Lernoux Feb. 18, 1984).

New Times reporter Dirk Russell described the 1970s as “Little Havana’s reign of terror” and a Cuban “civil war” (Oct. 19, 1976); *Miami Herald* reporters called it a “Campaign of Terror” (Crankshaw and Crankshaw Nov. 29, 1976). Four bombings took place on December 7, 1974, coinciding with the death anniversary of Maceo (Montalbano April 27, 1975). By the fall of 1976, a hundred bombings had exploded within a span of 18 months, eighty-one persons had died, and many more people were injured in other acts of terrorism credited to Cuban exile groups (Russell Oct. 29, 1976). Militants blamed the violence on communists or said it was necessary for La Lucha. Miami police said the bombers appeared to be challenging and threatening “our government structure,” “creating unrest,” and challenging “everything we stand for,” as bombs were targeting the state attorney’s office, police departments, and other institutional spaces (Crankshaw and Crankshaw Nov. 29, 1976). Officials read the bombings as serious threats to the authority of the U.S. state. They may have also interpreted Cuban emigre terrorism as a betrayal of the “debt” Cubans owed Anglos for the privileges of whiteness.

Just as Cuban emigres were expected to “perform” masculinity on the battlefield of the domino table, they were also expected to perform loyalty to La Lucha. Yet Bay of Pigs veteran Manolo Reboso admitted that only “a small percentage of violence in the Cuban community” was “based on patriotism” (Lernoux Feb. 18, 1984). Crime experts attributed most of the emigre violence to infighting among exile groups, personal and business grudges and rivalries, extortion, blackmail, organized crime and drug trafficking. A former member of the Dade County Organized Crime Bureau agreed: “Ninety percent of the people in exile terrorist organizations like Alpha 66 and Omega 7 are extortionists. They have no intention of going back to Cuba—that’s just a cover for the same old mob rackets. But people are afraid to challenge them because they’re killers” (Ibid.). Cuban emigre elites wanted to display solidarity with Anglos in order to cultivate fruitful social, economic and political relationships, yet they may have feared the consequences of standing up to exile terrorist organizations.

In response to the violence, Miami’s police department formed a bomb and terrorist squad, the FBI’s Miami office launched a bomb investigation team, and the State Attorney’s office began to investigate the unsolved murders (Montalbano April 27, 1975). Like any competing regime of “accumulation, control, and action” (Nordstrom 2004, 234), the counterrevolution required popular support, yet those who dared question the violence (and its motivations) could become targets themselves.

Mothers of Life and Death

Acts of violence occurred in counterpoint with symbolic regeneration. On Mother’s Day (May 10th), 1970, members of the Antonio Maceo Battalion took replicas of Our Lady of Charity and Our Lady of Regla and baptized them in Biscayne Bay (“Exiles to Baptise”

April 10, 1970). Afterwards, a procession of cars brought the icons through the heart of Little Havana, to be ceremoniously received by leaders of the Antonio Maceo Battalion.⁴²

The battalion mixed reverence for divine mothers with reverence for war. These mothers embodied “mixings” of blackness and whiteness and thus reinforced the theme of colorblindness. The predominant images of Our Lady of Charity in Cuba, where she is revered as the island’s patron saint of Cuba, portray her as a mulatta (Schmidt 2015; Zuñiga 2011). During Cuba’s wars for independence, the racially mixed troops of the Liberation Army were devotees of “Cachita” (as she is popularly known), including Antonio Maceo, whose middle name was “de la Caridad” (Schmidt 2015, 55; Brown 2003). Elizabeth Pérez (2010, 203) describes Our Lady of Charity as Cuba’s “preeminent symbol of religious and cultural hybridity...furnishing it with an origin myth that casts its mingling of races as voluntary and erotic, rather than violently coerced.” Cachita is syncretized with the Ochún, the female Orisha associated with sensuality, fertility and (in popular imagination) the mulatta (Zuñiga 2011; Betancourt 2000; de la Torre 2001).

In images of Cachita, she is almost always hovering over three male figures in a canoe (*los tres Juanes*), one of whom is always black, adding to the discourse of mestizaje/mulataje, racial mixing and colorblindness with which she is associated. In Miami, however, the popular images of Cachita among pre-1980 cohorts of Cuban emigres portray her as white; they also portray the two other figures in the canoe (on either side of the black boy) as white instead of Taino (an indigenous group),

⁴² Three years later, federal agents arrested battalion leader Zacarias Acosta and charged him and his adult son with possession of unregistered firearms, including a bazooka, cannon, dynamite, forty-two incendiary devices, four bombs and ammunition (Fabricio Nov. 18, 1973).

contradicting the original legend about Our Lady of Charity as documented by Cuba's Catholic church (Tweed 2001, 2002; Schmidt 2015; Zuñiga 2011).

Images of Our Lady of Regla (*La Virgen de Regla*), a black Madonna syncretized with the Orisha Yemaya (also a mother figure), almost always portray her holding a white baby Jesus, as if she were a wet nurse or mammy (Perez 2010, 207). Her most famous shrine is located in the Havana municipality of Regla (Ibid.), where Antonio Maceo Battalion leader Zacarias Acosta had served as mayor (Fabricio Nov. 18, 1973).

Together, the two saints and the Orishas with which they are syncretized (sisters Ochún and Yemaya) embody the mingling of races and blurring of racial lines and yet—at the same time—the preservation of the racial order: whiteness or whitening remains “on top,” with white male bodies satisfied and nurtured by black or blackened female bodies. These female images of the nation worked as characters for a Cuban version of Reunion: a scenario that could signify a joining of the nation but at the same time the retention of white dominance.

White men, in turn, retained the role of “fertilizers,” as well illustrated by this quote from a recruitment brochure for Alpha 66 (HWA), one of the preeminent Cuban emigre terrorist organizations:

ALPHA 66 has ... planted seed's [sic] in Cuba's heart and has shed its blood, which is the way to fertilize with honor those seeds. There is only a short way; the revolution will burst and Cuba will be free. The date is there, with the will to serve the fatherland and its great hopes.

In other words, the continuity of white life (and white racial lines) required violence.

Miami's Cuban social clubs, on the other hand, were spaces of imagined “new life.”

The White Club, the Ethnic Exhibit, and the Black Ghetto

By 1970 (or earlier), the Miami-Metro Department of Tourism was sending out press releases about Miami's "Cuban colony," as evidenced by its photos reprinted in articles such as "Miami's 'Havana' Story of Success" (Jan. 19, 1970) in the New Orleans' paper *Daily States-Item*. "Here, the displaced Cubans have written an amazing success story," wrote reporter E.V.W. Jones, who interviewed Cuban emigre civic elites such as Bernardo Benes. "Tamiami Trail, or S.W. Eighth Street, was a rundown street of vacant stores and for sale signs when the Cubans arrived," he wrote, in effect "setting the scene." "Today it is the mainstream of New Havana, with 386 retail stores operated by Cubans." On March 25, 1975, the *New York Times* published its own article about Little Havana, exciting Miami's Cuban civic elites (Wilfredo Gort, interviewed Oct. 31, 2017; Ralph Duarte, interviewed Oct. 31, 2017). The article, "Cuban Exiles Talk Less of Return, More of a Future Here," by B. Drummond Ayres, Jr., further boosted elites' interest in developing Little Havana as a tourist destination (Ibid.).

Like earlier articles, the *New York Times* piece aligned Little Havana with the Cuban success story. First, it compared Miami's Cuban community to the French Quarter in New Orleans and to "the German imprint in Milwaukee and the Irish imprint in Boston," implying that Cuban emigres possessed an ethnic whiteness associated with European backgrounds (Roediger 2005). Second, it described "Little Havana" as a "self-contained community," "providing total isolation for those who don't want to venture beyond its confines." It thus compared Little Havana to an exclusive club and distinguished it from the symbolic space of confining "ghettos," associated with blackness and lack of agency (Mohl 1995a; Linke 2003; Mills 1997).

Lastly, the article suggested that upper-class Cubans were establishing “carbon copies of clubs in Havana,” noting that many of the “early refugees” hailed from this “segment of society,” and that “membership in Miami is based on membership in Havana.” Blacks were prohibited from joining upper-class social clubs in Batista-era Havana, however (Helg 1995, 2005; De La Fuente 1995). In other words, Miami’s Cuban social clubs could appear to regulate membership based on purely “cultural” reasons (described as “money, position, family, wit and charm”) even if they were also exclusively based on race (King June 30, 1972).

Participating in the civic clubs that shaped Little Havana gave members access to powerful networks and titles. Formed in 1971, the Latin Chamber of Commerce (CAMACOL) focused on serving the interests of Cuban emigre businesses and business leaders. According to Tony Wagner (interviewed June 27, 2017), Luis Sabines started CAMACOL “when all the businesses began to flourish, and he felt that it was important to do that, to reproduce a Camara de Comercio like they had in Cuba. All we did was reproduce. Recreate what we had there.” I interviewed Wagner in his office, where he works as the NET Administrator for Little Havana—in his second stint in this position. Like other members of Miami’s Cuban elite, he has belonged to numerous civic groups influential in shaping Little Havana. He said organizations like CAMACOL maintained continuity with the past by reproducing “the whole concept of community, and business, and family.”

Headquartered in Little Havana, CAMACOL quickly recruited 678 member businesses and organizations (Croucher 1997, 35). In the span of three years (1974 to 1977), it had six presidents, six vice presidents, a secretary, two vice-secretaries, a

director (and two vice directors) of public relations, a treasurer (and two vice treasurers), and seven other directors: a twenty-four member board composed exclusively of men (CAMACOL, CHC). Many are now involved in local real estate, others are longtime business leaders and city staff, and one is a City of Miami commissioner.

In 1976, CAMACOL formed the Little Havana Development Authority (LHDA) (LHDA, HWA). LHDA played a lead role in efforts to make Little Havana a tourist attraction: “Miami’s French Quarter or Chinatown” (Ibid.). On June 30, 1972, Miami reporter Marylyn Springer wrote that Little Havana— “populated by Cubans, produced by Cubans and preserved by Cubans”--was already attracting “Americans” to the area. LHDA developed design criteria for a “Latin Quarter”: a zone of Little Havana “well defined to express and demonstrate our hispanic history, culture, folklore and customs” in the words of LHDA’s leaders (Dibble May 31, 1984). The *Miami Herald* called the block between 15th and 16th Avenues on Calle Ocho “a microcosm of Little Havana.” It remains the heart of the current heritage district (McMullan Oct. 16, 1977).

By 1976, CAMACOL, LHDA, the 8th Street Beautification Committee and other civic groups were partnering with the city and other agencies to plant trees, erect new light posts, and build Little Havana’s Domino Park (Jose Casanova, interviewed July 17, 2017). As many as thirteen city, county and state entities collaborated with private groups to landscape Southwest 8th and Flagler Streets, erect a Cuban Museum of Art and Culture, and improve local parks (Ibid.; Dibble May 31, 1984).⁴³ By 1978, LHDA opened

⁴³ Cuban Memorial Park was originally called Cuban Memorial Plaza.

its new office, funded from federal, county and municipal sources (CAMACOL, July 14, 1977, CHC, 14).

The idea of the Cuban enclave as an exclusive “social club” helped replace images of gun-toting Cubans in military fatigues with those of emigres sipping Cuban coffee and wearing guayaberas. Upwardly mobile Cuban emigres, like those who ran LHDA, lived in the suburbs (Stulberg June 30, 1972), also home of exclusive “Cubans-only” social clubs (King June 30, 1972), but in Little Havana they could showcase “Cuban culture” as if an exhibit, well-cultivated plantation or well-managed colony (Feldman and Jolivet 2014; de la Torre 2003).

Behind the highlighted scenes of Cuban success, however, members of CAMACOL and LHDA coped with a public relations problem. In 1975, representatives from every law enforcement agency in Miami-Dade County met inside Miami’s Columbus Hotel, as if in the body of Columbus himself, to discuss what police called “Cuban terrorism” (Montalbano April 27, 1975). Miami’s 1975 to 1985 comprehensive plan noted that “A major distinguishing feature of crime in Miami is the high proportion of violent crimes and crimes against persons. This is partly attributed to the high concentrations of poverty, low levels of educational attainment, overcrowded conditions and blight found in some of the Black and Latin communities” (Florida Collection, MDPL).

Cuban emigre elites dreaded the linking of Little Havana with black communities like Overtown and Liberty City. They launched the Committee of One Thousand in 1976 in order to give “Little Havana more life, to revitalize an area that could easily become an urban ghetto,” by “enlisting the participation of local business and retail owners and residents” (Medina July 7, 1976). They would invest in distinguishing Little Havana

from black neighborhoods like Overtown. Clean, safe and ordered spaces offered “proof” that Cubans were hardworking and industrious compared to other groups, and thus proof of the Cuban success story. City planning consultant Hunter Moss contributed to these distinctions with his comments published in the Miami’s Comprehensive Plan. He described Cubans as “hard-working and industrious” with a “basic pride of ownership” in contrast to “blacks as a whole” who did not seem to demonstrate “pride in ownership.” He remarked that every block where blacks lived appeared “on the negative rather than the positive side” (Florida Collection, MDPL). Regardless of his assessments, Little Havana residents were complaining (in 1976) about trash-strewn city blocks, inadequate garbage pickup and the lack of park facilities (Marina June 28, 1976). As such, the use of space to reinforce a white/black, civilized/uncivilized binary erased the realities that affected both neighborhoods.

Cuban emigre elites faced the risk of becoming targets themselves if they caved into pressure to address growing levels of terrorism and violence in the Cuban emigre community (Montalbano April 27, 1975). They wanted to demonstrate solidarity with La Lucha but at the same time distance themselves from the specter of crime, terrorism and poverty. Ralph de la Portilla (interviewed Nov. 7, 2017), born into an elite white Cuban family, says elites admired militant exile groups “as OUR grunt workers...OUR militia” yet saw themselves as “people that are assimilating, and acculturating and at the same time perpetuating 500 years of proud Cuban and Spanish history on U.S. soil.”

Publicly, they emphasized the neighborhood’s low crime rate. It failed to reflect actual levels of criminal activity, however. Little Havana residents complained about burglaries and assaults and the ineffectiveness of police (Marina June 28, 1976).

Moreover, a 1973 study mentioned in the Miami Comprehensive Neighborhood Plan for 1975 to 1985 reported that many Spanish-speakers were not reporting crime (Florida Collection, MDPL). Experts speculated that residents were under-reporting crime due to feelings of alienation, doubts that police would respond to their problems, and fears of retribution. The Dade County Organized Crime Bureau said witnesses to the crimes of Cuban emigres refused to testify because they considered offenders “ruthless gangsters” and not the “outraged patriots” they claimed to be (Marina June 28, 1976).

Their fears were well founded. WQBA news director Emilio Milian lost both his legs in a car bombing in 1976 (Torres, 1999, 85). He said the *Miami News* fired reporter Hilda Inclan for writing articles linking Cuban emigres like Rafael Villaverde of the Little Havana Activities Center to crime. Villaverde threatened the *Miami News* and demanded it fire Inclan, said Milian (“Emilio Milan Bombing,” CIA Archives).⁴⁴

Rolando Masferrer, publisher of the exile newspaper *Libertad*, accused the “businesses of CAMACOL” of failing to display loyalty to the cause of Cuban exile terrorism. Masferrer was a vocal anti-Castro militant involved in drug trafficking (Arguelles 1982, 38). In Cuba he had served in Congress, but he was best known as head of the secret police under Batista (English 2008, 103). His 3,000-man death squad, the Masferrer Tigers, tortured and killed anti-Batista activists, using techniques such as putting live victims in a sack, pouring gasoline on them, and setting them on fire (Waters 2003, 30).

⁴⁴ In 1977, the county attorney’s office investigated the Little Havana Activities Center for its role in anti-Castro terrorism; in 1981, Villaverde was indicted in the major crackdown of a cocaine network (“Police Smashed” Aug. 5, 1981).

In Miami, Masferrer attacked “bureaucrats.” He portrayed them as greedy and fearful of risk, mocking them for fearing the police and selling themselves out to Anglos. He described himself as an *hombre entero* (a whole man) willing to work with--or without--the support of police (Oct. 24, 1975, CHC). His warnings served as a reminder about excluding or penalizing those who carried guns and wore military fatigues.

The Latin Quarter: The Living Stage

By September 1979, LHDA had its official Latin Quarter plan at a cost of \$26,000; within a month, the county invested more than a million dollars in improvements to the area (“Latin Quarter,” private collection of Tony Wagner; “Latin Quarter Here” Jan. 6, 1978). The Latin Quarter boundaries were Southwest 17th Avenue to the west, Southwest 12th Avenue to the east, Southwest 9th Street to the south and Southwest 1st Avenue to the north. The plan underlined the need for public-private cooperation, linking political leaders to “developers, private investors, commercial property owners, local businessmen, associations, travel representatives, and others” (“Latin Quarter,” private collection of Tony Wagner). Together, in a Reunion of Anglos and white Cubans, and private and public institutions, they would make the stage for the Cuban success story.

Spectacles, newspaper and television coverage, and the transformation of Little Havana’s landscape activated a scenario of Discovery and Conquest and commemorated the achievements of modern-day conquistadors. The Miami Comprehensive Neighborhood Plan (1975-1985) described Little Havana as “a unique Latin American cultural extravaganza” achieved thanks to the “commitment of diverse individual efforts” that gave it “the necessary economic and political strength” for its revitalization (Florida

Collection, MDPL). A reporter for Miami's WTVJ television station described Little Havana as "an economic miracle brought about by Miami's Cuban refugees" ("Little Havana Beautification," Aug. 5, 1976, Wolfson Archives). *El Nuevo Herald* credited the "individualism and the hard work and determination of those who woke her from her sleep during the 1950s" (Soler July 16, 1978).

It was as if the female entity of Little Havana had awakened thanks to the arrival and conquest of hardworking Cuban men. Commentary about Little Havana always referred back to those credited for its "miracle": the Cuban civic elites who had made Little Havana "habitable" for fellow and non-Cuban "explorers," capitalizing on a "fertile" market. The showcase of "ethnic" "Little Havana" was an antidote to violence attributed to "blackened" warriors.

Official storylines merged images of whiteness with Cuban "ethnic" culture. The cover of LHDA's first and only known brochure, titled "Little Havana, U.S.A." (circa 1976, HWA), appears borrowed from a brochure for a Southern plantation, and affirms the scenario of Reunion (see Figure 8). Below the image of a Confederate flag waving from a plantation house, other symbols highlight "Lost Cause" nostalgia, U.S. Southern whiteness, and the theme of "progress": a horse-drawn carriage, a Southern belle, cotton flowers, a church, a steamship, a lamppost (Blight 2001). A "Latin Quarter" title sits above "Sponsored by City of Miami, Dade County," both of them below the Confederate images. Together, image and text reinforce both Cuban-Anglo solidarity and the inter-mixing between public and private interests (and monies).

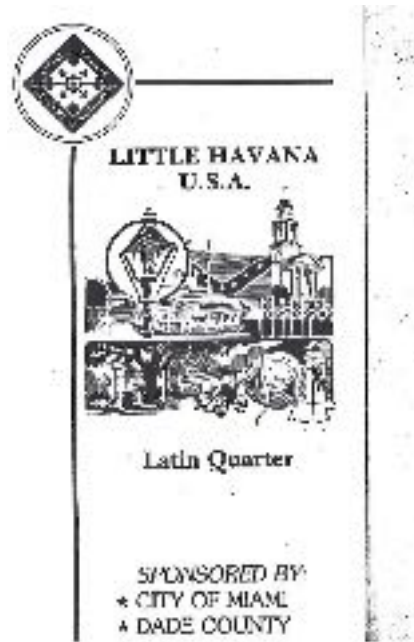


Figure 8: LHDA brochure cover. Courtesy of The Weisberg Collection. Hood College, Frederick, MD, USA. URL: <http://jfk.hood.edu>.

The brochure emphasizes that Little Havana maintains Cuban “traditions, language and pride in a living culture,” with “cultural spheres enhanced” by the arrival of Central Americans. Nonetheless, its “points of interest” highlight only those affiliated with Cuban (or Spanish) “culture.”⁴⁵ Free walking tours of Little Havana also reinforced Anglo-Cuban solidarity. LHDA members led tours for reporters, tourists and members of local social groups, like the Junior League, as often as once or twice a week (Wilfredo Gort, interviewed Oct. 31, 2017).

Memorializing Violence and War

Militant groups joined Cuban emigre civic groups in shaping Little Havana’s memorial landscape. Beginning in the 1970s, they inundated the Miami Memorial Committee with

⁴⁵ Many Anglos in South Florida continue to refer to Latin American peoples and cultures as “Spanish.”

requests for plaques, monuments and statues (Pennekamp Nov. 4, 1971). The first monument installed in what would become known as Cuban Memorial Park was a nearly 10-foot, six-sided obelisk sponsored by Brigade 2506. The monument honored the men who died in the Bay of Pigs invasion and included their names (“Monument” April 16, 1971; George April 18, 1971). Installed in 1971, it quickly became a rallying location for protests, hunger strikes and rallies. Brigade 2506 veteran Manolo Reboso (who designed the monument) said its eternal flame was inspired by Miami’s Torch of Friendship, constructed in 1960 as symbol of Pan-American peace and solidarity. While one torch symbolized peace, the other—in Little Havana—symbolized war (Donn Oct. 10, 1971).

In 1975, Arcadio Peralta of Masferrer’s newspaper *Libertad* praised the bombing of the “hateful” Torch of Friendship, also located in Bayfront Park and named after President John F. Kennedy after his assassination (Peralta Aug. 1, 1975 CHC, 9). Later that same month *Libertad* published an article by Florencio Garcia Cisneros demanding repairs to a bust of Christopher Columbus, also located in Bayfront Park (Garcia Cisneros Aug. 29, 1975 CHC, 3). The bombing of the Torch occurred on July 26, 1975, the anniversary of Fidel Castro’s failed attack of the Moncada barracks in 1953 (and the name of Castro’s revolutionary force, the 26th of July) (“Bombings” June 29, 1983, CI Archives). When the City of Miami added Kennedy’s name to the monument following his assassination, they unwittingly made it a target for emigres who blamed him for the failed Bay of Pigs invasion (Cruz Jan. 27, 1975). *Libertad* credited the Torch bombing (and numerous terrorist attacks within and outside the U.S. and Puerto Rico) to Acción Cubana and called its members patriots. It criticized the “fearful Americans,” those “supposed allies” who didn’t understand why emigres had to resort to terrorist acts in

order to maintain their “high spirit of resistance to oppression” (Peralta Aug. 1, 1975, CHC, 9). After all, they were attacking traitors—to whiteness, it was implied. *Libertad* used the scenario of Slavery—but a slavery in which whites were the oppressed. In fact, Cuban exile newspapers often portrayed Cuba as if black and blackened, and the Cuban Revolution as a repeated scenario of the Haitian Revolution (Benson 2012, 2016).

Libertad also featured caricatured and racist representations of black people, complete with exaggerated lips and bugged-out eyes, as in the illustration for a piece about communists in Cuba (“Noticias de Aquí y de Allá” Aug. 1, 1975 CHC, 5). Nonetheless, the face of Black Panthers leader, Elridge Cleaver, dominated the cover of its September 5, 1975 issue, with the headline: “Eldridge Cleaver: PANTERAS CONTRA CASTRO.”⁴⁶ Reporter Juan Ortega wrote enthusiastically about Cleaver’s disillusionment with Marxism and his backing off from “militant extremism.” Ortega suggested that exiles were misled by the U.S., and Black Panthers were misled by Cuba. In barely veiled racist imagery, however, he described Cleaver as one more who had “left the barn” to become a thinking man, as if Cleaver’s accusations against Cuba had in fact “whitened” a brute animal. If the Black Panthers were comparable to Cuba’s PIC, Cleaver—as depicted by Ortega, had come to his senses by giving up on imagined anti-white battles (“Claro...” Sept. 5, 1975, *Libertad*, CHC, 24). In the same issue, Eliseo Riera Gomez criticized the Bahamas for doing business with Cuba. “Blacks triumph and prevail because they go out to the street and they fight,” he wrote. “To imitate them is the word of order.” He suggested “attacking [the Bahamas] on all fronts.”

⁴⁶ PANTHERS AGAINST CASTRO.

In evoking the scenario of Black Revolution, where “blacks go out to the street and fight,” Gomez was also inverting the scenario. If “unruly blacks” signified disorder, “unruly whites” were only engaging in “disorder” because of the need to restore order, civilization—and white dominance: the scenario of Reconquista. The disorder of blackness was “order” when whites counterrevolutionaries were the ones going “out onto the street,” “imitating blacks” to force dramatic change. The idea of “owning” blackness for moments of disorder is also made clear in the title of his essay, titled “Imitemos a Nuestros Negros,” or “Let’s Imitate Our Blacks” (Sept. 5, 1975, *Libertad*, CHC, 13). Within several months after his column was published, these ideas were put into action: a bomb exploded in the departure area of Bahama Airlines, and another bomb nearly downed a jet headed to the Bahamas and carrying 62 passengers (Buchanan and Marina Nov. 28, 1975).

In an essay published in *Libertad* the week after he died, Rolando Masferrer quoted—or appeared to quote—Antonio Maceo:

Freedom does not beg, it is conquered with the edge of a machete. This is not the time for the machete. The enemy is not close enough to hit him with cold and sharp iron. The time will come. But dynamite can speak as eloquently as only she can. In the four corners of the world. So that they know the rats that eat by exposing secrets. Or those who have the shamelessness to speak of Jose Martí while they throw the thirty coins of Judas in their pockets...It is good to make the revolution with permission and with money from the police. Many have done it here. But when the time comes, those who are whole men, for something more than the mustache and crotch armor,⁴⁷ should do their homework without the police. And even against the police. (“Apendejation,” *Libertad*, Oct. 24, 1975, Cuban Heritage Collection).

⁴⁷ He uses the term “bragueta”: the strip that hides the opening of trousers.

Masferrer wanted to harness Maceo's "black power" as needed to battle disloyal whites and blacks who dared threaten the racial order. The "whole" man, after all, needed more than just the finery of the moustache and some protection for his *cojones*.⁴⁸ He needed to harness his "black" resources, too. Just as pro-independence creole elites used living blacks as convenient fodder for Cuba's wars of independence, white emigres sought to *temporarily* use the symbolic and material resources of living black men (and black "spirits of the dead" or divinities) for psychological and spiritual warfare.

Less than a week after the bombing death of Rolando Masferrer in late 1975, Esteban M. Beruvides, acting on behalf of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Jose Martí Post No. 10212, petitioned to move the Antonio Maceo statue from Hialeah to Cuban Memorial Park "as soon as possible" ("Bomb Blast" Nov. 1, 1975; "Ex-Batista Aide" Nov. 1, 1975; "Motion 75-1042" Nov. 6, 1975, Miami city commission minutes, OCC, 17). Erected above a two-level stone platform, the statue depicted Maceo standing with his right arm and right leg bent, a machete held upright in his right hand. He faced east, towards downtown Miami and Biscayne Bay (see Figure 9). His left arm reached back, fingers splayed and pointing downwards. Affixed to the wall behind the statue, a bronze plaque depicted the VFW shield; another plaque announced that the monument commemorated Maceo "and all those fallen in the fight for the liberty of Cuba."⁴⁹ Like Cuba's annual celebration of Maceo's day of death (December 7th), the monument commemorated more than just Maceo: it commemorated a racial *ajiaco* of the dead.

⁴⁸ Literally "testicles," but following Miguel de la Torre (2003) I mean it in the sense of macho "properties."

⁴⁹ "V.F.W. A la memoria del Mayor Gen. Antonio Maceo Grajales y de Todos Los Caidos en la Lucha por La Libertad de Cuba. Post 10212 Jose Martí."



Figure 9: Statue of Antonio Maceo in Cuban Memorial Park. Courtesy of State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory. <https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/120155>.

The only plaque affixed directly to the platform itself (and the only one still remaining of the original plaques) contained a quote without attribution: “La Libertad no se mendiga. Se conquista con el filo del machete” (Liberty is not begged for. It is conquered with the edge of the machete). This is the exact re-phrasing of Maceo’s quote as appeared in Masferrer’s essay in *Libertad*. Nonetheless, Maceo’s actual words, written to Colonel Federico Pérez Carbó in 1896 (Franco 1989, 237), differ. He writes (in Spanish), “Freedom is conquered with the edge of a machete, it is not demanded: begging for rights is the domain of cowards incapable of exercising these rights. Nor should you expect anything from the Americans, we should only count on our own efforts; it is better to climb or fall without their help, than to contract debts of gratitude with such a powerful neighbor.”⁵⁰ Cutting the sentence in half, like cutting bodies in half, removes part of its meaning: Maceo mentions “rights,” perhaps too easily associated with “equal rights”

⁵⁰ The original quote in Spanish is: “La libertad se conquista con el filo de machete, no se pide; mendigar derechos es propio de cobardes incapaces de ejercitarlos. Tampoco espera nada de los americanos, todo debemos cifrarlo en nuestros esfuerzos; mejor es subir o caer sin su ayuda, que contraer deudas de gratitud con un vecino tan poderoso.”

demanding by the PIC and those in the Civil Rights Movement. Maceo also mentioned debts to Americans, evoking the scenario of Emancipation, and yet many Cuban exile mercenaries did not want to lose all their ties to the “invisible hand” of the CIA.

On the anniversary of Maceo’s death in 1977, Miami’s new private bilingual schools paraded in front of the Maceo monument, accompanied by marching bands from local military schools. Teen boys dressed in military-style uniforms, all of them fair-skinned, formed neat and disciplined rows marching down Cuban Memorial Boulevard to the beat of snare drums beaten in perfect unison. Girls marched behind them. The next generation performed a racial and gendered order: white life on the day of the black dead (“Hondrando la Memoria” Dec. 8, 1977; “Antonio Maceo Death Commemoration” Dec. 7, 1977, Wolfson Archives). As CRT scholar Sara Ahmed explains (2007, 159), “whiteness itself is a straightening device: bodies disappear into the ‘sea of whiteness’ when they ‘line up.’... White bodies can line up, only if they pass, by approximating whiteness, by ‘being like.’” Young bodies were learning how to move through the paths of the world and into the bodies they had inherited. To march and move in perfect alignment reinforced their racialized *habitus* (Bourdieu [1979]1984). While they moved, Maceo remain fixed in fiberglass. The day of his commemoration marked the end of his life, his sacrifice for the nation.

Blackness on Exhibit

LHDA’s brochure and walking tours, along with the exhibits of the Cuban Museum of Arts and Culture, organized and racially mapped “Cuban culture” for fellow emigres as well as visitors to Little Havana. These vehicles enabled Miami’s Cuban civic elite to

present a narrative of racial inclusion that simultaneously also affirmed white supremacy through scenarios of Conquest, highlighting the Cuban success story, and Reunion, forging bonds between Anglos by depicting blacks as property that Cubans effectively managed. Together, tours and exhibits were discursive elements in an apparatus of Cuban white supremacy that worked through the crossroads of Little Havana.

From April 16 to June 4, 1978, the Cuban Museum of Arts and Culture hosted a series of programs as part of an exhibit called “Itori Eru: African Cultures from Cuba,” directed by the famous Cuban ethnographer Lydia Cabrera (“Itori Eru,” April 1978, CHC). All organizers and “expert” presenters (except for black drummers who performed) were white Cubans who met at the home of Raul Alvarez, project coordinator for the exhibit and lead architect and project director of LHDA (Ibid., 50). Organizers hoped to build solidarity with Anglos and African Americans; they wanted to bring the exhibit to Miami’s black neighborhoods: “We are trying to reach the black community and the Anglo community because we believe this exhibit should be a bridge that will unify the various ethnic groups in South Florida,” explained Alvarez (Soler April 1, 1978).⁵¹ As such, the exhibit also served the discourse of colorblindness.

Since the museum still lacked its own space in 1978, the exhibit was installed at Miami’s Science Museum, located on the fringes of Little Havana (Ibid.). Placement of Afro-Cuban artifacts in a science museum recalls early twentieth exhibits of racial science, where African relics served as “proof” of the validity of racial hierarchies (Bronfman 2004; Lidchi 1997; Coombes 1994). The cover of the bilingual

⁵¹ It is not clear if the exhibit was ever presented in the Joseph Caleb Center in Miami’s Brownsville neighborhood, the specific site Alvarez mentioned.

(English/Spanish) Itori Eru exhibit guide features the image of the *ñañigo* figure significant to the Abakuá fraternal order founded by Afro-Cubans. In Cuba, when Afro-Cubans celebrated the end of U.S. occupation in 1902, and broke rules by drumming and dancing in the streets on May 20th (Cuban Independence Day), authorities raided Abakuá meeting places and seized religious objects such as the masked *ñañigo* costume. The objects ended up in the University of Havana's Museum of Anthropology, where they were appropriated for constructions of Cubanidad (Cuban national identity) portrayed as inclusive (Bronfman 2004, 18, 170). "Rather than creating a clear line between the 'national body' and the 'uncivilized Other,'" explains Alejandra Bronfman (24), "this museum displayed the uncivilized other as part of the national body itself." This "part of the national body" was empty, however. On exhibit at the University of Havana's Museum of Anthropology, the costume was immobilized and "bundled" in juxtaposition with the white bodies of museum docents and curious visitors and tourists. Whereas the *ñañigo* spirit "mounted" humans during Abakuá ritual, the museum docents now "mounted" the costume for display. For white non-initiates, the costumes were merely an outer "skin," the living body once within now erased and made absent.

As Stuart Hall (2013) would argue (see also Bhabha 1983), removal of the costume from its original wearers transformed it into a racial fetish. Empty, it displaced the taboo (dangerous and desired) black body. White viewers could disavow the black body by both indulging in it (imagining what had once filled the costume's now "empty" space) and denying it. Like the bodily relic of the lynched man, the costume commemorated the lynched black body and at the same time the slave body: bodies to be owned, "put in their place," and spoken through by white experts.

In addition to its images of the masked *ñañigo*, the Itori Eru exhibit guide describes the major Orishas of Santería; it also includes articles on Cuba's Abakuá "secret society" and Palo Monte. Photos and illustrations depict Afro-Cuban religious objects and black Cubans from the era of slavery or the early twentieth century. The bibliography includes a 1937 book by Israel Castellanos, the same man who dissected and analyzed the bodies of dead black criminals (including men from the widely criminalized Abakuá brotherhood) in order to "prove" theories of racial science (Pavez Ojeda 2009; "Itori Eru," April 1978, CHC, 44). The guide's one-page essays are likely lifted from texts used within the exhibit itself. "The Black Slaves" ("Itori Eru," April 1978, CHC, 6) produces a history in which slavery in Cuba is benign and "less atrocious" than in the U.S.; it also echoes U.S. rhetoric of the "Lost Cause," with its "loyal slaves" (Savage 1997). It claims that Cuba's "advanced" sugar cane processing machinery mitigated the "rude and extenuating labor" of the "crop season"; Cuban Catholicism discouraged hate between whites and blacks; and "Spaniards viewed the slaves they had at home, exempt from racial prejudices, as human beings, and not as the beasts that many nations thought they were."

Lydia Cabrera's epilogue (Ibid., 43) makes similar points and abounds with affirmations of white supremacy. In a seeming apology to her "compatriots," she explains why the exhibit uses the term "culture" to describe "African cultures," despite the association of "culture" with "civilization." Her fellow emigres need not fear being grouped with "African cults" and their "pre-logical mentality," she explains. According to Cabrera, whites in Cuba lived in harmony with blacks and racism did not exist before Castro, as the "Constitution granted the same citizen rights to the blacks and to the

whites.” Hispanic whites were “devoid of ferocious ethnocentric prejudice” compared to Americans. She also reminds readers that “whites dominated Cuba” and claims it “was one of the least mixed and most prosperous and advanced countries of Hispanic America,” implying that “advancement” is coterminous with lack of race mixture.

In her description of slavery as benign, she depicts blacks as if their primary contribution to society is their role as entertainers (Ibid.):

The bona-fide paternalism which characterized the socially prominent white masters, who considered their domestic slaves as part of their families, and also the cordial coexistence of both races, forcefully influenced several aspects of the national temperament: it owes the Negro its good humor, its joy of life.

Afro-Cuban drummer Mario Arango⁵² and his group Erú Aña participated in the exhibit’s occasional performances, serving as living evidence of blacks’ “good humor” and “joy of life.”

The museum later moved to a site adjacent to Cuban Memorial Boulevard, where LHDA volunteers were offering their walking tours. On the tours, two sites became opportunities for narrating Cuban blackness and Africanity: the ceiba (kapok) tree in Cuban Memorial Park and the botanica. The LHDA brochure portrays the ceiba as a symbol of Otherness (Indian and African) rooted in the past: “Even today, practitioners of “Santeria” (witchcraft) use the ‘ceiba’ as a ceremonial center.” Coding Africanity as pre-modern, the brochure confirms the ideas of racial order reinforced in the museum’s exhibit, except it refers to the highly visible and seemingly permanent tree, itself like a monument. Notably, the brochure makes no mention of the Antonio Maceo monument.

⁵² He was the first to bring consecrated drums to the United States (Mario Arango, pers. comm.).

The LHDA itinerary began at a botanica⁵³ at Calle Ocho and 18th Avenue, heading east into what is now the heritage district. “I knew a little bit about Santería,” says Luis Sabines, Jr. about his visits to the botanica, “just a little bit.” In my interview with him on October 31, 2017, he talked enthusiastically about the botanica’s brightly colored “perfumes,” each one assisting in a different life matter (finances, love, etc.). He always concluded his tour with a presentation: “Then there was a spray can and I would bring it and I would say, ‘Now we have become so Americanized that we have an all-purpose, all-in-one spray can,’ and that was the end of the tour.” In my interview with Wilfredo (Willy) Gort on October 31, 2017,⁵⁴ he also mentioned the spray can:

First, we selected *La Botanica*...and we gave the history. We said the botanica was created in Miami. We didn’t have botanicas here in Cuba, because a very small percentage of the people practiced Santería. And now we explain the difference between Santería and *brujería*. And later we went on that Santería was something being studied by the University of Miami medical school, because a lot of the Haitians, and a lot of the people from the South and different countries believed in this type of medicine. Santería cures by utilizing herbs. Brujería is doing damage and dangers, so it’s two different things.

For Gort, most people who practiced Santería were from Haiti, associated with blackness, or “the South” and “different countries”—but not Cuba, because Cuba had “a very small percentage” of practitioners. He referred to Palo as *brujería* (witchcraft), also associated with blackness. He concluded his tours by showing tourists the perfumes, “And I would tell them, ‘Look, these people being so much improved, they have a little spray can.’” He said the women from the Junior League “loved it” when he sprayed them.

⁵³ Spiritual shop.

⁵⁴ The interview took place on the same day as my interview with Luis Sabines, Jr., but they were interviewed separately.

Like an anthropologist, or museum curator, white Cuban emigre elites portrayed Afro-Cuban religion as exotic, enticing and separate from their world. The spray can proved that they were doing their job, “improving” and whitening the masses with evidence of modernity. At that same time, it proved that while they might be in proximity to Cuban blackness, they were experts on “their blacks” and had them under control. The women from the Junior League, sprayed by the Cuban man, could enjoy a safe amount of “black power,” too, but one that magically unified Anglos and white Cubans in the solidarity of whiteness. As Sheila Croucher (1997, 115) notes, Cuban emigres received praise for their “ability to assimilate and ‘Americanize,’ indicated by behavioral shifts like choosing television over ‘noisy games of dominoes.’”

On visits a piñata shop during the tour, Gort emphasized the differences between Cubans and other Latinos by explaining that Cubans did not destroy piñatas, like Mexicans; Cubans re-used the piñatas because they were so beautiful. “[Cubans] created beautiful things.” White Cubanidad stood for beauty and regeneration, as compared to pre-modern blacks and “Indios.”⁵⁵

Parades and Pageants of Inter-Racial Harmony

Throughout Greater Miami the two cultures –Anglo and Hispanic—blend without losing their own identities. But it is in Calle Ocho where one feels surrounded by the scenery of a living stage with real-life characters in a Latin American setting.

– Herb Rau, 1978, “A World of Cuba Awaits Along Miami’s Calle Ocho,” *Atlantic Journal and Constitution*, Dec. 3, 1978

⁵⁵ “Indio” is a slang term (treated as an insult) that Cuban emigres sometimes use to describe Central Americans or mestizo Latin American more generally. See Aranda et al (2014), 230.

The “living stage” of Little Havana, and specifically the area that would become its heritage district, helped focus attention away from transnational movements of people, money, drugs and arms. It helped to protect and cultivate narratives of progress, ethno-nationalism and ethnic solidarity—and the scenario of Reunion. By the late 1970s, Little Havana’s Calle Ocho hosted parades and festivals (and not just protests, rallies and processions) aimed at building solidarity between Cubans and other groups, but especially Anglos (McMullan Oct. 16, 1977).

The first Three Kings Parade took place on Calle Ocho in 1972. The tradition began after Emilio Milian, an announcer on WQBA-AM, railed against Castro’s official decree banning Christmas celebrations, including public carnival celebrations for *Los Tres Reyes Magos*. “The communists cannot kill that beautiful dream because it belongs to our sons,” he remarked (Corderi Jan. 2, 1981). WQBA sponsored the parade, held on a Sunday in early January. Fellow announcer Juan Amador Rodriguez said he wanted it to build Pan-American and inter-ethnic solidarity. “We want this to be a celebration not just for Cuban exile children,” he said. “We want this to be truly an international festivity, with children from the Cuban colony, the Latin American colony and the American children alike...” (Soler Jan. 13, 1969).

Miami’s *Desfile de Los Tres Reyes Magos* was far removed from the roots of the colonial-era *Fiesta del Día de Reyes* tradition among Cuba’s enslaved Africans, when members of each cabildo—each ethnic group—chose their own king and paraded into city interiors to ask for alms (Ortiz 1960; Bettelheim 1998; Bettelheim 2001; Moore 1997, 64-65). In Miami, Cuban men participating in the parade acted as the “kings” — Melchior, Balthazar and Caspar; those who played the role of Melchior—the “African

king”— may have donned blackface. With one of the three “kings” black or “blackened,” the procession modeled racial inclusion and racial order simultaneously. Men standing side by side (one of them symbolically black) became commemorative bodies moving in one line towards the future and the next generation (and new year), itself embodied in the form of a white baby Jesus. Like the “Tres Juanes” under images of a white or whitening Our Lady of Charity, they stood for the myth of racial paradise, and *mestizaje/mulataje*, and thus the anticipated whitening of ethnic and national lines (Rahier 1998, 2003).

At the 1976 Three Kings Parade, boys and girls bearing U.S. and Cuban flags marched in military-style rows (Jan. 4, 1976, Wolfson Archives). Teen girls in predominantly white comparsa groups wore blindingly white ruffled dresses, embodying the iconic *rumbera* (Fernández-Selier 2013). At the top and rear of one float, young white women waved to the crowd, huge white plumes extending more than a foot above their silver crowns, white feathered boas draped over their shoulders. Viewing the spectacle, Senator Richard Stone exclaimed, “the outpouring of feeling, in favor of freeing the enslaved Cuba, is fantastic to me” (Jan. 4, 1976, Wolfson Archives).

The 1978 parade included a float with a paper mache rainbow; it carried three men dressed as the three kings, one of them dark skinned (“Three Kings Parade,” Jan. 8, 1978, Wolfson Archives). Other floats activated scenarios of Discovery and Conquest. Three white men walked in front of one of the largest floats, made to look like a Spanish galleon. Dressed as conquistadors, and as the commemorative bodies of Columbus and Ponce de Leon, these middle-aged men wore ruffled collars and helmets with plumes paired with sunglasses; the man in the middle raised a sword. Behind the three white men, on the galleon-float, stood the ultimate embodiment of the manly conquistador.

Wearing an armor breastplate and a helmet with a huge plume, the tall, bearded white (Cuban?) man stood in front and yet next to a white (Cuban?) woman wearing a gown, sash and crown. The conquistador raised his gloved hand to the crowd.

The newly formed Kiwanis Club of Little Havana began planning for the Calle Ocho Festival in 1977, in collaboration with the *Miami Herald* (Burmello, CHC, 3). They wanted to restore good relations with Miami's Anglo and African American community, and "bring South Florida's cultures a bit closer" (Soler Mar. 11, 1979). According to Frank Castaneda (interviewed October 31, 2017), Cuban leaders wanted to address "all sorts of tensions occurring in Miami, to make "some misunderstandings less significant" and even "disappear." They also wanted to promote Little Havana as a tourist destination. "We want to invite the entire non-Latin community to come to our home, which is Eighth Street, and to participate in our music, our culture, and our heritage," said Leslie Pantin Jr., co-chairman of the event's organizing committee ("Everyone's Invited" Jan. 30, 1978; Brownstein 10 Mar. 1978).

A hundred thousand people attended the first festival in 1978 (Pantín 2001, 82). Originally called "Open House Eight: An Invitation to SW 8th Street," it stretched from 12th to 27th Avenue along Calle Ocho ("Everyone's Invited" Jan. 30, 1978). Most of the posters and illustrations promoting the festival during the 1970s (Carnaval Miami poster collection, CHC) reproduced three types of scenes, all of them situating black figures as either separate and isolated or as entertainers. An illustration used to advertise the first festival in 1978 depicted all the figures on Calle Ocho as white or white-mestizo, with one dramatic exception: a black Mickie Mouse face, the only non-human and dark-faced figure in the crowd.

Remembering Blackness as Violence and Neglect

Ten days after the Maceo anniversary commemoration in 1975, at Cuban Memorial Park, Florida Attorney General Robert Shevin inaugurated another kind of monument across Miami-Dade County: billboards announcing Florida's new mandatory punishment laws. The statement "Three Years to Life" dominated the billboards, along with a huge image of a gun ("Attorney General Robert Shevin" Dec. 15, 1975, Wolfson Archives). "Mandatory" punishment depended on who you were, what resources were in reach, what connections you had, and where you stood in the racial/spatial order (Delaney 1998; Alexander 2010).

While Cuban exile terrorists consistently found ways to evade jail and prison sentences, blacks in Miami (especially African Americans) were targeted as the "real" criminals. In the late 1960s, City of Miami police officers began enforcing "stop and frisk" laws, and regularly raided bars and nightclubs (Dunn 1997, 2013). "This is war," remarked Miami's police Chief, Walter Headley, "We don't mind being accused of police brutality." He said that "young hoodlums" were taking advantage of campaigns for Civil Rights: "They haven't seen anything yet" (Doherty 2012, 188, 189). Police arrested Miami's black residents based on trumped up charges, as retired City of Miami police officer Michael Berish (2007) has documented in his autobiography. "Mopery with Intent to Gawk was always a good charge," said his partner, Officer O'Kofski (Berish 2007, 8).

In Miami, anti-black sentiment was stoked by the local media, too. A nearly full-page article in the *Miami Herald*, and published in 1970, implied that Fidel Castro and African American militants were conspiring to start a race war in the United States (Geyer and Beech Oct. 22, 1970). The article warned of transnational black solidarity and

its impact, fanning the fears of a black uprising. Fidel Castro “did not realize he was taking black power into the bosom of the Cuban Revolution” when he invited black “radicals” from the U.S. as tourists, warned reporters for the *Miami Herald*; they claimed that African Americans were teaching black Cubans about black nationalism and black power. The Cuban government was preaching violence to black militants and white revolutionaries, according to this narrative, but “these people are being sacrificed,” said an NAACP member quoted for the story. The article claimed that black radicals would “form the invincible cadre of the revolution in America.” In McCarthy-esque fashion, it named individual members of organizations like the Black Panthers and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), repeatedly hinting at future “urban guerrilla warfare” and evoking the imagery of Black Revolution.

For Cubans in Miami, the spectacle of a race war likely conjured their most feared scenarios of the Cuban Revolution, 1912, slave rebellions, and the Haiti Revolution—all over again. Nonetheless, media portrayals such as these helped divert attention away from the violence enacted by white Cuban emigres. Moreover, the seeming temporary “blackness” of Cuban terrorists could intimidate Anglo authorities...when needed.

The imagined “communion” of differently racialized Cuban men, fighting the specter of communism on symbolic battlefields, masked another aspect of the desire to possess certain properties of blackness. In order to fortify white Cubanidad and maintain the Racial Contract (Mills 1997), white men also needed to eliminate living black bodies (Mills 1997). Men bond through the “regeneration” of whiteness, which is what Laura Ann Stoler (1995, 85) describes (borrowing from Foucault) as the “genealogy of racism in which the exclusion and/or elimination of some ensures the protection of others.”

Harvey Young (2005, 652) contends that the human remains of lynchings achieved their force from the narratives attached to them: “The souvenir as fetish object had the power to remember the dead.” For a white man, the souvenir might reassure him that *he* was not the one sacrificed—or the one who was losing the modern property of whiteness (Harris 1993) and all it offered. Whiteness lived on and survived, thanks to the sacrifice of black bodies. Cuban emigre Ramon Orozco recalled CIA operative Rip Robertson, with whom he worked on numerous paramilitary operations against Cuba, offering him fifty dollars for an ear (a human ear):

I brought him two, and he laughed and said, “You’re crazy,” but he paid me \$100, and he took us to his house for a turkey dinner. Rip was a patriot, an American patriot. Really, I think he was a fanatic. He’d fight anything that came against democracy. He fought with the Company [CIA] in Korea, in Cuba, and then he went to Vietnam. He never stopped, but he also went to church and he practiced democracy. (Branch and Crile III Aug. 1975, 58)

Orlando Patterson reads the lynching spectacle as a sacrificial, religious rite, noting that lynching often occurred on Sundays and took place in communal areas. Priests or ministers incited lynching through their rhetoric. Fire served as an agent of “consecration, torture, and the divine devouring of the soul” (1998, 196). The victim’s bones, once symbolically sanctified, were thought to bestow certain effects on those who owned them, like the relics of saints. Lynching collectively whitened those who participated: sacrifice ensured their rights to the benefits of whiteness, while they could “consume” what they desired from the victim.

The dead black man, or the “black warrior spirit,” evoked through commemorations of Maceo was thus not confined to a separate, ethereal world. Through public rituals he became “one” with the white body, like Orishas “possess” or “mount” an initiate (Palmié

2013; Matory 2009; Beliso-De Jesús). Militant anti-Castro emigres could imagine themselves spiritually or symbolically possessed by powers envisioned as black and male, and to at the same time as possessors and controllers of these powers, as if they were slaves (or something to consume). Cutting up real-life, flesh and blood, black and brown bodies —and even white bodies when necessary, was both a sacrifice for “black power” and “white power.” These sacrifices helped the bodies of Cuban emigres flow and move from place to place. Socially white individuals could possess the magic of whiteness, and all the doors it could open in the seemingly ordered, streamlined and modern world of legality and the state, and secretly, with “plausible deniability,” the divine and dangerous agency associated with blackness. There was always “something else” that whiteness, the state and the legal needed in order to exist.

The Antonio Maceo Brigade and Antonio Maceo Park

In the late 1970s, other entities began to lay claims on Antonio Maceo’s name besides militant exile groups. In 1977, Mayor Maurice Ferre pushed through legislation to re-name Domino Park after Antonio Maceo (“Motion 77687” Sept. 8, 1977, Miami commission minutes, OCC, 6; Fabricio and Perez Oct. 30, 1977). In my interview with Ferre (May 23, 2017), he described Maceo as “a very controversial figure in Cuban history” because he was black, and because the “Cuban community” held a “tremendous amount of deep, hidden, institutionalized, prejudism [sic]” against blacks. Ferre, who is of Puerto Rican descent, suspected (white) Cubans would never honor the black general in such a symbolic space, as “the emphasis is always on Martí.” “For those of you that don’t know,” he remarked at the commission meeting, “Maceo was the military patriot

who led the war of independence in Cuba. He was black, he was a black man and he of course is a man that was very revered by Cubans of all sides, so he was not a political type, he was a patriot of Cuba” (“Motion 776878” Sept. 8, 1977, Miami commission minutes, OCC, 6).

Ferre’s motion passed unanimously, seconded by Vice Mayor Theodore R. Gibson, a son of black Bahamian immigrants and a longtime civil rights champion in Miami (Rose Nov. 15, 1977).⁵⁶ Curiously, the commission meeting coincided with the feast day of Our Lady of Charity, Cuba’s patron saint. By emphasizing Maceo’s blackness, Ferre could orient Maceo in the direction of African Americans (the black vote had helped him get elected), or in the direction of Cubans, forcing the Cuban community to “prove” their claims of colorblindness: a strategy also used by Afro-Cubans (De La Fuente, 1999; Benson 2016). He was also testing Cuban emigres by moving Maceo out of the realm of the battlefield symbolized by Cuban Memorial Park, and into the heart of Calle Ocho.

Growing rifts were already dividing the Cuban community. Months after the renaming, the Brigada Antonio Maceo (Antonio Maceo Brigade) visited Cuba, bringing fifty-five young Cuban emigres to meet with none other than Fidel Castro himself. The new group organized trips to Cuba for emigres; it supported the Revolution’s social justice goals and sought to connect Cubans in the diaspora with Cubans on the island. Its founder was rumored to be Lourdes Casal, a prominent middle class, black Cuban poet and activist living in New York (Pedraza 1996, 314; García 1996, 201-203; Masud-Piloto 1996, 73-74; Torres 1999, 93-94). Maceo’s name symbolized their own position against

⁵⁶ When Gibson had run for a seat on the city commission, Ferre supported his campaign.

the blockade; they said they were also inspired by African Americans and members of other “ethnic groups” investigating their heritage and roots (Jacobs Feb. 7, 1978). It also signified that Maceo was not only a property “owned” by a dominant segment of white Cuban emigres.

Veterans of Brigade 2506 interpreted the name and ideology of the new group as an act of symbolic warfare. Prominent emigre groups and leaders stated publicly their complete opposition to the Maceo Brigade’s ideals, including Bruno Barreiro (longtime County Commissioner for a district that includes Little Havana), Acción Cubana and CAMACOL, among others (“Nueva Denuncia” May 23, 1979). They described members of the “misnamed Antonio Maceo Brigade” as pro-Castro “elements” who used *oscuros manejos* (“dark maneuvers,” comparable to the term “black arts”) to infiltrate the exile community, causing division and escalating a climate of violence. In other words, they conjured the scenario of Black Revolution and transformed Cuban emigres of the Maceo Brigade—even white Cuban emigres—as elements or properties that needed to be put into order and control. Anti-Castro leaders held a meeting at the monument to Antonio Maceo to express their concerns about the brigade (Brownstein May 23, 1979).

Cuban emigres battled members of the Maceo Brigade with constant threats, harassment and violence; several of its leaders were assassinated (de La Torre 2003, 13). The Miami chapter closed its office for safety reasons but still held meetings. Brigade 2506 implied that more violence was yet to come. It blamed Castro and communists for any future acts (Williams Oct. 28, 1979; Gutierrez and Ducassi, Oct. 29, 1982). Like members of the PIC—and all blacks after the formation of the PIC—Maceo Brigade members had become targets. Militant exiles were also angry at civic elites involved with

Little Havana's development (they accused them of not investing enough in La Lucha). Their threats to the Antonio Maceo Brigade may have also served as veiled threats to the "bureaucrats" of Little Havana ("La Farsa del Little Havana," Oct. 10, 1975, *Libertad*, CHC, 15).

Public punishment had ended the lives of other whites in Florida who dared show "disloyalty" to white supremacy, which underscores the ways in which violence helped preserve loyalty to (Cuban) white supremacy. In 1910, two cigar workers in Ybor City's cigar factories (where many Cuban exiles worked) ended up hanging from trees. Although the vast majority of lynchings in the U.S. targeted African Americans, these victims were Sicilian immigrants. A note on one of the corpses warned others to "take note or go the same way... We are watching you. If any more citizens are molested, look out—Justice" (Luconi 2009, 30-31). Immigrants, Jews, Native Americans, Mexicans and even Anglo whites were also victims of lynching. Italian Americans (Luconi 2009) in Tampa were punished for organizing unions, fraternizing with blacks, and anti-racist views; many had formed friendships with Cubans (including Afro-Cubans) in Tampa's cigar factories. White or white-mestizo Cuban emigres living in the U.S. prior to the Cuban Revolution were likely well aware of the risks to those who failed to demonstrate solidarity with Anglo whites. Florida's non-black lynching victims were typically liminally white: Italian immigrants or Jews, those who treated blacks as "equals," and/or those who advocated for racial equality.

In 1921, Miami's KKK abducted, tarred and feathered Archdeacon Philip S. Irwin, the white Episcopalian president of Miami's Overseas Club. Irwin fled Miami, fearful for his life. The Overseas Club, headquartered in London, was an international organization

of British subjects that welcomed black Bahamians and treated blacks as equals to whites. A few years after Irwin's departure, the Klan erected an obelisk near Miami's courthouse. It read "On this Spot a few years ago a white man was found who had been tarred and feathered because he preached social equality to Negroes" (Rose 2015, 34, 38; Connolly 2014). Six years prior to the attack on Irwin, the Southern Cross Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) erected a 24-foot tall obelisk on the grounds of the Dade County Courthouse two years after the PIC massacre in Cuba, on June 3, 1913 (the birthday of President Jefferson Davis) (Florida Public Archeology Network, n.d.).

The Klan's memorialization of lynching (and other acts of punishment) served as a warning to blacks, whites, and all in the liminal realm between recognized blackness and whiteness. Lynching drew on fears of an interrupted white "line," lineage and trajectory: the *camino* or path of "the white race." Sara Ahmed describes whiteness as oriented around access—to continue lines and lineages. Lynching sacrificed those who threatened the reproduction of whiteness and thus the (white) nation's future. Whites (and blacks) loyal to the Racial Contract (Mills 1997) earned rewards of inclusion contingent on continual demonstrations of loyalty (Berrey 2015; Hoelscher 2003). Murder without consequence, both denied and sanctioned by the state, reminded blacks, "honorary whites" and whites how they were supposed to perform and where they could go.

In 1920, for example, the Dade County Democratic Committee re-published comments from a *Miami Herald* editorial (Oct. 22) warning whites not to facilitate black political participation. It suggested that South Florida's white Republicans who "deserted their race" would negatively impact whites throughout Florida and the Southern states, since "the Negro in politics is a very present menace to the peace of the state." Whites in

counties with a low population of blacks “owed a duty” to the counties with high numbers of blacks, “to protect them as far as possible from Negro domination.”

It is a question of whether we will aid in perpetuating white supremacy or whether we will give aid and comfort to our political enemies, the republicans, and aid them making the Negro a permanent feature of our political contests.

Maintaining whiteness required commitment to the “security” of white futures; in return, those included as white would have the security of protection from violence.

In 1970s Miami, the public battle attacking the Antonio Maceo Brigade inspired African American journalist Francis Ward to learn more about Antonio Maceo, however. In a column for the *Miami Herald* (May 7, 1979), he said he was struck by the “common history and culture” between blacks and Cubans. He reflected on the connections between free blacks who fought in the American Revolutionary War and the many blacks who fought for Cuban independence. He was also surprised to learn of other black Cuban generals besides Maceo. In his evocation of the scenario of Independence, blacks played important and dominant roles, and blacks in Cuba did indeed have common interests with blacks in the U.S. Ward questioned why so little effort had been invested in finding “a set of mutual interests, ideas or goals” that could unite black Cubans and African Americans. Ward also hinted at the possibilities of black solidarity, reminding readers that blacks had played important roles across Latin America and the Caribbean, which (like the U.S.) had histories of slavery.

Ward evoked Slavery to confront claims of colorblindness. He denounced the “widely held” denial that racism existed in Latin America and questioned arguments that blacks suffered economically and socially only for reasons of poverty, not race. Perhaps, he argued, Cubans do not want to discuss Maceo as a figure in black world history

because they only want to see him as Cuban--not black. Ward concluded charging that the “black condition worldwide—in the U.S., Latin America, Europe and Africa—is and always has been a matter of race and poverty.” Directly challenging the militant Cuban exiles who portrayed themselves as enslaved, he remarked:

Blacks and whites in Latin America may share poverty at the bottom. But they have never shared slavery anywhere in Latin America. Nor have they ever shared power in the upper class of any Latin country. The Latin upper class remains perhaps the most exclusively whites-only club in the world. And that, my friends, is not a matter of poverty.

Ward’s powerful words cut away at the narrative of colorblindness. They remembered Maceo’s links to a broader black diaspora. He was not merely using Maceo to connect African Americans to Cubans; he was, like W.E.B. Du Bois (1968), making visible the global color line. With his word-machetes, he re-claimed Maceo, the *cimarrón* and other powerful black commemorative bodies, and joined them with his own body: together, they were warriors and abolitionists fighting white supremacy.

As if in response to the symbolic war over Maceo, the City of Miami added a new memorial to Cuban Memorial Park in 1977: The Island of Cuba Memorial (Benitez 2001, 45). The bronze relief map extended along wall that spanned nearly the full width of the boulevard. Inscribed in the wall is a quote by Jose Martí: “*La patria es agonía y deber*” (The homeland is agony and duty). The new monument cut Maceo’s monument off from view and from the rest of the park (Benitez 2001, 45; Gonçalves 2012, 140-141).

Human Remains: Palo Spirits

Cuban emigres were also engaged in spiritual warfare, as mentioned in chapter one. Yet Afro-Cubans had their own relationship to Sarabanda, Oggún and other entities

associated with blackness—as well as “spirits” of whiteness. Armando, a friend and 60-something black Cuban practitioner and *Tata* (priest) of Palo Mayombe (which he described as the most “African” and “powerful” of Palo’s branches or *ramas*), told me many stories of his work as a palero in Miami, “enslaving” spirits of the dead so they could “hunt” and attack intended targets—often on behalf of the Cuban and Italian Mafia, Cuban coke dealers and exile terrorists. He admitted his fear and exhaustion working with the dead, as if they enslaved him, too.

He recalled an afternoon when several members of Miami’s Italian Mafia asked him to meet them at Versailles, the famous Cuban restaurant that sits on Calle Ocho in a liminal ten blocks between Little Havana and Coral Gables (Grenier and Moebius 2015; Cordoba, Ivy and Fadiman 2011), and one that Mirta Ojito (2001) has described as a “a bastion of white Cuban-Americans.” Remembering his arrival at the restaurant, he remarked: “You know they make excuses? Don’t want to let me in?” He snorted with disgust, using two fingers to quickly stroke his lean forearm, his skin the color of dark tobacco. The restaurant’s hosts were treating him as a “space invader” (Puwar 2004).

After a brief pause, he flashed a smile, revealing a gold-plated front tooth, and chuckled: “But the Italians—They’re watching. They see me.” He made a gesture of waving someone off. “They say, ‘He’s with us!’ They pull out a chair.” He took a drag of his cigarette. “And they had to let me through. I sat at the table with them. *Un negro en Versailles, es la verdad ...*” He smirked and quickly exhaled a plume of smoke, which swirled with his amusement and bitterness.

Whose flesh-and-blood body flows like smoke— without interruption or gate-keeping—into a place like Versailles, where mirrors on every wall make bodies multiply?

If he had been white, his whiteness would have “trailed behind” his moment of entrance, like the mirrors standing behind the bodies of white diners; he would have been surprised by any effort to prevent him from walking to the table to join his hosts (Ahmed 2007, 156). Like Fanon (1986), Armando was used to his (black) body walking before him, not behind him. When Armando’s body was next to white bodies, however, even those who in previous generations might not have counted as white (Roediger 2005; Orsi 1999, 2002), he had greater access to “white power,” and he could extend his reach (Ahmed 2007, 154) into “white” spaces like Versailles. The living bodies of socially white Italian mobsters aided him, just like the spirits of the black dead.

I imagine Armando’s experience in relationship to black Cubans who chose to work with the underground of Cuban exile terrorism and drug smuggling, including Paleros. Paleros work with the dead and with elements of nature (Ochoa, 2010; Johnson 2012). Many people, Cuban and non-Cuban, are afraid of Palo. In my years living here in Little Havana, I’ve often heard it referred to as *brujeria* (witchcraft) or “black magic,” and as more powerful and immediate than other African-inspired traditions like Santería. In Palo, the dead do not exist simply in conceptual form; they are “continuous and immediate to the living” and have a materiality “coterminous with that of the living,” remarks anthropologist Todd Ramón Ochoa, comparing their indivisible coupling to the surface of a Möbius strip (2010, 13, 34). Palo transmits memory. Palo ritual, as performed, embodied behavior, offers believers articulated media for evoking, remembering and transferring the violent events and experiences of slavery. It allows believers to re-negotiate their relationship to the past and act out alternative futures (Pichler, 2010; Ochoa 2010; Wirtz 2014).

Like Santería, Palo practices can signify racial difference, as evidenced by the *prenda judía* and the *prenda cristiana*. The terms *judía* (Jewish) and *cristiana* (Christian) derive from Spanish Catholic notions of good and evil (Ochoa 2010). The *prenda judía* is grounded in an ancient stereotype of the ritual murderer: the threat to blood and bloodline. It starts with the spectral Jew⁵⁷ of the twelfth century, a racist archetype that persisted in colonies dominated by Spanish Catholics: the Jew Masferrer conjured in his attacks against those who “throw the thirty coins of Judas in their pockets” (Libertad, Oct. 24, 1975, CHC). The Jew’s commemorative body emerged again and again: in the fifteenth century *reconquista* of Iberia by Castile and Aragon, the Holy Inquisition, the persecution of Jews and Muslims who tried to remain in Spain, and during slavery. In Cuba, whites had reinvented the spectral Jew of European Catholicism and the feared “Haitian” when alleging that blacks committed ritual murder. According to Ochoa (2010, 214), “in all the centuries of Spanish Catholic contact with Africa, hardly were the fears and accusations of ritual murder by Jews more detailed and widely diffused than in the nineteenth century, when tens of thousands of slaves were brought to Spanish Cuba.” Spanish and criollo Catholics fanned these fears when newly freed blacks threatened the white Catholic racial/spatial order; persecutions (“witch hunts”) targeted blacks who dared to petition for greater political participation, like the PIC (Ochoa 2010, 208-209, 215; Bronfman 2004; De La Fuente 2001; Helg 1995). Blacks were equated with the “witch, the devil, and the Jew” (Ochoa 2010, 218).

⁵⁷ Ochoa defines the “spectral Jew” as “the fictive (absent) yet socially real (present) powers attributed to Jews by European Catholics” and “the felt consequences of these powers on all sides of this relationship.”

The enslaved and their descendants carefully examined the spectral figures haunting Cuban Catholics, suggests Ochoa (2010): they wanted to know the secret to their power, and to appropriate this fear for their own creative purposes. They appropriated Catholic influences in the *prenda cristiana* and Santería (Brown 2003) and made them “rule” the *prenda judía*. It “is no surprise that Kongo and Yoruba cosmologies would each have made claims of access to the power vested in the Rule of Whites,” explains Ochoa (2010, 217). On Good Friday, however, the *prenda judía* is the most powerful of all. Ochoa’s *palero* contacts revered the *prenda judía*, describing its *nfumbe* (force) as especially dangerous, with a “taste for Christian blood” (207). The reputation of the *prenda judía* gave paleros an opportunity to claim “death-wielding sovereignty” for themselves: one more powerful than Catholic or even West African (e.g., Santería) protections (218-219).

While black Cubans closely watched whites to understand how their “white power” worked, socially white Cubans were investigating the African-inspired traditions they feared. Ochoa (2010) and other anthropologists including Kristina Wirtz (2014) and Stephan Palmié (2013) note the ways in which Palo rituals, as well as ritual and folkloric performances of Palo dance, seem to revel in stereotypes of primitive, dangerous, African blackness: the same stereotypes used to justify anti-black violence.

“Death-wielding sovereignty” is itself a kind of “black power,” however. Paleros may have added to the construction of the violent black warrior, but it helped them secure and intimidate their powerful white clients, giving them access to door-opening benefits of “white power.”

Black Ops, Black Markets, White Supremacy

In the “betwixt and between” realm of Little Havana, men were emerging from worlds and experiences that “bureaucrats” could hardly understand. “Freedom Fighters,” as they called themselves, were engaged in a covert war with global impact. While terrorist groups justified their activities in the name of anti-Castro nationalism and anti-communist patriotism, their actions often benefitted powerful companies, drug lords, dictators and their death squads. In Little Havana, Brigade 2506 decorated fascist dictator Augusto Pinochet with a Medal “de Libertad,” despite his institutionalized torture of 38,000 citizens, executions and “disappearances” of more than three thousand people (Kornbluh 2013; Ensalaco 2000); they had not awarded such a distinction to any other non-Cuban (Marshall 1987, 47).

At a location just across from Cuban Memorial Park, I met a former member of a Central American assassin team in 2010. “When you’ve seen what I’ve seen, and heard what I’ve heard,” was the mantra he repeated endlessly. He spoke fluent English but survived on small handyman jobs like the one I offered him. One afternoon, he told me about a Central American country he can never return to, a family he will never see again, and the special operations training he received from “Americans.” He said he had lived by orders to kill or be killed and hinted at the brutality of these acts. He had walked across Mexico alone and at night in order to reach the U.S., witnessing beatings and rapes of immigrant men, women and children by Mexican police.

We were sitting across from Cuban Memorial Park when he turned to me, looked me in the eyes, and said, “You see, Corinna, you Americans live in a bubble. You have no idea how the rest of us live. Your life is really, really good compared to ours.” His voice betrayed bitterness and resignation. His eyes lifted to meet mine again. “There are two

worlds. Americans are part of one of those worlds,” he continued, his voice lowered.

“But most people, including most people from my country, are part of the other world.

And part of the reason we live so hard is because of what your government does and you don’t even know it.” “When you’ve seen what I’ve seen, and heard what I’ve heard,” he muttered again, looking away. Cuban Memorial Park, like a cemetery, has buried stories.

The Death and Birth of Nestor “Tony” Izquierdo, “Freedom Fighter”

In Miami, no one embodied the militant Cuban ideal of the loyal black warrior (and a new version of Maceo) better than Nestor “Tony” Izquierdo Díaz, whose statue now stands in Little Havana’s Cuban Memorial Park. A hired assassin and CIA operative tied to international narcotics- and arms-smuggling networks, Tony Izquierdo died at age 43 on June 10, 1979. Fellow mercenary and CIA operative Gerry Hemming said Izquierdo fought (and died) in Nicaragua as part of a special forces team (The Education Forum, Oct. 17, 2005).⁵⁸ He was assisting U.S.-backed Anastasio Somoza Debayle’s National Guard, a military entity which *The New York Times* described as a 7,500-strong “private army” (Meiselas July 30, 1978; Enriquez 2005; Silva and Morin June 25, 1979; “Apoya a Estatua” January 7, 1987; Feeney April 19, 1986). By 1978, Somoza had become a dictator hated by people from nearly every sector of Nicaraguan society, including the elite; numerous organizations, including Amnesty International, accused his National Guard (formed during the U.S. occupation of Nicaragua from 1909 to 1933) of human rights violations, including the arbitrary imprisonment, rape, torture and execution of hundreds of peasants (Marshall et al. 1987; Meiselas July 30, 1978).

⁵⁸ An ODA, or Operational Detachment Alpha.

Izquierdo began his career in 1960 as a member of a secretive anti-Castro movement based in Cuba. The CIA recruited him to help prepare for the Bay of Pigs invasion; when it failed, the CIA sent him to Miami, where Brigade 2506 made him an honorary member (Feeney April 19, 1986). The CIA made Izquierdo a Commando for its elite Special Operations Division, which engaged in infiltration, arms caching, sabotage and assassinations (Cosculluela 2010).⁵⁹ Izquierdo continued to lead commando attacks on Cuba and in other “operational theaters” across Latin America. Hemming claims that Izquierdo was also the spotter in the Dal-Tex Building during the assassination of President John F. Kennedy (Gratz and Howell Mar. 11, 2005). In hushed voices, old Cuban men who frequent Cuban Memorial Park have also told me that he was “involved” in Kennedy’s assassination.

A year before Izquierdo’s death in 1978, the Coordinacion de Organizaciones Revolucionarias Unidas (Coordination of United Revolutionary Organizations), or CORU, picked Izquierdo as its Military Chief (Crankshaw and Marina Nov. 29, 1976; Fleetwood May 13, 1977). An umbrella organization, CORU included groups like Acción Cubana, Alpha 66, Brigade 2506 and FLNC; it was led by renowned Cuban exile terrorist Orlando Bosch, who also headed Acción Cubana. According to a Miami antiterrorist police veteran, the CIA wanted Cuban emigre groups to form CORU so they would engage in terrorism *outside* (and not within) U.S. borders (Arboleya 2000, 154). CORU was responsible for numerous terrorist actions and bombings across Latin America, the Caribbean, the United States and Canada (Posada Carriles 1994; “Accion Cubana” June

⁵⁹ <http://www.cubanspecialoperations.org/infiltration-a-commando-servicesG.html>.

29, 1976, LAS Archive, 8-9; “Coordinacion de Organizaciones Revolucionarias Unidas,” Aug. 16, 1978, NSA; Russell Oct. 29, 1976).

“We are fighting in different clandestine movements and complicity from those who should be our allies,” wrote Bosch to fellow CORU members. “The truth is we are all alone. We cannot deny this fact, but we have the example of our martyrs and of our prisoners on the ‘Slave Island.’ This will help us to keep fighting” (“Accion Cubana” June 29, 1976, NSA). Bosch’s language of La Lucha kept alive the images of *cimarrones* preparing a slave uprising against the oppressor, and thus the scenario of Slavery. “Cuba es Maceo, es Martí, es Máximo Gómez, es Pedro Luis Boitel, es Vicente Méndez, es Luis Posada Carriles,” wrote Esteban Fernandez for the militant Organizacion Autentico website, adding (in Spanish) that “Cuba is not of the enslavers but of those who will one day break their chains.” Activists evoked the bundling of the dead with the living, and Maceo with modern-day guerrillas; they continued to bring together inverted scenarios of Slavery and Independence in which they were the new runaway slaves and Mambises.

CORU derived most of its funding through drug trafficking (Scott, 1998[1992], 25; Korten Jan. 30, 2003). It also received funds thanks to its relationship with the CIA and connections in Latin America, including the fascist governments of Chile and Argentina (Marshall 1987, 43). The Miami-based World Finance Corporation (WFC), founded by Brigade 2506 veteran Guillermo Hernández-Cartaya, also helped fund CORU (Korten Jan. 30, 2003; Marina and Long Sept. 10, 1977). The international investment banking network comprised a tangled web extending from WFC’s Coral Gables offices to Panama, Columbia and the United Arab Emirates (Gerth Dec. 15, 1977). According to the House Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and Control, WFC’s activities included

“political corruption, gunrunning, as well as narcotics trafficking on an international level” (Marshall 1987, 44). The CIA funneled funds through WIC to anti-communist guerrillas in Latin America (Korten Jan. 30, 2003). In addition to CORU, Izquierdo participated in “Operation 40,” a highly secretive anti-communist CIA assassination team and counterintelligence operation presided over by Richard Nixon and comprised almost entirely of Cuban exiles. Hundreds of kilos of cocaine and heroin were found on one of the operation’s planes after it crashed. Federal narcotics authorities charged its leaders with organizing the biggest heroin and cocaine ring in the U.S. (Marshall 1987, 44-46; Marshall Mar. 5, 1979). Clearly, the flows of drugs into the U.S. and arms into Latin America had not begun suddenly in 1980. Narcotics were arriving in the U.S. long before, and Anglos and Cuban emigres had played a role in these exchanges.

After his death, Izquierdo received far more public attention than he ever received during his lifetime. Gilberto Casanova of Acción Cubana called him “one of the most loved men of this community” (Garateix. Aug. 4. 1991). More than two hundred people attended his funeral, held at St. Michael’s Catholic Church in Little Havana (Anderson June 16, 1979; “Obituary - Tony Izquierdo” June 16, 1979). Rituals of public mourning elevated him from the black man talented in the “black arts” to an exalted, whitened saint, a “freedom fighter” like Maceo, albeit with a shadow side to his life that some people knew well. In other words, as the black man who had died in service to the counterrevolutionary cause, he could transition from a black loyal slave into a body made exceptional and solid, a permanent body, like the idea of Maceo having “white parts.”

In his written tribute to Izquierdo, CIA-trained mercenary Luis Crespo said, “El Negro” [The Black] Izquierdo, as we called our brother of struggles and ideals, is profiled

in all his grandeur when the brutality of the Marxist-Castroites was stronger, it emerges as do thousands of patriots to challenge slavery and terror with the only language that tyrants and henchmen understand: “Fire and shrapnel” (“Los Martires Hablan,” personal collection). The runaway slave, the *cimarrón*, the metal of Oggún and “thousands of patriots”: the loyal black man, Izquierdo, helped add the “black” to operations, symbolizing violence and death, and pairing it with whiteness, symbolized as life-giving. Their enemies were all who threatened a racial and gendered order that privileged straight, white, male dominance.

Izquierdo was exalted as a martyr and a “freedom fighter.” Tributes emphasized his humility, his dedication to La Lucha, and his duty to God and family. The loyal black man was remembered because he had not edged too close to racial borders. “He did not want to be president, or anything,” said Izquierdo’s wife, Edith, “he just wanted to feel the satisfaction of the duty fulfilled” (Gutierrez May 29, 1992). Rafael Villaverde said he was the most respected fighter in the militant exile community because of his modesty (Anderson June 16, 1979). Others said he was a man of few words, who “dedicated his life to what he knew best: fighting the advance of communism on the continent” (Enriquez 2005). Mario Enriquez described him “sniffing out, without error, the Sandinistas in Nicaragua,” as if Izquierdo were the loyal slave: a shadowy Sarabanda spirit doing its owner’s bidding and hunting down its victim (Ibid.). At the same time, remembrances of Nestor consistently emphasized his Catholicism and Christian burial, denying any association with African-inspired faiths. His Afro-Venezuelan wife, Edith, testified that he “was very Catholic” and always prayed before going to bed. She denied

that he had anything to do with Santería and said he was the only black man she'd met who was *not* a Santero (Ibid.).

A poem written by Orlando Gutierrez Boronat evokes the transformation of Izquierdo into a new Maceo, able to move back and forth between black warrior assassin to whitened saint (de la Cruz June 5, 2014). Boronat grew up in the same Little Havana building where Nestor and his peers held their meetings. In a poem dedicated to Izquierdo, he describes the resentment felt by Nestor and his peers towards white Americans:

... Their tirades are mostly about
los americanos,
and these are words,
los americanos,
they some times say
with the crepuscular
loud to deep intonation
of men betrayed...

The poet then contrasts *los americanos* with exiles portrayed as if contemporary Mambises, evoking a *mestizaje* nationalism with the imagery of Jose Martí's (1892) famous poem, *Nuestra America* ([1891] 2005) and Fernando Ortiz's *ajiaco* (Ortiz 1995, 491):

There are unsmiling men upstairs,
some too young,
some too old...
their skins melding together like a flag of many colors:
the brown, the white, the yellow
Some times a mix of Chinese eyes and African lips

And one they call Ernesto, who always
blocks the driveway with ridiculously small boats
the men in undershirts call their war ships,
pauses in his work stirring a huge pot of the soup
they call *ajiaco*

to tousle my hair and thank me,
...

while the tall black one,
the first-among-equals
these free men
call Tony, El Negro,
makes the sign of the cross on my forehead
with his thumb
and bids me go,
and I hear him say to the men
as I turn to leave and he closes the door
behind me,
"Y ahora volvemos a la situación, porque persiste."

Linking Izquierdo to Maceo, he transforms him into a religious figure who marks men with the sign of the cross, preparing them for "freedom" through war. The sign of the cross also imitates the ceremony of "scratching," or ritual cutting (of foreheads and other parts of the body), enacted in initiations to Palo, and is thus a multi-vocal signifier. Izquierdo initiates the young Orlando Gutierrez-Boronat in the civil religion of La Lucha, as if "crowning" him with Maceo and delivering protective energy to the symbolic next generation. The fighters are protected by both "white" and "black" spiritual forces.

Boronat concludes by repeating the metaphor of *ajiaco*. Izquierdo, he implies, is part of the collective whole in a racial democracy of Cubanidad:

Los patriotas
Abuela calls them
and she says to me
during those late afternoons
when she watches over me
while my parents are still at work,
that if nature itself knew how to sew,
if the flesh of nations
were the fabric of its banners
then these men of many colors
would be Cuba's one and only flag.

The post of Boronat's poem online includes a photo of Nestor's statue in Cuban Memorial Park, linking readers to the tangible, material site: the touchstone of memory.

Time and time again, Izquierdo—and his white fellow mercenaries—had charges dropped and were set free. As Cuban “exiles” they were not quite “citizens”: those securely within the legal state could claim they were acting on their own, without sanction. They were plausibly deniable. After he retired, Izquierdo's former CIA case manager, Harold Feeney, wrote about militant Cuban emigres in an article for *The Nation* (April 19, 1986). He says they acted “without the knowledge of the CIA” and “created a problem for the Federal Bureau of Investigation.” Tony Izquierdo, the black Cuban man, is his first example of a “renegade” Cuban exile. Nonetheless, declassified documents reveal the State's complicity in the murder, torture and exploitation of thousands of civilians around the world, and the influx of drugs for whom black men would be arrested, convicted and imprisoned in the later War on Drugs. In merging his body alongside state forces, clearing paths like Oggún, Izquierdo knew “white power”: he accessed some of the benefits of white supremacy (Mills 1997). It made him exceptional, in the eyes of his white compatriots.

Yet Tony Izquierdo was the perfect “fall guy” for the imagined terrorist. He is never pictured in a guayabera suit or Panama hat, swilling rum and smoking a cigar. He is the man that would be permanently set in bronze and owned: the plausibly deniable forever slave of the non-state. The words of tribute to him are like ritual incantations to the *prenda*, petitions for enslaved spirits to do their duty.

Conclusion

By the time he died, Izquierdo had worked with some of the most notorious Cuban exile terrorist organizations in Miami, most of which were tangled in drug smuggling. He served as a hired mercenary, assisting paramilitary operations linked to the mass torture, rape and killing of civilians across Latin America. Meanwhile, drug smuggling operations were funneling cocaine and crack into black neighborhoods of the U.S.

In the 1970s, Celia Cruz became the nurturing female counterpart to Maceo-as-Tony Izquierdo: the black woman as sweet entertainer to the black man's violent and warlike tendencies. Both, however, served as examples of black loyalty. If Tony Izquierdo was treated as a "possession" of militant Cuban emigres; Celia Cruz in turn was treated as a "possession" of Cuban civic elites, highlighted in festivals and parades like the Calle Ocho Festival and the Three Kings Parade. The balance between these two ideas of loyal blackness played themselves out in portrayals of Cruz as the "Queen of Calle Ocho" and in Calle Ocho's material and symbolic linking with the symbolic battleground of Cuban Memorial Park, with its new statue of Antonio Maceo. Throughout this chapter, I have described the symbolic domination of black bodies as "evidence" of white solidarity (including Cuban/Anglo solidarity) and a vision of colorblindness that makes clear that whites are still in charge.

Cuban civic elites were concerned about impacts of the violent counterrevolution on their efforts to create the Latin Quarter and build relationships with Anglos; it threatened the narrative of the Cuban success story. Nonetheless, developing the Latin Quarter provided a symbol of life and regeneration that counter-acted associations of Cuban

emigre terrorism with death and violence; it also showed that they still had control of “unruly”—and thus symbolically “blackened”—white Cuban emigres.

Images of the Black Panthers, the Cuban Revolution, the Civil Rights Movement and the Antonio Maceo Brigade, all of them tied to communism, were added like ingredients to conjure the scenario of Black Revolution. Cuban civic elites and militant Cuban emigres forged solidarity through attacks against shared symbols of disloyal whiteness, embodied in the Antonio Maceo Brigade. Militant Cuban emigres portrayed themselves as if fighting in their own version of the Haitian Revolution—embracing black “disorder” to bring the world back into racial order.

Chapter two also revealed the numerous ways those who enacted crimes and acts of violence managed to avoid any charges due to their relationships with (and loyalty to) the Anglo-dominated state, and specifically the CIA. U.S. authorities both denounced Cuban emigre terrorists and facilitated their acts of drug smuggling and terrorism. I document the covert war that escalated in the 1970s, also reaching well beyond Miami’s city limits, and the processes that continued to produce public memory of violent blackness. The Reunion between Anglos and white Cuban emigres was not just occurring in the space of Calle Ocho, in other words, it was also occurring in the connected realm of the district’s Cuban Memorial Park. Moreover, it linked Little Havana to other spaces—to the firms involved in money laundering in Coral Gables and the narcotics negotiations in skyscrapers in downtown, the death squads in Latin America and the deal-making in Washington, DC, and to the neighborhoods like Overtown, where drugs were shortening the lives of men, women, and children.

Afro-Cubans were well aware of the advantages of aligning with whiteness and performing loyalty to the Racial Contract (Mills 1997), and they were rewarded for this loyalty. Nonetheless, just as blacks involved in Santería and Palo found ways to exploit and profit from white fears of their “black power,” so too did Cuban emigre terrorist groups exploit Anglo fears of their seeming possession of “black power.” Moreover, African Americans and non-Cuban Latinos used the figure of Maceo to propose interracial alliances or black solidarity, releasing Maceo from symbolic bondage, and reclaiming the scenarios of Slavery and Independence to challenge claims of colorblindness and remember black contributions.

The following chapter describes the impact of the 1980 Mariel boatlift on plans for the Latin Quarter, and the extensive efforts put in place to retain the Cuban success story and signify Cuban emigres’ ability to manage Cuban blacks. Figures like Christopher Columbus and Jose Martí grew in prominence: embodiments of Cuban emigre achievement and the ability to “manage” blackness and to “whiten” Cuban culture without denying its “roots.” Discovery and Conquest and Reconquest became dominant scenarios evoked by Cuban emigres in the 1980s, as they proved their ability to suppress “Black Revolution” on Calle Ocho by inverting it with a replay, albeit on a much small scale, of 1912.

IV. CHAPTER THREE: “REMEMBERING 1912”: LITTLE HAVANA AFTER THE MARIEL (1980-1989)

In popular tellings of Miami history, the Mariel boatlift in 1980 defined the moment of “Paradise Lost”—a moment depicted in an oft-cited 1981 *Time* magazine cover story about Miami (Kelly 1981). In popular narratives of this historic moment, black Mariel criminals from Cuba’s prisons and emaciated Haitians arrived in Miami in droves, converging with angry, rioting African Americans and fomenting a combusive apocalypse akin to the Haitian Revolution (Stephans 2016; Pedraza 2004; Fernandez 2007).

In 1980, 125,000 Cubans departed the Mariel Harbor seeking asylum in the United States. This cohort included former prisoners and mental health patients, which Castro released in order to mark all Mariels as what he called “scum” (*escoria*). His action effectively turned all asylum seekers, regardless of their pasts, into a “swarm” of criminalized Others (Portes and Stepick 1993; Levine 2000, 47). An estimated 90,000 settled in Miami. Many sheltered temporarily in Little Havana at the Orange Bowl or in a makeshift “Tent City” under the Interstate 95 overpass (Portes and Stepick 1993; Grenier and Stepick 1992). The Mariel cohort also included a higher percentage of black Cubans than in previous years (García 1996, 68; Pedraza 1996; Skop 2001; Ojito 2001; Masud-Piloto 1996), as well as Cubans who were gay, lesbian and transgendered (Peña 2013; Capó 2010). Miami’s Cuban civic elites fought to protect Calle Ocho and the Latin Quarter from the impact of Mariels and Central American immigrants moving into Little

Havana. Both were treated as threats to the stories of Cuban and Cuban American pasts, presents and futures.

A repeated narrative that constructs 1980 as a black apocalypse had a usefulness to earlier cohorts of Cuban emigres, however. It diminished attention to the involvement of pre-1980 Cuban emigres in drug smuggling and violent (and state-sanctioned) terrorism in the decades leading up to 1980. Such Cuban emigres' involvement had been fueled by the growing trade in narcotics and the ongoing efforts of Latin American dictators and U.S. conservatives to recruit Cuban emigres as hired paramilitary forces. While arms flowed south and into Latin America, facilitated by transnational networks involving both state and non-state entities like banks, corporations and paramilitary groups (U.S. and Latin American), the white powder of cocaine flowed north and into cities like Miami, New York, Chicago and Oakland. Street gangs sold the narcotics in predominantly black neighborhoods—like Overtown, which borders Little Havana (Webb Aug. 18, 1996; Arguelles 1982b; Scott and Marshall 1998; Daddy and Bailey 2010).⁶⁰ While police were targeting, terrorizing, killing and imprisoning citizens in the U.S., mostly of African descent, death squads (supported by arms, mercenaries and funds from U.S. sources) terrorized, tortured and killed citizens across Latin America, leading many families to uproot their lives and end up in places like Little Havana (Alexander 2010; McSherry 2005; Dale and Marshall 1992).

⁶⁰ Investigative reporter Gary Webb's landmark series of articles exposed the transnational networks of cocaine, crack and money that tied the CIA-backed and Cuban emigre-supported Contras to drug trafficking and distribution in predominantly black neighborhoods of the U.S.

This chapter, which covers the 1980s, highlights the role of the Latin Quarter in efforts to “return” to racial/spatial order through a *dispotif*, or “a relational and situationally dependent apparatus of discursive and non-discursive forces intertwined with history, bodies and schemes of signification” (Pløger 2008, 51; Foucault 1980). These forces involved place-making and knowledge/memory-making practices as well as public acts of discipline, combined for the scenario of Reconquista (Reconquest) in which the white Cuban man appears as the successful conqueror and manager of Othered bodies. The Reconquista also underlined distinctions between faithful and unruly blacks, and loyal and disloyal whites.

The Reconquista of the Latin Quarter was carefully incorporated into narratives of Cuban emigre achievement that helped foster (and maintain) white Cuban-Anglo solidarity and cover up Cuban emigre violence enacted by long-standing anti-Castro groups. Black bodies memorialized and commemorated in the district during the 1980s were either those depicted as faithful (and well-managed), and thus useful to narratives of colorblindness and *blanqueamiento*, or those punished publicly for transgressing into “white space,” thus serving as examples of “true” criminality needing disciplining. Enforcing and securing the material and conceptual borders of the Latin Quarter involved a ceremonial forgetting of white violence, in “formulas of erasure” (Trouillot 1995, 96).

The specter of the Mariel boatlift conjured a scenario of Black Revolution, which produced fear and tested the loyalty of Miami’s Cuban whites and blacks. During Cuba’s wars for independence, Spanish forces deployed scripts of unruly blackness through references to the Haitian Revolution. As Miguel de la Torre (2003, 100) states:

Since Cuba's sugar-based economy was dependent on slaves, this ensured the loyalty of sugar oligarchies to the Crown, which protected the institution during the early wars for independence. Cuban racism was thus created in an atmosphere of fear and insecurity. Skillfully using the memory of the Haitian Revolution in 1791, in which slaves overthrew their brutal masters, Spain frightened white Cubans into loyalty. Every revolt against Spanish rule was presented as the start of a race war. "Remember Haiti" became an effective negrophobic rallying cry against Cuba's attempt to liberate herself from Spain. Independence would leave white Cuba unprotected from Africanization, threatening its property, security, and white women.

The narrative of 1980 evoking Black Revolution separated "pre-1980" Cuban emigres, imagined as white, from those who arrived in the Mariel, imagined as black. As Homi Bhabha explains, a scenario can dramatize "a separation— *between* races, cultures, histories, *within* histories a separation between *before* and *after* that repeats obsessively the mythical moment of disjunction" (1983, 34, italics in the original).

White loyalty, discussed in previous chapters, involves abiding by the Racial Contract (Mills 1997). In the 1980s, this meant that Cubans—and Latinos more generally, "whitened" themselves through their demonstrated solidarity against communism, civil rights activists and "crime" signifying blackness (Benson 2012). As explained by CRT scholar Charles Mills (1997), the racial contract establishes a racial polity, a racial state, and a racial juridical system. If those who are phenotypically white fail to live up to civil and political responsibilities of whiteness, they are treated as having abdicated their roles as moral citizens. Cuban emigres demonstrated shared white group membership to each other—and to Anglos, through their embodied experiences of white territorialization in the Latin Quarter.

The theme of loyal or faithful versus unruly blackness is taken up by scholars Elizabeth Duquette (2010) and Ada Ferrer (1999). According to Duquette (2010, 140), in the U.S. the "loyal slave" as trope enacted

at the level of culture and narrative the assumptions underwriting late-nineteenth-century defenses of the contract, the rise of Jim Crow legislation, and the conservative judicial philosophy that enfeebled the citizenship rights supposedly guaranteed by the Fourteenth and Fifteenth amendments. What these disparate examples share is a fundamental commitment to an organization of power—individual and state alike—predicated on racial hierarchies and principles.

The loyal slave trope was made manifest in dominant discourse about proper black conduct in Cuba, too, especially after abolition. Ferrer (1999) discusses the distinction between representations of Antonio Maceo and Quintín Banderas, another famous black general in Cuba's wars for independence. Although the most famous black Cuban military leader still alive by 1898, Banderas was brutally killed just before Cuba gained its independence and after the Cuban government court-martialed him and stripped him of his rank and position. Racist propaganda depicted him as uncouth long after his death (Ferrer 1999; Horne 2014).

The press in Cuba and the U.S. often contrasted light-skinned black officers in the Cuban independence army (like Maceo) with darker-skinned peers (like Banderas), notes Ferrer (1998, 676-677), as if they were living examples of the "truth" of racial hierarchy. "Black leaders were acceptable—indeed desirable," explains Ferrer (677), "but they had to be black leaders of a particular kind. If race was no longer a rigid standard for inclusion—culture, performance, and civility now appeared to be quite critical." After Cuba's wars for independence, the word "civilization" distanced whites from blacks; it became synonymous with "white male power" (Ferrer 1999, 681).

Ferrer (1998, 682) argues that Banderas challenged the racial order by refusing to "keep up appearances"; like white officers, he kept a lover with him at camp. His critics claimed that he put personal desires over commitment to the army and nation. In a

discourse that incorporates anti-black racism, sexuality and Cuban nationalism, the state defined what counted as “degenerate” and deviant sexual practices: in other words, which behaviors were deemed “unpatriotic” because “unproductive” for, or not supportive of white supremacy (Stoler 1995, 134-136; Wade 2010). The Reconquista demanded loyalty to “white life.” Banderas survived the wars; he had not “died for a nation” like Maceo—a nation that elites wanted to whiten. He had not hidden his sexual liaisons, and thus was still able to “blacken” bloodlines. After the war he advocated for racial equality. In other words, he stood for “black life” and black agency, considered risky to white supremacy—and threatening to white and whitening bloodlines.

As a showcase of “Cuban heritage,” the Latin Quarter served to link physical relics like monuments and buildings to ideas about blood lineage (Hall [1999] 2003; Niell 2015; Lipsitz 2007; Fanon 2007). Its dispositif required narrated, visual and performed “scenes” in the tradition of *casta* paintings. In some Spanish colonies, *casta* (breed or stock) paintings correlated various combinations of racial mixing (e.g., Spanish and Indian, and Spanish and African) with levels of a racial hierarchy, using racialized and gendered signifiers of dress, setting, and behavior (Wade 2008; Katzew, 2005) to promote the ideal of *blanqueamiento* (whitening). *Casta* paintings portrayed racial order by contrasting scenes of male and female Spanish descent mixings with those involving mixing with African blood. The paintings served as an official archive to “document” imagined “real life” family scenes, represent sameness with or differences from *peninsulares* (individuals of Spanish blood born in Spain), and foster loyalty and solidarity with white supremacy and colonialism (Niell 2015, 7).

This chapter describes how the commemorative bodies of Christopher Columbus and Jose Martí served as symbols of whiteness “taking back” the symbolic territory (and bloodlines) of Little Havana. In tracing the dispositif of Cuban white supremacy in the Latin Quarter, I outline the range of disciplinary forces which, working alongside a “regime of racial representation” (Hall 2013), like those depicted in casta paintings, made the district a space where white Cuban emigres could once again prove their skills at managing “unruly blackness.” These forces included policing, urban planning, code enforcement, and schemes of signification in calendars, almanacs, posters and travel magazines and other texts.

In the 1980s, blacks (Cuban and non-Cuban) also found ways to “take back” Maceo, which helped them access opportunities and spaces typically denied non-whites. Like those before them, they created platforms for speaking out against racial injustice, securing valuable alliances, remembering covered-up histories, or re-making Maceo into a global hero of black liberation and Civil Rights (McKittrick and Woods 2007; Regis 2001; Savage 1994).

The End of a World? Riots, Floods and Death

In the 1980s, local and national media outlets portrayed the Mariel boatlift with imagery that implied horrific threats to whiteness (Portes and Stepick 1993; Pedraza 2004; Martinez 1997; Masud-Piloto 1996; Garcia 1995). In addition to arrivals from Mariel, more than 70,000 immigrants from Haiti’s working class fled to Miami between 1977 and 1981 (Sherrill 1987). In Miami’s black neighborhoods, anger overflowed in riots after the 1980 acquittal of four white police officers involved in the beating death of

black veteran Arthur McDuffy; a white Cuban officer delivered the fatal blows with a flashlight (Lopez 2012; Dunn 1997; Portes and Stepick 1993).

According to former Little Havana Development Authority (LHDA) president Willy Gort (interviewed Oct. 31, 2017), “even the Cubans” were afraid to come to Little Havana, as “a lot of those people” were frequenting the area, and the “whole thing changed.” In Cuba prior to the Cuban Revolution, an unofficial rule confined Afro-Cubans to the outer edges of parks in cities like Havana and Cienfuegos (Benson 2016, 92), but on Calle Ocho, groups of blacks appeared to be everywhere, at least in the early 1980s: apparent violations of racial/spatial order. “Police, merchants and residents now agree: The ghetto has arrived,” reported Karen Branch (1988) for the *Miami Herald*, as if Little Havana was now the scene of Black Revolution. Making sure to mention the three gold chains around his neck and the black comb tucked in his hair, *Miami Herald* writer Zita Arocha (Nov. 23, 1980) signified that Havana’s “ghetto” has indeed arrived, quoting the Mariel sitting in Antonio Maceo Park (see Figure 10) as saying, “I love to come here because it’s just like Havana!” In these moments, the white gaze interrogates the black man, as in Frantz Fanon’s (1986, 93) encounter with a little white boy who stares at him, frightened, and exclaims, “Look, a Negro! *Maman*, a Negro!”



Figure 10: Painting of Antonio Maceo Park (Domino Park), 1980, by Agustin Gainza. Collection of the author.

Media accounts highlighted the “strangeness” of blackness, emphasizing racial difference and treating Mariels like the historical figures of the *ñañigo*. In a Cuban carnival tradition dating back centuries, Afro-Cuban men initiated in secretive Abakuá sects danced in the streets wearing the full-body masked costume of the *ñañigo*, which Cuban creoles called the *diablito*, or little devil (and which the Cuban Museum of Arts and Culture depicted on its cover, as mentioned in Chapter two). With its conical hood fringed with raffia and two large eyes, the costume astonished and frightened blacks and whites alike (Bronfman 2004, 21; Echevarria 2010; Ocasio 2012). By appropriating the word *ñañigo* to describe “criminal” and “delinquent” social behavior, Cuba’s white elites linked blackness—and Abakuá initiates themselves—to social deviancy. According to scholar David H. Brown (2001, 84), whites associated *ñañiguismo* with “irrationality, Afro-Cuban barrios, malicious gangs, murder, savage black men with filed teeth, and dissipated white men fallen into primitive atavism and the lure of black women.” Accused of murder and cannibalism, *ñañigos* were used as excuse for the state-sanctioned demonization, interrogation, torture and lynching of Afro-Cubans in the early twentieth century (Helg 1995a, 1995b; Bronfman 2004, 21).

Together, Latin Quarter merchants, civic elites, police and the media employed a technology of examination as a part of their dispositif of social control: they observed, identified, and evaluated Mariels as social deviants. As Foucault (1975, 174) explains, examination is a “normalizing gaze, a surveillance that makes it possible to qualify, to classify and to punish...in it are combined the ceremony of power and the form of the experiment, the deployment of force and the establishment of truth.” According to one

Little Havana merchant, quoted in the press, “There are all kinds of weird, strange people hanging around--people who leave much to be desired” (Arocha Nov. 23, 1980).

Former LHDA leader Luis Sabines, Jr. (interviewed Oct. 31, 2017) said he could tell when someone was from the Mariel: “One was their color—not the color of their skin, because of black or white. Because of malnutrition. They had like a greenish color. I cannot explain it. And how they squatted to sit down, since they were used to waiting in line in Cuba every day, they squatted to rest, when they were in line.” Ralph de la Portilla (interviewed Nov. 7, 2017), who hails from an elite white Cuban family, said he “remembers very clearly” the many “Cubans of color” included in images of the Mariel circulating in the media. He suspects racial motivations for the backlash among established emigres: “And I think that almost, I think it was almost...overt, and sometimes completely in the unconscious mind, that it was a wave of Others: they were decidedly Others. [According to this mindset,] they were criminals, they were opportunists, and they were people of a lower class.”

After the disbanding of Little Havana’s Tent City in 1980, police officers warned of a “total loss of control of hardcore criminal refugees” who had already “infiltrated” the area. A WTVJ story about the camp zoomed in on its residents (most of them black), who were confined behind a chain-linked fence as if criminals or animals inside a zoo; they were asking permission to leave (“Tent City Cubans” Sept. 27, 1980, Wolfson Archives). Lorenzo, an Afro-Cuban man who lived in a “tent city” after the Mariel ([pseudonym], interviewed Oct. 27, 2017), said no one wanted to give black Cubans jobs or rent to them, which is one of the reasons so many ended up staying longer in shelters. Two thousand

Mariels were left homeless after the closure of Tent City in Little Havana (Yanez June 20, 1980; Lucoff June 24, 1980).⁶¹

Meanwhile, crack was becoming the drug of choice in the United States; it arrived in Little Havana in the mid-1980s, despite a major bust of Miami's cocaine and money-laundering operations in 1981 (Manny and David Schechtman, interviewed by David Crawford Nov. 12, 2004). After the FBI's "Operation Bancoshares" broke a money-laundering network estimated to have washed \$200 million in drug revenues, Miami police rounded up 61 suspects involved in the laundering and 51 linked to the cocaine network ("Operation Tick-Talks"), including Rafael Villaverde of the Little Havana Activities Center, but a judge ruled the 1,000 hours of wiretap evidence inadmissible as evidence ("Police Smashed" Aug. 5, 1981; Grimm Sept. 18, 1982). Despite their success at unraveling the links between Miami's exile terrorist groups and the drug trade, investigators found it almost impossible to get convictions. FBI Deputy Assistant Director Kenneth Walton compared Cuban emigre terrorist groups to Mafia families that consistently avoided successful prosecution by the law (McGee Dec. 30, 1980). Drugs brought social ills, but they also brought prosperity. Processing the "illegal" into the "legal" involved the "washing" and whitening of violent and illegal acts, coded as black, and transforming them, like sugar, into bright white buildings and guayabera shirts.

Mariel Cubans and black and brown immigrants more generally became the face of drugs and violence in the media (Nijman 2011; Martinez 1999). Some did indeed enter Miami's drug economy; they had few other economic options. They received far less

⁶¹ Many Mariels faced homelessness after being turned away by their sponsors. By August 1980, they could no longer stay in makeshift shelters at the Orange Bowl.

federal and local aid in comparison to earlier cohorts and (especially if black) were often excluded from the networks of support that had assisted pre-1980 emigres in finding housing, employment, business opportunities and other resources (Ojito 2001; Alberts 2005). Thus, they were easy targets for low-level drug dealing (Rieff 1987, 82). Lorenzo (Lorenzo [pseudonym] interviewed Oct. 27, 2017), an Afro-Cuban Mariel who lived at a temporary shelter after arriving in Miami, remembers people cruising the camp with offers of \$2,000 to transport “packages”—an offer he declined.

The volatile combination of drugs and arms exploded into an increase in crime; between 1979 and 1981, more than a hundred people died in drug-related murders, with one person killed in the middle of playing dominos in Antonio Maceo Park (“Trouble in Little Havana” April 27, 1981). Although 1,522 murders were reported in 1981 (a figure that decreased in following years), a higher *percentage* of Miamians died of murder in 1973, however. In fact, the number of violent crimes in Miami had been increasing steadily since the early 1970s as competition between drug lords also increased (Martinez, Jr. 1997). Cuban emigres who arrived prior to 1980 had far more reason to fear each other instead of Mariel refugees, moreover. Between 1980 and 1984, sixty percent of the murderers killing members of pre-1980 cohorts were members of those cohorts themselves; this number jumped to more than eighty percent between 1985 and 1990 (Martinez, Jr. 1997). Mariels, many of them young Cuban men in their 20s and 30s, were far more likely to be the victims of violent crime than earlier arriving counterparts. By 1981, an average of two Mariel refugees were being murdered every week (Silva and Hiaasen 1981).

War on Crime

Meanwhile, Cuban emigre terrorism resulted in at least 200 bombings by 1984, and at least 100 murders, in most cases carried out by those who arrived prior to 1980 (Lernoux Feb. 18, 1984). Acts of terrorism also persisted outside of U.S. borders. In 1981, Nicaragua's Sandinista government blamed CORU for the bombing of a Boeing 727 jet, which would have killed 107 passengers had the plane not been delayed for nearly an hour (Balmaseda Dec. 30, 1981). Yet Cuban exile terrorism seemed of secondary importance and out of the public eye compared to Little Havana's "war on crime," which like the later "War on Drugs" and "War on Terror" homed in on brown-skinned people as perpetrators. Based on numerous interviews of Cuban emigres in the 1970s and 1980s, journalist David Rieff (1987, 81) observed that the drug trade didn't seem bother Cubans in Miami...until the Mariel boatlift.

Amidst the Cold War and local territorial battles, Little Havana residents and business owners decided to engage in their own war—against crime. Numerous Little Havana groups named "crime" as one of their top issues. These groups included a new Little Havana Merchants and Property Owners Association (LHMPOA),⁶² which formed in 1982 with 750 members. Founded to "clean up the vagrants who scared away patrons," it started as a 600-member, 25-block Crime Watch group along Calle Ocho. Mayor Steve Clark, Dade State Attorney Janet Reno and Miami Police Chief Kenneth Harms attended its meetings, which took place in the heritage district (Dibble Aug. 26, 1982; Press Sept. 21, 1981; Blanchard Dec. 23, 1982). At the regional level, Willy Gort of the LHDA was

⁶² It was also referred to as the Calle Ocho and Little Havana Merchants and Property Owners Association.

among the Cubans recruited for a newly diversified Miami's Citizens' Crime Commission of Greater Miami, originally founded in 1948. A brochure for the organization (1980, CHC) described its "powerful Dade Citizens' War on Crime" as a "shoulder to shoulder assault on crime."

Leaders of LHMPOA, LHDA and the Latin Quarter Association (LQA) complained that Antonio Maceo Park (Domino Park) was attracting, in their words, vagrants, criminals, bums, troublemakers, "bad elements," drug peddlers, murder-for-hire, vagabonds and delinquents (Hernandez Jan. 26, 1986). They suggested fencing the park, limiting its hours of operation, restricting the number of allowed daily games, requiring ID cards, and moving the domino players to Jose Martí Park (sixteen blocks away), despite the protests of the players themselves (Dunlop May 30, 1982; Press Sept. 21, 1981). LQA submitted a petition with more than 300 names asking city officials to permanently close the public space (Marquis July 15, 1987).

Despite their reputation, few Mariel arrivals were serious offenders in Cuba (Portes and Stepick 1993). Some arrivals (5,486) were incarcerated as political prisoners. Others were jailed for minor crimes such as declining to work for the state in the sugar fields or selling items on the black market. Seventy percent were jailed for minor crimes like vagrancy or homosexuality (Pedraza 1996, 270-271, 319; Portes and Stepick 1993). Cuban police were known to detain citizens based on racial profiling, or the "suspicion that they were likely to break the law at some point in the future" (Stephans 2016, 21). As Mariel emigre Lorenzo (Lorenzo [pseudonym] interviewed Oct. 27, 2017) explains:

The majority of people coming from Cuba was black...because [we are] portrayed by Cuban society like we don't work, like they want to apply to us a law they call "*pelogrisidad*" [dangerousness]. [It] is the law made by the government in 1975: if

you go out of the school, or if you don't go to your job for more than three days, [then] that law applies to you. You are a *peligroso* [danger]. Because you don't work, you don't study, so they send you, for the first offense, six months to prison. Especially black people. The only job the government [had] in 1975 for young people was to work in the cemetery.

Policing, surveillance and other racial/spatial practices affected blacks in both Havana and Little Havana, in other words.

Between 1981 and 1982, the City of Miami hired 714 new police officers, more than doubling size of department; Mayor Maurice Ferre wanted to increase minority representation by eighty percent. Most of the officers hired, however, were white Cuban men (Maurice Ferre, interviewed May 23, 2017; Mancini 1996, 251). According to Chris Mancini (1996, 35), who by 1986 served as Deputy Chief of the Major Crimes Division and U.S. Attorney for the U.S. Department of Justice's Miami office, the officers in Little Havana saw themselves as public mercenaries fighting Mariel drug traffickers. Nonetheless, those who could not easily "flow" from the world of the illegal into the legal were typically those who lacked the modern property of whiteness (Harris 1993).

In 1986, Miami's police department set up a mobile police van in Antonio Maceo Park (eventually moving it to a location across from the park), for twenty-four-hour surveillance. The city also began planning a new police substation in Little Havana; its oversight committee included members from LQA and CAMACOL (Dibble June 7, 1984; Pablo Canton, interviewed May 16, 2017). A half-dozen foot and motorcycle patrols monitored Calle Ocho, aimed at clearing it of "vagrants and drunks" (Ynclan June 13, 1982), and these patrols worked with local merchants and civic leaders (Hernandez Jan. 26, 1986; Hernandez Feb. 20, 1986; Arocha Nov. 23, 1980; Dibble June 7, 1984; Pablo Canton, interviewed Dec. 6, 2017).

In Florida, targeting blacks with “vagrancy” is rooted in its Black Codes, and vagrancy and enticement laws, aimed at “keeping the Negro in line” after abolition (Oshinsky 2010, 101). The 1865 Vagrancy Act (1865) deemed as vagrants “all free negroes and mulattoes over the age of eighteen” who failed to carry written proof of employment, and used it to arrest, try and convict thousands of former slaves (101). In early twentieth century Miami, a “community-wide cleanup” meant the arrests of numerous blacks charged with vagrancy—but not whites, despite a grand jury report that criticized police for this practice (George 1978, 443).

Targeting blacks with vagrancy charges in Little Havana took place at the same time that Miami’s black leaders were charging the police department with institutionalized racism. Citizens submitted numerous complaints about Little Havana police officer Luis Alvarez, for instance, accusing him of excessive force, abusive treatment, false arrest and discourtesy (including poking a black Cuban demonstrator in the chest and calling him “nigger”), but the department consistently cleared Alvarez of these charges. Transferred to Overtown, he sparked two days of violence that left two men dead and 26 people hurt after shooting and killing a black man, Nevell Johnson, Jr. (Hirsch and Ducassi Dec. 30, 1982; “Blacks Call for Resignation” Jan. 5, 1983). Mayor Maurice Ferre responded by saying that Police Chief Kenneth Harms needed to balance his “paramilitary approach to problem solving with a humanistic side” (Hirsch and Ducassi 30 Dec. 1982). Harms admitted that police were arresting “a lot more refugees,” even when based on “overblown perceptions” versus “fact.” “But if perceptions make a person a prisoner in their home,” he explained, “we have to deal with perceptions,” he said (Zaldivar Jan. 4, 1983). When bodies do not “pass” they become hyper-visible, notes Ahmed (2007),

putting these bodies at political and personal risk. As Nirmal Puwar explains, “such bodies are stopped, where the stopping is an action that creates its own impressions. Who are you? Why are you here? What are you doing?” (2004, 161). Nothing would stand in the way of “white life,” which became clear through public disciplining of black bodies (Mills 1997; Foucault 1975; Alexander 2010).

Officers engaged in a wide range of ruthless practices targeting Mariels in Little Havana. Officer Rudy Arias (quoted in Mancini 1996, 35) complained about “Marielitos” thinking they “owned the streets.” Officer Luis Batista (quoted in Mancini 1996, 35) described the “criminal element” as being “more visible during that time,” and resented seeing Mariels “flaunting” any evidence that they might be earning income from the drug trade. “Stoppings” served to humiliate blacks (and white Mariels treated as disloyal to whiteness) and commemorate white dominance.

In her Pulitzer-winning *New York Times* article, “Best of Friends, Worlds Apart” (June 5, 2000), Mirta Ojito describes the experience of Joel Ruiz, who is Afro-Cuban. After dining with his uncle at the famous Cuban restaurant Versailles, joined by three lighter-skinned female friends, Ruiz and his companions drove down Calle Ocho. They were pulled over immediately after entering what is now Little Havana’s heritage district. Four police cars with wailing sirens converged on them, lights flashing. They were ordered out of the car. Ruiz had to spread his legs and lean face-down on the car while officers frisked him. “I’ve been keeping my eyes on you for a while, since you were in the restaurant,” said one of the officers. “I saw you leave, and I saw so many blacks in the car, I figured I would check you out.”

It was common for Little Havana officers to racially profile motorists, pull them over, and conduct illegal searches and “shakedown scams,” during which they would look for (and steal) any cash, drugs or other valuables they could find (Mancini 1996, 70). A group of nineteen Little Havana officers, nicknamed the “Pirates in Blue” (and later the “River Cops”), planted guns at crime scenes (217); lied on police forms, calling it “creative writing” (68); brutally beat people (and allowed police dogs to bite the faces of their “victims”) (91); and stopped their squad car suddenly, so those sitting in handcuffs in the back would get “pancake face” (143). In 1987, several of these officers started a contest to see who could kill the most people and get away with it (217). They believed that the law did not apply to them. According to Officer Batista (quoted in Mancini 1996, 70):

It became a matter of we were the police officers, you were not. We were right. You were not. We can do whatever we wanted to do and that was that. It became a different code of honor, to be faithful not to the police department, not to the City of Miami and not to the people of Dade County, it became a matter of being loyal to each other.

The language of entitlement shared by Cuban emigre police officers resembled the language used by militant anti-Castro emigres such as Rolando Masferrer and Orlando Bosch.

The crimes of Little Havana officers came to light several years later in one of the biggest police scandals in the U.S. (the “River Cops” case), which revealed the massive involvement of City of Miami police in cocaine trafficking and other crimes (Mancini 1996).⁶³ More than a dozen Little Havana officers were convicted in Miami Federal

⁶³ Miami Federal Court Case No. 86-511-CR-RYSKAMP.

Court for “conspiring to use the City of Miami police department as a racketeering enterprise to commit acts of felony murder, civil rights violations, income tax evasion, robbery, threats involving murder, conspiracy to commit murder, bribery, and possession of narcotics and dangerous drugs” (173). Eventually, more than a hundred police officers in Miami-Dade County were arrested, convicted, fired, or suspended from the force (165-165). The public show of condemnation for these practices did not prevent them from continuing, however.

Battles and Borders

The specter of Mariels threatened the image of Cuban emigres as whitened and exceptional: a “model minority” (Alberts 2005, 238). Previously, as Cuban American Ralph de la Portilla explains (interviewed Nov. 7, 2017), Cuban emigres “were looked as different than the rest of the immigrants, a little higher.”

That’s why Cubans felt like, our image, we looked different than everybody else. Not that we feel like we’re better or not. But the thing is, when Mariel happens, it’s like we get tarnished and trashed.

A tarnished silver or bronze object is one that blackens. For Cuban emigre elites, Mariels tarnished their whiteness.

White Cuban elites did not want to appear racist, however. It could threaten the myth of racial democracy and damage already fragile alliances with African American leaders: alliances necessary for ongoing political battles with Anglos. Besides, they wanted to retain hold on Antonio Maceo as the prime symbol of militant anti-Castro resistance.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, demonstrations, political marches and rallies brought large crowds to Antonio Maceo’s statue in Cuban Memorial Park. At many of

these gatherings, emigres demanded the release of political prisoners and evoked the themes of La Lucha, again tying the Cold War to Cuba's wars of independence and the struggle against slavery. They also denounced the Antonio Maceo Brigade ("Juntas de Tránsito" April 3, 1978; "Por Presos en Cuba" April 3, 1978; Brownstein May 25, 1979; "Demonstration" Oct. 21, 1978, Wolfson Archives). At one of these rallies in 1981, men and women stood before Maceo's statue bearing a huge Cuban flag in their arms. Some socially white participants held a heavy chain, saying it symbolized the suffering of political prisoners, and again evoking the scenario of Slavery. Of the few blacks present at the rally, each was surrounded by white Cubans ("Cuban Parade" April 5, 1981, Wolfson Archives).⁶⁴ Whites were the new slaves, in this scene, held hostage in a country (Cuba) portrayed in exile newspapers as "black" or "blackened," and battling the new threats on their symbolic "home away from home" (Zaldivar April 6, 1981; Benson 2012, 2016; Aja 2016; Lopez 2012).

On the 85th anniversary of Antonio Maceo's death that same year (December 7th, 1981), anti-Castro activists again attempted to "take back" Maceo from the Maceo Brigade and re-enflesh him as their anti-Castro warrior, to speak their words. "Maceo is the symbol of Alpha 66," said the leader of the exile terrorist organization, Andres Nazario Sargen, at a memorial service held in honor of Maceo at its headquarters: "We have the same political principles as he did." The commemoration included masses at Little Havana's San Juan Bosco church (where the funeral service for Campos Marquetti took place) and at the shrine for Our Lady of Charity, in Coconut Grove (Ducassi Dec. 8,

⁶⁴ The video is incorrectly titled as a parade to the Jose Martí statue, when it was in fact a parade to the Antonio Maceo statue.

1981). A year later, about two hundred people carried Cuban flags and shouted, “Viva Cuba Libre!” while marching down Calle Ocho in a procession to Maceo’s monument (“Heroic Moment” Dec. 8, 1982). When Hialeah Councilmember Paulino Nuñez failed to get a street re-named for Antonio Maceo in 1982, he admitted that he simply wanted to “rescue” Maceo’s name from its association with the Antonio Maceo Brigade (Shaw Nov. 22, 1982).

Despite these moments of bravado in Cuban Memorial Park and attempts to “take back” Maceo from the Maceo Brigade, the park itself was neglected. Numerous civic leaders I interviewed expressed the “lack of a plan” when it came to its memorials. Cuban Memorial Park had become a dumping ground for monuments, trash and displaced people: “Put all those people on 13th Avenue,” said Luis Sabines, Jr. (interviewed Oct. 31, 2017), former director of LHDA, referring to monuments. “Put them there and get them out of the way.” Ralph Duarte (interviewed Oct. 31, 2017) described Cuban Memorial Park as a place where monuments were “stored.”

If Cuban Memorial Park had turned into the cemetery for commemorative bodies made of stone, marble and bronze, Calle Ocho’s newly renamed Antonio Maceo Park (Domino Park) had become the haven for commemorative bodies made of flesh and blood. In 1980, during the holiday season, and on the anniversary of Antonio Maceo’s death, the *Miami Herald* published a story about homeless Mariels who slept in the park (Williams and Balmaseda Dec. 7, 1980). It mentioned a “wandering refugee” who spent cold and rainy nights behind a nearby botanica, in a trash-strewn lot where he saw Our Lady of Charity in a vision. Wearing a yellow jacket (the color of the Orisha Ochún, syncretized with Our Lady of Charity), he carried around a religious candle and pictures

of the saints he believed protected him in the street. A brightly colored mural of Our Lady of Charity that faced the park was fading away, but not the faith in a divine female figure that looked out for the downtrodden. Bodies came together, fluidly, like the mural depicting Cachita (the nickname for Our Lady of Charity), who in legend had floated towards three sailors—one of them black—as their boat tossed and turned in a turbulent sea. In the park, in between rounds of dominos, players slid and scattered the “bone pile” around and around the table, *para dar agua* (in order to give water), as the expression goes.⁶⁵

Black and White Solidarity: Another Re-Embodiment of Maceo

With Campos-Marquetti now deceased and Dr. Antonio Maceo staying out of politics, militant Cuban exiles wanted new, *living* embodiments of Maceo-as-counterrevolutionary-hero. The name “Antonio Maceo” had become extremely problematic for Cuban emigres supporting a militant anti-Castro agenda, however, as the Antonio Maceo Brigade had used him for its mouthpiece, too. Prominent anti-Castro commando Tony Cuesta identified a “new” Maceo in his namesake: Anthony (Tony) Bryant, an African American man he befriended while both were in Cuban prison in 1970. Like Cuesta, Bryant was a militant anti-Communist; he even suggested rewarding the Klansmen and Nazis who gunned down five Marxists in North Carolina (Dorschner Jan 18, 1981). He re-embodied Tony Izquierdo, too.

⁶⁵ *Dar agua*, or “to give water,” is an expression used in Cuban-style dominos when players mix and slide the dominos around the table in preparation for a new game.

At a 1980 bond hearing in Miami's U.S. District Court, the two Tony's—Tony Bryant and Tony Cuesta—reunited. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Cuesta had delivered numerous speeches at the base of the Antonio Maceo monument (Brownstein May 25, 1979; "Nueva Denuncia" May 23, 1979). His bomb-making activities had left him blind in one eye and with a missing left forearm, making him a living symbol of bodily sacrifice for La Lucha. He was a veteran of more than a dozen commando missions until captured and imprisoned in Cuba in 1966; by 1994 he had completed at least thirty raids against Cuba (Chardy and Ojito Nov. 2, 1992).

In 1969, more than a decade before the Miami trial, Bryant hijacked a National Airlines jetliner from New York to Cuba; he was also accused of robbing three passengers at gunpoint. After spending nearly twelve years in Cuban prisons for the crime, he finally returned to the U.S.--with a heavy chain around his wrists (Dorschner Jan. 18, 1981, 9). At Bryant's hearing on hijacking charges, Cuesta took the role of Bryant's champion. In turn, Bryant (1984, 384) told the judge that Cuesta was one of the greatest men alive. Cuesta assured the judge that he would "give his freedom in this country" in order to guarantee Bryant's court appearances, as he believed that justice in the U.S. "is based on the regeneration of a man, not on his destruction." Bryant was no longer a Black Panther who "once put in danger human lives," said Cuesta; he had become a man who loved "freedom and democracy," his time in Cuban prison transforming him into a U.S. citizen "worthy of the opportunity to prove he is changed" (Dorschner Jan. 18, 1981, 10).

By contrasting Bryant as a dangerous "Black Panther" (signifying the African American movement and the animal) with "freedom and democracy," Cuesta reinforced

the racializing binary that equates blackness with animality and violence and whiteness with life, regeneration, humanity, freedom and the body politic (Hall 2013, 232; Ferrer 1998), as well as the notion of *blanqueamiento* as a method of racial and moral evolution (Rahier 2003; Martínez-Echazabal 1998). In this case, however, racial mixing occurred through the willing moral-spiritual “possession” of the black man by the “white power” extended by Cuesta.

Despite Bryant’s three-page FBI rap sheet of violations dating back to 1956, including a conviction for armed robbery, U.S. District Judge Eugene Spellman released Bryant from federal custody (Voboril Nov. 4, 1980; Dorschner Jan. 18, 1981, 9). Thanks to a \$500,000 personal surety bond co-signed by Cuesta and two other former prisoners, Bryant managed to post bail (Voboril Nov. 1, 1980), and for the charge of hijacking he was eventually sentenced to just five years of probation. Bryant was symbolically re-born in the United States (Bryant 1984, 432), now the seeming “opposite” of the Black Panther he had once been, and finally away from the nation and prison space he characterized as blackening (in the “shadows,” a “nightmare”), life-shortening, and criminal (Ibid.). If he had once been an advocate for “Black Power,” he would now need to rally behind white men like Cuesta if he wanted to maintain his privileges and his freedom.

Meanwhile, standing next to the African American in chains, Cuesta could re-enact the scenario of Cuba’s Carlos Manuel de Céspedes freeing his slaves for Cuba’s wars of independence, or the scenario of Emancipation. He had given Bryant manumission, and now Bryant owed him. Cuesta was also like the Cuban police inspectors referencing Fernando Ortiz’s *Los Negros Brujos* (1917) text to help them inspect and analyze blacks accused of crimes. Using the technology of examination (Foucault 1975), Cuesta wielded

the power to orient Bryant, as a commemorative body, in the direction of whiteness, while at the same time moving himself further “towards” whiteness (Ahmed 2007; Hall 2013). Cuesta told the judge he had first perceived Bryant as a potential enemy because he could “not feel sympathy for someone who had broken U.S. law” (Dorschner Jan. 18, 1981, 9). Yet both Cuesta and Bryant had violated U.S. law. Next to a criminalized black man, Cuesta claimed his whiteness, his legitimacy, and his ability to magically transform into a symbol of the “legal” versus the illegal (Taussig 1997; Nordstrom 2007). Still, he retained his access to the powerful possession of blackness and its association with “black power.”

Together, Cuesta and Bryant also re-iterated the discourse of colorblindness. According to Bryant (1984, 386), Cuesta “was placing his reputation and freedom on the line simply because he believed in me. There was no talk of color or thought of what was in it for him, only his belief that I was worthy of his trust and faith.” Bryant was well aware of the symbolic power of two men, one black, one white, bonded in friendship (389). “I had sought to blame all of my failures on ‘Whitey,’ and now all those who had come to my rescue were white,” he wrote in his memoir (Bryant 1984, 396), “I only knew one thing...Myths were made to be destroyed!” (390). Bryant was a regular on Calle Ocho; unlike Afro-Cuban Mariels, he was seemingly immune from accusations of “vagrancy.” Like Tony Izquierdo, he wore a black beret, sunglasses and military outfits reminiscent of the Black Panthers (Bryant 1984). Yet when he walked down Calle Ocho, white Cubans consistently greeted him with “a hero’s welcome” (Dorschner Jan. 18, 1981, 9). Like Izquierdo, he was not treated as a “space invader” (Puwar 2004). Instead, Bryant was asserting the power he felt he’d achieved through loyalty to whiteness.

Bryant, like Izquierdo, modeled the role of the “loyal slave.” He made an imagined Maceo even more “real” because he spoke both Spanish and English, reaching both Cuban and Anglo audiences. As Elizabeth Duquette (2010, 142) argues, the figure of the loyal slave was a response to white anxieties about black loyalty and submission after emancipation; it established that national loyalty could be assessed based on race. The black slave symbolized continued servility and helped narrate a past to justify a future. Loyal slave stories “suggested that the changes undertaken in Reconstruction had been nominal or, better, had freed whites from slavery’s burdens but left blacks enmeshed in the bonds of love that they cherished.”

Bryant performed his loyalty to a conservative agenda by blaming African Americans for crime and poverty. He expressed his views on local and national talk shows and media outlets, and in his memoir, *Hijack* (1984), which sold an estimated 44,000 copies from the 50,000 printed (Dorschner Jan. 18, 1981, 9). For five months prior to his trial, Bryant appeared with Cuesta at events and Cuban emigre talk shows throughout the county (Ibid., 12). He rallied behind President Reagan and defended Miami’s Cuban community from claims that they were taking jobs from African Americans (Bryant 1984, 406-407). During an interview on the CBN Christian Broadcasting Network, Bryant said Black America had a “welfare mentality,” “black on black crime was reaching astronomical levels,” and “Black America was destroying itself!” (404). TV hosts Pat Robertson and Jim Bakker invited Bryant on their shows, and the white supremacist John Birch society chose him as a spokesperson (Dorschner Jan. 18, 1981, 9).

Bryant was also Oggún and “black power” embodied, however. He didn’t want anything to block his path, and yet his path was opening up thanks to his alignment with “white power.” Like Paleros who worked both the *prenda Cristiana* and the *prenda judia* (Ochoa 2010), he harnessed both “black” and “white” powers, also symbolized by his choice to become a born-again Christian even while still practicing the Santería he learned in Cuban prisons (Bryant 1984). Press accounts often tied Cuba and Castro to the specter of black radicals from the U.S., reproducing the scenario of Black Revolution. They also highlighted Bryant’s membership in the Black Panthers, despite the lack of evidence that he had ever belonged to the group. Cuesta capitalized on Tony Bryant as loyal “black warrior” by making him head of his militant anti-Castro group, Comandos L. Although caught carrying semi-automatic weapons to Cuba on a mission to terrorize tourists, both were acquitted of all charges. Bryant said he didn’t feel bad if “people who support my enemy, mankind’s enemy, are hurt or killed. We’re at war.” With the white man by his side, he likely felt invincible (Dorschner Jan. 18, 1981, 12); Cuesta likely felt equally empowered.

Seemingly “owning” such a powerful “black” force as Bryant must have excited both Anglos and white Cuban emigres who wanted his “black power.” By writing his memoir (Bryant 1984, v), Bryant made “permanent” public memory that others could use long after his death. “In the end I realized it was I who had been hijacked, deceived by those I most admired,” he wrote, “Karl Marx, Angela Davis, Jesse Jackson, Fidel Castro, Gus Hall, Jane Fonda, Che Guevara and a whole planeload of others.” By grouping black African American Civil Rights activists and communists together, he was helping to

produce a collective commemorative body that bundled unruly blacks and disloyal whites together: a body that stood for the opposite of “freedom.”

Bryant believed he was also fighting racism, however. Bryant rebuked the racism he had experienced in Cuba. He was furious about the exclusion of Cubans from its tourist-oriented hotels, especially since black Cubans were least able to “pass” and gain entry (Dorschner Jan. 18, 1981, 12). Bryant’s access to television and radio outlets reaching white audiences gave him an outlet to confront racism, at least in racism in Cuba. In the spring of 1969, an African American hijacker to Cuba named Raymond Johnson accused the Cuban government of racism, as Black Panthers in Cuba were prohibited from forming their own political party (like the PIC). After his statement reached Western newspapers, the Cuban government imprisoned Johnson and he was never heard from again (Ibid., 12). Bryant could talk.

In Cuban prisons, the vast majority of those incarcerated were black like Bryant, who said he was treated like a slave. He and other prisoners were forced to cut sugarcane, rising at 4 am, cutting cane at dawn, returning only after sunset set (17). Rebellious and constantly attempting escapes, Bryant was once locked in chains 24 hours a day for 17 days followed by fourteen months in a closet-sized room without a bed (7). Several days after Bryant first arrived in Cuba, he had a dream about falling to the bottom of a river he tried to cross. When he stepped out of the water, he realized his entire body was glowing, “like a light.” “I woke up and I knew then what I was going through and what was going to happen to me when I got out. That’s exactly what’s happening to me now.” Crossing a body of water, from the U.S. to Cuba, would change him forever. It was as he had been

baptized or initiated in the river ceremony of Santeria. Transformed, possessed with new powers, he was drenched in glowing light, like a god (10).

Calle Ocho is Back on its Feet and Fighting Back: Columbus Returns

When *Christian Science Monitor* reporter Robert Press (Sept. 21, 1981) wrote that “the Cuban exile’s champion, Southwest 8th Street,” was “on its feet and fighting back” after a “two-year bout with crime, recession, displaced Mariel refugees and bad publicity,” he implied that Calle Ocho was the body of a champion, joined by the bodies of (white) Cuban emigres: these bodies flowed side by side. Their enemy? Displaced Mariel emigres, bundled with “crime, recession and bad publicity.” The streets were “alive once again with healthy activity,” said Press, thanks to the removal of “vagrants.”⁶⁶

Millions of dollars (federal, state and local) continued to pour into the development of Calle Ocho and its showcase heritage district, contributing to its “health” (Alberts 2005, 233; Boswell and Curtis 1984; “Agenda Item S-10” July 30, 1984, Miami commission minutes, OCC, 123). The city and county spent four million on projects aimed at enhancing the Latin Quarter specifically, like red brick sidewalks and Spanish colonial lamp posts (Branch May 22, 1988), and in the first half of 1985 alone, more than nineteen million private and public funds were flowing into more than fifty projects based in Little Havana (Marquis June 11, 1987).

Leonel Alonso, president of the Calle Ocho and Little Havana Merchants and Property Owners Association in 1982, said his group was prioritizing Calle Ocho because

⁶⁶*Miami Herald* reporter Nancy Ynclan borrowed the “back on its feet” metaphor for her own news story on Calle Ocho a year later, in 1982 (June 13).

“symbolically, it is the heart of the Cuban exile community” (Ynclan Aug. 2, 1982). Calle Ocho received “all the attention,” admitted LHDA president Leslie Pantin Jr., because “it’s the street that outsiders hear about. It’s like Fifth Avenue in New York” (Blanchard Dec. 23, 1982). “We have done so many things in this area that we are proud of that we want everyone to know it’s nice and to come here,” said Hilda Rodriguez, executive director of the LHDA in 1985 (Steinback June 14, 1985). City of Miami planner Sergio Rodriguez said that the area’s “living culture” was its most important feature (“Agenda Item S-10” July 30, 1984, Miami commission minutes, OCC), and planner Jose Casanova said the goal was “a permanent showcase of Hispanic culture” (Dibble Nov. 1, 1984), because, in the words of LHDA leader Willy Gort, Little Havana was at risk of becoming “a transient place” for “less desirable people” (Blanchard Dec. 23, 1982).

This making of Little Havana recalls the making of other “ethnic” districts in the U.S., and the covering up of histories of ethnic and racial violence to construct a commodified, harmonious “heritage” (Deverell 2004; Thomas 2014; Andersson 1987; Horton 2001). As in the production of the Orient (Said 2003), the production of Little Havana’s “ethnic district” whitened its producers, who lived in the suburbs.

In 1984, the city approved the 60-block Latin Quarter as a special zoning district and formed a Latin Quarter Review Board to review requests for building permits in the zone (“Area Would Blend,” June 21, 1984; “Viva Latin Quarter!” April 3, 1984). Adding brick sidewalks was not enough, however. As Foucault argues in his theorizing on the dispositif (Pløger 2008), for space to have “effect” it requires meaning-representation, or in other words the archive and the repertoire, and a regime of representation (Hall 2013).

The Othered bodies that frequented Antonio Maceo Park were detracting from the “scene” meant to attract Anglos for the scenario of Reunion, and from the story of Discovery and Conquest highlighted in the Cuban success story. The “solution” to this dilemma included removal from Calle Ocho of all individuals profiled as vagrants, likely the majority of them black; confining Central American residents to the eastern part of Little Havana and “governing” them (Foucault 1991) with strategies described by Marcos Feldman and Violane Jolivet (2014); and carefully managing and “curating” those who remained in the vicinity of the heritage district, creating the perfect “living culture” to showcase to tourists. Cuban emigre elites treated Little Havana as an ethnic plantation or colony, but they consistently emphasized that they didn’t live there—they lived in the suburbs (“Havana, FLA” June 15, 1986; Dibble Jan. 2, 1985; Ralph de la Portilla, interviewed Nov. 7, 2017; Luis Palomo, interviewed April 12, 2017; Luis Sabines, Jr., interviewed Oct. 31, 2017).

In the 1980s, the commemorative bodies of Columbus and his avatar Ponce de Leon flourished, signifying white supremacy, male dominance, and the conquer of territory. They appeared in racial/spatial scenarios that re-tooled pasts and presents and circulated between Calle Ocho and the world beyond, just as Cuban civic elites themselves traversed between Little Havana and the suburbs. These scenarios evoke Discovery, Conquest, and the Reconquista of Little Havana; White Cuban-Anglo Solidarity forged in spaces like the suburbs, and a fraternity of Hispanidad and shared commitment to *blanqueamiento*, or a Reunion of Hispanidad. Together, these scenarios helped reinforce a message that Little Havana remained under the control of white Cubanidad, regardless of demographic changes. They appeared in publications like *Enjoy/Disfrute* (a Spanish

language monthly travel magazine edited by Cuban American Manolo del Cañal and aimed at Latin Americans visiting Miami); annual calendars published and distributed by Continental National Bank (a Cuban American bank headquartered in Little Havana); and annual Calle Ocho Festival posters produced by the Kiwanis Club of Little Havana, all of which are archived at the Cuban Heritage Collection at the University of Miami.

Enjoy/Disfrute used textual descriptions to evoke scenes and scenarios of the past and the present; it circulated in Miami's spaces of tourism and likely ended up in homes and businesses in Latin America. Continental National Bank calendars appeared in its bank branches, on the walls of local bakeries and other retail establishments (including those in Little Havana), and in homes and offices. The calendars "staged" proper performances of an emerging and shifting white Cubanidad through pairings of image and text: its effort to mark every month of the year with a "stamp" of Cuban exile daily life--the "highest achievements" at every "level" (1985, CHC). Each month included a *décima* (a 10-line poem) by Eduardo Pagés accompanying an illustration by Silvio Fontanillas (or a photo). Most of the Calle Ocho Festival posters (most of which were published by the Kiwanis Club of Little Havana) featured caricature birds-eye views or "maps" of the street and ended up taped to store windows along Calle Ocho or framed on the walls of homes and businesses.

The scenario of Discovery and Reconquista suggested that Anglos should recognize and respect white and white-mestizo Latino men (described as Hispanic, with an emphasis on Spanish heritage) for their ability to conquer territory (and people) and accumulate property. *Enjoy/Disfrute* articles (which are published more than once) boasted that the Spanish were first to "establish dominion" over Florida, despite

“ferocious” Indians and a “hostile environment” (“La Florida,” “Aumenta Influencia Hispanica,” 1981, “The Explorers,” “Nuestro Estado,” 1985, “Durante Trecientos Años,” 1986, CHC); one article contends that Florida streets named after Ponce de Leon are the lingering evidence of earlier Spanish dominion (“Aumenta Influencia Hispanica,” 1981, CHC). Since “Hispanics” converted South Florida (past and present) into a “beautiful land,” they deserved the “right to prosperity,” another article suggests (“City in Action,” 1985, Issue 144, CHC). A poem on one of the Continental National Bank calendars evokes nostalgia for the “Reyecito Criollo” — or a “little white Cuban kingdom” (1985, CHC).

By November 1986, the Latin Quarter Review Board was adding “proof” to Little Havana’s landscape, too, co-designating streets for Cuban and Latin American figures such as Martí, Maceo, and Simon Bolivar, but also still-living Cuban businessmen, including some that were eventually convicted for drug charges (Yanez Nov. 27, 1986; Mancini 1996). Notably, however, the section of Calle Ocho dedicated to Celia Cruz spans two blocks outside the heritage district, while the section of Calle Ocho spanning the entire heritage district is co-designated with the name of a white singer, Olga Guillot. *Enjoy/Disfrute* articles contend that the transformation of Little Havana into a “vibrant community” is itself “proof” that Latin American travelers (and Miami’s Latinx populations) are re-taking land (from Anglos) that they battled for first and rightly deserve (“Aumenta Influencia Hispanica,” “Welcome to Calle Ocho,” “Calle Ocho” 1981; “Our Lifestyle” 1985, “La Pequeña Habana” 1986, CHC): “Calle Ocho has been converted into one of our principal arteries, as one of the most living representations of what Hispanidad in Miami can achieve” (1981, CHC).

The 1980 poster for the Calle Ocho Festival, then called “Open House Eight,” is stark in its portrayal of the neighborhood as a space completely absent of color — just white with black outlines of buildings and streets (see Figure 11). Calle Ocho slices through the center of the poster like the blade of a sword, depicting a crowd of pink-skinned people and not a single person of obvious African descent (“Calle Ocho: Open House Eight” 1980, CHC). *Enjoy/Disfrute* describes Miami as evidence of “emporiums of wealth and progress,” where rapid “territorial expansion” has “revitalized” the city from its center (suggesting that Little Havana is the center) to its “four cardinal points” (suggesting the expansion of Cuban influence outside the enclave) (1985, Issue 143, CHC).

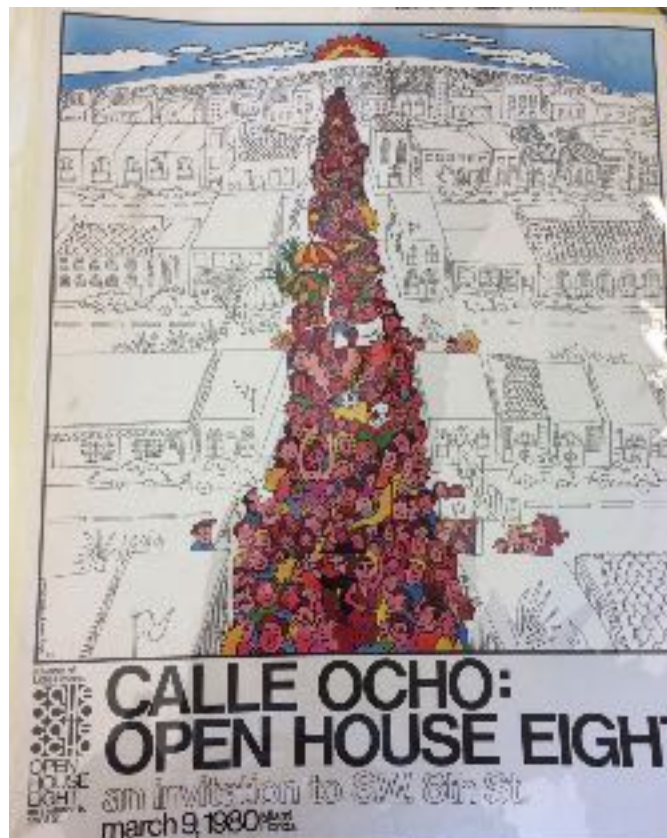


Figure 11: Calle Ocho: Open House Eight (1980). Florida Carnival Miami Poster Collection 0327. Courtesy of the Cuban Heritage Collection, University of Miami Libraries, Coral Gables.

The 1983 Continental National Bank calendar highlights links between suburbia and the “cultural world” (presumably in Little Havana), as if balancing the relationship between assimilation (coded U.S. whiteness and Cubanidad). Each month features a photo of a white Cuban man (or men), wearing white guayaberas or white shirts with ties, in staged scenes that alternate acts of “Cuban culture” (drinking Cuban coffee, playing cubilete) with performances of suburbia (house repairs and mowing the lawn). As Luis Sabines, Jr. emphasized during my interview with him (October 31, 2017), Cuban culture was spreading, and one could go to restaurants like Versailles (on Calle Ocho but adjacent to Coral Gables) to get their Cuban coffee: “They don’t go to Little Havana to a Cuban restaurant. They go to Versailles... There’s another coffee window someplace in Coral Gables by Ponce de Leon that other young people meet there to have *un cafécito*.”

The Mothers

By 1982, hotels, travel agencies and travel publications were once again promoting “Calle Ocho” as a travel destination (Yncian Aug. 2, 1982). Tour stops mentioned in LHDA’s brochure appeared word-for-word in the *Miami Herald* (“Bring Camera,” Mar. 5, 1983). As Ralph Duarte explains (interviewed Oct. 31, 2017), Cuban emigres wanted to restore their image after the Mariel crisis. “We wanted to show our culture, the nice things about us,” he said. “And that’s where Kiwanis do that. That’s where it takes off.” The marketing of the Calle Ocho Festival, part of the larger Carnaval Miami, sold Hispanidad to national brands seeking inroads to a Latinx market.

White faces continued to dominate the Calle Ocho Festival posters throughout the 1980s, despite the demographic shifts affecting Little Havana itself. Nonetheless, the

brown-skinned Celia Cruz became known as the “Queen Mother of Calle Ocho,” featured on stages and floats at the Calle Ocho Festival and Three Kings Parade as well as in posters, paintings, postcards and programs connected to Little Havana (Corderi Jan. 2, 1981). She walked down Calle Ocho like a queen, and in 1987 received the first star on the “Calle Ocho Walk of Fame” (modeled after the Hollywood Walk of Fame) (Grenier and Moebius 2015). Outside of Little Havana, however, other symbolic mothers included a whitened version of Cuba’s patron saint, Our Lady of Charity and the Statue of Liberty, appropriated as a symbol of Anglo-Cuban solidarity.

Celia Cruz embodied in many ways the twinning of Our Lady of Charity and Cuba’s popular black Madonna, Our Lady of Regla. The parish council of Little Havana’s Shrine of Regla, formed by Friar Michael F. Lobo and devotees on June 25, 1982, proclaimed Our Lady of Regla the “Patroness of Little Havana.” On September 7, 1982, Mayor Xavier Suarez ratified the title in an official proclamation (“The Story of Our Lady of Regla” Feb. 8, 2008). The parish council built a shrine to Our Lady of Regla in Little Havana in 1989, located just two blocks from Calle Ocho, with bronze plaques in English and Spanish announcing her designation as Little Havana’s “patroness.” The naming of Celia Cruz as the “Queen” or “Mother” of Calle Ocho linked her to the Holy Mother/Queen of Little Havana: the black *Virgen de Regla*. In Cuba, Our Lady of Regla is syncretized with the Orisha Yemaya, the older sister of Ochún. Ochún is syncretized with Our Lady of Charity. Thus, through these bundles of divine female bodies, Our Lady of Regla becomes the “older sister” of Our Lady of Charity: the black older sister in Little Havana to the younger, whitened mother of the nation, whose shrine was built outside of

Little Havana, in the predominantly Anglo Coconut Grove neighborhood (Tweed 1999; De la Torre 2001).

Imagined as an embodiment of both Our Virgen of Regla or Our Lady of Charity, Celia Cruz was the black or mulatta progenitor of a mixed-race nation. Reporter Liz Balmaseda (Mar. 4, 1984) of the *Miami Herald* called her “the goddess of Cuban salsa music”; Jorge Davila Miguel of *El Nuevo Herald* (May 1, 1992) described her as the earthly embodiment of Our Lady of Charity and the “Orisha of celluloid.” Like other tokenized black commemorative bodies in the district, Cruz was also assumed to have a primal, “mystical” force, as suggested by Monika Gosin (2016), evoking stereotypes of pre-modern Africanity. For example, Davila Miguel (May 1, 1992) described her as a “force of nature” who “did miracles.”

While consistently incorporating Afro-Cuban elements into her works (from drum rhythms to Yoruba words to song content), Cruz continued to serve as a signifier of hemispheric, unifying and “‘raceless’ pan-Latinidad” (Gosin 2016, 91; Aparicio 1999, 234). In her role as a divine mother, Cruz—in Davila Miguel’s opinion, “of all that vein of Hispanic nationality that exists in the cauldron of the American melting pot, retaining its particular musical vibration” existed for “everyone” when she arrived on stage.

As Monica Gosin (2016, 91) suggests, however, Cruz was elevated and nonthreatening in part because she was also constructed as a stereotypical mammy. She appeared loyal, disciplined and nurturing to whites (see also Manring 1998; Pérez 2010, 2013), and despite her origins in Havana’s working class and black neighborhoods, she had become became, in Aparicio’s words (1999, 229), “a central spokesperson for the politics of the early, white bourgeois, landholding Cuban exile community.” Cruz

constantly negotiated her blackness and Africanity in relationship to the white Cuban emigre community that embraced her for spouting pro-capitalist, anti-Castro discourse (Aparicio 1999 226, 229-230).

Her cry of “Azuca’!!”⁶⁷ (sugar), recorded into her songs,⁶⁷ were part of the heritage district’s musical landscape, emanating from Cuban-owned shops (Martin May 1, 1994), but it also evoked the economics of sugar plantations, the “whitening” process of sugar (and thus *blanqueamiento*), and the race- and gender-making of national identities (Aparicio 1999; Benitez-Rojo 1997; Ortiz [1947] 1995, Friginals 1976; Beliso-De Jesús 2014). She was the idealized “good” black woman, safe and motherly, singing and dancing and having fun. Possessed like valuable property, like the bodies of Maceo, Izquierdo or Bryant, her “exceptional” blackness made the whiteness of “Azucar!” even brighter. As Monica Gosin (2006, 95) argues,

Presenting Cruz as “exceptional” and different from the Marielitos and other black Cuban exiles reinforces the idea that her performance is mythical/mysterious and as such “redeems” her blackness. It also allows white Cuban exiles to celebrate Celia as a black woman while maintaining the assumption that Cubanness is equal to whiteness.

Lorenzo, who is Afro-Cuban ([pseudonym], interviewed Oct. 27, 2017), says the stardom of Celia Cruz made her an opportunity that white Cubans did not want to lose. “So they have to put the eye [on her] and say, ‘That is *our* singer. That is *our* little black lady that sings for us.’ Because she gettin’ so hot and so famous, they can’t lose the opportunity to say, ‘We here.’ See, the propaganda. Everything in this game is about propaganda.”

⁶⁷ According to popular legend, she was dining at a restaurant in Miami when a waiter asked her how she wanted her coffee, and she replied, “Con Azuca!” (with sugar!). It quickly became her trademark.

Celia Cruz was also known as the “queen of salsa,” salsa being not only a genre of “mixed” music but also a blending of flavors “dipped” into. The 1984 Calle Ocho Festival poster bursts with color: a rainbow in one corner reproduces the purples, yellows, reds and oranges found throughout. Rainbows appears frequently in Calle Ocho posters, a signifier of “we are all one” multiculturalism. The 1985 poster celebrates a Latinx multiculturalism in its Calle Ocho street scene, with a man in a Mexican sombrero saying “Andale! Andale!” and a Nicaraguan flag next to the words, “Viva Nicaragua Libre.” A white Snoopy orders a cafe Cubano from the Casablanca⁶⁸ cafeteria and bakery: U.S./Cuban symbols joined together to distinguish white Cubanidad.

In most of these posters, a caricatured Celia Cruz appears. She is usually the darkest figure in the crowd. In every poster where she appears, artists emphasize her huge grin, give her an enormous Afro and put her in a rumbera dress (usually with rainbow-color ruffles) (see Figure 12) (“March 4 Calle Ocho Open House” 1984, CHC).



Figure 12: March 4 1984 Celebrate Calle Ocho Open House. Florida Carnival Miami Poster Collection 0327. Courtesy of the Cuban Heritage Collection, University of Miami Libraries, Coral Gables.

⁶⁸ Casablanca, translated, means “white house.” Casablanca was a very popular bakery in Little Havana.

She becomes the historically sexualized figure of the *rumbera* (Fernández-Selier 2013; Skwiot 2012) subsumed and tamed as the archetypal and exaggerated mammy, her hands open wide, her smile unthreatening, her loyalty unquestioned: the caretaker of whiteness. At the 1984 festival (and perhaps other festivals), performers dressed as Mickey and Minnie Mouse danced rumba (a dance form associated with Afro-Cubans) in a Calle Ocho parking lot, advertising a local shop selling baby clothing (“Rente” Mar. 5, 1984).

Cruz linked Little Havana to Havana, too. As Afro-Cuban musician Freddy Cardenas (interviewed July 11, 2017) explains, she ...

...was caught up in between time, in between like the modern stuff and the old school stuff. She became a symbol of—of Cuba--but how can I put it, of the Cuba out of Cuba, like here in Miami. She became a symbol here of Miami. Back then, she wasn’t heard of as much as now.

Because of Cruz, Cubans on the island heard about “Calle Ocho” from their relatives in Miami, which influenced later Cuban emigres’ imaginations of the heritage district. Maikel Zamora’s cousins in Miami described Calle Ocho as the “place of carnivals” where Celia Cruz performed; in Cuba, Zamora imagined it as a stage to “communicate our message, our culture.” Philbert Armenteros (interviewed Nov. 14, 2017) said that thanks to Cruz, Calle Ocho became famous in Cuba as “the street of the Cubans.” He was extremely disappointed when first visited the legendary street, however. “Is this really Calle Ocho?” he said, laughing as he remembered his shock. He said it seemed dead.

While Celia Cruz became Calle Ocho’s symbol of nonthreatening blackness and racial/cultural hybridity (Gosin 2016; Aparicio 1999), the Statue of Liberty signified another kind of mixing: a mixing that held the promise of full inclusion in the category of whiteness through a U.S. version of *blanqueamiento*, or whitening. The Statue of Liberty

made frequent appearances in Continental National Bank calendars (CHC). In the July 1985 calendar, for instance, a (white) grandfather and grandson look admiringly at the Statue of Liberty. The *décima* mentions the male child hand in hand with the ancient: a “fiesta of generations.” Another shows a white-mestizo Latinx family visiting the Statue of Liberty; the boy waves an American flag (July 1990). These scenes hint at the blanqueamiento required for full citizenship in the U.S.: inclusion requiring symbolic acts of whitening (Doss 2010; Roediger 2005; Stovall 2018). In 1965, at the beginning of the Freedom Flights, President Johnson had welcomed Cubans to the U.S. as he stood at the base of the Statue of Liberty (McCoy and Gonzalez 1985, 16); Mariels (and Central Americans) had received no such welcome.

Blanqueamiento has its roots in the original scenario of the Reconquista. In Spain and Portugal, *limpieza de sangre* served as the justification for legalized discrimination against “New Christians,” and these ideas persisted in their colonies (Wade 2008; Martínez 2008). Cuban (and other Latin American) creoles had to perform an identity of racial purity in order to protect against accusations of contaminated blood. As anthropologist Peter Wade (2008, 179) comments, “colonial persecution of those seen as rebellious, heretical or religiously suspect was linked to perceptions of racial status.” Aware that where people lived, with whom they associated (especially sexually), and where and how they were raised could influence the interpellation of racialized natures, creoles used both the archive and the repertoire to distance themselves from blackness, Africanity or indigeneity. Like immigrants in the U.S., the pasts they constructed emphasized Christian and European roots, and their performances of memory emphasized their superiority over blacks past and present: loyalty to whiteness (Fraginals

1976; Wade 2002; Stoler 1995; Nightingale 2012; Helg 1990; Moore 1997; Harris 1993; Hale 1998; Roediger 2005).

In July 1986, the U.S. government unveiled a newly restored Statue of Liberty in a three-day “Liberty Weekend.” The event paired the statue with Ellis Island, ignoring and suppressing the role of abolition in inspiring the statue in the first place (Rand 2005, 110-111; Stoval 2018). According to Erica Rand (2005, 132), the rhetorical pairing of the two sites “ignores and disrespects people whose ancestors, transported by force, could not and, importantly, should not, be described as immigrants” as well as its roots as a symbol of abolition (see Stovall 2018). Decades earlier, anti-immigrant Anglos had appropriated the statue to symbolize white supremacy, but the 1965 and 1986 events reestablished the statue as the “Mother of Exiles,” or mother of immigrants mostly of European origin and eventually interpellated as white. The statue thus served as an ideal symbol of a U.S. version of blanqueamiento. As historian Tyler Stovall (2018) explains:

Those immigrants who gazed rapturously at the magnificent statue upon their arrival in New York Harbor may have seen a symbol of freedom and prosperity, but they also saw a vision of whiteness, and ultimately a vision of what they could become in America. Whiteness and freedom were therefore closely intertwined.

The 1986 event was a flagship of President Ronald Reagan’s push for “public-private” partnerships, which resulted in the addition of “Ellis Island” to the name of the Statue of Liberty Foundation, Inc. (133-135). Public-private partnerships continued to make their mark on Little Havana, too. By late 1980, a sign at Calle Ocho and 27th Avenue announced, “Welcome to Calle Ocho, Kiwanis of Little Havana.” “It’s like a monument,” said Ketty Gort, the sister of Commissioner Wilfredo Gort. “It is something we must maintain now, so that we have it in the future” (Dibble May 31, 1984). White Cubanidad needed to be preserved.

Jose Martí: Re-purposed for White Cuban-Anglo Reunion

Circulating images and texts also glorified the scenario of Anglo-Cuban Reunion.

According to *Enjoy/Disfrute*, Hispanics live in Florida with “North American brothers, descendants of the British immigrants who replaced the Spanish as the dominators of Florida” (“Durante Trecientos Años” 1986, Issue 147, CHC). On the July 1989 page of the Continental National Bank calendar (CHC), two white homes sit side by side in an idyllic scene of the suburbs, both displaying large U.S. flags. A smiling, dark-haired Cuban boy high-fives a smiling blonde boy in a sign of friendship; both hold small U.S. flags in their other hands. Their mothers sit side by side on a bench, and their fathers dominate the scene, standing and shaking hands. Both men also hold U.S. flags. The blonde American man’s shirt says “I [heart] Miami,” and the Cuban man wears a guayabera and smokes a cigar, a small Cuban flag draped over his pocket and over his heart. Together, the men say, “Happy Independence Day!” July 1988 portrays a similar scene, with a *décima* that emphasizes similarities between U.S. and Cuban flags and includes the lines: “and a twinned memory / Washington next to Martí.” These scenes depict the solidarity of whiteness: an agreement of ethnic difference unified through shared racial privilege, and two white male bodies—past and present, standing side by side, in their shared “little white kingdoms.”

Expressions of solidarity with Anglos manifested on Calle Ocho itself, where in 1981 Cuban emigres celebrated a Fourth of July parade (Moore July 3, 1981). According to festival organizer Fernando Armandi, “We want to show that we’re on the same team, the

same side of the fence, and we want to stay and do what's right, while at the same time show our own ethnic and cultural flavor.” Wilfredo Gort of the LHDA said the parade was a response to the anti-bilingualism law, and a way to show that the Cuban community cared about non-Hispanics. It was indeed a performance of Reunion. The parade included hundreds of children waving U.S. flags, a platoon of U.S. Marine wearing full battle gear and carrying bayonets, military jeeps and anti-tank weapons.

In the late 1980s, prominent Anglo-dominated entities also began offering their own tours of Little Havana. According to longtime Miami (Anglo) historian Paul George (publicly known as “Dr. Paul George”) (interviewed July 12, 2017), he led his first tours of Little Havana in 1988, working first with both the Miami Historical Association (later The Historical Museum of Southern Florida and now HistoryMiami) and the Dade Heritage Trust, for its annual Dade Heritage Days celebration. He began to include Little Havana tours as part of a repertoire of private Miami walking tours he offered as well. He developed his tour narrative based on his own independent research as well as his experiences in Little Havana, as he grew up in (and still lives in) Shenandoah, the residential neighborhood adjacent to Little Havana.

In a kind of spiritual communion with Miami's Cuban community, President Ronald Reagan dined at the Little Havana restaurant La Esquina de Tejas in October 1983 (Levine and Asis 2005, 156). Four years later, Vice President George Bush arrived in Little Havana to dedicate Reagan Avenue, a co-designation for Little Havana's Southwest 12th Avenue. It was not his first visit to Little Havana; in 1980 both he and Ronald Reagan had visited the neighborhood to campaign for the Cuban vote (“Candidates; Ron Reagan,” Mar. 9, 1980, Wolfson Archives). The Latin Quarter Review Board

spearheaded the street-naming effort. Bush called the newly designated street a “monument” to the ideals of the Reagan administration (Fiedler June 18, 1987).

These transformations of public space helped make remembering an embodied and quotidian experience. As *El Nuevo Herald* reporter Liz Balmaseda explains (Nov. 9, 1991):

We are surrounded by altars and memories, fighting desperately not to forget the reason why we are here. And in the process, we have created a new culture. Where else can you say, “Hey, kid, wait for me at the corner of Olga Guillot and Ronald Reagan?”...I ate at La Esquina de Texas, and immediately transformed the cafeteria into The Place Where Almorzó Reagan.

As part of an intra-regional cultural exchange program sponsored by WSVN-TV Channel 7 in 1985, fourteen visitors from Little Havana (members of its civic groups like LHDA and the LQA) visited the Anglo-dominated Davie, Florida, which was adopting a cowboy theme to promote its own “territory.” In turn, residents from Davie visited Little Havana. Willy Gort of the LHDA remarked, “We’ve found out we have a lot of things in common. The only difference is the theme” (Steinback July 21, 1985).

Reconstructions of History

In 1983, a Spanish-language “patriotic almanac” began to appear on the walls of Cuban emigre homes and businesses (Calendar Collection, CHC). Published by the exile newspaper *Diario Las Américas* and the home loan company AmeriFirst, the free almanac invented a “history of Cuba day by day from October 27, 1492 to October 22, 1962.” It linked the scenarios of Discovery and Independence to La Lucha through the mingled images of anti-Castro militants, conquistadors and Mambises: a strategy of marking and dividing up time in order to move from view certain pasts (Trouillot 1995).

It also exalted white supremacy. On the cover, images fill letters of “CUBA” as if possessing empty nation-bodies. The “C” depicts imagined Discovery, with an Indian waving at an arriving Spanish galleon. Standing underneath the Cuban flag, Carlos Manuel Cespedes and Jose Martí fill the “U.” The final “A” depicts men in the Bay of Pigs invasion. Each month brings together nearly five centuries of “dates,” and white men dominate nearly every month.

The almanac transforms Jose Martí into a fighter. In May, the month of Cuban independence, Martí and General Ignacio Agramonte meet their patriotic death atop charging steeds. Between them stands a white Cuban “mother of the nation” holding a Cuban flag, like a Cuban Statue of Liberty. President Tomas Estrada Palma hovers above them. A quote from Martí, printed in white, marks the top of the page: “*Como el marmol ha de ser el caracter: blanco y duro*” (Character has to be like marble: white and strong).

Maceo appears in two panels of the almanac: as a whitened profile next to Maximo Gomez and Jose Martí (who faces the reader and stands in front of a Cuban flag), and—slightly darker—astride a horse, in his moment of death, his machete flung out of his hand. In the rest of the almanac, no other fighters (all of them white) lose their weapons. The only obviously black man in the almanac is a smiling, muscular and bare-chested emancipated slave. Although he appears recently unchained, one of his wrists appears chained and the other unchained. He stands near a scene of smiling, nearly naked indigenous people waving at Spanish galleons. Below these men an invented scene portrays one white Mambise galloping on his horse and saving another. “*Lleguen a hombres los que han nacido para serlo,*” reads the Jose Martí quote above these images: “Let those who were born to be men become men.”

In these depictions, white men like Martí become heroic fighters, as strong as they are white. The black slave and the Indian may strive towards whiteness (coded as freedom), but only some men will reproduce in marble, “white and strong.” “Let me tell you, they don’t have Maceo as a black man,” said Lorenzo when I interviewed him ([pseudonym], Oct. 27, 2017). “They always say that Maceo was more white man than black man...this is the confusion that they put on, like he’s a different person.” White men are the valiant conquistadors, and they alone will “take back” Little Havana in Reconquista: the machete has been knocked out of Maceo’s hand.

Meanwhile, Little Havana’s memorial landscape indicated a symbolic transition away from Maceo. By 1984, a white marble bust of Jose Martí stood in front of the map of Cuba in Cuban Memorial Park, flanked by U.S. and Cuban flags. Parades honoring Jose Martí, and starting in the park, transformed Martí, the man of letters, into a valiant fighter. They were first organized by the Bilingual Private School Association (BIPRISA), and by 1985 they concluded at the new Jose Martí Park, a 10-acre, \$3.5-million park inaugurated on Jose Martí’s birthday (George 2006, 80; “Jose Martí Parade” Jan. 30, 1984, Wolfson Archives). Jose Martí Park sits on the easternmost edge of Little Havana, bordering the Miami River and downtown. On the weekend of May 18th, 1984, a year prior to its official inauguration, thousands gathered there for a Cuban Independence Day celebration. One of the guest singers was Manolo Fernandez, known as “El Caballero del Tango” (the Gentleman of Tango), and later recognized with a bust in Cuban Memorial Park — in front of Tony Izquierdo’s statue (Viglucci May 17, 1985).⁶⁹

⁶⁹ I discuss the Manolo Fernandez bust in later chapters of this dissertation.

The lone activity held in front of the Maceo monument that weekend occurred on Sunday, when members of thirty Cuban emigre organizations commemorated the death of Jose Martí. Hector Fabian, a co-organizer of the event, called it *La Protesta de Miami*, and said it gave members of Miami's Cuban community a chance to complain about all that *impeded* the liberation of Cuba (Ibid.). Another organizer of the event was Felipe Rivero Diaz, a neo-Nazi according to Miami authorities (Marina and Long Sept. 10, 1977). Rivero's ties to white supremacy are undeniable. When former KKK leader and Nazi sympathizer David Duke was campaigning for the Republican presidential nomination in 1991, Rivero hosted him on his conservative radio talk show (on WRHC-AM); his militant organization, CORU-member Movimiento Nacional Cubano (MNC)⁷⁰ also hosted Duke at a rally for 1,000 people (Méndez 2006, 8). Rivero, a Bay of Pigs veteran, was also Holocaust denier (Stencel Dec. 28, 1991).

Rivero's organization, the MNC, was the first hardline exile paramilitary group to use terrorism as its primary tactic. Its mission? The "*guerra por los caminos del mundo*" ("the war for the roads of the world") (Méndez 2006, 8). "Terrorism, there is no other road left for us than that," said Rivero in 1967 ("Exile Pledges More Terrorism" April 4, 1967). The Chicago Mafia helped fund Rivero Diaz's openly fascist organization; its two main customers for illegal arms sales included Cuban exile terrorist groups and Anglo white supremacists (Waldron 2009, 449,161-163). Rivero Diaz was a descendant of one of the Cuban elite's best-known families, the owners of *Diario de la Marina*, Cuba's most conservative newspaper (Arboleya 2000, 149). During Cuba's wars for independence, the

⁷⁰ Like other Cuban emigre organizations, its name varied over time. It was also called Asociación Nacionalista Cubana or the Cuban Nationalist Association.

Diario de la Marina sided with Spanish colonists; it regularly vilified Mambises and criticized Jose Martí. The publishers congratulated the Spanish military after Antonio Maceo's death. On December 7th, the anniversary of Maceo's death, they hosted a banquet for Spanish colonists honoring the Spanish general whose troops had killed Maceo (Pérez, Jr. 2013, 248-249).

On this May afternoon in 1984, however, nearly a hundred years after Maceo's death and on the anniversary of Jose Martí's death, Rivero Diaz stood in front a crowd gathered at the Maceo monument in Cuban Memorial Park. He called for a new understanding of La Protesta de Baraguá, and asked the Cuban community to speak out against any and everything that impeded "Cuba's liberty." At the actual protest of Baraguá on May 15th, 1878, Antonio Maceo refused to sign a peace agreement with Spain because, as he emphasized, his army was fighting to achieve Cuba's independence *and* free Cuba's slaves. In a complete inversion of the scenario of Independence, however, La Protesta de Miami linked Maceo to a popular narrative that blamed Maceo for Martí's death, as if Maceo himself had impeded—not aided--Cuba's liberation.

This act of "possessing" the Baraguá moment involved erasing Maceo and the historical moment of Baraguá even while signifying both. Rivero Diaz was not trying to *be* Maceo; he was sacrificing Maceo for the rebirth of whiteness embodied in a new "possession" of Martí as a property of whiteness. White supremacy requires sacrifice—in this case, of unwanted bodies and memories (Trouillot 1995; Fanon 1986, 112). At the actual historical event, however, Maceo had affirmed transnational links with predominantly black nations, remarking: "With our policy to free the slaves, because the

era of the whip and of Spanish cynicism has become void, we must form a new republic assimilated with our sister[s] of Santo Domingo and Haiti” (quoted in Helg 2001, 82).

Continental National Bank calendars (CHC) are also clear in depicting racial order and the scenario of Conquest and Reconquista. The scene for May 1985 depicts two white Cuban men (one of them in a guayabera) standing at a Little Havana ventanita as an Afro-Cuban man in a suit and neck brace walks towards towards the street (presumably Calle Ocho). With his head in the air (as if “putting on airs”) and his eyes closed, it is obvious that he will trip on the curb and fall into the street. The decima describes a man who cheats the law by faking an injury for his “life annuity.” The scam artist or “fũ” (a slang term that can mean both shoddy and signify Africanity by shortening the African-derived *fufu*) ends up living well thanks to *su*, the formal pronoun for “you,” and thus a signifier of the “elevated” white Cuban likely looking at the calendar. The scenario implies that blacks try to “cheat the system,” and even those in suits must have achieved their wealth dishonestly. The white Cuban men smirk at his attempts to “lift his head up.”

The New Antonios: Tony Izquierdo and Tony Cuesta

Gilberto Casanova of Acción Cubana was relentless in his efforts to memorialize Tony Izquierdo with a monument. He told Miami Commissioners it would honor “a great fighter for the freedom of Cuba” (“Motion 84-835” July 30, 1984, OCC, 131). Casanova himself was a fierce anti-Castro warrior, pressuring businesses, elected officials, and news media to punish any entity doing business with Cuba meetings (Alfonso Feb. 25, 1997; Meluza Jan. 12, 1986; Chardy May 8, 1997). Just as media accounts implied that

black Mariel Cubans were “contaminating” Miami and its symbolic Cuban heartland, Casanova argued that the Antonio Maceo Brigade had “contaminated” the name “Antonio Maceo.” Claiming to speak for “all the revolutionary groups here in exile,” he insisted that the city demonstrate that “all of us who are white” remember the black man “with all the affection and love as we remember the General Antonio Maceo” (“Motion 84-835” July 30, 1984, OCC, 131). In evoking Maceo, Casanova ritually “crowned” Izquierdo with Maceo’s body, making Izquierdo the new Maceo, afforded “affection”—a term common in U.S. Southern narratives of master/loyal slave relationships (Savage 1997; Duquette 2010; Wallace-Sanders 2008). His evocation of racial harmony likely resonated with the commissioners he needed to persuade. Izquierdo was the new exceptional black man, the newly Emancipated man, through whom Casanova and his white peers would speak.

Casanova said that his group had already picked a spot in Cuban Memorial Park behind the Brigade 2506 monument. Commissioners said the Memorial Committee needed to review the item at a public hearing, but the motion passed unanimously (“Motion 84-835” July 30, 1984, OCC, 133). Casanova did not wait for additional approval, however, and directed Miami sculptor Tony Lopez to start making the statue. Lopez had created the Maceo statue out of fiberglass, but he would make Izquierdo from a more permanent material: bronze, per the request of Casanova (“Wall of Martyrs Commemoration” May 20, 2014, Belén Jesuit Preparatory School). Izquierdo would become the new “Bronze Titan.” That same year, in 1984, City Commissioners honored a still living Antonio—Antonio (Tony) Cuesta—by declaring June 15th Tony Cuesta Day (Charda and Ojito 1992). Cuesta was the mercenary who befriended African American

Tony Bryant in Cuban prison; he also organized rallies around the Antonio Maceo monument.

After Miami commissioners approved the life-sized, six-foot statue of Nestor Izquierdo two years later, in 1986, Acción Cubana secured its desired space in the park with a wooden notice held in place with concrete bricks and signed by “El Patronato,” or “The Board”) (Yanez Nov. 10, 1986). A year later, the city approved Casanova’s request for a five-foot base, making the monument easily visible behind the Torch of Brigade 2506 (“Apoyo a Estatua” Jan. 7, 1987). Miami resident Sanford Cohen asked why the monument was being approved without an official public hearing, especially since it was planned for a public park, but Commissioners cut him off (“Res. 87-258” Jan. 8, 1987, Miami commission minutes, OCC, 27). Perhaps Cohen suspected that the monument commemorated more than just “Tony Izquierdo.”

The New Antonio Maceo Park

In 1986, Miami’s City Commissioners decided to re-name another park—north of Little Havana—for Antonio Maceo, a decision that would lead to the removal of Maceo’s name from the park in Little Havana (“Res. 86-44” Jan. 23, 1986, Miami commission minutes, OCC, 45). The lone African American commissioner, Vice Mayor Miller Dawkins, initiated the proposal to re-name Blue Lagoon Park for Maceo. Elected in 1981, Dawkins often battled for better parks and resources, especially for the city’s disenfranchised African American residents. In his introduction of the motion, Dawkins said he had moved to Miami from Tampa, where a Cuban was neither black nor white, but “just a Cuban.” When he came to Miami, he observed that “everything around here was named

for Jose Martí, who was white, and very few if anything was named for Maceo who was black.” Dawkins explained that Juan Amador Rodriguez had approached him with the suggestion to rename a “beautiful park in Flagami⁷¹ in honor of a valiant fighter who fought all his life for freedom,” and he embraced the idea. Rodriguez was an outspoken anti-Castro radio personality who dabbled in real estate and belonged to “Commando 100,” a group of experts trained in demolition and explosives (“Ingenieros de Combate Commando 100,” CI Archives).

During the nearly one-hour discussion of the motion, some speakers narrated Maceo as the black warrior, loyal patriot and symbol of La Lucha, as expected. “Most all of us are aware of [Antonio Maceo’s] place in history,” wrote Governor Lawton Chiles in a letter that Dawkins read aloud; Chiles added that Maceo had “fought beside the great patriot Jose Martí for the liberation of Cuba.” He portrayed Martí as the “great patriot,” not Maceo, and Martí on the battlefield, even though Martí died the first day he entered a battlefield and never actually fought beside Maceo. Maceo earns his “place” through his imagined proximity to Martí. When Maceo’s grandson Dr. Antonio Maceo had his turn to speak, he immediately tied Maceo to La Lucha, describing the Castro regime as “traitors of Martí, Gomez and Maceo” (notably listing Maceo last). After emphasizing the moral ideal of sacrifice for the nation, he said, “We also pray for the preservation of the heritage and traditions here in the enslaved island of Cuba and with the continued understanding to keep the world free from totalitarian regimes.” In reassuring his audience that “heritage and traditions” would be preserved, was he perhaps signifying racial/spatial order?

⁷¹ A neighborhood adjacent to Little Havana, on its northwest borders.

Others contradicted the limited and confining narratives about Maceo. Dr. Luis Andrés Vargas-Gómez, a grandson of General Maximo Gomez, said Maceo was not only a “freedom fighter and an extraordinary general” but had “a cultivated mind” and had inspired Cubans with “the integrity of his character.” Manuel Marina emphasized Maceo’s role as an abolitionist and linked him to the U.S. He mentioned a New York-based anti-slavery society that had written a letter to Maceo, thanking him for his fight against both colonialism and slavery. Marina suggested that Maceo—whom he described as a “universal hero”—was a predecessor of Dr. Martin Luther King.

At a hearing about the park a year later, on January 8, 1987 (“Res. No. 87-64” Miami commission minutes, OCC), the Commission and members of the public engaged in a heated debate filled with racial signifiers and efforts to forge racial alliances. It began when the lone white Anglo Commissioner, Joseph Lionel (“J.L.”) Plummer, expressed surprise that the “Antonio Maceo Foundation” assumed it would operate the public park. Margarita Mirabal stood to speak, identifying herself as a representative of the foundation.⁷² Mirabal said the “foundation” was cleaning up an area that she described as abandoned, dangerous and “drug-infested.” Evoking the discourse of colorblindness, she announced plans to create a library at the park, “for Cubans, for Americans, for Black, for yellow, for green, because we don’t see colors so it will be for all American people and we are American Cubans, Americans, all nationalities.”

⁷² A misspelled “General Antonio Macheo Foundation, Inc.” was registered with the Florida Division of Corporations on April 9, 1986 (the same year as the initial hearing), with Mirabal is listed as an officer, but it was dissolved within a year. No Antonio Macheo Foundation or Antonio Maceo Foundation is listed with the Internal Revenue Service, Guidestar, or other databases of charities.

Anglo Pat Keller (vice president of Citizens of Dade United, which in 1988 campaigned for an English-only ordinance) was furious about the re-naming of Blue Lagoon Park for “a foreign hero who had no significance to the United States,” however. She claimed it erased the history of the former residents and its “rich” Miami history, which she traced to Native Americans and “early Miamians.” In “taking over” the park, she suggested that Cubans were “stomping upon the American heritage”:

It is the equivalent to my taking over the Malecon in Cuba, renaming it for George F. Patton, putting up American flags, and then putting up monuments to Washington, Lincoln, Jefferson, John Kennedy, Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King, Nathan Hale, Colleen Kelly, too, and perhaps my own brother who died over the skies of Japan. (222-223)

Mayor Xavier Suarez reminded her that streets and monuments in Cuba were named after Americans, but Keller insisted that the naming of the park for Maceo amounted to “more discrimination, more putting down of Americans and all they hold dear.” Wasn’t having Antonio Maceo Park on Calle Ocho, and a monument to Maceo, enough? she suggested. Keller’s anger at the Cuban commissioners signified the very real tensions between Anglos and Cubans, despite the performances of Reunion on Calle Ocho.

She warned of the dangers of crossing racial/spatial (b)orders: “It reminds me of the story of the camel who wanted his foot in the tent, his master’s tent, and soon he wanted his other foot in the tent, and before he knew it the camel was in the tent—and his master was outside the tent.” Americans were being pushed outside the tent, she complained. To Keller, Cubans had betrayed the trust of their “masters”: Anglos.

Dawkins spoke up to defend the park’s new name. Like Governor Chiles, he mentioned Cuba’s second war of independence, but he focused on the historical moment when “the great Cuban leaders Maceo, Gomez and Martí” met to plan the war. He hoped

history would “repeat itself,” so “our Cuban brothers and sisters” in exile could establish their new Cuban republic. Then he reminded Keller that he was the one who had proposed re-naming the park. Dawkins both aligned himself with Cubans and confronted the traditional racial/spatial order that always listed Maceo *after* Martí and de-emphasized his role as a planner of the wars, not simply a fighter in the war. In other words, he re-inserted Maceo into what he thought was his proper role in a scenario of Independence. Dawkins was not Cuban, so Keller could not accuse him of being a “foreigner.” Next to his Cuban colleagues, he became more “American,” just as the Cuban Tony Cuesta, standing next to Tony Bryant, appeared more “white.” Even though Dawkins could parlay his role as a “genuine” citizen, everyone in the room knew that blacks are also treated as camels who need to stay out of masters’ tents.

It’s likely that Dawkins also knew that the real estate interests tied to the so-called “Antonio Maceo Foundation” needed him as their ally, and that both Cubans and Anglos needed his support to avoid accusations of racism. Dawkins made his calculated gesture of solidarity well aware that Cubans had become politically powerful. Collectively, Cubans and African Americans could kick the self-proclaimed Anglo “masters” from their tents. At the same time, Dawkins forced his Cuban colleagues to recognize Maceo’s importance and prove their claims of colorblindness. He wanted a library in the park so that “little Cuban boys and girls” could study history and learn about Antonio Maceo. “All we are attempting to do is enhance the lifestyle of all of us so we can live harmoniously together, that’s all!” he exclaimed. He may have owed “debt” to white Cuban emigres, for their solidarity, but he realized that they needed him, too, and he would demand what he was owed, too.

The Lynching of Antonio Maceo

Upon their arrival in the U.S. in 1988, three former political prisoners described the beatings they had witnessed in Cuba's largest prison (Treaster June 4, 1988). The following day, *The New York Times Magazine* published an article implicating the CIA in programs to promote torture in Latin America (LeMoyne June 5, 1988, 44). On the same weekend these two stories broke, vandals beat and mutilated the fiberglass statue of Antonio Maceo. They pulled it from its pedestal, leaving the body face down. They sliced the top off of Maceo's head and removed some of his fingers. Cracks penetrated his torso, neck and legs. On previous occasions, vandals had thrown acid on his face, leaving parts of it yellow. They had cut off one of his fingers. Someone had cut off his right hand and the machete it clutched (Muñiz June 7, 1988; Szuri June 7, 1988). Perhaps the vandals kept these body parts; perhaps they left them at the scene. At lynchings, spectators often kept pieces of the victim's body as a souvenir. Harvey Young suggests that keeping body "souvenirs" helped possessors re-activate their memory of the lynching scene (657). Sanctified, deified and politically significant dead bodies are also "divided up" into "relics" (Verdery 1999; Johnson 2004).

In both Miami and Cuba, vandals targeted monuments to Jose Martí, but never full-body statues of the hero, according to anthropologist João Felipe Ferreira Gonçalves, who contends that vandals were attacking the *manipulation* of the hero by the state (2012, 305). In Cuban Memorial Park, however, vandals attacked Maceo's *entire* body: the body produced through the mingling of the state and non-state. The police were unable to track down the vandals, and no one was ever arrested for the destruction of the monument. Suspects ranged from local youth to "crazy people in the street," gangs or "hoodlums"

(Pablo Canton, interviewed May 16, 2017; Wilfredo Gort, interviewed Oct. 31, 2017; Frank Castaneda, interviewed Oct. 31, 2017; Ralph Duarte, interviewed Oct. 31, 2017). Perhaps “if they had read, or had actually known who [Maceo] was,” remarked a local (black Cuban) business owner, “they would have done [their graffiti] on the wall next to the monument, and not directly on it” (Joe Caraballo, interviewed Nov. 17, 2017).

In moments of political transition, the destruction and removal of monuments signifies a break from the past and the beginning of a new regime (Verdery 1999; Cherry 2013; Azaryahu and Foote 2008). On one hand, Maceo could symbolize the threat of Mariel emigres or the Antonio Maceo Brigade; on the other hand, he could represent militant Cuban exiles and the “white power” of Cuban emigres dominating Miami’s government and police force and fueling resentment. Standing on the “front lines” even in death, Maceo was the sacrifice for these battles: the black warrior. Whether enacted “by” the Cuban emigre regime or as an act of defiance against it, Maceo was caught in the middle (Muñiz June 7, 1988). Metaphorically and materially, black bodies were “ground up” to whiten other bodies (Beliso-De Jesús 2014).

Various individuals and groups promised to help replace the statue; the VFW’s Jose Martí post suggested a more permanent bronze of bust of Maceo, as he was nicknamed “El Titan de Bronze” (the Bronze Titan). Nonetheless, Dawkins thought a new statue of Antonio Maceo—“something we could really be proud of”—belonged in the newly named Antonio Maceo Park instead.

Mayor Suarez treated Dawkins as if he were Maceo. “We have our own Titan de Bronze on this Commission!” he remarked. “It’s Commissioner Dawkins, who has so kindly offered to get involved in this effort and in a symbolic way come to the rescue of

Antonio Maceo and the value that his memory has for this entire community.” Dawkins’ fellow commissioners (most of them Cuban) put Dawkins in charge of the monument repair: only a black man would repair the “black life” symbolized by the statue of Maceo. The motion assigning him with this responsibility inaccurately states that the statue stood in “Jose Martí Park,” and the oversight is telling (“Motion 88-487” June 9, 1988, Miami commission minutes, OCC, 4).

Meanwhile, Antonio Maceo “left” Domino Park, too. After Miami commissioners agreed to re-name Blue Lagoon Park for Maceo in 1986, they renamed Little Havana’s Antonio Maceo Park (Domino Park) for the Dominican-born Generalismo Maximo Gomez.⁷³ Removal of the black general’s name coincided with the gradual removal of living black bodies from the park and from Calle Ocho. The city closed the newly named Maximo Gomez Park a year after its re-naming (in 1987), ostensibly for repair and renovation, and surrounded it with a chain link fence. It remained closed for more than a year (“Brick Sidewalk,” July 31, 1988; Marquis June 5, 1987; Branch Mar. 17, 1988; Hernandez Jan. 26, 1986; Hernandez Feb. 20, 1986; Reiss Aug. 2, 1988).

CAMACOL president Luis Sabines said he would do “everything in his power” to make sure it didn’t reopen, since the “drifters” were frightening visitors and thus hindering the Latin Quarter project. The domino players were outraged, however. They said local businesses had fought them for many years, but this was a public park, and the “bums”—whom they found pretty harmless—were a feature at all of Miami’s parks. “We’re having problems with a lot of parks,” agreed police officer Jesus Carames, who

⁷³ The re-naming was made official on April 10th, 1986.

had walked the Little Havana beat for six years. “If you were comparing it to Jose Martí, I’d say Jose Martí has all the problems” (Marquis June 15, 1987).



Figure 13: Rendering of Latin Quarter. Collection of the author.

The privatization of public space contributed to the regulatory dispositif for the Latin Quarter, which helped reinforce informal racial segregation. Images of a pure white Latin Quarter also manifested in official renderings of the Latin Quarter (see Figure 13). While the city funded renovations of the park, it allowed the LHDA (later the Kiwanis Club of Little Havana) to run it (Grenier and Moebius 2015). The city also allowed LHDA to restrict players to people 55 and over and required all players to obtain “Domino Club” identification cards proving their age, well aware of the rule’s impacts on the much younger—and darker—arrivals from the Mariel. When the park finally re-opened on September 23, 1988, it was no longer open 24 hours daily but had operating hours from 9 am to 6 pm, newly installed gates, and a security guard (Branch Sept. 23, 1989). “We make sure that the right people only came in,” said Willy Gort about the changes

(interviewed Oct. 31, 2017), “The people that don't belong there, we got them out. We got the park rangers to do so. We had to do a lot of clean up, because we got a lot of bad publicity. I mean, we had a lot of crimes that took place, and a lot of work that...you know what it is.”

Conclusion

As Frantz Fanon (2007, 44) states, “...this behavior [of the colonizer] betrays a determination to objectify, to confine, to imprison, to harden. Phrases such as ‘I know them,’ ‘that's the way they are,’ show this maximum objectification successfully achieved...” In Little Havana, memorials and commemorations of black Cubans like Celia Cruz, Tony Izquierdo and Antonio Maceo sought to “harden” them so that they would maintain their positions in an ongoing exhibit of public memory. What seemed out of control, and dangerous, were black bodies with agency, moving through the Latin Quarter, flowing into spaces like Antonio Maceo Park, walking along sidewalks or gathering around ventanitas. Singular black bodies in the Latin Quarter were acceptable if surrounded by whites; they were treated as exceptional, and as embodiments of loyalty.

In this chapter, I further demonstrate the role of Little Havana as a space where militant Cuban emigres were moving themselves from the status of “blackened” back into the status of “whitened,” and using the social whiteness of their bodies to easily transition from illegal into the illegal. I also described the use of the district for spectacles of Reunion aimed at demonstrating the shared interests of white Cuban emigres and Anglos, despite the frictions between both groups.

Chapter three also emphasizes the scenarios of Discovery, Conquest and Reconquista employed against the threat of an imagined Black Revolution destroying the Cuban success story. Nonetheless, by activating the scenario of an anonymous black, unruly swarm, Cuban emigres could cut off the memory of Cuban emigre terrorism that had haunted them through the 1970s, making Mariels the image of “crime” and positioning themselves in the role of crime enforcement. As modern-day Crusaders and conquistadors, they took action to reclaim the district from black Mariels through a range of efforts I describe as part of a Foucauldian *dispositif*. These included elements visible and materialized in the district, like the new regulations that privatized Domino Park and effectively excluded most Mariels, as well as brutal policing practices; it also included the imagery and representations that circulated far from Little Havana and ended up on calendars in suburban homes. The il/legal practices of racial discipline targeting black Mariels, including racial profiling, segregation and terrorism, were also commemorative practices, were linked to other commemorative bodies in the form of statues, place names, street names. These practices were also connected to the producers who “managed,” “produced” and “enforced” the Latin Quarter. The symbolic conquest and Reconquista of the Latin Quarter were commemorated as purification, whitening, and the generation of “white life,” linked to racial-moral code words of freedom, democracy, and patriotism.

The *dispositif* of Little Havana also required various forms of possession, in both the material and spiritual sense. Re-conquering and thus re-possessing the space of the Latin Quarter also required the symbolic “spirit” and material possession of black bodies by white Cuban men. Black men like Tony Izquierdo and Tony Bryant did not act

submissively; they did not fit stereotypes of the “house slave” (Hall 2013) or in Cuba, the private calesero (Ocasio 2012). They were closer to images of the “bad buck” in the U.S. (Hall 2013, 239), and black warrior in Cuba: violent, big, strong and independent—yet completely devoted to serving white authorities, which made them a bigger, and more powerfully symbolic, prize.

The arrival of many black Cubans on the Mariel boatlift created an opportunity for separation: a “before” and “after” that symbolized individual, spatial and political bodies. The “before” of Little Havana was not only its “abandoned” state before the arrival of Cuban emigres, as if a wilderness needing cultivation and colonization; it was also 1980, the “dangerous” stage of “rebellion” among arrivals who were darker than those from other cohorts. The moment of “black revolution” was spun as the originating force of violence, requiring a forgetting of violence enacted by white social actors.

In other words, the Latin Quarter symbolized the transformation of individual bodies, landscapes and diasporic/national identities through processes of blanqueamiento that reproduced the racial order through the symbolic domination and control of black bodies made loyal. The Latin Quarter thus supported a narrative of white Cubans as experts in surviving, managing and preventing racial “takeovers,” transforming unruly Others and making them “productive.” Nonetheless, blacks (and some whites) consistently found ways to re-claim bodies like Maceo in “spaces” like parks, newspaper columns and City Commission meetings. Archived and embodied forms of memory tell different stories about the past in anticipation of alternate futures.

The next chapter moves into the 1990s and reveals the increasing interventions of Afrodescendants in the Latin Quarter. It documents a growing erasure of blacks from the

heritage district and from historical accounts, and instead a continued linking of Columbus with Jose Martí, Maximo Gomez, and contemporary Cuban emigres, including counterrevolutionaries. By 1990, redevelopment efforts anticipated the eventual return of Cuban emigres to Little Havana and the heritage district, and the theme of blood lineage and legacy dominated official forms of public memory. Nonetheless, people of African descent were making their own forms of memory and place, refusing to be excluded, and affirming their own links to the past, present...and future.

V. CHAPTER FOUR:

LITTLE HAVANA, USA: PRESERVING LINEAGES (1990-1999)

By the 1990s, “multiculturalism” had become a popular commodity in the U.S. The “memorial mania” (Doss 2010) of the 1990s included the use of public art as a new form of monument (Ibid.); a dramatic increase in memorials erected by ethnic and interest groups (Doss 2010; Osbourne 2001); a rise in private-public development of monumental sites and spaces (Rand 2005; Gladstone and Préau 2008; Schwarz-Bierschenk 2014); and the development of ethnic theme parks and “heritage” neighborhoods (and tourism) (Poirot and Watson 2015; Anderson 1987; Deverell 2004; Boyd 2008). “Memorial mania” echoed the “statue mania” of the turn of the century, when anxieties about national unity were a response to immigration, racial mixing, and popular imaginations of modernity and civilization (Doss 2010; Savage 1997; Blight 2001; Hale 1998; Duquette 2010). Both in the U.S. and in Cuba, elites adapted to change by re-configuring the “stage” of symbolic urban spaces, with civic rituals that reflected racial order and elevated “the whitest” as the most advanced “core” of the polity (Hoeschler 2003; Niell 2015; Moore 1997; Doss 2010; Connerton 1989; Bodnar 1992).

In Miami, urban redevelopment took the form of a *telenovela*⁷⁴, suggests George Yúdice (2005, 38). It portrayed transnational Hispanidad in a glorious spectacle of *mestizaje* and contented consumerism that undoubtedly excluded blackness (Rahier 2003; Wade 2008; Hooker 2005; Aranda, Hughes, and Sobogal 2014). Apart from Celia Cruz, blacks were not part of Little Havana’s celebratory images, and there was no black

⁷⁴ Telenovelas as Latin American soap operas; they typically only feature light-skinned actors in prominent and positive roles.

representation among the images used to evoke Little Havana's proposed "future." As I document in this chapter, images of the heritage district's proposed redevelopment depicted only those who were white, slim and successful.

The scenario of Reconquista continued in the 1990s, but the Cuban success story didn't need to mention it. Instead, the Cuban success story was becoming archived in the 1990s and tied to the nostalgia of an earlier era of Little Havana, with a complete erasure of the 1980s. It was as if Little Havana had once again become a space for whitening, but now the charge was to whiten from the memory of the Mariel and simply focus on defining and commemorating "Cuban culture," as the original Latin Quarter plans had intended.

Despite huge financial investments in the Latin Quarter (and specifically the heritage district), most Little Havana residents, and especially those who lived in a section designated as "East Little Havana," lived at or just slightly above the poverty level by 1990 (CMPBZD 1993, MDPL, 15). While the demographics of Little Havana continued to shift with the influx of many more Central Americans into newly designated "East" Little Havana, Cuban emigre elites treated the neighborhood as too significant to "lose": "Control over Little Havana, the geographic and symbolic center of the Cuban American community, is crucial to the consolidation and preservation of elites' power," explain Marcos Feldman and Violane Jolivet (2014, 1281).

This chapter gives me the opportunity to discuss the intensifying deployment of regulatory, place-making and memory-making practices—the dispositif--aimed at shaping the heritage district into an exhibit that staged "white Cubanidad" in the middle of a more diverse Hispanidad. I link acts of memorialization and commemoration to

rituals of policing: all of them used to re-assert white dominance. Through formulas of silencing (Trouillot 1995), this racial ordering apparatus (Stoler 1995; Pløger 2008; Pred 2004) erased the memory of violence prior to 1980; histories of Afro-Cuban contributions to Cuban history; and the contributions of post-1980 (and even after 1970) Cuban arrivals who were making significant impacts on Little Havana's music, dance and theater scenes—impacts that would affect the city as a whole (Grenier and Moebius 2015). I connect these efforts to earlier and contemporary practices of place- and memory-making in Cuba and the U.S.

According to Trouillot (1995, 26), the production of public memory involves four primary moments of silencing: (1) the moment of making facts; (2) the moment of assembling facts and making archives; (3) the moment of fact retrieval (the making of narratives); and (4) the moment of recollection, when the narrative of the past gains significance (the making of “history”). All of these moments came together in the 1990s to re-establish the Cuban success story, and make it permanent as the story of white Cubanidad, in contradistinction to what is taken to be the plight of blacks as other primitive people who are “stuck in the past and are associated with other nations.” The remarkable detail here is that at the same time that very same public memory heavily relied upon figures like Tony Izquierdo and Celia Cruz to ward off charges of racism.

In the 1990s, mention of Maceo diminished significantly, especially after the installation of a statue for Tony Izquierdo. Instead, white Cuban emigres increasingly linked the figures of Maximo Gomez, Jose Martí and Christopher Columbus together. Columbus, the ancient white “global” patriot-ancestor tied to Europe (Spain/Italy), Cuba and the U.S. was bundled with Martí, white patriot-ancestor of Cuba, and Gomez, the

white Hispanic (Dominican-born) patriot-ancestor who fought for Cuba. These were the ancestor “heroes” linked to counterrevolutionaries and Cuban civic elites alike. This chapter illustrates the growing emphasis on ideas about racial lineage and legacy in the 1990s—the Reunion that linked not only the North and South, and white Cubans with Anglos, but a collectivity of whites linked to white ancestors deemed worthy of remembrance.

Relations between black and (white) Cubans were especially tense by the 1990s, despite the continued Cuban claims of colorblindness. As shown in the following pages, the juxtaposition of memorials and rituals in the district signified that whites had not only “defeated” blacks in a Reconquista, but also and most importantly that whites were progressing far ahead of blacks. This chapter also reveals the multiple ways in which blacks were indeed making subversive interventions in the district, finding ways to “make place” and “make memory” on their own, in both archival and embodied forms.

Little Havana Vice

Based on their ethnographic research in Little Havana, Marcos Feldman and Violane Jolivet (2014, 1273) suggest that Cuban civic elites use(d) a Foucauldian strategy of “pastoral power” for socio-spatial control of the neighborhood’s Central American residents, many of whom live in East Little Havana, east of Southwest 12th Avenue (the newly designated Reagan Avenue). Cuban civic leaders portrayed themselves as educators of Central Americans, exploiting a shared Hispanidad (with Central Americans) to get them to “cooperate” with political and legal entities and the police, and at the same time, asserting their “natural” authority and higher “ranking” in Miami’s

ethno-racial hierarchy (Feldman and Jolivet 2014, 1281; Aranda, Hughes and Sabogal 2014; Aranda, Chang and Sabogal 2009).

Central Americans may have received pastoral disciplining from Cuban emigres, but blacks were not included in the Reunion of Hispanidad, whether Afro-Latinx or not (Aja 2016; Lopez 2012; Ojito 2001). The ongoing “clean-up” of Little Havana’s heritage district ritualized acts of exclusion. These acts targeted those who frightened whites by their mere presence on the sidewalk, in stores, or in parks.

The district was experiencing what Foucault calls the “boomerang effect.” Foucault warned that it should never be forgotten

that while colonization, with its techniques and its political and juridical weapons, obviously transported European models to other continents, it also had a considerable boomerang effect on the mechanisms of power in the West, and on the apparatuses, institutions, and techniques of power. A whole series of colonial models was brought back to the West, and the result was that the West could practice something resembling colonization, or an internal colonialism, on itself. (quoted in Graham 2010, xvii)

Daily, everyday performances on sidewalks and in parks commemorated the blending of colonialism with Jim Crow.

In 1992, the City of Miami formed NET (Neighborhood Enhancement Team) offices for various Miami neighborhoods including Little Havana; these grassroots entities were meant to address public safety, code enforcement and other neighborhood-based issues (CMPBZD 1993, MDPL, 21; Feldman and Jolivet 2014). The Little Havana NET Office occupied a trailer parked across the street from Maximo Gomez Park; it included a NET Administrator, police officers, code enforcement inspectors and “Neighborhood Resource” personnel. The NET was part of a broader “action plan” prepared by the city and groups like the Little Havana Development Authority (LHDA), Latin Chamber of

Commerce (CAMACOL) and Latin Quarter Association (LQA) in 1993. For the “safety of the commercial, residential areas and city parks” and improvements to the neighborhood’s “safety, image and police visibility,” it recommended “police surveillance,” police sweeps, and various forms of surveillance, including crime watches, described as “the active involvement” of residents, property owners and merchants in reporting crime (CMPBZD 1993, MDPL, 78).

The plan also recommended a mounted patrol, which worked closely with the Little Havana NET. On his horse, Officer Manuel (Manny) Gomez began surveillance of Calle Ocho in 1990, and by 1992 had already made 247 arrests: an average of ten arrests a day (Grenier and Moebius 2015). When I interviewed Gomez and former Little Havana NET administrator Pablo Canton (Dec. 6, 2017), both emphasized the importance of the NET’s team. Gomez believed in “doing what he had to do” to “make the streets safe”:

Every time we tried to do something it was stopped by here, stopped by there. We used to do it anyway...Pablo Canton used to say, “Don’t worry about it, we’ll see what happens then.” We used to do things that technically we weren’t supposed to do. We did our own Code Enforcement, we worked to make this! We had to break rules! I repeat it. We had to break rules, or all of this would not have been done.

Gomez and Canton also described forced evictions, made possible by threatening to take property owners to the Nuisance Abatement Board and “shut them down” if they did not evict tenants they had profiled as drug dealers (Pablo Canton, interviewed Dec. 6, 2017). They hinted at the use of forced entry (without a search warrant): “We would go and take care of the problem! Walk in the door! No, I’m not going to say that. Knocks on the door, the door is open, we went in, drugs were all over the place, and we arrest (Pablo Canton, interviewed Dec. 6, 2017).

These descriptions of police and code enforcement practices in Little Havana reveal the “comfort” of white male Cuban emigres in the realm of the il/legal (Nordstrom 2007): full possession of whiteness meant they could always access “gaps in the law.” Like Cuban emigre terrorists and the “Pirates in Blue” (Mancini 1996) (many of whom served no prison time), they were exercising what Foucault (1975, 87) calls the *illegality of rights* reserved for the bourgeoisie: “the possibility of getting round its own regulations and its own laws, of ensuring for itself an immense sector of economic circulation by a skillful manipulation of gaps in the law—gaps that were foreseen by its silence, or opened up by *de facto* tolerance.” CRT scholars describe these “rights” as benefits of white supremacy, however. As Mills (1997, 56) explains, when Othered bodies are imagined as “subpersons,” or as not fully human, “it is possible to get away with doing things to subpersons that one could not do to persons, because they do not have the same rights as persons.” Likewise, Cheryl Harris (1993, 1745) points to the role of The Naturalization Act of 1790 in formalizing “gaps in the law.” The 1780 law restricted citizenship to persons who had lived in the United States for at least two years, could prove their good character in court, and who were “white” (1744). As she explains:

The inherent contradiction between the bondage of Blacks and republican rhetoric that championed the freedom of all men was resolved by positing that Blacks were different. The laws did not mandate that Blacks be accorded equality under the law because nature --not man, not power, not violence--had determined their degraded status. Rights were for those who had the capacity to exercise them, a capacity denoted by racial identity. This conception of rights was contingent on race--on whether one could claim whiteness--a form of property. This articulation of rights that were contingent on property ownership. (Harris 1993, 1745)

Little Havana’s “cleanup program” thus also involved a “cleaning up” of any messiness involved in doing what was perceived as necessary. The collaboration between

merchants and police, who together identified and targeted “vagrants” deserving of arrest, stimulated feelings of solidarity (Feldman and Jolivet 2014). Canton praised Gomez’s ability to profile “strangers” (Pablo Canton, interviewed Dec. 6, 2017):

Manny was great. Manny would say “give me ten push-ups.” He cleaned that whole area. Manny was pretty good in that. Because he identified, he knew who was who. He was too many years in there; everybody knew each other. So any stranger, you could tell right away. So the police was very much helping quite a bit. The criminals would disappear when he would come over. Because they knew Manny would take care of ‘em. Just him, patrolling this area...they were picked up. They were taken to jail.

After about a year and a half, he said they “cleaned up” Calle Ocho. Forcing Mariels to do push-ups on the sidewalk was itself a kind of ritualized punishment: an embodied way to “remember” the authority of white elites, but one done publicly, so every witness would remember, too.

The Afro-Cuban owner of a cigar shop in the district, Cristobal Mena, described the behavior of the police as “racial profiling, public humiliation, and endangerment,” as when a mounted officer would walk his horse into pedestrians intentionally. When I asked why victims did not file a complaint, he said they were afraid. They didn’t speak English, they didn’t understand their legal rights, and they had no idea where to go or what to do. They were also afraid of deportation or retribution, “‘cause back in the country where we are coming from, there is no right, so we believe that we have no right here, neither, you know” (Cristobal Mena, interviewed June 22, 2017). Racial profiling affected the very way black people moved when they were in Little Havana. Police would tell Afro-Cubans in the district, “I don’t want to see you guys here,” said Mena. “When you walk down the street, they look at you bad,” remarked an Afro-Cuban resident of Little Havana, describing her treatment by white Cubans (Goldfarb June 30,

1991). She was only able to rent in the neighborhood because a white friend “stood in” for her; otherwise, every property she visited (after confirming by phone its availability) was “suddenly” rented.

The use of a “stand-in” white or passing body to rent property in Little Havana was not uncommon (Lazaro [pseudonym], interviewed Oct. 27, 2017). It reveals the ways in which blacks in Little Havana used a “tricking of the border guards” (Mahtani 2002) to get around practices of exclusion. The “trick” involved temporary “possession” of a white body to use as one’s substitute—thus harnessing the “white magic” of this body’s white privilege to access the needed lease. Relationships with white friends, family members, or other allies willing to act in these roles helped subvert the Racial Contract (Mills 1997).

Blacks in Little Havana also mobilized Afro-Cuban spiritual practices as a form of resistance, as revealed in one of the stories shared by Pablo Canton and Manuel Gomez (interviewed Dec. 6, 2017). One of the places they entered, which they called a “crack house,” used to sit near Maximo Gomez Park.⁷⁵ Police officers, joined by Canton, entered the house (it is unclear whether or not they had a search warrant) and searched for drugs. Inside, they found an altar with offerings of fruit (for the Orishas) and a cauldron (a consecrated cauldron used for Palo rituals). They arrested the Afro-Cuban woman who lived there and took group photos of the officers and the “prizes” they had found. Canton said it was common to take and share these types of photographs. Photos of arrests, I

⁷⁵ It has since been torn down, replaced by a parking lot.

contend, functioned as memorials of Reconquista, as did the Latin Quarter itself, “cleaned up” of marked bodies.

While listening to this story, however, retired Officer Gomez jumped in with an important detail: “She had my pictures in there, in the pot!” he exclaimed. In other words, the Santera/Palera⁷⁶ now in handcuffs had likely asked a spirit to hunt Gomez, which may well have unsettled the officers who encountered the prenda. Afro-Cubans had their own forms of documentation, their own forms of “remembering,” and their own ritualized ways of acting on memory in ways that subverted the authority of whites (Ochoa 2010; Beliso-De Jesús 2014; Johnson 2014).

Officers asserted the state’s ownership over her body, ritually “possessing” and punishing her and commemorating the act of possession with the photos they circulated (Foucault 1975). She had photos of the officers, too, however. She had “black magic” and access to “black warrior” spirits of the dead. When Gomez fell off his horse in 2001, causing severe injuries and preventing him from returning to work, some speculated that it was the work of these avenging spirits, and the story itself still circulates in Little Havana as public memory of the “power of blacks” (Cristobal Mena, interviewed June 22, 2017; Ochoa 2010; Grenier and Moebius 2015).

As I was listening to this story, I realized that I had heard about this Afro-Cuban woman from another Afro-Cuban woman who knows her very well, and who told me that she would invite tourists into her home, talk to them about Santería, and serve them plates of homemade beans and rice. I have not found a written account of this Santera and

⁷⁶ Practitioner of both Santería and Palo.

her services to tourists; until the writing of this dissertation, her story has been excluded from official archives. Her story points to the ways in which Afro-Cubans found ways to share their histories in touristic settings (McKittrick 2011; Trouillot 1995; Matory 2009).

Like lynching, however, the public disciplining of black bodies—and the success in getting them to “disappear”—fostered the loyalty (and solidarity) of white merchants and police: a civic celebration of the district’s successful *blanqueamiento* (Berrey 2015; Markovitz 2004; Arnold 2009). Police, code enforcers, merchants and elites proved their whiteness (and solidarity with Anglos) through everyday performances in the district and shared roles of surveillance, reporting and enforcement (see Figure 14) (Berrey 2015; Stoler 1995; Low 2009b). Moreover, as Feldman and Jolivet (2014) document, even Central Americans residents were recruited to assist in surveillance. These practices echoed those of Jim Crow as well as “whitening through anti-blackness” efforts of European immigrant groups in the U.S. (Orsi 1999; Roediger 2005; Rand 2005; Priestley 2007).



Figure 14: Longtime Cuban restaurant in the heritage district. July 29, 2016. Photo by author.

On the anniversary of Maceo’s death in 1989, more than three hundred people (mostly Cubans and Columbians) had gathered in the Latin Quarter to rally for white

Columbian-born police officer William Lozano, who had just been convicted of homicide for the deaths of two black men on January 16th, 1989 (Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day). The shooting by Lozano had sparked three days of rioting in Overtown, resulting in one death and \$1 million in damage. At the Little Havana rally for Lozano, one person's sign read: "Dec. 7, 1989: A Day of Infamy for Law Enforcement in Florida." For weeks, signs posted in the windows of Calle Ocho businesses proclaimed Lozano's "100 Percent" innocence (despite the testimony of five eyewitnesses) and "Where would you be without police?" in both Spanish and English.

Speaking to the crowd at his rally, Lozano said he was fighting for his job, for justice, and for every single law enforcement officer risking his life in Miami ("Lozano," Wolfson Archives; "Miami Rallies" Dec. 10, 1989; Ovalle Dec. 8, 2014). In 1993, Lozano's conviction was overturned in appeals court. Responding to the ruling, David Honig of the NAACP remarked (Bell May 30, 1993):

Economically, black people are probably where white people were in 1930; politically, where they were in 1960. But in terms of criminal justice, they're back in 1860. It's lynch law.

Justice and Tourism

Cases like the Lozano shooting were just one contributing factor to rifts between African Americans and Cubans in the 1990s: rifts that would have later impacts on Little Havana's heritage district. "Mandela, Welcome to Miami, Home of Apartheid" said one of the signs held by supporters of Nelson Mandela when the world leader visited Miami in 1990 (Olson and Olson 1996, 107; Portes and Stepick 1993, 142). Mandela was visiting Miami Beach to give a speech at a national conference, one of many stops on his

national tour following his release from prison in South Africa. About three thousand supporters, most of them black, welcomed the world leader at the Miami Beach Convention Center (Olson and Olson 1996, 107; Portes and Stepick 1993, 142).

They were very angry, however, because the Cuban American mayors of Miami, Hialeah Gardens, Sweetwater, West Miami and Hialeah had signed a letter unwelcoming Mandela due to his words of appreciation for Fidel Castro (Portes and Stepick 1993, 142).⁷⁷ No elected official—including African American Commissioner Miller Dawkins—greeted the renowned leader or gave him a proclamation of honor (Olson and Olson 1996, 107; Portes and Stepick 1993, 142). Cuban emigre leaders insisted that their rejection had nothing to do with Mandela being black (Croucher 1997, 152). A smaller crowd of about three hundred people “unwelcoming” Mandela stood in front of the convention center, too, most of them Cuban emigres. Some held signs accusing him of being a terrorist. Others held overtly racist signs.⁷⁸

The snub of Mandela by local officials and the protests against his visit further exacerbated the resentment and anger of African Americans towards Miami’s Cuban community. Black leaders condemned Cuban discrimination against blacks, Cuban dominance of the local economy and government, and Cuban abuses of political power against blacks (Olson and Olson 1996, 107; Portes and Stepick 1993, 142). Black elected

⁷⁷ Castro supported the African National Congress after it was banned in South Africa in 1960.

⁷⁸ In 1990, president George Bush ordered the release of Orlando Bosch from prison, despite a Justice Department recommendation to the contrary. Many in Miami’s Cuban community celebrated the news; some asked why it had taken so long. According to acting associate Attorney General Joe Whitley, “Orlando Bosch has for more than 30 years been resolute and unwavering in his advocacy of terrorist violence...He has repeatedly expressed and demonstrated a willingness to cause indiscriminate injury and death...The conclusion is inescapable that it would be prejudicial to the public interest for the United States to provide a safe haven for Bosch.” See Hancock June 24, 1989; Roman and Sevsec July 18, 1990.

officials remained silent. According to black attorney H.T. Smith, black officials feared a political backlash from Cuban and Jewish colleagues and constituents (Croucher 148; Grenier and Perez 2003, 79). Cuban emigres had financed Dawkins' re-election campaign and most of his supporters were now Cuban American voters, not black voters (Croucher 1997, 149).

H.T. Smith, leading a group of black professionals, launched a Boycott Coalition. They asked event planners and conventioners to stay out of Miami until the mayors apologized to Mandela and agreed to a set of demands, including increased business and employment opportunities for blacks in the tourism and hospitality industry, voting reforms, a review of U.S. immigration policy towards Haitians, and an investigation into anti-black police violence (Croucher 1997, 154; Grenier and Perez 2003, 80; Portes and Stepick, 1993, 141; Lewis Sept. 1991, 22).⁷⁹ Although most mayors never apologized, fearful that Spanish radio stations or exile newspapers would portray them as disloyal (Portes and Stepick 1993, 141, 177), the boycott began to work. At least thirteen national organizations canceled their conventions in the city (Ibid.).

As Sheila Croucher (1997, 154) notes, the boycott contributed to political and social solidarity among blacks who realized the potential of the boycott as a tool for political bargaining. After three years, the boycott finally ended in 1993, having cost the city an estimated \$60 million in lost business. Local leaders agreed to a set of twenty goals for increasing racial equity in Miami's tourism and hospitality industry, and Miami's Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau (GMCVB) launched the Visitor Industry Human

⁷⁹ Prior to the boycott, police had beaten dozens Haitian demonstrators who were peacefully protesting the mistreatment of a Haitian customer at a Cuban-owned store.

Resource Development Council to help achieve these goals. A nonprofit entity, it would eventually lead to the formation of the Multicultural and Heritage Tourism department within the GMCVB in the 2010s (Bell May 30, 1993; “About Us,” GMCVB; Carole Ann Taylor, interviewed May 26, 2017).

Cuban leaders responded to the black boycott by pointing to racist practices in Cuba’s tourism industry and by denying the presence of racism within Miami’s Cuban community. When Jorge Mas Canosa (2003, 1639) spoke to the Commission on Human Rights at the United Nations (in Geneva) in 1993, he compared the Cuban government’s treatment of blacks to South African apartheid, mentioning the racial profiling that prevented black Cubans from entering touristic restaurants and resorts (Ibid.). Blacks had rights to participate in government and in the social welfare of Cuba, he argued, and any *future* system needed to bring equal opportunities and equality to all Cubans regardless of religion, race or color of skin (1640). “The Castro government cannot continue to say that the white Cubans in Miami and the Cubans in exile discriminate against blacks and that we don’t want blacks and that here in Miami they throw blacks to the dogs,” he insisted, “[because that is] something that millions of Cubans visiting Miami, and that Miami Cubans know is a flat lie” (Canosa 2004, 1641). The testimonies of Little Havana’s River Cops, however, had proved otherwise.

Bones, Bodies and Lineages in Black and White

A 50-foot ceiba (kapok) tree stands in Cuban Memorial Park—the space of remembering (see Figure 15). Easily visible from Calle Ocho, it is itself a monument, and a site where people produce many different kinds of memories that have become linked to racial

narratives. In 1981, famed (white) Cuban artist Ana Mendieta created an artwork on the bark of the tree. Mixing the “human remains” of hair (her own and clippings gathered from two nearby beauty shops) with a black paste, she traced the silhouette of a man on the west-facing side of the ceiba, near its base (Martin Oct. 1, 1995). Inspired by Afro-Cuban religion but not a practitioner herself, she called it “Ceiba Fetish.”



Figure 15: Milagrosa/Madonna in front of ceiba (kapok) tree, Cuban Memorial Park. Photo by the author.

Mendieta was delighted when she noticed the offerings left at the base of the ceiba, including sacrificed animals like chickens and roosters; she believed her artwork had “activated” the tree for Santeria practitioners (Martin Oct. 1, 1995; Diaz Casas 2014; Morales 2005). Nonetheless, practitioners criticized Mendieta for using the sacred tree for non-religious purposes. Moreover, it’s likely the *ebbos* (sacrifices) Mendieta noticed simply reflected the significant increase in local practitioners following the Mariel boatlift a year earlier (Bongiovanni 2013; Lammoglia 2001). In 1985, Mendieta fell to

her death from the 34th-floor window of her husband's New York apartment. He was tried for murder, but without enough evidence to convict him, he was found not guilty (Martin 1995). For those unfamiliar with Afro-Cuban religions, her death may have seemed another sacrifice offered to the ceiba, as if a commemorative white woman had been “punished” for coming too close to “black magic” embodied in the Ceiba *as* fetish.

The ceiba has long served as a symbol of death, life and race in Latin America. Spanish conquistadors used the ceiba to naturalize links between central plazas and government, law and Christian authority, well aware of its spiritual and symbolic significance to indigenous peoples (Niell 2015, 105). In popular Cuban Catholicism, and among rural Cubans, the tree became recognized as the *árbol santísimo*, the seat of the Virgin Mary (Martínez Betancourt and Vásquez-Dávila 1983, 325; Hartman 2011, 24); ethnographer Lydia Cabrera ([1981] 2009) suggested the possibility of a *culto a la ceiba* (a ceiba cult) in Cuba. Spanish colonists also recognized the ceiba's significance to enslaved and free blacks (and non-black Cuban peasants), and whipped slaves at the ceibas that stood in central plazas (Niell 2015, 106).

In Afro-Cuban religious traditions, the tree is extremely sacred: a channel of death and regeneration (Martínez Betancourt and Vásquez-Dávila 1983, 323-324). Among practitioners of Palo-Monte, it is referred to as a mother, an altar, and a micro-cosmos, manifesting spiritual power in the material realm (Hartman 2011, 26; Martínez Betancourt and Vásquez-Dávila 1983, 321-322). Believers in Santería consider the ceiba a “sacred place” and consider it home to Orishas such as Changó and Aggayú. They ask for spiritual favors by leaving offerings at its base (Martínez Betancourt and Vásquez-Dávila 1983, 322-323). According to Abakuá legend, the ceiba is a mother and embodies

the birth of Abakuá; members use it for initiation ceremonies (Miller 2009, 53-54). The tree is a witness of life and death; it is a portal through which spirits of the dead can help the still living. The ceiba is thus a convergence of pathways, a commemorative body, a ceremonial space, and a home.

In the early 1990s, a white marble statue of a mother holding her infant child was re-installed in front of the ceiba tree in Cuban Memorial Park (see Figure 15). Originally erected in Watson Park on the MacArthur Causeway, the statue was first unveiled on Mother's Day in 1959 (after two years in a warehouse): a donation of Caballeros de la Luz Lodge 58, a non-religious "fraternal organization of Latin Americans and Spanish-speaking non-Latins" ("Miami Given 'Mother' Monument," May 9, 1959). A plaque at its base, dated 1957, said it honored mothers. Many believed it was an image of the Blessed Mary (and Our Lady of Charity, specifically) (Yanez Nov. 10, 1986; Menendez Dec. 2, 1993).⁸⁰ Nonetheless, the Archdiocese of Miami said the Catholic church had never blessed the statue (Cotayo April 23, 1999).

Others, however, believed the statue represented Cuba's "La Milagrosa" ("the Miracle Woman"), a legendary mother figure entombed in Havana's Colon Cemetery.⁸¹ Local residents believed Little Havana's Madonna/Milagrosa brought miracles, too, and left pacifiers, baby bottles, and other baby items as offerings, as occurs at the Milagrosa tomb in Havana (Cotayo April 23, 1999; Joe Caraballo, interviewed Nov, 17, 2017; Alida

⁸⁰ Curiously, Mendieta died on September 8th, the feast day of Our Lady of Charity.

⁸¹ According to legend, Amelia Goyri died in childbirth and was buried along with her child. When her devoted husband returned to her tomb to collect her remains, her body was perfectly preserved and she held her baby in her arms, even though she had been buried, per tradition, with the infant between her legs. For years since, and to this day, women seeking to conceive a child visit the tomb and leave offerings to "La Milagrosa," asking her to grant them a miracle baby, too.

Rosa Cardo, interviewed July 7, 2017). Just as people left flowers, candles and other offerings at the base of the ceiba, people also left offerings at the base of the Madonna/Milagrosa: usually bouquets or vases of flowers or tall, glass-encased religious candles. Despite the ambiguity of the statue's identity, however, Florida's *Cuban Heritage Trail* guidebook (Pérez and Ennemoser circa 1996, 24) described the statue as a Madonna "representing the typical Cuban family's reverence of motherhood and deep devotion to the Virgin Mary." Cast in white marble, the statue was incorporated into Little Havana tour and guidebook narratives as "white" Catholicism and a whitened "mother of the nation" in contrast with the ceiba: the raw, natural, "primitive" site of Africanity and bloody animal sacrifice.

The positioning of the statue next to the ceiba tree also connected it in time and space to one of Havana's oldest monuments: El Templete, an imitation Greco-Roman temple located on the east side of Havana's oldest plaza, the Plaza de Armas (Plaza of Arms). According to legend, the bones of Columbus were buried at the site of El Templete after their delivery from the Dominican Republic and before their transfer to the Havana Cathedral (Reynolds 1906, 29; Linares 1899, 122-123). The memorialization of Columbus—and the reburial of his remains—gave permanence to ideas of whiteness penetrating and moving across multiple territories, "whitening" lineages and affirming a transnational solidarity of whiteness (Ahmed 2007; Allen 2002). In 1917 (Oct. 13), the *Miami Herald* published "What the World Owes Columbus, a two-page article described an international battle over the relics of Columbus. Cuban, Italian and Spanish officials all claimed to have the official remains of the explorer ("Let Him Rest," July 13, 1913).

In the U.S., decades earlier, various ethnic groups had engaged in their own “battle” to stake a claim on Columbus’s body, as documented by Michel-Rolph Trouillot (1995). After Italian-Americans began to celebrate Columbus in the mid-1800s, Spanish-Americans followed suit and soon Irish-Americans laid their own claim to Columbus through their membership in the Knights of Columbus, a fraternal society for Catholic males founded in 1881. Manifesting the white, Catholic, European body of Columbus within themselves helped “whiten” immigrants once considered non-white in the U.S. Census (Trouillot 1995, 122-123; Roediger 2005).

In Spain, political leaders embraced the 1893 quadricentennial for Columbus (and the scenario of Discovery) as an opportunity to showcase national and imperialist regeneration. They spent years preparing for a yearlong series of events and celebrations leading up to the anniversary; numerous lectures and publications also helped to valorize scenarios of Discovery and Conquest. In Cuba, the Spanish Crown used new and refurbished memorials and commemorations of Columbus to strengthen its ties with the colony and with possible North American investors (Trouillot 1995, 125-126).

In the early twentieth century, the Cuban republic promoted two sites in particular to tourists interested in Columbus: The Havana cathedral and El Temple, which postcards and travel ephemera described as the “Christopher Columbus Cathedral” and “Columbus Memorial Chapel” (Reynold 1906, 27, 85; “Habana: El Temple,” “HABANA. Columbus Memorial Chapel,” “Habana: Columbus Memorial Chapel.” Personal Collection).

Engraved in stone on a wall of the cathedral, where his remains were said to be entombed, a portrait of Columbus was paired with an inscription (Reynold 1906, 27, 85):

Oh, rest thou, image of the great Colon,
A thousand centuries remain guarded in the urn,
And in the memory of our nation.
-- The City of Habana to C. Colon, October 12, 1892

The ode suggested that Columbus, like an urn, protected bloodlines that extended back in time—over a thousand years—linking the racially mixed Cuba to European heritage.

Columbus was the saint to call upon for *limpieza de sangre*. He connected the past with the future, and Cuba with Spain and the U.S.⁸²

With architectural gestures towards Christian and European heritage, El Templete linked elite identities to Columbus, the city, and imaginations of the “whitest” possible blood lineage. Yet, as art historian Paul Niell (2015, 20) explains, it also symbolized the simultaneous disinheritance of people “lower” in hierarchies of racial mixings (*castas*)—and especially people of African descent. Inside the neoclassical structure, three wall-size paintings by Jean-Baptiste Vermay narrate the story (myths) of the site (and Havana/Cuba) with racial/spatial scenes and moments that repeat the scenario of conquest. “The First Cabildo” depicts conquistadors founding Havana under a sprawling ceiba tree, the Indians looking on in stooped and submissive positions. In the second painting, titled “The First Mass” (see Figure 16), a priest holds the city’s first Christian Mass under a ceiba, and blacks and Indians are again in positions of submission.⁸³ The third painting (Figure 17), covering the right wall of the temple, commemorates the 1828

⁸² The cathedral also included a Columbus Monument (the “Timba Monumento de Colon”), too. The massive, granite pedestal supported four male figures, one on each corner, each with a crown and religious vestments marked with the symbols of Castile and León. On their shoulders they supported a marble bier holding a marble coffin. See Norton 1900, 108-109.

⁸³ Neither Havana historian Emilio Roig de Leuchsenring (1957, 155-160) nor art historian Paul Niell (2015, 102) have found any evidence that either “The First Cabildo” or “The First Mass” actually took place at the foot of a ceiba tree.

“Inauguration of El Templete.” In this last painting, Havana’s bishop dedicates the monument, surrounded by Spanish royalty, officials and members of the city’s elite (and the artist Vermay).



Figure 16: “La Primera Misa” painting at El Templete. Photo by the author.

Niell (2015) contends that the paintings illustrate racial hierarchy and gradual *blanqueamiento* through time: a memorialization of black and brown bodies “lower” than white bodies. The pillar depicted in the painting still stands in front of El Templete, installed in 1754 to commemorate the ceiba tree it replaced. Ceibas were re-planted next to the pillar and El Templete; tour guides said they were “offspring” of the “original ceiba tree” that Columbus encountered (“Cuban Shrine” 1931). Atop the pillar, a Madonna and child (La Virgen del Pilar, affiliated with Spain) embodied in stone looks across the plaza. In Cuban Memorial Park, the white marble “Madonna” also stands in front of a ceiba. She too looks across the park (originally called a plaza), and towards the gun-toting Tony Izquierdo and the Brigade 2506 Torch: Little Havana’s own “Plaza of Arms.”

“Years, months, and dates present history as part of the natural cycles of the world,” writes Michel-Rolph Trouillot (1995, 116). “By packaging events within temporal sequences, commemorations adorn the past with certainty: the proof of the happening is in the cyclical inevitability of its celebration.” Like the “patriotic almanac” and calendars mentioned in Chapter three, the three paintings/moments at Templete punctuate “history” with whiteness and Christianity, separating the past from the present (and future) and yet re-connecting scenes into constantly repeating scenarios of Discovery, Conquest and Reconquista—and racial order. Cuban Memorial Park, and the juxtapositions of its monuments, made the repetition of scenes and scenarios ever more real, especially because of the familiarity of its dead and living bodies (and scenarios). At the 1828 inauguration of El Templete, a marble bust of Columbus was added to the base of the pillar (Niell 2015, 9, 14).⁸⁴



Figure 17: Painting of the inauguration of El Templete. Photo by the author.

⁸⁴ The bust was considered such an accurate portrayal of Columbus that American painter John Vanderlyn studied it closely while on a visit to Havana. He used it as a model for his famous painting, “Landing of Columbus,” which was installed in the rotunda of the U.S. Capitol in Washington, DC by 1847. The portrait appeared on a U.S. postage stamp first in 1869 and on one of the nation’s first commemorative stamps, issued in 1893, during the Columbian Exposition. See Reynolds 1906, 29; “Architect of the Capitol” n.d.).

In 1995, Miami's Knights of Columbus added its own monument to Little Havana's version of the Plaza of Arms: Cuban Memorial Park. On May 20th, Cuban Independence Day, Miami Bishop Agustin Roman of the Catholic Archdiocese dedicated the Knights of Columbus monument (see Figure 18) at a civic ceremony joined by Miami's Cuban elite and counterrevolutionaries (Menendez Dec. 2, 1993), as if repeating the scenario of El Temple's commemoration depicted in the third of its three paintings.

The monument consists of an eight-foot-high concrete wall with an engraved white marble plaque. On the plaque, the Knights of Columbus emblem and the Cuban coat of arms flank a central image of Our Lady of Charity hovering over the three sailors; against the white marble background, every figure appears white. Below, the text reads (translated from Spanish): "To the martyrs who have shed their blood for the liberty of Cuba in the centennial of the apostle Jose Martí's death, 1895 to 1995." The dedication, like the Columbus engraving in Havana ensuring that a "thousand centuries remain guarded in the urn," promised the continuity of the past and the present through blood, and the permanent possession of whiteness in bodies and bloodlines, spaces and times. Columbus had become linked to Martí, a whitened Our Lady of Charity, and contemporary Cuban emigre counterrevolutionaries. Discovery and Conquest were linked to Cuba's wars for independence and acts of Cuban emigre terrorism. The shedding of blood, like the bloody sacrifices at the base of the ceiba tree, symbolized both death and the continuity of the body politic. Yet the whiteness concretized in the monument's images, text and "white marble" signified "liberty" as whiteness repeating through endless cycles of conquest.



Figure 4: Knights of Columbus monument in Cuban Memorial Park. Photo by the author.

In 1992, a very pink-hued Columbus arrived in Little Havana's heritage district, in the Continental National Bank calendar's October scenario--celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month and the Columbus Quincentenary (CHC). He was kneeling before his own star on what was then called the Hispanic Walkway of Stars (Staub Oct. 3, 1992) (see Figure 19), surrounded by a crowd of white Cubans and a single black man. The black (Cuban) man is the only person in the crowd to fold both arms across his chest, in a seeming gesture of protection, closing himself off from the others.



Figure 5: Image from Continental National Bank calendar, Oct. 1992. Personal collection of author.

While Calle Ocho's Hispanic Walkway of the Stars did not actually include a star for Columbus, it did highlight celebrities described as Hispanic, including Gloria Estefan, Maria Conchita Alonso and Julio Iglesias (Staub Oct. 3, 1992).

Columbus appears again during Hispanic Heritage Month for the 1993 calendar (CHC), this time in Little Havana's Maximo Gomez Park (Domino Park) (see Figure 20). Columbus sits at a domino table in the park. He smiles as he holds one the "bones" in his hand; he is about to slap it down and win the game. An Afro-Cuban man — the only man in a suit and tie—sits next to Columbus, and thus on the opposing team. Both ends of the line of domino tiles (*fichas*) on the table end with four, which means Columbus must have a four (because he is about to win); we can see that the two other white players also have *fichas* with fours. Thus, every white player can add to the intersecting lines of dominos, making either line extend.

The black player, in contrast, is left with a single 5-5 domino, which means he is completely stuck: he cannot continue "his line." The decima reads:

*Alguien a Colón soñó / Someone dreamed of Columbus
en la Calle Ocho y dijo / on Calle Ocho and said
"-Lo tendrá cual punto fijo / "He will have a fixed spot
el Parque del Domino!" / in Domino Park!"
En decima digo yo / In decima I say
que Cristobal no perdona, / that Christopher (Columbus) does not pardon,
tapando toda intentona / covering all attempted plays
Y al "pegarse" el Navegante / and by "sticking it to him,"⁸⁵ the Navigator
aún mas que Gran Almirante, / even more than Grand Admiral,
¡Es el Rey de la Pollona! / Is the King of the Pollona!*

⁸⁵ "Pegarse" (literally "to stick" in this context means playing the last domino of the game, to win it (Posada Sept. 9, 2016).

The *pollona*, in Cuban-style dominos, is the “big hen,” and he who is “king” of the big hen is the rooster—the “very macho,” according to Miguel de la Torre (2003). In dominos, this expression means that the losing team scored zero points (even the Afro-Cuban’s white partner had a four, however) (“Las 10 Frases” n.d.). In this commemoration of racial/spatial order, the black man (regardless of how well dressed) is on “the other team” and is left out: his options are limited, and he cannot continue his lineage, symbolized by his “line” on the domino table. He is feminized, the conquered and “possessed” female hen: the conquered body and spatial territory.



Figure 20: Continental National Bank calendar (Oct. 1993). Miami Calendar Collection. Courtesy of the Cuban Heritage Collection, University of Miami Libraries, Coral Gables.

The bones (and commemorative body) of Columbus moved and circulated across local and national boundaries like his imagined “descendants.” They moved across domino tables, along Calle Ocho and into Cuban Memorial Park; back and forth between the suburbs, Little Havana, and the banking districts of downtown; and between Latin America, Miami and other parts of the world. They flowed back and forth through space and time, occasionally slapped down as if to proudly mark the extension of territory and

the extension of bloodlines. Like monuments, dominos are “bones” made “touchable,” accessible—and marketable.

Documenting Cuba’s War of Independence in the late 1890s, travel writer James Hyde Clark (1896, 38-39) exposed Havana’s active market in human relics. He describes a visit to Havana, when a sacristan of the Catholic church offered Clark’s American traveling companion a chance to see and kiss a bone of Columbus, which he claimed could help heal a sick man. The companion, unconvinced, whispered to the tour guide, “Between you and me, I don’t believe Christopher ever owned this bone. Why, man, they have a hip-bone or lock of hair or a couple of back teeth in every other church on the island, all belonging to Columbus! He is too badly scattered, see?”

Whose Bodies Gather Here?

Little Havana’s version of “memory mania” involved numerous private-public partnerships, urban redevelopment plans, implementation of the Latin Quarter design guidelines, and tourism initiatives: all part of the apparatus of racial ordering (Stoler 1995; McKittrick 2011). Dominican-born General Maximo Gomez had replaced General Antonio Maceo at the heritage district’s “Domino Club,” now called Maximo Gomez Park. The LHDA and the Cuban Sertoma Club installed a plaque for Gomez in 1989, and the Sertoma Club sponsored a four-page brochure about Gomez to distribute at the park. It included a portrait of Gomez and photos of the Gomez monument in Cuba, the Maximo Gomez Park sign, the plaque, and the players in the now-gated park (“Maximo Gomez” Weisberg Archive).

The brochure described Gomez as the “central military figure for the Cuban independence wars,” praising his “brilliant talents” and “feats on the battlefield.” It described Gomez as others had described Maceo in the years soon after Maceo’s death, even implying that Gomez had led the Protest of Baraguá (Ibid.; Foner 1997; Foner and Syme-Hastings 1970). Gomez was a popular figure for Alpha 66, too; in 1980 it had embarked on a large-scale terrorism campaign called “Plan Maximo Gomez,” which included recruiting Mariels stuck at the camps and offering them food and clothing in exchange for their services (Talleda 1995, 174). Meanwhile, the new bust of Antonio Maceo remained in Tony Lopez’s studio, gathering dust (Menendez Dec. 19, 1993). Symbolic repetitions helped construct new pasts—through brochures, calendars, parks and operational maneuvers, whether in the world of terrorism or in the everyday policing of the district itself.

In 1993, black men in suits (and one black woman) were beginning to appear on the wall of Maximo Gomez Park, however (see Figure 21). They were painted into a seventy-five-foot mural by a team of students and the Afro-Latino man who guided them: Oscar Thomas, Jr. The group portrait commemorated the thirty-three heads of state from across Latin America and the Caribbean who would be attending the hemispheric Summit of the Americas summit in Miami the following year (“Creating the Summit of the Americas Mural” 2018). The widely publicized three-day meeting culminated in a declaration with a list of goals in the areas of human rights, corruption, drugs, poverty and protecting the environment, including rights for minorities (among other groups), a condemnation of “terrorism in all its forms” and a “battle against the consumption, production, trafficking and distribution of illegal drugs, as well as against money laundering and the illicit

trafficking in arms and chemical precursors.” Another goal was to “eradicate poverty and discrimination in the hemisphere” (“First Summit of the Americas” 1994).

Leading up to the summit, a publicity campaign broadcast on local television showed a multi-racial mosaic of faces: it encouraged Miamians to “Go smile!” so that the visitors could “see what Miami is *really* about,” in a seeming effort to detract from the city’s racial tensions (Ibid.). The city also landscaped and manicured the areas where the leaders were scheduled to visit (Yoel Molina, interviewed Mar. 18, 2017). The idea for the mural emerged from a meeting between LHDA members Anthony Rivas, Lisa Martinez and Adele Rodriguez, and Oscar Herrera, a white Cuban graphic artist for the *Miami Herald* (Menendez Nov. 6, 1994). Herrera developed the design and layout for the wall, using photos sent to him by the assistants to each delegate. Thomas, Jr., a well-known Afro-Latino mural artist, transferred the design into a mural and began painting it.

Thomas, Jr. soon realized he would need the help of local high school students to complete the wall, especially since the LHDA had not paid either artist yet (Oscar Herrera, interviewed May 16, 2018). Students from Southwest Miami Senior High School did a bulk of the painting, guided by Thomas, Jr., who mixed the paint and made the final touches. In the final mural, a life-size, six-foot image of Bill Clinton dominates the center, flanked by other life-sized leaders. Since Fidel Castro was not invited to the summit, the artists commemorated Cuba in a separate space, next to the park’s entrance, with a Cuban coat of arms above a painted sign recognizing the LHDA and its numerous board members and staff, as well as other elected officials, including those who’d wanted to shut down the park in earlier years.



Figure 21: Section of Summit of the Americas Mural. Photo by the author.

As shared with me in an interview with his daughter, Dr. Tasha Thomas (July 3, 2017), Thomas grew up in Costa Rica, his mother an immigrant from Jamaica. He arrived in South Florida in 1980, the year of the boatlift, and was “discovered” by the owners of the only African American bookstore in Florida at the time, Miami’s Afro-In Books and Things. Soon he received commissions to create paintings and murals of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X and other famous black leaders. He became a well-known mural artist in Miami. Although hired to paint commercial murals for a company now called Viacom, he preferred to use his artwork to convey pressing social and political issues (Johnson Feb. 2, 1995). In the wake of police violence, he painted a sign in red and black and placed it outside of his studio: “NO JUSTICE FOR BLACKS,” it said in bold letters. Growing up, he had painted images of black leaders like Mandela and Marcus Garvey. In Miami, his daughter Tasha believes he was influenced by “pro black people” who inspired him to publicly embrace his African heritage. He proudly wore dashikis, an ankh around his neck, and other symbols of “black power.”

Thomas, like a trickster, reveled on his ability to move from one space to another, however, showing one side but not another, and then (surprise!) revealing another facet.

“He used everything to his advantage,” said Tasha Thomas, “He knew when to speak Spanish, and he knew when to not speak Spanish. He knew when to elevate his Jamaican accent, and when to tone it down and sound more American. And to a certain extent, I think the entire family does that.” According to Tasha Thomas:

He was very conscious about racial issues. Even within his own circle. Because I would be within the gallery, and you know, black people are coming in, and saying, “I hate Cubans on the job, and these Hispanics,” and I’m like, “You know we’re Hispanic, right?” So even within – it was almost like there was never a space for him. Like when he was hanging with rich white executives, when he was with poor people, he didn’t fit in, he was always on his own. Even within his own circle there was a clear disconnect, that I could see as a kid. Like I didn’t even know where he belonged.

Like the trickster, Thomas, Jr. existed in a crossroads space, performing identities as “African American,” “Afro-Latinx,” and “Afro-Caribbean,” as well as crossing socio-economic boundaries. “Little Havana,” remarked his daughter Tasha, “It’s like Liberty City. I mean the name in and of itself. It’s an inclusion and exclusion.” Who belongs in either place? Or neither place? “This is *our* people, this is for *us*, I don’t even know if the name is doing it justice. It is Little *HAVANA*,” she added.

LHDA never paid Oscar Herrera (interviewed May 16, 2018) or Oscar Thomas, Jr. Although Adele Rodriguez pleaded for the organization to pay the artists as promised, her fellow LHDA members told her the artists should appreciate the “publicity” (Ibid.). “We thought, these presidents will come here and then leave, and everyone will forget,” said LHDA executive director Anthony Rivas about the mural after its unveiling. “This wall will remain to remind us all our lives of this event, and it will make Domino Park even

more famous.” (Menendez Nov. 6, 1994).⁸⁶ The eleven black leaders still stare from the wall, unnamed.

Little Havana USA: The Making of History

By 1990, the City of Miami had made huge investments in Little Havana’s Latin Quarter. In 1974, it received a federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) with funds intended for Little Havana and other low to moderate income “Target Areas” of the city; the grant covered a nineteen-year period from 1974 through 1993 (City of Miami Planning, Building and Zoning Department [COMPBZD] 1993 MDPL). Development of a three-year “Neighborhood Plan” for Little Havana’s CDBG funds began in 1990, guided by the City of Miami Planning, Building and Zoning Department with “community input” from entities dominated by Cuban elites: the Little Havana NET, CAMACOL, LHDA, the Latin Quarter Association (LQA), a new East Little Havana Community Development Association (CDC) and a Little Havana Crime Prevention Sub-Council among them (Ibid., 2). The report referred to Little Havana exclusively as “La Pequeña Habana,” as if making permanent the area’s identity as a Hispanic (and Cuban) neighborhood.

The report emphasized the importance of the Latin Quarter as a “showcase of Hispanic culture,” and including renderings of a future heritage district where everyone appears white and middle to upper class (54, 60) (see Figure 13). Goals included enhancing the area’s “safety and image” and maintaining “the cultural values of the residents especially related to theaters and fine arts” (62-63), signifying the moral uplift

⁸⁶ Oscar Thomas, Jr. died in 1997 due to complications from diabetes. He was 41.

offered by “culture” coded as white or whitening. Among the allocations for the Latin Quarter included: \$624,726 for LHDA and its Latin Quarter plans; \$75,000 for the museum and headquarters of Brigade 2506; \$93,270 for the Latin Quarter Association; \$100,000 for improving the facades of retail businesses in the Latin Quarter; \$169,586 for Cuban Memorial Park; and \$28,281 for bathrooms at Maximo Gomez Park (85).

The report also emphasized the importance of tourism, referring to it as an “untapped resource” (56). Nonetheless, more than 150,000 visitors were already visiting the neighborhood annually, usually by bus tours or by car, and millions more attended the annual Calle Ocho Festival (Ibid., 56; Pérez and Ennemoser n.d., 24). In the late 1990s, city planner Jose Casanova received a grant to develop four different walking tours of Little Havana (Paul George, interviewed July 12, 2017). Bus tours of Little Havana typically began with lunch at the Cuban restaurant Versailles, an informal “headquarters” of white elite Cubanidad and popular meeting place for the hardline Cuban community (Ojito 2001). Versailles is located on Calle Ocho, close to the border of wealthy (and predominantly white) Coral Gables, and nearly ten blocks west of what the city considers the boundary of Little Havana, but tour guides described it as part of Little Havana (Martin May 1, 1994). Maximo Gomez Park was another stop: the gated park was now reserved for people fifty-five and older, excluding the majority of former players. The buses also stopped at a longtime fruit market close to Cuban Memorial Park (and run by a Brigade 2506 veteran and his family) and the El Credito cigar factory.

No people of color appear in the Miami section of the “Florida Cuban Heritage Trail,” produced by the Florida Department of State in the mid-1990s, distributed in numerous Florida locales for free, and still available online (Pérez and Ennemoser

@1996, 1); it focuses on the “contributions of Cubans and Cuban Americans to Florida.” The Miami section opens with the Cuban success story, linking Golden Exiles and other early cohorts (from “the 1950s and 60s”) to specific qualities (“upper and middle,” “educated and wealthy”). Next, it emphasizes their struggle through hardship, describing them as being “forced to give up” property, having to start their lives all over again, enduring a humbling experience, fighting in the Bay of Pigs invasion, and sustaining themselves with the dream of return. “Miami became their own Little Havana, their home away from home,” explain the authors, suggesting the expanded territory of Cubanidad. Lastly, the story concludes with a triumphal note: the announcement of conquest. “In less than 30 years, Miami was transformed from a vacation resort with a seasonal economy to a cosmopolitan city with a booming economy” (20).

In the heritage trail’s list of sites in Little Havana, even the “loyal black men” monumentalized in Cuban Memorial Park are transformed into “factualized fictions” (Pred 2004). Izquierdo becomes a hero of the Bay of Pigs invasion, although he never fought in the invasion. In the description of the Maceo monument, Maceo is credited for his participation in only one of the two major wars in which he fought. In contrast, the longer, biographical section on Dominican-born General Maximo Gomez acknowledges the full extent of his service and portrays him as “skilled” and not just courageous and willing to die (25). These forms memory-making used “formulas of silence” (Trouillot 95) and “factualized fictions” (Pred 2004) to erase the actual contributions of Afro-Cubans and invisibilize Little Havana’s actual residents (a quarter of whom were Nicaraguan), including Cubans who might be interpellated as “less-than-white” and those from post-1970 cohorts. Poor and working class Cubans and Central Americans, many of

them mestizo or black, lived in the seemingly “separate” area outside of the staging grounds for tourism: East Little Havana, an area repeatedly described as “deteriorating,” as if a part of a collective body that was rotting away and needed to be sacrificed (5, 15).

Civic elites dreamed up ideas for making “Little Havana, U.S.A.”, 4,000-square-foot open-air theme park envisioned as a landmark to tell “the story of Cuban Miami.” It would offer “all things Cuban,” described as coffee, rum, guayaberas, cafe Cubano, *lechón asado* (roast pork) and cha-cha-cha. Governor Lawton Chiles, U.S. Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, Emilio Estefan and Miami tourism officials were among those who praised the idea (Martin May 1, 1994). The Latin Quarter Association (LQA) had already gone ahead and created its own landmark in the heart of the heritage district. In 1996, more than a hundred people attended its inauguration of the tiny monument-building, just 15 feet long by 15 feet wide and located just steps away from Maximo Gomez Park (Domino Park). It honored the late Anglo mayor Steve Clark and the “first century of Miami,” according to the LQA, as 1996 marked the one hundredth anniversary of Miami’s founding (Ibid.).

Those also honored at the inauguration ceremony included Miami Commissioners J.L. Plummer and Willy Gort (former president of LHDA and a member of both CAMACOL and the Kiwanis Club of Little Havana), city administrator Cesar Odio, and mounted police officer Manuel Gomez, who received an honorific plaque. A mural of Gomez on his horse, next to a white Cuban boy and girl, covered the rear wall of the building, visible from the sidewalk. Another wall included photos depicting “the history of Calle Ocho” and a commemorative plaque dedicated to Clark (Guerra July 19, 1996). In his remarks during the ceremony, LQA executive director Oscar Rodriguez Fernandez

said, “We try to make this area a glass of champagne. There are no crazy people anymore, nor [whores], nor people who throw garbage in the street.” Next to the small building, the LQA had included a hitching rail so Manny could secure his famous horse and feed it hay, much like the hitching rails portrayed in the subtitled Western films screened at the nearby Tower Theater before it closed in 1984 (Ibid.). The white “glass of champagne” toasted the memories and the Reunion of cowboys and conquistadors.

Cuban Counterpoint: Jose Martí and Antonio Maceo

In 1991, the Jose Martí Post of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) (which had funded the original Maceo monument) celebrated its 20th anniversary. More than 500 people had attended the VFW’s anniversary dinner, held several weeks prior. Dr. Manolo Reyes, founder of the Jose Martí Post, told guests that it was chartered on May 16, 1971. “All of this started,” he explained, in Spanish, “when American Rough Riders and Cuban freedom fighters, under the direction of General Calixto Garcia, joined ranks to fight for the Cuban freedom in San Juan Hill, Oriente Province.” His narrative affirmed Anglo-Cuban solidarity and the “direction” of whiteness, symbolized by the hill where white American heroes are commemorated in a “black city” (Carlos-Drexler 2006; Mirabal 1998; Beidler 2013). Reyes said that Cuban veterans had named the post for Martí because he was “one of the most illustrious Cubans ever born,” recognized by both Cubans and U.S. Americans because “he too lived in exile in the U.S.” Martí was born and died “in slavery,” he said, implying the enslavement of both white and black bodies. Martí had “planted the seed of freedom” when he died (Moleda “Babalu Blog” Nov. 11,

2007). The abolitionist had become Martí--not Maceo--with Martí's body linked to the "freer of the slaves" Cespedes, in a repeating scenario of Emancipation.

Maceo was moving out of view; instead, fighting men owed Martí for the "seed of freedom": the genetic line of whiteness and white life planted after war, in an act of Reconquista. The "seed" of Martí was appearing well beyond the bounds of Little Havana, in fact. As David Rieff (1987, 50) writes, the abundance of Jose Martí images in Miami said "this is a Cuban town. Don't let the rest fool you." The hero of choice for commemoration had become Jose Martí. "I've done more Jose Martí's than I can count," said sculptor Tony Lopez. "I live off Jose Martí like the politicians. Whenever a Miami Cuban wants a Jose Martí, they think, let me call Tony" (Menendez July 4, 1997). Meanwhile, the replacement bust of Antonio Maceo remained in the studio of Tony Lopez. "No one's come to pick it up," said Lopez (Ibid.). In contrast, the Cuban government unveiled a 54-foot-high monument to Antonio Maceo (Cuba's largest sculpture) in the city of his birth, Santiago de Cuba, on October 14, 1991 (Lewis Dec. 28, 2016; Garateix Aug. 4, 1991).

A year after the VFW anniversary, with the bust of Maceo still sitting in Tony Lopez's studio, Acción Cubana unveiled the bronze statue of Tony Izquierdo in Cuban Memorial Park on May 28, 1992 (see Figure 22). It had taken years to raise the funds for the Izquierdo monument, which was now 11-feet-tall (including the base). Despite Casanova's public claims of fundraising for the statue (as of 1988, he'd raised \$18,000), all of the actual labor (except the bronzing) was done in kind; Lopez sculpted the statue for free (he said he would have charged \$30,000) ("Statue for a Warrior" May 29, 1992).

Acción Cubana also created a small, gated courtyard-like space that surrounded the pedestal (Ibid).



Figure 22: Statue of Nestor ("Tony") Izquierdo, Cuban Memorial Park. Photo by the author.

Four years before the unveiling, Karen Branch of *El Nuevo Herald* (Aug. 7, 1988) met with members of Acción Cubana at Cuban Memorial Park to ask them about the progress of the monument. Those who spoke to her seemed extremely nervous, she noted. They spoke quietly and cautiously, and none of them wanted to discuss Acción Cubana. “It’s too dangerous here,” said Osvaldo Diaz, who said he’d trained with Izquierdo in Guatemala. He began sweating and refused to reveal any additional details. Casanova whispered that communists would take advantage of them “if we said how many people belong to our group.”

Acción Cubana was one of the major Cuban exile terrorist organizations operating out of Miami; it was founded by Orlando Bosch, who had also co-founded CORU (Marina Nov. 13, 1976). Its members said they were simply patriots fighting for liberty by any method available (“Testigo” Aug. 23, 1976; Russell Oct. 29, 1976). The most notorious act attributed to Acción Cubana was the October 6, 1976 bombing of Cubana Airlines flight CN-455 on its way from Barbados to Jamaica, killing all seventy-three

people on board (“Coordinacion de Organizaciones Revolucionarias Unidas,” “Bombing of Cubana Airlines,” FBI reports, National Security Archive). Time and time again, however, Acción Cubana leaders Orlando Bosch and Luis Posada Carriles were set free, exercising the *illegality of rights* (Foucault 1975, 87). President George H.W. Bush pardoned (of all U.S. charges) Acción Cubana leader Orlando Bosch, and in 2011, Luis Posada Carriles, “one of the most dangerous terrorists in recent history,” according to Peter Kornbluh (Jan. 5, 2011) of the National Security Archive, was also acquitted of all charges (“Jury Clears,” April 8, 2011; Douglas 2005).

At the unveiling, Casanova did not act afraid (“Statue for a Warrior, May 29, 1992). Posing for photographer Peter Portilla of the *Miami Herald* (Ibid.) he stood on the statue’s five-foot platform, his living body in front of Izquierdo’s body—now ensconced in bronze. Although a foot shorter than the life-size statue, Casanova imitated Izquierdo’s pose, which in turn is almost a mirror image of the original sculpture of Maceo—except that Izquierdo holds a machine gun, not a machete. In front of Casanova and Izquierdo stood Father Sergio Carrillo, a black Bay of Pigs veteran and Catholic priest,⁸⁷ reading from a Bible in a ritual of dedication (and consecration) of the monument. At the same time that he stood above the living black man (Carrillo), thus re-enacting racial order, Casanova appeared to be communing with the dead black man, Izquierdo, imitating his movements the way dancers embodying Oggún enact the warrior by imitating swings of a machete.

⁸⁷ Carrillo was ordained a decade earlier in Miami, in 1982: the first black priest in the Catholic Archdiocese of Miami (“Black Priest” May 10, 1982, 43).

The priest Carrillo, a living black man, was “Christening” the statue. At the same time, he could also be read as “harnessing” an imagined powerful “black warrior” spirit to the statue, seemingly transferring that spirit into Casanova himself so Casanova could in turn “possess” it. Just as Izquierdo had marked the forehead of young Orlando Gutiérrez-Boronat with the sign of the cross (de la Cruz 2014), Carrillo was letting Casanova receive his own “initiation.” Next to Izquierdo, Casanova was no longer the old white man whispering nervously to a reporter while looking over his shoulder. He stood proudly between the living black priest and the living “spirit” of Izquierdo, showing his fellow Cubans in Miami (and imagined “spies” for the Cuban government) that he too had the “spirit of the warrior,” he too mastered the dead black body of Izquierdo (and Maceo)--and the living body of the black priest, and he too was evidence that “we are not racist.” In fact, Casanova claimed that Acción Cubana was commemorating Izquierdo because of Miami’s racial tensions. “I wanted to show how the Cubans felt an enormous affection and respect for men of the black race like Izquierdo, who was one of the most beloved men among the exiles,” he said (Gutierrez May 29, 1992; “Statue for a Warrior,” May 29, 1992).

Just two weeks prior to the Izquierdo monument dedication, Vice Mayor Victor De Yurre proposed designating the day of Tony Cuesta’s death (Dec. 2nd) as “Cuban Exile Day,” just as Maceo’s day of death is used to mark the death of Cuban fighters. De Yurre proposed erecting a “double obelisk in honor of Antonio Maceo and Tony Cuesta” at Southwest 10th Street and 13th Avenue, in the same stretch of Cuban Memorial Park where Maceo’s monument is located (“Resolution 39235” May 13, 1993, Miami commission minutes, OCC).

During his lifetime, Tony Cuesta, who had delivered many speeches in front of the Maceo monument, prided himself on having given “freedom” to Tony Bryant, the African American hijacker (Voboril Nov. 1, 1980). Even in death, he was paired with Bryant: the photo accompanying Cuesta’s obituary in *Diario Las Americas* shows the two men side by side (Bryant wears a white button-down shirt and tie with his black beret). The photo was taken just before Bryant was sent to jail, and Cuesta was sent to the hospital, after their arrest for yet one another terrorist “mission” to Cuba (Cuesta died in the hospital) (Verrier Dec. 4, 1992). No double obelisk ever materialized, but clearly Cuban emigres wanted to continue “pairing” the body of Maceo (and his avatars) with “appropriate” white bodies, whether Jose Martí or Tony Cuesta. Bryant was Cuesta’s prize; his conquest.

The new bust for Maceo was finally installed on May 20, 1994 (Cuban Independence Day). White roses adorned the new, three-tiered, six-foot white pedestal, flanked by both Cuban and American flags. Another plaque, which is currently missing, proclaimed, “Maceo El Titan de Bronce, the Bronze Titan, who fought for Cuban independence.” “This hero of Cuba’s independence fought in more than 500 battles,” said Wilfredo Gonzalez, the chief operating officer of CAC-Ramsay, one of the sponsors of the bust. Maceo may have been reduced to a head, but the imagery of the machete, and of battle, ensured his association with the body and with battle: he remained the *cimarrón*, Oggún, the avenging spirit. He was the “Bronze Titan,” the fighter, his role as a general (and his first name) made invisible (Menendez May 19, 1994).

Commemorating Black Servility and Black Violence

The commemoration of black warriors and at the same time black servitude has a long history in Little Havana. The Tamiami Trail was created by groups of convict laborers, most of them black, working in chains: living monuments to slavery, performing in the scenario of Slavery (Goyanes Jan. 4, 2016). The practice of leasing convicts to plantations, private companies and industries began a year after the official end of Florida's Black Codes in 1867, initially as a stopgap measure to deal with prisons overflowing with former slaves and a growing fear of black crime, and despite attempts by the Freedman's Bureau to interfere with the legislation (Alexander 2010, 28; Ortiz 2005). The "recruitment process" began with the sheriff and major employers compiling a list of black male "prospects" and arresting them for petty charges such as vagrancy, gambling or disorderly conduct. Most arrests were made at "Saturday-night shindies" in places like "Colored Town" (Dunn 2013, 2016; George 1978; Fields 1996). Convict laborers were "owned" by the state but not the companies that leased them, so they were considered easily replaceable and often suffered in inhumane conditions described as worse than slavery (Oshinsky 2010, 104, 109; Blackmon 2012; Ortiz 2005).

In Cuba, convicts sentenced to chain gangs or death sentences could apply to work as executioners (Norton 1900, 80); in French New Orleans, slaves could earn income as executioners (Vidal 2016). In colonial Cuba, the most notorious executioner was Valentino Ruiz. Both he and his successor were Afro-Cuban (Norton 1900, 80). Executions took place by garroting: an iron collar slowly tightened to strangle the accused, evoking cries of horror among witnesses because of the slow and painful deaths (Hyde Clark 1896, 431). American travel writer Albert Norton claimed that Ruiz had

garroted fifty-seven people before his retirement; he also claimed that Ruiz had served as the “official executioner” of the notorious General Weyler, himself legendary for brutality (Norton 1900, 80). Ruiz represented the colonized black man “safe”—like Tony Izquierdo—because he killed on behalf of the Crown, and most of those he executed were black. Racial order was “made” through his body.

From April to August 1898, coinciding with the Spanish-Cuban-American war, the retired Ruiz became one of the most popular attractions at a regional version of the World’s Fair held in Omaha, Nebraska: The Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition. In a “Cuban village” on the fair’s Midway, Ruiz conducted daily mock executions with the garrot (Norton 1900, 78-79; Miller 2011, 244): propaganda aimed at building U.S. support for the war. Promoters called him “the strangler” and “the hangman”; one reporter called him “an inhuman monster, whose delight is in the shedding of human blood.” Other sources said he had executed hundreds of political prisoners (Miller 2011, 244).

Re-oriented for the purposes of U.S. imperialism and “whitening” efforts, Ruiz’s black body reinforced a racial divide between Spain and the U.S. Ruiz’s criminalized black body helped Cuban creole elites—especially those in favor of annexation—highlight their proximity to Anglo whiteness and thus their modernity. In the early twentieth century, prominent Latin American intellectuals depicted Anglo American whites, and not Spaniards, as embodiments of civilization. The influential scholar Domingo Faustino Sarmiento claimed that the “extermination” of “savages” in the U.S. explained why it was “today occupied by the Caucasian race, the most perfect, the most intelligent, most beautiful and most progressive of races that populate the earth” (as

quoted in Martinez-Echazabal 1998). Works by Sarmiento and other race scholars offered a scientific rationale for dramatic differences between white Cuban Creole elites, most of whom lived in urban centers and traveled frequently to the U.S., and Cubans in outlying regions who were illiterate and poor, and mulatto, black or mestizo (Pérez, Jr. 2013; Pérez Jr. 1999; Helg, 1990).

In the opening address of the Nebraska exposition's opening ceremony ("A History," Trans-Mississippi & International Exposition Digital Archive), called "Destiny of the Anglo-Saxon," Judge John Webster praised the "American nation" for its doctrine of "annexation and of conquest" of Cuba. He criticized Spain with language that valorized patriarchy, U.S. Imperialism and whiteness:

Spain heeded not his [America's] voice. She has not taken part with America in the grand work of civilization. She has clung to her old idols and her despotic empire. In this, the close of the nineteenth century, she carried to the beautiful island of Cuba the cruel and relentless warfare of the fourteenth century.

Webster also remarked that U.S. "Saxon civilization" protested "barbarism of the Middle Ages" (like the garrot) "transplanted" to Cuba by the Spanish as a legacy of violent Reconquista. He praised the U.S. for "our high standard of civilization, our love of liberty, our sympathy with suffering humanity."

The spectacle of the exposition re-affirmed associations of (Anglo) whiteness with liberty and blackness with brutality and criminality. Ruiz was an "old idol," and so too—more than a hundred years later--was Izquierdo. The convict laborers of the Tamiami Trail were "old idols" and so too were the Mariels stopped and frisked on Calle Ocho. The Spanish, the white Cuban annexionists, the "Anglo-Saxons": all used Valentino Ruiz to make race and racial order. Regardless of which direction they oriented him, they

would still make him a brute animal force that needed constant control and subjugation in order to protect white civilization.

The Omaha exposition was modelled after the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago, which celebrated Christopher Columbus. It had its own version of a “White City,” its entrance so dominated by white buildings that visitors described it as “blinding” (Peavler 2008, 338). The Midway’s “amusing cabaret” of nonwhite and foreign peoples included “The Old Plantation,” with blacks in minstrel roles, and a Home Kitchen exhibit, where “Aunt Jemima” sold pancake mix: a “slave in a box” (339-340; Manring 1998). These displays resembled Confederate Pageants of the U.S. South, which Hoeschler (2003) describes as making collective whiteness “authoritative, all-encompassing, and real,” and which took place within an equally manufactured “white pillared landscape” (Hoelscher 2003, 2006, 660; Hopkins 2012) like the White Cities at World Fairs. At Confederate pageants, wordless tableaux depicted idealized “chapters from the past” in social dramas performed for both tourists and local audiences. Like the scenes and scenarios at the Omaha exposition, the pageants juxtaposed high-status roles for whites with demeaning choreographed roles for blacks, with whites as masters and symbols of virtue, and blacks as servants and symbols of derogation (Hoeschler 2003).

Scenarios of the past, which naturalized racial hierarchy, repeated into the present, with official commemorations tied to everyday performances in the same landscape: a landscape strategically framed to reinforce these scenarios and their narratives. As in the dispositif of racial order in Little Havana, the white-pillared landscape and its scenes repeated in brochures, books, news articles and other forms that circulated widely, including the popular films *Gone with the Wind* and *The Birth of a Nation*. The white-

pillared landscape and its associated scene had even re-appeared in LHDA's brochure.

These "stagings" required bundled bodies to "line up" in ways that consolidated a collective "white" identity (Ahmed, 2007) in contrast to blackness.

Nonetheless, at the Nebraska exposition, blacks used the fair to criticize white supremacy, highlight black achievements, and build black and inter-racial solidarities. They refused a "black department" exhibit that would segregate them from other groups and complained about their demeaning roles in other exhibits (Peavler 2008, 343). They organized a "Congress of Representative White and Colored Americans" which took place on a weekend during the fair. It brought together an economically diverse group of nearly two hundred men and women, both blacks and whites, to discuss race relations and the possibility of a national interracial civil rights organization (Peavler 2008, 338, 346-347, 354). Blacks unable to attend were being sent from the Trans-Mississippi region to Cuba as fighters in the "Spanish-American War" (347). Recruited to fight for "The White Man's Burden" (Katz 2018, 16), as it was described on the cover of one of the exposition's brochures, they were sacrificing themselves for the "white" nation. Ruiz did not return to Cuba, however (Norton 1900, 80). He had made enough sacrifices.

In 1996, after incarceration in the U.S. for one of his missions with Commandos L, Tony Bryant retired from Cuesta's paramilitary group. He campaigned for a seat on the Board of Commissioners. He said he didn't want war anymore, or anyone innocent killed. "Life is too beautiful to die like that." He attended meetings of the nonviolent group Movimiento Democracia, formed and led by Ramon Saul Sanchez, who had also abandoned his life with terrorist groups. "He came to one of our meetings with a flower in the canon of his rifle," recalls Saul Sanchez, who said Bryant had come to embrace a

philosophy of peaceful struggle. “We thought that that was a pretty nice gesture on his side, for a man who had always embraced traditional war methods.”

Bryant also reflected on the possibilities of transnational black solidarity—a kind of black Reunion. On a radio show for WMBM-AM (1490), Bryant recited a poem he’d dedicated to Malcolm X. He told an African American caller he’d “focus on the community here as soon as blacks in Cuba have the same rights as we do” (Almond Feb. 17, 1993):

What African-Americans have to realize is that now is the time to forge bonds with Cubans, to embrace the economic opportunity offered by a free Cuba, to pool our money so we can maybe buy a hotel down there.

Selling Santería, Making Race

By the 1990s, an estimated 100,000 practitioners of Afro-Cuban religions lived in Miami (Bongiovanni 2013; Lammoglia 2001). Yet despite popular perceptions, Santería had already become popular (though less visible) in the early 1970s; in 1971, for instance, one Santera said the religion had already become a “big business” in Miami. She noted that Santeros were enjoying a “wealthy lifestyle” because they were mostly in it for the money (Scott 1974, 526; “Semisecret” June 29, 1971). The influx of many more Afro-Cubans into Miami beginning in the 1980s likely meant more competition for earlier white practitioners who were profiting from Santería.

Meanwhile, Cuba was at beginning of its “Special Period,” a period of extreme hardship brought on by the loss of financial support from the Soviet Union and crumbling U.S./Cuba relations. The Cuban government responded to this shift by more publicly embracing Afro-Cuban heritage as part of Cuba’s unique national identity (Pérez Sarduy

and Stubbs 1993, 3-4; Ayorinde 2004; de la Fuente 2008). The “folklorization” of blackness was part of an earlier political move to use Afro-Cuban culture as “proof” that the revolutionary government had eradicated racism. Civic ceremonies and speeches included increasingly overt references to Afro-Cuban heritage and religious symbols (Benson 2016; Pérez Sarduy and Stubbs 1993; Miller 2000). Nonetheless, as Alejandro de Fuente (2001) has argued, these celebrations positioned blackness as exotic and backward: stuck in the past (Rahier 1998, 2004). Moreover, blacks in Cuba still coped with gross examples of racial inequity (Benson 2016; Helg 2005; Sawyer 2006).

Back in Miami, reporters expressed surprise that *white* Cubans were “very much into” this “Afro-Cuban cult,” including prominent doctors, lawyers, businessmen and “people in the political world” (Zaldivar July 18, 1982); Santería was “a seemingly incongruous element in the lives of otherwise business-oriented, impeccably upwardly mobile white Cubans,” according to travel writer David Rieff (1987, 74). In fact, a white Cuban Santero, Ernesto Pichardo, became a new face of Santería when he took the case of his Church of Lukumi Babalú Aye to the Supreme Court, winning its battle (for the right to animal sacrifice) against the City of Hialeah (Palmie 2013, 154). Among the “clients” of Santeros were also the notorious River Cops (Mancini 1996, 99). Drug traffickers “hired Santería priests to spill some animal blood to buy protection from the spirit world” and police officers themselves used numerous Santería rituals to protect themselves, especially during their court cases (Ibid.).

As in Cuba, Santería had become commodified “culture” to discover and conquer through consumption. The appropriation of Afro-Cuban religious objects, iconographies, ritual phrases, melodies, and embodied practices into non-secular forms had become

more overt, due to practitioners and artists from the Mariel; Cuban Americans seeking to “re-connect to their heritage” (Niurca Marquez, interviewed Dec. 14, 2017; Roger Consiglio, interviewed Mar. 9, 2017; Ralph de la Portilla, interviewed Nov. 7, 2017); tourist interest in these practices; and the Cuban government’s promotion of “folklore” based on Afro-Cuban religious arts. White Cuban artist Maikel Zamora (interviewed June 13, 2017), who left Cuba for Miami in the 1990s, said he knew about Santería because “*las calles les enseñan*” (“the streets teach you”), but that in Miami, even people who were not Santeros were profiting from the religion and from “selling Cuban culture.”

On tours of Little Havana’s heritage district led by Cuban civic elites or Anglos, tour guides were careful to Cuban civic elites from Santería, however. As in earlier years, they tied the botánica and ceiba tree to so-called “black magic” and thus to racial narratives (Torres July 12, 1987). Prominent Cubans patronized *botánicas*, but they also acted out their disdain of them, according to Lawrence Mahoney of the *Sun-Sentinel* (June 15, 1986). “How can you settle anything by trussing up a headless, drugged red chicken and throwing it into the grass?” they ask, very American,” he wrote, after mentioning the ceiba tree in Cuban Memorial Park.

Tour narratives re-appeared in archives of public memory: in travel articles and guides, perpetuating stereotypes of blackness and Africanity as exotic and primitive. Apparently, “that ol’ black magic” was one of the “prime tourist attractions of Little Havana,” according to Mahoney (June 14, 1986), “as in New Orleans and Port-au-Prince, Haiti.” Describing the ceiba tree, where animal sacrifices could now be found, he wrote: “In Salem, the witchcraft of centuries past thrills New Englanders. Here in Miami, in Little Havana, a block from Main Street, it lives every night.” The contrast between

“Little Havana” coded as exotic and “Main Street” coded as white reinforced racial binaries of white/black, normal/Other, healthy/dangerous, and modern/primitive (Hall 2013). In a guide to Little Havana published in the South Florida Sun-Sentinel in 1992, during Hispanic Heritage Month and the Columbus Quincentenary (Oct. 3), reporter Molly Arost Staub mentioned a botanica on Calle Ocho. After describing Santería as an “Afro-Cuban religion with elements of voodoo and Catholicism,” she noted that the owner (Louie Rueda) was an Amazonian Indian from Colombia with feathers and “other paraphernalia” piercing his nose, who “read palms and crystal ball.” Apparently, Rueda was playing into stereotypes of exotic Otherness in order to compete for tourists. “To be a believer is to be able to enjoy that mystical communion with the animating spirits behind all living things which white people in Cuba believe to be the special realm of blacks,” remarked another travel writer (Rieff 1987, 157). Little Havana promised both white sugar and the adrenaline-producing exotic, black (and brown) Other.

Little Havana narratives about Santería also repeated the theme of whitening as “progress.” An unnamed reporter for the *Miami Herald* described the so-called “magic African cult” as evolving from the “jungles and villages of Nigeria centuries ago,” and then transforming into “a complex religion of ritual, healing, black magic and voodoo-like cult mythology serving a pantheon of African gods” (“Semisecret,” June 29, 1971). One reporter described its roots as “firmly African” but “wedded to Catholicism in bizarre ways” (Mahoney June 14, 1986). Another called Santería “a prime example of the way ancient cultures and traditions become intertwined with modern Western Society” (Wilcox 30 June 1972).

The location of a botanica (Botanica La Negra Francisca) (literally, Botanica the Black Francisca) on Calle Ocho, across from Cuban Memorial Park, and the ceiba, within the park, furthered the sense of “danger” and blackness associated with the park’s other sculptures, so many of them connected to the violence of war and the La Lucha—and embodied in the statue of Tony Izquierdo with his machine gun. Like Valentino Ruiz, the spectacle of black primitivity could frighten and entertain white “spectators”; it could also serve as a tool for racial politics. The embodied experiences of the tour helped white Cuban civic elites display their alignment with Anglo whiteness. At the same time, the tours delivered a warning from militant Cuban emigres: “We have this black power at our disposal, and you don’t, so don’t mess with us!”

According to Miguel de la Torre, Santería is a “resistance religion whose rituals critique the dominant power structures” (845). During slavery, an animal sacrifice left at the entrance of a slaveholder’s home could serve as a warning; it capitalized on the reputation of “black magic” as dangerous. When spiritually “possessed” by an Orisha, Afro-Cuban priests could critique members of Cuba’s white elite (attending a ceremony) in ways they might not dare to do so otherwise. “As” an Orisha, their protest was “plausibly deniable.” Dressing and acting as *diablitos* during carnival frightened spectators. In the context of the Little Havana heritage district, white Cuban emigres used blackness and Africanity as their own coded warning to Anglos, even if at the same time using them to reinforce bonds of white solidarity and shared investment in white supremacy.

The Bodies in the Cemetery

Throughout the 1990s, groups bombarded commissioners with requests for new monuments to add to Cuban Memorial Park. “Well, here’s the thing,” said former Commissioner Joe Sanchez (interviewed May 19, 2017). “People think they own things. Little Havana, and this area. The property owners own it. I don’t own the plaza, it doesn’t --it’s just...we just can’t have anybody put out a monument! You know? I couldn’t fight all the battles. I just couldn’t fight all the battles. There were battles over the stars of Calle Ocho! I mean, I had to deal with that. I was dragged into —it was exhausting.” Occasionally, Cuban exile leaders would return, carrying flags, signs and megaphones for a hunger strike, a rally, a protest, a parade—a remembrance of past or present battles. The park had become a place of refuge for homeless individuals: living monuments who slept amongst those honored in concrete. One shirtless man told a reporter he was a *balsero* and was embarrassed by his homelessness. “There is nothing easy about this land of liberty,” he said (Martin Oct. 1, 1995).

In the 1990s, one of the homeless people sleeping in the park was Afro-Cuban poet Leandro Eduardo (Eddy) Campa, who also spent much of his time writing poems. Wearing his consecrated *elekes* around his neck, Campa would tuck himself into the folds of the ceiba tree’s thick, above-ground roots and smoke from a plastic pipe while reading a book or scribbling poems on any scrap of paper he could find. He wrote with empathy for Little Havana’s cast-offs—including the people of its “underground.” The poet, who had studied philosophy and literature at the University of Havana, wrote about a Little Havana of the future, when its marginalized residents were dead and buried: the poems journey through their lives. Campa had arrived in the Mariel boatlift, living in Little

Havana's Tent City, but left Miami as soon as he could, terrified of its small-time drug lords and gangs. When he returned to Little Havana in 1989, he decided to live simply, in the street (Villegas April 12, 2002).

He named his slim volume of poems, "Little Havana Memorial Park y otros textos," after an imagined "Little Havana Memorial Park," a space he compared to a cemetery. "Remember, the only people who are masters of their destiny are those with the means to forge their own destiny," he told reporter Judy Cantor for the *Miami New Times* (Nov. 4, 1999). "The only thing I've aspired to is to be a little less unfortunate." For his poem, "XXVIII," he wrote (original words in italics):

Esperaré con fuerza para ver la luz del amanecer,
I will wait with strength to see the light of dawn,
de todos los amaneceres.
of all the dawns.

Que el olor a vida me exite
May life's scent exude from me
cuando roce mi osamenta,
when you rub my skeleton,
y que siempre responda a su llamado
and may it always respond to your call
mi gratitud de hombre proscrito.
my gratitude of an outcast man.

Todos, todos estamos en Memorial Park.
All of us, all of us are in Memorial Park.⁸⁸

His bones were kept alive not in dominos but on the backs of receipts and discarded flyers, and they survive in the archive, ready to be rubbed into being, and remembered.

The cemetery, space of death, was one with which many black Mariels were likely well familiar before arriving in Miami. Lorenzo ([pseudonym], interviewed October 17,

⁸⁸ This is my own translation of the poem, which was written in Spanish.

2017) said that working in cemeteries was one of the few job opportunities available for young black Cubans in the 1970s.

I was studying at the university. Imagine that [was] the only job I could get was working in the cemetery, and burying people... Somebody works for me, but he works part-time in the cemetery. I needed a pair of shoes, and he said, "I have a good pair of shoes!" That day, I go to the party, after I start dancing, the shoes get off from my feet. It looks like the shoes are all deteriorating. Had been on the dead body and they had absorbed all that shit. The acid of the body. I'm like, "Oh my God, look what the motherfucker did to me!" Imagine! That happens.

The lived experience of Mariels like Lorenzo and Campa brought them in closer proximity to the dead: to the corpses, bones and artifacts of once-living humans, and to the corpses of once-living animals sacrificed in Afro-Cuban religions.

Campa grew up living in in Centro Habana, in a tenement building where he remembered one bathroom as serving a hundred families. As a young adult, he was inspired by the Civil Rights and Black Power movements in the U.S. He was jailed for being a "hippie" and later for sending his manuscript of poems to Venezuela for a literary contest. He taught college-level socioeconomics but was fired from work when his practice of Santería was discovered (religious practice was forbidden). Then he was sentenced to eight years in prison as a "anti-revolutionary" for writing a book of poems about his poor neighborhood in Central Havana: his descriptions were "too close to reality" (Cantor Nov. 4, 1999).⁸⁹ "Language is the only weapon of a totalitarian regime," he remarked, "which is why they try to create their own language. Language is only sincere when it doesn't betray reality. That's why those regimes are afraid of their poets

⁸⁹ He received a shorter sentence when he signed a contract admitting his writing was subversive.

(Ibid.). Campa is dead, now: No one is exactly sure how, where or when he died. His friends searched for him for six months before giving up (Villegas April 12, 2002).

Eddy Campa became like monument in the park, his body physically and conceptually bundled with the ceiba tree. Like a spirit of the dead, however, he moved. He too occupied space and time as he wished, and he spoke for himself. He was like the trickster Orisha Elegguá, referred to as Eshu among Yoruba in Nigeria:

With a feather in his cap, Eshu can be found at the crossroads, where nothing is sure but everything is possible. And at the cemetery where everything is sure and nothing is possible. Eshu turns life and death in on themselves. The Yoruba are both terrorized and amused by the sheer extravagance of attempting to bring together things that don't belong, and consider Eshu their favorite Deity. Although most at home in the marketplace—that anarchic swirl of bodies—he prefers to talk about what's going on in the bush, about swamp fevers and worried passions seeking the cover of all the forbidden, boring, banal, and empty territories where new generations are procreated. He reminds people that their everyday experience is embedded in an intricate network of visible and invisible forces...

The African trickster shows that the “really real” is incessantly multifaceted and ironic. Every social reality is fraught with an extravagance which is both its forcefulness and undoing. All attempts at closure, necessary in order to determine what's in or out, what's incorporated or “free,” must eventually burst out, becoming a laughing matter—a bursting of the seams. (Hecht 1994, 77-79)

Elegguá/Eshú reminds us that a commemorative body—and the scenes it which it figures—can burst at the seams (see Figure 23).



Figure 23: Elegguá as graffiti in Little Havana's heritage district. Photo by the author.

In the early twentieth century, in Cuba, officials opened El Temple to visitors on November 16th, St. Cristobal's Day,⁹⁰ for a memorial service honoring Columbus ("Cuban Shrine," April 12, 1931). On that day, Cubans ritually circumambulated the ceiba tree in front of El Temple (see Figure 24), encircling it counterclockwise three times while throwing coins at its base. Tour guides for U.S. visitors, as well as U.S. newspapers, explained the ritual as an act honoring the founding of Havana, as did newspaper and magazine articles ("What the World," Oct. 13, 1917). November 16th, however, is also a sacred day for practitioners of Palo and the feast day for Aggayú, one of the Orishas affiliated the ceiba and the Orisha father of Changó. Changó in turn was the Orisha "father" of the free black man Jose Antonio Aponte, organizer of Cuba's first slave rebellion (Ojeda 2012; Arroyo 2013). In 1812, Cuba's colonial government seized a "Book of Paintings" created by Aponte, using it as evidence of his role in planning a massive slave revolt modeled after the Haitian Revolution (Ojeda 2012; Arroyo 2013). Aponte headed a Lukumí (Santería) cabildo called Shangó Tedum and inherited membership in Ogboni, an Afro-Cuban secret society whose members were considered living descendants of Changó (Cluster 2008, 70; Arroyo 2013, 92).

The sacred stories and depictions of Saint Christopher (San Cristobal) and Aggayú are similar; they are syncretized, and thus serve as avatars of one another. In the Catholic story of Saint Christopher, he was gigantic in stature and carried the baby Jesus in his right arm, across a river (Martínez Betancourt 1983, 325). According to the Yoruba patakí or sacred story of Aggayú, he too is the patron "Orisha" of Havana, he too is a giant, and

⁹⁰ Saint Christopher, the patron saint of Havana.

is “owner of the river,” which he crosses while carrying a child on his shoulder (Bolívar Aróstegui 1990, 101-102). In fact, the sacred dance for Aggayú imitates the act of crossing a river while carrying a child (or the world) on one of his shoulders.⁹¹ These two bodies—one imagined as black (Aggayú), carrying a black child (Chango) on his shoulder, and the other one white (Saint Christopher), carrying a white child on his shoulder, were both connectors. Like the ceiba, their intertwined bodies connected spaces (Africa, Spain, Cuba) and time: the past, the present, and the future.



Figure 24: El Temple/Columbus Memorial Chapel (postcard) circa 1920s. Collection of the author.

Columbus was also like the ceiba. He too was a connector between worlds. Embodied in El Temple and the cathedral, he too was a ceremonial space and home. Cubans may have used parts of the ceiba for spiritual work and healing (Martínez Betancourt 1983, 321-322), but they also sold the alleged body parts of Columbus because his bones could supposedly “heal a man” (Hyde Clark 1896, 139). Just as the

⁹¹ Marisol Blanco and Oscar Rousseux taught me the dances of Aggayú.

ceiba embodied the birth of Abakuá, the secret, Afro-Cuban male order, so too did Columbus embody a white male fraternity of “discoverers” and “conquerers”: people who—like Saint Christopher or Aggayú, crossed bodies of water with their descendants “on their shoulders.” Columbus may have died, but like the constantly re-planted ceiba tree at El Temple, he was living on, his commemorative body bundled with multiple others: the ceiba, Saint Christopher, Jose Martí--and Aggayú--among them. White men were distributing their own “seed” across boundaries, but so too were black men, connected to a seemingly invincible spirit world and divine mothers.

Conclusion

The 1990s was a decade when “culture,” and more precisely the “spectacle of culture” accessed as a commodity, took place within the framework of American multiculturalism. Miami was being called the “capital of Latin America” not only because of its reputation for cultural diversity, but also because of South Florida’s strong political and economic relationships with Latin America and the Caribbean (Croucher 1997, 144). Cuban civic elites were careful to demonstrate their solidarity with other “Latinos,” whom they preferred to call “Hispanics.” However, despite their use of multiculturalism’ celebratory language, they carefully marked their distinction from non-Cuban Hispanics, especially if they were mestizos, or Latinos they sometimes called “Indios” (in a derogative way) because of their browner skin and more obvious indigenous heritage. Those who remained involved in Little Havana sought to protect their vision for the Latin Quarter and especially for the heritage district.

Those who stayed committed to their vision for Little Havana focused on four core strategies: all of which also served as an apparatus of racial ordering. First, they concentrated their efforts on “beautifying” a smaller portion of the original Latin Quarter, trying to maintain what is now the heritage district as a “Cuban” brand (Calle Ocho from 13th to 17th Avenues): their exemplary “glass of champagne,” as LHDA executive director Anthony Rivas explained (Guerra July 19, 1996). These efforts not only included collaborative efforts to report and remove Othered bodies; they also included the public humiliation of those who dared to trespass into the forbidden and controlled territory of Calle Ocho.

Second, they ensured that their names, titles and organizations were linked to the district through the careful curation of the sites in guidebooks and tours, and mention of names in civic rituals. In doing so, they ensured their permanent credit for—and ties to—the Cuban success story. The curation of sites also helped distinguish Cuban and Spanish “heritage” from Hispanic heritage of those considered to be from lower *castas*—because of greater mixings with indigenous or African blood, or because their social class marked them as less deserving of the “glass of champagne.”

Third, they maintained “ownership” over memorialized black bodies that could always be referenced as “proof” of continued colorblindness. They exalted “exceptional” mythical black figures (dead or alive) and yet embraced the sacrifice of living people of African descent who interfered with the repetition of stories: stories about the conquest of human bodies, spatial bodies, temporal bodies (as in the “modern” versus the “pre-modern”) or political bodies. The botanica and sacrifices at the ceiba tree also became touchstones for narrations of blackness and Africanity included in “Cuban culture” and

yet something primitive and exotic that gave it color and mystique—and did not need the presence of black bodies.

Fourth, they began to deepen an emphasis on ideas of legacy and continued bloodline, incorporating Jose Martí and Maximo Gomez into an all-white triumvirate of white hero-ancestors commemorated in the district and tied to contemporary Cuban emigres. Whereas earlier discourse had emphasized the trope of slavery, new narratives celebrated the expansion of Cuban “territory” beyond Little Havana and thus a vision for the complete reconquest of the Little Havana of the future through gentrification. The constant work of repeating and weaving together various scenarios with La Lucha (Conquest, Independence and Reconquista, for instance) and bodies (Columbus, Martí, Gomez and contemporary emigres) was, I contend, reliant as much on these ideas of continued lineage as they were with imaginations of hierarchy and dominance.

Chapter four also revealed the interventions and reactions of Afrodescendants in this context of imposed reproduction of white dominance and white commandment. It uncovered their strategies for inclusion, place-making, and memory-making. The possession of a stand-in white friend or family member was one strategy for obtaining housing. The possession of a white “enemy” in spiritual rituals was a strategy for producing fear (among whites) and asserting agency. Writing and painting murals offered opportunities to produce archival forms of public memory. Storytelling was yet another. One of the most fascinating examples, however, is the story of Eddy Campa, who chose to sit himself next to the ceiba tree. Smoking his pipe, wearing clean clothes and reading books, he did not fit stereotypes of homeless black men from the Mariel, but he proudly wore his sacred necklaces, too. He linked himself to the ceiba tree, but as someone

always wandering, he was not fixed anywhere, and his writings made their way well beyond the boundaries of Miami. He wrote about the cemetery, but he also wrote about the future. Thus, as much as white Cuban emigres may have tried to “fix” or remove black bodies from the district, in reality they were not successful, and the past-present-future lineages of Afrodescendants were continuing on, too.

Chapter five is rich with ethnographic accounts about the district from 2000 through 2018. It brings together what I have argued and discussed in previous chapters but provides greater insight into the everyday kinds of race-, place- and memory-making activities that grew from the practices of earlier decades. The chapter also reveals the “bursting of the seams”—the many ways in which Afro-Cubans and Afrodescendants in general, as well as non-blacks, challenged the racial/spatial order through their simple “trespassing” in the heritage district, even though they sometimes also—mostly unwillingly—reinforced it as well.

VI. CHAPTER FIVE: BURSTING AT THE SEAMS (2000-2018)

In 2017 alone, Miami Mayor Tomás Regalado re-stated the Cuban success story at nearly every “quadrant” of the district’s main intersection: Southwest 15th Avenue and Calle Ocho, where Calle Ocho separates Domino Plaza and Azucar Plaza. At ribbon-cutting, ground-breaking and civic ceremonies in both plazas, as well at events held at venues adjacent to the intersection, he repeated a history of Little Havana. “Because here, everything began. Here, the rebirth of Miami began. And that is indisputable,” he remarked at an event on June 9, 2017, always giving credit to members of the civic elite. At a speech on January 25, 2017, held at the district’s popular Ball & Chain venue, he described 1980 as the year when the Cuban government dropped a “demographic bomb” on Miami. After the re-opening of the Tower Theater in 2002, and the opening of new music venues, Little Havana had become very popular as a tourist destination, and apparently the longtime civic elites wanted the credit.

By 2000, the percentage of Cubans among Hispanics in Little Havana dropped to 56 percent; 30 percent were Central American. Historian and tour guide Paul George described Little Havana as a Latinx “Ellis Island” (George Mar. 9, 2008), a comparison repeated in 2017 when the National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP) announced its designation of the neighborhood as a “National Treasure” (Hetter Jan. 27, 2017). On the NTHP webpage for Little Havana, under a photo of rooster sculptures and a sign with a white rumbera in the heritage district, NTHP describes Little Havana as “Miami’s Ellis Island” and an “internationally recognized symbol of the role of immigrants in the American story,” a “symbol of inclusiveness,” and “a testament to the immigrant spirit

that built our nation...integral both to Miami and to the nation as a whole.” Although NTHP did not mention the Statue of Liberty (Rand 2005), it did not need to, I contend. In February 2018, NTHP launched an exhibit in a public space: an alleyway in the district. Called “Little Havana *Me Importa*: The Places and Faces that Define a Neighborhood,” it featured ten large photo-text murals of various people connected to the neighborhood (including me). All are white except two women: one black, one mestiza, both of whom were positioned near the end of the alleyway, furthest from Calle Ocho. Little Havana can serve as a national emblem of diversity, inclusion and Latinx immigration—but it also serves as a symbol of the privileges earned by “whitened” Hispanics, and thus U.S. *blanqueamiento* (Stovall 2018; Rand 2005; Rahier 1998; Aranda, Chang and Sabogal 2009).

Social actors can orient the discourse of “inclusion” to serve different interests, however, just as commemorated black bodies can be oriented to serve varied agendas. As historian Alejandro de la Fuente (1999, 53) argues, the “discourse of a racially fraternal nation could and did operate in either direction: as a force of exclusion and subordination, or as a legitimizer of Afro-Cuban inclusion and participation in society.” This primarily ethnographic chapter reveals Afro-Cubans’ and other Afrodescendants’ (and white Cubans’) efforts to make the heritage district a symbol of inclusion. The chapter also highlights evolving forms of knowledge production that re-actualize the bodies of Columbus and ongoing scenarios of Reconquista.

The chapter gives a great deal of attention to embodied forms of memory-making. Before and after the Cuban Revolution, the Cuban government permitted a bounded, government-managed (and profiting), folklorized version of “Afro-Cuban culture” only

when it served the interest of creating an ideological unity of *Cubanidad* disallowing claims of racial pride or open criticisms of persistent racism (Moore 1997, De La Fuente 2001, Skwiot 2012, Wirtz 2014). Afro-Cuban folkloric and religious expressions became far more visible and institutionally sanctioned in the district after 2000. Kristina Wirtz describes current folkloric performances as an “exoticized portrayal of primordial Blackness at the origins of the nation” (2014, 255). While these portrayals may indeed conjure stereotypes of blackness, Afro-Cuban “culture” and “religion” can also serve to disguise struggles for racial justice and provide an avenue for expressions of black solidarity, as this chapter uncovers (de la Torre 2001, 2003; Beliso-De Jesús 2013; 2014; Matory 2009; Pérez 2010).

The Inaugural Scene: *Azucar!*

In 2006, the City of Miami inaugurated Domino Plaza, which extends south from Calle Ocho to Southwest 9th Street. Permanently blocked off from traffic, it occupies the heart of Little Havana’s heritage district: Calle Ocho and Southwest 15th Avenue. In a mosaic wall bordering the plaza, the word “Azucar” appears above a Cuban flag crossing a sheaf of sugarcane. Sugar, here, also references Celia Cruz, who performed in the plaza during one of the first monthly *Viernes Culturales* (Cultural Fridays) festivals in 2002.⁹² “I want to go for a walk without bitterness, down the street of your memory,” sang Celia in Spanish (“Celia Cruz,” video, uploaded Feb. 15, 2002). Sugar sweetens bitter pasts.

A decade later, on March 17th, 2016, Miami Mayor Tomás Regalado held a press conference in Domino Plaza joined by city commissioners whose jurisdictions overlap

⁹² She performed there before it was transformed into a plaza but was blocked off from traffic.

Little Havana and members of the Cuban civic elite. He announced the city's investment of \$1 million for a "facelift" of Calle Ocho. "This project...has to do with history," he remarked:

This is about Calle Ocho...where everything began in the '60s, for the City of Miami, and the Hispanic community, and especially the Cuban American community. The Cuban American community was born, and grew up, in Calle Ocho. Today we celebrate the revert [sic] of Calle Ocho by placing art, by placing culture...It has to do with keeping Miami beautiful, but it has to do with keeping Miami safe."

On a Saturday morning in January 17, 2017, a small crowd assembled for another civic ritual in the avenue facing Domino Plaza: the ground breaking for construction of a new Azucar Plaza, a street and public space improvement project funded by the City of Miami and federal Homeland Security funds and located on the block just north of Calle Ocho and Southwest 15th Avenue. I arrived early. Already, city employees had set a table with trays of Cuban guava pastries and several white styrofoam coladas of *café Cubano*,⁹³ likely purchased across the street at the longtime Cuban restaurant El Exquisito. On this morning, Miami Mayor Tomás Regalado would honor the legacy of Miami's Cuban Americans--and mark this legacy with the symbolism of sugar. Already, the block had been re-named "Azucar Avenue."

Sugar. I could taste its sweetness in the now lukewarm Cuban coffee I sipped from one of the thimble-sized white plastic cups left on the table.

Most of those gathered this morning were men, light-skinned Cuban men dressed in dark suits or traditional white linen guayabera shirts. They were familiar faces at

⁹³ "Cuban coffee" in this context is dark espresso into which sugar is stirred until it becomes a froth or *espuma*, which sits on top. The beans themselves are not from Cuba, so the term refers to how the coffee is prepared, served and imbibed.

ceremonies like these: men who had for years engaged in Calle Ocho beautification, urban design, and development projects. Most were the Cuban emigre elites who navigated between projects, organizations, political posts and positions as city employees, business leaders, or board members, always retaining a role in shaping Little Havana, and nearly always with a past or present link to LHDA, CAMACOL, LQA, the Kiwanis of Little Havana, the Little Havana NET, or newer organizations like the Calle Ocho Chamber of Commerce and Viernes Culturales (Cultural Fridays). In preparation for the ritual ground breaking, sipping cafe Cubano seemed an obligatory act, a gesture of communion to commemorate of the “myth of success” (Aja 2016, x).

On Calle Ocho, just around the corner from where we were gathered, the district’s popular ice cream shop glorifies sugar with a one story, three-dimensional ice cream cone sculpture rising over its entranceway. It faces both the *ventanita* (walk-up coffee window) of El Exquisito and the Tower Theater, listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1992. Through the tall glass windows of Azucar, pedestrians can see customers waiting in line for cool and sugar-laced treats; they can also see the shop’s enormous, orange-hued painting of a smiling, terra cotta-skinned Celia Cruz, connecting the taste of sugar to the image of the Afro-Cuban woman. I didn’t see any tourists at the groundbreaking, but soon visitors from all over the world would begin to arrive, flowing out of the sleek buses parked at the district’s numerous “official” tour bus stops, and almost all seeking to taste *azucar* ... in *cafe Cubano* or in ice cream. Occupying the northwest adjacent to the plaza is the Latin Quarter Specialty Center, a three-story building with first-floor retail stores facing Calle Ocho. Tenants include popular Cuban-

owned spaces like CubaOcho (a hybrid art gallery, music venue and bar) and Guantanamera Cigars.

More than a dozen police officers gathered around the periphery of the block for the groundbreaking, standing sentry like the silver metal bollards and royal palm trees to be installed in the months to follow. City staff had arranged folding chairs in rows under a tent. The chairs faced a podium and a mound of sand about one foot high, as well as two easels displaying full-color, architectural renderings of the future plaza. Like a temporary monument, a tall rectangular sign towered over the podium, propped up on a sturdy wooden base. “Building Better Neighborhoods,” it read, capping details like the official name of the project, the construction cost (\$371,799) and a list of City Commissioners. At the foot of the sign, large letters announced, “FUNDED BY THE OFFICE OF MAYOR TOMAS P. REGALADO,” and “FRANK CAROLLO,” the city commissioner with jurisdiction over the district.

After he was introduced, Mayor Regalado stepped up to the podium to make his remarks. Alternating between English and Spanish, he began by emphasizing that no one had complained about this project:

Good morning, *buenos dias*. Neighbors or merchants are not complaining. Not in the City of Miami, not in Coral Gables, not in South Florida, *yo creo que este es el único proyecto de construcción de calle donde no hay quejas en el parte de los vecinos, de los comerciantes, de los visitantes*, because, it’s about a labor of love. And it’s about inclusion.

As if to emphasize his theme of inclusion, he noted that the district was the center of the Calle Ocho Festival and a new Gay8 festival:

Aquí es donde se celebra el centro de la Carnaval Calle Ocho. Aquí se celebró recientemente, con gran éxito, el segundo festival de gay and lesbian del sur de la Florida, and this is ground zero for tourists, for residents, and for merchants.

Lastly, the Mayor acknowledged various individuals for their role in making the area a successful tourist district. He named and thanked specific local merchants, business leaders, artists, a police officer, city staff and commissioners.

Nonetheless, he never thanked or acknowledged the woman with the silver-white hair sitting in the second row, directly behind his now empty seat. The distinguished looking brown-skinned woman sat unaccompanied. She was the only person of obvious African descent sitting in the rows of chairs, a cloud of silver-white hair rising above her head like a stylish crown, her wrists adorned with silver bangles. Standing near the back of the tent, I kept waiting to hear her name, but none of the speakers at the groundbreaking—all of them men—acknowledged Carole Ann Taylor, even though she had opened the district's first souvenir shop, a shop just steps away from where the Mayor was delivering his speech.

Taylor (interviewed May 26, 2017), who is black and identifies as West Indian (of Barbadian descent) was the first person to persuade tour buses to stop in the Little Havana district; she also championed the effort to add new tour bus stops along *Calle Ocho*. She is the longest running board member of *Viernes Culturales*, the monthly festival the Mayor acknowledged and praised early in his speech. She was the only person present at the plaza groundbreaking who sits on the Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau's (GMCVB) executive board, a longtime advocate for heritage tourism and "heritage neighborhoods," including not only Little Havana but also Miami's historic African American, Haitian and Bahamian neighborhoods.

On this cool Saturday morning, dressed all in black, Taylor sat like a statue in her folding chair. She clapped her hands after every speech, but I wondered what she must be

thinking, and how she was feeling, when so conspicuously excluded from the Mayor's acknowledgements. Several rows behind her, the City of Miami's videographer documented the event for a live (and later archived) video feed ("Groundbreaking Ceremony" Jan. 17, 2017).

The ground breaking for Azucar Plaza restaged what Michel de Certeau (1988, xxv) calls the "inaugural scene: after a moment of stupor, on this threshold dotted with colonnades of trees, the conqueror will write the body of the other and trace there his own history." In the ritual of breaking ground, Cuban emigres re-embodied Conquest and the "Cuban-American success story" (de La Torre 2003, 59). The Mayor invited a select group of Cuban and Cuban American men to join him. Together, they stood around the mound of symbolic "land," its grains the creamy brown of turbinado sugar. Standing side by side, smiling, surrounded by cameras and smartphones, the white men in suits and guayaberas dug their shovels into the sand.

Elegguá's Crossroads

"I did that deliberately, by the way," said Carole-Ann Taylor when I asked about her presence at the Azucar Plaza groundbreaking, in an interview (May 26, 2017). "It's my way of," and she paused, "declaring my absolute, my *absolute* refusal to be excluded." She continued:

And more importantly, it's my way of making [Cuban emigres] – even against their will – be inclusive. And I've done it for years, in meetings, events. I almost feel like I am so, I do feel so, so *blessed*, that the experience that I got in the Mayor's office⁹⁴ taught me about every community in Miami. And allowed me the mental freedom to not feel like an outsider anywhere. You can't do that to me. Especially in Little Havana. *Especiallly* in Little Havana.

⁹⁴ Taylor worked in an outreach position for Mayor Maurice Ferre.

At the groundbreaking ceremony, she may have been silent, but she was much more than a statue. The Mayor has had to acknowledge who she is, she added, but

even in the back of his head and heart, it's still--how did this black woman get here? And he finds it more comfortable to relate to the Cuban in Little Havana than a black woman in Little Havana. He's had to [acknowledge me] because of who I am, but given the chance to *not* do it, he didn't!

Taylor was not the only one who was haunting the plaza, refusing through her presence to be written out of history, and subtly subverting the Mayor's narrative--which credited all of the district's economic success to the efforts of white Cuban men (and just one white Cuban woman). The men in guayaberas and suits were digging into the dirt of the crossroads, the domain of Elegguá, the trickster Orisha of Santería.

In fact, Elegguá has appeared in many forms at the crossroads where Domino and Azucar Plazas encounter Calle Ocho. In February 2013, stencils of Elegguá heads began to appear on the brick sidewalks of the heritage district. Appearing either as a single head or three heads (Elegguá sacred number), they were stenciled in white, with cowry shell eyes, nose and mouth, to contrast with the bricks with their reddish-brown hues. For those with a rudimentary understanding of Santería iconographies, they were the symbols or even "presences" of Elegguá himself, and even the trickster-ish act of adding them to the brick sidewalks seemed to celebrate the divinity.

Elegguá is typically depicted with the colors red and black, colors that play an important role in a famous *patakí* (sacred story of Santería) that some call the *patakí* of *peonia*.⁹⁵ A popular version of the story begins with two inseparable best friends and

⁹⁵ "Peonia" is also the name of a red and black seed used in the religion.

neighbors. One day, Elegguá appears--at the same time--as a black man to one man, and as a white man to the other.⁹⁶ Each man insists that his interpellation of the stranger (Elegguá) is correct. The “friends” come to blows because each assumes the other is lying; each orients differently to the trickster, and thus is only able to see one “side,” “face” or “body” of the trickster. Neither can understand the other’s perspective (orientation) (Cabrera [1981] 2009, 110; Sandoval 2007, 217-218). Elegguá is a trickster because he reveals hidden truths (and histories) that bely portrayals of racial harmony.

A mural on the side of CubaOcho (facing the west side of Azucar Plaza) includes numerous symbols of Santería. Like the stencils, it also includes Elegguá embodied in an oval, concrete head, his eyes and mouth marked with cowry shells. In front of him the artist has painted an offering of candy: sugar. When I met a black British Yoruba tourist at CubaOcho one evening, I brought him outside to see the mural. He was stunned. “We’re taught not to practice the old religion, but my family—we’re Muslim, but when we have an important event in our life, we still do *ebbó* [sacrifice]. I can’t wait to tell my Nigerian friends in London—and my family in Nigeria!” He had not known that Orisha were honored beyond the realm of those who practiced “African traditional religion” on the continent, but immediately recognized Elegguá (whom he called Eshú) and the double-sided axe and batá drums of Chango.

After taking numerous photographs with his smartphone, he said that now he wanted to visit Cuba to learn more. Storytelling had helped bring attention to these presences, so they could be used as “proof,” and now he was using digital forms to transmit memory

⁹⁶ In some versions of this story, he appears as red to one man, and as black to the other.

and knowledge to others in both Europe and Africa; perhaps he would eventually participate in what Aisha Beliso-De Jesús calls transnational or “Electric Santería” (Beliso-De Jesús 2013, 2015; see also Mahler 2005). I walked with him up the street to a nearby cigar shop in the district owned by a black Cuban *babalawo* (high priest of Ifá/Santería) Cristobal Mena, and there he met other Afro-Cubans as well, including a black Rastafarian. Mena promised to connect the visitor to blacks in Cuba who were taking active roles to preserve Yoruba diasporic memory. The district had become a place for constructing new forms of transnational black solidarity and “Yoruba networks,” as described by Kamari Maxine Clarke (2004; see also Gilroy 1993; Shelby 2007; Matory 2005; Routon 2006).

At this same crossroads, some people interpret living people as embodiments of Elegguá, as occurred while I was interviewing Gilda Diaz (Nov 9, 2017), a Mariel and “regular” on Calle Ocho who identifies as Afro-Cuban but is light enough to pass as white in Miami’s Cuban community. We were sitting at CubaOcho, facing the intersection of Azucar Plaza and Calle Ocho, when a dark-skinned black man approached us: disheveled, shoulders hunched, and head down. She handed him a dollar, remarking in her loud, gravelly Spanish: “Here is a black man who is destitute. Here is my Elegguá.” He looked up, smiled, and walked by. The sixty-something Gilda usually wears her hair in a headscarf, but today she wore it in a ponytail, matched with long, dangling earrings. She dressed all in white and wore her yellow *ide* (beaded bracelet) indicating that she is a “daughter” of Ochún. She lives nearby, in a tiny apartment.

“That gentleman,” she added, elevating his status, “I sometimes give him a dollar...When I leave here at two in the morning, he is at the corner, waiting for me.” She

said he tells her the safe places to walk. Homeless men help her carry shopping bags, she said; they accompany her and protect her. Her “reading” of a black homeless man stands in stark contrast with those involved in Little Havana’s “clean-up” efforts. “We are equal,” she stated loudly, using expressive hand gestures to emphasize her points: “Everybody came from Africa. We are all *Africa*! Because you are white, do you know who your grandmother is? Or your great-grandmother? Well then!” In the narrative of Gilda and other Afro-Cubans (and some white Cubans) I interviewed, moving into the future required not *blanqueamiento* but a recognition of shared African heritage and an uncovering of painted-over pasts.

For months prior to the January 2017 ground breaking, an image of Elegguá “embodied” in human form also appeared on a doorway facing the west side of Azucar Plaza, opposite CubaOcho. A poster taped to the first-floor entrance of a dance studio on the second floor advertised an upcoming performance by the studio’s teachers. On the poster, the brown-skinned Marisol Blanco was dressed “as” Elegguá, in a harlequin-like outfit of red and black satin. S/he wore a red and black hat, and stood boldly, hips forward, chest back, arms crossed, a *garabato* (the hooked stick used in clearing sugarcane, but also an attribute of Elegguá) in her/his hand. Elegguá’s/Blanco’s face expressed playful challenge. Every Sunday for nearly a decade, Blanco had been teaching the dances of Elegguá and other Orishas to a racially diverse group of students: men and women, Cuban and non-Cuban.

Marisol has also performed Elegguá at CubaOcho across the street, and at the venue now called Ball & Chain (when it was a club called La Casa de Tula) just steps away from DAF Studio and also on Calle Ocho. In 2015, Miami’s Asociación Cultural Yoruba

U.S.A. held its first annual conference (AfroCubaMiami) at CubaOcho. The husband and wife owners of CubaOcho, both of them white, take pride in providing a space for expressions of Afro-Cuban culture and solidarity, in defiance of Cuban emigres (usually those who arrived in pre-1980 cohorts) who criticize them for doing so. Roberto left Cuba in 1990 and Yeney Fariñas Ramos (interviewed July 27, 2017) left in 1996, Roberto having spent several days stuck at sea before being rescued by the U.S. Coast Guard. They opened their venue in 2007, choosing Little Havana “because it has to do with Cuban identity,” in Yeney’s words. Both are devotees of Our Lady of Charity (La Caridad del Cobre), as “de la Caridad” is Roberto’s middle name and he was praying to her when he was rescued; many of the artworks in CubaOcho portray the Marian figure. At the 2015 AfroCubaMiami, which brought together Afro-Cuban religious practitioners from around the world (including Cubans from the island), as well as non-Cuban practitioners (including African Americans), Marisol performed as Eleggúa. At one point, however, she opened the doors of the venue, trespassing the private/public borders, and danced outside, facing Calle Ocho with her “cane-clearing” and space-marking garabato. In other words, she brought a mobile, brown and female embodiment of Elegguá more directly into Little Havana’s most symbolic crossroads.

In 2018, Miami’s Juggernaut Theatre Company brought Eleggúa into another crossroads nearby. Juan C. Sanchez, a white Cuban emigre who grew up in Little Havana, directed a site-specific series of performances (“Miami Motel Stories”) in the still-under-renovation Tower Hotel, just behind CubaOcho. Various “playlets” took place simultaneously in various rooms of the historic hotel (which had also served as a rooming house and a hospital), each viewable by only two people at a time. The playlets

gave a glimpse into the lives of people of different backgrounds (including African Americans) who had lived or stayed at the hotel during various historical periods (e.g., during the Mariel boatlift, in the 1920s, etc.), and was based on extensive historical research. The “guide” to the rooms was an Elegguá-like trickster figure acted by an African American man: he was the connector to all these intersections of time with space. Sometimes performances were interactive, as when a group of audience-members could watch or play dominos while a sixty-something white Cuban actor spoke about the exclusion of Mariels from Domino Park: a story I had shared with the playwright. Theater was transmitting buried histories, too.

After the playlets concluded, people gathered in the lobby area while Philbert Armenteros and other Afro-Cuban batá drummers began to play and sing songs to Ochún. Marisol, wearing a gold crown and the long skirted yellow dress of Ochún, began to dance. Milena remembers how engaged the audience became with the performance. “Because that was the type of music that different peoples, from different cultures, from different generations, was gravitating and vibing towards,” she said, “and a lot of people was like, ‘why I didn’t know about this group? Why don’t I see more of this?!’” One of the owners of the building, Bill Fuller, a middle-aged white Cuban American man, appeared mesmerized. “This is amazing!” he said. Yet the unforgettable moment occurred later, when I saw Marisol look down a hallway, still dressed as Ochún, to see the African American man. Neither of them knew each other, but he bowed to her, and they walked towards each other, embracing.

Celia Cruz, Azucar and La Rumbera

On the window of an unofficial “Welcome Center” in Little Havana, a neon sign flashes the silhouette of a smiling white woman holding a maraca in each hand and wearing ruffles on her sleeves and pants. The image—or a variation of it—repeats throughout the district: a dancing white rumbera with two maracas smiles at tourists and locals alike from the walls of three different Cuban restaurants, usually in posters designed in the early twentieth century to promote travel to Cuba. In front of two different souvenir shops where tourists pose and take photographs, her face disappears but her white hands remain in life-sized, wooden cut-out figures. These images, placed as props in front of the district’s businesses, set the scene of “Little Havana” for tourists. As tourists stick their heads in and out of cut-out figures, they can imagine themselves as the *rumbera* and as part of a scene from a Cuba remembered.

Rumba originates in the poor black neighborhoods of Havana and Matanzas, like those that Eddy Campa memorialized in his poetry. In her investigation of rumba and the “making of the rumba body,” Yesenia Fernández-Selier (2013) notes that the same black bodies that made rumba in the notorious *solares* (tenements) of these neighborhoods were linked musically to those who toiled the sugarcane fields of eastern Cuba, birthplace of Cuban *son* music (88). Rumba passed on histories through a repertoire of ritual practices maintained thanks to *cabildos*: Afro-Cuban mutual aid societies typically organized by African languages and groups. As Fernández-Selier explains (Ibid.):

Through these institutions and oral transmission, dancers and musicians learned the codes of the divine. These codes are stitched into rumba, creating a secular and multiethnic conversation in that ancestral ascendance is honored while playing a social game that encompasses entertainment, flirting, mating, self-identification, and social recognition. Making a rumba is a unique expression of the self: dancers

interpret and share who they are, where they come from, and the ancestral and daily life rituals to which they subscribe.

As rumba became popular outside black neighborhoods, the word *rumbera* became associated with the multilayered dress with ruffled sleeves and skirts.

In the 1920s, a “Rumba Craze” spread within and beyond Cuba, reaching the U.S., and appealing to elites in both countries who wanted “to explore the boundaries of their cultural expansion” (93), as Fernández-Selier explains. Film and salon versions performed by white women “staged rumba as sexual spectacle,” she adds, and built on stereotypes of the hyper-sexual mulatta (see also Costa 2000; Betancourt 2000). The rumba was “fully transferred to the White bodies to be absolutely possessed, a transaction sanctified through commoditization,” argues Fernández-Selier; it also made invisible black women (and men) (Ibid.).

When walking along Calle Ocho with Afro-Cuban musician Philbert Armenteros (interviewed Nov. 14, 2017), he critiqued the cutouts of a dancing rumbera and a rumbero (playing congas) after noticing their white hands. “Wrong,” he said, in Spanish. “Why can’t it be with blacks, who are the rumberos, right? But that’s for tourists...For them to imagine themselves. Always, a disguise.” He brought up the history of blackface and the exclusion of blacks despite their talents. Still, he was optimistic. “It’s a grain of sand. Another bit more...Over here, another bit. And when you join all the bits, it’s that-- we win. We can arrive. When we are all together, you know, together.”

In Little Havana, every representation of Celia Cruz seems to link her to sugar, as if her commemorative body is permanently joined with (or occupied by) a white body. As Little Havana resident Milena Lafitte (interviewed Nov. 1, 2017) commented:

She was so much more than that. To me that word is almost like a mockery. It depicts the Cuban as always the party, the dancing--and yes, we're definitely that, but it doesn't show in depth what we're really about. It doesn't show all the facets of what Cubans are all about. And especially somebody as big as Celia. It's a dishonor to her.

When tour guides talk about Celia Cruz, they often contribute to her linkages with sugar, as on a free walking tour of the district held during Viernes Culturales on April 28, 2017. We stood around the star of Celia Cruz on the "Calle Ocho Walk of Fame" (formerly the Hispanic Walkway of Stars). "Celia Cruz was the Queen of Salsa," said the middle-aged Anglo guide, who said she had moved to Miami "like *all* the other artists...from Cuba," even though she launched her career in New York. Jose Perez (interviewed Nov. 29, 2017), who is white Cuban, believes she moved to New York to avoid the racism of South Florida, following in the footsteps of many other black Cuban emigres (Aja 2016). He recalled an interview of Cruz on a television show:

They were asking her, 'Geez, Celia, with all the Cubans in Miami, why don't you live there?' And she smiled, and she kind gave this little, she kind of paused and she's like, "Well, you know the climate is not good for my voice. I live in New York because it's better for my voice, you know, for my vocal chords." And I thought about it. Celia Cruz... sang in Cuba, where the climate is almost identical to what we have here... And I think Celia Cruz was smart enough to recognize, 'I'm not going to come on and say, "I'm not going to live in Miami with all those racists,"' because those racists are buying her records.

"When she died 10,000 came to visit this star," he continued, after sharing a story of Celia Cruz receiving royal treatment on her walks through the district. "Anyways, right over there with the graffiti, it says Azucar! And that was her famous saying, Azucar! Sugar!"

Not every representation of Cruz "whitens" her, however, including a portrait affixed to a column of the Latin Quarter Cultural Center which houses businesses like CubaOcho, a cigar store (also bar and gift shop) and a hair salon. Depicting a huge black

face with an enormous smile and exaggerated teeth, it faces Calle Ocho and the souvenir shop now owned by the dreadlocked son of Carole Ann Taylor, and a Cuban restaurant, whose owner is Afro-Cuban. It is part of a series of black and white caricature portraits of famous Cuban personalities displayed on the columns of the building. Milena remembers the reaction of Marisol Blanco (her friend and dance teacher) when she first saw the portrait of Cruz and other blacks in the series: “‘*That’s* Celia? Oh my God!’ And that’s such and such and, ‘Oh my God!’ And ‘Who is that?!’” Milena called them “the little monsters” and that’s what she and Marisol have called them since then.

When conducting a walking interview with Yoel Molina (Mar. 18, 2017), president of the Miami-based Afro Cuban Forum, he approached the series of murals saying that others had called them racist, but he would reserve judgment until seeing them himself. Commenting about the exaggerated features in the portrait of Cruz, he said it reminded him of the Mammy figure, which he described as “a very demeaning caricature and image consistent with African American history.” He said it was easy to find it “very offensive.” Though also caricatures, the features of white Cubans depicted in the series did not have ties to a history of racist stereotypes, he said, his demeanor completely changing after seeing the portrait of famed Afro-Cuban pianist Ignacio Jacinto Villa Fernández (nicknamed Bola de Nieve, or snowball). Yoel was speechless. The portrait faces the restaurant Old’s Havana, where people sit outside to dine and can easily see the image of a black grinning face with huge lips and big ears, as well as the grinning portrait of Celia Cruz. “This person looks like a monkey,” he remarked, with disgust. “Those are the types of things, that frankly in many communities, would not be tolerated.”

Cuban Memorial Park

On February 8, 2001, Acción Cubana added a new monument to Cuban Memorial Park:

A bronze bust of a Cuban-born tango singer Manolo Fernandez, nicknamed “El Caballero del Tango” (the “Gentleman of Tango”). Lillian Guerra (2016, 139) calls it the most “bizarre” monument in Cuban Memorial Park, likely because it is so incongruous with the other statues and memorials in the park. The bust of Fernandez faces the Torch of the Brigade (and Calle Ocho) and sits at the “front” of the gated courtyard that includes the statue to Tony Izquierdo.

Both the bust and the statue were crafted by Tony Lopez who, two decades earlier, made the bust of another tango singer: Carlos Gardel. The Gardel bust was unveiled at a tango festival where Manolo Fernandez was one of the featured performers, as he often sang at shows dedicated to Gardel, who was a famous Argentinean tango singer (Marquis June 18, 1987; “The Latin Scene,” June 24, 1977; Muñiz Feb. 10, 1988). As a sort of Cuban Gardel, Fernandez could signify class and racial privilege. His bust served as a counterpart to Izquierdo’s: the new Jose Martí to balance with the new Maceo.

Argentina—with its predominantly white population—served as Cuba’s model of national blanqueamiento (whitening) in the early twentieth century, as Aline Helg (1990, 38-39) has noted, and tango, the national music of Argentina, is an example of an art form now “whitened” for caballeros and removed from its roots among poor, black Afro-Argentineans (Andrews 2010). In Miami, Fernandez was a frequent performer in “Tropicana Nights” shows in the 1960s, which featured the iconic white rumberas (“Monsieur Pierre Supper Club” Feb. 11, 1967; “New Toledo,” Jan. 29, 1966). Thus, like Gardel, he too was part of a music scene that capitalized on (and whitened) Afro-Cuban

music by removing any traces of the black people from whom it had originated (Fernández-Selier 2013). In 1988, Fernandez performed at the Cuban Independence Day celebrations in Jose Martí Park, during which “La Protesta de Miami” had taken place in front of Maceo’s monument (Viglucci May 17, 1985; Herrera Feb. 8, 1988). He had also served in the first militant organization created to prepare for the Bay of Pigs invasion (Muñiz Feb. 10, 1988).

On the plaque below the bust, other names join those of Fernandez, with his title, “gentleman of tango”. Listed are the names of Acción Cubana, Gilberto Casanova, and three others. I remember seeing Casanova during visits to Cuban Memorial Park, after I moved to Little Havana in 2006, and before he died. An almost skeletal, short and fair-skinned man, he usually sat alone in a lawn chair, in the gated courtyard next to the monument, with flyers in his hand. I remember one of them announcing Casanova’s intention to donate the land in the park to the Republican Party. In 2004, age 81, he told a reporter for *The Miami Herald* that “Everything you see here, this is my property” (Sanchez June 6, 2004). His property, then, included the head of the white “gentleman” of whitened tango (which I observed being painted over with gold paint by a city employee) and the black, bronzed body of the warrior that stood behind it, as if protecting the white man.

From 2004 to 2005, Miami invested \$2.9 million in renovations for Cuban Memorial Park, extending the linear park with a pathway, renovating monuments and altering the arboreal landscape. The press release announcing the ribbon-cutting event invited residents to celebrate “Cuban Heritage, American Freedom and International Diversity (“Mayor Manny Diaz,” Oct. 5, 2005; Sanchez June 6, 2004). When the project began,

two plaques still remained on the wall behind Maceo's monument, yet by the end of the renovations, both had been removed (Sanchez June 6, 2004; "WPLG04472," Mar. 13, 1994, Wolfson Archives). The Maceo monument now had no name; all that remained was the quote about the machete.

Izquierdo had become the new site to remember political prisoners. In 2017, activists gathered at Izquierdo's monument to honor 43-year-old black Cuban political prisoner Orlando Zapata Tamayo after he died on February 23, 2010 following an 86-day hunger strike ("Orlando Zapata Tamayo," Feb. 23, 2017). Commemorations of Tamayo made him into the new Maceo born "from" Izquierdo, much like the religious process in Santería whereby someone is said to have made an Orisha "from" the Orisha of their religious godparent. Activists spoke about Tamayo in the same way that others spoke about Izquierdo (and Maceo) years earlier: as the loyal black warrior. They described Tamayo as "a humble man who represented the dignity and sacrifice and who suffered doubly by being both black and an opponent of the regime" ("Grupos del Exilio," Feb. 22, 2017). Orlando Gutiérrez Boronat said the tribute to Tamayo was in the shadow of "another giant," who for him was Izquierdo, not Maceo. He emphasized the unity between those in the resistance in Cuba and in the diaspora, also implying racial unity among Cubans fighting communism and Castro ("Orlando Zapata Tamayo," Feb. 23, 2017).

In February of 2017, a Cuban man started camping out in the courtyard next to the Izquierdo statue, accompanied by his four pitbulls. Along the courtyard's iron fence, he had hung orange life jackets as well as homemade cardboard signs with messages scrawled in black marker: "Hope," "Somos Un Solo Pueblo" (We are One Village), and

on the front of the courtyard, “God Bless America, Juan 3:16.” He was referencing the Biblical verse about God giving Jesus as his sacrifice, his “only begotten son,” so those who believed in him could have everlasting life. The man in the courtyard was Diego Tintorero, a well-known activist and Mariel “retired” from involvement in Alpha 66, one of Miami’s best-known Cuban emigre terrorist organizations (Eaton and Corchado Dec. 7, 1997). He told me he was staging a hunger strike to bring attention to Cuban refugees stuck in Mexico thanks to the end of U.S. Wet Foot/Dry Foot policy.

I had a number of conversations with Tintorero, who camped out for nearly a month, sleeping on a cot behind the monument. He said he had been jailed multiple times due to his activism, but reading the works of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Ghandi had impacted his life, and now he believed in peace. While in jail in DC for his anti-Castro activism, black Muslims fed and cared for him, he said. In Miami, he had nearly been mauled by an anti-Castro crowd when he carried a sign about love, despite his service as a “warrior” for the counter-revolution. Afterwards, however, another prominent activist approached him, and admitted, holding back tears, the great burden of having to carry so much hate.

A month later, when Tintolero was gone, I noticed a plastic bouquet of red roses had been attached to the tip of Izquierdo’s machine gun, imitating Tony Bryant’s gesture of peace-making years earlier (Almond Feb. 17, 1993). It immediately reminded me of Bernie Boston’s famous “Flower Power” photo showing an antiwar protester placing the stem of a flower in the tip of a gun. Tintolero later admitted to me that he had attached it to the gun, re-making Izquierdo into a symbol of peace, not war.

Little Havana resident Lazaro ([pseudonym], Oct. 27, 2017), who is Afro-Cuban, had another interpretation of Izquierdo. He considered him not a “loyal slave” but a black man who freely and boldly criticized the Cuban government and confronted its claims of racial democracy:

“Hey black man, what are you doing here?!” Fidel, he say [to Izquierdo]. “I understand *those* people, but you’re black! You coming with those people to fight here? You got to be *crazy*! The revolution is for *your* people.” He [Izquierdo] say, ‘No, it’s not for my people. I know you and who you are, how many bones you put down, and how many Cubans you kill.”

Being Ochún

In addition to the colorful mosaic wall separating it from the adjacent Tower Theater, Domino Plaza has colored pavers that imitate a curving river extending from Calle Ocho to Southwest 9th Street – or two shores of an ocean both dividing and connecting the Tower Theater with Maximo Gomez Park. The top of the wall also rises and falls in a wave-like pattern. The mosaic design of the wall integrates iconic images of Cubanidad (tropical fruits, cigars, dominos, etc.) within a repeating floral design floral design. The wall also includes images of framed pictures, which like windows depict places or moments connected to Cuba: the *malecón* seawall in Havana, a *tinaja*⁹⁷ in Camagüey.

In 2012 or so, I was examining the mosaic wall when I realized that the repeating flower was a sunflower with five petals. “Ochún!” I thought, thinking of the feminine divinity of love, beauty and fertility: five is her sacred number and she is honored with sunflowers. The flower also signified Our Lady of Charity, syncretized with Ochún

⁹⁷ Earthenware clay pots historically used to hold water, and a symbol of Camagüey, Cuba: the city is nicknamed “la ciudad de las tinajas” (the city of the tinajas).

(Zuñiga 2011; Brown 1999; de la Torre 2001). Connecting colors, symbols and numbers, I noticed Elegguá, too. I was sure the artists were signifying him through two red-colored, football-shaped mamey fruits with their single black pits: Elegguá's eyes? To confirm my assessment, I walked along the full length of the wall, and sure enough, I saw the two "eyes" once again, repeated at both ends of the wall. I knew where to find the Orisha of the crossroads, of endings and beginnings.

In this moment of recognition, I felt as if Orishas had revealed themselves to me, reminding me of their co-presences (Beliso-De Jesús 2014, 2015). Anthropologist Paul Christopher Johnson describes a similar experience:

I am not quite transformed to the degree that my body feels owned or occupied, at least not to the point of forfeiting everyday, self-possessed consciousness, but I am surely transported as I pass this crossroads...Even as these walls and doors and pavement stones are permeated *by* the spirits of history, they also work *on* spirits and take part in shaping them...

The artists who designed the wall helped conjure these spirits through the wall as an archive of public memory. Yet perhaps I would not have recognized Orishas "in" the wall had I not learned so much from my Afro-Cuban dance teachers, who repeatedly emphasized the repertoire of symbols, attributes, behaviors and stories associated with each Orisha. The white Cuban artists who created the design, Mariels and identical twins Ronald and Nelson Curras, confirmed my assessment of the symbols. Although neither of them practiced Santería, they understood the Orishas as part of Cubanidad, adding them "under the noses" of white Cuban emigres from earlier cohorts, and in a plaza that urban planner Jose Casanova described as "if not the most important plaza, then one of the most important open areas for the Latin community" (Sanchez June 6, 2004).

During the Viernes Culturales festival on the last Friday evening of every month, Domino Plaza hosted music performances and artist vendors. In April 2012, HistoryMiami (the city's history museum) sponsored a performance of live Afro-Cuban music at the festival. Three Afro-Cuban drummers sat in chairs, each with a double-headed batá drum in his lap as Marisol Blanco danced. She was performing as Ochún, wearing a yellow leotard with gauzy yellow fabric for sleeves. She had wrapped a long multi-stranded beaded necklace across her body, like a sash; it combined "lines" of Yemaya and Ochun. Her brown skin contrasted with the bright yellow of her dress, and its flowing fabrics twinkled with hundreds of gold sequins. A satin gold crown with three oval prongs sat atop her head, adorned with cowry shells and more gold sequins. Marisol swirled through the crowd of onlookers, sometimes touching people with the fringe of her glittery shawl or with the yellow feathers of her fan. While the drummers slapped sacred songs from their drums and sang the stories of Ochún, Blanco moved to and fro along the edges of the crowd of locals and tourists gathered around her.

Nearby stood a vertical orange banner emblazoned with "HistoryMiami." As the former director of Viernes Culturales, I knew that this performance required approval by the Viernes Culturales board as well as museum decision-makers. Despite public stigmatization of Santería practitioners, and continued representations of Santería in tourist media as primitive and exotic (de la Torre 2001, 2003; Palmié 2013; Portes and Stepick 1993), two institutions (both funded by the state) were sponsoring this performance in a central and symbolic space. As in Cuba, where Afro-Cuban religious arts have become the "folklore" driving a nationalizing project and "proving" racial

democracy, Afro-Cuban “folkloric” performances in Miami also fit themes of inclusion and multiculturalism (Aranda et al. 2009, 2014).

That evening, Blanco moved as if part of the river/ocean evoked in the pattern of blue pavers decorating the plaza. Ochún “represents the constant flow of human life”; she is “constantly moving, eternally pursuing a path” (Castellanos 2001, 39). Blanco said that during this performance she maintained eye contact with the audience, because

your body has to explain the message. And then you have to maintain the connection between drums, singers, and dancers, because how can you explain to them if they don’t know the language, if they don’t understand the music? So, the dancer is the person that has the responsibility to communicate the history, communicate the patakí [sacred story], communicate what the singer says. I have the book, you have to read it, in my body, what that means...I’ve created is the history to give...I’m the book.

After she finished dancing, two Latina girls approached her (one white, and one black) and hugged her, both of them weeping, and saying that her dancing touched them profoundly. They saw themselves reflected in the dance, said Blanco, who said that sometimes, when she is performing, people think she IS Ochún, and they talk to her as if she is Ochún.

Marisol did not stop at the limits of the plaza after her performance. After the drummers had put their drums away and left, she decided to remain dressed in her crown and dress for the remainder of the festival. I walked behind her as she strode across Calle Ocho and past rows of cars waiting at the stop light. She walked by crowded music venues and galleries and the many people clogging the sidewalk, heading straight for Futurama 1637, the headquarters of Viernes Culturales. The space was crowded with visitors perusing art in the dozen or so studio-galleries on the first floor. Blanco walked regally past the crowd of elegantly dressed visitors, most of them white, and headed to

the office of one of her dance students: an Indian American midwife. Dressed as the Orisha of fertility, she hugged and embraced the racially diverse group of women gathered there for an art opening the midwife was sponsoring.

I felt a sense of awe walking along the sidewalk with Blanco. She was defining where she wanted to go, and walking without fear, after having performed in a plaza where for the past year men of color had endured constant harassment by police and local authorities for (legally) playing dominos in the plaza at night. After asserting a kind of royal black femaleness into what had become a battlefield dominated by men, she asserted her ability to move within and beyond the control of the institutions that paid her to perform in a spectacle of multiculturalism. “I feel like when I dance Oshún and that when I walk, that I give you a little piece of love that you need in your life. For me Calle Ocho is like home. So, welcome to home! Welcome to the neighborhood: I give you exactly what you need. You need support, you need love, you need to be strong. You need to be warriors. You can always come back because you need energy. So, I never close my door. My door always is open.”

Warriors in the Park

Shortly after Fidel Castro died on November 25th, 2016, a huge “Free Cuba” rally took over the heritage district (November 30th). From the morning until late in the evening, Calle Ocho from 12th to 17th Avenues was shut off from traffic. I arrived early, and watched vendors begin to arrive, selling flags and other merchandise. At a local fruit market near Cuban Memorial Park, I stopped to chat with one of the owners, Angel Jr. Hernandez. Lowering his voice, he leaned over to me and said, “I don’t know what that

reporter was thinking, dressing in red and black today! That's why my mother wouldn't do an interview with her. She *hates* those colors together! She should have known better."

"Why?" I asked. "Those are the colors of the Revolution! Red and black!" he replied.

The colors red and black are also the colors of Elegguá, the trickster Orisha, and so I wondered how many people wearing the color combination are mis-recognized as communist when in fact they might be honoring Elegguá. On the feast days for particular saints, like Our Lady of Charity and Santa Barbara, I've noticed many locals wearing the colors associated with the Orishas syncretized with these saints. Some people wear the colors of "their" saint or Orisha frequently, as does an elderly woman in the neighborhood who dresses head to toe in yellow, the color of Ochún, every single day.

As the day progressed, I noticed that most people carried small flags with them—or sometimes both a Cuban and a U.S. flag. Many flags, banners, signs, T-shirts and caps referenced Trump, although he had already been elected: "Trump/Pence," "Make America Great Again," "Latinas for Trump." Some men carried "Police Lives Matter" banners; the paramilitary organization Alpha 66 unfurled their eight-foot high banner on a fence facing the Brigade 2506 Torch. A local cigar manufacturer placed a banner in front of his business advertising "Liberty Cigars" under the title "Born Free"; the logo featured two white male babies on either side of two flags, one Cuban, one U.S. By the time the U.S. national anthem began to play from the huge stage erected on Calle Ocho, the crowd was shoulder-to-shoulder. I didn't hear anyone sing along with the U.S. anthem, but afterwards a few people began to chant, "USA! USA!" Everyone seemed to belt out the Cuban anthem shortly afterwards.

At the rally, I met up with Yoel Molina again, as he had told me he was planning to attend. Yoel is a very tall man, and he arrived wearing a black suit with a Cuban flag pin attached to his lapel. We walked over to the fruit market, and I introduced him to Angel Jr. by name, mentioning Yoel's leadership of Afro Cuban Forum. They began to talk, but a minute into the conversation, Angel suddenly looked up and said, "Wait, you're Cuban?!" I was shocked that despite all the "clues" (the rally, Yoel's name, title and pin) Yoel was still mis-recognized as non-Cuban. Every black Cuban I interviewed for this study recalled similar experiences: white Cubans not recognizing them as Cuban; similar experiences among Afro-Cubans in Miami are also documented by Alan Aja (2016).



Figure 6: Free Cuba Rally in Little Havana heritage district, Nov. 30, 2016. Photo by the author.

Later in the evening, I noticed an increased number of black Cubans who frequent the district now wearing Cuban flag jerseys instead of waving flags: their entire upper half had turned into a Cuban flag (see Figure 25). Walking by Guantanamera Cigars in the Latin Quarter Specialty Center, I noticed a black man dancing in a full-body Cuban flag costume. I interpret these gestures as a kind of security signified by the physical

“insertion” of their bodies “into” the flag and into imagined Cuban emigre solidarity, especially since the dominant expressions of Cubanidad at the rally referenced white U.S. nationalism.

In the days following the rally, Cuban Memorial Park returned to serve its regulars: teens trying new tricks on their skateboards, parents playing with their children, tour groups staring at the ceiba. Old Cuban men like to sit on the benches in the park, where I often find discarded issues of *Libre*, one of Miami’s oldest continuous running Cuban emigre newspapers. Published weekly, it is distributed to retail businesses and restaurants in heavily Spanish-speaking areas of Miami, and is published by Demetrio Perez, Jr., founder of Lincoln-Marti Schools. Lincoln-Marti organizes the annual Jose Martí Parade that begins in Cuban Memorial Park.

Reading *Libre*, which has print circulation of 5,000 and is also available online, I was shocked by the anti-black racism expressed in columns by Cuban emigre writer Roberto Luque Escalona, who by 2012 received at least two full pages (near the beginning of the newspaper) devoted to his column. His columns offer a “peak” into ideologies driving some of the memorialization practices in Cuban Memorial Park. He praises one of the most racist contributors to the white supremacist site Stormfront, and yet often expresses bitterness towards Anglos who treat Cubans as less-than-white, asking why Anglos “gave” whiteness to Italians but then “invented” Hispanics (Escalona, Oct. 12, 2010). He mocks Anglos who left Little Havana for “white” neighborhoods, when “now the houses of the neighborhood invaded by the *gusano* Cubans have not depreciated at all, but have increased in value.” Little Havana didn’t turn into the “ghetto,” he claims, so Anglos lost money and had to break their “racial schemes.” Referencing Columbus, Escalona

describes Cubans as superior to other Hispanics; he claims other Hispanics are envious of Cubans because Cubans as more hard-working and business-savvy, their success “measured in dollars” (Ibid.).

Escalona portrays African Americans as violent and racist (Luque Escalona “Como Cabe” Sept. 20, 2016), and Cubans as not racist, because “Cuba was the only country in history in which there were, at the same time, black slaves and generals of the same race” (Luque Escalona Oct. 12, 2009). He claims that Maceo did not “deny” his whiteness and criticizes blacks who deny their “white heritage” (Luque Escalona “No Hay Margen” Sept. 20, 2016). Days after President Barack Obama announced his re-election campaign in 2012, Escalona compares African American leaders to “the Haitians of the late eighteenth century,” conjuring the Haitian Revolution. He warns that Anglos are less forgiving: “If blacks go to war here, they will be exterminated” (Luque Escalona April 10, 2012). He also references the 1912 massacre (Luque Escalona Oct. 25, 2012):

Few American blacks are capable of reading in Spanish. Pity, because I have some things to tell you. I would tell you, for example, that in 1912, a pair of imbeciles called Evaristo Estenoz and Pedro Ivonet [leaders of the Partido Independiente de Color] tried to intimidate the white majority. More than two thousand blacks died. As the black minority of Cuba was greater than that of here and the white Cubans are much more benign than the Anglo-Saxons in racial matters, if a situation similar to that of Cuba were produced in 1912; in short, I do not even want to think about it. Those black leaders who do not stop preaching racial hatred, what do they want? Why does the Ku-Klux-Klan resurrect?

Immediately after the massacre of blacks in Cuba in 1912, local business men and government officials gathered around a table at the base of the Jose Martí monument. They were honoring the Cuban Army troops that had just lynched and murdered thousands of black men, women and children. Standing at the head of the table, in front of the monument, stood the army’s Chief of Staff: José Francisco Martí y Zayas-Bazán,

Jose Martí's son. A hundred years after the massacre, on February 15th, 2012, official Havana historian Eusebio Leal Spengler unveiled a new plaque for a wall in Old Havana (Betancourt n.d. "Eusebio Leal"). The plaque commemorated José Francisco Martí y Zayas-Bazán, revealing how scenarios of Reconquista appear to be enacted through forms of public memory in Cuba, too.

Warriors and Honey: Dancing Wisdom

On February 18, 2018, Marisol Blanco performed at an event during the Gay8 festival, currently the world's largest Latino LGBTQ festival in the U.S, which began in 2016 and takes place in the heritage district (www.gay8festival.com). The event took place in CubaOcho; most in the crowd were women. The walls of CubaOcho are covered with colonial-era and early to mid-twentieth century Cuban paintings. In the midst of these paintings, some of which depicted slaves in the street or fields, Marisol wore a burgundy colored satin dress with multicolored panels and a glittering burgundy and gold crown. She was dancing as Oyá, the female warrior Orisha of the wind and the market. Barefoot, she carried a long horsetail *eruke* (flywisk) and whipped it through the air around her head, charging through the aisle between the seated guests and yelling war cries. She would lean towards various women to "cleanse" them with the flywisk. The audience members, all of them Anglos or white Latinas, seemed ecstatic. Afterwards however, Roberto Ramos (the owner) whispered to me and said, "Why does she do *those* dances? Why can't she just do Ochún? That's a much better representation..."

After arriving in Miami ten years earlier, in 2008, Marisol (interviewed Aug. 3, 2017) started teaching dance classes at DAF Studio, located across the street from CubaOcho,

and also adjacent to Azucar Plaza. The studio occupies the same space once used by Cold Warriors to plan their next covert missions (George 2006). From the beginning, Marisol taught a racially diverse group of students, but sometimes black female students would approach her after class and say they how much they desperately *needed* her class in their lives. Marisol said the classes offer a support system “because life here is really hard.”

For her, teaching is a form of healing that provides knowledge and survival skills: Yvonne Daniel (2005) would call it “dancing wisdom” or an embodied repertoire of knowledge (Taylor 2003). “When you move, when you talk, when you walk, you have to feel like you are embodied,” says Marisol, “that you are strong enough to talk, to dance, to walk, to express, to communicate.” “The life is for warriors,” she adds. “*Para tener vida* [to have life], first you have to be grateful to be alive.” Second, she says, one has to be a warrior and learn survival skills, and third, one has to maintain those skills. Most Afro-Cubans I interviewed mentioned their need fortify their inner selves, defying the stereotypes that marked them (Fanon 1986; Hall 2013; Pérez 2013).

In January of 2016, Marisol began rehearsing with members of her dance company in an empty courtyard within the Latin Quarter Specialty Center, next to CubaOcho. Although gated to the outside, it’s easily visible to pedestrians walking along Calle Ocho, and thus both residents and tourists. The women dancers in the company, most of them black or mestizo, practiced a choreography of fierce and fast-paced Palo dances. I watched them leap forward, strike past invisible barriers with *garabatos* (hooked sticks originally used in clearing sugarcane), and dance in circles, like warrior women. Eventually, the East Little Havana Community Development Authority, which runs the Latin Quarter Specialty Center, prohibited them from holding their rehearsals there. “I

have my own personal opinion,” said Little Havana resident and dancer Milena Lafitte (interviewed Nov. 1, 2017), a member of Blanco’s group. “If we were rehearsing ballet, if we were rehearsing maybe, some other more popular dance – tango, I don’t think we’d have such a hard time rehearsing. But we’re rehearsing all different kinds of Afro-Cuban rhythms and dances. And our Palo routine? *Lots* of people were afraid of that routine – they were even afraid of the music, our war cries, our moves.” Some people watched and seemed delighted, she says, especially tourists. Occasional negative responses from white Cubans made her feel stronger. “I get a *stronger* urge to dance, I get a *stronger* urge to do better, to do it *perfect*, to show the world what we’re about, and if my war cry at that moment was like a little cat, when I see that and I hear that then I become a *lion*.

AuHHHH!!! YES. This is US. And yes, we’re HERE. And yes: You have to deal with it.”

Milena, a Santera “crowned” with Ochún, said that like her Orisha she is usually sweet and loving, but dancing taught her to tap into her warrior side, too. Describing Marisol’s class, she remarked, “The energy of the class is *vibrant*. And your body’s learning to take in that energy. You’re dancing Oggún: your body’s learning that energy. Same with any other Orisha. Be it Ochún, Obatala, Chango, whoever it is that you’re dancing: your body’s learning that energy.” She notes the genuine interest of students in Marisol’s in-class lectures, which connect dances to African and Cuban moments in history, African ethnic groups, patakí (sacred stories), and the attributes of specific Orishas, adding to embodied memory-knowledge.

Roosters

Every day, at least a hundred tourists take photos in front of a six-foot rooster sculpture that stands on the corner of Calle Ocho and Southwest 16th Avenue. The rooster wears a painted-on guayabera shirt that combines a Cuban flag on its chest with the stars and stripes of the U.S. flag on its wings and tail. Above the anthropomorphized cock, a small sign reads, “Welcome to Little Havana.” The rooster, facing towards Calle Ocho, appears like the conquistador, ruling his territory, and as a guide, welcoming tourists to the district. In 2011, the rooster was stolen by members of a fraternity at Florida International University, as part of a prank (it was later returned) (Grenier and Moebius 2015). Before Little Havana NET Administrator Pablo Canton realized the identity of the culprits, he said he “hoped it wouldn’t end up in a Santería ritual” (Suarez de Jesus Sept. 21, 2011).

Previous rooster sculptures had been vandalized and destroyed. In 2002, eight five-foot fiberglass roosters appeared along sidewalks in Little Havana, each of them painted with a different design. The roosters were installed as a “Rooster Walk” public art project of the Miami-Dade Empowerment Trust. Soon after they appeared, vandals defaced and destroyed them. Rumors spread that the roosters had video cameras hidden behind their crystal eyes; residents assumed they were being used for police surveillance. Eventually, more rooster sculptures returned to local sidewalks (without crystal eyes), along with additional roosters purchased by business owners (Grenier and Moebius 2015). Local black business owner Carole Ann Taylor (interviewed May 26, 2017) never received her rooster sculpture, however, despite her deposit of \$1,000 and her persistent follow-up. She believes she was one of the first business owners to request a rooster.

The roosters appear in front of several stores in the district, almost always with the ubiquitous guayabera shirt. Kenneth Burns (interviewed May 10, 2017), an African

American drummer with years of immersion in Afro-Cuban circles, said guayaberas are part of a coded language. “You know who wear the guayaberas?” he asked me, rhetorically. “The police, okay? The police are white and blue. The ones who check the black market money on the street wear blue ones or black ones. If you gotta grey guayabera, he’s watching the *traffico* [person working the black market]. If it’s white, or something – *cuidado!* [watch out!].” The guayabera, in other words, signifies authority. On the rooster, it ties white male authority to the animal most emblematic of conquest.

When I began the process of fieldwork, I started to hear stories about sacrificed roosters ending up on the doorsteps of various businesses, left there as a threat and warning. Roosters are important animals in Afro-Cuban religion, offered to divinities and spirits. Once-living, decapitated roosters left on Calle Ocho seemed to be more than spiritual offerings, however. They seemed to be a symbolic strike against the seemingly invulnerable roosters affiliated with white and male authority: a rebellious act against the contemporary conquistador, capitalizing on fears of “black magic.” “Santería emerged within this colonial system maintained through violence, repression, and racial ordering,” explains anthropologist Aisha Beliso-De Jesus (2014, 510), “as well as through its countertechnologies of rebellion, sabotage, secret religions, and other resistance.”

These thoughts became even more coherent on one of my walks through Cuban Memorial Park, when the smell of rotting animal carcasses around the ceiba seemed especially potent and unpleasant. Suddenly, it occurred to me that smell made present the death of humans whose lives and tragic deaths had been sanitized out of history. The tree as “monument” did not package death in names engraved in concrete monuments; it made death real and tangible and unforgettable. Just as local black business owners used

Afro-Cuban music to “reach” into the public spaces of the street, thus extending voices, words, melodies and rhythms across the borders of the private and into public space, so too did the scent of sacrificed animals “reach” anyone who walked through the park, defying all attempts at burying the past and the voices and presence of the dead.

Rumba

On March 25, 2016, nine police officers and code enforcement inspectors—several with bullet-proof vests--converged around the black-owned cigar shop, Top Cigars, located on Calle Ocho near Southwest 16th Avenue (see Figure 26). It was 8:30 pm, at the height of the district’s Viernes Culturales festival, and three double-parked squad cars with flashing lights were cutting off a lane of traffic on the already congested Calle Ocho. White Latinx men in bulletproof vests stood outside the black-owned business, while the owner sat calmly on a stool by the entrance. Inside, musicians continued to sing and drum for Elegguá, the trickster Orisha, aware that something was happening but not stopping the music.



Figure 26: Top Cigars owner Cristobal Mena points towards the group of police officers and code enforcement personnel conducting the “inspection” of his business.

The owner, Cristobal Mena (interviewed June 22, 2017) is used to encounters with the police and Code Enforcement, but he rarely organized a rumba after the invasion. He said that authorities have tried to arrest him and shut him down for years, but he knows his legal rights, having studied law at the University of Havana. He has made formal complaints about false arrests and illegal searches. When I witnessed the invasion during the festival, I asked a Code Enforcement inspector why they were conducting a so-called “inspection” at a cigar shop at night, and in the middle of a busy festival. She said it was pure coincidence and described it as a “routine” inspection for drugs and arms, yet when I asked, the only other Calle Ocho business “inspected” that evening targeted an LGBTQ-owned art gallery.

Music for Elegguá had always opened the monthly music gathering at Top Cigars. The door of the shop remained open so the music could be heard across the street. Drummers played with their backs to the storefront window, accompanied by a singer. They would start with batá drumming and songs for the Orishas, and then switch to rumba, later alternating between sets of sacred and secular Afro-Cuban music. As the night proceeded, the place would become crowded with people—most but not all of them of African descent, moving to the music. When the musicians played Yemayá, people would sway together in the imitation of waves; when they played rumba guaguancó, flirtatious energy would swirl back and forth between a male and female dancer circling in front of the drums; when they played an Abakuá song men would step into the space with the slow and graceful steps of the ñañigo; and when the drummers switched to Palo the room would fill with the triumphant spirit of resistance. In the back, four people were

always playing dominos, and some drank rum, or soda, or puffed on cigars. Others sat on a sofa pulled out in front of the store, and gathered around the entrance, talking.

Rumba brought blacks together in a group, but it was always an interracial gathering. In the heart of the heritage district, just a block from the Tower Theater, these joyful events stood in complete contrast to the district's other images and representations of blacks as isolated figures, either alone or surrounded by whites. Kenneth Burne (interviewed May 10, 2017), an African American drummer who often played at the rumba, explained why he thought whites feared the "real" rumba.

Well, most of these white Cubans – are descendants of plantation owners, that didn't want to deal with black folks unless we was working for them, slaves, and it's just typical. Like most white people, they want black stuff – they want black gods in their head, black booty in their bed, black music, but they don't want no black brothers and sisters in their house. Okay? So, that hasn't changed. So, once the Mariel came, and the REAL Cuba came, not this white Tropicana shit, where because Cuba is black and POOR and all the ambience from the street of the REAL rumba and stuff came, they didn't like that! 'Cause it's not white anymore.

Ariel Fernandez (interviewed Dec. 12, 2017), an Afro-Cuban man and Little Havana resident who frequented the rumba, also referenced "white fear":

It's the fear of the black planet, it's the fear of the black person, when they see so many blacks in one place, they get scared, like 'Something might happen here. Look at all these blacks here. Oh, how loud is the music.' So that definitely is something that is very particular, is very unique, and scary at some point, to the establishment...

He calls rumba "one of those elements of cultural resistance."

In his genealogy of spirit possession, Paul Christopher Johnson (2014b) helps uncover some of the tropes – like the scenario of Black Revolution -- that contribute to portrayals of dangerous black gatherings. He notes how Hegel's writings depict a "swarming horde" of African religious practitioners that "misrecognizes" "fetish" objects and elevates them for veneration (39). As Johnson (2014b, 40) explains:

Spirit possession indexed both the lack of a properly bounded self and an inadequately defined society. As possession's locus par excellence, Africa served as a chronotope of the anticitizen and the ungoverned state, a place and time (the past in the present, the primitive) of the frenzy and the horde, a socially undifferentiated and uncontrollable mob.

Like the portrayals of the Mariel boatlift, gatherings of blacks likely conjured fears among those who wanted to maintain the familiar racial/spatial order of the district, with "loyal blacks" being those who surrounded themselves with whites, not other blacks.

The gatherings became so popular they attracted Afro-Cubans (and others of African descent) of all social classes from across South Florida; the Internet helped word spread internationally. People who had defected to the U.S. while on tour with famous Cuban rumba groups like Yoruba Andabo and Raices Profundas became regular performers. Cubans who hadn't seen each other in years reunited. Rumba enthusiasts visiting from Cuba, New York, Philadelphia, California, Sweden and Puerto Rico—most of them black—would make a point to visit the rumba. African Americans, Jamaicans, Belizeans, Brazilians, and continental Africans were among those who joined in. People diverse in race, gender, age and gender/sexual identity participated.

For one of the rumba singers, Freddy Cardenas (interviewed July 11, 2017), such a gathering was rare in the U.S. because it was so visible and accessible. He felt proud when the music "lured" white Cubans into Top Cigars, and both he and Ariel Fernandez believed the rumba was a means to fight racism. Cardenas also uses the symbolism of "family" to suggest the liberating effects of racial mixing:

So when you walk by and you see this happening, and you hear the drums going, and the dancing, and the chanting, and all this emotional happening! Everybody gets so happy, and so into it, so excited with it, it just brings in a crowd, it calls everybody in, and so now you see people at the window, wondering what's going on, trying to come in, and the place is full, so they can't get in, they gotta wait a little bit, and they're

walking in a little scared, because it's basically full of a lot of black Cubans, and because of what people say about it, and everybody say, "Be careful!"...They're walking in because they want to enjoy it, but at the same time they're scared, but once they come in, they start dancing, they start enjoying themselves, you know, they start coming the next month or the next week. You see them play dominos. They become part of the family.

Many of the black "regulars" I interviewed explained how important this rumba was to their sense of identity and comfort; they emphasized how much they "needed it."

According to Milena Lafitte (interviewed Nov. 1, 2017):

Every time I came to this place, to me it felt like, FINALLY! There's a place in Miami where we can really dance rumba. Where we can really do the REAL thing! It's like being in Cuba, in a corner, where the real drummers are just playing and having fun. And that's how THIS felt to me. But no longer. It was a great gathering place. ...Because to me it was like a breath of Cuban reality. I would come out of the house or after class with Mari, and say, "Let's go to the rumba for a little we'll come and breathe in reality, and experience reality, and our bodies will be grateful for that reality. I'm with my people. I'm here with my people. I'm home again! I'm home! I'm here with my people!

The owner of the cigar shop, Cristobal Mena (interviewed June 22, 2017), said he simply wanted the music to lift peoples' spirits. He said that the energy from the music came from more than the singing: "It might look like singing, but they are PRAYING. And PRAYING, is deeper, they're asking God in different songs for different things."

Cristobal was not the first to organize rumba in the district. In the early 2000s, Afro-Cuban master percussionist Daniel Ponce, who arrived in the Mariel and had moved to Miami from New York, organized occasional *Sabados de la rumba* (rumba Saturdays) in a space close to where Top Cigars is now (Santiago Feb. 21, 2000). Nonetheless, the rumba—and other artistic projects that local arts reporter Carlos Suarez de Jesus described as "edgy" and "alternative"—faded out by 2002, as the district became an arts district dominated by tourist-oriented "folk images," some of which Suarez de Jesus

described as racist (Suarez de Jesus Jan. 18, 2007; Ralph de la Portilla, interviewed Nov. 7, 2017; Niurca Marquez, interviewed Dec. 14, 2017). Ariel Fernandez (interviewed Dec. 12, 2017) said he couldn't understand why a "historical site" like the district, an "epicenter for Cuban culture" could have "all the other expressions of Cuban music" but not the "stronger black contribution of Cubans to the music."

Those who participated in the rumba said it was a way of remembering: a connection to ancestors. "It's an amazing feeling," said Freddy. "When you do this, you feel – like you're back with the slaves, back with, you know?...Like the Afro-Black community, like back in the times...They couldn't tell their masters what they wanted to do or how to do things, so their only forms of expression was by doing these rumbas, by dancing, by shouting: stating what they wanted to say in a musical form." If blacks are no longer slaves, said Marisol Blanco (interviewed Aug. 3, 2017), then "we have to be free now. So why don't [they] give us the opportunity to valorize our heritage, our family?" She added: "The freedom. The FREE-dom. The freedom to express. When I dance, it's that way... It's my time to show you about my black heritage. I'm free."

Orientations: Touring the Ethnic District

Currently, walking and bus tours of Little Havana take place daily, and for more than a decade Viernes Culturales has offered free monthly walking tours of the neighborhood, usually led by local historian and author Paul George. At the festival on April 27, 2017, I joined a free tour led by one of his substitutes (also an Anglo male guide); at least fifty people were part of the tour. Most of the guide's narrative, predictably, repeated the Cuban success story, elevating Cubans who had arrived in the 1960s.

As we came closer to Cuban Memorial Park, however, his narrative shifted, and he made more distinct a binary between both “1960s Cubans” and “Others”—and Anglos and Cubans. Standing across from the botanica that faces the park, he claimed that botanicas had become tourist traps: “Busloads of Japanese tourists show up there... [directly to an Asian tourist] You’re not Japanese, right?” Several people laughed. “That was kinda racist,” he admitted, but continued, amidst more laughter. “They all go into the botanicas ‘cause there’s this old man there who dresses in white. He’s like a priest or Santero...he’s like, ‘Five dolla’, I will tell you what will happen in your future.’” He feigned a thick accent. “And they’re like ‘Ohhhhhhhhh,’” he said, then making a gibberish yell, “and he makes a KILLING.”⁹⁸

Our group never entered the botanica, where the owners are white Cubans. As such, participants on the tour likely assumed the owner was black, as the guide had already connected Santería with African origins (and with voodoo); he also shared a story of Mariel Santeros playing “bongos” at religious rituals and engaging in animal sacrifice. His tour narrative portrayed Othered Japanese tourists as a horde consumed with colonial desire for fetishized Afro-Cuban religion, while at the same time producing the Japanese tourist as a fetish-stereotype that could safely be laughed at along with black Mariels and their religious practices. Collective laughter and mockery produced them as the “Orient” while modernizing, whitening and elevating the Anglo guide and those who shared in the delight of laughing at the Other (Said 1978, 16; Bhabha 1997, 26-27). In his portrayal of Japanese tourists as a “swarming horde,” the guide also linked Japanese tourists to the so-

⁹⁸ In my twelve years living in Little Havana I have never seen a busload of tourists—Japanese or otherwise—enter this botanica; I have been to this botanica numerous times and the owner (and his wife) rarely dress in white and never offer to “tell fortunes.”

called swarms of Afro-Cuban Mariels in 1980 and colonial-era travel accounts of natives and “fetish doctors” (Johnson 2014b, 45; Hall 2013; McLintock 1995; Desmond 1999; Salazar 2012). The guide also portrayed Anglo whiteness as superior to Cuban whiteness, as if the proximity of Cuban emigres to fetish-loving “swarming hordes” made all Cubans somewhat suspect and Other, regardless of apparent assimilation.

A white male “expert guide” also appeared in a major marketing campaign spearheaded by the Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau (GMCVB). On January 24, 2014, I received an email from a marketing coordinator (Carolina Masvidal) at Turkel Brands⁹⁹ (a Coral Gables-based brand management firm), regarding their “It’s so Miami People and Places” campaign for the GMCVB. She asked if I could recommend a Hispanic male, ages 25 to 40, who “lived in the Little Havana area” and was “passionate” about the neighborhood. They wanted to feature locals “to talk about their neighborhood and their passion for Miami.” She admitted that “it’s all scripted and storyboarded, but we want the video to be authentic and ‘real’—advertising that doesn’t look like advertising.” Little Havana was just one of the Miami “heritage neighborhoods” highlighted for the campaign.

The GMCVB website, re-launched in 2014, included a new “It’s so Miami” section on Little Havana, describing it as a “Vibrant Cuban Neighborhood.”¹⁰⁰ The “Cuban American” rooster statue appeared in the primary photo for the section, and former LHDA president and tour guide Leslie Pantín, Jr. wrote an article published on the site. In the documentary-like campaign video (posted online and also distributed via multiple

⁹⁹ The firm is currently called Relebrand.

¹⁰⁰ www.miamiandbeaches.com/places-to-see/little-havana. Accessed Dec. 1, 2014.

other channels),¹⁰¹ the camera eye follows a (white), middle-aged Cuban man (Jose Fernandez) through the district. A Cuban male voiceover actor reads the storyboarded script as if *he* is Fernandez.

Like magic, the Anglo-run marketing firm bundled multiple bodies into a single commemorative body. Jose Fernandez, the voiceover actor, and the scriptwriter (likely Anglo or Cuban American) together reproduced an imagined Columbus. Viewers (like tourists) are the additional bodies that merge with imagined Cuban American elites, Anglos, and Columbus: together, all perform their conquest of “ethnic bodies,” including the district-as-body, with their insider knowledge. The only closing credit in the video thanks “Jose Fernandez and friends for telling their stories,” but the actual creator of the story is the strategically unseen, unnamed public relations firm and entities like the LHDA which helped produce the myth of Cuban success.

The profile of Fernandez on the GMCVB site describes him as a developer who is working to “restore and revitalize many of the buildings in the neighborhood of his youth.” A 1999 article about Fernandez (Commisso June 28, 1999), however, noted his intentions to purchase blocks of crumbling houses, knock them down, and replace them with homes aimed at young professionals. The authority of the GMCVB makes “Jose Fernandez” seem real, but he has become an invention: a digital body forever occupied with the voice of the godlike firm. Rendering both the district and its residents immobile, the campaign invents the successful Cuban emigre as an insider yet fellow traveler, ready to conquer new lands. It reproduces the imagination of ever mobile whiteness. “The

¹⁰¹ The video can be viewed at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KvJtX8LAkuw>.

entire neighborhood is a cultural museum,” says the voiceover actor, with just a hint of a Spanish accent. “This place? You have to see it for yourself. It’s not going anywhere. But I am.”

Remembering Maceo

I learned about Antonio Maceo for the first time in 2006 (the year I arrived in Miami), while on my first unofficial tour of Little Havana’s heritage district. My guide was a member of the Cuban civic elite, who had once led tours for the Little Havana Development Authority. I had just been hired as the new director of Viernes Culturales, and he offered me the tour since he served on the board. The last stop on the tour was the monument to Maceo, which still lacked any identifying name. He described Maceo as a “famous fighter in our wars for independence.”

We stepped into the Southwest 10th Street¹⁰² to cross back into the more popular northern section of the park, soon passing the wall that spans nearly the full width of the park, blocking the Maceo monument from view. My guide had already told me about the other monuments, so we strolled back towards Calle Ocho. “We call him ‘The Bronze Titan,’” he added, as we waited at the crosswalk in front of the Brigade 2506 Torch. “He was the brawn, Martí was the brains.” Three lanes of cars headed east down the one-way Calle Ocho, making their way towards sun-reflecting skyscrapers downtown.

I wondered why he was called “The Bronze Titan”; only after I read about Maceo did I realized he was non-white. More than ten years passed, and still the monument lacked any plaque with his name. By 2017, more than a decade after my first tour of Cuban

¹⁰² Southwest 9th Street does not exist in that particular area, and so the northern section of the park extends from the northern edge of Southwest 10th Street all the way to Calle Ocho (Southwest 8th Street).

Memorial Park, the monument to Maceo still lacked his name. Everyone I interviewed, regardless of race, narrated Cuban Memorial Park as “starting” at Calle Ocho, near the Brigade 2506 Torch and “ending” at the map of Cuba monument or, if they were even aware of it, the monument to Maceo, at least for the popular section of the park. Black Cubans (and some whites) interpreted the condition and placement of the monument as symbolic of the treatment and marginalization of blacks more broadly.

Some Afro-Cubans expressed anger at the placement of Izquierdo “in front of” Maceo. “He should have been done something remarkable, or important, for certain people, to place him in that place, in that position, and have that monument,” said Ariel Fernandez. Someone told him that Izquierdo had helped kill Che Guevara. “I don’t know,” said Fernandez. “For me, it’s like whatever he did, he don’t deserve to be in front of Antonio Maceo in the boulevard... Whoever decided to put him there definitely sees him as more valuable than Antonio Maceo in the context of Cuban history.” Milena Lafitte (interviewed Nov. 1, 2017) imagined re-organizing the park. “Now to begin with... just take out that tango guy in the front,” she laughed, “get rid of him!” She laughed again. “I’d place Maceo in the front. Because HE really symbolizes Cuba. He really symbolizes the Cuban people. He’s one of the main martyrs of the Cuban people. He’s a Mambi! So HE should be right up there with the ceiba. He should be the head of this park! If you really want this park to represent Cuban culture, THAT’S where I would have him!”

People also commented on the physical state of the Maceo monument. “I remember that I was really upset and disappointed by the state of the monument. Like it didn’t have his name and didn’t have anything. It was just Maceo, *con una frase alli*, like very left

out,” said Fernandez, who felt the lack of upkeep was a disrespect to his memory. “And this is dilapidated,” said Milena. “Look at this! You can’t even, I mean, I know it’s Maceo ‘cause I know Maceo, but you can’t even read ... what does it say?!” White Cuban Niurca Marquez (interviewed Dec. 20, 2017) assumed the untitled bust was a very bad attempt to portray Jose Martí; it is also described this way in some tourism articles.

In 2015, white Cuban Jose Perez, the son of a police officer and a graduate of a historical black university, decided he wanted to organize a commemoration of Maceo. The idea for the event coalesced at one of the Viernes Culturales rumba gatherings at Top Cigars. He had found the rumba through the sound of the drums, and upon entering the space immediately recognized several people, including myself. In the din of “*los tambores and todo eso*,” as he recalls the conversation, I mentioned the lack of an identifying plaque on the bust of the Maceo monument, as I knew he was a high school teacher with a passionate interest in Maceo. We discussed the possibility of a commemoration, and he suggested honoring Maceo on his birthday, not his “death day.” He reminded me that 2015 would mark Maceo’s 170th birthday. Soon we stopped talking, swept up in the singing, the swaying bodies.

In the days that followed, Jose began identifying speakers for the event. “Celebrate one of the Caribbean’s Greatest Heroes” was the title of the flyer he produced. On the border of a photo of Maceo, he’d placed images of flags from seven nations, including Cuba; he also included the Pan African flag. Some Cubans in Miami reacted negatively to the flyer, he said, since they thought Maceo was exclusively Cuban. Perez said he wanted to contest Cuban “possession” of Maceo “because if you guys were that concerned about

Antonio Maceo being a Cuban hero, we wouldn't have had to put this [event] together. You guys would have been taking care of this all along.”

The gathering took place at about 7 pm, in front of the monument. I brought sunflowers and carnations to lay on the monument, sharing them with attendees (see Figure 27). Although little more than a dozen people attended, most were of African descent, from across the diaspora. During the entirety of the ceremony I noticed curious looks of neighbors and people driving or walking by, likely surprised to see a predominantly black group of people gathered around the monument instead of a predominantly white crowd of tourists or demonstrators. Speakers testified to the importance of Maceo in many parts of the world and across the African diaspora, including the U.S., the Anglophone Caribbean, Africa and Latin America. Jose also invited someone to speak about Maceo's membership in and importance to Freemasons.¹⁰³



Figure 27: Antonio Maceo Commemoration, June 14, 2015. Photo by the author.

¹⁰³ Speakers included Jose Perez Carillo, Dinizulu Gene Tinnie, Khary Pestaina, Dr. Edmund Abaka, Roberto Claxton and myself.

After the commemoration, Jose returned many times to the monument. He surreptitiously installed a new flag at the site, as the existing flag was torn and faded from age and neglect. On the flag, he put “Antonio Maceo Remembrance Committee” and added, “Viva Maceo, viva el 14 de Junio,” installing the flag on Maceo’s birthday. When he saw tourists, he’d say, “‘Do you know who that is?’ And I’ll start to tell about Antonio Maceo. And they’re like ‘Well, we don’t understand, if he’s such a great hero, why is, you know...’ And I say, ‘because frankly, Cuban Miami doesn’t do black very well.’”

The following year, Maceo’s birthday passed without any formal commemoration. In 2018, however, the newly formed Afro-Cuban Professionals Network (APN) organized a commemoration on the anniversary of his death. A group of about ten people, most of them Afro-Cuban, gathered around the monument, which the city had finally renovated with his name and a small image of Maceo. People took turns making statements about him. One speaker said, “He is always associated with war. There has been a lot of emphasis on the Maceo of the machete. That’s something I think, well yes, it happened. But there is also another part. Maceo was a thinker, a speaker, and when he was in exile in Costa Rica, he was reading, but all these activities they never talk about.”

Afterwards, the group walked back through the district and to a new Cuban restaurant, Old’s Havana, owned by an Afro-Cuban man: it is located next to Maximo Gomez Park and across from Calle Ocho. The owner treated us graciously, and people took turns introducing themselves and discussing ways to build racial equality (the group grew to about fifteen people at this point). One speaker complained that white Cubans in both Cuba and Miami de-prioritize the need to address racial discrimination, claiming such discussions will “divide” the community. Yvonne Rodriguez (interviewed Dec. 12,

2017), a founder of APN, said she feels a responsibility, as a black woman receiving a lot of media coverage for her and her sister's cigar business, to start giving greater voice to the histories and issues of Afro-Cubans, which she admitted even she did not know much about. "I'm a walking billboard for an Afro-Cuban," she said, "but that's it. I don't know much more about it...I have to educate myself more and be a representative."

Ariel Fernandez was disappointed that more people did not show up to honor Maceo at the ceremony, however. He was surprised that so many people showed up at the previous networking gathering but "did not make time to collectively make a statement," he complained. "I'm looking for people with a commitment to the cause, and with the issues, and to seeing everything broader, and who support every aspect of the fight." He also complained about Afro-Cubans "in suits" who do not support rumba or the rights of those who practice Afro-Cuban religions because of the politics of respectability.

Cristobal Mena (interviewed June 22, 2017) said he didn't care about the monument to Maceo at all, however. He cared about living people who were discarded, including homeless veterans, black or white: "You know how much money [they spend] every time they do a ceremony, or they commemorate something, [how much] they spend on flowers and brochures and shit like that? Thousands. Do you know how much money they spend on the same kind of people who are sick, and they went to war? Zero. It's a joke."

Intertwined Lineages

When black Cuban leaders realized that CubaOcho owners Roberto Ramos and his wife Yeney Fariñas Ramos were open to their events, they began hosting a variety of meetings and events there, visible through the venue's large glass windows. Since CubaOcho has its own patio area adjacent to sidewalk, during and after these gatherings groups of

people sit outside to talk and drink. Events take place in the main room, so people can walk in on them from the sidewalk. After-parties and performances for the Ife-Ile Afro-Cuban Dance Festival, run by Afro-Cuban choreographer Neri Torres, have often taken place at CubaOcho, and the presence of women dominates these activities. In February 2016, a gala for the male-dominated Afro Cuban Forum brought together Afro-Cuban activists from Cuba and Miami. Combining speeches with spoken word, music and rap, activists called for equal participation “at the table” and for an end to systemic marginalization. Enrique Patterson, a prominent Afro-Cuban leader and journalist in Miami, remarked, “Very little has been said about experiences of black Cubans. Gaze into the future. In the future, we refuse to be invisible anymore.” Most recently, in 2018, CubaOcho hosted the new Afro-Latino Professionals Network run by Yvonne and Yvette Rodriguez.

On July 19, 2015, the Asociación Cultural Yoruba U.S.A. held its first AfroCubaUSA gathering, created to preserve Afro-Cuban roots invisibilized in the media, and to fight the “daily distortion” of Afro-Cuban religions. AfroCubaMiami organizer and Babalawo Luis Laza (interviewed Dec. 15, 2015) wants the annual event to reflect the roots of Afro-Cuban religions but also the histories of Afro-Cubans more generally, “bequeathed by our ancestors brought to Cuba from Africa and other continents.” Laza said he chose Little Havana’s heritage district in order to “continue the legacy” begun by earlier-arriving Cubans who had created a space of Cubanidad. “We don’t have representation of black Cubans here in Miami,” he remarked. Moving into the future meant ensuring the inclusion of blacks in both representations and imaginations of Cubanidad; it also meant remembering histories. Laza also wants to share Afro-Cuban culture with tourists as a

means to address racial, cultural and social taboos about Afro-Cuban culture. He also wants to “awaken” Afro-descendant culture in Latin America and the U.S.

By referencing Afro-Cuban “culture” rather than race, Laza was using a strategy adopted by his religious “ancestor” Adde-Shina more than a century earlier. In 1900, the Sociedad de Socorros Mutuos bajo la Advocación de Santa Bárbara Perteneiente a la Nación Lucumí, sus Hijos y Descendientes (an Afro-Cuban mutual aid society) filed a petition to the Office of the Mayor of Havana (and the American military government) demanding the right to continue the tradition of drumming on public holidays (Palmie 2013, 39). Signatories described their organization as the contemporary iteration of a *cabildo de lucumí*, tying themselves to African heritage. They included female founders of what would become *ramas* (branches of initiatory descent) of Santería (Palmie 2013, 40), as well as prominent Babalawos (high priests), including the president of the mutual aid society, Remigio Herrera (his Yoruba name is Adechina or Adde-Shina)¹⁰⁴. Organizing around “religion” and “culture” helped them maintain conversations related to race.

Herrera is the founder of Luis Laza’s *rama* (Adde-Shina), widely considered the most famous rama of babalawos in Cuba (Luis Laza, interviewed Dec. 15, 2015; Palmie 2013, 39). Herrera was born in Africa and brought to Cuba enslaved, but gained his freedom and became a relatively wealthy resident of the Havana municipality of Regla. His “good relations” with Spanish contacts helped him navigate Cuban urban society (Brown 1999,

¹⁰⁴ Luis Laza spells his name Adde-Shina, and Stephan Palmie spells it as Adechina.

78). He and other prominent Afro-Cubans were upset about continued marginalization of blacks from full inclusion in the Cuban republic (Palmie 2013, 39).

Herrera and other elder leaders of the Sociedad devised a ritual of initiation that “invented” Afro-Cuban religion as it is practiced today. Building on a structure of ritual kinship resembling Catholic godparenthood, it drew upon the symbolism of rebirth (40, 48). People could join the Sociedad based on a set of ritual practices regardless of “bloodline” or “ethnic” descent, marking the beginnings of “Santería” and concretizing imaginations of “Lukumí” as both a “nation” and a “religion.” These inventions allowed both black and white initiates to become “reborn” as “African” “Lukumí.” Through initiation, black priests gave whites the opportunity to “receive” and “possess” their African gods; in turn, white initiates let an African divinity “rule their heads,” thus allowing “possession” of their willing white bodies (Ibid.; Johnson 2014; Matory 2009). As Palmie (2013) suggests, black priests were engaging in a strategic political maneuver veiled as a matter of “culture” and “religion.” Initiation gave both whites and blacks “spiritually-based” lineages in addition to those based on blood and heredity, black “godparents” (who worked with them directly or were the originators of their spiritual lineage), and an African divinity that “ruled their heads.”

Memory-making was inscribed into the very process of religious ritual: the chants called *moyubas* (Pichler 2010, 150). Moyubas detail a priest’s “genealogical descent and historical consciousness” by paying homage to “the deceased founders of the religious family line (rama), their descendants, influential priests, his parents, grandparents and selected blood relatives, as well as the great living authorities of the rama” (Ibid.). New forms of identity-making offered blacks a means to secure useful alliances with

influential whites who—wittingly or unwittingly—could help advance efforts to achieve racial equity. It was risky to organize on the basis of race, as evidenced by the backlash against the Partido Independiente de Color, but within the context of religion, blacks hoped their inclusion of whites could help them challenge racial orders and white supremacy.

White scholars also played a role in these commemorative practices, explains Palmié (2013). For instance, Fernando Ortiz’s extensive writings on “Afro-Cuban religion” and “culture” (which followed his abandonment of “criminal anthropology”) offered a “strategy of legitimization” (54) for Afro-Cubans. By inviting Ortiz to become honorary president of his Sociedad in 1911, for example, priest Fernando Guerra used Ortiz’s authoritative voice to integrate the ritual practices and beliefs of the Sociedades into a broader effort of “modern” Cuban nation-building (55).

At the first AfroCubaMiami event, Laza and two other prominent babalawos (including a socially white babalawo from Cuba) sat at a table in the back of the long room, facing the entrance. Behind them, a colonial-era painting the size of dinner table faced the crowd. It depicted white Spanish or Cuban creole elites on a sugar plantation. Standing on a hill, white men wore fine coats and held scrolls of papers in their hands as they looked down a hill at blacks laboring in the fields, harvesting sugarcane. A screen began to lower from the ceiling until it shielded from view nearly all of the painting. In the second slide, the face of Adde-Shina and his most famous “godson” appeared on the screen. The organizers, who included white and black men, standing together, asked all to stand for the U.S. anthem, followed by the Cuban anthem. The day began.



Figure 28: AfroCubaMiami event, July 16, 2015. Photo by the author.

In the outdoor courtyard, managed by CubaOcho, a “throne” (religious altar) was set up for Ochún, with gauzy yellow fabric draped across one of the walkways on the perimeter of the courtyard perimeter, creating an alcove where *soperas* (soup tureens used to hold the consecrated “materials” of an Orisha) sat atop decorated pedestals, resembling the typical throne used in religious celebrations of Santería (Brown 1999). A rolled-up straw mat (the *estera*) was placed in front of the throne, so that later people could roll it out to “salute” the Orishas. To the right of the throne sat a nearly life-sized figure of a bearded black man bent over a non-consecrated *prenda* filled with sticks: an acknowledgement of Palo practitioners in attendance. People gathered around the throne as three Afro-Cuban batá drummers played (without singing) the preliminary cycle of songs for the Orishas. They played with the force I have witnessed at actual religious ceremonies, and loud enough so people walking along the sidewalk could easily hear them. Was the moment “religious” or “secular”? It occupied liminal space. Afterwards, the drummers returned inside CubaOcho for more drumming. A number of people recorded the drumming to share on social media.

The gathering in 2015 and in the years to follow included presentations, Afro-Cuban sacred and secular drumming and dance performances, and free Afro-Cuban dance class, participatory dancing and performances of popular Cuban music, as well. By AfroCubaMiami 2016,¹⁰⁵ however, the East Little Havana Community Development Corporation managing the building had prohibited music performances and exhibits in the courtyard. Inside CubaOcho, speakers delivered presentations (all of them in Spanish) on themes ranged from concerns about maintaining moral consciousness within the religion to the rights of Afro-Cubans and religious practitioners to restoring forgotten histories of slave rebellion. When a participant from Cuba disagreed with a speaker's telling of history, he remarked "My theme is unity: it's part of understanding we have different opinions, I'm not criticizing anyone. It's important to agree to disagree."

A babalawo from Bolivia said Afro-Bolivians gave their regards to attendees. He said that black people in Bolivia had forgotten a lot of their African roots, but that five Santeros and babalawos had been initiated in Bolivia since 2005. As did a presenter from Mexico, he urged the association to bring more texts and knowledge to Afro-Bolivians and other Latin Americans so they could understand the richness of their heritage. Luis Laza told the crowd that Adde-Shina had used his fortunes to purchase the liberty of slaves, and that the cabildos functioned as a connected economic system. He criticized as racist the denial of visas for many black Cubans who had wanted to attend AfroCubaMiami. "We have to unite," said Luis. "Anyone can create an association. I am referring to being united in this religion." Mentioning the recent mass shooting in

¹⁰⁵ August 13th and 14th.

Orlando, he said, “We don’t discriminate. If you are poor. If you are gay. We don’t discriminate by race. Political, economic. Unity can be false and negative, too. This religion, it can be bad if we let ourselves be divided by envy and ego. We need collective love.” By mixing calls for anti-racism with discussions of religion and calls for unity, Laza and others could defy accusations of being another PIC and benefit from multiple forms of solidarity. May have appeared to elevate the discourse of colorblindness, but he was also calling out anti-blackness.

At the conclusion of the event, Yeney Fariñas Ramos told the crowd: “This is your house. It’s an honor to host you. The freedom of expression, freedom of religion is important to us.” In my interview with Yeney (July 27, 2017), she said Cuba’s African and Afro-Cuban histories and people needed to be acknowledged and their contributions remembered as part of Cubanidad. CubaOcho belonged to everyone, she said; it did not discriminate based on race, color or sexual orientation. “We respect all as the human beings that they are. Each person contributes the best of himself...Sex or your skin color does not determine who you are for us, and that is what we want to teach in this place.”

In Cuba, on November 28, 2017, the Abakuá Association of Cuba remembered five members of their brotherhood who were massacred when attempting to protect eight medical students—most of them teenagers—from their execution in Havana on November 27, 1871 (Martinez Nov. 28, 2017). One of those students was also a member of the Abakuá, or a ñáñigo. More than a decade earlier, they had created their own commemoration. While the Federation of University Students performed its traditional memorial to the students, which never mentioned the Abakuá, the Abakua ñáñigos and their supporters gathered at the intersection of Morro and Colón (Christopher Columbus)

streets in Old Havana, at a tiny park. With music and poetry, and traditional Abakuá ritual performances, they give tribute to the students and the five anonymous black men killed after they staged an armed protest. At the 2017 commemoration, they recalled how Abakuá had played other important roles in Cuban history—as protectors of Antonio Maceo, for example.

In an echo of the Abakuá remembrance in Cuba, at the most recent AfroCubaMiami, held in 2018, masked Abakuá ñañigo made their way through Azucar Plaza, followed by drummers. In their full-body masked costumes, the ñañigo—and the group of black and white men who surrounded them, entered the space of white sugar.

Conclusion

Earlier chapters of this dissertation make visible the ways in which urban planning and design, tourism, public-private partnerships, policing, and code enforcement contributed to the staging of the Cuban success story. Chapter five reveals how these forces continue to concretize the success story through its relationship with Little Havana’s heritage district, which saw a significant increase in tourist visits after 2010. Now, institutions like the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau, and HistoryMiami perpetuate the theme of Little Havana as both an ethnic “Ellis Island” of immigrant Hispanidad and a showcase exhibit of white Cuban emigre exceptionalism.

Previous chapters also shed light on the activation of scenarios—such as Conquest and Independence—to articulate racial narratives. Chapter five, however, gives greater voice to Afro-Cuban and other Afrodescendant social actors involved in the district, revealing their own forms of embodied (and archival) knowledge and memory making

(Daniel 2005; Taylor 2003) and efforts to assert inclusion in local, national and diasporic bodies.

Practices of memory-making identified in this chapter reveal how social actors subverted and re-interpreted the dominant scenarios that for decades had propped up imagined Cuban white supremacy. For instance, many black social actors described the strategy of presence, or a form of Emancipation in which they asserted their agency and their own voice. In the case of Carol Ann Taylor, Cristobal Mena and Marisol Blanco, all three asserted their presence in “white” spaces and refused to be intimidated. Taylor made use of her contacts and her authority as a business owner and tourism influencer. While white Cuban-dominated organizations in Little Havana had used Carol Ann Taylor as “proof” that they were racially inclusive, Taylor used her relationships with white Cubans to advocate for economic investment in black neighborhoods. Mena also benefited from his own role as a business owner and used his knowledge of the law to defy efforts to remove him from his space and others from the heritage district’s public space. Blanco took advantage of her liminal role as a “performer” to become a symbolic queen of Calle Ocho when she walked down the sidewalk dressed as Ochún.

By organizing commemorations at the Maceo monument, blacks and white allies also took advantage of the tokenized presence of Maceo in Cuban Memorial Park by remembering him as a real historic figure—not as an iconic “black warrior” doing the bidding of white superiors. In other words, they “took back” isolated, exceptional black figures that had been used as mouthpieces for retooled histories. The presence of their bodies around the figure of Maceo gave him new meaning, as did their own tellings of

history. Tintolero's symbolic act of attaching a bouquet to the tip of Izquierdo added new meaning to the memorial.

The subversion of scenarios involved spatial strategies that interrogated the treatment of blackness as uncivilized or as stuck in a pre-modern past. Whether coincidental or not, the screenshow of the Asociacion Cultural Yoruba U.S.A. at CubaOcho displayed African ancestors "over" romanticized scenes of the sugarocracy, making the plantation the symbolic past and Afro-Cubans (and ancestors) as connected to the present and future. Presented on the screen, next to living Afro-Cuban men dressed in suits, the photos of ancestors could appear contemporary in comparison to the covered-up painting of plantation owners. The ñañigo performance in Azucar Avenue was also a symbolic juxtaposition of mobile, black bodies re-activating the "costumes" put on display in museums and re-activating them in spaces of whiteness. Nonetheless, social actors continued to reproduce racializing binaries in the district, as in the case of the Manolo Fernandez bust, which re-positioned Izquierdo as the "loyal slave" protecting white civilization.

Social actors also tapped into many ways the body could serve as a vehicle for memory making. While Code Inspectors and police heavily regulated most of the public spaces of the district, they had difficulty battling multi-sensory repertoires. Cristobal Mena kept the doors open during the rumba so that people could hear the drumming; he also projected sacred music to the street during the day, exercising what was permissible under the law. The smell and sight of animal sacrifices permeated the air of Cuban Memorial Park (and sometimes the entrances of businesses) as a ritual act able to evoke

fear. The sound of drumming enticed whites into Top Cigars, where some realized that their fears may have been overblown.

Afro-Cubans described the need to fortify themselves in a challenging world. They spoke both about recognizing ancestors and yet living in the present, exercising their freedom and agency as much as possible. They often used their own bodies—individually or collectively—to make “place” and “memory” and to feel possessed or occupied not by white authorities but by forces of protection, resilience, wisdom and love (see Figure 29). Geographer Katherine McKittrick proposes a re-imagining of geographies of dispossession and racial violence as “sites through which ‘co-operative human efforts’ can take place and have a place” (McKittrick 2011, 960). The heritage district, while a material and symbolic landscape still exploited for a colonial discourse of racial order, is also a crossroads where people are telling their own stories and making their own bodies.



Figure 29: Photo of Marisol Blanco and dancers performing Palo dance at CubaOcho. Photo by Juan Caballero.

Re-interpreted scenarios of Black Revolution and Reunion could also serve as celebrations of black and interracial alliances and lineages. Just as initiates of Afro-Cuban

religion obtain new lineages that inherently connect them to African ancestors, so too do people who take Afro-Cuban dance classes learn how to embody African divinities and valorize Afro-Atlantic ontologies (Matory 2009; Daniel 2005). Multi-racial, black diasporic and transnational gatherings—whether at the rumba, dance classes, gatherings at CubaOcho or commemorations in the park—strengthened various forms of solidarity. More recently arrived white Cubans extended opportunities for black place-making, as did black business owners who rented spaces in the district. By finding opportunities to bring together blacks from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds across the diaspora, gatherings in the district helped people forge vital social, economic and political connections.

Nonetheless, some Afrodescendants I interviewed criticized African Americans (or Afro-Cubans), revealing still-present tensions within Miami’s African diasporic community. Moreover, the same social actors who may in certain ways appear to support black diasporic solidarity may also serve to reproduce racial order or stereotypes of blackness. The construction of Little Havana as a “heritage neighborhood,” facilitated by Carol Ann Taylor’s efforts, has also helped further representations of “ethnic” neighborhoods as “exhibitions” (Said 2003; Boyd 2008; Desmond 1999; Said 1999). Cristobal Mena now owns souvenir shops that display and sell exaggerated depictions of Mammy figures. Audiences of Marisol Blanco’s shows may perceive “folk” representations as further reinforcement of stereotypes depicting blacks as primitive (Wirtz 2014). Furthermore, the scenario of Reconquista remains ever present, in the language and gestures of civic ceremonies and in continued representations of Little Havana and its residents, including those shared by local tour guides. With the increased

visibility of the heritage district on a global scale, these racialized representations can have far-reaching implications.

VII. CONCLUSION

They have filled him full of bullets
And beheaded him a dozen times more
They have blown him up with powder—but he manages to live.
For of lives this fellow Maceo has a score.
They have thrashed him, they have smashed him,
They have pounded him and banged,
They have buried him forever o’er and o’er;
He’s been guillotined and garroted, he even has been hanged,
But of lives this fellow Maceo has a score

They have cut him up in Moro and have fed him to the sharks;
They have nailed him through the head down to a floor,
But he’s always there for business when the Spanish poodle barks;
For of lives this fellow Maceo has a score.

— “Maceo is Dead-Long Live Maceo,” By J. Syme-Hastings
(Dec. 17, 1896) (as mentioned in Foner 1970, 66-67)

Little Havana may appear to many as an oasis of racial inclusion in a racially divided city and country. The racial diversity of the tourists who visit the heritage district, and the racial diversity of locals who also frequent the district, greatly contribute to this impression. At the western “entrance” of the neighborhood, on Calle Ocho at Southwest 27th Avenue, two murals (facing traffic heading east on the one-way Calle Ocho) further reinforce the image of Little Havana as a site of racial harmony.



Figure 30: Mural on south side of intersection at SW 27th Avenue and Calle Ocho. Photo by author.

On the right side of the street (see Figure 23), a mural more than two stories tall, a large cursive “Little” sits above an enormous “HAVANA” in huge, blocky letters. Each letter of “HAVANA” is filled or “possessed” with a different image evoking an imagined Havana, Cuba. The “H” depicts a well-maintained street in the UNESCO-designated “World Heritage District” (Scarpaci 2009) of Cuba’s *Habana Vieja* (Old Havana). A large Cuban flag hangs over the street and an antique car. The first “A” outlines the image of a dark café Cubano in a white demitasse cup. Inside the “V,” the white hand of a *conguero* (conga player) slaps down on his drum; behind him (further from us, the viewers), the hand of a darker-skinned *conguero* holds the sides of another drum. Inside the second “A,” white dominos with their black spots sit side by side, and inside the “N,” a fair-skinned couple dances, the man wearing a white Panama hat, a white guayabera shirt and black pants. Lastly, the ending “A” frames a painting of black beans and rice. The juxtaposition of blackness and whiteness pulls the letters together: *café* and *azúcar* making “Little Havana.” On the opposite side of the street, another huge mural sponsored by Ocean Bank repeats the welcome (its “welcome to Little Havana” was formerly written in Spanish but as of 2019 has been replaced with the welcome in English). It depicts a black (Latina?) woman dancing in her red dress with a white (Latino?) man wearing a hat and suit.

In between both murals, however, and positioned directly next to Calle Ocho, a six-foot statue of a rooster guards a third and smaller sign: “Welcome to Calle Ocho.” It is made of porcelain tile, with the City of Miami recognized in smaller letters above the welcome, and the Kiwanis of Little Havana below the welcome. Another rooster sculpture greets the visitor at the entrance of the district at Southwest 17th Avenue, this

time wearing a Panama hat, guayabera shirt and smoking a cigar (although the “cigar” is frequently stolen and must be replaced). Little Havana’s “schemes of signification” (Foucault 1980) or “racialized regimes of representation” (Hall 2013) make it clear that the roosters are in charge.

In this dissertation, I argued that Little Havana’s heritage district helped to reinforce—while also attempting to cover up—Cuban white supremacy and the violent acts used to maintain it. Drawing on Diana Taylor’s theory of the scenario, critical race theory and black feminist geography, and supporting my argument with ethnographic and archival data, I reveal the ways in which the district provided the scaffolding for the Cuban success story. Attempting to avoid the confining “exile model” as described by Nancy Raquel Mirabal (2003), I have woven together a story from threads that reach back in time and across space to better understand how the district became what it is today, and to consider the racial implications of the Cuban success story as it circulates further (and faster) than ever before.

I made six primary theses in this dissertation, all of them based on my consideration of Little Havana as a crossroads.

First, the district has been an intersection of Cuban emigre elites and militant anti-Castro groups, including those involved in terrorism in Miami, elsewhere in the U.S., Latin America, and beyond. In Little Havana, white Cubans involved in terrorism could temporarily enter the symbolic *hampa* (Ortiz [1906] 1973) or underworld, associated with blackness, and then re-make themselves as white again, re-claiming the privileges of whiteness.

Second, the district has been a space of reunion for Anglos and white Cubans, where they could “cover up” mutual acts of violence with the solidarity they had for each other and that distanced the blackness symbolized by “ghetto” spaces (Overtown and other black neighborhoods). At the same time, white Cuban elites could showcase the uniqueness of “Cuban culture” and their ability to navigate both white suburbs and ethnic Little Havana. In other words, they could prove their ability to “assimilate” into whiteness similar to Anglo whiteness, as signified by their residences in the suburbs. By managing Little Havana through their involvement in multiple agencies, organizations, businesses and so forth, however, they could demonstrate their ability to “produce” space it into something that they “owned” and could present as if an exhibit in a museum. They managed Little Havana, but they lived side-by-side with Anglos or other white Cubans.

Third, Little Havana has also been a celebratory site of reunion for white Cubans with Hispanics, furthering ideas of *mestizaje* (racial mixing) and colorblindness, but also *blanqueamiento* (whitening) as these have been reified in ordinary Latin American ideologies of national identity (Rahier 2003). In Little Havana, Cuban emigres and Anglos celebrate an imagined “Latino Ellis Island” that makes invisible the histories and presence of Afro-Cubans and others of African descent in the neighborhood, let alone Latin America. The district also reinforces *mestizaje* by privileging Cubans in an ethno-racial hierarchy above browner-skinned Central Americans (Feldman and Jolivet 2014; Aranda, Aranda, Hughes and Sabogal 2014; Chang and Sabogal 2009).

Fourth, the district has provided the setting for scenes of emancipation, where the presence of “exceptional” blacks as commemorative bodies was used to prove colorblindness, so that neither Fidel Castro nor Miami’s African Americans (or Afro-

Cubans) could accuse Cuban Americans of being racist. Nonetheless, these commemorated bodies were always oriented to highlight their “debt” to white Cubans. The use of black commemorative bodies in this way resembles similar practices of memorialization in Cuba (and the Americas) before and after the Cuban Revolution (Nathan 2012; Savage 1997; Duquette 2010; Wallace-Sanders 2008;

Fifth, Little Havana has also served as a territory for re-enacting scenes of discovery, conquest and *reconquista*, allowing white Cuban emigres to portray themselves as modern-day versions of Christopher Columbus. In this “encounter” with Little Havana, white Cubans could invert scenes associated with the Haitian Revolution and make them into scenes that resembled the 1912 massacre, through the use of policing, bombing, racial profiling and brutality, and other methods.

Lastly, blacks (and supportive non-blacks) have treated the district as a crossroads, where the black and interracial gatherings it hosts are revealing silenced histories, connecting contemporary Afrodescendants to ancestors and imagined futures, interrogating racism and inequality, and creating opportunities to heal.

I documented the ways in which Cuban emigre groups like the Little Havana Development Association, the Latin Quarter Association, CAMACOL and the Kiwanis of Little Havana worked hand in hand with public institutions and city agencies to control public space and create regulations that effectively removed black Mariels from the park. Merchants, property owners and police also worked together in the surveillance of public space. By using the scenario of Black Revolution to provoke hysteria and fear, Cuban emigre groups rationalized their methods of discipline over black bodies. The scenario of Reconquista was enacted in public performances of discipline, whereby blacks moving

through the district—whether by car or by foot—were publicly humiliated, reinforcing white dominance both symbolically and “in the flesh.”

The theme of Conquista and Reconquista also emerges in the treatment of blackness and black bodies in spaces like the Cuban Museum of Arts and Culture, where Lydia Cabrera portrayed Afro-Cubans as pre-modern but natural entertainers, and slavery as benign. I reveal the links between the museum and LHDA, and compare the museum’s objectifying displays of “specimens” of “Afro-Cuban culture” and religion with the tour narratives of Cuban emigre elites at a botanica in the district and at the ceiba tree in Cuban Memorial Park. In both cases, white Cuban emigre elites elevated themselves as experts and authorities on Afro-Cuban culture portrayed as primitive and stuck in time. They also highlighted the discourse of Cuban white supremacy through implications that white Cubans were better managers of blacks because they had treated their slaves better than Anglos had treated slaves in the U.S., and thus Afro-Cubans were better behaved than African Americans. This narrative momentarily shifted during the Mariel boatlift, when the inverted scenario of the Haitian Revolution dominated.

Highlighting the successful reconquista of Little Havana’s heritage district opened up opportunities to repeat the scenarios of Reunion with Anglos, and the current boom in tourism is evidence of this reunion, although many tourists of African descent are also visiting the neighborhood. The embrace of President Donald Trump in Miami’s Cuban community is also made clear in the rallies that still take place in Little Havana, especially near Cuban Memorial Park, and the joining together of mestizo-white and white Latinos in “Make America Great Again” sloganeering.

My ethnographic fieldwork revealed that Little Havana's heritage district is also the domain of the trickster Orisha Elegguá, the divine owner of the crossroads. The creation of Little Havana's heritage district into a symbolic space of Cubanidad, and the huge Calle Ocho Festivals that helped bring attention to it worldwide, also caught the attention of Cubans in Cuba, sparking interest in visiting the famous Calle Ocho. Cubans who arrived in the Mariel and thereafter, and Cuban Americans exploring ideas of identity and heritage, have transformed the district in multiple ways.

The heritage district has become a site for black reunion and solidarity. It has become a site for discussions of racial justice and equality, and thus projects the desires for full emancipation and citizenship. At dance performances and classes and at rumba gatherings in the district, people have acted out dances evoking slave rebellions. They have commemorated Antonio Maceo in a way that uncovers the history of the man himself, depicting him as an abolitionist hero with transnational impact, and as a man as intelligent as he was strong. African American business owner Carole Ann Taylor can evoke the scenario of Discovery herself, as can the many Afro-Cubans who learned about Calle Ocho thanks to the success of the Calle Ocho Festival. Afro-Cubans have subverted the scenarios of Conquest and Reconquista with symbolic acts targeting the symbol of rooster authority in the district and through the ownership of businesses, defiant presence in public spaces, and knowledge of the law, which allowed them to fighting back against disciplining acts. They have also evoked the scenario of slavery, but in ways that speak to a desire to remember ancestors who endured it, and to embrace freedom and healing at every opportunity, especially since racial discrimination persists in multiple forms.

I provided many examples of black place- and memory-making from the last decade alone, including the tradition of monthly rumba at a black-owned cigar shop, meetings of black civic and networking groups like Afro Cuban Forum and the Afro-Latino Professionals Network at a venue in the heart of the district, and the secular-religious annual AfroCubaMiami gathering of the Asociación Cultural Yoruba USA, which Afro-Cuban religious practitioners from Cuba and other parts of the world. On May 15, 2019, Cuba's most famous Afro-Cuban blogger, Sandra Abdallah-Alvarez Ramirez of *Negra Cubana Tenía que Ser*, was a guest at a meeting held at CubaOcho in the district. People of African descent have used their own bodies as commemorative bodies, but in ways that express their resilience and agency. They have also contributed to archival public memory, as in the Summit of the Americas mural in Maximo Gomez Park.

The Cuban success story and the portrayal of pre-1980 Cuban emigres as “model citizens” rests on an argument or “necessary belief” (de la Torre 2003, 59) that they are not racist; they are “ethnic” while Anglos are “white” (Aja 2016; Benson 2016). Indeed, thanks to the symbols I describe in the beginning of this conclusion, the heritage district may appear to be a place without racial divisions or tension despite recent scholarship describing it as an exclusionary space emphasizing Cuban whiteness (Aja, 2016; Feldman 2014; de La Torre 2003). Regardless, “dog whistle” (Haney López 2014) signifiers embedded in the content, design and positioning/order of memorials and civic rituals exalt Cuban white supremacy. In addition, the privatization of public space, selective code enforcement, and “formulas of silencing” (Trouillot 1995) manifested in forms of archival and embodied public memory all contribute to the territorialization of white supremacy in the district.

The Cuban success story does not include the world of Cuban Memorial Park. because Cuban Memorial is the place for burying inconvenient histories. In this dissertation, I argued that the Mariel boatlift was an opportunity, not a threat, to the Cuban success story. It was an opportunity to wipe clean a past and present of Cuban emigre terrorism by portraying black Cubans as the enactors of violence and savagery. By blaming blacks for white violence, and yet using exceptional blacks to claim colorblindness, white Cuban emigres protected both themselves and their Anglo and white Latinx allies involved in the worlds of racial violence, drug smuggling, money laundering, and terrorism.



*Figure 31: Commissioner Joe Carollo presenting new “Little Havana Flag” Nov. 30, 2018.
Photograph by the author.*

It is urgent to address the growth of white Latinx nationalism and assertions of Cuban white supremacy through a closer examination of Latinx memorialization efforts. On November 20, 2018, Little Havana Commissioner Joe Carollo unveiled a new flag for Little Havana, in a ceremony during which he also invited members of Brigade 2506. The civic ceremony, at which most attendees were white Cuban men, took place in the district, at the Tower Theater. Posing for cameras, men presented the Brigade 2506 and

Little Havana flags side by side. A rooster dominates the Little Havana flag, and stands in front of a Cuban flag merged with a U.S. flag. Tiny flags line the top and bottom of the flag, all of them representing Latin American nations. White letters below the rooster announce: “Little Havana U.S.A. The One with Freedom”; the Spanish version ends with “La Que Tiene Libertad.” Cuban emigre nationalism, I contend, is a form of white nationalism. I conclude with an example and a word of warning.

Two years prior to the Azucar Plaza ground breaking, Dylann Roof shot and killed eight black parishioners and their minister at a historically black church in Charleston, South Carolina. Earlier, he had posed for photos with a Confederate battle flag and announced his wish to start a “race war” (Croft and Smith 2017). Shortly after the mass murder, activists spray painted “Black Lives Matter” slogans on Confederate statues and monuments across the U.S. (“Black Lives” June 23, 2015). The Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) campaigned to remove from public spaces *all* Confederate symbols sanctioned by the government (“Appeals Court” Mar. 7, 2017). For its campaign-related report, “Whose Heritage?” (April 21, 2016), which replicates the name of a 1999 paper and presentation by Stuart Hall ([1999] 2003), the SPLC documented 1,500 Confederate symbols in public spaces across the country (primarily in the South), and more than 700 Confederate monuments and statues on public property.

In response to these findings and debates, U.S. municipalities began to remove Confederate flags from public spaces, re-locate statues of Confederate generals from public properties, and rename street signs honoring Confederate military figures and Ku Klux Klan members. In an amicus brief filed in 2016, the SPLC claimed that Confederate “monuments were constructed to perpetuate and honor white supremacy,” and that their

ongoing maintenance of the public square glorified long legacies of “state-sponsored racial oppression” while at the same time denying “the South’s shameful legacy of African slavery” (“Appeals Court” SPLC, Mar. 17, 2017).

A milestone in the efforts to remove Confederate symbols took place in April 2017, just a few months after the Azucar Plaza ground breaking, when the mayor of New Orleans, Mitch Landrieu, announced that he would be removing all of the city’s monuments to the “Lost Cause” (Blight 2001; Foote and Azaryahu 2007; Savage 1997). In a speech explaining his decision, he compared memorials of the Confederacy to a form of terrorism aimed at reinforcing the “color line” (Du Bois 2003):

After the Civil War, these statues were a part of that terrorism as much as a burning cross on someone’s lawn; they were erected purposefully to send a strong message to all who walked in their shadows about who was still in charge in this city. Should you have further doubt about the true goals of the Confederacy, in the very weeks before the war broke out, the Vice President of the Confederacy, Alexander Stephens, made it clear that the Confederate cause was about maintaining slavery and white supremacy. He said in his now famous ‘cornerstone speech’ that the Confederacy’s “cornerstone rests upon the great truth, that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery — subordination to the superior race — is his natural and normal condition.” (“Mitch Landrieu’s Speech” May 23, 2017)

In response to the campaign for removal of Confederate symbols, white supremacist like the League of the South (LOS)¹⁰⁶ declared war in what LOS called “The Battle of New Orleans.” The LOS was present when James Alex Fields, Jr. plowed his car into a crowd in Charlottesville, Virginia, killing a 32-year-old woman and injuring dozens of others. Earlier that day, brandishing the shield of the neo-Nazi group Vanguard Nation, Fields and others at a “Unite the Right” rally had protested the removal of a General

¹⁰⁶ The League of the South is a white nationalist organization which promotes the succession of the South from the United States.

Robert E. Lee statue from a public park (“Man Charged” Aug. 12, 2017). Weeks later, a young man who had attended both the “Unite the Right” rally and the earlier “Battle of New Orleans” used a flagpole to charge a crowd in Hollywood, Florida, where commissioners were deciding whether or not to change the names of streets commemorating three Confederate generals and a grand wizard of the KKK (Pereira Aug. 31, 2017).

The young protester with the flagpole was white—and Cuban. The press treated him as exceptional, however, as in this excerpt from the *Miami Herald* (Ibid.):

His Facebook page features Confederate and Black Cross of Southern nationalism flags, Pepe the Frog, and a photo of President Donald Trump drinking a coffee cup labeled “CNN TEARS.” He shows up at street rallies wearing dark sunglasses, waving a Confederate flag and offering up interviews in English and *en español*. He claims to be a defender [of] American “heroes” and labels as “Communists” those who want to remove Confederate symbols, such as statues and street names honoring the likes of Confederate Army leader Gen. Robert E. Lee and Ku Klux Klan founder Nathan Bedford Forrest. His name: Christopher Rey Monzon, 22. His city: Hialeah. His ethnicity: Cuban American.

News articles and online comments by readers depicted Monzon as an extremist, a “white supremacist,” and yet apart from aging, hunched over anti-Castro *viejos* congregating at Versailles or Domino Park to disparage communists. Monzon is portrayed as separate and outside the state and Cuban diasporic body politic—not integral to it.

The white nationalist leader of the Florida League of the South (FLOS) praised Monzon for his action. Despite the young man’s almost dusky skin color and Cuban heritage, situating him in a liminal space of contingent whiteness as “honorary white” (Bonilla-Silva 2002; Aranda 2014) or “inbetween” (Orsi 1999), Monzon’s performance ensured that at least for now he was “white enough” (Bhabha 1991; Mahtani 2002). In an

online forum, the leader of FLOS defended Monzon from white nationalists who questioned the “authenticity” of his whiteness:

Chris has done more fore [sic] the cause of Southern nationalism, Florida’s Independence and white supremacy in one 24 hour period than 99.9999% of Florida’s native White population have done in their lifetimes.

Monzon replied: “Except lynching negroes. I unfortunately have yet to do that ...”

(Southern Poverty Law Center Sept. 6, 2017).

The question I ask for scholars and activists is this: if it is acceptable to remove Confederate flags and statues from public spaces in the U.S., then why is it acceptable to permit the memorialization of white supremacy in other forms but in “ethnic” contexts? In heritage and memorial landscapes like Little Havana’s heritage district, an un-examined Cuban success story circulates through tour guides and in the seeming “proof” of the district and its commemorative bodies. When tourists take these stories with them and weave them into their own racial narratives, they reinvigorate again and again the scenarios used to justify the global color line.

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1994-1996	M.A. (with Distinction), California State University, Northridge, Major Field: Speech Communication. Minor Fields: Cultural Studies, Performance Studies.
1994-1995	Teaching Assistant
1997	Principal, Bordercross Communications, Los Angeles, CA.
1995-1997	Managing Editor, Luckman Interactive, Los Angeles, CA.
1998-1999	Director of Communications, womenCONNECT.com, McLean, VA.
1999-2000	Director of Interactive Media, Children's Express Worldwide, Washington, DC.
2001-2005	Principal/Owner, Bordercross Communications, Washington, DC.
2005	Director, Adams Morgan Day Festival, Washington, DC.
2006-2007	Executive Director, Viernes Culturales/Cultural Fridays, Inc., Miami, FL.
2007-2009	Director of Imagine Miami, Catalyst Miami, Miami, FL.
2010-present	Owner, Little Havana Experiences, Miami, FL.
2013-2016	M.A., Florida International University, Miami Graduate Certificates: Afro-Latin American Studies, African & African Diaspora Studies. Major Field: Global and Sociocultural Studies (Cultural Anthropology). Minor Fields: Cultural Geography, Public History, Critical Race & Immigration Studies, Memory Studies, Afro-Latin American Studies, Cuban Studies.
2013-2017	Teaching Assistant, Florida International University, Miami
2014	Latino Museum Studies Program Fellow, Smithsonian Latino Center.
2016-2019	Doctoral Candidate, Florida International University, Miami,
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PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Grenier, Guillermo and Corinna Moebius. 2015. *A History of Little Havana*. Charleston, SC: The History Press.

Moebius, Corinna. "Commemorative Bodies: Tracing the Racial Politics of Public Memory in Little Havana's Heritage District." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers, April 2019.

Moebius, Corinna. "Manufacturing Whiteness and Blackness at the Ceiba Tree: Transnational Flows of Racial Narratives in Cuba/Miami Tourism." Paper presented at the Twelfth Conference on Cuban and Cuban American Studies, Cuban Research Institute, Florida International University, February 2019.

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