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A Nation for All

Race, Inequality, and Politics in Twentieth-Century Cuba

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To Patri and Isa

To my parents, who taught me to love Cuba

and its people

To Wilfredo "Willy" Capote,

wherever he is

PART IV SOCIALISM

1959–1990s

7 BUILDING A NATION FOR ALL

> The black problem cannot be liquidated automatically just because a revolution has triumphed.
> —Juan René Betancourt, "Fidel Castro y la integración nacional" (1959)

> Without true equality among all Cubans, Republic and Revolution would be ill-fated lies.
> —Salvador García Agüero, "Va bien Fidel" (1959)

> Our Revolution . . . has eliminated from Cuban life the humiliating spectacle of discrimination because of skin color.
> —José Felipe Carneado,
> "La discriminación racial en Cuba no volverá jamás" (1962)

> In fact, that which one calls "revolution" in Cuba is nothing but the domination of one *class*, of one *race* over another class, another race.
> —Carlos Moore,
> "Le peuple noir a-t-il sa place dans la révolution cubaine?" (1964)

In the early morning of January 1, 1959, Batista fled the country. Rebel Army forces moved into the main cities, took control of garrisons and other strategic points, and began filling the vacuum left by the collapse of the previous regime. Although opposition to the dictatorship included a wide spectrum of groups and organizations, the Rebel Army led by Fidel Castro was unquestionably the center of political and military power after the revolution. Fidel Castro moved into Havana among cheering crowds, promising to redress Cubans' historic claims for social justice, economic independence, and national sovereignty. "This time," he asserted in a January 2 speech in Santiago de Cuba, "the revolution is for real."[1]

The shortcomings of the republican past, distant as well as recent, became the revolution's first claim to political legitimacy. The mostly unfulfilled program of the 1940 constitution gave those shortcomings a sense of urgency and visibility. They ranged from the inability of republican governments to promote economic diversification; eliminate corruption, the dreadful *latifundia*; or remedy chronic unemployment.

Prominent among these shortcomings was the republic's failure to build

the *patria* with all and for all envisioned by Martí. Although by the end of the second republic Afro-Cubans had succeeded in entering many areas of employment that had been previously closed to them, they remained systematically barred from some occupations and economic sectors. White-collar jobs in banks, upscale stores, and company offices were for the most part reserved for whites. In some industries, the unions gave priority to employee relatives when filling job openings. In the process, they helped reproduce traditional racial patterns in the distribution of employment. Blacks were also disproportionally represented among the unemployed, and they were the bulk of the inhabitants of the shanty towns in Havana and other cities. They were also overrepresented in the prison population.

Racial barriers were particularly visible in areas of social life, in which open racial segregation was not uncommon. Blacks and mulattoes were discriminated against in luxury hotels, restaurants, cabarets, bars, beaches, and social clubs. Their children could not attend the best private schools even if they had the financial means to afford them. Segregation was also evident in some public spaces, such as the central parks of several towns across the island. Blackness remained a formidable barrier against social ascent and mobility, particularly in the higher strata of society. Meanwhile, whereas the governments of the second republic had done little to tackle racism in any systematic way, mobilization and political demagoguery had given the issue national visibility and helped expose the inefficacy of the constitutional program of 1940.

Yet some scholars imply that it was only after 1959 that race became an issue in Cuban politics. David Booth asks, "Why did then color become an issue with the advent of the revolution?" One could easily turn this question around: How could race not have been an issue under the revolution? Race remained a major social identity with significant influence on individual chances for mobility in the late 1950s. Those who pose Booth's question somehow imply—and sometimes assert explicitly—that prerevolutionary Cuba was a racially harmonious society, that revolutionary authorities exaggerated the sufferings of Afro-Cubans for political purposes, or even that it was they who created a racial division that did not exist before.[2]

THE REVOLUTION'S "MOST DIFFICULT PROBLEM"

The question posed by Booth and others has some merit, however, given that race and discrimination did not figure prominently in the political program or the propaganda of the M-26-7. Although it is unthinkable that race would have simply disappeared from public debates or lost social significance

because of the revolutionary triumph, it does not necessarily follow that Castro and other revolutionary leaders had to publicly admit, much less condemn, racially discriminatory practices in Cuban society.[3] Yet in a March 22, 1959, speech given at the presidential palace, Castro spoke at length about racism, called on Cubans to eliminate discrimination, and asked them to forge a "new *patria*." According to Carlos Moore, Castro was forced to tackle the issue in order to avert a racially motivated "civil war." Moore asserts that the black members of the Rebel Army were being discriminated against and denied accommodation and service in the same hotels that housed their white comrades, which led to "a series of violent incidents across the island."[4] Other authors simply imply that, in the alleged absence of a real social problem, Castro's speech merely sought to rally the support of the Afro-Cuban population.[5]

What these authors neglect to mention is that discussions about race and the meanings of the revolution for Afro-Cubans began as early as January 1959. Race and racism did not become issues only when Castro spoke about them. Rather, these issues were brought to public attention by various social and political actors who perceived the revolution as an unprecedented opportunity to redress previous inequities. In the process, they exercised pressure on the government to adopt concrete antidiscrimination measures.

The Communists were again active in this movement. The party had been outlawed under Batista, but it reemerged in early January. Its daily, *Noticias de Hoy*, resumed publishing on January 6 with a front-page declaration that highlighted the "most immediate tasks" that the provisional government should undertake, including the formulation of a "real and effective policy against race discrimination."[6] Following the first meeting of the party's national committee—attended by such well-known Afro-Cuban leaders as Blas Roca, Nicolás Guillén, and Salvador García Agüero—a public letter was sent to then president Manuel Urrutia enumerating sixteen measures that should be implemented by the revolutionary government. The first two measures requested national application of the agrarian reform launched by the Rebel Army in the territory under its command during the insurrection. The third asked for an official antidiscrimination policy and for concrete steps to guarantee blacks' access to all jobs, the armed forces, and state institutions, including the diplomatic service.[7]

The need to eliminate discrimination and promote "real equality" among all Cubans was emphasized by the revolutionary labor movement as well. Under the leadership of the M-26-7, a labor congress had been convened in November 1958 with the participation of several groups, including the Com-

munists. The program of the revolutionary labor federation contained demands such as better pay and union rights. It also included a strong statement against "odious racial discrimination." Originally broadcasted by Radio Rebelde, this agenda was widely publicized in January 1959 by the M-26-7 and the Communist press.[8] When the CTC called on workers to attend the rally at the presidential palace on March 22—at which Fidel Castro spoke at length about racism—one of its slogans was "Against racial discrimination!"[9]

Afro-Cuban intellectuals also voiced their hope that racism would finally be eliminated under the revolution. In articles published in *Revolución*—the official daily of the M-26-7—and *Bohemia*, lawyer Juan René Betancourt, then provisional president of the Federation of Societies, countered Batista's propaganda that had presented Fidel Castro as antiblack and compared the Rebel Army with the Liberation Army of 1895. Betancourt's pieces were not just a panegyric on the new authorities, however. He also called on revolutionary leaders not to replicate the "mistakes" of 1895, warning that a socioeconomic problem such as race would not be solved automatically just because a revolution had triumphed. In order to achieve the long-sought national integration, claimed Betancourt, it was necessary to organize blacks into a unified social movement. Using language similar to that of the Afro-Cuban intellectuals of the 1930s, Betancourt asserted that there would not be a "real revolution" in Cuba if the question of racial equality was either ignored or silenced. He complained about the lack of blacks in positions of leadership in the new government and demanded justice for those who had been "always forgotten." While Fidel Castro used history to legitimize the revolution and the emerging order, Betancourt did so to demand effective equality for Afro-Cubans.[10]

The question of race emerged not just in political programs or press articles. The new authorities had no choice but to confront this issue in a myriad of social situations, from racially defined spaces within parks to patriotic celebrations held in racially defined social clubs. Thus, according to witnesses, segregation practices in several parks in the province of Las Villas were challenged when officers of the Rebel Army, accompanied by groups of black and mulatto citizens, walked through the sections that were traditionally reserved for whites.[11] When Afro-Cuban major Calixto Morales, military governor of Las Villas, was invited to attend meetings honoring the birthday of José Martí on January 28 by both the Afro-Cuban society El Gran Maceo and the white club El Liceo de Santa Clara, he asked the directors of the latter to invite the members of El Gran Maceo to their celebration. For many blacks and mulattoes, an Afro-Cuban journalist noted, it was the first

time they set foot in the exclusive Liceo. In another unprecedented act, the conservative club Colonia Española opened its doors several weeks later so Afro-Cubans could attend a poetry reading performed by the great mulatto poet Nicolás Guillén. Race, segregation, and inequality were issues that revolutionary authorities could not ignore.[12]

Attentive to the demands and needs of the popular sectors, whose support was deemed crucial for the survival of the revolutionary government, Fidel Castro listened. It is inaccurate to state that it was not until March 22 that Castro mentioned or criticized racial discrimination in Cuba. He referred to the issue on at least three previous occasions, first in an interview with U.S. journalists in January, then in speeches to workers the following month.[13] "Everybody knows," Castro told the workers of the Shell Oil refinery on February 6, "the tragedy confronted by women and by blacks. We know that these two sectors are discriminated against. They talk for instance about racial discrimination, which is true." Castro not only recognized that there was discrimination but also noted that the issue was being publicly raised and discussed. Then, on March 22, he asserted that the revolution had four main battles to fight: the battle to reduce unemployment, to raise the living standards of the poor, to bring down the cost of living, "and one of the most just battles that must be fought, a battle that must be emphasized more and more . . . the battle to end racial discrimination at work centers."[14]

Castro identified two forms of discrimination in Cuba: one that barred blacks from access to cultural centers and another, "the worst," that denied them access to jobs. Opposing the notion that an antidiscrimination law was necessary, Castro went on to state that the "hateful, repugnant" discrimination could be changed through a campaign condemning public manifestations of racism. He also promised to improve public schools, in which children of all colors studied and played together, and to build recreation centers open to all citizens. Together, he asserted, all Cubans would gradually build a "new fatherland" free of discrimination.

If popular pressures brought the issue of race to the attention of the revolution's main leader, Castro's declaration set the stage for an unprecedented assault on racism. Before March 22, public discussions about race had been dominated by requests to the government to act in this area. Afro-Cuban intellectuals such as Betancourt had complained about the lack of attention given to blacks and were clearly anxious to see the revolutionary government define its position on the question of race. Castro's speech had not only legitimized those claims, turning them into a central principle of the revolution's program, but also called for social mobilization against those

responsible for racist behavior. The speech of the then first minister created unprecedented opportunities to challenge traditional patterns of race relations in Cuba.

But the potential subversion of traditional racial hierarchies also met with opposition. As in the early years of the republic—when planters like Edwin Atkins complained that blacks were venturing into spaces that had been previously closed to them—or the 1930s—when the "best" citizens of Santiago complained that blacks were getting "fresher" all the time—Fidel Castro's appeal to end discrimination in employment and recreational places was interpreted by the wealthy, some sectors of the middle class, and even some workers as an assault on their dearest values: family, decency, and religion. According to a witness of these events, a number of "very respectable white ladies" left the country because, since Castro's speech, "blacks had become impossible." "In the well-to-do neighborhoods of Havana, Santa Clara, and Camagüey," this witness recounts, "there was general uproar. The counter-revolution . . . disseminated the rumor that Fidel Castro had invited black men to invade the country's aristocratic sanctuaries to dance and revel with the vestal virgins who, up to that moment, had managed to avoid the terrible contact with the black skin."[15]

Other sources confirm these impressions. Afro-Cuban journalist Sixto Gastón Agüero agreed that the speech had caused "alarm" and that a significant number of white Cubans were troubled by the possibility of eliminating racial barriers in entertainment activities that were deemed to fall within the private sphere. According to Agüero, the notion that blacks and whites would attend public dances together had created the strongest opposition. A U.S. report reproduced the perceptions of those who resented the elimination of traditional racial barriers in private spaces, asserting that many blacks in Havana had mistaken "liberty for licence and whether or not the entertainment appealed to them invaded not only expensive resorts but gatherings in private homes. Protests indicated to the authorities only that the unwilling hosts were counter-revolutionaries guilty of American-style prejudice."[16]

Like other authorities before him, Castro soon realized that eliminating racial divisions would be considerably more difficult to achieve than he had initially envisioned. Opposition to total and unqualified integration crossed political, class, and even color lines. It was not just the wealthy or the "aristocrats"—who opposed the revolutionary program on several grounds—who resented sharing leisure and other social activities with blacks. The "petit bourgeoisie" and some workers displayed similar indignation when it came to integrating their most personal circles. As a white self-employed salesman stated, a black man should be given opportunities "of the economic type, so he could enjoy a job and have his home," but not "social ones." He elaborated: "For example, 50 blacks can be working in a factory and 50 whites, and get along well, and be friends, and all that, but comes the time to share your house, no, no, you are black, and I'm white. . . . I'm not in agreement with integration in its totality."[17]

Nor was this attitude shared exclusively by counterrevolutionaries. People who wholeheartedly supported the revolution and were, in Sixto Gastón Agüero's words, ready to die for its leader were nonetheless scandalized by the notion of blacks and whites dancing together. Well-to-do mulattoes who had earned a pass into whiteness in Cuba's socioracial hierarchy through education, "decency," and income perceived the crumbling of racial barriers as a threat to their precarious social position.[18] Even some blacks, unused to such public exposure of their inferior status, found it hard to accept the challenge entailed by the potential overhaul of traditional racial roles.[19] Though Fidel Castro was not the first national political figure to condemn discrimination publicly, his speech mounted an unprecedented attack on one of the central tenets of Cuba's complex system of race relations: the separation of public and private spaces. In 1959, as on previous occasions during the republic, an attempt to integrate spaces that were socially defined as private met with resistance across a variety of social groups. This resistance demonstrated that a radical program of integration might endanger national unity.

And unity was the priority. The revolutionary program was already eliciting powerful opposition from within and without and could only be implemented with massive popular support. As Castro himself recognized in the same speech, the revolution needed "the most determined and absolute support of all the people." In a televised press conference held just three days after the speech, the prime minister again condemned racial discrimination, but he partially restored the traditional public/private divide concerning integration.[20] Although Castro angrily criticized those who called themselves Christian, educated, or revolutionary while being racist, he also asserted that the revolution would not "impose" limitations on individuals and their personal habits. "I did not say," he clarified, "that we were going to open the exclusive clubs for blacks to go there to dance or to entertain themselves. I did not say that. People dance with whomever they want and . . . socialize with whomever they want."

Castro also challenged the notion that after his speech blacks had become, as a white woman told him, "impossible." "What do [whites] want?" he asked of those who complained about blacks' alleged misbehavior. "[Whites] had

[blacks] cleaning automobiles all their lives, they had them cleaning shoes and begging, they could not go to school to get a good education, and now they want blacks to be more refined than those who went to study in Paris. Now they want blacks to even speak French, please!"

Yet the prime minister called on Afro-Cubans to be more "respectful" than ever before, asked them not to give any excuses to those who opposed the revolution's integrationist goals, and argued that racist attitudes would be changed through education and persuasion. Indeed, he remained opposed to passing antidiscrimination legislation and fighting racism through legal means.

Thus Castro's March 25 words were open to various interpretations. The speech unequivocally asserted that racial discrimination was socially and morally wrong. However, emphasis was placed on employment, described by Castro as the "truly cruel and inhuman" variant of discrimination. By contrast, private and personal spaces would be respected. Change in these areas would be gradual, achieved through the color-blind education of new generations of Cubans—a point that the most conservative press did not fail to emphasize.[21] Those who resented Castro's antiracist pronouncement were chastised, but, as on previous occasions during the republic, blacks were asked again to be patient and respectful—not to seek aggressively a redefinition of their traditional social places. These expectations could be easily used to delay integration, for any misbehavior could be interpreted as an indication that Afro-Cubans were not "prepared" to benefit from the revolution's program of racial integration.

But the speech was not ambivalent in some of its key statements. Not only was discrimination wrong, but also it was anti-Cuban and counterrevolutionary. Revolution and racism, Castro stressed beyond any doubt, were incompatible concepts. Most important, the prime minister called on writers, intellectuals, and journalists to debate race issues, to educate the public, and to demonstrate scientifically that prejudice and discrimination were absurd. In sum, Fidel Castro called for a public debate about racism and characterized discrimination as a national shame that ought to be eliminated in the new Cuba. This, by itself, created unprecedented opportunities to launch an assault—perhaps even the final assault—against discrimination and racist ideologies in the island.

Several groups seized this opportunity and, with the support of the state, led an antiracist campaign unparalleled in Cuban history. In April and May 1959 an outburst of conferences, lectures, and symposia analyzing the roots and effects of racial discrimination took place. The University of Havana held a "Forum against Racist Discrimination." The Cuban Association of the United Nations held a "Forum about Ethnic Prejudice in Cuba," presided over by white intellectual and professor Elías Entralgo. A roundtable about discrimination, with the participation of the minister of social welfare, the dean of the National Association of Journalists, and others, was televised in early April.[22] Around the same time, a group of prominent intellectuals, including Entralgo, Salvador García Agüero, and Nicolás Guillén, organized the Provisional Committee of Orientation and National Integration to launch a national movement in support of "the revolutionary attitude defined by the prime minister." On April 5, the committee held its first meeting, which was attended by Comandante Ernesto "Che" Guevara. Out of this assembly was created the Movement of National Integration with branches in several provinces, municipalities, and workplaces. In August, the Provincial Committee of Havana organized a series of public lectures across the province, including rural areas, to disseminate the revolution's antiracist doctrines.[23] Another series of conferences on racial integration, organized by the state-sponsored Department of Culture, were also staged in August. Invited by the Provincial Federation of Societies (the Afro-Cuban clubs), the minister of labor attended a meeting at the Club Marbella and gave a talk about "racial discrimination and unemployment." Still another movement, the National Campaign for Racial Integration, was organized by the Federation of University Students and some Afro-Cuban clubs, such as Unión Fraternal and Atenas.[24]

Several political, civic, and religious organizations supported the campaign and made public pronouncements in support of Castro's speeches, including the Partido Socialista Popular (communist), the Socialist Youth, numerous unions (see below), the Masons, professional organizations such as schoolteachers' groups, the Catholic Workers Youth, and even the Cuban Council of Protestant Churches.[25] In Santa Clara, university students organized cross-racial dances; fraternity banquets were organized in Santiago.[26] Journalists and writers published dozens of articles debating the origins of and solutions for racial discrimination. Fidel Castro had called on intellectuals to address the issue; the revolutionary press responded. *Noticias de Hoy* published long interviews with well-known intellectuals such as Fernando Ortiz and Entralgo. Communist Party leaders Carlos Rafael Rodríguez and García Agüero published articles supporting Castro's speeches and highlighting the Communists' historic role in the struggle against racism. A series of articles analyzed the psychological dimensions of prejudice and urged psychiatrists to scientifically study the problem.[27] The theme was also cov-

ered, though less prominently, by *Revolución*, *El Avance Revolucionario*, and other newspapers.[28]

The campaign against discrimination was also fueled by frequent references to the issue in some of the speeches of the revolutionary leaders. In addition to Fidel Castro himself, who kept talking about discrimination at public events, guerrilla commanders Raúl Castro and Guevara raised the issue frequently. On May 1, 1959, for instance, Raúl Castro and Guevara addressed workers' rallies in Havana and Santiago. They both spoke about the need to advance the revolution's antidiscrimination program. "Our revolution," Raúl Castro stated, "will wage the final battle against the ill-fated prejudice of racial discrimination. The unity of all people is as important to the revolution as the integration of all Cubans is to the nation." "Slavery," Guevara was saying at the same time in Santiago, "did not end in Cuba until January 1, 1959." When Guevara accepted a Doctor Honoris Causa from the Universidad Central in Santa Clara in December, he asserted that the "essential" function of the university in the "new Cuba" was to "paint itself with black, paint itself with mulatto, not only among students, but also among teachers." In a press conference in July, Fidel Castro, in turn, anticipated that through persuasion and "intelligent measures" Cuba was "approaching a process of abolition of racial prejudices."[29]

These "intelligent measures" were being implemented in two main areas: the gradual desegregation of public and recreational facilities and the design of policies that, although couched in color-blind language, created opportunities for the poorest in society, among whom blacks were of course overrepresented.

The process of desegregating recreational facilities and lifting racial barriers in occupations that had been traditionally closed to blacks was slower and more painful than is usually realized. Some authors question the importance of this process, implying that racial segregation had little bearing on the lives of many, if not most, Afro-Cubans.[30] Although some facilities were out of reach of all the poor, regardless of race, racial desegregation was critical because it turned the abstract goals of racial equality and national integration into concrete, tangible political acts with immediate results. Indeed, the issue was deemed potentially explosive enough for the government to follow a gradual approach.

The beaches became the first target of the revolutionary authorities. Most of the best beaches in the country had been privatized, linked to social clubs or expensive hotels, and open only to members and guests. Since most of these clubs were openly discriminatory, Afro-Cubans were in fact barred

from access to these beaches. Previous governments had offered as a solution the creation of separate recreational facilities on "popular beaches" or exclusive beaches for black clubs. In his March 22 speech, Fidel Castro announced that all beaches would be open to the public and that "the people" would be able to attend the country's best beaches, including exclusive resort areas such as Varadero, Santa María del Mar, or Tarará. Two weeks later, the private beaches in Santiago, Havana, and elsewhere were declared public. The official announcement, however, carefully noted that the people would have access to "the sand and the sea" only. Private buildings, swimming pools, restaurants, bars, and other club facilities remained off-limits and were to be used only by members. Furthermore, the authorities warned that, in addition to respect for private property, "order and decency required by the behavior of a civilized people" were expected. The beaches had been declared social property; club facilities remained private and beyond the reach of the black and the poor. Confrontation over these spaces had been, for the time being, postponed. Fidel Castro had hinted that this would be the official policy when he toured some of Havana's beaches and clubs in mid-February. Speaking at the club of bank employees on the Santa María beach east of Havana, Castro asked for cooperation concerning public access to beaches, but he reassured club members that their "privacy" would be respected.[31]

An equally gradual, nonconfrontational approach was followed in the desegregation of parks. Although some officers of the Rebel Army entered, accompanied by black civilians, the white sections of parks and challenged their traditional racial boundaries, the full desegregation of parks was frequently achieved through remodeling. Rather than confront embedded racist habits, the authorities chose to rebuild the parks and destroy their traditional, racially significant layouts. The new parks, they hoped, would not be associated with a historic geography of race and power. "The humanist revolution," the official in charge of the remodeling in Santa Clara declared, "has its origin precisely in all social injustices. One of these injustices is racial discrimination. . . . That is why the Revolutionary Government is building a new [Leoncio] Vidal park in Santa Clara, where white and black children can look at each other in the happiness of being equal members of a fatherland that is with all and for the good of all." The old flowerpots that had divided the white and black areas were removed and replaced with an undivided walkway, together with a recreational area for children. "This is how the revolution works," asserted *Revolución* concerning the opening of the new park; "this is a step forward in the unity of all Cubans."[32]

The gradual approach through which the revolutionary leadership hoped

FIGURE 7.1. *Revolutionary propaganda. This advertisement was published in the* M-26-7 *daily in early 1959 and calls for racial harmony and equality. From* Revolución, *April 2, 1959. (Biblioteca Nacional "José Martí")*

to eliminate discrimination and eventually achieve racial integration also became explicit in some of the propaganda of the period. An advertisement published repeatedly in *Revolución* during April and May 1959 exemplifies this point. It portrayed a black boy pleading for a better future (see figure 7.1). The text read:

> I don't ask for much. I want to eat, get to know the taste of a pastry. The right to a glass of milk and a little bit of meat every day, to be healthy so, when I grow up, tuberculosis does not consume me. I want to play, to have a tricycle . . . to have a new toy. I want to study, to access books and a good school. In order for me to reach all that, it is necessary that my parents have a place to work. They don't want to send me to an institution. They want to earn what is fair in order to give me food, toys, education, so when I grow up, I can be something besides a shoeshine boy, or a valet. If I become a good man, perhaps my intelligence will generate some respect, and we all can get along and the races will understand each other. Perhaps when I become a man, people will have a clearer idea about life so that when one of my children goes by, instead of saying "there goes a 'negrito' [little black]," they will come to say, "*there goes a child.*" Isn't it true that I don't ask for much?

The central message of this advertisement was unmistakable: socioracial hierarchies and traditions would not be transformed overnight. Instead of aggressively asserting their right to an equal place in society, Afro-Cubans were *asking* for such basic things as food, education, and work. In turn, racial ideas would "perhaps" begin to change when a new generation of Cubans, educated in a climate of racial harmony, acquired the knowledge needed to understand that skin color did not define humanity. Change would be achieved without confrontation. The needs represented by the boy in the advertisement were immediate, but Afro-Cubans were expected to wait for these benefits to be given to them.

When confrontation did occur—and, given the radicalization of the revolutionary process, it was virtually unavoidable—it was couched in the language of class rather than race. The process of desegregation of the social clubs, for instance, was done in the name of "los sin nada" (the have-nots): workers, peasants, and humble employees and professionals. Beginning in late April 1960, one full year after opening the beaches to the public, the government moved against the private clubs and nationalized them. The first club to be claimed as social property was the ultra-exclusive Havana Biltmore Yacht and Country Club, which was renamed Cubanacán. It was an ideal first

target: the club symbolized both the exclusivity of the elite and its intimate links with foreign, mainly American, investors. As one journalist wrote, it was a club "of foreign name and composition, therefore counterrevolutionary." Amid growing confrontation with the U.S. government, the expropriation of the Havana Biltmore came to represent an act of national affirmation by the Cuban "people," a concept that was identified with workers, peasants, and the humblest sectors of the population.[33]

Accused of accepting a million-dollar gift from Batista, the club was reopened as a *círculo social obrero* (workers social circle). Membership quotas varied according to the income of members. By late 1960, 55 percent of members earned less than $100 per month; another 23 percent had a monthly income of between $100 and $150. "The families that are using the workers social circle are low-income families," Fidel Castro noted with satisfaction. The leader of the revolution called for the creation of similar institutions across the country, "one circle in each town . . . one in each sugar mill." By October 1961, thirteen clubs had been transformed into *círculos sociales obreros* in Havana alone.[34]

Although these expropriations were done in the name of the people, they included not only such upper-class bulwarks as the Havana Yacht Club, the Miramar Yacht Club, and the Vedado Tennis Club but also clubs that belonged to professional associations and employees, such as the electrical workers' Cubanalco. The revolution was claiming as workers' property facilities that already belonged to workers. But some of these clubs, their social composition notwithstanding, had been as discriminatory as those of the elite. The clubs of railway and electrical workers, for instance, did not allow blacks on their premises, even though their bylaws were silent on the issue of race. By January 1960, the railway workers' club had been desegregated due to an integrationist movement led by the union. Cubanaleco remained open only to whites. Seizing the momentum created by Fidel Castro's antiracist declarations and the ensuing national campaign against discrimination, a cross-racial "Integration Committee" was organized within the union and began to fight against the color line in the club. "It is not fair," it argued, "that those who face death together at the top of the electric posts cannot have leisure together in a club that belongs to all." Quoting an article of the club bylaws that stated that anyone on Havana Electric's payroll could become a member of the club, the committee asserted that it was only demanding that the club follow its own regulations. "We do not ask for any privilege. We demand a right."[35]

Yet the process of desegregating the club encountered resistance among club members. Caught between competing demands, the general secretary of the union proposed a solution that was not too different from the one applied in the case of the parks: to build a new club for electrical workers at Guanabo Beach. This, Afro-Cuban journalist Roger Fumero noted, was only a maneuver to dissipate tensions while maintaining the "infamous color line" in Cubanaleco. The union leaders would have to open the club to blacks, warned the journalist. Otherwise, Fidel Castro would do it for them. "Union leaders never dared face this problem [before]. But it is evident that things are different now. Now . . . [there is] a government that has fought against all injustices, and its main leaders have recognized that the problem of discrimination exists in Cuba." Whereas union leaders hesitated over how to tackle the issue of discrimination at the club, revolutionary authorities did not: several months later, Cubanaleco was taken over by the state, turned into a workers social circle, and opened to all.[36]

State intervention was also crucial in lifting racial barriers in employment. This process was considerably slower and more difficult than the desegregation of beaches, parks, or social clubs. Numerous unions publicly supported Fidel Castro's antidiscrimination pronouncements and passed resolutions demanding that employers hire black workers.[37] Especially in those sectors in which Afro-Cubans had seldom found job opportunities, such as banks, retail stores, and cigarette factories, the unions' stand, combined with the explicit condemnation of discrimination from above, created opportunities that had not existed before. Correctly sensing the weakness of their position in the new environment, employers tended to compromise. Otherwise, workers would appeal to the authorities, something that, a lawyer representing sugar companies in the island noted, should be avoided by all possible means. "The hand of Cuba's destiny at present is held by the organized labor movement," a manager at a U.S. firm in Oriente asserted.[38]

Thus, when the Federation of Bank Workers stipulated in its collective bargaining agreement that the union would control 50 percent of new hires in order to appoint black workers, employers agreed. Some managers of bank and other companies even took the initiative and began hiring Afro-Cuban workers themselves.[39]

But as the example of electrical workers and their club shows, in some cases the unions themselves were the problem. Given the large number of unemployed and underemployed workers in the island, competition for jobs was fierce. Many unions favored the employment of sons and close relatives of existing employees, a policy that employers supported in order to maintain a better grip over the labor force. In companies that traditionally did not

employ blacks, the "lists of job seekers" were composed almost exclusively of whites: Afro-Cubans knew in advance that their chances of getting hired were nonexistent and did not bother to apply.[40] In sum, to alter significantly the racial composition of the occupational structure, it was necessary to confront embedded interests, habits, and hiring practices that had contributed to maintaining color lines in jobs. State action was required.

Yet the revolutionary leadership remained opposed to passing a law that would force employers to hire a predetermined quota of black workers—a position that the Communists still defended in 1960. The revolutionary government did take legal steps, but in a way that would lead to the gradual integration of workplaces and minimize racially defined confrontation. The new Organic Law of the Ministry of Labor, approved in January 1960, established that all new employees would be hired through the Ministry of Labor. In order to distribute jobs with "justice and equality," the ministry would conduct a labor census to determine the number, skills, place of residence, family income, and needs of the unemployed. With this information at hand, the ministry would then create a national registry of job seekers in which the unemployed would be randomly assigned a number. Only the ministry could fill vacancies. Neither unions nor employers could hire workers who had not been selected by the ministry out of the national registry. "This way," the official organ of the ministry proclaimed, "the Revolutionary Government will eliminate completely all sorts of discrimination in certain labor sectors." According to the secretary of labor, the census—which was actually conducted in April 1960—would guarantee that all Cubans would have equal opportunities for employment and eliminate race discrimination in employment.[41]

African American writer Julian Mayfield, who visited the island in the summer of 1960, commented on the impact of these measures: "Take an example. . . . The proprietor of a barbershop in a lush hotel like the Havana Libre . . . would never have considered hiring a colored barber before the revolution. But the decision is no longer his."[42]

The notion of forcing a color-blind distribution of employment through state intervention was of course not new. The principle was included in the Constitution of 1940 and was later upheld, but with little practical impact, in Prío's and Batista's decrees of 1951 and 1955. The situation, however, was "different" in 1960, according to Afro-Cuban journalist Fumero. Since family income and needs were weighed when filling vacancies, the new system was not, in fact, color-blind. It tended to benefit the poorest, among whom blacks were overrepresented.[43] More to the point, the capacity of the government to influence hiring practices increased significantly when, in the fall of 1960, foreign and domestic industries and companies began to be nationalized. By 1963, 70 percent of agriculture, 95 percent of industry and transportation, 75 percent of retail trade, and 100 percent of banking activities had come under the direct control of the state. Thus the state had become Cuba's main employer.[44]

Other government policies helped diminish social inequalities, including those associated with race, and contributed to the long-term goal of national integration. The nationalization of private schools in July 1961 destroyed one of the most enduring pillars of racism in Cuban society. Most of these schools were segregated. The 1961 massive literacy campaign, in turn, provided not only basic reading and writing skills to the poorest in society but also brought Cubans of different social backgrounds together. Urban residents came to know the harshness of rural life firsthand. Middle-class citizens became personally involved in confronting poverty and ignorance. Blacks and whites joined in this effort, both as teachers and as students. Among the voluntary teachers participating in the campaign, 30 percent were black or mulatto. Adult education was also expanded and special schools created to address the needs of underprivileged groups such as domestic workers, a large number of whom were Afro-Cuban females.[45]

Likewise, the lowering of rents and the 1959 creation of the National Institute of Housing benefited low-income families. The institute was charged with the construction of cheap housing for workers and took on the task of building houses for residents of the largely black shantytowns and slums. By 1961, for instance, the residents of the infamous Havana shantytown of Las Yaguas had been transferred to a new housing complex that had been built in what was traditionally a middle-class neighborhood. In Santiago, the shantytown "Manzana de Gómez" was in the process of being destroyed by early 1960, and similar neighborhoods, such as "Honduras" and "Debajo del Puente" (literally, "under the bridge"), were being studied to provide their residents with material support so they could build their own houses.[46] Scholarship students from poor families were lodged in the mansions of the wealthy, who by 1961 had fled the country en masse. More than a thousand ex–domestic workers enrolled in training courses for administrative and commercial jobs in 1962 were housed at the Hotel Nacional, previously one of Havana's most exclusive hotels.[47] Havana's traditional geography of race and wealth was being drastically altered.

Individuals of different social and racial backgrounds were further indoctrinated in the values of a new, integrated society through mass organizations such as the Revolutionary Militias, the Committees for the Defense of the

Revolution, and the Federation of Cuban Women. All these organizations were color-blind concerning membership. They served to channel revolutionary enthusiasm, mobilize and control the population, and give symbolic power to groups whose participation in Cuba's political life had been minimal before. Observers noted, for instance, that among those in the militia in 1960, "there were many who had been unable to fill prestigious roles in the old order, including a noticeably high proportion of negroes and middle-aged women."[48]

The effects of this process of radical change cannot be easily summarized. The lives of all Cubans were affected, and people responded to the revolutionary changes in different ways, which depended largely on their social origin. The predominantly white upper class and the most affluent sectors of the middle class left the country and found refuge in Miami, Florida, where they attempted to re-create a Cuba that no longer existed. The lower classes rallied in support of the revolution and its leader. According to a survey conducted in 1962, 70 percent of workers had a favorable attitude toward the revolution. The percentage was even higher among black workers: 80 percent approved of Castro's government. As early as September 1959, a U.S. State Department report considered blacks to be one of the sources of support for the revolutionary government.[49]

Most blacks and mulattoes benefited materially from the national redistribution of income and resources implemented by the revolution. Perhaps equally important, for the first time they were, together with other disadvantaged groups, at the center of government attention and given the opportunity to participate substantially in areas that had been closed to them. In this sense, the desegregation of parks, beaches, schools, and recreational facilities was critically important. It allowed Afro-Cubans to assert their recently acquired status in very concrete ways. A black industrial worker interviewed by Maurice Zeitlin in 1962 elaborated on the importance of this process: "I am most proud of what the revolution has done for the workers and the *campesinos* [peasants]—and not only at work. For example, Negroes couldn't go to a beach or to a good hotel, or be *jefes* [managers, supervisors] in industry, or work in the railroads or in public transportation in Santiago. This was because of their color! . . . But now, no—all of us—we're equal: the white, the Negro, the mulatto." Other Afro-Cuban workers concurred: "Here, there's not a place that my child can't enter, or anyone else's—whether he's poor, or Negro, or whoever." "We can frequent any place we want, beaches, hotels, movies," said another. Even some black emigrants otherwise hostile toward the revolution admitted that blacks were "like everybody else. The same as the white."[50] No one captured better what these transformations meant for many Afro-Cubans than Nicolás Guillén in his noted poem "Tengo" (I Have), written in 1964:

I have, let's see:
that being Black
I can be stopped by no one at
the door of a dancing hall or bar.
Or even at the desk of a hotel
have someone yell at me there are no rooms,
a small room and not one that's immense,
a tiny room where I might rest.

. . . . . .

I have that having the land I have the sea,
no country clubs,
no high life,
no tennis and no yachts,
but, from beach to beach and wave on wave,
gigantic blue open democratic:
in short, the sea.
I have, let's see:
that I have learned to read,
to count,
I have that I have learned to write,
and to think,
and to laugh.
I have that now I have
a place to work
and earn
what I have to eat.
I have, let's see:
I have what was coming to me.[51]

Some white workers found it hard to adjust to these changes and resented what they perceived as an official bias toward Afro-Cubans. Particularly difficult was the social and physical closeness that integrated schools, recreational facilities, and mass organizations imposed on blacks and whites. "My sons were militiamen," explained a white sugar worker in 1962, "but they resigned because of communism, and, too, they weren't happy because there were many Negroes in the battalion who thought they were better than

others." This perception that blacks felt as if they were "better" than whites or were "better off" than whites in the island was shared by several white workers interviewed by Fox in 1970, who resented the dismantling of traditional racial hierarchies. "[T]he black has more rights than the whites. . . . [T]he black is worth more than the white," declared a farmworker from Oriente. A former soldier concurred: "[T]he black gets more consideration. . . . The white man there [in Cuba] isn't worth a thing. A Negro is worth more than a white." According to a bread salesman, whites in Cuba were living "under the boot of the black." Blacks "abused" whites because they had gained membership and leading positions in the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution, the militias, and similar organizations.[52]

Not only had the revolutionary government taken decisive, although careful, steps toward the desegregation of most social spaces and the racial integration of the population, particularly the youth; it had also created an "ideal" that had become dominant in the discourse and imagery of the new society. Revolutionaries and, after 1961, Communists could not be racist. Racism was identified with social groups subservient to imperialist interests: the white, pro-Yankee, antinational bourgeoisie that had fled the country. Thus, not only was racism anticommunist or counterrevolutionary; it was also antinational and a perilous sign of ideological "backwardness."

Given the enormous influence that the state and its mass organizations exerted in most areas of national life, most members of society felt compelled to comply with this ideal and adapt to the new environment. As a black actor interviewed by Elizabeth Sutherland in 1968 explained, whites could not "very well be openly racist anymore." Blacks and whites acted "as though" they had achieved "the ideal of brotherhood," the actor noted, when in fact it was still just an ideal. But the facts that racial brotherhood had become the ideal and that people felt required to act accordingly were themselves significant achievements in a country in which racial barriers, and even segregation, had been rampant only a decade before.[53] The testimony of a white professional, interviewed by historians Duharte and Santos in 1994, exemplifies how ordinary whites were forced to cope with the issue of race:

> I was born in Camagüey in 1951. . . . This province has always been considered to be one of the most racist in Cuba and I believe that to be the case. In my family you would breathe racism constantly. . . . My grandmother never sat by a black in a bus or a taxi. . . . [S]he would not admit blacks to her table either. . . . Like many youth at the time, when I was twelve I went to junior high school in Havana. There, I had to face the problem from a different angle. For the first time I had direct contact with blacks; they were in my classroom . . . even in my dormitory. This was a tremendous experience for me. I don't recall having a marked aversion to them, due perhaps to revolutionary propaganda, which had been claiming for several years that we were all equal. Whoever did not share that feeling was considered counterrevolutionary.[54]

Revolutionary authorities, in turn, took the ideal at face value. As early as 1962, they began claiming that Cuba had eliminated racial discrimination. Among other successes, the Second Declaration of Havana, issued in February 1962, asserted that the revolution had "eradicated discrimination because of race or sex" in Cuba. Writing the same year, a Communist Party official concurred: "Our patriotic, democratic, and socialist revolution has eliminated from Cuban life the odious and humiliating spectacle of discrimination because of skin color." The dominant discourse was summarized by Fidel Castro himself when he argued that discrimination in Cuba had disappeared along with class privileges. He also noted that it had "not cost the revolution much effort to resolve that problem."[55]

This became the dominant theme in public discourse, echoed in official documents, journalistic pieces, and even scholarship. The revolution had solved Cuba's historic race problem: racism and discrimination were things of the past. The initial campaign against discrimination waned after 1962, leading to a growing public silence on the issue—except to note Cuba's success in this area. What had been the subject of a fruitful and unprecedented public debate in the early postrevolutionary years eventually became a taboo. As one of Sutherland's informants stated, "The problem in Cuba is that there is a taboo on talking about racism, because officially it does not exist anymore. And nobody, black or white, wants to talk about it." If openly racist acts were deemed to be counterrevolutionary, attempts to debate publicly the limitations of Cuba's integration were likewise considered to be the enemy's work. As in the past, the ideal of racial brotherhood worked in complex, often contradictory ways.[56]

Several factors contributed to making race and discrimination nonissues in public debates. First, silence was congruent with the gradual, nonconfrontational approach followed by the revolutionary leadership on the issue of race. The authorities admitted that racism and prejudices would not wither away overnight, but these attitudes were conceptualized as "remnants" of a past that would disappear in due time. Silence was institutionalized also because some of the political actors that might have objected to the revolu-

tion's policies in this (or any other) area were not in the position to do so. The Communists had always contended that the struggle against racism involved at least two fronts: a legal one, in which discrimination would be penalized, and a cultural one, which entailed an education campaign to eradicate socially accepted ideas about race. The leaders of the party defended the need to approve an antidiscrimination law—despite Castro's opposition to this idea—through 1960. But by 1961, the Partido Socialista Popular had become a partner in the ruling coalition. Although the party's position strengthened along with the establishment of closer ties to the Soviet Union, its role within the leadership remained subordinate.[57] The Communists' revolutionary credentials were frequently challenged immediately after the revolution's triumph because of their belated support for armed struggle and their previous ties to Batista. Thus the party could not afford the political luxury of having an independent voice. Furthermore, it is doubtful that party leaders felt the need to keep pressing for additional measures concerning the race question. After Fidel Castro declared the revolution to be of "socialist" character in 1961, the Communists had no reason to promote further an explicit antidiscrimination agenda. They had always believed that race differences would automatically disappear under socialism, as they had allegedly done in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries.[58]

Afro-Cuban intellectuals, who had tenaciously complained during the whole republican period about the shortcomings of Cuba's racial democracy, could have continued to address racism. But by the mid-1960s, this group had lost its main bases of institutional support: the Afro-Cuban clubs and the black press. Opportunities to publish a regular column devoted to "black issues" in the mainstream press—not an uncommon practice in prerevolutionary Cuba—had also disappeared. The press had been placed under strict government control.

The revolution's integration program left little room for racially defined voices or institutions to persist, much less to thrive. However, the Afro-Cuban societies were not dismantled overnight. Many survived much longer than the exclusive clubs of the bourgeoisie. When the government closed them, it was usually for alleged procedural reasons, such as lack of proper registration or failure to pay fees and taxes. Furthermore, the black societies were not singled out as preferred targets of government action. Rather, they were eradicated together with numerous other associations—civic, fraternal, professional, and mutual aid—that supposedly obstructed the process of redefining Cuba's civil society along lines deemed to be appropriate by the revolutionary government. In September 1961, more than 170 of these associations were closed by provincial authorities in Havana alone.[59]

The Afro-Cuban societies were in a weak position to resist. The leadership of the national and provincial federations had been dangerously close to Batista; many clubs received government subsidies. In January 1959, a process of "revolutionary seizures" of the societies began, similar to that which took place after the fall of Machado. Atenas was the first club whose board of directors was replaced by a group of disenchanted members who described themselves as "revolutionary youth." They replaced the old board—which they publicly accused of cooperation with Batista and CTC leader Eusebio Mujal—and informed the new chief of police about their action.[60]

The National Federation of Societies was also "revolutionarily seized" in January 1959. Leading the movement for its seizure was lawyer Juan René Betancourt, who claimed to be qualified for the task because his own organization, ONRE, was, aside from the federation, the largest in the country. Betancourt also argued that ONRE's leading figures had either been members of revolutionary organizations or at least remained aloof from the corruption of Batista's regime. "We were perfectly qualified to assume at that moment the defense of the race and the leadership of the federation," Betancourt asserted later. He became the self-appointed provisional president of the organization, sent telegrams to all affiliated societies notifying them about the changes, and began a public campaign demanding that the government clarify its position concerning the so-called black problem.[61]

In other cases, it was through government intervention that previous leaders were replaced. In early March, the directors of the National Club of Societies Juan Gualberto Gómez—the exclusive Afro-Cuban beach resort built with Batista's money in Marbella—were suspended from their duties by a decree issued by the minister of education. A government *interventor* (intervener) was appointed to run the club until a new board was elected. Instead, the government representative ordered the club in February 1960 to open its doors to Cubans of all colors.[62]

It was not only club directors that were being challenged from within and without. After Fidel Castro's speech in late March, the very existence and purposes of the black clubs were debated. Some Afro-Cuban intellectuals angrily criticized them as obstacles in the revolution's road to national integration. In his report to the Forum about Racist Discrimination held at the University of Havana in April 1959, for instance, journalist Manuel Cuéllar Vizcaíno warned that "racist associations, either of whites or blacks," should

receive no financial support from the revolutionary government, for they were all "anti-Cuban." By early 1960, Cuéllar claimed that Afro-Cuban societies had lost their purpose and would become a hindrance in the process of integration. He criticized Atenas for offering only recreational activities and complained that young club members had not taken exams for diplomatic careers. In his view, Atenas and other clubs not only were doing little to advance the program of the revolution but also had failed to take advantage of whatever opportunities were being created by the revolutionary government.[63]

Another Afro-Cuban journalist, Roger Fumero, supported Cuéllar's criticism. Fumero charged that, in light of the revolution's integrationist goals, there was no reason for the Federation of Societies to exist any longer. He also criticized Unión Fraternal, the second most important Afro-Cuban club, for clinging to its traditional social functions while failing to support the "democratic projections" of the revolutionary government. An Afro-Cuban reader of his column agreed: the leaders of the black societies acted as if a revolution had not taken place and were only concerned with parties and personal gain.[64]

These criticisms showed that Afro-Cubans did not share a common view about the roles their traditional institutions should play in the new environment or about the process of national integration more generally. Some, such as Betancourt, saw the societies as a bastion from which to articulate a racially defined autonomous movement that would promote the advancement of blacks as a corporate group. Thus Betancourt stressed that the societies "must never allow any government to tell them who should be their national leader; they must never again subordinate the happiness of the race to government charity." Concretely, he hoped to use the National Federation of Societies as a way to implement his plan for a black cooperative movement across the island.[65] But other Afro-Cuban intellectuals, including Cuéllar and Fumero, adamantly opposed any effort that would consolidate the separation of blacks and whites, especially at a time in which the government seemed determined to create unprecedented opportunities for effective racial equality. Journalist Sixto Gastón Agüero criticized even the dominant notion of integration, claiming that Cubans were already ethnically, biologically, and culturally integrated. What remained was to create awareness about this process and eliminate the very notion of "race" from social consciousness. Given that it was not likely that the Afro-Cuban societies would advance this process, they should be eliminated.[66]

Using similar arguments, the Communists also criticized Betancourt's efforts. The creation of a racially integrated and egalitarian nation, they argued, could not be achieved without the joint effort of blacks and whites. Those who opposed unity, Salvador García Agüero charged in an angry critique of Betancourt, were enemies of the revolution, the fatherland, and blacks themselves. He referred to Betancourt's "black doctrine" as a racist ideology that would only perpetuate segregation, resentment, and isolation among Cubans of different colors.[67]

The Afro-Cuban clubs tried desperately to adapt to the new environment. They participated in the antidiscrimination campaign launched in 1959 and 1960 and in revolutionary programs that did not have a specific racial content. Several societies, for instance, collected money to support agrarian reform, industrialization, or the literacy campaign. Some clubs, such as Atenas, elected leaders who had been active in the struggle against Batista. Others sought legitimacy by changing their names: in 1961 the Jóvenes del Vals society became Jóvenes del Vals Revolucionario. Many invited members of the Rebel Army or the M-26-7 to attend their public functions or lent their facilities to revolutionary organizations for free.[68]

But to no avail. The existence of racially defined associations was perceived by revolutionary leaders to be in blatant contradiction to the revolution's goals concerning racial integration. Many of the societies' traditional roles were being taken over by other institutions or had otherwise lost relevance in postrevolutionary society. The Afro-Cuban clubs had performed mutual-aid functions and provided services such as schooling, health care, and recreation that were being opened to all, regardless of race. They had provided Afro-Cuban professionals and politicians with a constituency that was critical to their aspirations for social recognition and ascent. But in the emergent institutional order, those roles were being played by mass and revolutionary organizations.

In many cases, the societies that were liquidated from above were virtually dead already. Although limited, the available evidence is nonetheless conclusive: the number of Afro-Cubans affiliated with the clubs declined considerably under the revolution. The membership of Jóvenes del Vals dropped from 127 in 1956 to 38 in 1962; that of Unión Fraternal, from 3,212 in 1951 to only 211 in 1965. In Atenas, the number of voting members declined by two-thirds: from 292 in 1957 to 91 in 1959.[69]

Because of its social composition, its ties to Batista, and conflicts among its members, the government "intervened" in the operation of Atenas. In July 1961, the *interventor* decreed the dissolution of the society, arguing that it was not fulfilling the ends for which it had been created and that it had been "abandoned" by its members. However, there is evidence that at least until

late 1960 the members of Atenas tried to maintain some institutional life, holding elections and calling for meetings. Outside intervention most likely prevented further engagement and accelerated the process of abandonment invoked as one of the reasons for dissolution.

Other societies survived longer into the revolution, and some, especially religious societies (see below), were never formally eliminated. Unión Fraternal and Jóvenes del Vals Revolucionario were not dissolved until August and September 1966, respectively. In both cases, authorities argued that the associations had not released information concerning elections, meeting minutes, and similar documentation.

Allegedly, these associations were being eliminated on purely technical grounds due to the lack of diligence of their directors, who had repeatedly failed to file the timely documentation required by law. But there is little doubt that, at best, by the mid-1960s the Afro-Cuban societies were being perceived by the revolutionary government as hindrances to its agenda. A new law of associations approved in 1965 placed their supervision and control under the Ministry of the Interior, the organ charged with preventing crime and counterrevolutionary activities.

Furthermore, some of the societies were closed despite resistance. When Unión Fraternal was dissolved and its properties assigned to government institutions, for instance, its president sent a long letter to the chief of public order protesting the decision. He invoked the society's glorious past, its involvement in the War of Independence, its antidiscrimination efforts during the republic, and its staunch support for all the revolutionary programs as evidence that it should remain open. That Unión Fraternal was nonetheless closed strongly suggests that the government was not proceeding on legalistic considerations alone. In the eyes of the new authorities, the societies had become not only useless but also counterproductive. They had fought against discrimination, but this problem had been avowedly eradicated by the revolution. They gave voice to a social group that allegedly did not need it any longer because its members had been fully integrated into all social activities. The 1961 resolution dissolving Atenas spelled it out clearly: among other reasons, the club was being closed because "discrimination due to race, sex, age, or social condition had disappeared" in Cuba's socialist society.

The Afro-Cuban clubs represented an affront to the government's vision of a color-blind society and a potential challenge to the official discourse of a discrimination-free Cuba. Indeed, in the early years of the revolution, the clubs and Afro-Cuban intellectuals had occasionally challenged local authorities for not promoting the revolutionary ideals of equality and even the central government for the absence of blacks in positions of command.[70] The clubs gave blacks and mulattoes the opportunity to articulate a common discourse according to which justice and equality were their own achievements rather than benefits handed down by the revolutionary government.[71] "There is a tendency," an Afro-Cuban actress stated in 1968, "to assume that the Revolution 'gave' blacks their freedom—gave us the right to enter white society, to have the same things they have. It is an essentially paternalistic attitude. And it creates resentment."[72] The clubs and the black press were potential channels to articulate such resentment and break the official silence of race. They had to be eliminated.

This, however, does not mean that race disappeared as a socially relevant identity from Cuban life or even that it was erased from all forms of public discourse. Debates about racism in Cuban socialism moved into the private sphere, in which notions of race continued to affect social relations in a myriad of ways. But the issue of race retained a prominent place in two areas of public discourse: culture and international politics.

TO MAKE A TRUE CUBAN CULTURE

The revolution was conceived by its leaders and many Cubans as a process not only of political or economic transformations but also of cultural change. As in the 1930s, the new Cuba required a new culture, one that would exalt autochthonous values and traditions and rescue forms of popular expression that had been forgotten, ignored, or simply rejected under the republic. In this process, a plethora of cultural institutions were created or reorganized in the first two years of the revolution. These included the Instituto Cubano de Arte e Industria Cinematográficos (ICAIC, Cuban Institute for the Art and Industry of the Cinema); the National Council of Culture, subordinated to the Ministry of Education; the National Theater of Cuba; and the National Publishing House.

It was nearly impossible to exalt popular traditions without acknowledging the African roots of national culture. Already by the 1950s, the notion that Cubanness could not be understood without reference to its black ingredients was widely accepted. This acceptance was neither unproblematic nor universal, but it was nonetheless widespread. The works of anthropologists Fernando Ortiz, Rómulo Lachatañeré, and Lidya Cabrera, all of whom emphasized the dominant role of "lo negro" in Cuban folklore, were highly respected and frequently invoked as proof that Cuba was a mestizo nation. Blackness was also central to the work of some of the best painters of the period, such as Wilfredo Lam. Although commodified and aesthetically "fil-

tered" to please North American tourists and white middle-class Cubans, rhythms and dances of perceived African origin had become established forms of national expression. The 1930s "black craze" had subsided, but blackness remained central to the way the Cuban nation was imagined and its culture represented.

In turn, the growing identification of the revolutionary leadership with the poor led to a renewed interest in the cultural expressions of the "people"—a concept that was increasingly identified with the dark lower classes. Moreover, the public condemnation of racial discrimination and Fidel Castro's invitation to debate questions of race in the mass media created unprecedented opportunities to attempt a full reassessment of Cuba's national culture and of the "place" and importance of its Afro-Cuban components. For many intellectuals, black and white, this was indeed a unique opportunity to create an authentic Cuban culture.

Thus cultural themes figured prominently in the debates that followed Castro's speeches in March 1959. Public lectures and roundtables discussed the importance of African influences in Cuban music, visual arts, and other forms of expression. As early as May 1959, a law to "stimulate folkloric traditions" was submitted to the Council of Ministers for consideration.[73] Cultural events that traditionally had been all-white domains were symbolically integrated. For instance, for the first time ever, the 1959 Miss Cuba pageant was presided over by a black man, Comandante Juan Almeida, who personally delivered the trophy to the white winner of the beauty contest. The incident, the U.S. Embassy reported, had caused "strong resentment" in the population, but it was nonetheless repeated. In 1960, Almeida presided over the choosing of Carnival's "queen" in Havana.[74] In a contest to select the best "Cuban dolls" for the "Cuban Christmas" of 1959 sponsored by the Department of Culture of the Ministry of Education, two of the three main awards—including the first prize—went to dolls representing Afro-Cuban figures. Also for the first time, in 1961 black models and hairstylists competed in the annual beauty contest sponsored by the Club of Hairstylists and the National Federation of Barbers in Havana. "Beauty," a newspaper noted, "has no specific color."[75]

This environment was propitious enough for some Afro-Cuban intellectuals to bring into the public sphere issues and cultural expressions that had been traditionally hidden or demeaned as "black things." Foremost among them was Santería, which had never been fully accepted as a genuine expression of Cubanness. Afro-Cuban activists and writers called for a reassessment of Santería as a legitimate and dignified form of popular religion rather than as witchcraft practiced by ignorant blacks.[76] Likewise, the social and cultural meanings of groups such as the Abakuá—a secret all-male fraternal society of African origin that used to appear only in the police chronicle of the daily press—began to be reexamined. Some *potencias* (Abakuá groups) donated money to agrarian reform and declared support for the revolution. When the harbor at Havana was sabotaged, Fidel Castro asserted that he did not doubt the loyalty of dockworkers, many of whom were affiliated with the Abakuá. By early 1960, the noted Afro-Cuban ethnomusicologist Odilio Urfé was engaged in the organization, for the first time ever in Cuba, of a national congress of the Abakuá.[77]

Other Afro-Cuban intellectuals challenged dominant ideas about race, nationality, and national culture. Journalist Gastón Agüero published a tract arguing that the Cuban nation was already culturally integrated and that only racism and prejudice prevented the acknowledgment of this historical reality. Cubans had to be educated in a new spirit, one in which the very concept of "race" had no place. Another Afro-Cuban writer, Walterio Carbonell, agreed that Cubans had to be exposed to a different education, but he argued that it was first necessary to destroy dominant interpretations of national history and culture, which had been fabricated by the white bourgeoisie. "To demolish the ideological conceptions of the bourgeoisie is to make Revolution," claimed Carbonell. In his seminal *Crítica: Cómo surgió la cultura nacional*, the author criticized those who spoke about the rescue of national culture while maintaining and reproducing an "aristocratic interpretation" of the formation of *cubanidad*. The culture of the slave owners, claimed Carbonell, could not be that of revolutionary Cuba. Rather, it was necessary to create a new "historical consciousness" that gave Africa and its descendants the place they deserved in the formation of the Cuban nation.[78]

Carbonell despaired over the inability of some revolutionaries to free themselves from the influence of what he termed the "bourgeois conceptions" of culture. He also criticized the fact that former slave owners were still regarded as founding fathers of the Cuban nation and Cuban culture. His critique indicated that although there was consensus about the need to create an authentic national culture, the "authenticity" and importance of its various components remained contested. As mentioned above, not even Afro-Cuban intellectuals shared a common vision about this process. Some institutions interpreted the "recovery" of Cuban values as a mandate to issue popular editions of Cuban "classic" authors such as José Antonio Saco or José de la Luz y Caballero, prime exponents of the bourgeois culture that Carbonell so angrily criticized.[79]

But other institutions did contribute to creating the "historical consciousness" that Carbonell and others advocated. By 1960 the recently created ICAIC was planning several documentaries and animated films that referred to Afro-Cubans, their history, and the fallacies of racism. A movie about the struggles staged by the peasants of Realengo 18, many of whom were black, was released in 1961. The cast included several black actors, and some of the characters were interpreted by residents of the Realengo, located in the mountains of eastern Cuba.[80]

One of the institutions that initially contributed the most to the task of creating a new national culture was the Teatro Nacional de Cuba (TNC, Cuban National Theater), whose Department of Folklore staged its first public performance in February 1960. Under the leadership of noted white ethnomusicologist Argeliers León, the Department of Folklore was conceived as a tool for Cubans to become "owners of [their] own culture," a process that mirrored and contributed to the economic and political independence created by the revolution. Unlike the tourist-oriented spectacles through which Afro-Cuban culture had been represented, León's productions were designed to maintain the "authenticity" of popular forms of cultural expression and to promote them in mainstream society.[81] The early work of Danza Nacional de Cuba (Cuban National Dance), another department of the TNC, was conducted with the utmost respect and admiration for Santería and its practitioners.[82]

As part of its mandate, the Department of Folklore organized the Seminar of Folklore Studies in 1960, at which some of the best young researchers of Afro-Cuban culture were trained.[83] León also published *Actas del Folklore*, a journal that included research papers on Santería, the Abakuás, and other forms of popular culture—including those of non-African origin. One of the participants in the seminar recalled later: "The intention was . . . to give new vitality, more weight, and greater value to the African influences expressed through the music and dance used in popular culture, and to return this . . . to the people."[84]

The experiment of the TNC was unique in several ways. To guarantee the authenticity of the presentations, they were staged by real practitioners of Santería and other Afro-Cuban religions. These performers had been trained in their households and communities, not in dance or music academies. Most of them were lower-class blacks and mulattoes whose practices had been traditionally hidden from the society at large. Furthermore, this was an unprecedented institutional effort, backed and supported by the state, with the purpose of researching the African roots of Cuban culture and educating the public in the aesthetic values of a new national culture.

Yet this does not mean that the revolution's cultural institutions were going to promote Santería or other Afro-Cuban religions. Since its creation, the Department of Folklore made clear that its mission was to present "the pure value of the songs, dances, and poetry" associated with the religions. The beliefs themselves were left to be practiced in private. Although the mere public presentation of Afro-Cuban ritual dances and songs helped significantly to legitimize these religions and emphasize the centrality of African elements in the formation of the Cuban culture, a systematic reassessment of Santería as a true religion—and not just a popular rite or superstition—did not take place. By 1961, Carbonell argued that the silence surrounding the progressive political and cultural roles played by the Afro-Cuban religions in the formation of the Cuban nationality was "suspicious."[85]

Paradoxically, this silence coexisted with the promotion of so-called Afro-Cuban folklore. In 1962, two new institutions took over the functions that had been initially concentrated in the Department of Folklore of the TNC. To promote research about the "cultural expressions of the Cuban people" and to create a "museum of Cuban ethnology," the National Institute of Ethnology and Folklore was organized. The decree creating the institute explained that although the Cuban people had created their own forms of language, dance, music, poetry, and myths, Cubans still lacked a true "cultural unity." The main purpose of the institute was to "integrate" these forms into a national culture that would represent and contribute to consolidation of the revolution. León became the director of the new institution and launched the publication of the important serial *Etnología y Folklore*.[86]

To continue public performances of popular songs and dances, the Conjunto Folklórico Nacional (CFN, National Folkloric Ensemble) was created. One of its founding members was young ethnomusicologist, composer, and writer Rogelio Martínez Furé, who had attended the seminar of folklore sponsored by the TNC in 1960. Martínez Furé described the purposes of the ensemble: "The Conjunto Folklórico Nacional [was] created to satisfy a need of our country, which did not have an institution that would collect dancing and musical expressions of national character and integrate them into the new socialist culture. . . . The *conjunto* . . . must select those forms of true artistic value and organize them according to the demands of modern theater, but without betraying its folkloric essence." The CFN followed in the footsteps of the Department of Folklore of the TNC in that the troupe was

originally formed with dancers, musicians, and informants who were active practitioners of Santería and other popular forms of cultural expression. In mid-1963 the CFN staged its first public performance in Havana, with a program that was mostly devoted to Afro-Cuban themes. A year later it represented Cuba in the Festival of Nations in Paris, also touring Spain, Belgium, and Algeria. The image that revolutionary Cuba began to export as its own was largely defined by its African ancestry.[87]

Both the institute and the CFN were seen by their founding members and by authorities as catalysts in the process of creating an authentic national culture. And to no small degree, they were. Especially in the early stages, the work of these institutions was permeated with enthusiasm and respect for the cultural expressions they were supposed to investigate and represent. But institutionalizing "scientific research" and "spectacles" as two separate areas reflected some of the ambiguities that characterized the revolution's approach to integration. The institute intended to research Cuban popular traditions, catalog them, monitor their evolution under socialism, and ultimately store them in the newly created Museum of Ethnology. The CFN would organize theatrical spectacles, selecting cultural forms of "artistic value" and depriving them of their sacred, ritual foundation. Although Martínez Furé was—as León before him—clearly committed to maintaining the authenticity of these presentations, they resulted in the secularization of Afro-Cuban sacred culture, a process that some black intellectuals criticized as "folklorization."[88] In a sense, the institute and the CFN were charged with keeping alive the historic memory of these cultural expressions precisely because revolutionary authorities believed they were about to die in the new Cuba. And just as the revolution had "solved" the problem of discrimination by eliminating the most visible forms of segregation, it was creating a national culture by integrating the equally visible expressions of Afro-Cuban traditions. The rest—remaining forms of discrimination and prejudice and the religious content of the Afro-Cuban songs and dances—were "remnants" of the past that, it was assumed, would disappear in due time.[89]

Thus the artistic value of these expressions was not necessarily linked to the complexity, vitality, and, in Carbonell's words, progressive social function of the Afro-Cuban religions, which were frequently referred to as "rites." By the mid-1960s it was clear that the religions of African origin were not perceived as progressive cultural forms but were in fact deemed to be obstacles to the construction of socialism and the formation of the "new man." But Santería and other Afro-Cuban religions had not been singled out for discouragement.[90] Their treatment was part of an assault on religions in general,

and the Catholic Church in particular, that had reached its climax in late 1961.[91] The assumption of Marxism-Leninism as the official ideology of the government, the organization of the Partido Comunista de Cuba in 1965, and the confrontation with the Catholic hierarchy all contributed to a climate of religious intolerance. Moreover, the emphasis on education and the formation of a highly politicized (that is, Marxist) "new man" clashed with the "opium of the masses" with which orthodox Communists identified religions. At best, religions were seen as relics of a past of ignorance and exploitation that the revolution had set out to destroy. Even after the gradual rapprochement between the revolutionary leaders and the Catholic Church began in 1969, the party still portrayed religions as "a helpful ideological element for the dominant classes in societies where exploitation is common."[92]

These dogmatic perceptions of religion were perhaps accentuated in the case of Santería, which party ideologues conceived of as little more than a grotesque collection of primitive rites. The state-church conflict of 1961–62 had been characterized by criticism of the Catholic Church as a reactionary institution and of priests as counterrevolutionary agents. Attacks on Christian dogma had not been a dominant theme. Judging by official publications, however, the perceptions of party officials about Afro-Cuban religions were seriously prejudiced and reproduced, in fact, many of the stereotypes that had identified these religions with witchcraft in the past.[93] As *El Militante Comunista* put it in 1968, "Santería is a coarse mix of mythological elements from various African regions. . . . Its practitioners pride themselves on their knowledge of the virtues of plants, which is more primitive, for instance, than that of medieval alchemists. . . . A religion is primitive when it has not even created abstractions. . . . To us [their practices] turn our stomachs, but for a primitive mentality they have a logic." Quoting the racist tract of Rafael Roche Monteagudo, originally published in 1908, the unnamed author of this article asserted that Santería was "ridiculous," that its *orishas* (deities) had a "monstrous and repulsive appearance," and that practitioners spent their lives dancing and looking at shells. These beliefs, the author continued, had to be "fought against" in school textbooks as harmful and antiscientific "nonsense." "It is undeniable," the article concluded, "that these remnants of the past make people unhappy and do not contribute at all to the construction of socialism."[94]

This was not an isolated piece. Santería was depicted in similar terms in other publications geared toward the political education of the population. A documentary devoted to Santería and released by the ICAIC in 1964 was entitled *Superstition*. An anonymous article published in the section "Ideologi-

cal Work" of *Trabajo Político* referred to Santería as "obscurantism," a "primitive" belief from which practitioners had to be "liberated." Although it had "folkloric value," Santería was said to clash with "the age in which we live and with the type of society and of man that is being created in our *patria*." Thus Afro-Cuban religions were represented not only as a remnant of the past from which ignorant practitioners had to be freed but also as a cultural form antagonistic to the new society and the new citizen under construction. Believers were viewed as potential social deviants, if not downright antisocial, whose behavior was characterized by drunkenness, vagrancy, and a concern for their religious community rather than for socialist society as a whole.[95]

No group exemplifies these perceptions better than the Abakuá societies. Members of these societies were considered to be dangerous to society just by belonging to the group. "It is a fact," a police journal reported on the Abakuás, "that many of the members display a high level of social dangerousness and a predisposition to commit crimes." Another study characterized members of the group as selfish and antisocial because of their "relentless individualism." The "sect" attracted the "worst elements" of society and had become a refuge for "bandits, counterrevolutionaries, and thieves." The Abakuás were also criticized for not accepting women in the societies, a restriction said to be common among "all primitive peoples."[96]

Critics blamed prerevolutionary society for the ignorance of practitioners of Afro-Cuban religions. As a result, they were to a degree exonerated from their faults. But ignorance, "low cultural level," and religious obscurantism were deemed factors contributing to antisocial conduct, thus the subject of special attention from state organs charged with the prevention and repression of criminal activities. Although the revolutionary government did not repress the observance of Afro-Cuban religions in a systematic way, it tried to limit their growth, imposed limitations on their practice, and associated them with crimes and counterrevolutionary forms of behavior. Whether they were considered ignorant or antisocial, religious practitioners were depicted by party officials as inferior members of society in need of uplifting and enlightenment. The environment was repressive enough for practitioners to hide the colors of their saints in ways that were not obvious to authorities, work colleagues, and society at large.[97]

Practitioners were not prosecuted because of their beliefs. Yet Afro-Cuban religions were invoked in criminal cases as predictors of social dangerousness and linked directly to a culture of criminality.[98] In a 1966 murder case, for instance, the twenty-one-year-old accused, a member of an Abakuá society, was described as someone who lived in a circle of "gangsters, criminals, and killers." The cause of the killing was not known, but the court inferred that it was due to conflicts between rival Abakuá *potencias*. In another 1966 murder case, the accused was characterized as "a youth who, due to his low cultural level and his links to antisocial elements, has become a true psychopath, that is, an individual who tends to break all the norms of civilized society, the law, and morality. . . . He is a member of the sect of '*ñáñigos* or *abakuás*,' which in its current form . . . constitutes nothing else but an association of criminals."

Likewise, when a member of the Sociedad Hijos de Sarabanda Corta Lima—a society of *palo* followers, an Afro-Cuban religion of Bantu origin—was tried for murder, the crime was linked to his membership in the group of *paleros*. According to the court, "[G]iven his religious affiliation, characterized by machismo and a false concept of manliness, he [the accused] killed his enemy." In turn, the same court was puzzled when hearing the case of a young man who had fired a shot at someone, because the accused had decided to be initiated as a *ñáñigo* despite having a "high cultural level" and coming from a "decent and morally adjusted household."

Given the state's pejorative perceptions of Afro-Cuban religions, it is not surprising that some policies were aimed directly at discouraging, and occasionally even preventing, the conducting of religious ceremonies.[99] In the mid-1960s, a measure was passed prohibiting initiation ceremonies of Santería, although it was revoked later. Also, during this period several religious associations requested official cancellation from the registry of the Ministry of the Interior. They usually alleged loss of membership and incapacity to fulfill legal requirements as reasons for dissolution.[100] Authorities saw this as a natural process—a function of generational change and a consequence of the construction of socialism. But it seems reasonable to assume that the negative social environment, born out of official condemnation, also played a role. Whereas religious associations could be an easy target for monitoring and repression, individual practitioners were not. Loss of membership and requests for cancellation might well have been strategies to further hide Santería from the watchful eyes of authorities and society.

Indeed, this seems to have been the strategy followed by the members of the Casino Africano San Antonio from Santa Isabel de las Lajas association in Las Villas.[101] In September 1966, the president of the society wrote to the official in charge of the registry of associations in the region requesting cancellation. No explanation was offered. Casino Africano, which had been founded in 1913, had only twenty-six active members by December 1965: sixteen men who paid 20 cents per month and ten women who paid 10 cents

per month. Its annual budget amounted to less than $52. In February 1967 it was officially dissolved, its goods—including a small house—given to the Institute of Housing and other state institutions.

Three years later, however, the former president of the association wrote a letter to Celia Sánchez, personal aide to Fidel Castro, requesting the reopening of the Casino Africano. His letter portrayed a quite different story, claiming that the society had been closed against his will and that something similar had happened to other associations. He addressed Celia, as she was popularly known, as a "comrade of struggle and ideals," for she had allegedly received the *santo* Ochún (Virgen de la Caridad del Cobre) from a notorious Santera (Santería practitioner) from Cruces who was an acquaintance of his. It is unknown whether Celia responded to this letter, but in January 1971, the former president of Casino Africano sought to formally register the association again. In his letter to the authorities, he noted that the purpose of the society was to "perpetuate the memory and respect for [their] ancestors." The new directive vowed to support the "triumphant revolution," asserted that "decency" and "irreproachable behavior" would be observed, and offered to maintain the institution at the "highest possible cultural level."

The local chief of the registry was not moved by all these offerings couched in the rhetoric of revolution. In fact, he was outraged. In his secret report to provincial authorities, he noted that the Casino Africano had been closed at the request of its own members and that no association had been arbitrarily dissolved in the region, as the former president of the society had told Celia Sánchez. But the official himself provided the clues needed to reconcile what appear to be radically different recollections of the same events. When the directives of the Casino Africano requested cancellation in 1966, this official reported, initiation ceremonies "were not being authorized. They also had to pay for stamps and other fees. None of this exists today, quite the contrary. It is since the time that initiations have been authorized that the directives of the society bothered to request registration." He asserted that if the purpose of the society was truly to "maintain the tradition of their ancestors," the members would not have canceled it before. That they could not perform some of their basic functions seems to have played no role in his assessment. The official opposed registration, claiming that this would only encourage "backwardness and ignorance." Whereas authorities perceived the 1966 cancellation as a spontaneous decision, association members deemed it an imposition.

By 1971 these ceremonies had been authorized again, but they required special permission from the local police district. Santeros were interviewed

in advance and asked to identify the participants, the types of rituals to be performed, and the origin of the materials required for ceremonies—many of which could be obtained only on the black market. Authorization was not automatically granted, and attendance of minors was strictly prohibited. "I had to insist for many weeks to get permission for the ceremony," explained a Santera from Pogolotti (Marianao, Havana) who was initiated in 1974. "Finally, the chief of police in the area said that I could do it, but he warned me not to have any minors there—'If I hear that there is a child there I will cancel the whole thing,' he said." Another Santero reported that his family tried to initiate him in 1972, but they could not because "it was prohibited for minors."[102] Even after the accommodation that characterized the government's approach toward religion in the 1970s, there is little doubt that Afro-Cuban religions were being merely tolerated. A mid-1970s movie portrayed Abakuás as groups that generated marginality and "a code of parallel social relations that is the antithesis of social integration." In the early 1980s, epidemiological studies conducted by the Ministry of Health still identified participation in Afro-Cuban religions as "pathological behavior."[103]

The official silence on race ultimately prevented a public discussion about the social functions of Santería along the lines suggested by Cuéllar Vizcaíno, Carbonell, and other Afro-Cuban intellectuals in the early years of the revolution. Along with other religious beliefs, the Afro-Cuban religions were characterized by the ruling Communist Party as opiates for the people. The party's orthodox and conservative language made no explicit reference to race, but terms such as "primitive" and "cultural level" had clear racial implications and were rightly interpreted by the population as veiled references to blackness. Folkloric spectacles were no substitute for a serious reassessment of Santería in which practitioners themselves had the opportunity to vindicate their beliefs as true religions and cultural forms of which all Cubans could be proud. Moreover, even some of these spectacles lost visibility during the late 1960s—the Conjunto Folklórico Nacional, for instance, did not stage any international tours between 1964 and 1970. In sum, the lack of a public debate about race and racism facilitated the survival and reproduction of the very racist stereotypes that the revolutionary leadership claimed to oppose. Historically, a unique opportunity had been lost.

However, efforts to promote the African roots of national culture were not meaningless. They contributed to reinforcing the notion that African elements were central to Cubanness and exposed ordinary Cubans of all colors to a different vision of themselves and their nation. The creation of the "Sábados de la Rumba" by the CFN, for instance, brought African cultural

elements to the heart of what had traditionally been a white middle-class neighborhood: Vedado.[104] At the same time, the work of painters such as Manuel Mendive celebrated the African origins of the nation.[105] A few young writers explored the complexities of race, exposed embedded racist myths, and found pride in blackness.[106]

The image of a mixed nation with African roots also became an identity for export and allowed the government to identify itself with the struggle of peoples of color worldwide. Through this identification, race became a major issue in Cuba's foreign policy.

INTERNATIONALIZING BLACKNESS

The importance of this identification with other nonwhite peoples increased as tensions between the governments of Cuba and the United States escalated. In its search for allies within and outside the United States, the issue of race became a central pillar of Cuba's international policy. Cuban authorities soon realized that African Americans could be a valuable ally and that racism was a formidable political weapon to counteract the negative campaign waged by the U.S. mainstream press against the revolutionary government. As early as February 1959, Fidel Castro responded to negative reports in the U.S. media concerning the killing of Batista's war criminals by reminding the U.S. government about its own race problems. Likewise, when the U.S. government voiced concern and opposition to agrarian reform, the Cuban press and leaders responded that the United States should first address its own domestic social problems, such as racial discrimination.[107]

Seeking the support of black Americans, in 1959 and 1960 the Cuban government organized, and in some cases even financed, the visits of African American intellectuals and public figures so they could see the revolution's accomplishments firsthand. Representatives of the black press were included among the 150 journalists that Havana invited in January 1959 as part of "Operation Truth," which sought to counteract negative publicity in the United States and elsewhere. The government also invited a group of congressmen, but only two—one of whom was Adam Clayton Powell, a representative from Harlem—accepted.[108]

More government-sponsored tours followed. In late 1959, the Cuban Tourist Commission invited a group of African Americans to visit the island during Christmas and paid all expenses. Among other activities, they were to attend a banquet with Fidel Castro and President Osvaldo Dorticós. Participants included heavyweight boxing champion Joe Louis and the editors and publishers of several major black newspapers. The message that the Tourist Commission wished to send was quite explicit: revolutionary Cuba welcomed African American tourism.[109] Another delegation, also financed by the Cuban government, was invited for the July 26 festivities in 1960. This group included authors Julian Mayfield, John Henrik Clarke, and LeRoi Jones and activist Robert F. Williams, who was on his second trip to see the Cuban "social miracle."[110]

To no small degree, the Cuban government's campaign was successful. Sympathetic accounts of the revolution and its leader flooded the African American press in the early months of 1959 and beyond.[111] Black journalists cheered the revolution's efforts to eliminate racism and reported Fidel Castro's public statements against racial discrimination. In the process, they could not avoid making comparisons with the situation in the United States, where white-supremacist groups were officially tolerated.

The initial campaign was fairly successful because the interests of Cuban authorities coincided with those of many African Americans in several ways. The revolution triumphed at a time when the civil rights movement in the United States had achieved some successes, but its most difficult battles still laid ahead. The Cuban ability to dismantle segregation and the most visible manifestations of racism in such a short period of time gave both revolutionary authorities and African Americans the opportunity to question the degree of determination of the U.S. government to eliminate racism at home and the alleged superiority of American democracy. Just as Castro challenged the moral authority of the United States to judge the actions of his government, African American activists questioned the U.S. concern for Cuban war criminals when blacks' rights were being violated daily at home. "The important lesson in the Cuban experience," Mayfield wrote in 1960, "is that great social change need not wait on the patient education of white supremacists. . . . Surely a powerful and secure government like that of the United States could, if it chose, achieve remarkable results. If the democratic press, of which we boast, needs several generations to achieve what the Cubans have done in 18 months, then there is something wrong with it."[112]

Castro's most conspicuous overture toward black America took place during his visit to the United Nations in October 1960. Offended by the way the Cuban delegation had been treated in a midtown-Manhattan hotel, Castro decided to stay in the Theresa Hotel in Harlem—a move that he himself characterized as "a big lesson to people who practice discrimination." Interviewed by the *Afro-American*, Castro asserted that in Harlem he felt like he was in his own country, adding that the Cuban delegation had been discriminated against in midtown Manhattan. Not invited to a luncheon organized

by President Dwight Eisenhower in the lavish Park Avenue Waldorf Astoria Hotel, Castro declared that he was "honored to lunch with the poor and humble people of Harlem."[113] Even those African Americans who did not sympathize with revolutionary Cuba appreciated the gesture, for, as Mayfield stated, "anybody so completely rejected by white America must have some good points."[114]

Cuba's initial gestures toward African Americans were driven by the need to counteract the negative publicity that revolutionary policies were getting from the mainstream media and politicians in the United States. This need was less evident after January 1961, when the United States broke off diplomatic relations with the Cuban government. Rather than appealing to all African Americans, after 1961 Cuban authorities shifted their emphasis toward the most radical sectors and activists within the black liberation movement—people who in many cases were at the fringes of the civil rights movement. The Cuban government identified these groups as allies who were fighting imperialism from within. These groups and activists, in turn, supported revolutionary Cuba because they shared a common enemy. As a 1961 "Declaration of Conscience by Afro-Americans" signed by a large number of intellectuals and political activists involved with the Fair Play for Cuba Committee stated, the enemies of the Cuban revolution were African Americans' own enemies: "[T]he Jim Crow bosses of this land where we are still denied our rights. The Cubans are our friends, the enemies of our enemies."[115]

One of the signers of this declaration was Robert F. Williams, who, as Van Gosse rightly asserts, "made the most telling connection between the rising anger of African-Americans and the island revolution."[116] Williams had become notorious for advocating blacks' "self-defense" in Monroe, North Carolina. The head of the local branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, he had been criticized by his own organization for his support of the Cuban revolution and his involvement in the Fair Play for Cuba Committee. Indeed, Williams traveled several times to Cuba during 1959 and 1960, where he claimed to have "experienced [his] first freedom as a human being." When Castro went to Harlem during his visit to the United Nations, Williams sent him a public invitation to visit North Carolina, calling him "the greatest humanitarian leader of our time."[117]

Amid growing racial violence in Monroe and facing charges of kidnapping, Williams left the United States and sought political asylum in Cuba. He lived there until 1966, continued to publish his newsletter, *The Crusader*, and began broadcasting Radio Free Dixie from Havana. Both the newsletter and

the radio broadcast underscored the differences between "racism-free" Cuba and racist America. In the words of U.S. authorities, Radio Free Dixie called "upon American Negroes to engage in force and violence against the American Government." A 1965 police journal charged that, through Williams, the Cuban government was preparing a black revolt in the United States. "Castro arming Southern Negroes," reported the *Police Gazette*.[118]

Williams was only the first radical African American activist to be given sanctuary in revolutionary Cuba. Others would soon follow. In 1968, one of the founding members of the Black Panther Party, Eldridge Cleaver, arrived on the island, remaining in hiding for several months. A few months later another high-ranking member of the party and a former bodyguard of Cleaver, William Lee Brent, hijacked a plane from Oakland, California, to Havana. The Panthers' leader, Huey Newton, also went to Cuba in 1973. A leading member of the Black Liberation Army, Assata Shakur, staged a spectacular escape from jail in 1979 and went to Cuba, where she still lived in the mid-1990s.[119]

Radical African American activists found not only refuge in the island but also diplomatic, political, and military support. According to Cleaver, there was even talk of opening a permanent training unit for black militants in Cuba.[120] As with the initial campaign to gain African Americans' support, this cooperation was based on common interests and judgments concerning the nature of racism and the struggle for its elimination. The Cuban authorities wanted to embarrass the U.S. government internationally and promote social conflicts at home. So did these African American militants. Castro believed that capitalism engendered racism; they agreed. Castro had demonstrated that social change was possible through revolutionary violence. Groups such as the Black Panther Party had appropriated the rhetoric and substance of this lesson. "We must destroy both racism and capitalism," Newton advocated in 1968. "It is useless to talk about becoming free unless you talk about engaging in armed struggle against racism and capitalism and imperialism in North America," the minister of education of the Panthers asserted. The Cubans considered the pacifist civil rights movement a maneuver to "confuse and deter the legitimate struggle of the black North American people." The Panthers agreed, describing pacifist activists as "begging-oriented" and modern exponents of the traditionally servile "house negro."[121]

There was agreement on yet another important point. African Americans' liberation struggle was part of a larger, international confrontation between colonial or neocolonial peoples and white imperialism. As Williams asserted in a 1962 broadcast of Radio Free Dixie, "[W]e are not going to be free until

we join the rising tide of humanity in South America, Asia, and Africa in the final assault against the racist, imperialist, and fascist forces of the U.S.A." African American militants argued that blacks constituted "an oppressed nation" that had "essentially the same relationship to American capitalism as other colonials and semi-colonials have to Western capitalism."[122] Stokely Carmichael endorsed this thesis in his speech to the first conference of the Organization of Latin American Solidarity (OLAS) in Havana in 1967: "We greet you as comrades because it becomes increasingly clear to us each day that we share with you a common struggle; we have a common enemy. Our enemy is white Western imperialist society. . . . Our people are a colony within the United States; you are colonies outside the United States." Carmichael declared that African Americans were training urban guerrilla groups inspired by the Cuban revolution and Che Guevara. He was treated as an honored guest by the Cuban government.[123]

It is hardly surprising that African American radicals would be inspired by Cuba's example. Besides the fact that Cuba had undertaken a campaign against racism at home, the revolution had made Africa a central concern of its foreign policy. From the visit of Guinea's president Sékou Touré to Cuba in 1960, to Che Guevara's fighting in the Congo in 1965, to Castro's own visit to Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Algeria in 1972, Cuba had supported the anticolonial struggle in Africa since the 1960s. Thus, for the African American militants, revolutionary Cuba was not only a safe haven but also a source of ideological legitimacy and one of their most important international platforms.[124]

Yet agreements between the Cuban government and the African American militants were neither universal nor unproblematic. This is because Cuba's international campaign of solidarity with oppressed black peoples around the world was staged for a domestic audience, as figure 7.2 shows. Cuba could take a leading role in the worldwide struggle against racism because it had allegedly eliminated racial discrimination at home. The social subordination of African Americans and the violence that characterized the process of desegregation in 1960s America were systematically announced to the Cuban population through the government-controlled media. Cubans were reminded, on almost at a daily basis, that they lived in a superior society.[125]

Although radical African American militants did not dispute the superiority of Cuba's revolutionary society, their insertion into the national political scene was fraught with difficulties. As representatives of "black power," these militants were in many cases adamant about the need for blacks to mobilize separately—a notion that contradicted the integrationism of the

FIGURE 7.2. *"We Want Castro!" This cartoon was published during Fidel Castro's visit to Harlem in 1960. From* Noticias de Hoy, *September 21, 1960. (Biblioteca Nacional "José Martí")*

Cuban revolution. Moreover, African American militants used the example of the revolution in Cuba to claim that gradualist approaches were a white maneuver to perpetuate racism, but in several areas the Cuban government itself had endorsed a gradual, nonconfrontational approach when dealing with the race question.

Thus many of these African American militants grew increasingly impatient with and critical of the Cuban government and its antidiscrimination agenda. Williams left the island in 1966 and went to China, where he sent a public letter to Castro denouncing the lack of cooperation of Cuban officials

concerning his revolutionary activities in Havana. Cleaver stayed in Cuba for just a few months, becoming an outspoken critic of the revolution thereafter. Carmichael had been given red-carpet treatment by Havana, but he claimed subsequently that the Cuban example was irrelevant to the cause of black liberation because of its emphasis on cross-racial class struggle. Less famous African Americans who came to experience life in Cuba shared these misgivings and criticisms.[126]

Contradictions also emerged because some of the internal consequences of Cuban solidarity with black America were neither anticipated nor desirable to the authorities. Some of the African American leaders who visited or lived in Cuba—Williams is a prime example—spoke frequently at workers' rallies and other public meetings across the island. Others, such as Carmichael, were publicized and treated as heroes. Either way they reached ordinary Cubans with messages that were not always acceptable to the authorities because their purpose, struggles, and doctrines were defined in racial terms. Carmichael, for instance, spoke about racial oppression not only as a form of economic exploitation—the position advanced by the Cuban government—but also as a form of cultural exploitation. In his speech to the OLAS conference in Havana, he asserted: "Black Power not only addresses itself to exploitation, but to the problem of cultural integrity."[127]

At a time when the Communist Party and Cuban authorities were discouraging, if not overtly repressing, Afro-Cuban cultural expressions such as Santería, these statements had clear implications for Cuban society. Visiting Cuba in 1967, Sutherland reported that Carmichael's visit had a significant impact among Afro-Cubans, who "seemed to be watching and listening with particular intensity." Some Afro-Cubans adopted at least some of the external symbols that these militants displayed—such as the Afro hairstyle—and perhaps part of the substance of their message.[128] In 1967, a group of young Afro-Cuban intellectuals attempted to draft a paper on race and culture in Cuba to be submitted to the World Cultural Congress to be held in Havana in January 1968. Other unconfirmed reports assert that Cuban blacks attempted to articulate some sort of autonomous discourse in various ways, but they always met with official resistance.[129]

In the long term, however, Cuba's support for the African American struggle and the anticolonial struggle in Africa contributed significantly to the government's project of national integration. At a minimum, Cuban solidarity paved the way for the island's unprecedented participation in African politics in the 1970s and 1980s. Foreign policy may have been used to distract attention from domestic race problems, as Carlos Moore asserts.[130]

But the heavy presence of Africa (and the West Indies in the 1970s and early 1980s) in Cuban life facilitated the ascent of blacks within the state bureaucracy and the armed forces and helped to modify embedded social perceptions about African culture, population, and politics.[131] The massive participation of black and white Cubans in the African wars and civilian missions after 1975 would not have been possible without such changes. Nor is it likely that in the absence of such changes Castro would have been able to proclaim that Cuba was a Latin-African nation, as he did in 1975.[132]

Identification with Africa and its descendants in the diaspora also gave the Cuban government the opportunity to construct a notion of Cubanness that was in stark contrast with that of its archenemy: the exile community in Miami. Whereas the revolution's "true" Cubanness was identified with the poor and blacks, the identity of the so-called worms was portrayed as the quintessence of all the ills the revolution had avowedly eliminated: class exploitation, foreign dependency, and racism. Nowhere were the racial implications of foreign policy clearer than in the conflict with Cuban exiles.

The Cuba that exiles attempted to reconstruct in Miami and other communities in the United States was in many ways the antithesis of the new Cuba that the revolution was attempting to build in the island. It was, to begin with, socially and demographically different. The 1953 Cuban census had reported that blacks and mulattoes made up 27 percent of the total population. Their proportion among U.S. exiles was about 13 percent in the 1960s and 16 percent in the 1970s. The educational and occupation profile of the exile community was also, initially, very different from that of the island population, with an overrepresentation of professionals, entrepreneurs, and white-collar employees. In addition to strident anticommunism, its racial and social composition made Cuban Miami the perfect antithesis to Cuba's revolutionary society.[133]

These contrasts were further magnified by factors over which the Cuban exiles had little control. Whereas revolutionary Cuba prided itself on being a racially harmonious, discrimination-free society, the exiles arrived in a city that in the early 1960s was, for the most part, still segregated.[134] To the racial tensions of the host community, they added a new layer, for many African American residents firmly believed that the Cuban refugees were getting the lion's share of public dollars and being given preferential treatment in employment and other opportunities. As the black weekly *Miami Times* editorialized in 1961, "Negroes are complaining that the Cubans are given preference and in some instances are being replaced by the refugees. While we sympathize with the unfortunate Cubans we feel that charity should begin

at home." Testifying before a Senate committee later that year, the executive director of the Greater Miami Urban League confirmed that there was considerable "resentment and hostility in the Negro community" toward the Cubans, who were pushing blacks out of jobs and accepting employment at "reduced pay rates."[135]

The perception that Cubans have been favored to the detriment of African Americans in Miami has lasted to this day.[136] Together with other factors, this idea fueled the anger that led to racial violence in the city in 1968, 1980, and 1989. Prior to the 1968 riot, for instance, there was discussion in the local black press of whether episodes of violence similar to those happening in other American cities would ever happen in Miami. Resentment toward Cubans was already high due to a strike that they had launched in 1967—"they are not grateful for the opportunity given them by American business," a journalist charged. When a black teacher in Miami warned that those who "planted seeds of hate" between African Americans and Cubans were inciting violence, her remarks provoked a strong reaction. A letter to the editor of the *Miami Times* reflected the anger of the community: "Who is this . . . writer who seems to be so concerned about riots, but not the conditions . . . that cause riots? . . . Who is this Negro . . . who is so much concerned about the economic advancement of Cubans, but fails to comprehend that Negroes as an ethnic group make up the lowest ring of the economic scale in Miami!" What the teacher had dubbed "rumors" concerning allegations that Cubans took blacks' jobs this writer called "facts." He said he did not approve of rioting, but he concluded that blacks in ghettos elsewhere were trying to send a message and that it was time to "start listening." Several months later, a violent riot erupted in the black section of Liberty City in Miami, to which the Cubans responded by arming themselves. In a report issued by a local task force for the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence, the "steady loss of jobs by Negroes to Cubans" was singled out as one of the factors leading to the riot.[137]

The Cuban presence was considered an underlying factor in the riot of 1968, but it was seen as one of the main causes of the May 1980 riot, which erupted again in Liberty City. Although it was the acquittal of several white policemen charged with killing an African American insurance agent that triggered street violence, observers were unanimous in their assessment that resentment over the public help given to the Cuban refugees who were coming by the thousands through the Mariel boatlift had led to the fury of Miami's blacks.[138] While the federal government pledged to welcome the Cuban *marielitos* with open arms, rumors about a slash in funding of food stamps and other social programs circulated in the black sections of Miami. To add insult to injury, although Cuban refugees were welcome, those from Haiti were systematically denied asylum and the benefits associated with such status.[139]

The 1980 riot could not have come at a better time for Cuban authorities, who were deeply embarrassed by the spectacle of tens of thousands of Cubans leaving the island. In contrast to previous migration waves, that of Mariel reflected the social and demographic composition of the general population. Many came from poorer sectors of the population; blacks and mulattoes were still grossly underrepresented, but their proportion was significantly higher than among previous exiles. Indeed, the *marielitos*' sociodemographic composition threatened to undermine the representation of Miami as the social, racial, and political antithesis of revolutionary Cuba. Havana responded by depicting them as *escoria*, the scum of Cuba's socialism. Revolutionary Cuba could not afford to have a nonwhite, nonelitist Miami.[140]

The 1980 riot, in turn, allowed Cuban authorities the opportunity to remind the population about the racist nature of U.S. society. The official press referred to Miami as a "racial hell in capitalist paradise" and grimly depicted the fate of the *marielitos*. It was emphasized, for instance, that the Ku Klux Klan had sent an airplane to fly over the refugee camps with a banner that read: "The KKK is here." According to the Cuban press, the *marielitos* were competing with native blacks for low-paying, menial jobs and had joined the city's underworld of unemployment, drug addiction, and homelessness. The popular weekly *Bohemia* published a photograph of a black handcuffed *marielito* who looked as scared "as if he were looking at the white robes of a Klansman." The Cuban press also emphasized that many *marielitos* had ended up in U.S. jails, where they had no legal guarantees, reinforcing the image of the United States as a society dominated by racism and the rejection of the poor.[141]

In fact, the new immigrants were rejected even by the Cuban-American community.[142] Their social composition represented a threat not just to the revolution's representation of Miami. It also threatened the community's image as "the cream of the crop" of Cuban society. For once, Cuban authorities and their enemies agreed: these low-class, dark immigrants were indeed scum and lumpen. Thus, the resettlement and assimilation of Afro-Cuban *marielitos* were particularly difficult. Not only did they lack relatives in the community, but also they were black. At the Fort Indiana Gap camp in Pennsylvania, for instance, the proportion of blacks among residents increased from 14 percent in May 1980 to 50 percent three months later. An

official of a resettlement agency said that churches were willing to sponsor Cuban refugees but that they preferred nuclear families and "want them white."[143]

The 1980 riot helped to restore the Cuban representation of Miami as a "racist hell," and Cuban-American politics through the 1980s reinforced the notion that the community was passionately racist. Nothing helped to consolidate this image more than Cuba's Africa policy. While Cuban troops were fighting the invasion of the South African army and its Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) allies in Angola, leaders of the right-wing Cuban American National Foundation (CANF) were lobbying in support of Jonas Savimbi, the UNITA leader. The fact that the congressional black caucus, the TransAfrica organizations, and other influential African American voices were critical of Savimbi did not seem to affect the CANF's decision. In 1988, the chairman of the organization announced that he would travel to Angola to meet Savimbi and to encourage Cuban soldiers to defect. While Cuba offered massive medical assistance to Angola and other African countries, a team of Cuban-American physicians offered their services to Savimbi's UNITA. Some Cuban-Americans even criticized the negotiations to withdraw Cuban troops from Angola, claiming that this would work to the benefit of its Marxist regime, for South African troops would be "precluded from re-entering Angolan territory."[144]

The association between the exiles and apartheid was further reinforced when they opposed Nelson Mandela's visit to Miami in June 1990. Mandela had praised Cuba for its support in the struggle against apartheid and for its human rights record. Disregarding the feelings of other sectors of the community, the city council of Miami yielded to Cuban-American pressure and refused to welcome Mandela. African Americans deemed this an insult and retaliated with a boycott against holding conventions in the city until officials apologized. When Mandela visited Havana in July 1991, the ideological split between the African American and Cuban communities of Miami grew even wider. Whereas the former welcomed Mandela's warm reception in Havana as something "wonderful," Cuban-Americans called Mandela a "communist" who had turned a deaf ear to the denunciations of human rights abuses in the island while praising Cuba for its "unparalleled" fight against racism. The exiles' support for racism and apartheid was denounced by Mandela himself: "Who are they [Cuban-Americans] to call for the observance of human rights in Cuba? They kept quiet for 42 years when human rights were being attacked in South Africa. . . . [They] have supported the apartheid regime for the last 40 years."[145]

Thus, it has not been particularly difficult for the Cuban authorities and media to propagate the image of a racially troubled Miami and of Cuban-Americans as bastions of racism. As *Granma*, the official newspaper of the Cuban Communist Party, asserted in 1994 in reference to the exiles, "[T]hey work as the empire's lackeys, declaring a Noble Peace Prize winner like Nelson Mandela persona non grata, burning Latin American flags or acting as a containing wall against Miami Haitians or Afro-Americans."[146]

The Cuban media has connected racism, Miami, and counterrevolution even when this connection was not obvious. The 1992 riot in Los Angeles is a good example. An editorial published by *Granma* asked whether this was the same government that was trying to incriminate Cuba in the international community because of its human rights record, whether this was the American "paradise" to which some wanted to emigrate. While President George Bush was visiting Miami and declaring that the Cuban revolution would fall, the editorial continued, the social explosion was about to start in the United States. The connection between racial violence, U.S. hostility toward Cuba, and Miami was therefore explicitly made. A *Christian Science Monitor* journalist who was visiting Havana reported that Afro-Cubans reacted in "horror" as the government "played the images of the Los Angeles riots over and over again on Cuban television."[147]

Cuba's identification with Africa and African Americans helped the revolutionary government advance its domestic agenda of national integration even if questions of race were not publicly debated after the early 1960s. Its cultural and foreign policies helped to emphasize the centrality of Africa in the formation of *cubanidad* without risking racial divisions internally. Meanwhile, authorities believed that remaining racial differences would automatically disappear through implementation of the revolution's egalitarian policies. This, in turn, would lead to the creation of a new social consciousness, one in which the very notion of race would be absent. By 1981, more than twenty years after the triumph of the revolution, it became possible to measure the impact of Cuban socialism on racial inequality and to ascertain how successful the revolution's class-based approach had been in eliminating racial differences.

RACIAL INEQUALITY: TWENTY YEARS LATER

For the first time since 1959, the Cuban census in 1981 released information according to race. The 1970 census had included this variable, but no racial figures were compiled in the published version. Race was also absent in serial demographic publications.

According to the census, in which respondents had the opportunity to identify their own race among four discrete categories—"white," "black," "mestizo," and "Asian"—by 1981 the Cuban population was 66 percent white, 12 percent black, and 22 percent mestizo (Asians represented only 0.1 percent of the total). The white proportion had declined significantly compared to 1953 (73 percent) and was the lowest in twentieth-century Cuba—not a surprising result, given that the vast majority of emigrants since the 1960s had been white. Contrary to what might be expected, however, the proportion of blacks was similar to that reported in the census of 1953. It was the percentage of mestizos that had increased significantly, from 14.5 percent in 1953 to 22 percent in 1981.

Scholars and journalists have questioned the accuracy of these figures, arguing that the proportion of nonwhites in the total population "must" have been much higher than 34 percent. Some even suggest that the census was a deliberate attempt to whiten the country.[148] Their criticism, however, implies that there is a true, immutable blackness, not just a social representation of it. This is a valid argument only if one assumes that by 1981 racial categories were defined along lines similar to those prevalent in 1953—that is, that no change had occurred in the social definitions of black, white, or mestizo. This is not likely to be the case.

The mulattoization of the Cuban population might be the result of various factors not necessarily related to the "real" degree of "race miscegenation" in the country. It could be the result of intermarriage, which anecdotal references indicate increased significantly after 1959.[149] It could also reflect a broader acceptance of the notion that Cuba is a mixed, mestizo nation or a process of upward mobility. Individuals who, due to their low status, would have been considered "negros" in the past saw themselves as mestizos or mulattoes in 1981. If this is the case—and there is compelling evidence in this direction—the racial composition of the population as reported by the census could reflect both the changes that took place since 1959 (mobility) and the resilience of the past, as indicated by the fact that such mobility was still identified with whitening. Indeed, as will be discussed to some extent in the next chapter, racial ideologies that associate whiteness with education, beauty, and other socially positive traits are quite prevalent in contemporary Cuba. The aphorism "to be white is a profession" summarizes these perceptions, which lead to popular concerns with "improving the race" (*adelantar la raza*).[150] Since "race" is defined by a number of social and cultural factors, in addition to phenotypical features, the growing proportion of mulattoes in the population is probably a reflection of the educational and occupational mobility experienced by younger generations of Afro-Cubans.

Other census results point to this coexistence of postrevolutionary change and prerevolutionary social realities. However, the transformations are so vast that they can only be described as impressive. By the early 1980s, Cuban society had made remarkable progress in the reduction of racial inequality in a number of crucial areas, including education, health care, and employment. Racial inequality persisted in some areas, but the trend was unequivocally toward equality.

The revolution's impact on racial equality and the singularity of the Cuban case can be understood better in comparative perspective. For instance, by 1981, life expectancy in Cuba was not only close to that of developed countries in absolute numbers but was almost equivalent for blacks and whites. Although a white/nonwhite gap of one year still existed, it was significantly lower than the gap in Brazil (6.7 years) or the United States (6.3 years). Life expectancy reflects broad social conditions, including access to nutrition, health care, maternal care, and education, and thus these differences are significant.[151]

This pattern held for educational achievement as well. Illiteracy was basically eliminated in the island in the early 1960s, but by 1981 inequality in education had disappeared even at the university level. The proportion of blacks and mulattoes who had graduated from high school was in fact higher than the proportion of whites, an indication that blacks had made good use of the educational opportunities created by the revolutionary government. Conversely, in the United States and Brazil, large differences according to race remained in education (see table 7.1).

The expansion and socialization of education eventually influenced the racial composition of the occupational structure. As table 7.2 shows, the index of dissimilarity (a summary measure of inequality) in the Cuban labor market in the early 1980s was three to four times lower than in the United States or Brazil. The proportion of blacks and mulattoes employed in the professions (one-fifth of the labor force) was virtually identical to that of whites in the island, whereas in Brazil it was three times lower. Of workers employed in the Cuban medical sector, 31 percent were black or mulatto, a proportion only slightly lower than blacks and mulattoes' share of the population (34 percent, according to the 1981 census).

But the distribution of the racial groups in the different occupations was still unequal. Although Afro-Cubans were not greatly overrepresented in

TABLE 7.1. Percentage of Population Aged 25 or Over Having Completed High School or College, by Race, Brazil, Cuba, and United States, 1980s

Country	Whites	Blacks	Mulattoes	Differences W/B	Differences W/M
Brazil (1987)					
High school	13.9	5.3	8.0	8.6	5.9
College	9.2	1.0	2.0	8.2	7.2
Cuba (1981)					
High school	9.9	11.2	9.6	−1.3	0.3
College	4.4	3.5	3.2	0.9	1.2
United States (1987)					
High school	56.4	52.8	—	3.6	—
College	20.5	10.7	—	9.8	—

Sources: Cuba, *Censo 1981. República de Cuba*, 16:2, 67–70; Andrews, "Racial Inequality in Brazil and the United States."
Note: W: whites; B: blacks; M: mulattoes.

TABLE 7.2. Percentage Distribution, Civilian Labor Force, by Race, Brazil, Cuba, and United States, 1980s

	Brazil			Cuba			United States	
Category	W	B	M	W	B	M	W	B
Professions	9.0	2.5	3.8	22.2	22.1	22.9	15.5	11.2
Administration	16.7	4.2	6.7	12.8	7.1	8.7	27.9	22.3
Sales	9.0	4.0	6.5	6.4	6.9	6.5	10.5	5.0
Nonagricultural manual labor	26.0	27.9	25.6	23.1	29.2	24.2	31.7	37.1
Service	10.7	22.6	13.0	7.3	9.4	8.6	11.4	22.3
Agriculture	22.7	31.5	38.6	18.2	12.9	18.3	2.8	2.0
Other/unknown	6.0	7.2	5.8	10.0	12.4	10.8	0.0	0.1
Index of dissimilarity	—	23.9	18.3	—	11.1	4.1	—	16.3

Sources: Cuba, *Censo 1981. La población de Cuba*, 117–18; Andrews, "Racial Inequality in Brazil and the United States," 249–50.
Note: W: whites; B: blacks; M: mulattoes.

blue-collar jobs (35 percent), their proportion in some sectors, such as construction (41 percent), was larger than their population share. Likewise, whereas 13 percent of whites worked in managerial positions, the proportion of blacks (7 percent) and mulattoes (9 percent) was significantly lower. Even taking these qualifications into account, however, it is safe to state that the incidence of racism in the Cuban labor market was limited, particularly against mulattoes. Furthermore, since these figures are not age-specific, at least part of the remaining differences could be attributed to historical factors and past discrimination.

Progress was also obvious in the area of black and mulatto representation in leadership positions—an area in which the Cuban government has been frequently criticized. Since the early years of the revolution, Afro-Cuban intellectuals of different ideological persuasions insisted on the need to open, once and for all, leadership positions to blacks and mulattoes. As Moore asserted in 1964, "The right to govern, not the right to be governed, this is the problem. . . . After six years of 'Revolution,' including four of 'socialism,' the government . . . does not have a single black member in its cabinet!"[152] Moore's complaint was not without foundation. In fact, at least in the upper

echelons of the government and the PCC, changes in the racial composition of the leadership were extremely slow. Blacks and mulattoes represented only 9 percent of the Central Committee of the PCC elected in 1965, an estimated 7 percent in 1975, and about 12 percent in 1980. Their proportion was not higher in the provincial executive bureaus: 8 percent in 1974.[153]

Nonwhites were much better represented in other positions of command. Following prerevolutionary trends, more than one-third of the members of the National Executive Committee of the CTC were black or mulatto in 1974. Among delegates to the Municipal Assemblies of Popular Power Organs in 1976, their proportion amounted to 28 percent. According to the 1981 census, 24 percent of those classified as "dirigentes" (people in leadership positions of various kinds) were either black or mulatto. Six years later the percentage of nonwhites in management positions had increased slightly. According to a census conducted in 1986 to determine the social composition of the leadership at the national, provincial, and municipal levels, blacks and mulattoes represented 27 percent of the total (table 7.3).[154]

TABLE 7.3. Percentage Distribution, Managers in Government Establishments (*Dirigentes de Establecimientos*), by Race, 1987

Category	Whites	Blacks	Mulattoes
Municipal	71.9	12.1	16.0
Provincial	73.8	10.9	15.3
National	72.7	12.7	14.6
Total	72.5	12.1	15.4
Percent in adult population	66.1	12.0	21.9
Index of representation	110	101	70

Source: Cuba, *Censo nacional de cuadros del estado*, 5:126–29.

That a census of the social composition of the leadership was conducted is itself an expression of the Cuban government's attention to questions of representation. Indeed, in the third congress of the PCC in 1986, Castro elaborated at length about the need to increase the number of women, youth, and blacks and mestizos in the highest echelons of the PCC. In his closing speech to the congress, Castro broke the long-standing official silence on race: "The hypocritical societies that practice racial discrimination are afraid to talk about this, but revolutionary societies are not. . . . If you do not feel embarrassed to say white or blond, why do you feel embarrassed to say black, or mulatto, or mestizo? Why? Especially in this country, where we are children of mixed blood. This is our greatest source of pride, because it is not a bad mixture, it is an excellent mixture. Ask imperialism whether or not this is true."

Castro's public admission that racism and discrimination had "an effect" that was "still" part of Cuban society was congruent with the dominant discourse that these were remnants of the past, but the official recognition of their existence was certainly new. In his speech, Castro himself gave some clues as to why these realities were being acknowledged. He spoke of the "hundreds of thousands" of blacks and mulattoes who had graduated from technological schools and universities, "outstanding" people who had to be represented in the leadership of society. The revolution's own success had created groups and tensions that ultimately undermined the official silence on race. "The correction of historic injustice cannot be left to spontaneity," Castro asserted. "It is not enough to establish laws on equality and expect total equality. It has to be promoted in mass organizations, in party youth. . . . We cannot expect women, blacks, mixed-race people to be promoted spontaneously. . . . We need to straighten out what history has twisted." In response, the third congress of the party elected a Central Committee in which blacks and mulattoes represented 28 percent of the total, a twofold increase since 1980.[155]

History's "twists" were evident in other ways. Racial inequality had been greatly reduced in areas in which government performance had been successful, such as health care, education, and employment. But in areas of limited government success, racial inequality remained much wider. For instance, despite efforts to the contrary, a strong correlation between race, the regional distribution of the population, and the quality of the housing stock persisted through the 1980s. A traditional geography of race and poverty had not been dismantled, largely because of the government's failure to provide adequate housing to all the population.[156] No neighborhood was racially exclusive—this was true, for the most part, in prerevolutionary Cuba also—but in the most dilapidated areas of the big cities, the proportion of blacks and mulattoes was greater than that of whites.

In Havana, the municipalities of Habana Vieja and Centro Habana exemplify well the persistence of these residential patterns. Blacks and mulattoes represented 36 percent of the city's population in 1981, but they amounted to 44 and 47 percent, respectively, of the residents of the aforementioned municipalities. Whereas 13 percent of city residents lived in tenement houses, in Habana Vieja and Centro Habana the proportion of tenement dwellers was three to four times higher. Only 14 percent of the city's population lived in these municipalities, yet they contained 47 percent of the houses in the city with structural damages. The proportion of houses in which sanitary services were collectively used was also three to four times higher in Habana Vieja (36 percent) and Centro Habana (24 percent) than in Havana as a whole (9 percent). Households in these municipalities also ranked consistently lower than the provincial average in the availability of appliances.[157]

These residential areas, characterized by high densities of nonwhites and a physically deteriorated environment, were also perceived as sites of criminal activities. According to police authorities, the geography of crime remained tied to race and poverty.[158] Of the areas officially classified by the Policía Nacional Revolucionaria (National Revolutionary Police) to be *focos delictivos* (criminal centers) in Havana in 1987, 31 percent were located in the three municipalities with the highest proportions of blacks and mulattoes in the city: Habana Vieja, Centro Habana, and Marianao (which comprised only 20

percent of the city's total population). These *focos* included some shantytowns, such as El Palo, Isla de Simba, Las Yaguas, and Isla del Polvo in Marianao, or tenement houses, such as Mercaderes 111 in Habana Vieja and Romeo y Julieta in Centro Habana. In many cases they were communities that had been rebuilt in the early years of the revolution to replace previous shantytowns.[159] Yet a study commissioned by the attorney general of Cuba in 1987 found that, in more than 70 percent of cases, the designation of an area as a *foco* did not reflect rates of crime higher than the city's average. It was police perceptions that turned these heavily black, low-income areas into *focos delictivos*. Crime rates were actually higher in neighborhoods considered "better" by police authorities.[160]

The persistence of racial inequality in the criminal system and the association between race and crime remained obvious in other ways. According to a Ministry of the Interior report, the yearly average number of criminal acts between 1976–80 and 1981–85 increased nationally by 11 percent. The growth in some of the provinces with a large black and mulatto population was significantly higher: 57 percent in Granma, 29 percent in Santiago de Cuba, and 50 percent in Guantánamo. In the same period, the yearly national average number of murders increased by 46 percent, from 216 in 1976–80 to 315 in 1981–85. The increase in the three provinces mentioned above amounted to 70 percent.[161]

Impressionistic reports also assert that blacks and mulattoes were overrepresented in the prison population. According to an organization of political prisoners in the Combinado del Este prison, in the late 1980s, eight out of every ten prisoners were black. This, they concluded, destroyed "the myth proclaimed by the Cuban revolution that it has established racial equality." A U.N. commission that visited two Cuban prisons in 1988 reported that "a large number of prisoners were black," a reality that was acknowledged by the vice president of the Council of State who accompanied the visitors. The functionary explained that the number of blacks in prison was disproportionate to their population share because despite "the substantial achievements of the Revolution," the majority of blacks were still in the poorest strata of society. This, he claimed, "is by no means the expression of a policy of racial discrimination, but a left-over from the past."[162]

Whether these racial differences can be explained as "left-overs" is of course open to question, but it seems safe to state that, just as in prerevolutionary Cuba, blacks' delinquency rates remained higher than those of whites through the 1980s. A provision in the penal code that can be particularly telling about racialized perceptions of crime is that of *peligrosidad social* (social dangerousness). The history of this criminal provision is itself revealing. It appeared in the Cuban criminal code of 1936—under the influence of contemporaneous Italian criminal law—to provide for the repression of individuals with "a certain unhealthy, congenital or acquired predisposition" to commit crimes. The penal code of 1979 changed the legal definition of dangerousness, but it still allowed for the repression (including reeducation through internment) of individuals with "a special proclivity" to commit crimes. In other words, a person whose conduct was deemed to be "manifestly against the norms of socialist morality" could be deprived of freedom even without committing acts defined as crimes in the law. Included among these precriminal behaviors were habitual drunkenness, vagrancy, drug addiction, and other forms of "antisocial conduct."[163]

Such a broad definition of antisocial behavior created room for racialized notions of proper conduct to be enforced more freely than under the specific provisions of the penal code. Data to assess the racially differentiated impact of the "social dangerousness" provision are scant, but the results of a study commissioned by the attorney general of Cuba in 1987 are revealing. Out of a total of 643 cases of *peligrosidad* submitted to the courts in Havana City between May and December 1986, 345 subjects were black and 120 were mulatto. Nonwhites represented a staggering 78 percent of all the individuals considered to be socially dangerous. This proportion was more than double their share in the total population. Whereas there were 5,430 white adults living in the city for each white person facing charges of social dangerousness, the ratio among blacks (excluding mulattoes) was 1 in 713. Blacks (again, excluding mulattoes) were declared to be socially dangerous 7.6 times more often than whites and 3.4 times more often than mulattoes. Social dangerousness was essentially used to typify the conduct of blacks, particularly of young blacks. Fully 84 percent of the socially dangerous subjects were between the ages of sixteen and thirty.[164]

Despite its inadequacies, the information reviewed here provides a picture of the role of race in 1980s Cuban society that is complex and contradictory. The structural changes implemented by the revolutionary government did benefit large sectors of the black population, but such gains were concentrated in areas in which the revolution had been particularly successful. Prominent among these were education, health care, and employment. Progress was also evident in the area of leadership representation. Moreover, the acknowledgment in 1986 that the "heritage" of racism had not been totally

eliminated under Cuba's socialism demonstrated that the state remained committed to the ideal of a racism-free society and pointed to the possibility of further advances.

Conversely, the government's failure to meet housing demands allowed for the survival and reproduction of traditional residential patterns that combined race with poverty and marginality. This also limited the impact of the revolution's educational program, high rates of schooling notwithstanding.[165] The chance that young blacks would grow up in these poorer areas remained significantly greater than that of whites. More important, perhaps, is that social perceptions about marginality and crime continued to be racially bounded, a clear indication that the ideal of a color-blind society had not been fulfilled by the 1980s. The revolution's gradual approach to the race question had been fairly successful in eliminating inequality, but mainly in those areas in which generous government spending had created unprecedented opportunities for mobility and minimized competition.

In summary, the achievement of racial equality in socialist Cuba was largely dependent on government performance. However, the capacity to perform is precisely what the government most lacked in the 1990s, when the collapse of the Soviet Union led to what the Cuban government called "the special period."

8 THE SPECIAL PERIOD

> People don't change inside. A strong wind has to blow. . . . Even so, there are deep roots that remain and struggle to resurface.
> —Manuel Granados, *Adire y el tiempo roto* (1967)

> Tourist firms look like South African companies in times of Peter Botha. You go there and they are all white. And I wonder: Where am I, in Holland?
> —Gustavo, Afro-Cuban singer (1994)

The Cuban economy stagnated in the late 1980s under the "rectification period" launched after the third congress of the Communist Party in 1986. This program called for a reversal of the market-oriented pragmatism that characterized the 1971–85 years, a recentralization in decision making, and the reintroduction of mass mobilizations and voluntary work as forms of labor organization. Then, following the collapse of the Soviet Union and Cuba's trading partners in Eastern Europe, the economy entered a depression. Between 1989 and 1993 the gross domestic product declined by as much as 40 percent. In 1986, Fidel Castro and the Communist Party had agreed that it was necessary to promote further racial equality in areas in which change had been too slow, but by the early 1990s, it was evident that such advances would have to be made with shrinking resources.[1]

The problem was not only that resources were not available to eliminate inequality in areas in which previous advances had been modest, however. Resources were lacking even to maintain previous levels of social welfare. Moreover, after 1993 the Cuban government was forced to introduce a number of market-oriented measures to foster productivity and stimulate Cuba's stagnant economy. These included the legalization of U.S. dollars, different forms of self-employment, foreign investment, and "free" agricultural markets. Although this program led to a modest recovery after 1995, Cuban authorities themselves recognized that it was not without a price. The new economic policies unavoidably provoked increasing inequality and resentment in a population that was used to living in a highly egalitarian social setting. As a high-ranking government official remarked in 1993, "This will create differences among people, greater than what we have now and greater than we are used to having since the revolution. . . . [T]he inequality or

privilege that can be created are realities we must allow." "We are aware," the same official declared in 1995, "that some of the measures that we are applying are not in agreement with the aspirations of equality . . . which have guided our revolutionary conceptions."[2]

Although privileges and inequalities had to be allowed, Cuban authorities probably expected that the crisis would not have a racially specific impact. The relatively high levels of equality and effective racial integration that Cuban society had achieved by the 1980s should have guaranteed a color-blind impact of market forces. Individuals should have been affected according to their position in society and employment, regardless of race. Yet substantial evidence indicates that under the so-called special period, racial inequality and racially defined social tensions have increased substantially.

RE-CREATING INEQUALITIES

These economic changes have affected large sectors of the population, regardless of race, education, and other socially relevant variables. As Cubans in the island themselves recognize, the origins and nature of the crisis are not racially defined. "The issue isn't race," a black scientist asserted in 1993, referring to the crisis. A black female physician agreed: "Here there are not black and white differences. We are all living through the special period."[3] A similar perception was prevalent among two hundred respondents to a survey conducted in Havana and Santiago de Cuba in 1994. Although a higher percentage of blacks (22 percent) than whites (7 percent) considered the crisis to have racially differentiated effects, the dominant view was that it affected blacks and whites equally.[4]

Yet some of the reforms introduced by the government affect different social groups dissimilarly and have racially differentiated consequences. The most obvious example is that of the legalization of dollars, which has tended to fragment Cuban society along the lines of those who have access to dollars and those who do not. For the most part, Cubans receive hard currency from two main sources: family remittances and links to the Cuban dollar economy, represented mainly by tourism and the joint ventures and foreign companies that have opened businesses in the island. Workers in some productive sectors have also received dollar payments in the last few years, but these amounts are small compared to what can be obtained in tourism jobs or through family remittances (for instance, workers in the biomedical research sector have received $70 once or twice a year). Some artists, artisans, writers, and scholars also obtain dollars through their work.

Family remittances are probably the most important source of hard currency for ordinary Cubans. Economic officials in the island estimated that in 1997 annual remittances amounted to about $800 million. Given the racial composition of the Cuban diaspora, it is reasonable to assume that blacks' access to these funds is rather limited. According to the 1990 U.S. census, 83.5 percent of Cuban immigrants living in the United States identify themselves as white.[5] Assuming that dollar remittances are evenly distributed among white and nonwhite exiles and that they stay, roughly, within the same racial group of the sender, then about $680 million out of the $800 million that enter the island every year would end up in white hands. What this means is that per capita remittances to the island would amount to about $85 per year among whites. The comparable figure for nonwhites would be less than half this amount.

Given their limited participation in the remittances, blacks' opportunities to participate in the dollar economy are basically reduced to the competitive tourist sector, the most dynamic and lucrative in the Cuban economy. The desirability and attractiveness of tourist jobs are such that a large number of professionals have abandoned their occupations to seek employment in this sector. Consequently, competition for these jobs has escalated.

Tourism is an area in which blacks should have privileged access, for in the early 1980s they had comprised a significant proportion of the labor force employed in hotels, restaurants, and similar services. Of those employed in "services," 38 percent, according to the 1981 census, were black or mulatto—a percentage slightly above blacks and mulattoes' population share.[6] Yet there is widespread consensus that nonwhites are currently underrepresented in the tourist sector and face significant obstacles to both finding jobs and getting promotions. Of respondents to a 1994 survey conducted in Havana and Santiago, 40 percent agreed that blacks do not have the same employment opportunities as whites in this sector.[7] The testimony of the manager of a tourism corporation—a white female, forty-five years old—which was recorded by historians Rafael Duharte and Elsa Santos in a study about prejudice in Santiago de Cuba in 1994, is revealing:

> Yes, it is true, there is a lot of racial prejudice in the tourist sector. I have worked there for about a year and I know that there is a lot of racism. In my corporation, for instance, out of five hundred workers there are only five blacks. . . . There is no explicit policy stating that one has to be white to work in tourism, but it is regulated that people must have a pleasant aspect, and blacks do not have it. . . . In the fanciest store in the city—La Maisson—all workers are white and out of fourteen models only one is

mulatto. It is so rare to find black women in tourism that when there is one, people comment that she must be going to bed with an important boss. The few black men who work in tourism always perform manual labor, such as driving trucks or lifting merchandise in the warehouses. They never work directly with the tourists, or even in cleaning jobs; all of these workers are white. I know a black woman who told me her experience when she tried to find work in tourism. She has a degree in economics, is a specialist in computing, and speaks English, French, and German. She went to the interview very well dressed, even though she herself confessed that everything was borrowed. Well, it was very unpleasant because in the end she was not accepted, but they did not give her a specific reason. . . . The person who interviewed her did not know how to handle the situation because he could not tell her, "We do not accept you because you're black." . . . I think that her knowledge should have counted; after all, some white women working in tourism are also ugly, even if they are white. A few days ago a representative of a tourism corporation said publicly that he does not want blacks in his corporation because "*el negro* never finishes what he starts."[8]

Although getting a job in such a competitive sector is certainly hard for everyone, some "aesthetic" and cultural factors are frequently noted to justify the exclusion of blacks on the ground that they lack the physical and educational attributes needed to interact with tourists. These factors are usually incorporated in the concept of "good presence," a racialized construct that is based on the belief that blackness is ugly and that blacks—their formal schooling notwithstanding—lack proper manners, "cultural level," and education in their social relationships. A black female librarian from Santiago told the story of a friend who had been discriminated against while working in a tourist store: "I have a friend who finished, with very high grades, a course to work as a cashier in a tourist store. She is the darkest [*la más prieta*] of her group, has a good presence, is a young educated person, and . . . was denied the cashier position. All the cashiers are blond. After having a job designated for her in Havana, she has been transferred three times to different positions, so she is very upset and says that . . . if she denounces what has happened she might get fired."[9] "I do agree," a white tourist guide stated, "that there is an aesthetic criteria in the selection of tourism personnel that favors whites. In my company, out of sixty workers there are three blacks."[10]

Blacks are not only facing obstacles in attaining these jobs, however.

Given their representation in the sector through the 1980s, it must be inferred that at least some of these workers were displaced from their previous jobs and moved to less desirable occupations. Persistent rumors suggest that hotel managers have been giving preference to white workers and that "rationalization" programs (a term used to denote the downsizing of the labor force) have targeted blacks. In early 1994, for instance, the administration of the Habana Libre hotel fired dozens of workers to improve efficiency and quality of service. It was rumored that blacks had been singled out in the layoffs.[11] Thus, blacks have to cope not only with the racial prejudices of Cuban managers but also with those imported by foreign investors and their managerial personnel. But they are in a weak position to combat such prejudices, given that these investors are a key element in Cuban developmental strategy. The government is interested in providing them with as friendly an environment as possible, including the strict control of labor unions and their bargaining capacity. Although investors' access to labor is supposed to take place through the mediation of the government, they have, in Climent Guitar's words, "complete autonomy to select, hire, and, when necessary, fire the hotel's employees." In fact, a significant proportion of those who enter these jobs are hired directly by the managers and foreign investors, further limiting the state's capacity to guarantee a color-blind labor policy.[12]

Two additional factors tend to further increase the racially differentiated effects of the crisis and to fuel growing racial inequality under the special period. Because of blacks' relative concentration in areas that are overcrowded and that have a dilapidated housing stock, the opening of *paladares* (family-operated restaurants) is not an economic option for many black families. The other lucrative sector in which blacks are underrepresented is the private agricultural sector. Since the early decades of the century, the black peasantry was displaced from landownership, so Afro-Cuban rates of urbanization have been consistently higher than those of whites. According to an agricultural household survey conducted by a University of Havana research team in 1992, in a sample of rural communities across the island, whites represented 98 percent of private farmers and 95 percent of agricultural cooperative members.[13]

Most of these racially differentiated effects are clearly unintended and escape government control. Government policies to cope with the crisis have provoked social polarization—including a fast-growing income gap—but they are racial only in their consequences, not in their design.[14] The dollarization of the economy, for instance, has multiplied income differences according to race, but the government has no control over the distribution of

he dollar remittances that members of the overwhelmingly white Cuban-American community send to their relatives in the island every year. Yet this does not explain blacks' underrepresentation in the tourist sector or in foreign corporations. As mentioned above, by the 1980s blacks had obtained levels of education comparable to those of whites and shared with them the benefits of expanded opportunities in white-collar employment. In fact, Afro-Cubans' slight overrepresentation in service jobs should have given them a competitive advantage in the expanding tourist economy. It must have been precisely because of these structural "advantages" that a racialized notion of suitability was constructed to define access to the most desirable sector of the Cuban economy. In other words, the underrepresentation of blacks in tourism cannot be explained as a function of structural conditions. It is, rather, a function of the pervasiveness of a racial ideology that portrays blacks as lazy, inefficient, dirty, ugly, and prone to criminal activities. In times of scarcity and growing competition for resources, this racist ideology has been used to justify the exclusion of Afro-Cubans from the benefits of the most attractive sector of Cuba's economy.

FROM PREJUDICE TO DISCRIMINATION

Despite its antidiscriminatory position and egalitarian social policies, the revolutionary government failed to create the color-blind society it envisioned in the early 1960s. The official silence on race contributed to the survival, reproduction, and even creation of racist ideologies and stereotypes in a society that, particularly in the 1960s, was still far from racially equal. What disappeared from public discourse found fertile breeding ground in private spaces, where race continued to influence social relations among friends, neighbors, coworkers, and family members. Supposedly harmless racist jokes reproduced traditional negative images of blacks. Racial ideologies were reproduced within the family and enforced in multigenerational households. The research of anthropologist Nadine Fernandez about the difficulties faced by interracial couples in Cuba convincingly demonstrates how traditional stereotypes have limited the choices of young couples.[15]

Still, the extent to which these racial ideologies permeate Cuban society and the intensity of racial prejudice in popular consciousness are somehow surprising. A survey conducted in Havana and Santiago in 1994 found that 85 percent of respondents agreed that prejudice is rampant in the island. A study conducted in three neighborhoods in Havana by the Centro de Antropología in 1995 found that 58 percent of whites considered blacks to be less intelligent, 69 percent believed that blacks did not have the same "values" and "decency" as whites, and 68 percent opposed interracial marriage.[16] To put these figures in perspective, in the United States in the early 1980s, the proportion of whites who declared that they were opposed to interracial marriage was actually lower (40 percent). Likewise, the proportion of whites who claimed to have no preferences concerning the racial composition of their neighborhood was lower in Havana (38 percent) than in the United States (42 percent).[17] Data compiled by Daniela Hernández in Santa Clara provide a less racist picture (for instance, 96 percent of white subjects declared that blacks and whites were equally intelligent and 65 percent opposed interracial marriage), but these results corroborate what we have known all along: that racial prejudice has not been obliterated in Cuba's postrevolutionary society.[18]

This ideology is frequently presented as a "left-over" or "remnant" from the past that is supposed to disappear in due time and whose impact is allegedly circumscribed to individuals and their most immediate family. Such representations are common in official discourse, journalistic pieces, and popular language. In 1986, for instance, the program of the PCC acknowledged that the "process of elimination" of "racial prejudices" had not been as "accelerated" as initially envisioned and that such beliefs affected "the psyche" of "a certain number of people." An article published in the popular magazine *Somos Jóvenes* in 1990 wondered if Cubans were "completely free" from the "ideological heritage" of racism. Another journal article asserted in 1991 that it would be a mistake to assume that the "vestiges" of centuries of racism and discrimination had totally disappeared under the revolution. After affirming that all Cubans had equal opportunities, the author admitted that "sometimes" such opportunities collided with "an inadequate family environment and other subjective factors."[19] To the limited extent to which they have researched these issues, most Cuban scholars share these notions.[20]

The characterization of racist ideologies as a "heritage" that affects only individuals serves several purposes. It obviously exonerates the revolutionary government and contemporary Cuban society from any responsibility in the production of racial stereotypes and prejudices. These ideas, the dominant discourse states, were created in the past—perhaps as long ago as the times of slavery. If they still affect some social relations (cross-racial marriages, for instance), it is because not enough time has lapsed. The implication, of course, is that they will eventually disappear even in the absence of systematic social and political action. Furthermore, although it is recognized that some action might be needed, the urgency of this problem is somehow diffused by its very nature: racist ideologies have a limited social incidence

for they only affect private and family relations—areas over which the government has little control. As in Brazil, whites in Cuba blame anything (history, slavery) or anyone (foreign influence) but themselves for racism and discrimination.[21]

In fact, traditional ideas about race have found propitious conditions under the revolution to reproduce and perhaps even expand. For instance, the belief that Afro-Cubans continue to be primitive, lazy, and uncivilized regardless of educational achievement is frequently explained in terms of their low "cultural level"—the very notion used by the revolutionary government in the 1960s and 1970s to disparage Afro-Cuban religions and other forms of popular culture. The identification of social blackness with marginality, crime, and social dangerousness helped nurture the idea—very widespread in the Cuban population—that blacks are naturally predisposed to commit crimes. The very success of the revolution in creating equal opportunities in education, employment, and other social areas is now used to demonstrate blacks' inescapable inferiority. A forty-year-old white male physician interviewed by Duharte and Santos explained: "I have a theory that could be considered fascist, but to me blacks are inferior to whites in regard to their intelligence coefficient. In support of this theory I contend that in Cuba, where for thirty-five years blacks have had the same opportunities to study, there is no evidence that they can equal whites. How can one not think that genetic heredity affects them neurologically and makes them different, that is, inferior?" Another white male professional, fifty years old, concurred: "We took the chains off blacks and released them. . . . Now, thirty-five years later, they are worse off, less educated; instead of using the opportunity to improve themselves they continue to be *marginales* and criminals."[22]

By ignoring the advances made by Afro-Cubans on almost all fronts and avoiding a critical approach to the question of race, the state-sponsored media has also contributed to the persistence of some of these racist images. To begin with, black actors are conspicuously absent from television and are frequently relegated to stereotypical roles. "When I worked in television," a black female scriptwriter asserts, "I told the national director once that blacks' situation in TV was hopeless, because television does not reflect the reality of blacks. If the programs referred to the past, blacks appeared as maids or Santeros, but it was not like that, there was a class of black professionals. . . . The same today, with the black professionals created by the revolution. Blacks are always portrayed as *marginales*. . . . I would write a script with a black character and they would change it to a white." Her experience is by no means unique. When playwright and television writer Maité Vera attempted to place blacks in leading roles in some of her programs, she was criticized for promoting "reverse racism." "For many years," Vera explained in an interview with *Cuba Update* in 1991, "our creators . . . have acted as if they were blind to . . . this multicolor population which was not so mixed before."[23]

The same is true of movies. Afro-Cuban actors have assumed leading roles mainly in movies dealing with slavery, such as Sergio Giral's *El otro Francisco* (1974) and *Rancheador* (1977) or Tomás Gutiérrez Alea's critically acclaimed *La última cena* (1976). Gutiérrez Alea used an all-black cast in an earlier movie—*Cumbite* (1964)—but the story takes place in Haiti, not Cuba. Blacks and mulattoes figure prominently in Sara Gómez's *De cierta manera* (1974), but the movie deals with questions of marginality, *ñañiguismo*, and lack of social discipline. Conversely, questions of discrimination and prejudice have been dealt with only occasionally, such as in the conflicts surrounding the young interracial couple that heads the cast in Juan Carlos Tabío's *Plaff!* (1988).

Just as racial prejudices and stereotypes are conceptualized as a historic heritage, the absence of Afro-Cubans in the media has been explained in terms that avoid direct responsibility for the persistence of racist practices. The arguments range from the claim that these are "unconscious" choices, to technical problems, to issues of aesthetics. In the first scenario, it is claimed that directors and producers do not include blacks because they tend to interpret reality through their own eyes—although this begs the question of why there are so few Afro-Cuban directors to begin with. Others assert that technical problems such as "light absorption" prevent dark-skinned persons from fully participating in movies or television. Finally, some whites in television claim that scriptwriters do not include blacks because they subordinate their preferences to those of the public, who would not accept blacks in roles other than stereotypical ones. When asked about these explanations, however, a black television writer responded: "I do not think that there are technical problems with the illumination of blacks, or a shortage of black actors. I think that there are racial prejudices in the minds of the directors, who are those who make decisions."[24]

These strategies of silence and avoidance find an ideal complement in popular humor. Visitors to the island are often puzzled by the fact that, while most Cubans feel adamant about denying that they are racist, they tell racist jokes and use derogatory aphorisms quite freely. Supposedly harmless, these jokes constantly reproduce the image of blacks as foul-smelling, dirty, lazy, and criminally oriented. As with the case of government politics more gener-

ally—which for the most part are banned from public discussions—these jokes express social feelings and ambiguities that do not find outlets in more formal social settings. What is otherwise banned or taboo, popular humor expresses in socially acceptable ways.[25]

The ideology of racism was not created under the special period, but it acquired visibility and growing social acceptability during the 1990s. Indeed, despite the failure of government propaganda, which has claimed since the 1960s that all Cubans are equal and deserve full access to all sectors of national life, to eliminate racial prejudice, its impact should not be underestimated. This campaign created an ideal of egalitarianism that was shared by vast sectors of the population. Its complexities and contradictions notwithstanding, the postrevolutionary social environment was decidedly antidiscriminatory. Public discourse equated racism with a past of capitalism and class exploitation—a trait of the antinational, pro-American, white elite that had been displaced from power. To be racist was to be counterrevolutionary. Real revolutionaries were not supposed to be racist—at least not in public.

The association between revolution and racial fraternity/equality is a double-edged sword, however. It links the unacceptability of racism to the legitimacy, popularity, and support of the revolution—as represented by the government. But in the 1990s, the government lost legitimacy, support, and popularity, as well as economic resources. The erosion and deepening crisis of legitimacy of the current political system thus create new spaces for racist ideas and practices to operate and flourish. What used to be social and political anathema restricted, for the most part, to private spaces has become increasingly acceptable and public. These ideas, to use the expression of one of my collaborators in the island, are no longer confined to "people's heads." They result in concrete practices that are discriminatory in nature, as the example of the tourist sector shows. Diminishing government control over the hiring and promotion of personnel in the expanding private sector has created additional opportunities for these racially discriminatory practices to operate unhindered. Moreover, government enterprises are themselves reproducing these practices, at least in the most desirable sectors of the economy.

Not surprisingly, blacks have actively resisted displacement from the most lucrative economic activities through participation in the informal—and frequently illegal—economy, from prostitution to the black market, in order to access the indispensable hard currency. There is a widespread consensus that a large proportion of the so-called *jineteras* (prostitutes) are black or mulatto. This is not surprising. Blacks' participation in prostitution is explained not only by their disadvantageous position in the current situation but also by the

tourists' own racialized notions of sexuality and pleasure. According to these notions, black sexuality is more appealing precisely because of the racial inferiority of black women and the unrestrained "primitiveness" of their sexual instincts, which makes them perfect sexual objects. Yet these very images, which associate blackness with unrestricted commercial sex, might construct as "black" women who would not be considered Afro-Cuban in other social relations. As Nadine Fernandez points out, the depiction of certain activities as "sex tourism" is mediated by notions of race, class, and gender. In fact, a 1996 study of the Cuban section of the Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales claims that the majority of the *jineteras* are "mestizas" who would be considered white in other scenarios. Prostitution has become an element in the current definition of social blackness.[26]

In any case, Cuban tourist agencies are profiting from these images of tropical, unrestricted sexuality. They frequently advertise the island as a paradise of sexual indulgence and promiscuity. "Cuba: the fire and passion of deepest Caribbean flavor," reads an advertisement for the Sol Palmeras Hotel in Varadero. "To be isolated is not to be lonely. This island deserves love," proclaims Cubatur. As Julia O'Connell Davidson, a sociologist at the University of Leicester who has conducted field research in the subject of sex tourism in the island, argues, for racially conscious white male tourists Cuba is paradise "in the sense that there, rather than being challenged, their racism is both implicitly and explicitly affirmed. They meet large numbers of Black women who really *are* sexually available, and, even more delightful for the white racist, people tell him that these Black women are sexually available because they are so 'caliente.'" The very existence of these dark-skinned *jineteras* is used to confirm the alleged moral deficiencies of black and mulatto women, further racializing the crisis that affects Cuban society.[27] As a visitor to the island noted in 1996, when elite women become involved with foreigners or artists and intellectuals aggressively seek to socialize with visitors in the hopes of getting grants or job offers, such activities do not convey social disapproval. "It's poor women of color who take the heat. And the fact that *jineteras* of color are now marrying Europeans at an unusually high rate makes them objects of envy in a country where many people are desperately looking for any means possible to emigrate."[28]

Other strategies of adaptation and resistance have become equally racialized. For instance, the migration of people from the eastern provinces to Havana has been frequently interpreted as a black assault on the city. "These *negros orientales* [blacks from Oriente] are taking over," a white male professional explained, referring to the "palestinos" (Palestinians), as these dark-

skinned immigrants are known in Havana.[29] In fact, internal migrations are a function of the uneven development of the dollar economy in different regions of the country. The regional distribution of dollar stores can be used as a rough indicator of this phenomenon. Up to 1993, dollar stores were concentrated in tourist areas: it was illegal for Cuban nationals to access them. With the legalization of dollars, stores and services that operate in hard currency have been created in nontourism areas also, following the availability of dollars in the general population. In early 1996, 40 percent of these stores were located in Havana. Conversely, the eastern provinces of Granma, Santiago de Cuba, and Guantánamo had only 10 percent of the total.[30] Not surprisingly, the bulk of immigrants came from these disadvantaged areas—a process that mirrors migration flows in prerevolutionary Cuba. It is estimated that 50,000 people moved to Havana in 1996 alone and that in the first semester of 1997, 92,000 people tried to legalize their status in the city. The government reacted by banning all immigration to Havana in the spring of 1997, imposing fines on both the immigrants and their landlords, and requiring the immediate return of immigrants to their place of origin. An official in the Foreign Ministry's U.S. Department explained: "We had people living in subhuman conditions in Havana, without work. We went to these people and said, for example, 'Señor, you're from Guantánamo. You have left a house and job in Guantánamo. You need to continue your life in Guantánamo. You can't live in subhuman conditions here in a house built of trash.'" Whether massive deportations have taken place as a result of the law remains open to further verification. Officials claim that "no one has been put on a bus and sent back," but other sources assert that hundreds, even thousands, of people have been forced to leave the city and that the deportation order has been violently enforced.[31]

The presence of these Afro-Cuban immigrants in Havana was linked to an increase in violence and petty crimes—an increase recognized even by official sources—which also has been explained in racial terms. "Look, we all have problems," a white male professional states while talking about the immigrants, "but whereas I try to solve them through work or other legitimate ways, what blacks do is resort to robbery." According to a white female professional, this vision of blacks was shared even by government authorities: "A lot of stealing was going on and they were accused. Fidel offended them by saying something to the effect of 'Old Havana is full of Eastern delinquents.'"[32]

Thus the crisis of the 1990s resulted in growing social and racial tensions.

Based on racially charged notions such as "good presence" and "cultural level," Afro-Cubans have been denied opportunities in some of the most lucrative sectors of the economy, particularly in tourism. As is usually the case, the intensity of racist prejudices is related directly to the desirability of the sector in which the discrimination is taking place. Afro-Cubans' strategies of adaptation, which frequently involve participation in illegal activities such as prostitution, black-market activities, or plain robbery, are in turn used to demonstrate their alleged natural inferiority. Such inferiority is further evidenced, so the argument goes, by the fact that after four decades of socialism and antidiscrimination efforts, Afro-Cubans make up the bulk of the so-called criminals and *marginales*. Given these perceptions, it is not surprising that blacks are singled out as potential suspects by the police, as a journalist claims.[33] Indeed, racism is a self-fulfilling prophecy: it denies opportunities to a certain group due to their alleged insufficiencies and vices, and in turn, lack of opportunities creates the very insufficiencies and vices initially used to justify exclusion.

FIDEL'S "SECRET WEAPON"?

The revival of racism and racially discriminatory practices under the special period has led to growing resentment and resistance in the black population, which suddenly finds itself in a hostile environment without the political and organizational resources needed to fight against it. In this context, events such as the Malecón "riot" of August 5, 1994, begin to make sense. Spontaneous outbursts of rage and anger are typical of politically disorganized groups who perceive their situation as hopeless. Symptomatically, participants in this street protest stoned tourist stores while calling for "freedom" and political changes. As I have argued elsewhere, the surprise of the Cuban government concerning the racial composition of the rioters—according to an official report leaked to the press, blacks and mulattoes were in the majority—is more a function of its own prejudice and expectations than of any concrete sociological reality. The government expects young blacks to behave as passive "beneficiaries" of revolutionary gains, not as active protagonists for their own well-being and future.[34]

Perhaps because of these expectations, the reaction of the Cuban government to this process of racial polarization has been slow and inadequate. Given the lack of government action, it is even questionable whether in official circles there is awareness of the problem at all. The program of the fifth congress of the Communist Party contained an element of hope: while

claiming that the revolution had "eliminated the institutional bases of racism" and worked to incorporate all Cubans, regardless of race, into the country's life, it called for maintaining "the just policy" of increasing black representation in positions of command.[35] Even if this policy had been fully implemented, its impact would have been limited: positions within the government bureaucracy are not, for the most part, as desirable as they were in the past, and they certainly do not provide material benefits comparable to those in the dollarized sector. Yet a visible increase of blacks in the power structure would have sent an unequivocal message to managers in the private sector (Cuban and foreign) that the government opposes racial exclusion and that racially discriminatory practices would not be tolerated. Instead, the 1997 congress of the party elected a Central Committee that was actually whiter (13 percent) than those elected in 1991 (16 percent) and 1986 (28 percent).[36] The proportion of blacks and mulattoes among the candidates to the National Assembly of Poder Popular in the 1997 elections (about 21 percent) was higher than their proportion in the PCC but still low considering their share in the total population. Furthermore, this figure does not indicate significant improvement over the racial composition of the candidates in the elections of 1993 (19 percent).[37] It was not until early 1999—when a delegation from the U.S.-based Trans-Africa Forum visited the island after the question of race was debated in a congress of the Union of Writers and Artists and raised the issue of discrimination with authorities and several conferences were devoted to discussing this theme—that government leaders took note and began to emphasize again the need to promote blacks and mulattoes to positions of leadership.[38]

Yet the belief that Afro-Cubans represent a source of support for the government—Castro's "secret weapon"—is quite widespread. It is argued, for instance, that blacks are terrified at the prospect of the return of the white Cuban-American exiles, but the limited available evidence does not support this assertion.[39] Even if we accept the notion that the Cuban-American community is racist, it does not follow that blacks in the island fully endorse this vision or, more to the point, that they are politically paralyzed as a result. Perceptions in Cuba about the Cuban-American community are in fact less negative than the government might wish. The government itself has contributed to this process by softening its rhetoric about the exiles, by presenting them as economic emigrants, and by welcoming their dollars. A survey conducted by CID-Gallup in Cuba in 1994 found that 75 percent of respondents referred to Cuban-Americans in affectionate terms. In a survey on racial attitudes conducted in Havana and Santiago the same year, only 27 percent of whites and 33 percent of blacks agreed with the proposition that the Miami exiles were racist. Only 39 percent of black respondents believed that, upon their return, the white exiles would bring racism back into the island, and this proposition was supported mainly by older (forty years old and over) blacks (51 percent). Only 18 percent of younger respondents agreed with the statement.[40]

It is also argued that Afro-Cubans benefited from the revolution to such a degree that they would perceive its end as a major social reversal. This argument is based on much more solid evidence. According to various surveys and studies conducted in the island between 1994 and 1995, most Cubans agree that the 1959 revolution represented a major step toward the improvement of race relations and the elimination of racism and inequality. The 1994 Havana/Santiago survey found that 76 percent of the population believed that blacks' situation improved along with that of the rest of the population; 62 percent of whites and 73 percent of blacks and mulattoes agreed that Afro-Cubans' situation would be worse without the revolution. The Gallup survey reported even more optimistic returns: 90 percent of the respondents affirmed that skin color did not significantly affect opportunities or the way people were treated; 94 percent believed that "persons of color have the same access as whites to a good education," and a similar proportion agreed that they have equal opportunities to get "a good job" (90 percent) or "a position in society" (91 percent). In the study conducted in Havana in 1995, 81 percent of whites, 75 percent of blacks, and 71 percent of mestizos agreed that substantial progress had been made toward the elimination of race discrimination. In Santa Clara, according to Hernández, 94 percent of whites and 83 percent of blacks and mulattoes agreed with a similar proposition.[41]

Whether this perception translates into an unconditional support for the government is, however, an altogether different question. In fact, one of the conclusions from the 1994 survey conducted in Havana and Santiago was that generational differences were more important in determining perceptions about the revolution, its achievements, its shortcomings, and the impact of the special period than racial ones. This result was coincident with the findings of the CID-Gallup survey, which found younger Cubans to be less satisfied with their personal life on the island. This is true for both blacks and whites. The current crisis has eroded some of the emblematic achievements of the Cuban revolution to such a degree that young blacks no longer per-

ceive the restoration of capitalism as a major reversal. The incapacity of the Cuban government to maintain its previous levels of social assistance, the deterioration of social programs that persist, and the introduction of limited market reforms with their legacy of increasing inequality and social polarization are all factors that have contributed to undermining the legitimacy of the political order. It should be noted, also, that the participation of Afro-Cubans in the cross-racial dissident movement is far from negligible. Some of the best-known leaders of the opposition, such as Vladimiro Roca and Félix Bonne Carcassés, are black or mulatto.

The very racialization of the crisis might lead to racially defined forms of organization and resistance, further fueling racial tensions in the island. It is perhaps worth mentioning that although the vast majority of respondents to the 1994 survey on racial attitudes opposed the formation of an all-black organization, 16 percent of the younger black respondents considered this type of organization to be a necessity. Racial exclusion breeds racially defined social responses. Unless some of the existing institutions (such as the courts) or organizations (such as the unions or the PCC) effectively represent Afro-Cuban concerns and take on the struggle for racial equality, the creation of a racially defined organization might be increasingly perceived as the only way to counteract discrimination in the labor market and other areas of social life.

Initial steps toward the eventual emergence of racially defined forms of social and political mobilization have been taken already. Although most of the groups that emerged in the 1990s limited their activities to emphasizing the importance of black culture in any representation of *lo cubano*, others sought to effect social changes more generally.

This is the case of the Cofradía de la Negritud (Fraternity of Blackness), created in early 1999.[42] The Cofradía was created to make the Cuban state and society fully aware of the "growing racial inequality" that has taken place in the country and to demand the adoption of adequate measures to reverse this process. Its members have argued that the growing income gap experienced during the special period has a strong "racial content" and that the "historical disadvantage" of the black population "increased substantially . . . compared to the previous decade." The members of the Cofradía have also complained about the lack of official action and predicted that racial inequality might reach a "critical level" in the future.

The program of the Cofradía has clear precedents in previous organization efforts among Afro-Cubans. Following dominant interpretations of Cuban nationalism, its members claim to pursue the "noble aspirations" of those who fought to create a *patria* for all, without racial differences. Indeed, the opening statement of their program is a quote by José Martí. Moreover, the Cofradía claims to follow the teachings of Juan Gualberto Gómez, the great Afro-Cuban advocate of integration, and vows to promote the "fraternity" of all Cubans regardless of skin color. Like most Afro-Cuban associations since the creation of the republic, the Cofradía seeks to work within the parameters of a racially integrated nation and calls for the understanding, solidarity, and support of all Cubans.

Yet, as on previous occasions, the very creation of the Cofradía denotes the frustration of a sector of the black population with state institutions and their skepticism and ambivalence concerning cross-racial forms of mobilization. Building upon Afro-Cubans' longtime traditions of self-help, their program calls for blacks to promote their own initiatives, increase their self-esteem, "rescue and promote the values of the black family," and establish contacts with black organizations in the island and abroad. Their slogan is self-explanatory: "Let us help ourselves and we will be helped." These pronouncements bear a strong resemblance to the purposes of past organizations, such as Juan René Betancourt's ONRE, created at times when Afro-Cuban intellectuals were equally frustrated with the inability of government authorities to eliminate discrimination.

The Cofradía also follows long-established patterns when it declares to be a social organization that does not pursue political purposes. But just as the Afro-Cuban clubs became sites of political mobilization during the republic, the founding members of the Cofradía acknowledge that their project and actions might be easily interpreted as being of a political nature.

Whether this or any other racially defined organization will be allowed to operate peacefully is, at best, doubtful. The existence of black organizations defined in terms other than cultural or religious would openly call into the question the government's record in the sensitive area of race relations and would likely result in charges of "reverse racism." In addition, as the spectacular surge of Santería in the 1990s shows, there are actors in Cuban society who persist in ignoring, silencing, or demeaning the African roots of *cubanidad*. In a document issued in 1993, the annual conference of the Methodist Church complained that Afro-Cuban "cults" were proliferating under the disguise of "national culture" and that they were promoted in the state-owned media, whereas the Christian faith received no support. "Satanism has acquired the status of folklore," the document asserted. Likewise, the refusal of the Catholic hierarchy to allow a meeting between Pope John Paul II

and Santeros exemplifies the Church's long-standing denial of the importance of the Afro-Cuban religions and their practitioners, which Cardinal Jaime Ortega reportedly called "pseudo-religions."[43]

The terms "cults" and "pseudo-religions," one could argue, are just restatements of "brujería," the demeaning term used to describe Afro-Cuban religions at the turn of the century. Although most Cubans surely agree that the nation ought to be for all, the concrete meanings of *cubanidad* remain open to contending interpretations.

EPILOGUE

Speaking before the grave of Antonio Maceo in 1951, President Carlos Prío elaborated on his vision of *cubanidad*. "Cuba," he declared, "has its own voice, which is neither white nor black. Just as Martí is white and Maceo is black, our culture is white with Spain and black with Africa." Almost fifty years later, in his welcoming remarks to Pope John Paul II, Fidel Castro characterized the nation in similar terms. "They [the Africans] made a remarkable contribution to the ethnic composition and the origins of our country's present population in which the cultures, the beliefs, and the blood of all participants . . . have been mixed."[1] It would be difficult to find two figures who are less alike in Cuban modern politics, yet these two presidents agreed on at least one thing: Cuba is a mixed nation in which there is little room for racial differences, much less discrimination.

This national discourse of *mestizaje* and racial fraternity has led to often contradictory social effects. It has contributed to minimizing or even ignoring, as some scholars contend, the specific claims for justice of the population of African descent. Yet it has also opened avenues for their participation in the nation—and not merely in a representational sense. Dominant interpretations of this ideology have delegitimized racially defined forms of political mobilization as racist and antinational, but they have also facilitated and encouraged other forms of social action. And whereas persistent racism and inequality have reinforced social identities associated with race, the reluctance of political regimes to acknowledge the social implications of race has contributed to the formation of competing identities from above. Particularly after 1959, the politics of distribution and social ascent contributed to the creation of new identities, such as "revolutionary" and "people."

This rhetoric of integration and equality notwithstanding, the fact is that perceptions of race continue to affect social relations in Cuba. But this is a reality that most political leaders in the island have chosen to ignore. Indeed, the very governments that have pledged allegiance to the ideal of a racially integrated nation, as they all have done since the early republic, also have implemented policies that resulted in the survival and reproduction of socially constructed perceptions of race. This was the case even during the postrevolutionary period, when the Cuban state used its considerable power and prestige to eliminate racism from the island. In some cases, such as the denigration and repression of African-based religions practiced by diverse political regimes throughout the twentieth century, the state has reinforced

and legitimized the traditional association between blackness and backwardness. This was certainly true in the early republic, when different administrations actively sought to de-Africanize Cuba. It remained true during the second republic, the "nationalization" of Afro-Cuban cultural practices notwithstanding, and persisted under the revolution. Particularly during the 1960s, the revolutionary authorities regarded Afro-Cuban religion as a cultural atavism incongruent with the construction of a modern, technically oriented socialist society—an obstacle of the past that had to be removed. For ordinary citizens, this has meant that whereas it is un-Cuban to be unequivocally racist, it might be patriotic to disparage Afro-Cubans and their culture.

More often than not, however, it is the failure of the government to act that has contributed the most to the continuing significance of race in Cuban society. The state's limited intervention in "private" social spaces has meant that racism has been allowed to operate virtually unhindered in this sphere. Thus, in the first republic, when government regulation of social and economic affairs was minimal, racial discrimination permeated vast sectors of the labor market and a large number of social activities. Racially exclusionary practices expanded even into spaces deemed to be public, such as parks, promenades, and upscale hotels.

Even after government intervention in the economy and society increased after the 1930s, private spaces remained bulwarks of discrimination and segregation. At least in this sense, the new Cuba that the so-called revolution of 1933 was supposed to create was not new at all. Indeed, during the second republic, many public establishments presented themselves as private clubs precisely to legally exclude black customers from their premises. Furthermore, it was in those areas in which the state succeeded the most in opening opportunities for all, such as public education, that a growing private sector expanded to accommodate the demand for racial exclusivity by the white middle and upper classes. The Communists understood this reality well and mounted an assault on private schooling in 1941; their main goal was to regulate the curriculum and admission policies of these institutions. They failed. The great Afro-Cuban intellectual and politician Juan Gualberto Gómez also attacked the public-private dichotomy when black spectators and athletes were barred from the Havana Yacht Club in 1930, but his voice went largely unheard.

It was not until the revolution of 1959 that systematic efforts were made to bridge the perceived gap between public and private. The revolutionary government not only destroyed the institutional bulwarks of racial segregation in the island, such as private schools, social clubs, and recreational facilities, but also sought to socialize younger generations in a new egalitarian and color-blind social ethic. With the expansion of the boarding-school system in the early 1970s, thousands of youths were removed from their families and sent to live in multiracial settings in which they learned the new socialist culture. Meanwhile, the nearly universal socialization of the means of production eliminated most private economic activities and facilitated the entry of Afro-Cubans into occupations and jobs that had been previously closed to them. The emigration of vast sectors of the middle and upper classes facilitated this process.

The impact of this radical program of social engineering should not be underestimated. By the late 1970s and early 1980s even unsympathetic observers acknowledged that significant progress had been made toward building a nation that was truly for all. Measurable inequality had decreased or almost disappeared in a number of areas; some behavioral patterns had begun to change. For instance, fragmentary but solid evidence suggests that cross-racial dating and marriage were on the rise. As sociologist Orlando Patterson puts it, in the final analysis "integration must mean intermarriage."[2] Perhaps the best indicator that race had lost social and political relevance in the island is the fact that by 1986 the leadership of the Communist Party felt comfortable enough to raise publicly the issue of black representation in the government.

The revolution's impact on traditional patterns of race is full of paradoxes, however. The youth were socialized in a new ethic through public education, yet the housing shortage meant that in practice they had to conform to the behavioral patterns sanctioned by their parents in multigenerational households. The government wiped out the pillars of institutional racism but in other ways remained prisoner of the very past it sought to erase. It advocated, as previous administrations had before 1959, dealing with race through a gradual and nonconfrontational approach. Furthermore, the authorities' adherence to a conservative interpretation of the national ideology of racial equality, according to which there was no racial problem in Cuba, foreclosed any public discussion of the issue. While some organizations were working in every community across the island to change ingrained cultural practices at the household level, there was no organized voice to prioritize issues of race. For instance, the Federation of Cuban Women worked with communities to eliminate the traditional subordination of women and denounced instances of gender discrimination, but no organization performed a comparable role concerning race discrimination. The Communist Party had become part of

the government. The Afro-Cuban societies had disappeared. There was no competition among political parties for the black vote. And while previous governments had been equally uncomfortable acknowledging the continuing significance of race in Cuban society, no administration before 1959 had been able to silence the issue. Only the revolutionary government, controlling the media, was in the position to impose an effective ban on public discussions of race. Thus the ultimate irony is that the same government that did the most to eliminate racism also did the most to silence discussion about its persistence.

It is also a paradox that three decades after the revolutionary triumph of 1959, when the new generation born and raised in socialist Cuba came of age, the whole experiment began to unravel. As George M. Fredrickson states, the "salience of ethnic status and consciousness" depends on the power relationships between social groups perceived as racially or ethnically different. The access of a subordinate group to physical resources, political power, and cultural recognition can improve its social status and even "gradually erode" the ideological pillars of racism. But the process, as Fredrickson himself notes and the Cuban experience confirms, is, unfortunately, reversible.[3] The generation born around 1959 grew up in a relatively egalitarian environment and was socialized in what was for the most part a color-blind social ethic, but this generation was also raised under the belief that socialism, *patria*, and social justice were all the same thing. In other words, the social unacceptability of racism had been linked to the fortunes and legitimacy of a political regime that by the mid-1990s was lacking both. If instances of discrimination previously had been condemned due to their "counterrevolutionary" character, in the 1990s they became increasingly acceptable precisely because of the progressive discrediting of the regime. In the new social and economic environment, the cumulative social and cultural changes that had taken place since 1959 could not be realized fully. Instead, a new logic of market relations, private economic activities, and exclusive social and recreational spaces began to reappear in Cuban society. One of the most noted symbols of the old bourgeoisie, the elitist Havana Biltmore Yacht and Country Club, reopened in 1997. The first club nationalized by the revolutionary government and turned into a "workers circle" in 1960, it was also the first to reopen, catering as it had in the past to foreign investors and their partners in the island.

The gradual reintroduction of market relations in the 1990s did not have to result in growing social polarization along racial lines, however. That it did is indicative not just of how ingrained perceptions of race are in Cuba's social landscape or of the difficulties involved in uprooting racism from the social consciousness. It is also indicative of how politics and racially neutral government policies (such as the "dollarization" of the 1990s) can lead to growing racial inequality. The creation of a nation that is truly for all requires systematic and consistent state action over a long period of time. Since the early years of the republic they helped create, Afro-Cubans have known this, and they have struggled to be included in the polity. It is unlikely that they will forget this lesson any time soon. In fact, after four decades of massive social mobility, education, and radical integration, Afro-Cubans are better prepared than ever to assert their equal place in society. This might sound overtly optimistic. But it is not just optimism. Rather, it reflects the assertiveness of young Afro-Cubans who are confident about the future. As a black doctor stated in 1992, "We are too educated and politically aware to let go what we have gained. We are not going back."[4]

176. Ramón Coto, "Responde Fidel Castro," *Bohemia*, November 10, 1955, 15, 81–83.
177. Thomas, *Cuba*, 1121; Masferrer and Mesa-Lago, "The Gradual Integration," 373.
178. "Manifesto No. 1 [26th of July Movement] to the People of Cuba" (August 8, 1955), in Bonachea and Valdés, *Revolutionary Struggle*, 270; "Program Manifesto of the 26th of July Movement," in Bonachea and Valdés, *Cuba in Revolution*, 132–33. See also Bonachea and San Martín, *The Cuban Insurrection*, 154–59.
179. Betancourt, *El negro*, 167; Carlos Nicot and Vicente Cubillas, "Relatos inéditos sobre la acción revolucionaria del líder Frank País," *Revolución*, July 30, 1963. For examples of Afro-Cubans participating in the M-26-7 in Santiago, see Nils Castro, "Universidad: 21 aniversario," *Mambí* (October 1968): 94–97.
180. Masferrer had developed this reputation for allowing the publication in his newspaper *Tiempo* of regular columns devoted to black questions. In 1951 an Afro-Cuban club from Havana proposed to organize a function to honor the senator. See Felipe Elosegui, "1000 noticias en sepia," *Tiempo*, December 6, 1951.
181. On Masferrer, see Earl Smith, "Joint Weeka no. 29," Havana, July 17, 1957, USNA, RG 59/737.00(W)/7-1757, and Betancourt, *El negro*, 167. On Vasconcelos, see Luis Manuel Martínez, "Habla Ramón Vasconcelos," *Tiempo*, July 9, 1957.
182. Salvador (Saviur) Cancio Peña, "Temblad, granujas!," *Panfleto*, November 15, 1954; Cancio Peña, "El día del gran Arrastre!," *Panfleto*, December 1, 1954. Note that the expression "mulato malo" was probably used here to denote that Batista was in fact a "dark" mulatto, as opposed to a light "mulato avanzado" or "bueno" in Cuban racial terminology.
183. Daniel Braddock to the Department of State, Havana, August 14, 1959, USNA, RG 59/737.00/8-1459.
184. García Agüero, "Desagravio a Maceo," *Noticias de Hoy*, May 23, 1953; Roca, *Los fundamentos*, 97.
185. Betancourt, *El negro*, 193.
186. Smith to the Secretary of State, Havana, March 25, 1958, USNA, RG 59/737.00/3-2558; Farber, *Revolution and Reaction*, 164–65.

CHAPTER SEVEN

1. *Revolución*, January 3, 1959, quoted in Pérez-Stable, *The Cuban Revolution*, 3.
2. Booth, "Cuba, Color and the Revolution," 155; Thomas, *Cuba*, 1120–21; Masferrer and Mesa-Lago, "The Gradual Integration," 373–74; Fagen, "Revolution," 10–15.
3. This sense of the inevitable is conveyed in Carneado, "La discriminación racial," 60–61.
4. Moore, "Le peuple noir," 199. I have been unable to corroborate these assertions by Moore.
5. See the works mentioned above, note 2.
6. "Unión: Tarea de la hora," *Noticias de Hoy*, January 6, 1959.
7. Daniel Braddock to the Department of State, Havana, February 2, 1959, USNA, RG 59/737.001/2-259; "Carta al ciudadano presidente," *Revolución*, January 31, 1959.

8. Park F. Wollam, "Events in Oriente," Santiago de Cuba, October 11, 1958, USNA, RG 59/737.00/10-1158; "El programa del FONU," *Noticias de Hoy*, January 11, 1959.
9. "Exhorta la CTC," *Revolución*, March 18, 1959.
10. Betancourt, "La cuestión racial," *Revolución*, January 17, 1959, and "Fidel Castro y la integración nacional," *Bohemia*, February 15, 1959, 66, 122–23. See also Gastón Agüero, *Racismo y mestizaje*, and Alcibíades Poveda, "Un problema social en Santiago de Cuba," *Revolución*, February 9, 1959.
11. This information was provided by Cuban historian Carlos Venegas during a conversation with the author in Cienfuegos, March 5, 1998. Venegas is a native of Trinidad. Another historian from Santa Clara, Hernán Venegas, also asserted that this had happened in Santa Clara.
12. These incidents are described in Ricardo Bernal, "La Universidad Central, la reforma agraria y la integración nacional," *Noticias de Hoy*, May 8, 1959. See also the perceptions of an African American journalist about these changes in Ring, *How Cuba Uprooted Race Discrimination*, 12.
13. "Necesitamos paz," *Revolución*, January 23, 1959; "Discurso pronunciado . . . en la Refinería Shell el 6 de febrero de 1959" and "Discurso pronunciado en la Plenaria Nacional convocada por la FNTA el 9 de febrero de 1959," in Castro, *Discursos para la historia*, 1:62, 84.
14. The speech was published entirely in *Noticias de Hoy*, March 24, 1959, and *Revolución*, March 23, 1959.
15. Depestre, "Lettre de Cuba," 121.
16. Gastón Agüero, *Racismo y mestizaje*, 11–13; Foreign Areas Studies Division, *Handbook for Cuba*, 89. César García Pons also mentions the "discomfort" provoked by Castro's speech in "El Dr. Castro y la discriminación," *Diario de la Marina*, March 29, 1959.
17. Fox, "Race and Class," 429.
18. Depestre, "Lettre de Cuba," 121; Gastón Agüero, *Racismo y mestizaje*, 13.
19. The uneasiness of some blacks concerning these drastic social changes is evident in the testimonies gathered by Fox in "Race and Class," 432–34. It is also evident in the anecdote mentioned above concerning the celebration of Martí's birthday in Santa Clara in January 1959. Although most members of El Gran Maceo accepted the invitation of the white social club, some chose not to participate. See Bernal, "La Universidad Central."
20. "¡A ganar la batalla de la discriminación!," *Revolución*, March 26, 1959.
21. The front-page headline in *Diario de la Marina*, March 26, 1959, for instance, read: "Dr. Castro Explained That Racial Discrimination Is an Issue That Requires a Process of Education. To End Discrimination Does Not Mean Forcing Anyone to Dance, If They Don't Want to Dance." The headline published in the *Times of Havana* on the same day read: "Social Changes Take Time."
22. Cuéllar Vizcaíno, "Discriminación," *Nuevos Rumbos* 8 (April 25, 1959): 5–9; Elías Entralgo, "Forum sobre prejuicios étnicos en Cuba," *Nuevos Rumbos* 10 (August 9, 1959); "Campaña contra la discriminación racial," *Revolución*, April 8, 1959.
23. "Integrarán Comité Nacional de Integración," "Habló Ernesto Guevara," and

"Reunión del Comité," *Noticias de Hoy*, March 31, April 7, August 25, 1959; "Anuncian en Marianao," *Revolución*, November 28, 1959; "Ciclo de mesas," *Noticias de Hoy*, September 9, 1960.

24. "Conferencias sobre integración," *Noticias de Hoy*, August 23, 1959; "Hablará el Ministro del Trabajo," *Revolución*, August 29, 1959; "Conferencia," *Revolución*, May 30, 1959.
25. "La unidad de blancos y negros" and "Unidad juvenil," *Noticias de Hoy*, March 25, April 30, 1959; "Reforma de la enseñanza," *Revolución*, April 18, 1959; "Statement of the Cuban Council of Protestant Churches," Havana, July 15, 1959, USNA, RG 59/837.413/7-1759.
26. Bernal, "La universidad central"; "Banquete," *Noticias de Hoy*, May 7, 1959.
27. The following list is only a sample of the coverage provided by *Noticias de Hoy* in 1959: "Cubano es más que blanco," March 28; "Don Fernando," April 4; José Felipe, "Racismo" and "Peligro negro," May 10 and 13; Diego González, "Los reflejos [I, II, III]," March 31, April 5, April 7; García Agüero, "Va bien Fidel," March 24; and Carlos Rafael Rodríguez, "A las filas," March 27.
28. "Zona rebelde: La discriminación racial" and "El humanismo," *Revolución*, March 25, May 23, 1959. *Avance Revolucionario* devoted two regular columns to issues of race in 1959: Roger Fumero's "Glosas del tiempo" and Tello Téllez's "Reflejos sociales." See also Alejandro Acosta, "La discriminación racial," *Sierra Maestra*, November 8, 1959.
29. "Discurso de Raúl Castro," *Noticias de Hoy*, May 3, 1959; "Speech of Ernesto 'Che' Guevara at Santiago de Cuba," Havana, May 4, 1959, USNA, RG 59/737.00–May Day/5-459; Guevara, *Escritos y discursos* 4:45–50; Castro, *Conferencia*, 37–39.
30. Thomas, *Cuba*, 1120–21; Betancourt, "Castro and the Cuban Negro," 272–73. See also Moore's discussion about the meanings of these measures in "Le peuple noir," 208–9.
31. "Se abren las playas," *Revolución*, April 11, 1959; "Mantendrán balnearios privacidad," *Revolución*, February 17, 1959; "Moncada: Siete años después," *Trabajo* 3 (July 1960): 66–71.
32. O. Fernández, "Hermano negro," *Revolución*, August 21, 1959; "Tendrá Santa Clara" and "Nuevo parque," *Revolución*, August 26, November 23, 1959; "Contra la discriminación racial en Cruces," *Noticias de Hoy*, April 1, 1959.
33. "Trascendencia social y humana de los círculos obreros," *Trabajo* 7 (November 1960): 90–93.
34. Ricardo Cardet, "Alegría fraternal," *Combate 13 de Marzo*, October 27, 1961.
35. Roger Fumero, "Glosas del tiempo" and "¿Dos 'Cubanalecos' para qué?," *El Avance Revolucionario*, January 22 and 25, 1960; Tello Téllez, "Reflejos sociales: ¿Dos 'Cubanalecos' para qué?," *El Avance Revolucionario*, February 22, 1960.
36. Tello Téllez, "Reflejos sociales: El extraño silencio de Fraginals" and "Reflejos sociales: ¿Dos 'Cubanalecos' para qué?," *El Avance Revolucionario*, February 17 and 22, 1960; Cardet, "Alegría fraternal."
37. "El humanismo," *Revolución*, May 23, 1959; "Proletarias: La discriminación," *Nuevos Rumbos* 10 (August 9, 1959): 7–9; "Un Comité de Integración en la Beck," *Noticias de Hoy*, May 12, 1959; "Demands . . . Workers in the Distribution of Motion Pictures," Havana, April 22, 1959, USNA, RG 59/837.062/5-459; "Crean Comité de Integración los tabaqueros," *Noticias de Hoy*, April 8, 1959.
38. Ramón de la Cruz to the Manatí Sugar Company, Havana, July 13, 1960, BBC, RG 4, ser. 45, box 2, folder "Labor-Cuba"; Richard Milk to the Secretary of State, Preston, December 24, 1959, USNA, RG 59/737.00/12-2459.
39. "Contra la discriminación los bancarios," *Noticias de Hoy*, April 9, 1959; "Empleará un banco a trabajadores negros," *Revolución*, May 22, 1959; Fumero, "Glosas del tiempo," *El Avance Revolucionario*, March 18, 1960; Roca, *Los fundamentos*, 98.
40. About these practices, see the perceptive article by Lázaro Peña, "Debemos combatir practicamente la discriminación racial desde los sindicatos," *Noticias de Hoy*, March 29, 1959.
41. "Recuento de la labor revolucionaria del Ministerio del Trabajo," *Trabajo* 1 (May 1960): 84–94; Augusto Martínez Sánchez, "Conferencia," *Trabajo* 1 (May 1960): 66–67.
42. Mayfield, "Cuba Has Solution to Race Problem," *Afro-American*, October 1, 1960.
43. "Los nuevos empleos son para los que más los necesitan," *Trabajo* 6 (October 1960): 4–5.
44. Mesa-Lago, "Economic Policies and Growth," in *Revolutionary Change*, 283.
45. Jolly, "The Literacy Campaign," 190–219; "La revolución reivindica a las clases explotadas," *Combate 13 de Marzo*, August 8, 1961. Black participation in the literacy campaign is quite apparent in Manuel Octavio Gómez's documentary *Historia de una batalla* (1962). This visibility was further enhanced by the fact that one of the campaign martyrs—Conrado Benítez, a volunteer teacher who was assassinated by counterrevolutionary bands in the Escambray mountains in 1961—was black.
46. Lewis et al., *Cuatro hombres*, 126–39; "La revolución transforma 'Las Yaguas,'" *Revolución*, February 18, 1959. For Santiago, see Cuba, *Statistics from the Ministry of Social Welfare*, 19.
47. Jolly, "The Literacy Campaign," 210.
48. MacGaffey, "Social Structure and Mobility in Cuba," 106.
49. Zeitlin, *Revolutionary Politics*, 77; "Developments in Cuba since Castro Assumed Power," September 5, 1959, USNA, RG 59/737.00/9-559.
50. Zeitlin, *Revolutionary Politics*, 85, 75; Fox, "Race and Class," 436.
51. Guillén, *¡Patria o muerte!*, 190–95.
52. Zeitlin, *Revolutionary Politics*, 77; Fox, "Race and Class," 427–30.
53. Sutherland, *The Youngest Revolution*, 150.
54. Duharte and Santos, *El fantasma de la esclavitud*, 100–103.
55. "II Declaración de la Habana" (February 4, 1962), in *Documentos de la revolución cubana*, 68; Carneado, "La discriminación racial," 54; Lockwood, *Castro's Cuba*, 128.
56. Sutherland, *The Youngest Revolution*, 149. Both Sutherland (ibid., 146) and Moore ("Le peuple noir," 205) note that the campaign against racism waned after 1962 or 1963. My research confirms these assertions.
57. This was particularly the case after the restructuring of the Integrated Revolutionary Organizations in 1962. See Domínguez, *Cuba: Order and Revolution*, 210–18.
58. Roca, *Los fundamentos*, 98–99.

59. The list of societies was published in *Combate 13 de Marzo*, August 27, September 1, 2, and 8, 1961.
60. "Destituyeron a la Junta Directiva del 'Atenas,'" *Revolución*, January 26, 1959.
61. Betancourt, *El negro*, 156–60. Betancourt recounted this story differently later, asserting that he had been appointed by the government to occupy the federation. See his "Castro and the Cuban Negro," 270–71.
62. "Destituyen a directivos," *Revolución*, March 24, 1959; Roger Fumero, "Deja de ser el Club Marbella un centro separatista," *El Avance Revolucionario*, February 19, 1960.
63. Cuéllar Vizcaíno, "Discriminación"; Roger Fumero, "Glosas del tiempo," *El Avance Revolucionario*, March 24, 1960.
64. Roger Fumero, "Glosas del tiempo" and "Mensaje," *El Avance Revolucionario*, January 20, April 23, 1960. The letter written by Jesús Muñiz was printed in Fumero, "Carta con breve preámbulo," *El Avance Revolucionario*, April 22, 1960.
65. Betancourt, *El negro*, 158–60.
66. Agüero, *Racismo y mestizaje en Cuba*, 226–42; Roger Fumero, "Glosas del tiempo: Más sobre 'Racismo y Mestizaje en Cuba,'" *El Avance Revolucionario*, April 21, 1960.
67. García Agüero, "Negrismo no: Integración," *Noticias de Hoy*, August 26, 1959. See also Betancourt's critique of the Communists in his "Castro and the Cuban Negro," 270–74.
68. "Conferencia sobre integración," "Festival en Aponte," and "Excepcional aporte a la R.A. en Matanzas," *Revolución*, May 30, April 29, June 12, 1959; Tello Téllez, "Reflejos sociales: El homenaje de ayer," *El Avance Revolucionario*, March 1, 1960; "Club Jóvenes del Vals," ANC, Registro de Asociaciones, leg. 1159, no. 24261; "Unión Fraternal de Jaruco," *Noticias de Hoy*, September 30, 1960; Cabrera Torres, *La rehabilitación*.
69. "Club Jóvenes del Vals"; "Unión Fraternal," ANC, Registro de Asociaciones, leg. 1225, nos. 25614–16; "Club Atenas," ANC, Registro de Asociaciones, leg. 1112, nos. 23267–70. The discussion below is based on these sources.
70. "A Guanajay no ha llegado la política justa de la integración nacional," *Noticias de Hoy*, May 10, 1959; Cuéllar Vizcaíno, "Discriminación," *Nuevos Rumbos* 8 (April 25, 1959): 5–9.
71. For an example of this sort of discourse in the clubs, see Tello Téllez, "Palabras para jóvenes," *El Avance Revolucionario*, February 12, 1960.
72. Sutherland, *The Youngest Revolution*, 150. Examples of this "paternalistic attitude" can be found in the leaders' dealings with black counterrevolutionaries, whom they considered double traitors. For examples, see Lavretsky, *Ernesto Che Guevara*, 163, and Montaner, *Informe secreto*, 98–100.
73. Antonieta Henríquez, "Ciclo de conferencias sobre integración racial," and R. Seoane, "En Cuba," *Noticias de Hoy*, August 23 and 30, 1959; "En poder de Urrutia un proyecto para estimular las tradiciones folklóricas," *Noticias de Hoy*, May 24, 1959.
74. "Eligen a Miss Cuba," *Revolución*, July 6, 1959; Daniel M. Braddock to the Department of State, Havana, September 9, 1959, USNA, RG 59/937.61/9-959; "Corona esta noche el Comandante Almeida a la Reina del Carnaval," *El Avance Revolucionario*, February 6, 1960; "Coronará Almeida a reina," *El Crisol*, February 3, 1960.
75. "Muñecas de trapo," *Revolución*, December 10, 1959; H. Núñez Lemus, "La belleza sigue siendo arma femenina," *Combate 13 de Marzo*, October 19, 1961.
76. Betancourt, *El negro*, 86; Cuéllar Vizcaíno, "Discriminación."
77. "Excepcional aporte a la R.A. en Matanzas"; Tello Téllez, "Apuntes sobre un Congreso Abacua," *El Avance Revolucionario*, April 1, 1960.
78. Agüero, *Racismo y mestizaje*, 226–33; Carbonell, *Crítica*, 20, 32–36.
79. For instance, the Dirección General de Cultura of the Ministry of Education published in 1960 the work of racist author Saco, *Colección de papeles científicos, históricos, políticos*. Another printing house, Lex, also published several works by Saco, Luz y Caballero, and Domingo del Monte. For Carbonell's assessment of these authors, see his *Crítica*, 34–40.
80. "Cine cubano: Otra obra de la revolución," *Trabajo* 8 (December 1960): 172–73; Mario Rodríguez Alemán, "Realengo 18," *Combate 13 de Marzo*, August 16, 1961. For an introduction to Cuba's movie industry in the early years of the revolution, see Pat Aufderheide, "Cuba Vision: Three Decades of Cuban Film," in Brenner et al., *The Cuba Reader*, 498–506.
81. Argeliers León, "La expresión del pueblo en el TNC," *Actas del Folklore* 1, no. 1 (January 1961): 5–7. About the Teatro Nacional de Cuba, see Hagerdon, "Anatomía," 219–38.
82. Ramiro Guerra, "Hacia un movimiento de danza nacional," *Lunes de Revolución*, July 13, 1959. See also Salvador Massip's excellent documentary *Historia de un Ballet* (1962), which documents the earliest efforts of Danza Nacional to study and stage Afro-Cuban dances.
83. These included Rogelio Martínez Furé, Miguel Barnet, Rafael López-Valdés, and Alberto Pedro. They all contributed some of their work in the seminar to *Actas del Folklore*.
84. Interview with Cuban anthropologist Rafael López-Valdés by Hagerdon, Havana, December 30, 1991, in Hagerdon, "Anatomía," 222.
85. León, "La expresión del pueblo en el TNC," 5; Carbonell, *Crítica*, 108–12.
86. "Creación del Instituto de Etnología y Folklore," *Actas del Folklore* 1, nos. 10–12 (October–December 1961): 33–35; Enrique González Manet, "Transforma la revolución las costumbres del cubano," *Bohemia*, May 11, 1962, 16–18, 97.
87. Martínez Furé, *Conjunto Folklórico Nacional*, and "Obra de fundación," in *Diálogos imaginarios*, 248–56.
88. Moore, "Le peuple noir," 218–19. The critique of "folklorization" was shared by some of the Afro-Cuban intellectuals interviewed in Sutherland, *The Youngest Revolution*, 151.
89. The same assumption was behind the foundation of the Santería Museum in Guanabacoa in 1964. About this institution, see José Luis Hernández, "El Museo de Guanabacoa," *Areíto* 1, no. 3 (July 1988): 8–12.
90. This assertion is made in Moore, "Le peuple noir," 219.

91. About the relations between church and state in post-1959 Cuba, see Kirk, *Between God and Party* (for the 1961 conflict, see 102–9), and Crahan, "Freedom of Worship," 211–19.
92. Kirk, *Between God and Party*, 127–43. The rapprochement was facilitated by a number of public documents released by the Catholic Church, reprinted in Hageman and Wheaton, *Religion in Cuba*, 279–308.
93. Domínguez, "Racial and Ethnic Relations," 280.
94. "Ciencia y religión: La santería," *El Militante Comunista* (October 1968): 82–90.
95. Bernabe Hernández, *Superstición* (1964), film; "Santería," *Trabajo Político* 4 (December 1968): 48–57.
96. "Los ñáñigos o abakuá," *P.N.R.* (January–March 1972): 2–16; "La Sociedad Secreta Abakuá (Ñáñigos)," *Revista Jurídica* 1 (1969): 13–24.
97. The author of "Ciencia y religión: La santería," for instance, asserted that practitioners disguised their ritual colors in watch bracelets (87).
98. Excerpts of the cases discussed below are taken from "La Sociedad Secreta Abakuá," 18–24.
99. Some authors have denied, however, that Santería was ever repressed, claiming that state opposition was due to counterrevolutionary activities. See Miguel Barnet, "Algunas palabras necesarias," *Areíto* 1, no. 3 (July 1988): 5–7.
100. "Sociedad Santa Bárbara, Cienfuegos," AHPC, Registro de Asociaciones, leg. 9, no. 201; "Sociedad Espiritista Casino Africano San Antonio, Santa Isabel de las Lajas," AHPC, Registro de Asociaciones, leg. 54, no. 6. Of course, some societies were never canceled, such as Hijos de San Antonio and Hijos de San Lázaro, both from Guanabacoa. See Ramón Valdés Guanche, "La Asociación Hijos de San Antonio," *Areíto* 1, no. 3 (July 1988): 20–22, and "En el munanso simbilico con el Tata Enkise," *Areíto* 1, no. 3 (July 1988): 23–24.
101. This is based on the dossier of the Sociedad Espiritista Casino Africano San Antonio.
102. Santera Coralia Crespo, interviewed by the author, Havana, March 13, 1998; Babalao Carlos Terry Calderón, interviewed by the author, Cienfuegos, March 6, 1998. The opposition to minors' participation in the Afro-Cuban religions is also evident in "La Sociedad Secreta Abakuá," 17.
103. The movie quoted is *De cierta manera* (1974), directed by Sara Gómez. For a good analysis of this and other movies concerning questions of race, see Martínez-Echazábal, "The Politics of Afro-Cuban Religion," 16–22. For the Ministry of Health information, see McGarrity, "Race, Culture, and Social Change," 199.
104. The Sábados de la Rumba were organized in 1982, but Saturday performances of the CFN began in 1975. See Martínez Furé, "Obra de fundación," in *Diálogos imaginarios*, 255–56.
105. On Mendive's work, see Martínez Furé, "Manuel Mendive: Los pinceles de Elegba" (1968), in *Diálogos imaginarios*, 243–47, and the documentary *Motivations* (1988), dir. Marisol Trujillo.
106. For introductions to the question of race in literature, see García Barrio, "The Black in Post-Revolutionary Cuban Literature," 263–70, and Olliz-Boyd, "Race Relations in Cuba," 225–33. Some important texts of the period, such as a section of Granados's *Adire y el tiempo roto* (1967) and a poem of Excilia Saldaña (1967), have been translated into English and reproduced in Pérez Sarduy and Stubbs, *Afrocuba*. Nancy Morejón is one of the authors whose work is well known, particularly her superb poem "Mujer Negra," which was published in English in "The Poems of Nancy Morejón," *Black Scholar* (Summer 1983): 50–53. On Morejón's work, see Efraín Barradas, "La negritud hoy: Nota sobre la poesía de Nancy Morejón," *Areíto* 6, no. 24 (1980): 33–39, and Howe, "Nancy Morejón's 'Mujer Negra,'" 95–107.
107. Mariano Faget to Dwight Eisenhower, Miami, November 27, 1959, USNA, RG 59/737.00/11-2759; "Discurso de Fidel Castro en el Congreso Nacional de la FNTA," *Revolución*, December 15, 1959; Park F. Wollam, "Events in Oriente Province," Santiago de Cuba, June 17, 1959, USNA, RG 59/737.00/6-1759.
108. "150 Newsmen Get Cuban Invitation" and "Adam C. Powell among Visitors," *Chicago Defender*, January 21 and 22, 1959.
109. "Castro, Joe Louis Confer in Havana," *Chicago Defender*, January 4, 1960; "Castro Opens Cuba's Doors for U.S. Negro Tourist Trade," *Pittsburgh Courier*, January 16, 1960. See also Gosse, "The African-American Press," 266–80.
110. Clarke, "Journey to the Sierra Maestra," *Freedomways* (Spring 1961): 32–35; Jones, "Cuba libre," in *Home*, 11–62; Ring, *How Cuba Uprooted Race Discrimination*, 6–9; Mayfield, "Cuba Has Solution to Race Problem," *Afro-American*, October 1, 1960.
111. The reactions of the black press to the Cuban revolution are studied in Gosse, "The African-American Press," 266–80, and Ring, *How Cuba Uprooted Race Discrimination*, 6–14.
112. Mayfield, "Cuba Has Solution." For additional examples, see Gosse, "The African-American Press," 271–72.
113. Steve Duncan, "Premier Talks to Afro," and Alvin White, "Fidel Calls Harlem 'An Oasis in Dessert,'" *Afro-American*, October 1, 1960. On Castro's visit to Harlem, see also Gosse, *Where the Boys Are*, 149–51; Rosemari, *Fidel and Malcolm X*; and Moore, *Castro, the Blacks, and Africa*, 78–82, which describes these events as "The Harlem Show."
114. Mayfield, "The Cuban Challenge," *Freedomways* (Summer 1961): 185. A similar point was made in the editorial "Castro Visit," *Afro-American*, October 1, 1960.
115. "Declaration," *Afro-American*, April 29, 1961, reprinted in Ring, *How Cuba Uprooted Race Discrimination*, 15. About the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, see Gosse, *Where the Boys Are*, 137–73.
116. Gosse, *Where the Boys Are*, 152–54.
117. "NAACP Hits Official's Support of Castro Rule," *Afro-American*, April 22, 1961; "Invites Castro to Visit South," *Chicago Defender*, September 27, 1960.
118. U.S. Congress, Committee on the Judiciary, *The Tricontinental Conference* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1966), 7, in Robert F. Williams Papers, box 11, CIA Documents, 1961–68, University of Michigan, Bentley Historical Library, Ann Arbor, Michigan; George Roberts, "Castro Arming Southern Negroes," *National Police Gazette* (July 1965): 5, 18, in Williams Papers, box 7, Clippings 1963–66.

119. Cleaver, *Soul on Ice*, 108; Brent, *Long Time Gone*, 131–46; Pearson, *The Shadow*, 268–75; Shakur, *Assata*, 266–74.
120. Cleaver, *Soul on Ice*, 107. U.S. authorities claimed that African Americans were being trained in terrorist tactics in Cuba. For a few examples, see U.S. Congress, Committee on the Judiciary, *The Tricontinental Conference*, 6–7.
121. Castro, *Discursos en los aniversarios de los CDR*, 102–3; Huey Newton, "Black Power and the Revolutionary Struggle," *Tricontinental* 3 (November 1968): 5–12; George Murray and Joudon M. Ford, "Black Panthers: The Afro-Americans' Challenge," *Tricontinental* 10 (January–February 1969): 96–111. For concrete examples of endorsement of armed violence versus pacifist approaches by the Cubans, see "Legítima lucha del negro Norteamericano," *OLAS* 5 (1966): 5–7, and "The Rebellion of North American Black People," *Tricontinental* 3 (September 1968): 57–58.
122. "Radio Free Dixie Broadcasts to U.S.A." (October 13, 1962), Williams Papers, box 11, CIA Documents, 1962–68, folder 2; Cruise, *Rebellion or Revolution?*, 94, 105–10. For a discussion of the colonial thesis of black America, see Haines, *Black Radicals*, 57–70.
123. James Forman, "Estados Unidos 1967: Marea Alta de Resistencia Negra," *Tricontinental* 6 (May–June 1968): 22–51. On Carmichael's visit to Cuba, see also Carson, *In Struggle*, 274–76.
124. The details of Cuban involvement in Africa are fairly well known and will not be reproduced here. By far the best-documented study of the Cuban Africa policy during this period is Moore's highly controversial *Castro, the Blacks, and Africa*. For Che's participation in the war in the Congo, see Taibo II et al., *El año que estuvimos en ninguna parte*. For the Cuban participation in the independence of Guinea-Bissau, see Gleijeses, "The First Ambassadors," 45–88. On Castro's visit to Africa, see *El futuro es el internacionalismo*, 11–102.
125. Examples of this media campaign are too numerous to cite here. Typical are the popular documentaries of Santiago Alvarez: *Now* (1965) and *LBJ* (1968).
126. Williams to Castro, Peking, August 23, 1966, Williams Papers, box 11, CIA Documents 1961–68; Cleaver, *Soul on Ice*, 107–9; Moore, *Castro, the Blacks, and Africa*, 260–62; Clytus, *Black Man in Red Cuba*.
127. Carson, *In Struggle*, 274–75.
128. On the rejection of Afro hairstyles, see Sutherland, *The Youngest Revolution*, 152–53, and Saul Landau, "A New Twist on Race in Cuba," 53.
129. Sutherland, *The Youngest Revolution*, 154–55, 162–63. The effort of these Afro-Cuban intellectuals is mentioned in Booth, "Cuba, Color and the Revolution," 172 n. 126, and Moore, *Castro, the Blacks, and Africa*, 307–12. Moore cites other cases of black organizing (see ibid., 304–16), but his information relies on individual oral sources that are difficult to confirm.
130. Moore, *Catro, the Blacks, and Africa*.
131. To mention but one indicator of this presence, between 1974 and 1980 eleven heads of state of African countries visited Cuba, and the island established diplomatic relations with twelve African states. In 1980 Cuba was also visited by Jamaica's Michael Manley (twice) and by Grenada's Maurice Bishop. In turn, Fidel Castro returned to Africa in 1976, 1977, and 1978, visiting thirteen countries in all. He also visited Jamaica in 1977. See Franklin, *Cuba and the United States*, 107–65. The social and cultural effects of Cuba's involvement in Africa might be contradictory, however. For many Cubans, this experience might have reinforced stereotypes about the "primitiveness" and "inferiority" of Africans and of blacks more generally. Derogatory remarks about Angolans were quite common among Cubans who returned from civilian and military missions there. This is a theme that needs further research.
132. Taylor, "Revolution, Race," 19–41. Castro's quote is taken from "En el congreso del pueblo," *Bohemia*, January 2, 1976, 55. On the relations between Cuba, Africa, and the Caribbean during the 1970s and 1980s, see Domínguez, *To Make a World Safe*; Falk, *Cuban Foreign Policy*; and Erisman and Kirk, *Cuba's International Relations*.
133. These figures are taken from Pedraza's "Cuba's Refugees," 273–75. Also of interest concerning the initial migration waves are Aguirre, "Differential Migration," and Fagen and Brody, "Cubans in Exile."
134. Dunn, *Black Miami*, 171–241.
135. "Refugee Problem" and "Negroes Losing Jobs to Cuban Refugees," *Miami Times*, November 11, December 16, 1961.
136. This assertion is based on a careful reading of the section "Street Talk" published in the *Miami Times* in 1993–98. Even when dealing with nonrelated subjects, African American residents frequently refer to the Cubans and the advantages they have received.
137. Dave Bondu, "Around Miami," *Miami Times*, May 26, 1967; "Riots Are Efforts of Communist Infiltration" and R. Gibson, "Letter to the Editor," *Miami Times*, August 4 and 11, 1967; John Egerton, "Cubans in Miami: A Third Dimension in Racial and Cultural Relations" (1969), in Cortés, *The Cuban Experience*, 4, 13, 23.
138. Marable, "The Fire This Time," 2–18.
139. On the 1980 riot and its connection to the Mariel influx, see Porter and Dunn, *The Miami Riot*, and Portes and Stepick, *City on the Edge*, 18–60.
140. About the characterization of the Mariel exiles as scum, see "Imágenes de Mariel," *Bohemia*, May 2, 1980, 54–59; "Noticias de Mariel. El tiempo sigue mejorando y la escoria navegando" and "Fidel, el primero de mayo," *Bohemia*, May 9, 1980, 44–45, 51–59. For an academic attempt to depict these emigrants as *escoria*, see Hernández and Gomis, "Retrato del Mariel," 124–51.
141. "En el 'paraíso' capitalista," *Cuba Internacional* 127 (June 1980): 9; Mario Kuchilan Sol, "¡Helos allí en su 'paraíso'!," *Bohemia*, June 13, 1980, 78–80; Julio A. Martí, "Una celda para Santy," *Cuba Internacional* (January 1991): 51–54.
142. Strong evidence supports this claim. For a good summary, see Portes and Stepick, *City on the Edge*, 22–37.
143. Elice Higginbotham, "The New Immigrants" and "The Difficulties of Resettlement," *Cubatimes* 1, no. 2 (Summer 1980): 23–26; 1, no. 3 (Fall 1980): 7–10; Portes and Stepick, "Unwelcome Immigrants," 493–514; Alma Guillermo Prieto, "Cubans of 1980 'Freedom Flotilla' Encountering Hardships," *Washington Post*, July 18, 1984.
144. "Cuban Exile Leaders Going to Angola," *Washington Post*, March 26, 1988; Mirta

Ojito, "Miami Medics Aid Angola Rebels," *Miami Herald*, February 6, 1988; Leonardo Cano, "Propaganda anticubana," *Bohemia*, July 20, 1990, 62–64; Jaime Suchlicki, "Do We Really Want Angola Agreement?," *Miami Herald*, August 21, 1988.

145. Portes and Stepick, *City on the Edge*, 176–78; Alfonso Chardy, "Blacks, Cubans See Mandela Trip in Different Ways," *Miami Herald*, July 27, 1991; Mimi Whitefield, "Mandela Salutes Cuba," *Miami Herald*, July 27, 1991; Whitefield, "Mandela Defends Bond with Castro, Rejects Criticism by S. Florida Exiles," *Miami Herald*, July 28, 1991; Lee Hockstader, "Castro Heaps Praise on Visiting Mandela," *Washington Post*, July 28, 1991.
146. Félix Pita Astudillo, "Emigration, 'Exile' and Political Manipulation," *Granma International*, April 27, 1994. On the image of Miami in the Cuban media, see also Cano, "Propaganda anticubana"; Nicanor León Cotayo, "Los agoreros de Miami," *Granma*, March 16, 1990; and Andrés Gomez, "Miami," *Granma*, January 5, 1994.
147. "A ese 'horno de iras,' ¡jamás!," *Granma*, May 6, 1992; Vincent James, "Black Cubans Call for Change," *Christian Science Monitor*, June 16, 1992.
148. For a summary of various estimates and the implications of this debate, see Moore, *Castro, the Blacks, and Africa*, 359–62.
149. Robert del Quiaro, "Five Faces of Cuba," *Washington Post*, February 11, 1973; Mayra Beatriz, "Amor: En blanco y negro," *Somos Jóvenes* (February 1990): 2–9. The best study of interracial couples in Cuba is Nadine Fernandez, "Race, Romance, and Revolution."
150. For numerous examples of how these ideas permeate popular consciousness, see Duharte and Santos, *El fantasma de la esclavitud*, 82–83, 95, 105–7.
151. For a discussion of how these figures were estimated, see de la Fuente, "Race and Inequality," 131–68. For sources, see table 7.1.
152. Moore, "Le peuple noir," 209. On the perception of other Afro-Cuban intellectuals, see Cuéllar Vizcaíno, "Discriminación," and Betancourt, *El negro*, 167–68.
153. Given that they are based on picture identification and sources that are far from adequate, these figures should be regarded as only tentative estimates. See Domínguez, "Racial and Ethnic Relations," 283; Montaner, *Informe secreto*, 107–8; and Domínguez, "Revolutionary Politics," 33. Figures for the provincial bureaus were obtained through picture identification from "Asambleas de balance," *El Militante Comunista* (June 1974): 24–191.
154. "El nuevo secretariado ejecutivo nacional de la CTC," *Bohemia*, November 23, 1973, 54–55; Casal, *Revolution and Race*, 16–20; Cuba, CEE, *Censo . . . La población de Cuba*, 117–18.
155. "Speech by President Fidel Castro Ruz at the Closing Ceremony of the Third PCC Congress" (February 7, 1986), in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report, Latin America* 6:027, February 10, 1986, 10–22; Castro, *Informe Central*, 503; Nelson Valdés, "The Changing Face of Cuba's Communist Party," *Cuba Update* 7, nos. 1–2 (Spring 1986): 1, 4, 16.
156. On the housing shortage, see Mesa-Lago, *The Economy of Socialist Cuba*, 162–64.
157. These figures are taken from Cuba, CEE, *Censo 1981*, 3:cxxi–cxliv.

158. Since the early 1960s these areas were considered sites for marginality and antisocial behavior. Youths from these areas, many of whom were black, were singled out for participation in various reeducation efforts. For a graphic example of this policy, see ICAIC's 1968 documentary, *Una isla para Miguel*.
159. For a view of these barrios, see José Luis Sanchez's documentary, *El Fanguito* (1990).
160. As coordinator of a research team of the attorney general of Cuba, I had the opportunity to visit these areas in 1987 and talk to the residents. Our results were included in an (unpublished) report entitled "Focos delictivos en la Habana."
161. Cuba, MININT, Sección de Estadística, *Informe*.
162. U.N., Economic and Social Council, Commission on Human Rights, *Consideration of the Report of the Mission Which Took Place in Cuba in Accordance with Commission Decision 1988/106* (E/CN.4/1989/46), 29, 319.
163. Evenson, *Revolution in the Balance*, 156–58.
164. Alejandro de la Fuente and Alejandro Vázquez, "La peligrosidad en ciudad de la Habana (1986)," unpublished report to the Office of the Attorney General, 1987.
165. This reality was acknowledged by the minister of interior in 1987. See "Palabras del Diputado a la Asamblea Nacional y Ministro del Interior José Abrahantes," in Cuba, MININT, *Una política consecuente*, 11–27.

CHAPTER EIGHT

1. For an introduction to the economic situation under the "rectification" and "special" periods, see Mesa-Lago, *Breve historia económica*, 127–74.
2. The first speech is quoted in Douglas Farah, "Cuba Opts to Legalize the Dollar," *Washington Post*, July 25, 1993, the second in "Con los que aman y fundan," *Correo de Cuba* (1995): 46. Concerning the reforms introduced by the Cuban government, see Mesa-Lago, *Are Economic Reforms Propelling Cuba to the Market?*
3. Mimi Whitefield, "Blacks' Support for Castro Erodes," *Miami Herald*, August 9, 1993.
4. For a discussion of the methods, coverage, and results of this survey, see de la Fuente and Glasco, "Are Blacks Getting 'Out of Control'?," 53–71.
5. Concerning the racial composition of the Cuban community in the United States, see Pedraza, "Cuba's Refugees," 273–75.
6. Cuba, CEE, *Censo . . . La población de Cuba*, 119.
7. De la Fuente and Glasco, "Are Blacks Getting 'Out of Control'?," 62–64. This perception is shared by some of the informants in Serrano, "Mujer, instrucción, ocupación y color de la piel," 119–31.
8. Duharte and Santos, *El fantasma de la esclavitud*, 126–27.
9. De la Fuente and Glasco, "Are Blacks Getting 'Out of Control'?," 65.
10. Duharte and Santos, *El fantasma de la esclavitud*, 126.
11. A Cuban official who requested to remain anonymous confirmed this rumor in a personal conversation with the author in 1996. One of the informants in Duharte and Santos, *El fantasma de la esclavitud*, 124, asserts that this had been a "big scandal" and that the hotel's manager had to apologize on television. On labor conflicts in the Habana Libre, see Clissold, "Balancing Economic Efficiency." In

"Cuba's Employment Conundrum," Clissold also reports the rumor that whites were being preferred over blacks in hotel positions.

12. "Climent Guitart: A Hotelier Moves into Cuba," *Cubanews* 2, no. 1 (January 1994): 11; Gunn, "Cuba's Employment Conundrum."
13. I thank Carmen Diana Deere for sharing this information with me.
14. One Cuban economist estimated that the income gap grew from 4:1 in 1989 to 25:1 in 1995 (quoted by Gunn, "Cuba's Employment Conundrum").
15. Fernandez, "The Color of Love," 99–117; Fernandez, "Race, Romance, and Revolution."
16. De la Fuente and Glasco, "Are Blacks Getting 'Out of Control'?," 62–64; Alvarado, "Estereotipos y prejuicios raciales," 89–115.
17. U.S. data are taken from Schuman, Steeh, and Bobo, *Racial Attitudes in America*.
18. Hernández, "Raza y prejuicio racial en Santa Clara," 75–86.
19. Alina Martínez Triay, "En el centenario de la abolición de la esclavitud," *El Militante Comunista* (October 1986): 14–23; Mayra Beatriz, "Amor: En blanco y negro," *Somos Jóvenes* (February 1990): 2–9; Esther Mosak, "Al tiempo hay que ayudarlo," *Cuba Internacional* 258 (June 1991): 34–36.
20. Alvarado, "Relaciones raciales en Cuba," 37–43; Guanche, "Etnicidad y racialidad," 51–57; Caño, "Relaciones raciales," 58–65. See also the testimonies of Cuban scholars quoted in Pedro Juan Gutiérrez, "Razas: Diferentes pero iguales," *Bohemia* 89, no. 2 (1997): 8–13.
21. Andrews, *Blacks and Whites*, 168.
22. Duharte and Santos, *El fantasma de la esclavitud*, 118–19, 99.
23. Ibid., 132–33; Esther Mosak, "White Mirrors: Film and Television Workers Talk about Racial Representation," *Cuba Update* (November 1991): 28–30.
24. This discussion relies on the testimonies of some television workers compiled by Duharte and Santos in *El fantasma de la esclavitud*, 132–35, and on Mosak, "White Mirrors," 28–30.
25. For a discussion of racial jokes in the island, see Fernandez, "Race, Romance, and Revolution," 152–59.
26. Fernandez, "Back to the Future? Women and Tourism in Cuba," paper presented at the meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Washington, D.C., November 19–23, 1997; Elena Díaz, Esperanza Fernández, and Tania Caram, "Turismo y prostitución en Cuba," unpublished paper, Havana, FLACSO, 1996.
27. Davidson, "Sex Tourism in Cuba," 39–48; Davidson and Sanchez Taylor, *Child Prostitution and Sex Tourism*, 24–25.
28. Coco Fusco, "Hustling for Dollars," *Ms.* (September–October 1996): 62–70.
29. Testimony of a white male professional, thirty-nine years old, interviewed by the author, Havana, August 1998.
30. Pablo Alfonso, "Torrente de dólares del exilio a Cuba," *El Nuevo Herald*, January 9, 1996.
31. Genevieve Howe, "Cuba: Regulating Revolution," *Z Magazine* (April 1998): 32–38.
32. For the first testimony, see note 29 above; the second is quoted in Howe, "Cuba: Regulating Revolution," 37.
33. This assertion, which one hears often in Cuba, is made by independent journalist Manuel Vázquez Portal in "In Cuba: It's a Crime to Be Black," *Miami Herald*, December 1, 1998.
34. For a discussion of the Malecón riot, see de la Fuente and Glasco, "Are Blacks Getting 'Out of Control'?," 53–54. For a reaction in the Cuban press that labeled participants "lumpen," see Marcos Alfonso, "Tranquilidad en la capital," *Juventud Rebelde*, August 7, 1994.
35. Cuba, Partido Comunista de Cuba, *Proyecto*, 6–8.
36. These are tentative figures, created using picture identification. See "Comité Central del PCC," *Granma*, October 11, 1997, and Cuba, Partido Comunista de Cuba, *IV Congreso*, 364–90.
37. "Los candidatos del pueblo," *Granma*, February 2–6, 1993; "Los candidatos del pueblo," *Granma*, December 19–23, 1997. *Granma* published a detailed profile of the candidates in 1997 but did not include race: Marcos Alfonso, "Radiografía electoral," December 9, 1997.
38. See de la Fuente, "Silence, Race, and the 'Special Period': An Update," *Cuban Affairs* 5, nos. 1–2 (Spring–Summer 1999): 3, 13. For Cuban officials' acknowledgment of the problem, see Susana Lee, "El primer requisito," *Granma*, April 23, 1999.
39. For examples of this assertion, see William Raspberry, "Black Cubans and Castro," *Washington Post*, May 24, 1995; "Black Cubans Fear U.S. Racism," *Miami Herald*, October 10, 1994; and Ricardo González, "¿Por qué no hay balseros negros?," *El Nuevo Herald*, September 12, 1994.
40. Mimi Whitefield and Mary B. Sheridan, "Encuesta intenta medir pulso," *El Nuevo Herald*, December 18, 1994; "Gallup Poll in Cuba," *Cuba Update* (February–March 1995): 9; de la Fuente and Glasco, "Are Blacks Getting 'Out of Control'?," 67–68.
41. See Whitefield and Sheridan, "Encuesta"; de la Fuente and Glasco, "Are Blacks Getting 'Out of Control'?," 60–62; Alvarado, "Estereotipos y prejuicios raciales," 107–9; and Hernández, "Raza y prejuicio racial en Santa Clara," 78–80.
42. I am deeply grateful to Engineer Norberto Mesa Carbonell, the founder of the Cofradía de la Negritud, for sharing with me the organization's program and additional information.
43. Pablo Alfonso, "Mensaje de la iglesia metodista," *El Nuevo Herald*, September 28, 1993; Orlando Márquez, "Entrevista al Eminentísimo Señor Cardenal Jaime Ortega Alamino," *Verdad y Esperanza* (January 1998): 4–8.

EPILOGUE

1. "Fustigó el Presidente Prío a la práctica de la discriminación," *El Mundo*, December 9, 1951; "La tierra que Usted acaba de pisar se honra," *Granma*, January 22, 1998.
2. Patterson, *The Ordeal of Integration*, 193.
3. Fredrickson, *The Comparative Imagination*, 87–88.
4. Quoted in Vincent James, "Black Cubans Call for Change," *Christian Science Monitor*, June 16, 1992.