

Planning For Succession in Cuba: the Long ‘Anti-Transition’

by Antoni Kapcia

Even before Fidel Castro announced (July 31, 2006) a temporary handover of power to his First Vice-President and brother, Raúl, the discussion outside Cuba of the post-Fidel ‘succession’ was—and continues to be—underpinned by several assumptions.¹

The first is a familiar ‘Fidel-centric’ assumption that the Cuban system has always been constructed around, and depended on, Castro. Indeed, this viewpoint has probably underpinned all United States policy toward Cuba since 1960, explaining repeated misunderstandings between the two states.² It also explains why US policymakers seemed unprepared for the actualization of the handover and the ease with which it took place. The fact that Americans regarded the Cuban system as *fidelismo* and assumed that Castro would die in office, leaving an inevitable vacuum and popular unrest, they could not conceive of either a *fidelismo* without Fidel or a peaceful and generally accepted handover.

The second underlying assumption has long been the notion that planning for a succession to Castro is a recent and panicked response to impending crisis in Cuba. Accordingly no Cuban leaders seriously planned for succession, either because a supposedly megalomaniac Fidel refused to contemplate his own mortality, preferring to die in office, or because he knew identifying a successor would be to see his power ebb away. As such, the issue of succession is a fundamental one. Fidel has presumably held together an otherwise fragile system through personal charisma, loyalties and autocratic control; therefore any arrangement for a successor would inevitably be less popular and lead to instability, especially because the constitutional successor, Raúl, has long been seen as lacking Fidel’s charisma and appeal.

Certainly, a more accurate forecast about the future of Cuban leadership can be determined beyond these simple interpretations of the current system under Fidel. To begin with, the Cuban system should be viewed as a complex political structure and not simply an autocracy, while still acknowledging the critical role Fidel played in shaping the perceptions of popular legitimacy; the definition of the system’s ideology (he remained until recently the ultimate arbiter of what defines ‘the

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Revolution³); the process of decision-making; and policy concerning cultural and foreign affairs. However, it would be historically irresponsible to suggest that the survival of a besieged and crisis-prone system for fifty years can be attributed to one leader alone, and that those five decades and successive generations have not produced greater complexity within the system. .

Secondly, the Cuban leadership, in its entirety, has planned for the Revolution's long-term continuity (a more helpful way to consider the system's future than the personalist notion of 'succession'). This has been a goal underpinning many of the leadership's strategies from the late 1970s, although policy measures have varied throughout the decades accordingly to external political conditions. Furthermore, considering Fidel's personal involvement and influence in the Revolution throughout its history, it is important to understand that in his mind, jeopardizing the Revolution's historic achievements by remaining in power too long is inconceivable.³ Mr. Castro has a long-standing sense of history, and he is crucially aware of the significance of history, both in leading to revolution and in the Revolution's and his own legacy.

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Therefore, what we now see in Cuba is not a sudden response to crisis but, rather, the emergence of a logically predictable outcome: Fidel's gradual concession of power and, Raúl's subsequent adoption of it, which were predictable for several reasons. First, Raúl's has been one of the Revolution's three main leaders since 1956 (Che Guevara being the third until his death in 1967), and since 1976 has been the formally constituted First Vice-President. Secondly, planning for a post-Fidel leadership has been occurring by trial and error since the late 1970s, when Fidel's partial withdrawal from his then extensive range of government roles became evident in part as a response to pressure from the Soviet Union and the Socialist Bloc's trading system, the Council for Mutual Economic Exchange (the CMEA); Cuba was supposed to follow more orthodox methods of ruling the state.⁴ Moreover, it also arose from the natural evolution of a system which, after two decades of massive social and political change, had become too complex and unwieldy to continue on haphazardly as it had during the early years of the Revolution.

However, this gradual withdrawal ended abruptly in the 1980s, when a succession of economic and political crises forced Fidel to the political forefront once more. Domestically, there was an accumulation of endogenous problems of production and inefficiency, exacerbated by the CMEA's (eventually fatal) stagnation,

while externally the threats were twofold: the Reagan Administration's active rhetoric about 'rolling back Communism' in the Americas, and Gorbachev's rise in the Soviet Union, whose reform efforts threatened to end the beneficial trading and aid relationship with Cuba.

Since a pattern seemed to exist whereby any internal or external threat would project Fidel back into full control again, and the scale and implications of the whole 1989–91 crisis (by far the worst crisis that the Revolution had ever faced); it was only reasonable to expect that this would again be the Cuban leadership's reaction, accompanied by a battering down of the political hatches in a more coercive and defensive approach.⁵

However, it was precisely then that the Cuban leadership began to publicly move towards political change, specifically bringing in a new generation of young politicians such as Carlos Aldana, the head of the powerful ideological department of the ruling Communist Party's Central Committee; the Foreign Minister, Ricardo Alarcón, given responsibility for a reformed National Assembly;⁶ Carlos Lage (in charge of the post-1993 program of unprecedented economic reforms and eventually given de facto prime ministerial status as secretary of the Council of Ministers); and Roberto Robaina, given Alarcón's former post as Foreign Minister. Finally, the Elián González campaign brought two even younger politicians to the fore, Hassan Pérez Casabona and Otto Rivero (respectively head of the FEU students' federation and the UJC, Young Communists), the latter eventually given overall direction of the Battle of Ideas. What had raised their profile nationally was their shared role in leading that particular campaign; as it evolved from January 2000, the entire mobilization took on an almost obsessive character, occupying the media daily, filling the streets repeatedly with demonstration after demonstration, but above all enlisting Cuba's several youth organizations as the spearhead of it all. Pérez and Rivero were especially prominent, appearing alongside Fidel Castro on national platforms; Rivero particularly displayed considerable oratory skills.

By 2000, a new political generation was evidently ready to govern Cuba, most of whom had valuable experience in leadership positions, making the 'succession' team (identified by Fidel on handing over power in mid-2006) completely predictable. It was a judicious mix of stalwarts of the guerrilla generation (Raúl, José Ramón Machado Ventura and José Ramón Balaguer, the latter Aldana's replacement in the Ideological Department) and new blood, notably Lage, Pérez Roque, Francisco Soberón (head of the National Bank and one of the architects of the post-1993 reforms), and the Havana Party leader, Esteban Lazo.

The peaceful transition was not only constitutionally and politically logical, but it was also consistent with some of the leadership's long-standing objectives. The first such objective has clearly been to preserve the 'essence' of the Revolution. In 1990, as the crisis of the early '90s grew in scope, the implications for the future of the Revolution widened and the public rhetoric on 'saving the Revolution' was not a simple matter given its troubled and often contested trajectory since 1959. Furthermore, the implications of the collapse of European socialism helped to usher

the need to redefine the objectives of the Revolution. Simply put, until there was a clear consensus about the ‘essence,’ a consensus could not be reached on what to save. The subsequent debate, occasionally explicit (in academic centers and in Party and leadership circles), but always implicit in every reform, decision and exhortation, was far-reaching and anguished, lasting some ten years.

The second objective has therefore been adaptive in nature; where it is imperative to enable both survival and agreement on ‘the essence’ when necessary. Although this objective became especially stark after 1991, it is worth recalling that *pace* appearances of apparent ‘utopianism’, idealism, or revolutionary zeal since 1959, after the Cuban Revolution, have always displayed a willingness to be pragmatic.⁷ For example, the sudden affinity in 1960 with the Soviet Union was partly driven by a search for sugar markets and oil; the post-1970 downgrading of the characteristic 1960s ‘insurrectionary’ strategy in Latin America responded both to stark failure (especially in Bolivia in 1967) and to a new Latin American willingness to end Cuba’s isolation.⁸

Equally, pragmatism also partly explains apparently idealistic policies, such as the post-1965 commitment to a ‘moral economy,’⁹ or the 1960s ‘guerrilla’ strategy, recognizing the impossibility of any Latin American government breaking the US-led isolation, saw that Cuba had little to lose from such a strategy.

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Moreover, the post-1990 debate itself—about the ‘essence’—also meant a debate on the bearable costs of survival and adaptation, for it was clear to all that it was never a matter of saving the Revolution at all costs. Some costs have been considered unacceptable, like a Chinese-style economic liberalization, or the sale of state lands, while others are evidently still being debated, including the contested questions of both ‘dollarization’ (the 1993 decision to allow the US dollar to circulate freely, a decision reversed finally in 2004) and the expansion of tourism.¹⁰

Although it long predated the 1990s crisis and debate, the next objective was brought sharply into focus after 1989 and focuses on the determination to resist a *supposedly* inevitable transition, an objective that has indeed been a battle ‘at all costs’. The familiar systems of state protection weakened after 1991 and the usual response, mobilization, gave way to an individualistic instinct at the grassroots level to survive by any means. With a weaker state system, the need to build sufficient popular support for a more acceptable and adapted version of the ‘essential’ Revolution became imperative.

By 2001, it had become clear to all the Cuban leaders that not only had Fidel’s role been critical in 1994, but also that he had successfully recruited a new generation into ‘the Revolution’ through the Battle of Ideas. Therefore, Cuban leaders realized

that in a future without Fidel, the Cuban system needed to deliver something other than personal charisma or loyalty, and therefore began developing other mechanisms to command support.

This brings us back to Raúl, whose long-standing image outside Cuba has been as a hard-line 'ideologue' who lacks his brother's charisma. There are several reasons for this image. One was his brief pre-1953 membership of the youth wing (the Socialist Youth) of the Popular Socialist Party (the post-1944 Communist Party) which led US intelligence officers to identify him as a potential 'red under the bed'.¹¹ Another was the fact that he soon became Minister of Defense and head of the Armed Forces (FAR), thus associated with expectations of repression, more so when considering that he was strongly in favor of closer links with the Soviet Union. This image was reinforced later by the close organizational relationship with the Soviet military he established via the FAR and by his personal association with 'hard-line' decisions and attitudes.

Regardless of the validity of the prior observations about Raúl's image, through economic management reforms within the FAR, he has established himself as a pragmatic economic reformer.¹² Indeed, this has led to a common (and not always realistic) expectation among Cubans that he will advocate more such reforms. Furthermore, reformer or hardliner, the evidence seems equally clear that Raúl is essentially a *fidelista*, loyal to his brother (as a person, a leader and a source of ideas about the Revolution) and loyal to a Revolution which he helped shape more than anyone apart from Fidel and Guevara.

Nonetheless, it already seems likely that a Raúl-led Cuba will be somewhat different from a Fidel-led Revolution in two key respects: style and structure. Raúl is generally known to have a clear personal preference for organization and efficiency over ad-hoc responses, a preference for structure and system over mobilization, and an awareness of the 'limits of charisma'.¹³ Essentially, this means that Raúl has an instinctive preference for the institutionalization that characterized the 1972-89 period rather than the somewhat unstructured 1960s or 2000-7 period. It is worth remembering that he leads an extremely loyal, organized, effective, and still popular constituency—the FAR, a body whose legitimacy comes from its historic association with the insurrection and subsequent defense of the Revolution, and later with the victorious involvement in Angola after 1975.¹⁴

Indeed, the FAR is clearly one of the two institutional keys to the Revolution's future and stability, the other being, of course, the ruling Communist Party. As a general rule, when viewing contemporary Cuba, it is helpful to see the Party less as Fidel's personal instrument of rule (as often presented abroad) and more as an organization with its own dynamic and its own *raison d'être*, and with a capacity to act as a forum for debate (as clearly happened before the respective Party Congresses of 1986 and 1991). Organizationally speaking, the Communist Party serves as a mechanism for involving the population, developing solutions, and acting as a safety valve in the event of emergency. This much is evident from its history; while the new Party tended to be something of a vehicle for the Sierra guerrilla veterans in the

1960s (failing to meet in a national congress for its first decade), it gathered strength, meaning and independence after that first Congress in 1975, only to stagnate somewhat in the face of a growing bureaucratization.¹⁵ However, after 1986, with the onset of ‘Rectification’, it became more of a forum for the soul-searching debate that, preceding the 1990s crisis, addressed the ‘threat’ posed by Gorbachev’s Soviet reforms, a role which increased in importance and scale after 1991.¹⁶

We are best advised to see the Cuban Communist Party as much more important in Cuban decision-making than ‘Fidel-centric’ interpretations would suggest, but conversely much less important than most Communist Parties were in pre-1989 Eastern Europe, where they mostly became power structures in their own right, under self-perpetuating and conservative bureaucracies. This caution is directly relevant here, since the evidence seems to indicate something of a decline of the Party since 2000; the supposedly five-yearly Congress of 2001 has not yet materialized, with reports that the Party’s governing Central Committee (supposedly biannual) has met infrequently.

On balance, the evidence so far points more to a preference for style than any differences: in periods of Fidel’s active rule, the Party has occasionally been seen as more dispensable and even a nuisance, while, under Raúl, it is more likely to be seen as the key to much-needed efficiency, as a necessary safety-valve and a sounding-board. Hence, expectations that the Party will experience a period of renewal are already being borne out, with the introduction into influential positions of a new generation, which, though schooled ideologically in the Soviet Union and thus seen as ideologically sound, has given ample recent evidence of imaginative thinking.¹⁷ If this is true, then this can only hasten the postponed Congress, to formalize the new direction, although only once that direction and any new leadership are decided, and certainly only once Fidel’s personal health and possible constitutional role are clear. Regarding Fidel’s health, rumors and a lack of clarity continue to characterize statements in the Cuban media, with the Cuban leader’s expected return to active politics being continually postponed, even after his unexpected television interview in September 2007. Regarding Fidel’s constitutional role, there are indications of proposed constitutional changes (perhaps to create a new role); furthermore, since the summer of 2007, a lively process of grass-roots debate has begun over Raúl’s telling speech on July 26, 2007, which called for the end to unacceptable problems.

Whatever the future holds for Cuba after Fidel, it is still clear that it will be a Cuba run by a single Communist Party, with little intention of any post-Communist ‘transition’. This latter fact should not surprise anyone, especially when we remember that, in 1989-91, when the world media consensus was that Cuba would be the next socialist domino to fall, those expectations proved inaccurate and the Cuban system did not collapse and follow the Soviet Bloc’s rush towards capitalism. Hence, if those expectations were wrong in 1991, when the Cuban economy was in deep crisis and when Cuba stood alone, why should such expectations be any more accurate now, after a decade and a half of economic recovery—unless, of course, one argues that the system has survived beyond what should have been the end of its ‘natural’ life only by being held together by the strength of *fidelismo*?

For an answer, we should look in two directions: at the need to forget the Eastern European experience and at the role of participation in the Cuban system. The first question refers to the reality that, despite appearances and the attractiveness of applying Eastern European models to the Cuban case, it was never useful before 1989 to see Cuba in terms of the Socialist Bloc, even in the apparently 'Sovietized' 1970s or 1980s and even when Cuba enjoyed a close economic and political relationship with the Soviet Union. This is because the differences between Cuba and the Socialist Bloc were always more significant than the similarities. After 1975, Cuba may have followed Soviet economic models with a political structure modeled on Soviet lines. But even at its most orthodox, the Cuban system was characterized by factors that set it apart from that Bloc. These included the Revolution's roots in a home-grown rebellion, the implications of Cuban nationalism (traditionally seeing the United States as the problem), the fragmentation of any significant internal political dissidence, the lack of any major organization in Cuba capable of crystallizing mass opposition, and finally the many mechanisms of participation that have always characterized the Cuban system.

By 2000, a new political generation was evidently ready to govern Cuba, most of whom had valuable experience in leadership positions, making the 'succession' team completely predictable.

Indeed, one might argue that such participation is really the main explanation for the system's survival, the creation from 1960 of a clear sense of popular empowerment and consultation, of a political culture where every Cuban has been mobilized, involved and (at least formally) consulted at every stage.¹⁸ Certainly the evidence suggests that Cuban leaders proved more capable than their eastern European counterparts of reading the popular mood and making the necessary adjustments.

Furthermore, as the Revolution recovered from its brief crisis, popular mobilization was suddenly revived to great effect after a decade of relative neglect, during which the system and individual Cubans invested energies in survival rather than political rallying. The value of this mechanism was shown in August 1994: on 4 August, the always problematic and poor Havana area of Centro Habana suddenly erupted in protest and street violence, stimulated by the growing movement towards mass illegal emigration in the face of shortages, by anger at the authorities action in sinking a hijacked harbor ferry (with loss of life), by frustration at the shortages of water and electricity, and also by the pent-up frustrations of life in recent years. This was especially worrying because it was the first series of serious street disturbances since April 1980, and the worst since the battles of the early Revolution. However, on August 5, Fidel himself unexpectedly appeared on those same streets, walking among and remonstrating with the angry crowds. He then proceeded to lead a counter rally on the waterfront at Malecón, where a mass rally consisting of

thousands of loyal activists had made their way to the site despite serious transport shortages to gather in defense of ‘their’ Revolution. This moment clearly represented a turning point: not only did Fidel’s action defuse a genuinely dangerous moment (witnesses talked of protestors who, having rioted angrily one minute, calling explicitly for the overthrow of Fidel and the system, suddenly began to chant ‘Viva Fidel’), but the pro-government rally also steeled the political will of otherwise demoralized activists and turning what could have been the system’s worst political shock into a successful manifestation of public faith and support. The crisis was further defused by Fidel’s recourse to the same measure as he had applied in April 1980, when protests had provoked an angry announcement that any Cuban who wished to leave the country could be collected by US-based relatives from the port of Mariel, leading to an exodus of some 125,000 *marielitos*; now, with less anger, the same call was put out, after negotiating a special (and still extant) migration agreement with the United States, leading to the exodus of some 35,000 rafters (*balseros*).

Then, in January 1998, the political apparatus organized a successful national celebration to greet the Pope during a visit that, even just a few years earlier, might have seemed to risk the destabilization of a besieged system. It was, however, the six months of mobilization over the Elián González affair that really reminded Fidel that the traditional recourse to mobilization could still be an effective means of re-energizing the faithful through action.

Hence, there were—and still are—essentially two structural factors (Party organization and mobilization) that have always militated against a post-Communist transition, although these have rarely been used simultaneously, tending over the decades to be used alternately, the former in 1975–89, and the latter in 1959–75 and 2000–2006. The debates of the early 1960s about whether to institutionalize or prevent institutionalization by a form of ‘permanent revolution’, produced a ‘non-Party Party’.¹⁹ The following decade of both a much stronger Party and a simultaneous weakening of the constant and exhausting mobilizations, all point to a basic truth about the Cuban system: that there has always been something of a tension between the Party and mobilization.

The time period from 1997 to the present should evoke the Revolution’s political evolution of 1965-75. Then, while mobilization succeeded in sustaining energy and commitment of the grass-roots activists, it also showed a capacity to destabilize and exhaust those same people who were the pillars of the system. Similarly, after 2000, sustained mobilization succeeded in reviving the flagging morale of the committed and while it added a younger generation of the faithful—specifically in the youth movement that was the focus of the post-2000 Battle of Ideas and the ‘emergency schools’ of the new educational ‘revolution’. This however produced the fatigue suffered by the party faithful, who remained at a heightened level of mobilization over a lengthy period of time. A familiar pattern from 1968-75 seems now to be under way again; namely a period of sustained mobilization necessarily being followed by a much-needed period of respite, in the form of a more measured

institutionalization and a focus on delivering material benefits to the Cuban population. This all points to the observation that there is perhaps, after all, less that is new in this latest process than one might have expected.

It is clear that the Party, rather than disappearing from the political scene is currently being strengthened precisely in order to ensure some sort of continuity. Hence, the Party (as much as Fidel) is seen by the leaders and the faithful as a key part of the agreed 'essence' of the Revolution, and very likely to survive Fidel, particularly as it has always been an instrument for continuity.

The lack of key figures, within the leadership, ready to lead such a process indicates a structural opposition to any transition. The remarkable continuity and lack of schisms within the governing group mean greater cohesion and are indicative of the Cuban system as a whole since Fidel came to power. If we compare the key people in the 1960s (Fidel, Raúl, Che Guevara, the Foreign Minister Raúl Roa, second president Osvaldo Dorticós, Fidel's confidante Celia Sánchez, Education Minister Armando Hart, former Communists Carlos Rafael Rodríguez and Blas Roca, and Interior Minister Ramiro Valdés) with the governing team of the 'institutionalized' and supposedly 'Sovietized' 1970s, we actually find more or less the same people in positions of power, apart from the absences through death (most notably Guevara). Equally, if we repeat the exercise for the 1980s we find the same thing, that only those who had died were absent.

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In the response to crisis after 1990, some veterans retired but others were noticeably still present (Balaguer, Machado Ventura, Interior Minister Colomé Ibarra) and one was even rehabilitated (Valdés). Yet even this new generation seemed not to contain any candidates supporting, leading, or otherwise speaking of transition. Aldana and Robaina, the two rising stars most associated with this idea of transition were summarily removed. Of the politicians identified as the 'team' to run Cuba during Fidel's absence in 2006, all are rightly seen as opposed to any transition and as individuals who are politically and ideologically reliable.

All the indications are that Lage remains the most probable medium-term successor to Raúl. Seen as ideologically sound, quietly efficient and unquestionably loyal to 'the Revolution', but also imaginative and flexible, Mr. Lage is already the de facto prime minister, replacing Fidel Castro in recent international summits. Ricardo Alarcón may well have been the outside media's favorite for succession in the early 1990s; but he was not part of the July 2006 'team', although he still enjoys two key roles as President of the National Assembly and a frequent negotiator in foreign affairs. As for the others, they either have no base for any potential transition role

(notably Soberón), or are firmly from the Revolution's traditional generation (Balaguer and Machado Ventura) or from the Fidel-loyal circle (Pérez Roque). Hence, there is simply no evidence of any leader contemplating fundamental change.

However, although the designing of the Revolution's future has long been carefully planned, the actual transfer of power in July 2006 came about much faster than many expected or than Fidel hoped. Over the previous six months, it had become clear to many observers that something significant was in the offing, with an unusual level of media attention being given to Raúl, with nostalgic coverage of the 1953-8 insurrection, and above all with the unusual preparations to celebrate Fidel's 80th birthday. The handover was smooth; preceded by the annual 'military preparations exercise' (this year being unusually highly publicized, presumably to warn off potential internal or external troublemakers) and a quiet but massive mobilization of troops on the eve of the announcement. This proved to be of no consequence, as there was no unrest and the affairs of the state continued without alteration.

It seems likely that the Cuban leadership will continue to act cautiously for a while, the length of this period shall be determined by the uncertainty about Fidel's survival and recovery, and Raúl's lifespan and willingness to continue in leadership. However, one can be certain that the Cuban leadership will continue to seek to preserve what has now been defined as the Revolution's 'essence': continued state control of key economic, social, and political sectors, and key roles for the existing 'mass organizations', and a clear commitment to the existing nationalist ideology.²⁰ The question of a post-Fidel 'succession' is actually not as relevant as it seems from the outside, and is not the crucial issue for judging the system's future. Instead, what should attract our attention is less the question of leadership than that of how long the Cuban population will continue to support a system without Fidel. Despite the difficulties of gauging popular support in Cuba, it seems that, alongside a genuine sadness at the possible loss of Fidel, a quiet mood of optimism prevails.

Hence, it is clear that a reservoir of loyalty runs deep, well beyond the committed proportion of the population to include large numbers of the majority 'middle' ground, those who, though tired of shortages, are still sufficiently fearful of alternatives and loyal to a benefactor state.²¹ However, as Cuba's leaders realize, even this support has a limited shelf-life and has never been able to be taken for granted, but has always had to be earned.

This indeed explains why the Revolution invested enormous energy, effort and money over the years in its people, to ensure a solid and deep base of loyalty to a system and against a transition. However, it also explains why Fidel invested so much energy in the 'Battle of Ideas' in order to attain a long-term support base. With that base content despite some of the variegated setbacks, it now seems logical that a period of stabilization and marginal economic reform will follow, further consolidating the base and retaining the loyalty of the 'middle' ground. What we are now seeing in Cuba is not a transition, or even the prologue to a transition so often compared to the democratization of post-Soviet Eastern Europe, but rather another

swing of the familiar pendulum of mobilization-stabilization. It just so happens that this coincides with, and in fact takes advantage of, the absence of Fidel. There may be succession, but it is a nominal one, and is overshadowed by the familiar and planned drive for the continuity of the Revolution.

Notes

- ¹ Because of potential confusion between the two Castro brothers, this article will henceforth refer to Fidel Castro and Raul Castro by their first names, Fidel and Raúl.
- ² After initial uncertainty, by 1960 US policy was set on the path of diplomatic rupture and invasion (in 1961), isolation and economic sanctions (from 1962).
- ³ It was this which led this author, in a 2004 lecture, to predict that Castro would begin to retire from 2009, coinciding with the end of the Bush presidency and of Castro's leadership of the Non-Aligned Movement, and with the Revolution's 50th anniversary.
- ⁴ Throughout the 1960s Cuba's unorthodox approaches to politics and economics led to serious differences with the Soviet leaders; in 1972 (as Cuba's leaders adjusted policies in a less radical direction), Cuba was allowed into the CMEA. See: Edward Gonzalez, *Cuba under Castro: the Limits of Charisma* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1974), 7.
- ⁵ The economic collapse was considerable: the economy shrank by 35% in three years, with a massive collapse of imports (especially oil), resulting in closures, unemployment, debilitating power cuts and the disappearance of much public transport.
- ⁶ In 1992 the National Assembly became a directly rather than indirectly elected body.
- ⁷ Camelo Mesa-Lago, *Cuba in the 1970s: Pragmatism and institutionalization* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1978), 26-28.
- ⁸ Throughout the 1960s, Cuba actively supported many Latin American guerrilla campaigns, driven by anti-imperialist commitment; in 1967, this culminated in the death of Che Guevara in Bolivia.
- ⁹ With the US embargo reducing available goods, increased material incentives to generate greater productivity made little sense.
- ¹⁰ Although the decision on the dollar reacted to the Bush Administration's measures to restrict emigrant remittances and family visits, there were already concerns about the corrosive effects of both the dollar and tourism in bringing the threat of inequality, crime and corruption.
- ¹¹ Thomas Paterson, *Contesting Castro, The United States and the Triumph of the Cuban Revolution* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 121.
- ¹² Hal Klepak, *Cuba's military 1990-2005: Revolutionary Soldiers During Counter-Revolutionary Times* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 75-102.
- ¹³ Edward Gonzalez, *Cuba under Castro: the Limits of Charisma* (Boston, Mass: Houghton Mifflin, 1974), 98-102.
- ¹⁴ In 1975, Cuba responded to the appeals of the newly independent Angolan government (with which Cuba had close links), to help against South African incursions in support of rebel groups, by sending 40,000 troops. That involvement grew with Soviet support, leading to the eventual defeat of South African forces in 1988. Please refer back to Klepak (2005), 75-102.
- ¹⁵ In 1961 the first party structure united the three revolutionary groups (Castro's July 26 Movement, the PSP and the small Revolutionary Student Directorate) into the Integrated Revolutionary Organizations. In 1962 (after internal differences) this became the United Party of the Socialist Revolution, which, in 1965, became the Cuban Communist Party; Jorge Domínguez, *Cuba, Order and Revolution* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1978), 34.
- ¹⁶ The 1986 Party Congress launched 'Rectification' (of 'past errors and negative tendencies'), largely against pro-Soviet attitudes; the 1991 Congress launched a program of economic reform in the face of the new crisis.
- ¹⁷ These are people largely associated with three magazines characteristic of the newer thinking of the 1990s: *Debates Americanos*, *Temas* and *Contracorriente*.
- ¹⁸ Please see the following authors for further information: Domínguez 1978: 260-305 and Fagen 1969)

¹⁹ K.S. Karol, *Guerillas in Power: The Course of the Cuban Revolution* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1970), 156-186.

²⁰ Since the early 1960s, a number of 'mass organizations' have channeled participation for most Cubans; these especially include the CDRs (street-level bodies created in 1960 against the impending Bay of Pigs invasion but continuing subsequently as channels for social provision and involvement), the women's, trade unions and student federations. See Antoni Kapcia, *Cuba. Island of Dreams*, (London: Oxford, 2000), 230-268.

²¹ Antoni Kapcia, "Political change in Cuba: Before and After the Exodus," *London Institute of Latin American Studies*: Occasional Paper No. 9, (1995): 22.