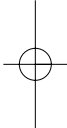
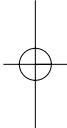


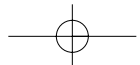
**RELIGION, CULTURE, AND SOCIETY:
THE CASE OF CUBA**

Woodrow Wilson Center Reports on the Americas • # 9



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RELIGION, CULTURE, AND SOCIETY: THE CASE OF CUBA

A Conference Report

Conference Organizer & Editor

Margaret E. Crahan

with the assistance of

**Elizabeth Bryan
Mauricio Claudio
& Andrew Stevenson**

Woodrow Wilson Center Reports on the Americas • # 9



Latin American Program



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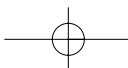


TABLE OF CONTENTS

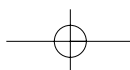
Executive Summary	VII
Introduction	XIII
 Part I	
Religion, Culture, and Society: Theoretical, Methodological, and Historical Perspectives	
Chapter 1	3
Theoretical and Methodological Reflections about the Study of Religion and Politics in Latin America <i>Daniel H. Levine, University of Michigan.</i>	
Chapter 2	17
Civil Society in Cuba: A Conceptual Approach <i>Ariel Armony, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars & Colby College.</i>	
Chapter 3	37
Cuban Diasporas: Their Impact on Religion, Culture, and Society <i>Margaret E. Crahan, Hunter College and The Graduate Center, City University of New York.</i>	
Chapter 4	55
The Evolution of Laws Regulating Associations and Civil Society in Cuba <i>Alfonso Quiroz, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars & Baruch College & The Graduate Center, City University of New York.</i>	
Chapter 5	69
Foreign Influence through Protestant Missions in Cuba, 1898-1959: A Quaker Case Study <i>Karen Leimdorfer, University of Southampton</i>	
Chapter 6	79
The Jewish Community in Cuba in the 1990s <i>Arturo López Levy, Columbia University</i>	



Part II

Religion, Culture, and Society: Transnational Perspectives

Chapter 7	93
The Catholic Church and Cuba's International Ties <i>Thomas E. Quigley, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops</i>	
Chapter 8	103
Religion and the Cuban Exodus: A Perspective from Union City, New Jersey <i>Yolanda Prieto, Ramapo College of New Jersey</i>	
Chapter 9	115
Cuba's Catholic Church and the Contemporary Exodus <i>Silvia Pedraza, University of Michigan</i>	
Chapter 10	123
God Knows No Borders: Transnational Religious Ties Linking Miami and Cuba <i>Katrin Hansing & Sarah J. Mahler, Florida International University</i>	
Conclusion	131
Agenda	137
Biographies of Participants	141



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MARGARET E. CRAHAN

HUNTER COLLEGE AND THE GRADUATE CENTER,
CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

The Latin American Program of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars hosted a seminar entitled *Religion, Culture, and Society* on January 21–22, 2003 with special emphasis on the case of Cuba. Participants included scholars, as well as policymakers and practitioners. In an effort to better understand the interaction of religion, culture and society in Cuba, as well as elsewhere, the participants explored the applicability of the predominant analytical models used to comprehend the interaction of these three elements. This was accompanied by a parallel exploration of concepts of civil society in both socialist and non-socialist societies, together with a review of the history of associationalism in Cuba and the impact of diasporas on Cuban identity. The impact of transnational links, both past and present, on the role of religions in Cuba was also analyzed in several presentations. This was particularly useful given the degree of permeability Cuban culture and society have traditionally evidenced. While the seminar focused primarily on Catholicism, attention was also paid to Protestantism, Judaism and Spiritism given their contributions to the molding of Cuban culture and society. Among the principal issues discussed were:

- How the study of the interaction of religion, culture and society in any country challenges existing theoretical and methodological models to define the units of analysis and locate each development, process, individual and group within a broader context in order to assess their actual impact.
- To date five theoretical and methodological models have been widely employed in the study of the interaction of religion, culture and society: the institutional, popular (or Gramscian), phenomenological, rational choice and ideal interest (or Weberian). The logic of each helps determine the nature of the data sought, as well as the analytical approach. The institutional and rational choice approaches tend to focus on institutions and their drive to maintain influence and meet their goals,

Margaret E. Crahan

both transcendental and material. Rational choice also assumes that religious behavior is influenced by individual and group interests. The popular and phenomenological approaches tend to analyze the interaction of religion, society and culture in terms of processes of social and political transformation which create new norms and actors that go beyond institutional needs. The phenomenological, in particular, examines concurrent cultural and institutional changes that may generate new capacities and modes of action that are reflected in such phenomena as increased activism. The ideal interest approach challenges rational choice by suggesting that religiously motivated behavior can reflect ideological and faith convictions that prioritize the common good over individual or group interests. The most insightful analyses generally employ a combination of approaches.

- In any analysis, it is essential to recognize the power of ideas and beliefs and their role in the construction of a moral vocabulary that provides guidelines for social and political organization and action. This is particularly important when analyzing the roles of religion in societies in forming, expressing and transmitting values.

- The difficulty that many analysts encounter in analyzing beliefs, values and culture is rooted in the use of theoretical and methodological frameworks that regard them as elusive and difficult to “measure.” However, the beliefs, values and practices that constitute culture have a material life that helps determine the interaction of religion, society and culture. This material life develops in the arena between the realities of daily life and such structures as church and state and are capable of being identified and studied in detail.

- The analysis of civil society presents some similar theoretical and methodological challenges particularly in different historical and cultural contexts. For example, how does being part of civil society legitimize religious, political and other actors? In the case of the Brazilian and Chilean transitions to democracy in the 1970s and 1980s, being active in civil society helped legitimize groups that worked to build consensual societal agendas. In Cuba the weakness of civil society and the strength of the government does not provide the same degree of legitimacy or resources for the building of societal consensus by civil society.

- The case of Cuba raises a critical question in understanding the role of any civil society and religious actors in any society, that is, is a free and pluralistic civil society only capable of reproducing capitalist hegemo-

Executive Summary

ny or can the principles and norms that sustain a free civil society be a basis for the incorporation of self-organized groups into a socialist system, thus making it more pluralistic and participatory? If a pluralistic civil society is deemed compatible with socialism, then a program of reform would have to focus on expanding structures of participation in such a way that they would not be totally subsumed into centralized political or economic structures.

- The problem of a “unified versus pluralistic” civil society involves three important conceptual and empirical issues. First, in cases such as Cuba there may be tension between the concept of “pueblo”—the people as a unified agent in the construction of socialism—and a myriad of differentiated, heterogeneous groups wanting to make the socialist project more participatory. Some analysts argue that Cuba needs to deepen the autonomy of popular organizations as a way of allowing civil society to help rebuild social and political consensus. Others question the pluralistic concept of civil society in a context where people may define their identities according to gender, ethnic, racial and other cleavages. A second issue concerns the fact that the Cuban political class has restricted the debate about civil society and limited the broadening of the public sphere arguing that civil society could become a “fifth column” on behalf of the US. A third issue involves the effects of globalization on Cuba, particularly the importation of consumption patterns from industrialized countries introduced, in part, via tourists and the increasing relevance of transnational actors in Cuba’s public sphere including religious ones. Such developments are occurring against a background of a strong history of associational activity and generalized religious beliefs, if not formal practice.

- In Cuba legislation from 1988 on paved the way for the spread of all types of autonomous civil associations. By 1959 Cuban civil society had evolved into one of the most advanced in Latin America despite government attempts to legislate its development. Since 1959–60 the Cuban revolutionary government, through executive orders, has effectively limited the autonomy and development of associative organizations. Efforts from 1976 and 1985 to institutionalize the revolutionary process have produced laws that have codified the state’s control of associations and non-governmental organizations.

- Legally there cannot be “independent” non-governmental organizations in Cuba today. By law, associative organizations are required

Margaret E. Crahan

to seek sponsorship from designated government institutions, as well as maintain a permanent relationship with official supervising entities. In addition, the state bureaucracy currently brokers international donor collaboration with Cuban organizations.

- In Cuba the interaction of religion, culture and society has been influenced by a high degree of religious diversity that has characterized Cuba since the sixteenth century beginning with the dissemination of Spanish Catholicism which produced an intermingling of Christian and indigenous beliefs. The importation of slaves in the 16th century and continuing into the nineteenth century intensified religious syncretism. African religious beliefs have permeated the island and helped maintain African culture, as well as served as a mechanism for resistance on the part of slaves. The arrival of numerous Protestant missionaries in the early national period further internationalized Cuban religious institutions, practices and networks. The twentieth century also witnessed an inflow of European Jews fleeing persecution in their homelands. As a consequence, religious diversity and tolerance in Cuba has historically been greater than in other Latin American countries and this was reflected in Cuban civil society.

- The Protestant penetration of Cuba in the late nineteenth-early twentieth century was part of a broader US expansionism and hence missionary activities were sometimes linked with US business and political interests, as well as elements of US civil society and culture. Protestant churches until the 1959 revolution were by and large identified with the US which helped fuel an exodus of church personnel and activists in the early 1960s leaving the churches seriously understaffed and thereby weakened. More recently there has been an increase in membership and activities, in part, due to a search for value oriented communities unaffiliated with the government.

- Likewise, the Jewish community lost nine tenths of its members in the early 1960's, but has recently experienced a resurgence particularly in terms of its youth and social welfare activities which has deepened its role within civil society.

- The diverse nature of Cuban religious beliefs and practices has come to be regarded as a hallmark of Cuban identity or *cubanidad*. While formal religious identification has traditionally been lower than in other Latin American countries, syncretic popular religiosity has always been strong. Furthermore, religious norms and beliefs have



Executive Summary

tended to have more influence in molding societal norms than actual levels of practice might suggest.

- Historically, and at present in Cuba, religions have served as a means to assuage a variety of personal and societal problems. During the independence struggle popular religious beliefs and practices were used to mobilize anti-Spanish forces, while today increasing numbers of Cubans have turned to religion to alleviate the pressures of living under difficult conditions.

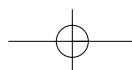
- Both today and in the past, religions have served an important role in Cuban American communities not only in maintaining cultural identity, but also in ameliorating the impact of accommodating to a foreign environment.

- Cuba Americans have tended to be more active religiously abroad than in Cuba, reaffirming the historical experience of other immigrant communities.

- Recently there has been a growth in transnational ties between religious institutions, groups and individuals that has increased mutual comprehension of the respective realities of Cubans on the island and off. Such linkages involve exchanges of personnel, humanitarian assistance, religious materials and sentiments reinforced by beliefs and practices linked to national identity. There are some indicators that such exchanges may contribute to a greater disposition towards reconciliation between Cubans and Cuban Americans.

- Spiritist religions rooted in African beliefs, as well as European ones, have flourished in recent years. Historically identified with the Afro-Cuban population and having served traditionally as a mechanism for cultural survival, identity and resistance, in recent years Cuba has become a mecca for spiritist believers from throughout the world and has benefited economically from this.

- Religions, in Cuba and elsewhere, have in recent years become a critical element in the growth of civil society particularly in countries experiencing substantial pressures for change. In Cuba, where the revolutionary government historically has attempted to subsume organized civil society into the state and marginalize religions, the possibilities of religions assuming a major leadership role via civil society in determining Cuba's future is unclear. Nevertheless, there is currently a "ripening" of civil society in Cuba, in which religions are playing a role. To date there



Margaret E. Crahan

has not been an elaboration by either of a consensual agenda that has broadbased support. Hence, it is likely that any major developments in Cuba in the near future will be influenced, but not necessarily be largely determined by religions.

INTRODUCTION

MARGARET E. CRAHAN

HUNTER COLLEGE AND THE GRADUATE CENTER,
CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

The interplay of religion, culture and society in any country, at any given time, is one of the most complex phenomena experts have attempted to understand and explain. To analyze such interaction in a nation in which the predominant religion has historically been somewhat weak institutionally and in which there have been high levels of competition from other religions, as well as ideologies, presents clear challenges. Hence, the task undertaken by the Woodrow Wilson Center's January 21-22, 2003 seminar *Religion, Culture, and Society: The Case of Cuba* was particularly challenging. Sponsored by the Center's Latin American Program, the seminar brought together academic experts on religion, Cuba, and civil society with practitioners and policymakers. Building on previous exchanges between the participants and their Cuban counterparts, the seminar explored theoretical and methodological trends in the study of religion, culture and society in terms of the applicability of the predominant analytical models to the case of Cuba. The seminar then focused on historical legacies, as well as contemporary developments. Suggestions for the reconceptualization of the current "wisdom" concerning the interplay of religion, culture and society in general and with reference to Cuba resulted.

THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

Five methodological and theoretical models for the analysis of religion, culture and society were examined, including the institutional, popular (or Gramscian), phenomenological, rational choice and ideal interest (or Weberian). The latter two were regarded as the best adapted to the analysis of complex religious phenomena given their uti-

Margaret E. Crahan

lization of a mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods and sources, as well as different levels of analysis. In addition, they were considered better equipped to take into account the increasingly competitive religious scene in Latin America and such variables as age, gender, race and ethnicity, together with such phenomena as religious transnationalism. Finally, the phenomenological and ideal interest models were regarded as better able to evaluate the transformative impact of ideas and values. The phenomenological approach incorporates the analysis of a wide variety of institutional and informal sources at multiple levels in a variety of religious groups and institutions together with their actions. The ideal interest approach derives from the Weberian concept of motives that do not result from pure self or group interest, but rather generate actions, both individual and group, that transcend self-interest, as a result of a commitment to shared ideals.

At the outset of the seminar there was discussion concerning the definitional limits of the term civil society, but ultimately there was agreement that it connoted both formal and informal associations and networks outside the sphere of the state that responded to and voiced the needs and desires of the inhabitants of any society in an effort to influence public policies at both the micro and macro level. This required the development of horizontal links within civil society and vertical links between civil society and the state in order to generate consensual agendas and communicate them to policy makers at all levels of society. The presence or absence of such links, as well as the receptivity of officials to such input, is critical in determining the efficacy of civil society. In recent years there has been considerable emphasis by scholars and policymakers on the importance of civil society, including religious institutions, personnel and networks, in influencing political developments. Less attention has been paid to the role of religions in molding societal and cultural processes.

In terms of analyzing the role of religions in civil society, the discussion centered not only on establishing a functional definition of the latter, but also on whether civil society in Cuba could be considered to be largely within or without the realm of the state. If civil society exists within the state then its role is dependent upon the state's capacity to organize and maintain the consent of the citizenry. In this case civil society serves to channel consent, in order to legitimize the hegemonic operation of the state. If a civil society is unwilling to or incapable of pro-

Introduction

viding such assent, for whatever reason, then the state might extract compliance through coercion and/or through the assumption of some of the organizational and social welfare functions of civil society. If the state does not achieve consent, then its capacity to exercise state power is undercut, even in the absence of challenges from civil society. In the case of Cuba where both horizontal linkages within civil society and vertical linkages with the state are limited, there is a real issue concerning the maintenance of consent in terms of the state's hegemony. Particularly since the end of the Cold War and the economic crises of the 1990s, the capacity of the Cuban state to extract consent from the citizenry based on the provision of promised services has become difficult. This suggests that the maintenance of the socialist system is dependent on the state's generating a higher level of assent and/or exercising increasing control over civil society.

A prime issue raised concerned the likelihood of the reassertion of state hegemony in Cuba in order to allow for greater pluralistic participation. It was suggested that this would require the expansion of the tendency already underway of locating organized civil society outside the state. The former would theoretically allow for civil society groups to have greater input into state policies and even challenge them. Such a development might possibly increase citizen support for continued state hegemony even in the context of a more dynamic discursive and politically competitive arena. Such developments are not, however, a guarantee of increased participation in politics as some case studies have shown that the growth of civil society activity within both socialist and non-socialist societies may result in the exacerbation of distrust among sectors of society, as well as towards the government. Whereas in Cuba high educational levels and a history of widespread associationalism, among other factors, favor an expanded role for civil society, it would be unlikely without substantial reforms on the part of the government to institutionalize and legalize a larger role for civil society and its components, including religions.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES ON RELIGION, CULTURE AND SOCIETY IN CUBA

A good number of analysts have traditionally regarded civil society and religion in Cuba as relatively weak. Several of the presentations

Margaret E. Crahan

suggested that the situation was more complex. Historically Cuba had a high level of associational activity. The proliferation of governmental regulations beginning in the nineteenth century attests to that fact and reflects the degree to which various governments attempted to control such activities. Beginning in 1959-60 the revolutionary government imposed additional controls and since 1976 most civil associations have been supervised by a state agency. International non-governmental organizations are also closely regulated. The current growth of associational activities, a good number of which are aimed at supplying services which the government is no longer capable of providing, has raised issues of just how flexible the government is willing to be in order to accomplish social welfare goals upon which it bases its legitimacy.

The substantial economic difficulties precipitated by the end of Soviet aid beginning in the early 1990s in Cuba have stimulated a return to both formal and informal mechanisms to meet basic needs. Hence, there is considerable pressure for more space for assistential efforts. These include formal and informal groups, as well as legal, illegal and extralegal organizations. Given the relatively greater degree of autonomy of religious organizations, as well as their access to international resources, they enjoy certain advantages within a relatively circumscribed space. Growth in this area has been tied to the vagaries of the Cuban economic situation, as well as to the government's determination of the advantages of cooperating particularly with religious groups.

Just as the history of associationalism in Cuba has been somewhat misinterpreted, so has its religious development. While it is true that institutional religion did not generate as much involvement, as well as denominational loyalty, as in some other Latin American countries, Cubans have traditionally been believers. Their cultural identity or *cubanidad* has been defined, in part, by the diversity of religions in Cuba and a pattern of blending indigenous, Christian, Spiritist, Jewish and other beliefs. This reality, encouraged by heavy in-and-out migration throughout the island's history, has resulted in more syncretism and eclecticism than in most other Latin American countries.

While Christianity penetrated deeply into Cuban culture beginning in the fifteenth century, there was always space for other beliefs which contributed to a degree of tolerance and flexibility. Given the diversity of peoples populating Cuba throughout its history, the fact that

Introduction

cubanidad incorporated religious diversity helped build a national identity. Given Cuba's extended colonial and neocolonial past and intervened sovereignty, the construction of an integrated national identity was a challenge. It is not surprising, then, that cubanidad emphasises the diversity of Cubans within a context of strong nationalistic and anti-imperialistic identity. Furthermore, in light of the fact that ten per cent of the Cuban population left the island during the independence struggles in the nineteenth century and a similar amount after the 1959 revolution, Cubans abroad have traditionally used religious involvement to maintain their cultural and national identity, as well as adapt to new circumstances.

The growth of Protestantism and Judaism in the twentieth century reflected the greater space traditionally available for non-Catholic religions in Cuba, a space that had been expanded particularly by the introduction of African religious beliefs brought in by slaves. Cuba, more than any other Latin American country, was the target of Protestant missionaries in the heyday of US religious expansionism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Encouraged by US intervention in the Cuban war for independence from Spain (1895-98), together with North American economic expansion in the Caribbean, Methodists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, Episcopalians and Quakers established schools and churches throughout Cuba. The Quakers reflected the multiplicity of motives of the US churches who wished to bring a "purer" religion to the island which they felt would assist the Cubans in creating a more democratic society. Mission Boards regarded schools as prime channels for the transmission of values and norms, as well as training grounds for employees for US corporations. Ties to US business and political interests, helped facilitate US penetration of Cuba, although some missionaries wondered about the benefits of this.

By the 1950s Cuba was considered the most secular of Latin American countries with polls showing that approximately three quarters of the population identified with a specific denomination. Nevertheless, that decade was also a period of increased religious activism via such groups as Catholic Action and Protestant university groups. More recently there has been a resurgence of such activism particularly incorporating young people who do not necessarily come from religious families, but who are seeking a more transcendental meaning for life than that provided by materialist atheism. In addition, there has been an expansion of

Margaret E. Crahan

religiously based social service activities ranging from parish soup kitchens to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center. The latter is an ecumenical institution that supports the revolution and offers a variety of social welfare programs some funded by US groups opposed to the US embargo in Cuba. Indeed, there is consensus among both Cuban and US based religions in opposition to the embargo.

The Jewish community in Cuba grew, in part, as a result of Cuba's historically relaxed immigration regulations that allowed for Jews fleeing from pogroms and other disturbances particularly in twentieth century Europe to settle in the island. Hence, Judaism was firmly established in Cuba by the 1950s. The 1959 revolution precipitated a massive exodus in which approximately ninety percent of the Jewish community left the country. Like other religions in Cuba, over the past fifteen years there has been a revitalization of the Jewish community and an expansion of its activities into the arena of non-state controlled civil society. Such revitalization has also increased the international ties of Cuban religions with substantial impact on Cuban culture and society.

RELIGIOUS TRANSNATIONALISM

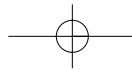
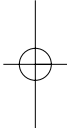
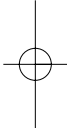
While religious services may have been lightly attended in Cuba both before and after the revolution, the evidence suggests there always was a core of influential religious activists. For example, the Cuban Catholic Church was the most active of any in Latin America in playing a leadership role in such efforts as the Inter-American Social Action conferences. It also maintained extensive exchanges particularly with the Spanish and US Catholic churches. These links diminished substantially in the early 1960s, in large measure because of the exodus or exile of the majority of church personnel and lay activists by the latter part of the decade. Relations with the Vatican were maintained, however, and in the 1970s there was a slow resumption of international exchanges which culminated in 1998 with the visit of Pope John Paul II. That event highlighted the increased space for religions in Cuba, particularly as the government looked to them to assist it in meeting the socioeconomic needs of the population. Spiritist religions have also maintained a variety of international links to the degree that Cuba has become something of a

Introduction

mecca for those wishing to be inducted into these religions. The government has facilitated this development, in part, because of the monies it generates for the Cuban economy. International exchanges and ties by the Protestant and Jewish communities have also proliferated in recent years.

Religions in Cuba, in general, have been cautious in the utilization of international ties in order to maintain their images as deeply rooted in Cuban culture and society, both past and present. At the same time they find it increasingly incumbent on them to be more active in exercising leadership in dealing not only with moral issues, but also with generalized societal problems. Such actions have been challenged at times by the government as unpatriotic. Since the 1980s virtually all religions in Cuba have been more assertive in exerting moral leadership particularly via comments on such issues as the abuse of state power, corruption and the weakening of the family and community. In this effort they have been assisted by resources from abroad, in large measure due to connections to international religious networks, as well as with the Cuban diaspora. Such contacts function on a variety of levels including the denominational or institutional level, as well as at the parish and individual level.

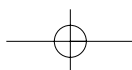
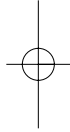
As a whole transnational religious links have greatly increased the flow of information and contacts both to and from Cuba and encouraged dialogue and greater understanding of the respective realities of Cubans and Cuban Americans. Some of these exchanges are motivated by political objectives, but many are encouraged by fundamental religious beliefs. Overall, they appear not only to be expanding, but also encouraging reconciliation which is bound to have consequences for the communities on both sides of the Florida Straits, as well as for US-Cuban relations.

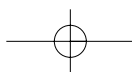
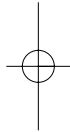
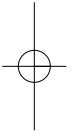




PART I

**RELIGION, CULTURE, AND SOCIETY:
THEORETICAL, METHODOLOGICAL,
AND HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES**





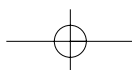
**CHAPTER 1****Theoretical and Methodological
Reflections about the Study of Religion
and Politics in Latin America¹**

DANIEL H. LEVINE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Forty years ago the study of religion in Latin America focused on the Catholic Church, and “everyone knew” that Catholicism was an elitist, conservative and anti-democratic force, intimately allied with those in power. The perspectives that informed the bulk of the scholarship on the subject were anchored in nineteenth century attitudes, according to which every religious institution is by its nature static, incapable of change and destined to disappear in the face of the advances of science and modern culture. Given this, instances of the use of religion in politics were viewed as vestiges of the past, if not simply as by-products of supposedly more basic factors such as social class or economic interest.

In fact, the mere idea of studying religion and politics required a special justification. Economics, which has become the religion of our times, dominated the field as the model of analysis and preferred focus for the study of politics. At the end of the decade of the 1960s, I had to struggle to convince others that religion, and religion and politics, were subjects worthy of political analysis. My first efforts were strongly influenced by these suppositions, so I began by inquiring how religious institutions responded to modernization, which implicitly accepted a theoretical framework in which the process of secularization was inevitable and desirable, and I sought to understand how churches could orient themselves and survive in a changed world.

¹ Translated from Spanish by Margaret E. Crahan and Mauricio Claudio.



Daniel H. Levine

On arrival in the field, however, I found myself faced with a vastly different reality. It was not about how religion reacted in the face of changes originating in other spheres of life, but rather about a strong process of innovation within religion already apparent at the meeting of the Latin American Episcopal Conference in Medellín, Colombia, in 1968. This meeting staked out a new path in the Catholic Church's effort to understand and participate actively in processes of social change. Liberation Theology, with its call for the transformation not only of religion, but also of politics to serve the poor, had recently emerged. New forms of religious organization, such as base Christian communities (comunidades eclesiales de base—CEBs), began to emerge, and there were truly novel alliances between religious groups and political forces of the left, for example in Chile and Brazil. A large part of the increasing religious ferment focused on questions of social justice, economic re-distribution and political transformation in the service, and with the participation, of popular sectors. Change oriented sectors within the churches shared a commonality of objectives with some progressive social and political movements. Towards the end of the 1970s, these groups would find themselves at the center of the revolutionary and counter-revolutionary struggles in Central America.

This list of changes could easily be extended ad infinitum but mention should be made of the enormous violence of the 1980s and 1990s, the role of the churches in the defense of democracy and human-rights, in peace negotiations and in transitions to democracy, as well as the emergence of Protestantism. The last twenty years marked a period of change within the Catholic Church which, because of its predominant legal, cultural and social position in Latin America, necessarily had an impact on politics.

This brief review brings us to a theoretical and methodological problem: how to explain this great wave of change that emerged from institutions, beliefs and motives that were supposedly destined to disappear? Theoretically, it was necessary to leave behind the suppositions of modernization theory, with its predictions about religion. The methodological problem was no less complicated. There already was a tradition of studies of religion and politics, almost all with a legal focus, which documented the history of concordats, treaties and so forth (e.g., Mecham, 1963). In that tradi-

The Study of Religion and Politics in Latin America

tion, documents were the indispensable raw material for any study of religion and politics: religion was, by definition, limited to the Catholic Church, conceptualized as a formally structured institution and represented by written documents and statements of its leaders. Politics was, by definition, limited to the formal actions of governments, represented by documents and laws, complemented by personal and familial relationships within the social and political elite. In the face of a process of change out of which new ideas, organizations, actors and spheres of action were emerging, the old legalist and constitutionalist framework evidently could no longer provide guidelines for research. Thus it was necessary to devise new methodological options in the light not only of the new perceptions of realities, but also the reality of the changes underway. Given the fact that every methodological option necessarily has a theoretical foundation, it is also necessary to trace, however briefly, some lines of theoretical change.

Modernization theory obviously did not explain either the origins or the dynamics of the changes underway. Above all, I was interested in how new forms of being religious (ideas, practices, organizations and institutions) emerged and were consolidated, and how these caused the faithful to view the world from another perspective and to organize for collective action. Ideas of equality, democracy, rights, participation and justice emerged to compete with norms of hierarchy, authority, submission and a fatalist acceptance of reality. I began my effort to relate values with experiences via a study focused on the activities and values of Catholic prelates in two countries, Colombia and Venezuela (Levine, 1981). In a later book, I carried the analysis of institutions and elites farther into the arena of popular religion, studying the experiences of base Christian communities and pastoral agents (Levine, 1992). The trajectory of my own work on the subject reflected the general evolution of the field: focusing on change, conflict and the creation of new actors and forces within Catholicism.

METHODOLOGICAL CHOICES

In order to identify these changes with precision and to gather a reliable set of data, scholars of the subject have employed a series of

Daniel H. Levine

methodological approaches. Given the limitations of time and space, I am restricting myself to four that have dominated the field: institutional, Gramscian (or “popular”), phenomenological and rational choice. After outlining each one, I will return to the phenomenological approach, situating it in the broader context of qualitative studies.

First of all, it is important to recognize the work of Ivan Vallier, who played a central role in revitalizing the study of religion (and the institutional approach), and to carrying it beyond the legalist framework. In various articles and a book (Vallier, 1970), Vallier insisted on finding the key to understand the Catholic Church in Latin America not in its documents, discourses or ideology, but rather via an institutional analysis that would focus on how the Church structured its relations with society. For Vallier, the Church *as an institution* sought above all to maintain and extend its influence. Previously it could achieve this by means of treaties, laws or relationships with elites. For Vallier, however, this entailed an enormous cost in a democratic period: it tied the Church’s wellbeing to a series of alliances with elites whose power was in decline. For Vallier the political and social role of the Church was to provide normative bases for consensus and social order. This functionalist twist to his theoretical framework compelled Vallier to seek other strategies of influence by which the Church could dispense with political alliances in order to secure a more broadly accepted position within society. Furthermore, achieving this transformation was a basic prerequisite for development. In terms of his research, Vallier employed a combination of interviews (of elites and the masses) in many different places (countries, regions, parishes) together with structural analysis of organizations. In purely methodological terms, this strategy had great strength, and those who have followed Vallier’s approach (Bruneau, 1984, for example) have worked with great efficacy in the study of religion and politics. Nevertheless, the theoretical approach underlying Vallier’s methodological options resulted in his own works not providing the desired results.

Vallier sought alternatives to the traditional ecclesial strategy of cultivating elites at the precise moment that the call to get involved in politics in search of justice gained momentum. His data was based on elites and therefore did not provide a means to appreciate the strength of the changes emerging from the grassroots. Nevertheless, Vallier freed the study of religion and politics from the domination of the legalistic tradition and encouraged a new generation of scholars to focus on religion.

The Study of Religion and Politics in Latin America

The body of work that I have labeled as Gramscian has another premise as its point of departure. Instead of focusing on institutions and elites together with their efforts to maintain influence and control, the origin of change is situated in major social transformations which create new actors, necessities and ideas. According to this point of view, it is the people who “erupt in the churches,” using their presence to spearhead necessary changes. Therefore what is needed is to focus on the grassroots, working with data from organizations, movements, actors and the creation of what the sociologist Christian Smith (1999) has called “an insurgent consciousness.”

From this perspective, religious change has its roots in social conflict. It is impossible to understand religious expression or the churches isolated from society. Emerging ideas, the models of action they championed and the organizations that they created made sense in light of those whom they represented. Therefore, any attempt to draw a direct line between religion and politics (as Vallier attempted) is impossible. Dominant institutions project a worldview which causes people to accept a submissive position. This is what Gramsci called hegemony: a power for cultural domination stronger than mere physical coercion. Likewise, a counter-hegemony may develop when those whom Gramsci called organic intellectuals create new ideas and base them on the experiences of groups in the midst of the fight for social and political change. Authors such as Enrique Dussel (1992), Otto Maduro (1982), or Phillip Berryman (1994) insist on locating these organic intellectuals as emerging out of the popular classes and giving shape (ideological and organizational) to the latter’s struggles. They find them among younger clergy, in certain religious congregations that have spearheaded the process of change and, above all, in grass-roots organizations. The process is fully dialectic: new ideas and organizational methods are introduced within a conflictual situation; the same dynamic of conflict and formation of classes and groups leads to the people “erupting” within the Church. In this model, it is “the people” who provide ideas and models for the institution, and not the reverse. The emergence of Liberation Theology and liberation movements in Peru, Brazil and Central America in the 1970s and 1980s are examples.

The Gramscian approach is very useful, above all for insisting on the need for rereading reality and the history of change from below. It forced everyone to recognize that the changes in religion and politics emerge from many and varied sources. Thus it is necessary to broaden the

Daniel H. Levine

bases of any study and to collect data beyond archival documents and the formal structures of the religious institution. The deficiencies of this approach derive from its virtues. To insist on the grass roots, the popular and a rereading from below carries with it the risk of underestimating the power of institutions (and the loyalty that they engender), and of overestimating the autonomy of popular groups in the religious domain. A case in point is the experience of the CEBs.

For many analysts working along Gramscian lines, these groups encapsulated the origins of a new popular culture, part of a wave of mobilization that would give rise to new forms of “doing politics.” Over time, however, and with the accumulation of empirical studies, it has become evident that these hopes were exaggerated. These groups were neither as numerous nor as radical, or even as lasting, as they had been portrayed. The problem was, in part, theoretical and, in part, due to the lack of analytical tools that detailed the continuous relations among the grass roots and institutions, popular masses and leaders.

The phenomenological approach, with which I identify together with other authors, such as Michael Dodson (1990), Michael Lowy (1998), Scott Mainwaring (1989) and David Lehmann (1996), places emphasis on a dialectical relationship between institutional identity (established through documents, interviews with leaders and work with organizations) and the needs, capacities and identities of those who come to the churches. Thus it is an attempt to combine the best of the institutional and Gramscian approaches. The theoretical emphasis is in the relation between the transformations of consciousness and ideas on one side and the creation of new forms of action, organization and alliances on the other. The phenomenological part emerges out of the neo-Weberian emphasis on the autonomy of religious categories and, consequently, on the need to reconstruct the logic of these categories as a base to understand the logic of commitment and of action.

Given the objective to describe the relationship between the formation of ideas, expression via ordinary actions, mobilizing agents and the audience—authors working along these lines have typically mixed analytical methods, utilizing interviews, formal polls, participant observation, life histories and archival documents. The strength of this approach comes from this multiplicity of methods. Its strength can also be its weakness given the problems of replicating any study.

The Study of Religion and Politics in Latin America

Beginning in the mid-1990s, a new generation of scholars of Latin American religion, society and politics emerged. Authors as disparate as John Burdick (1993), Carol Drogus (1997), Paul Freston (2001), David Stoll (1990), Virginia Garrard-Burnett (1993) and Anthony Gill (1998) emphasized four fundamental points: (1) the urgency of situating any study within a context of religious competition between Catholics and Protestants; (2) the need to seek new criteria for the selection of groups and variables to study beyond churches and denominations (for example age, gender and race); (3) the importance of paying systematic attention to transnational groups and to how they relate to national and local processes; (4) the validity of any approach based on ideas, which leads to a call to apply rational choice theory to the study of religion and politics. What follows is a brief commentary on points 1 to 3, followed by a lengthier analysis of the approach based on theories of rational choice.

The urgency to situate any study within the context of competition is an acknowledgement of the enormous growth of Protestantism so that for the first time in the modern era, Latin America is experiencing true religious pluralism. This changes the every-day experience of religion while transforming completely the churches participation in politics and their relations with different governments. New actors have introduced new religious strategies so that, for example, the analysis of the role of television is now indispensable. To emphasize competition implies seeking lines of analysis and data that unify the experiences of various churches—Drogus' work on women or Burdick's with youth and blacks are exemplary cases of this approach. Still studies on transnational groups are rare, though Brian Smith (1998), Paul Freston (2001), and Anna Peterson, Manuel Vásquez and Philip Williams (2001), among others, have shown the importance of this dimension of the phenomenon. Also relevant are the case studies comparing groups or movements, such as those of Levine and Stoll (1997), or some chapters in Peterson, Vásquez and Williams (2001).

A recent effort to bring about a reformulation of the approach to the study of religion and politics in Latin America derives inspiration from rational choice theory. In general terms, those following this theoretical framework share a few basic suppositions: a focus on a detailed examination of what motivates the individual considered in the abstract as a rational being motivated by self-interest; an emphasis on analytical models derived from economics, and consequently, a strategy based on

Daniel H. Levine

quantitative data (supposedly more “robust and reliable” than data on ideas or ideologies); and an emphasis on competition (with the risk of losing clients that it entails) as the basic engine of any decision or action. Taken together, these premises provide a basis for a mixed methodology that takes “the church” (without internal distinctions) as the basic unit of analysis and competition as the Catholic hierarchy’s strongest motivation for assuming positions in favor of the “poor.”

This theoretical approach has provided important results in the study of religion in the United States, for example, in the work of Laurence R. Iannaccone (1984), or Roger Finke and Rodney Starke (1993). Gill joins them in his emphasis on the construction of an economic model in which religious change makes sense in a context marked by a notable increase in the supply of religion. There are more churches, places of worship and forms of religious expression, in a word, more competition. This, in turn, leads the Catholic hierarchy to take progressive positions as a means of maintaining their influence over groups suffering from poverty and repression. In a certain way, this position is a variant of the institutional approach, but with another theoretical basis. Here the engine is self-interest, interpreted narrowly as attendance at services and the number of faithful or members. The influence of ideas or ideologies is discounted from the beginning by Gill, in part for theoretical reasons, but also for methodological reasons. In his judgment, the data derived from other methodological approaches is too soft and lack both the reliability and the capacity to predict actions that his economic model does.

Subjecting this model to a more detailed examination raises problems, not only of a conceptual and historical nature, but also from the perspective of methodology and the accuracy of the data itself. In the conceptual realm, despite Gill’s insistence that there has always been a high demand for social justice and religion in Latin America, he does not provide tools for the analysis of the definition of needs, how these have evolved or how different agendas reach the population. This conceptual framework hinders the task of explaining group or personal commitment. According to rational choice theory, it is extremely difficult to sustain any collective commitment. Once the interest of the individual is satisfied, commitment is abandoned. This is the famous free rider problem, which produces a supposed problem in collective action. In fact, any analysis of religious and political processes in Latin America confronts the problem

The Study of Religion and Politics in Latin America

of explaining collective action. In light of this reality, the challenge is not to explain collective action in itself, but rather why specific groups respond to crises collectively. As I noted before, this results more from the impact of repression and the opening of other opportunities than as a result of satisfying demands.

For Gill, the growth of Protestant churches comes at the expense of organized Catholicism, above all for its liberationist wing. However, he does not present data on this phenomenon and available studies indicate that although competition does indeed exist, the expansion of Protestant churches has been so spectacular that the data simply does not make sense. It is more likely that a great number of new Evangelicals are people who were not previously mobilized religiously. Finally, the quantitative data, indispensable for this type of analysis, come from notoriously unreliable sources. Upon closer inspection, the hard data do not seem so hard.

This outline of methodological alternatives reflects the variety of techniques and data, each one deriving its logic from a theoretical and conceptual framework that defines the field of religion and politics. For some, the critical element is the interaction of institutions, motivated above all by the drive to maintain influence and satisfy interests. For others, the field of study is understood as a process of social and political transformation, which creates new ideals and actors, and takes the field of study beyond an interplay of institutions. A third group defines it as a process of concurrent cultural and institutional change, which generates new capacities and modes of action. In contrast with the first approach which privileges the analysis of interest, the last two place elements of ideological transformation and belief (what Weber called “ideal interests”) at the core of the analysis.

The presentation of alternative methodologies in the previous section makes clear that any methodological option presupposes a choice of theory. Each position carries with it advantages and limitations. In this section, we will see what constitutes a qualitative approach to the study of religion and politics.

It is commonplace to assess qualitative methodologies not so much for what they do, but rather for the fact that they are not quantitative. Therefore, a label of “qualitative” could end up being quite negative. What is needed is a more profound analysis of this methodological option, one aimed at explaining the significance of actions and social

Daniel H. Levine

relations. Its point of departure is the premise that it is essential to acknowledge the power of ideas and the central role of constructing and re-constructing a moral vocabulary capable of providing guidelines for social and political organization and action. This is even more important when dealing with a phenomenon such as religion in which the formation, expression and transmission of values and beliefs play a central role. Given the character of the theoretical framework, it should not be surprising that at the core of this methodology there are a group of techniques and data for the analysis of values and their social place. Due to its emphasis on the need to explain both the origin and the history of ideas, as well as to determine their impact on every-day life, this methodology provides a more realistic and richer analysis than the classic phenomenological approach.

THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES

Any study of religion and politics, regardless of its methodology and theoretical approach, has to tackle three challenges: how to organize history and determine periods for study; how to define the units of analysis in order to achieve a better explanation of the results; and how to situate each moment, decision, individual or group within a broader context. Let us take a look at the responses provided by a qualitative approach.

How do we organize contemporary history into appropriate periods for the task of explaining change? The sociologist Robert Wuthnow (1996) suggests focusing on processes that last at least three decades and involve various levels of organization. In this way, not only can events themselves be captured, but also their antecedents and possible impacts. To work on a process at various levels and geographical locations focuses the analysis on the bonds that unify the individual, family, church, community, region, nation and transnational forces. Such a design makes it more possible to identify sources of variation in any process. The context in which an action develops can be as important as the objectives of the action itself. Here, context refers to both the physical place—what type of physical space, easy or difficult of access—as well as to its social nature—hierarchical, equalitarian, active, passive, etc. The analysis of elements that vary by context is not limited to geography or organization: demographic elements should also be incorporated, such as, gender, race

The Study of Religion and Politics in Latin America

or ethnicity. Taken together, a strategy of this type aids in avoiding the temptation—very commonplace in the social sciences—of limiting the analytical repertoire to class distinctions. Social class is important, of course, but as one factor among many.

The problem that causes the most distrust towards qualitative methodologies has to do with the possibility of collecting systematic and reliable data about the formation and transmission of ideas, values and norms. Although the use of polls based on samples of public opinion designed to capture attitudes is widely accepted in our discipline, regrettably it turns out to be rather crude and generally ahistorical in the field that interests us. A qualitative approach can well take advantage of polls using formal questionnaires, but it is also common to employ other techniques such as life histories and symbolic analysis as a way of facilitating the interpretation of values and attitudes expressed in answer to questions.

Here is the heart of the matter: a qualitative approach has as its point of departure the premise that the task of explaining is also a task of interpreting. Since all human behavior has significance (provided by the actors themselves, which is not necessarily shared by those who observe the process), it is essential to disentangle the logic of this process as it is experienced by the actors themselves.

A large part of the difficulty that many in the social sciences experience in the analysis of ideas and values (not to mention “culture”) is based on the use of a theoretical framework in which ideas, values and culture are conceived of as a vague “mental substance”—elusive, difficult to capture and impossible to reduce to a replicable yardstick. In my judgment, this is a limited perspective. The set of ideas, values and practices that are called “culture” has a material and organizational life that accompanies its intellectual life. If it were not so, no idea would ever have expression, nor much less be transmitted to contemporaries and even less to other generations. It would be impossible to imagine a school or tradition. The data for this process are as concrete as data of other types and there already are appropriate techniques to capture them. I have done it in my own work following the path, so to speak, of ideas and groups, examining systems of production and transmission of pamphlets, of the organization of meetings, the recruitment of promoters, and efforts to constitute and maintain an audience. This material life of culture develops in an arena located between every-day life and the “great structures” of

Daniel H. Levine

church or government, an area that it is possible to identify with precision and study with great detail.

CONCLUSION

It is not easy to derive conclusions from these reflections: the task has been other, to review various methodological efforts and strategies that have informed the development of the study of religion and politics in Latin America in the last thirty years. Instead of conclusions, it is perhaps more useful to pose the following question: with this variety of methods, have we advanced in our capacity to explain the processes of religion and politics in Latin America and perhaps to predict where the dynamic of change will take us in the future? Although it is not easy to give a definitive answer, in great measure due to the dynamic nature of the process, I nevertheless remain optimistic. Important steps have been taken, both in theory as well as in methodology. Indeed, in theoretical terms by avoiding the temptation to do away with the analysis of ideas and values, there exists the possibility of constructing a richer and more dynamic model of the process. With respect to methodology, the availability of such a broad repertoire of techniques makes it logical to expect that the most notable advances will come through the use of mixed methodologies that respect the autonomous logic of the process, as the actors would understand it themselves.

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Daniel H. Levine

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CHAPTER 2**Civil Society in Cuba:
A Conceptual Approach****ARIEL ARMONY**WOODROW WILSON INTERNATIONAL CENTER
FOR SCHOLARS & COLBY COLLEGE

I have chosen a broad definition of civil society to frame the analysis in this paper. I abstain, though, from suggesting my own definition. I utilize the one proposed by Theda Skocpol and Morris P. Fiorina in their volume *Civic Engagement in American Democracy* - a definition that has been widely accepted in the social science community and that, though crafted for liberal democracies, is still helpful in the case of a system such as Cuba's. Skocpol and Fiorina conceive of civil society as groups and social networks through which people become involved in political and community activities (1999b: 2). This definition emphasizes that, in addition to formal groups (which are, for the most part, the most evident expression of associational life), there are multiple other ways in which people link to each other. The notion of "ties" effectively conveys the idea of the variety of social linkages, which range from social movements and informal networks to various "publics" that engage in debates in the public sphere.

As this definition implies, civil society excludes the family. Skocpol's and Fiorina's definition also connotes the idea that civil society results from the uncoerced action of individuals. It understands civil society as different from political society, which is the arena in which political actors compete for the responsibility to exercise control over the apparatus of the state (Linz and Stepan 1996: 8). Finally, this definition does not make any references to "for profit" objectives. I consider that civil society is, in principle, different from involvement in the marketplace because, fundamentally, it is not dominated by profit-making objectives (Young 1999: 143-148).

Ariel Armony

This distinction does not mean that organizations in civil society cannot be oriented to promote a group-specific economic agenda, as is the case of chambers of commerce and economic policy think tanks in many countries. It does not mean either that social interactions originally based on commercial exchange at the micro level –as in the case of local black markets– cannot also function as a source of values, norms and shared identities.

In brief, viewed from the perspective of the public sphere, civil society entails a combination of formal, semi-formal and informal associational ties. These ties are manifested in varied and heterogeneous forms of association. Accordingly, civil society can be considered both as a realm and an activity, expressed not only in formal associations but also in social movements, different types of public fora (in which people debate collective problems), the media, publishing, informal social networks and manifold instances of socialization (Cohen 1999: 58; Young 1999: 150-53). The resulting public sphere thus refers to the multiple structures connecting civic organizations of all sorts, social movements and various forms of formal and informal interaction among people (Cohen 1999: 58). This sphere is dynamic in the sense that it provides texture to competing views of the organization of the polity and it creates spaces for debates and conflicts over power, claims to authority, public policies and policy-making mechanisms, and norms and practices in society (Ryan 2001: 237, 242; Cohen 1999: 58-59; Young 1999: 157; Stepan 1988: 3).

The functions assigned to civil society as public sphere include the exercise of control and influence over political society (legislatures, constitutional courts, and the various arenas of policymaking), the role of engaging people in identity building, the communication of information, the making of public agendas, and the production of critical discourse (Fraser 1993; Cohen and Arato 1992: 558, 560-63; Warren 2001: 77-82). The latter has been seen as a crucial function, as civil society can create and circulate “counterdiscourses,” which contribute to expose arbitrary power, express dissent, facilitate discussion and deliberation, and circulate new ideas and social practices (Young 1999: 151-53). One of the main tasks of studies of civil society is to examine the processes of communication in civil society and how debates in the public sphere enter the sphere of the state (Cohen 1999: 71).



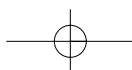
Civil Society in Cuba

As Jean Cohen (1999: 58) has argued, in the public sphere people engage in communicative interaction.

Associational life may contribute to create public opinion by stimulating the networks that sustain public spheres in which people shape agendas, debate ideas and engage in various kinds of deliberations (Warren 2001: 61). This function, which he refers to as “public sphere effects,” has the potential to produce persuasion (34, 61, 77-82). As I will argue, persuasion, deliberation and voice play a central role in the construction of hegemony in civil society—a central theme in Cuba today. This is why our attention should be directed to formal associations (along the continuum subordination/autonomy vis-à-vis the state) and the activities and ties that constitute public space in Cuba. Thus, what matters most in the analysis of civil society in the case of Cuba are the practices, capacities, and strategies of citizens to create public action (Ryan 2001: 233).

THE NEW CONTEXT IN CUBA

Growing interest in the question of civil society in Cuba is not just a result of the global “boom” of civil society studies. It is also a consequence of major changes that took place there in the 1990s as a result of the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, the introduction of market reforms, an unprecedented process of “destatization,” and an increased presence of international actors from center nations (Recio 1998-99 [Dilla]: 164; Fernandez 2001: 58). Indeed, the dramatic reduction in the capacity of the state to exercise control over the distribution of resources and the production of political discourse opened a new sphere for other actors who started to occupy a myriad of spaces formerly dominated by the state (Dilla 1999: 30). In the eyes of a significant portion of Cubans, the state is no longer viewed as the main arena for the articulation of one’s individuality and the social project of the revolution. This dramatic process of change triggered essentially three types of crises, occurring simultaneously at different levels: a crisis in everyday forms of survival, a crisis of legitimacy vis-à-vis the system of rule, and a crisis in the organization of hegemony (Recio 1998-99 [Limia]: 173).



Ariel Armony

Economic decentralization, the opening of new market mechanisms and the growing inability of the state apparatus to regulate ideological standards opened autonomous spaces, which were occupied by various types of associations, social networks and groups of people converging around common interests and demands. These new spaces created the opportunity for the emergence of new collective ventures, social activities and public debates –an explosion of association that represents a truly innovative phenomenon in the history of the revolution (Dilla 1999: 30). Also, serious shortages in basic goods, particularly in the mid-1990s, led to the emergence of “alternative distribution networks” that operate outside the traditional mechanisms of the Cuban socialist state and that contribute to the expansion of independent spaces for social interaction. The rapid expansion of public space has triggered, in turn, a broad movement in which different social sectors are seeking to create areas of greater freedom, autonomy and self-government (Fernandez 2001: 58). This process has already shown important consequences in the articulation of interests and the actualization of collective identities. Thus, intentionally or not, the Cuban government’s program of reform placed the question of civil society at the center of the political and social debate around the socialist project.

Broadly speaking, the transformations that have taken place in the realm of civil society involve a significant reorientation of public life. In the arena of formal organizations, the role of traditional associations and fora for organized community involvement (socialist mass organizations, the Catholic Church, the non-governmental organizations [NGO] sector) has become much more central to everyday life for Cubans and a source of challenge to the old-line ideological apparatus. The emergence and/or strengthening of informal networks of average citizens have altered traditional patterns of distribution of goods and services, and it has deepened alternative forms of socialization, especially for youths. The process of non-authorized appropriation of public spaces by small entrepreneurs, artists, male and female sex workers, young rock fans, Afro Cubans and other groups has started to reshape the urban landscape, particularly in Havana. By appropriating public spaces, aggregates of people challenge the state’s claim to control and regulate public life. In so doing, they use the city to make claims about rights (e.g., to claim their right to belong to a certain space), assert their identities and challenge the public/private divide (Holston and Appadurai 1999: 16).

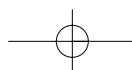


Civil Society in Cuba

Other ways in which this divide is being challenged involves the growth of a variety of home-based public activities (for profit and non-profit) such as paladares (restaurants, legal and illegal), tertulias (cultural events), religious services and countercultural parties. These activities have brought community interaction to the private sphere to an unprecedented level of intensity, thus radically transforming private homes into public spaces (Fernandez 2001: 59; Hansing 2001: 734). An exclusive emphasis on formal organizations cannot capture these crucial changes. In brief, the reshaping of civil society in Cuba results from simultaneous processes manifested by civic associations entering into areas previously controlled only by the state; mass organizations achieving greater autonomy vis-à-vis the government; informal networks shaping the day-to-day needs of citizens; public spaces being de facto privatized; and private homes becoming spaces for public interaction and debate.

Religion has emerged as a key source of associationalism in Cuba. Catholicism, Protestantism, Spiritism, Judaism, and other manifestations of religious activity provide fora where people congregate and engage in social interaction. In a context in which the state attempts to penetrate most arenas of social life, religious groups provide an opportunity for individuals to associate with a degree of independence from state control. In general, the government's relationship with religious groups is largely paternalistic, though some sectors have developed an ongoing dialogue with state authorities and tend to enjoy a cooperative relationship with them.

These various changes introduce a number of questions concerning the potential effects of civil society activity on Cuba's state and society. Given the variety and complexity of these effects, I will focus on three questions that, in my view, have major implications for the continuation and/or reformulation of the socialist project in Cuba. First, I am interested in the question of the organization of hegemony/consent in post-reform Cuba. I will attempt to give theoretical shape to this theme, seeking to understand the potential role of civil society in the process of reorganizing consent in Cuba. Second, I will explore a fundamental tension in the analysis of the public sphere in Cuba, namely, the conflict between unitary versus pluralistic conceptions of civil society and their compatibility with the socialist project. This question introduces three important elements in the analysis: the



Ariel Armony

tension between the Cuban socialist concept of “pueblo” and the emergence of differentiated identities shaped in civil society; the constraints on the democratization of the public space in Cuba imposed by the aggressive, interventionist role of the United States; and the role of transnational Cuban communities in the construction of a Cuban public sphere. Finally, I will discuss how trends toward fragmentation in Cuban society affect the associational arena and how informal networks of illegality in civil society may potentially erode the rule of law, hindering the prospects for democratization of the socialist system.

THE QUESTION OF HEGEMONY

Recent debates on civil society in Cuba (see, for instance, Recio 1998-99) have emphasized the question of the limits between the state and civil society. Indeed, this is a relevant question in a context in which the state exerted vast control over civil society until very recently. Theoretically speaking, however, a more important question is whether civil society in Cuba should be construed as being within or outside the state. This problem is not merely theoretical or terminological: this conundrum has vital implications for the organizing of hegemony in Cuba.

For Antonio Gramsci (1971), “domination” results from hegemony and coercion. The former entails, according to Gramsci, the uncoerced consent given by the population to the general orientation of society imposed by the dominant social group. Therefore, if civil society exists within the state—as key voices of the Cuban political class have argued (see Recio 1998-99 [Hart]: 156)—then domination would be solely dependent upon the capacity of the state to organize consent through cultural institutions (e.g., schools, universities, the media, and so on) and to effectively discipline citizens through its police, legal, and bureaucratic powers. In other words, both hegemony and coercion, according to this approach, are exclusive functions of the state (Cohen and Arato 1992: 145, 640, note 79).

In contrast to this position, I agree with the reading of Gramsci advanced by Perry Anderson (1976-77) and others, which asserts that consent is not produced by the state only (which is the sole source of coercion): civil society’s social, political and cultural expressions operate as sources of consent too (Cohen and Arato 1992: 145). In other words,

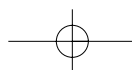


Civil Society in Cuba

the state employs mainly coercive mechanisms to integrate society, but it also produces hegemony. Civil society, in turn, functions as the main arena of political legitimacy, operating as the locus where hegemony is both produced and sustained (Cohen and Arato 1992: 642, note 83). This analysis, as recent transformations in Cuba's civil society show, is well suited to the Cuban case. If hegemony does not exist in civil society, then the state is required to obtain compliance largely by means of coercion (Stepan 1988: 11). This is a key problem for the socialist regime in Cuba because while the regime exercised Gramscian hegemony for decades, it now faces a crisis of consent.

Is it possible to recreate socialist hegemony in Cuba? This is, above all, a question about civil society's horizontal and vertical relations. The horizontal dimension refers to the relations within civil society, which are fundamental for the strength of the social infrastructure (Stepan 1989: xii). The horizontal links within civil society can be characterized by fragmentation or coalescence. Under a pattern of coalescence, civil society organizations tend to find spaces for consensual action, they agree on strategic priorities and are likely to establish alliances and they develop social networks that cut across social cleavages. These horizontal connections contribute not only to increase civil society's broader influence, but also to strengthen the public sphere. In turn, the vertical dimension refers to the relations of civil society with the state. This is a complex dimension in Cuba given the absence of independent mechanisms that mediate between the public sphere and the state. Therefore, it is still uncertain whether autonomous groups could succeed in developing agendas in collaboration with the state and to find supportive niches within the state apparatus. If this kind of connection is established, civil society groups would be more likely to modify the state and to strengthen areas that could operate as spaces for mutually beneficial exchange.

Whereas the pre-reform state was very effective in regulating almost all spaces of social life, the transformations that took place in the 1990s clearly show that the state is largely incapable of regulating and controlling the wealth of civic activity that exists in Cuba (Recio 1998-99 [Acanda]: 161, [Dilla]: 163). In other words, if coercion seems to be inadequate to recreate socialist hegemony in Cuba, and new state imperatives (e.g., accumulation) are likely to present problems for legitimation -it follows that the long-term survival of the socialist system will depend on the



Ariel Armony

capacity of civil society to produce consent without rejecting the basic tenets of the Cuban national project (see Dryzek 1996: 479). This capacity, however, is largely dependent upon political reform, because states can suffocate civic capacity, specifically when governments employ repression against their citizens, as other cases have shown (see Richard and Booth 2000).

When considering the problem of hegemony in light of civil society, it is useful to highlight four issues. First, it is important to take into account that the welfare role of the state is central to the recreation of consent. Having said this, we must be careful not to view the relationship between the state and civil society as one in which civil society “besieges” the state and eventually replaces it in the provision of welfare services, thereby relieving the state from its welfare burden (Recio 1998-99 [Dilla]: 165). This is a view advanced by studies of the “third sector” in the United States and extrapolated to other countries with uncertain results. According to this perspective, the central role of civil society (essentially, of nonprofit associations) is as a provider of services for which the state is considered ineffective (e.g., in health, social services, culture, and education) (Salamon and Anheier 1996: 46-49). This approach is based on the premise that voluntary associations have the knowledge, direct connections to society, flexibility, and expertise that the state lacks. The successful experience of the Cuban state in areas such as health (see Feinsilver 1993) shows that civil society is not necessarily the only option when it comes to efficiency in the provision of welfare services.

Second, the possibility to reorganize hegemony in Cuba around a more democratic and pluralistic but still socialist project requires that we discriminate between civil society’s inclusion in the realm of politics and its inclusion in the state apparatus (Dryzek 1996: 476). One of the most difficult issues in a potential transition in Cuba would revolve not so much around civil society groups entering the state, but around the creation of conditions for groups to challenge state policies. There have already been some promising steps towards the emergence of oppositional publics in Cuba. The case of the state-affiliated labor unions –which successfully challenged the creation of an income tax in 1994 –shows that mechanisms of participation coming from the core of Cuba’s “socialist civil society” can become the basis for more independent forms of oppositional politics (Dilla 1999: 32-33). But the likelihood that mass organizations affiliated with the party and state would be able to deepen their



Civil Society in Cuba

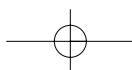
autonomous inclusion in politics, while remaining responsive to the interests and demands of their rank and file, is very uncertain.

Third, when considering the role of civil society in the organization of hegemony it is important to ask, what are the tactical advantages of the phrase “civil society” in Cuban discourse? What is the legitimacy that actors can gain from ‘being part’ of civil society? For instance, in the Brazilian transition to democracy, the meaning of civil society entailed “opposition to the regime.” While the military regime was largely unable to employ the idea of civil society to promote its own interests, very diverse groups gained legitimacy because they “belonged” to civil society (Stepan 1988: 5). In the case of Cuba, it appears that the government has failed to understand this key aspect of hegemony –at least when the official party line denounces civil society as a “neoliberal excrescence” and cracks down on certain arenas of debate (Dilla 1999: 31).

Finally, it is interesting to point out a paradox: while Cuba’s revolutionary state has played a key role in building civil society, in part, because of the distribution of resources produced by the socialist system and the creation of many spaces for participation, the revolutionary state stands as the most resilient obstacle to the expansion of civil society in Cuba (Dilla 1999: 32). Indeed, whereas in most of Latin America socioeconomic inequality has constrained the creation of broadly inclusive civil societies, the widespread enjoyment of social rights in Cuba has contributed to promote civic capacity. However, the expansion of civil society participation has led to demands for civil and political rights, and these demands have accentuated a crisis of legitimacy in Cuba. I argue that the possibility to solve this crisis is closely linked to the problem of broadening the public sphere, making it more inclusive. Is this compatible with the socialist project? To this question I turn next.

UNITARY VERSUS PLURAL CIVIL SOCIETY

Cuba presents an interesting test case for a key question raised in Gramsci’s analysis of civil society: is a free and pluralistic civil society effective only for the reproduction of capitalist hegemony? Or are the principles and norms that sustain a free civil society the basis for the broad incorporation of self-organized groups even under a socialist system? (Cohen and Arato 1992: 155).



Ariel Armony

This tension between a notion of a pluralistic civil society and a conception of a “unified state-society” is central to the project of deepening a socialist model in Cuba (Cohen and Arato 1992: 155). If a pluralistic civil society were deemed compatible with socialism, then a program of reform would have to focus on expanding structures of participation in such a way that they are not totally subsumed under a centralized economic or political project (Cohen and Arato 1992: 155; 640, note 77; 642, note 90). Unfortunately, the recent trend toward increasing social control in Cuba (with its ups and downs) points in the direction of “a totalizing, unitary cultural model” which closes public space and offsets, to an important degree, encouraging societal developments (Cohen and Arato 1992: 644. See Adamson 1987-88: 331-333).

The problem of a “unified versus pluralistic” civil society involves three important issues with both conceptual and empirical relevance. First, this antinomy may be read in the Cuban context as a tension between the concept of “pueblo” –the people as a unitary and unified agent in the construction of socialism –and a myriad of differentiated, heterogeneous groups with the capacity of reconstructing a socialist project (see Recio 1998-99 [Alvarez]: 158; [Dilla]: 164). This has been a controversial issue in Cuban debates on civil society. As some analysts have argued, on one hand, Cuba faces the need to deepen the autonomy of popular organizations as a way of building a civil society with the capability to serve as an arena for the recreation of political and social consensus. On the other hand, these analysts have questioned the analytical usefulness of the concept of civil society if it is employed to signify a space in which people define their identities across cleavages of gender, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation and so on (Recio 1998-99 [Dilla]: 165; [Limia]: 174).

In my view, the “politics of difference” has already become a part of civil society in Cuba. The following example illustrates this point. As some studies have shown (e.g., de la Fuente 1995), the early attempts of the revolution to tear down socio-legal patterns of inequality (e.g., institutional racism) did not alter the culture of racism in Cuban society. The revolution attempted to create the idea that the revolution had achieved “racial equality and national unity” but still the question of race and racism has not been addressed directly by the regime (Hansing 2001: 743). The situation of AfroCubans in the island has worsened in the last few years, especially because of their lack of access to dollars given the

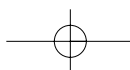


Civil Society in Cuba

increasing dollarization of the economy. They tend to have relatively little access to remittances; employment in the tourist industry (racial prejudices often preclude Afrocubans from obtaining jobs in this area); or other ways of obtaining dollars legally (e.g., by setting up home-based restaurants or bed-and-breakfasts). As a result, recent market reforms have introduced a racial dimension into the generalized crisis. Afrocubans have been increasingly participating in the informal or illegal economy in order to obtain dollars in an increasingly dollarized economy (Hansing 2001: 744). As illegal activities such as petty crime have become identified with the Afrocuban population, police attention has targeted this social sector. In a context in which race is already a basis for discrimination, this trend is likely to have negative consequences for the rights of Afrocubans. It is thus expected that associational activities of this group would respond in one way or another to the cleavage of race.

In addition, approaching the question of civil society without taking into account social differentiation risks missing significant developments that affect the identity formation of certain groups. For example, the emergence of new cultural spaces around which young Afrocubans recreate their identities is another relevant dimension of race that cannot be ignored in the analysis of civil society. Afrocuban religious activities, which have received increased attention within and outside the island, exist alongside more marginal phenomena such as the growing popularity of Rasta culture, which has encouraged young Afrocubans to explore their particular identity (Hansing 2001: 744-745). These cultural expressions are very different from the official discourse of “pueblo”—a discourse that presents a monolithic society-state model.

A second issue concerns the stance of the United States with respect to Cuba. Whereas the Cuban political class has restricted the debate about civil society and limited the broadening of the public sphere, hostility from the United States has led the Cuban regime to argue that civil society can become a “fifth column” on behalf of the US. In this sense, it could be argued that the U.S. government has restricted the potential democratization of Cuba’s civil society. U.S. policy towards Cuba consistently pushes the Cuban government toward a conception of a “controlled ‘socialist civil society’,” which serves the state to promote its totalizing worldview (Dilla 1999: 31, 36. See Recio 1998-99 [Hart]: 156).



Ariel Armony

Finally, the problem of creating a broad civil society in Cuba cannot be examined without attention to the effects of globalization, especially its cultural impact. I will focus on two important dimensions of this topic: (1) the recasting of popular culture as a result of the introduction (via European and American tourists and Cubans living abroad) of consumption standards from industrialized societies and (2) the increasing relevance of transnational publics in Cuba's public sphere. First, more research is needed to understand how changes in popular culture affect the constitution of the public sphere in Cuba. The construction of luxury hotels in Havana and other parts of the country, as well as renovation projects (as in Old Havana) targeted to tourism help create a new popular culture in which the gap between Cuban realities and rising expectations takes a central role (Portes 1997: 6).¹ This gap is especially relevant for younger generations who have attained high levels of education, but are now faced with a lack of incentives when it comes to their insertion in the professions for which they were trained. Formal and informal networks of young people play a critical role in channeling cultural dispositions and shaping attitudes toward the revolutionary regime.

Second, no analysis of the public sphere in Cuba can ignore the role of transnational communities in debates about the revolution's social, cultural, and political aspects. These communities—which constitute themselves as publics, especially via electronic means of communication are “social fields that cross geographic, cultural, and political borders” (Portes 1997: 4, citing Basch et al. 1994: 6). In other words, these are transnational communities (Portes 1997: 3). Cuban transnational civil society encompasses Cubans in the island, Florida, Spain, and many other places. These publics enter and leave the island, engage and disengage with each other in innovative ways, and involve large numbers of people (Portes 1997: 18). They carry ideas, political pressure, and

¹ Indeed, since the mid-1990s, “Cuba's sudden economic opening and the growth of tourism have made the entrance, access and circulation of foreign information, ideas and styles easier and vaster. Whilst the state continues to hold a firm grip on official cultural production and maintains its hardline anti-imperialist ideological stance towards what it views as North American cultural hegemony, it is having a harder time controlling the inflow of cultural trends from abroad as well as people's attraction to them.” (Hansing 2001: 735).



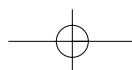
Civil Society in Cuba

even material goods and funds. The Elián González affair is one of the most well-known examples of this type of social interaction, marked by the fact that debates are no longer confined to a given national territory but occupy a virtual, transnational space. There are also many other examples of this communication process, for instance, the networks developed by the Jewish and gay communities in Cuba. These transnational networks introduce new forces that influence the nature of civil society and oppose the sanctioning of a socialist civil society “by decree.”

FRAGMENTATION, CIVIL SOCIETY, AND THE RULE OF LAW

The increasing fragmentation of Cuban society and the weakening of the rule of law in the country both affect civil society. First, as noted, the post Cold War crisis has had a differential impact across social groups. The generalized economic crisis coupled with a negative association between educational attainment and income has contributed to disengagement, cynicism, and rejection of the status quo (Milán 1999: 34–35). Micro-level social interactions appear to be increasingly permeated by social tensions triggered, in particular, by a worsening of income stratification. This is important because we cannot study civic organizations, formal and informal social networks, and other associational forms without taking into account their specific socioeconomic and political context. Patterns and effects of civic engagement are context-dependent. Therefore, civil society often multiplies existing cleavages in society.

The process toward social polarization that characterizes Cuba today may reinforce already existing patterns of intolerance, which can be easily reproduced in civil society. Civil society can have both democratic and non-democratic orientations because what matters are not the features of associations themselves, or some “extraordinary” dispositions or processes innate to civil society, but the specific characteristics of the socio-historical context. Social fragmentation, then, can contribute to the emergence of collective forms of public action oriented to restrict the rights of certain groups or it can lead to aggressive—even violent—forms of collective action. In the Cuban setting, this potential scenario is likely to increase the willingness of the state to discipline society through coercion.



Ariel Armony

Second, the deepening of particularism appears to be accompanied by an erosion of the rule of law at the micro level of society. The strengthening of a culture of the illegal in everyday interactions as a result of the recent economic reforms erodes respect for the law in society (see Fernandez 2001: 61). The existence of these practices is not a new phenomenon in Cuba but one that has attained a central role in everyday interactions. Informal networks that operate outside the law are based on at least two forms of illegality: corruption, understood as appropriation of state-owned goods by public officials, and mafia-like networks that thrive when legal norms and rules are weak. In this respect, the case of Cuba should be examined in light of the experience of Central Europe (e.g., Poland. See Wedel 1986). In these societies, the erosion of the rule of law at the level of citizen-citizen interaction under communism emerged as one of the fundamental obstacles toward the strengthening of democratic practices after 1989.

My point here is not to stress the importance of the rule of law for a transition to a liberal democracy in Cuba, but to emphasize that the development of a pluralistic civil society and, in turn, the democratization of the socialist system cannot be accomplished if social relations are not based upon a strong legal culture. This point raises serious concerns about the prospects for both equality and freedom in Cuba and it is a matter that cannot be solved via coercion. Indeed, there is an ongoing reinforcement between respect for the rule of law at the institutional level and at the level of society. Legitimacy of the decision-making process is built on people's judgment about rules and authorities, and strengthened when rules are perceived as "procedurally fair" and authorities are considered knowledgeable and trustworthy, and thereby to be obeyed (Levi 1996: 51; Tyler 1998: 272-73). However, the decision to obey the law is a rational gamble built upon not only what citizens "know about institutions and their ability to orient action" but also upon their experience in day-to-day interactions with other citizens (Cohen 1999: 82 note 27, citing Offe 1996: 23).

CONCLUSION

This paper has argued that the deepening of socialism in Cuba -by which I mean its democratization- is essentially tied to the creation of a plu-

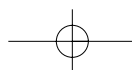


Civil Society in Cuba

realistic civil society. The comparatively even distribution of social rights in Cuba makes this venture unusually promising at least when compared to the rest of Latin America, where vast socioeconomic inequalities have impeded the emergence of strong, broadly inclusive and democratically-oriented civil societies. However, the Cuban political class has not been willing (or able) to take advantage of this potential path to change within the socialist system.

How can civil society, in particular the public sphere, be made more inclusive? Some have argued (e.g. Nancy Fraser 1993: 14-15) that democratization is linked to the opportunities available for various groups to create “parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counterdiscourses,” so as to produce “oppositional interpretations” of the social, political, and cultural order. Therefore, these groups may expand the arenas for deliberation if they contribute to create a “plurality of competing publics” (14). The result, however, is not always a democratic one because some counterpublics are antiegalitarian, extremist or favor the exclusion and marginalization of others. Beyond this fact, in the context of socialist Cuba, the multiplication of counterpublics may result in an increase in contestation (Fraser 1993: 15). This may allow different social groups to present new issues for public discussion, creating the opportunity for certain groups “to convince others than what in the past was not public in the sense of being a matter of common concern should now become so” (1993: 20).

The expansion of discursive space in the public sphere is important for deepening democratization processes. In the case of Cuba, this expansion can be potentially linked to the intersection of demands over identities, interests and needs (Fraser 1993: 14). This type of intersection would introduce a fundamentally new component to the revolutionary process. The process of expanding debate is likely to lead to increasing demands for the expansion of civil rights and, in turn, political rights (see Caldeira 1996: 198-99, 208). The chances that this process can be followed without discarding the principles of social justice that stand at the basis of the Cuban experiment are closely linked to the capacity of the regime to implement institutional reforms that would connect with the new forms of civil society activity that have emerged recently (Avritzer 2002: 165). In this respect, successful experiences of deliberative democracy in Latin America (such as participatory budgeting in Brazil) may be useful to Cuban policy makers.



Ariel Armony

Civil society, however, cannot offer solutions by itself. The complex web of intersections of networks of individuals and organizations reveals social coalitions and alliances, but also tensions, schisms and conflicts in the associational arena. Indeed, the opening of strategic spaces for the advancement of particular agendas should not be taken as a necessary indicator of coalescence within civil society or segments of it. Participants often face “competing loyalties” and social cleavages tend to create tensions within civil society (Clemens 2001: 271). Understanding the promises and limitations of civil society is then necessary to assess future developments and prospects for democratic change. This is a major challenge for revolutionary Cuba.

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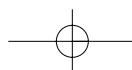
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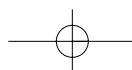
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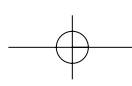
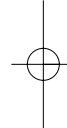
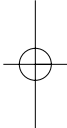
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CHAPTER 3**Cuban Diasporas: Their Impact on Religion, Culture, and Society****MARGARET E. CRAHAN**HUNTER COLLEGE & THE GRADUATE CENTER,
CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

The diasporic nature of Cuban history has resulted in a constantly shifting juxtaposition of peoples, cultures and belief systems. The encounters of indigenes, Europeans, Africans and others in Cuba in the colonial period produced an intense process of interaction, change, adaptation, borrowing, overlapping and abandonment of some cultural elements and the construction of new ones. Hence, there developed patterns of parallelism as symbolized by the identification of the *Virgen de la Caridad* with the spiritists' *Ochún*, *Santa Barbara* with *Shango*, and *San Lázaro* with *Babalo Ayi*. Such syncretic processes eventually helped distinguish the residents of the isle of Cuba from Native Americans, Europeans or Africans and gave rise to the emergence of a unique cultural identity embodied in the word—*cubanidad*. The definition of the latter was elaborated over time particularly during the independence struggles of the nineteenth century against Spain and the struggle against US penetration in the twentieth century. Today Cuban national identity is intimately tied to *cubanidad* which encapsulates the diversity of the constituent elements of Cuba's religious, social and cultural phenomena, including the holding of diverse religious beliefs by a single individual.

This presentation explores the interplay of religion, diasporas and *cubanidad* from the sixteenth century to the present focusing on three major diasporas—the African from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries, that occasioned by the struggle for independence and its repression in the nineteenth century, and the exodus after 1959. The latter two involved an estimated ten percent of the total population at the time. All three occurred

Margaret E. Crahan

within a context of ongoing in and out migration which began in the early sixteenth century with the departure of recently arrived Spaniards for the conquest of Mexico. Such flows continued throughout the colonial period stimulated, in part, by the Iberian flotilla system and Cuba's emergence as a commercial entrepôt, together with piracy, imperial competition and the importation of Yucatecan indigenous peoples and Chinese contract laborers. In the twentieth century there were notable streams of Europeans beginning with demobilized Spanish soldiers after the 1895-1898 war, as well as other Europeans looking for economic opportunities or safety from pogroms and the rise of fascism in Europe. US citizens came in substantial numbers, most notably as businesspeople, missionaries, tourists, or retirees and included returning Cuban Americans. Hence, diasporas occurred in the midst of a constantly shifting demographic profile.

Religions in Cuba were strongly affected by both the diasporas and the constant migratory streams resulting in a notable level of flexibility and permeability. The constant interplay of belief systems and practices has resulted in the emergence of particularly Cuban forms of Catholicism, Protestantism, Judaism and Spiritism. As a result they have helped define Cuban identity in a context of substantial outside influences permeating the island, as well as in foreign contexts.

The course of Cuban history has consistently helped define cubanidad and the nature of the island's religion, society and culture. For example, the struggle for independence in the nineteenth century was facilitated by the growth of a unique creole identity, as well as by Spiritist and Catholic priests, together with Protestant ministers who helped legitimize the struggle. Some of these religious leaders, many of whom had spent time in exile, disseminated information about alternative political, economic and social models. Finally, as a result of the Cuban diaspora in the late twentieth century, there have been substantial changes ranging from new forms of Spiritism such as santería generated in response to conditions Cuban Americans have encountered in the US and Puerto Rico. The role of institutional churches has also changed from marginalization in the mid-1960s to an increasing role in rethinking the island's future, including what role civil society could play in dealing with such

Cuban Diasporas

problems as poverty, corruption, anomie, alienation, abuse of power and the breakdown of family and community. The latter two have historically constituted strong supports of Cuban civil society.

RELIGIONS, DIASPORAS, AND CUBANIDAD

While the indigenous population of Cuba was substantially reduced by the Spanish conquest and colonization, indigenous communities, culture and religious beliefs have persisted up to the present. The “disappearance” of the indigenous population as a separate group in Cuba did not occur until the eighteenth century when it was no longer listed separately in the censuses. Up to that point there were 26 provinces of Indians and over seventy indigenous communities listed (Garcia Molina, 29-30). Some new indigenous communities emerged as late as the nineteenth century in which precolombian religious beliefs were present together with Catholic and African ones.

Few communities better epitomized the role of diverse religions in the creation of a Cuban identity than the mining town of Cobre near Santiago in the eastern part of the island. The town of El Cobre was founded in the late sixteenth century to exploit copper deposits using both indigenous and African labor. The area was already transculturated by the mid-sixteenth century. By 1648 it was estimated that the population was 43% creole, 22% mulatos, and 37% mulatas. (Portuondo Zúñiga, 113-14) A statue of the Virgen Mary was “found” in 1613 floating in the nearby Bay of Nipe reportedly by two Indian men and a mulato boy, all named Juan. As the years passed the artistic representations of the three changed to an Indian, Spaniard and African and finally in the mid-twentieth century into two white men and a mulatto boy indicating changing conceptions of the composition of the Cuban people. The Virgen stands poised on a half-circle, the indigenous sign for the moon, which is also the sign for water and the snake. La Caridad is associated with life, growth, fertility, solace and caring for the poor as is the Afro-Cuban spirit Ochún with which she is identified. Both were venerated by the Afro-Cuban soldiers known as mam-bises during the struggle for independence and in the early twentieth century she was identified largely with the working class. In 1916 the Virgen was declared the patroness of Cuba (Portuondo Zúñiga, 58-63).

Margaret E. Crahan

In the 1950s La Caridad was appealed to by both pro and anti-Batista forces, while Fidel and Raúl Castro's mother affixed ex votos to the Virgen's altar to protect her sons during their years of fighting in the Sierra Maestra. With the triumph of the 26th of July Movement on January 1, 1959 a mass of thanksgiving was said in the sanctuary in El Cobre (Portuondo Zúñiga, 260-71). Eleven months later the statue was transported to Havana for a National Catholic Congress that attracted an estimated 1,000,000 Cubans -one hundred times previous attendance. This meeting constituted the first major challenge to Castro. The crowd came alive when the Agrupación Católica leader, José Ignacio Lasagna, ended his speech with the exhortation "Social Justice yes; redemption of the worker and the farmer yes, communism no!" Chants erupted of "Cuba si, comunismo no!" as well as songs to the Virgen de Cobre to protect Cuba (Julien, 188; Padula, 458-59)

Shortly thereafter the massive exodus of Cubans began and in September 1961 an estimated 25,000 filled a Miami baseball stadium for the Virgen's feast day. Cards with her image were distributed imploring "Devuelvenos a Cuba," that is, "Return us to Cuba." In 1973 a shrine to the Virgen was opened overlooking Miami's Biscayne Bay with an image of the three Juans over the main door. This time they were portrayed as two whites and a black. In the midst of the debate in Miami over whether to travel to Cuba for the Pope's January 1998 visit, the celebration of the September, 1997 feast day of the Virgen was an occasion for a call for unity. As Bishop Agustín Román phrased it in his homily, Cubans "are not divided, because we all love the virgin"(Pique, 4B).

In both Cuba and the diaspora the Virgen de la Caridad del Cobre is a symbol of community and identity. As such it has become an expression of national and transnational consciousness rooted in the process of creolization and the struggle for independence, as well as for a more just society. The Virgen historically has been invoked as a symbol of cubanidad and the capacity of Cubans to work together to solve societal problems. Hence, it serves as an important icon for civil society initiatives in dealing with current problems including the reconciliation of Cubans within the island and abroad.

Catholic icons are not the only ones that have traditionally been called upon in moments of need by Cubans. African spirits have historically played a critical role in building communal identity and responding

Cuban Diasporas

to societal needs. Afro-Cuban Spiritism was stimulated by an upsurge of slave importations in the period 1760-1840 which helped Africanize the island's creole culture. As that process proceeded, the Catholic Church initially undertook to channel it, but as Afro-Cuban religions spread, it turned to suppressing previously legal Afro-Cuban religious organizations, carnivals and practices. This tended to reinforce the role of Spiritism as a mechanism of resistance and the preservation of historical memory and identity. Repression by colonial authorities encouraged the incorporation of some Afro-Cubans into the struggle for independence and helped legitimize the increased subversion of slavery as an institution. The contributions of Afro-Cubans to the 1868-1878 Ten Years' War for independence were considerable leading the predominantly white leaders of the independence movement to emphasize their commitment to ending slavery and incorporating Afro-Cubans into the body politic. However, gains made in Cuba and in exile by Afro-Cubans through the assumption of influential positions in the Cuban Revolutionary Party, the army, revolutionary clubs and mutual aid societies, all expressions of a nascent civil society, were impeded after independence in 1898.

This led to rising discontent and the creation of entities such as the Partido Independiente de Color in 1908 to oppose racial discrimination, particularly in government, and gain more access to jobs for Afro-Cubans in both the public and private sectors as a prelude to greater political and civic influence. In 1911 the government banned political parties based on race and in May 1912 the Party led an armed uprising that was ruthlessly put down. Afro-Cubans turned away from the larger polity seeking support and solace within their communities and in religion, particularly Spiritism. It became a prime source of psychic release and resistance, as well as a mechanism for social cohesion. The Spiritist religions' emphasis on Afro-Cuban community would be built upon in the early years of Castro's revolution when, as part of the process of generating support for a socialist revolution, he prioritized programs for the poor and those suffering racial discrimination. A good portion of the support for the consolidation of a socialist state came from the Afro-Cuban population, even though up into the 1970s the official policy of the government was critical of Spiritist religions. Nevertheless, Castro has used Afro-Cuban religious beliefs to legitimize his own government, as well as Cuba's involvements in Africa, and to attempt to stem the erosion of support for his government.

Margaret E. Crahan

In recent years some Spiritists have used their religion to challenge the government, particularly as its capacity to meet the basic needs of the population has grown more limited. Hence, while Castro's regime has probably contributed much to the consolidation of the Cuban nation state with substantial support from the Afro-Cuban religious community, that support has eroded. Indeed, a good number of the Spiritists who participate in the annual pilgrimage to the church of San Lázaro in recent years have prayed for a change in government (See the documentary film *La Promesa*). Throughout Cuban history Afro-Cuban religions have both contributed to the strengthening of civil society by promoting associationalism particularly in moments of crisis, as well as weakening it via legitimating separatism.

Meanwhile Spiritism in exile has given birth to new religious forms as part of a process of adaptation and retention of *cubanidad*. In the US, largely as a result of contact with Puerto Rican Espiritismo, Santerismo has emerged which involves a modification of the traditional saints and orishas to make them more accessible. Reflecting the new contexts in which exiles find themselves, membership is more transitory and episodic and there is not as much emphasis on kinship groups. The congregation is less a family in which the members have obligations to each other. Santerismo also contains elements of Kardecian Spiritism which tends to make it more appealing to the middle class. Overall, it is used as a means of identifying oneself as a Cuban and with creole values and culture, in the midst of a foreign culture.

In urban communities such as Miami, New York, Chicago, and elsewhere, Spiritism has clearly helped maintain a sense of community while in exile. As anthropologist Miguel Barnet notes the "religion of the orishas is linked to the notion of family -an extended and numerous family, originating in one sole ancestor, encompassing the living and the dead. Out of this system of tribal and familial lineage emerges a religious brotherhood involving godfather and godchildren in a kinship that transcends blood connections to form an all-inclusive and compact horizontal lineage." (Pique, 81)

The building of such linkages has been identified by a good number of political analysts as a prerequisite for the strengthening of associationalism and hence the capacity of civil society to build consensus and impose limits on the state, especially in terms of making it more responsive to the general public including in immigrant communities outside of



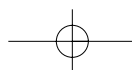
Cuban Diasporas

Cuba. Spiritist religions have been most prevalent among poorer Cuban exiles and appear to have had some positive impact in strengthening their communities. However, the emergence of Santerismo also suggests the degree to which Afro-Cuban and other religions can be modified outside the homeland. In contrast, in Cuba the spread of Spiritism in recent years seems to have stimulated communities to engage in more effective demand making on the government, as well as to protest as witness the street demonstrations in Barbacoa in 1994.

In short, Afro-Cuban religions have clearly helped forge Cuban national identity, as well as generate support for the struggle for independence from Spain and resistance to US domination. Both in revolutionary Cuba and in exile it has helped Cubans maintain their identity in the face of foreign influences. In the 1960s and 1970s the government criticized Spiritist practices, but they do not appear to have lost strength. Indeed, Santería and the other Spiritist religions, are benefiting from the current religious resurgence and are increasing their influence within Cuban society on the island and in the US. That makes them well-positioned to exercise greater influence if civil society becomes more active.

CHRISTIANITY AND CIVIL SOCIETY

The Catholic Church in Cuba has historically been deeply affected by the openness of the island as a commercial entrepôt, constant in and out migration, creolization and the relative weakness of societal institutions. In the early colonial period, the attractions of the mainland not only caused laypersons to leave Cuba, but also priests. This meant that the island was one of the first to ordain mestizos in an effort to cope with the scarcity of pastors and missionaries. Nevertheless, up to 1963 the majority of the clergy was Spanish including individuals who came to the island fleeing the French and Haitian revolutions and the Latin American wars of independence. The Carlist and other European wars of the mid-nineteenth century spurred some additional migration to the island by Spanish clerics, as well as the expulsion of some church people who were regarded by the colonial administration as harboring subversive ideas. Notable among these was Father Félix Varela y Morales (1787-1853), one of the estimated 100,000 Cuban exiles in the nineteenth century (Perez, 1995, 55).



Margaret E. Crahan

Varela's teachings at the Seminary of San Carlos and San Ambrosio in Havana, as well as his writings, have been cited by both José Martí and Fidel Castro as having profoundly affected their concept of *cubanidad*. Varela's impact on the underpinnings of the Cuban concepts of the polity and civil society has also been substantial. In discussing the quest for nationhood Varela emphasized the political role of the individual in society, human rights and reform of political, economic, religious and social structures, ideas that appear to have been sharpened by his experiences in exile. When in 1823 he called for independence from Spain, he was forced to flee to the United States where he immersed himself in the writings of such individuals as Thomas Jefferson and founded the newspaper *El Habanero* (1824-1826) to promote the island's independence. As the historian Sheldon Liss has concluded "he served as a major link between philosophical thought and political thought and between social action and national liberation. In paving the way for Cuba's independence, he rejected the intervention of foreigners in Cuban affairs. Before José Martí, he was the apostle of *Cubanidad*. He represented the Cuban bourgeoisie's quest for independence, a position he passed on to Martí" (Liss, 12).

At the same time that such subversive ideas were filtering into Cuba, there was another flow, namely, clerics who had abandoned Haiti in the face of the 1791-1804 revolution, as well as the wars of independence in the mainland Spanish colonies. This contributed to an increase in the number of priests to 1,000 in 1817, which by 1846 was reduced to 438 and in 1899 to 283 (Kirk, 25). The influx of clerics fleeing revolution and independence reinforced conservative sectors within the Cuban Catholic church and society, although the Bishop, José Díaz de Espada y Landa (1802-1832), attempted to limit their impact by supporting liberal European developments and even limitations on the power of the church. Espada regarded support for continued Spanish control of Cuba as a mistake and condemned slavery and the concentration of landholding. Clerical exiles from Haiti and the mainland conspired against him attempting to force him from office. His actions did, however, succeed in identifying the Catholic Church, at least initially, with the struggle for national identity and a more just society (Kirk, 20-22).

The development of the sugar industry and the increasing predominance of agrarian capitalism in the eighteenth and nineteenth cen-

Cuban Diasporas

tures is regarded as having reduced the influence of the Catholic Church and increased secularism. In the late 1830s and 1840s Catholic Church lands and buildings were being confiscated by the government, in part, because of financial needs resulting from the Carlist struggle. A good number of priests were forbidden to preach and others were forced into exile because of suspicions about their political positions. The Dominicans were barred from teaching at the University of Havana and some Catholic schools were forced to close. The upshot was increased limits on the capacity of the Catholic Church to evangelize particularly in rural areas. A debate erupted within the Church over whether to accept continued Spanish control to avoid further depredations or to support its critics and opponents. Institutional weakness encouraged caution, although Bishop Antonio María Claret (1851-56) publicly condemned social injustice and encouraged agrarian reform including utilizing lands formerly held by the Dominicans. After criticizing the government, as well as slavery, he was targeted for assassination and had to go into exile (Kirk, 23-27).

Ecclesial pleas for clemency for the rebels who participated in an 1859 uprising in Camagüey precipitated increased repression of the Catholic church and generated more exiles during the Ten Years' War (1868-78). A good number of church people appear to have tried to distance themselves from the conflict either through interior migration or through departure from the country, not unlike the reaction of some Catholics at the outset of the Castro revolution. Exceptions included Bishop Jacinto María Martínez Saez who was deported in 1869 for supporting the insurrection and Father Braulio Odio of Santiago who joined the guerillas. In 1873 the military government attempted to impose Monsignor Pedro Llorente as Bishop of Santiago without consulting Rome which resulted in his excommunication.

The chaos and destruction of the Ten Years' War not only resulted in an exodus of clergy and laity, it also destroyed churches and their financial resources. The Catholic church was in a particularly weakened condition when Protestant missionaries began to flow into the country in the 1870s and 1880s, many of whom were Cubans who had joined Protestant churches while in exile in Tampa, Miami, or New York. Indeed one of the leaders of the 1873 Virginius expedition intent on smuggling arms to the rebels was an Episcopalian minister who had converted while in exile. With the end of war in 1878 a number of

Margaret E. Crahan

Protestants who had been active in the independence movement in exile returned including H.B. Someillán and Aurelio Silvera of the Methodist church, Alberto Díaz of the Southern Baptists, and Evaristo Collazo of the Presbyterian Church. They, and others, had been attracted to Protestantism while in exile, in part, because of its identity with modernization and progress, as well as the sense of community Protestant congregations provided while they were experiencing the dislocation of living outside their homeland. In addition, there was also the symbolism involved in rejecting Catholicism and its identification with colonialism in favor of a religion associated with liberal democracy (Perez, 56-57). Protestant churches were also identified in Cuba with the abolitionist movement.

The direct involvement of Protestant ministers such as Díaz and Someillán in the independence movement furthered their churches' growth among opponents of continued Spanish control. Díaz had been a representative and fundraiser for independence leader General Antonio Maceo while in the US and he eventually became the military commander of the rebel forces in the Province of Havana. Someillán had been José Martí's secretary in Key West and a revolutionary agent in Cuba. Both ministers abandoned their churches in the face of the imposition by the US of the Platt Amendment (1901) which undercut Cuban sovereignty together with the support by US mission boards of the US intervention (1898-1902) (Perez, 56-59).

In the 1890s Protestants in Cuba and in the exile communities in the United States helped legitimize not only separatist sentiments through their criticism of the "evils" of continued colonial control, but they also promoted acceptance of what they regarded as a more Christian political model, namely, liberal democracy. Adoption of such a model would, it was argued, allow Cuba to modernize and become freer and more prosperous. Cuban political, economic, religious and social "backwardness" would fade away as the island enjoyed the benefits of a new and more beneficial system. US and Cuban Protestants, by and large, supported the 1898 US intervention in the Cuban war for independence. What the Protestant independence leaders did not expect was the onslaught of Protestant missionaries that followed hard on the heels of Teddy Roosevelt and his Rough Riders. That influx transformed the Protestant churches in Cuba from national and nationalistic ones into missionary operations heavily dependent on US financing and personnel. The prolif-

Cuban Diasporas

eration of schools and social welfare operations helped fill a substantial need, but also facilitated US penetration (Crahan, 1978, 204-05). The latter helped restrict the consolidation of a Cuban nation state rooted in an integrated civil society, although it did ultimately fuel Cuban nationalism.

Failure to consolidate the republic led to considerable instability in the period from 1901-1934 marked by repeated US intervention, insurrections by demobilized soldiers, the dictatorship of Antonio Machado (1925-33) and the failed 1933 revolution. This was a period of considerable growth for the Protestant churches although the 1929 Great Depression reduced the resources available for expansion. With the exception of the Baptists, the historical Protestant denominations (Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians and Quakers) depended largely on US pastors and missionaries. The result was that the Protestant churches became identified as US institutions in the public mind. As nationalist sentiment increased in Cuba, particularly in the 1930s, there were increasing pressures to make the churches more Cuban. This resulted in a series of studies that culminated in J. Merle Davis' *The Cuban Church in a Sugar Economy* which examined over 400 Protestant congregations. Davis concluded that Protestantism had virtually reached the limits of its possible expansion largely because its strategies concentrated on urban areas and were rooted in US conditions rather than Cuban. As a consequence, "a middle class institution has been set up in Cuba in an economic and social order in which the middle-class, as known in America, practically does not exist." (79). He recommended reorganization, leadership training and experimentation including with grass roots cooperatives that would help respond to poverty in the rural areas. The ultimate goal was to eliminate the dependency of the Cuban churches on US financing and personnel, as well as make them more responsive to Cuban needs (Davis, 123-24). While some progress was made in nationalizing the Protestant churches prior to the 1959 revolution, they were still strongly identified with the US, as witness the departure of virtually all of the US and Cuban born pastors by the early 1960s, except for those of the Eastern Baptists. As a consequence, the latter were able to maintain most of their congregations and membership. Hence, Protestantism did not contribute substantially to cubanidad although its emphasis on associationalism did reinforce the growth of organized civil society on the island.

Margaret E. Crahan

With respect to Catholicism, the war for independence and US intervention left the Church relatively weak institutionally and with a scarcity of personnel. While a good number of Catholics had supported the struggle for independence, and more of the clergy than has been commonly thought (Maza), the image of the Catholic Church continued to be Spanish, in large measure because of its continued dependence on European clergy. Institutional weakness contributed to cultivation of political and economic elites, as well as the growing middle class from the 1930s on. A reformist strain was present in such lay groups as Acción Católica and Agrupación Católica which by the 1950s were engaged in discussions of how best to respond to Cuba's socioeconomic problems, particularly in the countryside. A 1957 survey of 400 rural heads of families revealed that slightly over one-half identified themselves as Catholics and that 4.3% attended services. Of note is the fact that only 53.4% had ever laid eyes on a priest and less than 8% had ever had personal contact with one. Even more telling was the fact that only 3.4% of those surveyed felt that the Catholic Church could do anything to improve their lot. Most looked to the government (Echevarría Salvat, 14-16; 25). Approximately 85% of all priests and religious were based in Havana with the majority engaged in education rather than pastoral work.

The exodus of Catholic personnel after the Castro revolution was a product of a variety of factors. Most clerics and religious were Spanish and had been educated in Franco's Spain. Hence, fear of the consolidation of a Marxist Leninist government that would be inimical to the interests of the Catholic Church was deep. As early as February 1959 the Archbishop of Santiago, Monsignor Enrique Pérez Serantes, who had intervened on Castro's behalf after the Moncada attack, cautioned the government against "utopian egalitarianism." (Julien, 187) As a pre-Vatican II (1963-65) church, there was considerable suspicion over agrarian reform as a violation of the right to private property and the May 1959 government proposal to standardize the curriculums of all Cuban schools -public and private alike. The latter also disturbed the Protestant churches most of whose work was educational.

As tensions increased with the US and the revolution moved left, Catholics and Protestants began leaving the country in large numbers until most congregations were decimated. A 1969 survey by the Archdiocese of Havana concluded that over 50% of parishoners had left

Cuban Diasporas

the country. The largest Protestant denomination -the Methodist -which numbered 10,347 in 1960 fell to 2,629 by 1972 (Jover, 27; Lewis, 1).

By the end of 1960 between 1,000 and 1,500 Cubans were arriving in the US weekly. Many Catholic and Protestant congregations in Miami became predominantly Cuban not only in their membership, but also in their liturgy, organization and sentiments. Living in the US resulted in the remolding of religious beliefs and practices. While initially there was a renewed fervor among some who had not previously been active, over time this abated somewhat. There was, however, an increased tendency to experiment with a new congregation or denomination. Devotees of Spiritism were not as numerous in the initial waves of Cubans, but by the 1980s they had not only established themselves, but had increased their numbers not only among Cubans, but also among other Hispanics.

Over time Cuban religions reflected generalized trends within the US, as indicated by increased social and political activism on the part of the Catholic and historical Protestant denominations, as well as changes in liturgy, participation, and even social doctrine. One of the most notable developments was the spread of Pentecostalism and charismaticism, which eventually penetrated Cuba, given increased contacts between Cubans and Cuban Americans after 1977 (Garcia, 19). The Castro government's promotion of tourism has also facilitated the importation of new religions and religious practices.

After initially retreating in upon themselves, the Catholic and Protestant churches in Cuba responded to the revolution by seeking rapprochement with the revolutionary government. This was facilitated by Castro's increasing appreciation of Marxist Christian dialogue and the growing number of progressive Christians in other parts of Latin America. As Castro further consolidated the Cuban nation state, and the counterrevolutionary image of the churches receded in the 1970s, there was increasing dialogue. It was not, however, until the late 1980s and early 1990s that religions emerged from the margins of Cuban society, not only as a result of their growing internal strength, but also because of the erosion of the government's legitimacy and popular support. This confluence tended to activate the churches and make them more open to modernizing influences. By the 1990s religion in Cuba was characterized by renewal, experimentation and

Margaret E. Crahan

growth. Charismatics were increasing in both Catholic and Protestant churches, while Pentecostals proliferated.

Currently churchgoers tend to fall into three categories -traditionalists, renovators who are non-charismatics and renovators who are charismatics. Traditionalists esteem retention of historical doctrine, liturgy and practice and tend to regard charismatics as diluting or misrepresenting the faith. The non-charismatic renovators emphasize collective participation and greater responsibility on the part of members to be aggressive in the proclamation of the gospel. Emphasis is on personal experience of faith, knowing the Bible, and their liturgy incorporates more Cuban rhythms and music. They tend to fault charismatics for an inclination towards doctrinal ambiguity and introversion that can lead to less participation in society. Since charismatics tend to believe in a second baptism of the Holy Spirit, this can also raise barriers between those who have and have not received the Holy Spirit. This is divisive within a society that has traditionally put great emphasis on solidarity, and especially in the face of ongoing US pressure and severe economic problems. Those church leaders most committed to revolutionary goals tend to be critical of charismatics, as well as Pentecostals, for contributing to an erosion of support for the revolution (Carrillo, 20-30). Such developments also reduce societal solidarity and hence a highly cohesive civil society.

CONCLUSION

The consolidation of a Cuban nation state did not occur definitively until the second half of the twentieth century. The diversity of peoples entering the island over the course of an extended colonial period helped undercut the emergence of nationalism, albeit it did contribute to the emergence of a unique creole culture, as well as a unique identity-cubanidad. The relative unimportance of Cuba as a colony from the sixteenth into the mid-eighteenth century meant that few resources were dedicated to the construction of a strong Spanish Catholic presence. The incursions of corsairs, contrabandistas and others, together with the survival of indigenous peoples and their beliefs, as well as the importation of slaves, also militated against Catholic dominance of creole society. The heavy inflows of Africans in the period 1790-1840, together with the first

Cuban Diasporas

stirrings of liberal and independence sentiments, caused the Catholic Church as an institution to attempt to define more restrictively the institutional and legal basis for its preeminence within Cuba. This task was a problematic one given the fact that the Catholic Church was also the platform for some of the most influential intellectual precursors of independence. The spread of African and Protestant beliefs in the nineteenth century was not only subversive of Catholicism, but also of continued control by Spain given the abolitionist and republican sentiments of Protestants and the contribution of Africans and indigenes to an identity other than that of Spanish subjects. Hence, religions did contribute to the building of a national agenda in favor of independence and nationhood, albeit with some limitations. The building of a strong civil society, while encouraged by all religions, was also hindered by both internal and external limitations including US influence and hence proceeded at a relatively slow pace.

Overall the dissemination of a liberal democratic model was rooted in a dynamic civil society that greatly facilitated the dispersion of approximately one tenth of the population abroad in the nineteenth century and the eventual return of some. The legitimating of such a model was encouraged by the increasing exposure of Cubans on the island and abroad to Protestantism. The involvement of Protestant ministers in the struggle for independence further sanctioned it. The creation of an independent nation and the assertion of Cuban sovereignty were, however, impeded by US intervention in 1898 and political, economic, religious and cultural penetration up to 1959, as well as dependence on the Soviet Union thereafter.

While a consolidated nation state did not emerge out of the independence struggle, some progress in state building was accomplished during the dictatorships of Machado (1925-33) and Batista (1940-58). Nevertheless, the Cuban government was not regarded by a good number of Cubans as representative of national interests. The institutional churches in this period remained somewhat on the margins of both state and nation building as the Catholic Church was identified largely with Spain and the Protestant churches with the US. Both gradually became more concerned with reducing foreign dependency and placing decision making in the hands of Cuban personnel, a process that was initiated by the 1950s. By then, there was also a growing social consciousness and reformism within the institutional churches, particularly in the face of the substantial socioeconomic disparities within the country. The most

Margaret E. Crahan

Cuban religions were Spiritist, which had grown steadily and permeated Cuban culture over the course of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, given their identification with the more popular classes, their practice was often conducted discreetly, including by its bourgeois adherents. All religions in prerevolutionary Cuba tended to be fairly permeable to outside influences in good measure because of the constant in and out migrations of peoples and their belief systems. This made religions in Cuba somewhat flexible and adaptable, qualities that not only reflected the complexities of Cuban identity, but also the difficulties of constructing a unitary civil society.

The African diaspora to Cuba and the nineteenth and twentieth century diasporas out of Cuba helped develop and reinforce a Cuban identity, forged in part by memories and beliefs originating in the homeland preserved and passed down in part via religious beliefs and practices. The nature of cubanidad was molded by a combination of indigenous, European and African elements. Political and economic impediments imposed first by Spain, and then by the US, tended to slow down the translation of a unique identity into the creation of a nation, as well as a sovereign nation state with a strong civil society. The frustration of the political expression of Cuban identity contributed to nationalistic fervor that intensified over the course of the twentieth century and culminated in a nationalist/anti-imperialist revolution in the 1950s. That helped facilitate the alliance with the Soviet Union and the acceptance of Marxism Leninism, at least by the revolutionary leadership. Limited penetration by institutional religion, particularly in the rural areas, further facilitated the spread of a revolutionary ideology based on Marxism. Perhaps the most substantial potential religious impediment to growing support for a Marxist revolution was Spiritism, but the revolutionary government's focus on improving living conditions for the poor, especially in rural areas helped overcome resistance.

As long as the revolution was able to provide a reasonable level of benefits, it maintained its legitimacy to a considerable degree, always reinforced by appeals to nationalism and anti-imperialism. Today, however, the basis for the legitimacy of the revolutionary government is weak given that it is rooted in the promise that control by the state of production and distribution would guarantee the common good. Given the extent of socioeconomic deprivation and growing inequality in the 1990s, Cuba's socialist state is increasingly unable to legitimate itself. Hence, the revolution-

Cuban Diasporas

ary government has seen its support diminish and in light of that has turned to some marginalized sectors of society including religious believers. Such overtures, which intensified in the 1980s at the time most religions were experiencing renewal, have fortified religion. In addition, the deepening of Cuba's political, economic and social crisis since 1959 has led more people to turn to religion for psychological release and support, as well as hope.

Religious leaders, while they welcome the resurgence of religion, are also preoccupied by the possibility of future conflict and destabilization. Many continue to be committed to revolutionary ideals and accomplishments, but want a competitive political system and more space for civil society. Given that the government has strictly controlled civil society since the early 1960s, religious groups are among the very few reasonably autonomous organizations within civil society. While some progress has been made in building horizontal linkages and networking, as well as creating consensus, there is not yet considerable dialogue and agreement on how to reform Cuba. Yet religious groups appear to have more possibilities than any other sector of civil society to influence the reformulation of the polity. In this they have support from a good number of religions abroad, where many denominations are supportive of using the revolution's accomplishments as a basis to build a new model for the Cuban nation state, which would transcend the limitations of previous models. To accomplish this would truly be miraculous.

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Margaret E. Crahan

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CHAPTER 4**The Evolution of Laws Regulating Associations and Civil Society in Cuba****ALFONSO QUIROZ**WOODROW WILSON INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR SCHOLARS
BARUCH COLLEGE & THE GRADUATE CENTER,
CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Voluntary associations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are important bases of civil society.¹ These organizations rely on their legal status to attain broad civic goals. They can either thrive with positive legal norms or be curbed by confining legislation. Clandestine or illegal associations have only an isolated and temporary social impact. Thus the legal framework regulating associations and NGOs is key to the strengthening of civil society. This presentation analyzes the historical and current legislation concerning associations in Cuba to assess their impact on their evolution, autonomy and contribution to the development of Cuban civil society.

In Cuba, moderate liberal legislation from 1888 on paved the way for the blossoming of all types of autonomous civil associations. By 1959 Cuban civil society had evolved into one of the most advanced in Latin America despite erratic conservative and dictatorial attempts to legislate its control. Since 1959-1960 the Cuban revolutionary government, through executive orders, has effectively arrested the autonomy and development of associative organizations. Efforts from 1976 and 1985 to institutionalize the revolutionary process have produced specific laws that have codified in detail the state's control over associations and NGOs.

¹ The concept of civil society can be briefly defined as the area of legally protected, non-governmental, non-violent, self-organizing associative activities and institutions, outside the spheres of family and the state, in modern market societies (Keane 1998: 6; Becker 1994: 7).

Alfonso Quiroz

Legally speaking there cannot be "independent" non-governmental organizations in Cuba today. By law, associative organizations are required to seek initial sponsorship from designated government institutions, as well as maintain a permanent relationship with official supervising entities. Moreover, attempts to enhance the autonomy of non-governmental associations in Cuba have been regarded as suspicious and possibly contributing to foreign efforts to undermine the socialist character of the Cuban system. Thus the state bureaucracy currently brokers international donor collaboration with Cuban NGOs and associations. Independent NGOs can only exist as exceptions to the existing legislation.

Under these circumstances, and as a result of current economic difficulties, tension has developed as a result of Cubans' desires to organize to meet their basic needs in the face of the limiting prerogatives of state control. Historical analysis provides illuminating parallels with previous periods in which long-lasting state controls and legal shortcomings were eventually relaxed and reformed. A boom of associative activities often followed giving new life to a highly complex and diverse civil society.

There are some hints that the current legislation on associations in Cuba is under revision to allow for more flexibility in the formation and functioning of NGOs and associations. But this is an area of uncertain speculation outside the historical perspective emphasized here. Instead, this analysis will proceed with an evaluation of successive legal scenarios, favorable or unfavorable to the development of NGOs, associations and civil society. It culminates with an examination of the current legal framework conditioning the growth of the associative pillars of civil society.

ORIGINS OF ASSOCIATIONS

The associative origins of civil society in Cuba can be traced back, as in most Western social and cultural traditions, to the late eighteenth century. By then Cuba had developed a thriving sugar economy sustained by technological innovation, international market opportunities and an expanded use of African slave labor. Tobacco and coffee production and cattle ranching complemented the economic bases of a growing commercial

The Evolution of Laws Regulating Associations

and urban setting backed by improved property rights (Pérez de la Riva: 150–154). The development of these different markets allowed for the appearance of new, yet restricted forms, of civil associations beyond traditional guilds, religious congregations, military and aristocratic corporations.

Unlike Scotland and England—where intense economic and commercial dynamism in the absence of slavery was accompanied by a laissez-faire blossoming of private "polite" and enlightened associations and clubs—in Cuba the first civil associations were initiated by enlightened officials and remained organically linked to the Spanish state. The first semi-official associations, the "Sociedades Patrióticas de Amigos del País," (Patriotic Societies of Friends of the Country) were established in Santiago de Cuba (1780s) and Havana (1791) under the sponsorship of enlightened governors (Shafer 1958: 178). These organizations had scientific, educational and policy-making objectives and gathered the best intellectual and civic leaders in Cuba. They pressed for the improvement of Cuban socio-economic and cultural conditions and facilitated the collaboration between colonial authorities and the Creole elite, thereby establishing vertical links essential for effective civil society input into policy making.

Accordingly, the Captain General presided over the meetings of the Sociedad Patriótica of Havana which was renamed Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País in 1831 (Economic Society of Friends of the Country). This group published the first official Cuban newspaper and received some financial backing from the government. It also served as an advisory board for the colonial government. However, free people of color were not accepted as members of this and other elite associations. Although the Sociedad Económica's role and importance was weakened in the 1830s and 1840s, it continued to provide semi-official, semi-autonomous services to Cuban society and the colonial state throughout the nineteenth century (Ortiz 1929-1938, I: 3-23).² Other elite cultural, literary and artistic societies followed in the 1820s (Sociedad Filarmónica

² At the end of the Spanish colonial regime in Cuba in 1898 the members of the Sociedad Económica decided to incorporate themselves, under the same name, as a private and fully autonomous association. In the 1960s the Sociedad Económica was integrated into the official Academia de las Ciencias. In 1994 the Sociedad Económica was revived as a NGO, under the supervision of the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Science, Technology and the Environment. A fund in Spain permits its current semi-autonomous financing and the publication of its academic journal *Revista Bimestre Cubana* (third epoch).

Alfonso Quiroz

[Philharmonic Society], Sociedad Literaria Académica Americana [American Literary Academic Society], 1840s (Liceos [Lyceums]), and 1850s (Ateneos [Atheneums]) in different Cuban cities.

Afrocuban traditional corporations (cabildos [councils], cofradías [brotherhoods]) that combined religious and charitable functions were officially tolerated and formed an active part of the colonial social fabric. However, black secret societies, preserving distinctly African traits and gathering both free blacks and slaves, were declared illegal and repressed during periods of racial backlashes triggered by fears of slave rebellion. Especially from the 1820s the existing limited social rights of free people of color, including their participation in special colored militia units, were attacked. In fact, the first officially recorded piece of legislation concerning associations in Cuba, on 27 August 1876, explicitly forbade the meetings of illegal African secret societies (Borges 1952, 3: 8).

The next important breakthrough of associative activities among the white population in Cuba occurred in the 1840s with the emergence of Spanish regional, charitable and cultural societies. The first such society to be established in Havana was the Sociedad "Beneficencia de Naturales de Cataluña" (Beneficent Society for Natives of Catalonia) in 1840. Other such groups in Cuba—Asturians, Galicians, and Canarians—established their own centers, which have had a remarkably long and active life in Cuba. Today there are over 100 such associations in Cuba.

The rising spirit of association in the 1850s and 1860s included the proliferation of commercial, stock and insurance societies for profit, as well as some women's groups. The legal distinction between for profit and non-profit organizations resulted from two royal decrees in December 1860 that established regulations and an official supervising agency over commercial associations. As a result, for profit organizations were increasingly taxed and subject to varying levels of state intervention. Legislation for non-profit organizations was delayed until after the costly Ten Years' War (1868-1878) between Cuban separatists and the Spanish government. However, peninsular regional and recreational (*casinos*) associations as well as labor associations thrived during the war despite attempts on the part of the state to tax their patrimony as a result of Spain's strained financial circumstances.

The Evolution of Laws Regulating Associations

COLONIAL REFORM AND ASSOCIATIVE BOOM, 1878-1898

A period of important reforms after the Ten Years' War forged the legal conditions for the expansion of non-profit associations in Cuba. The protracted war ended, in part, due to the expectation of a thorough colonial reform promised by authorities closely linked to the restored constitutional monarchy in Spain in 1876. The Spanish constitution of 1876, in its 13th and 14th articles, guaranteed basic rights of association, free expression and assembly for subjects in Spain. Despite the proclamation of the Spanish constitution in Cuba in 1881, the extension of those basic rights and the abolition of slavery in Cuba proceeded gradually through successive special laws: abolition (1880 and 1886), right of assembly and press law (1881), religious tolerance (1884) and right of expression in print (1886). The law regulating voluntary associations was enacted in Cuba only in 1888. However, between 1878 and 1888 the number of charitable associations and societies continued to grow under executive, rather than legislative, orders and supervision.

The colonial government in Cuba based its approval of new associations on specific reports by the Board of Charity (Junta de Beneficencia), an agency of the executive power, that reviewed applications of charitable, mutual aid, educational, recreational and cultural associations. When conservative authorities feared that the proliferation of these associations, especially those organized by the working classes (tobacco, transportation and print workers), would erode colonial social stability during the tense period of slavery's abolition, the Junta de Beneficencia's liberal-minded officers defended the legality and worth of these charitable associations. However, civil society in Cuba lacked proportional representation and hence influence on the part of Creole and free colored groups.

An analysis of the 1888 law of associations in Cuba reveals a moderate legal approach which combined regulatory requisites, monitored by the state, and the protection of the right to organize a wide array of non-profit, cooperative and political associations. As with other reformist pieces of legislation under late colonial rule, this law has been regarded as too controlling and oppressive by recent scholarship (Montejo 1993: 52). It is true that the 1888 law, especially its articles 3, 10 and 12, allowed authorities to intervene in cases of non-compliance with legal requisites, as well as in order to have control over meetings and member-

Alfonso Quiroz

ship of autonomous associations. However, the law also established that only the judicial authority could sanction the suspension or termination of associations intervened by the executive. Secret and illegal associations, including separatist and anarchist groups, fell under the jurisdiction of the criminal code and thus were persecuted and repressed by the colonial police.

With reference to religious associations the 1888 law preserved the traditional distinction between the Catholic Church, under the state's control (Patronato) and thus exempted it from the new rules of 1888. Other legal requisites such as the submission of statutes for official approval and mandatory official registration of associations, although somewhat stringent in terms of deadlines, served mainly to formalize a rich associative life. The effectiveness and simplicity of the 1888 law has been demonstrated by its survival in Cuba until 1959.

The most significant organizational advance after 1886-1888 was the formation of Afro-Cuban associations that participated in activities that enhanced the size and importance of late colonial and early republican civil society. Actually the associative change among the now free black population included the legal conversion from semi-clandestine and traditional Afro-Cuban organizations to lawful and socially influential associations. These associations organized a peaceful civic march and demonstration in January 1887 to celebrate the final abolition of slavery. This event, recorded by the press at the time, encompassed the African component of Cuban civil society: members of the Centro de Cocheros (Chauffeurs' Center), musical bands, cabildos, agrupaciones (groups), hermandades, corporaciones (non-profit corporations), cofradías, and sociedades de recreo y de instrucción (recreational and educational societies). Abolitionist leader Juan Gualberto Gómez organized a legal and influential federation of Afro-Cuban associations, the Directorio Central de las Sociedades de la Raza de Color in 1886-1887 (The Center of Societies of the Colored). This organization intervened at crucial civic and political junctures that led to the end of Cuba's colonial status as well as independence.

The controversial U.S. military occupation of Cuba between 1898-1902 did not arrest the development of associations and civil society in Cuba. The U.S. military government's concern for political and social stability resulted in executive legislation that reinforced the liberal aspects of the late colonial legal framework. The 1888 law of associations continued to be current after 1898 with slight modifications. On 16 May 1901, military

The Evolution of Laws Regulating Associations

order No. 124 changed article 2 of the 1888 law to erase the distinction between Catholic and non-Catholic religious associations. From then on the Catholic Church and its organizations enjoyed the associative rights of other private non-profit associations. Until 1959 the property and activities (cult, educational, recreational) of Catholic and other religious organizations were recognized and respected as those of any other private association.

REPUBLICAN CONTINUITY, 1902-1959

The legal continuity of legislation relating to autonomous associations between 1902 and 1959 allowed for the development in Cuba of one of the most sophisticated civil societies in Latin America. The 1902 Republican Constitution clearly guaranteed, following the tradition of the 1876 Constitution, the right of free and legal association (Cobreiro 1916). Threats to the right of free association in this period did not involve dramatic legal alterations as was the case after 1959. Thus associations suffered only mildly the tendencies toward centralization characteristic of some undemocratic republican regimes. The major danger facing some individual associations was to be declared illegal for political or ideological reasons. If an association was officially deemed illegal for these reasons, or for "not complying" with legal requirements, it was subject to persecution and repression by the government. This happened in the case of Afro-Cuban secret associations and, most conspicuously, with the political organization Partido Independiente de Color (Independent Party of Color) that was repressed as "racist" in 1910-1912 (Helg: 131, 172). In 1940 the new Cuban constitution reaffirmed the right of association for all Cubans.

The first administration of Fulgencio Batista (1940-1944) introduced stringent rules for meetings and elections of associations. Batista's executive decree No. 3718 of 24 November 1942, just days before Cuba declared war against the Axis, served as a covert attempt to intervene and supervise associations' internal elections and affairs in the name of "national unity." This attempt to limit the autonomy of associations in Cuba was not entirely successful. A subsequent decree on 16 March 1943, exempted fraternal and Masonic organizations from the new rules. During Batista's 1952-1958 dictatorship he enact-

Alfonso Quiroz

ed the Ley-Decreto No. 1577 of 4 August 1954 stating that government authorities in the provinces could dissolve any association that did not comply with established legal procedures. However, another Ley-Decreto No. 1851 of 22 December 1954, in the spirit of the 1888 law, modified decree No. 1577 by permitting appeal of governmental decisions concerning the official suppression of associations. Despite widespread administrative corruption, in effect Batista's rules had little impact on the legal autonomy of associations.

REVOLUTIONARY CHANGES, 1959-1984

Restrictions on the autonomy of private associations' were part of the overall initial revolutionary transformation of property and political rights in Cuba after 1959. The policy of appropriation and expropriation of private domestic and foreign property by the revolutionary state applied also to associations, especially those of the elite. Civil organizations suppressed in 1959-1962 included the Asociación de Colonos (Association of Sugar Cane Producers), Jóvenes Obreros Católicos (Young Catholic Workers), Asociación Nacional de Industriales de Cuba (National Association of Industrialists of Cuba), Vedado Tennis Club, Asociación de Ganaderos (Association of Cattle Producers) and Havana Rotary Club (Padula 1974). Also, the extreme centralization of the Cuban political and social system involved a closer control on "non-governmental" organizations. Consequently law No. 835 of 30 June 1960 modified the articles of the Associations' Law of 1888 concerning the procedure for the formation of associations. By ad hoc legislation and executive orders the range of activities and number of associations were radically reduced. Thus the associative sphere of civil society was drastically curtailed in Cuba.

Moreover, law No. 1173 of 17 March 1965 placed the Register of Associations under the control of the Ministry of the Interior. In effect this was a transfer of jurisdiction from the civilian branch of government to the police branch in matters pertaining to associations. Under these extraordinary legal circumstances associations became the subject of police scrutiny and control. Two subsequent laws, No. 74 of 29 July 1965 and art. 4 of law 1291 of 13 March 1975 consolidated the legal power of the Ministry of the Interior over the formation and activities of associations.

The Evolution of Laws Regulating Associations

These stringent regulations for associations in Cuba began to change by 1975-1976. An ongoing process of institutionalization of the revolution resulted in the enactment of a new Constitution on 24 February 1976 and the establishment of the electoral system of the Popular Power (Asamblea de Poder Popular). Article 53 of the 1976 Constitution nominally guaranteed the right of association in Cuba. A new Law of Associations enacted by the Executive Council of Ministers soon followed. This law, number 1320 of 27 November 1976, recognized the importance of the right of association to allow citizens to contribute towards "the development of science, technology, research and creative initiative and manifestations of friendship and human solidarity." This legislation aimed to replace the aging 1888 law and modify the control of the Ministry of the Interior over associations. At the same time the new law specified a mandatory linkage between associations and government institutions. The lack of autonomy of non-governmental organizations was thus formally sanctioned. The latter continues to hold today and has not been substantially modified by subsequent legislation.

Contrary to the 1901 modifications of the 1888 law, ecclesiastical and religious associations were excluded from the 1976 Law of Associations. Mass organizations listed in article 7 of the 1976 Constitution and agrarian cooperatives, were also excluded. These legal exemptions continue today and thus limit the sphere of "legal" civil society.

To start an association, according to article 3 of the 1976 law, an authorization by the Ministry of Justice is required. This permit should be based on a "reference report from the organism of the State Central Administration that has direct relationship with the object of the association or with the condition of its members." The Ministry of the Interior would emit reference reports only when no direct link could be determined between the association's activity and any other government agency. Applications for authorization were to be addressed first to the relevant government agency's. No deadline was assigned for the ensuing government agency's "reference" reports. Forty-five days after receipt of the agency's report, the Ministry of Justice might grant authorization for the constitution of the association. This was clearly a cumbersome, complicated process that could take months or years to complete. However, the 1976 law also stated that the General Register of Associations, formerly administered by the Ministry of the Interior, was to be controlled

Alfonso Quiroz

thereafter by the Ministry of Justice. The latter change can be interpreted as an easing of police control over associations.

The 1976 law also specified mandatory links between active associations and relevant government agencies. These links included: material or technical support by the agency, supervision of the association's publications, coordination for international conferences and activities, periodic inspections carried out by the agency, annual reports of associations' activities, and reporting of meetings and property transactions by the association. As a consequence, despite the weakening of police supervision over associations thanks to the transfer of jurisdiction from the Ministry of the Interior to the Ministry of Justice, state control and supervision over associations was now legally formalized. The 1976 law of associations remained current until 1985 when new rules were enacted.

LEGAL CONDITIONS AFTER 1985

The current Law No. 54 of 27 December 1985 regulates non-governmental associations in Cuba. Unlike the 1976 law, the new law was passed by the Asamblea Nacional del Poder Popular (National Assembly of Popular Power) and is thus a full legal expression of the institutionalized revolutionary order. However, the 1985 law differs only in subtle ways from that of 1976. Reportedly, the 1985 law was required due to "transformations" in Cuba that demanded the reorganization of the Register of Associations. Most revealingly, the 1985 law responded "to the increasing interest showed by our manual and intellectual workers, peasants, women, and students regarding the formation and development of associations of social value" (Cuba 1988: 5). This reflected a revival of associative activities that was developing by the mid 1980s. Consequently some of the cumbersome 1976 procedures for the formation and functioning of associations were re-systematized in detail by the 1985 law and its 1986 rules of implementation. The 1985 law did, however, reinforce the legal control and supervision of the state over non-governmental organizations.

The 1985 law, including ecclesiastical and religious associations that fall under the state's regulation of religious cults also excludes the same basic associations exempted from the 1976 law. The Ministry of the

The Evolution of Laws Regulating Associations

Interior ceased to have even marginal jurisdiction over associations. The Ministry of Justice now has ultimate authority over the legal affairs of associations including the administration of the current Register of National Associations (provincial registers fall under the Justice section of the local *Asambleas Populares*). However, associations continue to depend on mandatory links of "coordination and collaboration" with relevant government agencies connected to the general area of activity in which associations are involved (articles 11-15). A formal "mutual accord" between a government agency and an association is required. Government agencies are in charge of inspecting the associations' budgets and making sure that associations use their resources for "social benefits" in accordance with their stated official objectives. These requirements for the registration and functioning of associations have curbed associative initiatives at the mercy of cumbersome bureaucratic decisions (Gunn 1995: 4).

Supervising government agencies have a deadline of 90 days for submitting to the Ministry of Justice their reference reports on potential associations. In turn, the Ministry of Justice has 60 more days to sanction the approval of new associations. The final approval is conditional on the fulfillment of all legal requirements. Legal authorization can still be denied if the association's activities are deemed "damaging to social interest" (Cuba 1988: 9). If for any reason the association is dissolved, its resources and property are appropriated by the state (article 9). Appeals of bureaucratic decisions only proceed in case of sanctions imposed by the Ministry of Justice (article 20).

The period 1994-1996 was a time of booming associative activities that elevated the total number of active NGOs in Cuba to approximately 2,200 and that generated an important debate. On the one hand there were those who expected and pressed for an expansion of the autonomy and number of associations in order to strengthen civil society (Gunn 1995: 1). In the middle of a profound economic crisis that sparked unprecedented survival strategies, self-help NGOs could serve to satisfy local needs that the state could not meet. Valiant attempts to increase independent initiatives by a few existing NGOs collided with inflexible official stances.

In contemporary Cuba the role of NGOs and civil society has a particular meaning for state officials (Hart 1996). The government considers NGOs as a means to obtain badly needed financial resources for its own purposes. Civil society and NGOs in Cuba, by law and revolutionary tradition, are officially defined as "socialist." Unlike former communist

Alfonso Quiroz

regimes that ignored the existence and even the concept of "civil society," in Cuba civil society is officially recognized as a transitional step toward a "socialist society" (Hart 1996: 5-7). The Cuban constitution and laws emphasize the "socialist" character of the Cuban system and recognize the associative elements of civil society. Accordingly state control over associations and civil society has to be recognized by foreign donor institutions dealing with Cuban NGOs. If this is not done the donor institution is identified with "imperialism" that "attempts to introduce chaos in the Cuban Revolution by stimulating direct relationships with certain individuals, promoting organizational models alien to our political system, and unbalancing the democratic working of our society" (Hart 1996: 7).

The legal regulations for associations have served to undercut greater independence by NGOs. Legal "NGOs" in Cuba today fall into two broad categories: "top-down" organizations (Asociación Nacional de Agricultores Pequeños [National Association of Small Farmers], for example), which are initiated by the state, and "bottom-up" organizations (Gran Logia de Cuba [The Great Lodge of Cuba], Consejo Ecuménico [Ecumenical Council]), products of grass roots initiatives (Gunn 1995: 2). All of the Cuban "NGOs" surveyed during this research have either a supervising representative of the Ministry of Justice on their boards or are supervised by a government agency as required by law. Current or former high-ranking government officials head most of them. There are very few truly autonomous or independent non-governmental associations.

Tendencies toward greater organic independence of Cuban NGOs are curbed by existing legislation despite occasional autonomous initiatives tolerated depending on case-by-case negotiations with the state. For example, Centro Havana's urban restoration foundation, linked to the Oficina del Historiador de la Ciudad (Office of the Historian of the City), has an atypical financial arrangement with foreign donors guaranteeing the allocation of foreign funds for restoration purposes only. In other words, the degree of state control over associations and foundations may vary due to the persistent tension between the associative private and local interests of civil society and the controlling and financial interests of the state. However, any overall transformation that could facilitate the growth of Cuban civil society needs to include a relaxation of the current legislation limiting the autonomy and activities of associations. This latter option, however, runs contrary to the regime's well-established strategy of limiting reform.

The Evolution of Laws Regulating Associations

CONCLUSIONS

Current legislation regulating associations in Cuba, especially in relation to the state's control over the autonomy of associations, has important similarities with pre-1888 limitations to the formation and activities of associations. Donor institutions dealing with Cuban NGOs must abide by state supervision, authority and brokerage. There are no legal mechanisms that can facilitate a direct connection between donors and NGOs without some degree of intervention and control by Cuban state agencies. Detailed and specific legislation bars the existence of any legislative loophole that could result in more independent associations. Attempts to enhance the autonomy of associations in the recent past have failed due, in part, to the existing legal framework. Consequently, the development of civil society in Cuba still awaits more flexible legislation that can allow for the enhancement and multiplication of much needed private associative activities. There exists in Cuba a need for independent associations, a rich historical civic tradition of autonomous associative organizations, and a strong sense of community. Civil society in Cuba was at one point one of the most developed in Latin America. In the absence of changes in the current legislation on associations, an explosion of peaceful associative activities similar to that in the 1880s and 1890s is not likely in Cuba at the beginning of the twenty first century.

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CHAPTER 5

Foreign Influence Through Protestant Missions in Cuba, 1898-1959: A Quaker Case Study

KAREN LEIMDORFER

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

Development of a strong national identity at the outset of Cuban independence was both hindered and facilitated by US political, economic, social, cultural and religious penetration. The flood of missionaries from the United States at the beginning of the twentieth century stimulated changes in Cuban culture and society some of which diminished Cuba's distinctness while at the same time helped Cubans to forge a more independent national identity. US religious penetration transmitted concepts of liberal democracy and civic participation that had resonance in Cuba, while the assumption on the part of missionaries that their's was the better system—politically, economically, socially and religiously—fueled nationalism and anti-Americanism.

US churches had evinced interest in Cuba prior to the latter's war of independence from Spain from 1895-1898. It was, however, the entrance of the US into the war in 1898 and the attendant press coverage that helped stimulate increased interest. There was considerable popular support in the US for intervening in the war against Spain in the name of liberating what were regarded as the oppressed of Cuba. There was also a generalized feeling that the US had an obligation to rescue the Cubans. The image projected by the press and politicians was of a benevolent US sacrificing its soldiers for the good of all Cubans (Pérez, 1999, 356-57). Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Baptists and Quakers reflected these views. The implication was that the US had a moral obligation to make sure that

Karen Leimdorfer

the Cubans chose an acceptable government on US terms. This was the main aim of the Platt Amendment incorporated into the Cuban constitution of 1901 in order to protect US interests in Cuba.

Although Cuba's first president, Tomás Estrada Palma (1902-1908), was reportedly chagrined by the imposition of the Platt Amendment, he felt that as an expression of gratitude for the US' role in the independence war the latter's interests should be accommodated. Furthermore, there is evidence to suggest that Estrada Palma expected Cuba to be annexed to the US in the long run (Thomas, 1971, 460). He also reportedly felt an affinity for the US due to the many years he had spent living there with a Quaker family and running a private Quaker school (Thomas, 1971, 470). Although some Cubans welcomed US involvement believing it to be the only way Cuba could "modernize," the historian Louis Pérez has concluded that US views of Cuban independence deprived Cubans of their rights to sovereignty and self-determination while their independence was reduced to accommodate US interests. This, he suggests, led over time to considerable anti-US sentiment (Perez, 1999).

Quakers and other US missionaries played an important role in this critical moment in Cuban state and nation formation. Many missionaries felt that they had a special role in advancing the moral development of the Cuban people (Cepeda, 2001, 145). It was, according to the missionaries, their role to continue the US military's good work and help prepare the Cubans for national development by educating and "civilizing" them. Education became one of the prime missionary objectives for, in this way, they felt they could promote US values for the Cubans' own good (Crahan, 1978, 207).

Therefore after 1898 foreign missionaries entered Cuba at a rapid rate. In some cases the missionaries were not only funded by US corporations, but also provided courses such as English and business that helped produce employable Cubans for the companies (Yaremko, 2000, x-xi). The scholar Jason Yaremko has suggested that the missionaries' aims were inherently political and cultural and played "a central role in the US oriented reconstruction of the Cuban republic" (Yaremko, 2000, 13). He further argues that both US business and the missionaries took advantage of a US occupied, war-torn and impoverished country, buying land at reduced prices

Foreign Influence through Protestant Missions in Cuba

and using conditions in Cuba to promote a “New Cuba.” He asserts that although some Cubans welcomed such actions others protested them as opportunistic and undermining the independence they had dreamed and fought for. Protests, he claims, came predominantly from Afrocubans who often regarded Protestants as representatives of US intervention. Yaremko’s claims are largely based on the missionaries’ links to US business interests and their promotion of US values especially via their schools. However, he also stresses that US Protestant missionaries were not “puppets” of US hegemony, but nevertheless their impact was “inherently political as well as cultural in consequence if not in nature” (Yaremko, 2000, 13-14).

Leading Quaker missionaries felt that Cuba was “a hundred years behind the times.”¹ Furthermore, they believed that the growing US presence was positive and “modernizing” and that the US government deserved gratitude for this: “The Cuban politician, seeking his own interests in place of the best welfare of his native land, is seemingly unappreciative of the improvements introduced by the American government.”² The missionaries did not, however, consider all US influence in Cuba as positive. With the benefit of hindsight in 1926 Sylvester Jones, one of the leaders of the Quaker mission, concluded that the overpowering US presence had taken its toll. He believed that US domination had, at times, “tyrannized” Cubans and that Cuba would do better freed from such dominance.

During their initial years in Cuba, however, missionaries generally praised US involvement in Cuba. Although the missionaries constantly promoted the idea of a native church, they believed that this could come about only under their supervision. This corresponded with the US’ assumption of a tutelary role over Cuba as a nation after independence.

Tensions between native born ministers and foreign missionaries contributed to increasingly strong nationalistic feelings in Cuba. Yaremko suggests that in many cases Cuban Protestant pastors who had established their churches prior to 1898 were sidelined or stripped of responsibilities by newly arrived, US funded missionaries after the turn of the century (Yaremko, 2000, 4).

¹⁻² May Jones, letter to the Board, Gibara 22 February 1901, Jones’ letters p.49, Friends Collection, Earlham College, Richmond, Indiana.

Karen Leimdorfer

Some of the early missionaries clearly understood the importance of learning from the Cubans who were already ministering in Cuba, but in general the US based Boards of Missions and the superintendents did not prioritize such exchanges and it was they who held the purse strings. In October 1903 Juan Francisco Gálvez, a Cuban, was recognized as a minister by the Quaker Board.³ However, his pay never equaled that of the foreign missionaries as the Board claimed that it wanted to promote a Cuban run church funded by the Cubans and therefore needed to control costs. Gálvez, therefore, had to do work equal to that of the foreign missionaries, but at a minimum wage compared to them.

Overall, the leaders of the Quaker mission had very conflicting objectives. "We are not trying to convert [the Cubans] to Americanism only so far as the essentials of Christianity coincide with American customs. We want them to feel that this is a church for the Cubans, not based on a temporary fad for things 'ameri-cano'...."⁴ However, their idea that to Christianize the Cubans could be separated from "Americanizing" them is dubious. Their definition of Christianity was almost wholly based on their US cultural and historical background denying the Cubans' Catholic Church any claims to the "proper" concept of Christianity.

One mechanism of attempted Quaker missionary influence was the condemnation of Cuban Catholic, Spiritist and African rituals. Quaker evangelization was based on a certainty that their's was the "true" or "pure" path.⁵ Therefore there was no common ground to be found between their "pure" religion and the ones already established in Cuba. From the outset they wanted to rid Cuba of its "superstitions and ignorance," which they blamed primarily on the Catholic Church. A principal means to do this was through education in church schools which incorporated many non-Protestants.

³ Johnathan Dickinson, Chairman Cuban Committee of AFBFM, article, 9 October 1903, Jones' letters p.278, Friends Collection, Earlham College, Richmond, Indiana.

⁴ May Jones, letter to the Board, Gibara 3 January 1901, Jones' letters p. 99, Friends Collection, Earlham College, Richmond, Indiana.

⁵ Sylvester Jones, article, 1908, Jones' letters p.417, Friends Collection, Earlham College, Richmond, Indiana.

Foreign Influence through Protestant Missions in Cuba

When the US missionaries arrived in Cuba at the outset of the twentieth century, they were confronted with a war-torn people that had suffered from neglect on the part of the Spanish authorities and the Catholic Church. Little money had been expended on schooling, especially in rural areas. The missionaries were therefore correct, to a certain degree, in attributing much of the illiteracy and even poverty to the Catholic Church which the state had made primarily responsible for education. However, it was not just the Catholic religion that the Quaker missionaries had trouble accepting. They also felt that Spiritism had a negative influence in Cuba and that "atheism and infidelity" were rife.⁶

Christian instruction would be provided via Sunday schools or by visiting people in their homes. In addition, missionaries stressed that private schools and mission colleges were the solution for an "adequate education system.... The American teacher may find more congenial surroundings in the school rooms of the United States, but he will certainly not find greater opportunities for influencing those who must become the history makers of their nation."⁷ Such education aimed at creating leaders for the denomination and for the nation.

It is notable that from the outset the Quakers distinguished between the class of Cuban that they wanted to attract to their schools and those whom they pursued for their religion. Although they were delighted when Cubans from the richer classes attended their services, more important was the "good name of the school."⁸ The schools were not only a way in which Protestants could influence the richer and more powerful elements of society, but they were a way to gain respect in a predominantly Catholic country which sometimes ridiculed these newcomers. As the missionary May

⁶ May Jones, article, "Friends' Missionary Advocate", Holguin 12-17 April 1904, Jones' letters p. 296, Friends Collection, Earlham College, Richmond, Indiana.

⁷ Sylvester Jones, article "The Outlook for College Men and Women in Spanish-Speaking Countries." The Earhamite, Vol. XXXIII, 6 April 1907, May and Sylvester Jones letters p. 366, Friends Collection, Earlham College, Richmond, Indiana.

⁸ May Jones, "Christmas in Cuba", Gibara, January 1901, Jones' letters p.112, Friends Collection, Earlham College, Richmond, Indiana.

Karen Leimdorfer

*Jones put it: "The custom-house inspector and the leading city editor recently put their children into our school, and both have favored us by attending the services once or twice lately. The former...is the idol of the city, and a prominent speaker on all public occasions....He became a member of the Episcopal Church while in the U.S. Although we count it all joy to serve the poorest and humblest, we hope that all these things may widen our influence."*⁹

THE QUAKERS AND US BUSINESS INTERESTS

Quaker mission history in eastern Cuba is strongly identified with that of the United Fruit Company's (UFCO) in the same region. The Quaker mission in Jamaica in the late nineteenth century was on UFCO land and the missionary Zenas Martin was a good friend of Lorenzo D. (Captain) Baker, the president of the company. This led not only to company funds being used to establish a Quaker mission in Banes, Cuba, but also to an ongoing relationship between UFCO and the Quakers. Furthermore, there is some evidence to suggest that the decision to establish a mission in the Gíbara-Banes area was due, in part, to UFCO's presence there.

The banana business in the Caribbean was growing at a rapid rate in the late nineteenth century and during the period between 1897 and 1904 there was a fusion of 5,300 different operations. As small holders sold their land, key US businesses started to gain a monopoly. In 1899 the three main players in the Caribbean fruit business merged to form the United Fruit Company worth twenty million dollars. The merger's principals were Minor C. Keith, Lorenzo D. (Captain) Baker and Andrew Preston (Zanetti & Garcia, 45-46).

At the outset of the twentieth century Captain Baker offered the Quakers two thousand dollars to open missions in Banes and Tanamo, later to be concentrated in one offer for the opening of a mission in Banes (Dumois, 1999,67). This was partly stimulated by the educational needs of the company's workers and their families, predominantly US workers

⁹ May Jones, article, Gíbara 21 January 1903, Jones' letters p.197, Friends Collection, Earlham College, Richmond, Indiana

Foreign Influence through Protestant Missions in Cuba

and the upper echelon of Cuban workers. Missionary schools were ideal for such purposes because they taught English and promoted “American” values akin to those endorsed by the company. Nevertheless, it appears that the agenda of UFCO and that of the Quakers did not always coincide as the former seemed more interested in a school for the children of their US employees, but contact with the Cuban community was of as great importance to the Quakers.

CONCLUSION

The motivation behind the establishment of the Quaker mission in Cuba came from two separate but intertwined histories. First, the direction which US Quaker history was taking during the second half of the nineteenth century and second the political and cultural history unfolding in the US and Cuba at the time. These two histories have one element that unites them -they both had developed expansionist aspirations. An evangelical form of Quakerism developed in the US at a time when US Manifest Destiny was rife. This latter led to US intervention in the Cuban-Spanish war. Belief in the “American way” as the key to modernization further stimulated interventionist policies, including by Mission Boards.

A fundamental belief in US cultural and religious superiority fueled US missionary fervor in Cuba after 1898. The missionaries’ need to make their contribution to “saving” Cuba was fundamental to their *raison d’etre*. They had a belief in their religious and cultural superiority. They considered their religion to be “pure” as opposed to the “ignorance and superstition” of Catholicism and other religions in Cuba. The links between the missionaries and US business interests further demonstrated the mutuality of US religious and economic expansionism. This is especially true as initial funding and incentives for establishing the Quaker mission came from UFCO, encouraging joint responses to future developments by business and church interests. Alliances with powerful business interests in Cuba gave missionaries more influence than their small numbers would have warranted.

However, some missionaries clearly felt that their aims were not to “Americanize” the Cubans except for when the essentials of

Karen Leimdorfer

Christianity coincided with US customs. However, their concept of the Christian was inseparable from their own cultural and historical roots. Although some of the Quaker missionaries tried to present the Cubans with a “pure” religion that would not promote US culture and interests, this was not possible as they could clearly not discard their cultural influences.

This analysis of the initial encounter between the Quaker missionaries and Cuban communities provides additional texture to the context in which state and nation building was occurring in Cuba at the outset of the twentieth century. While the US missionary presence helped disseminate a wide variety of concepts, including democratic participation conducive to the strengthening of civil society, it also undercut the forging of a consensual national agenda. While some of the missionaries did not intend to impose their agenda and culture on the Cubans, in general their assumptions of superiority affected Cuban national identity. The missionaries reflected the historical, political, and cultural context that they came from and many of their attitudes and actions reflected generalized attitudes in the US, including the superiority of US culture, politics and economics. Such views could not but help undercut the emergence of a strong national identity and coherent civil society.

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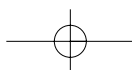
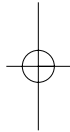
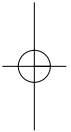
Foreign Influence through Protestant Missions in Cuba

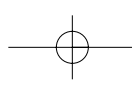
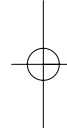
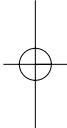
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CHAPTER 6

The Jewish Community in Cuba in the 1990s¹

ARTURO LÓPEZ LEVY
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

The analysis of the Cuban Jewish experience in the 1990s is impossible without referring to the situation prior to that decade.^{1a} A review of the previous period allows us to identify clearly how, starting in 1992, a new era in the history of the Jewish community in Cuba was initiated. Following are some of the major developments within Cuban Judaism from the outset of the Cuban revolution in 1959 up to the 1990s:

1) Between 1960 and 1962, there was a massive exodus of members of the Jewish community, most of whom were destined for the US, while others went to Latin America particularly to Mexico and Venezuela. This exodus was stimulated, especially for members of the Jewish upper and middle classes, by the nationalization laws of 1960 and 1961. A smaller group emigrated to Israel motivated by Zionism. Overall emigration was the result of:

a) the effect of the nationalization of businesses and the transition to socialism on the upper and middle classes. Cuban Jews, without belonging to the country's elite, had taken advantage of economic growth in the 1940s and 1950s. Many of them were successful in retail commerce and in small and medium scale enterprises;

¹ Translated from Spanish by Margaret E. Crahan and Mauricio Claudio.

^{1a} In July 2001, I presented an earlier version of this paper at the Congreso Internacional de Estudios Socioreligiosos, organized by Centro de Investigación Psicológicos y Sociológicos under the auspices of the Cuban Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment. Here, as I did then, I reiterate that my experiences as a Cuban Jew and as a leader of the Bnai Brith are fundamental in understanding my views. Nevertheless, only the author is responsible for what is written here and not the Cuban Jewish community nor the Cuban Bnai Brith.

Arturo López Levy

b) although the Cuban revolution did not develop an anti-Jewish strain, the experience of Jews in other socialist countries led some members of the community to fear possible discrimination;

c) the Decree for the Nationalization of Education of 1960, though extremely sensitive to the needs of the Jewish community, generated apprehension among some sectors;

d) the anti-religious slant of Marxist theory and praxis posed a challenge to the Jewish cosmovision. This was reinforced by the imposition of coercive measures such as the notorious *Unidades Militares de Abastecimiento a la Producción* (UMAP, Military Units in Support of Production) in the mid-1960s which incorporated those designated as social deviants, as well as those who “made religion a way of life.”

Complementing these factors were close ties with Jewish communities in the US and in other countries involving familial, business and religious networks. This made it much easier for those who decided to leave. In addition, due to World War I and World War II, as well as the tragedy of the Holocaust, there existed numerous Jewish support and immigration aid groups that served to lessen the difficulties of relocating abroad.

The effects of the massive emigration that continued intermittently until the 1980s, resulted not only in the loss of more than 90% of the Jewish community, but also of many of its leaders. The principal donors, rabbis, Hebrew school teachers, kosher restaurant and business owners, artists, writers and magazine and radio personalities, as well as persons in charge of the central rituals such as the *Brith* (Mole), the *Kashrut* (Shojet) departed.

2) While the Cuban revolution represented a significant disruption for Jews, it also encouraged greater integration of Cuban Jews into the broader community. Although Cuban identity since the wars of independence has been a porous entity with various levels of integration and assimilation, the Cuban revolution, via its socializing project, had considerable impact on national, religious, racial, cultural and ethnic differences. A sense of Cuban identity and belonging was heightened for those Jews who stayed on the island, at times to the detriment of their other identity.

The promotion of equality in the discourse and the practice of the revolution accentuated even further the dissolution of the secondary identity

The Jewish Community in Cuba in the 1990s

of Cuban Jews, who increasingly felt themselves a part of the whole. The social space where they developed the core of their lives was increasingly less distinct from that of other Cubans. They attended the same schools, nursery schools, beaches, etc. On the other hand, Jewish welfare institutions lost space in the wake of the state taking over the administration of educational and health services.

The official distrust for any civil society organization outside the strictest state control posed a challenge to any organization on the margins, including Jewish ones. Through the state, the Communist Party generated a hostile environment towards the development of any independent group, irrespective of whether it was political, religious or fraternal in character. Moreover, for those revolutionaries who were part of the system and had an interest in participating in Jewish activities, there developed a complex dilemma of loyalties.

Nevertheless, to focus on the abandonment of the synagogues, community centers, or other organizations solely from a dynamic of the relations between state policies and Jewish institutions is to reduce drastically the richness of the topic at hand. Those persons who lived in Cuba during the era in question did so immersed not in a simple period of political change, but rather in an authentic revolution. Irrespective of the turbulent epoch in which they were immersed, many of them ended up thinking that they “were storming Heaven.” For them, it was more important to take part in the agrarian and military mobilizations, in literacy campaigns, or in the harvesting of the sugar-cane crop, than in the religious or social life of the synagogue.

PERIOD OF DECLINE: 1963-1989

The Jews who remained in Cuba after the early 1960s were, in general, the most assimilated ones, that is, the poorest and, as would be expected, the most closely identified with the values of the left. It was the Ashkenazi Jews from Eastern Europe and Russia who, given their countries of origin, the economic resources with which they arrived, presence or absence of familial ties in the US, customs and language, were the slowest to assimilate into the country's culture. The Sephardim from

Arturo López Levy

Turkey, Greece, Syria, and Lebanon enjoyed the advantage of language and various characteristics which turned them into Cubans more quickly. That was the principal reason that one finds a predominance of Sephardim among the Jews who remained in Cuba.

The Jewish Cuban experience under the revolution was also quite different than the cases of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Even in the 1970s, there was never an anti-semitic environment in the country, or the closing down of synagogues by force. The government attempted to provide some possibilities for Jews to maintain their customs and traditions. The Cuban government cooperated with the continued operation of a kosher meat shop in Old Havana, the distribution of special products for the celebration of Pesaj, and until 1974 allowed for some optional Jewish subjects at the Albert Einstein School in the Santos Suárez quarter.

Nevertheless, Jewish institutions went into a marked decline as a result of:

1) A significant reduction (around 90%) in the members affiliated with the different community centers due to assimilation and emigration. The number who regularly attended religious services was even lower.

2) For almost 40 years, the Jewish community in Cuba has lacked rabbis who resided permanently in the country, as well as educators and professional leaders.

3) A lack of funds for the maintenance of community facilities and organizations, as a result of the emigration of the principal donors and a decrease in links abroad. The financial situation became truly critical in the 1980s. The Patronato de la Casa de la Comunidad Hebrea de Cuba (The Foundation for the Home of the Cuban Hebrew Community), at one time the most powerful Jewish association in the country, was forced to sell half of its facilities to the Ministry of Culture in order to deal with its debt and to create a minimal means to finance its activities. Likewise the Cuban Sephardic Jewish Center rented part of its installations.

4) The closing of some synagogues and centers due to lack of funds and members. The most extreme of such cases was the Unión Israelita de Oriente (Eastern Israelite Union) in Santiago de Cuba, which shut down in 1983 and was handed over to a traditional Afro-Cuban dance troupe and the closing of the Camagüey Synagogue. In Havana, a similar situation took place with the United Hebrew Congregation.

5) Diminution of space for Jewish education and social life via

The Jewish Community in Cuba in the 1990s

the disappearance of restaurants, interest groups, the University Hebrew Association and cultural organizations. Total suspension of community publications such as “Vida Habanera” (Havana Life) in Yiddish and Spanish, as well as a community radio hour. Hebrew and Jewish history courses at the Albert Einstein School eventually ceased.

6) Significant reduction in relations with Jewish communities abroad. The Cuba-United States conflict distanced Cuba’s Jewish community from the most important nucleus of diaspora Jews with which it had relations. The US embargo and especially travel restrictions further undercut relations.

7) The rupture by Cuba of diplomatic relations with the state of Israel deserves special mention. This act increased the distance between Cuban Jews and international Jewish institutions. The action was motivated by Cuba’s aspirations to the leadership of the non-aligned movement, and ignored the spiritual and identity needs of the Jewish community. It also resulted in the closing by government order of the Unión Sionista de Cuba (Cuban Zionist Union) in 1978, and the handing over of its property to the neighboring Unión Arabe de Cuba (Cuban Arab Union). Cuban support for the UN resolution equating Zionism with racism also contributed to the rupture in relations. According to Jack Rosen, President of the American Jewish Congress, upon meeting with President Fidel Castro in 1999: the most lively exchange occurred in relation to the point raised by the AJC to the effect that Cuba was the only country in the Western Hemisphere that voted against the elimination of the infamous ‘Zionism as Racism’ Resolution. Surprisingly, President Castro said that he was not aware of this vote. Nevertheless, he offered to consult with the relevant officials on the issue...the issue seems to continue to be examined, although informally it has been communicated that the vote reflects Cuban irritation with the fact that Israel votes consistently on the side of the U.S. and against Cuba on every issue debated by the United Nations (Baum, 217).

With respect to foreign views of the Cuban Jewish community, the categorization of the Jewish community as “Castro’s Jews” by some outside the island is simplistic albeit some Cuban Jews identify with the revolutionary project. Others adopted a less political position, but did not perceive any incompatibility between Judaism and living in a revolutionary society. A third group simply survived. Being Zionist, differing with

Arturo López Levy

the prevailing Communist conceptualizations or adapting to the reality of the country in which they lived, they attended synagogue as a means of finding space for their community identification and faith.

That group's greatest accomplishment was precisely the preservation of space, especially in the capital. Almost without resources or external aid, oftentimes without constituting a *minyam*,² the minimum number for religious services, these believers preserved properties, rituals and community. They were responsible for preventing the disappearance of religious services, for the operation of the *Jevra Kadisha* in charge of funeral services and for preventing the disappearance of various organizations such as the *Bnai Brith*. It was due to them that the kosher meat shop in Old Havana maintained its uninterrupted operation and that the special relationship between community and cemetery never disappeared. That work would be the basis upon which the community revival was possible.

THE RENAISSANCE OF JEWISH LIFE IN THE 1990S

Three events occurred in the decade of the 1980s that served as a prelude for the community's revival in the decade to follow.

1. At the outset of the decade, Dr. José Miller Friedman assumed the presidency of the Patronato. Miller, a surgeon, was a man with an active professional life and was involved in the revolutionary process above and beyond the needs of the Jewish community. Miller's leadership was of great importance in the insertion of the community into the Cuban context, be it in its relationship with other religions or with the party and state institutions. For example, in 1984, he assisted in the initiation of a new Sunday school project. Starting with courses in Hebrew, Jewish History, and Traditions and Religion, the "little school" grew in breadth and reach, managing to become one of the fundamental bases of community revival.

The separation of a whole generation from Jewish activities and services and the aging of those who attended them regularly caused grave concern. Towards the end of the 1980s, however, a new generation began

² Given this, a concept of a "Cuban Myniam" was developed, in which God, and at times even the Torah, was counted in order to have the required 10 "persons" established by the Halajic ritual.

The Jewish Community in Cuba in the 1990s

to gather, almost imperceptibly, in search of the identity of their ancestors. Some of those leaders of the 1990s revival created in 1989 a new Jewish youth organization whose aim was to revive work among youth.

The Jewish revival was also facilitated by the fall of Communism in the USSR and Eastern Europe, with the corresponding impact on the Marxist cosmivision of the world. This contributed to changes wrought by the Fourth Congress of the Cuban Communist Party (1992) which recategorized Cuba as a secular rather than a Marxist-Leninist state and allowed believers to be members of the Communist Party, thereby providing religious leaders with greater possibilities for influencing state policies.

Those transformations served as fertile ground for Jewish community institutions and encouraged the return of some former members as well as the incorporation of new members. In some cases, the latter were individuals with minimal prior Jewish education. Products in most cases of mixed marriages or families in which one grandparent was a Jew, the majority began by coming alone, only to bring other family members later. The reasons for their incorporation into the community were diverse, but all shared a lack of inhibition about the issue of religion due to the greater space accorded by the new constitutional and party principles. For some it was to discover a familial heritage, while for others it was the loss of credibility of the government and the disappearance of belief in Communism. Others were searching for social and entertainment spaces due to their absence elsewhere. The majority claimed to be in search of their roots and desirous of developing an increased sense of identity.

As early as 1993 there emerged a new challenge for the community, that is, how best to absorb the new adherents who were not Jewish by even the most general of religious criteria.³ It was also necessary to structure a more ambitious educational program that would build the community's capacity to reach a minimum level of Jewish knowledge in order to establish a less atrophied community life. It was at that moment that relations with other Latin American communities in Venezuela,

³ We refer in this case to the criterion within the orthodox and conservative Jewish movements which hold that a person can only become a Jew through matrilineal descent or by election after having gone through a rabbinical court and undergone the mikveh and, in the case of males, the Brith Mila.

Arturo López Levy

Mexico and Argentina and particularly with the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) began to gain momentum.

In the beginning of the 1990s various rabbis, Jewish educators, and regional leaders began to visit the island, and in coordination with local leaders they designed a program that resulted in the establishment of permanent education and development working groups sponsored by the Joint Distribution Committee. These teams created a group of young people able to administer religious services and community activities in all the synagogues, and provided financial support for these activities as well as for the community's educational activities. Instruction in Jewish history, Hebrew language, and religious traditions became more prevalent.

The Joint Distribution Committee also undertook to provide rabbinical attention for Cuban congregations. For almost 30 years, the Jewish community lacked even periodic rabbinical attention. The JDC arranged for rabbis from other countries to visit Cuba, which facilitated the conversions that took place in the 1990s. The latter included individuals who had at least two years of participation in the community, had Jewish ancestors or had married Jews and had previously attended educational courses of about a year's duration. In accordance with conservative ritual, all passed through a Rabbinical Court, the mikveh ritual and, in the case of men, the Birth Mila. Out of these processes later emerged many leaders of youth groups and other activists.

Towards the middle of the decade, there developed a more consistent structuring of community organizations. Under the aegis of the JDC, Gusher groups for adults between the ages of 30 and 60 years of age and Simian groups for the elderly were created. The Bnai Brith revitalized its social, including welfare, fraternal and cultural activities, as well as its monitoring of anti-semitic activities. In 1996, the Asociación Femenina Hebrea de Cuba (Cuban Jewish Female Association) held a national meeting. In 1994 a Cuban branch of Hadassah was created under the direction of Dr. Rosa Behar. This organization, which links members of all the synagogues, channels medicinal aid from congregations all over the world to the Cuban community. As part of the collaboration with the JDC, an exchange program with the Ministry of Health was designed whereby renowned Jewish doctors, mostly North American, visited the country and engaged in exchanges with local doctors.

The Jewish Community in Cuba in the 1990s

What stands out since 1993 is the Cuban Jewish community's international exchanges, including the hosting of many delegations from the United States, Canada, Venezuela, Mexico, Argentina, etc., as well as the participation of Cuban delegations in numerous regional and international events. In 1997, for the first time since the revolutionary period, a Cuban delegation participated in the Macabeadas, a sports tournament attended by people of Jewish origin from all over the world.

Of particular note was the religious revival in the provinces. The reopening of the synagogue in Santiago de Cuba, now under the name of 'Hatikvah', in July 1995 was the culmination of a process which contributed very favorably to Jewish life in that city. In Camagüey, where there were two Sephardic synagogues until shortly after 1959 a group of families began to organize again. A new temple was opened and there has been an active religious life including weekly services, Sunday schools and Jewish dance and cultural groups. There has been a revival among Jewish groups in other cities such as Santa Clara, Cienfuegos, Caibarien, Manzanillo, Guantánamo and Campechuela. In those cities, Jewish groups meet once or twice per month to celebrate Shabat religious services or other festivities, as well as to take part in educational projects or community meetings.

The revitalization of Cuban Jewish life brought with it an increased presence in national life. Whereas towards the end of the 1980s, Dr. José Miller and other community representatives began to be part of a dialogue with state officials, the decade of the 1990s witnessed an intensification of such exchanges.

President Castro's visit to the Jewish Patronato for the Hannuka celebrations in 1998 signalled the new relationship. On that visit, President Castro was accompanied by Vice-President Carlos Lage and current Foreign Relations Minister Felipe Pérez. President Castro's references to the importance of Jewish religious traditions as a revolutionary inspiration are unparalleled in the history of relations between Communist governments and Jewish religious groups.

Dialogue with the country's other religions also reflects the expanding role of the Jewish community within Cuban society. Of special mention was the invitation of the presidents of the Patronato and Adath Israel to a meeting with the Pope during the latter's 1998 visit to Cuba and the visit to the Adath Israel synagogue of Cardinal Jaime Ortega in the year 2000. Relations with the Consejo Nacional de Iglesias (National

Arturo López Levy

Council of Churches) and with some Protestant churches that do not belong to it have developed in an environment of solidarity and respect.

One of the greatest challenges to the survival of the Jewish community was the emigration to Israel in the 1990s of more than 400 Cubans, mostly young people, as a result of the Israeli law that considers all Jews in the diaspora as potential citizens of that country. It is difficult to predict the effects of this outflow though it is to be expected that in the medium term, depending on the evolution of the two countries, it will have some impact.

As a result of the increased economic opportunities for foreign investment and international tourism in Cuba beginning in the 1990s, some Israeli businesses and Jews from other countries have started to invest in Cuba. Foreign Jews, though not integrated into the local population, participate sporadically in the life of the community and provide financial support. Among the most important individuals in this group is Rafi Eitan, a former colonel in the Mossad and a legendary figure for his participation in the capture of Adolf Eichman.

The relation of Cuban Jews with Israel encompasses both exchanges between the community and the Jewish state and inter-state relations. In the first case, there has been a significant activation of links including the participation of many Cubans in Congresses, conferences and even sporting events. In the second case, the Cuban Jewish community has been limited in expressing its diverse positions in the public sphere, including its positions concerning the state of Israel and the Arab-Israeli conflict. This is in the face of considerable anti-Israeli, pro-Palestinian bias in the Cuban media.

THE FUTURE

In present-day Cuba no one doubts that at least the Catholic and Protestant Churches, as well as the Afrocuban religions, have considerable promise. Can the same be said of a Jewish community which does not total 1,500 members? Nevertheless, there is evidence to suggest that the Jewish community has passed through its worst moments. The isolation and ostracism of the old era and the increased space for Jewish educational and community life guarantee at least a minimum survival.

The majority of the Jewish community in Cuba awaits what the

The Jewish Community in Cuba in the 1990s

future will bring. The community's permanency depends a great deal on a peaceful future due to its extremely small numbers. Absent major traumas, the community will remain in the country because, for more than a century now, it has had very deep organic roots, and the national Cuban context is receptive and open towards Jews. Cubans have always been idiosyncratic in their openness and tolerance. The Jews of Cuba today are as pluralistic as Cuban society itself and include whites, blacks, mulattos, Communists, ex-Communists, the self-employed, apoliticals, dissidents, physicians, lawyers, engineers, workers, etc. Their attachment to Judaism is, unlike that of the pre-revolutionary period, more rooted in their Cuban identity.

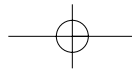
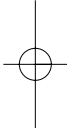
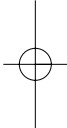
The state via the Communist Party's Central Committee's Office for Religious Affairs led by Caridad Diego accepts that Cuban Jews are in their majority pro-Zionist, but abstain from expressing that position outside the synagogue walls. That situation has become increasingly difficult to sustain as many Cuban Jews have familial and fraternal bonds with Israel. Nevertheless, the Cuban state has made a considerable effort to make viable the development of Jewish community life. This mutual acceptance suggests the degree to which both sides are committed to work towards greater tolerance of their respective views, as well as the growth of space for religious groups within Cuban civil society.

It is unlikely that the future of the Jewish community in Cuba will be as trying as the past. Earlier predictions that the Jewish community would disappear within 10 or, at most, 20 years have proven false. David Ben-Gurion, the founder of the state of Israel, once said that the Jew who did not believe in miracles was not a realist. The Jews of Cuba know this all too well.

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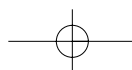
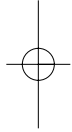
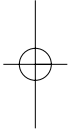
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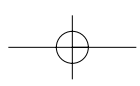
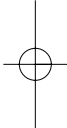
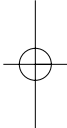




PART II

**RELIGION, CULTURE, AND SOCIETY:
TRANSNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES**





CHAPTER 7**The Catholic Church and
Cuba's International Ties****THOMAS E. QUIGLEY**

UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

Some believe that the Catholic Church in Cuba, from the moment of the triumph of Castro's Revolution in January 1959 to the years immediately leading up to the papal visit of January 1998, was little more than a shell. They held that it was a small remnant of an essentially pre-Vatican II church, one that had failed to respond adequately to the challenges of the times and which the rest of the Catholic world was content to ignore. There is some truth to the last point that the Church in Cuba lived much of the last four decades in considerable isolation from the Catholic Church beyond its borders. But the reality is much more complex.

This presentation seeks to recount the degree to which the Cuban Catholic Church lost certain of its international ties, retained others and, over time, developed new and important relationships that have redounded to the benefit of the Church as well as the larger Cuban society.

EARLY US-CUBAN CATHOLIC TIES

Almost from the beginning of the Revolution the Catholic Church in Cuba, which until that time had been well connected with much of the rest of the world, became a lonely and isolated outpost of the universal Church. Ties had been especially strong with the Catholic Church in Spain, as well as with the Catholic Church in the US. The latter's connections went back over two centuries to a time when the dioceses of New Orleans and Mobile were suffragans of the see of Santiago de Cuba.

Thomas E. Quingley

In the 1940s and 1950s, Cuba was one of the Latin American nations that most clearly exemplified the growing awareness in Church circles of the centrality of Catholic social teaching in the life of the Church. Cuban Catholics formed the linchpin of the Inter-American Social Action Conferences organized in those years by the US bishops' Social Action Department. The first Inter-American meeting was held in 1945 at Havana's Belén High School, Fidel Castro's alma mater. Furthermore, Augustinians from the US had founded Cuba's premier Catholic university, Santo Tomás de Villanueva, and, given the proximity and the ease of travel between the two countries, connections between the two Catholic Churches were numerous.

The political tensions arising between the two governments beginning in 1959, however, brought those ties to an abrupt end. After vigorously opposing the early show trials and summary executions of people connected to the Batista regime, the bishops, for the first six months or so, essentially refrained from criticizing the increasingly radical revolutionary legislation, some of which directly and adversely affected the Church. They were seeking, hoping against hope, to co-exist with a regime that was becoming daily more hostile to the Catholic Church.

On July 26 of 1959, the Nuncio even celebrated a Mass at Havana's Cathedral with top officials, including Castro, present. But by November, Cardinal Richard Cushing of Boston was publicly attacking the regime, labeling Castro a Communist and referring to the Catholic Church there as a Church of silence, a phrase used during the Cold War years to denote Catholicism under Communism. Over the next two years there followed a massive hemorrhaging of Catholics, the expulsion or coerced departure of a high percentage of the country's clergy and religious, and the departure of some 800,000 Cubans, many of them active Catholics, with most of them coming to the United States. Contacts between the Church in Cuba and in the US became less frequent and more difficult. The Catholic Church in Cuba indeed became a church of silence, and an increasingly isolated one.

YEARS OF ISOLATION

The sense of isolation was even more bitter as Catholic visitors and writers, including world-renowned Catholic sociologists and theologians,

The Catholic Church and Cuba's International Ties

accepted uncritically a litany of charges against the Catholic Church propagated by the Cuban government. Even some bishops in other countries were heard to opine that the Catholic Church in Cuba got what it deserved.

Following two years (1960-61) of frequent confrontation, growing repression, and genuine, if largely bloodless persecution, culminating in the September 1961 expulsion of Havana's Auxiliary Bishop Eduardo Boza Masvidal and 132 priests and religious, the Catholic Church in Cuba quietly endured more than two decades of very limited contact with the rest of the world. Relations with the Holy See never faltered, nor were diplomatic ties between Cuba and the Vatican severed. Although the Vatican mission in Havana was led for many years by a chargé d'affaires, not a nuncio, the Cuban government sought to maintain ties with the Catholic Church exclusively through the Vatican's representatives. The bishops of Cuba were effectively excluded from any recognition by the government.

THE BEGINNING OF SOME IMPROVEMENTS

Towards the end of the 1970s, partly through the patient diplomacy of the Vatican chargé, Monsignor Cesare Zacchi, relations between the government and the Holy See gradually improved. An Office of Religious Affairs of the Central Committee of the Communist Party was created to deal with some of the concerns of various religions, and, with the appointment in late 1981 of the Bishop of Pinar del Rio, Jaime Ortega Alamino, as Archbishop of Havana, the Catholic Church would soon be poised to reach out to the world beyond. For his installation, Ortega invited the Archbishop of Miami, Edward McCarthy, whose visit was the first of a US bishop in over twenty years.

It is worth noting that Miami's director of Catholic Charities, the energetic and charismatic, Monsignor Brian O. Walsh, was also invited. As the guiding force behind Operation Pedro Pan, a program that brought some 14,000 children to the US in the early years of the revolution, whose parents feared the Marxist indoctrination of the Cuban schools after church-run schools had been closed, Msgr. Walsh was clearly *persona non grata* and was not given a visa. However, according to the Cuban Interest Section at the time, it was just a bureaucratic error.

Thomas E. Quingley

OUTREACH TO THE US CHURCH

In late 1973, there had been an effort on the part of an informal group of several US bishops to visit Cuba, but by early 1975 it became clear that it was not going to happen. The spokesperson for the Cuban episcopal conference expressed the Cuban bishops' support for the visit, but acknowledged that everything depended on the government.

A decade later, Bishop Jean Vilnet of Lille, president of the French bishops conference, visited Havana. The Paris-based Comité Catholique contre le Faim et pour le Développement (The Catholic Committee against Hunger and for Development) had, since 1982, been responding to Cuban government requests for a Catholic non-governmental organization (NGO) to help with an educational program for handicapped children. The humanitarian value of the program was unquestioned, but the government's approach to a foreign Catholic NGO with no reference to the Catholic Church in Cuba caused, it was said privately, some chagrin on the part of the Cuban bishops.

In March 1984, Archbishop Jaime Ortega came to New York to preach a retreat for priests working in Hispanic ministry in the US. He was also invited to meet with UN Secretary General Javier Pérez de Cuellar, which probably did no harm to his standing in Cuba. On 14 March, staff of the U.S. bishops' conference traveled to New York to meet with the Archbishop, who spoke of the importance of Cuban Catholics knowing that they were not alone and forgotten by the rest of the world. He then extended an invitation, in the name of the Cuban bishops conference, for a delegation of US bishops to visit the Catholic Church in Cuba. On September 25, Bishop Adolfo Rodríguez of Camaguey, president of the Cuban bishops' conference, sent a formal invitation.

THE 1985 VISITS

From January 21-25, 1985, the US Catholic bishops' conference president, Bishop James Malone led a delegation which included Archbishops Bernard Law of Boston and Patrick Flores of San Antonio, staffed by conference General Secretary Msgr. Daniel Hoye and Fr. David Gallivan. This was the visit that first opened the

The Catholic Church and Cuba's International Ties

Catholic Church of Cuba to the world, if not the world to the Catholic Church in Cuba.

The North American visitors had been provided with background material on the state of the Cuban Catholic Church, including a lengthy document that the bishops had submitted to Castro in their efforts to open a dialogue on the nature of Cuban society and the role of Christians in that society. It never received a response. However, with the US bishops insisting that the Cuban bishops be present at any meeting the US visitors might have with Mr. Castro, the visit provided the first face-to-face meeting between Cuba's bishops and the head of state. It was only a reception at the Nunciature, but solemn assurances were given that a dialogue with the bishops would follow.

The following September, Archbishops Jaime Ortega of Havana and Pedro Meurice of Santiago de Cuba, Conference President Bishop Adolfo Rodríguez of Camagüey and Monsignor Carlos Manuel de Céspedes paid a visit to the US. They met with the bishops' administrative board in Washington, with Hispanic pastoral agents from various dioceses, celebrated Mass at Washington's St. Matthew's Cathedral and had meetings at the Cuban Interest Section, the State Department, and the White House. They had earlier met with the bishops of Miami and others, enduring a blistering attack from the Cuban American National Foundation's President Jorge Mas Canosa. The prelates went on to New York and Boston, solidifying ties with the Church in both, and some continued on to Canada where, despite historical ties and the presence of Canadian priests and religious in Cuba, there had been little church-to-church contact.

Out of these visits in 1985 came a new sense of ecclesial solidarity, especially between the churches in the US and Cuba. Irish bishops who visited Cuba in late November of that year wrote that the visit by the US bishops had played an important role in helping create an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect facilitating, it was hoped, a process of dialogue between church and state. Several concrete developments did result from the visits including significant progress in the release of political prisoners and the resettlement of many in the US, the Cuban bishops' first meeting with Castro in twenty-five years and an invitation for Cuban church representatives to participate in a government sponsored meeting on third world debt.

Thomas E. Quingley

ENCUENTRO NACIONAL ECLESIAL CUBANO

In February 1986 the National Cuban Church Encounter (Encuentro Nacional Eclesial de Cuba -ENEC) opened after five years preparation. A further expression of the Catholic Church's recent emergence from the shadows, this national gathering, the first such in twenty-seven years, was kept deliberately small and low-key. Although many across the island had been involved in the preparatory sessions (Reflexión Eclesial Cubana-REC), ENEC itself was limited to some 200 participants. The Vatican's Cardinal Eduardo Pironio represented the pope, and five other bishops, including Patrick Flores of San Antonio, Texas, plus two Cuban-American priests, came as observers. Exiled Bishops Eduardo Boza Masvidal and Agustín Román issued a statement supportive of the meeting.

REGULARIZING VISITS

It was now clearly feasible for more visits to take place. The same three Cuban bishops and Msgr. Carlos Manuel de Céspedes from the bishops' conference came to the US in November 1987. Archbishop Theodore McCarrick of Newark visited Cuba in March of 1988 and the following month Cardinal John O'Connor of New York went for the bicentennial commemoration of the birth of Fr. Félix Varela, the nineteenth century champion of independence. In visits in 1989 and 1990, Cardinal Bernard Law of Boston began what was to become a lasting and fruitful relationship between the archdioceses of Boston and Havana.

For his part, Cardinal O'Connor built upon the symbol of Félix Varela as a bridge between the people of New York and Cuba, since Varela, while in exile, had ministered in the US for thirty years. Throughout his 1988 visit, he made repeated references to the role of the Catholic Church as a bridge that unites people of varying backgrounds and points of view, and that can also serve as a bridge between peoples divided by distance and ideology. Thus, he promoted the idea that the Catholic Church could help bridge the divide between Cubans on the island and those in exile and, perhaps, between the US and Cuban governments.

The Catholic Church and Cuba's International Ties

THE SPECIAL PERIOD

What appeared to be a warming relationship between the government and the Catholic Church took a major step backward at the end of the 1980s. At issue were the dramatic changes occurring in Eastern Europe with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the consequent end, by December 1991, of the multi-billion dollar annual Russian subsidies that fueled the Cuban economy. At the same time the Cuban Catholic Church was growing in self-confidence aided, in part, by its ties with other churches, notably those of the United States, and the leadership of John Paul II.

The Pope's visit to Czechoslovakia in April 1990, and his harsh judgment of Communism, alerted the Cuban government that the presumably subdued Cuban Catholics, by virtue of their ties with the Church in the rest of the world, might pose problems for the Party's continued hegemony. This led directly to Castro's verbal denunciation of his country's bishops at a meeting of base Christian communities in Brazil in March 1991 where he accused the Cuban prelates of being lackeys of the US bishops and even of the US government. He further suggested that the prelates really preferred to be in Miami rather than in Cuba.

GRADUAL REBOUND

In time, Cuba adjusted to the new economic realities. International tourism and investment became ever more important to the country's well being. Visits from abroad were encouraged in the 1990s as never before, if only for the hard currency they brought in, and organizations such as Catholic Relief Services (CRS) of the US and various European Catholic agencies offered humanitarian aid to the needy in Cuba. In early 1991, the Cuban bishops organized Caritas Cubana, affiliated with Caritas Internationalis, the Rome-based secretariat that helps coordinate the relief and development work of the Catholic Church in most countries of the world. Diocesan Caritas offices, staffed largely by volunteers, were eventually opened in each of Cuba's ten dioceses. It was this outreach of Cuban Caritas to its counterparts in other countries, especially to the US Catholic Relief Services, that symbolized the

Thomas E. Quingley

Catholic Church's emergence, if not from the catacombs, at least from implicit second class status.

The rapid deterioration of much of Cuba's vaunted health care system in recent years also prompted the authorities to accept the Catholic Church's offer to provide at least some relief to the growing numbers of poor Cubans without access to needed medicines. Through its international ties, Caritas was able to broker the delivery through its own and other Catholic entities of millions of dollars worth of medicines, medical equipment and other necessities.

THE VATICAN'S UNIQUE ROLE

As mentioned above, relations between the Catholic Church in Cuba and the Holy See never faltered throughout the revolutionary period. During most of the 1960s and 1970s, Cuban bishops and clergy were castigated by progressive Catholics abroad for not fully supporting the reforms" brought about by the revolution, and equally rebuked by some in the Cuban exile community for their supposed acquiescence to the dictates of the government. Msgr. Zacchi was especially reviled by some in exile as the architect of a Cuban *ostpolitik*, but is more generally seen today as one who helped preserve the Church from even greater isolation and persecution than it did suffer, and who helped pave the way for the eventual emergence of a more united, vibrant, zealous and courageous Catholic Church.

The active diplomacy of successive nuncios, the visits to Cuba of senior Vatican officials, such as Cardinal Roger Etchegaray of the Pontifical Justice and Peace Council and Archbishop Jean-Louis Tauran of the Secretariat of State, as well as the events leading up to and culminating in the January 1998 visit of Pope John Paul II tremendously affected not only the life of the Catholic Church in Cuba, but the relationship of Cuba to the rest of the world. The fact that many Cubans in exile who had vowed never to return until Castro was gone, but did go for the papal visit and returned changed, has contributed to a more open and realistic view of the Church in Cuba.

The Catholic Church and Cuba's International Ties

OTHER INTERNATIONAL TIES

While their foreign travel was for years severely restricted, Cuban bishops continued to make their required periodic *ad limina* visits to Rome, enabling them to meet with bishops and others from many countries. And although they had only token representation at the 1979 Puebla conference of Latin American bishops, the Cubans gradually became more active in meetings of the Episcopal Conference of Latin America (CELAM) and, later, the annual Inter-American bishops' meetings which bring together small groups of bishops from Canada, the United States and Latin America for reflection on situations affecting the Catholic Church in the hemisphere. The 1999 Meeting of Bishops of the Church in America was held in Havana for the first time. In addition, several international religious congregations of men and women have re-established closer ties with their fellow religious in Cuba, and groups new to Cuba such as Mother Theresa's Missionaries of Charity and the Oblates of Mary Immaculate have begun ministry there. A key factor has been the willingness of the government to grant visas to foreign priests and religious, a spigot that can and has been turned on and off at the will of the government.

CONCLUSION

For more than four decades the Catholic Church in Cuba has experienced as many upheavals and crises, and as many moments of growth and regeneration, as any other national Church in the world. The strength and encouragement it derived from its international links were severely limited throughout half of this period, restricted almost entirely to its essential ties to the Holy See. The increasing contacts of the last two decades, especially with the Catholic Church in Europe and the United States, have helped open the Church in Cuba to a hitherto largely closed-off world, and have opened parts of the world, especially the US, to Cuba and its Catholic Church.

Many of the hopes for greater relaxation of government controls, for greater space for the Catholic Church and civil society that were generated by the papal visit have yet to be realized, and indeed the events

Thomas E. Quingley

of late 1999 and the following months signaled some reversals both in relations between the Catholic Church and the government as well as between Cuba and the US. Still, the advances of the recent past are unlikely to be stymied for long, and the encouragement received and the solidarity expressed by the Catholic Church outside Cuba assure an ever brighter future for the Cuban Church and people of Cuba.

CHAPTER 8**Religion and the Cuban Exodus:
A Perspective from Union City, New Jersey**

YOLANDA PRIETO
RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY

Most Cubans who left their country in the early 1960s were Catholic. The social base of the Catholic Church in Cuba at the time of the 1959 revolution was predominantly urban, white, upper or middle-class. Although Cuban society was nominally Catholic, the Church as an institution was weak, especially in the rural and poor urban sectors of the population. Most people were baptized and identified themselves as Catholics, yet practicing Catholicism varied according to class, race and region, while displays of popular religiosity were less tied to the Catholic Church than in other Latin American countries.

The Catholic Church had supported the fight against Batista, but soon after the revolutionary government took over in January 1959, conflicts between church and state developed. Tensions over some revolutionary measures, particularly the nationalization of Catholic schools and the accelerating antagonism between Cuba and the United States led to a rift between that institution and the government.

Rising tensions in diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States, internal counterrevolutionary activity, the Bay of Pigs invasion in April 1961 and Fidel Castro's declaration that the revolution was socialist in nature, escalated a process of social and political change which inevitably forced people to take sides. Although other religious groups also felt these pressures, the Catholic Church was at the forefront of the conflict. Being Catholic gradually became synonymous with being counterrevolutionary, and being revolutionary increasingly implied atheism and automatic

Yolanda Prieto

suspicion of anyone with religious beliefs, especially Catholics (Prieto, 2001). This was, in part, true. Many Catholics, including some priests, became involved in insurgent activities, and others participated in the Bay of Pigs invasion as exiles. For their part, many revolutionaries chanted slogans in front of churches during religious ceremonies, and in some extreme cases desecrated temples (Crahan, 93; Prieto, 2001, 2). Members of the clergy and religious orders, as well as laypersons, began to leave the country. Some of those involved in counterrevolutionary activities asked for political asylum in foreign embassies. Church/state tensions climaxed when the government expelled 131 priests and laypersons in September 1961, following a religious procession that turned into an anti-government protest.

In the early years of the migration, the Catholic Church, though not espousing a clear position, approved of and even aided the exodus. Most of the clergy, as well as the exiles, thought of this exit as temporary, lasting only until Fidel Castro's government was deposed. Operation Peter Pan was one of the most contentious episodes of the early migration. This program, which began in December 1960, brought over 14,000 unaccompanied children to the United States. Rumors that the government was going to take parental rights away stirred up fears. Children were sent to Miami, where the Catholic Archdiocese, which designed and managed the program, placed them in camps, orphanages and foster care until their parents joined them. The Catholic Church in Cuba participated indirectly in this program since most of these youngsters attended Catholic schools and nuns and priests helped make arrangements (Conde, 98).

The mass departure of upper and middle-class Cubans eroded the social bases of the Church. In September 1965 Fidel Castro announced that all those who wanted to leave the island could do so. Cubans in Miami rushed to the port of Camarioca to pick up relatives. Later, Cuba and the United States signed a memorandum of understanding in which the United States agreed to provide air transportation between the two countries permitting the entry of 3,000 to 4,000 persons monthly. These flights, called Freedom Flights, which brought the second wave of Cuban exiles to the United States, lasted until April 1973. The second wave was different from the first in that it had a high proportion of small entrepreneurs and work-

Religion and the Cuban Exodus

ing-class families who left the country for ideological and economic reasons. This new exodus represented another setback for the Catholic Church. Many of these migrants were very active in their parishes and unlike earlier migrants they realized that their trip might not be temporary. In addition, they did not appreciate the bishops' non-confrontational approach towards the government, which was severely criticized by the first wave of exiles in Miami.

The Catholic Church's isolated position in Cuba gradually began to change in the 1970s-80s. It is beyond the scope of this presentation to analyze all the factors that contributed to this, but the presence of a new papal envoy whose mission was to improve relations between church and state, the return of some priests to Cuba, one of whom was named Archbishop of Havana, reforms by Vatican II and the Latin American Bishops' meetings in Medellín (1968) and Puebla (1979), led the Cuban bishops to explore alternatives for a new position for the Catholic Church in Cuba (Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de Cuba, 185-186).

Changes in the Catholic Church were coupled with changes in the government. In 1977, Fidel Castro gave a speech to the Jamaican Council of Churches in which he stated that there were no contradictions between the aims of religion and the aims of socialism (Castro, 104). In 1985, he discussed these issues further in an interview with Frei Betto, a Brazilian friar, which was published as Fidel and Religion. In 1991, the Communist Party decided that believers could become members and, most importantly, a 1992 constitutional amendment redesignated Cuba as a secular rather than atheist state. While gaining more space in Cuban society, the Catholic Church continued to face criticism from Miami exiles, who felt it was selling out to the Communist government.

The third wave of Cuban refugees began to arrive in the United States in April 1980. Following an incident at the Peruvian embassy in Havana, the Cuban government announced that those seeking asylum would be allowed to leave the country. Within 48 hours, more than 10,000 Cubans had taken refuge on the embassy grounds. The Cuban government announced that the port of Mariel would be opened for those wanting to leave. Mariel refugees were more representative of the Cuban population as a whole than previous waves of exiles. The number of Afrocubans in this

Yolanda Prieto

group was significantly higher than in the earlier waves: twenty percent compared with three percent previously. Males outnumbered females by a ratio of two to one (Prieto, 1984, 67). Some of these migrants had relatives in the United States, and had long hoped to join them. Others had actively supported the revolution, but had become discouraged mainly by increasing economic difficulties in Cuba. After Mariel, the US government agreed to authorize 20,000 visas annually to Cubans who wanted to leave the country. But in practice, legal migration between 1980 and 1992 was limited, although a steady stream of refugees continued to reach the Florida coast on boats and flimsy rafts.

The fourth massive wave of Cuban migrants came in the summer of 1994 in boats and homemade rafts. Most *balseros*, or rafters, came from the poorest socioeconomic sectors of Cuban society. The deep economic crisis that Cuba experienced in the 1990s, pushed out thousands of people, many (perhaps most) of whom did not have any relatives in the United States. These refugees were encouraged to leave because, on the one hand, the Cuban government relaxed restrictions, and on the other, the US Cuban Adjustment Act, gave them legal status immediately. Thousands risked their lives and many perished during the journey. In a very controversial measure, the US government ordered all refugees picked up at sea to be detained at the US Naval Base in Guantánamo. Eventually they were brought to the mainland (Pedraza, 272-273). After this crisis, the US and Cuban governments decided to start a new round of migration talks. The United States again promised 20,000 visas a year, a promise never realized.

As opposed to the early exiles, few of the Cubans who left in the 1980s and the 1990s were practicing Catholics. This group had a more diverse religious background. Growing up during a period of government hostility toward religion, many had not had any contact with churches at all. Also, since many of the recent refugees came from modest sectors of Cuban society, they were much more likely to practice popular forms of religiosity, including Afro-Cuban religions (Ramírez Calzadilla, 82-94).

The Catholic Church in Cuba adopted a clear position on migration this time. It exhorted Catholics to make a personal decision that was illuminated by the Gospel and by their commitment to their faith and their

Religion and the Cuban Exodus

homeland not just according to human criteria (Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de Cuba, 218). Through statements and pastoral letters, the Cuban bishops outlined what has become the consistent viewpoint of the Catholic Church on migration: it encouraged its members to stay in Cuba, although it respected individual decisions to the contrary. One of the most common themes in the Cuban bishops' documents is reconciliation among all Cubans. Exiled Cubans have not always approved of the prelates stand on these issues, but these rifts began to mend with John Paul II's visit to Cuba in 1998. The Pope supported the Cuban bishops and encouraged Cubans, especially those abroad, to do the same (Stevens-Arroyo).

CUBANS AND RELIGION IN US SOCIETY

The great majority of Cuban migrants have settled in Miami, Florida and, no matter when they arrived in this country, most Cubans prefer to stay there. Proximity to Cuba, a warm climate, and the existence of an established Cuban-American community are definite magnets. But many Cubans have also migrated to the Northeast. One prime destination has been Union City, New Jersey, which has grown into the second largest concentration of Cubans after Miami. The abundance of industrial jobs and family ties explain why Union City became a final destination for many refugees.

As is the case with many immigrants, Cubans have displayed a higher level of religious participation once in the United States than they did in their own country. Religion often serves as a vehicle for integration into the new society. Sometimes immigrants are more religious here than they were before, because religion is one of the important identity markers that helps them preserve individual self-awareness and cohesion in a group (Smith). Cubans may also have sought help via religion to establish roots and offset the dislocation of exile. In addition, some, particularly the early exiles did not want to maintain strong ties with their native church, which they often accused of condoning the Communist government's rule.

Yolanda Prieto

CUBANS IN UNION CITY

Union City is one of twelve municipalities in Hudson County, New Jersey. A forty-six square mile area within minutes of New York City, Union City was the first home of many European immigrants who came to the United States. Germans, Irish, Eastern European Jews, Poles, Italians, and others settled in Hudson County between the eighteenth century and the early part of the twentieth century. As these groups moved up economically, they dispersed to middle class suburbs, leaving the area to new waves of immigrants. Hispanics began to come to Hudson County in significant numbers in the early 1960s. Puerto Ricans concentrated in Jersey City and Hoboken, while Cubans settled in Union City and the adjacent town of West New York. Since the 1980s, new immigrants from South and Central America, as well as Dominicans and African-Americans have settled in Union City. At the same time, many Cubans have moved to the New Jersey suburbs, mainly in Bergen County, or to Florida. Consequently, the area that used to have the second largest concentration of Cubans in the country after Miami in the 1960s and 1970s has become a very multiethnic, multicultural enclave. The percentage of Cubans in Union City declined from 32 % of the total population in 1980, to 26 % in 1990. In 2000, the number of Cubans living in Hudson County reflected a 23 % decrease while Bergen County experienced a 34 % increase (Hudson County; Morrill).

Before the massive influx of exiles came to Union City in the 1960s and 1970s, there was a small Cuban community in the area. Most of these Cubans were economic immigrants who had moved there from New York City. These Cubans were mainly from rural sectors of Cuba, particularly from Las Villas province. Most exiles came to Union City in the mid 1960s. Many were the relatives of the original Cubans; others came looking for blue-collar jobs. This is why the Cuban community in Union City has a higher proportion of rural and working-class persons than Miami. As the first Cuban immigrants dispersed, new arrivals came to Union City, replenishing, if in a modest way, the Cuban presence in the area.

Religion and the Cuban Exodus

ST. AUGUSTINE'S PARISH

St. Augustine's parish in Union City was established in 1886. In the late 1950s, there were some Hispanics who came to the church. The growing number of Cuban arrivals in the 1960s required more services for Hispanics. A Spanish mass on Sundays was very well attended. A community began to form. St. Augustine sponsored an Oficina Hispana, or Hispanic Office, through which federal aid was distributed to Cuban refugees. Catholic Charities, as one of four organizations designated by the government to distribute funds from the Cuban Refugee Program, financed the Oficina Hispana. It provided assistance in securing jobs for refugees, housing, translation services and furniture. The office was located in the basement of the church and it was always packed.

Gradually, the community organized. First, there were social activities planned by lay leaders. After Sunday mass, churchgoers would meet for coffee and pastries which were donated by Cuban businessmen in the city. Sometimes there were Cuban zarzuelas or operettas, sung by local artists, or fashion shows sponsored by local Cuban boutiques. Religious organizations flourished. St. Augustine's Cuban lay leadership contributed to the formation of a strong community. Ninety five percent of the Hispanic parishioners in the 1960s and early 1970s were Cuban. Among these were many professionals.

In recent years the composition of St. Augustine's Hispanic laity has changed dramatically. The parish is a microcosm of the changes taking place in the larger community. According to Father Pedro Navarro, the present pastor: "There has been a radical change in this parish since I got here in 1978. Twenty percent of the congregation was American and the remaining 80% was Hispanic. Of the 80% Hispanic, 75% was Cuban and 25% Puerto Rican. Now 93% of the parish membership is Hispanic. Of those, 35% are Cuban, 40% Colombians, and the rest are from other South and Central American countries and from the Dominican Republic" (Navarro).

Father Navarro also noted, however, that most of the current leaders are Cuban (Navarro). Similarly, José Planas, the Director of the Hispanic Catechism has stated that the predominance of Cuban leadership is explained by the leaders' middle class origins and, in most cases, their Catholic education (Navarro).

Yolanda Prieto

There are a number of very active groups in the parish including small working groups that meet for four weeks prior to Advent and Lent and a group of young adults that meets weekly to study and debate controversial issues regarding modern life from a religious point of view, for spiritual support and help and for moral guidance. Although there is a significant Cuban presence, the small working groups are diverse. Overall, the composition of the groups reflects the mixture of Latin American nationalities in the parish. The leaders of most of these groups continue to be Cuban. It is clear that the universal religious message takes precedence over the Latin heterogeneity of the group. The points made by the participants are always geared toward applying the message of love and peace in the Gospel, with much emphasis on improving the life of the community. There is a predominance of women in their 50s and 60s with a few younger ones.

The young adults group is more differentiated. There are many nationalities represented and the persons with official leadership roles are Mexican, Cuban and Guatemalan. These young men and women are concerned with issues that transcend their countries of origin and when ethnicity becomes a topic in the group's exchanges, the members identify more often as Hispanic Americans than with specific nationalities. The meetings are conducted in English. Clearly, the institutional structure of the Church is helping these young immigrants to become successfully integrated into US society. As the sociologist Andrew Greeley has suggested, the denominational character of US society has had a significant impact on social structure and social interaction. Religious institutions have provided the mechanisms for immigrants' integration into American life (Greeley).

As is the case in the larger community, many Cubans in St. Augustine cannot leave Union City for economic factors. Others have decided to stay for family reasons. Many Cuban leaders in St. Augustine are professional, educated persons who came in the 1960s and 1970s. They have made Union City their home and St. Augustine their parish. They are devoted to their community and, as Father Navarro commented, most of them are conscious that they have to help their brothers and sisters in the faith who come from other places and who are in desperate material and spiritual need (Navarro).

For most of St. Augustine's Cuban lay leaders, Cuba is not a topic of conversation. Their negative feelings toward the government of

Religion and the Cuban Exodus

Cuba and their uneasiness about the Cuban Church and the Cuban bishops' positions make them opt for silence. These first generation exile church leaders feel very much rooted in their present parish experience. Yet, this is slowly changing. Initially many of the Cubans were outraged by Pope John Paul II's 1998 visit to the island which they regarded as legitimizing Fidel Castro's government. At St. Augustine not a word was said publicly about the trip. However, after it was clear that the visit had been a success, Cuban parishioners began to express interest. Members of the parish could see how involved the Cuban Church was in the community and how much social and economic help they provided to needy Cubans. Many wanted to find ways to help the Catholic Church in Cuba economically and to establish communication.

My observations conducting this research suggest that social class and race are important factors behind the complex intergroup dynamics taking place at St. Augustine and in Union City in general. New arrivals from Cuba present a challenge. They come from all sectors of Cuban society and are considered economic migrants rather than political exiles. Many of the earlier refugees feel that the new ones are inferior. But at the same time, the new Cubans may make a difference in the long run in terms of a more open attitude about Cuba and about other Hispanics in Union City, with whom they share the same social status. These migrants have more contact with the island and travel there more frequently to visit relatives. Many of the early exiles do not have family or contacts in Cuba any longer. Therefore, their views on their native Church is less informed and less accepting. Obviously reconciliation among Cubans needs to be not simply between those on and off the island, but also among those in exile. Given that the Catholic and other churches have prioritized such reconciliation, the task of religious institutions and believers is a major challenge.

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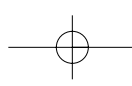
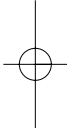
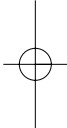
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CHAPTER 9**Cuba's Catholic Church and
The Contemporary Exodus****SILVIA PEDRAZA**

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

The collapse of Communism in the Soviet Union and the Eastern European countries ushered in a new era in Cuba, which Fidel Castro himself called “a special period.” Since the late 1980s, we have witnessed the strengthening of civil society in Cuba (Perez-Díaz, 1993). The Catholic Church through a variety of means has played an important part of this process. The focus of this paper is what role are the Catholic Church and Catholics playing in democratizing Cuba.

The “special period” in the 1990s and beyond is a crisis, which is not only economic, but also a crisis of legitimacy. When the Soviet Union and the Eastern European Communist countries collapsed, Cuba lost the Soviet Union’s very generous subsidies and socialist markets. It became evident that Communism had been rejected by a sizeable proportion of those who had lived under it. That collapse precipitated a profound crisis of belief in Cuba.

PROVIDING SPIRITUAL SUSTENANCE

The role the Catholic Church plays in Cuba today includes providing people with spiritual sustenance amidst the normal hardships of daily life. Prior to the revolutionary transformation of Cuban society initiated in 1959, the Catholic Church was a major institution in a country where many people identified themselves as Catholics, but only a few attended mass regularly (Agrupación Católica Universitaria 1954). Hence, Catholicism exerted great weight in the culture and less weight in observance (Céspedes 1995). The Catholic Church strongly supported

Silvia Pedraza

the efforts to end the dictatorship of Batista (1952-59), but when the Castro revolution became radicalized, church and the state found themselves locked in a confrontation that culminated in the nationalization of Catholic and other private schools, the expulsion of priests, and the departure of most of the religious congregations from the island (Collazo 2001). Subsequently, the revolutionary government defined itself as Marxist-Leninist and atheist, which contributed further to the massive departure of Cubans. Moreover, being seen in a church, practicing the faith, had real social costs: social ostracism in the neighborhood, loss of promotions at work and the like. As a result, the Catholic faithful declined in numbers, though those that remained often underwent a deeper mystical experience and gained a clearer understanding of the meaning of their religious commitment (Suárez 2002). Particularly after the collapse of Communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, the Catholic Church has provided an alternative vision of society—one where social classes and races are not pitted against one another and where the message is of justice with mercy, particularly helping others through compassion.

SOLVING PROBLEMS

For many Cubans, the Catholic Church, as do all churches everywhere, provides assistance in solving ordinary problems—for those who are lonely, hungry, ill, suffer from alcoholism and the like. And while these are problems churches everywhere strive to respond to, in Cuba they are not unrelated to the massive exodus that has taken place over the years. The exodus severed the complex, extended family that in the past had characterized Cuban culture and that served as a “safety net” for coping with life’s problems.

For example, the exodus of Cubans since 1959 has left many old people alone in Cuba today. Given the economic problems of “the special period,” they often have little to eat and are ill, yet have to fend for themselves. Many churches have stepped in to try to help. The Church of Santa Teresita in Santiago de Cuba tries to feed many of its elderly parishioners by making an *ajíaco* (a traditional Cuban vegetable stew). That *ajíaco* feeds approximately 70 persons a day. In order to make it, a number of the parishioners would go up to the hills to look for the tubers (*yucca*, *malanga*, corn, yams and the like) the dish requires, while others would help

Cuba's Catholic Church and the Contemporary Exodus

with the actual preparation of the dish, and still others would assist in delivering it to the elderly. As a consequence, the church provided the recipients as well as the providers with a new social network.

GIVING REFUGE

Many Cubans who have become profoundly disaffected from the government and its politics have turned to the Catholic Church seeking refuge. Mariana Torres was the daughter of a working class woman who, more than revolutionary or Communist, was Fidelista. From the beginning of the revolution Mariana's mother was imbued with Fidel's charisma and followed him in everything he did and said. So much so, that her house was used as a *casa de confianza*—literally, a house that could be trusted. There informants could meet with members of state security to give their reports on the dissident groups they had penetrated. However, while studying at the local university Mariana became progressively more and more disaffected from the revolution. When she lost her job working in a laboratory, she found that she desperately wanted to leave Cuba. She did not tell her family, especially her mother, that she had lost her job, nor that she hoped to leave. Instead, every day she pretended to leave home for work and went to a church in Centro Habana, where she sat in a pew for hours to think and pray. The priest there, she said, grew used to her presence and often just went about his work in the church while she continued to pray by herself. After some months there, she made a promise to the Virgen de la Caridad, Cuba's patron saint, that she would fulfill if she was able to leave Cuba as, indeed, she did. To her, the church was a refuge, physically and spiritually, enabling her both to cope with life in Cuba and eventually have the spiritual strength to leave her family and homeland.

BUILDING DEMOCRACY

Though to some church leaders, among them the current Cardinal Jaime Ortega, the mission of the Church should be strictly religious, not political, in recent years some Catholic leaders have consciously sought to use the Church to build a democratic future. Perhaps no

Silvia Pedraza

other priest has played this role as publicly as Father José Conrado Rodríguez. On September 8, 1994 the feast day of the Virgen de la Caridad, in his church in Palma Soriano, Oriente Province, he read a letter he had written to Fidel Castro. It stated:

For over 30 years, our country engaged in a politics at the base of which was violence 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...Soviet Union.... (since it) 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 (resulted in) hypocrisy and dissimulation, insincerity and lying, and a general state of fear that affected everyone in the island....We are all responsible, but no one is more responsible than you....I can no longer remain silent, in good conscience....

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, would allow the voice of all our people to be heard.... (Rodríguez 1995, translation mine).

Father Conrado's letter to Fidel Castro was widely circulated in Cuba as well as in the exile community. To many Cubans, in both countries, it was "a clarion call."

Obviously Father José Conrado thought the Catholic Church needed to play a more active role than it had in solving the Cuban crisis and paving the way for a democratic future. To him, the Cuban bishops' 1993 statement "El Amor Todo lo Espera" ("Love Hopes All Things") simply did not go far enough (Conferencia Episcopal de Cuba, 1993). Hence, the depth of the crisis and oppression caused the priest to act. In his work as a priest for eight years in the two parishes of Palma Soriano and Contramaestre, Father

Cuba's Catholic Church and the Contemporary Exodus

José Conrado regularly visited and said mass in numerous towns. He felt “that the situation was a real challenge, not only for my parishioners, but also for me, as their suffering was my suffering.... That was when I decided to act, to try to solve the situation with the means I had” (Yero 1996).

Of note is the fact that Father Conrado had repeatedly decided not to leave Cuba. Each time, he decided against it, his parents and grandparents also chose to remain behind to accompany him, though everyone else in the family was leaving. Father Conrado's position has consistently been that it is in Cuba that Cubans must carry the cross of serving *la patria* (the homeland); that the *compromiso* (commitment) with Cuba needs to keep those who care about its future in Cuba, not in exile. For Cubans such as Father Conrado their religious beliefs make it imperative to use their faith to construct a different Cuba. Their religious beliefs are at the root of their commitment and activism.

RELIGION AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

Religious symbolism has been an important component of national identity throughout Cuban history. Perhaps no symbol has been more identified with cubanidad than the Virgen de la Caridad de Cobre. Its central role was clearly recognized during Pope John Paul II's visit to Cuba in January 1998. The Pope symbolically crowned the Virgen during a mass held in Santiago de Cuba. That event was accompanied by the joyous sounds of the multitudes singing “Virgen Mambisa”, a song that alludes to the role the Virgen played in the struggle for independence from Spain. It was also during this visit that Pope John Paul II exhorted Cubans not to leave the island, but to remain and become protagonists of their own future –“Let Cuba open itself up to the world, and the world to Cuba.” This bit of advice is one that many Cubans, both in the island and in exile, take very seriously (see Pedraza 2002).

Devotion to Our Lady of Charity provides meaning for many in Cuba today including those in the arts. This can be seen in the many paintings that include images of the Virgen in a context of dealing with current problems. For example, I have seen works that depict the Virgen in the traditional manner yet that substitute the balseros of the nineties for the traditional boat with the three Juans who allegedly found her in the seventeenth cen-

Silvia Pedraza

ture. One painting stands out as particularly memorable. Painted by a young artist who was sunk in grief because his best friend, who had left Cuba on a raft in the summer of 1994, had never reached safety, the drawing depicted the sea raging under a black sky with a saddened Virgen above an empty raft.

PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS

Due in part to the crisis of “the special period,” the 1990s witnessed the rapid growth of a dissident movement. It takes its inspiration from the worldwide human rights movement that found its most substantial expression in the United Nation’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). In recent years, among the many calls for change that have emanated from inside of Cuba, two stand out: “La Patria es de Todos” (“Our Nation Is for All”) and the Varela Project. The latter has petitioned the Cuban government to democratize. In May 2002, over ten thousand signatures were delivered to the National Assembly of People’s Power. The Project demanded five changes in Cuba: guarantees of rights to free expression and a free press; the right to free association; amnesty for political prisoners; the right to form small private enterprises; and a plebiscite under a new electoral law and general elections. As Oswaldo Payá, founder of the Varela Project and the Movimiento de Cristiano de Liberación (Christian Liberation Movement—linked to the Christian Democratic International) expressed it: “Let no one else speak for Cubans. Let their own voices be heard in a referendum” (Payá 2001). Another Catholic activist Dagoberto Valdéz, founder of the magazine *Vital*, has concentrated on promoting independent ways of acting and thinking (Valdéz 1997). Though *Vital* is a lay magazine, it is published with the assistance and the printing press of the Archbishopric of Pinar del Río. These are but a few of the initiatives currently underway.

CONCLUSION

While the leadership of the Cuban Catholic Church insists that the role and the mission of the Church is and must remain strictly spiritual, for many Cubans today the church is not just a church, but also an alternative to the Communist vision—another way to think, feel, act, live.

Cuba's Catholic Church and the Contemporary Exodus

Hence, religion and politics are linked in Cuba. That does not mean that one should expect the Cuban Catholic Church to be the fountainhead of a large, popular, anti-Communist movement. Indeed, as Crahan (2002) has underscored the Catholic Church in Cuba is unlikely to play a role similar to its counterpart in Poland in the demise of the present regime. Yet, in truth, what happened in Poland in its exit from Communism also did not happen elsewhere in Eastern Europe—neither in Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Yugoslavia, nor the Soviet Union. For reasons that go beyond the scope of this paper, to date the experience of Poland is unique. But recognizing that does not contradict admitting the important role that all religions in Cuba are playing today and the extent to which, for a large part of the population, religion is an important source of help, an alternative in the quest for meaning that, at all times everywhere, men and women inevitably grope for. And for those Cubans who strive to create a democratic future, today religion is a vital source of support.

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CHAPTER 10

God Knows No Borders: Transnational Religious Ties Linking Miami and Cuba

KATRIN HANSING & SARAH J. MAHLER
FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Since 1959 over a million Cubans have migrated to the United States, the majority of whom reside in metropolitan Miami, a region that has become known as the capital of the Cuban exile. Decades of anger, bitterness and distrust have dominated the official discourse and image proffered by both sides, as witnessed globally during the Elián González custody battle. Thus, the dominant image of the relationship between Cubans on both sides of the Florida Straits has been that of two communities in a continuous state of cold war. From a wider perspective, however, Cuba internally, and relations between Cuba and the US, are undergoing major challenges and change is in the air. Among the telltale factors is that the decades-old US embargo against Cuba is increasingly being questioned not only by US based churches, but also by a growing number of members of the US Congress. Meanwhile the leader of the Varela Project, Oswaldo Payá, is being discussed as a contender for the Nobel Peace Prize for his democratization efforts on the island. What is causing all this change and what does it tell us about relations between the two Cubas?

Research we have been conducting on transnational religious ties between Miami and Cuba since 2001 brings a fresh perspective to this puzzling question for two basic reasons. First, the dominant narrative explaining these changes has been political-economic, focusing particularly on external pressures such as how US businesses are lobbying for an end to the embargo and internal pressures such as the Varela Project. We do not deny the importance of these efforts, but we also contend that they help

Katrin Hansing & Sarah J. Mahler

divert attention away from another important, yet little-recognized vehicle for change, that is, religious actors and particularly the Catholic Church in Miami and Cuba. Second, the cold war image of the Cuban diaspora obfuscates the fact that transnational ties between these communities have existed since 1959 and thickened noticeably in recent years. The reasons why people participate in exchanges vary from straightforward Christian evangelism to promoting political projects including both reconciliation and the removal of Castro. While non-religious transnational ties linking immigrants and their countries/communities of origin—such as remittances, cross-border businesses, political party fundraising, telecommunications and many others—are widely acknowledged and documented for many contemporary and historic migrations, this is not true of Cuban migration. Indeed, though an estimated US \$1 billion is sent annually in remittances from the US to Cuba—overwhelmingly from Miami—and an estimated 130,000 Cuban-Americans visit the island every year, these facts rarely permeate exile discourse. Rather, the “official” doctrine is that exiles should support the embargo—even if that means not assisting family members still residing on the island in order to depose the Castro government.

We intentionally use the phrase “two nations” to convey both US-Cuba relations and exile-island relations. To date, we have interviewed over 150 religious leaders and congregants in both Miami and Cuba, documented scores of religious services and organizational meetings on both sites, and conducted archival research. We have (1) traced various faiths’ (Catholic, Protestant/ Evangelical and Afrocuban) histories both within Cuba and in relationship to the U.S.; (2) documented the emigration of the vast majority of Cuban religious professionals and congregation members in the years following the 1959 revolution and the development of Cuban religious communities in Miami; (3) recorded the persistence of religious practice in Cuba post-1959, emphasizing efforts by religions to keep open an alternative, religio-civic space for dialogue within Cuba and between the island and the US; and (4) traced the multitudinous transnational religious ties that link Cuban clergy and laity on the island with diasporic communities in the United States and Miami in particular.

Transnational Religious Ties Linking Miami and Cuba

For the purposes of this presentation, we will discuss only one aspect of the overall study—transnational religious ties between Miami and Cuba. Moreover, we will focus primarily on the increased activities and connections that have emerged over the past decade.

BACKGROUND

It is critical to note that religious ties between exiles and islanders were relatively weak, especially in the first three decades of the revolution. This situation can mainly be attributed to the difficult political situation between the US and Cuba, as well as the more general politicized atmosphere in both communities. The churches in Cuba were faced with enormous pressures and prejudices from the Communist government which declared atheism official doctrine in 1961, placing the faithful in a position of marginality that encouraged believers to leave the island. A mass exodus in the 1960s further weakened the churches in Cuba. Their counterparts in the US, particularly in Miami, became powerful and outspoken anti-Communist institutions. Underlying the politics were deep-seated feelings and resentments: pastors who left Cuba were often burdened with guilt—and sometimes blame—for abandoning their flocks while those who remained behind were labeled puppets of Castro. In sum, during the decade of the 1960s the churches on both sides of the Florida Straits developed a degree of hostility that would endure for decades. Regardless, a thin transnational space for dialogue and reconciliation stayed open, primarily due to the efforts of liberal Protestants on both sides of the Florida Straits.

In the 1970s Castro began to entertain dialogues with religious leaders from the US, as well as from Cuba culminating in 1985 with the publication of his interview *Fidel and Religion*. Religious leaders in Cuba date the present religious renaissance to 1989 when the “Special Period” began as the former USSR ended its close political links with and economic subsidies for Cuba. In the 1990s, hunger and dashed hopes fostered disillusion among the populace and people were attracted to religions for material as well as spiritual needs. Reports of suffering in the early 1990s stimulated churches in Miami, and elsewhere, to

Katrin Hansing & Sarah J. Mahler

devise ways to supply medicine and other scarce goods to the island without drawing the wrath of either the Cuban or US governments. Thus began the most recent stage in transnational religious ties between Cuba and the US.

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

Over the course of documenting transnational religious ties, we have developed three broad categories for analyzing them: (1) a typology of the main types of ties; (2) a typology of agency; and (3) an examination of the intentions behind the ties. In the following section we will outline these categories and then provide some concrete examples from our fieldwork.

I. Types of Transnational Religious Ties: Coarse Divisions

Broadly speaking we have identified three main types of ties which include:

- material ties which mainly manifest themselves in face-to-face visits and transfers of money, food and medical donations;
- media/mass communication ties which include religious radio programs, periodicals, the internet, as well as videos containing some sort of religious content; and
- ties of a more symbolic nature which nevertheless connect these two communities through such rituals as prayer, patron saint day festivals that are celebrated in both communities, sister-church relationships, as well as promesas or vows that have a transnational component.

II. Agency: Degrees of Formality/Informality and Levels of Agency

We have observed that people who exercise transnational ties fall along a continuum from those who act in an official/institutional capacity to those who act primarily as individuals and informally. Of course, the same individuals can foster ties officially one day and informally another. Thus we focus less on the agents themselves than on the characteristics of their actions:

- ties of an official/formal nature
- “people to people” ties of a mainly informal and unofficial nature.

Furthermore, we have found that agents operate at different levels of agency:

- macro (e.g., denominational or large institution level)
- mezzo (e.g., church or small organization level)
- micro (e.g., individual or small group level)

Transnational Religious Ties Linking Miami and Cuba

A good example of how these two dimensions of agency interweave is the “Bridge of Hope” Cuba-Florida Covenant sister church relationship between Florida and Cuban Methodist congregations. The sister church program established a formal transnational linkage between a church in Cuba and one or more churches in Florida (some Miami churches do not participate for political reasons, however). We characterize this initial arrangement as an example of agency orchestrated officially/formally at the macro level. However, as Methodists in both countries have explained to us, each sister church relationship reflects primarily the interests and energies of congregants. Some have evolved into regular visitations between groups from each church while others have focused primarily on the transfer of material aid from the Florida sister(s) to Cuba. These on-going ties occupy a middle ground in the continuum of formality/informality as the churches involved often have to seek assistance from their denominational hierarchies to obtain the visas necessary for the visits and to transfer aid in excess of personal luggage. Similarly, these ties occupy what we usually refer to as the “mezzo” level of agency. However, we have heard of cases where sister-church relations have declined over time, but person-to-person ties begun through these sisterhoods have endured. Thus, we observe in the Methodist case an evolution from formal to informal and from macro to micro; however, it is critical to note that there are many instances of informal/micro ties that develop into more institutional/formal linkages as well.

III. Purposes Behind Ties: Specific Case of Political Agendas

Theorists studying transnational ties have slowly identified a range of intentions behind their construction and perpetuation ranging from the altruistic to the self-serving and reflecting everything from secular to sacred interests. Not surprisingly, the tense political climate between the two Cubas and pressure to conform to the dominant discourses on both sides shape the intentions behind agents’ participation in many, if not most transnational religious ties, above and beyond explicit religious objectives such as spreading the Gospel. What we have observed is that ties fall along a continuum of political purposes ranging from rancor to reconciliation, from pressing for change to seeking common ground.

- Antipathy toward the Castro or US governments, combined with advocacy for change
- Orientation toward acceptance, rapprochement and reconciliation.

Katrin Hansing & Sarah J. Mahler

This array of intentionalities is best illustrated through concrete examples and among the most ingenious informal projects aimed at undermining the Castro government that we have encountered is a Catholic radio program broadcast from Miami which reaches the north coast of Cuba. An exile priest solicits Cubans on the island to write him with their medical needs. Since 1994 he has received thousands of letters and, underwritten by wealthy Cuban exiles and staffed by a team of volunteers, he answers each request, packaging the medicine along with a rosary and a small religious pamphlet. The “paqueticos” are delivered by Miami Cuban “mules” who travel to the island, aided by Cuban-Americans who can return legally from the US once a year. The priest’s organization pays their airfare for carrying one extra suitcase filled with the packets of medicine.

This example is but one of dozens we have discovered that illustrate how transnational religious ties cultivate more than faith and work politically towards sculpting a post-Castro era. In this case, for example, at the same time the aid helps meet humanitarian needs, it simultaneously exposes the Castro regime’s inability to meet basic needs, undermining its credibility.

In contrast, however, we have also found scores of examples where the religious space is utilized primarily for reconciliation between Cubans on the island and in Miami. A critical yet unheralded factor here is the religious visa. Interviews with clergy on the island highlight the fact that clergy have greater access to international travel than virtually any other sector of society save top Communist Party members. The availability of religious visas from both the US and Cuba facilitates dialogue. These kinds of transnational ties are among the most dense and active. Cuban Catholic priests from the island, for example, come to Miami every month. They celebrate mass in one of the many Cuban Catholic churches in Miami, meet with former congregants from their parishes in Cuba, and even perform weddings, baptisms and so on. These priests serve as a balm to these longstanding divided communities through sharing local and personal news. Many preach a theology of reconciliation during their homilies. They also collect money for their churches back in Cuba.

Protestant, as well as Catholic, churches in Miami take advantage of this “religious tourism” by inviting traveling clergy to speak, and often preach, to their congregations while providing financial aid to support projects in Cuba, such as the restoration of church buildings, soup

Transnational Religious Ties Linking Miami and Cuba

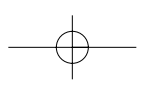
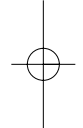
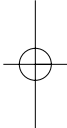
kitchens and homes for the elderly. These contributions build transnational rapport. In addition, since 1997 several high-level meetings between clergy on both sides of the Florida Straits entitled *Reuniones para Conocerse Mejor* (Meetings to Get to Know One Another Better) serve to encourage a culture of dialogue. These exchanges, coupled with the thousands of family visits by emigrees to the island, promote a face-to-face diplomacy that buttresses and expands the existing religious space; a space which is expanding rapidly and constitutes one of the few legitimate arenas for rapprochement and reconciliation between Cubans on the island and in the United States.

CONCLUSION

Ever since the Disciples became Apostles of the Word and were sent across cultural and political borders over two millennia ago to evangelize, Christianity has been “transnational.” Many clergy today view Cuba as the last great frontier for winning souls in the Western Hemisphere. They are pushing hard to establish beachheads on the island, taking advantage of the last decade of increased religious tolerance, for what they expect will become extremely fertile ground in the post-Castro era. Their denominational affiliations, as well as their political intentions vary, but one thing that unites them is the conviction that “God knows no borders.”

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CONCLUSION

MARGARET E. CRAHAN

HUNTER COLLEGE AND THE GRADUATE CENTER,
CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

The seminar discussions demonstrated repeatedly the complexities involved in the analysis of the interplay of religion, culture and society. The initial suggestion that understanding such phenomena required highly elaborated methodologies was repeatedly confirmed, particularly as the case of Cuba was examined. Add to this the need to factor in the power of ideas and beliefs to transform societies and one begins to understand how such studies are particularly arduous and require both quantitative and qualitative analysis of a wide variety of variables. Hence, methodologies need to incorporate elements of a variety of approaches in order to lay a basis for comparative study. If this is done then even a case as unique as Cuba can provide valuable insights into the interaction of religion, culture and society, particularly in terms of the identification of new roles for religions in non-traditional contexts.

Analysis of the Cuban case also suggests that the worldwide growth of religions is not limited to a particular political, economic, social or cultural context, but rather the motive forces transcend such differentials. In addition, the question was raised as to why such growth occurred in a country in which secularism was strong even prior to a Marxist revolution. Responses included the reassertion of a tradition of belief, albeit highly diversified, reforms within various religions making them more responsive to daily concerns, increasing loss of faith in the revolution and the search for surcease in the face of stress inducing living conditions. Finally, it was suggested that Cuba would be an interesting case study in the evolution of religious pluralism, given the strengthening of that tendency in the rest of Latin America.

A prime issue was what constituted political action by religions and who should define it? In situations such as Cuba's where the revolutionary government arrogated to itself the setting of the parameters for legitimate political action and who could engage in it, religions were ini-

Margaret E. Crahan

tially considered outside those limits. As a consequence, most religions have been cautious in asserting their traditional role as moral evaluators and legitimators of society. Nevertheless, increasingly religions in Cuba have emphasized that the exercise of this role constitutes neither dissidence, nor opposition to the government, and is in fact supportive of the government's stated commitment to the common good. Indeed, many religions have tended to maintain distance from dissidents and active opponents of the government. Related to this were questions of when do religions penetrate societies and its institutions sufficiently to play a major role in the generation of consensual agendas for public policies, together with pressure in support of them within a context in which normative values may be changing? Such questions reaffirmed the methodological challenge of analyzing multiple levels in religious and secular institutions and evolving processes.

Religions clearly have political objectives and engage in political activities, particularly in societies in crisis. Hence, while the intention may be to exercise moral leadership in a time of great need, the activities involved can be legitimately regarded not only as political, but at times as oppositional. Given the moral legitimacy of many religions, such actions can be considered as promoting a counterdiscourse to the state's and hence constituting a threat. The question arises as to when such activities achieve critical mass and under what circumstances might a government decide that religions might require repression. To study such developments poses a methodological challenge given the dynamism of the processes involved. It is at this juncture that the depth of understanding of the nature of a particular civil society and the roles that religions play in it become critical to such analyses.

The case of Cuba presents major analytical challenges. In that country religions continue to be somewhat marginalized, while organized civil society has been functioning within the sphere of state activities. Hence, the role of religions within civil society has been largely circumscribed until the recent expansion of civil society outside the confines of the state. This process has been facilitated by the fact that, as one seminar participant phrased it "religions are among the undigested elements of pre-revolutionary Cuban society." While that has provided religions with a certain image of autonomy, their actual capacity to act independently is limited by both formal restrictions and the weighing by religious leaders

Conclusion

of the realities of their situation. Furthermore, since in revolutionary Cuba there is a tendency to regard “everything” as political any movement to occupy civic space is regarded as political. The legal subsuming of civil society into the sphere of the state clearly raises questions about the extent of self-imposed limits on the part of religions themselves. The latter have consistently expressed support for the stated goal of the revolution to achieve socioeconomic justice, as well as the defense of national sovereignty. This has led religions to unanimously oppose the US embargo of Cuba. Not only in Cuba, but elsewhere, there is tension between the desire of religions to win souls at the same time they support public policies to promote the common good. In Cuba, which has not succeeded in becoming a classless society, support of one may undercut the other. Such efforts generally are the source of stress on the religions thereby encouraging caution in the assertion of moral leadership on public policy issues.

One concept that has recently generated considerable attention both within and without Cuba has been subsidiarity through which religions serve as intermediaries between the state and society in building cooperation in order to achieve the common good. The adducing of this concept in a variety of societies is part of an effort to categorize religious activities in the public sphere as non-political even when they involve politics since the search for the common good trumps politics. In Cuba subsidiarity has been employed by the government and churches in order to justify the expansion of humanitarian efforts to deal with crisis induced needs, particularly in terms of food and medicines. Much of the aid comes from international humanitarian agencies and is distributed via church-state cooperation. Nevertheless, they clearly have somewhat different agendas in terms of the nature of society and the polity. Finally, it should be noted that in most cases religious subsidiarity recedes when crises subside or there is major political change.

Some have characterized civil society in Cuba as ripening, at the same time that religions are revitalizing—two processes that are somewhat intertwined. Both civil society and religions, however, lack an elaboration of their respective agendas and the strategies to achieve them. Rather there have been some tentative efforts to awaken Cubans’ consciousness to the possibilities of being the authors’ of their own history, as Pope John Paul II phrased it during his 1998 visit. Some Cubans have responded with the query “where do we go” thereby reflecting the degree to which

Margaret E. Crahan

consensus within civil society is somewhat limited. The ripening of civil society, it was noted, will only bear fruit if it has more capacity to provide direction based on an agenda that is broadly accepted by a diverse population. As has been evident in other countries, the growth of non-governmental organizations and other civic groups does not guarantee a civil society capable of achieving the implementation of even a consensual agenda. Indeed, in some cases such growth generated more competition and conflict over societal objectives, particularly in resource poor countries. Given the weak tradition of religious cooperation in Cuba, for religions to assume a substantial role in resolving such issues requires major changes within and between them.

The cases of Chile and Mexico were introduced in an attempt to better understand the prerequisites for the effective interaction of religions and civil society. Some of the differences adduced included the fact that in contemporary Chile religions were stronger institutionally and were the objects of greater loyalty by their adherents than in Cuba. In addition, there was a strong lay elite that generally remained in the country during crises which provided a strong alternative voice in public policy debates. The Catholic Church, in particular, was beginning in the 1960s to be proactive in providing an analytical basis for critiques of government policies and programs. Furthermore, the Archbishopric of Santiago, Chile, provided an institutional base for civil society organizations when public space was restricted. In addition, many religions provided resources for the emergence of new civil society organizations. However, once the crisis was perceived to be over, the institutional churches tended to withdraw into a less public role. These factors that made for a high degree of religious-civil society cooperation in Chile are not duplicated in Cuba.

With respect to civil society itself, the case of Mexico was cited. In both Mexico under the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) and in revolutionary Cuba, the governments attempted to subsume civil society into the state. In both cases such an effort was only partially successful, although it did substantially diminish the role of organized civil society, as well as the perceived need for it, at least up until recently. In such cases for civil society to assume a larger role, there generally needs to be a relaxation of regulation from above, together with a reduction in the capacity of the government to meet social welfare, cultural and other needs. In Cuba the tendency has been for civil society to filter into pub-

Conclusion

lic spaces no longer occupied by the government due to economic limitations, rather than to benefit from a reduction in state regulation. This makes for a highly tentative assertion of civil society in a context where the parameters for action are unclear. Since religions were not fully subsumed into the realm of the state as was secular civil society, they have enjoyed more operational space, although with somewhat limited resources. The latter has been assuaged to a degree through international assistance. Some secular organizations are also “testing the waters” by expanding their activities thereby contributing to the expansion of civic space. Some associations that have not been registered by the state have also grown up taking advantage of the state’s current incapacity to control all of them. Whether such groups will strengthen and develop strong horizontal ties is unclear. Meanwhile, organized civil society faces a lack of clarity concerning the “rules of the game” as state implementation of regulations has always been somewhat irregular. Greater clarity about the latter is a prerequisite for more civil society activism.

The expansion of public space and decreased capacities of the state do not guarantee that a civil society or religious sector are capable of exercising strong leadership. While they might contribute to increased pressures for change, they do not ensure a capacity to determine its nature. To accomplish non-conflictual change, both civil society and the religious leadership in Cuba would probably have to be stronger which would require more internal development. There is no evidence that religions and civil society in Cuba currently have the capacity to negotiate changes in government regulation of them.

While programs in community development and leadership training have grown, their “graduates” do not constitute a critical mass united behind a consensual agenda appealing to a broad spectrum of Cuban society. Although Cuban religions have been increasingly disseminating their social doctrines, they do not appear to have deeply penetrated civil society. Indeed, within both the religious and civic sphere there is little articulation of consensus other than a desire for better socioeconomic conditions. This has caused some to retreat into religions as a refuge rather than utilizing them as a launching pad for political activism. Indeed, religious leaders are emphasizing the inculcation of hope and moral regeneration rather than explicitly political agendas, although the former efforts may have some political consequences.

Margaret E. Crahan

Can religions in Cuba assure a relatively non-conflictual future? Most experts express more hope than certainty in responding to this question. While religions constitute the strongest sector within Cuban civil society, they are somewhat weak internally, given to competition amongst themselves, leery of directly challenging the government and not awash with activists. The reality is that while religions are experiencing a revitalization and occupying more space within civil society in Cuba today, there is little certainty that they have the prerequisites for assuming a major leadership role in determining the course of Cuban society and culture in the near future.

AGENDA

WOODROW WILSON INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR SCHOLARS
1300 PENNSYLVANIA AVE., NW
WASHINGTON, DC
SEMINAR: RELIGION, CULTURE & SOCIETY
JANUARY 21-22, 2003

01/21/03

MODERATORS: Margaret E. Crahan,
Hunter College & The Graduate Center, City
University of New York
Joseph S. Tulchin, Latin American Program,
Woodrow Wilson International Center

8:30-10 AM **SESSION I: RELIGION, CULTURE, AND
SOCIETY: THEORIES**

**Methodological Reflections about the Study
of Religion and Politics in Latin America**

Daniel H. Levine, University of Michigan

Civil Society in Cuba: A Conceptual Approach

Ariel C. Armony, Woodrow Wilson International
Center & Colby College

Commentator: Frances Hagopian, Kellogg Institute,
University of Notre Dame

0:30-12:30 PM **SESSION II: RELIGION, CULTURE AND
SOCIETY: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES**

**Cuban Diasporas: Impact on Religion,
Society and Culture**

Margaret E. Crahan, Hunter College and The Graduate
Center, City University of New York

Agenda

Associationalism in Cuba: Historical Perspectives

Alfonso Quiroz, Woodrow Wilson International
Center & Baruch College & The Graduate Center,
City University of New York

**Foreign Influences via Missionaries, 1898-1959:
The Quakers**

Karen Leimdorfer, University of Southampton

The Jewish Community in Cuba

Arturo Lopez Levy, Columbia University

**1:30-3:30 PM SESSION III: RELIGION, CULTURE,
AND SOCIETY**

International Religious NGOS

Brian Goonan, Catholic Relief Service

The Struggle for Civic Space

Christina Hip-Flores, JFK School, Harvard University

The Catholic Church and Cuba's International Ties

Thomas Quigley, United States Conference
of Catholic Bishops

Catholic Social Teaching and US-Cuban Relations

David Roncolato, Allegheny College, relations

**4-5:30 PM SESSION IV: RELIGION, CULTURE
AND SOCIETY**

Spiritism and Race

John Burdick, Syracuse University

Spiritism and Cultural Identity

Marta Moreno Vega, Hunter College, City University
of New York

Agenda

5:30-6:30 PM SCREENING OF DOCUMENTARY: “WHEN THE SAINTS DANCE MAMBO” BY MARTA MORENO VEGA, HUNTER COLLEGE, THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

01/22/03

8:30-10:30 AM SESSION V: RELIGION, CULTURE, AND SOCIETY AND THE RETENTION OF NATIONAL IDENTITY

Transnationalism and Religious Identities

Sarah J. Mahler, Florida International University

Cuba’s Catholic Church and the Contemporary Exodus

Silvia Pedraza, University of Michigan

The Role of Religion in the Construction of Community among Cuban Americans

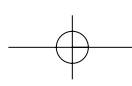
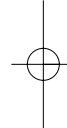
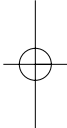
Yolanda Prieto, Ramapo College

Commentator: Mauricio Font, Bildner Center, The Graduate Center, City University of New York

11-12:30 PM SESSION VI: CONCLUSIONS

Commentators:

- Philip Brenner, School of International Studies, American University
- Hugo Frühling, Woodrow Wilson International Center & Universidad de Chile
- William LeoGrande, School of Public Affairs, American University
- Christopher Welna, Kellogg Institute, University of Notre Dame



BIOGRAPHIES OF PARTICIPANTS

Ariel Armony was a Woodrow Wilson Center Fellow in 2002–03 and is an Assistant Professor of Government at Colby College. He is the author of *Argentina, the United States, and the Anti-Communist Crusade in Central America* (1997) and *The Dubious Link: Civic Engagement and Democratization* (forthcoming from Stanford University Press). He is co-editor and co-author of *Repression, Resistance, and Democratic Transition in Central America* (2000). In addition, he has published articles and chapters on state terror, the Cold War in Latin America, and civil society. Dr. Armony was born and raised in Argentina.

Philip Brenner is a Professor of International Relations at American University and Director of American University's Inter-Disciplinary Council on the Americas. Dr. Brenner's most recent book, *Sad and Luminous Days: Cuba's Struggle with the Superpowers after the Missile Crisis*, co-authored with James Blight, was published by Rowman and Littlefield in October 2002. Centered around a secret 1968 speech about the Cuban missile crisis by Fidel Castro, the book examines how the crisis influenced Soviet-Cuban relations for many years, and still affects US-Cuban relations today. His previous books include *Limits and Possibilities of Congress* (1983) and *From Confrontation to Negotiation: US Relations with Cuba* (1988).

John Burdick is an Associate Professor of anthropology at Syracuse University. The editor of one, and the author of two books about Brazil, Burdick has just recently completed a manuscript entitled *The Legacies of Liberation: The Progressive Catholic Church at the Turn of a New Century* (Ashgate, forthcoming). Previous books include *Looking for God in Brazil: The Progressive Catholic Church in Urban Brazil's Religious Arena* (1993) and *Blessed Anastacia: Women Race and Popular Christianity in Brazil* (1998).

Margaret E. Crahan is the Dorothy Epstein Professor of Latin American History at Hunter College and The Graduate Center of the

Biographies of Participants

City University of New York. From 1982-1994 she was the Henry R. Luce Professor of Religion, Power and Political Process at Occidental College. She was a Woodrow Wilson International Center Fellow in 1985-86 and 2000-01. She has published over seventy articles and books including *Africa and the Caribbean: Legacies of a Link*, *Human Rights and Basic Needs in the Americas*, and *The City and the World: New York's Global Future*.

Cristina Eguizábal is a Program Officer at the Ford Foundation's Mexico City office working on Peace and Social Justice issues. She has held research and teaching positions at the University of Costa Rica, University of Bordeaux, University of Miami, Florida International University and the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences and has served as an advisor for regional projects at the Confederation of Central American Universities, Central American Institute for Public Administration, United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and United Nations University (UNU). Before joining the Foundation, she was a senior fellow at the Center for Peace and Reconciliation at the Arias Foundation on issues of negotiations, elections, civil military relations, international cooperation and human rights. Dr. Eguizábal holds a Ph.D. in Latin American Studies from the University of Paris-Sorbonne-Nouvelle.

Mauricio Font is Director of the Bildner Center for Western Hemisphere Studies at The Graduate Center, City University of New York, as well as Professor of Sociology there and at Queens College. Font's research examines problems of development and reform in Brazil, Cuba and Latin America as well as international cooperation in the Western Hemisphere. His books include *Coffee, Contention, and Change in the Making of Modern Brazil* (1990), *Toward a New Cuba? Legacies of a Revolution* (1997), and *Transforming Brazil: A Reform Era in Perspective* (2002).

Hugo Frühling was a Woodrow Wilson Center Scholar (2003) and Professor of the Universidad de Chile. Previously he served as a consultant to the Ministry of Justice of Chile during the presidencies of Patricio Aylwin and Eduardo Frei, and earlier was a member of the staff of the Vicaría de Solidaridad. His publications include *Estado y Fuerzas Armadas* (1982), *Represión política y defensa de los derechos humanos* (1986),

Biographies of Participants

Estado frente al terrorismo (1992), *Crime and Violence in Latin American: Citizen Security, Democracy and the State* (with Joseph S. Tulchin and Heather A. Golding, 2003).

Brian Goonan has been Country Manager of Catholic Relief Services' (CRS) Cuba Program since 2001. He has been working for CRS since 1999 initially serving in Guatemala. Prior to working with CRS, he spent over three decades working in Peru as a teacher, Project Manager for the Social Action Office of the Episcopal Conference-CEAS, Executive Director of the Center for Actions and Studies for Peace-CEAPAZ, and Director/Editor for Noticias Aliadas/Latinamerica Press.

Frances Hagopian holds the Michael P. Grace II Chair in Latin American Studies at the University of Notre Dame. She studies the comparative politics of Latin America, with emphasis on democratization and the political economy of economic reform in Brazil and the Southern Cone. She is the author of *Traditional Politics and Regime Change in Brazil* (1996), which was named a Choice outstanding book in Comparative Politics, co-editor of *Advances and Setbacks in the Third Wave of Democratization in Latin America* (Cambridge University Press, forthcoming), as well as several articles on democratization and political representation which have appeared in *World Politics*, *Comparative Political Studies*, and in other journals and books. Her current research focuses on economic liberalization and political representation in Brazil, Argentina, Chile, and Mexico.

Christina Hip-Flores is currently at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government. Ms. Hip-Flores wrote "The Cuban Catholic Church: Reopening the Spaces of Civil Society" while at Princeton's Woodrow Wilson School based on field research in Cuba. Ms. Hip-Flores spent a year of missionary work in Santiago de Cuba. There she assisted the Catholic Parish of Santa Lucia, ministering to three communities on the outskirts of the city and surrounding hinterland. She has also worked in policy development at the International Monetary Fund.

Karen Leimdorfer is currently working on her Ph.D. at the University of Southampton (UK). Her research relates to the influence of Protestant missions in Cuba during the period 1898-1959. She has done

Biographies of Participants

extensive field research in Cuba. Previously, she completed a post-graduate diploma in History and a degree in Spanish and Latin American Studies at the University of Portsmouth (UK).

William M. LeoGrande is Dean and Professor of Government at the School of Public Affairs at American University in Washington, D.C., where he has been on the faculty since 1978. In 1982-1983, Dr. LeoGrande was an International Affairs Fellow of the Council on Foreign Relations in New York. He has also been a consultant to various Congressional committees, executive branch agencies and private foundations. Professor LeoGrande has written widely in the field of Latin American politics and United States foreign policy, with a particular emphasis on Central America and Cuba. Among his works are *Cuban Communist Party and Electoral Politics: Adaptation, Succession and Transition* (2002), *Our Own Backyard: The United States in Central America, 1977-1992* (1998) and *Cuba's Policy in Africa* (1980).

Daniel H. Levine is a Professor of Political Science and Chair of the Department of Political Science at the University of Michigan. He has published widely on religion and politics in Latin America. Among his works are *Churches and Politics in Latin America* (1980), *Religion and Politics in Latin America: The Catholic Church in Venezuela and Colombia* (1981) and *Voces Populares en el Catolicismo Latinoamericano* (1996). He also contributed to the Fundamentalism Project and was on the editorial board of the Encyclopedia of Politics and Religion.

Arturo López Levy graduated in 1992 from The Instituto Superior de Relaciones Internacionales (ISRI-Higher Institute for International Affairs) in Havana. In 1997, he received a Master of Arts in Economics from Carleton University and in 2003 a Master's in International Affairs at the School of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University and is now working on his doctorate at the University of Denver. He was Secretary of B'nai Brith Cuba and president of its Cultural and Interfaith Dialogue Commission from 1999 to 2001. He has lectured about issues of Cuban history and the Cuban Jewish community in several institutions in Cuba, the US and Israel.

Biographies of Participants

Sarah J. Mahler is an Associate Professor of Anthropology in the Department of Sociology/Anthropology at Florida International University. She has conducted more than a decade of research on immigrants from Latin America and the Caribbean to the United States and, in particular, the transnational ties they retain to their homelands and the transformation of gender relations as a result of living transnationally. She is currently principal investigator on several grants including one examining the role of religion in immigrants' lives in Miami and transnational religious ties and another investigating faith-based organizations serving immigrants in Miami. She is the author of two books, *American Dreaming: Immigrant Life on the Margins* (1995) and *Salvadorans in Suburbia: Symbiosis and Conflict* (1995) and numerous articles.

Marta Moreno Vega has dedicated her professional life to developing culturally grounded institutions that disseminate the history and culture of African descendants throughout the world. She is the founder and president of the Franklin H. Williams Caribbean Cultural Center/African Diaspora Institute, an international non-profit organization. She is also the founder of Amigos del Museo del Barrio and one of the founding members of the Association of Hispanic Arts (AHA). In addition, Dr. Vega is responsible for creating two other organizations, The Network of Cultural Centers of Color, a touring network for artists of color, and the Roundtable of Institutions of People of Color, an advocacy lobbying group. She is also the author of the recently released book *The Altar of My Soul: The Living Traditions of Santería* (2000).

Silvia Pedraza is an Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. She was born and raised in Cuba, from whence she emigrated with her family at the age of 12. Her research interests include the sociology of immigration, race and ethnicity in America, as well as the sociology of Cuba's revolution and exodus. She has published two books: *Origins and Destinies: Immigration, Race, and Ethnicity in America* (1996), which was co-edited with Ruben G. Rumbaut and *Political and Economic Migrants in America: Cubans and Mexicans* (1985). She is presently working on the third, which will be titled: *Political Disaffection: Cuba's Revolution and Exodus*.

Biographies of Participants

Yolanda Prieto is a Professor of Sociology at Ramapo College of New Jersey. She specializes in the study of migration, in particular the post-1959 Cuban exodus to the United States. She has written on the experiences of Cuban immigrant women in the US. Dr. Prieto has also researched the role of religion in US Latino communities, as well as the relations between Cuban Catholics in the island and those abroad. At present, she is writing a book on Cubans in Union City, New Jersey.

Thomas Quigley is the Latin American Advisor of the Office of International Justice and Peace at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, a post he has held for decades. As such he has played a major role in the forging of the policies of the US Catholic Bishops conference with respect to Latin America and US-Latin American relations. He has published widely including several articles about Cuba.

Alfonso W. Quiroz was a Fellow at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars (2002-2003) and is a Professor of History at Baruch College and The Graduate Center, City University of New York. Professor Quiroz has authored several books and articles on the history of Peru and Cuba, including *Domestic and Foreign Finance in Modern Peru, 1850-1950: Financing Visions of Development* (1993); *La deuda defraudada: Consolidación de 1850 y dominio económico en el Perú* (1987); "Loyalist Overkill: The Socioeconomic Costs of 'Repressing' the Separatist Insurrection in Cuba, 1868-1878" (*Hispanic American Historical Review*, 1998); "Implicit Costs of Empire: Bureaucratic Corruption in Nineteenth-Century Cuba" (*Journal of Latin American Studies*, 2003); and he is co-editor of *Cuban Counterpoints: The Legacy of Fernando Ortiz* (Lexington, forthcoming). Currently, he is working on a book entitled *Corrupt Circles: Costs of Graft and Vested Interests in Peru*. His next project is a history of reform and civil society in Cuba.

David Roncolato is the Director of Community Service at Allegheny College, from which he received his undergraduate degree. He also has a Master's in Christian Spirituality from Creighton University. While working in campus ministry he began to direct the community service program. Currently, he is working on his dissertation at Duquesne University on the ethics of US-Cuban relations.

Biographies of Participants

Joseph S. Tulchin is the Director of the Latin American Program at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, D. C.. As director, he coordinates research on and public discussion of issues of concern to Latin America. The Latin American Program serves as a bridge between Latin America and the U.S. and promotes the exchange of ideas among persons from governments, international organizations, the media, business, labor, foundations, churches and the professions, as well as the academic world. Before moving to Washington, Tulchin was Professor of History and Director of International Programs at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. His areas of expertise are US foreign policy, inter-American relations, contemporary Latin America, strategic planning and social science research methodology. His publications include *World War I and US Policy toward Latin America* (1971); *Argentina and the United States: A Conflicted Relationship* (1990); *Brazil and the Challenge of Economic Reform* (1993); *Cuba and the Caribbean: Regional Issues and Trends in the Post-Cold War* (1997), and *Combatting Corruption in Latin America* (2000).

Christopher Welna is Associate Director of the Kellogg Institute for International Studies at the University of Notre Dame, as well as director of the undergraduate Latin American Studies Program and an Assistant Professor in the Political Science Department. His research interests include comparative politics and political economy, especially in Latin America and issues of human rights, the environment, non-governmental organizations and civil society. His co-edited book, *Democratic Accountability in Latin America* (forthcoming, Oxford University Press) addresses the question of how democratic leaders can encourage accountability while simultaneously promoting governmental effectiveness. A second forthcoming book *Peace, Democracy and Human Rights in Colombia* examines why peacemaking repeatedly has failed in Colombia, why public support for Colombia's long-standing democracy is so weak, and why human rights violations persist at record levels.