Tearing down the Cold Wall

Blocked transnationalism and shifting demographics within the Cuban-American community in Miami

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Introduction

Since the Spanish conquest of the New World, Cuba has played an exceptional role in global and hemispheric history. For last the two centuries, Cuban exceptionalism has been impregnated by its bipolar relationship with the United States. The foundation was laid by John Adams who considered Cuba a natural appendage to the North American continent. At the end of the nineteenth century, US foreign policy to Cuba was designed to unleash the Cuban nationalist sentiment for independence from Spain. When the US saw the opportunity to subordinate the Caribbean island to US interests, it did so, for almost half a century. In 1959, Fidel Castro ended US domination in the midst of the Cold War. The Cuban Revolution perpetuated the Cuba-US relationship reluctantly. First, Cuban migration to the United States was characterized as temporary by many; during the Cold War, Washington would not allow a communist regime to take root 90 miles off its Florida shores (Pedraza-Bailey, 1985: 9-12). Nowadays, the Cuban regime is still in power, and political and economic hardship on the island have created multiple Cuban migration waves to the United States. Nowadays, Cuban Americans comprise 15 per cent of the total Cuban population living in Cuba and the United States. The largest Cuban American community (CAC), almost half (961,516, US Consensus, 2015), lives in Miami-Dade country.

Over the course of the Cuban Revolution different migration waves, cohorts and generations have constituted the demographics of the CAC in Miami. The volatility of the (geo)political and economic context wherein Cuba-US relations occurred incited the respective governments in Havana and Washington to design policies and laws that regulated Cuban migration. Cuban migration was variously described as being ‘political’ directly after the Castro took power, to ‘economic’ starting in the 1980s. Besides migration policies, both governments have dominated the transnational social space of the two communities, through policies that allowed or blocked the realization of transnational ties. Next to the (geo)political and economic context, the evolution of Cuba-US relations was subject to the changing presidents of either nation-state. In Cuba, Fidel Castro had a consecutive rule of 47 years until his brother Raúl took power in 2006. In the United States several presidents have resided in the White House over the period of the Cuban Revolution.

The transnational identity of the CAC in Miami has shifted over time, dictated by different rationales for having transnational linkages across the Florida Straits; from a hard-line and militant hatred towards the Castro regime during the first years after the Cuban Revolution, to a more moderate, progressive and conciliatory posture during the last two decades. Even the death of Cuba American National Foundation founder and anti-Castro hardliner Jorgé Mas Canos in 1997, heralded a shift of position towards Cuba by a representative institution of the CAC in Miami. The growing desire of Cuban Americans in Miami to rebuild transnational bridges didn’t go unnoticed by politicians in Washington; Barack Obama got almost half of the Cuban American vote in Florida for his campaign promises to seek to normalize bilateral relations with Cuba. President Obama redeemed his promise on December 17, 2014. President Raúl Castro and President Obama announced that both countries would seek rapprochement after more than 50 years of antagonism. In Miami the reactions were split; the more recent arrivals and American-Born Cubans (ABCs) were open to binational engagement, while most of the first political exiles were opposed (Caputo and Flechas, 2014).

This research will seek to answer to the following research question: *What are the main rationales that have transformed the transnational identity of the CAC in Miami towards Cuba? and how have the (geo)political and economic context, and US and Cuban government policies influenced the (non-)existence of a blocked transnational social space between Miami and Cuba?* From my preliminary research on the topic, the following hypothesis has emerged and will be supported or disproved in my research: *demographic evolution has changed the transnational identity of the CAC in Miami and torn down the ‘Cold Wall’, created by Cuban and US government policies to prevent the American-Cuban community in Miami from materializing their desire to have transnational ties with Cuba*. The methodology that will facilitate the research is a literature review and analysis of existing data on demographic and transnational evolution, and the fieldwork will be undertaken

through qualitative interviews with Cuban Americans of different generations, cohorts and migration waves in Miami, as well as scholars and experts in the field of transnationalism within Cuban and Cuban-American Studies.

The first chapter elaborates the most significant perspectives in the current academic debate on transnationalism; together with the framework in which migration occurs in the creation of a diaspora, in particular the theoretic debate on the context wherein an exile community comes into existence, and the role of nation-states, will lead us to the existence of the 'impossible triangle': how a transnational identity is formed in the context of an exile community, and how this formation process can differ among generations and different cohorts of the diaspora. This section will analyse how migration and transnationalism can be regulated to serve the purposes of nation-states.

The second part will describe the exceptional historical context of the binational relationship between Cuba and the United States. It will address the most significant variables that constitute the transnational identity of the different generations and cohorts of the CAC in Miami. Furthermore, it will address the demographic evolution of the CAC through the waves of migration, and how the Cuban and US government have regulated migration, each influenced by mutations of the (geo)political and economic context of the bilateral relation. Next, the transnational policies that Havana and Washington conducted to create, but also block, the materialization of the transnational desire of the CAC in Miami will be outlined. Finally, this chapter will analyse the new road to 'normalization' initiated by President Raúl Castro and Obama that is tearing down 'the Cold Wall'.

The third chapter will discuss the foundation and development of the transnational social space that is currently in existence. It will synthesize the historically grounded analysis of the second chapter, along with the quantitative data of various institutions in the United States and the qualitative findings of my own research in Miami's CAC, to argue how the transnational identity of the CAC in Miami has evolved and differs by generation, cohort, and migration waves in the historical and contemporary context of binational relations. Using quantitative data, I show the manifestation of transnational identity among the CAC in Miami, made possible by government policies, which are substantiated by the narratives of the interviewees.

The last section of the research concludes with a discussion of the most significant concepts, variables and findings of the theory, the case study and fieldwork and attempts to answer the research question that will strengthen or weaken my hypothesis.

Chapter 1
Transnationalism: Normative Versus Blocked

Introduction

This chapter provides the theoretical grounds upon which the analysis of the case study, data and field research is based. The first part will analyse the history of transnationalism, how it is defined and why scholars found it significant to address within migration and diaspora studies. In the context of the case study, transnationalism is the realm wherein a nation-state and diaspora are involved in the creation and implementation of a transnational social space and transnational linkages across borders. The academic debate on these two entities is played out in the course of analysing their relationship in the context of an exile community. For individuals within the diaspora, transmigrant and transnational identity are debated to identify the variables that ground transnational behaviour. Subsequently, the political, economic, and sociocultural dimensions of transnational engagement that constitute the current scholarly debate are elaborated. In the third section these dimensions are deepened by anchoring them into the realm of generations, cohorts and migration waves, and the most important variables that produce divisions in transnational identity, and therefore behaviour. To engage with the specific historical context of an exile community, the last section will address the existence of an 'impossible triangular' relationship between the homeland, 'host' country and the diaspora, and debate how government policies and laws in the nation of origin and in the host country have created the concept of 'blocked transnationalism'.

1.1 The Evolution of Transnationalism

For a large part of the twentieth century the scope of migrant researchers was aimed at processes like adaptation, assimilation, and acculturation, which constituted the behaviour and experiences of migrants in the nation-state of resettlement. The popular presumption has always been that an 'immigrant' comes to resettle and pledge their alliance to the 'new' country, whereas a 'migrant' comes for economic benefits and at a certain point will return to the nation of origin. Basch *et al.* concluded that the lives and experiences of immigrants cannot be analysed as strictly separated from country of origin and the nation of resettlement. Immigrants today develop networks, patterns of living, activities and ideologies that bridge the homeland and host country (1994: 3-6). Thus in the 1990s some sociologist refocused its research on immigrants:

> as a social category distinct from racial and ethnic minorities and on immigration as an international process that reshuffles persons and cultures across nations... under the impact of changes in the nature of modern communications at this century's end, many immigrants fail to shed their old identities and totally assimilate. Instead, they developed new bicultural identities and live[d] their lives and are quite involved in more than one nation, more than one world – in effect making the home and adopted countries both one lived social world. (Pedraza and Back, 2012)

The study of transnationalism – defined as linkages transcending national borders – was in addition to concepts such as adaptation and assimilation in the new country, and thus enabled a more extensive analysis of the migrants' lives after resettlement (Vertovec, 2001: 573-574). Calhoun stresses that a wide variety of binational connections can characterize transnationalism, e.g. the movement of people or capital, and can take on forms of sociocultural interexchange (2002: 490).

1.1.2 The transnational framework of the nation-state and the diaspora

In the study of nationalism the 'nation' is defined as 'a people who share common origins and history as displayed by their shared culture, language and identity', while the 'state' is understood to be a 'sovereign system of government within a particular territory'. A nation-state can be considered as a geographic space that is constituted as one unit, defined by frontiers and wherein political and economic organization is conducted. In the realm of these boundaries lies the sovereignty and the homeland of its citizens, and the social order that is separated from outer territories (Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2002: 309). Torres argues that:

> Under this notion of organization, public power is organized and contested within the geographic boundaries of nation-states, which also define the economic and social organization of societies. (2014: 22)

The state is determined to regulate the public affairs of the nation; for whom and when the nation-state bears responsibility for these affairs varies widely, but activities that have to do with bilateral engagement with other nations are considered under foreign affairs of the state. Therefore, regardless of the domestic implications migration causes, transnational linkages are mostly accommodated through foreign affairs (Torres, 2014: 22-23).

All the citizens residing outside a nation-state, who identify themselves with an imagined or actual 'homeland' and who maintain actual or affective ties with people of the same ethnic identity are the diaspora. The diaspora can contain different kinds of individuals: expatriates, expellees, political refugees, alien resident, immigrants and ethnic and racial minorities. The members of the diaspora define themselves, or are identified by others as part of the population of the nation of origin, and therefore called upon to act in homeland affairs. Three types of members define the diaspora: 1) core members, who are the organizing elite, participate in diasporic affairs and have the ability to mobilize the diaspora; 2) passive members have to be motivated by the leadership for diasporic affairs; and 3) silent members, who are uninvolved in the communities affairs but may be mobilized during crisis. The diaspora can function in the host country as an ethnic lobby or proponent of multicultural foreign policy, but also to advocate democratization of dictatorial regimes in the homeland, or be significant for the homeland's economy. Members of the diaspora can strive to free or enrich themselves, but object to the same for the people in the nation of origin (Cohen, 2008: 1; Shain and Barth, 2003: 450-452; Berg and Eckstein, 2015: 2).

Portes and Rumbaut distinguish four types of migrants in the diaspora: 1) labour migrants; 2) professional immigrants; 3) immigrant entrepreneurs; and 4) refugees and asylum seekers (Portes, 2014: 29-43). These types can be divided into cohorts of political and economic migration. The moral difference between a political refugee and an economic migrant is set out clearly by Kunz:

the reluctance to uproot oneself [political refugee], and the absence of positive original motivations to settle elsewhere, which characterizes all refugee decisions and distinguishes the refugee from the voluntary migrants. (1973: 130)
Within a diaspora the 'vintages' or groups of political refugees are separated by 'character, background and avowed political faith' (1973: 137). Pedraza argues that 'vintages' are defined by attitudes, while waves are defined by timing (1995: 312). The vintages or cohorts of a political exodus can differ in social class, religion, or educational background. Refugee movement from the homeland can be acute and anticipatory, and cause friction within the diaspora:

> While the refugee of today leaves, the refugee of tomorrow endeavours to stall off further advance by working in retreat for a compromise. As the political situation ripens for each, they will leave the country as distinct 'vintages' each usually convinced of the moral and political rightness of his actions and implicitly or openly blaming those who departed earlier or stayed on. (1973: 137)

Stein emphasizes that the two types of migration are defined by a push-and-pull mechanism. The political refugee is pushed out by the political situation, characterized by great dissatisfaction with the political system and perceived danger to their livelihood, while economic migrants are pulled out of their nation of origin because of prospects of a better life in another country (1981: 322).

1.1.3 Transnationalism and identity

As immigrants construct linkages that transcend national boundaries, a transnational social space[1] is constructed, and the concept of 'transnational identity' is questioned. Esteban-Gutiart argues from a sociocultural approach that the archetype of any identity is the 'learner identity'. This identity is constructed by a learning process due to participation in formal and informal educational activities through which individuals perceive themselves as learners, a formation based on the idea that:

> identity is a semiotically-mediated act and is therefore a narrative product which is ordered, thus giving unity and purpose to the experience... Secondly, it is intimately linked with actions or participation in scenarios of educational activity, whether in a school, through new information technologies, or within the peer group, family or the community in general. Finally,... identity is constructed through recognition. (2015:19)

The learner identity constructs all other identities, whether ethnic, national, religious or transnational. Like any identity, the transnational identity is a cultural phenomenon of a type that links multiple nations; the sense of identity from the nation of origin cannot be replaced by the host country, nor the opposite. Therefore, transnationalism and identity can be can be accomplished as a transnational social space that is constructed from the perception of sharing some form of common identity, which is most likely based upon a place of origin and the cultural and lingual characteristics that correlate with it; they imply a desire to sustain linkages through movement and communication of resources and information. But at the same time the identity of these same individuals or groups are created by sociocultural contexts that transcend countries borders. Basch *et al*. (1994) refer to social exclusion, economic insecurity and racism as rationales for transnational activism among migrants, while Goldring underpins transnational linkages as the desire to obtain social status and reinforcement of one's identity in the community (1998, 189; Esteban-Gutiart, 2015:18-19; Vertovec, 2001: 573-574).

Migrants who create and maintain social, cultural, economic, religious or political structures between the 'home' country and host country are described as 'transmigrant'. These transnational linkages are often characterized by short duration or as having a more profound and sustainable character (Glick Schiller *et al.*, 1995: 48; Dahinden, 2010: 52). Through the transnational social space of the diaspora between the homeland and the host country, the transmigrants are:

> increasingly able to promote transnational ties, to act as bridges or as mediators between their home and host societies, and to transmit the values of pluralism and democracy as well as the 'entrepreneurial spirit and skills that their home countries so sorely lack'. (Shain and Barth, 2003: 450)

[1] 'combinations of social and symbolic ties, positions in networks and organizations, and networks of organizations that can be found in at least two geographically and internationally distinct places. These spaces denote dynamic social processes, not static notions of ties and positions. *Social ties* are a continuing series of inter-personal transactions to which participants attach shared interests, obligations, expectations and norms. *Symbolic ties* are a continuing series of transactions, both face-to-face and indirect, to which participants match shared meanings, memories, future expectations and symbols. Symbolic ties often go beyond face-to-face relations, involving members of the same religious belief, language, ethnicity or nationality' (Faist, 1998: 216).

According to methodological transnationalism, transmigrants are presumed to remain loyal to their homeland as long as they are not being absorbed by the host country through assimilation and naturalization. Identity is often defined by loyalty to nations or nation-states, and for migrants who feel at home in both or multiple countries it is difficult to decide where they belong. Thus, most transmigrants have not fully conceptualized or articulated a form of transnational identity. Transmigrants call 'home' the country of origin, although they are capable of creating a home in the host society. As national belonging is uncertain, it can make civic society in both host- and homeland to question the transmigrants' loyalty and the legitimacy of its transnational identity. The bilateral relation between the respective nation-states also affects the tolerance shown to multiple versus exclusive national loyalties; when the bilateral relationship is antagonistic, the concept of 'dual loyalty' becomes a loaded subject in relation to the transnational identity of migrants (Basch *et al.*], 1994: 3-7; Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2002: 309; Waldinger and FitzGerald, 2004: 1178-79, 1184).

1.2 The Creation of Transnational Bridges

The study on transnationalism displays two divergent observations on how the transnational identity is present in the life of a transmigrant through 'actual' and 'affective' transnational ties. The idea of transnationalism as 'actual' ties is asserted by Portes *et al.* and constitutes transnationalism as a form of practice, and of tangible ties. Under their definition transnationalism is demarcated as 'activities that require regular and sustained social contacts over time across national borders for their implementation' (1999: 219). The essence of transnational ties lies in the realization of cross-border connections that can be observed and form innumerable linkages. Grassroots associations[2] are argued to be capable of facilitating the creation and preservation of transnational ties. Being characterized by a higher education and/or occupational status increases the probability of a transmigrant constructing economic, political and sociocultural transnational linkages (Portes, 2007: 84). Schiller *et al.* (1995) and Levitt (2004) think of transnationalism as a process of preserving 'affective' transnational ties that underline transmigrants' ethnic identity and loyalties towards the nation of origin. This transnational process depends upon:

> the affective ties – real or imagined – that immigrants maintain through the reinforcement of ethnonational identities and the preservation of homeland loyalties. (1995: 48)

The actualization of this transnational process can be constructed within the diaspora – commemorative events, community bans or protests – or together with the homeland. Those 'affective linkages' between nation-states constitute transnationalism as a 'lived-experience' through the eyes of a transmigrant (Huynh and Yiu, 2015: 162).

In the creation of a transnational social field, Al-Ali *et al*. make a distinction between transnational activities and capabilities, variables which elaborate the theoretical concepts debated above. Transnational activities constitute actual political, economic, and sociocultural engagement; these practices can be observed and measured, while transnational capabilities encompass the migrants willingness and capacity for cross-border engagement, as well as the extent to which migrants identify with social, economic or political processes in their home country (experience). Being involved in transnational practices requires skills and resources, which are determined by variables of opportunities and length of time in the host country. Subsequently, direct transnational activities concern a focus on the homeland, while indirect transnational activity is aimed at actors outside of the home country:

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2 '[G]rassroots associations are locally based, significantly autonomous, volunteer run, formal nonprofit groups that manifest significant voluntary altruism as a group.... grassroots organizations tend to be smaller, more informal, and lack the resources of older NGOs. The work of a grassroots organization can focus on *advocacy* on behalf of a community or *organizing* of the community itself' (Adler, 2012: 237).

> Taking the case of refugee or exile groups... indirectly, transnational activities might also include the application of pressure on the host government or international organizations for change in the home country, or indeed the promotion of the rights of the exile community itself. Capabilities also centre upon the internal organization of migrant or exile communities, and the level of motivation to maintain group solidarity. (2001: 581)

Additional, Dahinden stresses that the concepts of 'mobility' and 'locality' have been under researched in the study of transnational formations. Mobility is defined as the physical movement of people in a transnational social space. Locality is explained as being rooted or anchored socially, economically or politically in the host country and/or in the sending country, and the desire to have social transnational relations. All these variables blend into different transnational linkages as:

> migrants settled in their new country develop forms of transnational social space that are different from those of migrants engaged in continuous transnational circulation. (Dahinden, 2010:52)

Emphasizing the different types of migration argued by Portes and Rumbaut, Al-Ali *et al.* argue that there is no doubt that labour migrants display much more flexibility and mobility than refugees, and therefore their transnational lives are different (2001: 586).

1.2.1 Political transnationalism

The political dimension of transnationalism is explained as a relation through political organization between the 'homeland' and the diaspora, but also through the foreign policy of the country of resettlement. In the homeland, political transnational activism by the diaspora can be perceived in multiple ways, e.g. as challenging the state institutions of citizenship and loyalty, as a threat to political and economic self-determination, particularly in the fields of macroeconomic policy and immigration, or to regain territory that is populated by ethnic kin in a sovereign state. In this way the diaspora is used as a geopolitical and geographical weapon to extend the political organization of the nation-state; it perpetuates an important linkage within the relationship between domestic and international politics of the nation of origin (Shain and Barth, 2003: 449; Calhoun, 2002: 490).

However, the political determination of the diaspora regarding the homeland is not naturally active, can be downplayed by external variables and can change over migrant generations. Portes and Rumbaut argue that if class is contemplated, first-generation professionals are more prone to engage in transnational political activism, and later on add the politics of the country of resettlement. But working class migrant labourers are less interested in engaging in politics, unless exclusion through racism or activism of the original inhabitants drives them to reactive mobilization. Ethnic minorities within the diaspora are likely to support progressive candidates and parties that expose a political agenda based on social equality to improve their own socioeconomic situation. Second and subsequent generations confirm Torres' claim that political activism is focused on 'host' country issues, as well the ethics and loyalty that are connected to it (2015, 211-213; Portes and Mozo, 1985: 53).

Political exile organizations seek to display an image of unity critical for obtaining national and international support, and to counter other political claims or groups in the home country or in the diaspora. International support for exile organizations can be acquired via three actors: enemies of the home regime, the home regime's allies, and agents interpreted as being remote from the dispute. Refugees who engage in political activism towards their homeland are not primarily motivated by material gain, but by national commitment. But if exile organizations fail to obtain their objectives over time, the support of the diaspora for political activism reduces (Shain, 2005: 29, 37, 54, 115, 125). The demographic of the diaspora is significant for the group from which exile organizations will gain support for their cause, and:

> a decisive influence on the nature of a diaspora pool is the home regime's policy of migration. Home regimes that encourage or force nationals to go abroad expand the pool of potential exile supporters but calculate that, by externalizing dissent, they will reduce the ability of their opponents to undermine the regime. (Shain, 2005: 54)

Other government policies that determine the transnational social space are the host country government's tolerance for assimilation or multiculturalism, requisites postulated for the migrant to obtain residence and citizenship, but also the structure and resources facilitated for the diaspora to materialize their transnational identity. Furthermore, administrations have the power to influence transmigrants' activism through policies and laws that control movement, e.g. by approving arrivals and departures. These policies' effectiveness depends on their degree of institutionalization, and the means and dedication applied to make them effective (Berg and Eckstein, 2015: 5-6). Nation-states' ability to block or provide transnational social space is further elaborated in the last section of this chapter.

1.2.2 Economic transnationalism

Some scholars indicate that the main cause of perpetuating migration and transnationalism is capitalism's evolution or the 'high points of globalization' (Basch *et al.*, 1994), through its extensive cultivation of technological development. A diaspora is able to increase and enhance transnational linkages. But the distinction between economic globalization and transnationalization is found in the limited space of transnational linkages between two or multiple countries, while globalization is non-territorial (Levitt and Jaworsky, 2007: 134; Duany, 2007: 163; Faist, 1998: 217). Portes stresses that at the micro level:

> Migrants' transnationalism can thus be understood as a form of grassroots response to the inequities and the economic difficulties that motivated their migration in the first place. It is a form of 'globalization from below' that countermands, at least in a partial way, the inequality-deepening 'globalization from above' promoted by the interests of corporate capitalism. It is in this context that one fully understands the implications of Carlos Ramos's (2002) remark (…) that migration and remittances are the true economic adjustment program of the poor. (2007: 80)

On the macro level, the globalization of capitalism has created a vicious circle: the dependency of developed countries on cheap labour from underdeveloped countries who are, in their turn, dependent on remittances sent by their diaspora. Various forms of capital acquired in the host country create the ability to contribute to the development and growth of the homeland economy (Landolt *et al.*, 1999: 297-300). For these countries, economic transnationalism becomes a great source of income and investment through the capital injected by the diaspora via remittances sent to family and friends. This especially counts for nations in the developing world, which policies and laws can stimulate and enhance, but which also block economic cross-border engagement that influences the well-being of its people (Berg and Eckstein, 2015: 6). Eckstein argues that:

> The transnational impact remittances have hinges on the social context in which they are embedded. States constitute an important part of that context. They, in principle, have the capacity to control cross-border income transfers, to appropriate money for themselves, and to regulate usages the recipients make of remittances. (2009: 207)

Financial capital coming from the diaspora funds public policies, private businesses, and social service projects in the homeland. Some recipient countries even use the prospect of remittances flowing into their economy to upgrade their credibility with international monetary institutions and thereby obtain loans (Levitt and Jaworsky, 2007: 134-136). But economic transnational ties can also endanger sovereignty in the homeland through its dependence on external capital, making the population indifferent to domestic causes. It may also undermine the societal

structures in the homeland for reward based on education, merit and hard work. Furthermore, segmented transnational networks based on class, ethnicity, gender and regional differences make societies susceptible to social inequality and domestic instability (Eckstein, 2010: 1652).

1.2.3 Sociocultural transnationalism

The sociocultural dimension of transnationalism is discussed here by structuring the social interplay between immigrants of the diaspora and non-immigrants in the homeland. Besides the actual transnational linkages, transnationalism is defined as living a transmigrant life; the transnational linkages seen as a process that maintains the affective ties of a ethnonational identity. The sociocultural transnational linkages are created by travelling, sending remittances, and telecommunication with those living there, but also through funding or organizing social projects that may include cultural experiences, schools and infrastructure in one's hometown (Huynh and Yiu, 2015: 162).

Carling focusses on the asymmetrical social relationship between the transmigrant, who resides outside of the homeland, and the non-migrant who is living in the country of origin to analyse the sociocultural process and practice of transnationalism. At the micro level, Carling claims that intrinsic asymmetries exist in transnational relationships. This intrinsic imbalance can be a source of frustration in the transnational social space of this relation, but it does not necessarily mean that there is an imbalance of power between the two actors:

> On the contrary, transnational practices are shaped by the multi-faceted nature of the relationship, with migrants and non-migrants experiencing vulnerability and ascendancy at different times and in different contexts. (2008: 1453)

Therefore, a practical analysis of the sociocultural dimension of transnational linkages between migrants and non-immigrants displays three asymmetrical differences: 1) the position taken towards transnational moralities, as pre- and post-migration experiences, staying in the homeland, and return have inherent moral dimensions; 2) access to information, different resources of imagination, and different creation of images about the various components of the transnational social field; and 3) differential distribution of not only material resources, but also legal entitlements to mobility and residence, and cultural and linguistic resources (2008: 1453-1457). Immigrants who are mobile, are more likely to be part of a decision-making process in the homeland that doesn't necessarily affect them, but does affect the immobile citizens in that country. In addition, the relationship between those who migrate and those who stay is often unequal as the migrants are often given leadership roles and demand respect (Kivisto and Faist, 2009: 155).

As we will see in the section on transmigrant generations, assimilation and acculturation focus on the cultural (inter)exchange within the boundaries of one nation-state. On a transnational level, cultural interplay between diaspora and the homeland is capable of shaping the transnational identity – immigrant and non-immigrant communities that acculturate through a transnational relationship. Intercultural exchange occurs through the mutual involvement and preservation of cultural expression. This process materializes through *fiestas* and celebrations associated with religious traditions that are taken to the country of resettlement. But at the same time, the homeland is transformed by the sociocultural characteristics that are brought through transnational linkages from the 'host' country. Levitt and Jaworsky claim that the cultural transformation in the 'host' country and the homeland brings with it the politics of belonging and citizenship. Through the power of art and culture migrants are able to express, create, remember and recreate their identity, individually or collectively, whether national or hybrid. A flipside of transnational acculturation by means of the 'high of capitalism' is argued to erase cultural identity (2007: 139-140).

1.3. Transnational Migrant Generations

As the fundamental variables of transnationalism are identified, this phenomenon can be set apart by different generations and cohorts within migration studies. This is to say that transnational ties differ among generation and cohorts within a diaspora and even within the community in one place owing to different variables. This section will elaborate the most salient characteristics that constitute these differences.

1.3.1 Generations within transnationalism

Although transnational economic, political, and sociocultural linkages have increased in the triangular relationship between the diaspora, the homeland and the country of resettlement, Berg and Eckstein argue that we lack knowledge. The concept of generations has been less significant within the literature on transnationalism than in the assimilationist framework. In this field of study:

> the concept of generation has been fundamental to the scholarly understanding of migrant adaptation, especially within the assimilationist and transnational frameworks. (Berg and Eckstein, 2015:1)

In general, these studies focus on the differences within genealogical generations – the division between migrants that have been born in the homeland and the next familial generation, who are their children. Migrants born in the 'home' country are the 'first generation', their children are the 'second generation'. In the social sciences generations can also refer to age- or birth date-based cohorts with distinctive historical experiences, life-stage groups or people who lived in a specific historical period (Eckstein and Berg, 2015: 178). Mannheim underscores generations as a:

> particular kind of identity of location, embracing related 'age groups' embedded in a historical-social process. (1970: 382)

By taking 'historical experiences' and 'age cohort' into account, Rumbaut stresses the ability to deconstruct generations by 1) the 1.75 generation, who are children that migrated in early childhood (ages 0–5), and whose experience and adaptive outcomes are close to the U.S born second generation; 2) the 1.5 generation, who are children that have immigrated to the United States before the age of 12, are of primary school age and literate in their mother tongue, but the majority of their education is undertaken in the country of resettlement; and 3) the 1.25 generation, who leave as adolescents (ages 13–17), and who possibly arrive alone and participate in secondary schools or in the work force. The 1.25 generation is considered the closest to the first generation, as they have already acquired some lived experience (2004: 1162).

Duany argues that like the first generation, the second generation does not completely break down transnational engagement with their homeland, but do display reduced activity such as sending remittances, although remaining ethnically identified with the country of origin. Immigrant children create a bicultural identity, which is balanced between the family tradition and the culture of the 'host' land. These children combine the two structures through the development of multicultural and multilingual skills, which become part of their identity (2011: 29; Esteban-Guitart and Vila, 2015: 18). The genealogical behaviour of the second generation is described as 'reactive blocked transnationalism' in the sense that they react to the covert conduct of transnationalism by the first generation; they openly interact with the homeland government and organizations, thus earning recognition that revitalizes the ethnic identity of the diaspora. The second generation doesn't carry the weight of history on their shoulders and therefore are able to manoeuvre themselves more easily towards being effective transmigrants. This contrast in historical context with the first generation can cause inter-generational conflict, but mostly on a small scale (Huynh and Yiu, 2015: 4, 24-29).

Portes and Rumbaut emphasize three fundamental factors that contribute to the understanding of generational and cohort differences within a diaspora: 1) their individual features, including their age, education, occupational skills, wealth, and knowledge of English; 2) the social environment that receives them, including the policies of the host government, the attitudes of the native population, and the presence and size of a co-ethnic community; and 3) their family structure (2001: 46).

1.3.2 Implications of assimilation and acculturation on transnational identity

As the history of transnational studies shows, assimilation and acculturation were the first concepts of migrant life after resettlement to be analysed. Scholars have argued that assimilation into the host country and the preservation of an ethnic identity through acculturation of generations within the diaspora are crucial to the diaspora's transnational identity (Vertovec, 2001: 573; Portes, 2007: 84; Berg and Eckstein, 2015: 2).

The 'assimilationist' view on migration is 'a singular, well-defined move from one bounded national space to another' (Berg and Eckstein, 2015: 5). The extent of assimilation is addressed by these authors through the occurrence of: 1) learning the language; 2) adapting to the new country's culture; 3) degree of educational and economic success; 4) participation in political and associational life; and 5) intermarriage with the native-born. Through acculturation within the diaspora, namely, the transmission of knowledge, traditions, legacy and other cultural activities within families and by institutions, ethnic identity is preserved. As perceptions of the 'home' country can be fluid and change over time as contexts change, the transfer of these variables among generations is important for the ethnic identification process and the transnational identity of generations in relation to the country of origin. Even if the actual transnational ties or the existence of generations that have a lived experience in the home country fade, the ethnic identity of the homeland will be preserved and transnational ties are more likely to be too (Berg and Eckstein, 2015: 4-8).

Assimilationists view the second generation of a diaspora as assimilating and acculturating more than their parents and normally gaining improved economic success. Furthermore, they obtain extensive knowledge of their country of birth and of their parents (ibid.). Portes and Rumbaut doubt straightforward assimilation, owing to the many variables that assimilation is subject to. According to them, the second generation is better understood by the process of 'segmented assimilation'. They emphasize that rapid integration and acceptance is just one of the alternatives, and that the degree of assimilation can be influenced decisively by four variables:

> 1) the history of the immigrant first generation; 2) the pace of acculturation among parents and children and its bearing on normative integration; 3) the barriers, cultural and economic, confronted by second-generation youth in their quest for successful adaptation; and 4) the family and community resources for confronting these barriers. (2001: 45-46)

These variables need to be assessed cautiously to comprehend the complexity of the process of assimilation and the transnational behaviour of the second generation (ibid.). The interplay of these components are likely to lead to different paths of assimilation:

> increasing acculturation and integration into the American middle class [classical assimilation theory] (Path 1)... acculturation and assimilation into the urban underclass, leading to poverty and downward mobility (Path 2). The third (Path 3), 'selective acculturation', is the deliberate preservation of the immigrant community's culture and values, accompanied by economic integration. (Xie and Greenman, 2005: 3)

Portes and Rumbaut argue that assimilation in the United States in terms of becoming American 'just like the rest' has never happened. Immigrants were not forced into cultural equality, but the strength of the American system in keeping the society heterogeneous, was the ability to create political space and structures that facilitated ethnic preservation and electoral mobilization. In defence of their own interests, immigrants fought for the interest of the greater nation. It made them 'just as American as everybody else' (Portes and Rumbaut, 2014: 213-214).

1.3.3 Pre- and post-immigration experiences

Berg and Eckstein also address how assimilationists forget to illuminate how the occurrence of migration – the historical background, and pre-migration experiences – influences their degree of assimilation and acculturation within the 'host' country's society, and the constitution of a transnational identity. Berg and Eckstein declare that their generational frame exposes the differences and changes within the diaspora over time. A shared country of origin but divergent migration experiences within different time frames, they call a historical cohort. They emphasize the personal experience of the migrant before and during migration, and how these variables have influenced experiences of resettlement in the 'host' country. In this case, generations are divided by the historical event they have lived through, not by family generations. Furthermore, they argue that a pre-migration experience needs to be set apart through age, class, ethnicity, gender and sometimes regional differences. The historically grounded conception of generations enhances the ability to analyse the cultural experiences and behaviour of cohorts and generations within the diaspora, i.e. the migration experiences resonates with the new life situation in the country of resettlement and therefore is a prominent variable in distinguishing transnational behaviour and adaptation experiences (Berg and Eckstein, 2015: 1; Eckstein and Barberia 2002: 800).

In the case of being exiled, the pre-migration experience is understood as forced separation due to the homeland's political circumstances and, as a consequence, the inability to return. Torres calls this leaving by force and inability to return the political memory of exile. The process of being exiled and the political memory that comes with it acts first through physical removal (*destierro*) from the homeland, which in turn causes a personal dislocation (*destiempo*). Both include the loss of memory of a place: *destierro* is created through the geographical movement across borders to another nation-state, while *destiempo* is defined by the loss of social and personal structures in existence before going in exile. The political context of the homeland that influences the ability of the exiles to go back, covers up the reality that any return to the past or childhood is impossible. Thus, the personal desire of the exile to seek for balance between going back to the past and going on with life has become highly politicized. If the host country is hostile regarding the exile community, this increases the sense of isolation. A mutual sharing of political memory, culture and heritage creates the foundation for the diasporic and transnational identity among exiles (2014: 37-38).

1.4. The Role of the Nation-State and Blocked Transnationalism

In the elaboration of the political dimension of transnationalism, the significance of policy and law by nation-states in the creation of the transnational social space of its diaspora was already discussed briefly. A context in which the diaspora is denied the opportunity to materialize their transnational identity in cross-border linkages, through government policies and laws on both sides is discussed by Portes and Rumbaut as 'blocked transnationalism'. With this concept they argue that:

> the political and social realities on the ground prevent the interest and concern with the home country to be translated into an effective presence. (2014: 209)

Traditional migration theory ignored the role of the state concerning its population and the receiving society until the mid-1980s (Zolberg, 1981; Pedraza, 1985: 6). Nation-states bear the responsibility of enacting migration policies that regulate entry and repatriation, resettlement and how to deal with illegal immigrants (Kivisto and Faist, 2009: 195). Ong argues that:

> Along with its juridical-legislative systems, bureaucratic apparatuses, economic entities, modes of governmentality, and war-making capacities – [the nation-state] continues to define, discipline, control and regulate all kinds of populations, whether in movement or in residence. (Ong, 1999:15)

In 1985 one study acknowledged the need to include social structures whereby migration occurs. Pedraza argued that in addition to the individual framework, the situation of individuals, their tendency to move, and the basis of their decisions, we also 'need to consider the larger social structures within which that plight exists and those decisions are made' (1985: 7). Similarly, the existence of a transnational space is argued to be dependent on constraints and opportunities in the localities in which transmigrants find themselves.

> Community institutions and norms, and governments through their policies, laws and discourse, may shape the nature and extent of cross-border bonding, bases of reciprocity, and trust, even among family members. The more supportive the milieu, the stronger and more benefit-generating cross-border ties are likely to be. (Eckstein, 2010: 1652)

To be engaged in transnationalism, migrants need to be localized in two or more places and to stay mobile they need to build local ties and be entrenched in specific localities. Cultural, socioeconomic and political frameworks can work restrictively on migrants' mobility and locality, and therefore influence transnational behaviour and motivations. Hence, Dahinden argues that the creation and activism of the transnational social space depends on the social, political and legal factors in the 'host' country and the homeland (2010: 52).

In the case of an exile community, where a relational structure of the diaspora, the homeland government and the host country's administration is established, Pedraza positioned herself on the 'impossible triangle' by Stéphane Dufoix:

> because it is impossible for the host state to recognize the exiles within—to tolerate them or encourage them, thus legitimizing their existence and their political goal—and at the same time to pursue diplomatic relations with the home state. The host state has to side with the one or with the other, but cannot side with both at once. (Pedraza, 2016: 279)

The general political stance of the diaspora tends to be linear and oppositional to the regime that forced them to leave their homeland. This stance is expected to remain unless the native hostility in the host country stimulates a 'reactive formation process'. Blocked transnationalism is argued to diminish over generations of refugees. But as long as the impossible triangle remains, exiles are observed with great distrust and uncertainty by the home regime, creating a context of espionage and (counter)intelligence. Collaborators are seen as traitors, while exiles feel betrayed when the 'host' country engages with the homeland, or that relationship gains importance. Exile politics oscillate between 'war' – seeking to overthrow the government in the home country, and 'politics' – bargaining, compromise and negotiation, and in the case of an actual war the impossible triangle fade as the 'host' country aligns with the exiles in opposition to the government of the country of origin. Citizenship acquisition in the host country is determined by the degree of blocked transnationalism. Portes and Rumbaut claim that higher rates of citizenship acquisition are shown among refugees and asylums that cannot go back to their homeland. Although migration does not necessarily mean denationalization, this policy can be used by totalitarian regimes to remove the migrant's citizen rights and leaving a person without the protection and representation of a government (2014: 208-211; Pedraza; 2016: 281-282; Faist, 1998: 217; Arendt, 1973: 269).

Chapter 2
Living in Between Two Worlds:
The Cuban-American Community in Miami

Introduction

This chapter creates the context for the empirical study to analyse differences in transnational identity among the various generations, cohorts and migration waves of the Cuban-American exile community in Miami. The first part will expose Cuba's exceptional position in the Western Hemisphere ever since the Spanish conquest of the New World, and its (geo)political importance for the United States, especially during the Cold War. A historically grounded analysis of the Cuban Revolution on 1 January 1959 will then be elaborated, and I will identify the most salient characteristics of the various generations, cohorts and migration waves that have blended into the CAC in Miami, over the time of the Cuban Revolution. By analysing their demographics, I especially underline their rationales for migration and their transnational identity with respect to Cuba. But as some scholars have argued, the individual or collective level is insufficient to understand migration and transnationalism. Thus, I will analyse the (geo)political and economic context of the respective migration waves as migration and transnational policies conducted by the Cuban and US government to create or block migration. In the analysis, the shifting demographics and evolution of the transnational identity regarding Cuba will explain the normalization process initiated by President Raúl Castro and Barack Obama, which has created migration and transnational policies that construct a transnational social space on the ruins of the Cold War, similar to that of other migrant communities in the US.

2.1 Cuban Exceptionalism and the Relationship Between Cuba and the United States

From the Spanish *Conquista* of the New World until the present day, Cuba has been a key player in hemispheric and global relations. During the Spanish Empire, Cuba was the last important hub for Spanish ships filled with richness of the Americas before they returned to the Old World. Cuban exceptionalism was found in its central geographical location where the Gulf Stream would guide ships out of the Florida Strait and back to Spain. Two hundred years later, Cuban *Balseros* or rafters would use that same current to seek better opportunities in the United States. The Florida Straits was the fulcrum of a great Cuban exodus that turned out to be a marker for Cuban-American transnational identity today. Eckstein and Barberia argue that:

> Cuban-American homeland ties must be understood in the context of Cuba-US immigration history. Emigration rates have varied with US law, Castro's tolerance and encouragement of emigration, and ordinary Cuban informal covert efforts to leave. (2008: 267)

Within the historical context of hemispheric relations between the United States and Latin America, Cuba's role is exceptional because it is: 1) the Latin American country that is most affected by the Monroe Doctrine;[3] 2) isolated from its Latin American neighbours because of US foreign policy and the economic embargo;[4] 3) the only country in the hemisphere with a

[3] A US statement that proclaimed zero tolerance towards any European interference in the Western Hemisphere. The doctrine evolved as an instrument to enhance US influence in Latin America (Hillman and D'Agostino, 2011: 193).

[4] Initiated as an arms embargo imposed during the Batista regime in March 1958 after increasing repression and violation of human rights on the island, became a US government attempt to isolate Cuba from the non-communist world and destroy Cuba's economy, after Cuba expropriated US property on the island. President Eisenhower reduced the sugar quota which had been leading the Cuban export economy for decades, and blocked all US export products to Cuba, except for food and medicine. This proved to be counterproductive; as Castro tried to retain political power, anti-American rhetoric fuelled by the embargo was implemented, and was an incentive that led him towards the Soviet

communist regime; and 4) the only country in the western hemisphere with a diaspora without 'normative' transnational relations. All of the Cuban migration waves during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were due to political circumstances in Cuba (Grenier and Pérez, 2003: 16, 29-31; Sweig, 2009: 6-10).

2.1.1 The fuel that sparked the revolutionary spirit in Cuba

The troublesome US-Cuba relations were first established by US Secretary of State John Adams in 1823, who called Cuba and Puerto Rico 'natural appendages of the North American continent' (Sweig, 2009: 4). The United States executed foreign policy that sparked Cuba's desire for its independence from Spain. The consequence was that Uncle Sam[5] acquired both islands during the Spanish American war in 1898 which lasted three months, and ended four centuries of Spanish rule in the Americas. Among others, Cuban poet, political thinker and organizer José Martí, initiated this struggle for Cuban independence; he strongly opposed the imperialist and expansionist drift of the United States, perceived Cuba-US relations as David vs. Goliath, and foresaw a leading role for Cuba in hemispheric relations. Martí would die in his first battle for a *Cuba libre*, but the veil of his nationalist and patriotic ideology prevails on both sides of the Florida Straits even today. After the Spanish American war in 1898, the United States ruled Cuba until 1902. The island became a US protectorate until 1934 because of the Platt amendment.[6] During the great depression of the 1930s, a popular uprising called for a revolution and the restoration of democracy, and ousted dictator Machado. A residue of that opposition to military and political subjugation, and the failure of the revolutionary forces in 1933 would determine Cuba's future. When in 1952, the popular elected President Carlos Prío Socarrás planned to cleanse the military from corruption, General Batista undertook a *coup d'état* (2009:7-9; Nackerud *et al*., 1999: 182; Wiarda and Kline, 2014: 341-342; Staten, 2003: 62-69).

The 1954 one-candidate election gave him 87 per cent of the popular vote. His unjust rise to power made him unpopular in Cuba, but was rationalized by the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States at the National Security Council:

> [We should] stop talking so much about democracy, and make it clear that we are quite willing to support dictatorships of the right if their policies are pro-American. (Shoultz, 2009: 55)

It clarified that the US foreign policy rationale of promoting democracy could be thrown overboard when it served US interests. By the 1950s Cuba had become an corrupt investors' paradise; hotels, casinos and brothels shaped Havana and the abundance of American tourists made the industry boom (Shoultz, 2009: 55; Merrill, 2009: 106). Batista's Cuba was a bastion for anti-Communism, and an ally of the United States. Repression and exploitation of the Cuban people replenished the nationalist and revolutionary sentiments that had pervaded Cuba during the 1930s. Beginning in 1956, Fidel Castro led his revolutionary 26th of July Movement from out of the *Sierra Maestra*, strengthened by Martí's ideology of untangling Cuba from neo-colonial dependence on the United States. Batista scaled up repression on the Cuban population, which resulted in his losing the support of his closest ally, the United States. On 1 January 1959, Batista

Union. The embargo can only be fully lifted through the US congress, and is unlikely to happen because of the Republican majority that fiercely opposes any concession towards the Castro regime (Morley, 1987: 58-60; Schoultz, 2009: 200; Hershberg and Dolezal, 2016: 89; Luxenberg, 1988: 51, 55).

[5] A commonly used reference to the United States – by some in a derogatory way - originated from a government inspector during the US Civil War of 1812, who went by the name of Samuel Wilson, among his workers known as 'Uncle Sam'. When the workers saw his initials 'US' on the supplies he had inspected for the government, they would assume he meant Uncle Sam, although he meant the United States (Schauffler, 1912: 145-146).

[6] The Cuban constitution allowed the United States to intervene in Cuba's internal affairs to protect their own interests by any means. The amendment was abolished in 1934 (Hillman and D'Agostino, 2011: 195-196).

fled into exile in the Dominican Republic (Hillman and D'Agostino, 2011: 80; Nackerud *et al*., 1999: 183).

2.2 The Cuban Revolution and the Creation of the Cuban-American Community in Miami

The Cuban Revolution added a new chapter to Cuba's exceptionalism. The Cold War was a historical period wherein 'West [the United States and Capitalism] and East [the Soviet Union and Communism] contested the superiority of their political and economic systems' (Pedraza, 1985: 7). The implementation of an authoritarian political- and state-led economic system based upon communist principles, was unknown in Latin America. Cuba's alliance with the Soviet Union – Cuba's patron until the fall of the Berlin Wall – only 90 miles off North American shores made Cuba a national security risk and important in the bilateral relationship of the two world powers. Grenier and Pérez emphasized this role by arguing that 'the closest the world has come to nuclear war was over Cuba [in October 1962]'. The Cuban Revolution caused Cubans to flee to the United States. In the first 20 years of the revolution, nearly a million Cubans fled the island (2003: 33; Pedraza-Bailey, 1985: 4-7, 21-22; McGillion and Morley, 2005: 12-13). Political antagonism fed the binational relationship:

> it became the policy of the United States to discredit the Cuban government ideologically by allowing Cubans the opportunity to choose capitalism and democracy over communism and dictatorship. This open-door policy towards Cubans served as an important aspect of the US propaganda war against communism. It also helped undermine Castro's government by draining Cuba of its human capital. (Hughes and Alum, 2011: 195)

The US foreign policy also sought to isolate Cuba in the Western Hemisphere. Through the Organization of American States (OAS) it expelled Cuba in 1962 as a member and in 1964 it demanded members break bilateral relations to impose a collective trade embargo; this embargo excluded humanitarian goods. The embargo was seen as a success because of communist revolutions until 1979. When in 1975 the 'red' threat in the southern hemisphere had weakened, the mandatory embargo was lifted (Leogrande, 2015: 480; Rathbone *et al.*], 2013: 1076).

The ideological antagonism of the Cold War created an migration framework that was regulated by Cuban and US government policies. Four massive migration waves to the United States occurred: (1) the early exiles, 1959-1962; (2) the 'airlift' from 1965-1973; (3) Mariel (1980); and (4) the 1994 'rafters'. During the Eleventh Conference on Cuban and Cuban-American Studies at Florida International University, Pedraza argued the existence of a fifth Cuban migration wave: *Los Caminantes,* 2006-2016 (personal attendance at the conference, July 24th 2017). Overall, the Cuban migration is characterized by an 'inverse correlation between date of departure and social class of the immigrants' (Pedraza; 1985: 9). Like the vintages Kunz distinguished among political refugees, Cuban migrations waves are distinguished by variables including timing, length and intensity. Eckstein and Barberia divide the Cuban migration waves into two apparent cohorts based on the following characteristics: (1) social and economic background; (2) pre-emigration experiences (3) the possibilities for resettlement in the United States. Based upon these characteristics, Cuban migration since the Cuban Revolution has created two mayor cohorts: political refugees and economic migrants (2002: 801; Grenier and Pérez, 2003: 22-23).

Vertovec emphasized the juxtaposition of transnationalism and identity based on common grounds relating to the nation-state (2001: 473) while Grenier and Pérez argued that Cuba's exceptionalism is part of that identity. It has created a strong sense of nationalism among Cuban on the island and in the US that is explicitly related to the nation of origin. Cubans had already thought of a Cuban identity or *Cubanidad*[7] two centuries before the Cuban state was founded. In the United States, Cubans reject any label of assimilation as pertaining to a hyphenated or pan-

[7] A term used to indicate 'the all-inclusive national identity that at its very roots serves as the generic condition of the Cuban' (Aja, 2016: 62).

ethnic identity (2003: 34). Fernandez has formulated the main markers of influence that constitute Cuban cultural identity in Miami in the historical context of Cuba's exceptionalism and the Cuban Revolution: 1) The political and ideological context, on the island and in the United States was significant in the formation of the American-Cuban community in Miami, and the relations with Cuba. This has been an acute form of disruption, and until today, for many, transnational relations with the country are unnegotiable; 2) the policies of the US government regarding Cuban immigrants have underpinned the differences with other Hispanic immigrant groups and stimulated the perseverance of their political ideology; 3) socioeconomic resources created by Cuban Americans, which facilitated cultural and linguistic expressions, are deeply entrenched in the community; 4) the constant migrant flow to the United States functions as an element of renovation and actualization of Cuban culture in the community; and 5) the organization of Cuban families in Miami, have facilitated the social and conservational cultural identity of Cuba and its transmission to the new generations (2000: 81-83). All the historical components are analysed on the basis of Cuban migration cohorts and waves in the rest of this chapter.

Cuba's exceptionalism created five decades of Cuban migration to the US which constitutes 15 per cent of the total population of Cuban descent in Cuba and the United States.[8] Almost half live in Miami-Dade County. In 2010 Cubans were the largest Hispanic group residing in Miami-Dade County, 34.3 per cent. As certain scholars have noted, inclusion of variables like gender, age, social class and ethnicity is important for understanding generational and cohort differences. The following table elaborates these variables related to the CAC in Miami-Dade County.

	2010	**2011**	**2015**	
Gender				
Male			49,3%	
Female			50,7%	
Age				
Under 25			24,1%	
25-54			42,6%	
55+			33,2%	
Educational level				
High school degree		56,1%		
College or associate degree		21,3%		
At least a Bachelor's degree		22,7%		
Race				
White	85,4%			
Black	4,6%			
Mixed race	3,7%			
Native Country			Cuba	United States
Miami-Dade County			70,9%	29,1%
Entered before 2000			56,7%	
Entered after 2000			43,3%	

Source: US Census bureau, 2015; Ennis *et al.,* 2010; Department of Planning and Zoning, 2011.

2.2.1 Post-Revolutionary 'political refugees'

After the Cuban Revolution, the first migrant wave of 'early exiles' was from Cuba's upper and middle class. The Castro regime applauded this post-revolutionary migration wave to free itself from political opposition. The second big migration wave came in 1965 when the economic

[8] The US Census bureau estimated the Cuban population in the US in 2015 at 2,106,501, while Worldometers estimated the population of Cuba in that same year as 11,389,562 (US Census bureau, 2015; Worldometers, n.d.)

embargo severely weakened the material and political situation in Cuba, and pressured Castro to get rid of the discontented; anyone who wanted to leave could. An emigration programme of 'Freedom flights' was initiated with the US where President Johnson welcomed them with open arms. This migration accord was the first diplomatic consensus between the two countries since the Cuban Revolution (Zolberg, 2008: 326; Leogrand, and Kornbluh, 2014: 107). Until the *Mariel Boatlift* in 1980, around 770,000 Cubans arrived in the United States, where the majority came to Miami. Cuban migrants were later dispersed throughout the United States through resettlement programmes to relieve Miami from the immense migratory pressure (Perez, 1986: 129-131).

Drawn from the theory of Kunz, the first wave (1959-1962) proved to be an acute refugee movement after the Cuban Revolution. The 'political refugees' were firm owners, big merchants, sugar mill owners, cattlemen, representatives of foreign companies, and professionals who left Cuba when the old social order was overturned involving the nationalization of American industry and agrarian reform laws occurred; between 1960 and 1964, around 172,919 Cubans arrived. It was dominated by woman and children as they are privileged to leave first. The 'Freedom flights' (1965-1973) were characterized by family reunification, and contained more middle- and working class individuals: employees, craftsmen, small merchants, skilled and semiskilled workers. It was an anticipatory refugee movement because it was regulated by both governments. Changing societal structures, the US embargo, the 'brain drain' of the first wave and failure of the sugar monoculture made Cuba migration already less political and more economically motivated, although their desire to leave was politically condemned. These Cubans rejected communism and feared persecution, imprisonment, torture or even death. The total first cohort was predominantly white, devoted Catholics, educated, well-off citizens and aligned with US interests on the island. They perceived migration as temporary because Washington would not allow a communist regime in Cuba in the wake of the Cold War (Pedraza-Bailey, 1985: 10; Pedraza 2007: 3-6, 26–27).

Families feared indoctrination of their children by a communist ideology, mainly because of the nationalization of private schools. Between 1960 and 1962, around 14,000 children were sent, with support of the Catholic church, but without their parents to the United States on a student visa; this was called 'Operation *Pedro Pan*'. Eckstein and Barberia argue that these first-wave Cuban-born children distorted from the political stance of their parents towards Cuba, hence also in transnational identity. Although some were committed to the anti-Castro ideology, many broke the travel boycott of their parents and the CAC to connect their past with the present (2002: 824; Eire, 2003; Grenier and Pérez, 2003: 23).

Between 1959 and 1995, US refugee policy towards Cuba was defined by an anti-communist political agenda. The first wave of Cuban exiles had great symbolic and ideological value within the 'Cold War arsenal' of the United States and thus were received with open arms. They became the figurehead through which US foreign policy was conducted, but:

> Cuban-Americans did not begin to exert a significant influence on the US Cuba policy until after 1980. Prior to that time, the establishment and continuation of a hostile policy towards Cuba resided exclusively in Washington, with exiles playing a merely supportive role, as exemplified by the failed 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion. (Grenier: 2003: 90)

After the failed Bay of Pigs operation, it became clear that the Cuban exiles were to stay, and therefore the US government started organizing resettlement (Torres, 2014: 69-72). The Migration and Assistance Act of 1962 facilitated their entry through 'open-door' policies via refugee, parole or special entrant status, and they received federal support for resettlement: job training, education, housing, medical care, and social welfare benefits. This exceptional treatment contrasted with refugee groups from other nations coming to the United States. The Cuban Adjustment Act (CAA) of 1966 emphasized these 'Cuban special immigration privileges' by assuring Cubans of permanent residence after staying in the United States for one year. The US congress justified this law by reasoning that it would:

> (1) ease the administrative burden of Cuban exiles who wanted to become legal permanent residents; (2) integrate Cuban exiles into the American workforce; and (3)

> provide refuge to victims of communist persecution... the CAA also served to further US efforts in the ideological war against communism. (Hughes and Alum, 2011: 196)

After resettlement the socioeconomic and entrepreneurial success, skills, attitude and political influence in US foreign policy labelled this first cohort of Cuban Americans as the 'Golden Exiles' (Portes, 1969). They became the 'builders of the new Miami' (Portes and Puhrman, 2015: 41). Duany argues that the economic successes were created by:

> the privileged class origins of early Cuban migrants, leading to the creation of an enclave economy in Miami; the definition of Cuban exiles as political refugees by the US government; and the unusually high participation of Cuban women in the US labor force. (Duany, 1999)

It has facilitated their adjustment to an American way of life and a protracted political and economic authority within the CAC in Miami. According to the assimilation theory by Berg and Eckstein (2015), this first cohort assimilated well into American society, while preserving their Cuban identity. Grenier and Pérez argue that these exiles felt compelled to flee as they had lost Cuba's internal class conflict, and so they have been 'standard-bearers' of the exile legacy and the struggle against the Castro regime (2003: 23; Nackerud *et al.*], 1999: 177; Hughes and Alum, 2011: 188).

A series of policies were institutionalized and enforced by the Cuban government to guarantee national security. Cuban exiles were characterized as traitors or '*gusanos*' to the Revolution. The Cuban constitution determined that Cuban citizenship is lost by becoming a citizen of a foreign country, and holding dual citizenship is not allowed. Returning to Cuba meant renouncing the other country's citizenship and applying for reinstatement of Cuban citizenship (Travieso-Díaz, 1998: 81-82). Cuban exiles were denied visitation rights and could only maintain low level contact with friends and kin in Cuba. The hardship of re-entering the island made Cuban exiles nonpersons in their own country. Fidel Castro used the exile community abroad as ideological fuel to light up the revolutionary spirit because it posed a counterrevolutionary threat, e.g. through the Bay of Pigs and assistance to the numerous assassination plots of the US government.[9] Castro created and expanded institutions to enlarge popular support for the revolution. At the same time, the massive Cuban exodus presented a depletion of human capital and questioned the legitimacy of a revolution that was supposed to be nationalistic (Eckstein and Barberia, 2002: 802; Torres, 2014: 52-60).

Since the notion of exile plays such a powerful role in the identity and politics of Cuban Americans, Torres argues that it requires close examination; the idea of exile is the glue that holds together the political memory of the CAC. The 'exile ideology' made the CAC an unambiguous community. It was the collective struggle against Castro and political organizations in opposition to the regime, who had not only apprehended their country but also their lives; this made it a personal struggle (Torres, 2014: 37, 76). These 'first wavers' proclaimed themselves to be 'political refugees' in their rejection of communism. Research undertaken in 1963 among the first group of Cuban exiles in Miami concluded that:

> the decision to leave was primarily based on personal experiences and *pragmatic* factors [that] carried more weight than *ideological* ones in the ultimate decision although the reverse was true for the initial thoughts of leaving. Timing of the decision to leave was inversely related to participation in the anti-Batista struggle and to initial attitude towards the Revolution (...). (Casal and Hernandez, 1975: 26)

As the demographics of the Cuban-American exile population changed over time, their reasons to migrate change as well. By the 1970s immigrant reasoning was based upon economic scarcities, rather than principles or personal security. In this research Wong stresses that:

[9] For more detail on the assassination attempts on Fidel Castro, see (Schoultz, 2009).

> the true political refugees may be those who left Cuba in a second stage, this is to say, between the abortive Bay of Pigs[10] and the 1962 Missile Crisis,[11] while later immigrants resemble more traditional immigrants in class origins and motivations. (1975: 27)

Under the Refugee Act of 1980, Cuban migration was legally restricted in the US to 19,500 Cubans a year, and only Cubans who could meet the international definition of a 'political refugee' – individuals subject to 'a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership social group, or political' – would be granted refugee status (Nackerud *et al.*, 1999: 181). Although categorized as 'political exiles', according to Casal and Hernandez, immigrants from the 1970s already did not meet the international definition as 'political refugees' but came to the United States in search of a better economic future. This has defined their political stance and transnational identity towards Cuba ever since (Casal and Hernandez, 1975: 26-27; Eckstein and Barberia, 2002: 801-802).

2.2.2 The Cuban 'economic' immigrants since the Mariel Boatlift

In 1980 a third significant wave of Cuban immigrants came to the United States. Cuban migration from the 1980s onwards was typified as different from the first cohort of 'political refugees'. Castro invited Cubans in Miami to the port of *Mariel* to pick up anyone who had the desire to leave the island. Like the 1994 *Balseros* coming from a crisis, Pedraza argued it was an acute refugee movement (2007: 7-8). As the exile community organized the pickup of Cubans at Mariel, Ronald Reagan used the boatlift in his presidential election campaign among Cuban-Americans, and forced US President Carter – wary at first – to organize a 'warm welcome' (Zolberg, 2008: 349). A wide variety of 125,000 Cubans crossed the Florida Straits in a period of five months:

> ranging from intellectuals, artists, and homosexuals, to long-time disaffected who for one reason or another previously had been unable to leave, to criminals and mental patients the government loaded on to boats picking islanders up. (Eckstein, 2004: 13)

Grenier and Pérez argue that the Mariel Boatlift was a good demographic representation of the Cuban population on the island. Miami's mayor formulated the Mariel Boatlift by saying that 'Fidel has just flushed his toilet on us' (Sweig, 2009: 97-98). This migration wave comprised the lower socioeconomic sector and the non-white population; youthful, 70 per cent were blue-collar workers, but there were also a significant amount of intellectuals – due to lack of freedom of expression. The flow of *Marielitos*[12] raised the Afro-Cuban population within the CAC from 3 to 5 per cent (Pedraza, 2007: 7-8; Rytz, 2013: 122). Cuban rhetoric from the island and the media enlarged 'bad news' which created negative connotations for Cuban Americans in the United States:

> The [Cuban] exiles ceased to be a 'model minority' and the 'builders of the new Miami' to become just another third-world minority forcing its way onto American shores. (Portes and Puhrman, 2015: 41)

The Mariel Boatlift was the last convulsion of 'open arm' policies towards Cuban migration. In the United States, the perception of Cuban migration changed and as a consequence *Marielitos* were denied permanent settlement by an official statement and labelled a new legal category: 'entrants,

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[10] A brigade of Cuban exiles who were trained by US tried to oust the Castro regime in April 1961, but failed miserably (Hillman and D'Agostino, 2011: 80).

[11] The possibility of a major Cold War confrontation revealed Soviet missiles were placed on the island. An agreement between the US and the Soviet Union ended the precarious situation (2011: 81).

[12] *Marielito* became the derogatory term to indicate the migrants of the Mariel Boatlift, that had stigmatized the reputation of the 'Golden exiles' and the Cuban-American community (Portes and Puhrmann, 2015: 41).

status pending'. They became denationalized (Grenier and Pérez, 2003: 24-27; Portes and Puhrman, 2015: 41).

The failure of Cold War communism destroyed the impossible triangle wherein Cuba was situated, and left it to confront the United States alone. When the Communist threat vanished after 1989, a first blow to the legitimacy of the embargo and the Cuban-American right-wing policy was given. Nonetheless, the US maintained an antagonistic stance under the rationale of 'promoting democracy' – as it was not in their interest to maintain Castro (McGillion and Morley, 2005: 12-14). Since 1989, more Cubans have come to the United States than during any other period in Cuba's (Duany, 2011: 137). President Bush Sr. enforced the Cuban Democracy Act in 1992, which severed the economic embargo on Cuba.[13] From the early 1990s on, the Cuban economy shrunk by US$4.3 billion dollars a year, which was 21 per cent of the annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and further pushed Cuban migration to the United States during the 'Special Period in Peacetime'. It created the fourth big migration wave of the Cuban *Balseros* in 1994. Eckstein calls Cuban migration of the post-Soviet era 'a family project':

> strategized to send their most employable family members abroad, young adults, on the assumption that those leaving, unlike in the past, would maintain homeland ties and income-share. Cubans accordingly cultivated the creation of new diasporic ties. They did not merely rely on ties of old. (2009: 185)

This time, Castro knew that Cuban Americans weren't going to pick up Cubans. Cuban migration policy motivated Cubans to float to the US on homemade rafts; 37,194 *Balseros* or rafters were intercepted on the Strait of Florida in 1994 and brought to Guantánamo Bay[14] to await the asylum procedure (Eckstein and Barberia, 2002: 801; Gershman and Gutierrez Rozo, 2009: 36-37; Zolberg, 2008: 384).

2.2.3 Shaping relations: Golden Exiles and post-Mariel migrants, Miami and Cuba

The influx of Cubans from the Mariel Boatlift onwards has distorted the demographics of the CAC in Miami. The newcomers had lived under the Castro regime since the Cuban Revolution which changed their view of the government. The exile ideology had held the community cohesive, but it was slowly changing to make 'the first-ever social divide within the émigré community' (Eckstein and Barberia, 2008: 268) and a 'bifurcated enclave' (Portes and Puhrmann, 2015) created by contrasting realities from which these migration waves stemmed; this has redefined the transnational identity of the CAC:

> ... the views of *Marielitos* and subsequent émigrés are grounded in the complexity of life in contemporary Cuba, and the lives of family member there, not in an imagined and idealized pre-revolutionary social order. They differ here from Cuban émigrés in the first cohort, especially those children of first wavers who do not even know Castro's Cuba first hand. Coming to the United States is mainly for pragmatic economic reasons, and not infrequently emigration is a family strategy, a way to earn money for kin left behind in the growing dollarized island economy. Recent émigrés put family first. By contrast, earlier émigrés, whose close relatives in the main are reunified in the United States, are well positioned to put politics and their personal principles first. (Eckstein and Barberia, 2008: 270)

[13] Pressured by Cuban-American lobbyists, President Bush forbid US subsidiaries outside of the US from trading with Cuba, to create economic and social turmoil that would motivate Cubans to demand political reform. It also prohibited ships from loading or unloading their freight in the United States if they had been to Cuban ports, and gave the President authorization to prevent US government assistance going to any country that supported the Cuban government (Rathbone *et al*.], 2013: 1076-1077; Wong, 1994: 651)

[14] Guantanamo Bay is a piece of land 'leased' by the US on the Cuban Island by the 1902 Platt Amendment (Staten, 2003: 46-47).

Research has shown that especially the Cubans who came after the Mariel Exodus displayed strong family ties with their relatives on the island due to the geographical proximity and close blood ties. They built transnational bridges with relatives and community on the island, although Cuban and American policies didn't allow it. Throughout the years Cuban migration and transnationality has started to show great similarities with other migrant diasporas: undocumented status, economic motivations, working class migrants, and the use of the diaspora as a source of income by the sending government (Duany, 2007: 166; Duany, 2011: 137-157).

The awareness of social diversity penetrated the community and compelled the Golden Exiles to acquire a definition of Cuban identity in Miami, which was different in Miami after the Mariel Boatlift. After the Cuban Revolution, the identity of exile had changed into a political statement. The first Golden Exiles perceived themselves as the 'real' political immigrants in Miami which made them feel superior to the post-*Mariel* migrants. The influx of Post-*Marielitos* reminded the older cohorts that Cuban culture on and off the island differed from each other. After *Mariel*, political activism remained in the 'old enclave', as they had gained large political and economic wealth. Post-Mariel migrants grew up in an culture that did not made them aware and able to express their political voice; they could choose between 'loyalty' and leaving. The Cuban-American hardliners intimidated, attacked and excluded those Cuban Americans who exposed a more progressive and transnational posture towards the Castro regime; integration within the privileged 'old' community was constrained for the *Marielitos* and subsequent cohorts. Exile politics took on an authoritarian style within the Cuban community in Miami, which was similar to the Castro regime. Although terrorist groups were declining, during the 1980s Miami had the highest number of bombing incidents and political assassinations in the US. Using all means, until the end of the 1990s the political 'exile' ideology appeared homogeneous to the outside world (Pedraza, 2016: 277-278; Portes and Mozo, 1985: 55; Torres, 2014: 79-87, 142; Duany, 2011: 137-157).

At the beginning of the 1990s, the end of the Cold War marked a moment of merging cohorts within the community in Miami. *Cubanidad* proved strong enough to get different migrations' waves and political groups together to discuss scenarios for a post-Cold War Cuba. Another sign of merging relations within the community was expressed when in 1997 Cuban American National Foundation (CANF) founder and figurehead of the Cuban-American opposition against Castro, Jorgé Mas Canosa, died. Afterwards, his son Jorgé Mas Santos reformed the CANF to represent the entire CAC with a more progressive political stance towards Cuba, e.g. the CANF denounced cutting remittances and direct flights to Cuba, policies that were announced by President Bush in 2003. Support for the CANF's new course became visible during research in 2004 which concluded that almost half of the Cuban Americans in Miami favoured unrestricted travel, although the majority still supported the embargo (McGillion, and Morley, 2005: 17-18; Rytz, 2013: 124; Duany, 2007: 166).

2.2.4 A new generation of American-Born Cubans (ABCs)

The burden of the severely politicized history of the CAC in Miami, and with it the opposition to 'normative' transnational ties has influenced the socialization into a political identity of the ABCs, and influences the creation of a transnational identity towards Cuba as their Cuban identity is not the lived experience of a common identity linked to a particular place. The rigorous preservation of Cuban culture, political and ideological factors, and economic successes have played a decisive factor in the cohesion of the CAC in Miami. The 'exile ideology' of the community has significantly influenced the ABC's socialization process by means of family, the educational institutions, political and social organizations, and to a lesser degree the means of communication. Fernandez argues that it is important to analyse the notion of 'exile' and how this is entrenched into the US-born Cuban generation. She concludes that the second generation has considered itself as emigrants more than being in exile in the United States. Portes argues that:

> The politics of the second and subsequent generations has been overwhelmingly American, as are the values and loyalties of their members. (Portes, 2014: 213)

This collides with Torres' presumption from a assimilationist perspective that political socialization of the second generation is more and more focused on the new country (Torres: 2014:33). The exile ideology of their (grand)parents and the anti-Castro dogma becomes less significant in this political process, and Fernandez argues that there has been a high degree of acculturation outside the CAC to US society, e.g. there is a preference for the English language among Cuban youngsters (Fernandez, 2000: 81-82).

The second-generation Cuban Americans constantly live between two worlds. There is the 'Cuban' world of the family and the community: Spanish speaking grandparents and parents, Cuban culture and the heritage of family life in Cuba, and the American world outside these frames: speaking English with friends, work or study, and the social and cultural characteristics of American society. Generations that have been born in Cuba look towards the past, present and future out of their point of reference, which is Cuba while the ABCs perceive the world around them from their frame of reference – the United States. Fernandez argues that these different lenses are capable of creating inter-generational conflicts caused by: 1) the bifurcation of who they are and who the community and their family want them to be. For a long time being a good Cuban was to adhere to the exile ideology, but the second generation is likely to have changed that; 2) the affective dimension in terms of pride and the psychological meanings pertaining to the Cuban community. But at the same time the second generation displays considerable affection towards the United States, which is recognized as part of their identity; and 3) conflicts associated with aspirations, life projects, necessities and interests that exist within the US-born generations, which are a logical result of the generational transitions. The second-generation experiences the past of their parents on a different level in terms of value and emotions, because this past is not part of their own lived experience. Some of the ABCs are expected to conform to an illusionary Cuban identity, created by the first generation based on their own political identity, i.e. the 'exile ideology'. But the second generation can never live up to these expectations and rejects any imposed political identity (2000: 86-88).

2.3 The Impossible Triangle and transnationalism since the Cuban Revolution

Besides the decisive role of migration policies in the contemporary demographics and transnational identity of the CAC in Miami, this section will further elaborate US and Cuban government policies on the creation or blockage of transnational linkages between Cubans and Cuban Americans since the Cuban Revolution, to analyse the concept of Cuban 'blocked transnationalism' while bearing in mind the interplay of the geopolitical and economic context, and the shifting demographics of the CAC in Miami. Eckstein argues that:

> State and community structures, norms, and informal social pressures all kept transnational ties to a minimum and a negative asset during Castro's first three decades of rule, between 1959 and 1989, years during which 7 per cent of the Cuban population emigrated to the US. Barriers emanated from both sides of the Florida Straits. (2010: 1652)

In 2006, a survey concluded that transnational practices of Cuban Americans in the United States consolidated over time and were characterized by travelling and sending remittances to Cuba, followed by telephone calls, property ownership and belonging to an ethnic organization. Duany argues that Cuban transnationalism faces more legal, political and economic barriers than other Latino groups in the United States, and therefore demonstrates fewer transnational linkages. Especially since the economic hardship that troubled Cuba between 1989 and 1994, cultural, familial and emotional transnational bridges have been cemented. Even during the return to the hardline and antagonistic policies of the Bush administration, Cuban Americans travelled and sent remittances to Cuba through third countries (Duany, 2011: 150; Portes and Puhrmann, 2015: 46).

Though the economic embargo of the 1960s does not ban travel itself, under the Cuban Assets Control Regulations (CACR) (1963-1977) restrictions were placed on financial transactions related to travel to Cuba and therefore travel was effectively banned. Both governments severed mailing and telecommunication services, although the minimal Cuban-American desire to remit funds didn't needed regulation from Washington. Castro's regime was determined to perpetuate the revolution and therefore constrained contact with Cuban exiles, prohibited visits by immigrants, and penalized dollar possession. Anyone who had linkages with the diaspora was castigated by exclusion of the Communist party, and membership was required for a high level job. For Cubans these socioeconomic repercussions proved good incentives to abstain from maintaining linkages with Cubans abroad. Besides these policies by the Cuban government, there was a psychological burden to the lack of transnational activity between the two enclaves; Cubans grieved about family that had left them, and ended transnational ties with kin abroad (Sullivan, 2017: 1; Eckstein, 2010: 1652-1653).

A secret dialogue during the Ford administration resulted in the establishment of interests sections in both capitals during Carter's tenure. President Carter lifted the travel ban and family visits were authorized for the first time since the 1960s. In August 1977, Fidel Castro tried to cultivate linkages by exchanging ideas and opinions with the moderate section of the exile community already emerging. Castro considered Jimmy Carter to be a person of 'high religious and moral principles' and thought that empowering the more moderate exiles would strengthen him to change the hostility of US foreign policy towards Cuba. The dialogue resulted in releasing 3,000 political prisoners from Cuba and even discussed compensation of expropriated property in Cuba. It was the biggest gesture ever made by Fidel Castro towards the US and the exile community. In 1979, Castro allowed 100,000 Cuban Americans to visit the island (Zolberg, 2008: 349; Leogrande and Kornbluh, 2014: 5, 180-183). The Cuban government reduced Cuban-American visits again after the Mariel Boatlift crisis, and mail services were precarious. Cuba restricted entry of *Marielitos* until the end of the 1980s, and of the 1994 *Balseros* until 1999 (Eckstein and Barberia, 2002: 814; Kornbluh and Blight, 1994).

The United States was forced to tighten the screws on Cuba again in 1979, after the Nicaraguan and Grenadian revolutions were established, and the efforts of Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford encountered an impasse over Cuba's support to revolutionaries in Angola. When President Ronald Reagan was elected to the White House from 1981 to 1989, the transnational space was further narrowed; travel was again restricted, although travel-related transactions of certain travel categories were allowed. Despite their personal enmity towards Castro and government policies blocking transnational ties, Cuban Americans empathized with kin and friends in Cuba and have sent remittances ever since 1978 (McGillion and Morley, 2005: 12-15; Rathbone *et al.*, 2013: 1076;). In the 1980s the Castro regime constituted a transnational framework of policies that welcomed hard currency from Cubans abroad. Beginning in 1982, Castro changed his reference of *gusanos* or Cuban traitors to 'the Cuban community abroad' (Blanco, 2011: 25). Eckstein and Barberia see this as part of the shifting rationale for Cuban migration to the US:

> The more Cubans emigrate for income-earning purposes, the less likely are politics to stand in the way of transnational family ties. For economic immigrants, visiting Castro's Cuba poses no moral dilemma, even if they would welcome the leader's downfall (Eckstein and Barberia, 2002: 815).

Domestic possession of dollars became legal. The Cuban government created dollar-based consumer and savings possibilities and in the late 1990s became an agent of transnational hard currency exchange (Eckstein, 2009: 179, 185, 214-215).

The end of the Cold War and Cuba's economy plummeting into recession, changed the US rationale for its Cuba policy. On the American side, opponents of Castro thought that the right policies would bring the regime down. The Cuban Democracy Act, signed by President Bush in 1992, banned travel to Cuba but promoted people-to-people contact, humanitarian assistance and sales of medicine. Bill Clinton improved transnational engagement. The US granted visas to Cuban

artists, musicians and scholars. American companies upgraded telecommunications services with Cuba, which had not been done since 1961, and in July of 1993, Castro eased travel restriction on Cuban-American visits. During the *Balsero* crisis, the CANF pressured President Clinton to reduce remittances and end charter flights. The demographic shift started appearing when these measures weren't supported by all. Cuban Americans were concerned about the scarcity on the island affecting their kin, and opposition to Castro became subordinate. Many ignored the regulations, supported by upgraded mail and telephone services. Transnational linkages were already too well established to be easily reduced and no significant effect on hard currency in Cuba was produced as Cuban Americans sent it through third countries. In October 1995, Clinton approved the restoration of Cuban-American remittances and eased travel restrictions. President Clinton persisted in the enforcement of the embargo and promoted the travel of media bureaus and cultural organizations for humanitarian goals, to promote democracy, and to stimulate the Cuban desire for regime change (Leogrande and Kornbluh, 2014: 272-274, 304; McGillion and Morley, 2005: 15-18).

Instead of searching for engagement, the Bush administration tried to replace the Castro regime, and turned to the antagonistic policies of the Reagan era. Bush's spearhead was the Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba (CAFC), a committee designed to help replace the Castro regime, and create a democratic and free Cuba. Bush had no faith in people-to-people exchanges, thus curtailed travel and the flow of hard currency to Cuba. Cuban Americans could only travel to Cuba once every three years, and were restricted in sending remittances and goods (Leogrande and Kornbluh, 2014: 355; Sweig, 2009: 190).

2.3.1 A new dawn of engagement on the Cold War's ruins

The Cuban and US governments have controlled Cuban migration and transnationalism for half a century. In 2009, President Barack Obama met his promise of opening a dialogue for the normalization of bilateral relations with Cuba. Obama argued that:

> We don't need to a debate about whether to have a rigid, state-run economy or unbridled and unregulated capitalism - we need a pragmatic and responsible action that advances our common prosperity. (Frank, 2013: 135-140)

United States' senator Lugar declared that US policy on Cuba had failed as it had not removed Castro, and that the American citizen was the best ambassador to promote American ideals. Restrictions on Cuban-American family visits and remittances were removed and telecommunications with Cuba were established. Obama was pressured by other Latin American countries to permit Cuba membership in the OAS in April 2009. Barack Obama declared that Cuba's reaction to US engagement would decide the course of bilateral relations between the two countries. Raúl Castro announced that Cuba was ready to seek bilateral engagement on any issue that needed to be addressed: human rights, political prisoners, etc., but that Cuba was not willing to undertake political concessions (Dominguez *et al.*, 2012: 42-43; Frank, 2013: 122, 130-142).

In January 2011, Obama permitted educational and religious activities, and authorized people-to-people travel. US citizens were allowed to send remittances up to $500 per quarter and licensed remittances to religious organizations. Transnational policies were similar to policies during Clinton's tenure, although Obama allowed US airports to become eligible for flights from and to Cuba. From 2014, Obama installed 12 categories of travel, permitted the use of US credit and debit cards, eliminated per diem limits, authorized general licensed travel for professional media or artistic productions as part of the travel category for those involved in the export, import, or transmission of information or informational materials, and authorized educational travel for individuals. Moreover, Obama lifted all the value limits of Cuban goods taken from or to Cuba and increased the dollar limits for so-called non-family and donor remittances to humanitarian projects, in support of the Cuban people and the development of private businesses. Bill Clinton had codified the embargo in 1996 by signing the Helms-Burton Act and therefore a total lift of travel restrictions required legislative action; as it is conditioned by the act of certain democratic

conditions in Cuba, tourist activities to Cuba are still prohibited by law (Sullivan, 2017: 1-2; Nackerud *et al.*], 1999: 189).

The Castro regime reacted to this new rapprochement by changing restrictions on travel in January 2013, e.g. the *tarjeta blanca*[15] was abolished. US authorities saw a 79 per cent increase of granted visas. Under the 1966 Cuban Refugee Act, Cubans are able to obtain *residencia* (green card) after staying one year in the United States, and then can leave the US for up to a year. The Cuban government issued travel visas up to two years out of the island, with the possibility of extending these foreign stays for another two years, without losing property or citizenship rights. These policies allow Cubans to be 'transnational' citizens and strengthen linkages between the communities. Cuba has eased travelling for Cuban-Americans. Before, the US Embassy in Havana warned Cuban-Americans of hostile measures by the Cuban government: e.g. impeding restrictions and obligations (including military services), forcing them to surrender their US passport, to sign declarations of repatriation or denying Cuban Americans the right to leave the country. ABCs were considered Cuban nationals and this gave the Cuban government rights over them, even if they had not applied for Cuban citizenship. Nowadays, 'The Government of Cuba treats US citizens born in Cuba as Cuban citizens and may subject them to a range of restrictions and obligations' (US Embassy in Cuba, May 4th, 2017; Leogrande, 2015: 484; Ackermann, 2015: 2; Martinez, 2016).

Another decisive day in the historical relations between Cuba and the United States was 17 December 2014. President Obama and Raúl Castro announced on national television the normalization of bilateral relations (Hershberg and Dolezal, 2016: 89). In July of 2015, after being closed for half a century, embassies in Havana and Washington were reopened. These institutions are known as instruments to institutionalize links with the diaspora, and to motivate transnational activities (NPR, 2015; Al-Ali *et al.*, 2001, 590). On 12 January 2017, President Obama announced his last act on Cuban migration by ending the 'wet foot, dry foot' policy of President Clinton. This policy modified the 1966 Cuban Refugee Adjustment Act, and was installed during the rafter crisis. It returned rafters caught at sea by the US Coast Guard, but made *Balseros* who reached US soil legal residents of the United States (Leogrande and Kornbluh, 2014: 270; Caldwell and Pace, 2017, January 13). Although President Obama has changed US migration and transnational policies, the course of US foreign policy towards Cuba remains uncertain under President Trump. He spoke of 'terminating the deal' if it didn't get a better for the Cuban people, Cuban Americans and the United States. With the ideological person of Fidel passing away in November, 2016 Raúl Castro has the exclusive right to decide what course Cuba will take (Vazquez, 2017). The question remains whether the path towards normalization chosen by Barack Obama and Raúl Castro will continue not only helping each nation to construct their part of the transnational bridge on the Florida Straits, but in the process also merging the colours of the Cuban transnational identity in Miami.

[15] This was the permission that Cubans needed from the Cuban government to travel outside of the country (Leogrande, 2015:484).

Chapter 3
Rebuilding Transnational Bridges on the Florida Strait

Introduction

In the theoretical chapter, the contextual analysis of the transnational identity of the CAC in Miami, situated within the historical and contemporary relationship between the United and Cuba, has identified significant variables that have contributed to the contemporary transnational social space between Miami and Cuba. This chapter will address the variables that have created differences in transnational identity generations, cohorts and migrations waves of Cuban Americans in Miami, and how the shifting demographics and transnational identity of Miami's CAC has evolved to motivate both governments to break down the 'Cold Wall'. Furthermore, the use of data will underline the materialization of the Cuban-American desire to have transnational linkages; statistics are used to show how the shifting demographics have constituted a more moderate and progressive stance that favours engagements with Cuba over antagonism. In the summer of 2016, I conducted field research for a period of six weeks in the heart of Cuban-American life, in Miami. I interviewed Cubans–Americans from different generations, cohorts and migrations waves, and professors of the various universities located in Miami to discuss the most significant topics of this research. I conclude that the observations made through the interviews cannot be generalized as being representative for certain cohorts because the research sample is quite modest, but the qualitative results are used to support or nuance quantitative data in the literature. As certain scholars have noted, inclusion of variables like gender, age, social class and ethnicity would strengthen the validity of the research.

3.1 Changing Perceptions of the Cuban Revolution

As Cubans left the island after the Cuban Revolution, they lost their citizen rights and were without a country. This first cohort forged an alliance with the United States against the Cuban regime. Washington's policies such as the economic embargo on Cuba, support for political and military activism (e.g. the Bay of Pigs) and the CAA demonstrated this antagonism. Cold War contradictions created the existence of an 'Impossible Triangle' which left no desire or space for normative transnational ties between the two communities. But the transnational identity was constituted by the affective transnational ties of Cuban identity or *Cubanidad*[16] that was entrenched in the Miami community. Being a Cuban exile in Miami encouraged political and military activism in opposition to the regime in their homeland. Post-Mariel immigrants have blended that transnational identity as they are more open about the creation of transnational bridges based on long-term commitment. They have defied the old guard and the 'blocked' transnational framework (Port and Rumbaut, 2014: 211). When I spoke to the lead investigator of the FIU Cuba Poll and Professor in Sociology at Florida International University, whose writings I have frequently used of the course of this research, Guillermo Grenier[17] explained the pre-migration experiences of more recent arrivals:

> Now the [Cuban] folks that are coming, from 1995 especially, when there was a new migration accord between the US and Cuba, those people don't see the revolution as this experiment in social engineering that has destroyed their way of life. They see it as something that is making life very hard, it is a tough economy... Ultimately, the Cuban problem is not a political problem, it is an economic problem. If you have capitalism that

[17] Personal interview with Dr. Guillermo Grenier, 2 June 2016 at FIU, Miami, Florida.

works, people are happy; if you have communism that works, people are happy; socialism that works, people are happy. (2016)

The quantity of Cuban *Balseros* or rafters who crossed the Florida Strait was the biggest mass migration the United States had to deal with up to that moment. In 1994 and 1995, new immigration policies[18] regulated Cuban migration to the United States and were a game changer to the numerous demographics of the American-Cuban community in Miami. In 2015, US Census bureau estimated that 43.3 per cent of Cubans in Miami-Dade County came after the year 2000. These figures are addressed by Grenier[19] during our interview on transnational identity. He argues that these Cubans – from *Periodo Especial* – are true transmigrants (ibid.; US Census bureau, 2015; Castro, 2013: 27).

The subsequent waves of Cuban migration have brought Miami a rich history. Historian Arva Parks describes these waves as 'Miami's whole history … written in short paragraphs' (George, 1995: 373). I interpret this description as a reference to the diversity and complexity of the Cuban-American story in Miami and towards Cuba. In my interview with Andrew Gottlieb,[20] who has done qualitative field research on revolutionary societies in Cuba, and quantitative research on ethnic identity and assimilation in the United States, stresses that Miami's history is changing quickly and the truthfulness of the joke that 'Miami is the only city in the United States with its own foreign policy'. Observations made by Park and Gottlieb are also pointers to the impact the CAC has on American society, Washington and Havana. The diverging short paragraphs of Miami's history, portray the difference of context wherein subsequent migration waves came to Miami, in its turn creating a perceptual change towards the Cuban Revolution. When I spoke with Grenier,[21] he explained this complexity by means of the 1959 revolutionary earthquake that caused seismic waves in the lifetime of all ethnic Cubans. The distance – *tierra y tiempo* – between the starting point and generations of subsequent Cuban migrations marks the degree of influence. Gottlieb also addressed the significant impact of pre-migration experience to the transnational complexity of the CAC in Miami:

> My wife's grandfather with whom I lived had his farm taken, his whole life taken and he was educated under the old system. He couldn't even see the colour red. He hated everything about the Communist government. Then, there is my in-laws. My father-in-law was educated for free, he became a physicist in Cuba. He wouldn't join the party, so he was taken from the college setting and made to taught reform school or *escuelas de conducta*. They are for children who don't behave well, in the countryside, because he wouldn't join the party. He was arrested for listening to radio Free America. And so his views [grandfather] and my in-laws views are ambivalent, insofar as they [his in-laws] were educated, good college, without a charge and didn't have any of their own possessions taken. And they were not sympathetic to that government, and still are not. But they don't have that vitriolic hatred that their parents had. And then there is my wife's generation, my wife came here as a young girl [1.5 generation]. She said: 'my education was better in Cuba'. At five years old, she was learning the letters and started learning basic scientific principles for elementary. While here, in the US, all that kids did was play games and take naps all day. (2016)

I reason that the lived experience of pre-migration in Cuba, and subsequent flight from their homeland while losing everything they owned, has created a personal and ideological hatred towards Fidel Castro and the Communist regime, which has become their identity. Young Cubans of the 1.5 generation, were still influenced by the their (grand)parents and highly politicized community in Miami, but didn't have that same memory or lived experience and therefore weren't

[18] See Castro, 2013:27-30.
[19] Interview with Dr. Guillermo Grenier, 2 June 2016 at FIU, Miami.
[20] Interview with Dr. Andrew Gottlieb, 14 June 2016 at Restaurant Versailles, Little Havana, Miami.
[21] Interview with Dr. Guillermo Grenier, 2 June 2016 at FIU, Miami.

as hard line as the first generation. This generation had less awareness and understanding of the Cuban Revolution in its moment and the nature of exile. Both Juan Jimenez[22] and Gladys Goméz-Rossié[23] are children of the *Pedro Pan* operation. Their statement endorses this observation that they were not conscious of migration and its rationale. Nonetheless, they both argue that their parents made the right choice. This is coherent with the testimony of Elsie Miranda[24], born in 1963 in Miami and an associate professor of practical Theology at Barry University. Like Jimenez and Goméz-Rossié she praises her grandparents courage, but also reflects on her own transnational identity:

> They choose to be free in exile, rather than at home and oppressed. Like my parents, [they] are marked by their loses, and stanch anti-Castro people. (…) It [the Cuban Revolution] took away their identity, with the expropriation of property, and the need to get out or die. That influenced me too. I inherited [these] memories of pain, that weren't mine, but I associated with them. I entered into their reality, without judgement. But I didn't lose anything, I only had something to gain. I wanted to make my own memories, establish my own relationship with who had been losers in history as well. They helped me understand my poverty, as I did with theirs. (2016)

Juan Jimenez started understanding the history of the Cuban Revolution and its diaspora in Miami at the age of 17 and became fanatically anti-Castro but has mellowed over the years. Nowadays, he supports normalization of binational relations.

As I have elaborated briefly in the last chapter, a period of economic incentives and relaxation policies under President Clinton and the Cuban government, was followed by the fierce anti-Castro policies of the Bush administration in 2004. Bush tightened and restricted effective homeland ties: remittances, network communication, travels. But as McGillion and Morley already indicated, by the 1990s:

> the family ties between Cubans in the United States and Cubans on the island had become too well established and too important to be easily severed. (2005: 15)

I assume that this was probably just as true around 2000, with the continued influx of transmigrants since 1995, and despite Bush's return to anti-Castro politics, as the remittance figures showed an insignificant decrease to US$800 million in 2005. The more recent the immigrant, the more likely the desire to have a good relationship with Cuba. Grenier believes that the desire for 'normative' transnational ties helped President Obama to win Florida in 2008, because of the discontent among Cuban Americans about the Bush era. Many Presidents preceded Obama and could have the same thing, but Grenier[25] argued: 'Cuba just isn't important enough, and why mess with it? Why chance Cubans getting mad in Miami?' But Obama preached change and redeemed his promises by creating transnational space through policies, stimulated the transnational activity of Cuban Americans, and searched for opportunities to engage in the small private sector of the Cuban economy, which was created by the Cuban government (Krull and Perez, 2014: 292-293).

3.2 Breaking Blocked Transnationalism since the 1990s

In the previous section we have seen how the Cuban-American demographics have changed along with the transnational identity, and how slowly a transnational social space with reciprocal intentions for further engagement has rooted on the Florida Strait. The following section will

[22] Telephone interview with Juan Jimenez, 1 June 2016, HI Hosteling International, Miami Beach.
[23] Interview with Gladys Goméz-Rossié, 17 June 2016, Cuban Heritage Collection, University of Miami.
[24] Interview with Dr. Elsie Miranda, June 15th,2016, University of Miami, Miami.
[25] Interview with Dr. Guillermo Grenier, 2 June 2016 at FIU, Miami.

elaborate on the demolition of transnational blockages on each of the three transnational dimensions; the historical perspective allows for analysis of the contemporary status quo, backed by the elaboration of Cuban-American narratives on specific topics obtained during my fieldwork.

3.2.1 Political dimension

The Cuban Revolution created an impossible triangle. The Cuban exiles symbolized the anti-Communist sentiment of the Cold War by fleeing communism and making an alliance with the United States, while losing their citizen rights and being used as ideological ammunition for the Cuban Revolution. This geopolitical context made normative transnational linkages impossible, except for oppositional political and military activism, until the 1980s.

> On most matters they [the Golden Exiles] pressed for minimal cross-border engagement, engagement which they perceived would both help keep Castro in power and taint their moral high ground. (Eckstein, 2004: 32)

Political organization of the exile community has been characterized by two groups, *los intransigentes* (mostly Republicans) who fiercely oppose any engagement with the Castro regime and feel betrayed by the normalization of binational relations, while *los moderados* (mostly Democrats) support normalization and a 'new' direction in US foreign policies towards Cuba (Pedraza, 2016: 277).

The stigmatization of the CAC with the *Mariel* Boatlift, made the first cohort decide to demarcate their refugee status in relation to the new arrivals; they closed political resources for this cohort and created a policy of self-defence. During my interview with Alejandro Portes[26] – a prominent sociologist at Princeton University and Cuban exile himself, whose work I have used extensively throughout my analysis – argued that the clear dichotomy, lack of acceptance, assimilation and political participation within the CAC has contributed to the transnational identity of the more recent arrivals:

> The new arrivals from Cuba are much less politicized. Perhaps the experience of their growing up in the revolution, makes [clear] that they have no political voice here [in Miami]. The political voice of the CAC, such as it is, continues to be the old-timers or their children's. The political presence of the recent arrivals coming from Cuba is close to zero. They are actually transforming things by their actions, going back and forth and creating this transnational realm, not by any kind of political voice or organizations within the American political system. They were thoroughly inoculated against politics because of their life in Cuba, in the highly political sense. They didn't want to alienate or confront the old Cubans who politically controlled the city [of Miami]... Many people would say: 'They are not like us. We don't have any particular tie with them.' And that's the generalized view of the old Cuban establishment. (2016)

After 1980, subsequent waves weren't considered eligible for the same type of privileges that the political refugees had earned. In addition to their own motivations for leaving Cuba, it is possible that this oppositional stance from the receiving actors towards the *Marielitos* and post-Mariel Cuban Americans has contributed to a stronger transnational identity with a particular focus on the economic and sociocultural dimension.

The educational level of Cubans in Miami-Dade consists of 56.1 per cent who achieved high school graduation or less, 21.3 per cent having a college or associate degree, and 22.7 per cent having achieved at least a bachelor's degree. As Portes argues, higher educational and occupational status has a positive effect on migrants having transnational linkages. The first cohort of the 'Golden Exiles', highly educated and economically successful, have contradicted this assumption. I reason this is because of the historical and political context of the Cuban Revolution

[26] Personal interview with Dr. Alejandro Portes, 20 June 2016, University of Miami, Florida.

through which political exiles only had transnational ties through their activism in opposition to Fidel Castro; other desires or possibilities for transnationalism were non-existent. This evolution contrasts to Portes arguing that a high level of 'human capital' or education results in more political activity towards the homeland (2007: 84; Portes, 2014: 209). During my interview with him Portes[27] emphasized that the recent arrivals came from a Cuban political system that left their political awareness underdeveloped. In the literature I encountered a brief historical analysis of political generations within the CAC in Miami:

> The 1990s émigrés differ from the early émigrés also in their island political formation, and associated views. They lived the revolution, many with little or no first-hand knowledge or memories of the pre-revolutionary period. They consequently experienced no civil society involvement independent of the state, as had the middle and upper classes before the revolution. But by virtue of living most if not all their lives under Castro they had a nuanced understanding of conditions in Cuba, and they were socialized by the revolution. Thus, for this cohort, unlike the first, Castro's Cuba was not imagined and the pre-revolutionary society not idealized. (Eckstein, 2004: 14)

Along with the lack of political awareness and economic resources of post-Mariel migrants, their different rationales to migrate and lower education made them politically insignificant. In 2015, ABCs in Miami-Dade County comprised 29.1 per cent of the total population. Of the 681,873 foreign-born Cubans, only six out of ten were naturalized US citizens, a requirement for political voting rights.[28] Thus, recent arrivals have created transnational bridges by their actions instead of through the policies and laws of the administrations produced in Washington and Havana (US Census bureau, 2015). This evolution of the political dimension was underlined by Sean Foreman,[29] a Professor in Political Science at Barry University, and Pedro Roig,[30] a Senior Research Associate at the Institute for Cuban and Cuban-American Studies (ICCAS) in Miami.

President Obama had won almost half of the Cuban votes in Florida during the 2012 elections.[31] His normalization policy of 17 December 2014 (D-17) of building transnational bridges with the Cuba of President Raúl Castro, was polled among Cuban Americans in Florida. The divisions in transnational identity and political activism among the generations of Cuban-Americans became clear through the results of a survey by Bendixen and Amandi International[32] in the aftermath: only 38 per cent of the foreign born agreed with Obama's announcement of normalization, against 64 per cent of the ABCs. Of the Cuban born, 64 per cent of the pre-1980 arrivals disagreed, while only 44 per cent of the post-1980 arrivals disagreed. In the 18-49 age cohort, 77 per cent supported the Obama policy, while a small majority (51%) of those 65+ disagreed (Caputo and Flechas, 2014). Two years later, the 2016 FIU Cuban Poll among 1000 randomly selected Cuban-Americans in Miami-Dade County found that the majority (64%) were in favour of normalizing relations with Cuba. Among ABCs and the Cuban born, the figures were almost even (60% and 65%). The survey showed a clear gap between Cuban-Americans who were not registered to vote (88% in favour) and those who could vote (55% in favour). These percentages are similar to the 'date of arrival' – 1995-2016 arrivals portray 89% in favour, while pre-1980 migrants are 38% in favour. Regional differences among Cuban-Americans in the US are also observed; among those closer to Cuba, in Florida, five out of ten Cubans approved the normalization, against 63 per cent in the rest of the US. These results comply with Grenier's[33] argument during our interview. The old enclave has kept Cuban Americans in Miami incubated

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[27] Ibid.

[28] More information on voting eligibility in the United States: http://resources.lawinfo.com/civil-rights/right-to-vote/what-are-the-requirements-to-be-eligible-to-v.html.

[29] Interview with Dr. Sean Foreman, 7 June 2016, Barry University, Miami.

[30] Interview with Pedro Roig, 31 May 2016, Instutition for Cuban and Cuban-American Studies, Miami.

[31] see Hugo Lopez and Taylor, 2012.

[32] Research group consists of 400 Cuban Americans, more than half living in Florida. 56 per cent living in Florida disagreed with Obama's announcement (Amandi, 2015)

[33] Interview with Dr. Guillermo Grenier, 2 June 2016 at FIU, Miami.

with the exile ideology: 'they were still close to ground zero of the exile experience', while Cuban-Americans in the rest of the US developed different views on Cuba and American society (Amandi, 2015; Grenier and Baldwin, 2016).

Vicente Blanco-Capoté[34] is on the board of the Bay of Pigs museum. He was among the first that fled in exile and fought with the 2506 Brigade in April 1961; he opposes any transnational engagement with Cuba while the regime is still in place.

> We hated the policy of the Democrat government [Obama], we don't agree with that. The Kennedy betrayed us. Obama betrayed us too. In Cuba there is no change, it is still the same people. There is no change. It is a Kingdom. That is a country in control of the [population of] Cuba, with the backup of China and Russia. There is no change. (2016)

Juan Jimenez,[35] Law Librarian at the University of Miami, a *Pedro Pan* child (10 years), had no understanding of the Cuban Revolution and migration when it occurred and explained that:

> when I was 16/17 I got more knowledge and interest into what had happened and why I had to leave the island … I became a really anti-Castro fanatic. But I have to say that through the years I have mellowed. I would favour normalizing relations because the embargo failed. It is better to change the policy of failure into something that you don't know if it is going to work, than maintaining something of what you're sure of that is failing. (telephone interview, 1 June 2016)

I interviewed a Cuban American who came in 2004 at the age of 16. She said that she was 'brainwashed with revolutionary thoughts'. She came with family through *el Bombo*,[36] mainly for economic reasons. She still has family and friends on the island and has helped them a dozen times because of her own lived experience of scarcity in Cuba. She analysed the D-17 announcement:

> Many people say: 'oh, it is going to give more money to the government'. But as long as it brings more money to Cuba, and more people travel to Cuba, it creates jobs. There is more exchange between the American and Cuban people, they learn. I mean, there is an exchange of information, money, goods and services. And I do think it is helpful. Even if it is helpful to the government, it is also helpful to the people. And that is what I care about. (Anonymous, 2016)

As a second-generation Cuban-American, Cherie Canio works with her family's business which focusses on Cuba. She supports Obama's normalization policies and lifting the embargo because it would make life better for the people in Cuba, and will engage Cubans on and off the island (telephone interview with Cherie Canio, 21 June 2016).

From the literature, statistics and personal narratives that I have analysed, I would describe the evolution of the CAC political position by the changing demographics; individual opinions haven't changed, but collective opinion has. The old establishment personified through *Señor Blanco-Capoté* portray a pre-migration experience that generated a hatred towards Castro that became his life. He fought against Castro at *Playa de Girón,* for which Casal and Hernandez have argued that they are the 'real political refugees'[37] (1975: 27), and have not changed their

[34] Interview with Vicente Blanco-Capote, 10 June 2016, Bay of Pigs Museum, Little Havana, Miami.
[35] Telephone interview with Juan Jimenez, 1 June 2016, HI Hosteling International, Miami Beach.
[36] The lottery system that was created under President Clinton in 1996 and granted 20,000 Cubans per year a visa to move the United States (Aschkenas, 2006: 93).
[37] Michel Vain, who came to the US in 2009, made a similar argument: 'It [Cuban migration after 1959] has never been a political question within the community in the first place. The first generations only fled Cuba to have a better future in Miami, they didn't care about the political situation of the Castro's. For me a political refugee is someone who takes action against the new regime and flees to avoid prosecution. In that way you can say that the Bay of Pigs exiles are the only political refugees' (interview with Michel Vain, 25 May, 2016, HI Hosteling Internationa, Miami Beach).

mind. Pedro Roig[38] from the ICCAS emphasized this by stating that: 'the older ones [Golden Exiles] are dying, not changing their minds… not one Cuban has changed. Those who were in favour, are in favour; those who are against, are against' (2016), although generalizing was avoided in my interview with fellow Bay of Pigs veteran, William Muir. His statement can imply that engagement based on reciprocity is tolerable:

> This reconciliation policy of Barack Obama is a total failure until now. The deal was based on the US giving and Cuba didn't give anything in return (interview by telephone with William Muir, 3 June 2016, Miami).

The recent arrivals and ABCs bare little resentment towards the Cuban regime, and qualify the status quo rationally. They don't feel the burden of a 'destructive' lived experience and are more pragmatic towards having bilateral ties. They reason that political engagement is best for everyone.

3.2.2 Economic dimension

Until recently, the Cuban state-controlled economy has not allowed private business and property, but since the inauguration Raúl Castro, has permitted private business[39] although still highly regulated. These measures have stimulated Cubans–Americans to send remittances and strengthen transnational ties to enhance entrepreneurship and ameliorate their economic situation. Nonetheless, the caution of the Cuban-Americans that had lived through the Cuban Revolution became visible during the interview with William Muir,[40] a Bay of Pigs veteran who has spent almost two years in a Cuban prison as a prisoner of war, but nonetheless showed a more moderate political stance towards the Castro regime.[41] When asked about his economic support to Cuba he addressed the delicate and uncertain process of investing in Cuba; 'the government will take anything into their possession, whenever they want' (2016). It is one of the main reasons why economic transnational ties have been channelled through remittances and sending goods to family and friends. Ten per cent of the islands' labour force is self-employed, one-third of the private businesses that have surged are funded by Cuban-American remittances. It supplied Cubans on the island with the means to stimulate the economy and set-up small businesses, e.g. guesthouses and family restaurants[42] (*Paladares*). As I have argued, this increased dramatically with the influx of the *Marielitos*, who displayed a strong transnational identity towards their life on Cuba, friends and family. Informal transmitting services created alternative options for the CAC to distance themselves from the impediments and built transnational trust, an important variable that had been absent during the subsequent decades after the revolution. Afro-Cubans are known profited little from these transnational activities because of their lack of relatives abroad. They were the populace upon which the socialist Cuban Revolution was built and therefore few of them had emigrated (Krull and Perez, 2014: 290-294; Eckstein and Barberia, 2008: 270; Duany, 2016: 24).

Numbers of dollars remitted in the 1980s are unavailable owing to the illegality of circulation until 1993 and the fact that the Cuban government never published official data. Eckstein calculates around US$50 million in the early nineties. Even with the policies to block transnationalism imposed by the US government, remittances and travel – through third countries – injected millions of dollars into the Cuban economy, an estimated US$537 million in 1995. This

[38] Interview with Pedro Roig, 31 May 2016, Instutition for Cuban and Cuban-American Studies, Miami.

[39] By the fall of 2013 there was an increase from 178 to 201 occupations in which it was legal to be self-employed (Ritter and Henken, 2014: 292).

[40] Telephone interview with William Muir, 3 June 2016, HI Hostelling International, Miami Beach.

[41] This tendency of suspicion by the 'Golden Exiles' towards the homeland regime is congruent with an analysis of the first-generation immigrants of the Vietnamese-American community, a community that was also formed by threats of communism (Portes and Fernández-Kelly, 2015: 167-168).

[42] see Duany, 2011: 147.

increase was caused by economic deterrence in Cuba and the *Balsero* crisis. During my interview with him, Guillermo Grenier[43] argued that:

> [Cuban migrants] after the *Periodo Especial* is 40% of the Cuban-American community. It is a big bulk. These are the transnational Cubans; they behave different, have different view about the revolution and Cuba, and behave different about it. (2016)

In the twenty-first century, remittances became the third-largest source foreign exchange. In 2005, President Bush imposed restrictions and remittances decreased to $800 million. To work around the cap, Cuban Americans send money by informal remitting services and mules. In 2011 estimates varied between US$500 million and US$1.2 billion per year, and they accumulated to US$3.13 billion in 2014 (Eckstein, 2009: 179; Duany, 2011: 147-148; Duany, 2016: 25; Portes and Fernández-Kelly, 2015: 125). In 2007 a survey showed that almost 2.5 times more Cuban Americans who came after 1989 – although far poorer – send remittances to kin on the island than the immigrants from 1959-1964 (Krull and Perez, 2014: 293). I have analysed that this distortion in remittances sending per cohort can be explained through differences in the pre-migration experiences, awareness of scarcity and poverty on the island, and lack of a 'family project', i.e. interconnection with family on the island to care for.

The 2016 FIU Cuba Poll shows that 47 per cent of the Cuban Americans support friends or relatives on the island by sending money, while 42 per cent report sending other items (Grenier and Baldwin, 2016). Furthermore, 70 per cent of Cuba's cell phone market, which adds up to more than 3 million phones in 2015, is financed by Cuban Americans abroad.

> Cuban Americans make more than 50 million telephone calls per year to Cuba, and Cubans living abroad send millions of dollars in packages, including food, clothes, medicine and other assets. Nearly half a million Cuban-Americans travelled to Cuba in 2013. They took with them merchandise worth millions of dollars, such as electrical appliances, spare parts, and other items used to develop and maintain businesses on the island. (Duany, 2016: 24)

All these developments are the results of policy changes by the Cuban and US government, e.g. improvement of telecommunications networks, to allow Cuban and Cuban-American travel, abolition of restrictions on travel imports – that were identified in Chapter 2. The 2016 FIU Cuba Poll shows that the opinion of the CAC on the economic embargo has changed throughout the years too. In 1997, eight out of ten Cuban-Americans supported the embargo. In 2008, after the restrictive years of the Bush administration and the election of Barack Obama, this percentage had declined to 55 per cent. Grenier[44] clarifies these figures by postulating that:

> One of the reasons Obama ended up getting more votes [of Cuban Americans]... U.S-Cuban relations [under Bush] was impeding the transnational tendencies of this last group [the post-*Balseros*]. (2016)

But during recent elections, the majority (54%) of Cuban Americans sided again with the Republicans. It appears that the Cuban-American vote went to Donald Trump because of his fierce rhetoric for a more reciprocal 'normalization' of bilateral relations. Although Obama has gained a lot of support with his reconciliation policy, many argue it is unilateral in nature, and Cuba falls short (Krogstad and Flores, 2016; Vazquez, 2017).

I have indicated that a main focus of Cuban-American exile politics was on maintaining and tightening the embargo. It still is a threshold policy blocking full normalization of Cuba-US relations, but the shift in position of the CAC in Miami towards the embargo is significant. Cuban-Americans living in Miami who favoured ending the embargo had increased from 43 per cent in

[43] Interview with Dr. Guillermo Grenier, 2 June 2016 at FIU, Miami.
[44] Interview with Dr. Guillermo Grenier, 2 June 2016 at FIU, Miami.

2007 to 63 per cent in 2016 (Grenier and Baldwin, 2016). I discussed the issue during my fieldwork with Cuban Americans of different cohorts. At the Cuban Heritage Collections of the University of Miami, I asked Gómez-Rossié[45] – a *Pedro Pan* child – how she saw the reconciliation policy of Barack Obama. Being 14 she had no understanding of the Cuban Revolution and her migration, i.e. she lived through it but didn't understand it. Now she said that:

> My generation marks the embargo. I think at this point the embargo is an excuse that the Cuban government uses in front of the rest of the world. (…) But the rest of the world hasn't got an embargo on you. But that country who has, is sending you medicine, and that country is your economy, your exile. The number one money that goes into the Cuban economy is exile. The people outside are maintaining the people inside. I would say 'NO' to maintaining the embargo. (…) Do they want to take the embargo out, the Cuban government? I don't think so, because that is their excuse' (2016).

Her observation was confirmed by Elsie Miranda[46], said that: 'the embargo was Castro's trump card for every wrong on the island. But we shouldn't be naïve and give them everything'. (2016) On the other hand William Muir,[47] a prisoner of war after the failed Bay of Pigs invasion, argues that:

> People who say that the embargo is a total failure are wrong, because at the first place the embargo wasn't designed as a punishment for the Castro regime. It was already there when Castro started his revolution. But Fidel never used the embargo as an excuse until the 1990s because the economy was abundantly sponsored by the USSR. But in the end Cuba can get almost any product or service from any the US if they pay cash up front. (2016)

Yvonne Odette,[48] an ABC, is an Associate Administrator Business Development at a hospital in Miami, who argued that the embargo: 'only alienated the people who love Cuba from it' and 'a move [Obama's] is better than no move. But it's not a fair trade' (2016). Yllien Verdés,[49] an ABC, grew up outside the Cuban-American enclave in Miami, and has co-owned a family dental office in Little Havana for 20 years:

> It doesn't really matter how, but the embargo has showed that isn't the way. I support any intention that will try and reach for that [economic opportunities and political freedom]. (2016)

Jorge Perez[50] a 21-year-old, studies Legal Psychology, has family living in Cuba and has visited them a couple of times:

> to me trading would be good, because they have things to offer to us and we have things to offer to them, and trade is always going to be beneficial. (2016)

The figures of recent research have proved that the embargo is denounced by most of Cuban-Americans living in Miami, especially recent arrivals and US-born Cubans. Although the observations on the embargo vary between generations, it seems that most Cuban Americans question its functionality within the current status quo. Muir's postulation that the embargo isn't a failure because it was constituted for Batista, and the Cuban regime only uses the embargo to

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[45] Interview with Gladys Goméz-Rossié, 17 June 2016, Cuban Heritage Collection, University of Miami.

[46] Interview with Dr. Elsie Miranda, June 15th,2016, University of Miami, Miami.

[47] Telephone interview with William Muir, 3 June 2016, HI Hostelling International, Miami Beach.

[48] Telephone interview with Yvonne Odette, 10 June HI Hostelling International, Miami Beach.

[49] Interview with Yllien Verdés, 19 June 2016, Coral Gables, Miami.

[50] Interview with Jorge Perez, 8 June 2016, Miami Beach

cover up their own mess, sees removing it as a good policy change, either way. Unlike the first cohort, who see the embargo as retaliation for the Cuban Revolution and the destruction of Cuba, post-1980 migrants – even some earlier Cubans – and the second generation observe the codified law as blocking the development of Cuba, the country and people they care for. It is an outdated Cold War mechanism which downplays the current transnational desire and possibility of normalizing binational relations.

3.2.3 Sociocultural dimensions

Ethnic identity and culture as an affective transnational linkage was described in the first chapter by Portes and Fernández-Kelly, and *Cubanidad* shows itself to be ever present among Cuban Americans in Miami.[51] It is the emotional connection that is inherited in the cultural identity of the diaspora (2015: 176). *Cubanidad* was described by Cherie Canio,[52] an ABC, through her own perception:

> When I was in Louisiana I started noticing that I was missing *cafecito's, croquetas,* the smell of my dad's Cuban cigars and speaking Spanish. For me these are the Cuban things. (2016)

The political contact had redefined what it meant to be Cuban in exile and demarcated a cultural space to survive as a unique entity in the United States. As Cuban migration was perceived as temporary, Cubans didn't assimilate completely. They preserved Cuban identity and commemorated their legacy:

> *Cubanidad* eased their adaptation to the United States. By giving hardship a larger meaning, it psychologically empowered them to deal with exile. (García, 1996: 83-84)

The preservation of the Cuban identity is fundamental to Cuban settlement in Miami. As Grenier argued in 2003, Cubans reject any relation to a hyphenated identity or pan-ethnic identity. During my interviews, most interviewees identified themselves as Cuban. Pedro Roig[53] confirmed this posture by saying:

> We don't like the word Latino, because it has gained a negative connotation in the US. We are Cubans, or Hispanics because of our heritage from the Spanish. (2016)

Unlike the old enclave, the post-Mariel immigrants did not see themselves as refugees but as migrants. And with the rise of the ABCs, I would argue that the 'exile' ideology of the Cuban Revolution and the Cold War lost influence on the identity of the CAC in Miami. Instead of living through history, Cubans of the 1.5 generation want to connect with their roots, as they only have childhood memories and an imagined conception of Cuba. ABCs do not have a pre-migration memory, and thus, as Grenier and Pérez argue 'have not lost a home, they have gained a heritage' (2003: 200; Eckstein and Barberia, 2002: 816). The ABCs and post-*Mariel* engage in physical cross-border bonding through sociocultural organizations, it appears. Some of the second-generation Cubans with whom I spoke have engaged with contemporaries in Cuba through 'people-to-people' linkages and travelling, e.g. they have founded CubaOne, a sociocultural organization that creates these transnational linkages (Canio and Jimenez,[54] 2016).

The FIU Cuba Poll of 2016 supports this finding of a sociocultural desire to engage with Cuba through travels and people-to-people contact; three-quarters of the participants supported unrestricted travel by all Americans and opportunities for 'people-to-people' contact with Cuba;

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[51] An investigation done by PewReseach among 350 Cuban-American adults shows that 63 per cent perceived themselves as Cuban, while only two out of ten saw themselves as American (López, 2015).
[52] Telephone interview with Cheri Canio, 21 June 2016, HI Hostelling International, Miami Beach.
[53] Interview with Pedro Roig, 31 May 2016, Instutition for Cuban and Cuban-American Studies, Miami.
[54] Ibid.; interview with Daniel Jimenez, 27 May 2016, Miami Beach.

in 1997 these figures were the other way around. Forty-five per cent of the Cuban born had travelled to Cuba after leaving the island, but only a quarter of the pre-1980 migrants did. These results are consistent with literature analysed in the previous chapters on generational characteristics: the second generation and the recent arrivals were predominantly in favour of sociocultural transnationalism (Grenier and Baldwin, 2016). Travel to Cuba eradicates *des* from *destierro* and *destiempo*, the concepts of physical removal and personal dislocation of the homeland formed through exile. Experiences of transnational sociocultural ties revive the memory or legacy of a family identity. This family identity is considered to be very strong and going back to Cuba is a 'state of mind', as children of first wavers – even those who were under a year old at the time of migration – call travelling to Cuba 'going back'.

Some Cuban Americans have travelled to Cuba despite the moral objection of their parents (Eckstein and Barberia, 2002: 816-825). Elsie Miranda[55] told me that:

> I was able to drop the legacy and heritage of my parents and grandparents, and I went there as a blank page to write my own narrative. (2016)

Elsie Miranda has created CubaEvolution, a foundation to establish mutually beneficial relations between the US and Cuba, with churches and larger society. Some have respected the travel boycott of their parents. Yllien Verdés,[56] told me that she can't go to Cuba because she didn't want to cause her parents that anxiety or worry, otherwise she would have gone (2016). Like Daniel Jimenez[57], other Cuban-Americans needed both governments to change the binational relationship in order to create space for them to engage with Cuba (2016).

[55] Interview with Dr. Elsie Miranda, June 15th,2016, University of Miami, Miami.
[56] Interview with Yllien Verdés, June 19th, 2016, Coral Gables, Miami.
[57] interview with Daniel Jimenez, 27 May 2016, Miami Beach.

Conclusion

Transnationalism changed the academic debate on migration studies in the late 1980s. Many prominent scholars have contributed to the theoretical debate on transnationalism discussed in Chapter 1, much of whose work in Cuban and Cuban-American Studies has addressed significant variables in the creation of a transnational social space, in particular of an exile community. The notion of an exile community makes transnationalism salient because of the 'Impossible Triangle', the diaspora aligning with the government of the host country, in opposition to the government of their nation of origin, which creates a transnational realm, based on political and militant activism in opposition to the Cuban Revolution. According to Vertovec, that transnationalism and identity are intertwined because of the significance of a cultural identity of common place of origin; I argue this is the foundation of a transnational identity shaping cross-border behaviour and motivations across political, economic and sociocultural dimensions. In addition, many scholars have addressed the (geo)political and economic context wherein migration and resettlement occur as significant to one's desire to materialize transnational identity and built transnational linkages; the role of policies and laws designed by the respective nation-states create an situation of "blocked transnationalism" to providing transnational bridges.

The concept of 'blocked transnationalism' has been elaborated throughout this research, as this phenomenon has been the reality for the Cuban-American exile community in Miami. At the University of Miami, Portes addressed the non-existence of blocked transnationalism for Cuban-Americans ignited by the transnational activism of recent arrivals, which forced the Washington administration to change US-Cuba policy. I would argue that a fully normalized transnational social space is not in place, because the cradle of US-Cuba policy and Cuban-American exile politics after the Cuban Revolution is still in place – the economic embargo. Nonetheless, the contemporary consensus in Miami is that a majority of the Cuban Americans favour ending the embargo, nuanced by different generations and cohorts during my interviews. These figures and statements perpetuate the changing transnational identity of the CAC in Miami. My research question addresses the change of transnational identity and the breakdown of the 'Cold Wall' on the Florida Strait, namely: *What are the main rationales that have transformed the transnational identity of the CAC in Miami towards Cuba? and how have the (geo)political and economic context, and US and Cuban government policies influenced the (non-)existence of a blocked transnational social space between Miami and Cuba?* The hypothesis that my research had to prove to be true was whether: *the demographic evolution has changed the transnational identity of the CAC in Miami and torn down the 'Cold Wall' created by Cuban and US government policies to prevent the CAC in Miami from materializing their desire of having transnational ties with Cuba*. I argue the hypothesis is supported because the regulation of Cuban migration and transnationalism has blocked 'normative' transnational ties, but contributed to the changing demography of the CAC which resulted in the crumbling of the Cold Wall., I will further elaborate on this beginning with the context.

Cuban migrations during the last two centuries have all occurred because of the political context on the island, but the Cuban Revolution has constituted a significant exodus of Cubans towards the United States, to Miami in particular. Cuba's exceptional position in global and hemispheric relations stems from the Spanish Empire, and one of the few successful socialist revolutions; this added another chapter to Cuban exceptionalism, and determined the indefinite future of Cuba-US relations, of David vs. Goliath, with or without the consent of those involved. Its prelude began in 1823 when US Secretary of State, John Adams, called Cuba a 'natural appendage' of the US and, after the Spanish American war, Cuba's political and economic system was designed to be subordinate to US interests. Its ideological father, José Martí, led Fidel Castro to mobilize domestic discontent of the working class and created momentum in the context of the Cold War. His 26th of July movement sparked Cubans' nationalist pride and the dignity of those Cubans who had lost it through their subjugation, and ignited the Cuban Revolution.

The CAC in Miami can be divided by generations, cohorts and migration waves. The first cohort described as the 'political refugees' is, to a large extent, made up of two migration waves:

the 'early exiles' (1959-1962), an acute refugee movement stemming from a crisis, whose migration was seen as temporary due to the probability of US activity concerning communism 90 miles offshore – the failure of the Bay of Pigs invasion is seen as the moment that perception was abolished – and the 'airlift' (1965-1973), an anticipatory refugee movement. The majority were Cuban elites, *Batistianos*, mainly white and highly educated, who fled the island when Castro began expropriating property and nationalizing businesses and schools. This cohort was denominated the 'Golden Exiles' and the 'new builders of Miami'. Most Cubans came with the whole family or were reunited eventually, and lost everything including their citizenship; incrementation they were stigmatized by Castro as 'traitors' and the psychological burden of being exiled suppressed any desire for transnational ties. Torres has argued that this political memory of exile, a personal dislocation through exile *destierro* – geographical removal and *destiempo* – involved loss of personal and social structures. They maintained their 'affective ties' by preserving the Cuban identity and culture in Miami's Little Havana. Another part of their transnational identity was materialized by means of exile politics and military activism fed by the exile ideology: an anti-Castro posture and establish a free and democratic Cuba. Their alliance to the US and its symbolic value within the political context of the Cold War provided a privileged position in American society with federal support for resettlement, unknown to other immigrant groups. Their common pre-migration social class, post-migration experiences, strong adherence to Cuban culture and fierce opposition to Castro created a fairly cohesive community, maintained even by means of repression until the late 1990s. Their entrepreneurial competences helped the Cuban-American community to adapt to a new life in the United States. Making the exile ideology and *Cubanidad* fundamental to the community in the US eased their adaptation to American society. This cohort gained great economic prosperity and political influence in Washington, enabled them to preserve the economic embargo which is still in place today.

From the 1980s onwards Cuban migration involved rationales for migration and a transnational identity that was different from the first cohort. The *Mariel* Boatlift was an critical refugee movement that brought in 125,000 Cubans who lived under Castro's government for over 20 years and wanted to leave because of repression and economic failure. They sought socioeconomic improvement in the United States, but also retained part of their life in Cuba. They had no political memory of being exiled or longing for a pre-revolutionary social order. People of these migration waves were people disillusioned by the Cuban Revolution, and what was supposedly their victory. This group was a representative sample of the Cuban population, but American society wasn't as tolerant and the old enclave prevented their use of the extensive exile network to assimilate properly. This group included the migrants who came for economic reasons and displayed a desire for transnational ties. As Grenier argued during our interview, growing up in American society outside the Cuban enclave in Miami changed views on Cuba; I argue that being blocked from it also bind you more closely to the homeland. But the Communist threat still legitimized hard-line anti-Castro policies by political exile organizations and influenced US foreign policy towards Cuba; more progressive and transnational postures towards Cuba were repressed within Cuba, by all means. Yet even in this climate, there were visible changes;: President Carter relaxed transnational policies on remitting and travel. Fidel Castro considered Cuban Americans as a source of income and referred to the diaspora as 'the Cuban community abroad', talked with a moderate Cuban-American exile organization in Miami and released a few thousand political prisoners.

With the fall of the Soviet Union in 1989, the Cuban economy collapsed and brought the fourth wave *Balseros* to Miami shores. Since 1989 more Cubans have migrated to US than in any other period. Grenier argued that these were the real transnational Cubans who came as part of 'family projects' – mainly young men sent to the United States to earn money and support family in Cuba. As different polls on Cuban Americans have shown, these Cubans are the main supporters of normalizing bilateral relations between Washington and Havana; this was supported by interviewees during the fieldwork who strongly support the removal of restrictions by President Obama's administration. Recent arrivals are also less politically active due to their pre-migration life in Cuba or can't vote during the presidential elections. Their actions are changing US politics and prolonging transnational linkages – the return to anti-Castro policies by President Bush had

minimal effect. Sending remittances and goods, and travelling have evidenced the transnational desire and also a clear division from the pre-*Mariel* immigrants. As numbers of the 'Golden Exile' decrease and those who display a transnational identity for 'normative' transnational bridges increase, a majority of the CAC favour normalization of bilateral relations and abolishment of the economic embargo.

Like the second and third generations, most of the 1.5 generation, e.g. the *Pedro Pan* children, were not traumatized by the revolutionary earthquake. The political memory of exile is absent; one Cuban-American indicated that she didn't understand why she had to leave but, at 14, had been aware of the unfolding situation. After migration these children grew up under the exile ideology of the politicized community, yet outside the community had assimilated into American society and adopted American norms and values. I see this absence of personal hatred towards Fidel Castro and resilience in constructing a Cuban identity apart from family and communal heritage, as the desire and motivation to have their own Cuban experience. Although the family has lost so much, this loss is not part of their lived experience and is compensated by what they have gained in the United States. They have developed the desire to engage with Cuba to revitalize and rediscover childhood memories, the homeland of family heritage, and the culture and narrative of Cuba they grew up with. They carry with them respect for their parents and ancestors, who courageously fled the island and rebuilt their life in the United States, according to Gladys Goméz-Rossié. Although critical of the Cuban government, they can be objective, like Juan Jimenez, who observed the failure of the economic embargo and therefore supported changing Cuba by other means. Yet they do not let this become their own life experience. Their experience collides with the ABCs as they dwell even further from the seismic shift of the revolution. They are born into American society and are susceptible to the family and communal heritage, as they express respect for their (grand) parents choices to flee Castro, but don't bear personal hatred towards Fidel Castro. They don't know Cuba from lived experience, but want to perceive it from their own perspective including its impact on their own transnational identity, although like Yllien Verdés, some choose to respect their family's objection and don't pursue transnational ties.

As individual stances towards Cuba change with the influx of new migration, the transnational identity of the Cuban-American community as a collective is changing too. Like Juan Jimenez, some have softened their tone. Others, like William Muir, who have fought Castro with their own hands maintain opposition to any involvement with the regime, and some even feel betrayed by Obama, like Vicente Blanco Capoté. But the second and third generation hold the future and are likely to support further engagement, by perpetuating actual ties despite the politics. However, with the 'wet foot, dry foot' policy gone, Cuban migration has become somewhat normalized. The migration flow of first generation Cuban born is uncertain, and so is the preservation of Cuban transnational identity over generations. Some have criticized the lack of reciprocity by the Cuban government. Others think that as long as the Cuban government retains political power, changing Cuba for the better is most likely to succeed through social-cultural and economic engagement. Fidel's passing and the election of Donald Trump leave the course of bilateral relations yet to be decided. Transnational linkages are unlikely to dissolve again, even with restrictive government policies. As Eckstein asserted, the more supportive the context, the more likely cross-border ties will be beneficial for both societies.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - List of interviewees

American-Born Cubans	Personal information	Interview
Cherie Canio	28 years, Director of external relations at her family' company, Co-founder of the CubaOne Foundation	By telephone, Miami, 21 June, 2016
Daniel Jimenez	35 years, Assistant director at Ernst & Young, Co-founder of the CubaOne Foundation	Miami Beach, Miami, 27 May, 2016
Elsie Miranda	52 years, Associate professor of practical Theology at Barry University	Coral Gables, Miami, 15 June, 2016
Yvonne Odette	Age unknown (approx. 50-55), Manager at a hospital in Miami	By telephone, Miami, 10 June, 2016
Jorge Perez	21 years, Student in Legal Psychology	Miami Beach, Miami, 08 June, 2016
Yllien Verdés	45 years, co-owner of a Dental office in Miami	Coral Gables, Miami, 19 June, 2016
Post-1980 migrants		
Anonymous	28 years, in the United States since 2004, Public Services and Acquisition assistant at Cuban Heritage Collection, and student for Bachelor's in Public Relations	Coral Gables, Miami, 15 June, 2016
Michel Vain	39 years, in the United States since 2009.	Miami Beach, Miami, 25 May, 2016
pre-1980 migrants		
Vicente Blanco-Capoté	73 years, Bay of Pigs veteran and co-director of the Bay of Pigs museum, and in the United States since 1962.	Little Havana, Miami, 10 June, 2016
Gladys Goméz-Rossié	70 years, staff coordinator of community relations for the Cuban Heritage Collection, in the United States since 1962 (*Pedro Pan*).	Cuban Heritage Collection, Miami, 17 June, 2016
Juan Jimenez	63 years, Law librarian, in the US from 1962 (*Pedro Pan*).	By telephone, Miami, 1 June, 2016
William Muir	72 years, retired, born in Cuba.	By telephone, Miami, 3 June, 2016
Scholars		

Dr. Sean Foreman	Professor in Political sciences at Barry University.	Barry University, Miami, 7 June, 2016
Dr. Andrew Gottlieb	PhD in Political Sociology.	Restaurant Versailles, Little Havana, Miami, 14 June, 2016
Dr. Guillermo J. Grenier	Professor of Sociology and Graduate Program Director in the Department of Global & Sociocultural Studies in the Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs at Florida International University, born in Havana, Cuba. Lead investigator of the FIU Cuba Poll.	Florida International University, Miami, 2 June, 2016
Dr. Alejandro Portes	Research Professor and Distinguished Scholar of Arts and Sciences, born in Cuba.	University of Miami, Miami, 20 June, 2016
Pedro Roig	Senior Research Associate at the ICCAS, born in Cuba.	ICCAS, Miami, 31 May, 2016

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