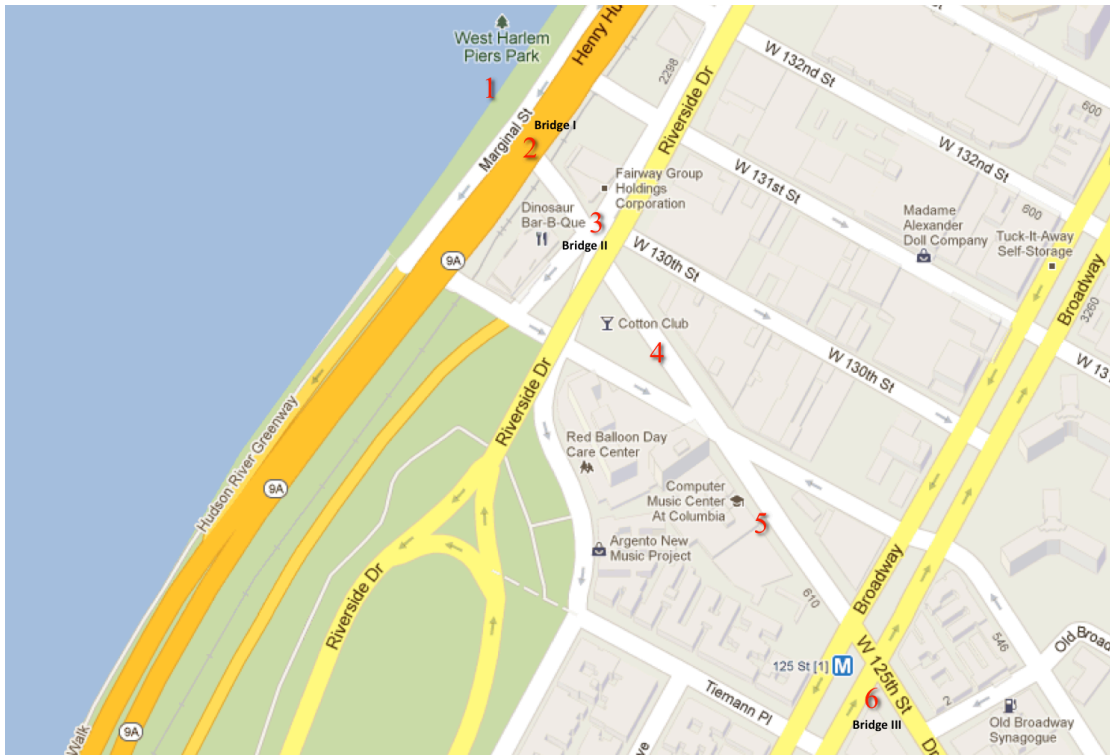


Almost-Yuppie (West Harlem Piers to Broadway)



At the edge of Harlem lies a peaceful little park where one goes to contemplate New Jersey and the Hudson River. Except no one really goes there, unless one is homeless, in which case one goes to find a bench on which to rest one's weary feet, and to contemplate nothing in particular.

This part of Martin Luther King Boulevard is detached from the rest of MLKKB because it's apparently almost lily-white. Tourists and hipster types get off the subway at the 125th Street station at Broadway, and turn left towards budget and backpacker hotels, family restaurants and white-person-oriented (WPO) advertising.

The feel here is *almost-yuppie*. One can sense “normalcy” – in the American materialist sense of the term – creeping up north across Riverside Park. The three bridges here add to the strangely scenic and totally out-of-place (OOP) vibe. Nothing here is what it seems. Take the iconic Cotton Club, where Duke Ellington once played. At night, I am told, it slips back into its glorious past. But in the daytime, it looks like a washed out figure of itself, overwhelmed by everything around it.



Fig. 1 – West Harlem Piers Park. View towards New Jersey. A homeless man in the distance.



Fig. 2 – Henry Hudson Parkway. Eerily reminiscent of the High Line.



Fig. 3 – Clouds gathering beneath Riverside Drive. White man's advertising in a black man's world.



Fig. 4 – Still standing... barely...in its own (traffic) island.



Fig. 5 – Industrial past and residential present.



Fig. 6 – 125th Street Subway station brings a change in the landscape. Suddenly life happens.