

Cuba's Exiles: Portrait of a Refugee Migration

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This article provides a portrait of Cuba's exiles that encompasses all their waves of migration, while utilizing the Cuban exodus to shed light on the broader phenomenon of refugee migration. It argues that to understand the changing social characteristics of the exiles over twenty years of migration, we need to understand the changing phases of the Cuban revolution. Utilizing the Cuban exodus as data, the article uses Egon F. Kunz's (1973; 1981) theoretical framework for refugee migration to shed light on the refugees' varying experiences, while also using the actual Cuban refugee experience to react to Kunz's abstract model.

In the sixteen years from 1960 to 1976, the United States admitted over 750,000 Cuban refugees (Casal, 1979). In the Spring of 1980, 125,000 more arrived, whose immigration status remains one of "entrants". Twenty years of political migration that brought close to a million persons to American soil harbor distinct waves of immigrants, as well as distinct refugee "vintages", alike only in their final rejection of Cuba.

Drawing upon earlier analyses of the Cuban exiles, the purpose of this article is to provide a comprehensive portrait of the Cuban exiles that encompasses all their different waves of migration, while also utilizing the Cuban exodus to shed light on the broader phenomenon of refugee migration. The underlying argument is that to understand the changing characteristics of the exiles over time, we need to pay attention to the changing phases of the Cuban revolution. As Peter I. Rose (1981:11) underlined, "refugees do not live in a vacuum. They are part of an intricate sociopolitical web that must be seen as the background against which any portrait of their travails must be painted and any dissection of their innermost thoughts and feelings must be pinned." It is the changing phases of the Cuban revolution that account for the varying characteristics of the immigrants, for the development of what E.F.Kunz called distinct "vintages", distinct in "character, background, and avowed political faith" (Kunz, 1973:137).

But first we need to briefly outline contemporary theories of migration, as these shape our understanding and interpretation of migration flows.

MIGRATION THEORY: INDIVIDUAL AND STRUCTURAL PERSPECTIVES

Traditionally, migration theory proposed the “push” of diminishing opportunities and the “pull” of new ones to explain the flow of migrants from one place to another. Most fully expressed by Everett S. Lee (1966:50), the theory focused on the individual migrant and his reasons for migration: the factors that “hold and attract or repel people”. Unlike many economists, Lee went beyond a simple cost-benefit calculus of perceived advantages and disadvantages at the origin and destination. Instead, he stressed both the role of intervening obstacles which prove more of an impediment to some individuals than to others, such as distance, physical barriers, immigration laws, cost; and the influence of personal traits such as stage in the life cycle, information, contact with earlier migrants, personality, and the effect of transitions such as marriage or retirement. Still, the decision to migrate was the focus, although, as Lee (1966:51) said, “Indeed, not all persons who migrate reach that decision themselves. Children are carried along by their parents, willy-nilly, and wives accompany their husbands though it tears them away from environments they love.” The studies that followed on its heels concentrated on the individual characteristics of the migrants (*See*, Ritchey, 1976; Petersen, 1978).

In addition, the “push-pull” framework did not contrast political and economic migration, except as different negative factors pushing the migrants at the origin and the personal traits selected. Yet, as more recent immigration theories have proposed, we cannot understand migration without considering the functions of political and economic migration.

Immigrants are a distinct social category. Alejandro Portes (1978:241) reminded us that the study of immigrants was “closely wedded” with the beginnings of social science in America. Immigrants and their plight in this country were the focus of vivid studies from the early days of American social science until the early sixties (*e.g.*, Park, 1928; Thomas and Znaniecki, 1927; Hansen, 1940; Handlin, 1959; Higham, 1955; Jones, 1960; Gans, 1962). But, as Portes stressed, with the arrival of racial demands and the civil rights movement a shift took place towards an alternative framework — ethnicity and ethnic relations. All encompassing, the new analytic perspectives often arrived at general and all-inclusive theories and race and ethnic relations. For example, R.A. Schermerhorn (1978) defined ethnic groups as all those who shared in a real or imagined “putative common ancestry”. And in the process what is really distinctive about immigrants was lost.

What is really distinctive about immigrants? To be sure, immigrants have their own ethnic identity and culture, as do Cubans, Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, Vietnamese, and Koreans. But new immigrants are a distinct social category in two senses: at the micro-level of the individual, and at the macro-level of the societies they exit and enter.

At the micro-level, the immigrants' preparation for adult roles in society took place in their country of origin, while they will live these roles (in whole or in part, depending on their age and circumstances) in the new society to which they migrated. Furthermore, as Portes (1978:242) maintained, contrary to the case of ethnic minorities, new immigrants "are decisively influenced not only by events in the United States but by experiences of a whole life in a different country. While the point was evident in classic studies of immigration, the tendency at present has been towards *de facto* fusion of new immigrants with native-born ethnic Americans."

At the macro-level, the state in two societies permits the immigrants to exit and enter. As gatekeeper, the state regulates and directs their migration through a body of law. Those laws can embrace quotas for different countries or areas, and preference criteria for categories of persons, depending on national purposes.

Traditional migration theory largely ignored the role of the state. Consequently, it ignored the functions migration might serve for the society that allows large numbers of its citizens to depart, as well as for the society that welcomes them.

To counteract the traditional perspective of studies of labor migration that focused on the individual migrant's reasons for migration, and its personal consequences, a structural perspective developed, now widely used, for analyzing economic migration. In essence, this new structural perspective argued that a system of economic migration had developed from the flow of labor between developed and underdeveloped nations.

Arguing independently although in a similar vein, Michael Burawoy (1976), Manuel Castells (1975), and Alejandro Portes (1977) reformulated the problem by examining the structural sources and social and economic implications of labor migration. In a nutshell, they agreed that migrant labor — as immigrant, and as labor — had structural causes, and that it performed important functions for the developed capitalist nation that received them.

Burawoy defined migrant labor institutionally: as a system that separates the functions of renewal and maintenance of the labor force physically and institutionally. The function of renewal takes place in the less developed society, such as Mexico, while only the function of maintenance takes place in the more developed country, such as the United States. Both Castells and Portes defined migrant labor as cheap labor, whose function in capitalism

was to maintain the rate of profit. As a Marxist, Castells judged that migrant labor served to counteract the tendency of capitalism towards a falling rate of profit. Not a Marxist, Portes saw migrant labor as less necessary but more vital to small and medium-size enterprises for whom alternatives (such as the overseas relocation of multinationals) do not exist.

While the Mexican migration provided the United States with a dependable source of cheap labor, it provided Mexico with a "safety valve" (Corwin, 1978). Migration became the solution to Mexico's incapacity to satisfy the needs of its poor and lower-middle classes.

As I argued elsewhere (Pedraza-Bailey, forthcoming), political migration can also constitute a system when, in certain historical periods, it performs beneficial functions for the two societies involved. To be sure, the loss of such large numbers of the professional and skilled classes eroded the Cuban revolution. But the exodus also performed an important political function: it lessened the capacity of those politically disaffected from the revolution to undermine it. In externalizing dissent, the Cuban government in effect controlled it. As a result, the revolution grew stronger.

At the same time, in America all the political migrations that took place during the peak years of the Cold War — the Hungarians, Berliners, and Cubans — served an important symbolic function. In this historical period of the Cold War, West and East contested the superiority of their political and economic systems. Political immigrants who succeeded in the flight to freedom became touching symbols around which to weave the legitimacy needed for foreign policy.

These new structural perspectives add a necessary component to the study of migration. The danger of the structural emphasis, however, lies in its tendencies to obliterate people, to lose sight of the individual migrants who do make decisions. The theoretical and empirical challenge immigration research now faces lies in its capacity to capture both individuals and social structure. We need to consider the plight of individuals, their propensity to move, and the nature of the decisions they make. We also need to consider the larger social structures within which that plight exists and those decisions are made. Hence, in our analysis of the Cuban exodus, we focus both on the nature of the decisions the refugees made to depart, as these reflected changing phases of the Cuban revolution, and the larger social structures that shaped the exodus. As C. Wright Mills (1961) said, so long ago, the sociological imagination lies at the intersection of personal troubles and historical issues.

We noted that it is essential that we recapture what is really distinct about immigrants. It is just as essential that we capture what is really distinct about refugees.

REFUGEES

As E.F. Kunz (1973:130) explained, a refugee "is a distinct social type". The essential difference between refugees and voluntary migrants lies in their motivations:

It is the reluctance to uproot oneself, and the absence of positive original motivations to settle elsewhere, which characterizes all refugee decisions and distinguishes the refugee from the voluntary migrants (Kunz, 1973:130).

Hence, the key idea behind Kunz's (1973) model of the refugee in flight is that of the "push". While voluntary immigrants are more likely to be "pulled" by the attraction of the opportunity to fashion a better life, as Barry N. Stein (1981:322) succinctly expressed it, "the refugee is not pulled out; he is pushed out. Given the choice, he would stay." That reluctance to leave, coupled with the political disaffection that pushes him to depart, is what distinguishes the refugee as a type.

Since the essential difference between refugees and voluntary migrants lies in their motivation, and reluctance to depart characterizes the refugee, ultimately motivation depends on perception. Peter I. Rose (1981:8) captured both the motivation and the perception: refugees are "reluctant leavers driven out by the prospect of an unacceptable fate". Kunz (1973:136) also underlined the role of perception and definition of the situation: whether the refugee's fear for his safety is valid "can after all never be tested: it is the individual's interpretation of events and self-perceived danger or revulsion, or role, which motivates the refugee and justifies his stand". Because refugees have come to perceive and define their fate as unacceptable, political exile is the last step of a process of political disaffection. Yet political disaffection, the many-layered disillusionment with government and cause, has received little attention (Williams, 1980).

To explain the enormous variance among refugees' experiences, Kunz (1973) laid the foundations on which to begin building a refugee theory that could "look behind the unique in refugee situations" (1973:129) and could embrace recurrent types of experiences. At the outset, Kunz developed a kinetic and motivational model of refugees in flight that relied on the distinction between anticipatory and acute refugee movements. Thereafter, recognizing that some political situations develop almost overnight (*e.g.*, a military occupation), while others take a long time to develop (*e.g.*, over twenty years of revolutionary change in Cuba, encompassing several distinct stages), Kunz introduced the concept of "vintages". Vintages are refugee groups that reflect "unlike reasons for departure" (1973:139). Hence, the concept of "vintages" can be used to sort out the process of political disaffection different refugee groups suffered.

As Kunz explained, when dramatic changes in the society take place gradually, individuals react differently. Some oppose changes that others support, some call for compromises that to others smell of collaboration: "As the political situation ripens for each, they will leave the country as distinct 'vintages' each usually convinced of the moral and political rightness of his actions and implicitly or openly blaming those who departed earlier or stayed on" (1973:137).

"Vintages", then, may or may not be the same as waves. Above all, "vintages" represent substantial political differences in avowed political faith. Moreover, "vintages" tend to unite people with similar educational, social, or religious background. Thus, they are "distinctive enough not to resemble in their composition another vintage" (Kunz, 1973:138). The Cuban political exodus took place over more than twenty years, and over the course of several distinct waves of migration. In the analysis that follows, we will use Kunz's (1973;1981) theoretical framework for analyzing refugee migration to shed light on the varying experiences of Cuban refugees. At the same time, we will use the actual Cuban refugee experience to react to Kunz's abstract model.

CUBA'S EXILES: WAVES OF MIGRATION

Nelson Amaro and Alejandro Portes (1972) portrayed the different phases of the Cuban political immigration as changing over time with the exiles' principal motivation for their decision to leave. With the unfolding of the Cuban revolution, over the years "those who wait" gave way to "those who escape", and they to "those who search". Overall, the Cuban migration is characterized by an inverse correlation between date of departure and social class of the immigrants. To the demographic portrayal of Cubans in the United States, Lourdes Casal (1979) added their changing political attitudes. Based on the collected life stories of hundreds of Cubans, José Llanes (1982) drew 58 composite characters. These composite oral histories served to preserve the human dramas of the personal histories.

On the Heels of the Revolutionary Transformation

Typical of the first phase of the immigration were "those who wait". Although beginning with the success of the Cuban revolution in 1959 and the exit of the *Batistianos*, the exodus of political immigrants really took force with Cuba's October 1960 nationalization of industries. In this first phase, those who left were Cuba's elite. These upper and upper-middle classes were not tied to Batista's government but were bound to a political and economic structure that, Amaro and Portes underlined, was completely interpenetrated by the demands and initiative of American capital:

These executives and owners of firms, big merchants, sugarmill owners, manufacturers, cattlemen, representatives of foreign companies and established professionals, were those most acquainted with the United States' political and economic guardianship of Cuba, under which they had created or maintained their position, and thus were the least given to believe that the American government would permit the consolidation of a socialist regime in the Island (Amaro and Portes, 1972:10).

Hence, amidst the economic and diplomatic war that ensued between Cuba and the U.S. in 1960 (Schreiber, 1973), they decided to leave.

Kunz (1973:131-135) classified the flight pattern of refugees into two kinetic types: anticipatory versus acute refugee movements. Anticipatory refugees are those who leave the country in apprehension of the future, often goaded by economic restrictions that, to them, foretell of future political restrictions. Often knowledgeable regarding the country of settlement, anticipatory refugees manage to depart before the political situation has deteriorated to such an extent as to impede their orderly departure. In acute refugee movements, by contrast, the refugees flee either in mass or, if the political situation obstructs their departure, in bursts of individual or group escapes. As Kunz stressed, the emphasis is on achieving escape — to anywhere that can grant safety. Over the course of more than twenty years, and distinct waves of migration, Cuban refugees left Cuba both in anticipatory and acute refugee movements.

The refugees of this first wave clearly came to the United States in an anticipatory refugee movement, spurred by Cuba's nationalization of American industry, agrarian reform laws, and the United States' severance of diplomatic and economic ties with Cuba. All of these entailed personal losses for the refugees and filled them with foreboding. As Amaro and Portes (1972) underscored, these first refugees came imagining that exile would be temporary — waiting for the "inevitable" American reaction and help to overthrow Cuba's new government. In this first stage the exile's political activity was intensely militant, supporting military counterrevolution against Cuba. Of these, Bay of Pigs was the largest; certainly, the most tragic.

Amaro and Portes judged that this first phase of the Cuban exile ended with the fiasco of the "freedom fighters" April 1961 invasion of Cuba. Those who waited inside Bay of Pigs itself for the United States' promised air cover waited in vain.

With the hindsight that time provides, today we can see that at Bay of Pigs what nineteen years later would constitute two different refugee "vintages" came face to face. The "freedom fighters", and the compatriots that lent them support in exile, returned to Cuba to overthrow Castro's government due to their total loss of faith in Castro's revolution (*See*, Llanes, 1982:64). On Cuban soil, those who fought against them, and the supporters who applauded

them, defended Cuba due to their total faith in Castro's revolution. Nineteen years later, some of the defenders escaped on the flotilla exodus from Mariel. Among Cubans in the United States, the first and last waves of refugees live side by side as two sharply contrasting refugee "vintages". For them, as Kunz (1973:137) pointed out, the date of departure from Cuba "signifies the bona fide" of their "political *credo*". As Kunz also expected, they tend to blame each other for having left too soon or stayed too late.

The failure of the Bay of Pigs further consolidated the revolution; Castro announced for the first time that he was a Marxist-Leninist. The exodus doubled. "Those who escape" constituted the second phase. It lasted from April 1961 to October 1962, when the regular flights that had brought the immigrants from Havana to Miami ceased due to the threat of nuclear war that the Cuban Missile Crisis posed. As Amaro and Portes noted, the inverse relationship between date of emigration and social class in Cuba began to show. Still largely a middle-class exodus, now it was more middle than upper: middle merchants and middle management, landlords, middle-level professionals, and a considerable number of skilled unionized workers. Members of the economic elite that had earlier been reluctant to leave also departed. Their decision to leave, stressed Amaro and Portes (1972:11), corresponded not to an attitude of patiently waiting to overthrow Castro, but of wanting to escape a new order they were increasingly convinced was stable, whose end was "neither certain nor immediate".

The immigrants of the first two phases, they stressed, were not so much "pulled" by the attractiveness of the new society as "pushed" by the internal political process of the old. When the private universities and schools began to close in 1961, the fear of having the children educated by the state became prevalent (See, Llanes, 1982:23-24). Over 14,000 children arrived alone, sent by their parents, who feared their loss of parental authority to the state (Walsh, 1971). "What began as a trickle", wrote Richard Fagen *et al.* (1968:62), "was, by the middle of 1962, a small flood". By this time 153,534 Cubans had registered with the Cuban Refugee Center (Casal, 1979; *cf.*, Clark, 1975).

Table 1 shows the higher class origin of Cuban refugees in the early years of the exodus. Richard Fagen, Richard Brody, and Thomas O'Leary (1968), using a sample of Cuban refugees that the Cuban Refugee Emergency Center in Miami assisted from 1961 to 1962, showed that, in comparison with the over-all occupational distribution of Cuba at the Census of 1953, the occupational distribution of Cuban refugees in these early years was top heavy. The exodus overrepresented the professional, managerial and middle classes, 31 percent, as well as the clerical and sales workers, 33 percent; it underrepresented the skilled, semi-skilled and agricultural workers. Likewise, the educational level of the Cuban refugees was much higher than that of the Cuban population. While only 1 percent of Cuban adults had a college education, over 12 percent of the early exiles did.

With breathtaking speed, and in response to myriad exigencies, in a couple of years the Cuban revolution moved through distinct phases. Nelson Amaro (1977) captured them in flight: democracy, humanism, nationalism, socialism, and Marxist-Leninism. The punitive policy of the United States at this time probably aided the rapidity of this transition: cutting the sugar quota, instituting a trade embargo, and backing the exiles' invasion of Cuba. Amidst this swift progression, some dissented at one point, some at others — too swift a transition to create distinctly different refugee vintages. All who left were labeled counterrevolutionaries.

In these early phases of the Cuban refugee migration, the Cuban Refugee Program was initiated and institutionalized. In only a few years, the program assisted over 68,000 persons — 58 percent of the refugees in Miami (Amaro and Portes, 1972:11).

Casal judged that after the massive failure of the organized invasion, exile political activity fragmented into "uncoordinated acts" of hostility against the Cuban government: infiltrating, sabotaging, and fostering internal dissent. After the Cuban Missile Crisis, the role of the U.S. Coast Guard turned to stern prevention of these raids (Clark, 1974:184). Casal observed that although the "highly belligerent" counterrevolutionary movements of the first two phases never actively engaged all exiles, they did draw on the financial or moral support of most. Cubans in exile hoped for Castro's overthrow and for their own return to Cuba.

Kunz (1981) distinguished various refugee types according to the strength of their identification with the society they left behind. The vast majority of Cuban refugees have always been what Kunz termed majority-identified refugees, people who "identify themselves enthusiastically with the nation, though not with its government" (1981:42-43). Hence, the exiles of the early years spoke of "the revolution betrayed", and supported the core groups of revolutionary activities, such as the Bay of Pigs' "freedom fighters" or "Alpha '66". But, as Casal said,

As these organizations failed to reach their goal — and the international situation plus the internal consolidation of the Cuban regime made it progressively more unlikely that they would — the Cuban communities became disenchanted with such activities and withdrew their support (Casal, 1979:121).

Kunz (1981: 45-46) also distinguished various refugee types according to their ideological-national orientation while in exile. Kunz's labels for the various ways in which one can be an exile constitute an effort to delineate the types: the Restoration Activists, the Passive Hurt, the Integration Realists, the Eager Assimilationsist, the Revolutionary Activists, and the Founders of Utopias. For example, the Revolutionary Activists can be distinguished by the singleminded way they "subjugate matters of family and chances of long

TABLE 1
OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF CUBAN IMMIGRANTS AT THE TIME OF ARRIVAL
IN THE UNITED STATES COMPARED TO THE CUBAN POPULATION IN 1953

	YEAR OF ARRIVAL								
	1953 Cuban Census	1959 — 1962 ^a	1962 — 1965 ^b	1965 — 1966 ^a	1967 ^a	1970 ^c	1971 ^c	1973 1974 ^d	1980 ^e
Pre-Exile Occupations									
Professional, Technical, Managerial	9.2	31.0	18.1	21.0	18.0	12.4	13.1	10.1	11.2
Clerical, Sales	13.7	33.0	11.7	31.5	35.5	30.2	27.0	24.6	6.6
Skilled		17.0		22.0	26.0	25.2	23.2	22.3	25.5
Semiskilled, Unskilled,	27.2	8.0	49.0	11.5	8.0	16.0	18.6	12.3	45.4
Service	8.3	7.0	10.5	9.0	8.5	9.0	8.9	26.4	4.8
Agriculture, Fishing	41.6	4.0	10.7	5.0	4.0	7.2	9.2	4.3	6.5
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	1,938,228	27,419	10,632	17,124	14,867	14,755	12,350	586	5,809

SOURCES: a) Fagen *et al.* (1968), Table 7.1.

b) Casal (1979), Table 1.

c) Aguirre (1976), Table 2.

d) Adapted from Portes *et al.* (1977), Table 6.

e) Adapted from Bach (1980), Table 1 and Bach *et al.* (1981/1982), Table 6.

term resettlement" to the purposes they set out to achieve; the Eager Assimilationists, on the other hand, may engage in a "hyperactive search for assimilation and the achievement of material success" as a way to forget their guilt and their past (Kunz, 1981: 46). At present, we cannot give evidence of the existence of these exile types among Cuban refugees, because most studies have either concentrated on the social and demographic characteristics of the refugees, or have only sounded the exiles' attitudes towards the revolution (*e.g.*, Fagen *et al.*, 1968; Fox, 1971). A serious dearth of studies of attitudes exists for a community whose attitudes led them to the consequential and irreparable decision to leave their home.

Still, it is important to realize, as Kunz proposed, that while these "solutions" to the problem of exile may be found side by side, most individuals "pass through these role-phases from their day of flight, progressing and regressing" throughout their exile careers (Kunz, 1981:46).

I would like to propose that passage through these different role phases may be facilitated by specific historical or personal events. For example, it seems fair to suppose that the failure of Bay of Pigs promoted many of the early Revolutionary Activists to become either Eager Assimilationists or to retire as Passive Hurt. Only future research that relies on oral histories and personal autobiographies can lend support to Kunz's typology and my hypothesis. The very life of Lourdes Casal, however, attests to various exile role passages and to diametrically opposed ways of shouldering the felt sense of historic responsibility which exile can entail. In her attempt to express her strong identification with Cuba and to solve her personal problem of exile, from her early days as an active member of the counterrevolutionary "Alpha '66", to her last days as an active supporter of the Cuban revolution, Casal traversed many exile roles (For the ideological itinerary expressed in her writings, *See*, Institute of Cuban Studies, 1982).

Escape as Escape Can

After the October Missile Crisis, the flights ceased, forcing the migration rate to slow down. The U.S. provided direct transportation only for the more than 1,000 prisoners from the Bay of Pigs fiasco and their relatives. The Cuban government exchanged the prisoners for vital needs: medicine, medical and surgical equipment, food, and money. During this period, other Cubans that arrived had either previously stayed in other countries, or had escaped Cuba illegally in boats and rafts to the shores of Key West. Francisco Mateo, one of Llanes' composite characters, crossed the 90 miles between Cuba and Key West on a small rowboat:

Some of the people who left from Mariel (in 1980) took twenty hours to cross the distance in a motorboat. We took twenty days in 1962, my

family and me, in a boat with three oars and holes... You tell me how eight people could leave on an eight-foot rowboat and expect to get anywhere. Across the Miami Causeway maybe, but not those stinking, treacherous ninety miles. God was with us. There is no other answer (Llanes, 1982:19).

This phase of the exodus, as well as the Camarioca flotilla exodus that initiated the next major wave, clearly correspond to what Kunz termed acute refugee movements, where refugees fly in mass or burst in individual or group escapes. Ultimately, however, the validity of Kunz's distinction between anticipatory and acute refugee movements lies in Kunz's expectation that, in the long run, both the selectivity of participation and the flight patterns would affect refugee outcomes.

At present, the body of research that exists on Cuban exiles can serve to demonstrate the selectivity of participation by giving evidence, as we do here, of the changing social and demographic characteristics of the exiles overtime, and linking these to the changing phases of the Cuban revolution. To date, no study of Cubans in exile has addressed the question of whether the flight patterns of refugees, anticipatory vs. acute, hold psychological consequences for the lives of exiles. Expecting that past experiences and aspirations would have effects on subsequent behavior, Kunz hypothesized that acute refugee movements would tend to heighten the refugees' emotions, intensifying their previous identification with or alienation from their homeland (Kunz, 1981:49). Future research should address whether, in both the short and long run, flight patterns hold psychological consequences. As Rose highlighted, few social scientists have turned their attention to the sociology of exile, and even those few "rarely have delved into the social and psychological ramifications of those affected" by refugee migration and resettlement (Rose, 1981:11).

During this phase of the exodus, as Table 1 shows, the proportion of professionals declined to 18.1 percent, and that of clerical and sales workers more than halved, to 11.7 percent. Close to half of the arrivals, 49.0 percent, were blue-collar workers, skilled and unskilled. And for the only time in what was to become twenty years of migration, agricultural workers and fishermen constituted over 10 percent. Cuba's introduction of food rationing and compulsory military service in 1962 and 1963 probably account for the change in the exodus. Altogether, from October 1962 to November 1965, the Cuban Refugee Emergency Center registered 29,962 Cubans.

Freedom Flights and the Revolutionary Offensive

In the Fall of 1965, a chaotic period ensued that previewed the 1980 wave of immigrants. Hundreds of boats left from Miami for the Cuban port of

Camarioca, where they picked up relatives to come to the United States. In two months, this acute refugee exodus brought about 4,993 Cubans to the U.S., until the United States and Cuban governments completed the negotiations for the orderly air bridge that began in December 1965 (Clark, 1975:86).

In Amaro and Portes' (1972) view, "those who search" characterized the next major wave of the Cuban migration that resumed in 1965. In response to President Lyndon Johnson's "open door" policy, the Cuban exodus was organized and concerted. The "freedom flights" from Varadero to Miami brought Cubans that the Cuban Refugee Program swiftly processed and relocated throughout the United States. Excluding the newcomers of 1980, 40 percent of Cubans in the United States arrived through this air bridge. After 8 years, in 1973, both the flights and the Refugee Program were phased out. When the refugee airlift closed, thousands of flights had brought more than a quarter of a million persons. Throughout the years of the freedom flights, the Cuban Refugee Emergency Center registered 264,297 Cubans.

Throughout this period, the Memorandum of Understanding regulated the immigrants' departure. The joint agreement of the United States and Cuban governments decided that relatives of exiles already living in the United States should have priority: first husbands and wives, next parents, and then siblings (Thomas, 1967). Both governments compiled their master lists of those who claimed and who were claimed, and jointly decided who would emigrate. Sparked by the acute refugee movement of Camarioca, the joint policy of the United States and Cuban governments turned this long wave of Cuban emigration into an anticipatory refugee movement. Cuba barred from exit young men of military service age (15 to 26), as well as professionals, technical and skilled workers whose exit would cause "a serious disturbance" in delivering social services or in production (Clark, 1975:89-90). To the Cuban revolution, initially the exodus proved erosive.

With this phase of the migration, the exodus of the upper and upper-middle classes largely came to an end. This wave of immigration was largely working class and "petit bourgeois": employees, independent craftsmen, small merchants, skilled and semi-skilled workers. Over time, Amaro and Portes judged (1972:13), the political exile increasingly became an economic exile as "those who search" searched for greater economic opportunities than were provided in a socialist society that substituted a new ethic of sacrificing consumption to achieve collective goals for the older ethic of individual consumption goals.

Without doubt, these were the leanest years of the Cuban revolution. The impact of the hemispheric trade embargo imposed by the Organization of American States in 1964 resulted in a spare parts crisis and other economic dislocations (Schreiber, 1973). The exodus amounted to a drainage of technical and administrative skills. And Cuba failed in her attempts to cease being a sugar monoculture, industrialize, and diversify. Amaro and Portes (1972:13)

judged that the impossibility of realizing economic aspirations characterized this phase of the migration: "Increasingly, the emigration ceases to be a political act and becomes an economic act." Although *de jure* the new immigrants were considered political immigrants, Amaro and Portes affirmed that *de facto* they increasingly came to resemble "the classic immigrant", whose origins are in the lower social classes of his country, seeking better economic opportunities overseas in a developed country. Contrary to the earlier immigrants, whom the Cuban revolutionary transformation "pushed", Amaro and Portes considered that the legendary attraction of American opportunity "pulled" the immigrants of this phase. Yet their distinction misses the reality that while life in Cuba grew harsh for all, it turned bitter for those who had announced their dissent by declaring their desire to leave. Antonio Chacón, one of Llanes' composite characters, had sent his children to the United States in the beginning of the exodus and applied to leave Cuba in 1962. When he finally arrived in 1966, he was suffering from malnutrition, diabetes, and high blood pressure:

We had applied for an exit permit. This meant that I would lose my job at the newspaper. We had planned for a few months of unemployment. It was unavoidable... Then, slam. The door closed and I was inside. Unemployed. We finally left in 1966. Can you imagine that? Four years knocking around doing "volunteer work" on weekends in order to get the food allowance. We lost our belongings. Everything we owned was sold or traded for food. We ended up living with my friend Jacobo, who took us in at great risk. I lost eighty pounds in those four years (Llanes, 1982:93-94).

The political and economic transformation the Cuban revolution effected was so pervasive that it always "pushed" Cubans. America, in facilitating the migration, always "pulled" them. Moreover, the Cuban migration is unique in the extent to which both the United States and Cuban governments organized, concerted, and facilitated the exodus (Tabori, 1972:348). Together, I argued, they set in motion a system of political migration (Pedraza-Bailey, forthcoming).

Within the Cuban community in the United States, during this period the immigrants gradually depoliticized. As Casal (1979:121) noted, the militant anti-Castro organizations drew progressively fewer participants, and "among the majority of exiles, private issues such as job training and improvement of living standards took precedence over participation in political activities". Indeed, the immigrants became American: sought to acculturate and to compete successfully. For many, the myth of the return gradually lost its compelling force. As Kunz (1973:133) specified, when the refugee realizes "that the doors are closed behind him" he begins to take the steps that change him "from a temporary refugee into an exile".

Now Cubans came to be a heterogeneous group, varying widely in their social class origin. The former social distinctions were perpetrated and reenacted in exile, often with little bearing to their life in America. Those who had belonged to the five most exclusive yacht and country clubs in Havana founded another in Miami, in nostalgia dubbed "The Big Five". Cubans of working-class origin remain outsiders to these attempts to recreate once enviable social positions: a golden past that was not theirs, but which with increased distance in time, seems to grow only more golden.

At the start of the migration in the early 1960s, 31 percent of the Cubans who arrived in the United States were professionals or managers. By 1970, as Table 1 shows, only 12 percent were professionals or managers. More than half the arrivals, 57 percent, were blue-collar, service, or agricultural workers. While Cuban exiles are clearly heterogeneous, their celebrated "success story" obscures it. It particularly serves to obscure the many Cuban poor.

Casal (1979:116) emphasized the costs of the "success story": it prevents Cubans from getting "a clear picture" of their true situation; it desensitizes them and others to the hidden costs of "success"; and it isolates Cubans from other American minorities. She went on to add:

Other information, gleaned from the 1970 Census and the U.S. Budget, documents the darker side of the story. For instance, one out of five metropolitan Cubans lives in an area designated as "low-income" by the Census Bureau. Again, there are wide regional variations; more than half the Cubans in Newark and Boston inhabit such areas. As another instance, at the end of 1972, 90,700 persons were receiving financial or medical assistance under the Cuban Refugee Program (Casal, 1979:118).

Many of these Cubans on assistance were elderly refugees who arrived in the United States too old to remake their lives. Still, the Cuban poor are evident in many neighborhoods of Miami's Southwest. But not only are they hidden from the view of Americans, Cubans also tend to hide them from themselves. Thus Jorge Domínguez (1975:4-5) concluded that:

Although there seems to be a certain correlation between those who are less hostile in their attitudes toward the revolution and those who are concerned about social inequality among Cubans, there is a great deal more of the former than the latter. Social action groups aimed at helping black Cubans, elderly Cubans, and, in general, those Cubans that look upon the success of their co-immigrants with a sigh, are extremely limited. This cleavage is very real and too latent.

Spain's refugees arrived next. With the end of the "freedom flights" from Cuba to the United States, the next wave of immigrants that arrived from

1973 to 1975 consisted of refugees that had first lived in Spain. Hoping to come to their relatives in America, they had waited in Spain for immigrant visas to the United States. Their arrival was delayed because the 1965 amendments to the Immigration and Nationality Act imposed a ceiling of 120,000 immigrants from all countries of the Western Hemisphere that went into effect in 1968. From 1968 to 1974, therefore, Cubans who wished to leave the island increasingly went to Spain. Finally, in October 1973, in yet another anticipatory refugee movement, special family reunification provisions allowed Cubans from Spain to enter the United States.

Alejandro Portes, Juan Clark, and Robert Bach (1977) interviewed a sample of 590 male heads of family from this migration soon after their arrival. They found, as Table 1 shows, a different occupational distribution than earlier exiles. These émigrés represented Cuba's "middling service sectors" (Portes *et al.*, 1977:15). Throughout the 1960s, the proportion of émigrés from the service sector had ranged from 7 to 10 percent. Now that rate more than doubled, 26 percent of the immigrants came from the service occupations: cooks, gardeners, domestics, street vendors, shoe shiners, barbers, hairdressers, taxi drivers, small retail merchants.

They had left Cuba during the period when, nearly a decade after the triumph of the revolution, Castro launched a new "revolutionary offensive" in Cuba, confiscating 55,636 small businesses that were still privately owned (Mesa-Lago, 1978). With this last wave of nationalization, all industrial, trade, and service activity passed into the hand of the state. Of all socialist countries, Cuba then held the highest percentage of state-owned property. Only the small farmer prevailed: to this day 30 percent of agricultural activity remains in private hands.

The interviews of Portes *et al.*, (1977:17) suggest that "concern with the long-term continuation of political and economic limitations rather than with short-term shortages was the decisive factor for many" as they left. From 1968 on, both the émigrés who came directly to the United States on the freedom flights and the émigrés who first needed to go to Spain responded to the push of the "revolutionary offensive". This last wave of nationalization in Cuba pushed, in disproportionate numbers, the little entrepreneur and his employees.

As Kunz (1973:137) proposed, refugee "vintages" are "each distinctly different in character, background and avowed political faith". Hence, refugee "vintages" may or may not be the same as waves. Kunz expected that in anticipatory refugee movements, "vintages" would more often equal waves, while acute refugee movements would more often unite different "vintages" in a burst of escape that would arrive in the new country of settlement as a wave. Yet, the second major wave of the Cuban exodus contradicts Kunz's expectation.

The joint policy of the United States and Cuban governments turned this

second wave into a coordinated and orderly anticipatory refugee movement, exodus that lasted for eight years. This wave thus united refugees whose social background and process of political disaffection contrasted sharply. This wave included Antonio Chacón, who had come to define his fate as unacceptable during the years of the first wave and had then sent his children into exile, but on whose face the door slammed as the result of the Cuban Missile Crisis. This wave also included people who scarcely minded the economic and political changes the revolution wrought in 1960, the agrarian reform or the nationalization of American industry, but whom the 1968 "revolutionary offensive" dispossessed and offended. By and large, the refugees of this last "vintage" believed in the promises of the revolution until the Cuban government labelled them "parasites" and took over their small business holdings. Given both American and Cuban migration policies, they arrived in the United States as they could — either on the "freedom flights" of the second wave or after a temporary stay of some years in Spain. Hence, we need to note that anticipatory refugee movements may be created by coordinated state policies, and that they may catch distinct "vintages" in their trail.

The Dialogue: A Brief Collaboration

The decade of the seventies witnessed the institutionalization of the revolution in Cuba and the assimilation of the exiles in America.

In Cuba, with the economic transition to socialism effected, the government cast the shape of the political system (Mesa-Lago, 1978). Although created in 1965, the new Cuban Communist Party held its First Congress in 1975, the hallmark of the process of institutionalization. The new Constitution of 1976 aimed to provide support for the consolidated and expanded party structure and the new legal codes. In many ways, the old idealism and romanticism of the 1960s gave way to what Carmelo Mesa-Lago called pragmatism. The failure of the mobilization of workers to cut the 10 million tons of sugar planned for 1970 promoted the revolution to enter this new phase. Cuba reintroduced material incentives, wage differentials, and cost-benefit analysis in an effort to promote greater productivity and capital accumulation, economic growth that would deliver Cubans from scarcity. In the sixties, trade unions, their role neglected, had virtually disappeared. Now unions were restructured, garnering some vitality; other mass organizations, such as the Organs of People's Power, took form. With increasing institutionalization, Cuba increasingly took on the features of Eastern European communism (*cf.*, Roca, 1977; Bernardo, 1977).

For the vast majority of Cubans in the United States, throughout these years the issue continued to be life in America. Yet that very stability, and cultural impact on the young who lived face to face with "the sixties" in

America, gave birth to an increased ideological pluralism, "denser" than that which had always existed though obscured by the uniform rejection of Cuba. As Casal (1979:128) observed, "the Cuban community is not monolithic now (if it ever was)".

Among other splits, such as social class and waves of migration, the Cuban community is certainly cleft by age, by generations. Without doubt, a generation gap exists among all generations. But this gap reflects more than that; it is the difference between political generations. Karl Mannheim (1952) conceived of generations as the common location in the historical dimension of the social process that limits individuals to a specific range of potential experiences during their youth — a stratification of experience that shapes a frame of reference for the future. Among Cuban exiles, the gap between the political generations which came of age during certain critical periods of Cuban history, and that which came of age, American, under the impact of the Civil Rights and anti-Vietnam War movements, is often a chasm.

It was 55 progressive young people that, in December 1977, first broke through 19 years of hostility, abuse, and isolation. Grouped as the Antonio Maceo Brigade, their visit throughout the island left behind a profound mark. Cuba filmed it: "55 *Hermanos*" (55 Brothers and Sisters) captured their search for cultural identity; for some, for political identity. Widely shown in Cuba, it proved heartrending: evidence of the suffering that exile brought for those who left and who were left behind.

In November of 1978 an unprecedented meeting took place. President Castro met with representatives of the Cuban community in exile, and with them engaged in a give and take of ideas and proposals that came to be known as The Dialogue. Impossible as it is to know Castro's ulterior political and economic motives, it is sensible to assume that, for whatever reasons, at that time Castro was seeking an economic and political rapprochement with both the United States and the Cuban-American community. Whatever Castro's motives may have been, the importance of the Dialogue rests in that it bore multiple fruits. The Cuban government agreed to release 3,000 political prisoners plus 600 others caught trying to escape from Cuba illegally; to promote the reunification of families by allowing Cuban families rent apart in the early years of the revolution to reunite with their relatives in America; and to recognize the right of Cubans in the United States to visit their homeland.

All at once, the counterrevolutionaries, *gusanos* (worms) of yesterday, respectfully became "members of the Cuban community abroad". Immediately, the release of political prisoners began. Gradually they arrived, until 3,600 political prisoners were released. In January 1979, the return visits of Cuban exiles commenced. Twenty years of revolution, and twenty years of emigration issued a sincere common effort. Whatever the future may hold,

that is already part of Cuban history.

The Cuban community split into the opposing camps of those who supported and opposed the Dialogue; those who returned and refused to visit Cuba. Still, in the year 1979 alone, over 100,000 Cubans returned to Cuba.

The significance of the Dialogue was not lost on the right-wing Cuban terrorists. After some years of aimless violence, a fresh wave of terrorism surged with a clearer aim: two Cubans that endorsed the reopening to Cuba were murdered (Casal, 1979; Stein, 1979). Yet their spite could not undo the reunification so many achieved. Those reunions were partly responsible for the next mass exodus.

THE MARIEL EXODUS

After the refugees from Spain arrived, the flow of Cuban refugees halted for many years. Only the political prisoners released by the Cuban government gradually arrived. With the increasing institutionalization of the Cuban revolution, and the increasing assimilation of Cuban immigrants in America, few expected the next turn. The chaotic flotilla exodus in the Spring of 1980 belied many expectations.

Initiated in April by those who asked for political asylum at the Peruvian Embassy, within days it grew massive. When this acute refugee exodus ceased some months later, it had brought approximately 125,000 more Cubans to America. Unlike other waves of migration, this one lacked order and process. From Miami, thousands of boats manned by relatives sped across the 90 miles of sea to Cuba's Mariel Harbor. At times they succeeded in bringing their families, other times they brought whomever angry officials put on the boats. Towards the end, this included their social undesirables: many who were imprisoned in asylums, or homosexuals, irrespective of their desire to leave the country. Right from the start, therefore, this wave of refugees included two types of persons: those who left and those who were sent.

In Cuba, these "antisocial elements", this "scum", as the government called them, represented a large public slap in the face: no longer the immigrants of the transition from capitalism to communism, but of communism itself. In America they arrived in the throes of an ambivalent government policy that scarcely knew if it wanted them, and attitudes that evidenced an antipathy towards the refugees solidly rooted in a declining economy.

After twenty years of celebrating the achievements of Cuban exiles, the press contributed to their damaging portrayal. It focused on the criminals, the homosexuals, the many blacks: categories of people to whom Americans accord too little respect. Who are the latest immigrants? Are they "scum"?

To dispel the more damaging and inaccurate portrayals, Robert Bach

(1980) studied their characteristics. Among the most salient was the visibly higher proportion of blacks than ever. Approximately 40 percent of the Mariel refugees were black Cubans, a sharp contrast with the previous immigrants (Bach, 1980; Bach *et al.*, 1981/1982).

Despite their differences, common to all waves of Cuban immigrants prior to this one was that they were predominantly white. With a Caribbean history of plantation slavery, Cuba is a multiracial society: the 1953 Cuban Census put the proportion black at 27 percent. Yet, while throughout the decade of the sixties the occupational distribution of Cuban refugees became more representative of Cuban society, "paradoxically", said Benigno Aguirre (1976:105), Cuban blacks "participated less in it".

In Cuba, like in much of the Caribbean, social class and race overlapped in the extreme. So that Cubans valued whiteness as tantamount to beauty, status, and honor. Contrary to American practice, color gradations had meaning, particularly when buttressed by income and authority. Despite the coincidence of race and class, while the social class level of the Cuban migration dropped, for 15 years the immigrants remained overwhelmingly white. While data on race is not available for the early waves of migration, it can be inferred by the change in the proportion of black Cubans in the U.S. The U.S. 1960 Census showed that 6.5 percent of Cubans were black; the 1970 Census showed only 2.6 percent. As Casal (1980:15) noted, "this suggests that almost all the Cuban émigrés to the U.S. during this intercensal period — half a million — must have been white". In addition, 95 percent of the refugees that arrived from Spain in 1973-1975 were white (Portes *et al.*, 1977:9). Yet the differential migration of the Cuban races up to this time was quite explainable. Two different social processes, Aguirre (1976) concluded, were at work.

At the outset, the revolution pulled out the power from under the upper classes, which had deliberately excluded blacks from their midst. The immigration proceeded through the chain of extended family and friends, further selecting whites. In addition, the migration policy of the United States and Cuba contributed to blacks being excluded. From 1965 on, the exodus was regulated by the Memorandum of Understanding between the two countries, both of which gave priority to close relatives of Cubans already in the United States. This policy unwittingly excluded Cuban blacks from the possibility of emigrating.

The Cuban revolution eradicated the old and blatant forms of racial discrimination in Cuba, and actively sought to incorporate blacks into the mainstream of the revolution. Aguirre (1976:112-114) stressed that the "ideological climate" in Cuba accentuated two themes: that socialism in promoting egalitarianism, eradicated racism; and that the United States is a racist society incapable of eradicating racial discrimination, tied as it is to capitalist exploitation.

But not only revolutionary ideology prevented blacks from emigrating. Blacks in Cuba did benefit from the revolution. Cuba never had a body of laws that explicitly condemned blacks to the denigrating inequality that Jim Crow laws worked in the U.S.; and Cuban culture was an amalgam of white and black cultural traditions, a "creolization" that Orlando Patterson (1976) notes is peculiar to Caribbean societies. Yet pre-revolutionary Cuba excluded blacks from the pinnacles of society: yacht and country clubs, the best resort beaches, hotels, and private schools reserved for the elite.

One of the first acts of the revolution was to make these exclusive facilities public, available to all, regardless of color or wealth. In addition to such palpable gestures, the Cuban government promoted new opportunities for blacks in employment and education, filling administrative positions, and providing scholarships to study at the university. The place of blacks in Cuban history was also recognized, honoring their contributions. As many others, Richard Fagen (1977:188) noted that the race problem in Cuba was "a boon to Castro". The revolutionaries found it extremely useful for discrediting the old social order. With the "instant liberation" of blacks "tens of thousands of disadvantaged Cubans were recruited into the ranks of revolutionary enthusiasts".

Given the confluence of migration policy, ideological themes, and real benefits, the low proportion of blacks in the earlier exodus was explainable. Why then such a large presence in the last wave? Past studies suggest several possibilities. As early as 1971, Geoffrey Fox (1971:21) remarked that "almost all those emigrating today are among the poorer classes in Cuba, the very people in whose name the revolution was made", blacks included. To study "the defections of the sans-culottes", Fox interviewed fifty working-class émigrés in Chicago. Both for white and black workers he concluded, the salience of race in the revolution predisposed them to leave, for it created role strain: both felt unequal to the new expectations. White workers perceived that the revolution displayed favoritism towards blacks; blacks felt that it suffered from tokenism.

Another possibility lies in the persistence of racial prejudice in Cuba (Casal, 1980:20), attitudes which, despite the government's attempts to eradicate discrimination, Cuban blacks might have sensed as real, denying the changes effected. In pre-revolutionary Cuba, both individual and institutional forms of discrimination were condoned. Under the revolution, all institutional forms of discrimination were abolished; all individual forms of discrimination condemned. Access to the mainstream of society in educational and occupational opportunities, administrative posts, and political participation was a reality. Yet at the same time, while discrimination as a set of practices of individuals and institutions died, racism (and sexism) as a set of cultural beliefs, as an ideology that defines superiority, beauty, and worth, still lives.

The twin concepts of prejudice and discrimination guide social science research on race and ethnic relations. Until very recently, Joe Feagin and Douglas Eckberg (1980) pointed out, the underlying model was prejudice-causes-discrimination. With this assumption, "analysts seek to reduce bigotry as a means of reducing discrimination", thereby ignoring the economic and political context within which prejudice exists (1980:5). While this is certainly problematic, the Cuban experience presents us with another predicament. With discrimination eradicated why should prejudiced attitudes persist? Perhaps the answer lies in what Max Weber (1978) pointed to so long ago: whatever their origins, attitudes, once established, take on "a life of their own".

Another possibility is that while discrimination can be eliminated and equality promoted by government decree, only social movements touch consciousness (Safilios-Rothschild, 1974:9-10). Initiated from below, to those participating in a social movement, politics is personal (*cf.*, Evans, 1980). People who constitute a movement are reaching for a goal of personal change for themselves, in their own lives, as well as social change. A successful social movement is the point of intersection between personal change and social change. Then attitudes change. There are limits to what can be achieved by fiat.

Last, it is also possible that the pattern of race relations changed so considerably in twenty years of revolution, that the émigrés, overwhelmingly young, were hardly conscious of their race, and their motive for migration lay elsewhere.

Whatever role their race may have played in the decision to emigrate, black Cubans will find their steps uncertain in America. As blacks, they will not be fully accepted by whites; among blacks, they will be Cubans, with all the skepticism that permeates bonds among minorities still.

What else characterized the Mariel refugees? Most important are their former occupations. Based on Bach's studies, Table 1 shows the overall picture for the 1980 immigrants, both those processed in South Florida and in the military camps. As Bach, *et al.*, (1981/1982:39) observed, "most were from the mainstream of the Cuban economy". They are hardly "scum".

The number of professionals who left, 11.2 percent, was very similar to their proportion throughout the 1970s. Among them, teachers appeared most frequently. Accountants, entertainers, urban planners, architects and nurses also arrived "at a greater than incidental rate" (Bach *et al.*, 1981/1982:44).

The 1973-74 immigration from Spain was distinct in the high proportion of service workers, 26.4 percent, that resulted from the nationalization of the small commercial sector in the late sixties, when most left Cuba. In 1980, by contrast, service workers as well as clerical and sales workers emigrated at the lowest proportions ever, 4.8 and 6.6 percent. These low figures, however, may reflect the decline in the commercial sector itself (Gugler,

1980). As nearly constant for twenty years of migration, the exodus of agricultural workers was very small. Gastón Fernández (1982) interpreted this as reflecting the improvements in the rural areas during the revolution.

Most salient is that this last exodus was overwhelmingly working class — 70.9 percent were blue-collar workers. Of these, 25.5 percent were craft workers who left at approximately the same proportion for fifteen years. The major difference lies in the large number of semiskilled and unskilled laborers, 45.4 percent. In comparison to the Cuban population, construction and transportation were overrepresented (Bach, *et al.*, 1981/1982:44; Fernández, 1982:200). Fernández judged that their exodus may be partly due to the shifts in government investment patterns to industry, away from the expansion of education and medicine in the 1960s that created and maintained many professionals as well as construction workers. Coupled with the recent economic crises in Cuba that centered on the key industries of sugar and tobacco — “We are traveling through a sea of economic difficulties”, said Castro seven months before the exodus — the discontent of urban workers ran high.

In addition, the return visits of Cuban exiles had an impact. They relinked family whose ties had become loose from twenty years of disuse; and made the scarcity of consumer goods and food less bearable in the face of their comfort. More than any of the previous migration waves, this one might be characterized as “those who hope”.

In the United States, the press focused inordinately on the criminal element. Indeed, there were many who had been in prison. The Cuban government, increasingly angry at the exodus, towards the end of the outflow, dumped prisoners, mental patients, and homosexuals on the boats. The estimates of the Immigration and Naturalization Service are as follows (Montgomery, 1981). Of the 124,789 Mariel refugees, 19.21 percent, or 23,970, had been in jail in Cuba. Of those who had been in prison, 22.89 percent were political prisoners, and 69.71 percent were in jail for minor crimes or acts that were crimes in Cuba but not in the United States. Most of these had served short sentences of 1 to 3 years for robbery, participating in the extensive black market, drugs, vagrancy, refusing to serve in the military or to work for the state, or trying to escape for the United States. The Cuban *Ley de la Peligrosidad* (law of dangerous people) made some forms of dissent “anti-social” behavior, controlled by prison terms (Bach, 1980:43; Bach *et al.*, 1981/1982:46; Fernández, 1982:189). Of those who had been in jail, only 7.4 percent, or 1,774, were serious criminals. In addition, there were approximately 600 mental patients and 1,500 homosexuals (Montgomery, 1981).

Also salient in the 1980 immigrants is their youth. Most of the immigrants were young male adults, single or heads of families who left their wives and children behind. Bach’s (1980:42; 1981/1982:36) studies showed that between 58 and 64 percent of those processed in the South Florida centers were 20 to

34 years old; at the military camps of the Midwest, the median age was 31. At Fort Chaffee, Fernández's (1982:194) study showed nine times as many refugees in the age range 15 to 34 as in the range 45 to 64.

The disproportionate number of the young who left, stressed Fernández (1982:196-197), suggests new generational strains. These generational strains may be the result of the more limited economic and political opportunities available to the young when the older generation of Cubans who made the revolution hold the key posts, as well as of the burden of military service in Cuba and overseas shouldered by the young (*cf.* Díaz-Briquets, 1983).

A year after Bay of Pigs, the revolution consolidated, Maurice Zeitlin (1962) studied the political generations in the Cuban working class. Zeitlin (1962:493) stressed the different political generations formed among Cuban workers as a result of the impact on them of distinct historical experiences, yielding a differential support of the generations for the revolution. Following Mannheim (1952), individuals of approximately the same age who shared, in their coming of age, certain politically relevant experiences constituted a political generation: their political outlook shaped by a specific historical period. Operationalized as those 18 to 25 years of age during five critical periods of Cuban history, Zeitlin identified five political generations, whose attitudes towards the revolution differed. The strongest support for the revolution came from the generation of '53, their consciousness marked by the anti-Batista struggle, generation of the rebel leaders themselves. The two generations that came of age during the 1930s followed, the anti-Machado struggle and "the abortive revolution of the thirties" shaping them (Zeitlin, 1962:505). The lowest support for the revolution came, unexpectedly, from the then current generation of '59, followed by the republican generation of the 1940s. Hence, the historical period in which individuals came to manhood "played a significant role in the formation of the political identities of succeeding generations of Cuban workers", affecting their response to the revolution (Zeitlin, 1962:508).

Because the young are overrepresented in the latest immigrants, we need to think of them also as a political generation one whose coming of age was long after the early revolutionary struggle and sharp social cleavages that demanded great sacrifices but affirmed the loyalty of many. Those 18 to 30 in 1980, roughly half of the immigrants, came of age during the late 1960s or the 1970s. In these later stages of the Cuban revolution, artist debates and problems of freedom of expression, such as the Padilla affair, stood paramount; deviance, particularly homosexuality, was scorned; and new political and social institutions were cemented. In addition, in the late seventies, Cuba turned to a decisive internationalism of military support for struggles in Africa. Comparisons with the years of Batista can no longer serve to promote the consent of a generation that scarcely can remember them.

This last wave of Cuban refugees, therefore, is a significantly different

"vintage" — one whose lived experiences contrast sharply with those of other "vintages". In particular, at the two poles of twenty years of emigration, stand two "vintages" that at best can hardly comprehend one another and at worst may be, as Kunz noted (1973:138-139), hostile. The reason is that over the course of twenty years the dramatic changes the Cuban revolution effected progressed through distinct stages, and these stages interacted with the social characteristics of the refugees to produce markedly different processes of political disaffection. To put it simply, let me give two stark examples. A 1960 émigré, executive, older, male and white, would likely have become disaffected by the nationalization of American industry in the early years of the revolution. But a 1980 émigré, bus driver, young, male and black, would scarcely have minded that nationalization. Instead, he might have spent many years following the professed goals of the revolution, until a bout of prison terms for his participation in the extensive black market of the 1970s promoted his disaffection. Mariano Medina, one of Llanes' composite characters, was a black Cuban and former Army officer that fought in Angola. He spoke of the distance that separated him from the earlier exiles:

I can now see that they feel no ill will toward me and may even want to help me, but they can't help me come to grips with the twenty years I've spent in Cuba. They don't understand how I feel...(Llanes, 1982:170).

What does the future hold for the Mariel immigrants? Still too early to tell, the prospects look dim. Their arrival coincides with a recession, inflation, and particularly unemployment, that sharply contrasts with the land of plenty that welcomed the immigrants of the sixties and early seventies. In addition, the government assistance available to them as "entrants" pales besides the extensive support system found in the Cuban Refugee Program from 1961 to 1973 (Montgomery, 1981). In the Miami "ethnic enclave" Bach (1980:44) was optimistic that many would find jobs, often without the need to learn English, cushioning their adjustment. But, as he also stressed, the change in occupational and educational background in the successive waves of Cuban immigrants affected the Cuban communities in the United States:

The later arrivals have, in a sense, become the working class — lower waged and skilled — for the golden exiles of the 1960s and early 1970s. Thus, there has been a total transplantation of the prerevolutionary Cuban social structure to Miami, with all the implications of unequal wealth, power, and prestige. The recent emigrants will add to the lower strata (Bach, 1980:44-45).

Despite the willing help of many in the Cuban community, many others exhibit a defensive prejudice against the newcomers, "who are not the same

as we were" and may tarnish their reputation. As Kunz (1973:138-139) discerned, "vintages" that are significantly different may remain aloof or be downright hostile.

For all the stress placed on the differences between the latest immigrants and the earlier ones, a gap remains unmentioned. Oscar Handlin (1973) wrote of the immigrants from Europe at the turn of the century, those who came to fashion America. He caught the sadness, despair, and nostalgia of every person that has been uprooted:

Yesterday, by its distance, acquires a happy glow. The peasants look back...and their fancy rejoices in the better days that have passed, when they were on the land and the land was fertile, and they were young and strong, and virtues were fresh. And it was better yet in their fathers' days, who were wiser and stronger than they. And it was best of all in the golden past of their distant progenitors who were every one a king and did great deeds. Alas, those days are gone, that they believed existed, and now there is only the bitter present (Handlin, 1973:98).

Cuban immigrants in America for many years missed Cuba so. But one night in Key West, while speaking with four refugees from Mariel, the difference struck me. While fishing, they listened on the radio to a baseball game being played right then in their hometown in Cuba. The early refugees' nostalgia attached them to the Cuba they knew, that was. The Mariel refugees' is for the Cuba that is.

Differences abound, yet the questions this last wave of refugees raised were the same that for twenty years have framed the debate over the meaning of the Cuban migration. Interpretations of the meaning of the exodus once again polarized into the only two positions that have led that discourse. At one pole, the immigrants were said to be a manifestation of the loss of legitimacy of the Cuban revolution, discrediting it. At the other pole, the immigrants were said to be propelled by the scarcity of consumer goods (*See*, Fernández, 1982). Hence, at one pole the immigrants are political refugees; at the other, economic refugees. Twenty years, and close to a million persons: Are they political or economic immigrants?

Without doubt, the polar answers depend on the different ideological convictions that filter reality. But, in addition, the question is poor. For all societies are simultaneously and inextricably political and economic. Hence, in the perceptions of individuals, political and economic conditions are entangled; particularly in the attitudes that lead to the consequential decision to emigrate from the land of birth. In a society in transition, political disaffection easily results when government policies to change the basic economic allocation dislocate people: they lose their economic, social, and ideological "place". Even in a stable society, lack of economic opportunities

easily results in lack of trust for public leaders. In this sense, Cuba's refugees are, and have always been, both political and economic. But when people grow politically disaffected, even for underlying economic reasons, they can no longer be disposed of as simply economic refugees. Cuba's refugees are, and have always been, fundamentally political. In addition, the states that regulate their exit and arrival define immigrants as political or economic. In the United States, the 1980 Haitian immigrants, who face hearings and possible deportation, underscore the point. In Cuba, all who left were labeled counter-revolutionaries.

We ought, then, to change the question. The meaning of the Cuban exodus, of nearly a million persons over twenty years, ought not to lie in whether they are political or economic refugees - discrediting the revolution or merely embarrassing it. The meaning of the Cuban exodus lies in the role of dissent in society. A society where the only choice possible is to "love it or leave it" provides too few choices.

A truly democratic society is defined not only by its party structure, constitution, delegation of authority, or electoral representation, but principally by its capacity to tolerate and incorporate dissent. Democracy is not only a set of institutions; it is also a set of practices. With applicable reasoning, in *Exit, Voice and Loyalty*, Albert Hirschman (1970) explained that two options exist for customers of a firm (or members of an organization, association, or party) when the quality of what these provide deteriorates: to attempt to change an objectionable state of affairs by using the "voice" of individual or collective actions or protests; or to "exit", withdrawing. If you cannot express your "voice", you "exit". But after exiting, you have lost the opportunity to use your voice to promote recuperation.

Writing of the very first wave of Cuban immigrants in the early 1960s, Richard Fagen *et al.*, (1968:120) judged the exodus to be "one of the more humane solutions to the trauma of change in contemporary Cuba", and issued the following prediction:

Dissatisfaction among certain groups in Cuba will continue, of course, and new sectors will come to view the revolutionary society as less than perfect. But this does not mean that disaffection sufficient to lead to self-imposed exile will result.

That prediction proved false. False, because over two decades the Cuban revolution's only solution to dissent was to externalize it.

When Cuba ceases to externalize its dissenters and begins to provide political channels to express and incorporate their voice, it will become a truly democratic society woven not only by mass mobilization, but also by the mass participation of both those who agree and who disagree. Ultimately, liberty is woven of participation and identity.

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