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Haunting and Dispossession: Spatial and Environmental Injustice in Los Angeles 1940s-1990s

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
Requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in

Literature

by

Edmundo R. Ortiz

Committee in charge:

Professor Rosaura Sánchez, Chair
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2020

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Chair

University of California San Diego

2020

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Haunting and Dispossession: Spatial and Environmental Injustice in Los Angeles 1940s-1990s

by

Edmundo R. Ortiz

Doctor of Philosophy in Literature

University of California San Diego, 2020

Professor Rosaura Sánchez, Chair

This dissertation focuses on representations of the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice in Los Angeles in 1940s-1990s. The project includes several fictional and non-fictional counternarratives particularly in regards to displacement and dispossession in multi-ethnic U.S. literature and film, in relation to several regions of the city: Chavez Ravine, East L.A., Downtown L.A. neighborhoods, including Crown Hill, Pico-Union and Skid Row; and the communities of South Central and Koreatown during this period. The counternarratives include Culture Clash's fictional play *Chavez Ravine* (2003) in Chapter 2, Helena María

Viramontes's fictional novel *Their Dogs Came with Them* (2007) in Chapter 3, Dai Sil Kim-Gibson's and Christine Choy's documentary film *Sa-I-Gu* (1993), John Ridley's documentary film *Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992* (2017), Anna Deveare Smith's non-fictional play *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992* (1994), and Héctor Tobar's fictional novel *The Tattooed Soldier* (1998) in Chapter 4. In the project, I argue that all of the selected counternarratives feature several L.A. residents, both fictional and non-fictional, who encounter spatial and environmental injustice related crises that must be dealt with by the residents. I argue that the authors and filmmakers of the selected counternarratives use the metaphors of haunting and ghosts and other devices to critique and challenge (1) the erasure of people of color from the city's history, (2) the recurring master narrative of supercity progress, specifically regarding the uses of "eminent domain" via "urban renewal" modernization, and (3) the simplistic mainstream interpretation of the uprising popularized by the local Los Angeles and national television news media networks, constructing it as an African-American versus Korean binary system, which uses half-truths to mischaracterize the rebellion as the "L.A. Riots", while simultaneously ignoring many other complex factors and issues which help explain the significance of the L.A. Uprising. Moreover, the narrative devices that will be discussed in the project to examine the selected counternarratives, where appropriate, include the following: the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, figurative language, "rasquachismo" aesthetics, "composite characters", film noir stylization, "jumping" geographic scales, and documentary evidence.

Chapter 1: Introduction

This dissertation focuses on representations of the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice in Los Angeles in 1940s-1990s. The project includes several fictional and non-fictional counternarratives particularly in regards to displacement and dispossession in multi-ethnic U.S. literature and film, in relation to several regions of the city: Chavez Ravine, East L.A., Downtown L.A. neighborhoods, including Crown Hill, Pico-Union and Skid Row; and the communities of South Central and Koreatown during this period. The counternarratives include Culture Clash's fictional play *Chavez Ravine* (2003) in Chapter 2, Helena María Viramontes's fictional novel *Their Dogs Came with Them* (2007) in Chapter 3, Dai Sil Kim-Gibson's and Christine Choy's documentary film *Sa-I-Gu* (1993), John Ridley's documentary film *Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992* (2017), Anna Deveare Smith's non-fictional play *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992* (1994), and Héctor Tobar's fictional novel *The Tattooed Soldier* (1998) in Chapter 4. In this project, when appropriate, I will use the theoretical concepts of "haunting", "ghosts", "the right to the city", "spatial justice", "environmental justice", "environmental racism", "scale", and "urban renewal." Various scholars representing a wide range of scholarship, including Jacques Derrida, Avery Gordon, Kathleen Brogan, Henri Lefebvre, Edward Soja, Laura Pulido, Robert Bullard, Sallie Marston, and Neil Smith, among others, have defined and discussed these terms in their writings. Since these terms are borrowed from philosophy, sociology, urban studies, and geography, it is useful to define the concepts at the start of the project. In my view, these terms are particularly important as we examine the selected counternarratives in terms of how they operate as counternarratives on the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice. In the project, I argue that all of the selected counternarratives feature several L.A. residents, both fictional and non-fictional, who encounter

"breaking points" in which there are spatial and environmental injustice related crises that must be dealt with by the residents. These crises inform the audience that "enough is enough" and that a reckoning must occur in regards to each of the unfolding events in the counternarratives. As we note, two of the most prominent devices used by the authors and filmmakers to signify the breaking points are the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in the counternarratives.

The project consists of examining how the authors and filmmakers address the breaking points using a wide variety of narrative devices, including the metaphors of haunting and ghosts, to discuss the unavailability of spatial and environmental injustice. As Derrida and Gordon have argued, the uses of haunting and ghosts in literature help begin conversations on issues of ethics and justice (Derrida xvi-xx; Gordon 2011, 1-5). Gordon also claims that ghosts are social figures that disrupt hegemonic master narratives in a society: "The ghost is not simply a dead or a missing person, but a social figure, and investigating it can lead to that dense site where history and subjectivity make social life" (Gordon 2008, 8). I argue that the purposes of these narrative devices and others in the selected counternarratives are used by the authors and filmmakers to critique and challenge both (1) the erasure of people of color from the city's history and (2) the recurring master narrative of supercity progress, specifically regarding the uses of "eminent domain" [1] via "urban renewal" [2] modernization. As we note in the following chapters, these two

[1] Erin Stanton has defined the noun "eminent domain" as the power of the U.S. government to take privately owned land and convert it to public use, providing the landowner with reasonable compensation in accordance with the Fifth Amendment (Stanton 93-97).

[2] Neil Smith has defined the noun "urban renewal" as a process that unlike gentrification, does not involve rehabilitation of older buildings and structures but rather the construction of new buildings and structures on previously developed land (Smith 1982, 140). According to Colin Gordon, urban renewal modernization is often used in conjunction with eminent domain and scientific language such as "blight", "slum clearance" and the term "economic development" to fully promote local urban renewal processes (Gordon 2004, 305-309). In addition, urban renewal is also about public financing of private economic development or property transactions: "such

interrelated themes operate differently in the historical periods presented in this project. For instance, these two themes operate together in order to promote urban renewal in Chapter 2, regarding the destruction of Chavez Ravine in favor of Dodger Stadium in the 1940s-1950s and in Chapter 3, regarding the destruction of East L.A. in favor of the East L.A. freeway system in the 1960s-1970s. In Chapter 4, regarding the L.A. Uprising of 1992, we note how these two themes work together to promote (3) the simplistic mainstream interpretation of the uprising popularized by the local L.A. TV news coverage. According to numerous scholars representing many disciplines, this mainstream reading refers to the uprising as the "L.A. Riots", and constructs it as an African-American versus Korean binary conflict, with Koreans standing in place of white people: it is based on a binary system which as Lynn Itagaki has shown, using Claire Jean Kim's concept of "racial triangulation" [3] as a scholarly lens, is a system in which black people are shown as both the perpetrators of the rebellion and as victims for destroying their neighborhoods, while also casting Korean merchants as "model minorities" [4] who lost their

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policies extend the public credit and the public power of eminent domain to private interests – a combination that has incurred the opposition of both taxpayers and property owners displaced by urban renewal or redevelopment" (Gordon 2004, 305).

[3] Claire Jean Kim has defined the noun "racial triangulation" as the concept in which Asian-Americans have been racially triangulated vis-à-vis African-Americans and white people and located in the field of racial positions with reference to the other two populations. Racial triangulation, thus has two linked processes, (1) "relative valorization" whereby A (white people) valorize B (Asian-Americans) relative to C (black people) on cultural or racial grounds and (2) "civic ostracism" whereby A (white people) constructs B (Asian-Americans) as immutably foreign in order to ostracize them from the civic and political realms; white people are the hierarchical leaders in both processes (Kim 1999, 107). Marta María Maldonado has since borrowed Kim's term to include Latinos as an ethnic group that is also racially triangulated vis-à-vis African-Americans and white people and located in the field of racial positions with reference to the other two populations (Maldonado 355).

[4] The University of Texas at Austin has defined the noun "model minorities" as a stereotype or myth that is placed on Asian-Americans as individuals or as an ethnic group. The myth is a cultural expectation that Asian-Americans should be smart, especially at math, science and technology; wealthy; self-reliant and living "the American dream"; non-political; and never in need of financial help from the state. The stereotype does not acknowledge Asian-Americans as

businesses to looting and fires, placing them in the position of white people who similarly lost their businesses in the 1965 Watts Rebellion (Itagaki 37-64, 103-180). Furthermore, this binary system uses half-truths to mischaracterize the rebellion as one started solely by an angry black population in the streets of L.A. after the jury of the Rodney King-LAPD trial found the white LAPD officers who beat King, not guilty, while simultaneously ignoring many other complex factors and issues which help explain the significance of the uprising (Caldwell 302-335; Cho 196-210; Itagaki 37-64, 103-180; Kim 2008, 36-50; Omi and Winant, 97-111; Sánchez 1009-1027; Soja 1996, 426-460; Valle and Torres 45-66).

In Chapter 4, we note how the four counternarratives, to differing degrees of realization, challenge the simplistic mainstream interpretation. These counternarratives provide alternative readings of the uprising by incorporating the following complex factors and issues that comprise the historical context of Los Angeles in the 1970s-1990s: urban restructuring [5], racial and

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a diverse group of individuals. As a result, the myth helps to maintain white people as the hierarchical leaders of the hierarchy of races in the U.S. As Lynn Itagaki has shown, the myth uses Asian-Americans in order to deny other racial groups' claims of disenfranchisement and discrimination. As Elaine Kim has shown, Korean immigrants buy into this myth in South Korea, influenced by U.S. cultural influences and South Korean value systems believing the U.S. is a meritocratic "land of opportunity" and often unaware of the history of racism and oppression of people of color in the U.S. (www.cmhc.utexas.edu/modelminority; Itagaki 46; Kim 1993, 219).

[5] According to Edward Soja, in 1965-1992, the population in the sixty-mile L.A. area increased to 5 million, during the collapse of a manufacturing economy and the emergence of a service economy based on immigrant and temporary laborers. As Jennifer Wolch has shown, there were four restructuring trends in L.A.: deindustrialization, reindustrialization, public sector contraction, and service sector expansion (Soja 434-460; Wolch 392-393).

economic inequality [6], immigration [7], demographic changes [8], homelessness [9], the militarization of the LAPD [10], the Latasha Harlins murder case, the Rodney King-LAPD trial results, the right to the city [11] and the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice [12] but also criminal

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[6] The evolution of L.A. into a global metropolis relied on racial and economic inequality for black people, Asian-Americans, and Latinos in the 1970s-1980s. The exploitation of these laborers translated into earning disparities before the uprising (Ong and Blumenberg 311-330).

[7] There were approximately 250,000 Koreans in Southern California in 1990 (Abelman and Lie 11). In addition, there were approximately 460,000 Central Americans in L.A. in 1990, with a majority from El Salvador and Guatemala. There were 3.3. million Latinos in L.A. in 1990, 2.5 million of whom were of Mexican origin. The white population in L.A. declined from 71 percent to 41 percent from 1970-1990. In addition, the total population of black people, Asian-Americans, and Latinos achieved a majority population status in L.A. in 1990 (Camarillo 359; Rocco 367-374).

[8] In the 1980s, Latinos from Central America began to settle in South Central, transforming many historic black neighborhoods such as Compton, into Latino neighborhoods (Camarillo 359-366).

[9] In 1990-1991, there were an estimated 125,600 to 204,000 homeless people in L.A. County as a result of the restructuring of the regional economy, loss of state funding, and a lack of housing. This led to many homeless people on Skid Row in Downtown L.A. (Wolch 394-404).

[10] The LAPD borrowed a military ethos primarily from the U.S. Marine Corps in the 1950s-1980s, that envisioned the LAPD as an elite force using new technologies such as the patrol car, the militarized helicopter, and high-tech communications (Davis 1990, 240-260, 267-297).

[11] During the L.A. Uprising, city authorities abandoned South Central and Koreatown, which resulted in a carnivalesque atmosphere that included the uprising participants and the armed business owners, among others, temporarily taking control of the streets of South Central and Koreatown during this period. The concept of the right to the city, therefore, is useful in helping us examine how these communities of color each believed they had a right to the city during the uprising in these counternarratives.

[12] In Chapter 4, examples of spatial and environmental injustice include the change of venue request that was granted to the LAPD defense counsel in the King-LAPD trial, moving the trial from L.A. County to Simi Valley in Ventura County. The connection of Simi Valley to environmental racism and spatial and environmental injustice demonstrates that Simi Valley would not be the ideal location. For example, the California Energy Commission, for many years sited polluting power plants in Oxnard, a majority Latino community which is 30 miles west of Simi Valley (California Environmental Justice Alliance). The city of Los Angeles also has a history of restricted housing segregation legislation that restricted the black population to renting and owning homes in segregated sections of the city in the 1930s-1940s (Anderson 336-346; Avila 2004, 185-223). In addition, many Korean immigrants who migrated to Los Angeles in the 1970s-1980s, were denied opportunities to open businesses in the wealthier parts of L.A., because of their status as Asian immigrants. Many bought stores from African-Americans in the 1970s-1980s. In the 1990 census, it was reported that nearly 40 percent of Koreans in L.A.

justice and other vital forms of redress regarding the L.A. Uprising. Moreover, the narrative devices that will be discussed in the project to examine the selected counternarratives, where appropriate, include the following: the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, figurative language, “rasquachismo” aesthetics [13], “composite characters” [14], film noir stylization, “jumping” geographic scales, and documentary evidence.

The Recurring Master Narrative of Supercity Progress in Los Angeles

According to Raúl Villa, the master narrative of supercity progress in Los Angeles is defined as one used by city promoters and politicians in the twentieth-century to denigrate the city’s pueblo history and the remaining affordable neighborhoods in Downtown L.A. and East L.A., as a strategy in order to promote the uses of eminent domain via urban renewal modernization, to change the city for the future (Villa 2000, 25-110). Indeed, as Villa, Eric Avila

owned a family business (Cho 200, 210; *Sa-I-Gu* 3:00-3:45). In regards to public space, in the 1980s, L.A. city authorities created a policy of containment, resulting in the creation of super-malls as indoor venues designed to contain the circulation of shoppers and laborers within a policed structure and to discourage open-air vendors. There also existed a disinvestment in traditional public space and the shifting of these fiscal resources to corporate-defined redevelopment sites in the city during the 1980s (Davis 1990, 226-336).

[13] Tomas Ybarra-Frausto has defined the noun “rasquachismo” aesthetics as neither an idea or a style, it is an attitude connected to the working poor, and a visceral response to lived reality that is rooted in resourcefulness in Chicano art (Ybarra-Frausto 1989, 5-8).

[14] David G. Garcia has defined the noun “composite characters” as a term from the field of Critical Race Theory that refers to fictional characters dealing with particular themes and placed in composite counterstories to represent the perspectives of several real life or fictional people of color (Garcia 2006, 118-119).

and Donald Spivack have shown, the supercity master narrative was also used to criticize the poverty in Downtown L.A. neighborhoods, in particular Bunker Hill and Crown Hill, as part of the strategy to generate evidence of urban blight in order to justify and promote urban renewal, including the creation of the modernized Downtown L.A. skyline to replace the old Bunker Hill neighborhoods, which is particularly relevant in Chapter 4 (Villa 2000, 71-101; Avila 2004, 185-223; Spivack 65-83).

In regards to Chapter 2 and Chapter 3, as Villa and Mike Davis have shown, this master narrative describes Los Angeles as an old former Mexican pueblo waiting to be transformed into a modern U.S. metropolis. The recurring master narrative of supercity progress emerges as a major element in structural actions by the California state legislature, L.A. City Hall, and the LAPD, during the 1930s-1950s. In the twentieth-century, this master narrative was popularized during the Chandler era of the *Los Angeles Times*, to cover up the interests of a connected web of investors, including corrupt L.A. City Hall authorities, real estate capitalists, and promoters, supportive of using federal funding, technology, and eminent domain via urban renewal modernization to ensure the erasure of people of color who were displaced and dispossessed in favor of urban renewal processes that brought Dodger Stadium and freeway interchanges to East L.A. in the 1940s-1970s (Davis 1990, 17-97; Villa 1999, 111-115; Hines 138-142; Avila 2004, 185-223). In regards to Downtown L.A., as Mary Pat Brady and Avila have shown, highway construction resulted in hypersegregation, particularly affecting both Downtown L.A. and Eastside communities targeted for urban renewal and as a result directly affected people of color in Downtown Los Angeles and East Los Angeles in the 1940s-1990s (Brady 2013, 73; Villa 2000, 71-101; Avila 2004, 185-223).

Haunting and Ghosts

We will now provide definitions of the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts. In 1993, Derrida published *Specters of Marx*, regarding the future political and philosophical relevance of Marxism to ethics and justice after the collapse of the Soviet Union (Magnus and Cullenberg vii-xii). In *Specters of Marx*, Derrida coins the concept of "hauntologie" which brings together the terms "haunting" and "ontology", to argue for a relational ethics to evaluate the emerging global crises in the period of late capitalism (Davis 2005, 373; Henriksen 14; Jameson 26-30). To begin a conversation on the subject of hauntological ethics, Derrida employs the metaphor of the ghost of King Hamlet in William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* as a spectral character which seeks justice and revenge while also representing a political disturbance in both time and space (Henriksen 14; Jameson 27; Prendergast 45). Before the start of the tragedy, King Hamlet is murdered by his brother Claudius in an act of treason and Claudius also marries Queen Gertrude, his brother's widow, to begin a new regime in Denmark. As Derrida argues, the ghost of King Hamlet appears several times in the play to call upon the protagonist, King Hamlet's son Prince Hamlet, to seek justice and revenge for the murder of his father. Hamlet reacts to the ghost's visit by proclaiming that "the time is out of joint", a metaphor which refers to the disturbance of both time and space, referring specifically to the political organization of the realm of Denmark (Derrida xviii; Jameson 26-30; Prendergast 44-45). As Christopher Prendergast has noted, Derrida employs the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts in *Specters of Marx*, particularly the ghost of King Hamlet, to establish a conversation on ethics and justice: "these motifs converge on the ontological and the ethico-political, the metaphysical realm of being and the historical realm of justice" (Prendergast 45).

The ghost of King Hamlet complicates political matters by disrupting King Claudius' court in Denmark and haunting Hamlet in a quest for vengeance. In my view, it appears that Derrida uses the example of Hamlet's skepticism and doubts about the ghost's visit to emphasize the importance of taking haunting and ghosts seriously in society. That is, Hamlet has doubts about the ghost's intentions and is not certain if the ghost truly represents his dead father or if it is an evil demon. As a result, Hamlet's initial skepticism regarding the ghost's visit costs him valuable time and eventually leads to the tragedy at the play's conclusion. The lesson here is that haunting and ghosts must be taken seriously; ignoring the experience of being haunted and a ghost's visit can lead to tragic events in society (Shakespeare 1.5.1-190). For these reasons, it appears that Derrida uses Hamlet's skepticism as a lesson in emphasizing the importance of taking haunting and ghosts seriously and speaking to them to hear their messages. Indeed, in the Exordium of *Specters of Marx*, Derrida argues that in order to speak about social justice and hauntology, "it is necessary to speak *of the* ghost, indeed *to the* ghost and *with it*", which must be done out of respect for dead people, those who are unborn, and for living people (Derrida xviii, emphasis in original). Thus, as Line Henriksen has shown, Derrida's concept of hauntology calls for a relational ethics that takes seriously those who are present and immediate but also absent presences and takes as its guide the ghost that "through its hauntings, is both present and absent" (Henriksen 14).

In my view, Gordon shares Derrida's view regarding taking haunting and ghosts seriously; however, she more clearly defines the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in literature. As a result, we will focus on Gordon's concepts of haunting and ghosts in the project. While Derrida's example of the ghost of King Hamlet is shown to be a literal ghost, Derrida also suggests that haunting can be either a literal or figurative experience in literature (Henriksen 14).

Gordon more clearly claims that haunting can be a literal or figurative experience in literature and that ghosts can be a literal or figurative presence in literature. According to Gordon, in a literal or a figurative sense, ghosts have real presences and they demand their due; they demand attention in literature (Gordon 2011, 2). In one notable example, Gordon cites the lives of former slaves in Reconstruction era Ohio in 1873 in Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (1987) and demonstrates how Denver and her mother Sethe both immediately recognize the literal ghost of Denver's sister Beloved and take her demands seriously in the novel. Gordon argues that ghosts must be taken seriously as social figures because they act on and meddle with commonly accepted realities: "the ghost is just the sign, or the empirical evidence...that tells you a haunting is taking place…The way of the ghost is haunting, and haunting is a very particular way of knowing what has happened or is happening" (Gordon 2008, 8). In Gordon's view, haunting and ghosts are either literal experiences or figurative experiences, in which ghosts are social figures and in which the haunting prompts "a-something-to-be-done" (Gordon 2011, 2-3):

> Haunting raises specters, and it alters the experience of being in linear time, alters the way we normally separate and sequence the past, the present and the future. These specters or ghosts appear when the trouble they represent and symptomize is no longer being contained or repressed or blocked from view…Haunting always registers the harm inflicted or the loss sustained by a social violence done in the past or being done in the present and is for this reason quite frightening. But haunting unlike trauma by contrast, is distinctive for producing a something-to-be-done…haunting was precisely the domain of turmoil and trouble…when the cracks and rigging are exposed, when the people who are meant to be invisible show up without any sign of leaving…Haunting refers to this socio-political-psychological state when something else, or something different from before, feels like it must be done, and prompts a something-to-be-done (2-3).

Here, in Gordon's expanded definitions of haunting and ghosts, she clearly defines haunting as a literal or a figurative experience and a ghost as a literal or a figurative presence in literature. According to Gordon, specters and ghosts demand attention because haunting is an experiential

modality that “registers the harm inflicted or the loss sustained by a social violence done in the past or being done in the present” (2-3). Indeed, the concept of time, first suggested by Derrida’s example in which Hamlet senses during the ghost’s visit, that the “time is out of joint”, is an important component in Gordon’s definition insofar as she argues that haunting and ghosts “alter the experience of being in linear time” and prompt “a-something-to-be-done”; these experiences whether they are literal or figurative, demand attention from the people experiencing haunting and ghosts in literature (2-3). In addition, Gordon argues that the metaphors of haunting and ghosts represent, “the dead or the disappeared or the lost or the invisible” people or historically erased people of the past who are actively demanding their due in literature (Gordon 2008, 182). As a result, a haunting can be a literal or a figurative experience and a ghost can be a literal or a figurative presence in literature.

In addition, Gordon more clearly states that the metaphors of haunting and ghosts are important in order to reveal “subjugated knowledge” and the idea of lost futures in literature. While Derrida suggests this claim, especially through the example of the ghost of King Hamlet sharing the story of the king’s murder with Hamlet, Gordon more clearly claims that haunting and ghosts reveal this type of knowledge in literature. According to Herbert Marcuse, people are really figuratively haunted by the “historical alternatives that could have been and by the peculiar temporality of the shadowing of lost and better futures” (Gordon 2011, 7). These historic alternatives are not only about what could have been, they are also nostalgic for what was, they can sometimes be about regret, and they are always about a “critical urgency” and “a-something-to-be-done” (7). As a result, this is a figurative type of haunting as opposed to a literal type of haunting. This leads Gordon to note how Raymond Williams once wrote about the time that is spent waiting for social change and how people must “carry on regardless” and constantly strive

for equitable alternatives to oppression (7). In Gordon's view, haunting and ghosts, in either a literal or a figurative sense, are also about responding to emergencies and challenging oppressive conditions: "to keeping urgent the repair of injustice and…to keeping urgent the systematic dismantling of conditions that produce the crises and the misery in the first place" (8). In Gordon's view, the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts are useful to examine subjugated knowledge, historic alternatives, and her notion of a "critical urgency" in an oppressed society (7). As a result, haunting and ghosts are useful to call for social change in order to transform society and repair justice in the world in literature.

Similarly, Kathleen Brogan also argues that haunting and ghosts are useful in calling for social change in literature. For instance, Brogan has claimed that post-1960s multi-ethnic U.S. literature is noteworthy for the multitude of haunted narratives produced by a wide variety of multi-ethnic U.S. authors, including Morrison, Maxine Hong Kingston, Sandra Cisneros, and Rudolfo Anaya, among others, interested in discussing the communal exorcism of specters and the recuperation of a people's history, which she calls tales of "*cultural haunting*" (Brogan 151, emphasis in original). Brogan has argued that although these multi-ethnic U.S. authors represent different cultures, they have all written contemporary ghost stories. In addition, she cites Joseph Holloway's research while noting that in narratives of cultural haunting by African-American writers, the concept of the ghost and communal belief in ancestor spirits survived African religious thought into syncretic forms of New World religious practice (150). This concept of the ghost and communal belief in ancestor spirits can also be traced in the work of these other multi-ethnic writers. In Brogan's view, their multi-ethnic ghost stories have much in common insofar as the ghosts in these counternarratives similarly function: "to recreate ethnic identity through an

imaginative recuperation of the past and to press this new version of the past into the service of the present" (151).

While Brogan does not explicitly apply her concept to film studies, in my view, her concept of cultural haunting will be particularly useful to examine how the metaphors of haunting and ghosts are used in the two multi-ethnic documentaries we examine in Chapter 4, regarding the L.A. Uprising. As Brogan has shown, this resurgence in multi-ethnic ghost stories is due in part to these writers' collective interest in re-creating ethnic identity in order to recover a people's history. These counternarratives build upon the British Gothic tradition of ghost stories regarding "the tortured mind of an individual" and make a definite shift to "foreground the communal nature" of a community's ghosts by focusing the stories not only on an individual's psyche but also on "issues of communal memory, cultural transmission, and group inheritance." These multi-ethnic stories of cultural haunting, "share the plot device and master metaphor of the ghost as go-between, an enigmatic transitional figure moving between past and present, death and life, one culture and another" (152). As a result, several interrelated themes emerge from these counternarratives, including the themes of possession, communal exorcism, and the reconstruction of memory whereby there is "a paradigmatic movement from possession to exorcism." Moreover, possession is triggered by some type of horrifying experience, "such as the loss of land or homes, deaths of family members, or acts of racial persecution" (152-153). Ultimately, these different forms of haunting, from possession to exorcism to reconstruction of memory lead to an integration of the past into the present at the conclusion of the narrative (153). In contrast to Gordon's figurative and reflective definitions of haunting and ghosts, Brogan has a didactic and literal approach in which multi-ethnic narratives of cultural haunting must be distinguished from historical and fictional narratives in which people are only figuratively

haunted without any literal interaction between living and dead people in the counternarratives (Brogan 152). All of the counternarratives in this project use the metaphors of haunting and ghosts as narrative devices in correspondingly different ways, to examine the complex issues but also to refer directly or indirectly to certain non-fictional and fictional dead victims featured in the counternarratives.

In my view, Gordon and Brogan have different definitions of haunting and ghosts, as a result, their definitions will be referenced when appropriate in the project. Brogan's definition of cultural haunting prominently features "the master metaphor of the ghost as go-between", which is more attuned to didactic and literal portrayals of haunting and ghosts (152). As a result, Brogan's definitions of haunting and ghosts are more applicable to *Chavez Ravine* in Chapter 2 and to *Sa-I-Gu* and *Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992* in Chapter 4, insofar as these counternarratives are similarly interested in exploring the themes of possession and reconstruction of memories, communal exorcism, and integration of the past and present, through the use of the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts. In contrast, Gordon's definitions of haunting and ghosts are more reflective than Brogan's concept of cultural haunting. As Gordon has noted, haunting and ghosts "alter the experience of being in linear time" and prompt "a-something-to-be-done"; these experiences whether they are literal or figurative, demand attention from the people experiencing haunting and ghosts in literature (Gordon 2011, 2-3). In addition, Gordon argues that the metaphors of haunting and ghosts represent, "the dead or the disappeared or the lost or the invisible" people or historically erased people of the past who are actively demanding their due in literature (Gordon 2008, 182). As a result, Gordon's reflective definitions of haunting and ghosts are more applicable to *Their Dogs Came with Them* in Chapter 3 and *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992* and *The Tattooed Soldier* in Chapter 4, insofar as the

writers use the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts more reflectively and figuratively in these counternarratives.

The Right to the City

We will now define the concepts of the right to the city, spatial justice, environmental justice, and environmental racism. One of the most important cornerstones of urban studies since the 1970s is Lefebvre's concept that space is socially produced and reproduced; that every society and its mode of production produces space and therefore, social space and spatiality are social products (Lefebvre 1991, 35, 40; Marston 2000, 221). It follows then, that the term spatial justice, a combination of the terms "space" and "social justice", is similarly socially produced as a product that refers to the unavailability of justice for city inhabitants who seek redress for unjust spatial relations. In addition, the term spatial justice was not commonly used by geographers and urban theorists until the early 2000s when urban studies scholars rediscovered Lefebvre's philosophical and spatial justice concept of the right to the city (Soja 2010). The right to the city is particularly applicable to Chapter 4 and not the preceding chapters, insofar as the documentary films *Sa-I-Gu* and *Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992*, examine a wide variety of complex factors and issues in Los Angeles in the 1970s-1990s, that drove many residents of Downtown L.A., South Central, and Koreatown to participate in what some of them viewed as a movement which promotes the shared production of space and the appropriation of urban space during the L.A. Uprising.

For Lefebvre, the right to the city is an anti-exclusionary concept. He argues that city inhabitants have the right to take part in decision-making and the spatial production and transformation of their cities (Lefebvre 1995, 147-159). Lefebvre's concept relies on his view

that space is a social product and on his theories of the three integral spaces in society: perceived space, designed space, and living space. As Mary Pat Brady has noted, these three spaces described by Lefebvre, can also be viewed as three interanimated processes. Perceived space is comprised of spatial practices regarding spaces of production, social relations, and divisions of labor. Perceptions of space are necessarily different to diverse city inhabitants in an unevenly developed society. Designed space is comprised of representations of space and how urban planners, engineers, and real estate investors imagine and organize space for the diverse city inhabitants. Living space is comprised of representational spaces and is the space where the diverse city inhabitants, in their correspondingly different ways, experience social relations and spaces in the city (Brady 2002, 208-209).

According to Mark Purcell, it is important to note that in recent years, the popularity of Lefebvre's term the right to the city has led to it's being appropriated worldwide by a wide variety of scholars, policymakers, and activists. This popularity has threatened to make the meaning of the right to the city increasingly indistinct (Purcell 2013, 141). Although Lefebvre did not provide a very detailed plan about how the term should be applied in urban liberation movements across the world, as Purcell notes, it is clear from Lefebvre's work that he argues for "profoundly reworking both the social relations of capitalism and the current structure of liberal-democratic citizenship" (Purcell 2002, 101). In other words, Lefebvre calls for a "restructuring of social, political, and economic relations" and reframes decision-making away "from the state and toward the production of urban space", shifting power away from city authorities and capital and toward urban inhabitants (101-102). The right to the city is therefore a rejection of the Westphalian notion of national citizenship enfranchisement and instead focuses on the production of urban space and the inhabitants of that urban lived space: "whereas conventional

enfranchisement empowers national *citizens*, the right to the city empowers urban *inhabitants*" (102, emphasis in original). For Lefebvre, the right to the city views urban inhabitants as the enfranchised people and they have two principal rights: the right to participation in the production of space and the right to appropriation of urban space, so they can access, occupy, and use urban space. This utopian worldview differs from the conventional liberal-democratic framework in which people are represented by institutions of the state: "the right to the city would see inhabitants contribute directly to all decisions that produce urban space in their city" (102). At this point, it is appropriate to state that in this dissertation, I will define the people living in L.A. in the selected counternarratives as residents and not use the term citizens. Moreover, while the residents in the selected counternarratives are not as organized and revolutionary as Purcell and Lefebvre, for our purposes in examining spatial and environmental justice in the counternarratives, it is important to note that the residents call for practical and progressive politics in regards to the use of urban space, regarding access to public space, communal land use, and home ownership in the counternarratives. As we have noted, the right to the city is particularly applicable to Chapter 4 and not the preceding chapters, insofar as the documentary films *Sa-I-Gu* and *Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992*, examine a wide variety of complex factors and issues in Los Angeles in the 1970s-1990s, that drove many residents of Downtown L.A., South Central, and Koreatown to participate in what some of them viewed as a movement which promotes the shared production of space and the appropriation of urban space during the L.A. Uprising.

Spatial Justice

In the essay "The City and Social Justice" and the study *Seeking Spatial Justice* (2010), Soja applies lessons he learned from Lefebvre's call for the right to the city to Los Angeles. In both counternarratives, Soja argues that justice has a geography and moreover, that in the twenty-first century, particularly in Los Angeles, "the search for justice has become a rallying cry and mobilizing force for new social movements and coalition building…extending the concept of justice beyond the social and economic to new forms of struggle and activism" (Soja 2008, 4). According to Soja, critical spatial thinking hinges on three principles: (1) the ontological spatiality of being (people are social, temporal and spatial beings), (2) the social production of spatiality (space is produced socially and can be changed), and (3) the socio-spatial dialectic (the spatial shapes the social and the social shapes the spatial) (Soja 2008, 2). These principles show how the spatial causality of justice and injustice are embedded in households, cities, regions, and nations (2). This definition of critical spatial thinking will prove useful considering the political apparatuses that have been used historically by those wielding power in Los Angeles and help us note the underlying processes that produce unjust geographies including exclusionary zoning, segregation, uneven and underdevelopment and the design of spatial structures to privilege wealthy populations versus disenfranchised populations (3).

For Soja, Los Angeles is a primary center for transforming theory into civic practice with groups such as the SAJE (Strategic Action for a Just Economy), Justice for Janitors, the Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy, and the Bus Riders Union, which have all worked to fight for spatial justice in L.A. in recent years. The Bus Riders Union is a particularly noteworthy example of coalition building which challenged L.A.'s Metropolitan Transit Authority from starting a multi-billion dollar rail system in wealthier suburban areas of the city "at the expense of the more urgent needs of the inner city working poor" who depend on a more flexible bus

network than wealthier citizens. This fight led to the Bus Riders Union and the working poor getting the rail system plan to work in favor of their needs versus those in the wealthier suburbs in the 1990s (4-5). These examples show how spatial justice operates, with participants working together in different coalitions to achieve social change and to prevent disenfranchisement, marginalization, and dispossession in cities across the world.

Environmental Racism and Environmental Justice

Laura Pulido and Robert Bullard have both discussed the work of coalitions in L.A. in their writings on environmental justice and environmental racism in the city. Pulido's and Bullard's definitions of these concepts will be useful in the project. Pulido and other scholars define white privilege as a highly structural and spatial form of racism which produces urban geographies of environmental racism (Pulido et al., 2005, 229-237; Pulido 2015, 809-810). According to Bullard, environmental racism "refers to any policy, practice, or directive that differentially affects or disadvantages (whether intended or unintended) individuals, groups or communities based on race or color [including] exclusionary and restrictive practices that limit participation by people of color in decision-making boards, commissions, and regulatory bodies…[that combine]…public policies and industry practices to provide *benefits* for [white people] while shifting *costs* to people of color…to foster and perpetuate discriminatory practices" (Bullard 1993, 23, emphasis in original).

To be sure, examples of environmental racism include facility siting and intentionality in the production of urban spaces includes the siting and construction of urban highways. As Bullard has shown, while people of color tend to rely on public transportation and alternative modes of travel, it is freeway construction and its disproportionate facility siting which affects

and displaces their communities (Bullard 2004, 2-5). In addition to displacement and dispossession, highway construction affects people of color in the following ways: "federally subsidized transportation construction and infrastructure projects" target low-income and people of color neighborhoods, isolates residents from institutions and businesses, disrupts communities and subjects residents to elevated risks regarding hazardous chemicals and other dangerous materials (4).

Moreover, Pulido has noted how environmental racism is also a subset of environmental justice. In her view, environmental racism and environmental justice are intertwined with any given local community's dealings with power, inequality, and struggle for social change (Pulido 2015). According to Pulido, environmental racism is a subset of environmental justice insofar as environmental racism deals specifically with racism and pollution, while environmental justice addresses these components but also systemic discrimination versus minorities, particularly people of color who have historically had their rights denied as they seek environmental legislation to benefit their communities. The environmental justice movement began in Warren County, North Carolina in 1982. During this period, the black population of Warren County began noticing that hazardous materials were deliberately being sent to their county for processing. Activists during the 1980s began to consider the disturbing patterns and connections between racial discrimination, industrial pollutions, and the placement of hazardous waste. In 1987, the United Church of Christ released a breakthrough report regarding environmental justice that helped pave the way for the establishment of environmental justice and environmental racism as important fields of scholarship. The report entitled *Toxic Wastes and Race in the United States* had a major impact insofar as it documented evidence of troubling patterns of pollution distribution primarily affecting communities of color across the nation

(Pulido 2015). Pulido's and Bullard's definitions of environmental racism and environmental justice will prove useful as we apply these terms throughout the project.

Here are some examples of the right to the city, spatial justice, environmental justice, and environmental racism from the selected counternarratives. In Chapter 2, in the play *Chavez Ravine*, María tries to unionize many of the Chavez Ravine residents to protest the selling of their homes and later, their forced removal from their homes. As a leader, she seeks consensus and builds coalitions, working to challenge L.A. City Hall policies with a wide variety of likeminded activists, including many residents, leftist politicians, and musicians such as Pete Seeger and others. These efforts demonstrate the theme of the right to the city, insofar as the coalitions that are formed to challenge L.A. City Hall's collusion with capitalist investors to take their lands is reminiscent of Lefebvre's claim that city inhabitants have the right to participate in the production of space and the right to appropriation of urban space, so they can access, occupy and use urban space. In this particular case study, María and the residents seek to keep their homes and to have their ideas taken into consideration during the early citywide voting measures that take place prior to their forced removal in the late 1950s.

In contrast, in Chapter 3, in the novel *Their Dogs Came with Them*, Viramontes's characters such as Turtle and Ermila, among others, demonstrate their rights to the city through movement. For instance, Ermila devises ways to avoid the fictional Quarantine Authority department and her grandparents' harsh rules and relies on her intricate knowledge of the public transportation system to move around town. Moreover, Viramontes is more reliant upon metaphor and figurative language to highlight examples of spatial and environmental injustice more viscerally and reflectively for the audience. For instance, the novelist excoriates the decisions made by L.A. City Hall to destroy Viramontes's native City Terrace to create the East

L.A. interchange: “Pay attention, Chavela demanded. Because displacement will always come down to two things: earthquakes and earthmovers” (Viramontes 8). Here, the novelist opts for a more reflective approach in discussing spatial injustice than Culture Clash and therefore uses figurative language to show the audience what it feels like to be displaced and dispossessed. And, by using the term “earthmovers” which signifies the power of L.A. City Hall to operate bulldozers to efficiently destroy homes in East L.A. to make room for the freeways, Viramontes likens their power to earthquakes which are particularly powerful in Southern California in causing widespread displacement, dispossession, and destruction.

In Chapter 4, Tobar features homeless characters in Downtown L.A. demonstrating their collective rights to the city. These characters include Antonio, the protagonist from Guatemala who relies upon the anonymity and chaos of the rebellion which creates a carnivalesque atmosphere [15], to achieve his revenge on Longoria, in view of the lack of authority in terms of surveillance exercised by city officials in Pico-Union and elsewhere. In addition, Smith includes marginalized and anonymous characters who might not be necessarily homeless, yet as the working poor, live on the margins of society and try to survive on the city streets. Similarly, the documentaries directed by Kim-Gibson and Choy and Ridley, also feature the residents of L.A. claiming their rights to the city during the rebellion of 1992 and in the process, these filmmakers challenge the erasure of people of color from the city’s history and the master narrative of supercity progress in L.A. and the simplistic mainstream interpretation of the L.A. Uprising.

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[15] Mikhail Bakhtin has defined the noun “carnival” to characterize writing that shows temporary destabilization or reversal of power structures. Films, painting and sculpture should also embody the spirit of carnival (Oxford Reference.com).

Scale

According to Marston, scale may best be defined as a socially constructed level of geographic representation. Scale is implicated in the production of space and "refers to the spatial extent of a phenomenon or study" (Marston 2000, 219-233). According to Marston, in recent years, social theorists tend to agree that scale does not necessarily reflect a "preordained hierarchical framework for ordering the world – local, regional, national and global", rather it is socially constructed. Marston further contends that scale is "constituted and reconstituted around relations of capitalist production, social reproduction, and consumption" and agrees with Smith that in regards to urban scale, social groups can create their own politics of scale "in order to resist capital-centered scale constructions" (219-233). This is a process known as "jumping scales" which was coined by Neil Smith and often cited by other geographers in their studies, including Marston. To be sure, jumping scales can best be defined as moving to a different or wider geographical field in order to resist the effects of capitalism in the everyday world (219-233). Marston argues that it is important in social theory to acknowledge other levels of scales beyond the urban, in particular the home, as Smith acknowledged in his later writings, because these levels have not been addressed by all social theorists as additional, legitimate scales: "the relations of social reproduction…are as important as capitalist economic production to understanding the politics of scale" (232). In this way, Marston contends that scholars will begin to agree with her and Smith that the home is also a socially produced scale that is "thoroughly implicated in wider social, political, and economic processes" (232). Marston's use of the term jumping scales will prove particularly useful in our examination of the destruction of homes in Chavez Ravine and East Los Angeles as part of city-authorized urban renewal processes in the dissertation.

Urban Renewal

Smith's definitions of the terms gentrification and urban renewal will similarly be useful in our examination of the various counternarratives in the dissertation. According to Smith, gentrification may best be understood as the transformation of inner-city neighborhoods to more upscale residential and recreational areas, often resulting in social, physical and economic changes which cause the displacement and dispossession of the inner-city inhabitants (Smith 2010, 1; Smith 1982, 140). In the article, "Gentrification and Urban Development", Smith makes a clear theoretical distinction between gentrification and urban redevelopment. He argues that gentrification deals with the rehabilitation of inner-city neighborhoods by homebuyers, landlords, and professional developers who seek to "revitalize" the buildings and neighborhoods, while urban renewal does not involve rehabilitation but rather the construction of new buildings and structures on previously developed land (Smith 1982, 140). This distinction is important because both are part of the historical debates that led L.A. City Hall in the 1940s-1970s to use eminent domain via urban renewal modernization and scientific language such as "blight", as part of the master narrative of supercity progress to displace Chicanos and others from their homes in order to build Dodger Stadium and the East L.A. freeway system.

Indeed, as Colin Gordon has noted, terms such as blight, urban renewal, "slum clearance", and "economic development" were all used historically throughout the twentieth-century by city authorities across the U.S. to promote urban renewal processes. According to Gordon, urban renewal is also about public financing of private economic development or property transactions: "such policies extend the public credit and the public power of eminent domain to private interests – a combination that has incurred the opposition of both taxpayers and property owners displaced by urban renewal or redevelopment" (Gordon 2004, 305-309).

Historically, the main purpose and justification for these urban renewal policies, has been to eliminate inner-city neighborhoods, for the sake of the master narrative of supercity progress. As Gordon has shown, there is no standard definition for blight, and throughout the twentieth-century, "courts have granted local interests almost carte blanche in their creative search for 'blighted' areas eligible for federal funds or local tax breaks…in a long history of local anxiety surrounding inner city housing, 'slum clearance', and the fate of the central business district" (305). In L.A. for example, Thomas Hines, John Laslett, and Eric Avila have all noted how city authorities used similar language to obtain federal funds to initiate urban renewal at the local level. In the 1950s, the Los Angeles City Housing Authority (CHA) used the language of urban renewal to obtain funds via the Federal Housing Act of 1949 to destroy Chavez Ravine in favor of public housing promises that were never kept (Laslett 3). The L.A. Sheriff's Department was called upon to forcibly remove families such as the Arechiga family, from their homes (Hines 123-143). Similarly, L.A. City Hall also employed the Federal Highway Act of 1956 to initiate urban renewal processes to create the East L.A. freeway interchange system, destroying parts of the barrio and causing widespread displacement and dispossession among the Chicano community in East L.A. (Avila 2004, 185-223).

Here are some examples of scale, gentrification, and urban renewal using the selected counternarratives. In all of the counternarratives, residents' homes and local businesses are important settings that are certainly related to issues of scale, gentrification, and urban renewal, among other issues. As Marston and Smith have argued, the home is also a socially produced scale that is "thoroughly implicated in wider social, political, and economic processes" (Marston 2000, 232). In addition, they both agree that social groups can create their own politics of scale "in order to resist capital-centered scale constructions" (219-233). In regards to this project, the

authors and the filmmakers use the narrative device of jumping scales to challenge the erasure of people of color from the city's history and the master narrative of supercity progress. As Alicia Muñoz has shown, the emphasis on pedestrian movement is a sign of resistance to the use of the Los Angeles "narrative cliché" of high-speed car chases on the freeways of the city. It is also a sign of resistance to L.A. City Hall authorities (Muñoz 24-38). In my view, this argument can be broadened to include other multi-ethnic U.S. literature and film counternarratives set in L.A. Indeed, in the selected counternarratives, I argue that the process of jumping scales operates as a useful narrative device that shows the working poor resisting marginalization and oppression by walking, using public transportation, driving on side streets, and employing alternative means of movement to de-emphasize the cliché narrative vision of L.A. of high speed car chases. While walking on city sidewalks, abandoned lots, graveyards, using the city bus and driving on side streets are also socially constructed pathways through Los Angeles, in the selected counternarratives, the authors and filmmakers use these alternative methods of city movement to critique and challenge the erasure of people of color from the city's history and the master narrative of supercity progress. As Michel de Certeau and Sikivu Hutchinson have both argued, pedestrian movement by walking or through the use of public transportation in cities such as New York or Los Angeles enables other modes of freedom, what de Certeau calls "everyday practices of being in the city that escape the transparency of regulatory control" (Hutchinson 108-119). Moreover, while car chases are referenced in some of the counternarratives, these car rides do not result in unbridled freedom, they result in death and disaster, which affect residents such as Turtle in *Their Dogs Came with Them* in Chapter 3, Rodney King and various other residents in both *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992* and *Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992* in Chapter

4. Therefore, jumping scales is an important narrative device that is used to discuss these important issues in the selected counternarratives.

As Marston and Smith have argued, the home is also a politically significant and socially constructed scale. As we shall see, homes and local businesses operate in these counternarratives to provide shelter from L.A. City Hall authorities, the Quarantine Authority, and the LAPD. In the counternarratives, we learn how these entities threaten homes and neighborhoods and have the authority to forcibly remove residents from their homes and neighborhoods and in some cases to apply deadly force during the law enforcement. A few examples of these uses of authority are featured in the following counternarratives: *Chavez Ravine* in Chapter 2, *Their Dogs Came with Them* in Chapter 3, and *The Tattooed Soldier* and *Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992* in Chapter 4. In some cases, many residents resist L.A. City Hall authorities and refuse to be forced from their homes and neighborhoods, while in other episodes, residents' domiciles are invaded either by the Quarantine Authority or the LAPD or others. In addition, some residents do not own or rent any homes and seek refuge on the streets; they create new places to live as homeless survivors especially in *Their Dogs Came with Them* in Chapter 3 and *The Tattooed Soldier* in Chapter 4. The characters in these counternarratives are shown as gangsters or homeless survivors whose existences on the margins of society in East L.A., Downtown L.A., and South L.A., challenge the erasure of people of color from the city's history and the master narrative of supercity progress.

To be sure, local businesses are also important as places that operate as sites of resistance in *Sa-I-Gu* and *Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992* in Chapter 4, and *The Tattooed Soldier* in Chapter 5, regarding the uprising. In these counternarratives, businesses have rules of their own and provide shelter to a wide variety of residents who struggle to protect their businesses. This

includes the Central American postal business in *The Tattooed Soldier* in which Central immigrants send money to Central America. This also includes the Korean businesses in *Sa-I-Gu* and *Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992*. Therefore, residents' homes and local businesses are also important settings that are certainly related to issues of scale and urban renewal, among other issues in the selected counternarratives in this dissertation.

Chapter 2: Haunting and Dodger Stadium: Spatial and Environmental Injustice at Chavez Ravine in the 1940s-1950s

Chavez Ravine (2003) by Culture Clash

The narrative devices of haunting and ghosts, among several other components, help us to understand how Culture Clash's play *Chavez Ravine* (2003) in Chapter 2 and Helena María Viramontes's novel *Their Dogs Came with Them* (2007) in Chapter 3, establish conversations on the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice. All of the counternarratives in this project use the metaphors of haunting and ghosts as narrative devices in correspondingly different ways, to examine the complex issues but also to refer indirectly or directly to certain non-fictional and fictional dead victims featured in the counternarratives. In Chapter 2, I argue that Culture Clash uses these devices as well as a wide variety of other narrative techniques to critique and challenge both (1) the erasure of people of color from the city's history and (2) the recurring master narrative of supercity progress, specifically regarding the uses of eminent domain via urban renewal modernization in Los Angeles, two interrelated themes that are still used to erase the social violence that occurred during the urban renewal of Chavez Ravine and East Los Angeles in the 1940s-1970s. As I noted in the first chapter, Raúl Villa and Mark Davis have shown how these interrelated themes and issues were instrumental in helping L.A. City Hall authorities of the period promote policies that led to the creation of Dodger Stadium and the East L.A. freeway interchange system, which resulted in the displacement and dispossession of many people of color, particularly Mexican and Chicano residents and homeowners (Davis 1990, 17-97; Villa 1999, 111-115). The narrative devices that will be discussed in Chapter 2, where appropriate, include the following: the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, rasquachismo aesthetics, composite characters, and film

noir stylization. In Chapter 2, I argue that Culture Clash's play features several ravine residents, who reach breaking points in which there are spatial and environmental injustice related crises that must be dealt with in the narrative. These crises inform the audience that enough is enough and that a reckoning should occur in regards to each of the unfolding events in the play. In my view, Culture Clash use a didactic method to arrange the aforementioned narrative devices in order to critique and challenge the erasure of people of color from the city's history and the recurring master narrative of supercity progress and to demonstrate the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice at Chavez Ravine in the 1940s-1950s.

To be sure, Culture Clash in Chapter 2 and Viramontes in Chapter 3, have similar goals in critiquing and challenging the erasure of people of color from the city's history in L.A. and the supercity progress master narrative. Viramontes's reflective arrangement of the narrative devices in her novel more viscerally brings to light the experiences of displacement and dispossession than Culture Clash's didactic arrangement of the narrative devices in its play. In Chapter 2 and in Chapter 3, we learn how in their correspondingly different ways, Culture Clash and Viramontes access the literary imagination to inform the reader about spatial and environmental injustice through examples of displacement, dispossession, and social violence that affected the residents of Chavez Ravine and East L.A. in the 1940s-1970s. Ultimately, I note in Chapter 2 how Culture Clash opts for didactic methods in its play, and we note in Chapter 3 how Viramontes selects reflective methods to examine similar forms of spatial and environmental injustice in her novel.

The Early Years of Chavez Ravine

Chavez Ravine is located in the hills northeast of Downtown L.A., which is now the site of Dodger Stadium. For many decades, the ravine was home to 1,100 families and nearly 4,000

residents before the construction of the stadium in the early 1960s. According to Ronald López, many residents owned homes that had been built by their parents and grandparents. While the residents had their share of issues and problems with the city, Chavez Ravine "had the highest proportion of property owners" of any Chicano community in Los Angeles. In addition, it is worth noting that segregation, lack of affordable housing, and the exclusion of Mexicans and Chicanos from new housing developments "made the prospect of finding new homes especially onerous" (López 459). In 1949, the L.A. City Housing Authority (CHA) determined that the ravine neighborhoods were slums. As a result, the land was selected for a federally funded housing project in the late 1940s (López 459; Laslett 55-73). Thomas Hines has referred to the confrontation between the CHA and the ill-fated ravine residents as "The Battle of Chavez Ravine." This confrontation involved many strong-willed community activists from the ravine who at first fought the liberal CHA to avoid losing their homes via eminent domain and via urban renewal modernization. Ultimately, a broad coalition of private investors and promoters joined the battle for more destructive reasons: to end the CHA's public housing project, clear the ravine via eminent domain and sell the land to the privately-owned Dodgers in the 1950s (Hines 123).

The history of the ravine dates back to the nineteenth-century when the land was the property of Julian A. Chavez, a resident of New Mexico who settled in Los Angeles in the 1830s. In 1850 and 1880, Mexican and Chinese resident immigrants suffering from smallpox were sent to Chavez Ravine to recover from the disease. During the same period, Jewish immigrants bought some land for a cemetery on the south section of the ravine (Culture Clash 8; Laslett 21). Many years later, Mexicans escaping the Mexican Revolution fled Mexico for L.A. and settled in Chavez Ravine (Laslett 22). These Mexican residents thought of Chavez Ravine as a paradise for

three reasons: (1) the land was cheaper than East L.A. neighborhoods, (2) the ravine was isolated from L.A., and (3) the ravine had a rural atmosphere reminiscent of Mexico. The rural setting provided these residents land to create farms which helped them survive during the Great Depression. Nevertheless, the neighborhoods had many problems including a lack of paved roads, streetlights, and proper hospitals. That said, many of the residents found work in railway companies, upholstery businesses, and in furniture stores in Downtown L.A. (30-31).

The Erasure of Chicanos from L.A. History: Repatriation During the Great Depression

Once the Great Depression struck after the stock market crash in 1929, Chavez Ravine residents were particularly affected. Many residents were targeted for their status as immigrant laborers by nativist labor groups who protested in L.A. to encourage local businesses to only hire U.S. citizens. This led to a structural response from the state legislature in Sacramento which created the Alien Labor Act in 1931, "which made it illegal for any business doing business with the state to employ 'aliens' on public works" (Laslett 42). As Laslett has noted, the nativist sentiment also led to the U.S. Government targeting Mexican residents with policies enforcing repatriation to Mexico in 1931-1935. Mexican immigrants were accused of depriving native-born residents of employment and led to the deportation of thousands of L.A.'s Mexican population during this period. Most alarming was the fact that many Chicano residents with proof of U.S. citizenship were also put on trains and "deported" to Mexico even though they were U.S. citizens (45). According to the Mexican newspaper *El Universal*, the U.S. Labor Department estimated in August 1932 that 2,000,000 Mexicans working and residing in the U.S. returned to Mexico during this period. Nevertheless, many repatriates or those who left voluntarily to Mexico eventually returned to the U.S. to find work during World War II (Laslett 45).

As Laslett has noted, despite the ravine's isolation from the rest of the city, the Latino residents shared the same patriotic sentiments regarding the Japanese invasion of the U.S. that caused the nation to declare war on Japan. Many residents of Chavez Ravine also bought war bonds and contributed to the war effort by working in war related industries and by joining the service to fight the war overseas (Laslett 47-48). Upon their return from World War II; however, many Chicano veterans experienced a lack of acknowledgment for their efforts and a return to marginalization in postwar L.A. society. As Culture Clash shows in the play *Chavez Ravine*, one of the composite characters, Henry Ruiz, is a World War II veteran who fought in the Pacific and returns to Chavez Ravine to find ravine residents being forcibly removed from their homes via eminent domain. Henry's brother Arturo does not return from World War II (Culture Clash 20-39). As Villa has shown, many Chicanos from L.A. enlisted and perished in combat at a rate "greatly disproportionate to their percentage in the local and national population, and they became the most highly decorated of any national ethnic group" and yet still were not treated as heroes upon their return to L.A. (Villa 2000, 76). The theme of discrimination is also apparent during the historical episode known as the "Zoot Suit Riots" which affected the residents of Chavez Ravine and East L.A. during the war (Villa 2000, 66-67; Laslett 51-53).

<u>Urban Blight and Slum Clearance: The Los Angeles City Housing Authority</u>

In 1949, the neighborhoods of the ravine were targeted as urban blight to be cleared for a public housing project by the L.A. City Housing Authority (CHA). The supercity master narrative was used to connect the poverty in the ravine to the city's pueblo history as a strategy to promote urban renewal. Indeed, in the 1940s-1950s, the CHA used terms such as urban blight to designate areas to be cleared for urban renewal while the city obtained funds from the U.S.

Government via the Federal Housing Act of 1949 to address the housing shortage crisis (Laslett 3; Hines 123-143; Avila 2004, 185-223). According to Don Parson, the debate over postwar public housing in L.A. is rooted in political and economic debates dating back to the Great Depression. Moreover, postwar L.A. society featured two separate political pathways regarding the debate over public housing: community modernism versus corporate modernism (Parson 6-11; Laslett 55-60). Community modernism is defined as a liberal ideology that calls for policies of "social democratic reform in matters of housing, urban redevelopment, rents, education, air pollution and so forth" (Parson 6). The community modernists such as Mayor Fletcher Bowron and Frank Wilkinson, the Information Director of the CHA, were both proponents of public housing in L.A. during the postwar years. In contrast, Parson defines corporate modernism as a conservative ideology aligned with the business special interests which rejected community modernism in favor of urban renewal and the following priorities: "inner-city redevelopment for commercial purposes on a monumental scale, with modern housing being relegated primarily to the suburban periphery in the form of single-family homes" (9).

Chavez Ravine: The 1950s L.A. Public Housing Debate

In late 1949, the residents of the three neighborhoods of Chavez Ravine learned that the CHA had selected their community as urban blight and a slum that would be the site for a federally funded public housing project (Laslett 60; López 459). According to Laslett, the Chavez Ravine barrio was selected because it was considered "the worst slum in the city." Most of the defenders of the ravine's homes made it clear that most of the dwellings were made in the 1920s, before the city's building codes (Laslett 63-64). A court case filed in the 1950s argued that many of the condemned homes could be made to conform to the city's building codes

instead of being demolished. In addition, an attorney representing some of the residents made the claim that it was unreasonable for the CHA to tell residents who were already homeowners in Chavez Ravine, to sell their homes and become renters in a public housing project (66).

In July 1950, the residents were officially notified that the CHA's new public housing project would require the demolition of their homes via eminent domain to make room for Elysian Park Heights (Laslett 60). Frank Wilkinson, the CHA Information Director and his colleague Ignacio "Nacho" López frequently visited the neighborhoods "convincing Chavez Ravine residents to move." The residents were promised first priority in the new housing project, rent scaled to income, and no discrimination in regards to housing (López 461-462). As López has noted, L.A. City Councilman Ed Roybal, a Chicano who supported public housing, encouraged the residents to sell their homes at a reasonable price. Public hearings were held by the CHA, the Planning Commission, and the L.A. City Council in 1950 to debate the public housing project (López 462-463). Many residents were represented by lobbyist groups which allied themselves with the conservative lobby that viewed public housing as socialist. While many of the residents did not endorse the view that public housing was socialist, they thought that by emphasizing their home ownership, they could defeat the public housing project. Others tried to emphasize their patriotism (460). Ultimately, none of these tactics worked for the ravine residents. Some residents decided to sell their homes to the city while others like the Arechiga family, decided to fight to keep their land in the ravine.

As Hines has shown, in the midst of the public housing debate, Wilkinson was accused of being a communist. Soon, the L.A. City Council voted to cancel the city's contract for public housing with the CHA in 1951. The CHA filed a lawsuit against the council. The California Supreme Court voted unanimously that the council had to honor its contract with the CHA. The

L.A. City Council then scheduled a citywide referendum vote to cancel the contract and this proposal was approved by a vote of 378,000 to 258,000. Ultimately, the anti-public housing coalition recruited GOP Congressman Norris Paulson to win the mayoral race and he ended the "socialistic" public housing project at Chavez Ravine. With the residents removed from the ravine, the city converted the land to public use and then sold the land at a bargain rate to Walter O'Malley, the owner of the Brooklyn Dodgers (Hines 139-140).

As Villa has shown, Paulson's mayoral win was detrimental to public housing in Los Angeles during the 1950s. Paulson publicly promoted eminent domain via urban renewal modernization as he helped to end public housing at Chavez Ravine, making several speeches referring to the city's past history as a Mexican pueblo to contrast this era with the supercity L.A. future. Part of the strategy was to condemn public housing as socialistic and promote the sale of the land to the Dodgers to the public in the 1950s (Villa 80-95). As a result, the city authorities and their sympathizers created a coalition that manipulated the L.A. public into fearing public housing projects as socialism and yet, paradoxically, encouraged the public into supporting the use of eminent domain to clear the ravine residents in order to sell the land to the privately-owned Dodgers in the late 1950s.

Authors

Chavez Ravine (2003): Summary

Culture Clash is comprised of three performance artists and playwrights: Richard Montoya, Ric Salinas, and Herbert Siguenza. Montoya is a Chicano, while both Siguenza and Salinas share Salvadoran heritage. All three worked on their craft in community theater and with Luis Valdez and his El Teatro Campesino (Aldama 143). In 1984, visual artist Rene Yanez

invited the actors to perform a comedy show during the Cinco de Mayo festival in the San Francisco Mission District and Culture Clash was established after that performance. As playwrights and performers, Culture Clash fuse together many influences and its own brand of rasquachismo aesthetics. As we learned in the previous chapter, rasquachismo aesthetics has been defined as an aesthetics that is an attitude connected to the working poor and a visceral response to lived reality that is rooted in resourcefulness in Chicano art (Ybarra-Frausto 1989, 5-8). Culture Clash's other influences include 1960s Chicano theater, Mexican carpas (sketch comedy), vaudeville, and the comedy of Charlie Chaplin and Cantinflas (Glenn 413). In addition, as Antonia Glenn has noted, Culture Clash also employs the narrative devices of resistance performance strategies in its work (Glenn 413-414). These strategies call upon the three actors to play a wide-variety of roles, even multiple roles in many productions (413-417). And, as David García has shown, the trio also uses the narrative devices of composite characters in many of their theatrical productions (García 118-126).

In the play *Chavez Ravine*, Culture Clash adopts a didactic approach intended to teach the audience about spatial and environmental injustice in specific regards to the destruction of Chavez Ravine to construct Dodger Stadium in the 1950s-1960s. The purpose of the play is to critique and challenge the erasure of people of color from the city's history in L.A. and the supercity progress master narrative. Ultimately, the trio uses the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, rasquachismo aesthetics, composite characters, and film noir stylization to demonstrate the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice in regards to Chavez Ravine. In the early 2000s, the Mark Taper Forum and the Latino Theatre Initiative in Los Angeles commissioned Culture Clash to develop a play based on the history of Chavez Ravine. The play *Chavez Ravine* begins on Opening Day at

Dodger Stadium with the Los Angeles Dodgers playing the Houston Astros on April 9, 1981. While the Dodger rookie Fernando Valenzuela prepares to pitch to begin what will be his breakthrough season, ghostlike apparitions visit the outfield. Henry and María are the ghostlike visitors from the past and their purposes are to teach both Fernando and the audience about the history of Chavez Ravine. Culture Clash also plays many roles including the three villainous film noir composite characters known as Mover, Shaker, and the Watchman who represent a wide variety of investors and conservative lobbyists (Culture Clash 39-43). Ultimately, Wilkinson after being accused of being a communist is fired. Bowron loses the mayoral election to Paulson who ends the public housing project. The city authorities then use eminent domain via urban renewal modernization to clear the ravine and eventually the land is sold to the Dodgers. The setting of the play at Dodger Stadium features Henry and María teaching Fernando and the audience about the spatial and environmental injustice that occurred in Los Angeles in 1940s-1950s (56-97).

Chavez Ravine

Narrative Devices

Haunting and Ghosts: Introduction

In my view, Gordon and Brogan have different definitions of haunting and ghosts, their particular definitions will be referenced when appropriate in the project. Brogan's definition of cultural haunting prominently features "the master metaphor of the ghost as go-between", which is more attuned to didactic and literal portrayals of haunting and ghosts (Brogan 152). As a result, Brogan's definitions of haunting and ghosts are more applicable to *Chavez Ravine* in Chapter 2 and to films to be discussed in Chapter 4, *Sa-I-Gu*, and *Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-*

1992, insofar as these counternarratives are similarly interested in exploring the themes of possession and reconstruction of memories, communal exorcism, and integration of the past and present, through the use of the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts. In contrast, Gordon's definitions of haunting and ghosts are more reflective than Brogan's concept of cultural haunting. As Gordon has noted, haunting and ghosts "alter the experience of being in linear time" and prompt "a-something-to-be-done"; these experiences whether they are literal or figurative, demand attention from the people experiencing haunting and ghosts in literature (Gordon 2011, 2-3). In addition, Gordon argues that the metaphors of haunting and ghosts represent "the dead or the disappeared or the lost or the invisible" people or historically erased people of the past who are actively demanding their due in literature (Gordon 2008, 182). As a result, Gordon's reflective definitions of haunting and ghosts are more applicable to *Their Dogs Came with Them* in Chapter 3 and to *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992* and *The Tattooed Soldier* in Chapter 4, insofar as the writers use the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts more reflectively and figuratively in these counternarratives.

Chavez Ravine

Haunting and Ghosts and Disjointed Time: Possession and Reconstruction of Memories

In *Chavez Ravine*, we are first introduced to the "ghostlike apparitions" of Henry and his sister María as they visit Los Angeles Dodgers star Fernando Valenzuela and Dodger Stadium on Opening Day, 1981. While legendary Dodgers TV and radio broadcast commentator Vin Scully begins the sportscast on one part of the stage, Fernando prepares to lead the Dodgers' defense on Opening Day at the stadium. Suddenly, the apparitions also join the stage. Although it's worth noting that Henry and María are introduced as "ghostlike apparitions", we will also refer to them

as ghosts because the stage directions require them to wear 1940s period clothing as they enter the stage along with small houses that descend onto the outfield, which operates as supernatural imagery for the contemporary audience. Moreover, the stage directions also demonstrate that the ghosts' visit is urgent and serves as evidence that a haunting is occurring as they seek to possess [16] Fernando during their visit: "Small houses gently fall onto the outfield from above. Two Chavez Ravine residents enter like ghosts from another era: María, in a 1940s dress, carries a small house and places it on second base. Her brother, Henry, appears…in [a WWII Marine Corps uniform]. They look toward Fernando" (Culture Clash 15). Moreover, the appearances of these ghosts, their influence as teachers to the audience, and their central roles in this play about displaced Mexicans and Chicanos in Los Angeles history, is in line with Brogan's concept of the ghost as representing a communal belief in ancestor spirits (Brogan 150).

Culture Clash also employs the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, to show the Henry and Maria as literally haunting Dodger Stadium in the counternarrative. As Derrida notes in *Specters of Marx*, Hamlet reacts to the visit of the ghost of his father to the castle by proclaiming that "the time is out of joint" (Derrida xviii; Jameson 26-30; Prendergast 44-45). Gordon similarly has noted how haunting raises specters and "alters the experience of being in linear time" (Gordon 2011, 2-3). In regards to Henry and María's visit, time is similarly "out of joint" insofar as the houses represent an earlier historical period. Therefore, the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts and non-linear and disjointed time are intertwined in *Chavez Ravine* and *Their Dogs Came with Them* and will be examined together in this section of the dissertation. I will refer to this combination of devices

[16] Merriam-Webster.com defines the verb "possess" using the following definition: "to bring or cause to fall under the influence, domination, or control of some emotional or intellectual response or reaction" (Merriam-Webster.com).

as the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time. In Culture Clash's play, the homes in this scene represent those that were cleared from the ravine via eminent domain. As Laslett has noted, most of the ravine homes were built in the 1920s and 1930s (Laslett 63-64). This is a first sign that time is interrupted. Second, the ghosts are also out of their time, making the audience aware that time is disjointed and interrupted insofar as they wear clothing from the 1940s while visiting Dodger Stadium in 1981. Henry and María are only visible to Fernando and the audience and not to Scully (Culture Clash 18). As the pitcher and leader of the Dodgers' defense on the field, Fernando looks away from the game and looks towards the ghostly visitors during the scene (18). They introduce themselves as siblings Henry Ruiz and María Salgado Ruiz and they are demanding their due as Fernando in turn slows down the game so that he can engage in conversations with them. As a result, one major difference between Culture Clash's and Viramontes's employment of the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, is that Culture Clash incorporates these devices, literally in the play, with the ghosts of Henry and Maria, for example, wearing clothing from the 1940s during their haunting visit to Dodger Stadium in 1981.

Therefore, in Henry and María's ghostly visit it is clear that a haunting is occurring because of the non-linear interruption of the flow of time of a baseball game at the stadium. The ghostly visitors and the small houses cause time to be disjointed. As Gordon has argued, a haunting not only raises specters, it also "alters the experience of being in linear time…and the way we normally separate and sequence the past, the present and the future" (Gordon 2011, 2-3). Henry and María visit Fernando and Dodger Stadium to establish conversations with him and the audience regarding spatial and environmental injustice. Their visit is part of Culture Clash's didactic methods of using their collective memories to teach the audience about the displaced

and dispossessed former residents of Chavez Ravine. Their purpose is to critique and challenge the interrelated themes of the erasure of people of color from the city's history and the master narrative of supercity progress through their visit to the stadium. They include themselves as people of color in the city's history. As María states at the end of the play, the former residents of Chavez Ravine want the contemporary and future residents of L.A. to know about what happened to the ravine's neighborhoods. They want to teach people about the importance of community solidarity, unions, and how establishing "a culture of resistance" at the local scale is required in order for communities of people of color to claim a right to the city and fight spatial and environmental injustice in Los Angeles (96).

The conversations with Fernando begin with Henry announcing that he was born behind second base and raised on "La Bishops Road" (15). The stage directions then show that María "places something underneath the house, on second base" while Henry speaks to Fernando. The ghosts then both speak and tell Fernando that Dodger Stadium was built where their house once stood in the ravine. They teach him and the audience that the land was privately owned by the former ravine residents, decades before the city used eminent domain to clear the land for a public housing project. As we have noted, the city subsequently ended the project and then sold the land to the privately-owned Dodgers. The ravine where they lived was comprised of three neighborhoods:

> MARÍA. La Loma, Palo Verde and Bishop. We never called it Chavez Ravine.
> HENRY. La Bishops Road ran through the base of the canyon located in the midst of five ravines.
> MARÍA. Chavez, Cemetery, Solano, Reservoir and Sulpher.
> HENRY. This area was bordered by Echo Parque, North Broadway and Elysian Park. Some people called it a slum, Fernando.
> MARÍA. It was no slum, man. It was home…familia…
> FERNANDO. (bewildered) Hola. (Culture Clash 16).

Here, we note how the siblings introduce themselves and occupy second base which is in the infield, while Fernando as the Dodgers' pitcher, leads his team's defense. Instead of properly leading the defense versus the opposing team, Fernando turns to the infield to speak to the ghosts which prompts Scully to wonder if Fernando has something in his eye to cause him to temporarily slow down the game (18). As we have noted, the ghosts disrupt time insofar as their visit is a non-linear one that stops the flow of the baseball game and causes Fernando as the leader of the Dodger defense to turn away from the opposing team to speak to the ghosts. As a result, he slows down the game to speak with them which demonstrates that he is possessed by the ghosts' visitation. As Derrida and Gordon have noted, ghosts represent disjointed time and alter one's normal sense of time and place which is made clear by Fernando's bewilderment when the ghosts introduce themselves during the scene (Derrida xviii; Gordon 2011, 2; Culture Clash 18). In addition, Henry and María are not demanding Scully's attention, who cannot see or hear them, they speak solely to Fernando and the audience. As Scully states at the end of the scene, "The youngster [Fernando] may have gotten dust in his eye, light winds are known to whip around the infield. He looked positively possessed from here" (18). These lines are evidence that Scully cannot see or hear the ghosts and that only Fernando and the audience are witnesses to their visit to the stadium. We also note the use of the verb "possessed" which as Brogan has noted, is the first phase of haunting, when the ghost demands its due and the audience learns that a haunting is taking place in the narrative. Scully conveys humor as he observes the scene and tries to explain Fernando's stalling during the game using dust and wind as the logical excuses for his lack of attention on the mound (18). Scully is unaware that the ghosts have demanded Fernando's attention, causing him to slow down the game as he listens to them teach history lessons regarding spatial and environmental injustice in the ravine.

María also teaches Fernando during the possession scene that the former ravine residents considered their neighborhoods to be sacred land. Indeed, as Laslett has previously shown, in the nineteenth-century, Chavez Ravine was used as burial grounds for many other people of color and immigrants. This leads María to tell Fernando: “These are sacred lands you’re pitching on Fernando. Long ago burial grounds for the Tongva, Chinese and Jewish gente” (Culture Clash 17; Laslett 20-21). The stage directions then immediately call for the sounds of funeral services featuring “Native American/Chinese/Yiddish voices”, which is meant to explain how the ravine was historically allocated and set aside for marginalized people of color and immigrants in the nineteenth-century. Henry also teaches Fernando that the land was sacred to the residents because they farmed the land throughout the hills. María adds that the “scent of wild, night jasmine” filled the ravine, emphasizing the deep connection the former residents shared in their neighborhoods (Culture Clash 17). These nostalgic memories are more evidence of the spatial and environmental injustice shared by the ghosts after losing their neighborhoods. These lessons demonstrate what Laslett noted earlier regarding the self-sufficiency of the people who farmed the land in order to survive during the Great Depression (Laslett 15-40). Henry and María’s visit to Dodger Stadium is thus part of a didactic lesson meant to teach Fernando and the audience about how Mexicans, Chicanos and other people of color have been erased from the city’s history. The residents’ neighborhoods were selected for urban renewal and their homes were cleared from the land via eminent domain. The land was then sold to the privately-owned Dodgers. These are further examples of the ghosts teaching lessons about spatial and environmental injustice. The appearances of these ghosts, their function as teachers to the audience, and their central roles in this counternarrative emphasizes the displacement of

Mexicans and Chicanos and their erasure from L.A. history, which is in line with Brogan's concept of the ghost representing a communal belief in ancestor spirits (Brogan 150).

In addition, Culture Clash's inclusion of the ghost of Manazar Gamboa as the play's narrator is another example of the writers' incorporation of the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts. As a ghostly narrator who tells jokes, Manazar, unlike Henry and María, is not a fictional personality he was a real-life resident of Chavez Ravine. Early on in the counternarrative, Manazar uses humorous references to establish the "rules" of the play, namely that only the audience can see or hear his narration during the play (Culture Clash 27). Manazar's rules and revelations in this early monologue make it clear to the audience that he will demand his due and that he too has important things to teach the audience about Chavez Ravine. As a result, this early monologue operates as a scene of possession of the audience. Moreover, by employing the ghost of Manazar as the play's narrator, a real life witness to the destruction of the ravine, Culture Clash suggests that haunting and ghosts can access the literary imagination more effectively to teach the audience about the history of spatial and environmental injustice that occurred at Chavez Ravine.

Culture Clash establishes Manazar's reliability and credibility as the ghost narrator early in the play. This is made clear when Manazar reveals to the audience that he was a poet and a native of Chavez Ravine, who recently died in L.A. in 2001 (27). As a witness to Chavez Ravine's history, Manazar also emphasizes the home ownership of the ravine residents, which further deepens their connection to the land: " …the original families [arrived in the ravine] in the 1920s, refugees of the Mexican Revolution…they found themselves in these empty hills and sabes que, they needed houses, so the people worked together to build their casitas" (27). These lines are a reminder of what Laslett has shown earlier, that the original Mexican and Chicano

families of the ravine, settled in the hills during the Mexican Revolution, in land that the city had long set aside since the nineteenth-century, for marginalized people of color and recent immigrants (Laslett 20-26). Moreover, Manazar's discussion of the ravine's empty hills later occupied by these marginalized residents, challenges the supercity master narrative that Chavez Ravine was a slum by emphasizing the fact that the residents claimed a collective right to the city, bought the land, and worked together to build their own homes. In addition, the city was also unwilling to help ravine residents modernize the neighborhoods over the years (Laslett 22-31; López 459). Nevertheless, these homes would eventually be taken away from the residents by L.A. City Hall authorities using eminent domain in the 1950s. Manazar, as the ghost narrator, is thus a credible witness to the spatial and environmental injustice that occurred at Chavez Ravine during this period.

It is also worth reiterating that unlike Henry and María, Manazar is not a composite character. While the siblings effectively represent many of the families as composite characters, Manazar speaks as a witness to history. This explains why Culture Clash devote more time to develop his credibility for the audience than the trio do with Henry and María, in order to examine spatial and environmental injustice. All three characters serve a didactic purpose, which is to teach the history of Chavez Ravine especially during recalled scenes of the people's possession of the ravine and the reconstruction of their memories. In another pivotal scene, Manazar and a few residents, known as the "Eminent Domain Players" teach the audience about how the early residents escaped the Mexican Revolution and created the ravine's three neighborhoods:

> MANAZAR. Before long, a few casitas started to take shape. Frames of houses like skeletons appeared. Finalmente, after many months of intense labor, the gente climbed the eastern ridge to admire their creation.
> RESIDENT 1. Casitas had been built everywhere.

RESIDENT 2. Improvised on the basins of canyons.
RESIDENT 1. The slopes of hills, the crests of ridges…
MANAZAR. They all stood there, proud.
RESIDENTS: Ahhhhh…a Mexican village with nails, screws and faith.
(Culture Clash 29).

Here, Manazar and three residents discuss how the early inhabitants of Chavez Ravine left Mexico during the Mexican Revolution, moved to L.A., and took charge of their collective future as residents and claimed their rights to the city. They bought the land and built their own homes in the ravine (29). Except for Manazar, these unknown residents are also anonymous composite characters who represent the many real-life residents of the ravine such as the Arechigas who built their own homes in the 1920s, several decades before the homes were torn down and in the Arechigas' case, demolished live on local L.A. TV to make room for Dodger Stadium in 1959.

The tone of the language used in these exchanges is wistful. We also notice the foreshadowing that occurs in the scene. The wistful tone is apparent when Manazar discusses how the frames of the houses were "like skeletons" which simultaneously describes the shapes of the houses as they are built from scratch with a nostalgic sense of pride, yet also foreshadows how these same houses would be torn down and demolished by the city using eminent domain via urban renewal modernization. These are properties that the ravine residents had owned for several generations. There is a didactic purpose to the scene, which is to teach the audience about the residents who inhabited the ravine before the city used eminent domain to take the land. Moreover, the audience also notes the use of haunting and ghosts through the role of the deceased narrator representing the 1920s, as they reminisce about the houses and neighborhoods that had once stood in the ravine. These are examples of ghosts demanding their due as Gordon has described, similarly interrupting time and taking the audience further back to the 1920s to teach them about the "basins of canyons" and "slopes of hills" where the residents "raised a

Mexican village with nails, screws, and faith" (26-29). These images also foreshadow that there is a "something-to-be-done", as Gordon has described, insofar as characters such as María and others, decide to protest and fight to keep their homes in Chavez Ravine. These are also further examples of spatial and environmental injustice in L.A. in the 1940s-1950s.

Manazar's role as the ghost narrator is also important because along with Henry, he discusses the theme of U.S. patriotism early in *Chavez Ravine*. This is relevant insofar as the first scenes of the play are set in postwar L.A. in the late 1940s and early 1950s. When Henry and María arrive at Dodger Stadium, it is made clear that they are both in 1940s period clothing. Henry also mentions early on in the play that he served overseas during the Battle of Saipan, in which the U.S. Marine Corps fought Japan in 1944 (21). Culture Clash includes the theme of U.S. patriotism because it is part of Culture Clash's didactic method to teach Fernando and the audience about the residents' wartime patriotism. Therefore, Henry's role as a veteran represents the sacrifices of Chicanos and Latinos who served the nation patriotically during World War II. It is also worth noting that Henry and María lost a brother, Arturo, during the war (15). According to Laslett and López, many of the nearly 1,100 Chavez Ravine families lost relatives during World War II (Laslett 47-48; López 459). This historical information is meant to critique and challenge the erasure of people of color from the city's history and the myth of supercity progress by emphasizing the heroic efforts of Latinos who defended the nation overseas during World War II; however, when they returned to their families after the war, these heroes still had to endure discrimination and spatial and environmental injustice in postwar Los Angeles.

As a former ravine resident, Manazar also shares his memories of the residents' wartime patriotism during World War II and the Korean War. In another early scene, Manazar reveals a large photograph of ravine residents taken during World War II, which presents many friends

and family members. He examines the photograph and mentions the patriotic señoras: "If you look closely at the photo, some of the señoras are wearing the army hats, and on the hats are little stars. Those little stars are for their sons and daughters who were away…Some of the fellas never made it back" (31-32). He also mentions how some neighbors not in the photograph included, "Italians, Slavs, Russians and some Germans" and yet for the most part, mostly Mexicans resided in the ravine: "And on holidays, pura aroma de tamal y hecho al menudo, y los compadres tocando la guitarra till late at night…That was [the Chavez Ravine] community" (32). In this scene, Manazar uses the old photograph to discuss the multi-ethnic diversity of the residents and the theme of patriotism, which many residents cited as a tactic to help them save their homes during the battle over the ravine. His inclusion of the many immigrants in the scene is a reminder that the ravine was always home to Native Americans, people of color, and immigrants for more than two centuries, as Laslett has also shown (Laslett 19-21).

Chavez Ravine

Haunting and Ghosts: Communal Exorcism

Culture Clash uses the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts in some of the final scenes featuring communal exorcism in *Chavez Ravine*. These are two somber scenes that require their own section because unlike the integration scenes, which contain several humorous scenes, the exorcism scenes are meant to exorcise the forms of spatial and environmental injustice at Chavez Ravine in the 1940s-1950s. Moreover, the communal exorcism scenes are also important didactic scenes because they feature the LAPD interrogating María and the forcible removal of her and her mother from their home by the L.A. Sheriff's Department (91-93). It is also worth noting that *Chavez Ravine* was produced in 2003, giving Culture Clash the

advantage of more than 40 years to examine the spatial and environmental injustice that occurred at the ravine in the 1950s.

The communal exorcism begins with María's interrogation by the LAPD. This scene foreshadows the end of the battle over the ravine. Two detectives representing the LAPD corner María in what the detectives call "a little get-acquainted session" in 1959 (89). They ask accusatory questions such as whether she knows of any residents who took the city's offer to sell their homes and yet, have not left the ravine. The detectives ask her for names and warn María to tell "old lady Arechiga and the last families to get off the hill" and for her to "Do it fast and do it quiet" (90). María responds to the detectives by reciting nicknames of ravine residents, when suddenly Manazar appears on stage. Structurally, his monologue overlaps with María's recitation of the nicknames, as they both talk on stage simultaneously. Her recitation of the nicknames of the long-departed ravine residents is an incantation and part of the communal exorcism. This exasperates the detectives who then promptly exit the scene. Her incantation strengthens María as she reclaims her dignity and moral superiority over the LAPD detectives. While the incantation forces the detectives to leave the ravine, in the next scene; however, the city responds by sending the L.A. Sheriff's Department to forcibly remove the remaining residents (89-90).

During María's recitation, Manazar continues his monologue. He informs the audience that: "On May 8th 1959 [the L.A. Sheriff's Department forcibly removed the Arechiga family]…there on national television in black and white…from the hill" (91). Several L.A. Sheriff's deputies then begin to remove María from her house. As we have noted, María is a composite character, meant to represent many characters. In this instance, she also represents Aurora Vargas, a daughter of the Arechigas, who famously refused to leave her home and was forcibly removed from it by four Sheriff's deputies on live local L.A. TV. They are also there to

remove her mother Mrs. Ruiz, a composite character who also represents many characters including Mrs. Arechiga, the matriarch of the family. Mrs. Ruiz appears onstage with a shotgun, proclaiming that although the family is not famous like the Mulhollands, Lankershims, or the Van Nuys, people will remember the name "Arechiga" (92). Her words are a critique of the city's marginalization of the ravine residents who may not be as wealthy as the well-known Los Angeles families she mentions, yet the name Arechiga will not be erased from the city's history. Her defiance along with María's incantation, comprise the communal exorcism and a rejection of the city authorities' enforcement of spatial and environmental injustice.

To be sure, Manazar echoes Mrs. Ruiz's moral superiority regarding the L.A. Sheriffs and her defiance of their orders when he discusses the forcible removal of the family to the audience. As he watches María's removal from the home she fought to save for a decade, he comments on the dramatic action to the audience: "Memory cannot be flattened. Memory is history singing in tune with the stars, and no sheriff's baton can reach that high" (92). The significance of these words is that the residents' memories cannot be erased by their removal from their homes. It also means that the removal of the Ruiz family who represent families such as the Arechigas, will also never be forgotten. Manazar's commentary critiques and challenges the erasure of the residents from the city's history by describing how they fought their forcible removal. And, it also criticizes and challenges the myth of supercity progress noting the deception inflicted on the ravine residents who were removed from the ravine via eminent domain for a public housing project, while the city's ultimate plan would be to sell the land to the privately-owned Dodgers.

Chavez Ravine

Haunting and Ghosts: Integration of the Past into the Present

The haunting scenes featuring the integration of the past into the present, include many comic moments. They also have different functions insofar as the exorcism scenes demonstrate the Ruiz family confronting the city authorities while the integration scenes show several characters accepting reality, which includes the arrival of the Dodgers and Dodger Stadium. This explains why the ghosts visit the stadium during the counternarrative. In addition, as Brogan has noted, in narratives about cultural haunting, integration scenes also include reconstructions of memories (Brogan 151-153). *Chavez Ravine* differs slightly from the paradigmatic movement described by Brogan, in which reconstructions of memories occur solely in the final phase. In my view, reconstructions of memories occur all along in Culture Clash's play from the early scenes of possession through the communal exorcism and the integration scenes. As playwrights using a didactic approach, Culture Clash has less time than Viramontes to examine spatial and environmental injustice, and therefore the trio reconstruct memories in every haunting phase as part of the didactic method of teaching the social violence that occurred at the ravine in the 1950s.

Throughout *Chavez Ravine*, the playwrights emphasize the significance of baseball for several reasons. As David García has noted, Fernando's breakthrough year in 1981 brought thousands of Mexicans and Chicanos to Dodger Stadium "in never before seen numbers" (García 2006, 128). At the conclusion of the 1981 season, Fernando won both the Rookie of the Year award and the Cy Young Award, which had never been achieved before or since that time, which is an important milestone for a Latino athlete representing Latino communities in the U.S. The Dodgers also won the 1981 World Series. In my view, Culture Clash includes Fernando Valenzuela's breakthrough year of 1981 in the counternarrative as part of the integration of the

past into the present for the audience. In *Chavez Ravine*, Fernando represents a new generation of Chicanos and Latinos who may have been unaware of the ravine's history. As a result, setting the play at Dodger Stadium in 1981 is part of didactic history lesson connecting two different periods. As Garcia has noted, the inclusion of Fernando in the play, "speaks to the continuity of a Mexican presence, and a spirit of resilience in Chavez Ravine – Dodger Stadium" (García 128). Therefore, Dodger Stadium is the symbolic as well as the historical site where haunting and ghosts suggest a communal exorcism of the past, ongoing reconstructions of memories of spatial and environmental injustice, and the integration of the past into the present, with Henry, María, Fernando, and Manazar in 1981.

The final scenes of Act II are jolted into the narrative with the sounds of an earthquake. This earthquake causes time to be disjointed, sending the play from a scene set at the Pacific Dining Car in 1959 to Dodgers Opening Day 1981 (Culture Clash 83-84). In the 1959 scene, the film noir composite characters, Mover, Shaker, and Watchman are joined by a woman reporter from the *Los Angeles Herald*, who has encountered them before and has many questions about L.A. City Hall politics regarding the public housing debate. The earthquake jolts the characters causing them to tremble, while the reporter wonders about the significance of the event: "was that a tremor or a shift in power?" (83). As we noted, the scene then abruptly changes from the film noir darkness of the Pacific Dining Car, to the communal exorcism scenes at Chavez Ravine in 1959 and the integration scenes at Dodger Stadium in 1981 (83-97). After the earthquake, the play moves to the seventh inning stretch at Dodger Stadium, where Culture Clash turns the spotlight onto the Dodger Dog Girl and the Rodarte Brothers band. While on the surface, these characters appear to be celebrating the seventh inning stretch, they are included in the scene to teach Fernando and the audience about integrating the past into the present. As we noted with

Henry and María, the Dodger Dog Girl and the band can only be seen and heard by Fernando and the audience until she needs help from Tommy Lasorda to be released from the harness. The interaction reflects Culture Clash's rasquachismo aesthetics, included for laughs, to demonstrate the modesty of the production's finances. While levitating over the field in the harness, the Dodger Dog Girl tells the audience and Fernando that only he of all the Dodgers can hear her and that it is the Chicano community's "prayers and forgiveness" in regards to the ravine's history, that will make him the Rookie of the Year at the conclusion on the season (87).

Although the Dodger Dog Girl is not a narrator, she possesses knowledge about the ravine's history. Indeed, her role as a ghostly composite character is to symbolically represent the Mexicans and Chicano residents of L.A. who know the ravine's history and have decided to integrate the Dodgers into the present. As she flies above the audience, in a scene that blends a somber review of the ravine's history and rasquachismo comic elements, she makes it clear that people of color in Los Angeles, particularly the forgotten people who lived in Chavez Ravine over the last two centuries, are represented in Fernando Valenzuela's breakthrough year in 1981:

> DODGER DOG GIRL. …Fernando knows,
> all the spirits
> of La Loma,
> Bishop and
> Palo Verde
> the Pachuco zones
> and spirits of Native peoples of
> Las Cienegas
> The opium dens of Chinatown ghosts
> Tecato blues
> and Jewish spirits
> of so many cemeteries…
> now (88).

Here, we note the poetic language the Dodger Dog Girl uses to teach Fernando and the audience about all the former Chavez Ravine residents whom the city tried to erase from the city's history. Indeed, she references "all the spirits of La Loma, Bishop and Palo Verde", "the Native peoples of Las Cienegas", "Chinatown ghosts", and "Jewish spirits", which all serve as evidence of Culture Clash using the devices of haunting and ghosts to discuss spatial and environmental injustice. As Laslett has noted, these are the marginalized people, who occupied the ravine for over two centuries (Laslett 15-40). Moreover, in an interview with John Glore, Culture Clash argues that the trio intended *Chavez Ravine* to have ghosts as characters when they framed the narrative with Fernando at Dodger Stadium: "The mysticism of Fernando being an Indian Mexican, the sense of there being ghosts and spirits rising up out of that land…[demonstrates] a kind of ghost-play" (Culture Clash 5). Thus, Culture Clash uses this scene featuring the Dodger Dog Girl and Fernando to reconstruct the memories of the former ravine residents, some of whom the Dodger Dog Girl mentions are ghosts, who once occupied or owned homes in the ravine, before the city used eminent domain to clear the residents and take their land. Therefore, her monologue is a tribute to all the former ravine residents and her words demonstrate her knowledge of the social violence that occurred at the ravine.

In addition, the role of the Dodger Dog Girl in this scene is to challenge the erasure of people of color from the city's history and the myth of supercity progress. While levitating above the field, she informs Fernando and the audience, that prayers and forgiveness have helped pave the way for his notable rookie season. As a Mexican immigrant, Fernando brought many Latinos to Dodger Stadium in record numbers. Moreover, at the conclusion of his breakthrough season, Fernando would eventually win both the Rookie of the Year and the Cy Young Award, making him a true hero for all residents of Los Angeles in 1981 (3-6). As we have noted, L.A. is a city

where Mexican and Chicano residents, among other people of color, have had to deal with their erasure from the city's history. Culture Clash's inclusion of the Dodger Dog Girl in the final scenes of Act II, therefore, is symbolic insofar as she too is knowledgeable about the ravine's history of spatial and environmental injustice and yet she chooses to reconstruct those old memories and integrate the past into the present and accept Dodger Stadium and the Dodgers in 1981.

Manazar's last monologue and subsequent exit from *Chavez Ravine*, is another significant integration scene. His words directly address the destruction of the ravine and East Los Angeles for the freeway system, which is a central issue in Viramontes's novel *Their Dogs Came with Them* in Chapter 3. As María and Mrs. Ruiz leave the stage after the communal exorcism family removal scene, Manazar discusses the spatial and environmental injustice inflicted upon the ravine residents. And, he ends the monologue with light comedy and laughter as he integrates the past into the present. This then leads to a final temporal jump from Chavez Ravine in 1959 to Dodger Stadium in 1981, with a poem entitled "Cuervos" (1991) which Culture Clash borrows from Victor Valle, a poem about L.A. which Raúl Villa has notably examined in previous scholarship (Villa 2000, 101). Manazar reads Valle's lyrical words about the destruction wrought by urban renewal modernization at Chavez Ravine and East L.A.:

> MANAZAR. Our backyard, a hand that touched
> a still wild river,
> home for the paloma,
> coyote, and
> carrizales…
> Later, barricaded by boulevards,
> freeways
> clouds of high-octane smoke
> and a ceaseless roar (93).

Here in these poetic lines borrowed from Valle's poem, we note the melancholic tone of Manazar's monologue that is filled with metaphors and figurative language. These words borrowed from the poem demonstrate the spatial and environmental injustice experienced by the ravine residents and the residents of the East L.A. corridor. Indeed, Valle's words inform the audience that the backyards of the residents were next to the Los Angeles River and he lists the flora and fauna that co-existed with these marginalized people of color: "the paloma", "the coyote", and "the carrizales." The purpose of listing the flora and fauna in the poem is to emphasize the deep connection the ravine and East L.A. residents shared with their surrounding environment.

Valle's words then contrast these deep connections with the disruptive and destructive elements that destroyed the flora and fauna of their neighborhoods. For instance, he uses the following words: "barricades", "boulevards", "clouds of high-octane smoke", and "a ceaseless roar" to demonstrate how the neighborhoods were invaded and destroyed by city authorities who selected the ravine and East L.A. for urban renewal in the 1940s-1970s. Therefore, the figurative language in this monologue is meant to emphasize the spatial and environmental injustice experienced by Latinos and people of color who were displaced and dispossessed, when their neighborhoods were destroyed by the city during this period in L.A. history. Moreover, the contrast between the flora and fauna and the freeway elements is very stark. While the flora and fauna are vibrantly described as full of life, it is clear that the freeway elements are described as corrosive, polluted, and deadly. Here, using Valle's poem, we note Culture Clash teaching the audience about the spatial and environmental injustice that occurred at Chavez Ravine and East Los Angeles in the 1940s-1970s. Manazar's monologue does not remain as somber as Valle's poem. As an integration scene as opposed to an exorcism scene, he exits the stage with laughter

and jokes that Julian Chavez should have never sold the land in the first place. And, he reminds the audience that city authorities of the 1950s could never have imagined that one day L.A. would have a Chicano mayor which is an indirect reference to Antonio Villaraigosa, the first Latino mayor of L.A. since the nineteenth-century (93). With these last words, Manazar exits the narrative.

This leads to the final scenes in *Chavez Ravine*. At the conclusion of the play, Culture Clash returns to Dodger Stadium, which is a structural full circle insofar as the counternarrative begins and ends at Dodger Stadium on Opening Day in 1981. Scully again notes that Fernando has been possessed by something: "Fernando is staring out to second base. Valenzuela once again absolutely transfixed on the center field area" (94). The ghosts of Henry and María return to Dodger Stadium along with three new ghostlike visitors. These people include Wilkinson who supported the public housing project, Rosalind Wyman, a city councilwoman who supported the sale of the ravine to the Dodgers, and Nicky Apodaca, a descendant of a ravine resident lost during the Korean War. These three characters demand their due and can be seen and heard by Fernando and the audience. While Wilkinson still regrets his actions, he criticizes the city for destroying the CHA public housing project. He is at peace knowing he outlived his enemies. In contrast, Wyman offers an insincere apology to the ravine residents and claims that the Dodgers' popularity has unified L.A.: "the city coalesced around something…and that was a good thing for this town" (95). Nicky's comments echo the words heard from the Dodger Dog Girl, earlier in the narrative, that baseball is popular with the Latino community: "This stadium was the best thing that ever happened to L.A.…a lot of Chicanos feel the same way" (95). These perspectives are included by Culture Clash to integrate the past into the present. Two of the ghosts are former city officials who had opposing views. The third visitor, Nicky, represents the patriotic ravine

residents who fought for the nation and still lost their homes in the ravine. His opinion is similar to the Dodger Dog Girl insofar as many Chicanos are aware of the spatial and environmental injustice that occurred at the ravine and have decided to integrate the past into the present and accept the Dodgers.

This leads to the last two visitors, Henry and María. In the final scene, she informs Fernando that the lessons they have taught are not meant to romanticize the working poor residents of Chavez Ravine. More importantly, she tells Fernando and the audience that the most important lesson is that the ravine residents were a united group that had decided to fight the city for their land. She realizes that the city won and that it is time for the Chicano community to move on; however, it's important to always remember the battle for Chavez Ravine insofar as the community protests created a culture of resistance (96). She also notes how the battle over the ravine taught her about building coalitions to confront the political marginalization of people of color in L.A. We note the optimistic tone in María's words as she discusses a culture of resistance. This is reminiscent of Edward Soja's ideas about building coalitions in Los Angeles in the twenty-first century to challenge spatial and environmental injustice in Chapter 1. Finally, Henry reminds Fernando that the ravine residents will always consider the ravine sacred land, especially considering that one's home had once stood on second base. He then tells Fernando: "Now go get them Nando!" (97), The final words from these ghosts are not somber, they are optimistic and demonstrate Henry and María encouraging Fernando to win the game on Opening Day at Dodger Stadium in 1981. Their purpose is to integrate the past into the present while still remembering the spatial and environmental injustice that occurred at Chavez Ravine in the 1940s-1950s.

Finally, the ending of *Chavez Ravine* at Dodger Stadium is symbolic, structurally. Indeed, it shows Culture Clash bringing the counternarrative to an end where it began at Dodger Stadium in 1981. The narrative devices of haunting and ghosts are also significant in producing the symbolism insofar as the audience witnesses a progression from possession to communal exorcism to reconstruction of memories and to the integration of the past into present. After teaching Fernando and the audience the didactic history lessons about the spatial and environmental injustice that occurred at the ravine in the 1950s, the ghosts of Henry and María make it clear that they are ready to accept the Dodgers by adopting Fernando as one of their own during his breakthrough year at Dodger Stadium on Dodgers Opening Day in 1981.

Chavez Ravine

Rasquachismo Aesthetics

Culture Clash member Richard Montoya credits the trio's influences and brand of rasquachismo aesthetics as an important narrative device that has helped the performers build characters for their productions. As we have noted, rasquachismo aesthetics is defined as an aesthetics that is neither an idea or a style; it is an attitude connected to the working poor, and a visceral response to lived reality that is rooted in resourcefulness in Chicano art (Ybarra-Frausto 1989, 5-8). In an interview, Montoya claims that rasquachismo aesthetics helped inspire the trio to develop a willingness to perform anywhere, such as local community theaters, universities, political rallies, and professional theater venues across the nation (Aldama 149). According to Montoya, rasquachismo aesthetics is irreverent and demonstrates how Culture Clash is focused on survival and resourcefulness as Latino performance artists. In an interview with Frederick Luis Aldama, Montoya noted the minimalization of the set design and the props which contrasts

with the amount of effort the trip place into the performance aesthetic (Aldama 149). Moreover, Montoya has also stated that the trio incorporate magical realism and spoken word from literature and Method acting, flashbacks and flash-forward elements from film: "that is rasquache – that sense of survival in and through collage-performance art" (149). Culture Clash uses this form of performance aesthetics in *Chavez Ravine*, to demonstrate the resilience and inventiveness that are necessary as performers to examine the political marginalization and exclusion of the residents of Chavez Ravine and the historical struggle for spatial and environmental justice in Los Angeles.

As García has shown, rasquachismo was inherited from Mexican theater and the Chicano theater of El Teatro Campesino. In *Chavez Ravine*, García notes one vivid example of rasquachismo aesthetics that takes place in Act II, in which Culture Clash satirizes L.A. County Supervisor Kenneth Hahn and Dodgers Owner, Walter O'Malley. In the scene, a Department of Water and Power helicopter pilot takes Hahn and O'Malley on a trip to view the ravine before the sale of the land to the Dodgers. Manazar, the narrator, stands behind the three helicopter travelers who are sitting in chairs and swings an object to simulate a propeller. The other three actors then humorously move side to side in unison, as if they are flying in a helicopter (García 126-127). In this way, Culture Clash demonstrates the modesty of its production finances and its resourcefulness as political artists to remind the audience of the trio's connections to Mexican theater and El Teatro Campesino. Rasquachismo aesthetics also helps the trio critique the city authorities insofar as the officials used eminent domain to clear the residents from the land, while the ultimate plan was to sell the land to the privately-owned Dodgers. Therefore, using comic relief such as the rasquache helicopter flight is a satirical way of making this critique while at the same time, undermining stylistic realism in theater (126-127).

Another example of rasquachismo aesthetics is the scene involving the Dodger Dog Girl and the Rodarte Brothers band. As we have noted, the Dodger Dog Girl and the band can only be seen and heard by Fernando and the audience not by the other characters. As we noted earlier, the Dodger Dog Girl is lifted on a harness ten feet above the audience delivering a monologue. She tells Fernando and the audience that the Chicano community is responsible for his breakthrough year due to the "prayers and forgiveness" that helped him win Rookie of the Year (87). The Dodger Dog Girl then requires Tommy Lasorda's help to get released from the harness which is included as part of the rasquache tradition. This is meant to generate laughs and also demonstrates Culture Clash's acknowledgment of the Brechtian alienation effect [17], which like the helicopter flight, calls attention to the artificiality of the performances to undermine stylistic realism. The Dodger Dog Girl scene, therefore, is an example of Culture Clash's rasquachismo aesthetics, insofar as it is a comic moment that is included for laughs, as part of the rasquache tradition discussed earlier by Ybarra-Frausto (Ybarra-Frausto 5-8).

The Rodarte Brothers band also functions as part of the rasquache tradition. In the play, the band and Manazar operate as members of a quasi-"Greek chorus" [18]. While these characters are not an actual Greek chorus because they do not consistently comment on dramatic actions in the play, Manazar makes occasional jokes while the band uses songs and music to comment on the action. This is all done to generate comic relief during the production. In Manazar's first monologue, he comically informs the audience that the play has rules and the third one is that

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[17] Encyclopedia Britannica has defined the noun "alienation effect" as an idea central to the dramatic theory created by Bertold Brecht, involving techniques designed to distance the audience from emotional involvement in the play through reminders of the artificiality of the theatrical performance (Encyclopedia Britannica.com).

[18] Merriam-Webster has defined the noun "Greek chorus" as a chorus in ancient Greek theater, typically serving comment on the moral issue that is raised by the dramatic action or to express an emotion appropriate to each stage of the dramatic conflict (Merriam-Webster.com).

any similarity between he and "the Stage Manager in *Our Town* is purely coincidental" (27). This is meant to temporarily undermine his reliability as the narrator for laughs from the audience. Likewise, the Rodarte Brothers band generates laughs when playing at María's community organizing event, which she calls the first "Palo Verde Home Owners Protective Society Fundraiser" (45). She invites the protest singer and liberal activist Pete Seeger to the stage and the band plays "This Land is Your Land", while the ravine residents want to hear Mexican corridos and Maríachi music. This conflict is meant to generate laughs. In this scene, the band becomes part of the dramatic action temporarily and is no longer a quasi-Greek chorus commenting on the action through music and songs. These scenes represent the rasquache tradition with the band playing along with the actors to generate laughs from the audience. Moreover, these scenes demonstrate the alienation effect, in which the audience is reminded of the artificiality of the theatrical performances. As we noted with the helicopter scene and the Dodger Dog Girl's trouble with the harness, Manazar provides comic relief during the narrative. These scenes are examples of rasquachismo aesthetics and the alienation effect and are purposely included to reflect the modesty of the production values and the theatricality of the performances as Culture Clash examines the spatial and environmental injustice throughout the counternarrative.

Chavez Ravine

Composite Characters

In addition to using the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts and rasquachismo aesthetics, Culture Clash also incorporates composite characters and film noir stylization in *Chavez Ravine*. According to García, the trio create composite characters after conducting preliminary research when collaborating on a new production. This form of collaboration began

in 1994, when Culture Clash started to include site-specific historical research into their playwriting using research methods often used by critical race scholars (García 118-126). In general, critical race theory identifies two standard modes of storytelling: majoritarian storytelling and counterstorytelling. The majoritarian approach represents master narratives of hegemonic power insofar as it reflects a method of recounting history from a position of racial, social, and political privilege (García 116-117). In contrast, the counterstorytelling approach challenges the majoritarian approach by critiquing the status quo and cultural stereotypes. As García notes, this approach seeks to "challenge racial privilege evidenced in majoritarian stories" while listening to the perspectives of people of color (118).

As we have noted earlier, in the early 2000s, the Mark Taper Forum and the Latino Theatre Initiative in Los Angeles commissioned Culture Clash to develop a play based on the history of Chavez Ravine. According to García, while the members of Culture Clash do not claim to be historians, they conduct historical research regarding marginalized communities while they write their plays. With their completed research, Culture Clash then transforms the material and research into characters and scenes for the stage, which results in a "uniquely-Chicano-Latino perspective" (García 118-126). As Montoya has stated, since the early 1990s, the troupe developed an interest in interview-based productions and as a result the trio's plays changed focus from comedies to historical productions, including *Chavez Ravine*, a play based on interviews and the history regarding the spatial and environmental injustice that occurred in L.A. in the 1940s-1950s (Aldama 145).

One of the most notable narrative devices Culture Clash employs in *Chavez Ravine*, is the element of composite characters. The concept of composite characters is related to counterstorytelling and critical race theory and the main goal is to challenge racism. There are

three forms of counterstorytelling: (1) autobiographical, (2), biographical, and (3) composite characters. We will focus on the narrative device of composite characters employed by Culture Clash in *Chavez Ravine*. According to García, critical race theory scholars such as Derrick Bell and Richard Delgado popularized the use of composite characters in the 1980s. Composite characters are created from a wide variety of information including: (1) empirical research data, (2) academic scholarship, (3) legal records, (4) authors' experiences, and (5) community memory (García 2006, 118-119). This information is then synthesized to create composite characters in a counterstorytelling narrative such as *Chavez Ravine* (118-119). As we have noted, the Ruiz family members are meant to represent many ravine residents including the Arechiga family, the last family to be forcibly removed from the ravine. Thus, composite characters are useful as part of Culture Clash's didactic methods of using the play to teach the ravine's history (García 2006, 118-119).

One important example of Culture Clash's use of composite characters includes the scene in which the Ruiz family discusses the city's offer to purchase their homes. In 1950, the ravine residents receive letters regarding the public housing project from Wilkinson and the CHA. These letters explain that the neighborhoods have been selected for urban renewal and the city offers to purchase the residents' homes at a price set in accordance with federal rules. To begin the scene, Wilkinson and María are both shown reading CHA letters about the public housing project, with their voices overlapping. While Wilkinson reads the letter in English, María reads the letter in Spanish. The letter states: "To the families of Chavez Ravine, this letter is to inform you that a public housing development will be built…for families of low income…the house you are living in is going to be included" (Culture Clash 35-36). This scene is important because it shows Wilkinson's role in starting the public housing project. While he is ultimately exonerated

by Culture Clash in the play's conclusion, he had a role in having the CHA enforce eminent domain. In addition, in terms of composite characters, the various members of the Ruiz family represent the multiple ravine residents who had different reactions once they received the letters. The language used in the letter is cold and brusque: "a public housing development will be built …for families of low income…the house you're living in is going to be included" (35-36). The letter does not mention that many residents are already homeowners who do not need public housing or why their homes have been selected for the project.

News of the letters lead to a difficult conversation between the members of the Ruiz family. As we have noted, Henry, who lives with his wife and family in a neighboring home built by his father, decides to sell the home and leave the ravine, that it is time to "talk about the city's offer…It sounds like a good thing…they'll pay what the house is worth…there's nothing here" (36-38). When Henry calls the ravine a slum and that he wants to move west to Echo Park, María challenges his plans and reminds him that he can't afford to move to Echo Park (38). These contrasting views are purposely included in the play by Culture Clash in order to teach the audience about the multiple perspectives the ravine residents had about the public housing project. The various members of the family represent a wide variety of different ravine residents. Many residents accepted the offer and left immediately while others waited for a few years. In addition, some families such as the Arechigas had to be forcibly removed, which ultimately occurs to María and Mrs. Ruiz.

Culture Clash uses these composite characters to heighten the dramatic tension in the narrative as Henry decides that selling the home and leaving the ravine is an economic opportunity. He also considers that the city's use of eminent domain will ultimately ensure that the ravine residents will be forced to leave: "Sooner or later you are going to have to sell. And

the longer you wait, the less they'll offer" (37). In contrast, María and Mrs. Ruiz view his decision as a betrayal of their family's history. Mrs. Ruiz finally decides to accept his decision, yet issues a stern warning that if he sells the house his father built, he should not visit her house in the future (37-38). Culture Clash uses the scene to show the public housing project tore families apart by forcing them to take sides during the debate over whether or not to sell their homes. The scene is also noteworthy because it shows Henry's mother and sister arguing that leaving the ravine is an abandonment of family history and a form of disrespect for the ravine community that built homes and lived in Chavez Ravine for decades (36-39). Therefore, by using these three composite characters to debate the public housing project, Culture Clash teaches the audience about the multiple perspectives the residents had about the project and the trio makes clear the spatial and environmental injustice experienced by the ravine residents.

Chavez Ravine

Film Noir Stylization

To be sure, film noir stylization is another narrative device that Culture Clash uses in the play. Indeed, the Ruiz family's debate about the public housing project precedes another important scene featuring film noir composite characters. These characters include the three previously mentioned mysterious men known as Mover, Shaker, and the Watchman, who appear in several scenes at undisclosed locations to discuss ending the public housing project. In my view, Culture Clash applies the lessons learned from counterstorytelling in order to create these villainous composite characters. Mover, Shaker, and the Watchman are included in the narrative to indirectly oppose the Ruiz family. As film noir composite characters, they represent the conspiratorial efforts of a coalition consisting of corrupt city authorities, right-wing opinion

writers of the *Los Angeles Times*, conservative investors and their sympathizers, who considered public housing to be socialistic and who thought the ravine should be used for something more profitable than the public housing project. The film noir characters always meet in dark places and never encounter María and the ravine residents. Rather, city officials send the LAPD and the L.A. Sheriff's Department to directly oppose María and Mrs. Ruiz in the narrative (Culture Clash 89-93). In this scene, to heighten the dramatic tension, Culture Clash borrows elements from Hollywood film noir to emphasize the deviousness of the anti-public housing villains in their schemes to end public housing and sell the land to the Dodgers.

According to Paul Schrader, film noir is not a genre, rather it refers to many Hollywood films produced between 1941-1958, known for dark tones and moods. These films were called "film noir" by French critics soon after World War II because the French had missed seeing Hollywood films during World War II and noticed the "new mood of cynicism, pessimism, and darkness which had crept into the American cinema" (Schrader 53). Although there are numerous film techniques used in the film noir tradition, here are a few which are relevant for the discussion regarding *Chavez Ravine*. First, in film noir movies, the "majority of scenes are lit for night. Gangsters sit in the offices at midday with the shades pulled and the lights off" (57). Moreover, actors are often shown conducting business in realistic scenes filmed in the city at night and standing in shadows. This is a contrast from Hollywood films of the 1930s, in which bright lighting was used to emphasize the role of the central characters in the movies. In Hollywood film noir of the 1940s and 1950s, the equal lighting emphasis upon the actors and the realistic setting "creates a fatalistic, hopeless mood" in which the emphasis is on the protagonist's struggle to survive in the noir city (57). In Culture Clash's collection of plays *Oh, Wild West!*, which features *Chavez Ravine*, photographs of the production demonstrate minimal

lighting, which is consistent with the film noir tradition described by Schrader (Culture Clash 40). Moreover, the photograph also shows Mover, Shaker, and the Watchman wearing fedora hats and trenchcoats, echoing the costumes used in film noir movies. The photograph also shows minimal scenery and no ravine residents, which is meant to emphasize the fatalistic and hopeless, noir mood. The starkness in these photographs point to how Culture Clash focuses the audience's attention on the villainous, conspiratorial dialogue that occurs among Mover, Shaker, and the Watchman as they scheme to end public housing via eminent domain and sell the land to the Dodgers.

In their first appearance in the play, Mover and Shaker have a conversation at an undisclosed location. They make it clear they are against liberals like Wilkinson and have to end the project. They find public housing to be "un-American" (40). Shaker tells Mover that the plan should be to "stop the Housing Authority before they break ground" (41). The stage directions then call for "a voice from the shadows" (40). The Watchman emerges from the shadows and tells the others that the plan should be to kill the Chavez Ravine public housing project by calling it socialistic. He argues that if they can convince everyone that the CHA has communist infiltrators, the public housing project will be ended. Mover and Shaker decide to join the Watchman's coalition, get rid of Mayor Bowron, install the "perfect stooge" Paulson as the new mayor who will end the public housing project, and as Shaker notes, let the CHA continue using eminent domain via urban renewal modernization to displace the ravine residents (42). While Mover and Shaker mention they have friends all over town who will also join the coalition, they wonder what the Watchman will do for the group. He mentions that he represents the *Los Angeles Times*, which historically helped promote the sale of the land to the Dodgers (43).

To be sure, Mover, Shaker and the Watchman represent members of a coalition that plotted to end public housing in L.A. during the 1950s. Therefore, their efforts helped promote the spatial and environmental injustice that occurred at the ravine prior to the arrival of the Dodgers. Culture Clash uses composite characters and film noir stylization in these particular scenes to exemplify the conspiratorial efforts of these pro-business characters. Culture Clash's purpose is to use these scenes to teach the audience about the anti-public housing coalition that worked against the CHA and the ravine residents to destroy the public housing project, to clear the land and the ravine residents via eminent domain, and then to sell the land, temporarily owned by the city, to the privately-owned Dodgers.

As a result, composite characters and film noir stylization are important narrative devices used by Culture Clash in *Chavez Ravine*. These devices are incorporated as part of counterstorytelling efforts in order for the trio to teach the audience about the spatial and environmental injustice that occurred at the ravine. While the Ruiz family members are composite characters who represent the many different families, who sold their homes or were forcibly removed from the ravine, Mover, Shaker, and the Watchman represent the anti-public housing coalition that worked to oppose them by ending the public housing project and denying the residents their land via eminent domain. As we have noted, the ultimate plan was for the city of L.A. to convert the land temporarily to public use, to later privatize it, and eventually, to sell it to the Dodgers in the late 1950s.

Conclusion

As we noted, Culture Clash uses the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts, among several other components, to establish conversations on the unavailability of spatial and

environmental justice for the residents of Chavez Ravine in *Chavez Ravine*. Culture Clash uses these devices to critique and challenge both (1) the erasure of people of color from the city's history and (2) the recurring master narrative of supercity progress in Los Angeles, two interrelated themes and issues regarding the urban renewal of Chavez Ravine and East Los Angeles in the 1940s-1970s. Culture Clash uses the following narrative devices in the counternarrative: the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, rasquachismo aesthetics, composite characters, and film noir stylization. Culture Clash employs a didactic approach to incorporate these devices, particularly haunting and ghosts, to emphasize the residents' displacement and dispossession after losing their homes and neighborhoods to eminent domain via urban renewal modernization in Chavez Ravine in the 1940s-1950s.

Chapter 3: Haunting and the East L.A. Freeway System: Spatial and Environmental Injustice in East Los Angeles in the 1960s-1970s

Their Dogs Came with Them (2007) by Helena María Viramontes

Helena María Viramontes uses the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts, among several other components, to establish conversations on the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice in her novel, *Their Dogs Came with Them* (2007). All of the counternarratives in this project use the metaphors of haunting and ghosts as narrative devices in correspondingly different ways, to examine the complex issues but also to refer indirectly or directly to non-fictional and fictional dead victims featured in the counternarratives. She also uses these devices to critique and challenge both (1) the erasure of people of color from the city's history and (2) the recurring master narrative of supercity progress in Los Angeles, two interrelated themes that appear in mainstream news accounts to diminish the social violence that occurred during the urban renewal of Chavez Ravine and East Los Angeles to build Dodger Stadium and the East L.A. freeway system in the 1940s-1970s. While certain freeways in East L.A. such as the I-5 Santa Ana Freeway were built in the 1940s and others were built in the 1950s, many more freeways were constructed in the 1960s-1970s. In the novel, Viramontes focuses on the period 1960-1970. To be sure, Viramontes uses the following narrative devices in the counternarrative: the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, figurative language, official state language, and jumping scales. In contrast to Culture Clash, I argue that while Viramontes similarly employs the metaphors of haunting and ghosts as components in the counternarrative, as a novelist, she also relies on figurative language more than Culture Clash does in the play *Chavez Ravine*. She particularly

uses haunting and ghosts to explore evidence of the death and destruction [19] wrought by the city's urban renewal and freeway construction in East L.A. Viramontes also uses figurative language and jumping scales to reject notions of the freeways as representative of individual freedom by focusing on the lives of the disappeared residents and their various efforts of resistance and survival during the construction of the East L.A. highway system in the 1960s-1970s. As noted in Chapter 2, while Culture Clash opts for didactic methods in its play, in Chapter 3, Viramontes selects reflective methods to examine similar forms of spatial and environmental injustice in her novel.

In *Their Dogs Came with Them*, Viramontes is not interested in examining the collusion among city authorities to destroy sections of East L.A. as part of urban renewal. As we noted in Chapter 2, this is one of Culture Clash's goals in *Chavez Ravine*. For Viramontes, as a native of East L.A., who experienced urban renewal and the construction of the freeway system in the 1960s-1970s, it is much more important to use the aforementioned narrative devices to explore the spatial and environmental injustice experienced by the characters. I argue that Viramontes is also interested in eliciting empathy from the reader to develop an understanding of what it is like for the residents to experience urban renewal and the city-authorized evisceration of their Chicano neighborhoods to build the East L.A. freeway system. Unlike Culture Clash's didactic approach which teaches the audience about the spatial and environmental injustice in Chapter 2, Viramontes's approach is reflective and invites the reader to empathize with the East L.A.

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[19] In a literal sense, "deaths" refer to the city-authorized murders of Turtle and Tranquilina, in the final chapter. In a figurative sense; however, Viramontes uses the tones of death and destruction to refer to the communal history of dehumanization, conquest, and the erasure of a people of color like Chavela, who like countless other residents, loses her home to eminent domain and disappears from East L.A. Figuratively, then, the tones of death and destruction refer to a disappeared community of people, all displaced to make room for the East L.A. freeway system in the 1960s-1970s.

residents as they experience environmental racism and spatial and environmental injustice during the construction of the East L.A. freeway system. In addition, in this counternarrative, the characters' storylines intersect and disconnect at numerous points, metaphorically resembling the structures of the East L.A. freeways with their on-ramps, off-ramps, lanes and interchanges (Muñoz 25). This is an example of the novelist reflectively using figurative language as part of the novel's structure. As Viramontes stated in an interview with Daniel Olivas, while she was writing, she sensed that the stories were multiplying like freeway interchanges which inspired her to metaphorically structure the novel to resemble the East L.A. freeway system (25).

While focusing on the residents' experience, Viramontes also uses figurative language and jumping scales to examine the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice in the counternarrative and to critique and challenge the aforementioned master narratives. For example, the novelist reflectively provides empirical evidence of the residents' efforts to resist and survive death and destruction caused by urban renewal and the quasi-police state oppression of the Quarantine Authority in East Los Angeles in the 1960s-1970s. Rejecting the freeways as being symbolic of individual freedom, Viramontes focuses on the lives of the displaced residents and their various efforts of resistance and survival during freeway construction. She uses jumping scales to de-emphasize the stereotypical vision of L.A. as a city that is defined by highways and suburbs, ignoring the central core communities of color that are tied closely to Downtown L.A., East L.A., and South L.A. (Muñoz 25; Brady 2013, 173; Avila 2004, 186-189). Viramontes's strategy is to leave the highways in the background as tangible symbols of urban renewal while shifting the focus to the East L.A. residents' various efforts of resistance and survival, particularly regarding their alternative means of transportation during urban renewal

and the quasi-police state occupation during the period. Central to the novel is her critique of several forms of spatial and environmental injustice in East L.A. in the 1960s-1970s.

While Viramontes and Culture Clash have similar goals in critiquing and challenging the erasure of people of color from the city's history in L.A. and the supercity progress master narrative, Viramontes has a more reflective rather than a didactic approach. She begins the novel with an epigraph quoted from Miguel Leon-Portilla's *The Broken Spears: The Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico* [20] to inform the reader that the narrative will feature a communal history of dehumanization and conquest. Indeed, the epigraph is placed at the start of the novel to foreshadow the city-authorized siege of the community [21]. The upheaval of the community along with the police control of the neighborhood streets will lead to the deaths [22] of two main characters, Turtle and Tranquilina, in the final chapter of the counternarrative. These events demonstrate the novelist's efforts to prioritize what the characters feel and experience as they are displaced and dispossessed as opposed to examining the city-authorized urban renewal politics that displace them, as Culture Clash does with its didactic approach in *Chavez Ravine*. In correspondingly different ways, Culture Clash and Viramontes access the literary imagination to inform the reader about environmental racism and spatial and environmental injustice that

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[20] Helena María Viramontes includes an epigraph quoted from Miguel Leon-Portilla's *The Broken Spears: The Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico*. The epigraph refers to the arrival of the Spanish conquistadors with their dogs that accompanied the Spaniards to conquer Mexico. A line from the epigraph, "their dogs came with them", is used by Viramontes as the title of the novel.

[21] The phrase "city-authorized siege of the community" is a rephrasing of the title of Rodolfo Acuña's historical study of East Los Angeles, *A Community under Siege: A Chronicle of Chicanos East of the Los Angeles River, 1945-1975*.

[22] As we have noted, in a literal sense, "deaths" refer to the city-authorized murders of Turtle and Tranquilina, in the final chapter. Figuratively, then, the tones of death and destruction refer to a disappeared community of people, all displaced to make room for the East L.A. freeway system in the 1960s-1970s.

affected the residents of Chavez Ravine and East L.A. in the 1940s-1970s. Ultimately, Culture Clash opts for didactic methods in its play, while Viramontes selects reflective methods to examine similar forms of spatial and environmental injustice in her novel.

Deterritorialization and Privatization: Socio-Spatial Changes in Early Los Angeles

As Raúl Villa has shown, the early history of Los Angeles is about deterritorialization and privatization primarily affecting the Mexican residents of the old pueblo of Los Angeles. While California became a U.S. state in 1850, the displacement of the laboring Mexican residents and the elite, landowning Californios did not immediately occur in Southern California until the first railroad trunk line from San Francisco was completed in 1876 (Villa 2000, 20-21). The addition of the transcontinental Southern Pacific line in 1883 and the Santa Fe line in 1886, brought immigration from the East coast and Midwest, resulting in, "wholesale reorganization of land use by residential subdivision" and the "nascent industrialization of the regional economy" (20-21). Indeed, Villa notes Carey McWilliams's observation that with the influx of thousands of U.S. settlers to Southern California, the Mexican and Spanish appearance of the towns began to disappear overnight, demonstrating how the Mexican residents were eclipsed in Los Angeles in the late nineteenth-century: "Old-Town Santa Barbara was almost entirely destroyed" (29).

The physical removal and destruction of Mexican and Spanish-designed structures are examples of city-authorized erasure of Mexican and Chicano history in early Los Angeles. In addition to the destruction of these buildings to make room for new structures, there were many other drastic social, cultural, and political changes made in Southern California. According to Villa, these changes included the "reorganization of land-use patterns, transportation facilities and water resources and their distribution", which collectively laid siege to the Mexican

organization and administration of the community's public space and the restructuring of the pueblo into an "Anglo township" (26-28). Villa, citing Robert Fogelson's research on early land-use patterns in L.A., notes that the new Anglo land-use administrators confronted a myriad of problems when trying to dismantle the Mexican *ayuntamiento* system, also known as the Mexican municipal system, because the Mexican administrators heavily relied upon community control as a system of regulating common lands known as *ejidos*, municipal lands known as *propios* and private lands. In addition, Mexican landowners' property was considered as part of a livelihood, as Fogelson has shown. In contrast, the U.S. administrators, "paid taxes on their real estate and treated it as a commodity" and objected to the Mexican system of governmental and community regulation of municipal lands. Thus, the U.S. land-use administrators found the ayuntamiento system of community control to be a liability because if the municipality "held the land, the newcomers could not cultivate it, and the council could not derive taxes from it." As Villa and Fogelson make clear, the Mexican policy "whereby the community retained control over the development of its land" was viewed as foreign and in direct opposition to the U.S. land-use administrators' inclinations and traditions of privatizing land-use patterns (28, emphasis in original).

In addition to these multiple forms of deterritorialization and reorganization of land-use patterns, during the years 1890 to 1930, continuous industrial-economic expansion and demographic growth also transformed the city. Indeed, during this period, the population of Los Angeles changed overall from 50,000 to 1.2 million in the city, and from 101,000 to 2.2 million in the county. The Mexican community in L.A. also steadily climbed during the 1890 to 1930 period. Research shows that the number of Mexican residents rose from 5 percent of the city's population in 1900 to about 15 percent in 1930. According to Albert Camarillo, there were 3,000

to 5,000 residents in the city in 1900 and approximately 97,000 to 190,000 Mexican residents in L.A. in 1930 (39-40). During this period, Downtown L.A. was heavily populated by immigrant workers and people of color, including: Italians, Chinese, Japanese, African-Americans, Russians, and Jews (40). Research has shown that residential segregation patterns began at the turn of the twentieth-century as Anglo communities fled the central city. Moreover, Downtown L.A. near the old Plaza district was considered the hub of metropolitan expansion insofar as the central city served as "the principal point of entry, recruitment, and dispersal" for the new immigrants and people of color seeking work in Los Angeles (40). These laborers representing different ethnic and national communities lived in close proximity and as a result there was cross-cultural contact between the many groups. The overall population boom from 1910-1930 led to industrial transformations as L.A. required more resources such as water, oil, and electrical energy. The Owens Valley Aqueduct, for instance, was completed in 1913 and transportation modernization such as improved roads began to emerge throughout the city.

In addition, modernization in the new L.A. metropolis required more changes than improved roads and infrastructure. For instance, modernization for public transportation required a pattern of major urban development in the early decades of the twentieth-century. As Eric Avila has shown, this pattern of urban development "had already been delineated" by the old Pacific Electric Red Car trolley system that was owned by investor Henry Huntington. This system of trolleys operated across L.A. between 1880 and 1930 (Avila 2004, 188-189). As Mary Pat Brady and Avila have shown, Huntington purchased tracts of rural land in L.A. County and connected his landholdings via his trolley system to the Downtown Los Angeles main station. These sprawling connections from Huntington's communities to Downtown, discouraged Anglo settlement in the central city, which remained populated by people of color. During the heyday

of the streetcar system, most residents of the city, including Mexican immigrants and African-Americans, who experienced housing discrimination throughout the county, depended on “the interurban system of streetcars” to travel across the city for work. The interurban system also connected people of color to their different points of residence and leisure insofar as they were no longer necessarily “confined to the boundaries of their neighborhood” (188-189). That said, as Brady has observed, Huntington’s interurban system helped reinforce the “hypersegregation” of neighborhoods in the city insofar as his rural landholdings in the suburbs similarly all depended on covenants and redlining practices structured to reject people of color in regards to housing, binding them more closely to segregated communities and dense residential areas near Downtown L.A. (Brady 2013, 173).

The History of the East L.A. Freeway System

In the 1940s, the L.A. streetcar system was no longer in use across Los Angeles. According to Avila, during the wartime era of the 1940s, L.A. experienced a highway shortage. This led to the Collier Burns Highway Act of 1947, approved by the state legislature in Sacramento, which led to extensive highway construction in L.A. in the 1950s (Avila 2004, 195-199). In 1956, the U.S. Congress approved the Interstate and Defense Highway Act to authorize the construction of 41,000 miles of interstate highways across the U.S. (206-207). As Avila and Gilbert Estrada have shown, apart from the I-5 Santa Ana Freeway, which was funded by the state of California and built in East L.A. in 1944, the implementation of both the Collier Burns Act and the Defense Highway Act led to the construction of many other freeways in East L.A., including: the U.S. 101 Hollywood Freeway in 1948; the I-10 San Bernardino Freeway in 1953; the I-5 Golden State Freeway in 1955; the I-10 Santa Monica Freeway in 1961; the I-710 Long

Beach in 1961 and the S.R. 60 Pomona West Freeway in 1965. These highways account for 19 percent of the total land use in East Los Angeles (Avila 2004, 195-199; Estrada 290). The East L.A. Four Level Interchange, also known as the "Stack", was completed with funding from the Collier Burns Act in 1954 and connects the U.S. 101 Hollywood Freeway and the I-5 Santa Ana Freeway to S.R. 110, known as the Arroyo Seco Freeway and Harbor Freeway (Avila 2004, 195-199). As Estrada has shown, the Stack was constructed on 135 acres. Although, it was designed to carry 450,000 vehicles per day in the 1950s, it was carrying approximately 1.7 million cars a day in 2005 and is now the most congested region in California with some of the worst air pollution in the nation (Estrada 300-301). At various points in *Their Dogs Came with Them*, Viramontes incorporates several of these highways into the residents' storylines: the Four Level Interchange (Viramontes 2007, 168-169), the I-5 Santa Ana Freeway (276), the U.S. 101 Hollywood Freeway (125, 168-169, 276), the I-710 Long Beach Freeway and S.R. 60 Pomona West (219, 226, 272-276, 296). While Viramontes leaves the freeways to operate in the background of the counternarrative as symbolic examples of environmental racism and spatial and environmental injustice, it is important to note how she uses the freeways and their many intersections as metaphorical structures for the various storylines. It is also worth noting how each of the aforementioned freeways are incorporated into the novel.

Environmental Racism and the East L.A. Freeway System

In regards to environmental racism and spatial and environmental injustice, Laura Pulido and Gilbert Estrada have shown how the disproportionate placement and the construction of the East L.A. freeways are products of white privilege (Pulido et al., 2005, 229-237; Pulido 2015, 809-810; Estrada 306-311). As we noted in the first chapter, Pulido and other scholars have

defined white privilege as a highly structural and spatial form of racism which produces urban geographies of environmental racism (Pulido et al., 2005, 229-237; Pulido 2015, 809-810). As Robert Bullard has noted, environmental racism "refers to any policy, practice, or directive that differentially affects or disadvantages (whether intended or unintended) individuals, groups or communities based on race or color [including] exclusionary and restrictive practices that limit participation by people of color in decision-making boards, commissions, and regulatory bodies…[that combine]…public policies and industry practices to provide *benefits* for [white people] while shifting *costs* to people of color…to foster and perpetuate discriminatory practices" (Bullard 1993, 23, emphasis in original).

To be sure, examples of environmental racism include facility siting and intentionality in the production of urban spaces includes the siting and construction of urban highways. As Bullard has shown, while people of color tend to rely on public transportation and alternative modes of travel, it is freeway construction and its disproportionate facility siting which affects and displaces their communities (Bullard 2004, 2-5). In addition to displacement and dispossession, highway construction affects people of color in the following ways: "federally subsidized transportation construction and infrastructure projects" target low-income and people of color neighborhoods, isolates residents from institutions and businesses, disrupts communities and subjects residents to elevated risks regarding hazardous chemicals and other dangerous materials (4).

The intentional siting and construction of urban highways in East Los Angeles is an example of environmental racism. As Estrada has shown, a disproportionate number of freeways were constructed in East L.A. in contrast to other sections of the city (Estrada 306). In 1958, the Metropolitan Transportation Engineering board, a group of urban planners, published a blueprint

for the L.A. freeways called the *1958 Master Plan of Freeways and Expressways*. This plan called for 1,575 miles of freeways throughout the city. As Estrada has shown, only 61 percent (918 miles) were ever implemented, many freeways near predominantly white neighborhoods such as the “Beverly Hills Freeway”, “Pacific Coast Freeway”, and the “Laurel Canyon Freeway” were never constructed. In contrast, 100 percent of the freeways planned for East Los Angeles were all constructed (307). As we have noted earlier, highways in East L.A. account for 19 percent of total land use, including 7 freeways in roughly 16 square miles. As a result, East L.A. is one of the most polluted communities in terms of air and noise pollution in all of California (306-308). According to a study conducted by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD) in 2000, 80 percent of the area’s air pollution is caused by the 1.7 million cars and trucks that use the East L.A. Interchange System and that approximately 90 percent of the region’s carcinogenic risk is connected to toxins produced by the freeway system. Many residents live, work, and attend school within 100-300 meters of the freeways in the region (307-308).

Author

Their Dogs Came with Them (2007): Summary

Helena María Viramontes is a native of East Los Angeles. The author and activist’s publications include her collection of short stories, *The Moths and Other Stories* (1985) and her two novels *Under the Feet of Jesus* (1995) and *Their Dogs Came with Them* (2007). Viramontes has received an NEA grant for her work. Viramontes has also worked as an editor for the Latino literary and art magazine *XhismeArte* (Viramontes 2009, 79-80). She also was a founder of Southern California Latino Writers and Filmmakers in 1989 (Villa 2000, 115). In addition, she

earned an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of California, Irvine and currently teaches creative writing at Cornell University. During her years at UC Irvine, Viramontes experienced the rejection of her first short stories by her advisor (Viramontes 2009, 79-80). This early case of rejection taught Viramontes about the writerly concepts of universality and cultural particularity and she used his remarks as a form of inspiration as a writer (Viramontes 2011, 9-10). For instance, in an interview with Carmen Flys-Junquera, Viramontes claimed to be a social realist writer interested in representing marginalized communities and using her work in a search for social justice. For this reason, Viramontes tries to combine her social realist aesthetic with a basic romantic underlining as a way to connect to the humanity of her readers and to urge them towards political action in order to challenge marginalization in U.S. society (Viramontes 2001, 232-233). Viramontes has also emphasized the need as a contemporary writer to be inclusive of one's historical context. In an interview with Elisabeth Mermann-Jowziak and Nancy Sullivan, Viramontes stated that writers have the obligation to bring history to life for their readers, to help the reader understand the historical moment in order to empathize with writers' characters (Viramontes 2009, 83).

In the novel *Their Dogs Came with Them*, Helena María Viramontes adopts a reflective approach to demonstrate the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice in regards to the creation of the East L.A. freeway system in the 1940s-1970s. The purpose of the novel is to critique and challenge the erasure of people of color from the city's history in L.A. and the supercity progress master narrative. Ultimately, Viramontes uses the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, figurative language and official state language and jumping scales, to demonstrate the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice in regards to the creation of the East L.A. freeway system. The novel is Viramontes's

most personal work. As we have noted earlier, Viramontes structures the counternarrative metaphorically so that the intertwining storylines of the four leading characters, Ermila, Turtle, Ana, and Tranquilina, are made to resemble freeway interchanges, with characters at times aware of each other as they share the same public spaces and at other times unaware of each other, as they all individually attempt to resist and survive urban renewal and the quasi-police state occupation in East L.A. in the 1960s-1970s. As I have noted, Viramontes keeps the highways in the background as symbols of environmental racism and spatial and environmental injustice. The novelist does not spend any time showing the city's political decision-making, rather, she devotes her time to show how her characters experience spatial and environmental injustice by compiling empirical evidence of the devastating effects that are produced during urban renewal. Viramontes's strategy is to emphasize the East L.A. residents' various efforts of resistance and survival, particularly regarding their alternative means of transportation during this period as she explores the spatial and environmental injustice experienced by the East L.A. residents during the 1960s-1970s.

Their Dogs Came with Them

Narrative Devices

Haunting and Ghosts: Introduction

Gordon and Brogan have different definitions of haunting and ghosts; as a result, their definitions will be referenced when appropriate in the project. Brogan's definition of cultural haunting prominently features "the master metaphor of the ghost as go-between," which is more attuned to didactic and literal portrayals of haunting and ghosts (Brogan 152). As a result, Brogan's definitions of haunting and ghosts are more applicable to *Chavez Ravine* and to films to

be discussed in Chapter 4, *Sa-I-Gu*, and *Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992*, insofar as these counternarratives are similarly interested in exploring the themes of possession and reconstruction of memories, communal exorcism, and integration of the past and present, through the use of the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts. In contrast, Gordon's definitions of haunting and ghosts are more reflective than Brogan's concept of cultural haunting. As Gordon has noted, haunting and ghosts "alter the experience of being in linear time" and prompt "a-something-to-be-done"; these experiences whether they are literal or figurative, demand attention from the people experiencing haunting and ghosts in literature (Gordon 2011, 2-3). In addition, Gordon argues that the metaphors of haunting and ghosts represent, "the dead or the disappeared or the lost or the invisible" people or historically erased people of the past who are actively demanding their due in literature (Gordon 2008, 182). As a result, Gordon's reflective definitions of haunting and ghosts are more applicable to *Their Dogs Came with Them* in Chapter 3 and to *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992* and *The Tattooed Soldier* in Chapter 4, insofar as the writers use the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts more reflectively and figuratively in these counternarratives.

Viramontes' epigraph by Leon-Portilla, at the start of the novel is an example of the novelist eliciting a ghost. The epigraph's purpose is to inform the reader that Viramontes's novel will feature a communal history of conquest and dehumanization. Indeed, the epigraph foreshadows the city-authorized siege of the community, causing displacement and dispossession in order to construct the East L.A. highways, changes that result in the slaughter of two main characters, Turtle and Tranquilina, in the final chapter of the counternarrative. For these reasons it is important to examine the epigraph from Leon-Portilla's account of the Spanish conquest of the Aztecs that inspires Viramontes's intentions and the title of her novel:

> They came in battle array, as conquerors, and the dust rose in whirlwinds on the roads. Their spears glinted in the sun, and their pennons fluttered like bats. They made a loud clamor as they marched, for their coats of mail and their weapons clashed and rattled...they terrified everyone who saw them. Their dogs came with them, running ahead of the column. They raised their muzzles high; they lifted their muzzles to the wind…
> – Miguel Leon-Portilla, *The Broken Spears: The Aztec Conquest of Mexico*

Here, in the epigraph that Viramontes quotes, Leon-Portilla describes the Spaniards from the Aztec perspective. The natives immediately noticed the visitors' metallic spears which "glinted in the sun" and how the Spanish "terrified everyone who saw them" as they appeared ready for battle, wearing armor made of iron and chain mail, marching into Tenochtitlan with pennons fluttering in the dusty wind, while carrying their weapons. The Spaniards' armor and weapons clashed and rattled as they marched towards their destination. The Aztecs also noticed how the conquistadors' dogs came with them and were similarly prepared for battle along with their masters, enthusiastically "running ahead of the column", raising their "muzzles high" and "to the wind", ready to attack the conquistadors' enemies.

To be sure, the lines which Viramontes selects from Leon-Portilla's account, foreshadow death and destruction, particularly, the Spanish conquest of the Aztecs and the contemporary conquest. In my view, Viramontes intentionally incorporates this epigraph from Leon-Portilla's study at the start of her novel as a symbolic way to foreshadow what the novelist considers to be a similar type of conquest: the displacement and dispossession of the Aztecs' descendants, namely, the Chicano residents of East Los Angeles. These events demonstrate how city-authorized urban renewal in East L.A. was meant to benefit those in power and affiliated powerful coalitions, while shifting the costs of the construction to an already marginalized people. As Pulido, Estrada, and Bullard have all noted earlier, these are examples of

environmental racism, white privilege, and spatial and environmental injustice in which freeway construction and its disproportionate facility siting affects and displaces communities of color (Pulido et al., 2005, 229-237; Pulido 2015, 809-810; Estrada 290-311, Bullard 2004, 2-5). Moreover, as Leon-Portilla states in *The Broken Spears: The Aztec Conquest of Mexico*, the colonization of the Aztecs by a foreign European power led to the conquest of a sovereign nation and the dispossession of natives. The Aztecs were displaced and dispossessed, their lives were disrupted, their way of life was destroyed and countless people were slaughtered. As a result, the epigraph's purpose is to inform the reader that the novel will similarly feature a contemporary conquest and foreshadow the city-authorized siege of a community to build the East L.A. highway system in the 1960s-1970s.

The epigraph is also included by Viramontes, symbolically, as a way to introduce the reader to the nameless villains in the narrative, the city employees who enforce the city-authorized urban renewal in East Los Angeles. These villains and their weaponry such as blaring sound, bulldozer exhaust fumes, and other hazardous toxins, are introduced as representatives of a quasi-police state to enforce eminent domain, neighborhood clearance, and freeway construction in the community (Viramontes 2007, 7-15). And, the novelist also includes a villainous entity known as the Quarantine Authority (QA) in charge of enforcing a quarantine and a curfew, ostensibly, to contain a rabies outbreak among rabid dogs roaming the neighborhood streets in 1970. The QA is portrayed as a destructive militant force with the authority to closely monitor the residents at various checkpoints every night, while other QA employees take to the nighttime sky aboard helicopters with high-powered rifles in search of rabid dogs, disrupting the residents' lives (12-13). It is clear from Viramontes's descriptions that the QA terrorizes the residents with its many broad powers to enforce a quarantine from land and

sky in East L.A. This group of city officials is authorized to disrupt the residents' lives, wielding power in 1970 that is starkly different from the power of the city employees responsible for bulldozing the streets and constructing the freeways at the start of the chapter in 1960, yet both are representatives of a quasi-police state active in East L.A. in the novel (6-13). While the QA is Viramontes's fictional creation, Bridget Kevane's research shows that Los Angeles attempted to contain a rabies outbreak in 1955 (Brady 2013, 182, 189). The novelist includes the city employees and the QA as nameless villains to demonstrate their overwhelming power over the marginalized East L.A. residents during the quarantine and curfew. The city authorities' show of force to enforce urban renewal and a quarantine and a curfew, exemplifies environmental racism and spatial and environmental injustice.

We will now examine how Viramontes's use of the epigraph is related to the tones of death and destruction in *Their Dogs Came with Them*. In an interview with Elisabeth Merrmann-Jowziak and Nancy Sullivan, Viramontes discussed East L.A. as her own "Faulknerian County"; her "Yoknapatawpha", insofar as she was inspired by William Faulkner to write about her own hometown. In the interview, Viramontes mentioned how cemeteries and freeways are "two major, *major* metaphors of Los Angeles" which also led her to excavate the history of East Los Angeles, especially the disappeared voices and abandoned neighborhoods of Mexican and Chicano residents whom the city officials attempted to erase from the city's history to make room for the highway system. For Viramontes, cemeteries and freeways, then, are metaphors for the death and destruction that occurred during the construction of the East L.A. freeways in the 1960s-1970s. In the interview, she also discussed the rhetorical questions that helped her excavate East L.A. history to search for the ghosts of the past as part of her efforts to explore a communal history of spatial and environmental injustice: "Where did all these people go from

these abandoned neighborhoods? Where did they all go? What happened to them?" As an exiled writer working on the novel in New York in the 1990s, Viramontes notes how she had to rely on her memories of displacement and dispossession during freeway construction in the 1960s-1970s. These memories guided her as she wrote the various storylines that comprise a communal history of spatial and environmental injustice for the novel: "to tell all these different stories and, like the freeways, have them all intersect" (Viramontes 2009, 81-82).

Their Dogs Came with Them

Haunting and Ghosts: Tones of Death and Destruction

As we noted in Chapter 1, Viramontes introduces the reader to Chavela and Ermila, who both experience the clearance of condemned homes, including Chavela's blue house on their street in East L.A. in 1960. Viramontes infuses their early scenes with the tones of death and destruction by figuratively using haunting and ghosts to show the reader what it feels like to experience environmental racism and urban renewal. Gordon's definitions of haunting and ghosts are particularly useful in showing how Viramontes's use of these devices reveal oppressive conditions, subjugated knowledge, and "a-something-to-be-done", regarding the displaced East L.A. residents. For the novelist, informing the reader about the degradation connected to urban renewal and seeking to have the reader empathize with the displaced residents accomplishes the "a-something-to-be-done" concept. Ultimately, as we have noted, Viramontes rejects the notion of the freeway system as being symbolic of individual freedom by focusing on the lives of the displaced residents and their various efforts of resistance and survival during the construction of the East L.A. highway system in the 1960s-1970s.

Viramontes invokes the tones of death and destruction by figuratively using haunting and ghosts, specifically, the metaphors of earth, earthquakes, and earthmovers [bulldozers] and an omniscient narrator, in the first chapter of the counternarrative. These metaphors are used to call the reader's attention to the haunted and ghostly conditions of Chavela's and Ermila's street and neighborhood during urban renewal. At the start of the first chapter, Chavela urgently warns Ermila about displacement and dispossession naturally caused by earthquakes, setting the stage for the tones of death and destruction: "Where could you run?...It just wasn't right. Nothing was left…Nada." (Viramontes 2007, 7-8). Here, Chavela prepares to leave her condemned home in East L.A. and informs Ermila that she has been displaced before by earthquakes. Her language is dire as she raises her voice, informing Ermila that an earthquake is devastating because it leaves people feeling as if they have no solid earth beneath them, leaving them with nothing and nowhere to run. This scene is noteworthy because as terrifying as earthquakes can be to experience, Chavela is not being displaced by an earthquake; rather, she is preparing to be displaced by the city via eminent domain, which is different than an earthquake. In addition, the reader learns from the omniscient narrator that the earthmovers [bulldozers], as Ermila's grandmother calls them, are parked on their street next to empty houses, "covered in tarps and roped with tight-fisted knots", to protect the vehicles from vandalism and rainstorms (9). The parked earthmovers serve as a reminder of the power of the quasi-police state and the marginalization of the residents, as part of Viramontes's critique of spatial and environmental injustice.

As noted earlier, as Chavela prepares for displacement and dispossession, she collects boxes taped with notes describing their contents. She does this because of her fading memory but also to remind herself about what she needs to survive once she is forced to leave her house (5-

11). Her boxes and their contents reveal the oppressive conditions forced upon the East L.A. residents, as they are under duress to abandon their condemned homes as part of urban renewal. In addition, she tapes notes on the walls in her house to organize her belongings before displacement and dispossession. The boxes, the notes describing their contents, and the taped notes on the walls all provide evidence of an elderly Chicana's life in the process of being disrupted by the quasi-police state: "Throughout the house, scraps of paper, Scotch-taped reminders, littered the walls" (5). This quotation helps show what it feels like to be in the process of being displaced. It also operates as a critique of eminent domain insofar as it shows an elderly woman who is already marginalized using taped notes to remind her of what she needs to survive when she leaves the sanctity of the home she has owned for decades for the uncertainty of the streets. There is a sense of dread connected to the tones of death and destruction in the words the omniscient narrator uses to describe Chavela's final days in her condemned home. In this way, Viramontes uses the metaphors of haunting and ghosts and figurative language to critique the city's use of eminent domain to destroy Chavela's home and neighborhood to build the East L.A. freeway system.

Viramontes also uses haunting and ghosts to explain Chavela's disappearance from the narrative. For instance, the novelist focuses the early sections of the novel on Chavela's preparation to leave her home as actions similar to that of a dying person preparing for subsequent death [23]. For instance, the novelist uses figurative language to make this vivid equation: "Pay attention, Chavela demanded. Because displacement will always come down to two things: earthquakes or earthmovers" (8). Here, in this quotation the novelist invokes death

[23] Viramontes equates Chavela with death, figuratively, not literally. While the character does not die in the narrative, it is clear that once she is displaced by eminent domain from her home, Chavela disappears from East L.A. and from the novel.

and destruction by having Chavela adamantly warn Ermila that displacement is always deadly and dangerous. She uses her wisdom to inform the child that earthquakes are a natural, deadly occurrence and earthmovers are political and purposely used to destroy homes and neighborhood streets. This example is meant to emphasize the old woman's imminent displacement, dispossession, disappearance, and death in the novel. Chavela also symbolically represents the spectral community of disappeared Mexican and Chicano residents, whose neighborhoods were nearly all destroyed to make room for the freeways. The net result is that displacement and dispossession caused by eminent domain is shown to be very destructive insofar as urban renewal is based on white privilege and environmental racism, which results in spatial and environmental injustice (Pulido et al., 2005, 229-237; Pulido 2015, 809-810; Estrada 290-311, Bullard 2004, 2-5). Thus, the devices of haunting and ghosts are used to invoke the tones of death and destruction in these early scenes to starkly describe the void and emptiness of First Street witnessed by Chavela and Ermila, as the neighborhood undergoes urban renewal. In the process, the novelist posits a critique of spatial and environmental injustice in these scenes.

Viramontes further invokes the tones of death and destruction by likening the contemporary bulldozing of Chavela's neighborhood to the conquest of the Aztecs. For example, Chavela, Ermila, and other residents distinguish the saved homes from the condemned homes, as the "living side" and the "dead side" of the streets. Ermila's grandparents' home is on the living side; in contrast, Chavela's condemned home is on the dead side and will eventually be cleared away for the freeway system. In an interview with Daniel Olivas, Viramontes explained how the bulldozers and freeway construction "devastated" East L.A. during this period and how the bulldozers "resembled the [Spanish] conqueror's ships coming to colonize a second time", inspiring the novelist to "portray the lives of those who disappeared" from the neighborhoods of

East Los Angeles (Viramontes and Olivas, 2007). Indeed, the reader also learns how the bulldozers appear to have metal teeth, similar to the Spanish conquistadors' dogs described in the epigraph: "The earthmovers, Grandmother Zumaya had called them; the bulldozers had started from very far away and slowly arrived on First Street, their muzzles like sharpened metal teeth making way for the freeway" (Viramontes 2007, 8). In this quotation, Viramontes reflectively uses figurative language to liken the dogs' muzzled jaws to the bulldozers' muzzled metal teeth as the bulldozers destroy the condemned homes. As a result, the reader notes the tones of death and destruction and how the city employees and the bulldozers operate as metaphors for the Spaniards and their dogs that accompanied them during the conquest of the Aztecs in Mexico.

To be sure, in a later scene, Viramontes continues the use of the Spanish conquistador metaphor and further equates it to urban renewal in East L.A. For example, she likens the tarps tied around the bulldozers that destroy Chavela's neighborhood to the sails of the Spanish galleons used to transport the conquistadors from Spain to conquer and colonize the Americas: "In a few weeks, Chavela's side of the neighborhood, the dead side of the street, would disappear forever. The earthmovers had anchored, their tarps whipping like banging sails…In a few weeks the blue house and all the other houses would vanish just like Chavela and all the other neighbors" (12). Here, in this quotation, Viramontes alludes to the conquest of the Aztecs to vividly describe the destruction of Chavela's house and her neighborhood which the residents refer to as the dead side of the street. The earthmovers are likened to the Spanish galleons, insofar as they "had anchored" on the dead side of the street with "their tarps whipping like banging sails." The words "anchored" and "sails" clearly are maritime words, referring to sailing. These words are also a reminder to the reader of Leon-Portilla's description of the warlike Spaniards in Tenochtitlan with their fluttering pennons, whipping around in the wind

before the conquest of the Aztecs. Viramontes uses figurative language in these references to the Spanish galleons to connect the conquest of Mexico to the conquest of East L.A. The ships which sailed the Spanish to Mexico and to the rest of the Americas, played an instrumental role in helping Spain conquer and colonize different civilizations to create New Spain. In addition, as Brady has noted, the use of the metaphor of the bulldozers as dogs makes it possible for the novelist to liken the freeway construction to Spain's genocidal practices (Brady 2013, 175-176). In this way, Viramontes uses the metaphor of the earthmovers as vehicles that help facilitate urban renewal in East L.A. We also note the ghostly language used to explain how Chavela's blue house and the other condemned homes "would disappear forever" and that she would vanish like "all the other neighbors." Just as Tenochtitlan would disappear forever, so do sections of East Los Angeles in the 1960s-1970s. These are part of the novelist's efforts to critique forms of spatial and environmental injustice in East L.A. in the 1960s-1970s.

Their Dogs Came with Them

Haunting and Ghosts and Disjointed Time: The Development of a Political Awareness

Viramontes also employs the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, to demonstrate that the characters are figuratively haunted in the counternarrative. As noted earlier in Chapter 2, haunting and ghosts and non-linear and disjointed time are intertwined in both *Chavez Ravine* and *Their Dogs Came with Them* and therefore will be examined together in this section of the dissertation. I refer to this combination of devices as the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time. As Derrida observed in *Specters of Marx*, Hamlet reacts to the visit of the ghost of his father to the castle by proclaiming that "the time is out of joint" (Derrida xviii; Jameson 26-

30; Prendergast 44-45). Gordon similarly has noted how haunting raises specters and "alters the experience of being in linear time…and the way we normally separate and sequence the past, the present and the future" (Gordon 2011, 2-3). In *Their Dogs Came with Them*, Viramontes similarly presents time nonchronologically by changing time frames within the same chapters and creating cinematic flashback [24] and flash-forward [25] sequences to disrupt the linear flow of time. For instance, in a scene from the first chapter which we will examine more closely, while Ermila is visiting Chavela's condemned home in 1960, the narrator abruptly makes a non-linear flash-forward jump to 1970, to reveal that in addition to the urban renewal that she witnesses in 1960, Ermila also experiences the militarized oppression of the QA helicopters in East L.A. in 1970. After vividly describing the QA helicopters in 1970, the narrator abruptly returns to Ermila visiting Chavela's house in 1960. In the fourth chapter, the narrator re-examines the 1970 QA helicopter sequence in Ermila's neighborhood in more vivid detail to show how these oppressive night flights are very reminiscent of the urban renewal she experienced during her visits to Chavela's home in 1960 (Viramontes 2007, 12-13, 75-78). One major difference between Culture Clash's and Viramontes's employment of the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, is that Culture Clash incorporates these devices, literally in the play, with the ghosts of Henry and María, for example, wearing clothing from the 1940s during their haunting visit to Dodger Stadium in 1981. In contrast, Viramontes employs the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, figuratively in terms of language but also structurally, in terms of the

[24] Louis Giannetti has defined the noun "flashbacks" as an editing technique in film that suggests that the present is interrupted by a shot or series of shots representing the past (Giannetti 523).
[25] Louis Giannetti has defined the noun "flash-forward" as an editing technique in film that suggests the present is interrupted by a shot or series of shots representing the future (Giannetti 523).

temporal arrangements of the events, the characters' inner monologues, and the omniscient narrator's rendition of events, to explore spatial and environmental injustice in East L.A. in the 1960s-1970s.

Viramontes also uses the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, to show Ermila in the process of developing a political awareness regarding the disappearances of the East L.A. residents. This consciousness enables her to witness spatial and environmental injustice that occur throughout the novel. As a witness to the death and destruction occurring in her community, her memories of the disappeared East L.A. residents, urban renewal, and the quasi-police state occupation, are another way for the novelist to critique and challenge the erasure of the East L.A. residents and the master narrative of supercity progress. As Viramontes stated in an interview with Daniel Olivas, *Their Dogs Came with Them* takes place in 1960-1970, in part, to not only examine urban renewal but to also show how this volatile period in U.S. history affected her East L.A. community and her character Ermila who represents a young socially conscious Chicana who is learning to be politically aware of the events in the counternarrative: "The discontent with the Vietnam War, the rising power of the disenfranchised and the growing political consciousness planted by civil rights, Chicano, and feminist movements all contributed to a chaotic questioning, a disruption of thinking and living" (Viramontes and Olivas, 2007). Viramontes, then, sets the novel in this particular decade as a way to include her leftist politics and social realist aesthetics as a writer in the various storylines. This explains the importance of Ermila's storyline as a character developing a political awareness from 1960 to 1970, to confront spatial and environmental injustice in the novel.

Viramontes also incorporates the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, within Ermila's trajectory as she develops a political awareness in the counternarrative. The novelist begins by rejecting temporal rationalization and linear time in favor of non-linear and disjointed time to emphasize the haunting and ghostly conditions of the neighborhood as it undergoes urban renewal and the occupation within a decade. Viramontes similarly presents time "out of joint" and alters the experience of being in linear time by changing time frames, throughout the counternarrative. The narrator begins by informing the reader of Ermila's experience watching Chavela prepare for displacement and dispossession in 1960, then abruptly makes a non-linear flash-forward jump to 1970, to reveal Ermila's future experiences with the oppressive Quarantine Authority helicopters. The narrator then just as abruptly returns to Chavela's house in 1960. In the fourth chapter, as we have noted, the narrator fully examines the 1970 QA helicopter sequence in Ermila's neighborhood in more vivid detail which demonstrates how these oppressive night flights, for Ermila, are very reminiscent of the urban renewal, namely the destruction of Chavela's home and dead side of the neighborhood that she experienced in 1960 (Viramontes 2007, 12-13, 75-78). These abrupt changes in time sequence inform the reader that time is similarly "out of joint" for Ermila as she experiences the haunting and ghostly conditions wrought by urban renewal and the Quarantine Authority's dangerous presence in her eviscerated neighborhood for a decade, 1960-1970:

> In a few weeks the blue house and all the other houses would vanish just like Chavela and all the other neighbors.
> Ten years later [Ermila] the child becomes a young woman who will recognize the invading engines of the Quarantine Authority helicopters because their whir of blades above the roof of her home, their earth-rattling explosive motors…
> She [Ermila] will be a young woman peering from between the palm tree drapes of her grandparents' living room, a woman watching the QA helicopters burst out of the midnight sky to shoot dogs not chained up by curfew. Qué locura, she thinks. The world is going crazy…

> The wheeling copter blades over the power lines rise in intensity, louder and closer and closer and louder, just like the unrelenting engines of bulldozers ten years earlier when the young woman [Ermila] was a child… (12-13).

Here in this quotation, we note Viramontes figuratively employing the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, structurally, as the omniscient narrator abruptly adjusts the time frame several times from 1960 to 1970 to 1960. We note that this is occurring insofar as the narrator correspondingly refers to Ermila as the child in 1960, then as the young woman in 1970, and then as the child in 1960 again as the time sequence is changed in the scenes. The novelist's purpose of including these non-linear sequences is to critique the haunting and ghostly conditions wrought by urban renewal and the occupation. In addition, we note the deadly and destructive language used to describe the "invading engines" of the Quarantine Authority helicopters, with "their whir of blades above the roof of her home" and "their earth-rattling explosive motors" that terrify the residents of East L.A. in 1970. The 1970 quarantine sequence shows how the QA shoots dogs not locked away at curfew which reveals the oppressive conditions occurring in the neighborhood. The idea of a curfew is similarly oppressive, meaning that the QA has the authority of the city to regulate the time, actions, and movement of the East L.A. residents. The last lines of the quotation demonstrate the narrator returning from 1970 to Chavela's house in 1960. Viramontes uses these devices to show Ermila in the process of developing a political awareness, within the same chapter and later in the fourth chapter as she witnesses the spatial and environmental injustice that occurs throughout the novel.

Moreover, Ermila's political awareness is also noteworthy insofar as she is the most socially conscious character and the most concerned about the disappearances of people in the counternarrative. The reader learns that Ermila is an orphan, whose parents disappeared in

Guatemala, and so she lives with her grandparents, the Zumayas. During her visit to Chavela's condemned home, Ermila begins to learn how it feels to experience urban renewal and the crucial difference between earthquakes and earthmovers in regards to displacement and dispossession. She eventually returns to her grandparents' home and is reprimanded by her grandfather for having left the house. From him, she learns about the disappearance of a local neighborhood girl, named Renata Valenzuela, whose disappearance further haunts the characters and prompts Ermila to develop a political awareness. For instance, her grandfather's constant references to Renata's haunting disappearance, frighten Ermila but also cause her to begin to distinguish among different types of disappearances: "For weeks [Grandfather] had engaged [Ermila's] attention with the story of Renata Valenzuela, a local schoolgirl who had vanished, abducted one afternoon" (Viramontes 2007, 9). Later, after he reprimands her for having left their home, Ermila begins to mournfully wonder what has happened to the community, people are disappearing, including Renata, her parents, Chavela and "all the other ghosts of all the other houses" who were all displaced by the East L.A. freeway system: "[Ermila] didn't want to ask why everyone disappears because it seemed to happen all the time; what she wanted to know, what she wanted to ask, was where" (15). In this way, we note how the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, are operating as Ermila begins to consider where Renata, her parents, and Chavela have all disappeared. These questions are identical to Viramontes's rhetorical questions that prompted her to write about the displacement and dispossession caused by the construction of the East L.A. freeway system (Viramontes 2009, 81-82). Finally, Viramontes employs the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, to reflectively demonstrate how Ermila develops a political awareness regarding spatial and environmental injustice as a way to critique

and challenge the erasure of the East L.A. residents and the master narrative of supercity progress in L.A. in the 1960s-1970s.

Their Dogs Came with Them

Figurative Language: Urban Renewal

In the first example of figurative language, Viramontes uses the narrative device to focus on urban renewal in 1960. In the scene, Turtle, the female member of the McBride Boys gang in East L.A., views the ongoing freeway construction from her family home in 1960. This scene is best described as melancholic because due to the novelist's use of flashback and flash-forward sequences, the reader has already learned that Turtle will eventually lose her somewhat stable family life and find herself homeless on the streets of East L.A. in the late 1960s. As we noted earlier, she and Tranquilina, another neighborhood resident, are also killed by the Quarantine Authority in the finale of the counternarrative. Turtle's homelessness occurs once her brother, Luis Lil Lizard, who is also in the McBride Boys gang, is sent to the Vietnam War and their mother abandons her to move to Arizona. While it is never made explicit what happens to Luis, the narrator infers that he is killed in Vietnam along with many other Chicanos from East L.A., including YoYo, the older brother of Ermila's friend Mousie (59-60). As Viramontes stated in the interview with Daniel Olivas, the Vietnam War was not at all popular in her East L.A. community (Viramontes and Olivas, 2007). While Luis does not literally die fighting in Vietnam, like Chavela who disappears with her house, the narrator's rendition of events leads the reader to infer that they are figuratively dead and part of the community of disappeared residents. These figurative inferences amplify the chaos, destabilization, and sense of loss in the scene at Turtle's

home as she witnesses urban renewal. From her family's porch, she notices Chavela's blue house being demolished along with the other homes and the construction of the freeways:

> …[Turtle] looked out from her porch steps…to see the blue house like all the other houses disappearing inch by inch just like Chavela and all the other neighbors. In its place, the four-freeway interchange would be constructed in order to reroute 547,300 cars a day through the Eastside and would become the busiest in the city.
> But tonight, on the porch steps, Turtle stared at the incomplete ramp bridge being constructed above the boundary of the Chinese cemetery. It resembled a mangled limb…a mesh of electrical wires hung out of broken cement like arteries dripping mounds of heaved-up rubble (Viramontes 2007, 168-169).

Here, in this quotation, Viramontes uses figurative language to provide empirical evidence of the death and destruction wrought by urban renewal during freeway construction in East L.A. in 1960. While the "Stack" was technically built in the 1950s, the novelist is likely referring to the maintenance and expansion of the four-freeway interchanges in the 1960s and to the construction of newer freeways in the quotation. As Avila and Estrada have noted, many freeways were built in East L.A. in the 1960s, including: the I-10 Santa Monica Freeway in 1961; the I-710 Long Beach in 1961 and the S.R. 60 Pomona West Freeway in 1965 (Avila 2004, 195-199; Estrada 290). The narrator's claim that 547,300 cars are meant to travel through the new freeway system in close proximity to the East L.A. Chinese cemetery and to the saved homes, such as Ermila's house and neighborhood, exemplifies environmental racism and spatial and environmental injustice.

Moreover, in this scene at Turtle's home, the novelist's objectives are to humanize the landscape that is being destroyed as a way of memorializing the neighborhoods and to encourage the reader to empathize with the residents' struggles in the counternarrative. The narrator begins to humanize the landscape by describing the demolition of Chavela's house from the porch steps

of Turtle's home (Viramontes 2007, 168-169). A house's porch steps lead a family into its home and back to the outside world. A family's home is meant to be a sanctuary and yet, Turtle is witnessing the destruction of Chavela's home and many other houses from the neighborhood, from the porch steps of her home. It is worth noting that Turtle and Ermila, who are only distantly acquainted, have separate and different storylines in which they both witness the demolition of Chavela's blue house. Therefore, this scene at Turtle's home is evidence of Turtle's and Ermila's storylines figuratively intersecting like freeway interchanges. This is an example of Viramontes reflectively using figurative language as part of the novel's structure, which was her intention as she was writing the novel as she discussed in an interview with Daniel Olivas (Muñoz 25).

In addition, the narrator's description of Chavela's house as blue, humanizes the home as a vibrant space full of life in contrast to the gray, ashen color of the newly constructed freeways. These new, gray highways are reminiscent of the old, gray tombstones of the East L.A. Chinese cemetery, as the highway system is built to replace the condemned homes. Unlike the new freeways; however, the old East L.A. Chinese cemetery is sacred land to the descendants of the Chinese residents who helped build Los Angeles in the late nineteenth-and early twentieth-centuries. As the narrator makes clear, this graveyard is also threatened by the city's freeway construction because a ramp bridge is being built near the boundary of the site. Using figurative language, Viramontes compares and contrasts this unfinished bridge to a "mangled limb" because it features "a mesh of electrical wires hung out of broken cement like arteries dripping mounds of heaved-up rubble", suggesting that freeway construction is dangerous to the landscape, hovering as it does over the cemetery. Moreover, the description of the bridge as a mangled limb, sounds like language that more appropriately describes the demolition of a

structure as opposed to its construction (Viramontes 2007, 168-169). As part of her critique of environmental racism and urban renewal, the novelist uses figurative language to ominously describe the construction of the ramp in a way that emphasizes the destruction of the neighborhood. Like Ermila earlier in the counternarrative, Turtle is shown in this scene to be another witness to the destruction wrought by urban renewal and with this empirical evidence, they are both able to critique spatial and environmental injustice. The uses of figurative language in this example demonstrate Viramontes's reflective method of representing the communal history of death, destruction, displacement, and dispossession that occurred during East L.A. freeway construction in the 1960s-1970s.

In the second example of figurative language, Viramontes uses the narrative devices to focus on the construction of other freeways in the 1960s. Turtle is shown with her brother Luis exploring the freeway construction sites of the I-710 Long Beach and the S.R. Pomona 60 in their East L.A. neighborhood in the 1960s. In this scene, Turtle no longer witnesses the freeway construction from a distance, she actually visits the construction sites overnight to more closely examine the destruction of the neighborhood as part of her collection of empirical evidence:

> [Turtle] stood beneath miles of earth that had been heaved up, plowed aside, carted off and carried away in preparation for the rolling asphalt of the Interstate 710 Long Beach and the Pomona freeways. Severed tree roots jutted from mud walls. It was another planet altogether…she marveled at how far down the tree roots had grown…
> Out of sight, out of mind, and over the embankment, everything was forgotten. Nonexistent (226-227).

Here, in this quotation, we note the figurative language the narrator uses to describe Turtle's exploration of the construction of the I-710 Long Beach and S.R. 60 Pomona Freeways in the 1960s. For example, the narrator likens the construction site to "another planet", one that appears

so different because of the "miles of earth that had been heaved up, plowed aside, carted off and carried away" in preparation for freeway construction. The figurative language used to describe the amount of land that is removed, the "miles of earth", humanizes the landscape that is unnaturally unearthed and carted off in preparation for more East L.A. highways and hazardous toxins. Moreover, the description of the "severed tree roots" and the vanquished trees further humanizes the landscape that is eviscerated for urban renewal. The narrator notes how Turtle "marveled" at how deep the roots of the severed trees had grown, which reveals the East L.A. community's ties to the landscape that is destroyed for freeway construction. The narrator's claim that the impact on Turtle's community is "out of sight, out of mind", and "nonexistent" to the rest of the city of Los Angeles demonstrates white privilege and is an example of environmental racism (226-227). The uses of figurative language in this scene further demonstrate Viramontes's critique of environmental racism and spatial and environmental injustice in the novel.

Their Dogs Came with Them

Figurative Language and Official State Language: The Quasi-Police State

Viramontes uses figurative language and official state language to explore the militant oppressiveness of the Quarantine Authority as it is described in a pamphlet sent to the East L.A. residents. She uses these different forms of language to specifically examine the QA's enforcement of a quarantine and a curfew in the residents' neighborhoods in 1970. This official state language demonstrates the oppressiveness of the city authorities during this period. For instance, the state language used in the pamphlet, contains indirect phrases, concealing the danger inherent in the policies, in order to persuade the residents to comply with the QA's

quarantine and curfew policies without any forms of protest. This first example takes place in 1970 shortly after the Chicano Moratorium that occurred in East L.A. In this scene, Ermila, her friends, and their families receive an official pamphlet from the city's Quarantine Authority regarding both a quarantine and a curfew in their neighborhoods:

> Rising cases of rabies reported in the neighborhood (see shaded area) have forced Health officials to approve, for limited time only, the aerial observation and shooting of undomesticated mammals. Unchained and/or unlicensed mammals will not be exempt…
> For limited time only, a curfew enforced…
> [the community must] work together to keep our families and our city safe, the end of the message urged (54).

Here, in this quotation, we note the official state language and indirect phrases the narrator uses to demonstrate the power of the city authorities as they order a quarantine and a curfew in the pamphlet sent to the residents. The state language demonstrates the militant oppressiveness of the Quarantine Authority as the residents are informed that a quarantine has been authorized for a "limited time only" to conduct "aerial observation and shooting of undomesticated mammals." The official language in both phrases is calm and clinical in tone and the emphases are on policy. The state language is also indirect, concealing the deadly force that will commence in the residents' neighborhoods.

For example, in the phrase, "limited time only", the state language is indirect yet also signifies oppression insofar as city authorities will determine the relevant timetable for the use of deadly force in the residents' community. The phrase is also indirect because it is not clear to the residents how the city authorities' timetable will affect the residents nor what the ramifications of this policy will be for their neighborhoods. In addition, a curfew is also meant to be enforced for a "limited time only" and the timetable for this ordinance is similarly absent in the pamphlet.

Moreover, the phrase “aerial observation” is not only clinical, it is also indirect insofar as the residents are not specifically informed what “aerial observation” will entail during the quarantine and curfew. They only know that their neighborhoods will be observed from the sky. The clinical and indirect language used in the pamphlet does not convey the terror the residents will experience. For instance, Ermila eventually learns that aerial observations involve the QA helicopters’ terrorizing her East L.A. community, with “their whir of blades above the roof of her home” and the sounds of “their earth-rattling explosive motors” (12). In addition, the residents are not informed how terrifying the shooting of “undomesticated mammals” will be nor who is liable to get shot by the QA during these raids. The pamphlet’s warning that “mammals”, which obviously include human beings, might also get shot during the quarantine, foreshadows the dehumanization that occurs in later curfew checkpoint scenes. The QA will be responsible for the deaths of Turtle and Tranquilina in the final chapter of the counternarrative. In neighborhoods that have been eviscerated for urban renewal, the city imposes a quarantine and a curfew, targeting mammals that include more than just unchained dogs on the streets. For instance, there are homeless people, residents without cars who must walk to their destinations, and others who use public transportation to move around in East Los Angeles. The state language used in the pamphlet conveys the QA’s militant oppression of the community.

Viramontes explores evidence of the deadly impact of the enforcement of the Quarantine Authority’s curfew on the residents by focusing on how the QA’s oppressiveness affects and restricts the residents’ freedom of movement in their own neighborhoods. The QA enforces a quarantine and a curfew using deadly force via armed employees aboard helicopters in the nighttime sky above East L.A. in 1970. In the final chapter, Viramontes reflectively uses figurative language as part of the novel’s structure for the last time, metaphorically weaving

together several characters' storylines like freeway interchanges to end the counternarrative. The first two purposes are to invoke the characters' common humanity and to tragically demonstrate their failings as human beings, in Turtle's case, insofar as she kills Nacho on behalf of her gang while under the influence of PCP before she is shot and killed by the QA. Tranquilina witnesses their deaths and rushes to comfort them as they both are both dying in the bus depot alley. There, she refuses the QA's orders to halt and is also shot and killed by the Quarantine Authority in the final scene in the novel (317-325). The novelist's third purpose of bringing the counternarrative to a close with these intersecting storylines, then, is to point to empirical evidence of the death and destruction wrought by urban renewal and the quasi-police state oppression of the Quarantine Authority in East L.A. in the 1960s-1970s.

At the end of Ermila's storyline, as we have noted, she learns that the McBride gang plans to kill her cousin Nacho, who lives with her at the Zumaya house. The gang plans to kill Nacho in retaliation for his efforts in trying to keep Alfonso, the leader of the McBride gang, from dating his cousin Ermila. Nacho and Alfonso had a fight earlier in the evening, with Nacho winning. Later, Nacho decides to leave L.A. and take an early bus to Mexico. Alfonso decides to seek revenge and so he and his gang plan a deadly retaliation at the bus depot in Downtown L.A. Ermila learns of the gang's plan to kill Nacho at nearly 2 A.M. while at her grandparents' home in East L.A. during the QA curfew. Even though she is under pressure to remain at the house, she decides to leave her home and run to the bus depot to warn Nacho about the plot. Her decision to leave her grandparents' house shows how she must contend with their strict rules and oppression as well with the militant oppression of the Quarantine Authority. As she prepares for her journey to the bus depot, she hears the constant, invasive noise of the new freeways surrounding her neighborhood:

> The whoosh of the city's vehicles, the broken-up silence from faraway night, made [Ermila] feel like they lived on an island, the freeways closing in on them like ocean waves, the tierra firme vanishing swiftly. The only plan she had was to run…while reciting the Hail Mary…Pray and run…Pray the Hail Mary…into believing it was possible to reach the depot in forty-five minutes.
> Ermila discovered an apricot crate stood upright [outside the window of her house] as if someone had anticipated her escape. Finally, with some luck, Ermila used the crate and leaped to the ground running (316-317).

Here, in this quotation, we note how Viramontes explores urban renewal and the militant oppression of the enforcement of the Quarantine Authority's curfew on the residents. The residents must contend with the constancy of sound, movement, and pollution because of the proximity of the freeways to their neighborhood, which make them feel isolated from the rest of the city: "The whoosh of the city's vehicles, the broken-up silence from faraway night, made her feel that they lived on an island, the freeways closing in on them like ocean waves." The residents are said to feel like islanders because the freeways keep them from mainland Los Angeles and the QA restricts their freedom of movement with their curfew. Ermila also notes the "tierra firme" that has vanished so quickly to make room for more freeway construction. As we noted earlier, in an interview with Daniel Olivas, Viramontes explained how the bulldozers and freeway construction "devastated" East L.A. during this period, which inspired the novelist to "portray the lives of those who disappeared" from the neighborhoods of East Los Angeles (Viramontes and Olivas, 2007). The figurative language used here provides examples of environmental racism and spatial and environmental injustice in the novel.

This scene is also important because it shows Ermila confronting intracultural oppression from her grandparents who have bought into the QA's rationale for a quarantine and a curfew in the neighborhood. In this way, her last scene sets up the stakes for all the characters in dealing with various forms of pressure in the finale of the counternarrative. As the reader learns, Ermila

will not arrive in time to warn Nacho. She is last shown running from the neighborhood to the bus depot as her storyline figuratively intersects with other storylines one last time in the final chapter of the novel (317-325).

In the second intersecting storyline, Turtle and the McBride gang know that Nacho is at the bus depot. They plan to kill him there. Throughout her storyline, Turtle has been shown to be a very streetsmart character not a drug user, who spends most of her time using alternative routes to avoid both the QA and the McBride gang in the neighborhood. Her plan is always to survive; however, while she is under the influence of PCP, her state of mind is altered and she attacks Nacho in an alley near the bus depot to impress the gang. It begins to rain torrentially. She stabs him to death before Ermila can reach the bus depot in time to save him. The McBride gang then flees the scene, leaving Turtle as the QA helicopter approaches the alley. In her confused state and unable to react, the QA shoot and kill her: "Breaks of white radiant light flashed one, and then another, and Turtle grimaced, her hand resolutely useless in shielding her eyes from such brilliance" (324). Here, we note Viramontes using figurative language to describe Turtle's final moments. The "white radiant light" refers to the QA helicopters' beams which are meant to demonstrate the QA's militant oppression over Turtle who is cornered in the alley. She is then shot and killed. Tranquilina witnesses everything that occurs at the bus depot and rushes to comfort Nacho and Turtle as they are both dying in the street (324).

In the third intersecting storyline, then, Tranquilina, the neighborhood Christian missionary and Ana, a clerical worker, search Downtown L.A. for Ana's brother Ben, who has mental illness issues and is missing. They have to find him because he is lost and because they have to meet the QA curfew. A few moments before Turtle kills Nacho in the alley and before Ermila can arrive to save Nacho, Tranquilina arrives at the bus depot searching for Ben. While

Ana waits in the car, Tranquilina speaks with Nacho, who is a stranger to her, about Ben. He tells her he cannot help her and they part ways. A few moments later, Turtle and her gang arrive at the bus depot and Tranquilina witnesses Turtle's deadly surprise attack on Nacho. Suddenly, from the hovering helicopter, the QA's beams focus on Turtle and shoot her to death in the alley (317-325). Tranquilina rushes to the alley to comfort both Nacho and Turtle as they bleed to death on the rainy street: "Absolutely drenched in the black waters of blood and torrents of rain, Tranquilina couldn't delineate herself from the murdered souls because these tears and blood and rain and bullet wounds belonged to her as well" (325). Here, we note Viramontes using figurative language to provide further evidence of the QA's militant oppression but also to focus on the common humanity shared by three East L.A. residents, strangers who all die together in the bus depot alley: "Tranquilina couldn't delineate herself from the murdered souls because these tears and blood and rain and bullet wounds belonged to her as well." Moreover, this quotation also foreshadows Tranquilina's imminent death by gunshot a few moments later while she's comforting Nacho and Turtle as they lay dying in the street, not knowing these strangers are also from her East L.A. neighborhood. While she is in the alley, the QA warn Tranquilina to freeze. She refuses to halt and is shot dead in the last scene of the novel: "Shouting voices ordered her not to move, stay immobile, but she lifted one foot forward, then another, refusing to halt" (325). As Viramontes' figurative language demonstrates, in her last moments, Tranquilina witnesses Nacho's and Turtle's deaths, tries to comfort them as a Christian missionary and is shot and killed while operating as a humanitarian to help dying strangers. This is further evidence of the quasi-police state, with the militant QA overzealously killing people in the night.

As a result, the militant oppressiveness of the Quarantine Authority is responsible for the deaths of Turtle and Tranquilina in the finale of the counternarrative. While Turtle is responsible

for Nacho's death, as East L.A. residents during urban renewal and the QA presence, they both understood the militant oppression of the quarantine and curfew in their community. These QA policies prevent Ermila from saving Nacho from the McBride gang's deadly plot. As we have noted, in these final scenes, Viramontes reflectively uses figurative language as part of the novel's structure for the last time, metaphorically weaving together several characters' storylines like freeway interchanges to end the counternarrative. The first two purposes are to invoke the characters' common humanity and tragically demonstrates their failings as human beings, especially in Turtle's case insofar as she kills Nacho before she is killed by the QA. Tranquilina rushes to comfort them as they are both dying in the street. There, as we have noted, she refuses the QA's orders to halt and is also shot and killed by the Quarantine Authority in the final scene of the narrative. Viramontes brings the counternarrative to a close with these intersecting storylines that provide empirical evidence of the death and destruction wrought by urban renewal and the quasi-police state oppression of the Quarantine Authority in East L.A. in the 1960s-1970s. These examples all comprise the novelist's efforts to critique forms of spatial and environmental injustice in East L.A. in the 1960s-1970s.

Their Dogs Came with Them

Figurative Language and Jumping Scales: Resistance and Survival in East Los Angeles

Viramontes uses figurative language and jumping scales to focus on Ana's anxiety with driving on the freeways as a rejection of urban renewal and the East L.A. freeway system. The focus is on Ana's alternative means of movement as a motorist attempting to resist and survive during urban renewal and the quasi-police state occupation. As we noted earlier, Ana is a friend of Tranquilina's and one of only three characters in the counternarrative, besides Alfonso and

Santos of the McBride gang, who own a car. In the scene, Ana and Tranquilina drive around in search of Ana's brother Ben, who has mental illness issues, so they can meet the curfew. The search eventually leads them to the bus depot alley in Downtown L.A., where Tranquilina is shot and killed by the Quarantine Authority. This scene also demonstrates the QA's militant oppression insofar as a motorist, Ana, must find Ben to comply with the curfew in the community. This scene is important insofar as it again demonstrates how Viramontes rejects the freeways as being symbolic of individual freedom by focusing on Ana's alternative means of movement as a motorist who prefers to drive on the city streets to arrive at her destinations.

> [Ana] might think it unsafe to search for Ben at night and this dread deepened Ana's anxiety, which was why she risked taking the Pomona 60 West in the first place. On Soto Street, [Ana] caught the I-5 freeway entrance…to the Pomona 60. Ana had maintained a driving strive onto the multiple-lane freeway until the cars were trapped into files of gridlock…The cars and trucks began to crowd her until a wild impatience moved her to set her signaling blinkers on and aim the car in a crawl toward the closest runaway exit out of the Pomona 60 West. She exited and ended up in an unfamiliar city block of boarded-up warehouses (275-276).

Here, in this quotation, we note how Viramontes uses figurative language and jumping scales and focuses on Ana's anxiety about driving on the freeways as a rejection of urban renewal and the East L.A. freeway system. There is a tone of apprehension in the language the narrator uses to convey Ana's unease as she drives at night searching for Ben: "[Ana] might think it unsafe to search for Ben at night and this dread deepened Ana's anxiety, which was why she risked taking the Pomona 60 West in the first place." The words "dread", "anxiety" and "risk", all suggest Ana's discomfort driving and searching for Ben at night. The reader then learns that Ana is stuck in traffic on the Pomona 60, a "multiple lane freeway" and feels overwhelmed "until a wild impatience moved her" to exit the freeway. This is more evidence demonstrating Ana's discomfort with the Pomona 60 West freeway and how she decides to take the nearest off-ramp,

even having to endure “a crawl of traffic” to leave the freeway, before finally arriving at an unrecognizable city block in Downtown L.A.

Moreover, this scene is also evidence of Viramontes using figurative language and jumping scales as a rejection of urban renewal and the East L.A. freeway system. For instance, Viramontes uses these devices to focus on Ana’s anxiety with driving on the freeways as a way to reject the newly constructed freeways as being symbolic of individual freedom. She highlights Ana’s alternative means of movement as a motorist who prefers to drive on the city streets as she attempts to resist and survive during urban renewal and the quasi-police state occupation. Moreover, it is evident in the scene that Ana has a sense of urgency as a motorist, which is to find Ben to meet the QA curfew. The urgency is made clear through the figurative language used to convey the apprehension she feels driving at night on the Pomona 60 freeway and her “wild impatience” that takes her to the nearest exit to the streets. As a result, her decision to avoid the freeways in favor of the streets demonstrates how the novelist continues to challenge the significance of the East L.A. freeway system in the master narrative of city progress. As we noted with the first example, the novelist uses jumping scales to leave the freeways to operate in the background as she shifts the focus to the streets and the sidewalks where Ana and Tranquilina hope to find Ben in the scene.

In the second example of figurative language and jumping scales, Viramontes uses these devices to focus on Turtle’s alternative means of movement, using cemeteries and side streets as she tries to resist and survive during urban renewal and the quasi-police state occupation in East L.A. In this way, the novelist again rejects the freeways as symbolic of individual freedom by focusing on Turtle’s pedestrian movements. Unlike Ermila and Ana; however, Turtle is homeless and cannot afford public transportation and does not own a car. Moreover, as a gang member

trying to avoid any confrontations with gangs and the Quarantine Authority, her alternative movements depend on her stealth, speed, and familiarity with side streets. This scene is also evidence of jumping scales insofar as Viramontes rejects the freeways and deemphasizes public transportation in order to focus on Turtle's desperate, alternative means of movement as she moves throughout the community.

> Escaping between two warehouses, Turtle emerged on the other side of the alley, relieved…After two hours of walking, she arrived in the Eastside late. Turtle tried to avoid both the QA and the lengthy line of worn-out people waiting at the quarantine checkpoint…She took Third Street once again, and walked under a long row of palms bordering the Calvary Cemetery. It was a major boulevard…Turtle vaulted over the short brick wall of the first Serbian cemetery, where she walked in a rumor of lamppost light past the engraved markers…After stomping on an old wiry gate enough, Turtle hopped out and jogged across the severed deserted remains of Second Street, and then climbed the wire-mesh fence of the second Serbian cemetery. She stood under an ancient eucalyptus until she was sure the coast was clear.
> The Interstate 710 below her, Turtle sprinted, Go, Go, Go, across the bridge and then slammed and scaled the tall chain-link fence up and over, dropped into the Chinese cemetery like a load of stolen goods (218-219).

Here, in this quotation, we note how Viramontes uses figurative language and jumping scales and focuses on Turtle's alternative means of movement as she tries to resist and survive during urban renewal and the quasi-police state occupation in East L.A. In this particular scene, Turtle is shown to have a desperate form of movement as a pedestrian insofar as she is trying to avoid her gang, the McBrides, any rival gangs, and the Quarantine Authority. It must be noted that the McBride gang eventually does find her which leads to Nacho's death and her own when the QA shoot and kill her in the final chapter of the counternarrative.

In this scene, the figurative language emphasizes Turtle's desperate, alternative routes to avoid any confrontations and at the same time, reveals her reliance on her stealth, speed, and familiarity with side streets. For instance she uses these skills to escape between "two

warehouses" and her knowledge of the side streets to move throughout her East L.A. There is a sense of exhaustion insofar as she walked for two hours and arrived late to the Eastside. In addition, there is also a sense of desperation which is made clear with verbs such as "vaulted", "hopped", "jogged", "climbed", "sprinted", and "scaled", to highlight Turtle's extraordinary efforts to escape from her enemies once she arrives in East L.A. These verbs signify rapid movement and demonstrate her quest for safety and solitude in the night. Indeed, she cannot rest upon her arrival in the Eastside because she immediately notes the QA and must avoid the curfew: "Turtle tried to avoid both the QA and the lengthy line of worn-out people waiting at the quarantine checkpoint…She took Third Street once again, and walked under a long row of palms bordering the Calvary Cemetery." This is evidence of Turtle's efforts to avoid the QA curfew as she tries to resist and survive urban renewal and the quasi-police state occupation in the scene.

This scene is also noteworthy insofar as it shows Turtle's familiarity with numerous pedestrian escape routes that take her to various East L.A. cemeteries. While these graveyards are sacred to East L.A. residents, as we have noted earlier, they are located on streets in city zones that have been condemned for urban renewal and freeway construction: "Turtle hopped out and jogged across the severed deserted remains of Second Street." In this scene alone, there are references to four cemeteries: Calvary Cemetery, two Serbian cemeteries, and the Chinese cemetery. While cemeteries and graveyards represent sacred land that Turtle seeks in order to provide herself some temporary shelter, they also represent death. Turtle's familiarity with these East L.A. cemeteries results in a false sense of security insofar as these cemeteries foreshadow her eventual death in the final chapter of the counternarrative. As we noted earlier, Viramontes claimed in an interview with Elisabeth Merrmann-Jowziak and Nancy Sullivan, that cemeteries and freeways are "two major, *major* metaphors of Los Angeles" which led her to excavate the

history of East Los Angeles, especially the disappeared Mexican and Chicano residents whom the city officials attempted to erase from the city's history to make room for the highway system (Viramontes 2009, 81-82). For Viramontes, cemeteries and freeways, then, are metaphors for the death and destruction that occurred during the construction of the East L.A. freeways in the 1960s-1970s.

Moreover, this scene is also evidence of Viramontes using figurative language and jumping scales to reject the freeways and deemphasize public transportation in order to focus on Turtle's desperate, alternative means of movement. Viramontes uses these devices to also demonstrate that Turtle, as a homeless gang member, cannot rely on public transportation especially since her goal is to avoid confrontations with her gang, rival gangs, and the QA's militant oppressiveness. As a result, the novelist deemphasizes the significance of the freeways and public transportation in order to highlight Turtle's desperate, alternative routes as a pedestrian in East L.A. As we have noted, Turtle uses her stealth, speed, and familiarity with the side streets to help her plan her escape routes. The narrator's focus is on her movements and especially on her false sense of security in traveling through the various East L.A. cemeteries. In this way, the novelist again uses figurative language and jumping scales to reject the freeways as symbolic of individual freedom by focusing on Turtle's alternative means of movement in the scene.

Conclusion

Viramontes uses the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts, among several other components, to establish conversations on the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice for the residents of East L.A. in *Their Dogs Came with Them*. She uses these devices to critique

and challenge both (1) the erasure of people of color from the city's history and (2) the recurring master narrative of supercity progress in Los Angeles, two interrelated themes and issues regarding the urban renewal of Chavez Ravine and East Los Angeles in the 1940s-1970s. Viramontes also uses a variety of narrative devices in the counternarrative, including the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, figurative language and official state language and jumping scales. Viramontes uses a reflective approach to incorporate these devices, particularly haunting and ghosts, to establish conversations on the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice during the construction of the East L.A. freeway system in the 1960s-1970s.

Chapter 4: Haunting and the L.A. Uprising: Spatial and Environmental Injustice and Criminal Injustice in Downtown L.A., South Central, and Koreatown in the 1980s-1990s

Sa-I-Gu (Directed by Dai Sil Kim-Gibson and Christine Choy, 1993)

Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992 (Directed by John Ridley, 2017)

Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992 (1994) by Anna Deveare Smith

The Tattooed Soldier (1998) by Héctor Tobar

In this chapter, the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts, among other techniques, are again prominent in the following counternarratives, Dai Sil Kim-Gibson's and Christine Choy's documentary *Sa-I-Gu* (1993), John Ridley's documentary *Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992* (2017), Anna Deveare Smith's non-fictional play *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992* (1994), and Héctor Tobar's fictional novel *The Tattooed Soldier* (1998). Here, as in the previous chapters, the metaphors of haunting and ghosts operate as narrative devices that introduce certain non-fictional and fictional victims in the four counternarratives regarding the L.A. Uprising. the four counternarratives use the metaphors of haunting and ghosts as narrative devices in correspondingly different ways, to examine the complex issues but also to refer directly or indirectly to certain non-fictional and fictional victims who died before the uprising or during the rebellion, as well as to those who were city-authorized murder victims, and all of whom are featured in the four counternarratives.

Moreover, as we noted in Chapter 1, the right to the city is particularly applicable to Chapter 4 and not the preceding chapters, insofar as the documentary films *Sa-I-Gu* and *Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992*, examine a wide variety of complex factors and issues in Los Angeles in the 1970s-1990s, that drove many residents of Downtown L.A., South Central and Koreatown to participate in what some of them viewed as a movement which promotes the

shared production of space and the appropriation of urban space during the L.A. Uprising. These counternarratives are set in the following Downtown L.A. communities, Crown Hill, Pico-Union and Skid Row and the communities of South Central and Koreatown; to establish conversations on the right to the city and the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice but also criminal justice and other vital forms of redress regarding the L.A. Uprising. These authors and filmmakers use these devices to critique and challenge (1) the erasure of people of color from the city's history, (2) the recurring master narrative of supercity progress, and (3) the simplistic mainstream interpretation of the uprising popularized by the local L.A TV news coverage.

As noted in Chapter 1 and as numerous scholars have commented, the third master narrative is a mainstream interpretation of the rebellion which refers to the uprising as the "L.A. Riots" and renders the rebellion as an African-American versus Korean binary conflict, with Koreans standing in place of white people. This binary reading, as noted by Lynn Itagaki, sees black people as both the perpetrators of the rebellion and as victims for destroying their neighborhoods, while also casting Korean merchants as model minorities who lost their businesses to looting and fires, placing them in the position of white people who similarly lost their businesses in the 1965 Watts Rebellion (Itagaki 37-64, 103-180). Furthermore, this binary reading uses half-truths to mischaracterize the rebellion as one started solely by an angry black population in the streets of L.A. after the jury of the Rodney King-LAPD trial in Simi Valley found the white LAPD officers who beat King, not guilty, while simultaneously ignoring many other complex factors and issues which help explain the significance of the uprising (Caldwell 302-335; Cho 196-210; Itagaki 37-64, 103-180; Kim 2008, 36-50; Omi and Winant, 97-111; Sánchez 1009-1027; Soja 1996, 426-460; Valle and Torres 45-66).

In this chapter, I note how the four counternarratives, to differing degrees, challenge the simplistic mainstream interpretation. These counternarratives provide alternative readings of the uprising by incorporating the following complex factors and issues that comprise the historical context of Los Angeles in the 1970s-1990s: urban restructuring, racial and economic inequality, immigration, demographic changes, homelessness, the militarization of the LAPD, the Latasha Harlins murder case, the Rodney King-LAPD trial results, the right to the city and the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice but also criminal justice and other vital forms of redress regarding the L.A. Uprising. I argue that the authors of the four counternarratives employ the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts among other techniques to examine the aforementioned factors and issues and to provide alternative interpretations of the significance of the L.A. Uprising. Other devices used include: non-linear and disjointed uses of time used in conjunction with haunting and ghosts, figurative language, and documentary evidence.

In my view, the uprising counternarratives differ in terms of the degrees of realization of presenting alternative interpretations of the rebellion; central to this difference is that the documentaries by Kim-Gibson and Choy and Ridley, are didactic counternarratives as we noted with *Chavez Ravine*, that are interested in teaching the audience about the rebellion. As noted in Chapter 1, non-fiction narrative films, particularly documentary films as noted by scholars, are inherently insofar as they are meant to teach a particular subject matter to the audience (Platinga 101-119; Renov 18-32). In contrast, Smith's and Tobar's counternarratives are reflective counternarratives as we noted in the discussion of *Their Dogs Came with Them*, that promote empathy and invite the reader and audience to help interpret the events. Smith as a playwright and actress and Tobar as a journalist and novelist, use reflective approaches to explore how marginalized people of color respond to the complex factors and issues connected to the

rebellion. They both particularly rely on figurative language to produce empathy, to help the reader and audience understand what it is like for their multi-ethnic characters to experience the events leading to the rebellion and the uprising itself in 1992. These reflective approaches also encourage the audience to help interpret the events. In addition, as noted in Chapter 1, these authors and film directors, to a certain extent, create carnivalesque atmospheres in the four counternarratives. In this chapter I will compare and contrast how the four counternarratives use the aforementioned narrative devices and the degrees to which they point to minorities' right to the city and the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice but also criminal justice and other vital forms of redress regarding the L.A. Uprising.

An Overview of the Events Leading to the L.A. Uprising

On March 3, 1991, motorist Rodney King, a resident of Altadena, was beaten by several LAPD officers in the San Fernando Valley. George Holliday witnessed the arrest and videotaped the beating during the arrest. Holliday's video showed eight officers beating a severely injured King with 56 near-deadly baton swings. Holliday approached KTLA, the local L.A TV news network to share his video. The station subsequently edited the tape, to limit the extent of King's beating by the LAPD. On March 16, 1991, Latasha Harlins was killed during an argument with Korean merchant Soon Ja Du, a 50-year-old immigrant from South Korea. The murder occurred in Du's grocery store in South Central. The argument over orange juice led to an altercation that was caught on a security camera, with Du shooting and killing Harlins (Itagaki 40-48). Despite documentary evidence of Harlins' death and King's beating, Du and the LAPD would be exonerated by the court system. The results angered the African-American community in L.A.

To be sure, the Harlins murder case and the King-LAPD trial results were proximate causes for the rebellion, though, as we have noted, there are other complex factors and issues that led to the uprising. Several hours after the King-LAPD trial ended, the rebellion began in Downtown L.A. at Parker Center and at the intersection of Florence and Normandie in South Central and lasted from April 29 through May 4, 1992 (The Los Angeles Times Staff 32-43). In addition, the city relied on the entire forces of the LAPD, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, the National Guard, and the U.S. military to restore order and end the uprising. In total, 52 people died and 2,383 people were injured. An estimated 4,000 businesses were destroyed and the property damage was listed at $1 billion. In addition, more than 16,000 people were arrested with Latinos at 51% and African-Americans at 38% of the total arrests during the uprising. In addition, 1,200 of those arrested were undocumented residents from Central America and Mexico who were deported by the U.S. after the uprising (*Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992* 2:04:49-2:06:14; Felker-Kantor 2017; Sánchez 1011; Valle and Torres 52-53).

Authors and Filmmakers

Sa-I-Gu (1993): Summary

Dai Sil Kim-Gibson is a Korean-American documentary filmmaker and author who is the co-director and a producer of the documentary *Sa-I-Gu*. She previously was a professor of religion. Her films have been funded by The Rockefeller Fellowship, the MacArthur Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Christine Choy, the co-director of the film, is a Chinese-American and Korean-American filmmaker and a professor of film at New York University Tisch School of the Arts. Choy was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Documentary for the film *Who Killed Vincent Chin?* (1988). Elaine Kim is a

Korean-American professor of Asian-American studies who worked on the film as a producer. She is now a professor at UC Berkeley. In *Sa-I-Gu*, the filmmakers use the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time and documentary evidence, to demonstrate the right to the city and the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice but also criminal justice and other vital forms of redress regarding the L.A. Uprising.

Kim-Gibson's and Choy's documentary, *Sa-I-Gu*, literally means April 29th, features a wide-variety of Korean women's perspectives regarding the L.A. Uprising. The interviewees in *Sa-I-Gu*, explain how they all similarly had dreams of financial independence when they left South Korea in search of a better life in the U.S.; however, their collective dreams were similarly destroyed when they realized they were considered model minorities with few rights. Their college degrees were not transferable as equivalent to U.S. degrees, and to survive they had work as merchants and open businesses in the poorer sections of town because of restricted business opportunities afforded to them as Asian immigrants. Nevertheless, they were able to open family businesses including liquor stores, grocery markets and swap meets, in South Central and Koreatown, rather than in the more affluent Westside of Los Angeles. The film reveals a struggle with racial triangulation insofar as the Korean shop-owners realize during and after the rebellion that the LAPD and city authorities had abandoned them and their businesses, causing many Koreans to question the model minority myth that they had accepted. As Noted in Chapter 1, the model minority stereotype is designed to deny other racial groups' claims of disenfranchisement and discrimination by holding Asian-Americans to a fictional standard that denies the diversity of individuals within the ethnic group. This myth is meant to maintain white people as the hierarchical leaders of the hierarchy of races in the U.S. As Kim has shown, many Korean immigrants buy into the myth and believe the U.S. is a meritocratic society, unaware of the

history of racism and oppression towards people of color in the U.S. (Kim 1993, 219). At the end of the documentary, the Koreans realize in the aftermath of the rebellion, that they must band together politically as a community, like African-Americans and Latinos, to achieve social change in the future. In my view, the filmmakers construct a film that is meant to send a warning especially to Asian-Americans in L.A., that minority communities must use a collective voice when trying to call for a right to the city and to make clear the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice but also criminal justice and other vital forms of redress in Los Angeles.

Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992: Summary

John Ridley is an African-American screenwriter, novelist, and television director. He won an Academy Award for Best Adapted Screenplay for the film *12 Years a Slave* (2013) and he created and wrote the crime anthology series *American Crime* for ABC (2015-2017). Ridley adopts a didactic approach in his film *Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992*, intended to teach the audience about multi-ethnic perspectives regarding the uprising. The purpose of the film is to critique and challenge the erasure of people of color from the city's history in L.A., as well as the supercity progress master narrative, but especially to challenge the mainstream interpretation of the rebellion by presenting an alternative reading of the uprising. Ultimately, Ridley uses the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time and documentary evidence, to demonstrate the right to the city and the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice but also criminal justice and other vital forms of redress regarding the L.A. Uprising.

Ridley's documentary film *Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992*, is different from *Sa-I-Gu*, insofar as he incorporates a multi-ethnic perspective regarding the uprising. Ridley's film is

concerned primarily with the perspectives of the black community of South Central and examines many instances of police brutality and dehumanization led by a militarized LAPD. Ridley's political statement in the documentary is that the rebellion was bound to occur because of the relentless persecution of African-Americans and Latinos by the LAPD in the decades prior to the uprising and given a lack of justice from the court system. Indeed, as Jeannette Catsoulis has noted, Ridley's film reveals that the uprising was an "almost inevitable" result of a "decade of heightening racial tensions" (Catsoulis 2017). Two prime examples of the lack of justice include the Harlins murder case and the King-LAPD trial results. In both cases, the defendants were found not guilty, decisions which angered the black community in L.A. Harlins was killed nearly two weeks after King was arrested and beaten by the LAPD. Ridley adds these two events to a list of horrible atrocities committed against black people in L.A. that begin in 1982 and end with the Harlins murder case and the King-LAPD trial results, before the L.A. Uprising. Ridley incorporates a multi-ethnic perspective by including interviews with various groups to show how the anonymity and chaos of the rebellion created a carnivalesque atmosphere, in which the oppressiveness of both the LAPD and City Hall were made evident throughout L.A., in Pico-Union, South Central, and Koreatown. The purpose of the film is to demonstrate the right to the city and the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice but also criminal justice and other vital forms of redress regarding the L.A. Uprising.

Twilight: Los Angeles 1992: Summary

Anna Deveare Smith is a an African-American playwright, actress, and professor of theater. She has taught at USC, Stanford University and Carnegie Mellon University. She currently teaches at New York University Tisch School of the Arts. In 2019, she joined the board

of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, one of the oldest learned societies in the U.S. Smith employs a reflective approach that promotes empathy and invites the audience to help interpret events regarding the issues regarding the uprising. As in the case of Ridley, the purpose of the play is to critique and challenge the erasure of people of color from the city's history in L.A., especially with respect to the supercity progress master narrative. The play also seeks to challenge the mainstream interpretation of the rebellion, by presenting an alternative reading of the uprising. Smith also uses the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, figurative language, and documentary evidence, to demonstrate the right to the city and the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice but also criminal justice and other vital forms of redress regarding the L.A. Uprising.

In *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992*, Smith presents a unique form of documentary theater in the form of a one-woman show that is part of a series of plays she has created, known as *On the Road: A Search for American Character*. In *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992*, Smith performs as twenty-five multi-ethnic L.A. residents who witnessed the rebellion, whom she interviewed in 1993. In the play, she employs a Brechtian alienation effect similar to Culture Clash's approach in *Chavez Ravine* and a democratic technique all her own, that rejects the traditional rules of the stage focused on psychological realism, by focusing on the interviewees' thoughts on their lives and material conditions. In this way, the multi-ethnic group of people she interviews, co-produce the play as she bases her portrayals of them on their words and actions through her physical performances in the play (Smith 1993, xxxi-xli). More specifically, Smith's approach during her performances is to include the interviewees' grammar, regional accents, and physical movements, as part of the Brechtian alienation effect she employs to portray the interviewees but also to inform the audience of the artificiality of the presentations. While she does not portray

literal ghosts, she demonstrates, in line with Gordon's concept, how the interviewees are figuratively haunted by their memories of the rebellion. As part of Smith's democratic technique, the monologues are designed to focus on the interviewees' memories of the events so that the concept of character can be revealed in the distance established between the interviewee and her performance in the play and in the film adaptation (xxxi-xli). As Lynn Itagaki notes, in terms of "structure, methodology, and performance, Smith intends her plays to do the kind of cultural and political work needed to foster more democratic political participation and comprehensive public policies that address the causes of the violence and its aftermath" (Itagaki 144). Moreover, like Culture Clash, Smith plays all the characters in her one-woman show. While Culture Clash and Smith similarly employ the Brechtian alienation effect and interview diverse, multi-ethnic groups of people, she does not use rasquachismo aesthetics nor does she incorporate composite characters in her exploration of the L.A. Uprising. In *Twilight Los Angeles, 1992*, Smith also uses the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts to critique and challenge the aforementioned master narratives. The purpose of the play is to demonstrate the right to the city and the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice but also criminal justice and other vital forms of redress regarding the L.A. Uprising.

The Tattooed Soldier: Summary

Héctor Tobar is a Latino journalist, novelist, and professor of creative writing. He is of Guatemalan descent; his parents immigrated to Los Angeles in the early 1960s. He shared a Pulitzer Prize with his colleagues on the Los Angeles Time Staff for the news coverage of the L.A. Uprising in 1992. He is currently a professor at UC Irvine. Tobar employs a reflective approach that promotes empathy and invites the audience to help interpret the events and issues

with respect to the uprising. The purpose of the novel is to critique and challenge the erasure of people of color from the city's history in L.A., the supercity progress master narrative and the simplistic mainstream interpretation of the uprising. Tobar also uses the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, figurative language, and documentary evidence, to demonstrate the right to the city and the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice but also criminal justice and other vital forms of redress regarding the L.A. Uprising.

In *The Tattooed Soldier*, Héctor Tobar presents a novel regarding Guatemalan immigrants in L.A., that is divided into three sections, with the first and final sections taking place before and during the L.A. Uprising and the second section taking place, via flashbacks, in Guatemala during the counterinsurgency in the 1980s. The protagonist, Antonio Bernal, is a homeless Guatemalan immigrant in L.A. During a crucial scene in the first section, he recognizes the antagonist, another Guatemalan, Guillermo Longoria, a former leader of an elite death squad of the Guatemalan army, playing chess with other Central American immigrants in MacArthur Park. Longoria had killed Antonio's wife Elena and son Carlos. As the reader learns, Antonio and Elena, in particular, were both leftist intellectuals who were critics of the extreme right-wing governmental policies in Guatemala. As a result of her political views, Elena and her son are killed by the death squad. In the novel, Tobar refers to protagonist Antonio by his first name to emphasize his humanity but he refers to the villain by his surname to emphasize exactly the opposite; Longoria is a murderer of innocent Guatemalan civilians. To be sure, Antonio decides that he must avenge the deaths of Elena and Carlos and soon he begins to orchestrate a plot to kill Longoria with the help of Frank, a homeless black man who lives in their shared encampment with other homeless people on Crown Hill in Downtown L.A. On the second day of

the uprising in South Central and Koreatown, Antonio uses the anonymity and chaos of the rebellion which creates a carnivalesque atmosphere, to kill Longoria in Downtown L.A. Tobar uses the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts, in line with Gordon's concept, to show how Antonio is figuratively haunted by the murders of his wife and son and his failure to protect them and that while they are not shown as literal ghosts, their absence represents the murder of Guatemalan dissenters who were killed during Guatemala's civil war in the 1980s (Tobar 272-307). The purpose of the novel is to demonstrate the homeless' right to the city and the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice but also criminal justice and other vital forms of redress regarding the L.A. Uprising.

Sa-I-Gu, Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992, Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992, and *The Tattooed Soldier*

Narrative Devices

Haunting and Ghosts: Introduction

In my view, Gordon and Brogan have different definitions of haunting and ghosts. Brogan's definition of cultural haunting prominently features "the master metaphor of the ghost as go-between", which is more attuned to didactic and literal portrayals of haunting and ghosts (Brogan 152). As a result, Brogan's definitions of haunting and ghosts are more applicable to *Chavez Ravine*, *Sa-I-Gu*, and *Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992*, insofar as these counternarratives are similarly interested in exploring the themes of possession and reconstruction of memories, communal exorcism, and integration of the past and present, through the use of the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts. In contrast, Gordon's definitions of haunting and ghosts are more reflective than Brogan's concept of cultural haunting. As

Gordon has noted, haunting and ghosts "alter the experience of being in linear time" and prompt "a-something-to-be-done"; these experiences whether they are literal or figurative, demand attention from the people experiencing haunting and ghosts in literature (Gordon 2011, 2-3). In addition, Gordon argues that the metaphors of haunting and ghosts represent, "the dead or the disappeared or the lost or the invisible" people or historically erased people of the past who are actively demanding their due in literature (Gordon 2008, 182). As a result, Gordon's reflective definitions of haunting and ghosts are more applicable to *Their Dogs Came with Them*, *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992* and *The Tattooed Soldier*, insofar as the writers use the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts more reflectively and figuratively in these counternarratives.

Sa-I-Gu, Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992, Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992 and *The Tattooed Soldier*

Narrative Devices

Documentary Evidence: Introduction

In this section, I will provide an historical and theoretical overview regarding the significance of documentary evidence as a prominent narrative device used in all four counternarratives, *Sa-I-Gu, Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992, Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992* and *The Tattooed Soldier*, particularly in the two documentary films regarding the L.A. Uprising. We will examine how the four counternarratives, to differing degrees, use documentary evidence in the film to critique and challenge (1) the erasure of people of color from the city's history, (2) the recurring master narrative of supercity progress, and (3) the simplistic mainstream interpretation of the uprising as the "L.A. Riots", which constructs it as an African-American versus Korean binary conflict, with Koreans standing in place of white people, mischaracterizing the rebellion

and ignoring other complex factors and issues which help explain the significance of the uprising. As we have noted in the previous sections, Kim-Gibson and Choy and Ridley employ the narrative devices more literally than figuratively and rely more heavily on documentary evidence than Smith and Tobar, to examine the rebellion. In contrast, Smith and Tobar employ the narrative devices more figuratively than literally, they incorporate documentary evidence less substantially than the filmmakers; the writers rely more on figurative language in their counternarratives. The filmmakers use different types of documentary evidence, including old photographs from the 1970s-1980s, funeral portraits, personal videos of the uprising, archival newsreels, the videos of Harlins' death in Du's store and King's beating by the LAPD, and local L.A. TV news coverage, in their films. In contrast, Smith and Tobar are not filmmakers; however, they both employ photographs, and make references to the videos of Harlins' death in Du's store and King's beating by the LAPD, and local L.A. TV news coverage, in their counternarratives. In this section, I will compare and contrast how the filmmakers incorporate didactic approaches and the writers incorporate reflective approaches as they each use the component of documentary evidence in the four counternarratives to establish conversations on the right to the city and the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice but also criminal justice and other vital forms of redress regarding the L.A. Uprising. As Michael Renov has noted, all documentary films are didactic and meant to record, reveal, and preserve non-fictional events in the real world, sharing a mimetic drive common to all cinema, that is more intensified by the documentary film's ontological status. According to Renov, documentary films have four essential functions: (1) to record, (2) to persuade, (3) to interrogate, and (4) to express (Renov 18-32). Moreover, as Carl Platinga has shown, there are four modes of documentary films that historically reflect their chronological development: expository, observational, interactive, and

reflexive. These four modes are to differing degrees, meant to teach the audience about a particular subject matter. The expository films, such as John Grierson's 1930s documentaries about social problems in Britain, overtly contain a transparent, voice of authority discourse that is usually didactic in scope. Observational films are less intrusive insofar as they represent the cinema verité ethos of the 1960s, preferring to observe events. Interactive films very often incorporate interviews and the filmmaker's presence and as a result, include a conversational style. Finally, reflexive films often acknowledge their own construction and foreground the process of representation in the film's mode of production. In addition, documentary films often rely on three different voices to establish narrational authority: the formal voice, the open voice, and the poetic voice. These voices refer to a film's broad aesthetic concerns as all films have a variety of functions and qualities. The formal voice contains a high degree of epistemic authority. In contrast, the open voice non-fiction film is a more reticent voice regarding the impartation of presumed knowledge; not formulating clear, overarching questions, and not offering answers. The open voice documentary film does not impart a clear explanation of the on-screen events and phenomena. The poetic voice is less concerned with observation, exploration, and explanation and more concerned with exploring representation itself, which Platinga refers to as "epistemic aestheticism" (101-119).

Sa-I-Gu

Haunting and Ghosts: Possession and Reconstruction of Memories

In Kim-Gibson's and Choy's documentary *Sa-I-Gu*, the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts and non-linear and disjointed time are introduced by showing Edward Lee's funeral, both at the start and at the end of the film. The documentary includes the memories of his mother Jung

Hui Lee and his sister Jenny Lee, which are in line with Brogan's concept of cultural haunting. In this way, the filmmakers use the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts by having Lee's family members share their memories of Lee, who was the only Korean-American to die during the L.A. Uprising. He was murdered by another Korean, while trying to defend their businesses once L.A. city officials abandoned South Central and Koreatown during the first night of the rebellion. This evidence operates as a way for the filmmakers to critique and challenge the aforementioned master narratives, particularly the third one which is the simplistic mainstream interpretation of the L.A. Uprising. Lee's death and particularly his funeral, are constant elements in the film, with video clips of the funeral service showing the attendance of his immediate family but also hundreds of Korean-American mourners, both at the start and at the end of the documentary (*Sa-I-Gu* 3:00-8:15, 35:20-37:05). As we noted earlier, Lee is not shown literally as a ghost in the film; however, the nature of his death during the uprising has been documented and his family's memories of his life and death are shown in ghostly terms, visually, through old photographs from the 1970s-1980s, as a deceased victim in a blood-stained shirt in photographs in the *Korea Times* and the *Los Angeles Times*, and in a gold-framed senior high school portrait that is prominently shown both in medium shots [26] and close-up shots [27] at the funeral and in the family home (*Sa-I-Gu* 3:00-8:15, 19:10-21:16). In addition, Lee's absent presence in the film shows that he is a singular ghost who represents the Korean community of

[26] Louis Giannetti has defined the noun "medium shot" as a relatively close shot used for shooting exposition scenes, for carrying movement and dialogue (Giannetti 9-10).
[27] Louis Giannetti has defined the noun "close-up shot" as a shot used to focus the viewers' attention on objects in order to elevate the importance of things often suggesting a symbolic significance during scenes in a film (Giannetti 9-10).

L.A., in line with Brogan's concept of the ghost representing a communal belief in ancestor spirits (Brogan 150).

Moreover, Kim-Gibson and Choy also employ the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, to demonstrate that the interviewees are figuratively haunted by the complex factors and issues insofar as their memories are not shared in a linear sequence in the counternarrative. As we have noted in regards to Derrida's *Specters of Marx*, Hamlet reacts to the visit of the ghost of his father by proclaiming that "the time is out of joint" (Derrida xviii; Jameson 26-30; Prendergast 44-45). Gordon similarly has noted how haunting raises specters and "alters the experience of being in linear time" (Gordon 2011, 2-3). In regards to Lee's death , time is similarly "out of joint" insofar as Kim-Gibson and Choy use editing techniques such as cross-cutting [28] and jump cuts [29] to disrupt the flow of time in order to create a non-linear counternarrative; the interviews do not tell the story of the uprising in a linear sequence. For instance, the film begins with Lee's funeral and after several interviews and storylines, ends with his funeral. It is also worth noting that the filmmakers also include opening and closing commentary before the film begins and after the final credits, to provide an overview of the film production. Indeed, they discuss the didactic purpose of the documentary insofar as it is meant to teach the audience about the Korean women's perspectives regarding the uprising (*Sa-I-Gu* 0:15-1:00, 40:30-41:19). As a result, one major difference between the writers' and the filmmakers' employment of the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear

[28] Louis Giannetti has defined the noun "cross-cutting" as an editing technique involving the alternating of shots from two sequences, often in different locales, suggesting they are taking place at the same time (Giannetti 522).
[29] Louis Giannetti has defined the noun "jump cuts" as an editing technique involving an abrupt transition between shots, sometimes deliberate, which is disorienting in terms of the continuity of space and time (Giannetti 524).

and disjointed uses of time, is that the filmmakers incorporate these devices, literally in the films, while the writers use a figurative approach in their counternarratives.

To be sure, the filmmakers use several filmmaking strategies to teach the audience that the documentary will focus on a reconstruction of memories, which is line with Brogan's concept of cultural haunting. To accomplish this, the filmmakers use intertitles [30] and several interviews to reconstruct the memories of the rebellion. One intertitle is used to teach the audience that a proximate cause for the rebellion are the King-LAPD trial results, in which the officers were acquitted of King's beating on April 29th, 1992 (*Sa-I-Gu* 2:00-3:00). The filmmakers then include several interviews in which the interviewees suggest that there are other complex factors and issues that are overlooked in the aforementioned mainstream interpretation of the rebellion as the "L.A. Riots", which we will examine in the next section (Cho 196-210; Kim 1993, 215-220; *Sa-I-Gu* 6:15-8:15, 9:00-12:52, 16:30-25:36). Kim-Gibson and Choy also focus on Mrs. Lee's interview throughout the film. In an early sequence at her house, they use a medium shot and a close-up shot of Lee's senior portrait in the family room to suggest his absent presence. The lamentation in his mother's voice as she recalls their last conversation demonstrates that she is grieving his loss at the start of the film. The film then transitions to a video of his funeral featuring another medium shot of the senior portrait. In addition to his family, there are many other Koreans in attendance at the funeral. Moreover, a keyboard interpretation of the Christian hymn "Amazing Grace" is heard in a video of the service. These audio and visual elements are arranged to teach the audience that Lee, as the only Korean killed during the rebellion, represents the larger community of Koreans (*Sa-I-Gu* 3:00-6:00, 19:10-

[30] Merriam-Webster has defined the noun "intertitle" as a word or group of words, including dialogue in a silent movie or information about a setting, that appear on-screen during a movie but are not part of a scene (Merriam-Webster.com).

21:16). In addition, during Mrs. Lee's interview scenes, Kim-Gibson and Choy use a wide variety of medium shots and close-up shots, cross-cutting, jump cuts between the interviews, old photographs, voice-over narration, spare keyboard music, and intertitles as part of their strategies to reconstruct her memories of the uprising.

Moreover, Kim-Gibson and Choy use Lee's death as an absent presence in *Sa-I-Gu*, to challenge the three aforementioned master narratives, particularly the third one that mischaracterizes the L.A. Uprising as the "L.A. Riots." As Mrs. Lee consistently notes, her son died trying to defend Korean businesses from looters; however, he was killed by Koreans who mistakenly thought he was also a looter during the uprising. This evidence is used in *Sa-I-Gu* to critique and challenge the simplistic mainstream interpretation of the uprising as an African-American versus Korean binary system, with Koreans standing in place of white people. Using several of the interviews as evidence, the filmmakers also teach the audience that in the aftermath of the uprising, the Korean community in L.A. realizes the model minority stereotype is meaningless. Several of the interviewed women explain that in retrospect, they are angrier with the white population of the city insofar as a majority white jury acquitted the LAPD during the King-LAPD trial and this influenced the angry rebellion participants to turn their anger towards Korean businesses. Unlike Ridley; however, Kim-Gibson and Choy do not explicitly connect the Korean owners' defense of their businesses to Lee's death, it is mostly implied to the audience. Nevertheless, these important realizations by the Korean-American community of racial inequality and racial hierarchies are an important component and operate as a way for the filmmakers to critique and challenge the aforementioned master narratives (*Sa-I-Gu* 3:00-6:00, 6:15-8:15, 10:26-12:52, 16:30-25:36).

Sa-I-Gu

Haunting and Ghosts: Communal Exorcism

To be sure, Kim-Gibson and Choy use the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, in the second phase regarding a communal exorcism in *Sa-I-Gu*. In this second phase, Mrs. Lee is not shown trying to exorcise the memory of her son, rather, the filmmakers use several sequences to diagnose the problems that led to the rebellion as a way of demonstrating how the Korean-American community has accepted Lee's death, as a form of communal exorcism to begin to integrate the past into the present. This is in line with Brogan's concept of the ghost existing as a communal belief in ancestor spirits (Brogan 150). The first interview is conducted with a woman named Choon Ah Song, a former business owner with misinformed views on racism in the U.S. The second interview is conducted with a woman named Young-Soon Han, a former business owner who displays more empathy for the black community than Song and who tries to diagnose the problems leading to the rebellion as a lack of empathy from Koreans towards African-Americans before the uprising. The third interview is a collection of interview segments with three unidentified Korean women, all of whom lost businesses and who each try to diagnose the problems leading to the uprising. In these interviews, Kim-Gibson and Choy use their narrational authority in this didactic process to demonstrate the communal exorcism of the metaphors of haunting and ghosts as a way of exorcising these complex factors and issues that led to the rebellion.

The first interview features Song, a Korean mother who lost her business and who is misinformed on the state of racism in the U.S. The purpose is to demonstrate her realization that the U.S. is not a meritocratic country based on equal justice and that the model minority myth is

meaningless, two doomed belief systems that led to the uprising. Kim-Gibson and Choy use medium shots and close-up shots during the interview, showing Song singing "Amazing Grace" in Korean, an act that implicitly connects her and the Korean-American community to Mrs. Lee's grieving family, who include the song at the funeral service. Moreover, the filmmakers also make it clear to the audience that Song, Han, and the unidentified Korean women, speak for themselves as they each try to diagnose the complex factors and issues that led to the L.A. Uprising. During her interview, Song states that Koreans should have treated black customers like human beings; however, she was disappointed in the black community for destroying the Korean stores during the rebellion. She also explains that she and her husband tried to treat their customers with respect as old photographs from the 1980s are shown of her husband dressed as Santa Claus with the neighborhood black children before the uprising. The inclusion of Song's misinformed views on racism in the U.S., months after the rebellion, shows that she still lacks empathy for the black community. The interview demonstrates how many Koreans, like Song, are unaware of the aforementioned complex factors and issues that led to the L.A. Uprising. The implication is that the Korean community must learn these issues as part of the communal exorcism process (*Sa-I-Gu* 23:10-24:06).

In the second interview, Han explains in voice-over narration how she tried to connect to African-American customers before the rebellion. There is sadness in her tone of voice as she recalls that many of her customers told her that Korean business owners were often rude and did not treat black shoppers as human beings; some Koreans did not even speak in English to their customers. During the interview, burned businesses are shown to demonstrate the destruction wrought by the rebellion. Han's interview is meant to demonstrate that she is more inclusive of people and not as judgmental as Song, and that not all Korean business owners shared Song's

misinformed views on the state of racism in the U.S. In my view, Kim-Gibson and Choy include this segment of Han's interview as part of the communal exorcism, to show Korean store owners like Han, trying to diagnose the complex factors and issues that led to the uprising. She is shown as an interviewee who tried to empathize with the African-American community. The implication in the segment is that Koreans should have tried to empathize with black people and Latinos further and that more dialogue between different communities of color could have prevented the rebellion (*Sa-I-Gu* 24:10-25:36).

The third interview is a collection of interview segments with three unidentified Korean women, all of whom lost businesses to looting and the fires of the rebellion. These women's perspectives are noteworthy insofar as they all attempt to diagnose the reasons which led to the uprising. Their opinions result in a critique of the third master narrative, the simplistic interpretation of the uprising as the "L.A. Riots", which constructs the rebellion as an African-American versus Korean binary system, with Koreans standing in place of white people. These three women blame the white jury for the acquittal of the LAPD officers who beat King, the city authorities for abandoning their stores during the uprising, and the white population of the city for not addressing the binary system created by the media. The implication is that the white population is responsible for some of the events that led to the uprising. Kim-Gibson and Choy reinforce the critique, structurally, using medium shots, close-up shots, and upbeat keyboard music, to show stores on Rodeo Drive in unaffected Beverly Hills in 1993, featuring many white customers. These scenes are juxtaposed with the Korean women visiting the burned and destroyed buildings and empty lots that once housed their businesses in South Central and Koreatown. The juxtaposition teaches the audience that the Koreans suffered losses, not the white population. The juxtaposition scenes are also designed to visually emphasize the restricted

business opportunities that Korean store owners experienced in L.A. in the 1970s-1980s. As Cho and Kim have shown, Korean immigrants were not allowed to open stores in the wealthier Western side of the city, which we noted earlier, are further examples of spatial and environmental injustice. In this way, these interviews operate as part of a communal exorcism and a communal enlightenment meant to critique and challenge the aforementioned master narratives, particularly the third one which is the simplistic mainstream interpretation of the L.A. Uprising (Cho 196-210; Kim 1993, 215-220; *Sa-I-Gu* 25:36-29:18).

Sa-I-Gu

Haunting and Ghosts: Integration of the Past into the Present

To be sure, Kim-Gibson and Choy return to Edward Lee's funeral in the third phase in the final moments of the documentary. Moreover, they also include several interviews with an unidentified elderly grandmother and a young woman, who both lost businesses. In addition, they include videos of the Korean community protesting for social change and compensation and other forms of redress regarding the L.A. Uprising. These final scenes show how Mrs. Lee and the Korean-American community of L.A., accept Lee's murder as part of the uprising but also how the community has banded together in the aftermath of the rebellion to seek compensation and other forms of redress for their losses. In these scenes, the filmmakers show the Korean community trying to move forward into the integration of the past into the present. As Brogan has noted, in narratives about cultural haunting, integration scenes also include reconstructions of memories (Brogan 151-153). Indeed, *Chavez Ravine* and *Sa-I- Gu* differ slightly from the paradigmatic movement described by Brogan, insofar as reconstructions of memories occur throughout Culture Clash's play and in *Sa-I-Gu*. As playwrights and filmmakers using didactic

approaches, Culture Clash and Kim-Gibson and Choy have less time than the writers using reflective approaches to examine spatial and environmental injustice. As a result, the filmmakers in particular, reconstruct memories in every haunting phase as part of the didactic method of teaching the audience about the L.A. Uprising. These three sequences are in line with Brogan's concept of cultural haunting insofar as they are included as a way for the multi-ethnic communities to exorcise the haunting and ghosts connected to the complex factors and issues that led to the L.A. Uprising.

Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992

Haunting and Ghosts: Possession and Reconstruction of Memories

To be sure, in Ridley's documentary *Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992*, the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts and disjointed time are introduced by the filmmaker connecting the seemingly unrelated L.A. murders of James Mincey, Jr. in 1982, Karen Toshima in 1988, Latasha Harlins in 1991, and Edward Lee in 1992, to the L.A. Uprising. In this way, Ridley uses the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts to claim that these deaths which occurred before the uprising and as a result of it, are all connected to the aforementioned complex factors and issues that led to the rebellion. As a result, Ridley uses this evidence to critique and challenge these master narratives, particularly the third one which is the simplistic mainstream interpretation of the L.A. Uprising. The documentary includes these murder victims' friends and families' memories and a multi-ethnic group of interviewees' perspectives regarding the uprising, which are in line with Brogan's concept of cultural haunting (Brogan 150). While Ridley includes these multiple perspectives, the focus is on the four victims who died as a result of the aforementioned complex factors and issues, most notably the militarization of the LAPD, among

other reasons. As we noted with *Sa-I-Gu*, these victims are not shown literally as ghosts; however, Ridley similarly uses filmmaking strategies to demonstrate that the witnesses are not just haunted metaphorically; the interviews demonstrate that there exist literal interactions between the living and dead people in the film. These scenes include personal memories of Mincey's and Toshima's deaths at a hospital, Harlins' final moments before she was shot and killed in the South Central market, and Lee's final conversations and his funeral, in both films (*Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992* 6:30-14:10, 26:24-31:15, 56:44-1:03:40, 1:57:49-2:04:49, 2:18:19-2:20:33). In the film, these scenes are in line with Brogan's concept of cultural haunting and with the notion of the ghost representing a communal belief in ancestor spirits (Brogan 150).

Moreover, Ridley also employs the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, to demonstrate that the interviewees are figuratively haunted by the complex factors and issues insofar as their memories are not shared in a linear sequence in the counternarrative. As we have noted in regards to Derrida's *Specters of Marx*, Hamlet reacts to the visit of the ghost of his father by proclaiming that "the time is out of joint" (Derrida xviii; Jameson 26-30; Prendergast 44-45). Gordon similarly has noted how haunting raises specters and "alters the experience of being in linear time" (Gordon 2011, 2-3). In regards to the four specters in Ridley's film, time is similarly "out of joint" insofar as the filmmaker uses editing techniques such as cross-cutting and jump cuts to disrupt the flow of time in order to create a non-linear counternarrative; the interviewees do not tell the stories of the victims in a linear sequence. For instance, the film begins and ends with contemporary interviews with retired Sergeant Lisa Philipps, an LAPD officer who was aware of the militarization of the LAPD and who tried to save lives during the rebellion; retired L.A. firefighter Donald Jones, a resident of South Central, who also tried to save lives during the uprising, and Timothy

Goldman, a resident of South Central, who also tried to save lives and who created videos of the uprising. At the end of the film, Ridley shows how Philipps was rewarded for her valor in saving lives during the rebellion and how Jones and Goldman were also acknowledged for saving lives during the rebellion in South Central. These interviewees provide their memories of the South Central residents claiming a right to the city and the carnivalesque atmosphere at the intersection of Florence and Normandie, at the start of the uprising. Ridley does not use his own voice to add commentary, rather, he uses intertitles to prepare each section of the film for the audience. In the final sequence, Ridley uses intertitles and cross-cutting, to juxtapose the photographs and videos of the most widely interviewed witnesses in their contemporary interviews and how they appeared during the uprising. This is part of a didactic purpose of teaching the audience about these interviewees and the roles they had in the L.A. Uprising (*Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992* 0:16-1:46, 1:29:23-2:06:14, 2:18:34-2:20:33). As a result, one major difference between the writers' and the filmmakers' employment of the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, is that the filmmakers incorporate these devices, literally in the films, while the writers use a figurative approach in their counternarratives.

To be sure, Ridley uses these filmmaking strategies to teach the audience that the film will focus on a reconstruction of memories, which is in line with Brogan's concept of cultural haunting. For instance, Ridley uses an intertitle in this sequence to suggest that a proximate cause for the rebellion was the complex factor and issue of the militarization of the LAPD and a history of police brutality of African-Americans. He then includes several interviews with the murder victims' friends and families' and with the multi-ethnic group of interviewees to obtain

multiple perspectives regarding the rebellion (*Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992* 0:16-1:46, 2:18:34-2:20:33).

Ridley introduces the first specter, an African-American named James Mincey Jr., with an intertitle that presents Mincey's story and the militarization of the LAPD. In this sequence, through the arrangement of the various interviews with Mincey's fiancée Marjean Banks and with the retired Detective Robert Simpach who was involved in the story, the audience learns how Mincey was arrested and later died at age 20 at a hospital in L.A. in 1982. The filmmaker uses medium shots and close-up shots during these contemporary interviews and includes a second intertitle, to inform the audience that Mincey died of injuries related to the now banned bar-arm chokehold formerly used by the LAPD. As part of his filmmaking strategies, Ridley also includes an archival LAPD training video showing patrol officers practicing the chokehold in the 1980s. While Banks and Simpach share different perspectives about what led to Mincey's arrest, with Simpach accusing Mincey of using the drug PCP while driving and Banks defending Mincey, Ridley's arrangement of the interview makes it clear that Simpach has no empathy for Banks or Mincey. This is countered by Banks' memories of Mincey's final moments as the life-support machines were stopped and how it took her many years to accept his death. An intertitle then informs the audience that the L.A. County Coroner found no evidence that Mincey was using PCP. Ridley then uses editing, including cross-cutting to juxtapose the contemporary interviews with old photographs of Mincey's life and death. The clear implication is that Mincey died as a result of the militarization of the LAPD, a complex factor and issue which also led to the L.A. Uprising (*Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992* 6:30-14:09).

Ridley introduces the second ghost, a Japanese-American named Karen Toshima, via an intertitle, which presents her murder case as additional evidence of the militarization of the

LAPD. In this sequence, Ridley includes an interview with her brother Kevin Toshima who informs the audience that Karen Toshima was randomly shot by gangs supposedly from South Central in Westwood, near UCLA one evening in 1988. As part of his filmmaking strategies, Ridley uses medium shots and close-up shots during this contemporary interview, archival videos, newspaper articles, and old photographs from the 1980s as documentary evidence. Near the end of the sequence, Kevin Toshima recalls that his sister was on a life support machine and a ventilator when the family received the news that there was no hope for recovery and they decided to take her off the machines. A black and white photograph of Karen Toshima in the 1980s is then shown and a close-up shot of a painting she turned into a business card before her death is also shown at the end of the sequence. The clear implication is that Karen Toshima died as a result of militarization of the LAPD insofar as the South Central gangs were driven to gang violence in Westwood. In this way, Karen Toshima is included as a ghost in the film to teach the audience that her death represents the Asian-American community and how victims who were not residents of South Central were also affected by the militarization of the LAPD in the 1980s. In addition, Ridley's arrangement of this particular sequence is also meant to teach the audience that her death was instrumental in leading city authorities to justify and promote a more comprehensive policy of the militarization of the LAPD, known as Operation Hammer, which led to the L.A. Uprising (*Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992* 26:24-39:53).

Ridley introduces the third ghost, Latasha Harlins, by including an interview with her neighborhood friend Lakeshia Combs, who witnessed Harlins' murder. In this sequence, Combs recalls that on the morning of March 16, 1991, she was shopping at the Soon Ja Du's grocery market called Empire Market in South Central. She recalls that Du and Harlins had an altercation over a bottle of orange juice that Du believed Harlins was trying to steal from the store. Du tried

to retrieve the bottle from Harlins who hit Du in response; the older woman then shot Harlins to death as she tried to leave the store. As part of his filmmaking strategies, Ridley uses medium shots and close-up shots during this contemporary interview, archival videos, intertitles, old photographs of Harlins, old newspaper articles regarding Harlins' death and Du's court trial, and the store security video showing Du killing Harlins. An intertitle is then included to teach the audience that Harlins was killed two weeks after the Rodney King beating. A newspaper article from the period then shows that the LAPD found no evidence that Harlins was stealing from the market. At L.A. Superior Court, the jury convicted Du of voluntary manslaughter; however, in a miscarriage of justice, Judge Joyce Karlin, would only sentence Du to five years of probation and 400 hours of community service for killing Harlins. Ridley then includes local L.A. TV news coverage showing the angry response of the black community to the decision. In this way, Harlins is shown as a singular ghost representing an entire community. There are several clear implications in this sequence which include: Du's criminal behavior in killing Harlins, Judge Karlin's failure to properly sentence Du for killing Harris, the failure of documentary evidence to help the Harlins family and the African-American community to obtain justice in a corrupt and racist justice system in L.A., the aforementioned restricted business opportunities for Korean merchants as a result of spatial and environmental injustice, Harlins' death, and the King-LAPD trial results, all complex factors and issues, which led to the L.A. Uprising (*Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992* 56:44-1:03:40).

Ridley introduces the fourth specter, Edward Lee, juxtaposing his mother Mrs. Lee's voice-over narration from a contemporary interview with archival video of burning structures in South Central on April 30, which was the second day of the L.A. Uprising. In a sequence of several scenes, Ridley explains how Lee was killed and unlike Kim-Gibson and Choy in *Sa-I-*

Gu, he explicitly links the Korean-American business owners' decision to arm themselves and defend their stores to Lee's death. As part of his filmmaking strategies, Ridley uses medium shots and close-up shots in contemporary interviews with Mrs. Lee and other interviewees, archival videos of burning Korean businesses, intertitles, old photographs of the burning structures, old newspaper articles regarding Lee's death, and videos of Lee's funeral. Mrs. Lee recalls that her son was watching TV and saw local Korean-owned businesses on fire in South Central and Koreatown. As we noted earlier, he was killed by another Korean who was defending Korean-owned businesses during the rebellion. Ridley then includes a contemporary interview with a Korean named Kee Whan Ha, the former President of the Korean-American Chamber of Commerce. Ha recalls telling Korean business owners through Radio Korea, to use their military training from South Korea to arm themselves and defend their stores. Ridley then includes archival videos of Koreans patrolling their stores and firing their weapons as part of the carnivalesque atmosphere. Unlike Kim-Gibson and Choy, Ridley explicitly links the Korean-American business owners' decision to defend their stores to Lee's death. There are several clear implications in this sequence: Lee was killed by another Korean, the Korean business-owners were advised to defend their businesses once L.A. city officials abandoned South Central and Koreatown, and Mrs. Lee reiterates the notion that Koreans realized during the uprising that the model minority stereotype was meaningless. As a result, Lee's death is connected to the aforementioned complex factors and issues, which led to the L.A. Uprising (*Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992* 1:57:49-2:04:49). Ridley uses these sequences for didactic purposes to critique and challenge the aforementioned master narratives and to show how the four deaths led to the L.A. Uprising (*Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992* 6:30-14:10, 26:24-31:15, 56:44-1:03:40, 1:57:49-2:04:49, 2:18:19-2:20:33).

Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992

Haunting and Ghosts: Communal Exorcism

To be sure, Ridley uses the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, in the second phase regarding a communal exorcism in *Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992*. In this second phase of communal exorcism, the family and friends and other interviewees are not trying to exorcise the memories of the four victims, rather, Ridley is interested in using several sequences as a way of diagnosing the problems that led to the rebellion, demonstrating how the multi-ethnic communities have accepted their loved ones' deaths, and exorcising the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in order to begin to integrate the past into the present. This is in line with Brogan's concept of the ghost existing as a communal belief in ancestor spirits (Brogan 150). The first sequence includes the militarization of the LAPD, the second sequence includes the Harlins murder case and the King-LAPD trial results, and the third sequence includes the right to the city and the carnivalesque atmosphere in South Central and Koreatown during the uprising. In these sequences, Ridley uses his narrational authority in this didactic process to demonstrate how the multi-ethnic communities exorcising of haunting and ghosts is connected to the complex factors and issues that led to the rebellion.

The first sequence is the militarization of the LAPD, in which Ridley focuses on how Mincey's and Toshima's deaths and the acceleration of the militarization of the LAPD in the late 1980s, led to the uprising. Ridley uses archival videos, narration from older documentaries, contemporary interviews with retired LAPD officers, and an intertitle to introduce a section regarding Daryl Gates' tenure as the LAPD Chief of Police for several decades. In a contemporary interview, retired Lieutenant Michael Moulin states that Gates ran the LAPD as a

paramilitary organization which primarily recruited white people to join the force. As supporting visual evidence for Moulin's claims, Ridley uses archival videos and old photographs of several events: the use of excessive force in the shooting death of South Central resident Eula Love in 1979, documentation of racist statements made by Gates over the years, the implementation of the excessive community policing initiatives, and local L.A. TV news media regarding numerous deaths due to the bar-arm chokehold policy. As a result, the bar-arm chokehold was banned by the city of L.A., which led to the implementation of the PR-24 metal baton to be used in policing the streets (*Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992* 14:09-17:45). In addition, Toshima's death is shown to have led to the acceleration of the militarization of the LAPD in the late 1980s. A retired police officer, Captain Paul Jefferson, explains how the LAPD created a policy to saturate the Westwood neighborhood in order to use probable cause to stop residents for a variety of reasons to see how many could be arrested during the weekends. Ridley then uses heightened theme music, old videos of a militarized LAPD helicopter, videos of mostly black people and Latinos being arrested in the 1980s, and the LAPD enforcing the operation described by Jefferson in several videos. As a result, Ridley shows here again how the acceleration of the militarization of the LAPD, in particular towards South Central residents, led to the L.A. Uprising (*Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992* 31:15-39:53).

The second sequence focuses on the Harlins murder case and the King-LAPD trial results and how they led to the uprising. These sequences demonstrate the failure of the use of documentary evidence, namely the videos of Harlins' death and King's beating, as not enough evidence to condemn Du and the LAPD. Moreover, these courtroom dramas are shown as evidence of a corrupt and racist justice system in L.A. Judge Karlin's failure to adequately sentence Du for her crime is another complex factor and issue that led to the resentment between

the black community and the Korean community in Los Angeles. Ridley's arrangement of the filmmaking strategies, including the cinematography, the contemporary interviews, the archival videos, the photographs, the local L.A. TV news media, and the videos of Harlins' death and King's beating, demonstrate the unavailability of criminal justice for both Harlins and King. Harlins as a murder victim, in particular, is shown as a singular ghost who represents the African-American community of South Central. The implication in both sequences is that Du and the LAPD benefited from racism towards African-Americans in the corrupt and racist justice system in L.A. Another implication is that the aforementioned restricted business opportunities for Korean merchants as a result of spatial and environmental injustice, also led to these events. It is worth noting, that near the end of the film, Ridley includes a shot of some graffiti spray painted on a business, with the names of "Latasha Harlins Rodney King", painted in red on the side of a store. The implication is again that the complex factors and issues of Harlins' death and the King-LAPD trial results, also led to the L.A. Uprising (*Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992* 41:07-1:28:15).

The third sequence focuses on the right to the city and the carnivalesque atmosphere in South Central and Koreatown during the uprising. In this sequence, Ridley includes Lee's death in Koreatown by another Korean and the South Central residents' attack of motorists at the intersection of Florence and Normandie during the carnivalesque atmosphere. In this sequence, Ridley explains how Lee was killed and unlike Kim-Gibson and Choy in *Sa-I-Gu*, he explicitly links the Korean-American business owners' decision to arm themselves to Lee's death. Ridley then includes archival videos of Koreans patrolling their stores and firing their weapons as part of the carnivalesque atmosphere. The other clear implication is that Mrs. Lee reiterates the notion that Koreans realized during the uprising that the model minority stereotype was meaningless. As

I have noted, Ridley also returns to contemporary interviews with Philipps, Jones, and Goldman and others, at the end of the film that he has included at the start of the film. These witnesses recall the South Central residents claiming a right to the city and the carnivalesque atmosphere at the intersection of Florence and Normandie at the start of the uprising. As part of the communal exorcism, Ridley shows the violence that occurred at the intersection of Florence and Normandie as South Central residents, mostly black, attacked motorists driving through the intersection. Ridley then includes the perspectives of these and other witnesses to condemn the violence that occurred in South Central. The filmmaker also shows Philipps, Jones, and Goldman as heroic witnesses and juxtaposes their contemporary interviews with archival videos of them during the uprising. The implication is that the carnivalesque atmosphere in South Central and Koreatown led to Lee's death and the violence at the intersection of Florence and Normandie during the L.A. Uprising (*Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992* 0:16-1:46, 1:57:49-2:04:49, 2:18:34-2:20:33).

Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992

Haunting and Ghosts: Integration of the Past into the Present

Ridley returns to the first contemporary interviews with Philipps, Jones, and Goldman and others, in this third phase in the final moments of the film. As we noted earlier, Ridley begins the film with these interviewees, who recall the South Central residents' claim of a right to the city and with the carnivalesque atmosphere at the intersection of Florence and Normandie. As we noted earlier, Philipps, Jones, and Goldman, in particular, are shown as heroic witnesses whose contemporary interviews are juxtaposed with archival videos of them during the uprising. This is done to teach the audience that these three witnesses were acknowledged for saving lives

during the rebellion and to condemn the violence done in South Central and Koreatown during the carnivalesque atmosphere of the rebellion.

Sa-I-Gu and *Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992*

Documentary Evidence

To be sure, *Sa-I-Gu* and *Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992* are examples of the interactive mode of documentary film using a formal voice of narrational authority regarding the L.A. Uprising. Kim-Gibson and Choy and Ridley use this narrative device, more literally than figuratively, for didactic purposes in both films. In contrast, as writers and not filmmakers, Smith and Tobar also employ the narrative device of documentary evidence; however, they particularly rely more on photographs and the aforementioned videos to support their respective claims regarding the rebellion in Smith's play *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992* and in Tobar's novel *The Tattooed Soldier*. In my view, for Kim-Gibson and Choy and Ridley as filmmakers, the narrative device of documentary evidence is more prominently used in their documentary films. In this section, beginning with *Sa-I-Gu* and then *Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992*, I will examine how Kim-Gibson and Choy and Ridley use the narrative device of documentary evidence in the films to establish conversations on the right to the city and the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice but also criminal justice and other vital forms of redress regarding the L.A. Uprising.

Sa-I-Gu

Documentary Evidence

To be sure, Kim-Gibson and Choy use film structure to construct *Sa-I-Gu* as an example of an interactive mode of documentary film that uses the formal voice of narrational authority regarding the L.A. Uprising. One example of their use of film structure is their employment of the filmmakers' introductory and closing commentary in the film. The purpose of using commentary is to provide opportunities to Kim-Gibson and Choy to intervene in the film with instructional commentary. Indeed, Kim-Gibson includes voice-over narration at certain points, to explain ongoing events in the film. As they make clear in the introductory commentary, the filmmakers explain that the purpose of the documentary is to create a counternarrative to show Korean women's perspectives regarding the uprising and to critique and challenge the aforementioned master narratives, particularly the third one which is the simplistic interpretation of the rebellion. In this way, their instructional commentary and their ability to intervene in the course of action demonstrates how they use the formal voice of narrational authority to teach the audience about the rebellion. The filmmakers' inclusion of their commentary and discussion of their filmmaking choices also demonstrates that *Sa-I-Gu* is an example of the interactive mode of documentary film.

Moreover, Kim-Gibson and Choy also use a wide variety of filmmaking strategies, which further demonstrates their inclusion of the formal voice of narrational authority in the documentary. These filmmaking strategies include, intertitles, the arrangement of the interviews, cinematography, production design, music, and editing, which all demonstrate their mastery of documentary evidence. For example, intertitles are used to comment on the events. Moreover, the arrangement of interviews is another important component. As we have noted, the filmmakers include several interviews, with Han and several unidentified women, who try to diagnose the complex factors and issues that led to the uprising. In addition, the uses of

cinematography and editing are also very notable filmmaking strategies used in the film. For example, during Mrs. Lee's interview, Kim-Gibson and Choy use a wide variety of medium shots and close-up shots, cross-cutting, jump cuts, archival videos and photographs, voice-over narration, an orchestral music score, and intertitles, as part of their strategy to reconstruct the interviewee's memories of the uprising. The filmmakers use these filmmaking strategies to demonstrate their narrational authority in the film. These examples are useful to demonstrate how the filmmakers use the narrative device of documentary evidence in *Sa-I-Gu*, to establish conversations on the right to the city and the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice but also criminal justice and other vital forms of redress regarding the L.A. Uprising.

Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992

Documentary Evidence

To be sure, Ridley uses film structure to construct *Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992* as an example of an interactive mode of documentary film that uses the formal voice of narrational authority regarding the L.A. Uprising. One example of his use of film structure is his use of intertitles in the film. Like Kim-Gibson and Choy, Ridley uses intertitles to intervene in his film. Indeed, the intertitles operate as a way for him to prepare the audience for each film sequence and in this way, the intertitles are a form of instructional commentary. In addition, Ridley also employs voice-over narration from the interviewees at certain points, to explain ongoing events in the film. Ridley uses both techniques as part of a didactic process in the counternarrative as a way to critique and challenge the aforementioned master narratives. The filmmaker's inclusion of intertitles with instructional commentary, and a wide variety of filmmaking strategies

demonstrates how *Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992* is an example of the interactive mode of documentary film.

Moreover, Ridley also uses a wide variety of filmmaking strategies, which further demonstrates his inclusion of the formal voice of narrational authority in the documentary. These filmmaking strategies include, intertitles, the arrangement of the interviews, cinematography, production design, music, and editing, which all demonstrate their mastery of documentary evidence. For example, intertitles are used to comment on the events. Moreover, the arrangement of interviews is another important component. As we have noted, Ridley includes several contemporary interviews in which the interviewees comment on the action and provide their perspectives on the events that led to the uprising. In addition, the uses of cinematography and editing are also very notable filmmaking strategies used in the film. For example, during many interviews, Ridley uses a wide variety of medium shots and close-up shots, cross-cutting, jump cuts, archival videos and photographs, voice-over narration, an orchestral music score, and intertitles, as part of his strategy to reconstruct the interviewees' memories of the uprising. Ridley uses these filmmaking strategies to demonstrate his narrational authority in the film. These examples are useful to demonstrate how Ridley uses the narrative device of documentary evidence in *Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992*, to establish conversations on the right to the city and the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice but also criminal justice and other vital forms of redress in regards to the L.A. Uprising.

Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992

Haunting and Ghosts: Tones of Death and Destruction

To be sure, Smith uses the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts to reflectively show the reader what it feels like to experience the militarization of the LAPD and carnivalesque

atmosphere in the streets during the L.A. Uprising. To accomplish this, Smith uses the tones of death and destruction that are produced in the monologues to show how the interviewees are figuratively haunted by certain complex factors and issues that led to the uprising. As we noted earlier, Gordon's definitions of haunting and ghosts are particularly useful in showing how Smith and Tobar use these devices to reveal oppressive conditions, subjugated knowledge and "a-something-to-be-done", regarding the L.A. Uprising. Smith accomplishes the "a-something-to-be-done" concept by encouraging the reader and audience to empathize with the residents' collective reactions to the aforementioned complex factors and issues. Moreover, Smith uses her democratic technique as the playwright and actress to arrange the monologues to make it clear that there is no unifying voice in the play. In her view, collective voices are more important than a singular voice and theater can be a unifier if it embraces diversity in order to mirror society. For these reasons, Smith invited scholars, journalists, and writers representing different ethnicities such as Tobar, to work as dramaturges on *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992*, insofar as she was interested "in the diversity that they would bring to the project in terms of areas of expertise" in order to "make theater a more responsible partner in the growth of communities" (Smith 1994, xx-xxiv). This explains Smith's reflective approach to including many different interviews with different people who have wide-ranging memories of the complex factors and issues related to the uprising, all shared with the reader and audience in a non-linear sequence in the counternarrative. This evidence operates as a way for the writers to critique and challenge the aforementioned master narratives, particularly the third one which is the simplistic mainstream interpretation of the L.A. Uprising. Smith's recreation of some of the interviewees' memories of events that occurred decades before the rebellion in the monologues, demonstrate how they are figuratively haunted by their memories but also by spatial and environmental injustice issues and

other issues in L.A. in the early 1990s, to establish how certain complex factors and issues led to the uprising.

In the first example of haunting and ghosts, Smith includes a monologue featuring Rudy Salas, an elderly sculptor and painter, in the prologue of the play. The placement of this monologue is meant to introduce the tones of death and destruction to show how the interviewees are figuratively haunted by certain complex factors and issues that led to the uprising. The monologue is also used to critique the militarization of the LAPD. As Salas states, he was a "zoot-suiter" in his youth in the 1940s. He was arrested and taken to an LAPD station where he responded to an officer's abusive behavior and punched him in self-defense, which led to Salas' brutal beating by several LAPD officers. He recalls that they beat him at a police station, fracturing an eardrum. As a result he was left hearing impaired for the rest of his life and learned to hate the LAPD. For years, when he would read the newspapers, he did not care if the news mentioned any dead LAPD officers: "if [Salas] would read about a cop shot down in the street, killed, dead [Salas did not care about their deaths]" (1-5). Smith includes this monologue to establish evidence of the history of the militarization of the LAPD and to connect this militant policing to the Latino community decades before the rebellion. In this monologue, Smith uses the tones of death and destruction to show how Salas is figuratively haunted by certain complex factors and issues, such as the militarization of the LAPD, that led to the uprising.

In the second example of haunting and ghosts, Smith includes a monologue featuring Rodney King's aunt, Angela King, a storeowner in Los Angeles, who discusses the video of Rodney King's beating by the LAPD. The placement of this monologue is significant insofar as it begins the third of six sections of the play and the only one that specifically focuses on King's beating. In this monologue, Smith uses the tones of death and destruction to show how Angela

King is figuratively haunted by (1) her memories of her brother, Rodney King's father, who died before the uprising and (2) her memories of watching her nephew, Rodney King, being beaten by the LAPD on the video shown on the local L.A. TV news. She also recalls that after many reconstructive surgeries, Rodney King began to appear like his dead father after the beating: "[After the beating] Rodney—went through three plastic surgeons, just to look like Rodney again…And when [Angela King was watching the local L.A. TV news] …he looked just like his father…" (54). Here, in this quotation, Angela King's words demonstrate how she is figuratively haunted by the memories of both her dead brother and King's beating, which she saw on the local L.A. TV news, and how Rodney King resembled his father after three reconstructive surgeries. As a result this monologue demonstrates Angela King's implicit condemnation of militarization of the LAPD. Moreover, in this example, Smith uses the tones of death and destruction to show how Angela King is figuratively haunted by certain complex factors and issues, such as the death of her brother, her nephew Rodney King's beating, and the militarization of the LAPD, that led to the uprising.

In the third example of haunting and ghosts, Smith includes a monologue featuring Josie Morales, a clerk for the city of L.A., who witnessed King's beating by the LAPD. On the night of the arrest, Morales and her husband were in their apartment next door to George Holliday, who recorded the video of King's beating by the LAPD. The placement of this monologue is significant insofar as it is placed in the third of six sections after Angela King's monologue. This is the only section of the play that specifically focuses on King's beating. It is also worth noting that Smith does not include interviews with Holliday or with Terry White of the L.A. District Attorney's office, who prosecuted the case. In the monologue, Smith uses the tones of death and destruction to show how Morales is figuratively haunted by King's beating and that she was a

scheduled witness during the trial, never was called to prepare for trial, and soon learned that White was not going to call her as a witness; she did not have the opportunity to share what she witnessed during the trial. Morales explains that when she saw the beating, she knew it was wrong, because as she implies, King appeared to be near death and she "knew it was wrong…you know they [the LAPD] can't do that" (66). Morales states her belief that White was going to need extra witnesses and evidence besides Holliday's video: "If you do not put witnesses…to say what they saw…[White] was dead set on that video and that the video would tell all…Look at this, they were, they were acquitted" (68). She then explains after realizing that she was not going to be called that she "had a terrible dream…[the LAPD officers] would be acquitted" (68). The monologue then ends with Morales explaining that her dream was accurate, the LAPD officers were acquitted and she did not appear during the trial (69). As a result, Morales's words demonstrate an explicit condemnation of the militarization of the LAPD insofar as she states they created an "oppressive atmosphere" that nearly killed King (66). In the aftermath of the L.A. Uprising, Morales is haunted by her disjointed memories of King's beating by the LAPD and that she was not able to share her perspective during the trial. In this monologue, Smith uses the tones of death and destruction to show how Morales is haunted by her memories of King's beating by the LAPD and that she was not called during the trial.

Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992

Haunting and Ghosts and Disjointed Time

To be sure, Smith also employs the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, to show how the interviewees are figuratively haunted by a series of the complex factors and issues. While Smith structurally places the monologues in six

different sections, with titles such as “Prologue”, “Twilight”, and “Justice”, the numerous interviewees’ memories within these sections are shared in non-linear sequences to disrupt the flow of time in order to create a non-linear counternarrative. As we have noted in regards to Derrida’s *Specters of Marx*, Hamlet reacts to the visit of the ghost of his father by proclaiming that “the time is out of joint” (Derrida xviii; Jameson 26-30; Prendergast 44-45). This concern with how time is perceived in haunting is noted by Gordon who similarly writes that haunting raises specters and “alters the experience of being in linear time” (Gordon 2011, 2-3). In *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992*, Smith similarly presents time nonchronologically through the arrangement of the monologues in the six sections. In contrast to the filmmakers who use a literal approach, Smith figuratively employs the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, not only in her arrangement of the monologues but in her use of a democratic technique to focus on the interviewees’ words and actions during the monologues, to explore how the interviewees are haunted by their memories and also by spatial and environmental injustice issues and other issues in L.A. in the early 1990s.

In the first example of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time. Rudy Salas is figuratively haunted by his beating by the LAPD as a “zoot-suiter” in his youth in the 1940s. During the monologue, the time is shown to be “out of joint” insofar as Smith uses her democratic technique to reveal Salas’ memories in a non-linear sequence. For example, Salas’s memories shift to different time periods during the monologue which include his contemporary opinion of the LAPD, his memories of his grandfather who had been a revolutionary in the Mexican Revolution and had fought with white people in the early twentieth-century, and a shift to Salas’ fights with the white LAPD officers as a “zoot-suiter” in his youth in the 1940s. After they beat him, fracturing an eardrum, he learned to hate the LAPD.

In this way, Smith uses the narrative devices to demonstrate how Salas is figuratively haunted via the non-linear sequence of his memories.

In the second example of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, Angela King is figuratively haunted by the death of her brother, Rodney King's father, who died before the uprising and by King's beating by the LAPD. During the monologue, the time is shown to be "out of joint" insofar as Smith reveals Angela King's memories in a non-linear sequence. As we noted earlier, King's aunt states that after many reconstructive surgeries, Rodney King began to appear like his dead father: "[After the beating] Rodney—went through three plastic surgeons, just to look like Rodney again…And when [Angela King was watching the local L.A. TV news] …he looked just like his father…" (54). Here, in this quotation, Angela King's memories of her nephew's beating by the LAPD jumps from a period after the beating, a flash-forward sequence, when he had to have many reconstructive surgeries to "look like Rodney again" to a flashback memory when she saw her nephew's beating on the local L.A. TV news. In her memories of the events, Angela King recalls that her nephew began to resemble his father who had died before the uprising. In this example, we note how Angela King is figuratively haunted by both her brother's death and her nephew's beating by the LAPD. During the monologue, the time is shown to be "out of joint" insofar as Smith reveals Angela King's memories in a non-linear sequence.

In the third example of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, we refer once again to Smith's interview with Josie Morales. As we have noted, Morales is figuratively haunted by witnessing King's beating by the LAPD and by not being called during the trial. During the monologue, the time is shown to be "out of joint" insofar as Smith uses her democratic technique to reveal Morales's memories in a non-linear sequence. For

example, Morales states that she warned White in a letter about not calling her as a witness and how she started to have dreams the LAPD would be acquitted. In her monologue, there is a persistence in Morales's voice as she recalls trying to warn White that he needed more witnesses of King's beating for the trial and then her thoughts flash-forward to the trial results. As Gordon has noted, haunting raises specters and "alters the experience of being in linear time" (Gordon 2011, 2-3). In this way, Smith uses these narrative devices to show how Morales is figuratively haunted via the non-linear sequence of her memories of not being called as a witness during the King-LAPD trial.

Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992

Figurative Language

In the first example of figurative language, Smith uses scholar and interviewee Homi Bhabha's figurative definitions of the word "twilight", to represent the interviewees' and city residents' communal examination of the complex factors and issues that led to the uprising. To accomplish this, she includes an interview with Bhabha regarding the rebellion. In the monologue, Bhabha uses metaphors to define twilight and in the process suggests that the figurative definitions of this word can be used to examine the uprising. While Bhabha was not a witness of the rebellion, Smith includes his perspective as a scholar who learned of the uprising through the news coverage. As we have noted, as part of her democratic technique, Smith also includes Bhabha and other critical thinkers to help examine the issues that led to the rebellion. In her view, collective voices are more important than a singular voice and theater can be a unifier if it embraces diversity in order to mirror society. For these reasons, Smith also invited Tobar and other writers to work as dramaturges on *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992*, insofar as she was

interested "in the diversity that they would bring to the project in terms of areas of expertise" in order to "make theater a more responsible partner in the growth of communities" (Smith 1994, xx-xxiv).

Smith's reflective approach includes the incorporation of many interviews with different people who have wide-ranging memories and perspectives of the complex factors and issues related to the uprising. In the monologue, Bhabha states a figurative definition of the word twilight:

> This twilight moment
> is an in-between moment.
> It's the moment of dusk.
> It's the moment of ambivalence…
> the enigma,
> the ambivalences,
> in what happened in the L.A.
> uprisings…
> It's exactly the moment
> When the L.A. uprisings could be something
> …or maybe something
> other than it was seen to be.
> I think when we look at [the L.A. Uprising] in twilight
> we learn…
> That fuzziness of twilight
> allows us to see the intersections
> of the event with a number of other things that daylight obscures for
> us,
> to use a paradox.
> We have to interpret more in
> twilight,…
> whereas, to use the daylight
> metaphor,
> there we somehow think
> the event and its clarity
> as it is presented to us,
> and we have to just react to it.
> Not that we're participating in its clarity:
> it's more interpretive,
> it's more creative (232-234).

Here, in this quotation, Smith uses Bhabha's figurative definitions of the word "twilight", to represent the interviewees' and city residents' communal examination of the complex factors and issues that led to the uprising. In the monologue, Bhabha uses metaphors to define twilight and in the process suggests that the figurative definitions of this word can be used to examine the uprising. As Bhabha states, twilight as opposed to daylight, is a time of day just before the darkness and uncertainty of night, that requires more interpretation than daylight time.

Moreover, Bhabha uses the metaphor of daylight to suggest that it is a paradox insofar as events happen in full light and yet are also obscured in the harshness of the daylight. In contrast, twilight is a fuzzier time of day that requires more interpretive and creative skills from people to make sense of what is happening just before the darkness of night. Indeed, as he states, the "twilight moment" is an "in-between moment" between day and night; "the moment of dusk." As Bhabha states, in a figurative sense, twilight is the best time of day for a community to try to make sense of the rebellion insofar as it "exactly the moment…When the L.A. uprisings could be something…or maybe something other than it was seen to be." Bhabha suggests that in a figurative sense, twilight is the best time of day to make sense of the rebellion insofar as it requires more interpretive skills than daylight time and as a result, the interviewees and city residents have the memories and skills to see the uprising, not as the aforementioned master narrative of the rebellion but as a series of events based on certain complex factors and issues that led to the rebellion, otherwise known as the L.A. Uprising. In this monologue, Smith uses Bhabha's figurative definitions of the word twilight, to represent the interviewees' and city residents' communal examination of the complex factors and issues that led to the uprising.

In the second example of figurative language, Smith includes an interview with a Salvadoran immigrant named Gladis Sibrian, a leftist revolutionary residing in L.A. As a

revolutionary in El Salvador, Sibrian used the name “Lucia” which is related to the Latin word Lux, referring to light. In this monologue, Smith continues to use figurative definitions of light to examine the rebellion. For instance, Sibrian uses figurative language to define the uprising as a “social explosion” in which people have reached a breaking point with a myriad of injustices and must work together to cause a social explosion to reject the status quo in L.A. The main message is that Sibrian praises the rebellion as a social explosion that rejected the status quo after the King-LAPD trial results; her critique is that the rebellion was too anarchical and not planned; an uprising should have a “sense of future, sense of hope, that things can be changed” because people have the power to change things. In this monologue, Smith includes Sibrian’s perspective as a Salvadoran immigrant who believed the uprising was necessary in order to reject the marginalization of oppressed city residents exemplified by the King-LAPD trial results.

In the third example of figurative language, Smith includes an interview with Twilight, a gang member from South Central who leads a coalition to create a truce among L.A. gangs. In the monologue, Smith continues to use figurative definitions of light to examine the rebellion. Twilight explains that light “symbolizes knowledge, knowing, wisdom” in religious texts and “twilight is that time between day and night.” As Twilight notes in the monologue, darkness is not necessarily a negative time; however, in a figurative sense it is not the best time to know what’s happening in the world; as a result, he views “light as knowledge and the wisdom of the world” and people cannot “dwell in darkness” if they are in search of knowledge and wisdom (253-256). The implication in this monologue is that as a gang member, Twilight distinguishes between darkness and light as part of a communal search for knowledge and wisdom, with the eventual goal of finding common ground with other L.A. gangs in the aftermath of the rebellion. As a result, in all three examples of figurative language, Smith reflectively uses Bhabha’s

figurative definitions of the word twilight and also Sibrian's and Twilight's perspectives to represent the interviewees' and city residents' communal examination of the complex factors and issues that led to the L.A. Uprising.

The Tattooed Soldier

Haunting and Ghosts: Tones of Death and Destruction

To be sure, Tobar uses the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts to show the reader what it feels like to experience homelessness and the carnivalesque atmosphere in the streets during the L.A. Uprising. To accomplish this, Tobar uses the tones of death and destruction to show how the characters are figuratively haunted by certain complex factors and issues that led to the uprising. As we noted earlier, Gordon's definitions of haunting and ghosts are particularly useful in showing how Smith and Tobar use these devices to reveal oppressive conditions, subjugated knowledge, and "a-something-to-be-done", regarding the L.A. Uprising. Tobar accomplishes the "a-something-to-be-done" concept by encouraging the reader and audience to empathize with the residents' collective reactions to the aforementioned complex factors and issues. As we have noted, Tobar presents a novel regarding Guatemalan immigrants in L.A., that is divided into three sections, with the first and final sections taking place before and during the L.A. Uprising and the second section taking place, via flashbacks, in Guatemala during the counterinsurgency in the 1980s. This evidence operates as a way for Tobar to critique and challenge the aforementioned master narratives, particularly the third one which is the simplistic mainstream interpretation of the L.A. Uprising. In these different sections, Tobar uses the aforementioned narrative devices to establish how the character Antonio is figuratively haunted by his memories of events that occurred a decade before during the rebellion in Guatemala but

also by spatial and environmental injustice issues and other issues in L.A. in the early 1990s, to establish how certain complex factors and issues led to the uprising.

In the first example of haunting and ghosts, Tobar uses figurative language and an omniscient narrator to show how Antonio is figuratively haunted by the deaths of his wife and son and his homelessness. In this scene, Tobar uses the omniscient narrator to introduce the reader to the protagonist Antonio and his roommate José Juan, a Mexican immigrant, as they are forced to leave their apartment in Downtown L.A. when they fall short of the monthly rent. The apartment manager, a South Korean immigrant named Mr. Hwang, refuses to let them have extra time to earn their rent money. As a result, they are forced to join the many homeless people living near S.R. 110, known as the Harbor Freeway and later on Crown Hill in Downtown L.A. These early scenes establish the important theme of homelessness in L.A. which operates throughout the counternarrative. A group of homeless people tell Antonio and José Juan that there is no room for them at an encampment near the Harbor Freeway and so they walk towards the empty lots on Crown Hill. There they find shelter among a multi-ethnic group of homeless people, including Frank and another African-American, the Mayor (Tobar 3-16). The placement of this scene at the start of the novel is significant insofar as it meant to introduce the tones of death and destruction to show how the characters, Antonio in particular, are figuratively haunted by certain complex factors and issues that led to the uprising.

At the start of the scene, Antonio and José Juan are told they must leave their apartment by the apartment manager, Mr. Hwang. Antonio and Mr. Hwang then have an argument regarding the monthly rent. The conflict is that they need extra time to make the rent and Mr. Hwang does not have empathy for their problem, he warns them that he will call the police to

force them to leave. As Antonio and José Juan clear the apartment, Antonio finds some letters from his mother in Guatemala while Mr. Hwang continues to warn them to leave:

> Antonio glared at [Mr. Hwang], then picked up a stack of unopened letters from his mother in Guatemala. In between two of the envelopes he discovered a forgotten photograph of his wife and son, taken years ago in Quetzaltenango…[Antonio] tried to fight off the rush of memories that began to gather and rumble like thunder behind his eyes…
> …"Hurry, please."
> It struck Antonio as an outrageous invasion of his privacy…as he packed away this photograph (7).

Here in this quotation, Tobar employs the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts, figurative language, and the omniscient narrator to show how Antonio is figuratively haunted by the murders of his wife and son via the photograph and also the complex factor and issue of homelessness. This is made clear by "the rush of memories that began to gather and rumble like thunder behind his eyes" while Antonio stares at the photograph. Tobar creates a scene in which Mr. Hwang's persistence in urging the two roommates to hurry and leave the apartment is shown to be very oppressive insofar as Antonio cannot stare at the photograph in peace; Mr. Hwang's oppressive presence is an invasion of Antonio's privacy. Moreover, Antonio's photograph of his murdered wife and son represent the subjugated knowledge, namely, that they were murdered by the Guatemalan army; their peaceful family life was destroyed, which is revealed later in the counternarrative. Finally, Tobar places this scene at the very start of the novel to demonstrate how Antonio is figuratively haunted by their deaths and by the dispossession and homelessness caused by Mr. Hwang's lack of empathy for their financial plight. These complex factors and issues also operate as a way to foreshadow Antonio's plans to kill Longoria, who murdered his family, and his personal revenge as complex factors that lead to his participation in the carnivalesque atmosphere during the uprising.

In the second example of haunting and ghosts, Tobar uses figurative language and the omniscient narrator to show how Antonio is figuratively haunted by his homelessness and to explore early scenes of his life on the streets. In this example, Antonio and José Juan leave the apartment and search for shelter near the Harbor Freeway in Downtown L.A. The omniscient narrator informs the reader that "Antonio was living on the streets" and "no one would look him in the eye." As a Guatemalan immigrant in L.A. Antonio "was used to being unseen." However, homelessness is "another kind of invisibility" in which people make a point of turning away from Antonio just as he once turned away to avoid homeless people who "pushed their belongings around in shopping carts" (10-11). Antonio and José Juan appear to be homeless and as a result, people avoid looking at them; they are figuratively dead and unacknowledged as they walk towards the freeway in Downtown L.A. As they walk around carrying their belongings, Antonio realizes the practicality of having a shopping cart if you are a homeless person in L.A.

Moreover, in ways similar to Viramontes in Chapter 3, Tobar employs figurative language and the tones of death and destruction to show how Antonio is haunted by his homelessness but to also posit a critique of the hazardous air conditions caused by the Harbor Freeway for the working poor and homeless population living in Downtown L.A. For example, as Antonio and José Juan approach the Harbor Freeway in search of shelter, Antonio's senses are overwhelmed by the sight of a "network of leafless ivy branches spread out like capillaries across the gray surface" with water oozing "like blood from the cement" of the concrete structure and its many on-ramps and off-ramps. He also hears the "hurried rattling sounds" of trucks on the freeway and notices the hazardous air quality of the "hydrocarbon winds rushing by in their wake." Tobar contrasts the normally green, vibrant ivy branches as "leafless" and reduces the important, life-sustaining qualities of the normally red capillaries to dead capillaries spread out

“across the gray surface” of the on-ramps and off-ramps of the freeway structure. As noted in Chapter 3, Viramontes similarly uses figurative language to liken the gray, ashen color of the newly constructed East L.A. freeways to the gray tombstones of the East L.A. Chinese cemetery. In this scene, Tobar uses the gray, ashen color to refer to the surface of the Harbor Freeway. In addition, just as Viramontes compares and contrasts an unfinished bridge to a “mangled limb”, giving it human qualities, Tobar suggests the Harbor Freeway, built during the urban renewal period which displaced many residents in Downtown L.A. in the 1960s, is a concrete structure that is unhealthy insofar as water oozes “like blood from the cement”, which also gives the structure human qualities (Viramontes 2007, 168-169; Tobar 11). In this example, Tobar uses the tones of death and destruction to show how Antonio is figuratively haunted by certain complex factors and issues including the murders of his wife and son and homelessness, which led to the uprising.

In the third example of haunting and ghosts, Tobar employs figurative language and the omniscient narrator to both show how Antonio is not only overwhelmed by his homelessness but by his old life as a university student in Guatemala. While the theme of homelessness is ongoing in the novel, it does not define Antonio or José Juan, two unemployed immigrant laborers in Downtown L.A. As a result, an equally prominent theme in the novel is Antonio’s old life as a university student which is revealed as he tries to empathize with other homeless friends such as Frank and the Mayor after they all learn the King-LAPD trial results. In the process Antonio learns about other homeless people’s problems, and how to survive as a homeless immigrant in Downtown L.A. As they settle on Crown Hill overlooking the skyscrapers of Downtown L.A. to the east, Antonio and José Juan both discover what appear to be ruins all over the empty lots on the hill. Using his skills as a student, Antonio searches for empirical evidence regarding the lost

neighborhood and then surmises that a wealthy community once lived on Crown Hill several decades earlier. Implicit in the scene, is Antonio's condemnation of the city authorities that must have permitted the policy of urban renewal that displaced the Crown Hill neighborhood in the early twentieth-century in Downtown L.A.:

> Antonio looked at the land around him. There was the green hill, with perhaps a dozen tents and shacks perched on its muddy earth. Underneath these ephemeral structures were the ruins of a lost community, a forgotten neighborhood built with brick and cement. On the hill, and on the flat plain that extended from its base, he could see a grid of city streets…bordered with sidewalks, asphalt avenues…dozens of concrete stairs led from the streets to what used to front lawns. In all, Antonio counted more than forty demolished lots…(15-16).

Here, in this quotation, Tobar employs figurative language, the omniscient narrator, and the tones of death and destruction to both show how Antonio is figuratively haunted by his homelessness and to explore the theme of his skills as a student studying the evidence on Crown Hill in Downtown L.A. In the quotation, his intellectual skills are apparent when he notices the "ephemeral structures", including "a dozen tents and shacks perched on its muddy earth." He then notes the "ruins of a lost community, a forgotten neighborhood" via the "grid of city streets…bordered with sidewalks, asphalt avenues." He observes dozens and dozens of concrete stairs that "led from the streets to what used to be front lawns", which suggest that the homes were wealthy residences.

Moreover, Antonio not only takes note of the lost community, as a student and humanitarian, he also empathizes with the families of the lost neighborhood. For instance, he notes how there were more than forty demolished lots that he infers were purposely cleared by the city authorities. These examples demonstrate Antonio's skills as an intellectual, who despite his status as a homeless immigrant, is still able to recognize the "ruins of a lost community."

There is also a melancholic tone in the scene in which Antonio, who lost his wife and son in Guatemala and most recently, his apartment in Downtown L.A., empathizes with the families of this lost neighborhood. In this scene, which is revealed via the omniscient narrator, we also note the tones of death and destruction which are included by Tobar as a way to also critique the devastating effects of urban renewal and homelessness while simultaneously critiquing Mr. Hwang's lack of empathy, resulting in Antonio's homelessness, a complex factor and issue that led to the uprising.

The Tattooed Soldier

Haunting and Ghosts and Disjointed Time

To be sure, Tobar also employs the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, to demonstrate that the characters, particularly Antonio, are figuratively haunted by the complex factors and issues insofar as their memories are not shared in a linear sequence in the counternarrative. As we have noted, the novel is divided into three sections. In these sections, the characters are shown to be figuratively haunted by their memories and these are shared with the reader in non-linear sequences to disrupt the flow of time in the counternarrative. As we have noted in regards to Hamlet's reaction to the visit of the ghost of his father by proclaiming that "the time is out of joint" (Derrida xviii; Jameson 26-30; Prendergast 44-45), so too Gordon notes that haunting raises specters and "alters the experience of being in linear time" (Gordon 2011, 2-3). In *The Tattooed Soldier*, Tobar similarly presents time nonchronologically through the arrangement of the novel in three sections. In contrast to the filmmakers who use a literal approach, Tobar employs non-linear and disjointed uses of time to

explore how the characters, Antonio in particular, are figuratively haunted by their memories but also by spatial and environmental injustice issues and other issues in L.A. in the early 1990s.

In the first example of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, we refer once again to the scene in which Antonio and José Juan settle into the empty lots on Crown Hill, with the homeless population where they discover a lost neighborhood. In this scene, the omniscient narrator presents Antonio as figuratively haunted by the deaths of his wife and son as he loses track of time as a result of his homelessness. His lost sense of time is a direct result of the displacement and dispossession both Antonio and José Juan experience when they lose their apartment in Downtown L.A. During the first night with the homeless population, Antonio is described as being "adrift in a timeless night" (13). While all the other homeless people are asleep, Antonio spends "sleepless hours" staring at the L.A. sky which he finds to be "empty of stars" with "constellations erased", by the light from the skyscrapers in Downtown L.A. In a figurative sense, as the omniscient narrator makes clear, during his sleeplessness, Antonio can only stare at the L.A. sky as the new ceiling, as a result of his homelessness.

Several hours later, Antonio and José Juan discover the lost neighborhood of Crown Hill and surmise that the community was displaced by urban renewal. It is then that Antonio searches through his possessions looking for photographs of his family, but "he could not find [the photographs], and this left him feeling unsettled" (17-18). His sense of loss then reminded him of something many years ago in Guatemala. The omniscient narrator informs the reader that as Antonio searches for photographs on Crown Hill, he begins to remember carrying a cardboard box the day that he left Guatemala for L.A. and recalls that he was "leaving behind a house with floors that were covered with reddish black blood." He remembers that the reddish black blood

was all over the tiles of his home when he returned from work and then he recalls a crowd in the doorway and the corpses of Elena and Carlos at the front of the house (17-18). The omniscient narrator then informs the reader that Antonio's strongest memories of Carlos are two moments he will always relive, "the birth and death of his son" fused into a single visual memory. As a result, using these disjointed memories, Tobar demonstrates how Antonio is figuratively haunted by the murder of his wife and son in Guatemala in the 1980s. As Gordon has noted, haunting raises specters and "alters the experience of being in linear time" (Gordon 2011, 2-3).

The second example of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, finds Antonio's first morning at the homeless shelter on the empty lots of Crown Hill aware of his homelessness and need for food. Juan José tells Antonio that they should go to the food bank center with the other homeless immigrants. While Juan José begins preparing to leave for the food bank, Antonio's memories return to Guatemala, his mind heavy with "the burden of so many thoughts, so much sadness." He thinks of Elena and Carlos and suddenly finds that he "could not remember when his wife and son died. He could remember their birthdays September 23 and May 15 – but he could not remember the date of their deaths" (40). Antonio is figuratively haunted by memories of his old life in Guatemala just as he struggles with homelessness, conflating both struggles in his mind (40).

To be sure, José Juan then decides to go to Third Street and to the food bank center without Antonio. There on Crown Hill, Antonio begins to notice all the morning rituals of the other homeless people who decide to look at the bright side of things as they prepare for the day and cook food on portable grills. He notices people with milk crates, blankets, and tin materials. He also notices the extreme poverty and his mind returns to Guatemala and what he used to think of Los Angeles, when he lived in his native country. He remembers that he felt he knew L.A.

from watching TV shows: “Antonio felt he knew California because he’d seen it…on his television set…like sunlight glimmering off a mountain lake” (42). Disappointed with his real-life experiences in L.A., Antonio then decides to go with José Juan to the food bank. He decides it is important “to not lose control” and to survive out of respect for the family he lost in Guatemala in the 1980s. As he stands on Crown Hill looking at the empty lots, thinking of the displaced community there, he continues thinking about his lost family in Guatemala in the 1980s.

In the third example of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, we refer to Antonio’s and José Juan’s second exploration of Crown Hill later in the novel. After having discovered the forty demolished lots during the first night of homeless, Antonio and José Juan conduct a second exploration of the lost ruins of the Crown Hill community looking for items for their homeless shelter. As they walk across the empty lots they discover sidewalk engravings, which they read to themselves. Antonio is shown carefully considering what each name means, they refer to street names, a contractor’s name, and the year, “1919” (54-55). Staring at the empty lots, thinking of the displaced community that had once lived there, Antonio’s thoughts return to his haunted memories of his dead wife and son, particularly the time he and Elena traveled to Guatemala City, to see abandoned and “centuries dead” Mayan ruins, that had once been a major city in Central America. He recalls that a modern residential park had been constructed near the ruins and that the modern Guatemalans played soccer near the old temples. Standing on Crown Hill he began to think of the abandoned Mayan ruins and how the earth surrounding the ruins, “looked like the land on which Antonio now found himself, ten years and thousands of miles later” (55). As a result, using these narrative devices, Tobar shows that Antonio is figuratively haunted by his memories as well as his

family's murder, both scenes triggered by his homelessness on Crown Hill in Downtown L.A. in this scene.

The Tattooed Soldier

Figurative Language

Later, during the first night of the rebellion, Antonio learns of the King-LAPD trial results at the homeless encampment on Crown Hill, when Frank brings the news to his friends. Frank had learned the news from the radio. In addition, a few miles west, Longoria also learns the news while working as a clerk at El Pulgarcito Express, a shipping office that serves the Central American community in Downtown L.A. While Antonio sides with Frank and the Mayor, who are angry when they learn the results, Longoria sides with the LAPD officers, defending their actions. On the second night of the rebellion, Antonio executes his plan to kill Longoria, taking advantage of the carnivalesque atmosphere of the rebellion, to avenge the deaths of his wife and son in Guatemala in the 1980s (272-307). In this scene, Longoria watches the carnivalesque atmosphere on live local L.A. TV news at El Pulgarcito Express, after the trial results:

> A large rectangle, four walls and a roof of flames, the picture so bright it seemed it might burn a hole in the screen. Cars with spider-web windows speeding away from an intersection in twilight, adolescent arms hurling projectiles…all of this seen from an eye in the air…And then more flames, more burning rectangles, a whole row of them, a family of burning buildings. And now the eye returns to the ground, the eye is someplace completely different…The camera pans…And there is the woman again, a reporter…The television is doing crazy things…[people] mill around the reporter. They are Latino and white and black, all colors…The camera loses the woman again, looks for her, finds a police car instead. Black and brown and white arms…The car flips over very slowly…The police car is on fire and people are laughing.

> Another shot. A line of white helmets and shields, black batons held at the chest. Police officers, the LAPD…[the battle] was being fought all over the city (276-277).

Here, in this quotation, Tobar who was a journalist for the *Los Angeles Times*, uses figurative language and the omniscient narrator, to explore the carnivalesque atmosphere of the rebellion. In this scene, Longoria learns of the rebellion taking place at Parker Center in Downtown L.A. during a local L.A. TV news station's coverage of the first day of the rebellion. As noted earlier, as a former elite death squad leader in the Guatemalan army, Longoria believes in militarization of armed forces and sides with the LAPD officers after the trial results and during the rebellion at Parker Center in Downtown L.A.

The omniscient narrator uses Longoria's perspective as he watches TV to witness the carnivalesque rebellion. For instance, he notices the burning buildings and the "cars with spider-web windows speeding away from an intersection in twilight, adolescent arms hurling projectiles…all of this seen from an eye in the air." The scenes are shown from the perspective of camera crews aboard news station helicopters, that provide panoramic views of the city during the uprising. We also note Tobar using the word twilight, which references his work as a dramaturge for Smith, when she created *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992*. In addition, the figurative language describes "a family of burning buildings" that are all on fire implicitly referring to the lost Korean family businesses during the rebellion in *Sa-I-Gu*. It's also worth noting that Longoria notices the many black people, white people, and Latinos who are all participating in the rebellion at Parker Center. This observation is a critique of the aforementioned master narratives and meant to demonstrate that the rebellion was a multi-ethnic uprising that was "being fought all over the city." It is this carnivalesque atmosphere that Antonio uses to kill Longoria in the final scene in the novel.

In the second example of figurative language, Tobar describes a scene during twilight on the second day of the rebellion as Antonio and José Juan take a bus to South Central. José Juan decides to look for an Armenian contractor who owes him money in another part of South Central. As a result, Antonio is left wandering the streets observing the multi-ethnic working poor participating in the rebellion. He is armed with a gun to kill Longoria and decides not to join them as they loot necessities from several abandoned stores. Antonio decides it is best to just wait a few hours to kill his enemy later that evening. While he waits, he notices the many fires throughout South Central:

> There were many fires burning on [Washington Boulevard] now. The sunlight retreated, erasing the shadows of running people from the sidewalks. Flames from a burning warehouse ignited a palm tree…Antonio wandered back to the auto parts store in time to see two more cars filled with looters collide in a metallic crunch….
> There was no police. There was no authority or order of any kind. It was a municipal day of vendettas (289).

Here, in this quotation, Tobar uses figurative language and the omniscient narrator, to explore the carnivalesque atmosphere of the rebellion. The phrase “sunlight retreated erasing the shadows of running people from the sidewalks” is an implicit reference to twilight as the best time of day to interpret and make sense of the complex factors and issues that led to the uprising. In a literal sense it is also the time of day before the darkness of night. This use of figurative language is meant to signal the moment of anonymity for Antonio who is closely observing the participants looting the stores. Antonio decides that he should not join the looters and instead waits to execute his plan and kill his enemy. As he stares at the burning buildings and trees on Washington Boulevard, Antonio notices that since there are no police, it is “a municipal day of

vendettas." It is a carnivalesque atmosphere which Antonio uses to kill Longoria in the final scene in the novel.

In the third example of figurative language, Tobar notes how Antonio uses the anonymity provided by the carnivalesque atmosphere of the rebellion, to kill Longoria at the end of the novel. In these final scenes, Tobar appropriates the metaphorical imagery of fire connected to homeless campfires and to burning buildings and trees during the rebellion to symbolize Antonio's quest for revenge in the final section of the novel. A few days before the uprising, Antonio breaks into Longoria's apartment and finds the evidence to support his claim that Longoria killed his wife and son. He had already recognized the killer by a yellow tattoo on his arm by chance when they were both at MacArthur Park, where many Central American immigrants play chess during the week. He tells Frank about the apartment evidence and he helps Antonio create a plan to kill Longoria. Although, Antonio has an unplanned altercation with Longoria by chance at MacArthur Park before the rebellion, he is unable to kill Longoria. He decides to use the carnivalesque atmosphere of the uprising to execute his plan and kill Longoria (178-298).

In these final scenes, Tobar appropriates the metaphorical imagery of fire to symbolize Antonio's quest for revenge. In Longoria's final moments, Tobar uses the metaphor of fire and related figurative descriptions of fire such as heat, burnings, and smoke to describe the carnivalesque atmosphere that surrounds them in Pico-Union in Downtown L.A. As Longoria walks home he notices the "black smoke" from a Thrifty drugstore. As he walks near the drugstore, he notices black people, white people, and Latinos taking food from a supermarket amid burning buildings as firefighters try to save the drugstore. He hears the constant sounds of LAPD sirens throughout the city. Antonio waits at the Longoria's apartment and notices the

endless smoke from all the hundreds of buildings in South Central and Koreatown, floating in the air. The omniscient narrator informs the reader that since his homelessness and life on Crown Hill, Antonio is very acquainted with burning campfires. As he waits to kill Longoria, Antonio notices that there are "hundreds of fires, a city of mini-malls and palm trees ablaze" (296-298). When Longoria finally reaches the front steps of the apartment building, Antonio emerges from the alley and fires the gun, Longoria collapses on the sidewalk. Still alive, Longoria follows Antonio to Crown Hill. At an abandoned underground trolley tunnel, Antonio confronts the murderer to see if he remembers Elena and Carlos and he learns nothing from the killer who is near death. Longoria dies of his wounds in the tunnel. Antonio then leaves Crown Hill for his new life in South Central. In all three examples of figurative language, Tobar reflectively uses this narrative device and the omniscient narrator, to explore the carnivalesque atmosphere of the rebellion.

Twilight, Los Angeles, 1992 and *The Tattooed Soldier*

Documentary Evidence

To be sure, in Smith's *Twilight, Los Angeles, 1992* and Tobar's *The Tattooed Soldier*, the writers use the narrative device of documentary evidence less prominently than the filmmakers, regarding the uprising. Smith's and Tobar's counternarratives are a text-based play and a novel and as a result, the photographs and videos they incorporate are not as prominent as the other narrative devices they incorporate in their counternarratives. As I have noted, Kim-Gibson and Choy and Ridley use this documentary device, more literally than figuratively, for didactic purposes in both films. In contrast, Smith and Tobar use the documentary evidence more figuratively as part of their reflective approach to examining the rebellion and challenging the

aforementioned master narratives. In this section, beginning with *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992* and then *The Tattooed Soldier*, I will examine how Smith and Tobar use documentary evidence to establish conversations on the right to the city and the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice but also criminal justice and other vital forms of redress regarding the L.A. Uprising.

Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992

Documentary Evidence

As part of Smith's democratic technique, she incorporates documentary evidence including photographs and videos of the uprising in various literal and figurative forms. To be sure, literal forms refer to Smith's uses of documentary evidence in the play's published materials and the actual set design, including the written publication of the play, the stage performance, and the PBS filmed adaptation of the play, which was produced in 2000. In these three different instances, there are literal photographs and videos of the rebellion regarding Harlins, King, and the uprising. In the written publication of the play, Smith includes a section of photographs of the rebellion borrowed from the *Los Angeles Times*. In the figurative sense, Smith also includes a section in the written publication of the play with several photographs of her portraying several of the characters. They are figurative because they are not literal photographs of the interviewees. These photographs are also incorporated in the set construction and design of the uprising in her stage productions and in the PBS filmed adaptation of the play. Moreover, as part of the production of the play, many notable interviewees, including Angela King, Katie Miller, an African-American interviewee from South Central, and Paul Parker, an African-American activist from South Central, all make various references to the King beating

video and to local L.A. TV news media coverage of the uprising. These performances operate as figurative simulacra of the events and the interviewees' memories. They also demonstrate Smith's democratic technique in terms of performance. As a result, her performances as the interviewees are not literal demonstrations of her memories of the rebellion, they are figurative and symbolic representations insofar as the actress is performing as the various interviewees regarding the rebellion. Therefore, in *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992*, Smith incorporates documentary evidence including photographs and videos of the L.A. Uprising in various literal and figurative forms.

In the first example of documentary evidence, we refer once again to the Angela King monologue. In this interview, Rodney King's aunt discusses the video of King's beating by the LAPD. In regards to documentary evidence, Angela King explains the devastating effect the video had on the King family. In the monologue, Angela King implies that the documentary evidence was not enough to secure the guilt of the LAPD officers who beat King; however, the video was devastating for the family (Smith 1994, 51-60). In the second example of documentary evidence, Smith includes the Miller monologue. In the scene, Miller recalls how the local TV media created the African-American versus Korean conflict, with Koreans standing in place of white people which operates as the simplistic mainstream interpretation of the uprising via a distorted coverage of the rebellion. Her memories of the racial discrimination on the part of the local L.A. TV news coverage has also been discussed by several scholars as factors which led to the simplistic mainstream interpretation (Smith 1994, 129-133; Caldwell 302-335; Valle and Torres 45-66). In Miller's monologue, the main message is that the local L.A. TV news media's looping coverage of the rebellion, specifically regarding the carnivalesque atmosphere in South Central and Koreatown which did not examine other complex factors and issues, led to the

creation of the simplistic master narrative of the rebellion as the "L.A. Riots" and not as the L.A. Uprising. In the third example of documentary evidence, Smith includes an interview with Parker, an African-American community activist from South Central who also witnessed the rebellion. In the monologue, the main message is similar to Miller's monologue insofar as Parker claims that the local L.A. TV news media helped to create the African-American versus Korean conflict, with Koreans standing in place of white people which operates as the simplistic mainstream interpretation of the rebellion, using the looping video of a few African-Americans beating Reginald Denny and not on evidence showing how the rebellion was a multi-ethnic uprising (Smith 1994, 170-174). While Parker tries to justify violence in parts of the monologue, Smith includes his perspective as a critique of the local L.A. TV news media's coverage of the rebellion. Smith includes Parker's perspective to demonstrate that the racial discrimination contained in the local L.A. TV news media's coverage led to the creation of the simplistic master narrative of the uprising. These examples are useful to demonstrate how Smith uses the narrative device of documentary evidence in *Twilight: Los Angeles 1992*, to establish conversations on the right to the city and the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice but also criminal justice and other vital forms of redress regarding the L.A. Uprising.

The Tattooed Soldier

Documentary Evidence

As part of Tobar's creative technique he incorporates documentary evidence including photographs and videos of the uprising in various literal and figurative forms. To be sure, literal forms refer to Tobar's references to documentary evidence in the novel, which include photographs and local L.A. TV news media coverage of the rebellion, that are presented

figuratively in the novel. In this figurative sense, Tobar also includes Antonio's fictional letters and family photographs, the newspaper articles and photograph albums he discovers at Longoria's apartment, and the Crown Hill sidewalk engravings Antonio examines as he imagines the displaced community that once lived on Crown Hill decades before the homeless encampments took over the empty lots before and during the uprising. These particular forms of documentary evidence are figurative because they are not literal photographs of historical people such as Harlins, King or the anonymous rebellion participants. These forms of documentary evidence operate as figurative simulacra in a fictional counternarrative regarding real-life events such as the deadly counterinsurgency in war-torn Guatemala and the L.A. Uprising. As a result, Tobar's figurative discussion of the documentary evidence is inclusive of both literal and figurative forms of evidence. In *The Tattooed Soldier*, Tobar refers to documentary evidence including literal photographs and news coverage of the rebellion and also fictional letters, photographs, newspapers and sidewalk engravings, regarding the 1980s counterinsurgency in Guatemala, urban renewal and homelessness in Downtown L.A. in the 1990s, and the L.A. Uprising, in various literal and figurative forms.

References to documentary evidence which are also an example of physical evidence, are figuratively presented in the novel when Antonio and José Juan find more documentary and physical evidence of the Crown Hill community that once existed there in the third chapter. As they search for materials for their homeless shelter on the hill, they discover sidewalk engravings on Crown Hill. As a former university student, Antonio is shown carefully considering how the writings refer to street names, a contractor's name, and the year, "1919" (Tobar 54-55). Antonio surmises that a community had existed nearly a century before on the empty streets and lots on Crown Hill, where the homeless look for shelter during the night before the uprising. This

evidence is meant to critique homelessness in L.A. but also the policy of urban renewal that led to the destruction of Bunker Hill and Crown Hill in Downtown L.A. The main message in the scene is that despite his daily struggles, Antonio's old life as a student demonstrates his empathy for the Crown Hill families that were displaced and dispossessed by urban renewal, making them homeless decades before his search for shelter as a homeless man in Downtown L.A. The scene stands in contrast to Mr. Hwang's lack of empathy as an apartment manager, that leads to Antonio's homelessness in the counternarrative.

In the second example of documentary evidence, Antonio breaks into Longoria's apartment to find evidence that he killed Antonio's wife Elena and son Carlos in Guatemala. After recognizing Longoria at MacArthur Park and before orchestrating his final plot to kill him, Antonio decides to gather evidence to justify his plan. In Longoria's apartment, Antonio finds newspaper articles and a photograph album which contain evidence of the atrocities committed by Longoria's elite death squad and the Guatemalan army during the counterinsurgency in the 1980s (Tobar 178-181). This evidence demonstrates Antonio's skills as an intellectual who searches for documentary and physical evidence of Longoria's connection to the elite death squad and his guilt as a murderer who killed innocent civilians. Antonio's repulsion after discovering the evidence reveals his empathy for the many victims. Unlike Longoria, who led the death squad to kill targeted victims, such as Elena and Carlos, Antonio searches for evidence to justify his revenge plot. He also shares the evidence with Frank, who helps him plan Longoria's killing at the end of the novel. After discovering Longoria's album of photographs, Antonio devises a plan to kill him as part of his quest for revenge for the deaths of his wife and son, which he achieves during the carnivalesque atmosphere and chaos of the rebellion.

In the third example of documentary evidence, Antonio, Frank, and Longoria all learn of the King-LAPD trial results. Antonio learns of the court's decision at the homeless encampment on Crown Hill when Frank brings the news to his friends. Frank had learned the news from the radio and then convinces some friends to join the protests at Parker Center. At the same time, a few miles west, Longoria learns about the results while working as a clerk at El Pulgarcito Express, a shipping office that serves the Central American community in Downtown L.A. Longoria sees the trial results on the local L.A. TV news coverage in the office and immediately sides with the LAPD officers, defending their actions. In contrast, Antonio sides with Frank and his African-American friends who cannot believe that the documentary evidence showing King's beating was not enough to convict the LAPD officers in the case. On the second day of the rebellion, Antonio and José Juan go to South Central to find a new apartment. Later, Antonio returns to Downtown L.A. where he executes his plan and kills Longoria, to avenge the deaths of his wife and son in Guatemala in the 1980s (Tobar 272-307).

While Antonio does not totally understand the history of racism and the militarization of the LAPD, he feels a sense of empathy for his African-American friends who are devastated by the King-LAPD trial results. He understands his friends' collective sense of resentment when they learn the results. It is also worth noting that the carnivalesque atmosphere and chaos of the rebellion provides the anonymity which helps Antonio kill Longoria. These examples demonstrate how Tobar uses the narrative device of documentary evidence in *The Tattooed Soldier*, to establish conversations on the right to the city and the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice but also criminal justice and other vital forms of redress regarding the L.A. Uprising.

Conclusion

Sa-I-Gu, Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992, Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992 and *The Tattooed Soldier*

As we noted, Kim-Gibson and Choy and Ridley, use the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts, among several other techniques, to establish conversations on the right to the city and the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice but also criminal justice and other vital forms of redress regarding the L.A. Uprising. They use these devices to critique and challenge (1) the erasure of people of color from the city's history, (2) the recurring master narrative of supercity progress, and (3) the simplistic mainstream interpretation of the uprising as the "L.A. Riots", which constructs it as an African-American versus Korean binary system, with Koreans standing in place of white people, mischaracterizing the rebellion by excluding white people and Koreans from having any responsibility for the events and ignoring other complex factors and issues which help explain the significance of the uprising. Kim-Gibson and Choy and Ridley also use the following devices in the counternarratives: the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time and documentary evidence. As we have noted, Smith and Tobar similarly use the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts, among other techniques, to establish conversations on the right to the city and the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice but also criminal justice and other vital forms of redress regarding the L.A. Uprising. Their counternarratives are meant to critique and challenge (1) the erasure of people of color from the city's history, (2) the recurring master narrative of supercity progress, and (3) the simplistic mainstream interpretation of the uprising as the "L.A. Riots", which constructs it as an African-American versus Korean binary system, with Koreans standing in place of white people, mischaracterizing the rebellion by excluding white people and Koreans from having any

responsibility for the events and ignoring other complex factors and issues which help explain the significance of the uprising. Smith and Tobar also use the following devices in the counternarratives: the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, figurative language, and documentary evidence. As noted, Smith and Tobar use a reflective approach to incorporate these devices, particularly the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts, to establish conversations on the right to the city and the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice but also criminal justice and other vital forms of redress in regards to the L.A. Uprising.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

In conclusion, this dissertation focuses on representations of the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice in Los Angeles in 1940s-1990s. The project includes several fictional and non-fictional counternarratives particularly in regards to displacement and dispossession in multi-ethnic U.S. literature and film, in relation to several regions of the city: Chavez Ravine, East L.A., Downtown L.A. neighborhoods, including Crown Hill, Pico-Union and Skid Row; and the communities of South Central and Koreatown during this period. The counternarratives included Culture Clash's play *Chavez Ravine* (2003) in Chapter 2, Helena María Viramontes's novel *Their Dogs Came with Them* (2007) in Chapter 3, Dai Sil Kim-Gibson's and Christine Choy's documentary film *Sa-I-Gu* (1993), John Ridley's documentary film *Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992* (2017), Anna Deveare Smith's play *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992* (1994), and Héctor Tobar's novel *The Tattooed Soldier* (1998). In this project, I used the theoretical concepts of haunting, ghosts, the right to the city, spatial justice, environmental justice, environmental racism, scale, and urban renewal. Various scholars representing a wide range of scholarship, including Jacques Derrida, Avery Gordon, Kathleen Brogan, Henri Lefebvre, Edward Soja, Laura Pulido, Robert Bullard, Sallie Marston, and Neil Smith, among others, have defined and discussed these terms in their writings. Since these terms are borrowed from philosophy, sociology, urban studies, and geography, it was useful to define the concepts at the start of the project. In my view, these terms were particularly important as we examined the selected counternarratives in terms of how they operate as counternarratives on the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice. In the project, I argued that all of the selected counternarratives feature several L.A. residents, both fictional and non-fictional, who encounter breaking points in which there are spatial and environmental injustice related crises that must be

dealt with by the residents. These crises informed the audience that enough is enough and that a reckoning must occur in regards to each of the unfolding events in the counternarratives. As we noted, two of the most prominent devices used by the authors and filmmakers to signify the breaking points are the metaphors of haunting and ghosts.

The project consisted of examining how the writers and filmmakers addressed the breaking points using a wide variety of narrative devices, including the metaphors of haunting and ghosts, to discuss the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice. As Derrida and Gordon have argued, the uses of haunting and ghosts in literature help begin conversations on issues of ethics and justice (Derrida xvi-xx; Gordon 2011, 1-5). Gordon also claims that ghosts are social figures that disrupt hegemonic master narratives in a society: "The ghost is not simply a dead or a missing person, but a social figure, and investigating it can lead to that dense site where history and subjectivity make social life" (Gordon 2008, 8). I argued that the purposes of these narrative devices and others in the selected counternarratives are used by the authors and filmmakers to critique and challenge both (1) the erasure of people of color from the city's history and (2) the recurring master narrative of supercity progress, specifically regarding the uses of eminent domain via urban renewal modernization. As we noted in the previous chapters, these two interrelated themes operated differently in the historical periods presented in this project. For instance, these two themes operated together in order to promote urban renewal in Chapter 2, regarding the destruction of Chavez Ravine in favor of Dodger Stadium in the 1950s-1960s and in Chapter 3, regarding the destruction of East L.A. in favor of the East L.A. freeway system in the 1960s-1970s. In Chapter 4, regarding the L.A. Uprising of 1992, we noted how these two themes work together to promote (3) the simplistic mainstream interpretation of the uprising popularized by the local L.A. TV news coverage. As we noted earlier, this mainstream

reading refers to the uprising as the "L.A. Riots", and constructs it as an African-American versus Korean binary system, with Koreans standing in place of white people; a binary system which as Lynn Itagaki has shown, using Claire Jean Kim's concept of racial triangulation as a scholarly lens, is a system in which black people are shown as both the perpetrators of the rebellion and as victims for destroying their neighborhoods, while also casting Korean merchants as model minorities who lost their businesses to looting and fires, placing them in the position of white people who similarly lost their businesses in the 1965 Watts Rebellion (Itagaki 37-64, 103-180). Furthermore, this binary system uses half-truths to mischaracterize the rebellion as one started solely by an angry black population in the streets of L.A. after the jury of the Rodney King-LAPD trial found the white LAPD officers who beat King, not guilty, while simultaneously ignoring many other complex factors and issues which help explain the significance of the uprising (Caldwell 302-335; Cho 196-210; Itagaki 37-64, 103-180; Kim 2008, 36-50; Omi and Winant, 97-111; Sánchez 1009-1027; Soja 1996, 426-460; Valle and Torres 45-66).

In Chapter 4, we noted how the four counternarratives, to differing degrees of realization, challenge the simplistic mainstream interpretation. These counternarratives provide alternative readings of the uprising by incorporating the following complex factors and issues that comprise the historical context of Los Angeles in the 1970s-1990s: urban restructuring, racial and economic inequality, immigration, demographic changes, homelessness, the militarization of the LAPD, the Latasha Harlins murder case, the Rodney King-LAPD trial results, the right to the city and the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice but also criminal justice and other vital forms of redress regarding the L.A. Uprising. Moreover, we examined how the writers and filmmakers of the selected counternarratives employed the following narrative devices: the

metaphors of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, figurative language, rasquachismo aesthetics, composite characters, film noir stylization, jumping geographic scales, and documentary evidence.

Haunting and Ghosts: Conclusion

As Derrida and Gordon have argued, the uses of haunting and ghosts in literature help begin conversations on issues of ethics and justice. In *Specters of Marx*, Derrida employs the metaphor of the ghost of King Hamlet in William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* as a ghost which seeks justice and revenge while also representing a political disturbance in both time and space (Henriksen 14; Jameson 27; Prendergast 45). The ghost of King Hamlet calls upon his son Hamlet, to seek justice and revenge for the murder of his father. Hamlet reacts to the visit of the ghost of his father by proclaiming that "time is out of joint", a metaphor which refers to the disturbance of both time and space, specifically the political organization of the realm of Denmark. Hamlet eventually has a literal conversation with the ghost; however, his skepticism about speaking to the specter wastes valuable time, which leads to the play's tragic conclusion (Shakespeare 1.5 1-1-190; Derrida xviii; Jameson 26-30; Prendergast 44-45). Ultimately, Derrida's concept of hauntology calls for a relational ethics that takes seriously those who are present and immediate but also absent presences and takes its guide the ghost that "through its hauntings, is both present and absent" (Henriksen 14).

As we have noted, Gordon shares Derrida's view regarding taking haunting and ghosts seriously; however, she more clearly defines the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in literature. As a result, we focused on Gordon's concepts of haunting and ghosts in the project. While Derrida's example of the ghost of King Hamlet is shown to be a literal ghost, Derrida also

suggests that haunting can be either a literal or figurative experience in literature (Henriksen 14). In contrast, Gordon more clearly states that haunting can be a literal or figurative experience in literature and that ghosts can be a literal or figurative presence in literature; ghosts are social figures and the haunting prompts "a-something-to-be-done" (Gordon 2011, 2-3). Moreover, Gordon argues that the metaphors of haunting and ghosts represent, "the dead or the disappeared or the lost or the invisible" people or historically erased people of the past who are actively demanding their due in literature (Gordon 2008, 182). As we noted, Gordon's definitions of haunting and ghosts were particularly useful in the selected counternarratives insofar as the writers and filmmakers use these narrative devices to establish conversations on the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice in Chavez Ravine in the 1940s-1950s, East L.A. in the 1960s-1970s, and in Downtown L.A., South Central, and Koreatown during the L.A. Uprising in 1992. In Gordon's view, the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts are useful to examine subjugated knowledge, historic alternatives, and her notion of a "critical urgency" in an oppressed society (7). As a result, haunting and ghosts are useful to call for social change in order to transform society and repair justice in the world in literature.

As we have noted, Gordon and Brogan have different definitions of haunting and ghosts, as a result, their definitions have been referenced when appropriate in the project. To be sure, Brogan's definition of cultural haunting prominently features "the master metaphor of the ghost as go-between", which is more attuned to didactic and literal portrayals of haunting and ghosts (152). As a result, Brogan's definitions of haunting and ghosts are more applicable to *Chavez Ravine* in Chapter 2 and to *Sa-I-Gu* and *Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992* in Chapter 4, insofar as these counternarratives are similarly interested in exploring the themes of possession and reconstruction of memories, communal exorcism, and integration of the past and present,

through the use of the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts. In contrast, Gordon's definitions of haunting and ghosts are more reflective than Brogan's concept of cultural haunting. As Gordon has noted, haunting and ghosts "alter the experience of being in linear time" and prompt "a-something-to-be-done"; these experiences whether they are literal or figurative, demand attention from the people experiencing haunting and ghosts in literature (Gordon 2011, 2-3). In addition, Gordon argues that the metaphors of haunting and ghosts represent, "the dead or the disappeared or the lost or the invisible" people or historically erased people of the past who are actively demanding their due in literature (Gordon 2008, 182). As a result, Gordon's reflective definitions of haunting and ghosts are more applicable to *Their Dogs Came with Them* in Chapter 3 and to *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992* and *The Tattooed Soldier* in Chapter 4, insofar as the writers use the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts more reflectively and figuratively in these counternarratives.

Chavez Ravine

As we noted, in Chapter 2, Culture Clash uses the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts, among several other components, to establish conversations on the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice for the residents of Chavez Ravine in *Chavez Ravine*. Culture Clash use these devices to critique and challenge both (1) the erasure of people of color from the city's history and (2) the recurring master narrative of supercity progress in Los Angeles, two interrelated themes and issues regarding the urban renewal of Chavez Ravine and East Los Angeles in the 1940s-1970s. Culture Clash uses the following narrative devices in the counternarrative: the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, rasquachismo aesthetics, composite characters, and film noir stylization.

Culture Clash employs a didactic approach to incorporate these devices, particularly haunting and ghosts, to emphasize the residents' displacement and dispossession after losing their homes and neighborhoods to eminent domain via urban renewal modernization in Chavez Ravine in the 1940s-1950s.

Their Dogs Came with Them

As we noted, in Chapter 3, Viramontes uses the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts, among several other techniques, to establish conversations on the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice for the residents of East L.A. in *Their Dogs Came with Them*. She uses these devices to critique and challenge both (1) the erasure of people of color from the city's history and (2) the recurring master narrative of supercity progress in Los Angeles, two interrelated themes and issues regarding the urban renewal of Chavez Ravine and East Los Angeles in the 1940s-1970s. Viramontes also employs the following narrative devices in the counternarrative: the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, figurative language, official state language, and jumping scales. Using a reflective approach to incorporate these devices, particularly haunting and ghosts, Viramontes establishes conversations on the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice during the construction of the East L.A. freeway system in the 1960s-1970s.

Sa-I-Gu and *Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992*

As we have noted in Chapter 4, Kim-Gibson and Choy and Ridley, use the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts, among several other techniques, to establish conversations on the right to the city and the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice but also criminal justice and other vital forms of redress in regards to the L.A. Uprising in their documentaries.

They use these devices to critique and challenge (1) the erasure of people of color from the city's history, (2) the recurring master narrative of supercity progress, and (3) the simplistic mainstream interpretation of the uprising as the "L.A. Riots", constructed as an African-American versus Korean binary system, with Koreans standing in place of white people, mischaracterizing the rebellion by excluding white people and Koreans from having any responsibility for the events and ignoring other complex factors and issues which help explain the significance of the uprising. Kim-Gibson and Choy and Ridley also use the following devices in the counternarratives: the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time and documentary evidence. Kim-Gibson and Choy and Ridley use a didactic approach to incorporate these devices, particularly haunting and ghosts, to establish conversations on the right to the city and the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice but also criminal justice and other vital forms of redress in regards to the L.A. Uprising.

Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992 and *The Tattooed Soldier*

Finally, in Chapter 4, Smith and Tobar use the narrative devices of haunting and ghosts, among several other techniques, to establish conversations on the right to the city and the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice but also criminal justice and other vital forms of redress in regards to the L.A. Uprising in Smith's play *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992* and Tobar's novel *The Tattooed Soldier*. They use these devices to critique and challenge (1) the erasure of people of color from the city's history, (2) the recurring master narrative of supercity progress, and (3) the simplistic mainstream interpretation of the uprising as the "L.A. Riots", which constructs the uprising as an African-American versus Korean binary system, with Koreans standing in place of white people, mischaracterizing the rebellion by excluding white

people and Koreans from having any responsibility for the events and ignoring other complex factors and issues which help explain the significance of the uprising. Smith and Tobar also use the following devices in the counternarratives: the metaphors of haunting and ghosts in conjunction with non-linear and disjointed uses of time, documentary evidence, and figurative language. Smith's and Tobar's use of a reflective approach while incorporating these devices, particularly haunting and ghosts, enables them to establish conversations on the right to the city and the unavailability of spatial and environmental justice but also criminal justice and other vital forms of redress in regards to the L.A. Uprising.

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