DEMOCRATIZATION AND MIGRATION: CUBA'S EXODUS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF CIVIL SOCIETY—HINDRANCE OR HELP?

Silvia Pedraza[1]

The collapse of communism in the Soviet Union and the Eastern European countries ushered in a new stage in Cuba, stage which Fidel Castro himself called "a special period." In this period, we have witnessed the emergence of civil society—fragile but nonetheless real. At the same time, the 1990s and the present have also been a period of massive emigration out of Cuba—the migration of *balseros, lancheros,* and visa lottery winners, as well as Cubans who leave and arrive through third countries.

The question that frames this paper, then, is whether this new, massive Cuban exodus is a **hindrance** or a **help** to the development of this new civil society in Cuba. The question can also be posed with the analogy that Albert O. Hirschman (1970) first introduced in his book *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States*. As Hirschman noted, when there is a deterioration in the quality of the benefits or services that a firm, an organization, or a party provides, the *loyalty* of its members is threatened. To promote recuperation, they can then express themselves by using one of two options: they can choose to *exit*—simply leave—or they can use their *voice*—organize, protest. The pattern could be characterized, Hirschman (1986) underlined, as a simple hydraulic model: deterioration generates the pressure of discontent, which will be channeled into *voice* or *exit*. The more pressure escapes through *exit*, the less is available to foment *voice*. But, Hirschman underlined, once having exited they cannot promote recuperation. Hence, the question is whether the new Cuban exodus, massive and seemingly unabated, constitutes the use of the *exit* option to such an extent that it will serve to impede the use of *voice*, which is what is necessary to develop civil society.

Let me first expand both points, regarding civil society and the Cuban exodus. Since civil society is a somewhat ambiguous concept, I follow Victor Pérez-Díaz's (1993) definition in his analysis of the return of civil society to Spain. It entails the existence of associations (whose ends may be political, economic, or purely social) that were created by and are the result of the voluntary participation of its members. Such associations occupy an intermediate position between the individual and the state—for example, the press, media, labor unions, churches, professional associations, and the like. As Pérez-Díaz (1993:57) summed it, civil society "denotes a *type* of society that combines, to one degree or another, markets, voluntary associations, and a public sphere which are outside the direct control, in a full or mitigated sense, of the state." This civil society is what Vaclav Havel (1986) called the "independent life of society."

In Cuba, those intermediate associations effectively ceased to exist as they were either abolished or silenced by a government that, in the beginning years of the revolutionary process, succeeded (due to the enormous popularity of the revolutionary process as well as the enormous charisma of Fidel Castro himself) in making the state the sole arbiter, the sole owner, the sole administrator, the sole judge, and the sole political party, excluding all others from participation. Thereafter, that same government went on to organize some of the intermediate associations—such as, the professional associations, the press, the labor unions—but these lack independence from government; hence, they do not qualify as part of what is here defined as civil society. However, the crisis of the "special period"—crisis which is not only economic but is also a crisis of legitimacy—has spurred the return of civil society in Cuba.

Today, we witness in Cuba the growth of independent journalists ("independent" meaning free of government control and organization), independent professionals, efforts to create an independent labor union, a religious revival of all the churches, independent publications, independent grassroots organizations aimed to solve social problems at the local, micro level of family and town. To Cubans involved in the founding of these organizations, the effort to reconstruct civil society is a deliberate social project that entails what Dagoberto Valdés (1997:104) called moving along two paths: one, "*una renovación de los espíritus*" (a renewal of the hearts and the minds of the people) and, two, reforming the social structure of the society. To Dagoberto Valdés, this social project of reconstructing civil society issues emerges from, and is accompanied by, a Christian humanism. To others, it is a project in which they participate due to their ethical and philosophical convictions, in the absence of religious beliefs. To all in Cuba today who consciously participate in reconstructing civil society, civil society is the *sine qua non* of a democratic transition, and is also the guarantee of a democratic future in which all Cubans of all political convictions can participate (See Valdés 1997: 130).

The new Cuban exodus has been both unregulated and regulated. The unregulated exodus consisted of the exodus of the *balseros*, which peaked in the summer of 1994 when over 34,000 Cubans were rescued at sea by the U. S. Coast Guard and taken to Guantánamo to live in camps, while awaiting processing to come to the United States over a couple of years. As a consequence of this crisis, the United States and Cuba signed a new Migration Agreement, which has since allowed for the regulated and orderly departure of Cubans from the island, at the rate of 20,000 Cubans a year. An unknown but also rather sizable exodus has left for other countries—particularly Spain, Venezuela, and Costa Rica. While the regulation of the exodus certainly contributed to a decline in the number of *balseros* who risked their lives in the crossing, some continue to leave Cuba and try to enter the United States illegally—at present, occasionally as *balseros* (those who left on rafts) and, more often, as *lancheros* (those who left on speedboats operated by persons who provide such passage for pay), and through third countries in less risky ways. This new Cuban exodus is rather massive—one can easily imagine that roughly 25,000 Cubans leave Cuba now every year, or 100,000 persons every 4 years—and it shows no signs of abating.

Comparing this new Cuban exodus to the former waves of the Cuban exodus will show its proportions. Using data from the 1990 census of the United States, the largest wave of immigrants from Cuba after the revolution has been what is called the second wave—the roughly 283,000 Cuban immigrants who left the island during the 9 years from 1965 to 1974, or 41 percent of those who immigrated from 1960 to 1990 (See Pedraza 1996:Table 1). This second wave also resembled the contemporary exodus in that it was also regulated and administered by both the Cuban and the United States governments who, like now, collaborated after a major crisis, in this case the flotilla exodus out of the port of Camarioca in 1965. Like the present exodus, family reunification (though more stringently defined now) was the criteria used to allow those in Cuba to leave when claimed by their relatives in the U.S.

The major difference between the two periods, then, is that the family reunification criteria used now is

extremely stringent, and, as a result, there is a visa lottery for 5,000 annual visas that is part of the annual visa total. At the rate at which Cubans are presently leaving the island, the new Cuban exodus of the 1990s and the beginning of the 21st century is a massive exodus of nearly the same dimension. However, the exodus is taking place at a very different moment in the history of the Cuban revolution—not at a time of revolutionary consolidation, as was the second wave of the exodus (after the failure of the Bay of Pigs exile invasion of Cuba, as well as the defeat of the counter-revolutionary forces in the mountains of El Escambray) but at a time when Cubans are beginning to build a civil society that is independent of government. Weak and fragile as it may be, it is real—it is now there, while it was not there earlier.

To assess the dilemma of whether the *exit* option impedes or facilitates the use of the *voice* option, I searched through the literature and found four different theses. I will first state them briefly and then comment on each.

The first thesis is Dagoberto Valdés's (1997) thesis, as stated in his book *Reconstruir la Sociedad Civil: Un Proyecto de Educación Cívica, Pluralismo, y Participación para Cuba*. Valdés clearly sees the Cuban exodus as a negative factor—a **hindrance** to the development of civil society in Cuba: "One of the causes of the impoverishment and the near disappearance of a civil society in Cuba has been the massive and permanent exodus of Cubans," and the exodus is the result of the lack of political liberty that does not allow Cubans to participate freely and responsibly in the polity and, as a consequence, of the lack of economic initiatives Cubans can undertake by themselves, which leads to dismay and to civic irresponsibility (Valdés, 1997:118-19, translation mine). Phrased in Hirschman's terms, the formulation is that which Hirschman himself postulated initially in 1970—the use of the *exit* option becomes an obstacle to the development of *voice* in the country.

The opposite thesis is that espoused by Victor Pérez-Díaz (1993) in his analysis of the transition to democracy in Spain after Franco. For many years, Spain was a periphery country in Europe that lent its labor—via a massive labor exodus—to the core European countries of Germany, France, England, Switzerland, Belgium. This labor migration occurred because of the lack of job opportunities in Spain from the early 1960s to the mid-1970s, as Spain was changing from a predominantly rural, agrarian nation to a predominantly urban, industrial nation. The *émigrés* lent their labor to the industrial sector (working in factories) or the service sector (working in hotels and restaurants, for example) in these more developed European countries. In Victor Pérez-Díaz's (1993:12-13) assessment, this Spanish exodus was part of the massive flow of capital, commodities, and people that began to flow across the Spanish borders for at least 15 years, bringing with them all sorts of institutions and cultural transformations:

> Millions of tourists invaded the coasts of Mediterranean Spain, while millions of Spaniards emigrated northward, often to spend years living and working in Germany, France, Holland, or Switzerland; thousands of students and young professionals went abroad to study; entrepreneurs imported machines; foreign investors poured capital into the Spanish economy; and consumers became accustomed to buying foreign-made goods.

> As these interchanges increased in frequency, their significance soon became clear for all to see. It could be summarized as a massive, all-pervasive learning experience. Spaniards were exposed to institutions and cultures, ways of accomplishing things in all spheres of life, which were simply far more efficient than their own in achieving some of their traditional objectives as well as other objectives which they were rapidly learning to appreciate: a better, more comfortable standard of living, offering more money and resources but also increased freedom of movement, more opportunities to prosper and get ahead, less subjection to authority, more knowledge, and more varied ways of relating freely among themselves. In this way Spaniards learned from, imitated, and wound up identifying with the people of western Europe, their institutions, and their way of life (p. 13).

In this analysis, the exodus was a midwife to the development of civil society because the *émigrés* lived and worked in societies that were politically democratic and pluralistic, where groups of people were organized in institutions they themselves had created to defend them, and by living there they engaged in

an *aprendizaje democrático* (a democratic apprenticeship).

It is important to note, however, that for this to have had an impact on the homeland they left, the *émigrés* had to return. They, indeed, returned to Spain and, with this know-how contributed to the development of the peaceful transition out of Franco's Spain as well as to its governability in a new, pluralistic and democratic Spain in the years that followed when democracy was consolidated and democratic institutions were institutionalized. Indeed, Felipe González was Spain's first elected prime minister to represent the opposition—the socialists; hence, to some, this election represented the key moment in which Spain could truly be said to be a democratic nation. And Felipe González was the son of a woman who had left Spain to work overseas as part of the massive labor migration that took place during those years.

To Pérez-Díaz (1993), a *successful* transition can only come about if a civil society either predates the transition or becomes established in the course of it (p. 40, emphasis his). These processes went hand in hand with what Pérez-Díaz called "the invention of a new tradition and a new identity: that of a democratic Spain in contrast to a Francoist Spain, connected in a problematic way with pre-Francoist history, from which it is cut off by the trauma of the civil war" (p. 20). According to this analysis, the exodus is a positive factor that **helped** the development of civil society. Phrased in Hirschman's terms, those who first used the *exit* option underwent a democratic apprenticeship in the countries where they migrated, and as they returned, brought what they had learned about the *voice* option with them, to exert an influence on the development of a new political culture and civil society there.

Yet a different thesis is that posed by Michel Laguerre (1998)—a Haitian social scientist who analyzed the role Haitian immigration played in the U.S. Laguerre's thesis is that the Haitian immigrants in the U.S. themselves became the civil society that Haiti lacked. Through their exercise of what Laguerre called "a transnational diasporic citizenship," Haitians became the missing political center—between the government, on the one hand, and the

atomized, inarticulate masses, on the other. In this analysis, the exodus resulted in the formation of a community that became the missing civil society. As a result of their transnationalism, Haitian *émigrés*, as individuals and as groups, crossed national boundaries to engage in productive informal interactions and dialogue:

> The diaspora is a major factor in the opening up of the political system in Haiti. By interveening at all government levels, by injecting money in various sectors of the economy, and by providing human and financial resources to grassroots and formal voluntary associations, the diaspora has infused the country widely and deeply with its democratic views (Laguerre 1998:170).

Laguerre also noted that this same transnationalism had had some negative consequences for the Haitian American community because it had diverted their energies toward their homeland, at the expense of their role and place in the receiving country. However, without doubt Laguerre saw the role of the Haitian *émigré* community towards their homeland as a positive factor, a substantial **help** in the form of an informal diplomacy carried out by civilians who traveled to Haiti and spoke not on behalf of their government but on behalf of themselves or their organizations—*"ambassadeurs du béton ou sans cravate."* Laguerre's analysis notes that they helped to establish civilian control over the military as well as funded cherished social projects back in Haiti, both of which strengthened the development of civil society there. Such informal diplomacy was not only an outcome of transnationalism but also, Laguerre underlined, was totally outside the control of both the United States and the Haitian governments, "effectively transforming the immigrant subject into a transnational citizen" (p. xx). Phrased in Hirschman's terms, it says that when the civil society in the homeland country has effectively disappeared and the people there remain too atomized and marginalized to constitute it, those who first exercised the *exit* option may end up becoming the ones who constitute its *voice.*

Yet another thesis comes from Hirschman's (1993) later work, when he applied his initial conceptual

scheme to the actual case of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) in 1989, when a series of social movements developed in rapid succession in Poland, Hungary, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Romania—that resulted in the collapse of the communist world in Eastern Europe, and the demise of the GDR. While in his earlier work (1970; 1986) Hirschman had argued that a basic seesaw pattern existed between *exit* and *voice*—the more of one, the less of the other—23 years later, when he examined the GDR up close during *die Wende* (the turn, as it was generally called), he was forced to conclude that in the last year both *exit* and *voice* had "worked in tandem" and **reinforced** each other, "achieving jointly the collapse of the regime" (1993:177). This insight came from the work of the East German sociologist Detlef Pollack, who witnessed the events during 1989 at very close range.

These are the theses regarding the development of civil society and the exodus I have found to date. I will now comment on each, basing myself on my research in recent years. As some of you know, I have been working on a research project for a book to be titled *Cuba: Revolution and Exodus* that has entailed a lot of field work—participant observation, as sociologists prefer to call it—in major communities of Cuban exiles, not only Miami but also New York (in its various social worlds of the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Manhattan), New Jersey (Union City and Elizabeth), Chicago, Los Angeles, Houston, San Antonio, and Puerto Rico, as well as Spain (Madrid, Salamanca, Canary Islands). As a result of this field work, I conducted 100 very in-depth, semi-structured interviews with Cubans representative of the four major waves of the Cuban exodus.

Moreover, in recent years I have traveled to Cuba about once a year or year and a half and, not only am I old enough to remember the origins of the Cuban revolution but also since 1979 I have returned to Cuba on 10 very different trips—of different lengths and under different circumstances—in which I have made an effort to get as close to the lives of people there as I could (a social jump that at times is a leap!). These trips have taught me a great deal about the social conditions in the island as well as about the process of change in which the Cuban people are involved. It is on the basis of this research, then, that I comment on each of these theses I identified.

A MASSIVE EXIT IMPEDES THE USE OF VOICE

Regarding Dagoberto Valdes' thesis of the exodus as a hindrance to the development of civil society, I would say that it is in line with what I myself wrote in the past regarding the functions of political and economic migration to both the societies involved (See Pedraza-Bailey 1985).

Analysts of labor migrations speak of the exodus of migrants as performing a "safety valve" function for the societies they leave (e.g., Spain, Mexico, Turkey), as it externalizes the material discontent their society could not provide for. In the same vein, I argued, a political exodus also externalizes the political discontent, the dissent, their society could not respond to. As such, the Cuban exodus always contributed to strengthening the Cuban revolution in the political sense, though at the same time it proved erosive to the development of the society because the exodus also represented an enormous brain drain of the professional and middle classes whose resources and talents the society's functioning needed.

Moreover, I found Dagoberto Valdés's thesis to be quite common in Cuba among people who, like himself, are struggling to help build that new civil society in Cuba—whether through the development of intellectual alternatives, such as his own effort in the last seven years with the magazine *Vitral* (the image is that of a stained glass window that filters the light through a many-colored prism), whose subtitle is itself indicative of its content: *la libertad de la luz* (the freedom of light), or through the strengthening of a church or synagogue as a viable alternative way to think, feel, live. When I was in Cuba a couple of years ago, I visited a friend who had been a priest in his small town for about 12 years, a community I had also visited in the past. As we drove through the small town where everyone knew everyone else, he pointed to each house where a family had left, saying "They left," then "They also left," and "Do you remember them? They are no longer here." And I felt his sense

of desolation when he said: "*el país se está desangrando*" ("the country is bleeding to death"). In this "special period," with its new Cuban exodus, there is no doubt that to those on the ground of Cuba itself who are struggling with the renewal of the minds and hearts of the Cuban people, the exodus feels like a vital loss of people who could help develop the new civil society.

Yet, despite my basic agreement with this thesis, I think one has to distinguish between those who left "in the first instance" and those who left "in the last instance." Those who leave Cuba today "in the first instance" are those who could not "translate" their evident dissatisfaction into an active search for a new political alternative, or at least another way of living and thinking. Without doubt, these are people who were disaffected from the political and economic conditions in Cuba and whose minds and hearts had grown tired of the government's empty promises, but they held their dissent close to their chest and shared it with very few intimate friends (sometimes not even with their closest family members!). They either played a public role of assenting to the conditions there—what Cubans call "*la doble moral*"—or they sought to live as uninvolved in the political process there as possible.

Some analysts have pointed out that Hirschman forgot the fourth option—*neglect*—an option that is as real a choice as those of *exit, voice,* or *loyalty.* That is to say, that most of these Cubans exercised the option of either a false *loyalty* or of a daily lived *neglect* and were unlikely to become involved in the development of civil society—even if they had remained in Cuba. They need to be distinguished from those who left Cuba "in the last instance"—Cubans who did, indeed, become involved in the dissident movement, or founded a new human rights organization, or participated in the development of a new alternative through their church or synagogue, or became an independent journalist, and the like—those who did, indeed, exercise the *voice* option. But, having done so, they then suffered its costs as they lost their jobs, many of their friends, and every door began to close behind them until they ended up either in prison or

living in conditions that were intolerable, pushing them to leave.

Those who left under those conditions, what I call "in the last instance," had, in truth, already given to the development of civil society in Cuba everything that they had to give. Their efforts to bring a democratic polity to Cuba and a sense of human rights as just that—rights—are perceived by the government and those loyal to it as going against the government there. Pushing them into a corner that they could no longer get out of certainly served as an example to many Cubans of the futility of going against the powerful government there. Yet they also became heroes to many who remained behind. Gonzalo López, for example, was a young, well-educated mulatto, who joined the independent journalists and worked in that capacity for two years before leaving for Venezuela. He explained:

> When you become an independent journalist you die socially. People in your same block look at you differently. You lose friends; you develop problems with your father in-law; you have to worry about with whom you talk; young people who hate the government viscerally come and tell you "You're young! Why are you going to do that? They'll put you in prison!" It's the result of the control they have over the society, the fear the people have inside of them, the political apathy of the young. But at the same time, it is contradictory. You feel actualized in your self, morally, as a human being. Because once you get into it people admire you, they care for you.

Another example was that of Ariel Gómez, a young man who founded a human rights organization in Camagüey. Though he was a good doctor, he ended up without a job. Even when he went to Havana to look for a job and was offered one, the municipal government back in his home town would not give him the permission to emigrate to Havana to work. Eventually, he and his wife Yolanda—who stood behind him solidly, which is not always the case—ended up sleeping in the garage of her parents' home, with two small children who went to bed every night hungry, as they ate whatever others gave them. With every door closed behind them, and the sight of children too young to understand their suffering, Ariel and his wife decided to leave Cuba, and did so with

visas given not for family reunification but for political refugees. As he told it to me after he arrived in the U.S. and was resettled to Los Angeles, and I corroborated again with his old friends, when I visited Cuba, on the day he left the streets were packed with people who came out to bid them farewell—honoring them, despite the visible risk to themselves.

THOSE WHO EXITED UNDERWENT A DEMOCRATIC APPRENTICESHIP THAT HELPED VOICE DEVELOP

Regarding the thesis of *el aprendizaje democrático* (a democratic apprenticeship), I think it depends on the conditions of the exodus—the length of time the emigrants spent abroad, the nature of the access to the polity they had in the societies where they lived and worked, and—crucially—whether or not they returned, bringing their new-found political culture back with them. Ewa Morawska (2001), a Polish sociologist, has studied the recent exodus of Eastern European immigrants who went to work in Western European societies. She concluded that, for the vast majority of those *émigrés*, a democratic apprenticeship did not take place because their stay in those countries was very brief, and their participation as "guest workers" in the economy and the polity of the host countries was very delimited as they lived lives that socially were very marginal. Hence, a real change in values or behavior that was more compatible with a democratic society hardly took place.

Morawska did find a more substantial change among the more educated Eastern European immigrants who traveled overseas for professional work because though their stays were brief, the very nature of their professions allowed them greater access to the new society, from which they learned a great deal. Hence, in her analysis, since these Eastern European migrations—both the labor migrants and the professionals—were brief, the social class of the *émigrés* had a decisive impact on whether or not they could realize such a democratic apprenticeship.

However, Pérez-Díaz's analysis of the Spanish emigration to Western Europe stressed that for these working class *émigrés* such a democratic apprenticeship did take place, despite their class background—men and women who went in search of decent work

and wages at a time when Spain could not provide them. The key difference seems to be in the length of time they spent abroad—for some Spaniards I spoke with, as many as 30 years of absence—and in that they returned to Spain thereafter, at a time when Spain was growing economically and becoming part of the European Union.

On a recent trip to Spain, a Spaniard named Jesús Moguer, who was a maitre at a marvelous restaurant in Valencia, told me that he left Andalucía as a very young man, and spent 30 years in Düsseldorf, Germany, doing similar work—always in Hilton Hotels: "I lost my youth in that freezing weather!," he said. "But everything I know I learned while I was living and working there."

If Morawska and Pérez-Díaz are both correct in their assessment of the impact that living and working abroad had on these different cases of migration—the Eastern European and the Spanish, both to Western Europe—the difference should alert us to the realization that we need to take a close look at each case to see what are the conditions that impact the potential for such a democratic learning: the social class of the *émigrés*, the length of their stay abroad, and the nature of their economic and social as well as political participation there, as well as whether or not they eventually returned to their homelands or at least remained vitally linked to those who remained there, helping them.

In the Cuban case there has been such a democratic learning but time—the passage now of 42 years—as well as the economic success of a large part of the Cuban exile community go against the grain of facilitating the development of civil society in Cuba. Those who left in the early years of the exodus—say, the first two waves of the exodus, from 1959 to 1974—have already put deep roots in their adopted country, as they have seen at least one if not two generations of children and grandchildren born abroad. And, as I objected to Laguerre's analysis (Pedraza 1999), the new "transnational diasporic citizenship" may well be true of the first generation of immigrants, but can seldom true for most of their children, the second generation, most of whom will not have an interest in returning to Cuba. Due to their parents' as well as

their own success, they have become very assimilated to American life, speak English rather than Spanish fluently, and from the point of view of their parents' culture, are culturally inept, finding it difficult to understand that world now and to fit back there. In general, this is true of the second generation for all immigrant groups in America. It is all the more true among Cubans at a time such as this when poverty has become so generalized among the Cuban people, irrespective of their levels of education.

Hence, while the Cuban government tells its people regularly that the Miami exiles will return and want to take their houses away (the houses where their families lived before they left the country), demographic change is an inexorable social change and I frankly see very few Cubans from those early waves of the exodus (their children, that is) returning to take anything away because they are now part of another world—perhaps better, perhaps worse, but certainly another world—where they have put new roots. Given that less time has passed, those who left more recently—the *Marielitos* and "the new Cuban exodus" of the 1990s and beyond—do have a greater potential for returning because fewer "roots" have been put out elsewhere. However, their memories of a past that for many was traumatic may impede their return.

The early exiles still to this day hold memories of *"la Cuba de ayer"* that are the happy memories of people who had a very comfortable life in a society that, at that particular time of the 1950s, was known for its splendor—music, color, gayety (see the film "Havana: Memories of Yesteryear" recently done in Miami for excellent testimonies). The recent exiles— the children of Communism—very often hold memories of their past life in Cuba that are so traumatic, so negative—not only because of the lack of all forms of material comfort, hunger, poverty, but also because of the isolation and marginality experienced by those whose *loyalty* became questioned, who often denied their real feelings and convictions—that their way of coping with a past that lacked dignity was to close the door on it, forever. Many of them, though young, will not return to

Cuba but will go on to make new futures, new lives, wherever they settled.

Moreover, Spaniards returned to Spain because, however stifling Francoism may have been to working class organizations, it did deliver economic growth and modernization as Spain underwent a transition from being a rural, agrarian society to an urban, industrial society—economic modernization that Cuba has not registered, with or without the Soviet subsidy. Still, it remains possible that if (note the if) a successful transition to a democratic society were to take place in Cuba, that were accompanied by international assistance—of the sort that the Marshall Plan after the end of World War II constituted— and economic growth could be achieved in their productive lifetimes, the more recent *émigrés* and some of the children of the early exiles might return to Cuba with the democratic learning that living and working overseas—in the United States, Spain, Venezuela, Costa Rica—entailed. But my sociological sense tells me that such a return migration would be small.

THOSE WHO EXITED BECAME ITS VOICE

Regarding the thesis of the "transnational diasporic citizenship"—that is, the *émigrés* themselves become the civil society—I think this is an underlying assumption of many exile political organizations that are situated in vastly different spaces in the political spectrum, as are the Cuban American National Foundation, at one end, and the Committee for Cuban Democracy, at the other. There are certainly ways in which the Cuban exile community, particularly that based in Miami, has sought to become the island's civil society—for example, through the development of organizations and political parties— such as the *Partido Demócrata Cristiano,* the *Partido Liberal,* and the *Partido Social Demócrata* that have ties to their homologous organizations in the dissident movement in Cuba (the *Movimiento Cristiano de Liberación,* the *Corriente Liberal,* and the *Corriente Socialista Democrática*, respectively*)*, parties that have also joined forces and constituted themselves as *La Plataforma Democrática Cubana.* However, in my view, these groups can only be effective to the extent that they are in touch with those inside of Cuba, an

effort that the Cuban government deliberately seeks to stop by making communications as difficult as possible and denying them visas.

It is also useful to examine the role that other exile groups played in other transitions to democracy—in Spain, Poland, the Czech Republic, Brazil. I believe that the historical record shows that, in general, the role of the exiles was rather delimited. One could object that the Cuban case is different in that a much greater part of the Cuban population has emigrated—estimated around 12 percent of the population—and the time span is overwhelmingly long (now 42 years). Moreover, its proximity to the island due to its concentration in Southern Florida renders it potentially a more decisive political actor than other exile communities. But I remain in doubt that it could play a leading role in such a transition unless the ties of the exile political organizations with the Cuban people in the island remain strong—as, generally, they are not.

For example, in the case of Brazil, during the political dictatorship of 1964, many Brazilian exiles—in this case, people convinced of the rightness of the communist cause—left for Europe, where they lived for many years. These Brazilian exiles did engage in a real *aprendizaje democrático.* Many were convinced communists, full of the ideals that communism was able to inspire in many. But their lived experience in the Eastern European countries—the truly existing communist societies—as well as in Italy, France, and Germany, led them to progressively change and to become true democrats of very different stripes. They returned to Brazil during the period of *la apertura* (the opening) in the early 1980s and there they became grouped in various political parties, such as that of Brizola.

But—and here is its relevance for the Cuban case— the Brazilians who remained in Brazil themselves by and large rejected political parties organized by the exiles that sought to appeal to the people there with the arguments that "We are different now—we have changed. We were not here during the years of the military dictatorship; hence, we were not corrupted by it; we are purer." To which Brazilians mostly replied: "But you were not here all those years when we lived through and suffered the years of the dictatorship. You did not share our hardships and our suffering." As the recent incident that revolved around the custody case of Elián González, "the little *balserito,*" made evident, people in Cuba did not side with what the Cuban government derisively calls "the Cuban mafia in Miami." That is a phrase that, sadly, the Cubans in the island also often use, noting the gulf that remains in understanding between those who live in Miami and are part of the dominant political organizations there, such as *Unidad Cubana, Hermanos al Rescate,* and those who live in Cuba, even when they do not side with its government. It was that segment of the organized Cuban political community in Miami that made the Elián González case into one about a child that had to be saved from returning to communism. Yet most of the people that I met with in Cuba, including those who in favor of the government, argued that the issue at stake was that a Cuban child belonged with his father back home. The gulf in understanding is much wider, longer, and deeper than the 90 miles that separate the two communities. Under such conditions, the exile community can hardly become the missing civil society.

BOTH EXIT AND VOICE INCREASED IN TANDEM

Regarding Hirschman's (1993) reformulation of his initial thesis, it is important to underline that in his analysis of the actual, historical, empirical case of the GDR, Hirschman was able to see that the course of events over the 40-year-long life of that state (1949-1989) "comprised a large variety of *exit-voice* relationships" (1993:177). While over the course of time, more often than not the easy availability of *exit* did undermine the development of *voice*, other relationships also obtained. For example, in 1961, with the building of the Berlin Wall, the authorities sought to repress both *exit* and *voice*. And in 1989, the last year of the regime, both *exit* and *voice* worked in tandem, reinforcing each other. I contend that, in recent years, both have begun to operate in tandem also in Cuba.

The cases of Cuba and the GDR hold many parallels, not the least of which was the constant availability of

the *exit* option to another very near place—the Federal Republic of Germany, the Miami exile community—where a measurably easier life, political liberty together with the presence of family there exerted a strong "pull." This was especially true during the years of the second wave of the exodus, when the violence of the so-called counterrevolution (to themselves, they were the real revolutionaries) came to an end and they had to lay down arms, defeated in a conflict for which thousands died and thousands more were imprisoned.

Throughout those years, the use of the *exit* option did impede the use of the *voice* option because, in the aftermath of the consolidation of the revolution, Cubans no longer believed in the chances for successful *voice*, an effective challenge to the government. Moreover, the government itself, as in the GDR, was quite conscious of the basic seesaw pattern of *exit* and *voice* and chose to consciously manipulate the *exit* option to undermine the *voice* of dissent. For example, the 1980 exodus of the *Marielitos* was largely a working-class exodus of Cubans with a visibly higher proportion of Blacks than ever before, who left from the port of Mariel. Because they were the children of communism itself, they represented a large public slap in the face of the government. Fidel Castro responded by calling them *escoria* (scum):

> Our working people are of the opinion: "Let them go, the loafers, the antisocial and lumpen elements, the criminals, and the scum!' … As always, Cuba gladly opened the doors for them, as it had done before with all the rabble that opposed socialism and the revolution (Castro 1980a).

A week later, Castro explained the benefit of externalizing dissent:

> … I think that those of them remaining here are people with whom we can work better, much better! … So we need not worry if we lose some flab. We are left with the muscle and bone of the people. We are left with the strong parts (Castro 1980b).

From the mid 1980s on, when the new dissident movement was gathering force, as in the GDR, this also took the form of a selective policy of forced *exit* that literally "pushed" certain critical *voices* out of Cuba, while barring others from returning home. The result of this forced *exit* policy was palpable. In 1992, Amnesty International issued a special Country Report on Cuba, *Silencing the Voices of Dissent*, in which many of Cuba's most prominent dissidents then were featured. A few years later, virtually all of them were living outside of Cuba, in exile.

But the easy availability of *exit* was not the only reason why the emergence of *voice* was less likely in East Germany than elsewhere in the Soviet-dominated Eastern European countries. Hirschman noted other major reasons.

- First, East Germans had no independent institutions (more or less), like the Catholic Church of Poland, that would sustain them in a struggle for some autonomy from the all-powerful communist state. That, until very recently, was also true in Cuba.

- Second, many East Germans initially embraced the ideology of the state "for reasons intimately connected with the catastrophic historical episode they had just lived through"—Nazi Fascism. That "ideological advantage," as Hirschman (1993:182-83) called it, was also the role that Batista's dictatorship played in the initial acceptance and popularity of the Cuban revolution.

- Third, East Germany played a different role for the Soviet empire in its contest with the West during the Cold War, as evidenced by the presence of Soviet atomic missiles there. That was also true in Cuba, which played a similar role for the Soviet Union inside the Western Hemisphere and throughout the Third World, as also evidenced by the location of atomic missiles in Cuba, which led to the October Missile Crisis in 1962. In exchange for this role of exporting revolution to Latin America and Africa, and contesting the United States, the Soviet Union subsidized the Cuban economy very generously, mitigating the role of the U.S. embargo.

In sum, until the 1990s, one could arrive at the same conclusion regarding Cuba as Hirschman (1991:183) did regarding the GDR:

The direct obstacles to voice, that is, to any political movements of resistance or dissidence, were enormous. They must be added to the indirect undermining of voice by the real or imagined availability of exit to the West. Jointly these direct and indirect restraints on voice produced an exit-voice balance that was tilted far more against voice and in favor of exit than that prevailing in other Soviet-controlled East European territories, with the already noted result of substantially divergent political behavior in East Germany.

Yet throughout the 1990s, during the crisis of the "special period," we witnessed the increasing use of both the *exit* and *voice* options in Cuba, as was the case in the GDR in 1989. For example, in the summer of 1994, the dramatic *balsero* crisis took place, when over 34,000 desperate Cubans put out to sea, was the immediate result of *"el Habanazo"*—the largest *voice* event on record—when massive riots took place as Cubans ran, shouting down the streets of central Havana, protesting the economic conditions in Cuba as well as the lack of liberty. The riots themselves were set off by the detour of the small boat that regularly crossed the Bay of Havana for the town of Regla and on that day took a different course, trying to leave Cuba. The riots were also preceded by the most tragic *exit* event: the tugboat incident in mid-July. A number of Cuban families were attempting to leave the island when the Cuban Coast Guard set out to stop them and, in the process, overturned the tugboat with powerful shots of water, causing the deaths of over 40 women and children, an incident that a number of survivors lived to tell. As a result of these multiple ways in which *exit* and *voice* were expressed that summer, reinforcing each other, Fidel Castro announced that the authorities would not interfere with anyone who wanted to leave, announcement which led immediately to the massive outpouring of *balseros* to sea throughout the month of August, which in turn resulted in the signing of the Migration Agreement between Cuba and the U.S. that has now given way to the massive though orderly exodus of Cubans at present.

Even more, on September 8th, the day Cubans celebrate the national feast day of their cherished patron Saint, *La Virgen de la Caridad del Cobre* (Our Lady of Charity), Cubans witnessed yet another clear expression of the incipient use of *voice* in Cuba when Father José Conrado Rodríguez was emboldened to act by the crisis Cubans had lived through that summer. In his church in Palma Soriano, Oriente Province, that day's homily consisted of his reading a letter he had written to Fidel Castro. It is worth quoting the letter at some length:

> My deep concern for the situation our people are living through moves me to write you, in the hope that you will pay attention to my reasons, and will reply accordingly.

> Many humble people excuse you, saying that you do not know the truth of what we are living through, but I do not share that opinion. What is there that you do not know of the tragic situation we are living through? …

> For over 30 years, our country engaged in a politics at the base of which was violence. This politics was justified because of the presence of a powerful and tenacious enemy only 90 miles away, the United States of America. The way in which we confronted this enemy was to place ourselves under the power that for years confronted it, the Soviet Union, as we became part of the socialist block of countries that superpower led.

> While the Soviet Union gave massive assistance to our economy and our arms race, Cuba gradually fell into a state of internal violence and profound repression. … The use, within and without our country, of hatred, division, violence, suspicion and ill will, has been the main cause of our present and past misfortune.

> Now we can see it clearly. The excessive growth of the state, progressively more powerful, left our people defenseless and silenced. The lack of liberty that would have allowed healthy criticism and alternative ways of thinking caused us to slide down the slippery slope of political volition and intolerance towards others. The fruits it bore were those of hypocrisy and dissimulation, insincerity and lying, and a general state of fear that affected everyone in the island. …

> We grew accustomed to not earning our daily bread with the sweat of our brow and to greatly depending for our living on the assistance others gave us. We have lived a lie, fooling others as well as ourselves. We have done wrong, and that wrong has now befallen

us. We are all responsible, but no one is more responsible than you. …

I can no longer remain silent, in good conscience, which is why I speak to you, because I think we could still rectify our course and save our nation, as you have on several occasions expressed were your desires.

Right now, if you wished, it would be possible to arrive at a peaceful, negotiated agreement, through the process of a national dialogue among people representing the various tendencies within the Communist Party, the dissident groups in the island, as well as Cubans in the diaspora. A popular referendum, free and democratic, in a climate of respect and tolerance would allow the voice of all our people to be heard. If you were to be at the head of that process … it would avoid the bloodbath that our present circumstances forecast and will, unfortunately, render inevitable… (Rodríguez 1995, my translation).

Padre José Conrado's letter erupted in the Cuban scene exactly as Havel (1978) explained any sudden action that signifies a sudden coming to live in the truth, rather than the lie of the "post-totalitarian society": as an act of courage that places that person in real danger. When he began receiving threats, including death threats, the Church decided to send him to Salamanca, Spain, to study—a forced *exit* intended to protect him. After two years in Spain, he was allowed to return to Cuba, to a new parish where he continues to be what he has always wanted to be—an ordinary Cuban priest.

Due in part to the crisis of the "special period," the 1990s witnessed the rapid growth of a dissident movement the seeds of which were sown in the mid 1980s. This new dissident movement in Cuba is characterized by its being non-violent in strategy and approach, following the social movements spearheaded by Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King. And it takes its inspiration from the world-wide human rights movement that found its earliest expression in the United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human Rights as well as the Czechoslovakian intellectuals' Charter 77 (Havel 1986).

That dissident movement has not only grown in size—*Concilio Cubano* (Cuban Council), the umbrella organization at one point covered over 70 different groups, albeit some with very small size—but has also grown in maturity, seeking to provide an alternative vision of a democratic society in Cuba. In recent years, among many documents, two particularly stand out: *La Patria es de Todos* (Our Nation Belongs to All of Us) and the *Proyecto Varela.* In May 2002, the *Proyecto Varela* handed the National Assembly of People's Power more than the 10,000 signatures (11,020, to be exact) that the 1976 Cuban Constitution requires for citizens to seek a Constitutional change. Though different, both projects have called for a plebiscite or a national referendum, so that Cubans can freely elect their government.

Spearheaded by one of Cuba's leading dissidents, Osvaldo Payá, founder of the *Movimiento Cristiano de Liberación* (Christian Democratic Movement for Freedom), part of the worldwide Christian Democratic Movement, the *Proyecto Varela* called for a popular referendum of the Cuban people. Such a referendum was to place five propositions on the ballot to be voted upon by the Cuban people in a free and democratic election. The five propositions are:

- the right to freedom of expression and freedom of association, so that Cubans can freely organize themselves in all sorts of associations, be they political, economic, cultural, labor, student, or religious organizations, including freedom of the press;

- amnesty for political prisoners in Cuba's jails;

- the right of Cubans to own their own enterprises, both as individuals and as members of cooperatives;

- a revision of the electoral law so that the candidates running for election are freely nominated and elected by the people in their district through the collection of their signatures supporting particular candidatures; and

- the right to a free and democratic general election.

The goal of the Project is not only to create the conditions for Cubans to participate freely in their polity, a form of participatory democracy, but also for Cubans to be able to express their *voice*: "Let no one

else speak for Cubans. Let their own voices be heard in a referendum"(Payá 2001).

It is interesting to note the name of the document and project that seeks the signatures. It was named after Father Félix Varela, a Cuban priest who, in the early 19th century strove for Cuban independence from Spain. Forced to leave Cuba, he spent the rest of his life in the United States, in exile, working with Irish and Italian immigrants in a parish in New York. He also wrote prolifically, expressing his dissent, as a form of *voice*. Hence, Varela's very life holds within it the use of both the *exit* and *voice* options. Though he died in exile, long before Cuba achieved its independence, today he symbolizes the use of the *voice* option inside Cuba.

Four of Cuba's leading dissidents, each of them representing a different group, joined to write a document *La Patria es de Todos* (Our Nation Belongs to All of Us) that criticized the Communist Party's sole monopoly over power in Cuba and that called for a return to some of the principles of the 1940 Cuban Constitution, the charter that expressed the institutionalization of the short-lived Cuban Republic. Arrested in July 1997, in March 1999 the four dissidents were tried behind closed doors and sentenced to three to five years in prison for acts of sedition and for being "counterrevolutionaries" (Alfonso 1999; Tamayo 1999). The four came to be known as *El Grupo de los Cuatro* (the Group of Four); they also represented the full gamut of race and gender in Cuba. They were: Vladimiro Roca Antúñez, a former combat pilot, mulatto, and the son of the well-known communist leader Blas Roca; René Gómez Manzano, a laywer, white, who represented the Independent Lawyers; Félix Bonne Carcasés, black, an engineer who previously taught at the University; and Marta Beatriz Roque, an economist and woman, who represented the Independent Economists. Due to the pressure for their release exerted by Amnesty International, Americas Watch, Pope John Paul II, the European Union, and the governments of Canada, Mexico, and Spain (Cuba's major trading partners), they were released after serving their prison terms.

With so many obstacles to the emergent use of *voice*, how is it possible for both *exit* and *voice* to have developed in tandem, reinforcing one another? In Hirschman's analysis of Germany in the final, climatic year of 1989, the seesaw of *exit* and *voice* suddenly turned into a joint act when the inability of the government to prevent a large-scale flight of its citizens out of the country "signaled a novel, serious, and *general* decline in state authority" (Hirschman 1993:187, emphasis his), signal that proved emboldening to others. The mass exodus of some citizens— a private solution to their troubles—did feel to many then in the GDR, as today in Cuba, as a bloodletting of the country. But, as Hirschman (1993:197) underscored, it "did sufficiently impress, depress, and alert some of the more loyal citizens, those who had no thought of exiting, so that they finally decided to speak out"—a most public act.

So it was also in the Cuban case. For example, it was the *balsero* crisis of the summer of 1994 that provoked Padre José Conrado Rodríguez to write the letter to Fidel Castro and emboldened many other Cubans to join the dissident movement and to found new human human rights organizations. Hirschman underlined that the collaboration of *exit* and *voice* in the last phase can be explained by an appeal to the concept of *loyalty*. *Loyalty* delays *exit* as well as *voice* when there is a decline in the performance of an organization, party, or nation to which one belongs. But when the decline passes a certain threshold, the *voice* of the loyal members tends to become particularly vigorous. Hirschman, however, did not underline, as I think it important to do, that in this case the *loyalty* was no longer to the government, but to the nation. For Cubans, that is precisely the symbolic meaning of titling the call for a national referendum after Father Felix Varela, the 19th century hero. Quite independently, it also lent its symbolism to Father José Conrado's letter to Fidel Castro, which in its closing emphasized:

> A long time ago, another Cuban priest, Father Félix Varela, wrote these wise and courageous words which I now make mine: "When the nation is in danger, … drawing ever closer to a precipice, is it imprudent to raise our voice and to warn others of that danger? My

heart does not know the prudence of the weak" (Rodríguez 1995; my translation).

CONCLUSION

My analysis of the four extant theses regarding the role of migration in the democratization effort of a society, and its implications for the Cuban case, leads me to the conclusion that clearly migration bears a relationship to democratization; but it is a highly historically-contingent one that depends on a myriad of factors we are just beginning to comprehend. Ulti-

mately, the question of whether the exodus is a **hindrance** or a **help** to the development of civil society does not have a unique answer. Rather, as Hirschman found in his last analysis, over the course of many years, a number of *exit-voice* relationships obtained. Perhaps this analysis would serve to elucidate not only the relationship of *exit* and *voice* in Cuba but also help us understand the island's present situation.

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Involving the institutions of civil society to the state regulation of internal forced migration meets the general trends of the development of state governance. Thus, according to the National Strategy for Civil Society Development in Ukraine for 2016-2020, systemic government support of civil society should be carried out in the following areas: • creating favorable conditions for the building and the institutional development of civil society organizations (improvement of the legal status, order of creation, organizing the activities and termination of self-organizing communities of society, expanding their powers to participate in solving local problems; legislative level issues requiring mandate planning in State Budget of Ukraine and local budget expenditures to make the provision on the. Civil society in contrast to the state refers to the social relations areas which are free from interference of political powers and includes a group of institutions and organizations, and pressure groups considering private and civil (non-private) aspects. Civil society is social relations area and government is political relations area [2]. When the development of civil society in any country is depended on that country's law and constitution, allowance of civil society's entrance (involvement) and applying for optimizing the executive procedures and planning by that needs stabilize and development of civil society [6,7]. Out of this preconditions, supposing that the conditions are prepare for civil society activities. More generally, civil society includes all manner of social organisations found between the household and the state, an apparatus composed of a complex of institutions such as governments, the judiciary, the legislature, the armed forces and any other institution used to project the power to determine who gets what in society ('the http://www.scielo.br/scielo.php?pid=. Democratization/political liberalization: The spread of democratization in recent years has changed the political and institutional environment in which civil society organisations operate. In some cases civil society has been the locus of active opposition to authoritarian governments, providing a breeding ground for alternative, participatory or 'democratic' forms of political organisationand governance. Politics. v. t. e. Civil society can be understood as the "third sector" of society, distinct from government and business, and including the family and the private sphere. By other authors, civil society is used in the sense of 1) the aggregate of non-governmental organizations and institutions that manifest interests and will of citizens or 2) individuals and organizations in a society which are independent of the government. Request PDF | Democratization and migration: Cuba's exodus and the development of civil society-hindrance or help | The collapse of communism in the Soviet Union and the Eastern European countries ushered in a new stage in Cuba, stage which Fidel Castro himself | Find, read and cite all the research you need on ResearchGate. At the same time, the 1990s and the present have also been a period of massive emigration out of Cuba—the migration of balseros, lancheros, and visa lottery winners, as well as Cubans who leave and arrive through third countries. The question that frames this paper, then, is whether this new, massive Cuban exodus is a hindrance or a help to the development of this new civil society in Cuba.