

The Buena Vista Social Club

The Racial Politics of Nostalgia

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THIS ESSAY WILL examine the popularity and success of the *Buena Vista Social Club* documentary and music collection in the United States in order to evaluate the role of popular culture in shaping political discourse. It is my premise that the *Buena Vista Social Club* is a narrative of an ahistorical nostalgia for a prerevolutionary Cuba that was presumably more appreciative of its Black talent than socialist Cuba, and thereby ends up serving as a justification for the unilateral reentry of U.S. corporate interests into the affairs of Cuba.¹

Cultural studies theorists have long observed that popular culture can "legitimate exploitative social hierarchies."² Specifically, popular culture can perpetuate societal power relations through the vehicle of narrative. Some scholars conceive of culture as a "contested narrative field" containing symbolically charged elements with ideological significance.³ Culture is thus a valuable area of analysis even for legal academics such as myself who traditionally confine ourselves to the textual analysis of court opinions and statutes.⁴ What is particularly rewarding about the inquiry into Cuban popular music is the manner in which it helps to elucidate issues of discrimination and racial conflict given the overrepresentation of Afro-Cubans within Cuban music.⁵

THE BUENA VISTA SOCIAL CLUB NARRATIVE

The *Buena Vista Social Club* is a 1997 album of newly recorded Afro-Cuban *son* pieces produced by the U.S. conglomerate Warner Music

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Company. The album won a Grammy Award in 1998 and has become one of the best-selling world music albums of all time.⁶ The *Buena Vista Social Club* is also the title of the documentary that was produced in 1999, which interviewed the musicians in Cuba and filmed them as they performed in the United States and Europe.

The popularly depicted narrative of how the *Buena Vista Social Club* came to be is as follows:

North American guitarist Ry Cooder decided to seek out talented musicians in Cuba to revitalize the forgotten music of *son* that made Cuba great before the socialist revolution.⁷ If not for the intervention of Ry Cooder, the talented members of the ensemble he put together would have perished without national recognition. In fact, lead singer Ibrahim Ferrer would still be shining shoes for a living had it not been for the heroic efforts of Ry Cooder.⁸ Ry Cooder discovered Cuban musical treasures that the nation itself had overlooked.⁹

What is missing from this finely spun tale ("the BVSC narrative") is any demonstration of agency on the part of the Afro-Cuban musicians themselves and the respect they garnered within Cuban society of their own accord. For instance, the narrative completely omits the role of Afro-Cuban bandleader Juan de Marcos González, the individual who masterminded and facilitated the collaboration. (de Marcos González briefly appears as a nonspeaking background figure in the documentary, leaving the viewer to conclude that he might be a friend of the musicians who wanted to listen in at the recording session). Yet, long before the arrival of Cooder, de Marcos González had contacted many of the veteran musicians who appear on the BVSC album for a project of the Afro-Cuban All Stars entitled *A todo Cuba le gusta* (All of Cuba likes it).¹⁰ In fact, Cooder's original intention had been to record an album in Cuba with African and Cuban guitarists. But when the African guitarists were unable to arrive in Cuba, Cooder's record label approached de Marcos González for assistance. It was de Marcos González who then reconceived the project to focus on the Afro-Cuban musical tradition of *son* with the musicians who he already had a working relationship with.¹¹ In short, Cooder did not discover nor did he "pluck" the musicians off the streets of Havana as depicted in the U.S. popular press.¹²

Furthermore, the characterization of lead singer Ibrahim Ferrer as

so unappreciated and destitute that he was forced to shine shoes overlooks the fact that his principal source of income was his government pension. Unlike musicians in the United States, Cuban musicians are state employees with the security of a pension and other government benefits when they choose to retire.¹³ Ferrer himself explains, "I was retired. I didn't need to shine shoes for money. I've always been a restless guy. You can ask my wife. I have to stay busy."¹⁴ Similarly, contrary to the BVSC narrative of atrophied musicians, pianist Rubén González had never stopped performing. His reduction in the number of performances was due to arthritis.¹⁵ In addition to portraying the elderly musicians as discarded by Cuban society, the BVSC narrative refers to *son* as the forgotten music of the 1940s. Yet the one female vocalist on the album, Omara Portuondo, has explicitly affirmed that "there have always been people performing it, like Rubén, and Cachao, the bass player—all these people who have kept playing."¹⁶ Furthermore, the Cuban government has facilitated the continued performance of *son* music as part of its overarching national commitment to the development of the arts.¹⁷

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So why is Ry Cooder glorified in the U.S. popular press and the BVSC documentary when the facts themselves contradict Cooder's self-aggrandized role? The narrative's focus on Cooder serves to create a colonial myth of Cooder as "discoverer/conqueror" of native resources that have gone unappreciated and are more effectively channeled by a North American figure. Cooder's own descriptions of his attraction to working with musicians in the Afro-Cuban *son* tradition position Cooder as foreign explorer in opposition to an "unspoiled" indigenous Other. For instance, when interviewed on the television broadcast of *The Newshour with Jim Lehrer*, Cooder stated,

I love the music because it is purely emotional, and then it has a certain mysterious other side. . . . But when you are around him [Ibrahim Ferrer] or around these folks, what you begin to see is they have retained some humanity that is very out in front. It is very well-worn, you know. This guy comes in this aura of humanity. . . . His music comes from inside, it's from direct experience. . . . He didn't buy it in a

mall, so his culture has not been replaced, as people outside in the rest of the world have often forfeited and given up their culture, and they don't even know it.¹⁸

Cooder in effect equates the isolation of the U.S. trade embargo with being sheltered from the political and commodifying aspects of the international music industry.¹⁹ Yet Cuban artists are quite cognizant of the commercial influences on their artistry. *BVSC* creator Juan de Marcos González himself has conceded that he implicitly acquiesced to Cooder's propagation of the colonial myth for the purpose of ensuring the commercial success of the collaboration.²⁰ Other Cuban artists have also expressed concern about the commercial pressure to "self-exoticize" in order to ensure financial success.²¹

The documentary furthers the image of the Afro-Cuban musicians as spiritual and emblematic of a more authentic humanity when singer Ibrahim Ferrer is interviewed in his home and the camera focuses great attention on artifacts and tokens symbolic of the Afro-Cuban religion Santería (which many Cubans maintain in their homes whether or not they are firm adherents of Santería).²² Yet when Ferrer himself was questioned about spiritual issues, he stated, "I don't understand anything about Santería."²³ Nevertheless, the CD's liner notes go on to describe him as a "shy and unassuming man with a strong faith."²⁴ The reference to his presumed faith in Santería acts as a metonym for his authenticity that in turn facilitates the commodification of African-based spirituality for the sale of Afro-Cuban music.²⁵ Cooder is thus positioned as the foreign outside observer who can truly appreciate the authenticity of the Afro-Cuban indigenous "Other" constructed in the documentary. The *BVSC* narrative constructs the Afro-Cuban *son* musicians as "Other" precisely because their presumed authenticity stands in marked contrast to the ennui of the observer from an industrialized nation.²⁶

It is in this way that the *BVSC* can be viewed as suffering from the same ills as ethnographic cinema so vividly depicted by cultural studies commentator Fatimah Tobing Rony.²⁷ In analyzing the films that have accompanied the development of anthropology as a discipline, Rony concludes that the ethnographic depictions of people of color as embodying and conferring authenticity and spirituality, best illustrated by the myth of the Noble Savage, serve as an antidote to the alienation engendered by industrialized modernity.²⁸ Central to the ethnographic

spectacle that Rony describes is the nostalgic reconstruction of a more authentic humanity centered in the unspoiled primitive.

Indeed, the very musical form Cooder seeks to excavate like a colonial explorer in his self-described musical "treasure hunt"²⁹ is a genre of dance music created at the end of the nineteenth century by Afro-Cubans who were for the most part illiterate and not formally trained as musicians.³⁰ Their lack of formal education facilitates a characterization of *son* musicians as "feeling" artists who are "unspoiled" and thus subject to discovery. In contrast, contemporary Afro-Cuban music is being developed by musicians who have been formally trained with conservatory educations provided by the socialist government.³¹ As a consequence, younger Cuban musicians have been disturbed by the level of international attention focused on older *son* musicians while contemporary Afro-Cuban music is ignored.³² Cuban musicians note that the foreign interest in Afro-Cuban music "has been propelled by the Cuban music of a bygone era."³³ Furthermore, the *BVSC* focus on prerevolutionary musical styles completely overlooks the upbeat and nationalistic character of most popular songs in contemporary Cuban dance music that chronicle the life on the island today and its changes.³⁴ But of course the more politicized content of contemporary Afro-Cuban music does not lend itself as easily to the colonial fantasy of discovering unspoiled native talents.³⁵

The *BVSC* colonial fantasy of discovery and conquest reverberates within the larger Cuban music industry context in which the United States and European countries compete to stake a claim in much the same way European powers once competed to establish territorial claims in the "new world." One music industry executive describes the race to claim a share of the Cuban music market as a "feeding frenzy" because "[i]t's like discovering a treasure that's been buried all these years."³⁶ Despite the U.S. trade embargo, U.S. record companies have been sending emissaries to Cuba on a regular basis and were a strong presence at the 1998 Cubadisco annual music industry trade show in Cuba.³⁷ (Although U.S. law prohibits U.S. companies from hiring Cuban musicians directly, U.S. companies can contract to be the U.S. distributors of musicians signed to foreign labels. In addition, Cuban musicians can be signed directly to the foreign subsidiaries of U.S. companies.)³⁸ And just as the colonial expansion of European powers was accompanied by legitimate concerns with economic exploitation, the competition for the Cuban music market has raised similar concerns

with economic exploitation. In fact, there have been instances already of foreign record companies refusing to compensate Cuban musicians, of fraudulent concert promoters leaving musicians stranded in Europe, and of payment fees being set as low as twenty-five dollars for a recording session.³⁹ Furthermore, the ability of Cuban music companies to negotiate their own distribution deals has been periodically hampered by the denial of U.S. State Department travel visas to attend important music industry conferences.⁴⁰

The construction of the colonial myth is furthered by the *BVSC*'s idealization of prerevolutionary Cuba as a magic time for music in which these musicians and the music *son* were appreciated. The choice of the album title itself is a fond look at Cuba from before the revolution, as the Buena Vista Social Club was a music hall from the 1940s, which has long been closed. Similarly, Cooder's constant reference to lead singer Ibrahim Ferrer as "the Cuban Nat King Cole" evokes apolitical visions of a lost musical elegance.⁴¹ The nostalgic picture continues with the documentary's soulful shots of the now faded mansions and glamorous hotels of yesteryear as the camera searches for the architectural remnants of what was the Buena Vista Social Club, while omitting any depictions of the more developed and upscale areas of the island that do exist.

What is particularly disturbing about the *Buena Vista Social Club* longing for old-world Cuba is its oversight of the social ills that plagued prerevolutionary Cuba and motivated large numbers of Afro-Cubans to support Fidel Castro.⁴² Even the use of the name "Buena Vista Social Club" fails to appreciate how the original Buena Vista Social Club was one of the few prerevolutionary Havana nightspots that allowed entrance to people of African descent.⁴³ De facto racial segregation was widely practiced before the revolution in public accommodations like restaurants, nightclubs, and beaches.⁴⁴ The racial segregation was also accompanied by extreme racial stratification:

In the main Afro-Cubans occupied the lower end of the socio-economic order. Almost 30 percent of the population of color over twenty years of age was illiterate. Blacks tended to constitute a majority in the crowded tenement dwellings of Havana. They suffered greater job insecurity, more unemployment/underemployment, poorer health care, and constituted a proportionally larger part of the prison population. They generally earned lower wages than whites, even in the same in-

dustries. Afro-Cubans were subjected to systematic discrimination, barred from hotels, resorts, clubs, and restaurants.⁴⁵

Only after the socialist revolution did the Cuban government publicly denounce these manifestations of racial hierarchy.⁴⁶ Yet the *BVSC* narrative is completely divorced from the realities of the time frame it so longingly wants to be transported back to. Moreover, the documentary's own evidence of prerevolutionary economic disparity is glossed over as romantic. For instance, Ibrahim Ferrer's birth in a social dance club in 1927 is characterized as a testament to his inherent ability as a singer, rather than as an indicator of his family's destitute economic status and lack of the nationalized health care system that presently exists for all Cubans.⁴⁷ Similarly, guitarist Eliades Ochoa's youth spent performing music in brothels and bars is presented as charming rather than demonstrative of the impoverished educational system that existed before the socialist revolution.⁴⁸ The complexities of racial hierarchy and desperate poverty do not lend themselves as well to the commercial ends of packaging "authentic" and "quaint" Cuba for sale.⁴⁹

Instead, the *Buena Vista Social Club* idealizes the past and reinvents it to support the notion that socialist Cuba does not appreciate the talent of its populace in the way a White North American like Ry Cooder can.⁵⁰ Missing from the picture are the documented instances of contract exploitation of Cuban songwriters by U.S. music companies before the revolution, when musicians were paid one dollar for the legal rights to their songs and Afro-Cuban *son* musicians were targeted for copyright exploitation.⁵¹ Also missing from the story is the racial discrimination that *son* musicians were subject to before the revolution, in which Afro-Cubans were denied admission to musician unions because they played the Afro-Cuban music of *son* or because they had no formal training or could not read music.⁵² The erroneous depiction of Afro-Cuban music as frozen in time, isolated from outside influences, and populated by unappreciated dark natives re-envisioned Cuba as a new frontier to be discovered and conquered as colonial imperialists did in the past.

History demonstrates that the construction of narratives is instrumental to the subjugation of people and thus should be carefully monitored. For example, when Native Americans began to use the courts to challenge their dispossession from their own lands, the U.S. Supreme Court justified the maintenance of their continued exclusion from legal

title to property with the narrative that the poor character of the Native Americans as a people warranted their conquest and forceful expulsion.⁵³ Contemporary analysis of judicial opinions also demonstrates the continued use of ethnocentric and racially biased narratives in the application of the law.⁵⁴ Thus, even the racially harmless myth of how a North American “rediscovered” Afro-Cuban popular culture for the world can have an adverse effect on the sovereignty of Cuba and its economic power by providing ideological justification for contemporary colonial and economic conquest.⁵⁵ As cultural studies scholar George Lipsitz has stated about popular culture, “this ain’t no sideshow.”⁵⁶

NOTES

1. While it is certainly the case that the Cuban nation has also demonstrated an interest in participating in the global economy with its establishment of joint ventures with corporate entities from foreign nations, at the same time, like many other less-developed countries, Cuba is concerned with the dangers of economic exploitation inherent in globalization. See John M. Kirk, series editor’s foreword to *Afro-Cuban Voices: On Race and Identity in Contemporary Cuba*, ed. Pedro Pérez Sarduy and Jean Stubbs (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000), viii: “The social distortions resulting from the demise of the Soviet Union, and from the post-1980s Special Period, as Cuba opened up rapidly to foreign investment and domestic economic reform—what Fidel Castro termed a ‘pact with the devil’—have only aggravated the situation.” See also Jeremy Brecher and Tim Costello, *Global Village or Global Pillage: Economic Reconstruction from the Bottom Up* (Boston: South End Press, 1994), 16, 24: criticizing globalization as leading to a decline in working and social conditions overall with an increase in prosperity only for developed nations and a small elite of underdeveloped countries.

2. George Lipsitz, *Time Passages: Collective Memory and American Popular Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990), vii.

3. Jocelyn Linnekin, “On the Theory and Politics of Cultural Construction in the Pacific,” *Oceana* 62 (1992): 249, 251. See also Robin Moore, *Nationalizing Blackness: Afro-Cubanismo and Artistic Revolution in Havana, 1920–1940* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1997), 87.

4. Richard K. Sherwin, *When Law Goes Pop: The Vanishing Line between Law and Popular Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 8: observing that “law is both a producer and a byproduct of mainstream culture” and thus cannot “escape the forces and conflicts that play out in the culture at large.”

5. Moore, *Nationalizing Blackness*, 4: “Music and dance have always been

among the most democratic of the arts in Cuba, representing forms of expression accessible to minorities that appeal to listeners across class and racial boundaries.”

6. Elisa Murray, “The Sound of Son,” *Seattle Weekly*, 1 April 1999, 53.

7. Heather Johnson, “‘Social Club’ Delivers Sassy Salsa from Forgotten Greats,” *University of Virginia Cavalier Daily*, 7 September 1999, U-Wire edition.

8. David E. Thigpen, “Forget Me Not: At 72, Ibrahim Ferrer at Last Finds Fame,” *Time*, 9 August 1999, 1.

9. “Those were the golden days of Cuban music, before the revolution left many of the great artists of Ferrer’s generation scraping to get by.” *Ibid.*, 1.

10. Jan Fairley, “Cuba Roots,” *Scotsman*, 23 October 1999, 18.

11. *Ibid.*

12. “In 1997 Ferrer was plucked off a Havana street by California guitarist Ry Cooder, who invited him to sing on a new album he was producing, Buena Vista Social Club.” Thigpen, “Forget Me Not,” 1.

13. Judy Cantor, “Isla de la Musica: The Biggest Surprise at Havana’s Cubadisco ’98: A Burgeoning Retinue of Americans Hoping to Cash In,” *Miami New Times*, 28 May 1998, Features Section.

14. *The Newshour with Jim Lehrer*, PBS, 16 November 1999, transcript no. 6599.

15. *Ibid.*

16. *Ibid.* See also Sandra Levinson, “Talking about Cuban Culture: A Reporter’s Notebook,” in *The Cuba Reader: The Making of a Revolutionary Society*, ed. Phillip Brenner, William M. LeoGrande, Donna Rich, and Daniel Seigel (New York: Grove, 1989), 487, 495.

17. Yvonne Daniel, “Rumba: Social and Aesthetic Change in Cuba,” in *Blackness in Latin America and the Caribbean: Social Dynamics and Cultural Transformations, Eastern South America and the Caribbean*, vol. 2, ed. Arlene Torres and Norman E. Whitten, Jr. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 481, 487–88: describing how the Cuban government through its Ministry of Culture provides financial, organizational, and ideological support for the promotion of the arts as part of its revolutionary agenda of national education.

18. *Newshour with Jim Lehrer*, transcript no. 6599.

19. What is especially naive about Cooder’s idealized vision of Cuban music is the way in which it contrasts with Cubans’ own conception of culture as inherently political and therefore part of the revolution. Indeed, music figures prominently in U.S.–Cuban relations: “intellectuals and embittered exiled artists regularly fan the flames of anticommunism by proclaiming that under Cuban socialism there is no freedom for the artists.” Levinson, “Talking about Cuban Culture,” 487. Furthermore, the volatile protests that greeted the Miami concert of the popular *son* group from Cuba, *Los Van Van*, exemplify the political tenor of Cuban music, just as the drama that surrounded the simple custody

dispute of Elián González exemplifies that everything about Cuba is political. Mike Clary, "Amid Protest Cuban Group Plays Miami Concert: Angry Foes of Castro and Police in Riot Gear Don't Deter More Than 2,000 from Hearing Los Van Van Perform," *Los Angeles Times*, 10 October 1999, A8; David Cole, "The 'Cuba Exception,'" *Nation*, 7 February 2000, 4. Yet it is Cooder's seeming naïveté about the political aspects of what he is viewing that also positions the documentary as an alternative perspective to the more widely disseminated conservative perspectives of anti-Castro exiles, in that the BVSC documentary grants humanity—albeit in a problematic way—to those Cubans struggling under the U.S. trade embargo.

20. Fairley, "Cuba Roots," 18.

21. Rogelio Martínez Furé, "A National Cultural Identity? Homogenizing Monomania and the Plural Heritage," in *Afro-Cuban Voices: On Race and Identity in Contemporary Cuba*, ed. Pérez Sarduy and Stubbs, 154, 159.

22. Although always present in the Cuban culture, until recently manifestations of Afro-Cuban religious beliefs, like other religions, were discouraged by the Cuban state. Today there is considerable concern among Santería adherents that Afro-Cuban religion has become a commercialized vehicle to attract tourism and the resulting foreign currency. Juan Benkomo, "Crafting the Sacred Batá Drums," in *Afro-Cuban Voices: On Race and Identity in Contemporary Cuba*, ed. Pérez Sarduy and Stubbs, 140, 142–43.

23. Ed Morales, "Dreaming in Cuba," *Village Voice*, 8 June 1999, 66.

24. Nick Gold and Nigel Williamson, *Buena Vista Social Club Compact Disc Liner Notes* (New York: Warner Music Group Company, 1997), 8.

25. Ann duCille, *Skin Trade* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), 1–2: describing race as a "hot property."

26. Laura E. Donaldson, "On Medicine Women and White Shamans: New Age Native Americanism and Commodity Fetishism as Pop Culture Feminism," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 24 (spring 1999): 677, 682: describing one of the most important innovations of contemporary commodity consumption as "the rummaging through of imagined histories to envision a different life for oneself . . . immune to the corrupting influences of Western society."

27. Fatimah Tobing Rony, *The Third Eye: Race, Cinema, and Ethnographic Spectacle* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996).

28. *Ibid.*, 194–95.

29. *Buena Vista Social Club Compact Disc Liner Notes*, 3.

30. Moore, *Nationalizing Blackness*, 89–93, 285.

31. Judy Cantor, "The New Miami Sound: It's Straight from Contemporary Cuba and It Has Taken Root in a Most Unlikely Place: Little Havana," *Miami New Times*, 20 August 1998, Features Section.

32. Paul Fisher, "Cuban Music: Revolution Heats Up Airwaves," *Japan*

Times, 13 July 1999. See also Cantor, "Isla de la Musica": contemporary Cuban musician notes that he is not pleased "by the recent glut of Cuban discs with wrinkled faces on the covers" because of its obstruction of revolutionary music.

33. Cantor, "Isla de la Musica."

34. *Ibid.*

35. Daniel Chang, "Reviews of New Latin Dance, Soundtrack and Rap Releases; Afro-Cuban All Stars 'Distinto, Diferente' Nonesuch," *Orange County Register*, 19 January 2000, Entertainment News Section.

36. *Ibid.*

37. Christopher John Farley, "Viva la Musica Cubana," *Time*, 22 June 1998.

38. *Ibid.*

39. Cantor, "Isla de la Musica."

40. Judy Cantor, "The Politics of Music," *Miami New Times*, 17 September 1998, Features Section. The U.S. State Department has denied Cuban music executives visas for fear that they might engage in legally prohibited transactions, such as signing Cuban artists directly to U.S. record labels.

41. Thigpen, "Forget Me Not," 1. Even for Cubans, Nat King Cole and his chemically straightened hair symbolize apolitical and nonaggressive and thus acceptable Black celebrity. Alden Knight, "Tackling Racism in Performing Arts and the Media," in *Afro-Cuban Voices: On Race and Identity in Contemporary Cuba*, ed. Pérez Sarduy and Stubbs, 108, 109: "A particular irony of Cooder's reference to Ferrer as the 'Cuban Nat King Cole' is, in fact, that Nat King Cole experienced blatant racial discrimination when he traveled to Cuba in 1951. In fact, the Hotel Nacional de Cuba has just recently issued a posthumous apology for denying Nat King Cole (and Josephine Baker) lodging at the hotel in 1951 because of his race. "Natalie Cole to Visit Cuba in November," *Granma*, 30 August 2000, available <http://www.granma.cu/ingles/ago5/36cole.htm>.

42. Douglas Butterworth, *The People of Buena Ventura: Relocation of Slum Dwellers in Postrevolutionary Cuba* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1980), xiv.

43. *Newshour with Jim Lehrer*.

44. Debra Evenson, *Revolution in the Balance: Law and Society in Contemporary Cuba* (Boulder: Westview, 1994), 110.

45. Louis A. Pérez, Jr., *Cuba: Between Reform and Revolution*, 2d ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 307.

46. Even though the socialist revolution has made great strides in addressing the problems of racial stratification through the operation of its economic redistribution programs, racial disparities persist today. See, e.g., Tanya K. Hernández, "An Exploration of the Efficacy of Class-Based Approaches to Racial Justice: The Cuban Context," *University of California Davis Law Review* 33, no. 4 (2000): 1142–51.

47. *Buena Vista Social Club Compact Disc Liner Notes*, 8.

48. Ibid., 27.
49. Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 77: describing how mass marketing creates an "imagined nostalgia for things that never were."
50. Mike Clark, "New on Video," *USA Today*, 17 December 1999, 13E: "Ry Cooder album that successfully promoted accomplished, aged Cuban musicians who had been forgotten even in their own country"; Sean Piccoli, "From Buena Vista, a New Kind of Cuba Libre," *Fort Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel*, 6 June 1999, 1D: "brilliant musicians who were practically forgotten at home."
51. Cantor, "Isla de la Musica." See also Moore, *Nationalizing Blackness*, 107-8.
52. Moore, *Nationalizing Blackness*, 97.
53. *Johnson v. M'Intosh*, 21 U.S. (8 Wheat) 543 (1823). See also Christine A. Klein, "Treaties of Conquest: Property Rights, Indian Treaties, and the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo," *New Mexico Law Review* 26 (1996): 201.
54. Thomas Ross, *Just Stories: How the Law Embodies Racism and Bias* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996), 1-18.
55. Sherwin, *When Law Goes Pop*, 5: "Culture provides the signs, images, stories, characters, metaphors, and scenarios, among other familiar materials, with which we make sense of our lives and the world around us."
56. Lipsitz, *Time Passages*, 3.