HEGEMONIC DISCOURSE AND SOURCES OF LEGITIMACY IN CUBA:

COMPARING MARIEL (1980) AND THE MALECONAZO (1994)

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Thesis submitted to the University of Nottingham for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

JULY 2012

Abstract

This research project investigates the sources of legitimacy in hegemonic Cuban discourse, understood to have supported the stability of the Cuban system during crises and challenging times, such as the end of the Cold War and the 1990s Special Period. Evidence was drawn from the Cuban press, namely *Granma, Bohemia* and *Verde Olivo*, in two critical periods: the 1980 Mariel episode and the 1994 *maleconazo* disturbances as two examples before and after 1989 in order to compare the sources of legitimacy and identify continuities and shifts. The two periods represent recent examples of instability, which dominated the attention of the whole nation. The evidence is based on textual examination using discourse analysis as the method of investigation. The research is written in the discipline of political history, with elements taken from cultural studies and political communication.

The project is based on the assumption that the sources of legitimacy represented a significant, but not exclusive factor which may have encouraged the population's loyalty by reflecting their attitudes and concerns and channelling them in a particular direction. The discourse also interpreted reality to support the legitimacy of the system. This might have contributed significantly to the stability of the whole system, and its ability to survive the post-1989 transitions experienced in other communist countries. The research examines the content and internal mechanics of the discourse, its assumptions and endogenous references, taking into account the specific context of the single-party communist state in control of the country's media and mass organisations. By suppressing alternative discourses, the system increased the impact of the hegemonic discourse, especially if compared to pluralist political systems. The discourse might have contributed to the continuing loyalty of the population by explicitly and implicitly stressing endogenous sources of legitimacy intelligible to the Cuban audience, reflecting its particular historical experience and political culture. The research investigates the sources of legitimacy traceable in the discourse, to demonstrate what made it tick internally and why some Cubans might have decided to remain loyal to a system that they perceived as legitimate and defending their interests, attitudes, concerns and identities.

Collaterally, the research addresses the topic of migration, which was a main issue during both crises, and the way the perceptions of migration shifted over time in order to protect the legitimacy of the system confronting large outflows of discontented people. The research demonstrates how the system interpreted events in its favour, and how it prioritised different sources of legitimacy, such as independence, patriotism, socialism, material prosperity, social provision, culturalism and the US embargo in order to encourage loyalty. The research takes into account the regional Hispano-Caribbean context, reflecting the identities of the Cuban population in their perceived difference from Anglo-Saxon America and its socio-political model. The research looks in more detail at the key sources of legitimacy during the challenging 1990s when the system was near a possible collapse. The research

enhances our understanding of how the sources of legitimacy shifted over time to reflect new realities and to support the system. The research sheds further light on the system and the structure of the system's endogenous ideology in a post-structuralist sense, stressing the role of language and the complex and extended definition of ideology. For this reason it takes into account Cuban semantics, linguistics and endogenous meaning of words and concepts.

The existing academic literature focuses on explaining the stability of the system before and after 1989 by analysing Cuban history, institutions, culture, international relations and other aspects, but there is insufficient focus on legitimacy, politics and media addressed to the population as a possible factor in the system's stability. It does not investigate sources of legitimacy in relation to the content and internal mechanics of the discourse constructed to appeal to Cubans. This research answers these questions and thus enhances our understanding of the system. The research provides one possible answer to the question of how the system might have maintained stability, what sources of legitimacy it argued for, how it argued for them and how it interpreted current issues to encourage loyalty. It demonstrates how the system interpreted migration to cancel its potentially destabilising impact, and how it shifted the interpretations of the sources of legitimacy over time, especially in relation to the different global context before and after 1989.

Acknowledgements

With sincere thanks to my parents, my wife and the staff and colleagues at The University of Nottingham.

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Part I: Setting the Context

Chapter 1

1.1. Introduction

Cuba, its political system and internal mechanics have long been a mystery for many interested in this Caribbean island, perceived by some as isolated. The island's ability to survive since 1959, despite many obstacles both at home and from abroad, gives rise to the question: How was this possible? What made it tick? Why may the system have been perceived as legitimate? These questions have gained further significance since 1989 and the transitions in many ex-communist countries in the former Soviet bloc. This dissertation provides one answer, as well as insights into the Cuban system, based on evidence mostly from 1980 and 1994. The subject of the research project was approached from a Cuban perspective to shed more light on how events and issues were interpreted on the island. Cuban cultural and historical references shared by Cubans as a nation were taken into account, and were given great importance in interpreting the evidence. The dissertation examines in depth Cuban political history and relates findings to it.

Any understanding of the island has to take into account the specific regional and national context, without which any analysis would be incomplete. This context, among other topics, includes Cuban history, its post-colonial patriotism, media censorship, developing country context and more. Above all the context of post-colonial nation-building, frustrated until 1959, as the most important driver of the system, needs to be kept in mind when reading this text. As Karl Marx pointed out,

> "Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given, and transmitted from the past." (Marx 1852).

Hence, the Cuban system was also set in its own particular historical context.

> "The colonisation of Cuba by the Spanish conquistadores was accompanied by the cruel and relentless extermination of the indigenous population. By 1550 as a consequence of inhuman forced labour, hunger, and disease, only some five or six thousand of the 100,000 Indians, calculated to have existed at the beginning of the sixteenth century survived. The Indians were the first victims of the bloody epoch of colonisation and the original accumulation of capital. There followed the unbridled exploitation and gradual but systematic extermination of entire generations of black slaves...." (Zorina 1975: 2).

The research provides one perspective on why Cuba might have survived 1989. After 1989, Cuba found itself in a time of increased antagonism with some of its former allies such as Czechoslovakia, and found itself more isolated, experiencing some of the worst economic problems since its 1959

Revolution[1]. The new context greatly challenged the stability and future of the system. These extremely difficult times forced the system to reflect on its *raisons d'être*, and respond to the current concerns and attitudes of the population in order to avoid a sudden collapse along the lines of Eastern Europe few years earlier. This dissertation provides a new perspective on Cuban political history during the period. To answer the research questions, it considers the system's endogenous ideas such as Cuba as a society under siege and at war, Cuban patriotism and history of struggle for independence, its national heroes, such as José Martí and his concept of Nuestra América, condemnation of active opposition against the system, the triumphant revolutionary symbolism of 1959, imperialist exploitation, Marxist interpretations of democracy, the US embargo, and immaterial socialist values conflicting the US capitalist model, amongst others.

Examining Cuban politics and especially the country's survival of 1989 is a highly controversial topic, which as such was difficult to tackle in a serious research project and unforeseen research problems had to be addressed and resolved to complete the research. Perhaps, because politically-oriented research on Cuba has to confront many challenges, there appears to be a lack of academic research transgressing two existing delimitations: first, literature written with somewhat limited critical approach, even if using excellent data from within the system; second, critical analyses written from a liberal democratic perspective, often lacking substantial research data from within the system that would provide better understanding of the situation from within. The latter are at times written from an outsider's perspective, and miss important contextual data related to the culture and history of the Cuban nation. This lack can make them incomplete, as capturing the context is crucial for understanding what makes the system tick. This research addressed this gap, with its own limits of objectivity, and tackles sensitive topics from a critical position also using data gathered from within the system. As academic research, this investigation goes beyond journalistic literature, which may be one-sided or have a clear political agenda. This research combines a wide variety of sources, including those published on the island, even if they tend to be rather uncritical and "within the revolution". By doing this, it centres on a certain middle ground, as an academic investigation based on historical evidence from within and outside the system.

The evidence, the research and analysis were approached within the Cuban context, where communist ideological boundaries were openly set, and *Granma,* in particular, served as the key delivery vehicle of information from the Cuban Communist Party (CCP), allowing no space for alternative opinions in the context of one possible acceptable truth, constructed by the leadership. Since 1959, dissenting intellectuals have been marginalised, siphoned off or suppressed in the name of national security, and thus the Cuban public at large has not encountered alternative interpretations of reality that would offer other conceivable solutions.

[1] Throughout the dissertation, "Revolution" refers to the historical event in 1959 and "revolution" to the system and more complex process since 1959.

> "In the 1960s, counterrevolutionaries as well as gays, Jehovah's Witnesses, and other unfortunates who did not fit the revolutionary profile were imprisoned with minimal recourse to legal procedures." (Alfred Padula in Baloyra & Morris 1993: 25).

This research seeks above all to enhance our understanding of why the Cuban system may have survived the challenges of 1989, looking primarily at its internal mechanics, but also considering external factors and the symbolism of the collapse of communism in other parts of the world. The question is not only how the system survived the 1989 crisis, but also how the revolution survived internal crises, how it adapted to new circumstances and what might have allowed it to cope with the 1990 to 1994 material deprivation, the worst since 1959, when discontent was rampant and the future was in question. To achieve this, the research uses explanatory tools and concepts that have been overlooked in the literature on Cuba, or have not been addressed in a similar depth and detail. By examining crises, we can make interesting inferences about the possible reasons for the revolution's ability to cope. Emphasis is placed on understanding Cuban political communication within its national context of the single-party communist state, where access to alternative sources was significantly restricted, with the media officially controlled by the leadership.

To interpret the revolution before and after 1989, the research focuses primarily on legitimacy in relation to the changing circumstances, to explain the system's survival. Other possible factors are also acknowledged, to reveal the full complexity of the situation and suggest further research in different directions that would greatly complement the conclusions of this research. The existing literature provides different pictures of the revolution since 1959, and its legitimating components, which changed during different periods for internal and strategic reasons, namely the 1959-60 initial mass support of the triumph, the 1970s economic challenges, institutionalisation, alliance with the Soviet Union and constitutional changes. 1980 brought new challenges as support from the Soviets started declining, a new post-revolutionary generation of Cubans reached maturity and the country was thrown into the midst of shifting currents from *glasnost* and *perestroika* to the outright collapse of Soviet satellites in Eastern Europe in 1989. The worst for the revolution followed thereafter during the 1990s. The reasons why the system argued for its legitimate right to exist differed during these periods, with some reasons persisting and others being added or even dropped. The post-1989 period appears as the most interesting, since Cuba survived the political changes of its former allies, going against the currents of the time and keeping its communism and revolutionary system. This inspires the questions, what happened during the crucial post-1989 period, and how did it change in comparison to the pre-1989 times? Did Cuba retreat to its original aspirations and ideas of 1959-60, as a country not constrained by the pragmatic alliance with the USSR, or did it carry on with little difference in terms of its internal political culture and project? Were socialism and communism still emphasised after 1989, despite the negative publicity of other countries adopting the neoliberal Washington Consensus? How may Cuba have survived the

shocking material deprivation on the island during the first half of the 1990s, if material provision represented for some an important legitimating force that was now missing? This research answers these and other questions by examining the shifts in the system before and after 1989 and then making analytic conclusions and inferences on the basis of the findings, to enhance our understanding of how the revolution reconsidered its essence to save the system from a collapse, and what aspects it emphasised to encourage public support. Let us now first consider the existing interpretations of the system, before going into more detail on the analytical tools and evidence.

1.2. Interpretations of the Cuban System since the 1960s

The existing literature on Cuba is vast, especially if we include non-academic titles, as the country has been both a great source of inspiration, as well as an object of criticism. Many authors have examined Cuban politics, history and other aspects of the system, hence this chapter looks at some of the most important interpretations of the revolution and how it survived different periods. The chapter considers first the overall body of relevant literature, and then considers in more depth the key authors that have looked at the legitimacy of the system since 1959.

Interpretations of the First Two Decades of the Revolution
Initial interpretations of the system were influenced by the recent nature of the Cuban Revolution, and often examined its origin. US liberal explanations such as Theodore Draper's were often critical of the process, and assigned the system's *raison d'être* to Castro's skilful megalomania and lust for power, assigning a lesser role to the initial mass support and grass roots nature of the system (Draper 1961, 1965). Draper concluded that the system was based on Castro's political skills as a more recent version of Latin American *caudillismo*, even naming it "his revolutionary schiozophrenia" (Draper 1961: 26). He maintained that the system was based more on Castro's political ambition and skills, than socialism, communism or popular support:

> "...it is not what it claims to be. It belongs to a new type of system...the revolution that brought him into power is so ruthlessly distorted that his entire political development begins and ends in fantasy. ...Fidel Castro-as much a demagogue as idealist, as much adventurer as revolutionary, as much anarchist as Communist or anything else-was suddenly and unexpectedly catapulted into power without a real party, real army, or a real program." (Draper 1961: 26).

In a somewhat similar way, Andrés Suárez perceived the basis of the system as a conspiration between Castro and the Partido Socialista Popular, again disregarding its popular basis (Suárez 1967). Originally Cuban and with direct involvement in the revolutionary process, Suárez documented Castro's uses of power and his motivations to take the island towards socialism for opportunistic reasons and his ability to radicalise Cubans (Ibid.). Similar to Draper, Suárez perceived Castro's lack of ideological conviction, exploiting the Cold War for his own ends. The system was therefore based primarily on Castro as a manipulative politician, labelling the system as "Castroism" rather than communism, which the latter adopted for strategic reasons to guarantee Soviet support (Ibid.). These and other authors, implied the central role of Castro, a theme that took on a life of its own in the works of many other authors, assuming the system survived due to Castro's charismatic personality. The initial focus of these liberal analyses shaped the subsequent thinking about the revolution and its essence.

Lloyd Free, on the other hand, researched attitudes of the Cuban people on the island after the Revolution and published his findings in his book *Attitudes of the Cuban People toward the Castro Regime in Late 1960.* Free found that 86

percent of the respondents supported the Government and 43 percent could be called fervent supporters. He noted that many of the fervent supporters mentioned the extraordinary qualities of, and their supreme faith in, Fidel Castro (Free 1960). Gustavo Torroella, a Cuban researcher, found during his research of the attitudes of over one thousand Cuban youths in the early 1960s in his book *Estudio de la juventud cubana*, that they also greatly supported the system. Zeitlin confirmed this notion with his research into the attitudes and post-revolutionary conditions of Cuban workers, and their involvement in political processes and changing power-relations in the workplace (1962, 1970). Zeitlin, Torroella and Free, confirmed the notion of the original popularity of the revolutionary system, and communism:

> "Como se observa en el Cuadro No. 9, el concepto que tiene la juventud cubana del progreso consiste en el avance de la sociedad hacia el socialism-comunismo." (Torroella 1963: 51).

The three authors concluded that amongst the main sources of legitimacy behind the popular support were social emancipation and real benefits, such as social provision or workers' rights, as well as workers' involvement and politicisation by the revolutionary process, which benefited the population soon after 1959. The system's legitimacy seems to have been based on involvement of Cubans in political processes, as recognised in 1960 by Richard Fagen and his emphasis on the impact of the Literacy Campaign that involved and socialised the population (Fagen 1969). Kapcia supported the notion of popular support based on the literacy campaign and land reform, as two prominent examples of processes that brought real benefits to many in post-colonial Cuba and "ensured a lasting loyalty" (Kapcia 2008: 52-53). Other authors, such as Leo Huberman and Paul Sweezy, confirmed this perspective, examining the benefits brought to many Cubans, mainly landless farm workers and labourers, during the early agrarian policies and the initial wide consensus in revolutionary Cuba (Huberman & Sweezy 1961: 78). These were part of the essentially peasant character of the Revolution, with deep roots in historic inequalities and dependence of pre-1959 Cuba. Huberman and Sweezy argued for the "peasant character of the rebel army" and the Revolution, appealing to the interests of the poorest sectors of Cuban society, who gained the most from the subsequent processes which, for them, legitimated the system during the first decade of the revolution:

> "The reason for existence of the Cuban peasant under the old order was thus very simply to be exploited for the benefit of others." (Ibid: 80).

The new relations were confirmed by the Agrarian Reform Law in May 1959, after the initial focus of the revolutionary regime on correcting abuses caused under Batista (Ibid: 145). They wrote about the "unwavering support of the plain working people" convinced that the Revolution served their interests, and whose betrayal would represent the loss of all they believed in (Ibid: 178). The crucial role of the agrarian reform was equally stressed by Azicri, who also discussed nationalisations of private enterprises, as the revolution sought to eliminate social privilege (Azicri 1988: 29). Huberman and Sweezy concluded that, initially, the system was not based explicitly on communist,

but mostly on patriotism and humanitarianism, which guaranteed wide popular support (Huberman & Sweezy 1961: 145).

> "All these factors interacted with the upsurge of mass living standards to create a quantity and quality of popular support for the revolutionary government which has few if any historical parallels." (Ibid.)

In addition, they argued that economic achievements were a significant force, allowing the revolution to survive the first decade (Ibid: 108). This was, however, combined with other factors, such as the exhilaration which came from overthrowing the domination of foreign and domestic bosses, or national pride in standing up to the United States (Ibid: 203). The defiance of the United States was also confirmed by Scheer, Zeitlin, Bonsal, Farber, Boorstein, who recognised the historical confrontation with the United States and its behaviour towards Cuba, and the resulting attitudes on the island, as an important factor in the success of the Revolution (Scheer & Zeitlin 1963, Bonsal 1971, Farber 1976, Boorstein 1968). Fagen supported this notion with his focus on the changing dynamics of Cuban political culture, by focusing on the 1961 literacy campaign, the Schools of Revolutionary Instruction and the CDRs. During the early 1960s, Cuba was not interpreted primarily as nationalistic, with Ramón Eduardo Ruiz recognising the role of nationalism only in 1968 (Ibid: 630).

According to Azicri, the opening of education and public health ensured the loyalty of the people. The crucial role of the health reform was also supported by Hugh Thomas, who as a result labelled the Revolution "immensely popular" (Thomas 1998: 1486). Edelstein also stressed the role of the post-revolutionary redistribution of property and other real benefits, placing great emphasis on the achievements with respect to a general social transformation improving equality, health, education, and secure employment, national sovereignty and dignity. Kapcia argued for the extension of these egalitarian policies towards not only social, but also racial opening (Kapcia 2008: 46), further strengthening public loyalty in the 1960s.

Hugh Thomas covered Cuban history in great depth in 1971 and then again in 1986, and emphasised the historical roots of the Revolution, dating back to the 18th century (Thomas: 1971). The historical roots and legitimacy of the system were also supported by Damián Fernández, Azicri, and Louis J. Pérez. Kapcia labelled these historical roots later with his concept of *cubanía revolucionaria* [revolutionary Cubanness], to stress the cultural element and radicalisation of Cuban patriotism:

> "In order to understand how this newer *cubanía* corresponded to the earlier version, however, we should examine its component beliefs and 'codes', its array of political-historical myths and its discourse. This is especially necessary because myths and discourse have historically been the most effective ways in which the codes (and thus the whole ideology) have been inculcated, preserved, embodied, understood, and transferred across generations and between groups. We are not talking here of ideas, but rather of beliefs and values, that is the substance of

> which a genuinely consensual ideology consists... Thus 'activism' extolled Maceo's resistance at Baraguá in 1878 rather than the previous surrender of Zanjón; extolled the self-sacrifice of Martí rather than the 'betrayal' by the 1908 Constitutional Convention's acceptance of the Platt Amendment..." (Kapcia 2008: 92).

The historical and cultural roots of the Revolution were taken futher by Nelson Valdés. He wrote about the packaging of the revolutionary rhetoric, which promoted endogenous ideas of morality, duty, honour and a concept of an absolute truth, as major components of the country's historical heritage (Valdés 1979). Valdés examined the idea of Cuban millenarianism, or *la generación del centenario*, which fulfilled the long frustrated longings of the Cuban people as a sovereign nation, supporting the link between Cuban historical heritage and patriotism (Ibid.). According to him, the term *la generación del centenario* was used by politically active young people of the early fifties in order to commemorate José Martí's birth in 1853, as a specific link between national heritage and the revolutionary system. Further examining the historical roots of the system, Valdés identified Antonio Guiteras as an anti-imperialist like Martí, but also an anti-capitalist, thus predefining the ideology of the Revolution. He argued that these Cuban heroes, together with Eduardo Chibás, placed great emphasis on the moral behaviour of leaders, ruling on the basis of unquestioned support of the people, thus representing a historical legitimacy of the subsequent system reflecting this heritage (Ibid.). According to Valdés, there was no significant socialist influence in the ideology of the 26th of July Movement, implying that ideological socialism as we know it was not central for the Revolution in its early years, but was integrated later.

Kapcia categorised the content of the revolutionary rhetoric into culturalism, youthism, re-generation and ruralism (Kapcia 2008: 92). Similar to Valdés and others, he also identified explicitly moral foundations and support in the countryside as two key components of the system (Ibid: 93). According to Kapcia, the system initially stressed voluntarism, consciousness and anti-materialism as the revolutionary values underpinning the system (Ibid: 103), with frequent biblical metaphors of the myth of David as a "powerful biblical and mythical legitimacy" (Ibid: 104). The endogenous historical codes contained in the revolutionary rhetoric as part of the legitimating matrix of the system were also examined by Saul Landau. Landau analysed the specific meaning of communism in Cuba in relation to its historical and anticolonial struggle against foreign interests, and the United States in particular, with this confrontation sustaining the system:

> "Cuban communism developed as a direct result of US hostility, not from a Soviet plan, and that the Cuban revolution remained part and parcel of a larger anti-imperial, anticolonial movement. To this day, the ethnocentric press corps does not place Cuba's revolution in the context of its own and world history, nor do most reporters see the revolutionaries themselves as members of a historical fraternity forged in a common commitment dating back to at least 1868." (Landau 2006: 123).

Along with Azicri and others, Landau argued for the historical and geopolitical sources of legitimacy dating from before the Revolution (Landau 2006: 127). As Balfour wrote later, the implicit message was that to carry out the great task of development, Cubans could not be left to their own devices because they had been conditioned by decades of neo-colonialism, underdevelopment and dependency (Balfour 2009: 128). Azicri, however, placed greater emphasis on the interplay between popular support and outside pressure:

> "Domestic and international political dynamics, pressures, threats, and attacks against the revolution, as well as massive support for it by the majority of the Cuban population, provided both the context and the forces pitted against each other throughout this difficult period. The regime has usually explained its policies as a continuation of Cuba's tradition in its struggle for independence since the 1860s." (Azicri 1988: 28).

The outside pressures were also emphasised by Richard Gott, as the beginning of the Cuba-under-siege atmosphere that allowed the political leadership to justify its decisions and policies:

> "These attacks along the Cuban coast were to continue throughout the 1960s, a perpetual irritant to the government and to the population, and an excuse for the Cuban government to maintain an ever more powerful and intrusive secret service. As in the days of Spain, the island's captain-general was obliged to take strong-arm measures against the 'pirates' – and those who supported them on the island." (Gott 2005: 209).

The notion of Cuban nationalism was supported by most Cuba experts, including Lawrence Whitehead and Kapcia, representing a key theme in the existing literature as a characteristic process of post-colonial emancipation. Kapcia, examined the way nationalism was often indirectly evoked in Cuban discourse, where the revolution meant the same as *Patria* [homeland], providing a crucial connection between the local and national (Kapcia 2008: 84). Sebastian Balfour also viewed nationalism as the dominant source of legitimacy of the system during the 1960s and the 1970s, with constant appeals to patriotism, exemplified by the exemplary role of the heroes of the Revolution. In addition, Balfour emphasised the personality cult as a belief in the infallibility of Fidel Castro, and the values of the revolution:

> "The official ethic of the Revolution was an extension into everyday life of the Sierra campaign. The new virtues that Cubans were encouraged to adopt were austerity, discipline, selflessness and comradeship." (Balfour 2009: 76).

Fernández, extended the debate by shifting the focus onto the role of emotions in Cuban political culture, as the key component of the system and its inherent, radical nationalism:

> "Modern projects such as nationalism, ironically, relied primarily on feelings, not reason or imagination exclusively. Emotional attachment to a place, its symbols and myths, and the sense of solidarity with strangers (i.e. co-nationals), where the cornerstone of national identity. Revolution, another modern notion, required more than cost-benefit calculation to spread its fire; it demanded affect and disaffect." (Fernández 2000: 5).

Fernández concluded that affection and passion defined the character of politics in Cuba, based on a strong emotional foundation, even before 1959, regardless of governments and regimes." (Ibid: 41). He even labelled Cuban political culture a "political religion" (Ibid: 63), and identified charisma as contributing force. As other authors mentioned earlier, Fernández also concluded that during the 1960s the system relied also on significant material benefits that the revolutionary government redistributed in-line with its emphasis on egalitarianism. Thus, Fernández summarised that material benefits along with "affection, passion, political religion, and charisma mutually reinforced each other" (Ibid: 69). He identified the importance of the cultural foundation of the system and historical foundations based on frustrated Cuban nationalism (Ibid: 33) as well as the initial role of inclusion of most Cubans in processes of political socialisation as key factors:

> "Soon after the advent of the revolution the state undertook several major campaigns to socialize individuals according to revolutionary norms....values such as collective spirit, *conciencia* [conscience], egalitarianism, self-sacrifice, patriotism, internationalism, and loyalty to Fidel Castro and the symbols of the revolution..." (Ibid: 88).

The notion of the emotional basis of the system's legitimacy was previously supported by James M. Malloy, who concluded that the Revolution built an emotional connection with the Cuban masses in the year 1962 to 1965, building "a large store of affective commitments for the new regime among the masses" (Malloy 1974: 34).

To an extent, Fernández and Malloy attributed legitimacy primarily to affective commitment, overtly simplifying the complex mechanics of system legitimation.

In his book *Cuba in the 1970s*, Carmelo Mesa-Lago examined the second decade of the revolution, which he labelled as the decade of institutionalisation, as part of the radically shifting interpretation of the revolution. Interpreting its origins and the 1973 reform, he argued that the system rejected the division of state power into three branches-executive, legislative and judiciary-as a bourgeois institution (Mesa-Lago 1974a: 67). This concept was later retained in the 1976 Constitution. He labelled Cuba as a "personalistic-charismatic regime" (Ibid: ix), assigning the initial source of legitimacy to Fidel Castro, which allowed the system to maintain the unity of the Cuban people. During the 1970s, however, this was being increasingly replaced by institutions as Castro's "charisma-as a unifying force in the

Revolution-was eroded." (Ibid: 155). In 1974, Andrés Suárez continued to argue for the importance of Cuban media and historical legitimacy of the system:

> "The effort of the Cuban news media to identify Castro's goals with those of José Martí are obvious." (Andrés Suárez 1974: 5).

In the introduction of *Cuba, Castro, and Revolution*, Suchlicki interpreted Castro's support of the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia as a turning point, as a contradiction to the Cuban sense of national independence. Similar to Dominguez and others, he emphasised the role of Fidel Castro (Suchlicki ed. 1972: 18). Unlike most other authors, Suchlicki attributed the system's legitimacy to the grip of the armed forces, making him an outlier in the community of authors focusing on the island (Suchlicki 1972: 19). In addition, Suchlicki identified the embargo as an important source of legitimacy, supporting the continuing siege mentality, which facilitated the mobilisation of the population and justified the demands for personal sacrifices and providing a justification of economic failures. (Suchlicki ed. 1972: 21).

Dominguez interpreted the 1970s by examining Cuban political evolution and prioritised an interpretation of the revolution's roots in Cuba's political, as opposed to its social or economic, confirgurations before 1959. Similar to Mesa-Lago and Suchlicki, Dominguez assigned the primary role to Castro:

> "In January 1959, therefore, the old Cuban political system was fragile, while the resources legitimating revolutionary politics were vital, including the first, the best, the supreme political resource, then and thereafter, Fidel Castro himself." (Dominguez 1978: 196).

Dominguez, however, also explained why he thought that institutions were growing in importance even though, unlike Mesa-Lago, Dominguez maintained Castro's supreme role:

> "Under the two previous twentieth-century political systems in Cuba no single leader had been available to act as the focal point of the legitimation-or relegitimation-of Cuban politics....Castro had charisma, and charisma provides an authority that rests upon the extraordinary quality of the ruler as a person as it is perceived by the citizenry. Charisma depends on the leader's conviction that he does not depend on election by his followers but had been 'elected' by a supernatural authority, either God or some 'historical force,' and on the citizenry's sharing that conviction. Charismatic authority is very unstable and must be routinized if it is to remain successful. The routinization of charisma began very slowly during the 1960s as government legitimacy began to depend more on other people, institutions, and policies; it was not until the 1970s that the process appeared to be taking hold. ...many Cubans distinguished between the failures of the government, which they might be willing to criticize, and Fidel Castro himself, who is exempt from criticism." (Ibid: 197-198).

Dominguez continued stressing the role of the revolutionary leader during the 1970s, but extended further the system's justifications to pre-1959 Cuba as a reference point, and the growing role of institutions. He also argued for the important role of the media in regards to the interpretation of the past:

> "Although the power of, and reliance on, charismatic leadership as a source of legitimation has declined in Cuba, it is still a pillar of the new order....The Cuban revolution was legitimated not only by charisma but also by performance. The message repeated in speeches, in newspaper articles, in broadcasts, in virtually all significant appeals for popular support has been that the revolution delivered Cuba from a terroristic, corrupt, abusive and illegitimate political system. This message generated an immediate source of support. When in the spring of 1960 Lloyd Free asked people about their fears or worries for Cuba, the single most important response was 'a return to the past'. ...This negative legitimacy-the concept that the present government is legitimate because it saved the country from the past-was prominent at the time of Free's survey and is still voiced in official political statements...." (Ibid: 199).

Similar to Kapcia and others, Dominguez continued to argue that the system relied on real achievements in terms of material and social redistribution, development, and eradication of illiteracy, which continued to legitimate the dystem during the 1970s. Marifeli Pérez-Stable broadened this notion by arguing for the impact of economic growth since the 1970s to 1980s (Pérez-Stable 1993b: 74-75), together with the revolution represented by Castro (Pérez-Stable 1993b: 71). Dominguez also argued for the key role of Cuban nationalism, as another dominant legitimating force, and the specific semantic meaning of the concept in the country's discourse:

> "Another equally early source of legitimacy was nationalism. ...Nationalism affirmed the cultural, political, and historical integrity of the Cuban nation. Often *nation* is used to mean the working people of Cuba, or the worker-peasant alliance. ...class enemies are also national enemies. ...The revolution is legitimate at least in part because its enemies, both within and outside its borders, are so despicable. Class enemies are described as 'worms'; foreign enemies, as 'imperialists'" (Dominguez 1978: 200).

Dominguez summarised the "four elements in the legitimation of the revolutionary rule" as including charisma, political deliverance, distributional performance, and nationalism (Ibid: 201). He stressed that political participation in general elections did not legitimate the system, but only contributed to it along with the more important underlying "contact with the masses" (Ibid: 298).

Referring specifically to the 1970s, Azicri presented a number of stabilising factors, with the 1976 Constitution providing a new political and legal framework combining Cuban and Soviet Marxism-Leninism with endogenous Cuban ideas (Azicri 1988: 39). This was combined with the first national

elections since 1959 held in October 1976 (Ibid: 40), also a legitimating factor. He recognised the direct communication with the Cuban people at mass gatherings as a particular exercise of revolutionary democracy, and we can understand it as a Cuba-specific source of legitimacy addressed in this research (Ibid: 241). Similar to Dominguez and others, Azicri brought attention to the growing legitimating role of institutions during the 1970s:

> "The institutionalization process expanded the revolutionary government's legitimacy. The source of its legitimacy somewhat shifted from Castro's original charismatic leadership and the core of revolutionary values to the newly created socialist institutions. However, Castro's centrality continues as the main source of the revolution's traditional legitimacy, and he is the leader towering above all individuals, and institutions. Thus the polity is still ruled by a uniquely qualified charismatic leader, who is also the system's founder and major architect." (Ibid: 70).

The role of participation in mass organisations was described in more detail by Casal, confirming the strong participatory ethos of the system, as a potential source of legitimacy by involvement:

> "The *Organos de Poder Popular* [Organs of People's Power] delegates have the duty to listen to problems, complaints, difficulties, etc., brought in by citizens of their districts. Furthermore, they are required to transmit requests to the corresponding municipal, regional or provincial organization and to report back to their electors on their requests... OPP delegates have scheduled weekly office hours to talk to their electors. ...The masses participate directly in the process of discussion and approval of fundamental laws, etc., from the Family Code to the Constitution. These discussions take place at the work centers and also through the mass organizations such as the CDR. Significant modifications of the laws can emerge (and have emerged) from these dicussions. ...The mass organizations are another instrument for participation of the masses in decision-making. These organizations (CDR, FMC, Central Organi- zation of Cuban Trade Unions, National Association of Small Farmers, Federation of University Students of Cuba, Federation of Intermediate Education Students of Cuba, and the Union of Pioneers of Cuba), 'gather in their midst the various sectors of the population' and 'represent specific interests of the same', according to the first draft of the Cuban Constitution (Article 7). These mass organizations during the early years of the Revolution had as their main goal mobilizing the people to accomplish specific revolutionary tasks (voluntary work, demonstrations, vigilance, etc.). Thus, they were instruments for participation but mostly at the implementation level. Since 1970, these organizations have strengthened their membership, increased their scope of action and gained an increasing role in decision-making." (Casal 1975: 84, 86-87).

Referring to the 1970s, Balfour argued for the continuing presence of the immense energy released by the Revolution, but also a presence of an "Afro-Cuban discourse of the Revolution" where "Angola was a reaffirmation of the strength of the Revolution for many Cubans and a welcome source of national pride after the reverses of the late 1960s and early 1970s." (2009: 128).

In comparison to the interpretations of the 1960s, the literature and depth of analysis have not only grown substantially as revolutionary Cuba generated growing interests among leftist sympathisers as well as liberal critics, but the early interpretations also shifted from focusing excessively on the role of Castro (eg. Draper), to more complex and system-focused analyses (eg. Mesa-Lago, Dominguez). Following the initial focus on the reasons and history of the Revolution itself, authors examined the underlying processes, such as nationalism or radicalisation, and subsequently looked more at the new challenges to the system and its responses. Altogether, the literature covering the first two decades identified a whole range of factors that may have contributed to the stability of the system and its survival of numerous challenges.

Interpretations of the 1980s and 1990s: Collapse of the Socialist Bloc

Azicri analysed Cuban political traditions and the system's structure of the first half of the 1980s in his 1988 book *Cuba: Politics, Economics and Society*. He addressed the topic of legitimacy in a chapter entitled *The Cuban Republic*, still emphasising Castro's personality, arguing that: "...this created a system whereby the regime's authority has always been highly centralized in and around Castro...Castro further defined the revolution as being Marxist-Leninist, 2 December 1961" (Azicri 1988: 26-27). Azicri examined 1980 Mariel, interpreting it as a renewal of the system, concluding that Mariel reawakened the revolutionary consciousness, even if it encouraged some inside, and many outside, the island to question the regime's legitimacy. "Mariel was too controversial internally and externally to be settled easily. Opposing interpretations were given as to its causes, meaning, and consequences for Cuba..." (Ibid: 43). According to Azicri, Cubans were looking for ways of preserving the system, with nationalism playing an increasingly legitimating role to support socialism (Ibid: 98).

Fernández interpreted the events of the 1980 Mariel and concluded that for many Cubans, the spectacle of the boatlift was a breaking point: "[Cubans] could not accept living under a system that encouraged that kind of behaviour; basic moral norms were transgressed in a system that portrayed itself as a highly moral." (Ibid: 87-88). He did not explain, however, why Cuba could have possibly survived such a crisis. Nor did he explain on the basis of what evidence he reached such a generalising conclusion. He examined the erosion of legitimacy without establishing his use of the concept and its mechanics, attributing overt emphasis to the role of emotional legitimacy, with little attention to the different decades and internal evolution of the system. Despite not setting out his methodology and evidence, Fernández instinctively identified a whole range of issues that were part of the Cuban discourse. Nevertheless, part of his conclusion was that nationalism was growing in

importance in regards to the loyalty of the people, as it appealed widely to popular sentiment:

> "The revolution required an emotional infrastructure to triumph over Batista as well as to sustain itself in power. Realising that the Cuban masses were losing that loving feeling, Fidel and other leaders emphasized themes and leitmotives that pulled at the heartstrings of Cubans, specifically nationalism in its Cuba-the-besieged-island variant and the glories of the revolutionary struggle. Since the 1980s the government launched two major campaigns to do just that....Without the revolution there would not be an independent *patria*. ...An attempt to reignite the politics of passion and the crusade for absolute moral ends." (Ibid: 116).

Fernández also argued for the role of international crises, which, he believed, had been used to encourage nationalist passion among Cubans (Ibid: 117). He suggested the system relied primarily on popular support. Louis A. Pérez Jr. also addressed nationalism aimed at the United States as a contributing factor. Similar to Fernández, Pérez argued that anti-US attitudes were promoted by the revolution as a legitimating issue, especially after the Bay of Pigs invasion (Louis A. Pérez Jr. 1992: 501). In addition, Pérez Jr. supported the notion of emigration as a key factor that guaranteed the internal success of the system (Ibid.).

The question of Cuban economics received renewed attention in relation to the 1980s and especially the 1990s as declining economic performance greatly challenged the system, had a negative impact on its legitimacy, and was understood by liberal scholars as an important factor in the collapse of the countries of the Soviet bloc. Andrew S. Zimbalist analysed Cuban economics and other aspects of this period in great detail. According to Zimbalist, the siege mentality and related repression remained relevant in the late 1980s and 1990s and helped to secure stability:

> "Indeed, Castro and the Party justifiably perceive Cuba to be more under seige from external forces today than at any time in the revolution's past. This perception has always brought increased repression at home. The incarceration of political dissidents, the operation of the *brigadas de respuesta rapida*, the enhanced control over the media, the cancellation of the satiric film *Alicia en el pueblo de maravillas* (Alice in Wonderland) and other signs all point to increased repression, concurrent with the suggested liberalisation reforms of the Fourth Party Congress. The regime sees the repression as requisite for its survival. It is probably right. ...Castro is still viewed as the legitimate defender of Cuban sovereignty by large numbers of Cubans. It is improbable in the extreme that the 40% to 50% of the Cuban population that is black or mulatto will accept passively the vision of Cuba's future offered by right-wing, white Cuban exiles in Miami. Large numbers of white or mulatto Cubans are also prepared to defend the Castro government. As long as the perceived alternative is violence along with the highly publicised visions of the Cuban

American National Foundation, even strong critics of the Castro government will defend it." (Zimbalist 1992: 11-12).

Like Huberman and Sweezy in the 1960s, Zimbalist concluded that economic growth between 1965 and 1984 was 6.3%, which was a "very healthy, if not impressive, rate of growth and stands out in sharp relief when compared to the growth experienced in the rest of Latin America" (Zimbalist 1987: 93). The crucial role of economic growth in legitimating the system was again revisited by Claes Brundenius, who argued for the important interplay between economic growth coupled with equity (Brundenius 1984). Brundenius argued this was a legitimating factor during the 1960s, 70s as well as 1980s, despite the growing economic problems (Brundenius 1981: 165). Zimbalist provided several contributing factors to explain the legitimacy of the system and its survival after 1989, including repression, Castro's personal legitimacy and the fear of a possible return of Cuban exiles, with the last one shared with the conclusions of Darren Hawkins. Hawkins, however, expanded this explanation by poiting out that, besides the fear of Cuban exiles, Cubans also feared a possible disintegration into chaos or civil war (Hawkins 1998, 2001). Darren Hawkins addressed the question of post-Cold War Cuba and its legitimacy, explaining that despite the 1990s as a decade of economic difficulty and the rise of a post-revolutionary generation, Cuba appeared to maintain a minimal standard of legitimacy. Hawkins also concluded that, on the whole, Cubans still believed in the political institutions more than in its alternatives. In addition, he concluded that low levels of blank or spoiled ballots during elections suggested continuing legitimacy (Hawkins 2001: 77).

This was accompanied by the legitimating force of socialist programmes, such as free medical care and education, subsidized food and transportation (Ibid: 80). Most importantly, sharing with the findings of this research, Hawkins warned that liberal democratic political institutions were "deeply tainted" due to their association with "corruption, underdevelopment, and poor governance during their brief existence from 1940 to 1952." (Ibid: 80). Referring to the economic, social and political problems in Latin America and Russia since the 1990s, Hawkins established that such new post-Cold War context failed to persuade Cubans of the qualities of liberal democracy. He also identified the established revolutionary norms as key legitimating factors that retained their hold in the 1990s. On the basis of this interpretaton, we can assume that the symbolic meaning of the possibility of the United States prevailing over revolutionary Cuba represented a threat of a return to the Batista terror, making the revolution a safer option under most circumstances, including the most extreme hardship of the 1990s. This provided a major legitimating force and encouragement of popular support. To strengthen the explanatory potential of this factor, Hawkins also explained the construction of meaning of pre-revolutionary Cuba in its discourse, and the important role of the country's media:

> "The Cuban regime constantly reinforces images of a miserable pre-revolutionary life through the media and the educational system. To the extent that Cubans believe the argument that the revolution has

> improved their lives and there is evidence that a large number does." (Ibid: 81).

Focusing specifically on the mid-1980s, Gott argued that the Cuban leadership started organising Cuban defence in terms of a "people's war" to resist a possible American attack, as a result of declining Soviet defence assistance (Ibid: 274). The system at the same time started emphasising nationalism as the main source of loyalty:

> "Cuba's government no longer justifies its existence on the attempts it once made to construct socialism. It emphasises instead its heroic and long-lasting nationalist struggle against the United States, a campaign that still strikes a sentimental chord in much of Latin America." (Gott 2005: 324).

Similar to Pérez Jr., Gott attributed the stability of the system partially to the periodic syphoning off of the disloyal parts of the population (2005: 212), in contrast with the manifestations of support that accompanied it. After Mariel, the continuing marches to demonstrate support represented an important legitimating force and demonstrations of faithfulness to the Revolution (Ibid: 268). The notion of the importance of emigration was also confirmed by the sociological research of Ernesto Rodríguez Chávez, who researched evidence since 1959. Chávez looked at the shifting perceptions on emigration and émigrés in regards to Mariel and the *maleconazo*, concluding that emigration was since the 1980s increasingly perceived as economic and gradually lost its political content. He based this conclusion on sociological data and the fact that a growing number of black and less educated Cubans were leaving, following similar migratory patterns in the rest of the region from developing to developed countries, and especially the United States. Cuban emigration was increasingly being defined within this context and thus acquired a new meaning. For these reasons, the phenomenon lost its delegitimating potential. Kapcia extended the emigration argument further, recognising its role of getting rid of dissenters, but also releasing potential unemployment. Kapcia however saw emigration as also having a possibly negative impact on legitimacy (Kapcia 1995: 10).

The theme of popular support was also addressed by Nelson Valdés, who argued for the sweeping appeal of the patriotic revolution beyond ideological questions, as a dominant legitimating force relevant both during the 1980s, as well as after 1989 (Valdés 1992: 207). Valdés also addresses the question of Cuban discourse and its endogenous context, as well as its limited horizon:

> "Political language discloses codes-that is, recurring categories with culturally defined meanings. The codes express imbedded ideas that shape our perception of reality. They manifest shared assumptions, whereas other aspects of observed reality are excluded." (Ibid: 208).

According to Valdés, we can observe a clear continuity in some of the basic values of the revolution before 1989. He argued that even in 1940, most political parties in Cuba shared a common terminology and rhetoric

emphasising national independence and justice. According to Valdés, Marxism only converged with the already existing basics of Cuban political discourse during the 1960s and 1970s, with its focus on equality and exploitation, while emphasis on morality retained its prime position (Valdés 1992: 213). This consistent internal composition of the discourse can thus be understood as a persisting source of legitimacy of the system, helping to explain its continuity despite the decline in the legitimacy of communism worldwide. Valdés emphasised the role of the far-reaching endogenous roots of the revolution in the following words:

> "The marriage of politics, nationalism, and morality was initiated by Félix Varela. A moral person, he wrote, was one who was useful to the fatherland...Cuban revolutionaries may define themselves as Marxists and rugged materialists, but below the surface declarations one finds utopian socialists consistently submitting to the logic of a moral code." (Ibid: 214).

According to Valdés, the insulting approach toward the United States or toward the dissent on the island can be understood within the country's political culture pre-dating the Revolution, originating from a belief that one's opponent is treacherous, understanding opposition as betrayal (Ibid: 217). He identified a self-sacrificial component of the revolutionary culture, and attributed it to the endogenous "Catholic-Hispanic values" also emphasising discipline (Ibid: 216). The emphasis on sacrifice for the country, according to Valdés, also had deep roots in the country's political culture and such expectation was thus perceived as historically legitimate:

> "Death permeates Cuba's historical and political imagination. The willingness to die for a political ideal or for the nation represents the highest form of patriotism and a true measure of altruism." (Ibid: 221).

This political culture, combining endogenous concepts of morality and patriotism, thus contributed to the legitimacy of the system, since it it encouraged self-denying support under any circumstances. This allowed Cuba to cope with an overwhelming enemy at the Bay of Pigs, in Angola or simply in isolation as during the Special Period. Along with others, Valdés recognised nationalism as the prominent underlying force, stretching even beyond the limits of self-preservation:

> "José Martí taught...Nationalism, as the secular religion of a country struggling for independence, accepted suicide as long as it was done with a national purpose." (Ibid: 223).

This notion of the continuing prime role of nationalism in regards to the system's legitimacy was also strongly supported by Kapcia, especially due to its unique relevance to most Cubans across regions or ideologies, resulting in a strong unifying capacity desperately needed by the political leadership (Kapcia 2000: 234). Along with Balfour and others, Kapcia also argued for the increasing role of nationalism in the 1990s, with a new trend to redefine the Party in more nationalist, *cubanista,* terms emphasising the Revolution's

historical roots and Cuban character. This resulted from a need "for a more responsive structure to reclaim lost legitimacy and broaden its appeal..." (Kapcia 1995: 23) (Balfour 2009: 155-159). Saul Landau supported the continuing primacy of Cuban nationalism, as a result of similar processes after World War II in other developing countries in Africa, the Middle East and Asia that rose up against their colonial masters, adopting an anti-imperialist discourse as other countries including Ghana, Algeria, Syria, Egypt, India or China (Landau 2006: 118, 122).

The stability of the system during the 1980s and 1990s was addressed by Isaac Saney, who examined the country's legal system, foreign relations, race relations and emigration. Saney mentioned the contradictory meaning of Cuban emigration for different political groups, and their use of the issue for political ends. He argued that legitimacy continued to come from the longevity of the system as such, and commented that elections, for example, were connected in the minds of the people with corruption and disenfranchisement (Saney 2004: 48). Saney focused on the particular structures of the government and political practices, arguing they were perceived as legitimate on the basis of Cuba's historical development and experience. He identified in particular, the concept of the single-party system within Cuban national history long before Marxism-Leninism:

> "The necessity for a single party derives from Martí's writing on the imperative of forging national unity and his experience in building the Partido Revolucionario Cubano [Cuban Revolutionary Party-PRC]. The single-party system was conceptualised as 'an alternative to the foreign imposed political process, in which Cubans were incited to divide themselves along the lines of one or other of the political parties each of which fought to attain political power for itself." (Ibid: 46-47).

Cuban academic Fernando Martínez Heredia with his co-author also prioritised the historical foundations of the system within the developing, post-colonial world. Similar to other authors and this research, they asserted that the system was based on the initial support for the Revolution, and its symbolism as a Cuban nation-building project, standing for change and progress:

> "The victory of the people's army and the tremendous struggles that followed thoroughly destroyed and discredited the previous system. Revolutionary accomplishments left far behind prior illusions, and overcame assaults, enormous changes, miserable circumstances, chaos, deprivation, mistakes, trials, and misfortunes. In the process the foundations of Cuban socialism were erected, with new bonds of solidarity formed between the people, the communities, and the nation. The authority of the revolutionary leadership was conclusively legitimized...The consensus and continued legitimization of the Cuban Revolution has in many fundamental ways been shaped by the political behavior of the masses. The power of the state is not only of popular origin, but it is identified as the appropriate means for producing change, for defending the revolution, and for guaranteeing popular

> victories, progress, and the continuation of the regime. In spite of its tenacious bureaucratization, shortcomings in the service sector, and various mistakes, it would be unwise to think that Cubans tend to reject this powerful state; on the contrary, their experience has, on balance, been positive and the power of the state is viewed as belonging to them." (Martínez Heredia & Pierce 1991: 22).

The authors identified differences between Cuba and former communist countries, emphasising the need to perceive the island within its own regional context, in many ways different from Eastern Europe, instead situating Cuba in Latin America, as a small, underdeveloped, militant country of the developing world, and its deep rooted historical conflict with North American imperialism (Martínez Heredia & Pierce 1991: 19). The authors asserted that Cuban socialism was less based on theoretical imperatives, and more on the revolutionary history, which from its inception leaned towards socialist policies in line with egalitarianism, emancipatory development and redistribution. They argued for the role of specific components of the revolution, and explained the meaning of this master signifier as a supreme foundation. According to them, the central promises of the Revolution were:

> "(a) permanently freeing Cuba from foreign domination, and guaranteeing Cuba's sovereignty and self-determination; (b) mobilizing, educating, and organizing the popular forces in the midst of tremendous anticapitalist changes...; and (c) restructuring from the ground up the means of production and the reproduction of the forms of social life, political power, and the body of prevailing ideas and beliefs so that the economy, political power, and ideology would remain in the hands and at the service of the majority." (Martinez Heredia & Pierce 1991: 19). "This specific meaning of the revolution and socialism then explains the limited impact of the collapse of other socialist countries at the end of the Cold War." (Martinez Heredia & Pierce 1991: 27).

The authors found a similar function of the system's communication processes as this research, concluding that the people and the leadership maintained direct communication, as a basic feature of the system improving its abilty to remain stable at all times (Martinez Heredia & Pierce 1991: 33). This notion was supported by Rafael Hernández, who pointed out the key role of Cuban media (Hernández et al. 1991: 41).

Along with other Cuba experts, Julie M. Feinsilver argued for healthcare as a major legitimating force in the context of the developing world (Feinsilver 1993). According to Feinsilver, this source of legitimacy was increasingly gaining prominence during the late 1980s and then also during the 1990s:

> "The priority Cuba places on health-care investments despite the costs is partially accounted for by the government's striving for legitimacy in an adverse geopolitical situation. Because they are not freely elected, socialist governments rely on their ability to meet the socio-economic needs of their populations to legitimize their regimes." (Feinsilver

> 1993: 200). "The inability of the Castro government to provide adequate food and other basic consumer goods during this time of adversity has led many to question the legitimacy of his rule. Nonetheless, prior success in meeting basic needs helps to explain why this government has survived so long after the fall of the Berlin Wall." (Ibid: 211).

Feinsilver argued for an interaction of a number of factors that contributed to the survival of the system into the 1990s, also including "nationalism, tight domestic security, and more important, the lack of alternatives." (Ibid: xv). Despite her argument about the deligitimating impact of the economic crisis that some saw as terminal, Kapcia examined the impact of the crisis on the system's legitimacy and stability in greater depth, and concluded that the crisis was economic rather than political (Ibid 1995: 7). This research examines further the different sources of legitimacy in the 1990s, reflecting the loss of a relatively good economic performance of the 1980s.

Writing in the 1990s, Carmelo Mesa-Lago argued that the system would collapse (Carmelo Mesa-Lago 1993), along with Enrique A. Baloyra and James A. Morris (Baloyra & Morris 1993) and Juan M. Del Aguila (Del Aguilla 1994). When Cuba, as one of the remaining communist countries remained however, the reasons for the survival received renewed attention in academic circles. According to Kapcia, Cuba experts came with different answers:

> "For some, its roots were to be found in the past and the system's exceptionality. Damián Fernández saw it in a continuity of Cuba's politics of affection, solidarity and loyalty, while Antoni Kapcia emphasised the system's underlying ideological cement, picking up a theme which had been largely unchallenged to that point. ...The question of the crucial role of Fidel Castro regained its explanatory force in the 1990s." (Kapcia 2008c: 640, 644).

A general agreement on the topics has not been reached, even though authors do often recognise a mixture of different factors that might have contributed to it (nationalism, social provision, and culturalism).

Kapcia examined in detail Cuban national identity before and after 1959 and also Cuban discourse in terms of words used to define "Cubanness", as well as why the system survived the 1980 and 1994 crises and the end of the Cold War. He argued for a "growing crisis of party legitimacy" since the late 1980s (Kapcia 2000: 204). Through internal debate since the Rectification, the system addressed problems of inefficiency, corruption and the rise of a "bureaucratic class" (Hable 1991: 57-65; Bengelsdorf 1994: 91-4) (Kapcia 2000: 205). The beginnings of this process dating back to the mid-1980s were interpreted by Kapcia as a way of explaining the system's survival of 1989 and the 1990s:

> "Even before the post-1989 crisis in Eastern Europe evolved, therefore, the Revolution was in the throes of both its own triple crisis and a

process of self-questioning and debate, which, indeed, may be one reason for the system's eventual survival beyond that new and frightening challenge. ...While the post-1989 crisis was enormous, it was actually wider and older than it seemed, with its roots in internal tensions, problems, debates and crises that were somewhat familiar to many Cubans and were already being addressed along familiar lines. In that sense, the real crisis point for Cuba was not 1989 or 1991, as it seemed, but 1984-5; once the cycle of debate and contest was under way from that date, the adjustment to the supplementary crises, although more urgent and more extreme than any had imagined, was actually just that – adjustment of the existing strategy, and not so much a fundamental revision." (Kapcia 2000: 207).

In the 1990s, Kapcia perceived a return to *Che* as a unifying symbol relevant to both the young and old in Cuba, and a source of legitimacy with its origins in the 1960s (Kapcia 2000: 210-211). He termed the August 1994 crisis as the worst since the 1960s (Kapcia 2000: 217). The evidence was also the 30 per cent of abstention or spoiled ballots during the 1992 municipal elections (Kapcia 2000: 217).

Along with Gott, Pérez Jr. and others, Kapcia interpreted Cuban migration as a way for the system to release discontented or exhausted Cubans, many of whom were connected to the black market, and argued that the system used the issue as an embarrassing weapon against the United States (Kapcia 1995: 1-2). Most importantly, he interpreted the events of July-August 1994 also as a crisis at government-to-government level, instead of an internal issue of the system (Kapcia 1995: 2). According to him, the 1994 crisis was a result of the increasing tensions in Cuban society since 1989, and to a limited extent of an increasing alienation of the younger generations, who were "less amenable to the repetitions of older slogans and demanding alternative solutions" (Ibid: 9). Kapcia argued that the episode "represented a collective protest against and escape from the daily grind of existence in the Cuba of 1994" in an environment riddled with boredom, loss of hope, rising petty crime and expanding black economy "into which even the most loyal citizens are obliged to descend in order to survive." (Ibid.). With these descriptive details, he stressed the depth and seriousness of the crisis, inspiring further questions about the ability of the system to survive it, especially in the midst of extreme material deprivation, seen by other authors as an important legitimating factor (eg. Feinsilver) – one of the questions addressed by this research.

Kapcia argued that the continuing guarantees of social provision, healthcare and education remained as the prominent sources of legitimacy, along with guarantees of full employment and a crime-free environment (Ibid.). Hence, he argued that "issues of 'democratisation' were often shelved provided that the benefits of 'citizenship' continued to be guaranteed." (Ibid.). The system was based on a strong "participatory ethos" (Kapcia 1995: 8). In particular, he perceived a legitimating role of the *parlamentos obreros* [workplace assemblies] that served to discuss the serious problems during the 1990s, involving the average Cuban in decisions, making it more difficult to blame the government (Ibid: 13). The role of participatory politics was also

supported by Edelstein, who argued that the population socialized before 1959 was formed within an authoritarian political culture in which opportunities for participation on the part of the working class and the peasantry did not exist, and hence the revolution brought real involvement in the country's political organisations during the institutionalisation of the revolution, thus delivering grater equality and participation, if judged in the Cuban national context (Edelstein 1995). Kapcia also investigated more recent destabilising factors, such as the new emphasis on profit and tourism that he interpreted as contradicting the ideology underlying the system (Kapcia 1995: 10). Tourism generated increased tensions with the black economy, and this was accompanied by growing inequality (Ibid: 11-12).

Kapcia interpreted Cuba in view of the recent transitions in Eastern Europe, and argued that in Cuba there was no organised opposition group similar to the Church or Solidarity in Poland, which might have contributed to the survival of the Cuban system since 1989 (Ibid: 20). He analysed the reasons behind the stability of the system in the following words:

> "...there are more basic reasons why an alternative system is not at this stage a likely, or even desired, outcome for many Cubans. The first is the residual, if weakened, loyalty of a sufficient number of citizens to a system (and a leadership) which, for all its faults, has much still to offer, has firm popular and historical roots (unlike many of the pre-1989 Eastern European systems), and which, by allowing benefits to be allocated extensively and safety valves to operate, may still enjoy majority support." (Ibid: 21).

Edelstein supported this notion of a different national context in Cuba, and found that Cuban nationalism had a completely different role to nationalism in Eastern Europe, since in Cuba it was in favour of the system, while in Eastern Europe it was rather against it due to it being a Soviet satellite (Edelstein 1995: 24). Edelstein concluded that this was a major factor, which contributed to the stability of the system despite the collapse in other communist countries:

> "In Cuba the government is correctly seen as the defender of the nation, while the prospect of a return of the Miamians in the event of the fall of the government is repugnant to most Cubans." (Edelstein 1995: 24).

Kapcia estimated that the population included one third committed, a third somewhat loyal, and another third opposed (Ibid: 22). He also identified renewed concerns about the possible return of *batistianos* and the impact of such an event on the social provisions granted by the communist system, as another pro-stability factor, which had an impact not only on the loyalists, but also on the undecided (Ibid: 22). He argued for the system's ability to adapt and shift as a contributing factor for its survival (Ibid.) – a topic addressed by this research in terms of shifting interpretations of the Cuban discourse and its inherent sources of legitimacy.
According to him, during the 1990s the system increased its emphasis on the past achievements of the revolution (public health and education), even if

"The historical role which Castro had assigned Cubans of standing up to the US was difficult to sustain when they were going hungry." (Ibid: 153).

Kapcia's argument about popular involvement in political processes was also supported by Balfour, who argued that:

> "...in the wake of the corruption trials of 1989...the leadership had launched a campaign of mass assemblies to shore up the legitimacy of the regime...the Cuban leadership tended to play down analogies with the October Revolution in favour of the autochtonous origins of the Cuban Revolution and its Latin American connections....Socialism became a synonym for the peculiar nature of Cuban experience, though Cuban leaders continued to use the rhetoric of Marxism-Leninism. The works of Che Guevara, a fierce critic of Soviet revisionism, were once again promoted by Castro. ...Castro renewed the Guevarist appeal to justice and egalitarianism... Castro's continued legitimacy among Cubans rested above all on his appeal to beleaguered nationalism. ...Castro's demands for ever greater sacrifices by the Cuban people could be justified by the 'blockade' of Cuba and political centralisation legitimised by the sense of siege." (Balfour 2009: 155-159).

This chronological summary of relevant literature, focusing on the themes of this research, provides a widely encompassing perspective on what other scholars concluded about the Cuban system and its legitimacy. Nevertheless, most, if not all, of the authors recognise to a larger or lesser extent the role of Fidel Castro and his perceived charisma. In view of the major focus on Castro's charisma as a source of legitimacy, a special section is dedicated to this theme, so far purposely excluded from the chronological order.

Charismatic Leadership of Fidel Castro

A large number of interpretations of Cuban history and politics refer to legitimacy in greater or lesser connection to Fidel Castro's charismatic leadership, as an important base-layer of the system. Leycester Coltman, Tad Szulc, Hawkins, Azicri, Balfour, Fernández and many others see this as a key source of legitimacy. In most cases, the authors do not provided a precise definition or the mechanics of the concept. Some, however, have been more specific. Referring specifically to 1962 to 1965, Malloy called it an emotional "affective commitment" by the Cuban masses, a notion later developed by Fernández, suggesting a direct link to the system's legitimacy (Malloy 1974: 34). As a result, the connection between leaders and followers was powerfully affective and constituted charismatic authority (Ibid: 64). Mesa-Lago labelled Cuba a "personalistic-charismatic regime" (Mesa-Lago 1974a: ix), but along with Valdés added institutionalisation (bureaucracy) as a way of securing long-term stability (Valdés 1979: 16). Huberman and Sweezy acknowledged the role of Fidel's charisma, defined as "the inborn gift of being able to inspire in people a mixture of passionate love and blind faith" (Huberman & Sweezy 1961: 177). Thomas argued that Castro's "magnetism and oratory" have enabled him to direct Cuba "very much according to his own designs" (Thomas 1998: 1485).

One of the few that defined charisma as a source of legitimacy was Dominguez:

> "...charisma provides an authority that rests upon the extraordinary quality of the ruler as a person as it is perceived by the citizenry. Charisma depends on the leader's conviction that he does not depend on election by his followers but had been 'elected' by a supernatural authority, either God or some 'historical force,' and on the citizenry's sharing that conviction... Castro reiterated the legitimacy of his claim to rule, as coming from history-as-god. ...The cause, the idea, history incarnate in the people elects the leader to serve, to implement, and hence to rule: the essence of charismatic legitimation. ...many Cubans distinguished between the failures of the government, which they might be willing to criticize, and Fidel Castro himself, who is exempt from criticism." (Dominguez 1978: 197-198).

Reviving the topic after the 1960s and 1970s, Hawkins related charismatic authority to the survival of Cuba after 1989, arguing that it "offered the regime a degree of legitimacy missing in most other Communist countries." (Hawkins 2001: 14). He stressed that this was even more valuable, since Cuba was the socialist country most dependent on Soviet aid (Ibid.).

Fernández defined the concept as a relationship between the people and the leaders, seen as based on attachments akin to those inspired by religious feelings such as rapture, faith, hope, elation, devotion, and love (Fernández 1974: 64). He focused the attention on the biblical metaphors in the discourse as a source of charismatic authority, along with events such as the landing of a dove on Castro's shoulder on 8th January 1959 and, what he perceived, a "deification of Fidel Castro" (Fernández 2000: 74):

> "In that speech [History Will Absolve Me] Castro portrayed himself as a man with a mission entrusted to him by history." (Fernández 2000: 71)

Other authors, such as Kapcia, argued in favour of a greater focus on deeper structural and historical forces, but also recognised the role of charisma:

> "...Castro's personal intervention in August 1994 turned a dangerous moment of popular discontent into a pivotal moment of popular support, it reminded us that structural explanations alone cannot suffice. Second, Castro's protracted departure from the active political equation may make such approaches more relevant than before." (Kapcia 2008c: 647).

Balfour, on the other hand, prioritised the use of language by the leader:

> "Castro's popularity was due not only to what he said but also to the way in which he said it. His power of rhetoric and flamboyant style captured the imagination of the world's mass media and ensured that

Cuba received an attention out of all proportions to its international importance." (Balfour 2009: 132).

There appears to be a broad consensus amongst most Cuba experts that a force broadly labelled as charisma and emanating from Fidel Castro did contribute to the legitimacy and stability of the system. Cuba experts deal with Castro's charismatic leadership despite his own repeated reminders that the revolution was not personified by him or anyone else, but was instead a historical process. Further questions will arise in research focusing on the Cuba after 2006 and the gradual disappearance of Fidel Castro from public eyes. With its focus on the time up until 1994, this research makes occasional references to charisma, in relation to speeches by Castro and the way he appealed to popular sentiment with his own rhetorical style, understanding the concepts along the lines of Balfour. The concept is, however, a minor explanatory tool for the conclusions of this research, prioritising instead the focus on discursive strategies and more tangible sources of legitimacy in the discourse. To some extent, some evidence of this research can be used to shed more light on how charisma functioned through the means of public or televised speeches and interviews, to reaffirm the respect and trust in Castro and the language he used to reflect this by strengthening an already existing emotional connection with the audience by appealing to widely held attitudes. This might have allowed Castro to generate bonds of trust and loyalty.

Defining charisma as the interplay of language and affective emotions, this research looks into what was being said, how, and with what ideas, concepts, cultural references, reflecting certain specific attitudes and issues within the Cuban field of meaning, thus interpreting reality into a political project with a direction.

Contribution of this Research

The existing literature offers a whole plethora of factors that may have contributed to the longevity of the Cuban system during challenging moments and at different periods. The initial analyses overemphasised the alleged manipulative role of Castro, and were for this reason extended by more system-oriented analyses. Some themes, such as the role of nationalism or Castro's charismatic leadership have been present throughout, while others, including the 1970s institutionalisation and pragmatic alliance with the Soviets have been added. Since 1959, the analysis deepened to include endogenous cultural and historical codes (eg. Valdés, Kapcia) and other topics. Overall, the existing authors have not compared systematically the possible legitimating factors between different decades, and especially after 1989, either because their writings preceded this date, or because they provided a chronological historical narrative or systemic analysis. They have also not looked at the legitimating forces at the base of the system in general, to compare them with new evidence from the island and the situation during the troubling first half of the 1990s, to elucidate how the system reflected the new domestic and international circumstances in order to secure its future. Some authors have examined the legitimacy of the system, but not in a comparative way as a tool to understand the longevity of the Cuban system. Instead, in many cases, they have identified different processes and factors, but did not assign them the

important role of generating legitimacy, while shifting or remaining constant in time, conveyed to the populace through the country's discourse. Hence, even though the authors often do touch on the topics that helped the revolution survive, they examined them from a non-comparative, sometimes non-systematic, historical perspective. Authors that have covered pre- and post-1989 Cuba have not compared the sources of legitimacy from both periods to demonstrate what the system kept and what it replaced to reflect the new challenging situation after 1989.

Politically oriented research on Cuba has to confront many obstacles, such as conducting such projects on the island immersed in its under-siege political culture and suspicion towards unfamiliar outsiders gathering information. Especially sensitive topics using evidence from the 1980 Mariel boatlift and the 1994 *maleconazo* are very difficult to research in Cuba, since doing so may be perceived as too controversial for the communist system. Having successfuly transgressed these limitations, this research improves our understanding of the system. A good range of writings from authors such as Jaime Suchlicki, Jorge Domínguez, Susan Eckstein, Susan Kaufman Purcell, David Rothkopf, Leyva de Arnoa or Juan J. López cover Cuba from a political perspective, but are all too often constrained by their liberal bias. Other publications by Cuban researchers on the other hand, such as Arnaldo León Silva, Jorge Ibarra, Luis Suárez Salazar, Ernesto Rodríguez Chávez, Roberto González Gómez, Soraya Castro Mariño, Luis Acanda González, or Rafael Hernández, tend to cover Cuban politics and history from an equally biased and perhaps insufficiently critical position, either due to their belief in the system or self-censorship present in Cuban academia. This research goes beyond this dichotomy and takes more of a middle ground, providing a more balanced interpretation.

An important part of the literature is written from a historical point of view, analysing several decades, or in some cases, even the whole of Cuban history. These sources include authors such as Azicri, Kapcia, Dominguez, John M. Kirk, Suchlicki, Thomas, Gott, Ramon Eduardo Ruiz, and others. Many of the books were published before 1989, or if published afterwards, focus on different aspects of the system. They do not analyse in similar depth the sources of legitimacy of the system, its discourse and survival of 1989. Interestingly, more recent large-scale research of the public was conducted by Gallup in 2009, which confirmed that 47 percent of Cuban respondents continued to approve of their political leadership (Gallup 2009), suggesting some continuity in the perceived legitimacy of the system. These rare cases of quantitative research on the island continue to support the thesis that the system has relied, amongst other factors, on legitimacy possibly correlating with popular support, which has allowed it to survive many challenges since 1959. This research complements such analyses by providing possible reasons that may have contributed to the perceived legitimacy of the system.

The various sources (Kapcia, Azicri, Huberman and Sweezy, Azicri, Edelstein) examining post-revolutionary social transformations as key sources of legitimacy inspire the question of how the system promoted these achievements, if at all, some thirty years later, when they became an

established part of the system, possibly taken for granted by the younger generations, in the midst of the material hardship of the late 1980s and the early 1990s. The question of the role of socialism, as examined by Valdés for example who concluded that the system was not about socialism between 1959-60, inspires the question of what was socialism's role in the 1980s and especially the 1990s. Kapcia's notion of the important role of endogenous codes provides an opportunity to investigate these further, in regards to the 1980s and especially the 1990s, in order to shed more light on the internal mechanics, language, patterns of reasoning and shifts. Hence, this research addresses these and covers a number of gaps, and research limitations. It extends our understanding of the system, and provides a new angle on Cuba's political history using an alternative and critical methodology, which has received significant attention in the humanities and social sciences over the past decade.

To provide new insights into the Cuban system, this research examines the sources of legitimacy on which the system relied in a detailed, systematic and comparative way, to demonstrate what changed across the 1989-91 divide, and what remained unchanged from 1959. This research explores these shifts and continuities in the revolution before and after 1989 by focusing on evidence from two dates either side: the 1980 Mariel episode and the 1994 *maleconazo* disturbances. The 1980 Mariel crisis took place when Cuba was still closely allied with the Soviet Union during the Cold War. The 1994 Malecón riots, on the other hand, took place in the context of the post-1989 changes in many formerly communist countries, which started adopting liberal democratic political models. During crises, the system highlighted the reasons why it was legitimate and justified, and the sources of legitimacy were the most prominent, allowing for an easier identification. The two examples are of interest because they offer rare examples of significant unrest in Cuba that completely dominated the country's attention for months, and encouraged the employment of the sources of legitimacy sustaining the system. Examining the discourse and demonstrating which sources were put forward is one way of answering why some Cubans might have remained loyal to the system that survived long after 1989. This research project enhances our understanding of what the discourse contained, and why it might have worked with the culturally and historically conditioned audience, possibly implying further inferences about the stability of the system. The analysis of the evidence investigates and compares more specifically the sources of legitimacy in the discourse during both crises. This allows for a greater understanding of how the political leadership communicated news and ideas to the population, and how it adapted to new challenges. It also allows for a greater understanding of how the leadership argued for the legitimacy of the system, despite criticism and diplomatic pressure from foreign governments and international institutions. The sources of legitimacy provide insights into the possible reasons for the stability of the system before, and most of all, after the end of the Cold War, when the pressure of neoliberal discourses on Cuba increased tremendously. In relation to the available literature, this research extends our understanding of the system by using a different methodology than most of the available literature. It sheds more light on why the system may have appealed

to some Cubans. It offers new perspectives on Cuban national and political life from an alternative historical perspective.

The central assumption is that the Cuban political system relied on sources of legitimacy specific to 1980 and 1994 to encourage stability before and after 1989 in view of different contexts. The system was based on endogenous sources of legitimacy, such as the values of the 1959 Cuban Revolution, patriotism, Marxist political ideology and Cuban history. The sources of legitimacy can be perceived as one possible factor that could have contributed to the stability of the system, which had previously siphoned off most of the opposition and delivered real benefits to the revolutionaries. To identify these sources of legitimacy, the research relies on evidence from the hegemonic Cuban discourse reflected in the country's media. It compares two crises, and the sources of legitimacy contained in the discourse to see if they changed and if so, why. As other discourses, the Cuban discourse reduced the complexity of reality into a simplified hegemonic discourse encouraging continuity. By focusing on sources of legitimacy traceable in the discourse at different times in history, this research complements other available analyses, which look at other factors, such as economics, ideology or institutional processes.

The evidence and conclusions enhance our understanding of the possible reasons of the long-term stability of the Cuban system, especially during crises as key moments of destabilisation. During such times, the discourse focused more than ever on its sources of legitimacy helping to sustain the system in the eyes of the public. Crises provide a good example of how they were subsequently interpreted with a meaning that would help sustain the system without contradicting it. The related processes of interpretation represent revealing examples of the system's internal mechanics. To analyse legitimacy, this research uses the concept of a hegemonic discourse, which contained its sources. Hence, the research uses discourse analysis to examine the evidence, to make conclusions about shifts and continuities in the discourse, and then also relate them to the existing literature. Hence we can decide if the sources of legitimacy, most of them already identified by the authors above, such as socialism, Fidel Castro, nationalism, material provision, social provision, developing country exploitation etc., shifted, remained the same or changed in terms of their meaning, fine nuances or patterns of argumentation. In this way, we can understand better what happened in Cuba after 1989, in comparison to the last decade of the Cold War. Not excluding other factors, this research offers an answer why and how the system may have survived the collapse of other communist states after 1989, by reflecting new realities and concerns in its internal discourse to encourage loyalty. Further inferences can be made about the general stability, essence and direction of the system.

By addressing specifically questions of the sources of legitimacy from a critical perspective based on a critical methodology, this research goes beyond liberal sources and traditional historiography. It sheds further light on questions that have not been previously addressed in a similar way and to the same extent, allowing us to understand how the discourse interpreted reality, what sources of legitimacy it presented explicitly and implicitly, and why such interpretations might have appealed to the public. Undoubtedly, Cubans, as the

audience, represent a key component in the country's long-term stability since the triumph of the Revolution in 1959, and even more so after 1989. The objective of the research is to explore how the Cuban leadership might have encouraged a particular way of thinking about the issues of the time. It is therefore logical to examine the media through which the leadership communicated with the population, with the likely intention to mobilise the population into supporting and defending the system. Texts that were directed at Cubans thus constitute the focus of the analysis, since they sent predetermined messages and acted as a means for transmitting the leadership's ideology. By the means of examining the discourse, this study covers in great detail how sources of legitimacy that may have appealed to Cubans were employed, reflecting Cuba's cultural and political history and the current context. This focus represents a topic not researched in the past to a similar extent.

The press in a country such as Cuba represents valid evidence of the communication of the leadership with the general public, especially since the examined newspaper and magazines were under direct control of the leadership as a recognised instrument of the revolution. The press reflected reality and interpreted it in a particular way, integrating it into the existing political project. The two crises represent crucial moments of a more fundamental national discussion, and represent examples of the construction of meaning in favour of systemic stability. Despite the fact that both crises were rather Havana-centred, they were highly important, as they were followed by widespread popular mobilisations and incited nationwide discussions about the revolution, the system and its future. The identified sources of legitimacy are examined in relation to widely held attitudes in Cuba, Cuban values, concerns, desires, culture and history, as part of a system that originated in 1959 and belonged to Cubans as a young, post-colonial nation. The important role of the media was described by a Havana-based analyst:

> "Tó a large extent the rhythm of politicization reflects the use of the mass media as a means of political orientation and ideological education. Fidel Castro used television to discuss major national problems, orient the masses, explain the political situation, and even make public decisions. This massive political education contributed to a rapid change in the culture of the population. The classic example is the dramatic spread, within barely two years of the triumph of the revolution, of popular knowledge about socialism and communism." (Hernández et al. 1991: 41).

The research provides valuable insight into the mechanics of the discourse, its lines of reasoning, argumentation, and interpretation communicated to Cubans. The Special Period of the 1990s was one of the most challenging periods for Cuba since 1959. Parallel to the transitions that were taking place in post-Soviet Russia and Eastern Europe during the same period, the Cuban system carried on despite the extreme material hardship on the island. This inspires the question of how the system managed to maintain enough support in such a challenging environment in order to prevent a collapse. This research help us to understand why some Cubans might have remained loyal to the

system, as the discourse reflected their identities and provided them with pro-governmental subject positions backed by endogenous sources of legitimacy, within a particular historical framework of reference.

Key political issues and evidence were identified from the extensive coverage of the two years, and then critically examined in great depth and detail, looking for particular problematization of the issues of the time and the implicit and explicit use of sources of legitimacy. The evidence represents the means by which Cuban reality was interpreted. Comparison of the two years allowed for a clarification of the sources of legitimacy persisting over time. This can help us understand why Cuba remained closed and opposed to alternative political models, and followed a different non-transitional path compared to other former communist countries at times, when some, such as Francis Fukuyama, have predicted the end of history (Fukuyama: 2006). By looking at how the system coped internally with political changes after the end of the Cold War, this research significantly differs from the existing literature. By using examples that took place before and after 1989, as well as looking collaterally at the interpretation of neoliberalism in the discourse, this research provides a new perspective on why and how Cuba might have survived the major changes after 1989. Unlike other shorter analyses of this period, this dissertation focuses fully and in detail on these topics and the period.

Let us now consider the concepts of legitimacy and the detailed methodology applied to the evidence, before examining the evidence and then comparing the two examples in the subsequent analytical chapter.

Chapter 2

2. 1. Legitimacy and its Sources

To understand the longevity of the Cuban system, this research uses the concepts of legitimacy and looks for its possible sources in the unique historical context of the island. As a contested concept, legitimacy and its sources have been examined by a number of classical authors such as Plato (*The Republic*), Aristotle (*Politics*), John Locke (1869), J. J. Rousseau (1762), as well as by more recent scholars such as Max Weber (1922, 1964), Antonio Gramsci (2011), Karl Deutsch (1963), Larry Diamond (1999, 2009), Guillermo O'Donnell (1986, 2010), Jürgen Habermas (1988), Carl Friedrich (1963), Robert Dahl (1959, 2000), David Easton (1965), Seymour Lipset (1959), Lucian Pye (1966), John Schaar (1970, 1981) and others. They defined the concept within their own body of work and, above all, their theories of society, political systems and political philosophy. John Locke for example, based his theory of political legitimacy mainly on the consent of the people as its source (Locke 1869). Antonio Gramsci linked legitimacy to his concept of "cultural hegemony" whereby ideology becomes common sense resulting in consented coercion under the mask of consent (2011). If a political system and its practices are accepted as legitimate, the system is also stable even in unstable times or in the midst of temporary instability due to economic difficulties or other factors, more recently examined by Habermas (1988) for example into an economic crisis, rationality crisis, legitimation crisis, and motivational crisis.

Max Weber identified three sources of legitimacy: traditional (tradition and history), charismatic (supernatural character of the leader) and legal-rational (established laws, customs, institutions and constitution) (Weber 1978). Most of the authors recognise that the concept of legitimacy is key in understanding the *raison d'être* of political systems, or we could say their stability. Somewhat similar to Locke, Mattei Dogan argued that:

> "If people hold the belief that existing institutions are appropriate or morally proper, then those institutions are legitimate." (Dogan 2003: 116).

Seymour Martin Lipset on the other hand defined legitimacy as the capacity of the system to engender and maintain "the belief that the existing political institutions are the most appropriate ones for the society" (Lipset 1959: 77). Juan Linz also emphasised the importance of institutions and defined legitimacy in short as

> "the belief that in spite of shortcomings and failures, the political institutions are better than any other that might be established, and therefore can demand obedience" (Linz 1988: 65 in Dogan 2003).

Legitimacy is unlikely to reach unanimity, and it is not recognised equally by different groups in a society, which is composed of the committed, the apathetic popular strata as well as various rebellious groups, dissidents or even

armed terrorists, with many in between. Moderate supporters include a large number of those only partially convinced by the legitimacy claimed by the rulers (Dogan 2003: 119). In addition, other authors such as Peter Stillman recognised the crucial role of endogenous values in a society in relation to legitimacy, whose definition relates to the values of the society (Stillman 1974: 32).

Other authors, such as Susan Eckstein, stressed that legitimacy produces a reservoir of support guaranteeing the co-operation of the citizens even in the case of quite unpleasant policies (Eckstein 1966). This is particularly relevant to our understanding of the 1980 and 1994 crises, since legitimacy can be perceived as a reservoir of goodwill on which the authorities can draw in difficult times, and which "increases considerably the willingness of the people to tolerate shortcomings of effectiveness." (Dogan 2003: 120-123). For this reason, the concept of legitimacy and its sources is a suitable analytical tool to understand the stability of Cuba during crises as well as before and after 1989.

During interviews in Cuba, Luis Suarez, a reputable Cuban political scientist, stressed the historical origin of legitimacy in different societies, such as Cuba or the United Kingdom, where some practices are perceived as legitimate because of tradition, that is, they have been in place for a sufficient amount of time to be beyond questioning by the people (Luis Suárez, Havana 2010), thus strongly supporting the crucial role of historical legitimacy and tradition, which is not objective, but particular to different systems. This suggests the need to investigate systems from a perspective of social constructivism, to uncover their particularities and endogenous references. Such focus is one of the main parts of this research.

A simple and universal definition of legitimacy and its origins is not available. It is, however, possible to narrow the concept down to the popular acceptance of a governing law or system as a source of authority based on a specific range of ideas and concepts relevant to the subjects of the system. Across different authors dealing with legitimacy, there is a common recognition of the gradual development of legitimacy resulting in an established tradition on the bases of which practices were previously routinised, so that they appear natural and there is little imagination of a different scenario. This definition is well summarised by Raymond Duncan, a US political scientist who has written on Cuba:

> "By legitimate authority is meant a relationship between state and subjects, in which the general population perceives the government as 'proper,' in the sense that its authority and rule are acknowledged by those subject to it, and the person or institutions exercising that authority (government, party, mass organizations) are seen as possessing some special quality, knowledge, or skills not possessed by the subjects. Legitimacy means popular compliance with and support of a regime's authority and policies without exclusive reliance upon the threat or use of coercive force...." (Duncan in Baloyra & Morris 1993: 232).

Questions of legitimacy are preceded by questions such as: Why do people voluntarily follow and obey their rulers and why do people accept and maintain authorities and institutions? Such questions are even more relevant when aimed at the Cuban system, which has been subject to significant criticism by intellectuals on both the left and right of the political spectrum, international NGOs and many governments. Some of them perceive the system as illegitimate due to a perceived absence of elections allowing various parties and recognised by international observers. Sources of legitimacy contained in the country's discourse represent one way of understanding why some Cubans might have remained loyal to the system despite such external criticism, allowing, only to an extent, for a possibility of Locke's rule by consent.

This research understands the sources of legitimacy as a set of principles and ideas justifying a political system. In other words, legitimacy of a political system is the justification of it in relation to the history and principles of a community and the subjects of the system. In this way, this research recognises Weberian notions of legitimacy, especially historical legitimacy (also Suárez) and, to a lesser degree, charismatic legitimacy. Legitimacy is based on a number of sources, which underpin it and generate compliance or support, thus securing stability, even in difficult times as recognised by Locke, Dogan and others. Such sources include an interpretation of history, persuasive reasoning, charismatic leadership and other factors. This research, nevertheless, touches in different parts on many of the sources of legitimacy examined by these authors, including the impact of demonstrated popular support (Locke), morality of the system (Dogan), endogenous values (Stillman), or the belief in institutions (Lipset and Linz). This research also identifies additional sources of legitimacy, such as nationalism or material prosperity.

To examine these sources in Cuba, the research relies on the analytical tool of discourse analysis, recorded in the country's print media and political speeches. This research assumes the role of a Gramscian hegemonic discourse in modern societies with mass communications, which communicate legitimacy of a system to its subjects and argue for the *raisons d'être* of it (Gramsci 2011). In this way we can better understand the way the Cuban discourse contributed to the Gramscian rule by consent in Cuba, rather than rule by pure force (Ibid.). Accepting the Gramscian focus, we can penetrate and comprehend the depths of Cuban cultural hegemony linked to political stability through consented coercion and masks of consent (Ibid.). We can investigate the way ideology was presented as common sense and how it articulated widely held feelings, again a Gramscian notion (Ibid.).

Due to the diverse composition of legitimacy of a system, its internal mechanics differ from case to case. Hence it is revealing to study the Cuban discourse in order to investigate its own sources of legitimacy and the ways they were communicated or shifted over time to encourage loyalty and prevent rebellion, uprising or a revolution. In addition, Discourse Analysis Theory argues that these sources in a discourse are not given, but rather selected,

constructed and conveyed in a specific way. By focusing on a discourse, we can understand the sources of legitimacy and internal, contextual structures of meaning, following Gramsci's suggestion that ideas cannot be understood outside their social and historical context (Ibid.).

2. 2. Discourse Analysis as a Tool to Examine Sources of Legitimacy

Suitability of Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis allows us to identify and trace the development of the sources of legitimacy as deployed by the Cuban system at different times to reflect new realities. It allows for an examination of the construction of ideology in a wider sense, including language and discourse, and the interpretation of reality. Discourse analysis provides valid insights into the ways the system coped with crises by stressing different sources of legitimacy of the current national and international context. In this way, the method demonstrates how the system used endogenous references and meanings to subtly as well as bluntly suggest its sources of legitimacy. In other words, the method shows what was said and how. By focusing on language, the research makes more evident the implicit suggestions, assumptions and sources of legitimacy, which may be otherwise more difficult to spot and understand. The method provides a focus that allows for a comparison, to demonstrate shifts before and after 1989. Unlike traditional historiography examined earlier, discourse analysis is a research alternative, going deeper into the inner workings of the system. In this way it allows us to understand better how the discourse reflected popular attitudes and concerns.

The research examines sensitive issues with a perspective from within the system, difficult to research in Cuba. At the same time, the research retains a critical perspective based less on ideology, and more on the principles of discourse analysis, based on the assumption of general limits of all discourses across countries, ideologies and times. The basis of the critical position lies in critically examining discourses and the simplifications they contain, their constructions, sources of legitimacy, and internal dynamics. Unlike most other analyses, this research analyses the fine and detailed mechanics as well as content, difficult to penetrate by outsiders and non-Cubans. Discourse analysis allows identification and comparison of shifts reflecting internal changes, as well as the end of the Cold War.

The methodology provided a tool for a valid examination of key print media, which served as crucial vehicles of interpretation in the single-party communist state, where the media were closely controlled by the political leadership. The research project and the methodology acknowledge and take into account the specific nature of the Cuban case, where access to alternative discourses and sources of information for the general public during the researched period was restricted. This was taken into account during the analysis and in regards to the conclusions. The analysis took into account the role of the dominant discourse, which was even more influential than in pluralist systems, where diverse discourses compete.

The research also comprised of the examination of underlying values and patterns of reasoning in the evidence, embedded in the Cuban field of meaning. The methodology allowed the examination of the concepts that were used in the discourse to interpret reality, to be intelligible within the Cuban context. These discourse contained a number of central pillars, or master

signifiers, aimed at Cubans, reflecting specific attitudes, concerns, culture and national history, which acted as crucial sources of legitimacy. Particular attention was given to the endogenous Cuban content of the discourse, based on the country's historical experience, culturally-bound meanings, and the specific use of endogenous concepts, references, ideas and arguments. The evidence was analysed in terms of what was covered and how, and what might have been omitted.

The Concept of Hegemonic Cuban Discourse

The central concept of the research is referred to as "hegemonic Cuban discourse", which is used as a label for the communication and messages that were constructed by the Cuban political leadership, and sent mainly through *Granma*, the official newspaper of the Cuban Communist Party. This communication, however, also included public speeches, or coverage in magazines such as *Bohemia* and *Verde Olivo.* Throughout the dissertation, "hegemonic Cuban discourse" is abbreviated to "hegemonic discourse" or simply "discourse" to avoid excessive repetition. Hegemonic discourse refers mainly to political communication aimed at putting across the sources of legitimacy, implicitly and explicitly, which represented justifications of the continuity of the system. The hegemonic discourse reflected people's concerns and attitudes, as opposed to other parts of the discourse that was perhaps more critical (in *Temas* or *Contra Corriente*) in order to support the stability of the system during crises as well as in response to shifting circumstances before and after 1989. The concept of the hegemonic discourse does not include discourse amongst Cubans during actual physical interaction, but refers specifically to the evidence gathered from printed sources, which also included speeches and interviews. The discourse represents a construction reflecting public attitudes and concerns, creating a Gramscian consensual hegemony (Gramsci 2011) that can be understood as supporting stability. The discourse is understood to contain crucial sources of legitimacy that implicitly and explicitly argued in favour of the system, thus providing one possible answer to Cuba's survival after 1989. All discourses are understood to have the capacity, and in fact an inherent aim, to become hegemonic to achieve dominance and stability of the related political project. In this way, they may be more effective in the long term, compared to repression or violence, since by reflecting and channelling popular concerns and new realities they create consensual hegemony. This consensual hegemony then maintains the perception of the continuing legitimacy of a political project and its institutions. This represents a tool for explaining the longevity and stability of political systems in changing circumstances and at different times.

The research relies on a combination of two schools of discourse analysis, one emphasising the study of language and the way ideas are expressed, based on pre-suppositions, expected common sense, assumptions and intertextual messages. This can be called the Critical Discourse Analysis school (CDA) (Fairclough 1989, 1995). The second prioritises the content, construction of meaning, and inner structures of a discourse and is called Discourse Analysis Theory (DAT) (Howarth 2000). In order to examine ideologies of power relations involved in a discourse and its mechanics, both schools draw on the writing of a range of authors including Antonio Gramsci (2011), Louis

Althusser (1999, 2007, 2008), Karl Marx (1992), Jürgen Habermas (1988), Martin Heidegger (1962), and most of all Michel Foucault (1977) and Pierre Bourdieu (1982).

First Methodological Component: Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis examines the vocabulary, grammar, cultural and historical references and metaphors, implied ideas, implicit messages, assumptions, presupposed knowledge, unsaid expectations, assumed "common sense", connotations, expected background knowledge, frequency and emergence of new terms and concepts, as described by Norman Fairclough (1989, 1995, 1996), Pierre Bourdieu (1982) and other language-oriented analysts. It also analyses language shifts over time, comparisons used by a given author, indirectly and subtly conveyed ideas and suggestions, accentuation, parallels, projected images, rhetorical techniques, and the general presentation of ideas conveyed. It investigates the particular wording, i.e. how it was said. The analysis involves discussion of the ideological effects of the discourse and its possible purpose within its historical context, allowing for valuable insights into a discourse that is not ours and would be otherwise distant or even unintelligible (Fairclough 1989).

> "...the media operate as a means for the expression and reproduction of the power of the dominant class and bloc. And the mediated power of existing power-holders is also a hidden power, because it is implicit in the practices of the media rather than being explicit." (Fairclough 1989: 43)

By analysing the socio-historical conditions in which a given discourse establishes its legitimacy, we can uncover the sources of legitimacy, and understand why the discourse may have appealed to the audience. CDA allows for an analysis of power in semantics, assuming that a discourse is held together by a logic that reflects existing social relations and sustains a particular form of perception of reality. There is a complex dialectical relationship between the change of language and perceptions. For this reason, centrality is placed on language as a symbolic and signifying system affecting cultural development, and reflecting the change in perceptions. Discourses serve as a medium of interpretation, suggesting necessary action, by the means of which a society tackles challenges and maintains continuity. Discourse thus represents the means for producing and maintaining new and existing codes of reality. The links between the codes and reality are described by language analysts as a link between the signifier and the signified. A hegemonic discourse entails a fixed lexicon, semantics, and even syntax, where the use of terms from outside the code produces the same kind of automatic negative reflex as an error in spelling or punctuation (Hernández 2003).

In *Discourse and Social Change* for example, Norman Fairclough explains that discourse plays a part in the construction of "social identities" and "subject positions" for social subjects, but also in "the construction of systems of knowledge and belief" (Fairclough 1992: 64). Focusing on the mechanics of the construction of systems of knowledge and belief is particularly relevant to this research, which investigates how, through language, the Cuban leadership

tried to encourage citizens to defend the system by understanding current issues and reality from a particular point of view. Fairclough views discourse as a "form of social practice, rather than a purely individual activity or a reflex of situational variables" (Fairclough 1992: 62). His approach is comprised in investigating: "vocabulary" "cohesion" "grammar" and "text structure" (Fairclough 1992: 75). Fairclough suggests a focus on alternative wordings and their political and ideological significance, together with the meaning of words used and their meanings as representations of hegemony (Fairclough 1992: 77). He also emphasises the examination of metaphors in the text in order to examine "the ideological and political import of particular metaphors, and conflict between alternative metaphors" (Fairclough 1992: 77). Fairclough suggests the need to consider the "ideological investment" which can be inferred from the different ways in which events or statements are signified (Fairclough 1992: 77). By focusing on language, its structuring, content and form, we can gain significant insights into the Cuban system of knowledge and belief as well as the assumptions about social relationships, reality and identities that were built into the text (Fairclough 1992: 78).

> "Mass-media discourse is interesting because the nature of the power relations enacted in it is often not clear, and there are reasons for seeing it as involving hidden relations of power....media producers address an ideal subject...Media discourse has built into it a subject position for an ideal subject, and actual viewers or listeners or readers have to negotiate a relationship with the ideal subject." (Fairclough 1989: 41)

Within this school, ideology is understood as pervasively present in language, which represents the exercise of power through the manufacture of consent. Connections between language, power and ideology can be analysed in terms of why is something said and how it is said. Ideology is often, even if not exclusively, conveyed in a rather subtle way (Fairclough 1989).

Second Methodological Component: Discourse Analysis Theory

The Discourse Analysis Theory methodological component of this research project is based on the writings of Ernesto Laclau and David Howarth, as recent innovators within the political science research tradition (Laclau & Mouffe 2001, Howarth 2000). DAT places greater emphasis on the interpretation of historical events and potentially destabilising events, and the construction of meaning of reality. Combining the two enhances our understanding of the internal mechanics and communicative strategies of the discourse, but also how the meaning of the two crises was constructed and how arguments were conveyed to the population in order to reinforce the stability of the system during difficult times and the end of the Cold War.

DAT is situated in-between the two poles of positivist scientific search for objectivity, value neutrality and causal relations, or even predictions, on the one hand, and hermeneutical theories, relying mostly on contextualised self-interpretations of agents that may lack deeper theoretical underpinnings and possibilities for generalisations. Contrary to the Kantian notion of observing and experimenting with real phenomena in the social world, which is the basis of positivist research, discourse analysis takes into account the fact that social

structures do not exist independently of the activities they govern. They are fundamentally different from the physical world where scientific discovery is possible and "...we cannot sever beings from the relational contexts in which they appear, and from the particular interpretations that constitute their meaning." (Glynos & Howarth 2007: 30). The result is a contextualised research, which requires a passage through the self-interpretations of the actors engaged in the practice under study. The objects of study within DAT are established regimes of practices. The aim is to critically explain their stability or transformation. The aim is also to capture the various conditions that make them work and tick, in order to explain their essence by examining their discourse that sustains them. The task is to demonstrate how political projects or social practices maintain stability and hegemony.

Discourses are understood as systems of meaning and practice that constitute the identities of subjects and objects submerged in them, and the worldview of which they are part:

> "In other words, empirical data are viewed as sets of signifying practices that constitute a 'discourse' and its 'reality', thus providing the conditions which enable subjects to experience the world of objects, words and practices." (Howarth et al. 2000: 4).

The method accepts Foucault's concept of power, which is conceptualised not only as a direct influence of A on B, but also more subtly through practices that make up subjects, their identities and modes of being, and often work on a more unconscious level. Power is subtle and is already part of the subjects' identities and social relations. This subtle role of identities and established common sense is similar to CDA. Hence, the discourse analyst focuses on their creation, disruption, mechanics and possible transformation, together with the related negotiation and persuasion that makes discourses stable, despite ongoing historical change. Politics is understood as the struggle between opposed sets of meanings embedded in different ways of life, and Heideggerian being-in-the-world, which are at the origins of different social realities. The poststructuralist ontology emphasises the connection between the political dimension at the bottom of institutional practices, by arguing that every social order is marked by a number of competing tendencies and internal inconsistencies. Stability is achieved by exclusion and hegemony. DAT allows for the study and explanation of the stability of systems and the particular ways, by which they generate legitimacy through the construction of a hegemonic discourse. It brings to the surface the misleading appearance of social reality as given, rather than constructed at particular moments in history, and then maintained.

The focus is on the way a political system achieves stability though communication with the public. It is a tool for examining the ways in which moments of instability, such as economic depression or social unrest, are interpreted or symbolised within a discourse, and integrated into it with a constructed meaning. Social reality of practices is embedded in a particular hegemonic discourse which sustains it. The boundary between the social and political dimensions is understood as blurred. Political discourse, however, is

where the social dimension is negotiated. From the poststructuralist perspective, every regime is marked by an outside, which also to some extent constitutes its identity, but at the same time represents a threat of subverting it (i.e. the Other). This ontological perspective is based on the claim that all regimes are political constructions that involve the exclusion of certain possibilities. DAT also examines the grip of an existing system on its subjects, by providing an imagined utopia to be reached in the future, which is a source of direction and effective leadership. It imagines, pictures and promises a future fullness, which is to arrive when a particular obstacle is overcome. Images of omnipotence or victimhood are often used. Interpretation of reality in a discourse comprises Foucault's techniques of problematization, archaeology of knowledge and genealogical analysis: "a movement of critical analysis in which one tries to see how the different solutions result from a specific form of problematization" (Foucault 1997: 118-19). The constructions of a discourse contribute to the legitimation of the resulting policy, which is the outcome of a hegemonic discourse weaving together a number of strands of discourses to achieve dominance and organisation of the field of meaning. This is to immobilise the identities of objects and practices, thus achieving hegemony, stability and continuity.

Discourses can be understood as theoretical horizons, within which the being of objects is constituted, and which conceal the world beyond them, leaving them as the unknown and insecure. Most subjects that inhabit the discourse and its system of practices cannot think, or even be, outside it; this creates the notions of insiders and outsiders (Glynos & Howarth 2007). DAT allows for the understanding of how a discourse constructs a particular narrative, which sets the terms of debate and the range of possible solutions. A discourse contains central signifiers which act as its central pillars (or we could say sources of legitimacy). DAT allows for criticism of the closed and reductionist nature of discourses. DAT also allows one to bring to one's attention the constructed and political character of a discourse and its internal mechanics intended for a particular audience. The discourse analyst focuses on the negotiation and persuasion that makes discourses stable over time. This is particularly relevant to answering the main research question: how the Cuban discourse worked and what its sources of legitimacy were.

DAT focuses on understanding different webs of meaning constituting a discourse, with its particular terms of practices, and ideas, or, in other words, the study of different languages of reality (Glynos & Howarth 2007: 52). DAT establishes the link between meanings, beliefs, institutions and legitimacy in a given system. This can be captured in the language of a discourse, as language is socially shared and makes reality possible, being part of our consciousness as well as unconsciousness, and making particular ways of thinking and being possible. The analyst can explain people's choice of rhetoric by identifying their relevant beliefs, and situating them within their appropriate discourse (Bevir & Rhodes 2005: 179). Hegemonic discourses contain other smaller discourses, which are excluded or repressed. This is the case in all social structures, irrespective of the overarching ideologies or discourses. The method allows the study and explanation of the stability of different regimes

and the particular ways in which they generate legitimacy – an ideal fit for the study of the longevity of the Cuban system.

Since objects and actions are understood as meaningful, the researcher studies the historic specificity of these meanings and the overall framework of reference of the whole system, reflected in the system's discourse. The discourse provides available subject positions, with which social agents can identify. This also defines the structure versus agency debate, by understanding the limited choices of a subject in relation to the possible identities within the available and intelligible structure, and the limited possibility to choose between them, thus acknowledging a certain degree of limited individuality. The analysis enables the researcher to understand how a discourse constructs a particular narrative, i.e. "a coherent universe of discourse" (Glynos & Howarth 2007: 68), maintaining that opinion leaders are not governed by any underlying metaphysical principle or ground (Glynos & Howarth 2007: 179), but rather interpret reality in order to maintain the existing system. DAT allows for critique within the tradition of deconstruction, which challenges the closure from within by describing and unravelling concrete specificity (Glynos & Howarth 2007: 155). The critique discloses the internal mechanics of hegemonic projects focusing on their historical and normative specificity, providing insights into the ways in which subjects identify with, and are gripped by the given discourse appealing to their attitudes and sentiment.

DAT uses texts, ideally from challenging times. DAT understands crises and their subsequent interpretation in a discourse as key moments for the survival of a political system. The system either collapses or manages to negotiate through the discourse with the population to retain its hegemonic position, constructing a narrative. The discourse can present its narrative as given, natural or the only one available, whereby it gives meaning to the destabilising event or issue supporting the stability of the system. By doing this, the discourse remains hegemonic and dominates other alternative discourses that would have provided a different interpretation potentially resulting in a different direction or socio-political system. DAT investigates the process of interpreting an event and construction of the narrative. It analyses the process through a selected discourse and the references, cultural and historical concepts and ideas that were involved in the interpretation. It investigates the internal mechanics of the discourse and the context of the negotiation. It can compare the hegemonic discourse with alternative discourses, or can discuss the apparent closure of the hegemonic discourse and its denial of possibilities beyond its own apparent horizon.

Combining the Two Approaches: Mixed Methodology

There are many affinities between the two schools already mentioned, making them suitable for a mixed method. Both, for example, accept that evidence can be a mixture of speeches, reports, manifestos, historical events, interviews, policies, or even institutions. These are approached as texts or writing in the Derridean notion that there is nothing outside the text. Suitable ethnographic methods also include thick descriptions, interviews, and textual analysis of official documents. Both allow for a comparison of data and also use case

studies. Contrary to positivists, who often understand case studies as a limited tool of study providing little possibilities for generalisations, and hermeneuticists, ethnographers and interpretivists, who use them as self-explanatory narratives, CDA and DAT steer a somewhat middle course, allowing for generalisations, based on a presentation of a persuasive narrative rather than empirical testing.

Both methods study established discourses, and their internal mechanics and assumptions. CDA places greater emphasis on the packaging of a discourse, in terms of what language and references were used, and what assumptions and presupposition it contained as commons sense to communicate ideas rather subtly and indirectly. By investigating a discourse and its interpretation of events based on statements, metaphors and hegemonic practices, Fairclough (CDA) converges to a great degree with DAT, making both variants of discourse analysis complement each other. Similar to the recognition by CDA that a discourse is used unconsciously by the subjects, DAT recognises that most subjects immersed in a discourse cannot see beyond the discursive horizon that it represents: subjects tend to use what has been made available to them. DAT emphasises the need to understand the whole of a discourse, in order to analyse particular examples, which rely on the whole structure that gives meaning to abstract concepts, new events or challenging moments. The two methods complement each other, since DAT provides a greater theoretical underpinning for research into political history, and accepts crude texts such as political speeches, while CDA provides the tools to uncover culturally and historically relevant references and meanings that make a discourse intelligible, relevant and appealing to the concerns of a given public. CDA is grounded to a greater extent in linguistics with a more sensible approach to language, while DAT is grounded in political research and history – yet both make their conclusions based on textual analysis and the study of a language and a discourse. Both schools are part of the family of discourse analysis and represent alternative research methodology to positivist quantitative analysis. Both schools of discourse analysis stand for the practice of researching information understood as discursive forms. Both schools understand the main function of a discourse as a tool for winning others' consent, or at least acquiescence, in their possession and exercise of power.

The differences between the two methods are apparent in the detailed descriptions of their research practices, focus and theoretical assumptions. CDA prefers more subtle texts, while DAT can use explicit evidence. This difference of selection of evidence can be perceived either as a conflict, or an opportunity to approach a text through two different lenses, which both give slightly different interpretations of the same evidence. CDA places greater emphasis on the unconscious use of a discourse by its users, unaware of its historically constructed patterns of interpretation. Thus it analyses what is presupposed in a discourse. DAT recognises to a greater extent that such discourse is actually constructed by individuals that intend to retain its hegemonic character. CDA understands language as a representation of social reality (linguistics), while DAT assumes the construction of a political project, based on an interpretation of history and reality that supports it and ensures its hegemonic position in an environment, in which it is constantly challenged by

other discourses and events that contradict it. DAT understands opinion leaders as striving to maintain hegemony of their discourse that allows them to rule and remain in power by consent generated through the discourse.

CDA assumes unconscious processes of language users, who take thinking patterns of a discourse as given, but which can be modified in conjunction with social reality. DAT does not address the unconscious processes embedded in language, which assume, presuppose and rely on the underlying established common sense taken for granted. In this sense, CDA is a better methodology for uncovering such assumptions, thus allowing for a deeper investigation of the internal mechanics. On the other hand, DAT is better for investigating historical processes and stability of political systems. With CDA we learn more about the implicit sources of legitimacy, while with DAT we can address the broader picture of the whole system. While CDA is a more subtle tool dealing with language and its more gentle ways of generating consent, DAT brings our focus more on the way concepts are used and how the discourse is structured in terms of content. By combining the two methods, we gain two slightly different perspectives on largely similar evidence, thus gaining further insights into the system.

The methodology has received significant attention in recent years as a methodology complementing more established positivist and statistical methods used in political research and social science. This specific approach gives the dissertation an innovative angle as such, compared to many other traditional writings on Cuban history and politics, based solely on historical data, and classical approaches. Rather than focusing solely on historical facts, the research examines Cuban discourse from an internal perspective. It examines how it reflected widely held attitudes and national memory to argue for legitimacy and thus continuity after 1989.

Use of Terms

In the following text, Cuba is referred to as both communist and socialist, since this term has been used interchangeably in Cuban discourse as well as in many other texts referring to pre-1989 Eastern Europe as a Socialist Bloc. The concept of the "Cuban framework of meaning" is used and refers to the general worldview of Cubans, based on their endogenous values and the world in which they are embedded and from within which they are understanding reality. This is closely related to the term "discursive horizon", which refers explicitly to the limits and borders of hegemonic Cuban discourse. The term implicitly stresses the limits of discourses, which tend to deny the world beyond their horizons. The concept of the "field of meaning", also used in the following text, is closely related to the discursive horizon, as the sum of what is available and on which bases reality is interpreted and meaning assigned to a range of concepts and events. Another term used in the text is "an agent of interpretation", a term which designates an opinion leader in a society, whose views may be likely to be adopted in order to make sense of the world in terms of the past, present and future, somewhat close to the charismatic component of Weberian notions of legitimacy.

The following text also uses the concept of the Other, used to refer to those outside of the Cuban political unit labelled as "we" or "us", which contributed to the constitution of Cuban identity by referring to what it was not, and those beyond the boundaries of the widely accepted characteristics of Cuban society as a coherent community, with its own set of values, history and culture. Cuban national identity relied on the Other to define its boundaries and national character. Thus, the Other is part of what defined or even constituted the self of Cubans as individuals. The Other involved the exclusion of those living in Cuban society that defined their existence beyond the boundaries respected by the majority. In this way, Cubans understood themselves in relation to the Other as part of a process of reaction and identity formation. The Other allowed the discourse to distinguish between familiar and alien, home and abroad, worthy of trust and worthy of distrust, the accepted and the rejected or condemned.

2. 3. Evidence

Reasons for Choosing 1980 Mariel and 1994 *maleconazo*

In order to investigate sources of legitimacy, crises were identified as suitable moments, when the sources were the most prominent and played an important role in supporting the stability of the system. In addition, crises were selected before and after 1989 in order to allow for further comparisons of pre- and post-1989 as a date after which communism was greatly challenged worldwide. The two crises provide comparative examples of continuities and adaptation of the sources of legitimacy in different national and international contexts. The available crises, closest to 1989 were only two: the 1980 Mariel and 1994 *maleconazo* and for this reasons they are the most suitable and other crises were not selected. By comparing the discourse, as recorded by the country's mainstream media, we can see which sources of legitimacy changed and if so why. We can also compare how the structure and mechanics of the discourse changed, in terms of interpreting emigration or the specific meaning of socialism and patriotism. By the means of such a comparison on either side of the 1989 crisis, we can gain insights into how the discourse shifted and what implications this may represent.

The Mariel and *maleconazo* episodes were selected as recent examples of potentially destabilising, and certainly challenging, moments for the system. They provide two examples of times when the discourse argued the most for the system's legitimacy trying to support the hegemonic consensus of the population. At the same time, the two events could have ended in a collapse of the system, but in the end did not. This implies that, potentially, the system could have used a hegemonic construction put on them, giving them a meaning in favour of the system, and then subsequently reintegrating their legitimating meaning back into the discourse. This could have contributed to the continuity and stability of the system as the meaning of these events did not contradict it and reflected people's attitudes and concerns conveyed with a language they were familiar with.

The 1980 Mariel and 1994 *maleconazo* episodes were selected as the only significant internal moments of destabilisation in Cuba after 1980. They represent two challenging moments that generated internal discussions about the sources of legitimacy of the system. The loss of the Soviet Union and the decline in legitimacy of communism worldwide, due to the collapse of a large part of the communist bloc, represent further destabilisations. By analysing the discourse, we can gain further insights in regards to how the system coped with these shifts. As a consequence of these transformations, Cuba experience extreme hardship during the 1990s, further inspiring the question of how the system responded to this to encourage loyalty and avoid a collapse similar to other communist countries in and after 1989. Thus, by comparing the two episodes we can make further inferences in regards to Cuba's survival of 1989. Both episodes involved serious discussions about migration, which itself is revealing, and could have been a highly destabilising issue. The two examples were identified as suitable in relation to the underlying methodology of discourse analysis:

> "...having immersed oneself in a given discursive field consisting of texts, documents, interviews and social practices, the researcher draws on her or his theoretical expertise to make particular judgements as to whether something counts as an 'x', and must then decide upon its overall import for the problem investigated. ...An integral part of judging whether a particular empirical phenomenon counts as an instance 'x' consists in deciding what the precise relevance and importance of 'x' is in constructing a narrative that explains a phenomenon." (Glynos & Howarth 2007: 184).

Evidence from Cuban print media including speeches was used for practical reasons and to suit the constrained research environment in Cuba. Evidence was gathered during two research visits of Cuba, one in January 2008 and the second in April-May 2010, of a combined time of two months, which provided opportunities for observation, interviewing and library research. The research activities included interviews conducted by the author on the island. The interviewees included Cuban academics, former Government officials and members of the general public in Havana in April and May 2010. The main part of the evidence was extracted from Cuban printed periodicals, but indirectly also included political writings and other forms of text produced by the Cuban Government and academia. The selection of sources was conducted objectively, with the selection criteria based on their relevance to the topic, accessibility and availability. The combined discourse analysis methodology is a suitable method, since printed media represent a valid source of evidence to investigate sources of legitimacy encoded in a discourse. Printed media interpret events and issues on the basis of the underlying discourse, and contain subtle presumptions, historical references, and established meanings, which represent suitable evidence to trace the sources of legitimacy and internal mechanics of a discourse. The researched data was analysed from different points of view aiming to be as objective as possible. This research and its conclusions are based on the focus on the sources of legitimacy in the hegemonic discourse accessible through widely available government-regulated newspapers. For this reason, large-scale interviews with ordinary Cubans were not necessary, as the main evidence included government-controlled printed sources in order to examine the shifts and continuities in terms of the deployed sources of legitimacy. For these reasons, interactions with Cubans and the environment during the two research visits were only complementary research activities for the project. Challenges of researching in Cuba were considered during the research design, which was at different stages pragmatically modified in order to provide an achievable and academically valid research project.

To investigate the sources of legitimacy of the Cuban system, this research project uses evidence from Cuban print media, including *Granma, Bohemia* and *Verde Olivo*. The research is based on a textual analysis of these sources. *Granma* is a particularly useful source of evidence, as it tracked the country's public life on a daily basis, and was written for the general public. For many Cubans, *Granma* was an important source of information. Further evidence was gathered from magazines *Verde Olivo* (published weekly until 1988) and *Bohemia* (published fortnightly). The magazines provided information in a

more leisurely manner, also including short stories or entertainment such as crosswords. They complemented *Granma* as they often reprinted its most important articles in full or abbreviated. In some cases, they also covered some topics in greater detail. *Verde Olivo* was to some extent aimed at army personnel and was written as such, but was nonetheless also widely read by the general public as the military was highly integrated into Cuban society, as a society of *guerilleros* [guerrillas] and *combatientes* [combatants] under siege, where each citizen was expected to defend the homeland. Since the 1990s, the military was closely involved in the management of a significant number of the island's enterprises, and to this date coordinates relief operations during the hurricane season, assisting the civilian population. The military was highly integrated in the Cuban government, linked in through Raúl Castro, who was the head of the armed forces. The language used in *Verde Olivo* contained a military tone. The magazine *Bohemia* was aimed at the general public, providing information in the most relaxed tone of the three. Like *Verde Olivo*, it also reprinted major articles from *Granma*, or paraphrased them. Cubans who did not read *Granma* or *Verde Olivo* were likely to grab an issue of *Bohemia* on a Sunday afternoon for some digested news from the country, combined with entertainment. The two magazines complement *Granma* as well as each other in terms of covering most of the Cuban public. *Granma* was, however, the prime source, as the other two information outlets provided a relatively limited coverage of current issues.

The data from more than two years provided an extensive amount of evidence, out of which the most relevant and key articles were selected in relation to the research focus. The evidence from the two years was compared in order to identify shifts, similarities, patterns, differences and omissions. This comparison revealed more clearly its sources of legitimacy, and allowed for an observation of how they were affected by changing internal factors and the external global context. The project required careful selection of the most directly focused, relevant and exemplary texts from the extensive body of possible evidence. Articles covering major issues, migration, situation in Cuba, relations with the United States, and those containing arguments for the legitimacy of the system, were selected and analysed as the most relevant to this research. The texts included public speeches by Fidel Castro and Government officials, testimonies from the public and interviews as printed in Government-controlled media, editorials, Government announcements, and analytical articles of the time. They were written by journalists from *Granma, Bohemia* and *Verde Olivo*, as well as by officials and Fidel Castro.

The evidence used was selected objectively, only in respect to the research focus. It is worth pointing out that the 1980 Mariel crisis chapter is also based on articles from *Verde Olivo*, a magazine that was discontinued during the 1990s because of economic problems and lack of paper. For this reason, the 1994 *maleconazo* chapter is not based on evidence from *Verde Olivo*. This difference did not have a negative impact on the conclusions, since around eighty percent of the evidence in both chapters is based on *Granma,* and the two magazines represent only complementary evidence, with *Verde Olivo* playing only a minor role, yet still worth including. In the *maleconazo* chapter, a few articles from *Granma Internacional* were used, but these include

exclusively transcripts of public speeches given to Cubans in Cuba (in most cases transmitted on Cuban national TV and radio), thus constituting valid evidence as part of the discourse aimed at the Cuban public. The detailed work with the original language allowed for a true penetration and understanding of the discourse, despite linguistic and cultural barriers. The linguistic and cultural skills of the author were greatly enhanced during the two research visits to Cuba, which involved interviews and a first order experience with the environment and immersion in its discourses. On the other hand, the limitation of the researcher as a geographic and cultural outsider provided greater distance from the evidence, and greater potential for a critical approach.

The coverage from these two periods is a revealing example of the internal mechanics of the system, allowing for an investigation of how events were covered, what subtle messages were sent, and which endogenous references were used in the process. In addition, the two crises provide examples for comparison of the similarities, differences and shifts in the sources of legitimacy, the mechanics of the discourse itself set in vastly different global political contexts. In addition, they provide interesting insights into the internal reaction of the system to the neoliberal discourse. The time difference of almost fifteen years between the two crises provided additional space for shifts and changes. Both episodes involved issues of emigration, and the reaction of the discourse to it. The national debate focused on some of the most basic pillars (sources of legitimacy) to communicate clearly the reasons for the rest of the population to stay on the island and remain loyal to the system.

The Cuban Communist Party had direct control over the country's media, and social and political organisations. The coverage of the events in 1980 and 1994 took place in a similar environment, and awareness of it is important when considering the impact of the examined evidence. It would have been difficult for a Cuban to have a different opinion outside the overwhelming majority, after some thirty-five years in an ideologically highly integrated system, involving every institution and every person through various mass organisations, including children and the elderly. Some of these, mainly Comités de Defensa de la Revolución [Revolutionary Committees][1], were used during the 1980s:

> "to intimidate dissidents and keep them in their homes...the Cuban leadership resorted to organised mobs, consisting of available neighbours and security personnel in civilian clothes, who conducted 'acts of repudiation' against individuals with dubious loyalties....these included sieges of their residences to actual invasion of premises, beatings, and destruction of property." (Baloyra & Morris eds. 1993: 9).

[1] Square brackets are used in the text to indicate explanatory additions, or translations by the author.

Part II: Evidence

Chapter 3

3. 1. Discourse Analysis: 1980 Mariel Episode in Cuban Newspaper *Granma*, and Magazines *Bohemia* and *Verde Olivo*

The so-called Mariel was a major migratory episode that surprised Cubans without a warning in the midst of the relatively prosperous early 1980s. It resulted in the State opening the floodgates of unrestrained emigration, to relieve the system of its most discontented elements, while claiming strong legitimacy amongst the loyal parts of the population. The loyal were encouraged to repudiate those leaving as unpatriotic scum, who were allowed to legally embark onto ships arriving from the US (Kapcia 2009: 41, 156, Gott 2005: 266-267). The boatlift was mostly organised by Cuban exiles residing in Florida, and its name derives from the port of Mariel just a few miles West of Havana. Cuban authorities proclaimed the voluntary character of Cuban socialism, and aware of the damaging impact of the migratory crisis on US electoral politics, and released its own prisoners who joined the migrants, resulting in some 125,000 *marielitos* (Ibid.).

The Situation before the Crisis

Following the victory of the nationalistic Sierra Maestra freedom fighters during the Revolution, the nation-building project enjoyed relative stability, largely due to continuing mass revolutionary enthusiasm. Undoubtedly, this enthusiasm provided the main legitimating component in support of the post-revolutionary ideological structure sustaining a system which was perceived as historically legitimate. The system belonged to those Cubans that stayed on the island after the Revolution. The system suffered a blow during the failed ten million ton sugar harvest in 1970, which damaged the rest of the economy neglected during the campaign, while also representing a delegitimating failure. Castro addressed the failure of the 1970 *zafra* [sugar harvest] and offered his resignation during his July 26 speech (Eckstein 2003: 41). In this way, he reasserted his legitimacy as a popular leader that was ultimately not revoked. At the same time, the system retained its strong grip on dissenting intellectuals, arresting Herberto Padilla in March 1971 and accusing him of producing counter-revolutionary poems (Gott 2005: 247).

In 1972, Cuba became a member of the COMECON, and the USSR paid increased prices for Cuban sugar, while providing oil supplies at lower rates (Eckstein 2003: 47), supporting further growth of the economy. In 1974, the system experienced an economic boom based largely on the high world sugar prices (Ibid: 48). In 1973, the Thirteenth Congress of the CTC (Cuban Labour Confederation) increased legitimacy of the system amongst Cuban workers by putting forward policies, which were to increase their material benefits in relation to their productivity and overtime work (Ibid: 43).

> "By 1975 over two thirds of the labour force received pay for overtime and double-shift work...Meanwhile, the government increased the supply of such consumer goods as refrigerators and television and it

expanded the housing stock, linking access to them to 'economic contribution'." (Ibid.).

As a result of these and other factors, between 1971 and 1975, the country ranked among the highest in Latin America in terms of economic growth, resulting in an increased per capita consumption (Ibid: 51). Nevertheless, because of the preceding economic problems, households were not doing as well as it may seem.

In August 1975 Cuba agreed to send some 480 military instructors and personnel to Angola (Gott 2005: 252), and in November 'Operation Carlota' was launched (Ibid: 254). This focused national attention towards the developments in Africa and the aspirations of other developing nations to a similar independence that Cuba had won thanks to the Revolution. In March 1976, South African forces withdrew from Angola, a move that represented a legitimating victory for Cuban involvement, but also the more complicated return of war veterans who would require state support back home.

The second half of the decade, however, brought a downturn for the economy, caused by the fall of the price of sugar on world markets between 1974 and 1977 (Eckstein 2003: 51). This negatively influenced Cuban foreign trade and the growth of the economy. As a result, the government increased its focus on foreign investment and encouraged joint ventures (Ibid: 46). As a result, the country's Western debt rose significantly.

> "Initially opposed to tourism on moral grounds because of the gambling, gangsterism, and prostitution with which it had been associated under the Old Regime, in the late 1970 Castro modified his stance here too. He argued that tourism could be regulated to avoid the degenerating effect it had had before the revolution." (Ibid: 47).

The system went through major changes during the institutionalisation processes after 1975, which culminated in a new constitution in 1976. The December 1975 Party Congress represented a renewed direction for the country, which tried to reverse more pro-market policies of 1966-1970, now perceived as erroneous, back towards socialism. The economic policy was revised, the link between the political apparatus and mass organisations was strengthened, and the perceived overt centralisation of the bureaucracy was reversed (Silva León 2008: 69):

> "...muchos estudiosos del proceso revolucionario cubano lo consideramos como el inicio de un nuevo período en la construcción del socialismo en Cuba." [...many students of the Cuban revolutionary process consider it as a beginning of a new period of the construction of socialism in Cuba] (Ibid.).

The period represented a revision of the Cuban revolution as a process, with renewed emphasis on industrialisation and exports for 1976 to 1980, based on the Dirección y Planificación de la Economía, in order to contain the growing foreign debt crisis (Ibid: 72-73). The economic policies of the SDPE proposed

ways of constructing socialism without capitalist means, while changes were made to the functioning of the People's Power (Ibid: 74). The provincial division of the island was reshuffled (now 14 provinces and 169 municipalities) and a new Constitution was approved by a referendum on 15th February 1976, with the official results showing a 98% participation with 97.7% of the electorate in favour (Ibid: 88). The electorate now had the right to recall candidates of the Peoples Power, making them more accountable to their constituencies, thus improving communication from bottom to top. The socialist character of the country was reaffirmed. The National Assembly was established as the supreme organ of the state with exclusive constitutional and legislative powers (Ibid: 91). In the same year, municipal elections provided further legitimacy with official results reporting a 95.2% participation (Ibid: 95). The new Constitution also codified women's rights as part of the Family Code. The new changes demonstrated the ability of the system to react to changing circumstances, always keeping the revolution current, and assuring the public about constant improvements to the system. It also sent a message of improved material wellbeing for the rest of the decade despite the adverse conditions. Overall, the SDPE and the recent membership in COMECON improved the economic conditions of Cuban households compared to the first half of the decade, increasing the role of the material source of legitimacy.

The blowing-up of a Cuban airliner on 6th October 1976 that killed all passengers onboard, including the Cuban national fencing team, reminded Cubans of the constant threat from Cuba's enemies, especially the radical Miami exiles who had orchestrated the bombing. Together with the allegations that these exiles had been associated with the CIA (Gott 2005: 261), this incident provided an example before the 1980 Mariel crisis of the continuing relevance of the real danger originating from the United States and its regional allies. It supported the negative image of the United States as a criminal state because of the CIA link to the terrorists, ready to use any means to destroy revolutionary Cuba. It also supported the Cuban criminal image of the Miami exiles, later used during the Mariel crisis to denounce those leaving, as Cubans of a similar character to those exiles supporting terrorism.

Cuban involvement in the Ethiopian revolution of 1977 and its increased focus on Africa as a region where the country's socialist revolutionary development model represented a new alternative for change, enhanced the country's image at home and within the Non-Aligned Movement. It also increased tensions with the United States.
Cuba thus contributed to the triumph of the Ethiopian revolutionary movement, led by Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam, a Marxist-Leninist backed by the Soviet Union, which led to the closure of US military bases in the country and caused a Cold War strategic confrontation. The conflict later escalated into a military confrontation between US-backed Somali forces and a coalition of Ethiopia, Cuba and the Soviet Union. The Somali forces withdrew in March 1978, leaving Cuba and its allies as the victors, and negatively influencing US-Cuba relations (Ibid: 257-260). The Ethiopian confrontation was portrayed in Cuba as a conflict between US neo-colonial imperialism and Cuba's altruistic righteous revolutionary cause, strengthening the negative image of the United States.

In September 1979 delegates from over ninety-four countries from the Non-Aligned Movement arrived in Havana for the group's sixth conference. This can be understood as a symbolic increase in legitimacy of the Cuban system domestically, supporting its representation of the righteous Cuban struggle in the developing world. It also encouraged comparisons of Cuban socialist luxuries in contrast with harsh realities in many developing countries battling with extreme poverty and under-development, which demonstrated the qualities of the Cuban system despite any economic issues. Cubans and their leaders stood for Cuba's unique ability to survive in the face of exploitative interests abroad, always able to resist US hegemonic pressures that had often disillusioned other countries and stimulating great admiration for Cuba's ability to maintain its autonomy under all circumstances.

Despite these antagonistic relations with the United States, in the late 1970s the Cuban leadership entered into negotiations with the Miami exile community before the crisis, through Bernardo Benes, a Cuban exile himself (Ibid: 265). The negotiations represented a potential rapprochement with Miami, with negotiations touching on the release of political prisoners held in Cuba and on potential permission for Cubans living abroad to visit the island. The negotiations resulted in more than 100,000 Cuban-American family visits to the island in 1979, which had a significant destabilising impact on Cuban society, by exposing the population to the wealth of the United States and an inflow of information beyond the hegemonic discourse, possibly putting the system in doubt by providing a tempting alternative. Hence, while in 1979 the focus on the Non-Aligned Movement and Africa encouraged Cubans to perceive themselves as lucky, the arrival of significant numbers of rather wealthy exiles had the very opposite effect. Especially, as the economic situation on the island took a turn for the worse during the second half of the 1970s. The inflow of exiles is seen by some Cuba experts as the main trigger for the break-in at the Peruvian embassy and the ensuing social unrest culminating in the Mariel exodus. Hence, while post-1975 institutionalisation settled Cuban society and the legitimacy of the system for a while, the influx of Cuban-Americans rattled the cage again generating discontent and doubt.

In the United States, following the Nixon presidency which ended in August 1974, and the interim presidency of Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter took over the White House in January 1977, bringing new hopes of potentially improving relations with Cuba, due to his emphasis on soft power, ethics and human rights. A Cuban academic, Roberto González Gómez from the Cuban *Centro de Estudios Martianos* later even described Carter as: "inteligente, muy ambicioso y dotado de un profundo sentido ético" [intelligent, very ambitious and gifted with a deep ethical sense] (Gómez 2003: 134). Carter started by opening interest sections in Havana in September 1977 reciprocally allowing the Cubans to do reciprocally open theirs in Washington D.C. But Cuban involvement in Africa sent negative messages to the Carter administration, and especially its hawkish advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski. The administration remained rather inconsistent, due to disagreements between Brzezinski and other advisors, or as expressed by Gómez, "...fue una política zigzagueante" [...it was zigzag politics] (Gómez 2003: 155).

During this time, Cuba maintained good relations with the Soviet Union as a cardinal ally that provided significant subsidies to the island thus disincentivising any improvements in relations with the United States. The alliance contributed to a negative perception of Carter by the US public, with his softer approach to Cuba, engaged in military conflicts side by side with the Soviet Union, such as in Ethiopia and Somalia. Cuba kept building its own socialist model, believing it was well tailored to the conditions in developing countries, thus challenging Soviet socialist orthodoxy despite the strategic alliance. Even so, the Soviet-Cuban alliance remained firm, and possibly allowed for the radical condemnation and ridiculing of the United States during the Mariel boatlift. The tensions between Cuba and the United States provided useful ammunition for the Cuban leadership to claim legitimacy for its decisions domestically, protecting its citizens from its traditional adversary and criticising or denouncing those that would consider switching sides. It provided a new certainty that the economic blockade, so often denounced within hegemonic Cuban discourse and understood as a central cause of hardship in the country, would remain in place, legitimating the decisions of Cuba's leadership.

During the run-up to the 1980 Mariel crisis, *Granma* reported the country's rising economic productivity, discussed the values of the revolution, provided examples of the virtues of Cuban revolutionaries as models for others, and also covered a selection of events beyond the island from its own pro-governmental angle. On a national level Cuba seemed to be focusing on its own national routine. The nation was hit by the death of Celia Sánchez in January 1980, who was a recognised national figure since the early days of the revolution (*Granma*, y. 16, n. 10, 12 January 1980: 1). Hence, the whole issue of *Granma* of 12th January was printed in black. This was sad news for the country, already squashed under the hardship of the *el bloqueo* [blockade], but on the other hand it served as a useful reminder of the heroic deeds of revolutionaries, revolutionary values and the need for commitment.

The Mariel crisis started in mid-April and continued until the end of October 1980, with the greatest number of Cubans leaving between 24th and 26th April when the Mariel boatlift took place, as the Cuban authorities allowed boats from Florida to pick up anyone wishing to leave Cuba. As in the past, the event gradually developed into a symbolic confrontation between the United States and Cuba. In addition, the crisis took place in the crucial month of April, remembered by all Cubans as the month of the *Playa Girón* attack, which started on 17th April 1961. This provided a unique and very symbolic opportunity to reflect upon US aggression, the Cuban victory and the need for Cubans to unite in defence of a homeland facing real military threat. The context of the Bay of Pigs victory anniversary also provided a tool for inciting patriotism against those leaving.

Calm Before the Storm: January to March 1980

The print media content in Cuba preceding the crisis was a mixture of rather ordinary topics. *Granma* of 2nd January reported about maritime trade, ongoing construction projects, improvements in social security, and even details such as the high production of refrigerators. The language used descriptive terms, statistical data and focused on informing in an encouraging way. It did not include any insults, as was the case during the peak of the crisis. An article titled *Las moliendas de fin de año son ejemplos de los niveles que deben alcanzarse desde ahora* [The milling of the end of the year is an example of the levels that must be achieved from now on] (*Granma*, y. 16, n. 1, 2 January 1980a, Juan Varela Pérez: 1) used rather informative language suggesting improvements, such as *desarrollo, acción colectiva, incrementar* or *consolidar la eficiencia* [development, collective action, increase, consolidating efficiency]. The language was implicitly sending a message that the country was doing well. To support the message, the article listed provinces that had already fulfilled ninety percent or more of their target production. It emphasised the role of the revolution and the strengths of the Cuban collective, evoking images of confidence and stability. Other articles used positive expressions in the same spirit such as *la producción de refrigeradores más alta de su historia* [the highest production of refrigerators in history], or *horas voluntarias* [voluntary hours] demonstrating the voluntary commitment of citizens, and implying the smooth functioning of the system based on genuine loyalty of Cubans to their country and its system.

The discourse in general was positive and encouraging. The last page of the same issue contained a measure of Cuban anti-Americanism and negative portrayal of capitalist countries in an article titled *1979 fue un año de más inflación, de aumento de la desocupación y de mayores precios en países capitalistas.* [1979 was a year with more inflation, an increase in unemployment and high prices in capitalist countries] (*Granma* y. 16, n. 1, 2 January 1980b: 6). The article then reported on the situation in Japan, Italy, France and the United Kingdom, using expressions and descriptions such as *más desempleo, serias dificultades económicas para la población*, or *los precios se elevarán* [more unemployment, serious economic difficulties for the population, or prices to rise], implying a worsening situation abroad and evoking images of problems, such as unemployment, not encountered on the island. The build up of such images portrayed Cuba as a safe place to live, with the state granting basic existential needs for all, with Cubans not having to worry in comparison to other nations living in a constant existential gamble. Inflation and economic recession in capitalist countries were contrasted with successes and increased production in communist Cuba. The portrayal of the revolutionary socialist virtue of genuine commitment to hard work in the daily lives of Cubans, as part of the revolutionary struggle, is evident in an article in a later issue tiled *Amílcar González, un mecánico enamorado de su trabajo* [Amílcar González, a mechanic in love with his work] (*Granma*, y. 16, n. 7, 9 January 1980, José Gabriel Guma: 1). The article asked a rhetorical question:

> "¿Quién es ese obrero que merecía el honor de personificar el esfuerzo de sus 870 compañeros?" [Who is this labourer that deserves the honour of personifying the effort of his 870 co-workers?] (Ibid: 1).

The discourse elevated the revolutionary emphasis on hard work, as a source of individual honour within the workers' state. In addition, the word *compañeros* can be translated as colleagues, co-workers or comrades, inspiring a sense of a united community of workers. Amílcar González was also described as a *militante del Partido* [militant party member] (Ibid: 1), which merged his working skills and social honour with the commitment to political affairs within the highly politicised Cuban political culture, where such commitment was assumed to be highly valued. He was also described as having visited the USSR in the past, which encouraged him in his commitment, and which was an implicit statement of what he gained from Cuba's crucial strategic ally and ideological partner, the USSR.

Celia Sánchez as an Exemplary Loyal Revolutionary

Granma published an entire issue in black on 13th January and dedicated it to the honour of the death of Celia Sánchez, the nation's female hero and close aide to Fidel Castro. This event provided an opportunity to remind Cubans about the origins of their patriotic revolutionary struggle, with Celia portrayed as a model revolutionary. This is evident in an editorial in the issue titled *Celia*, which considered her contribution to the Cuban nation-building project. She was described almost as an asexual figure and a citizen embodying the values of the revolution:

> "humilde...una de las figuras más nobles, más queridas, y más definitivamente grandes, entre tantas que la Revolución cubana hizo destacar del seno fecundo de la Patria ...uno de sus más bravos soldados." [humble...one of the noblest figures, most loved, and most certainly great, amongst so many that the Cuban revolution has elevated from the fertile womb of the homeland ...one of its bravest soldiers] (*Granma*, y. 16, n. 10, 12 January 1980: 1).

The article demonstrated her personification of revolutionary values, and her patriotism that was the source of her qualities. The article specifically mentioned her commitment to *el Partido y el Estado* [the Party and the State] (Ibid: 1), which were constructed as unified concepts in the single-party system, suggesting that the party was the state. This also represents a particular presentation of Cuban nationalism within the boundaries of the discourse, which largely omitted the word *nacionalismo*, due to its attribution to the far right in Cuban political culture. The article not only described her as *una trabajadora infatigable* [a tireless worker], consistently emphasising the revolutionary worker ethics, but also described her explicitly as *hermana* [sister] (Ibid: 1), a word suggesting a close bond and familial unity of the Cuban people in general. The article spelled out Cuban national values, and then described Celia's life story and the process by which she was drawn to the revolutionary cause from its early days:

"...el patriotismo, la combatividad, la vida ejemplar, modestia, sensibilidad humana y entrega leal y desinteresada al servicio de la causa revolucionaria." [...patriotism, combativeness, exemplary life, modesty, human sensitivity and loyal and selfless dedication at the service of the revolutionary cause] (Ibid: 1).

"Fidel y la Revolución se convertirán desde entonces en el fundamento, la razón de ser y la estrella guiadora de su existencia." [Fidel and the revolution became from then on the base, the reason of her being and the guiding star of her existence.] (Ibid: 1).

In addition, a link was established between *el Maestro* [the Teacher] and Celia, hence between José Martí, her and the revolution that had fulfilled their longings. They all represented exemplary symbols for the people, especially before the Mariel unrest, which was already developing and might have been noticed by the leadership, therefore focusing on strengthening the patriotic message. Celia was symbolised as steadfast even in moments when her life had been under threat during the revolutionary struggle, a process which continued. According to the article, she was always ready, awaiting instructions and orders, demonstrating *disciplina revolucionaria* [revolutionary discipline] (Ibid: 1). In the last part of the article, she was described in a more poetic, sublime, grandiose and transcendental language as *...la sal invisible en el inmenso mar de la Revolución* [the invisible salt in the immense sea of the revolution] (Ibid: 1), leaving Cubans explicitly with *un ejemplo extraordinario...a todo nuestro pueblo...* [an extraordinary example...for our whole people] (Ibid: 1).

This example from the discourse before the Mariel incident demonstrates how the rather negative news of Celia's death was combined with an encouraging and positive tone of her heroic contribution to the revolution and the nation, within which she was transcendental and immortal, along with other Cuban national mythological figures, such as Che Guevara. In this sense, the discourse suggested an inspiring existence with true depth for committed revolutionaries, even beyond death.

Encouraging Voluntary Loyalty

The issue of the 10th March delivered clear messages. The title page announced a number of main points in relation to the III Congress of the *Federación de Mujeres Cubanas* [Federation of Cuban Women], with one of the headlines reading: *La lucha por el socialismo es una lucha voluntaria: ese fue, es y será nuestro principio* [The struggle for socialism is a voluntary struggle: this was, is and will be our basic principle] (*Granma*, y. 16, n. 60, 10 March 1980: 1). This indirect expression of determination, related the frequent reference to Cuba as a country of courageous *guerilleros*, with a resolute determination to keep alive the mythical status of the revolution and its triumphalism, was deeply embedded in the discourse. The message was in line with the more subtle messages inspiring confidence, loyalty and determination. Interestingly, the direct emphasis on the voluntary character of the system may suggest the awareness of potential unrest in Cuban society and preparation of the public for the opening of emigration floodgates that had

taken place in the past, but in a way that would portray the Cuban leadership as in control of the process. The tone continued to be encouraging, without insults or strong condemnations, instead providing information portraying the system as functioning well.

During the pre-crisis period, *Bohemia* focused on diverse issues of interest in a more informal way. The work of health workers in the Sierra Maestra or life in Hungary were covered in the issue dated 4th April. The issue started with a brief message from Fidel Castro, condemning the US embargo and discussing the country's right to independence. In the introduction, Castro constructed the concept of *nosotros* [we/us], with an emphasis on people united by their opposition to the twenty one years of the US embargo, using an issue which appealed to all Cubans, regardless of their level of loyalty. The revolution was interpreted in relation to revolutionary projects that continued in other countries, such as Nicaragua and Granada, giving further weight to the Cuban model. This implicitly proved that it was continuing to inspire other peoples abroad. The common features of these revolutionary projects were interpreted by Castro in the following words:

> "Lo que nos caracteriza es precisamente nuestro propio espíritu de independencia, lo que nos[1] caracteriza es la defensa de los principios soberanos de nuestros países, el anhelo de luchar por nuestros pueblos, de acabar con el analfabetismo, de acabar con la miseria, de acabar con el desempleo, de acabar con la falta de asistencia médica, de acabar con la pobreza, de acabar con la indignidad, que bastante había en nuestro país, desde la prostitución, el juego, el tráfico de drogas. ...Pero debemos estar preparados para un largo tiempo." [What characterises us is precisely our own spirit of independence, what characterises us is the defence of the sovereign principles of our countries, our desire to fight for our peoples, to end illiteracy, to end misery, to end unemployment, to end insufficient medical care, to end poverty, to end disgrace, of which there has been enough in our country, from prostitution to gambling to drug trafficking. ...But we have to be prepared for a long time.] (*Bohemia*, y. 72, n. 14, 4 April 1980a, Fidel Castro: 3).

As in *Granma*, the language was informative, but engaging, pointing to the alliance of revolutionary countries emerging from social and economic difficulties and many other problems, but remaining on the right track. It suggested the need for commitment. Another article in the same issue presented the harsh reality up in the Cuban mountains, which had, however, improved since the revolution: *Los días no son iguales* [The times have changed] (*Bohemia*, y. 72, n. 14, 4 April 1980, Magda Martínez: 4-5). It described in a poetic way the daily life in remote parts of the country, using a leisurely and relaxed tone and an entertaining narrative. Unlike the more factual and political language in *Granma*, it described the life of a *campesino* [peasant]. The light narrative tone of *Bohemia* later became more serious during the crisis. In a subtle way, the language contrasted the harsh realities in

[1] Cuba, Nicaragua, Granada

Cuba with the firm struggle of its people, surrounded by Cuba's inspiring natural beauty, and having righteous motives, as the story narrated the life of a rural physician fulfilling his noble role, symbolically taking place in the region of Granma:

> "El cielo luce lechoso de tantísimas nubes, y a ratos, audazmente se filtra un sorbo de azul." [The sky shines milky white with so many clouds, and from time to time a drop of blue seeps boldly through.] (Ibid: 4).

The Uncertainties Abroad in Contrast with the Comforts at Home
The same issue also focused on difficulties and poverty in Latin America, and the capitalist world, putting Cuba's own problems into perspective. The article cited sources from the IMF and OECD, thus increasing its credibility.

> "En América Latina la desnutrición afecta al 45% de la población y cerca de 35 millones de niños viven en la más aguda miseria." [In Latin America malnutrition affects up to 45% of the population and close to 35 million children live in the most severe poverty.] (*Bohemia*, y. 72, n. 14, 4 April 1980c, José Luis Robaina: 66-67).

Referring to the capitalist countries the article reported:

> "Inflación, desempleo, pobre crecimiento económico, endeudamiento, desnutrición, miseria. Esas son allí las palabras de orden." [Inflation, unemployment, poor economic growth, indebtedness, malnutrition, misery. These are common parlance over there.] (Ibid: 66-67).

In addition, Robert McNamara, the former president of the World Bank, was quoted:

> "Para fines del siglo 600 millones de personas estarán en la pobreza absoluta." [At the end of the century 600 million people will be in absolute poverty.] (Ibid: 66-67).

The description of the difficult world beyond Cuba in both developing and advanced capitalist countries aimed to increase the attractiveness of the Cuban alternative, and in a way anticipated and addressed possible intentions of some Cubans to emigrate. To increase the effectiveness of this argument against emigration even further, a crucial part of the article informed:

> "Según informe del Departamento de Empleo que reveló *The New York Times*, los negros e inmigrantes hispano-parlantes son los primeros en ser despedidos en momentos de crisis empresarial, ...son los menos remunerados." [According to information from the Department of Employment, revealed by *The New York Times*, blacks and Spanish-speaking immigrants are the first to be made redundant in times of corporate crisis ...and are the lowest paid.] (Ibid: 66-67).

The language became more direct and later read: *la recesión será horrible* [the recession will be horrible] (Ibid: 66-67). This report would have made anyone considering emigration, or doubting the system, to rethink the situation carefully.

Hence the overall media message can be summarised as focusing on positive progress in economic development and productivity, supported by Cuba's socialist work ethic, in contrast with economic problems elsewhere in the world. The discourse emphasised Cuba's righteous cause in diplomatic relations with the United States. The revolution was regularly covered in a triumphant way, as an encouraging example for comparison with the situation abroad: some having serious problems and others opting for the Cuban model. The construction was a mixture of Cuban patriotism, anti-Americanism and an image presenting national firmness and determination despite Cuba's structural position as a small country. The language used in the pre-crisis discourse avoided insults, focusing to a large extent on encouragement, and suggesting some possible awareness of the increasing internal instability.

Unrest Escalates: April to October 1980

On 1st April 1980, a group of disaffected Cubans crashed a vehicle through the gates of the Peruvian embassy in Havana, killing one Cuban guard during the following exchange of fire. The incident sparked off the Peruvian embassy crisis, which then escalated into the Mariel boatlift. After the incident, the discourse began to include messages referring to unrest in Cuban society, attributing the problems to anti-social elements. Increasingly, the language started to include negative connotations. *Verde Olivo* reported the event with a double-page spread filled with images of the bus driven into the premises of the embassy, describing the moments of the incident in detail, including the brief shootout, as narrated minute-by-minute from different perspectives. The magazine listed the names and past convictions of those involved, questioning their status as political refugees, as they were interpreted in the US discourse. The article stated clearly that

> "...la irresponsibilidad de los que acogen a tales individuos, exentos en cualquier lugar del mundo de recibir asilo diplomático, va más allá de lo que puede soportar nuestro pueblo: se pierde la vida de un joven con hermosas cualidades humanas y revolucionarias." [...the irresponsibility of those that welcome such individuals, excluded in any place in the world from receiving diplomatic asylum, goes beyond what our people can support: the life of a young person with beautiful human and revolutionary qualities was lost.] (*Verde Olivo*, 15/80, 13 April 1980a, Jorge Luis Blanco: 10-11).

The listed convictions of the perpetrators to demonstrate convincingly their criminal past, and hence immoral nature, included the following:

> "indisciplina laboral, tráfico de marihuana, robo, falsificación de documentos, santería...aquí los 'problemas políticos' que confrontaban

los que ahora son acogidos por las autoridades peruanas." [work indiscipline, trafficking of marijuana, theft, falsification of documents, Santería...Here are the 'political problems' faced by those that are now welcomed by the Peruvian authorities.] (Ibid: 10-11).

The language suggested a lack of any real political motivations for leaving. It also assumed, within the officially atheist nature of the Cuban state at the time, that Santería was a negative symptom. The article clearly argued for the idea that the revolutionary project was voluntary, and that criminal acts used as a means to leave the country were not acceptable, thus establishing the grounds for the beginning of the crisis.

Confident, Loyal Masses Face the Parasites

In the case of *Granma*, the language already started to include insults directed at disloyal Cubans. The issue of 4th April included a government declaration, coupled with a synthesis of the life of the soldier killed in the premises of the Peruvian embassy during the incident, portraying him as an exemplary revolutionary, a heroic victim of the morally twisted attackers. The range of words used to describe the perpetrators already expanded to include *deliquentes comunes, lumpens, elementos antisociales* [common delinquents, lumpens, anti-social elements] (*Granma*, y. 16, n. 82, 4 April 1980: 1). The article also confirmed that:

> "...no se les concede autorización por los gobiernos extranjeros para viajar legalmente a los países a los cuales quieren dirigirse...han apropriado el procedimiento de introducirse por la fuerza en embajadas extranjeras." [...they were not given permission by foreign governments to travel legally to countries they wished to head for... so they have proceeded to enter foreign embassies by force] (Ibid: 1).

This explanation demonstrated that the perpetrators had in fact been refused by foreign governments (not explicitly citing Peru), and it suggested the complications of emigration as such for others in Cuba considering leaving.

Such negative news was contrasted with positive news about the popular response to the official condemnation of the incident. A headline of another article read: *Pleno respaldo popular al editorial de Granma que define la posición de Cuba ante los hechos registrados en la embajada de Peru* [Full public support for the *Granma* editorial that defines the position of Cuba with regard to the events that took place at the embassy of Peru.] (*Granma*, y. 16, n. 85, 8 April 1980b, Evello Talleria: 1). The discourse increased its putative tone and used the word *parásitos* [parasites], further encouraging loyal Cubans:

> "En esta espontánea reacción de nuestro pueblo es unánime el criterio de defender nuestra soberanía y repudiar las acciones de elementos antisociales, deliquentes y parásitos que ponen en peligro la seguridad y la inmunidad diplomáticas, así como la vida de valiosos soldados de nuestro pueblo." [In this spontaneous reaction of our people is the unanimous decision to defend our sovereignty and repel actions of

> antisocial elements, delinquents and parasites that endanger security and diplomatic immunity, as well as the lives of valiant soldiers of our people.] (Ibid: 1).

Later in the text, the perpetrators were also referred to as *vagos*, *escoria* and *lumpens* [vagrants, scum, lumpens] (Ibid: 1), contrasting the condemnations from "trabajadores...integrantes del Ballet Nacional de Cuba... miles de miembros de nuestras organizaciones políticas y de masas" [workers...members of the National Ballet of Cuba...thousands of members of our political organisations, and the masses] (Ibid: 1). The article ended by calling out *¡Que se vaya la escoria!* [Let the scum leave!] (Ibid:.1). Pages four and five of the same issue then carried a message from the mother of the soldier killed during the incident, quoting her reaction:

> "'Díganle a Fidel que aunque mi hijo murió, aquí me quedan otros que seguirán defendiendo la revolución', Luisa Cabrera Lien, Madre de Pedro Ortiz Cabrera." ["Tell Fidel that even though my son died, I have others that will continue defending the revolution", Luisa Cabrera Lien, mother of Pedro Ortiz Cabrera.]. She also added: "Como madre lo he llorado mucho; pero me queda el consuelo de saber que cayó cumpliendo con su deber para con la Patria." [As a mother I cried a lot about it; but I have the consolation of knowing that he fell doing his duty to the Fatherland.] (*Granma*, 11 April 1980a, Santiago Cardosa Arias: 4).

This was the strongest demonstration of loyalty to the system, expressing patriotic sentiment without referring explicitly to nationalism, but instead using the word fatherland. Support for the position of the leadership was portrayed not as moderate, but absolute with complete loyalty and readiness to receive orders from the commander in chief of the nation at war to stop the nation's external, but also in this instance, internal enemies, represented by dissenters intending to leave the country by violent means. The statement echoed Cuban revolutionary values of sacrifice, determination and perseverance in difficult moments, as exemplified by the leaders of the revolution during the Sierra Maestra campaign.

The overall message contained elements stressing the unity of the rest of the population devoted to their country and its historical struggle for independence. The message was clear, repeating the theme of receiving orders, in an article entitled: *¡Comandante en jefe, ordene!, corean los estudiantes en las calles* [Commander in chief, command us! Chanted students in the streets] (*Granma*, y. 16, n. 88, 11 April 1980b, Roger Ricardo Luis: 6). The discourse demonstrated wide support:

> "Expresiones y cantos de apoyo a Fidel y a nuestro Partido surgen incesantemente de las masas estudiantiles que en los últimos días recorren las calles." [Expressions and chants of support for Fidel and our Party arise incessantly from the masses of students that march in the streets.] (Ibid: 6).

Cuban public opinion was interpreted very explicitly in an article in the issue dated 10th April and entitled *Así piensan los Cubanos* [So Cubans think], accompanied by brief explanations of individual Cubans expressing their views in line with the leadership. Within the hegemonic discourse, where workers were given high social value, the opinions given were often from factory workers, telephone switchboard operators, street sweepers, repair shop workers etc., but some white collar workers were also included. The tone was increasingly serious and combative, calling these exemplary Cubans *soldados de la Revolución* (*Granma*, y. 16, n. 87, 10 April 1980c, Joaquín Oramas et al.: 2-3), bringing in a stronger militaristic tone. Calls for antisocial elements to leave were repeated, and the emphasis on national unity in opinion culminated in the last paragraph:

> "Así piensan, de San Antonio a Maisí, nuestros obreros y campesinos, nuestros intelectuales y nuestros estudiantes: los revolucionarios cubanos." [So they think from San Antonio to Maisí, our workers and peasants, our intellectuals and our students: the Cuban revolutionaries] (Ibid: 2-3).

The description from San Antonio to Maisí suggested to Cubans the complete inclusion of the whole of the island from its most western part (San Antonio) to its most eastern (Maisí), including all generational and social groups, starting with the workers and only then followed by intellectuals and others.

The perpetrators were also referred to in a specific word as *vendepatrias* [treacherous/those that sold their fatherland], which echoed a very strong sense of Cuban patriotism and belonging. A strong example of this emphasis appeared on the front page of *Granma* dated 12th April: *Dispuesto nuestro pueblo a defender la patria hasta la ultima gota de sangre* [Our people is ready to defend the homeland until the last drop of blood] (*Granma*, y. 16, n. 89, 12 April 1980a, Ralsa Pagés et al.: 1). The article described the Cuban people as:

> "nuestro pueblo...erguido y valeroso, supo de la amenazante maniobra militar yanqui alrededor de Cuba...los hijos de la tierra de Céspedes, Agramonte, Maceo, Gómez, Martí, Mella, Guiteras, Camilo y Che...confirman su fervor revolucionario y su disposición al combate por la defensa de su gloriosa Revolución..." [our people...upright and courageous, learned of the impending Yankee military manoeuvres around Cuba ...the sons of the land of Céspedes, Agramonte, Maceo, Gómez, Martí, Mella, Guiteras, Camilo and Che ...confirm their revolutionary fervour and willingness to combat for the defence of their glorious revolution] (Ibid: 1).

The language repeated the concept of "our people belonging to Cuba and its revolutionary system", suggesting the seriousness of the military threat from *alrededor de* [around] (Ibid: 1) Cuba, encircled by hostile forces, yet drawing confidence from the country's historical experience of victorious struggle for independence and autonomy. It cited particular heroic figures who died in the independence fighting or for the revolutionary project, thus demonstrating

absolute courage and commitment to the revolutionary cause. The tone increasingly stressed the seriousness of the situation, as a fight, also recalling the
Cuban army and its proven ability to prevail in military conflicts:

> "Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias ...Angola, Etiopía, Girón, que participaron en la Lucha Contra Bandidos y contra piratas...no caben los serviles ni los cobardes." [Revolutionary Armed Forces ... Angola, Ethiopia, Giron, who participated in the fight against bandits and pirates ... fit against the subservient nor cowards] (Ibid: 1).

The article again included strong words such as *sangre* [blood] and finally repeated the call *¡Que se vaya la escoria!* [Let the scum leave!] (Ibid: 1). The tone at this stage was becoming increasingly militant and mobilising.

In most cases, Cubans involved in the initiation and continuation of the crisis, and implicitly those unsupportive of the rest of the loyal collective, were referred to with a range of terms including *lumpens*, *elementos antisociales*, *vendepatrias*, *delincuentes*, and *escoria*. The identity of those disloyal Cubans was constructed repetitively in several negative points, instead of reporting any substantial diversity of reasons for wanting to leave. Later on however, *Granma* included a brief explanation of this classification at a moment when the number of people intending to leave expanded dramatically. The newspaper stated explicitly that it portrayed these dissenters as anti-social elements, due to the violent origin of the crisis, but later on, when the numbers grew, explained that under the term of anti-social elements were also included other individuals, such as relatives of Cubans already living in the United States. (*Granma*, y. 16, n. 104, 27 April 1980: 1). In most other cases however, this distinction was not made and emigrants were described consistently in negative terms. The negative portrayal of those who were constructed as having betrayed the country and the system, was put in contrast with the rest of the population, urging them to leave if they wished, thus asserting the strength and self-confidence of the loyal part of the people and the system. *Granma* expressed this outright on its last page of the issue of 8th April: *¡Puerta abierta a la escória!* [The door is open for the scum.] (*Granma*, y. 16, n. 85, 8 April 1980a: 2). Later issues followed by outright shouts on the front page: *¡Que se vayan!* [Let them leave"/Get out!] (*Granma*, y. 16, n. 96, 19 April 1980: 1).

The United States as a Criminal State

The image of the United States as an undesirable place to settle was evident on the front page of the issue of *Granma* dated 10th April, which reported the arrival of a African-American US resident after hijacking an American Airlines plane. On arrival in Cuba, he testified that he had left for religious and political reasons to escape persecution. The article presented his description of the difficulties black people were encountering in the United States at that time. The hijacker also added that in the United States, slavery continued to be maintained informally and that the racial struggle in the country had moved from opposing the "Ku-Klux-Klan" (Ibid: 4) to opposing the political establishment and *el partido nazi* [the Nazi party] (Ibid: 4), finally concluding:

> "En Estados Unidos...los negros vivimos en un círculo vicioso sin esperanza...Se habla del mundo libre, pero un mundo libre que en Estados Unidos no es para los negros." [In the United States...the blacks live in a vicious circle without hope...They speak about a free world, but a free world in the United States is not for black people.] (*Granma*, y. 16, n. 87, 10 April 1980a: 1, 4).
>
> The testimony of the hijacker then continued in the article in the following words: "Nosotros...los llamados negros norteamericanos, hemos sufrido el peor tratamiento que ningún ser humano haya experimentado jamás." [We...the so-called North American Negroes, have suffered the worst treatment ever experienced by human beings.] (Ibid: 4).

As is evident here, the tone of the discourse in relation to the United States was increasingly condemnatory of the United States as a symbol, and started to include very direct, negative interpretations of particular parts of US social reality. The focus on US social reality was particularly negative in this case, and indirectly addressed the internal issues of Cuba, where the leadership might have sensed increasing domestic unrest, possible migratory pressures, and the impact of the recent influx of Cuban-Americans. The negative content on the front page can be understood as a counter argument to the Cuban domestic situation, interpreting the United States in a less than attractive way. The tone here became much more confrontational in regards to the United States as a symbolic adversary, countering what others might have perceived as a tempting world of prosperity and wealth.

While Cubans were affected by the increased visits of Cuban-Americans, articles such as this one might have been aimed at providing less attractive descriptions of the world outside, especially the United States. The means by which the alleged racial problems of the hijacker were solved by criminal behaviour, for example, were not addressed or discussed in the newspaper, even though in a different context it would have been most certainly seen in as anti-social behaviour of the *escoria* emigrating from Cuba by criminal means. The same issue of *Granma* included an article criticising declarations of US President Jimmy Carter in support of the ruling junta of El Salvador, describing the situation in the Caribbean as if this region belonged to the United States (*Granma*, y. 16, n. 87, 10 April 1980b, Héctor Hernández Pardo: 6). This approach was described as imperialist, and Cuba was portrayed as morally superior by simply demanding national independence that it had right to as a nation-state. Alleged lies and misinformation campaigns of the White House were contrasted with Cuba's justified demands for its rights that had been internationally recognized, thus giving Cuba moral superiority US geographic greed, suggesting the different characters of the two states as righteous versus criminal.

Granma of the 11th April 1980 followed up with the announcement of a major US military exercise called Solid Shield-80 that was to take place the following month in the Caribbean *alrededor de* [around/encircling of] Cuba.

(*Granma*, y. 16, n. 88, 11 April 1980c: 1). The timing of the article on the front page suggests the increasing emphasis on maintaining the siege atmosphere, in anticipation of a coming crisis, building an image of a complete encirclement by hostile forces. Migrants abandoning the country in such a situation were perceived as symbolically willing to join the enemy, thus in a way becoming the enemy within. Social pressure was on the rise. The article also reported the US military base in Guantánamo to have been involved in the exercise, suggesting the reality of a potential military threat with an undertone of real proximity, immediacy and seriousness. The military threat represented by the United States combined with its denial of Cuban territorial integrity by the maintenance of its base in Guantánamo, and the historical evidence of the expansive nature of the United States, were contrasted with Cuba's righteous defensive position and moral superiority as a peaceful island state. This was a construction particularly and uniquely relevant to Cubans, their concerns and national memory.

Granma continued with the issue of the 12th April, further extending the erroneous-position of the US government, by claiming that the aggressive nature of its current foreign policy was targeted not only against Cuba, but against all developing countries, as well as against the poor in the United States itself. Instead of taking care of the poor, the US government was increasing its already high spending on armaments, while spending on social programmes was being reduced.

> "La política de Carter, añadió, es una política de guerra contra los pobres y desafortunados de Norteamérica, contra los estados en vías de desarrollo. De ella salen beneficiados sólo los fabricantes de armas, los mercaderes de la muerte y también los regímenes despóticos que apoya Washington." [The politics of Carter, he added, are the politics of war against the poor and less fortunate in North America, against developing states. Its beneficiaries are only the arms manufacturers, merchants of death and also the despotic regimes supported by Washington.] (*Granma*, y. 16, n. 89, 12 April 1980b: 7).

The United States was denounced for its unwillingness to accept migrants from Haiti, while expressing such support for migrants from Cuba. This was presented as US hypocrisy of its real position on immigration from South America and the Caribbean. The discourse continued in an increasingly insulting and accusatory tone, condemning the United States, and those aiming to emigrate.

The magazine *Verde Olivo* contained almost identical messages as the main information outlet *Granma*, accompanied by extra material not focusing on current events. At the beginning of the crisis the magazine devoted a double-page spread to the incident at the Peruvian embassy with photographs from the scene. The following pages then covered the personal story of the guard killed during the incident, with a reprint of an editorial from the *Granma* entitled *La posición de Cuba* [The position of Cuba] (*Verde Olivo*, 15/80, 13 April 1980b: 10-15). Amongst the points covered was a statement urging anyone wishing to

leave Cuba to do so, but with the permission of the country of destination, not through force.

> "Como lo hizo siempre, Cuba les abría gustosamente las puertas [As it has always done, Cuba will open its doors with pleasure] (Ibid: 10-15).

The article reported that those who entered the embassy peacefully after the incident had not committed an act of aggression and were free to return home, with the Cuban authorities not intending to take any action against them. This information demonstrates the gradual preparation for a possible exodus of disaffected Cubans in the future, that could have been already under negotiation amongst the leadership at the same time, portraying it from a position intended by Cuban authorities as something under their control and intent, preparing the public for things to come (Ibid: 10-15).

The issue of *Verde Olivo* of the 20th April reminded on the front page that since *Playa Girón*, all peoples of Latin America had become *un poco más libres* [a little bit freer], sending this message as a quote from Fidel Castro (*Verde Olivo*, 16/80, 20 April 1980a: 1). Later in the issue, an article titled *La respuesta del pueblo uniformado* [The reply of the people in uniform] (*Verde Olivo* 16/80, 20 April 1980b, Luis Lopez: 4-5) reported the loyalty of the armed forces. The issue devoted eight pages to CIA aerial operations over Cuba, reinforcing the underlying message in *Granma* of the reality of a possible US military aggression, not only from the sea but also from the air, supported by strong historical evidence. This increased the range of threats against the country under permanent siege. The article was titled *Playa Girón, Las operaciones aéreas de la CIA* [The Bay of Pigs, aerial operations of the CIA] (*Verde Olivo*, 20 April 1980c, José M. Miyar Barruecos: 26-38), suggesting the ability of Cubans to prevail by drawing on national memory, recalling past triumphs in defence of their country. In an encouraging tone, *Verde Olivo* contextualised the historical event as *parte de una historia de triunfo y victoria de nuestro pueblo* [part of a history of triumph and victory of our people] (Ibid: 27). The period was described as:

> "El pueblo fue alertado, la nación se puso en pie de guerra, se hizo más firme la conciencia de lucha y la decisión de las masas de defender su Revolución." [The people were alert, the nation went on a war footing, the fighting consciousness and the decision of the masses to defend their revolution grew stronger.] (Ibid: 27).

The language contained a rather uncommon use of *la nación* [the nation], and provided an endogenous model of how to behave in unity in times of national crisis, reminding readers of their historical ability to prevail against all odds to defend their way of life, and political and social system. It also stressed the decision of the masses to defend the revolution, implicitly suggesting that this was due to spontaneous popular support, not involvement by the political leadership.

In general, the consistent mixture of supporting messages facilitated the reinforcement of the sense of Cuba as a society under siege, in a situation

requiring special sacrifices, increased social control and loyalty. At this stage, the tone was becoming more direct, negative, militaristic, denouncing, and confrontational. Topics related to US aggression or emigration were addressed and interpreted within the Cuban historical experience, anticipating further problems and hence preparing the public to ensure loyalty. The tough exploitative individualist life in the United States was contrasted with the relative comforts of life on the island, available to those who would decide to stay, and who were implicitly encouraged to do so. The loyal were portrayed as opposed to those considering leaving for a world of racial inequality, unemployment, worse access to education and public services, leaving behind state-granted accommodation, public medical care, and a salary granted at the end of each month. The press warned that for those leaving Cuba *El aprendizaje será brutal* [The apprenticeship will be brutal] (*Granma*, y. 16, n. 91, 14th April 1980, Georgina Jiménez: 6).

This construction of US and Cuban realities in comparison can be understood as a factor that could have contributed to the continuing legitimacy of the Cuban system with a positive impact on the country's stability in these challenging times, by ways of persuasion and a specific interpretation of reality. It reiterated the basic principles of Cuban political culture, thus echoing some of Ernesto Che Guevara's ideas (fight against oppression, social provision etc.) at a time when the system was under pressure and required active defence and loyalty of the public:

> "Why does the guerrilla fighter fight? We must come to the inevitable conclusion that the guerrilla fighter is a social reformer, that he takes up arms responding to the angry protest of the people against their oppressors, and that he fights in order to change the social system that keeps all his unarmed brothers in ignominy and misery." (Cuban Embassy to South Africa 2010, Ernesto Che Guevara, http://emba.cubaminrex.cu).

The Mariel Boatlift: 22-26 April 1980

The coverage of the main wave of emigrants leaving through the port of Mariel started in the issue of *Granma* of 22nd April, with a section on the front page titled *Noticias de Mariel* [News from Mariel]. (*Granma*, y. 16, n. 99, 22 April 1980: 1). It informed the public that, the preceding day, two boats had left Mariel for the United States with 48 *elementos anti-sociales* onboard [anti-social elements] (Ibid: 1). In addition, the article reported the reaction of US authorities, and reported the difficulties that those leaving were going to face in the United States:

> "...el Departamento de Estado yanqui hacia frenéticas declaraciones contra estos viajes a Cuba, amenazando con arrestar, confiscar, etcétera." [the Yankee State Department made frantic declarations to Cuba against these journeys, threatening to arrest, confiscate, etc.] (Ibid: 1).

The underlying message was that the emigrants and *vendepatrias* were not welcome in Cuba, but neither were they welcome in the United States, thus communicating the dangers of joining them and dissenters overtly critical of the system in general, who had no place of their own and were presented as despised by all. The article, and similar coverage, can be seen as implicit discouragement of emigration. It also suggested the failure of the United States in the diplomatic row, as the crisis was getting out of control for the United States, which had in the past accused Cubans of constraining emigration, but was now not willing to permit it, thus contradicting itself on all grounds and building an image of a confused, irrational, lying imperial aggressor.

Granma of the 24th April repeated the furious reaction of the *yanquis* against the maritime bridge between Mariel and Florida. The language continued to emphasise the embarrassing effect of the event on the Carter Administration, using stronger accusatory language such as *mentira yanqui* [Yankee lie] (*Granma*, y. 16, n. 101, 24th April 1980: 1). The United States was accused of lying about alleged emigration accords between Cuba, Peru and Costa Rica. The issue of the 25th April continued to accuse the United States again of *otra desvergonzada mentira* [another shameless lie] (*Granma*, y. 16, n. 102, 25 April 1980a: 1). A large part of the article was written in a factual style, and only at the end did it adopt more insulting language. Interestingly, it described Cuban-Americans in a positive light, a rare occurrence in the discourse at that time:

> "Esto no fue más que una respuesta inteligente de los residentes cubanos en Estados Unidos a la política hipócrita de ese país." [This was no more than an intelligent reply by Cuban residents in the United States to the hypocritical politics of that country.] (Ibid: 1). In addition, emphasis was given to the correct handling of the situation by the Cuban side: "Aquí todo se desarrolla ordenadamente." [Here, everything is developing in an orderly manner] (Ibid: 1).

Granma of 26th April continued with statistics from Mariel. The Port of Mariel was described as a *bosque de mástiles* [a forest of masts] (*Granma*, y. 16, n. 103, 26 April 1980a: 1), with 958 boats requesting permission to pick up *lumpens* from Cuba. Further on, Mariel was reported to be currently an exception to the embargo, with burgeoning commerce between the crews and locals, with increasing purchases of Havana Club rum, reportedly because Bacardi rum produced in the United States *no sírve absolutamente para nada* [is good for absolutely nothing] (Ibid: 1). Thus, the event was interpreted as advantageous for Cuba, temporarily annulling the hated *bloqueo*, again contradicting US interests. The editorial then concluded:

> "Estos hechos demuestran una vez más la infinita confianza que existe en las garantías y la seriedad de la Revolución Cubana. ...¡Y reafirmamos dignamente que la Revolucion y el socialismo es obra de hombres libres!" [These acts demonstrate one more time the boundless confidence that exists in the guarantees and seriousness of the Cuban

> revolution. ...And we reaffirm with dignity that the revolution and socialism are the work of free men] (Ibid: 1).

Another article in the issue referred to those leaving as "parasites", and even encouraged them to leave as they had no place in a society where work was considered of the highest dignity, where they represented only a minority that longed for the exploitative and unjust American way of life instead of joining the voluntary efforts of Cuban patriots and honourable citizens to build up their own country.

> "Los parásitos no tienen cabida en una sociedad donde el trabajo representa la más alta dignidad moral y social." [The parasites do not have a place in a society where work represents the highest moral and social dignity.] (*Granma*, y. 16, n. 103, 26 April 1980b, Hector Hernandez Pardo: 3).

They were described as misfits in *nuestro pueblo trabajador* [our working people] (Ibid p 3), emphasising a strong sense of community. The traitors were contrasted with the rest of Cuban society that was ready to defend, at any price, the sovereignty and dignity of their country. The article used references to José Martí and his concept of *Nuestra América* [Our America] as a strong source of identity within Spanish-speaking America, opposed to the Anglo-Saxon imperialist United States. Martí's call to Latin Americans to unite was reiterated and those that lacked faith in their country were condemned in the context of a national crisis and reconsideration of values and revolutionary history. The emigrants were portrayed as converting themselves into *marionetas de la sociedad de consumo...los que cobardamente no creen en la victoria y prefieren desertar* [puppets of consumer society...the cowards do not believe in victory and prefer to desert] (Ibid: 3), suggesting their weak and vile character. The tone suddenly became abusive:

> "Hay que cargar los barcos de esos insectos dañinos, que le roen el hueso a la patria que los nutre. ...Eso es lo que piensa el pueblo entero... Porque es verdad. El pueblo piensa como Martí." [It is necessary to fill these boats with these harmful insects that gnaw on the bone of the homeland that nourishes them...This is what the entire people think...Because it is true. The people think like Martí.] (Ibid: 3).

A qualitative contrast was reported between the just cause of Cuba with its system based on truth, dignity, humanity, peace, equality, anti-racism and social mobility, and the values underlying the US system, as for example in the issue of 25th April stating: *Hay valores humanos que no pueden ser cambiados por cosas materiales.* [There are human values that cannot be swapped for material things.] (*Granma*, y. 16, n. 102, 25 April 1980b, José A. Benítez: 2).

Granma of 27th April included further news from Mariel, reporting an additional 903 *elementos asociales* leaving the country, with a definition of the use of the term. Interestingly, the individuals were described as *vagos,*

parásitos, elementos delicuenciales o predeliquentes [vagrants, parasites, delinquent elements and pre-delinquents] (*Granma*, y. 16, n. 104, 27 April 1980: 1), but the article also pointed out explicitly that amongst these were relatives of Cuban living in the United States, who were not necessarily *lumpens*. Nevertheless, the article stated that it would continue referring to them as *lumpens*, due to the fact that most of them fitted this category: "Granma seguirá denominándolos a todos como elementos antisociales" [*Granma* will continue to denominate them all as antisocial elements] (Ibid: 1). Later on, US reality was constructed as an illusion, which had been described by Martí as monstrous (Ibid: 1). The issues of *Granma* from 26th and 27th April contained the most condemning and insulting language, and the two days can be understood as the peak of the crisis.

An issue of *Verde Olivo* from 27th April covered the massive popular mobilisation in support of the Cuban authorities (*Verde Olivo*, 17/80, 27 April 1980, Eduardo Yassels: 4-5). Interestingly, the issue did not cover the events of the Mariel boatlift, which were reported on four pages in the subsequent issue instead. There does not appear to be a special reason for this omission, as this was at the time reported by *Granma*. *Verde Olivo* followed with a comparison between Cuban youth widely supportive of the system and the hopeless youth in the United States photographed holding guns in the midst of poor housing estates in desolation (*Verde Olivo*, 18/80, 4 May 1980a: 8-11). The article used strong language such as *sangre* or *combate* [blood or combat] (*Verde Olivo*, 18/80, 4 May 1980b, Coronel Manuel Lópet Díaz: 12-13). It reminded, that the crisis was a *nuevo combate por nuestra dignidad y soberanía* [new combat for our dignity and sovereignty] (Ibid: 12-13), and then reinforced the spirit of community in Cuba, based not only on a certain blood relation but also on a more subliminal and spiritual bond: "No sólo les une la sangre. Una afinidad espiritual enlaza las generaciones." [Not only blood unites them. A spiritual affinity binds the generations.] (Ibid: 12-13).

This heightened appeal was aimed at Cubans of all generations, defending the very basics of their identities and social reality at a decisive moment. The trans-generational bond of the revolutionary system was further emphasised in the following words: "Marchaban junto a viejos luchadores contra la opresión..." [They marched beside old fighters against oppression...] (Ibid: 12-13). The article reiterated the decades-old trust in the leaders of the revolutionary project, and inspired renewed confidence: "para lo que sea, como sea y donde sea: Commandante en Jefe ¡Ordene!" [for whatever may be, however it may be or wherever it may be: Commander in Chief, command us!] (Ibid: 12-13). This article was followed by further coverage of Fidel Castro's speech to the masses, emphasising unity and commitment (*Verde Olivo*, 19/80, 11 May 1980, Fidel Castro: 8-15). The following issue reported on a double page spread the situation in the United States in an article titled *¿Paraíso o infierno?* [Paradise or inferno?] (*Verde Olivo*, 23/80, 8 June 1980, Armando Lopez Rivera, 8 June 1980: 16-17), describing police repression and desolated immigrants in a US refugee camp, once again implicitly discouraging emigration. The article examined the insecure future of those who had left the comfortable socialist homeland, finding themselves in an environment where an airplane was described as having over flown the

provisional refugee camp with a banner reading: "EL KU KLUX KLAN ESTA AQUI" [The Ku Klux Klan is here] (Ibid: 16-17). The article continued that "No todo era color de rosa en la tierra de 'promisión' en el idílico 'paraíso' yanki." [Not all was rosy in the 'promised' land, in the idyllic Yankee 'paradise']. In the United States, immigrants were not welcome and women would sometimes turn to prostitution (Ibid: 16-17). As other articles from this period, it aimed at opening the eyes of the Cuban public, focusing on the less attractive parts of the US social system, after the population of Cuba was previously tempted by increased visits of Cuban-Americans. Such portrayals of the situation in the United States not only fitted well in the overall hegemonic discourse, but also discouraged emigration of moderate dissenters, increasing their loyalty to the system. It addressed domestic doubts about the system at a moment of national re-evaluation, and reverted to a militant, warlike language.

> "Arguably, the so-called Mariel boatlift of April-November 1980 was the most destabilising event confronting the revolution since the Bay of Pigs invasion....The government estimated that another 25 percent of the population were ready to emigrate." (Baloyra in Baloyra & Morris 1993: 50).

After the Storm

Following the disquiet of the Mariel crisis, the printed media discourse asserted the victory of Cuba and its people and reverted to other issues. It described the outcome in the following words: *El desconcierto yanki no puede ser más completo* [The Yankee confusion cannot be more complete] (*Granma*, y. 16, n. 106, 29 April 1980: 6). This was further followed by coverage of new popular mobilisations in the next issue: *¡Mañana con Fidel todos a la plaza!* [Tomorrow with Fidel, everyone to the square!] (*Granma*, y. 16, n. 107, 30 April 1980: 1). The same spirit of encouragement peaked on the symbolic day of 1st May, when *Granma* reported about massive rallies in Havana and elsewhere on the island to express support for the government and symbolically demonstrate the lack of fear of the US military exercises taking place at the same time. The issue focused strongly on nationwide festivities around the symbolic date of the International Workers' Day, and the continuing *La Marcha del Pueblo Combatiente* [March of the fighting people] (*Granma*, y. 16, n. 120, 14 May 1980: 1).

As the titles from the front page of *Granma* illustrate, the discourse quickly turned positive, celebrating the perceived Cuban victory: *Este pueblo merece un lugar en la historia, Este pueblo merece un lugar en la gloria, Este pueblo merece la victoria* [This people merits a place in history, This people merits a place in glory, This people merits victory] (*Granma*, y. 16, n. 109, 2 May 1980a: 1). Even though the mockery of the perceived US failure continued, as did the condemnations of those that had left, the discourse became very encouraging, containing a high frequency of positive words, such as *victoria* and *gloria*. Other terms used included *fuerza, unidad, Patria o muerte* [strength, unity, homeland or death], with *Patria o muerte* deeply embedded in

the discourse. The collective self-esteem was considered restored, assuming an almost absolute national unity (*Granma*, y. 16, n. 109, 2 May 1980d: 2-7). The message was clear: despite all obstacles, revolutionary Cuba would prevail, as had happened many times before, and it would not let itself be bullied by a regional hegemon. All of this was possible thanks to the people and their full support and confidence. The assumption of complete unity was demonstrated by reports and photographs of deserted streets of Havana during the events (*Granma*, y. 16, n. 109, 2 May 1980: 7).

Granma of 3rd May continued by printing Fidel Castro's speech, which refocused the readers back on the need to continue increasing productivity and on other practical issues as before the crisis, based on the common sense that the problems had been dealt with and Cuban victory delcared (*Granma*, y. 16, n. 110, 3 May 1980a, Fidel Castro: 1-3). The counter-revolutionary *lumpen* that had left were portrayed as having betrayed the noble national values of their homeland, *una sociedad con más valores morales* [a society with more moral values] for superficial capitalist materialist values. The front page reported that more than a million Cubans participated in the rallies, as confirmed by international news agencies, demonstrating the loyalty, honour and revolutionary consciousness of the public. At the same time about 700 dissenters were reported to have gathered in front of the US Interests Section in Havana, in order to show opposition to the rest of the country. These were again dismissed as mostly anti-social elements, asking for a swifter exit from the country (*Granma*, y. 16, n. 110, 3 May 1980b: 5).

It is interesting that the newspaper covered the opposition as well, even though it could have chosen to not report it. It was reported, however, in a context of overwhelming support for the government, and the disproportion was the angle of the coverage, which included numerous supportive responses of the crowd at the rally in almost each paragraph of Castro's speech:

> "APLAUSOS: ¡Que se vayan, que se vayan! ...El pueblo unido jamás será vencido!" [Let them leave, let them leave! ...The united people will never be vanquished!] (*Granma*, y. 16, n. 110, 3 May 1980a, Fidel Castro: 1-3).

The people were addressed in the following words:

> "El pueblo debe ser disciplinado, acatar las instrucciones de sus organizaciones y cooperar con las autoridades. ...La disciplina es el factor esencial en las grandes batallas de los pueblos." [The people must be disciplined and obey instructions from their organisations and cooperate with the authorities. ...discipline is an essential factor in great popular battles.] (Ibid: 1).

This communicated the contextual justification of the necessity to maintain social order under the given circumstances, even by applying strict measures, thus legitimating the policies of the leadership reinforcing the siege atmosphere. Other passages interpreted the situation as encouraging, emphasising strength, unity and rejection of those that had left:

> "...nuestra fuerza...En estos días se ha estado librando una batalla de masas como jamás se había estado librando en la historia de la Revolución, tanto por su volumen como por su profundidad. ...Quien no tenga genes revolucionarios, quien no tenga sangre revolucionaria, quien no tenga una mente que se adapte a la idea de una revolución, quien no tenga un corazón que se adapte al esfurezo y al heroísmo de una revolución, no les necesitamos en nuestro país." [...our strength...In these days a battle of the masses has been unleashed as never before in the history of the revolution, as much for its volume as for its depth. ...Whoever does not have the genes of revolutionaries, whoever does not have revolutionary blood, whoever does not have a mind that adapts to the idea of a revolution, whoever does not have a heart that adapts to the effort and heroism of a revolution, we do not need them in our country.] (Ibid: 2).

The Cuban magazine *Bohemia* gave a relatively low coverage of the crisis, in comparison to *Granma*, as can be expected from its more relaxed and less political style. One particular issue covered the events that had taken place in Mariel on a double-page spread, sending identical messages to those sent by *Granma* and examined above (*Bohemia*, y. 72, n. 18, 2 May 1980: 54-59). The article in fact referred to *Granma* as its source.

Castro Summarises the Situation

The final interpretation of the crisis from within the system was well summarised in Fidel Castro's speech given on the occasion of a mass rally on 1st May 1980. Amongst many other points made, Castro's speech responded to the high turnout at the gathering. He interpreted the times as a crucial battle of the masses, reminding Cubans of their reasons for taking part in military campaigns, such as in Angola and Ethiopia, as part of a historical mission, emphasising the humanity of each living being, black or white, rich or poor. These Cuban values were explained as being opposed to the wrongs of systems based on market force mechanisms, since within the Marxist spirit, not all could be bought or sold. The speech reiterated the interpretation of those who left as *escoria* [scum], escaping hard work rather than being dissidents in the true meaning of the word. The voluntary character of the revolution was again emphasised as suited only for those having revolutionary *genes* [genes] and *la fuerza moral* [moral force], as those representing the core of the Cuban historical mission against all odds:

> "Creían que era propaganda de nosotros, creían que estábamos cometiendo una injusticia y estábamos llamando a los 'pobrecitos disidentes', lumpen...la construcción del socialismo, la obra revolucionaria, es tarea de hombres y mujeres libres. ...este principio tiene un gigantesco valor moral" [They believed that it was our propaganda, they believed that we were committing injustice and were calling the 'poor dissidents', lumpen...the construction of socialism, the revolutionary task, is a task of free men and women ...this principle has a huge moral value] (*Granma*, 3 May 1980a, Fidel Castro: 2-3).

Cuba was interpreted as a workers' state with superior moral values above the market, based on Marxist ideological foundations:

> "...no hay una sociedad con más valores morales que los que ha alcanzado esta sociedad nuestra al cabo de 21 años de revolución" [...there is no other society with more moral values than those achieved by this our society at the end of 21 years of revolution] (Ibid: 2-3).

Communism and socialism were constructed as key parts of the revolution within a workers' state, where only selfish and exploitative bourgeois elements would be ready to join their interests with the US imperial power in the act of emigration, this being given as Castro's explanation for the Mariel crisis (Ibid: 2-3).

The ideological component was strongly accompanied by elements of Cuban nationalism. The message was that honest Cubans were loyal to their home country and were not keen on leaving for the illusions of the United States, which in the end came as a surprise for the United States. Cuba was described as driven by an *espiritu humano* [human spirit], building a world where medical care was not for sale and where doctors had not been commercialised, reminding Cubans of their internationalist emancipatory mission going far beyond the borders of Cuba. For these reasons, Castro said, the popular mobilisation and protests had to continue as a testimony to the injustices being perpetrated against the country. He argued that Cubans were representing the safety valve for the security of the system and its independence, repeatedly inciting patriotic attitudes:

> "(APLAUSOS) ...la sola presencia de ustedes en esta Plaza es una batalla, y una importante batalla en defensa de la integridad y la seguridad de Cuba" [(APLAUSE) ...just your presence in this square is a battle, and an important battle in defence of the integrity and security of Cuba] (Ibid: 2-3).

The reality of the military threat from the United States was bound to the need for discipline and alertness, encouraged by the spirit of victory in the symbolic Mariel skirmish between the two countries. Within the same spirit, Castro urged Cubans to use the displays of energy and unity to solve internal deficiencies and debilities, thus shifting the focus on the public back on itself, once the Mariel crisis appeared to be under control: *...la lucha contra nuestras propias debilidades* [...the fight against our own debilities] (Ibid: 2-3). The speech then linked the whole episode to Cuba's higher historical mission for the glory of the homeland and humanity. The speech represented a particular interpretation of the Cuban *nosotros* [we/us], as constructed by Castro, based on his ideas and convictions, steering majority public opinion and constructing Cuban reality. The discourse was based on three main pillars: Cuban nationalism, Marxist ideology and a particular version of Cuba's historical experience, all built into a coherent whole of the discourse. The speech normalised the content of the discourse at the end of the crisis to provide effective leadership by refocusing the victorious outcome of the crisis on future improvements of the system internally: *Debemos convertir esta energía*

en una fuerza productiva. [We must convert this energy into a productive force.] (Ibid: 2-3).

The discourse was able to interpret the present on the basis of a particular view of the country's history, appealing to a significant numbers of Cubans. An interesting example represented a poem published in *Granma.* Under the title *Marines U.S.A.,* the poem linked the current events and anti-American attitudes in a sublime and artistic way, with the much older historical experience of Cuba. US soldiers taking part in military exercises around the island were referred to as *yankipiratas* and *bestias* [Yankee pirates and bestial creatures]. They were compared to Drake and Morgan, pictured as accompanied by grey parrots referring to Cuba's history of outside invasion and aggression, thus encouraging the siege atmosphere in Cuban society. In the poem, these outside aggressors *van con el hierro de matar...con la mano de robar* [go with steel to kill...with a hand to steal] Cuba's tobacco, sugar and leather, but a storm stops them and the Cuban people prevail (*Granma*, 13 April 1980, Nicolás Guillén: 1). The message suggested a victory for Cuba almost granted from above, as a missionary example to the rest of Latin America and beyond, as desired by José Martí.

Concluding Observations

The Mariel crisis changed the hegemonic Cuban discourse by refocusing its attention on some of the basic values and sources of legitimacy of the system. Initially, moving from a situation of relative normality, discussing ordinary everyday topics, such as industrial production or the sugar harvest, it shifted to remind Cubans of the very basic *raisons d'être* of the nation, reminding them of the meaning and values of the revolution in opposition to the US model. It contained a strong sense of urgency and seriousness. As the tone gradually became more serious, it used derogatory terms aimed at emigrants and ridiculed the United States as a symbol. The interpretation of the issue of emigration in the country's printed media emphasised the criminality of those leaving as opposed to the voluntary and heroic character of those who stayed, to later share Cuba's legitimating symbolic victory. Subsequently, after asserting complete victory with massive popular support and celebrations, the discourse returned to its less insulting style.

The themes used during the crisis called for national unity, discipline and engagement. The discourse assumed that individuals having different opinions were morally questionable, and that their arguments were illegitimate. The interpretation of the issue of emigration emphasised the criminality of those leaving, a theme that started to shift towards a more moderate approach after the crisis. The discourse argued that unity was necessary due to the disproportionate position of independent Cuba in a war-like situation, thus making excessive opposition illegitimate. At the very end of the crisis, the language shifted from negative condemnation of emigrants, towards a certain recognition that some may have been relatively normal economic migrants misled by the temptations of the United States. In this sense, they represented less political enemies than victims of US lies. This indicates a shift in the way

the hegemonic discourse explained reality. This initial shift is highly relevant to the later chapter about the *maleconazo*. In this way, 1980 was an important crisis, when the traditional condemnation of political émigrés replaced a certain realisation and public acknowledgement that these migrants were indeed economic at heart. This of course excluded the specific *lumpen*, which included prisoners, gays and those perceived as outrightly anti-social or criminal.

On the whole, the Mariel discourse can be seen as part of the overall hegemonic discourse, which contained many of the same topics and themes, such as the need for national unity, discipline, engagement and criticism of the United States as a social and political system, on a continuous basis, but with less emphasis, militancy and urgency. These were brought in at a decisive time when the stability of the system was challenged, and its future was at stake.

Some historians, such as Richard Gott (Gott 2005: 268), interpreted the impact of the Mariel crisis in terms negative for the system. The evidence, however, suggests that internally the events were interpreted not as a crisis or a time of national questioning, but as en event with a positive outcome, and an opportunity for a refinement of the loyal population. The crisis was constructed as an opportunity to flush treacherous anti-social elements out of the country, and then celebrate the victory with massive popular support, demonstrating the full strength of the system. The times were interpreted as an absolutely crucial battle of the masses, reminding Cubans of their reasons for taking part in military campaigns, such as in Angola and Ethiopia, as part of a historical mission, emphasising the humanity of each living being, black or white, rich or poor. Those leaving were interpreted as escaping hard work rather than being dissidents in the true meaning of the word. The voluntary character of the revolution was emphasised. Cuba was constructed as a workers' state with superior moral values above the market, demonstrating strong Marxist ideological foundations. Emigrants were assumed to be selfish bourgeois elements ready to leave for the exploitative United States. This was provided as the explanation of the cause of the Mariel crisis. Large-scale popular support marches continued after the crisis as a testimony to the injustices against the country, so that the United States would understand the loyalty of Cubans to their leadership. The stability of the system was attributed to popular support, backed up by a patriotic response. The evidence of the internal mechanics and interpretative strategies of the discourse represent one possible contributing factor in the ability of the system to survive such crises. From the outside, such crises may have been interpreted as more serious, but from the inside they reached Cubans as a construction within a specific historical-cultural context and political culture in support of the system.

The 1980 Mariel crisis was a sudden event for both Cuba and the United States. It continues to be interpreted differently by opposed political groups, who disagree about its meaning. The crisis could have greatly challenged the system, and some would argue it did. It could have developed as a proof that discontent on the island was growing, manifesting itself in social unrest and mass emigration, but in the end the system withstood the crisis and generated substantial popular marches in its support. As Balfour pointed out:

> "Indeed, Castro was able to turn the potentially damaging incident of the Mariel boatlift to some advantage. ...Castro called the United States bluff by mobilising on to the streets the sort of mass support for the regime that appeared to give the lie to claims that there was widespread disaffection among the Cuban population." (Balfour 2009: 126).

The Mariel crisis represented a major fallout between Cuba and the United States, where those migrants Carter welcomed as Cuban heroes were labeled on the Cuban side as anti-social *escoria* [scum]. The Mariel crisis had a negative influence on Carter's presidency, as the US public did not necessarily welcome large numbers of Caribbean refugees who contributed to unemployment and the number of inmates in US prisons. This confrontation seemed to fit the previous pattern, as the Cuban leadership in general had dealt more easily with more heavy-handed US presidents hostile to Cuba, allowing it to maintain the country's siege culture more easily, generating popular support, legitimacy, unity and stability. Hence, even relations with softer democrats in the United States have often led to diplomatic conflicts, and some Cuba experts (e.g. Kapcia 2005, 2007) believe more confrontational US presidents suited the Cuban leadership better. The Mariel conflict between Cuba and the United States, and Cuba's continuing alliance with the Soviet Union, plus its military campaigns abroad, all led towards renewed tensions between the two countries fuelling the siege atmosphere, which escalated further with the appearance of Ronald Reagan on the horizon during the last few months of 1980.

The reality of the military threat from the United States was bound to the need for discipline and alertness, yet supported by the spirit of victory in the symbolic Mariel skirmish between the two countries. An ideological component was strongly accompanied by elements of Cuban patriotism. The discourse was based on three main pillars: Cuban nationalism, Marxist ideology and a particular version of Cuba's historical experience, all built into a coherent whole of the hegemonic discourse. Legitimacy was based on a particular view of the country's history, appealing to significant numbers of Cubans, with implicit and explicit anti-Americanism. The main message suggested a victory almost granted from above, to fulfil José Martí's longings. The sources of legitimacy were based on the argument that the system was the guarantor of national independence, as an issue appealing to the popular sentiment of Cubans as individuals longing for emancipation from a history of submission.

Chapter 4

4. 1. Cuba Between the Two Episodes: 1980 to 1994

First Half of the 1980s: Inequality, Growing Economic Problems and the US Threat

Despite Mariel, the 1980s can be described as a stable decade, sometimes referred to by Cubans today, influenced by the subsequent disaster of the 1990s, as *La Edad de Oro* [The Golden Age]. During the first half of the 1980s, Cuban growth was "remarkable by Latin American standards" (Zimbalist 1988: 2). Cuba experienced an average 4.1 per cent annual economic growth between 1970 and 1988, compared to 1.2 per cent in Latin America (Gott 2005: 244). The stability of the system was supported by the continuing, but already declining, military and economic backing from the COMECON. However, the 1980s also brought a number of challenges, not only during Mariel, but also therafter, as some of the original revolutionary enthusiasm started ageing in literal terms: the adults of the revolution were now thirty years older.

The government launched two five-year plans between 1976 and 1980 followed by another between 1981 and 1986. These five-year plans, as well as the *Dirección y Planificación de la Economía* (SDPE) programme, in place since 1976, encouraged state enterprises to act more independently, allowed limited self-financing, emphasised profitability, self-efficiency, profit generation, decentralisation, and material rewards. Many of these economic policy changes were based on market-oriented and capitalist incentives, which were perceived by political hardliners as inconsistent with Cuban communism. In 1980, a new pay scale was introduced, which reduced the earnings of manual workers, but encouraged technicians, executives and administrative personnel with the possibility of earning more. These changes and the introduction of limited private entrepreneurship during the 1980s brought apparent changes in the egalitarian social structure, contradicting Guevarist moral principles as one of the original ideological bases of the system, and thus having a negative impact on legitimacy. Nevertheless, economists such as Brundenius and Lundahl still perceived the system's failure to meet growth targets less as a result of incompatibility between growth and equity, and more as the result of inefficiencies of an overcentralized and bureaucratic planning system (Brundenius & Lundahl 1982: 143).

Even after the opening of *mercados agropecuarios* [agricultural markets] in May 1980, there remained room for speculators and free-market behaviour. Corruption grew, with only some having access to extra income or foreign currency, giving them the possibility to buy on the black market, outside the permitted modes of egalitarian socialist consumption. Increasingly, as in Orwell's *Animal Farm* (1945), all were equal, but some were more equal than others. This contributed to a growing destabilisation of the equilibrium between original revolutionary ethics and material and social reality.

> "In 1985, an inspection of 600 CPAs (Agricultural Production Cooperatives) concluded that free trading was rapidly fomenting rural social differentiation, and more particularly, a *nouveau riche* peasantry, to the detriment of CPA growth and performance." (Stubbs 1989: 42). "As the *nouveau riche* emerged on the market scene, a typical comment in city queues was: "so this is the worker-peasant alliance?" (Stubbs 1989: 45).

Orlando Borrego[1] commented on these experiments with market-oriented policies, describing them as *un desastre* [a disaster], and the enterprises as *empresas egoístas* [egoistical companies]. These conditions and systemic contradictions were likely to have contributed to a relative decline in legitimacy of the system, which was to face much tougher challenges during the rest of the decade. For this reason, the country was constantly engaged in debates about improving the material standards of the population, as the economic situation was undermined by the declining price of sugar on world markets so crucial for the economy (Gott 2005: 274) (Brundenious & Lundahl 1982: 143). The leadership undoubtedly sensed that some Cubans were becoming increasingly discontented, waking up from the revolutionary dream, yearning for material prosperity. Despite the positive interpretation of Mariel, with numerous popular marches in defence of the system, the episode had still demonstrated that some were ready to leave the island and their families, twenty years after the Revolution, to live within the detested *imperio* [empire]. Nevertheless, the system was strengthened by the final interpretation of the event as a total victory, and as an opportunity to flush-out anti-governmental troublemakers and prisoners.

Symbolic encouragement came in 1981, when the 20th anniversary of the victory at *Playa Girón* was used to remind Cubans, as every year, of their heroic past and willingness to unite in seemingly hopeless situations. This determination was further strengthened by the announcement in August 1981 of the continuing support for Angola's confrontation with the South African imperialist forces, refocusing public attention onto Cuba's campaigns abroad, which always sought to contrast the relative comforts of Cuban daily life with the conflicts and poverty into which other developing nations were plunged.

The country struggled with foreign loan repayments and "drastically falling sugar prices from 28 cents per pound in 1980 to 7 cents in 1982" (Brundenius 1984: 65). Therefore the government issued a new Investment Code in 1982 opening the country to tourism, which by the end of the decade became an important source of hard currency. The code included the opening-up of light industry, medical equipment manufacturing, pharmaceutical production, construction and agro-industry to foreign investment. As a result of the market-oriented reforms, the economic performance of many enterprises improved. Managers did not own enterprises, as this would have been ideologically unacceptable, but their performance was tied to their remuneration. Castro later condemned the system of material rewards in the following words:

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[1] Che Guevara's close combatant, Nottingham University, February 2008.

> "Although we recognize there is room for bonuses under socialism, if there is too much talk of bonuses, we will be corrupting workers. ...Is there no appeal to the obligation of the workers? Is there no appeal to the duty of young people, telling them that this is an underdeveloped country that needs to develop, that it cannot be on the basis of offering pie in the sky?" (Dominguez 1986: 124).

Targets for workers to receive bonus pay were raised and, in some cases, wages were reduced.

> "This rationalization drive meant large-scale discharges of workers from many workplaces. Supposedly, workers could only be laid off if there was another job awaiting them. Yet, while unemployment was around 2% in the mid-70s, by 1989 it had grown to 7%." (Detroit 1996).

All these factors contradicted the promises of the communist system, with social provision, egalitarianism and employment as crucial sources of legitimacy, resulting in a negative impact on the system's legitimacy.

The conflict in Angola, where Cuba confronted the US-South African alliance, added to the already hostile relations with the United States. Ronald Reagan's entry into the White House in 1981 marked a radical change in US power politics abroad, as his administration adopted a confrontational strategy and steadfast opposition to communism, from the Iran-Contra affair until the collapse of the USSR and the end of the Cold War.

> "Reagan made it clear in his 'Caribbean Basin' strategy that the source of the 'contagion' was Cuba, to be dealth with afresh; while no one believed that invasion might result, the signs pointed to a new 'siege', renewed pressure, and 'the revival of vendetta politics'." (Morley 1987: 317).

Hence, after a relative rapprochement during the Carter administration, US-Cuban relations entered a new phase of open hostilities marked by flaming rhetoric, (Aguila 1994: 126). In 1981 President Reagan halted all aid to Nicaragua and launched an ideological war with continuous covert CIA involvement, in order to bring down the Cuban-backed Sandinista government. In his April 1983 speech to the Congress, Reagan reasserted the US commitment to dominate Central America:

> "If Central America were to fall [to communism], what would be the consequence for our position in Asia and Europe and for alliances such as NATO? If the United States cannot respond to a threat near our own border, why should Europeans and Asians believe we are seriously concerned about threats to them? ... Our credibility would collapse, our alliances would crumble." (McWilliams & Piotrowski 1997: 330).

Relations were temporarily improved by Havana's decision to accept the return of 2,700 of the Mariel migrants in 1984, identified as convicted criminals before they had left Cuba, as part of renewed talks about migration. Cuba also welcomed the 20,000 visas quota, introduced by the United States as a way of preventing another Mariel-like mass exodus. With the quota in place, potential emigrants would from now on need to consider the possibility of being turned back and having to return to the island, with all the condemnation they would have been likely to encounter. This was a symbolic victory for the Cuban side, which strengthened the meaning of Mariel as a victory, thus possibly improving the system's legitimacy as an able negotiator with the empire.

The US embargo, as the ultimate representation of North American hostility towards Cuba, continued to damage the economy, and continued to provide a key issue for the hegemonic discourse during the decade. The politics continued to be defined by the under siege atmosphere, strengthened more than ever by the arrival of Reagan. The confrontation was well documented on most last pages of *Granma* from the 1980s, usually including a cartoon denouncing the United States, its perceived expansionism and capitalist greed as the alpha and omega of the discourse (eg. y. 16, n. 1, 1 January; n. 85, 12 April; n. 108, 1 May; n. 36, 15 May 1980). This external threat kept providing an important source of legitimacy based on the need to protect the homeland, allowing the political elites to justify their decisions, including the repressive features of the system. It legitimated the leadership as the defender of the interests of Cubans against the United States and its embargo, and as a defender of Cuban sovereignty and its egalitarian democracy. A new reminder of the presence of the United States and its willingness to interfere in internal affairs of its southern neighbours came when the Caribbean island of Grenada was invaded on 25th October 1983 (Gott 2005: 271-272). The US threat was even further supported by the growing number of staff in the US Interests Section in Havana that was to become the largest foreign embassy by the end of the decade (Ibid: 262). Half way through the 1980s, US-Cuban relations received a major blow following the launch of Radio Martí/Voice of America on May 20th 1985 (Ibid: 300). This infuriated the Cuban government, and chilled diplomatic relations. Cuban-American visits to Cuba were suspended.

During the 1980s, the discourse involved frequent references to the unsettling situation in the rest of the region, and the media reported regularly on violence elsewhere, implicitly positioning Cuba as stable, safe and somewhat comfortable platform for such observation. Such interpretations made the system more appealing, and increased its legitimacy. In April 1984, the government sought to augment this legitimacy by presenting the results of the elections to the People's Power in which, according to the data of the Cuban authorities, 98.6% of registered voters cast their ballots.

Gorbachev Loosens the Screws

The Soviet Union represented a viable alternative for a country that for historical, cultural and ideological reasons refused the United States as its ally. Within the bipolar Cold War context, a strong alliance with the Soviet Union brought Cuba many benefits, but by the mid-1980s these were gradually

disappearing. When Gorbachev became the leader of the Soviet Communist Party in 1985, Cuba faced two politico-ideological possibilities to maintain the support of its population. It could either follow its major ally towards significant political change, thus to ensure its future economic and military support and to offer Cubans something new, or it could reject the liberalisation of *glasnost* and *perestroika* and go its own way. The government decided, as has been its tradition, to go its own way and return to revolutionary orthodoxy as a key source of legitimacy, removing parts of the system that were contradicting past commitments:

> "Castro stated that under Rectification the party will increase its strength, and he has rejected any possibility of political pluralism of the Eastern European variety in Cuba..." (Shearman 1990: 101)

Unlike the Soviet Union, Cuba to a large extent relied on the confrontation with Washington, and hence the improving superpower relations were not necessarily in the interest of the Cuban leadership, which used the threat as an important source of legitimacy. *Perestroika* represented pressure for change, which Castro and the ageing revolutionary leadership resisted. Gorbachev's policies of openness were articulated into Cuban discourse uniquely in negative terms as *un final trágico y poco glorioso* [a tragic and inglorious end] (Gómez 2003: 234). At the same time, Cuba strived to maintain the best possible relations with Russia, aware of the many past and existing benefits (Shearman 1990: 64).

The combination of Gorbachev, growing indebtedness to the West, a worsening economic situation and concerns about youth alienation were amongst the main worries of the first half of the 1980s, until 1986, when the system addressed the declining levels of legitimacy and hence launched a new campaign.

1986 Rectification

During the Third Congress of the Cuban Communist Party in February 1986, the worsening situation was debated. The congress, which involved feedback and suggestions from grass-roots organisations, had to meet twice to resolve the many issues discussed (Kapcia 2000: 206). The discussions were "open, candid, and critical" (Zimbalist 1988: 10). Many features of the system were also criticised in *Granma*. The result was a new direction for the nation in the form of the 1986 Rectification of Errors and Negative Tendencies programme. The campaign was launched in the symbolic year of the 30th anniversary of the landing of the *Granma*. As a result, *mercados agropecuarios* were closed in May 1986. The new campaign reversed some of the delegitimating influences of the previous years, and by involving large parts of the Cuban public, gained substantial levels of legitimacy. Some even trace the beginning of rectification to 1982-84, when the system had to look for solutions to destabilising issues (Mesa-Lago 1990) (Kapcia 1990: 162). Castro rejected much of the new market-oriented Soviet model, instead steering the country towards greater emphasis on the original communist revolutionary values, including *conciencia* [revolutionary conscience] and the communist spirit, perceived as superior to the power of money. Castro abandoned the previous plan

implemented by Moscow-trained economist Humberto Pérez Herrero, the head of Cuba's JUCEPLAN (*Junta Central de Planificación*). Antonio Pérez Herrero was dismissed, perceived as negatively influenced by capitalist practices and possible personal enrichment. Instead, Castro steered the economy towards lower import dependency, as Soviet-Cuban imports were decreasingly advantageous for Cuba. The SDPE economic system was replaced by *Sistema de Dirección de la Economía* (SDE).

> "Pérez Herrero was no democrat, but he sought to apply Marxism-Leninism systematically to run Cuba. His dismissal in 1985 was the first since 1968 which publicly linked a party official's departure to a policy dispute-in this case, the new, short-lived opening toward the United States, and the new opening toward the Roman Catholic Church, which is still underway. [Castro] was opposed to both overtures." (Dominguez 1986: 120).

Castro placed renewed emphasis on moral incentives (Gott 2005: 274), following the perceived negative impact of previous growth of private activities of peasants, street vendors, middlemen, truck drivers, small manufacturers, personal-service workers and house-builders. Castro interpreted these as leading to "the creation of a wealthy class in Cuba, as large or larger that the bourgeoisie which the Revolution expropriated" combined with worker absenteeism and, in some cases, enterprise managers stealing from their companies (Shearman 1990: 102). Castro rejected market-oriented policies, which also led to some managers increasing prices of goods in order to provide employees with bonuses by generating more profit. These were possibly alienating the population. Therefore, Rectification can be seen as an effort to re-establish the revolutionary values in order to revive the original revolutionary energy and address the negative effects of previous liberalisation (Zimbalist 1988: 11), only to emerge into the 1990s Special Period of unprecedented economic hardship. Some have interpreted it as a "reaffirmation of one element of continuity and certainty in a climate of confusion." (Kapcia 1990: 179).

> "As early as 1982, the newspaper *Granma* published a series of articles exalting communist conscience, the need to develop a 'new man', and Guevara's legacy. This campaign increased in 1986-87, with the publication of many newspaper and journal articles on Guevara, and reached its climax with the awarding of a Special Che Guevara Award to two books on Guevara, one on his economic thought and another on the transitional period. Thereafter these books were widely disseminated domestically and abroad 'to avoid a turn to the right'." (Shearman 1990: 100).

SDE reassessed the situation and looked for solutions to economic problems, especially the foreign exchange imbalance. The country's need to import machinery and a number of other products from Western countries demanded reserves of hard currency that were acquired through the sale of sugar and re-exportation of Soviet oil, together with tourism and sales of pharmaceuticals.

> "According to Cuba's figures, in constant prices, the average annual growth rate in 1981-85 was 7.3 per cent, the highest under the revolution...the growth rate slowed down in 1985, almost stagnated in 1986, sharply declined in 1987, and increased in 1988." (Shearman 1990: 118).

With the loss of Soviet subsidies and the declining world sugar price, the situation was unfavourable. A more centralised approach to economic decision-making, combined with some decentralisation was introduced (Zimbalist 1988: 12-13) to "mitigate bottlenecks, delays and general inefficiencies" (Zimbalist 1987: 19). Farmers' markets, handicraft markets, motivation bonuses, private enterprise, private selling, renting and other possibilities of individual economic gain were rejected to underscore the validity of revolutionary ideals as the legitimating base. Self-centered profiteering was rejected as being in contradiction with the construction of the revolutionary utopia, and any form of capitalism and its tendency to create disunity and instability within communist systems was denounced.

The second half of the 1980s, after the launch of 1986 Rectification, can be seen as a political strategy to contain possible changes undermining the ideological, and also social, structure of the system. According to Balfour, the 1980s and Rectification signified a return to egalitarian moral values as an important root of the system (Balfour 1990: 135), with a continuing emphasis on nationalism and homeland defence against the United States (Ibid: 143). The leadership hoped to hold firm by reaffirming the original revolutionary ethics as key sources of historical legitimacy sustaining the whole system, thus avoiding a possible collapse. Economically, the situation after Rectification continued to deteriorate, except for an improvement in 1987 in the foreign trade balance (Shearman 1990: 124). Rectification addressed the inefficiencies of the preceding decade, but could not avoid growing economic difficulties "throwing into question the economic successes upon which the new ordinance had based its political legitimacy." (Kapcia 2000: 203). The legitimacy of the system was likely to have been negatively influenced by this decline in material prosperity. Rectification, however, counteracted the possible decline in legitimacy by shifting public focus onto ethical ideas and the revolutionary emphasis on *conciencia*, as the primary *raison d'être* of the system.

Cuba continued to be involved abroad during this decade, consolidating its role as a leader of the developing world and proving its experience as a confident, resolute and doughty David standing up to the Goliath of world politics. This was reported in the media that covered the frequent travels of the Cuban leader. Rectification affirmed communist and revolutionary orthodoxy in opposition to the *détente* and the rapprochement between the Soviet Union and the West (Domínguez 1990: 45). It kept Cuban troops engaged abroad:

> "In 1986-88 the Cuban government adopted a policy of 'rectification' at home, in part to foster non-material incentives; abroad, in 1987-88, appealing to patriotism and internationalism, it sent 15,000 troops to

> Angola to reinforce 35,000 already there, to confront South Africa's military." (Domínguez 1990: 45).

Constant political unrest in other Caribbean and Latin American countries provided a useful contrast to the safety in Cuba, with social security, free healthcare, stability and development, all important sources of legitmacy. From this perspective, the Cuban leadership was successful and legitimate.

The benefits of economic growth enjoyed by Cubans at the beginning of the decade were cut by Rectification, which significantly limited consumption. Underneath this rhetoric, the government was motivated by the need to minimise distribution of profits to ordinary Cubans in order to solve its worsening debt situation and repayments of foreign loans – the policy was driven by economic realism as well as the need to reassert the key values embedded in Cuban political culture to ensure sufficient legitimacy of the system, which interpreted equality as one of the highest priorities. If this social value had been eroded, the system could have become unstable. During the second half of the decade, the exploitative nature of foreign loans was condemned in many issues of *Granma*. Continuous promotion of voluntary labour, brigades and cooperatives, and the restriction of most legal private economic activity were the reality for most Cubans, helping to redress the economy with voluntary or unpaid work for the sake of the revolutionary collective.

If we consider some of the statistical data available from the period, Cuba in the 1980s ranked amongst the largest exporters in Latin America, despite its many difficulties and the major political and economic transformation in the middle of the decade. Cuba's GDP continued to rise during the decade from 14,159 (millions of USD) in 1980 to 17,113 in 1985 (Eckstein 2003: Appendix[2]). During the second half of the decade, economic growth slowed down. The national budget deteriorated, as Rectification changed the country's economic outlook. In 1983, the balance was –266 millions Cuban Pesos, improving significantly to a deficit of –76 in 1984, only to plunge again after the introduction of Rectification to –1,624 in 1989 (Ibid.). The end of the decade looked grim.

A similar trend was seen in the foreign trade balance, which retained its crippling grip on the economy for the rest of the decade (Zimbalist 1987: 2). While in 1982 the trade balance was 802 million Cuban Pesos, the figure declined consistently during the rest of the decade to 73 million Cuban Pesos in 1984, going into negative numbers from there on: -6 in 1985 and finally an estimated –10 in 1989 (Ibid.). Hard currency earnings also declined during the 1980s, as the current account balance went deeper into negative numbers: -212 million Cuban Pesos in 1984; -506 in 1985; and -600 in 1989. Cuba became heavily indebted, which was partially the cause of the decline of the price of oil on the world markets (since Cuba was reexporting Soviet supplies), low price of sugar and high interests on its loans (Ibid.). Sugar exports steadily declined throughout the period from 866 millions Cuban Pesos in 1981, to 648

[2] Statistical data sourced from the Cuban authorities and the Economist Intelligence Unit.

in 1982; 263 in 1983; 250 in 1984; and 171 in 1985 (Ibid.). This worsening economic situation required a political and economic response, to decrease domestic consumption (i.e. imports) and increase economic performance. Rectification can be seen as an alternative solution to the foreign debt crisis, after Cuba's failure at the summer 1986 Paris Club negotiations to secure a new $300 million loan (Zimbalist 1988: 11). In addition, on the basis of agreements from 1972, payments on debts contracted by Cuba as a result of trade deficits with the Soviet Union were postponed until 1st January 1986 (Brundenious 1984: 65). Now was the time to act on these pressing issues.

Hence, after the growth during the 1960s and 70s that brought both growth and equity, overseen by the state, Cuba remained insulated from the international debt crisis because of its favourable terms with the Soviets (Zimbalist & Brundenius 1989: 165, 169, 172).

> But as the terms of trade with the Soviet Union deteriorated, petroleum prices and the dollar dropped, poor weather decimated the harvest, and Western debt accumulated, Cuba by 1985 was facing the same foreign exchange crunch as the rest of Latin America. Similar to other countries in the region, Cuba introduced an austerity package. (Ibid: 1989: 172).

Hence, even though the country still outperformed the rest of Latin America in both equity and growth, domestically it had to face the negative impacts of liberalisation and declining growth that were eroding the system's legitimacy (Ibid: 165).

In December 1986, further austerity measures were announced that would eliminate imports of domestic appliances, and lower the consumption of milk and meat to reduce imports and reduce the workforce employed in public administration, including the Administración Central del Estado and Organos Locales del Poder Popular [Central State Administration and Local Organs of the People's Power]. In other words, Cubans had to work harder and longer for fewer material rewards, while the government tried to increase its revenue by any means possible, in order to improve the overall economic performance of the country and pay off some of the foreign debt and accumulated interest. In order to increase economic growth, the government continued to pursue economic ties with the West during the 1980s, using Western management expertise as well as investment, with extended cooperation in electronics, mechanical engineering, petrochemicals, pharmaceuticals, textiles, and tourism (Eckstein 2003: 68). Western tourism was encouraged, even if this was somewhat inconsistent with the condemnation of the imperialist West and its lifestyle; Cuban tourism workers were soon delivering "bourgeois pleasures" in the island's luxurious Caribbean resorts. This strategy's fundamental economic objective was the acceleration of the country's industrialisation, diversification of exports and substitution of imports, especially from capitalist countries. Rectification thus combined a strong push towards ideological reinforcement with economic realism to sort out the country's finances, while keeping the system legitimate. This also had to be anchored within the hegemonic discourse of the revolution in order to secure

the support of the population; it had to be justified by the right words in order to fit into Cuban political culture. Rectification was such a response and the system retained its legitimacy.

In 1987, state-run Cubanacan was created to generate foreign investment for hotel development. Amonst its activities was constant promotion of tourism and conferencing. Other organisations focusing on different sectors soon followed. Contex was in charge of the fashion industry and Artex of musical and artistic performance. Spain, Venezuela, Mexico and Italy provided most of the investment. Gaviota was founded at the end of the decade in 1988 to develop the high-income luxury tourist market. Cooperation with foreign investors might have been inconsistent with some of the precepts of Cuba's communist ethics, but it generated income for the defence of the homeland. The number of tourists rose from 130,000 in 1980 to 326,000 by the end of the 1980s (Eckstein 2003). This was the beginning of the Cuban focus on tourism as a main source of hard currency, which would be further developed in the following decade. By the end of the decade, the revenue from tourism had increased fivefold since 1980 (Eckstein 2003). The only other sources of hard-currency that generated more income during the second half of the 1980s were sugar, fish and oil exports, leaving tourism to generate around 12% of hard currency rising from 3% in 1981 (Ibid.). The service-oriented industry was not dependent on constantly and painfully unpredictable fluctuations of the world price of sugar and oil, causing distress to commodity-oriented export countries, especially in developing countries. In 1988, Cuba planned to increase the number of tourists visiting the island to 600,000 by 1992 (Ibid.).

> "Since 1986, the Cuban economic system has undergone a fundamental transformation, a real 'revolution', moving with astonishing rapidity from an inefficient, centrally-planned sugar-dominated system, largely dependent on barter trade with the Eastern bloc, to an economy that is increasingly open, and whose external trading enterprises are increasingly autonomous. ...the informal economy is being rapidly legalised. What we are seeing, in short, is the conversion of an economy following (for three decades) a supposedly 'socialist' model of development into a a somewhat classical model of underdevelopment, in which the clear direction is towards some version of capitalism." (Kapcia 1995: 8)

Rectification represented a multifaceted debate, which addressed corruption, privilege, bureaucracy of power, lack of accountability, growing national indebtedness and the divergent paths of Cuba and the Soviet Union. Internally, the debate continued for the rest of the decade, underlined by the leadership's worries about the legitimacy of the system. Dominguez, however, has argued that this return to moral incentives at home, was only partial and rather short lived, as the country had to cope with far worse problems at the end of the decade (Domínguez 1990: 46). This unavoidable transition to Cuban capitalism under the guise of socialism encouraged the leadership to restructure the main sources of legitimacy in the country's discourse during the 1990s.

> "Although the leadership's response was visibly dramatic – declaring a 'Special Period' ('in Times of Peace') in September 1990 and talking defiantly of *Socialismo o Muerte* instead of the familiar *cubanista* slogan of *Patria o Muerte*, in essence the initial responses were simply continuations of 'Rectification', which, as has been seen, had always had an economic motive, a political purpose, and an underlying ideological inspiration and direction." (Kapcia 2000: 207).

In addition to the systemic problems, the new generations born shortly before and after the Revolution were now approaching their thirties, reaching maturity without personal memories of the times before 1959. They had only heard or read about the initial revolutionary impulse and were more likely to take the benefits brought by the revolution for granted.

> "With over half the population now under thirty that is, born within the revolution, there is a very definite generational gap. The young see their society and its problems in a very different light, questioning old symbols and clichés. ...these young people were challenging even Fidel Castro, in person, on a number of very concrete issues." (Stubbs 1989: 23).

> "By the 1980s, however, the relative security of the political system had been undermined by three developments. First, it was undermined by the growing disjuncture between the social and political aspirations of younger generations and the economy's limited capacity to satisfy these demands, especially after 1984. Secondly, it was weakened by the discernible rise of an unprecedented, increasingly entrenched, power elite, in the form of the Party, leading indeed to the growth of privilege and even corruption..." (Kapcia 1995: 9).

The Rectification returned to the original plan of the 1960s in order to create the socialist *hombre nuevo* [new man] after Che Guevara's maxims. Detroit interpreted the Rectification campaign in the following words:

> "The Western loans dried up in the late 1980s. But that was not due to Castro's choosing, but because Cuba was defaulting on its debts. During 'rectification' the Cuban leadership bled the masses in part to pay off these debts. And the pursuit of foreign capital continued in another form." (Detroit 1996).

The younger generations might not have necessarily perceived the system as legitimate, in view of the prosperity reported through unofficial channels from abroad. Rectification, therefore, also targeted specifically the younger people to support their sense of moral incentives (Zimbalist 1988: 15).

> "Rectification could be seen as a government manoeuvre to pre-empt criticism concerning corruption and inefficiency and neutralize the potential for large-scale discontent rather than as a conscious attempt to return to the roots of the revolution. It is more likely that the government's motives were a mixture of both." (Lievesley 2003: 120).

For these reasons, the 1980s saw a shift of sources of legitimacy from economic factors, as at the beginning, and the accompanying delegitimating impact of growing inequality, corruption and the black market. As the economy started to decline, Castro combated the negative effects by launching Rectification, which symbolically re-purified the revolution, and refocused the public on the moral content. In this way, Castro refreshed the legitimating force of the revolution, and refocused on Che Guevara and the original revolutionary ideals. As ever, patriotism served as the main source of legitimacy, as a source with little controversy or negative side effects. Patriotism received a boost by the arrival of the threat posed by Reagan, and possibly encouraged even the least patriotic Cubans to remain loyal to the system. In addition, the system relied on its tradition of participatory politics, and by involving the population in the processes of Rectification, as well as during 1989 and 1990, it gained further legitimacy as a system reflecting popular concerns (Kapcia 1995: 9). Cuba survived the difficult period of the 1980s, only to prove that it could cope with far worse situations, such as the subsequent Special Period of the 1990s.

Cuba after 1989

Another endorsement of revolutionary orthodoxy came in 1989 in the form of a serious political affair within the Cuban ruling elite. The affair involved not only senior figures of the government, but most of all several members of the Sierra Maestra generation, who were accused of having betrayed the ideals of the revolution. This provided an example that ignorance and criminal behaviour would not be tolerated, thus strengthening the legitimacy of the system as a moral project. The trials examined the alleged involvement of Arnaldo Ochoa, Tony and Patricio de la Guardia and others in drug trafficking and illegal affairs around the *Moneda Convertible* mission during the 1980s, which was part of the Cuban Ministry of Interior (MININT) (Gott 2005:281). Based in Panama, the mission was to acquire hard currency by circumventing the US embargo. When the first secret cocaine shipment was made in April 1987, a cargo of 300 kilos was aboard a plane from Colombia to Varadero, to be delivered subsequently to the United States. The US coastguard intercepted the traffickers before their contraband reached its final destination (Ibid: 282). As a result, several senior figures including Ochoa, a legendary Cuban general who led the Cuban forces to victory in Angola, were arrested in June 1989. Most of those involved were condemned to long prison sentences and Ochoa, de la Guardia and two others were executed on 13th July 1989 (Ibid: 284). Whether the affair involved an internal political elite struggle would be a speculation, but the trial and executions certainly sent a clear message of 'zero tolerance' towards behaviour seen to be against revolutionary morals at any level of the state, even if this behaviour was allegedly in the national interest. From this example, Cubans were sure that corruption and illegal dealings would not be tolerated, with a possibly threatening impact on the black market. The moral ideals and purity of the revolution were renewed, as the master signifier and source of legitimacy.

Cuba confronted the worst crisis in the years 1989-91, with the crisis persisting until 1994. During these years, the system was destabilised by major

economic and security problems related to events following the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989. The leadership had to witness worrying radical political changes abroad, such as the execution of Nicolae Caucescu in Romania in December 1989, the total disintegration of COMECON and the internal reform of the Soviet Union followed by a coup in August 1991. The legitimacy of communism declined significantly, and many Cubans might have been asking questions too. Despite the fact that the leadership somewhat anticipated this period, and was preparing Cuban society for it with its 1986 Rectification offering a new direction within the scope of Cuban communist orthodoxy, the country was undoubtedly shaken. First the financial and then the security backing from the Soviet Union disappeared, and then the 1991 collapse wiped out this valuable ally in real terms:

> "...hasta 1991 el azúcar cubano era pagado por la URSS con precios nominalmente superiores a los del mercado mundial, mientras que el petróleo se compraba a precios inferiores a los del mismo mercado. Esa relación de precios se modificó en 1992, ya que todo lo comerciado entre ambos partes se hizo a partir de los precios del mercado mundial." [...until 1991, Cuban sugar was paid by the USSR with prices nominally higher to the world market, while oil was bought at prices below those of the same market. This price relation changed in 1992, since when all trade between the two parties was made according to world market prices.] (Suárez Salazar 1997: 103).

Rafael Hernández analysed coverage from *Granma* in regards to the impact of the post-Cold War context and the 1989 transitions, and concluded that despite the economic hardship, the reference to pre-revolutionary Cuba continued to provide a major legitimating force:

> "...it must not be forgotten that, from the beginning, revolutionary policies and politics were supported because they signified a fundamental change in direction for the conditions of existence of the people, and a net improvement in their standard of living. During the '70s and '80s the revolutionary process achieved substantial gains in the conditions of material and cultural life of Cubans, including their social and national consciousness. This development has constituted a fundamental pillar of the revolution all these years." (Hernández 2003: 14).

The new Cuba of the 1990s developed its focus on external markets such as tourism and mining (Monreal 2002: 76). The transfer of responsibilities to the Cuban army as a reliable operator continued, and its responsibilities were further increased:

> "Soon the armed forces were running hotels, doing language training, spiriting tourists around the island on tours...Aircraft normally used for parachute training were converted to carry tourists." (Klepak 2005: 49).

The collapse of the Soviet Union was however something that the Cubans were already prepared for since Castro's speech on the 26th July 1989, the 36th Anniversary of the Moncada assault:

> "...tenemos que advertir al imperialismo que no se haga tantas ilusiones con relación a nuestra Revolución y con relación a la idea de que nuestra Revolución no pudiera resistir si hay una debacle en la comunidad socialista; porque si mañana o cualquier día nos despertáramos con la noticia de que se ha creado una gran contienda civil en la URSS, o, incluso, que nos despertáramos con la noticia de que la URSS se desintegró, cosa que esperamos que no ocurra jamás, ¡aun en esas circunstancias Cuba y la Revolución Cubana seguirían luchando y seguirían resistiendo!" [...we must warn imperialism not to make any illusions in relation to our revolution and in relation to the idea that our revolution will not be able to resist if there is a debacle in the socialist community; because if tomorrow or any other day we wake to the news that there there is a civil war in the USSR, or even that we wake to the news that the USSR has disintegrated, which we hope will never happen, in such circumstances Cuba and the Cuban revolution will continue fighting and will continue resisting!] (Castro 1989a).

Hence the legitimacy of the system was not necessarily damaged by the transition in post-Soviet Russia; Cuba was to continue with its own nationalistic project under any circumstances, following its endogenous political orthodoxy under the insignia of the *bandera cubana* [Cuban flag] as the most important source of legitimacy.

Opposing such an argument, Juan J. López addressed the question of the stability of the system in the 1990s, and concluded that the non-transition in the 1990s could not be explained by the legitimacy of the regime among the population (Ibid: 165). Instead, López argued that the lack of mass unrest implicitly legitimated the system (Ibid: 57). This makes the impact of the 1994 *maleconazo* disturbances even more relevant, as this would contradict López's argument. López identified economic underperformance as a main source of regime instability, but did not answer the puzzle why Cuba has been able to survive several decades of the embargo and the vertiginous destitution of the first half of the 1990s. Referring to Cuba, he argued that:

> "Major theoretical works on transitions to democracy concur that dictatorships tend to fall when faced with crises." (Ibid: 1).

However, Cuba survived several crises, and would thus contradict this theory. Kapcia, on the other hand, identified the difference in the origin of the communist systems in Cuba and Eastern Europe, as well as their difference in constraining emigration:

> "Why then has a political revolution not taken place? The main explanation has to be that, until recently, there has not been a commensurate political crisis. In 1989, such crisis as there was could

be seen as purely economic in character. However, the potential always existed for this to be translated into a parallel political crisis, if economic solutions were not found readily, and especially at the grass-roots level. Here, the key questions were not *whether* a 'translation' could take place but *when* it might, and how long could the crisis go on until the cracks began to show in the edifice, how long before the underlying tensions and problems came closer to the surface. Could economic adjustment and progress come fast enough and be convincing enough? In the light of this, one should logically ask how the system has been able to survive so far, when far less afflicted systems collapsed throughout Eastern Europe and Latin America." (Kapcia 1995: 8).

"...the need for political change in Cuba is simply not as urgent as it has been in Eastern European systems that lacked legitimacy as far as the majority of their citizens were concerned and which lacked the 'safety valves' available to the Cuban population..." (Kapcia 1995: 27).

The loyalty of the population became ever more important after the withdrawal of 7,000 Soviet troops from the island by Gorbachev. From 1991 to 1994, therefore, Cuba found itself isolated and the population bore the consequences. This led to increased nervousness amongst the leadership during the first half of the 1990s, which again focused on maintaining the mobilisation of the population as the backbone of the system, driven by nationalism as the main source of legitimacy:

"Now lacking the Soviet guarantee, Raúl began organising Cuban defence in terms of a 'people's war' to resist a possible American attack. The mobilization of the entire population was to substitute for the revolution's earlier reliance on Soviet assistance." (Gott 2005: 274).

The sense of a threat from abroad was even more relevant since the American invasion of Panama in December 1989 (Operation Just Cause), when President Bush Sr. sent 20,000 US troops to depose Noriega and bring him to be tried for charges of drug trafficking issued by a Miami court. The invasion served as yet another example increasing the anxiousness of the Cubans, and making them more likely to listen to the increasing emphasis of the discourse on *¡Patria o Muerte!* [Homeland or death!].

"Castro continued to assert the regime's orthodoxy in the midst of a worldwide collapse of Soviet-style socialism. The slogan 'Socialism or Death!', first coined at the beginning of 1989 on the thirtieth anniversary of the Revolution, became the rallying cry of all his speeches." (Balfour 1990: 154).

In the meantime the political leadership had to find solutions quickly not only to security issues, but above all to the fact that Cubans in the early 1990s were hungry and the country had to cope with a growing foreign exchange deficit. An important aspect of the "Great Adjustment" of the decade was the

adaptation of the economy to a new international context. In this sense, the reinsertion of the island into the world capitalist economy was a key component of survival (Monreal 2002: 75), ensuring Cubans would not starve to death. The food supply situation was so serious that dogs, cats and rats were disappearing from the streets of Havana (Hernández Otero, Havana, May 2010). Nevertheless, hard currency earned at already operating tourist resorts was not sufficient to supply the island with all the required imports. Cuban bureaucrats were making difficult choices on a daily basis whether to purchase a tanker with petrol or food stuffs waiting outside the Havana bay for a call to come in and unload (Garcia Brigos, Havana, May 2010). The leadership was aware of the tension amongst the population, as the population went quiet and the atmosphere was turgid (Ibid.). The population was desperate, the leadership worried, and both of them despised even more the US-imposed embargo as the continuing source of legitimacy inflicting pain on them all.

The discourse reflected the crisis by largely dropping the reference to the construction of communism and instead spoke more about preserving the achievements of the revolution, such as social benefits. At the same time, the system was making concessions to private capital in the form of foreign investment, tourism and some limited private enterprise as a reaction to combat the embargo and "save" the revolution, as the patriotic representation of the homeland. The period was termed the "Special Period in time of Peace" as the economic situation deteriorated with a 2.9 per cent decline in the country's GDP in 1990, 10 per cent in 1991, 11.6 per cent in 1992 and 14.9 per cent in 1993 (Gott 2005: 288).

> "Our opening is not an opening toward capitalism, but rather a socialist opening toward a capitalist world. It is based on certain principles that guarantee the preservation of socialist order over our economy and our ability to meet our economic and social objectives" (Carlos Lage in Cole 2002: 47).

Discontent in Cuba was real, with *Abajo Fidel* [Down with Fidel] painted onto walls, clashes between youths and the police, disobedience of the Film Institute, intellectuals signing an open letter demanding reform, all accompanied by purges in academia (Pérez-Stable 1993: 213). The crisis management of the Cuban political apparatus included a codification of the new pro-business, pro-foreign currency reforms into an updated Constitution approved in July 1992, as a result of issues raised by the *Llamamiento al IV Congreso del Partido Comunista de Cuba* in October [Call for the IV Congress of the Cuban Communist Party] (Silva León 2008: 140), again involving large sections of the general public through various mass organisations.

> "On the eve of the Fourth Party Congress in 1991 there was a call for public debate to establish a 'consensus based on a recognition of the diversity of views that exists within the population and strengthened by democratic discussions within the Party and the Revolution'." (*Cuadernos de Nuestra America*, 1991).

For several months Cuba experienced an unusually free public debate, when millions of people criticised, proposed or simply offered opinions on questions ranging from daily life to public policy (Cole 2002: 51). The reforms maintained the party as the ultimate guiding power of Cuban society, but removed the exclusion of religious candidates. The nature of the state was renamed from atheistic to lay, to represent a higher number of Cuban citizens. The same year, the government decriminalised the holding of US dollars (Kapcia 1995: 10). In 1993, General Elections were held, with Cuban government figures showing a participation of 99.57% of registered voters (León Silva 2008: 143-145):

> "El alto nivel de participación ciudadana en estos procesos demostró la legitimidad quo tiene el actual sistema político unipartidista existente en Cuba." [The high level of participation in these processes demonstrated the legitimacy of the present single-party political system existing in Cuba.] (Silva León 2008: 102).

Despite the contradictions, joint ventures with the despised capitalists had increased rapidly since 1990; but the economy remained in recession.

> "Early in 1993...The economic system was on the verge of collapse and two officials from the International Monetary Fund visiting Havana declared that the Cuban decline since 1989 was far worse than the deterioration suffered by the former socialist countries of Eastern Europe in the same period." (Gott 2005: 291).

During a speech at the annual anniversary of the Moncada barracks on 26th July 1993, Castro spoke about current events and concerns. He described the difficulties as *doble bloqueo* [double blockade] (Castro 1993) and argued for the use of any means to gain access to hard currency including foreign investment, to thus improve the living standard of the population and save the revolution by making unavoidable concessions. In the context of such a construction, the new direction was legitimate. As part of the achievements of the revolution, Castro pointed out the luxury of any Cuban to receive a minimum of food supplies from the state with the popular *Libreta de Abastecimiento* [Supply Book/Ration Book], which, he said, would be retained (Ibid.). Castro assured that the luxuries of the socialist revolution would be saved unlike in other socialist countries, which collapsed into chaos:

> "...en período especial la Revolución no estuvo dispuesta, ni está dispuesta ni estará dispuesta, a sacrificar al pueblo. En otros países habrían adoptado las famosas medidas de choque: liberación de precios, con efectos realmente terribles para jubilados, para todos los que reciben menores ingresos... Pero nuestra Revolución ni siquiera en período especial dejó a un solo trabajador en la calle, ni dejó desamparado a un solo ciudadano, ni a un solo jubilado, ni a un solo niño, ni a una sola madre, ni a un solo núcleo familiar de bajos ingresos." [...during the special period the revolution was not willing, is not willing and will not be willing to sacrifice the people. In other countries the famous shock measures have been adopted: price

> liberalisation, with really terrible results for the retired, for all those of low income... But our revolution even in the Special Period has not left a single worker in the street, has not left a single citizen homeless, not abandoned a single retired person, nor child, nor mother, nor a single low-income family.] (Ibid.).

Castro interpreted the continuing unbreakable interconnection between Cuban nationalism and socialism to reassert the country's ideological fabric, despite the changes in the rest of the world:

> "Ahora nuestro país tiene una tarea prioritaria, como la hemos definido: salvar la patria, la Revolución y las conquistas del socialismo (APLAUSOS). Digo las conquistas del socialismo porque es por lo que podemos luchar hoy, pero sin renunciar jamás al socialismo. ...No nos resignaríamos jamás a renunciar a eso. Esto es lo que queremos expresar cuando decimos Socialismo o Muerte." [Now our country has a priority, as we have defined: to save the homeland, the revolution and socialist conquests (applause). I say the conquests of socialism because this is what we can fight for today, but without ever renouncing socialism. ...We will never resign to renounce it. This is what we mean to express when we say socialism or death.] (Ibid.).

To maintain at least minimum levels of loyalty, the government had to communicate carefuly with increasingly disgruntled Cubans, possibly doubting their own system and aspiring to the luxuries available in Havana's dollar shops. Some observed growing cynicism and disenchantment with the privileges of leaders in the decline of those involved in mass organisations (Kapcia 1995: 10).

> "The most important aspect of all these changes during the Special Period and the economic hardship suffered was that the bedrock of the Revolution, free education and health care for all-was maintained if not increased. Moreover this was achieved in the midst of increased confrontation with the United States as the economic blockade was tightened first by the so-called Cuba Democracy (Torricelli) Act of 1992, which extended the trade ban to overseas subsidiaries of U.S. companies..." (Hamilton 2002: 24-25).

Therefore, the Special Period did not end the radical nationalistic project. The inefficient communist economic system, and external factors including the tightening of the embargo, declining world prices of sugar and oil, and collapse of COMECON, posed a lethal threat. In addition, in 1993, particularly destructive weather conditions resulted in a poor production of sugar, cutting futher Cuba's cash to pay for imports of food and fueland plunging the island into the full depths of the crisis (Cole 2002: 41-42). A number of pro-market and pro-investor policies would not destabilise the system nor the loyalty of the people, as these were only necessary concessions to keep the nation-building project on course. *Mercados agropecuarios* were allowed again in 1993 after having been abolished in 1986, and the leadership organised major CTC [Cuban Workers' Union] discussions in May 1994 to

listen attentively to people's concerns. These changes, particularly the newly introduced free circulation of the US dollar, did represent, however, a digression from Rectification, while Cubans were increasingly exposed to the living standards of foreign tourists (some of whom rushed in to witness a possible Cuban transition to Western-style democracy). The black market grew again, resulting in increasing social inequality. The system was interpreting the situation as a way of developing Cuba, but it could not completely ignore some of the related contradictions and negative effects. It did, however, prevent a sudden collapse, by interpreting the meaning of these changes as necessary and legitimate. The government provided a particular interpretation of the country's problems and gave the public a direction for the future within the existing structures of the historically legitimate communist system, which supported loyalty and stability. Economic changes and especially the opening to foreign investment provided the resources necessary to improve economic performance, and thus were interpreted as necessary, that is, legitimate. During this time, Cuba managed to remain engaged in international politics as a leader of the developing world, thriving on the legitimating support of other developing countries.

Cuba and the United States in the 1990s

In the United States, George Bush Sr assumed the presidency in January 1989 and despite his preoccupation with internal developments in the Soviet Union, as the former Vice-President of President Reagan, he represented a strongly anti-Cuban Republican administration. Hence, in the context of a Republican administration in Washington and the US invasion of Panama in December 1989, Cuba had cause for concern about its national security. Bush also provided 36.9 million dollars to fund Radio and TV Martí between 1991-1992 (Suárez Salazar 1997: 105). The US involvement in the Persian Gulf against Saddam Hussein in Iraq in 1991 was yet another opportunity for Cuba to criticise the empire's involvement abroad, despite the multinational nature of the coalition forces, which it ignored. Cubans were also reporting renewed hostile under-cover operations during this time (Suárez Salazar 1997: 77-78).

After the arrival of President Clinton in the White House in January 1993, the most important Cuban foreign strategy became the establishment of a dialogue with Washington, with expectations of a friendlier leadership amongst the American Democrats – the embargo and its Torricelli Act tightening however remained in full force.

> "Cuba maintained rather good relations with the Clinton Administration and Castro offered publicly to stand down in exchange for the lifting of the embargo." (Kapcia 1995: 3).

The same year, the United States was reevaluating its post-Cold War national security concerns with START II signed by President Bush shortly before the end of his term. But friendlier ties with post-Cold War Russia did not extend to US-Cuba relations. Cuban discourse continued reporting the external pressure on the country's political system. The discourse interpreted the situation as the war of the people to keep their socialist privileges, thus anxiously promoting internal mobilization and loyalty: *la guerra de todo el*

pueblo [war of all the people] (Suárez Salazar 1997: 79). In adition, the political leadership of the island sought extended inter-state cooperation within the Caribbean and Latin American region, looking for new trade opportunities. In January 1994, the system was affected by another crisis in Mexico. The Zapatista National Liberation Army in Chiapas, composed mostly of impoverished native Indians and peasants, rebelled on the same day NAFTA went into effect (McWilliams & Piotrowski: 343). This provided a timely echo of what Cuba had achieved in 1959 and henceforth in terms of national independence and benefits for the poorest. Implicitly, it argued why the system should be valued and defended by Cubans despite the difficult times.

Legitimacy and Interpretations of Early 1990s

Cuba observers have interpreted the island during the 1990s in different ways. Based on evidence from *Bohemia* and orther sources, Susan Eva Eckstein argued that during the Special Period the system based its claims to legitimacy on Marxist-Leninist moral principles (Eckstein 2003: 12). Legitimacy also continued to be based on pre-1959 sources, such as the use of Cuban law and constitution, which was not respected by the Batista government (Ibid: 15). Eckstein continued to support the concept of Castro's charismatic leadership as a source of legitimacy, calling it "a mystical and magical influence, a commanding spell..." (Ibid: 19). This notion was supported by Baloyra, who termed the system a "charismatic hegemony" (Baloyra 1993: 39). However, Eckstein argued that, the system increasingly relied on rational-legal bureaucratic forms of legitimacy (Ibid: 20). Eckstein found that during the 1990s, the system increasingly relied on nationalism as the prominent source and unifying force:

> "Castro found ideological and moral justification for the diversity of strategies pursued, partly in reinterpreting Marxism-Leninism but also in nationalism and contemporary au courant global discourse. The ruling ideology was flexibly reinterpreted." (Ibid: 127).

Enrique A. Baloyra and James A. Morris, on the other hand (and in agreement with Kapcia), identified key differences between Eastern Europe and Cuba, thus explaining the survival of the system:

> "...the former socialist regimes of Central Europe were imposed by Moscow after the turmoil of World War II. The Cuban Revolution, on the other hand, evolved from a distinct set of indigenous factors. Instead of being imposed by foreign invaders, Cuban leaders asked to join the socialist bloc." (Baloyra & Morris eds. 1993: 4).

They perceived a crisis of legitimacy in view of the collapse of the socialist bloc, which forced the system into re-examining its foundations (Baloyra & Morris eds. 1993: 5), calling the period a "crisis of ideological legitimation" (Baloyra 1993: 38). Baloyra also concluded that the system relied primarily on its internal Gramscian hegemony based on consent, implying that violence or wide-scale repression were not necessary to maintain stability (Baloyra 1993: 42). Marifeli Pérez-Stable supported the possibility of eroding legitimacy

brought by the end of the Cold Word and the Ochoa-de la Guardia affair (Pérez-Stable 1993b: 77). She concluded that the system responded with a call for perfecting the system, increasing the emphasis on the national origins of the revolution and socialism in Cuba, using the national sovereignty and social justice that the past three decades had brought as enduring sources of legitimacy (Marifeli Pérez-Stable 1993b: 77).

Raymond Duncan, on the other hand, argued that the system experienced a substantial loss of legitimacy and thus responded with various forms of repression, together with an image of the United States as an enemy state, legitimating the system (Duncan 1993: 232). Duncan argued that the system had to enforce loyalty, coercing those that would resist publicly, and promoting adherence to a militarized political culture (Ibid.). Zimbalist supported the role of the under-siege mentality based on a real and growing threat of Reagan's United States, which resulted in a growing repression including incarceration of political dissidents, operation of *brigadas de respuesta rápida* [quick response brigades] and enhanced control of the media (Zimbalist 1992: 11-12). These seem to have, to some extent, complemented the liberalisation reforms of the Fourth Party Congress. An additional source of anxiety of many Cubans, which was likely to make them loyal, was the Cuban American National Foundation and its visions of a post-revolutionary Cuba. For this and other reasons, Zimbalist estimated that 40-50% of Cubans might have remained loyal (Ibid.). Zimbalist concluded:

> "The regime sees the repression as requisite for its survival....Castro is still viewed as the legitimate defender of Cuban sovereignty by large numbers of Cubans." (Ibid.).

Duncan's, Zimbalist's and Mesa-Lago's arguments about repression contradict Pérez-Stable's and Hernández's emphasis on popular support:

> "The revolution had mustered extraordinary popular support and offered Cuban socialism a long-standing source of legitimacy." (Marifeli Pérez-Stable 1993b: 83).

> "Popular support for the system is what gives it stability. Continued identification of the system with the interests of the population guarantees it support." (Hernández: 20).

Fernández also attributed the survival to popular support:

> "The discourse is better understood as the language of passion that gave form to a political religion, not an ideology narrowly defined. ...The revolution evoked feelings and also relied on those feelings to muster support and, in no small measure, to survive in power. The strong affective reactions stemmed from a moral sense of justice expressed as radical nationalism, based on judgments about Cuba's past and future." (Ibid: 65).

Conclusions based on repression contradicted Geraldine Lievesley's analysis of the period, as she argued that the destabilising "climate of insecurity and dissatisfaction" of the 1990s resulted in the system loosening up social controls such as press censorship and critical public debate (Lievesley: 123). These contradicting interpretations, however, may represent a range of combining factors that in fact reinforced stability. Encouragement of the loyal part of the system, with repression of the dissenters, close control of the media (perhaps liberalised during short periods such as during the call for the IV Congress in the summer of 1992), and a limited liberalisation of some parts of the system might have produced the right mix that allowed the system to retain its legitimacy and withstand the worst challenges. The next chapter therefore looks at the discourse, its interpretations and sources of legitimacy during a major crisis, to understand how the system coped, when collapse could have been imminent.

Chapter 5

5. 1. Discourse Analysis: 1994 Malecón Episode in *Granma*, and *Bohemia*

This chapter examines the content and mechanics of the discourse during 1994, before and after the hijackings, Malecón public disturbances, and subsequent migratory and diplomatic crisis. The chapter provides a second example of a destabilising moment. It examines how the media interpreted the crisis for the general public and how they interpreted emigration, while striving to encourage loyalty and stability. As demonstrated in the preceding chapter, the Special Period was a time when Cubans experienced extreme poverty, unheard of since 1959, and when they seem to have doubted the system the most. One of the symptoms demonstrating the possibility of growing instability was the Malecón riots that erupted in Havana on 5th August 1994. This was also preceded by numerous hijackings earlier that year. In the afternoon of 5th August, Fidel Castro himself approached the discontented crowd and steered public opinion in his favour, generating renewed support. The riots were a rare public protest in Cuban history since the 1959 Revolution, which triumphed on the basis of wide public support and then thrived on its residue. The daily hardships of the early 1990s tested the allegiance of loyal Cubans to the limit. Similar to Mariel in 1980, migration was again a major issue, both domestically, and between Cuba and the United States.

Summary of Key Events

The changes following the end of the Cold War plunged Cuba deeper into its domestic tensions and economic crisis in 1994, but at the same time provoked a turning point after which the economy started a slow recovery later that year. A chronology of the most important events during the several months of domestic instability was given by Fidel Castro during a televised interview and it is useful to present the most important events here in an abbreviated form (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 175, 26 August 1994, Fidel Castro Ruz: 1-7). On 13th July 1994 a tugboat *13 de Marzo* was hijacked and sank during a subsequent chase, in which boats of the Cuban coastguard were involved. Thirty-one individuals were saved by the coastguard and thirty-two died during the incident. *Granma* reported President Clinton on 18th July to have described the situation as "otro ejemplo de la naturaleza brutal del régimen cubano" [another example of the brutal nature of the Cuban regime] (Ibid: 1). On 26th July another hijacking took place, in which hijackers using a pistol and knives took control of a boat called *Baraguá* with thirty people on board, threatening to kill a seventeen year-old female passenger and later throwing two passengers overboard. On 3rd August another boat called *La Coubre* was hijacked. The boat was intercepted by US coastguards out at deep sea, with over one hundred people onboard (Ibid: 1). On 4th August the already mentioned boat *Baraguá* was hijacked again, and officer Gabriel Lamoth Caballero was killed during the incident. The boat ran out of fuel on the way, was captured the following day and returned to Cuba (Ibid.).

On 5th August, riots broke out on the streets of Central Havana, with some rioters shouting *¡Abajo Fidel!* [Down with Fidel!]. Fidel Castro confronted the crowd in person later that day, which reportedly resulted in the crowd chanting *¡Viva Fidel!*. On 8th August another hijacking of a military boat *5034* took place in the port of Mariel, with Captain Roberto Aguilar Reyes killed during the incident. The boat was intercepted by US coastguards with twenty-six people on board, who were all transferred to Key West in Florida (Ibid.). The number of *balseros* [rafters] crossing the straights to Florida was increasing during these days; the US coastguards reported assisting 116 on 9th August bringing the total number of rafters intercepted in 1994 to 5,270. On 11th August an additional 116 balseros were intercepted (Ibid.). On 14th August about seven hundred Cubans, with the assistance of the captain, boarded the tanker *Jussara* in the port of Mariel. On the 15th August the Cuban Ministry of Interior *MININT* announced that anyone disembarking from the *Jussara* would be allowed to do so with no subsequent punishment (Ibid.). On 19th August, President Clinton declared that illegal immigrants from Cuba would not be allowed to stay in the United States and would be transferred to the US military base at Guántamo (Ibid.). From the end of August, large-scale marches in support of the Cuban government took place and continued during the following months.

Considering the Evidence

January to July 1994: Tensions under the Extreme Poverty of the Special Period

The style of messages did not involve insulting language, and the discourse suggested the need to save the revolution or face total destruction with no future. Emphasis was given to national pride, duty and patriotism above all. A frequent juxtaposition of three main signifiers, homeland, revolution, socialism, and the order in which they were used implied the precedence of the homeland above all as the driving force. Socialism was interpreted as representing independence, while communism stood for patriotism, neoliberalism for imperialism, and the US threat was as serious as ever.

The press before the crisis contained messages assuring Cubans that the country was on its way to economic recovery and that the government was planning to rationalise expenditure without altering the social achievements of the revolution. The press argued that one of the main causes of the economic problems was the disintegration of the Socialist bloc after the Soviet Union had followed an erroneous direction. The discourse repeatedly confirmed the continuing validity of communism and socialism, and the need for Cuba to avoid a similar mistake. This interpretation made it possible to report the transitions in the Socialist bloc, without having concerns about their potential destabilising impact on Cuba. The discourse of the pre-crisis period used statistical data and government-produced reports, focusing the public away from the declining legitimacy of communism abroad. The press during this period contained an ever higher frequency of the word *Patria*, demonstrating the ever increasing appeal to Cuban patriotism in the new unipolar context

after the collapse of Cuba's communist allies and its potential delegitimating impact on the persuasiveness of communist ideology.

The underlying message was encouraging Cubans to remain loyal, confident and patient, assuring them that revolutionary ideals would be upheld despite the challenging national and international contexts. The print media reported new economic developments and reorientation to tourism, suggesting brighter days to come to improve morale which was at an all-time low since 1959 (*Bohemia*, y. 86, n. 8, 15 April 1994, Ariel Terrero: 40). It suggested that increasing numbers of foreign tourists were assumed to bring hard-currency cash to be spent, and subsequently used by the authorities to finance medicine for the population, reassuring Cubans, that the cash would be used for public benefit. The language was positive, using expressions such as *buenos resultados* [good results], *eficiencia* [efficiency] or *mejorar* [to improve] (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 28, 9 February 1994: 1), (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 80, 22 April 1994: 3).

Beyond tourism, the coverage also reported that new markets in Latin America and Europe were receiving exports from Cuba as a reorientation away from the former Socialist trading partners, suggesting the effective responsiveness of the system to current problems. Other articles reported on the success of exports of medical products as another growing export industry. In sum, the discourse admitted that the times were hard, but that there were no doubts that the situation was about to improve. A significant number of articles supported this message. This was, however, accompanied by reassurances that these changes would not infringe on revolutionary ethics, public decency, and the ideological base of the country:

> "...los objetivos de Cuba sin abandonar sus principios...No queremos la imagen de un país de juego, de drogas, de prostitución. Queremos la imagen de un país de elevada cultura y capacidad para acoger al visitante que el mundo tenga la imagen de un país honrado, moral y eso lo apreciamos mucho porque sabemos que en el mundo tales cualidades no abundan." [...the objectives of Cuba without abandoning its principles...We do not want the image of a country of gambling, drugs, prostitution. We want the image of a country that is highly cultured, with a capacity to welcome the visitor, we want the world to have the image of a country that is honourable, moral and this we appreciate very much because we know that in the world such qualities do not abound.] (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 102, 21 May 1994, Iralda Calzadilla: 1).

This article referred to *sus principios* [its principles], presupposing in the reader the knowledge of these referring mostly to Cuba as an independent country, with an emphasis on good socialist morals and dignity above the market. The future was painted in very positive language, and the discourse did not contain any insulting language aimed at opponents (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 7, 11 January 1994: 5). Despite a parallel with the pre-crisis coverage of 1980 Mariel, which also focused on good economic performance, the coverage from the 1994 period was clearly addressing the desperation of the population by

more strongly presenting evidence of developments that would positively affect the near future, because in 1994 Cuba was already in trouble. Elsewhere, the language used expressions such as *crece confianza* [confidence grows], *favorables condiciones* [favourable conditions], or more bluntly *optimismo* [optimism]. The discourse could not have been more morale-boosting using both explicit and implicit messages.

The encouraging reports were contrasted with the negative impact of the US embargo. The embargo was routinely denounced and presented as the most important factor contributing to the economic collapse of the early 1990s, after Cuba lost its allies and had to face the United States on its own, without Soviet sponsorship based on trade transactions below world market prices with the difference financed by the Russian people. The unjust nature of the embargo was demonstrated by evidence of international support, presumably to increase the credibility and impact of the information, indirectly implying that these groups and individuals represented the majority opinion in their countries. Solidarity abroad strengthened the legitimacy of the system, and pictured Cuba leading a global alliance against imperialism (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 34, 17 March 1994: 1), (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 7, 11 January 1994: 5).

An important article reporting a Fidel Castro speech was printed on 5th January, linking the country's revolution to socialism as the only possible socio-political model guaranteeing the country's independence. This was one of the most important messages during the whole episode. This interpretation in the spirit of *¡Patria, Socialismo o Muerte!* [Homeland, socialism or death!] was not unique to this period, but was greatly emphasised in the press during these difficult times, when the system was being questioned by many, and it would have been inconcievable to dismantle communist ideology without bringing down the whole system. In the slogan, the order was reversed, to emphasise the role of patriotism in close connection with socialism, suggesting they were one. This interpretation of the pillars of the country's own model left no other possibilities beyond itself and argued for continuity. The headline *Sin el socialismo y sin la Revolución no seríamos un país independiente* [Without socialism and without the revolution, we would not be an independent country] explicitly made the direct connection between socialism and independence, sending a message that socialism had to be maintained under all circumstances despite the transitions elsewhere, in order to safeguard priceless national independence as the crucial driving force of the political identities of Cubans. In the speech, Castro stated the only acceptable option:

> "Cualesquiera que sean las cosas que hoy hagamos y tengamos que hacer para salvar la Patria, la Revolución y las conquistas del socialismo, jamás renunciaremos al socialismo. ...Ser revolucionario ahora es cuando vale verdaderamente ser revolucionario. Cualquiera puede ser revolucionario en tiempos fáciles, pero no todos son capaces de ser revolucionarios en tiempos difíciles..." [Whatever we do and have to do today to save the homeland, the revolution and the achievements of socialism, we will never renounce socialism. ...To be a revolutionary now is when it is truly worth being a revolutionary.

> Anyone can be a revolutionary in easy times, but not all are capable of being revolutionaries in difficult times...] (*Granma Internacional*, y. 29, n. 1, 5 January 1994, Fidel Castro Ruz: 13).

Again, the juxtaposition of the three signifiers (homeland, revolution, socialism) and their order implied the precedence of the homeland above all, closely knit together with Cuban socialism, emphasising the need to persevere under any circumstances. It conveyed meaning to reality from within the Sierra Maestra experience well know to all Cubans, where the revolutionary rebels had encountered many utterly desperate moments, but never gave up, expecting the same from all Cubans. Hence the hard times were a good opportunity to test everyone's true revolutionary capacities. The times were interpreted as another challenge, rather than a final collapse. Castro was perhaps anticipating the worst and was gathering support, interpreting those that would choose otherwise as weak, cowardly and unpatriotic. He indirectly suggested that courage and honour equalled *ser revolucionarios en tiempos difíciles*.

Again, Castro insisted that Cuba's hard-won achievements would be preserved, indirectly presenting the success of the system based on public support:

> "Todas esas circunstancias adversas se juntaron en muchos campos, sin embargo, ninguna escuela se cerró, ningun hospital se cerró, la mortalidad infantil no creció... ¿Cómo es posible ese milagro sin el pueblo que tenemos, cualesquiera que sean los débiles, cualesquiera que sean las dificultades materiales tremendas que tenemos hoy? ...tenemos que luchar, pero no renunciaremos a nada" [All these adverse circumstances came together in many fields, however, no school was closed, no hospital was closed, the infant mortality rate did not grow... How would this miracle be possible without the people we have, regardless of the weak ones, whatever the tremendous material difficulties we have today? ...we have to fight, but will not renounce anything] (Ibid: 13).

With the use of *tenemos que* [we have to] Castro referred to loyal supporters, as well as everyone else on the island, leaving them little choice and assuming a union of most Cubans. The nationalistic rhetoric was presupposed in the reference to the Cuban public as *nosotros* [we/us], and was transmitted by a frequent reference to homeland, the revolution and the people as well as frequent use of the first person plural tense of verbs and nouns. Such language presupposed a nation-wide community, stressed in repetitive expressions such as *nuestro camino...nuestros esfuerzos, nuestras negociaciones y nuestras iniciativas* [our path...our efforts, our negotiations and our initiatives] (Ibid.). The language emphasised a scenario in which, if the model were changed, the country's independence would be lost, channelling the widespread appeal of nationalism towards systemic stability:

> "Este país nunca será entregado, este país nunca será vendido, y la estructura, lo fundamental, lo esencial de la Revolución y el

> socialismo, se mantendrá: porque sin el socialismo y sin la Revolución no seríamos nada, tendríamos que regresar al horroroso pasado que ya conocímos...Sin el socialismo y sin la Revolución no seríamos siquiera un país independiente." [This country will never be surrendered, this country will never be sold, and the fundamental structure, the essence of the revolution and socialism, will be maintained: because without socialism and without the revolution we would be nothing, we would have to return to the horrific past that we already know... Without socialism and without the revolution we would not even be an independent country.] (Ibid: 13).

By the proximity and repetition of the terms *Este país, la Revolución y el socialismo*, Castro implied the unity of these terms, unable to exist separately, again reversing the order with the patriotic signifier first. The repetition of these terms in their proximity appealed to the attitudes of Cubans. Therefore, within the national context of the day, it was not important what was happening elsewhere after the end of the Cold War, whether the Cuban economy would get worse, or anything else. Cuba would not, and most importantly could not change direction or compromise on any of the main pillars interpreted as inseparable. The interpretations assumed that by transforming one pillar, the whole system would collapse. Such a message incited patriotic sentiment in the audience and linked it to socialism. By relating the end of socialism to a return *al horroroso pasado que ya conocímos*, Castro implicitly referred to the Batista era to extrapolate his argument evoking images relevant to Cuban national memory. The language implied that a systemic change would ultimately mean a regression to pre-revolutionary Cuba, perhaps representing US-style democracy as something that had already been tried with the disastrous result that the island was controlled by foreign interests. Castro frequently encouraged the people:

> "...los tiempos difíciles pasarán, tendrán que pasar. ...mañana construiremos mucho mejor y mucho más en condiciones favorables....Estoy convencido de que las generaciones venideras se sentirán orgullosas de esta generación, la generación que no se dejó vencer por ningún obstáculo, la generación que no claudicó, la generación que no se rindió." [...difficult times will pass, they have to pass. ...tomorrow we will build much better and in much more favourable conditions...I am convinced that the generations to come will feel proud of this generation, the generation who was not overcome by any obstacle, the generation which did not give in, the generation that has not surrendered.] (Ibid: 13).

In this paragraph, by the frequent repetition of *generation*, Castro implied the continuity of the system as part of a long history of struggle for independence, longed for by the country's forefathers. In this sense, Castro reflected patriotic sentiment, and stressed the importance of the common historical heritage and continuity in favour of systemic stability. He promised that the current economic problems would be temporary, by the emphasis and repetition of expressions such as *pasarán, tendrán que pasar*. By repeatedly referring to *generación*, Castro indirectly related the current situation with Cuba's

independence struggles and the fulfilment of Martí's nationalist ideas in the revolutionary victory of 1959, normally referred to in full as *la generación del centenario* [the centennial generation]. By linking socialism with Cuban nationalist martyrs and memory, he legitimised the system as a singular unit that had to be retained. The speech stressed that the hard times were a passing period, which had to be lived through in order to preserve the basics of the self-worth of Cubans as members of an independent nation, to sustain their honour and dignity. The speech constructed a sense of *nosotros*, as surviving only if the revolution were preserved in its purity and entirety.

Retaining Revolutionary Communist Orthodoxy Backed by Patriotic Sentiment

The discourse repeated that the bright times were to come in order to raise the morale of the population. The encounter solidified the press relations at times when dissent would have been the most destabilising.

> "La prensa tiene la misión primordial de defender la Revolución. Defender la Revolución es defender el socialismo. ...Cuando hablamos de esta Revolución, no la puedo concebir separada del socialismo, son inseparables. ...Veo la prensa como una fuerza, un instrumento formidable de la Revolución. La veo como Radio Rebelde, en la Sierra Maestra, porque estamos viviendo tiempos que no son más fáciles que los de la Sierra Maestra..." [The press has the primary mission of defending the revolution. To defend the revolution is to defend socialism. When we talk about this revolution, I cannot conceive it separated from socialism, they are inseparable...I see the press as a force, a formidable instrument of the revolution. I see it as Radio Rebelde in the Sierra Maestra, because we are living in times that are not easier than those of the Sierra Maestra...] (*Granma Internacional*, y. 30, n. 2, 12 January 1995: 3-5, speech transcript).

By repeating the word *defender*, Castro presupposed a war-like situation, requiring a special effort from all, recalling the Sierra Maestra as a victorious national experience. By juxtaposing signifiers such as *socialismo* with *Revolución*, and building up the image with the historical references, Castro conveyed an image driven by implicit patriotism, where Cuban socialism and nationalism were one and *inseparables*, thus sustaining the legitimacy of the system with a single solution. The linking of the hardship of the Special Period with the struggles in the Sierra Maestra gave contemporary times a lot more meaning to any patriotic Cuban, inciting a culturally relevant sentiment within the context of a nation-building project.

> " La indisciplina, el desaliento, la duda, son tendencias peligrosas que deben empezar a revetirse ...Sin el bloqueo económico, sin el sabotaje, sin el hostigamiento de que nos hacen víctimas constantemente, nosotros podríamos, en un tiempo más corto...ir saliendo del periodo especial. ..Debemos decir que este país en el capitalismo, jamás consiguió lo que ha conseguido en el socialismo. Estaríamos como Haití..." [Indiscipline, discouragement, doubt, are dangerous tendencies that should be reversed ...Without the economic blockade,

> without sabotage, without the harrassment of which we are constantly victims, we could, in a shorter time...exit the special period. ...We must say that this country under capitalism, never achieved what it achieved under socialism. We would be like Haiti...] (Ibid: 5).

By juxtapositing terms referring to a lack of commitment such as doubt and *tendencias peligrosas* with the embargo and sabotage, Castro suggested the danger represented by a lack of commitment thus increasing the social pressure on dissenters. In addition by using the image of Haiti in comparison, Castro warned what would happen to the country if it abandoned socialism, using an image well embedded in Cuban national memory, suggesting the chaos Haiti had experienced since 1791. The speech referred negatively to the concept of political opening as tested in the Soviet Union:

> "...la perestroika tuvo una notable influencia en nuestro país, y a medida que se desarrollaba todo el mundo fue observando la trágica y dramática consecuencia de todo eso." [...perestroika had a marked influence on our country, and as it developed everyone observed the tragic and dramatic consequences of it all.] (Ibid: 5).

The article reasserted Cuba's tradition of leadership rather then discipleship, by offering its particular nationalist-socialist model intact. Castro anticipated people's concerns about transition-related economic problems in former Socialist countries, and incited them with negative language about adopting similar *perestroika*-like policies. Similar language was used consistently several weeks later: *monedas devaluadas, poblaciones desilusionadas, desesperadas* [...devalued currencies...disillusioned and desperate populations] (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 37, 16 February 1994: 5, speech transcript). The language presupposed that Cuba, if following a similar direction, would ultimately experience similar economic chaos.

Saving the Revolution from Neoliberalism

An important transcript of Castro's public speech delivered on 28th January 1994 in which he encouraged Cuban patriotism and and interpreted it as in conflict with neoliberalism was published in *Granma* on the 16th February. He used specific endogenous signifiers such as *batalla* [battle] to suggest the connection between the current hardships with the times of the nationalist struggles of the rebels in the Sierra Maestra. He juxtaposed neoliberalism with the signifier of *genocidio* [genocide], an important reference evoking images of past threats of biological warfare against Cuba, and possibly even suggesting the image of the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. In this way, he reconstructed the meaning of neoliberalism for Cubans: *neoliberalismo era un suicidio...era un genocidio* [...neoliberalism was a suicide...it was a genocide] (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 37, 16 February 1994: 4, speech transcript).

By using these images, Castro painted a culturally specific image of neoliberalism as a real threat, conveying a message relevant to the nation's memory with a potentially strong impact. This was the intentional ideological projection of an image of the new global context and the construction of its meaning for Cubans, inciting particular attitudes. The language also

reinterpreted the concept as another label for imperialism and the immediate negative meaning it thus carried. The identity of Cubans as "we" was simplified in relation to its Other in the following words:

> "...no podríamos decir que somos, pero sí podríamos afirmar categóricamente que no somos, y no somos, por supuesto, nada en absoluto neoliberales. ...no sólo Cuba está viviendo un período especial. América Latina está viviendo un período especial...el Tercer Mundo lo está viviendo. ...en el mundo crece el hambre, hay más hambre y más pobreza que nunca..." [...we could not say what we were, but we could say categorically that we are not, we are absolutely not, of course, neoliberals. ..not only Cuba is living a special period. Latin America is living a special period...the Third World is living it. ...hunger grows in the world, there is more hunger and poverty than ever...] (Ibid: 5).

The island was portrayed as maintaining the safe direction, interpreting current problems as temporary: *estámos travesando* [we are passing through] (Ibid: 5), contextualising problems in Cuba with the developing world. These ideas were repeated in other articles, reporting that imperialism was impoverishing an increasing number of countries besides Cuba. Neoliberalism taking hold in Latin America was later labelled in another article as *el peligroso veneno* [dangerous poison], reaching a conclusion that it was *una aventura norteamericana* [a North American adventure] (*Bohemia*, y. 86, n. 8, 15 April 1994j, G. Sojo, Maggie Marin: 10-13). By linking neoliberalism to North America, the negative meaning implied that it was an alien, non-hispanic, oppressive phenomenon, ill-suited to Cuba.

The discourse called on Cubans to protect their homeland, as the last standing defender of rights of the developing world, painting images of larger processes, with Cuba in the front line. The language assumed moral superiority, which implied that revolutionary sacrificial commitment for reasons beyond individual self-interest were the right subject position. The link between familiar anti-imperialism and new neoliberalism provided the meaning of the new concept: *Ser antineoliberal es ser antimperialista* [To be anti-neoliberal is to be anti-imperialist...] (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 37, 16 February 1994: 5, speech transcript). Negative images such as loss of independence, subjugation or global inequality, which was reflected in the UN veto system, were linked to the concept of neoliberalism, which was in this way reconstructed with a modified meaning within the discourse. The revolution was the central pillar in the discourse, as the key signifier interpreting all other concepts that could be related to it at any time.

The frequent use of the word *desaparecer* [to disappear] in relation to the collapse of the Soviet Union is particularly revealing (Ibid: 5); the Socialist Bloc was not described as having disintegrated or being dismantled by its oppressed people to join the free world, as it was interpreted in some discourses outside Cuba, but simply as having disappeared. Thus an explanation of a possible cause was omitted. Cubans were instead warned that adopting the new neoliberal trends would mean a return to colonial

dependency and loss of national autonomy. The underlying message was that Cubans were surrounded by hostile forces, and hence had to hold fast, unite and carry on: *nos convertirían todavía en más colonias de lo que somos hoy...liquidarían nuestra independencia...liquidada progresivamente* [they would convert us into still more of a colony than we are today...they would liquidate our independence... independence...liquidated progressively] (Ibid: 5). By repeating the words *liquidarían* and *independencia*, the impact of this scare was made more prominent.

Adopting anything different than the existing system was interpreted as a road towards destruction, calling capitalism a *suicide* (Ibid: 5). If adopted, it would lead to the loss of its most valued independence by sooner or later seeing *militares yankis en nuestros países* [Yankee soldiers in our countries] (Ibid: 5), an interpretation that again linked Cuban nationalism to the survival of communism. Neoliberalism was linked to a *regreso* to a presupposed past negative experience with a similar system under Fulgencio Batista, evoking images of social and racial segregation, landless labour and colonial subjugation. In addition, by using plurals (*nuestros países*), Castro presupposed similar processes in all developing countries. As an implicit metaphor, the expression also evoked the 1898 arrival of the US battleship *Maine,* later bombed in Havana harbour, and the 1901 Platt Amendment, inciting Cuban nationalism by implicit historical examples.

Criticism of the Cuban system was addressed indirectly, by arguing that the United States was a single party political system since Democrats and Republicans were a similar group of the imperialist bourgeois class: *El imperio es monopartidista* [The imperium is single party...] (Ibid: 5). The message suggested that Cuba was fighting for more than just its independence: it was fighting for its just socio-economic programme, for itself and other developing countries that were being exploited by lawless neoliberals. This interpretation suggested that economic and other difficulties on the island were caused by external factors, and thus did not require fundamental internal adjustments in terms of Cuba'scommunist model. The communist model was portrayed as granting Cuba's independence, in view of the US embargo and the collapse of the Socialist bloc, thus increasing in importance. In the last part of the speech, Castro assumed a general attitude of public opinion and interpreted it in the following words:

> "...nosotros tenemos un pueblo que sabe lo que es el capitalismo, y les puedo asegurar que nuestro pueblo no quiere el regreso al capitalismo." [...we have a nation that knows what capitalism is, and I can assure you that our people do not want a return to capitalism.] (Ibid: 7).

Subsequently, Castro encouraged the people with images of victory ahead: *la Revolución sobrevivirá* [the revolution will survive] (Ibid: 6), *Nuestra Revolución saldrá más fuerte de este período especial.* [Our revolution will come out stronger from this special period.] (Ibid: 5). This time, Castro finally closed with a strong emphasis on socialism, modifying the usual call *¡Pátria o Muerte!* to *¡Socialismo o Muerte!* [Socialism or Death!] (Ibid: 7), thus

enmeshing further Cuban nationalism with socialist ideology by using a common sense slogan with a different signifier. The discourse confirmed its high interaction with concepts, or signifiers, originating from its Other, adopting them with a modified meaning by contextualising them within the national historical experience, political culture and endogenous master signifiers. The link between Cuban socialism and nationalism was now interpreted anew by inserting explicit and implicit messages of the possible collapse of independent Cuba, if socialism as the revolution's key component was dropped. It implied it would lead to the collapse of the whole, including what most Cubans were potentially keen to keep.

An issue of *Bohemia* from the 15th April 1994, reminded Cubans about the anniversary of the Bay of Pigs invasion with the following title on the inside front cover: *Girón, La Victoria engrandece la patria, somos de patria o muerte* [Bay of Pigs, Victory exalted the nation, we are of homeland or death] sending a strong patriotic message by the repetition of *patria*. Implicitly, it reminded the public of the Cuban tradition to prevail in seemingly hopeless situations.

Changing the Intepretation of Emigration

Another article reported in depth about a conference called *La nación y la emigración* [The nation and emigration], in which members of the Cuban emigré community living abroad participated. It promised *acercamiento* [rapprochement] and used expressions such as *normalizar* and *dialogar* [to normalise, dialogue]. It mentioned both political and economic reasons for emigration in general, then looking at the different waves of emigration from Cuba. It mentioned the 1959 Batista allies, family reunions, economic and other reasons for emigration. It reported that many Cubans living abroad were also supporting revolutionary Cuba (*Bohemia*, y. 86, n. 8, 15 April 1994i: 24-27). Most of all, the article explained the changing attitudes towards emigration in relation to ideological continuity:

> "Nuestra actitud de hoy, de ir hacia el acercamiento necesario con la emigración cubana, no constituye una concesión en el terreno ideológico, ni tampoco la forma de subsanar un error cometido antes como algunos piensan. La postura mantenida por nuestro pueblo y gobierno en otros momentos estuvo plenamente justificada por las circumstancias históricas, tanto externas como internas, entonces existentes. Ahora las condiciones internacionales han cambiado, así como como la situación interna." [Our attitude today, must go forward toward a necessary rapprochement with the Cuban diaspora; it does not constitute a concession in the ideological field, nor a way of correcting a mistake committed before, as some think. The position taken by our people and Government in other times was fully justified by both external and internal historical circumstances of those times. Now the international conditions have changed, as has the internal situation.] (Ibid: 27).

The text assumed the unity of opinion of the people and the government, making it clear that the new attitude towards emigration reflected of the new

reality. It suggested the need to defend the revolution by various means, including *acercamiento* with those formerly signified as enemies. The article also assumed an unsaid right to correct different interpretations of the issue *como algunos piensan*, providing the acceptable subject position. The article well reflected the changing attitude toward emigration in Cuba since 1980, shifting towards a more complex understanding of the phenomenon, and reinterpreting it as economic rather than political.

Achievements of the Revolution, Nelson Mandela and Continuity Based on National Heritage

A key article brought an interview with Roberto Robaina, Cuban Minister for Foreign Relations at the time, who spoke about *una tremenda batalla diplomática* [a tremendous diplomatic battle] and warned that it was

> "...un momento crucial en la historia de la Revolución, cuando está en juego no sólo la soberanía de la Patria sino la existencia misma de la Revolución." [...a crucial moment in the history of the revolution, when not only the sovereignty of the homeland is at stake, but also the very existence of the revolution.] (*Bohemia*, y. 86, n. 8, 15 April 1994e, Pedro Viñas Alfonso: 34-39).

By the use of the word *batalla*, Robaina linked the current difficulties to the revolution's historical legacy. By the juxtaposition of *la soberanía*, *la Patria* and *la Revolución*, the text suggested a call for engagement to defend over thirty years of national autonomy and shared history, in the midst of internal and external pressures. (*Bohemia*, y. 86, n. 8, 15 April 1994c, Mirta Rodríguez Calderón: 28-29), (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 80, 22 April 1994a: 1). Over all, the articles stayed away from strong condemnations or insults and, similar to *Granma, Bohemia* carried a message of encouragement.

A part of the pre-crisis coverage, especially in May, focused on Nelson Mandela and festivities in South Africa attended by Fidel Castro (*Granma*, 10-14 May 1994). This was positive coverage, reminding Cubans of their respected achievements abroad at a time when the country's ideals were under pressure, indirectly evoking images of Cuba as a heroic international freedom fighter (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 94, 11 May 1994a: 1). The text recalled Cuba's contribution, as an implicit encouragement sending an unsaid message that other countries have only recently emerged to enjoy what the Revolution had brought to Cubans in 1959. This helped the leadership to solidify Cuba's image of righteousness, leading the way with its own legitimate model:

> "Esta tarde, en toda isla, se rendirá homenaje a los combatientes internacionalistas cubanos que con su participación en las luchas de independencia y por soberanía en Africa contribuyeron también al triunfo sobre el apartheid." [This evening, in the whole island, a tribute will be paid to Cuban internationalist combatants who through their participation in the fights for independence and sovereignty in Africa also contributed to the victory over apartheid.] (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 94, 10 May 1994: 1).

The 41st anniversary of Moncada filled the pages of several issues in July. The articles pointed out the significant involvement of youth as a response to the anniversary, demonstrating the continuity of the revolution. It emphasised the patriotic aspect as the inheritance of the country's forefathers:

> "Esa misma Juventud que jamás ha claudicado, ni jamás sabrá dejarse vencer, porque está consciente que defendiendo esta Revolución se defiende a sí misma, defiende la existencia de su Patria...hacer de este país una nación libre y soberana" [The same youth that has never faltered, nor will ever let itself be defeated, because it is conscious that by defending the revolution, it also defends the existence of its homeland...to make this country a free and sovereign nation] (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 137, 12 July 1994: 1).

The article from the 12th July mentioned specifically that revolutionary youth was *defendiendo nuestra cultura* [defending our culture] (Ibid.), demonstrating renewed focus on the cultural meaning of the revolution, used during the sixties, but brought into renewed attention. This component of the discourse was once again placing greater emphasis on Martí's concept of *Nuestra América*, as a valid source of legitimacy for most Cubans. This suggested the need to defend Cuba not only as a nation, but also as a cultural community, with different values from the regionally-dominant Anglo-Saxon United States, interpreted as alien and incompatible with post-1959 Cuba built on its endogenous ideology. Cultural and national independence were again emphasised in a later issue from 27th July, which celebrated the symbolic Moncada assault over five pages and warned Cubans about *los enemigos de la Patria* [enemies of the homeland]. The extent of the coverage demonstrates the emphasis on rallying support by evoking images of patriotic Cubans not giving up, even in the most hopeless circumstances:

> "...el hombre es capaz de sobreponerse a las más duras condiciones si no desfallece su voluntad de vencer, hace una evaluación correcta de cada situación y no renuncia a sus justos y nobles principios" [...man is capable of overcoming the toughest conditions if his will to win does not weaken, he makes a correct evaluation of every situation and does not renounce his just and noble principles] (*Granma*, year 30, n. 148, 27 July 1994: 1).

The word *principios* presupposed the principles of the revolution known to all Cubans. In addition, the article insisted *Cumpliremos el mandato martiano* [We will fulfil Marti's mandate] (Ibid: 1), using a metaphor from national mythology to suggest the need to fulfil the historical mission of Cuban forefathers.

The US Threat and International Solidarity

A number of issues of *Granma*, including that of the 22nd July, brought news about the United States expecting to receive the go-ahead from the United Nations to intervene in Haiti (Operation Uphold Democracy launched in September). The texts were written in a rather factual style using expressions such as *indicó, declaró* [indicated, declared], devoid of language insulting the

United States. This suggests a more cautious approach towards the only remaining superpower (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 145, 22 July 1994: 1). The discourse painted images of a potential US military deployment in the very proximity of Cuba, perhaps suggesting a similar threat for Cuba as it was becoming encircled by the US army in real terms – the threat evident and very close.

Issues closer to August brought reports of expanding international support for the Cuban cause against the US embargo, which included, for example, reports not only from the rest of Latin America, but also from Canada: *Congreso colombiano demanda cese del bloqueo contra Cuba* [Colombian Congress demands cessation of the embargo against Cuba] (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 117, 11 June 1994: 1), *Se opone Canadá a aislar a Cuba* [Canada is opposed to the isolation of Cuba] (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 124, 22 June 1994, Orlando Oramas León: 1). The discourse reported the diversity of positions in capitalist countries and implied opposition to the United States even within the capitalist camp, thus discrediting this unilateral US policy.

The press also brought encouraging assurances that the economy had already started improving, and further partnerships and contracts with foreign investors were being signed. In this way, the discourse was countering the increasingly tense atmosphere, which former government employees described, during interviews conducted on the island, as tense, unusually silent and charged with anger (Pastor Brigos, Havana May 2010). The positive messages focused not only on the growth of the tourist sector, maintenance of healthcare and social provision, but even on reports about growing extractions of petrol on Cuban soil (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 131, 2 July 1994, Ortelio González Martínez: 1). Such messages had a significant role in improving the chances for loyalty of the population, based on their expectations about the near future (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 144, 21 July 1994, Silvia Martínez: 1). The theme of improving economic outlooks was strongly present during the pre-crisis period, implicitly asking the Cuban public to further stretch its patience: *Debemos convertir el patriotismo en respuestas más eficaces* [We have to convert patriotism into more effective responses] (*Granma*, year 30, n. 154, 4 August 1994b, Fidel Castro: 4-5).

5th August Disturbances

In sum, during the disturbances in Havana and the subsequent migratory crisis, the discourse increased the emphasis on a number of themes, with an underlying patriotic message. Those involved were interpreted as anti-patriotic anti-social elements allied with the United States and trying to destabilise the island internally. It interpreted the US threat as aimed against all Cubans, rather than the political system, hence requiring a patriotic response from all the people to defend their national independence, one of the most valued master signifiers of Cuban political culture. Since the disturbances were organised from abroad, the implication was that there were no worries whatsoever about the system itself. The perpetrators were interpreted as weakening Cuba internally at a difficult time, which was not patriotic and thus condemned by everyone. They were pictured as a small minority, facing an

overwhelmingly loyal sweeping majority. Emigration received a new meaning, as a common phenomenon, driven by economic motivations and thus common in the developing world, to which Cuba belonged. Castro demonstrated his charismatic leadership skills, as a legitimate leader by the side of the Cuban people, boldly facing yet another incident in the long history of imperial aggression. The criminal United States was in a weaker position, fearing another Mariel that righteous Cuba could unleash any time. Many condemnations were aimed at the United States, for its encouragement of illegal emigration, inciting violence and highjackings, which were endangering Cuban civilians. The details of US immigration policies were examined in detail to demonstrate the internal contradictions and nonsensical rules. The outcome was interpreted as a euphoric, nation-wide revival of revolutionary energy and commitment. *Patria* was again something to actually die for. The discourse used more neutral language compared to 1980 Mariel.

On 3rd August, a ferry *La Coubre* was hijacked and piloted towards the United States with several passengers thrown overboard. Cuban patrol boats were reported to have been ordered to avoid further incidents after the sinking of the *13° Marzo* tugboat on 13th July. On the 5th August, civil disturbances erupted in Central Havana in the areas of Neptuno and San Rafael, spreading towards El Prado/Paseo de Martí and the Malecón, with some Cubans also mentioning Obispo, as the area where some of the best dollar shops in Havana were located, with stones having been thrown at displays and the police. Castro was later reported to have confronted the angry crowd in person, turning the mood in his favour (although surprisingly no photographic evidence is available).

During a live broadcast on the evening of 5th August, Castro gave his account of the events to the nation and *Granma* published the transcript the following day. To send the main message, Castro argued the meaning of these events to represent another manifestation of popular support and renewed confidence in the revolution. The title of the article presupposed widespread support, based, above all, on patriotism: *No ha sido en vano la cantidad de semillas de patriotismo que se ha sembrado en estos más de 35 años* [The amount of seeds of patriotism sown during the past 35 years has not been in vain] (Ibid: 4). With this metaphor, the title referred to shared revolutionary history, with patriotism as the uniting component. By using the word *semillas*, the title implied growth of popular support, with a tone suggesting confidence in the country's direction dating all back to 1959, linking the present day to symbolic historical events. Castro was praised by one of the presenters for his charismatic presence facing the rioters in person, renewing his profile as an effective leader and hero:

> "...el Comandante venía a pie, bajando por todo Prado, que llegó hasta la esquina del Malecón...Su presencia en la calles...algo extraordinario" [...the commander came by foot, down along Prado, all the way to the corner of Malecón...His presence in the streets...something extraordinary] (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 157, 6 August 1994a: 4).

The use of words such as *extraordinario* and references to the positive outcome of the incident contained an underlying message, that the events did

not represent a crisis, but instead a renewed faith in the leader, and implicitly, in the system. Castro described how, after receiving news about attempts to hijack another boat in Havana harbour with apparently no engine fitted, further information arrived about *algunos disturbios...desórdenes* [some disturbances...disorder] (Ibid: 4). Castro suggested the inadequacy of those involved, i.e. disloyal Cubans, in contrast with the organised and strengthening revolution, backed by its supporters, painting a picture of overwhelming support. Castro's use of terms painted a picture of a small-scale event for viewers in the rest of the country, contradicting any images of mass riots that would have suggested widespread discontent. On the contrary, the language implied that the event was insignificant by juxtaposing it with the overwhelming support that ensued. Therefore, the legitimacy of the system was not harmed.

Castro, as the leader and physical representation of the revolution, demonstrated confidence and renewed its essence. Castro referred to the events specifically as *provocaciones* [provocations] and termed those involved as *perturbadores* [rioters] (Ibid: 4), suggesting that confident, loyal Cubans would not have been challenged nor threatened. Castro also appealed to the audience by humorously describing his motivation for attending the disturbances in person, suggesting his unquestionable confidence:

> "...yo quería también recibir mi cuota de piedras y de disparos. ¡No es nada extraordinario!" [...I also wanted to receive my share of stones and gunfire. It is nothing extraordinary!] (Ibid: 4).

He spoke as a seasoned and confident revolutionary fighter, always in the front line, without any doubts. The text exemplified his genuine commitment to the revolutionary project, as its legitimate leader able to intervene in difficult times. It revived the legendary Sierra Maestra history, relating it to the events of the day, as the crucial source of popular support and legitimacy. Castro's account demonstrated commitment and closeness to the people, including those who might have lost faith in the system, thus exemplifying leadership skills and trust:

> "...tenía el interés especial de conversar con nuestra gente, para exhortarla a tener calma, paciencia, sangre fría, no dejarse provocar, puesto que yo me sé de memoría todo el plan del enemigo y toda la concepción imperialista acerca de los medios para liquidar la Revolución, su actual estrategia" [...I had a special interest to converse with our people, to encourage them to be calm, patient, cold blooded, not to let themselves be provoked, because I know by heart the whole plan of the enemy and the whole imperialist conception about the means to liquidate the revolution, its current strategy] (Ibid: 4).

Here, Castro referred to *nuestra gente*, presupposing the large numbers still committed to the revolution that, instead of giving in to small-scale provocations encouraging violence to destabilise the system, would inevitably follow his example of treating the events as an essential moment of revival, reasserting the historic duty to stop the enemy. With the expressions *la*

concepción imperialista and *todo el plan del enemigo*, he evoked images of past US actions against Cuban independence, such as the 1901 Platt Amendment and the official US occupation from 1906, appealing to popular sentiment that would incite support for the revolution. In addition, the multi-signifier *la concepción imperialista,* might have also referred to Martí's warnings about the United States' threat to destroy Cuban independence. The language linked Cuban historical experience to the events of the day, re-labeling history as *actual.*

Rioters and Hijackers as an Instrument of Imperialist Aggression

The rioters were interpreted as an instrument of the enemies of the revolution abroad, placing them beyond the protective boundaries of Cuban nationalism, and making them de facto enemies of the patriots who were united to preserve their independence. The rioters would have to face anyone with patriotic attitudes, regardless of their ideology, defending the revolution as a representation of justice, patriotism and commitment to social equality. They were interpreted as the enemies of all, linked to the imperialists, and hindering the country's economic recovery. Such an interpretation would have most probably evoked anger from most Cubans looking for an improvement as soon as possible:

> "como instrumento de subversión, y, finalmente, como instrumento de intervención en nuestro país. ...La estrategia imperialista...de dividir a la población...conducir nuestro país a un conflicto, a un baño de sangre ...presiones...para tratar de dificultar nuestro esfuerzo con vistas a salir del período especial" [as an instrument of subversion and finally as an instrument of intervention in our country... The imperialist strategy...to divide the people...conduct our country into a conflict, into a bloodbath...pressures...to try to hinder our efforts to get out of the special period] (Ibid: 4).

By using the word *intervención*, Castro built up the message of an immediate real threat taken literally and very seriously in Cuba. At the same time, the word was often used to refer to past US involvement, and therefore carried even stronger meaning for Cubans. The nation was threatened by the imperialists, a term which presupposed the automatic identification of this term with the United States and anyone else opposed to revolutionary Cuba.

The issue of emigration from the Cuban side was used as a weapon to threaten the United States, recalling from national memory the image of the victorious example of 1980 Mariel: *...ellos tomarán todas las medidas para prevenir otro Mariel* [...they will take all measures to prevent another Mariel] (Ibid: 6). The hijackings that took place earlier that year were interpreted not as a sign of discontent, but instead as part of a universal phenomenon, stimulated by the embargo:

> "El fenómeno migratorio es universal y, sobre todo, se produce desde los países que tienen desarrollo hacía los países que tienen más desarrollo económico; pero en el caso nuestro no era Cuba la que limitaba la salida....el bloqueo es un instrumento que compulsiona las

> salidas ilegales..." [The migratory phenomenon is universal and, above all, is from developing countries towards more developed countries, that have more economic development; but in our case it was not Cuba who limited the departure...the blockade is an instrument of compulsion of illegal departures] (Ibid: 4).

Elsewhere in the text, the term *el pueblo luchando* [fighting people] was juxtaposed to *disturbios* [disturbances], suggesting the divide between the rioters and the rest of Cuba. The interview contained a frequent use of *provocar, provocaciones*, suggesting external factors aimed at destroying the nation. Castro continued building up and reinforcing the image of a plan of aggression, linked to the rioters, indirectly discouraging the undecided to rebel and further encouraging the loyal, again repeating the image of a master plan, omitting any internal problems or discontent:

> "...la causa? Estos incidentes de ahora son parte de todo un plan y de toda una estrategia de Estados Unidos. ...su plan integral para destruir a la Revolución" [...the cause? These incidents are now part of a whole plan and the entire US strategy...its complete plan to destroy the revolution] (Ibid: 4).

The text presupposed the validity of the argument, by placing it into a commonsense context (*todo el mundo sabe*), based on the shared knowledge of past skirmishes with the United States. The text explicitly defined the peaceful position of Cuba based on superior moral qualities:

> "Todo el mundo sabe que la Revolución Cubana tiene una tradición de decir la verdad en todas las circunstancias y que la Revolución Cubana nunca ha mentido....este problema se podría resolver mediante una sincera colaboración entre Estados Unidos y Cuba, que no la han querido hacer, porque son demasiado demagogos, son demasiado hipócritas, son demasiado cobardes..." [Everybody knows that the Cuban revolution has a tradition of saying the truth in all circumstances and that the Cuban revolution never lied....this problem could be solved by sincere collaboration between the United States and Cuba, which they do not want, because they are too demagogic, too hypocritical, too cowardly...] (Ibid: 4-5).

The use of the word *sincera* highlighted the ongoing dishonest behaviour of the United States, implying that the difficulties to which Cubans were exposed were unnecessary, as a boatlift could have been arranged at any time. This demonstrated the non-problematic interpretation of emigration, interpreting it as an ordinary flow of economic migrants towards developed countries. Hence, emigration did not represent a delegitimising issue for the leadership. This interpretation reminded that Cuba was part of the developing world, and the main cause of its economic hardship was linked to the US embargo. Castro contextualised illegal migration, arguing that Cubans were interpreted in the United States as escaping from a ruthless communist regime, but were in fact not different from Mexicans dying at the fenced US-Mexican border, built to keep them out. Nor were they different from Haitian rafters. This was

presented as proof of US hyprocrisy in using a migratory issue in a defamation campaign, ignoring the support the revolution enjoyed from the Cuban people. The compassionate nature of Cuban authorities implicitly denying images of an oppressive regime, was suggested in its orders:

> "Saben que los guardafronteras cubanos no les van a disparar, aunque les disparen no van a disparar a la lancha de pasajeros porque hay ancianos, hay mujeres, hay niños, hay personas que no tienen nada que ver con el secuestro, que son inocentes." [They know that the Cuban coastguard will not shoot at them, if they shoot they will not shoot at a passenger boat because there are elderly, women, children, people that have nothing to do with with the hijacking, who are innocent.] (Ibid: 5).

The language emphasised the criminal character of the rioters, as well as of the United States as their benefactor, with the two juxtaposed closely next to each other, indirectly associating the two. The language also included frequent use of words such as *nosotros* [us], *nuestro país* [our country], *lucha* [fight], *batalla* [battle] and *guerra* [war], while many verbs were in the first person plural tense, all implying the situation of the unified Cuban people facing another fight in a series of battles of its war of independence. The repetitive use of *nosotros*, referring to Cuba as a whole, also assumed a majority support, omitting any possibility of internal disunity. The language referred to the definition of the 1990s as a Special Period in Times of Peace, when the leadership called on to the people to defend Cuba in a war-like situation, in times when all depended on their loyalty, instead of on the Soviet Union. The seriousness of the situation was communicated by the juxtaposition of terms such as *Guerra biológica* [biological war] and *nuestro país* [our country], suggesting a possible annihilation of the independent Cuban nation, reviving similar accusations from the 1980s (Ibid: 4). The image was built up to convey the seriousness and the life-or-death situation. To stress the message explicitly, the text frequently used *destruir la Revolución* [destroy the revolution] or *planes genocidas, sus planes criminales, sus planes intervencionistas contra Cuba* [genocidal plans, its criminal plans, its interventionist plans against Cuba] juxtaposed to *nosotros*, thus assuming the United States (often referred to as "they") to be against all Cubans and not just the revolution, its leadership or ideology. The repetitive use of *nuestro país* [our country] reinforced the patriotic message in the midst of the build-up of images of a total annihilation, to encourage Cubans through their shared memory to mobilise in support of the system.

> "No será la primera vez, ya hubo una vez que hasta tuvimos amenaza nuclear...Y de los revolucionarios es la Patria y de los revolucionarios es la independencia, y los que están encargados de defenderla. Y todos saben con qué paciencia hemos nosotros tolerado todas estas cosas... Las provocaciones de hoy llamaron al combate a la gente, porque yo hacía mucho tiempo que no veía a la gente con el espíritu con que la veía hoy en la calle." [It will not be the first time, we already were once under a nuclear threat...The homeland is of the revolutionaries, and independence is of the revolutionaries, and of those that are called

to defend it. And all know with what patience we have tolerated all these things. Today's provocations called the people to fight, because I have not seen for a long time the people with the spirit with thich I saw them in the streets today] (Ibid: 6-7).

Finally, Castro explicitly reaffirmed the evidence of fresh confidence, and implicitly the stability of the system. The language appealed to individual and group self-esteem of the public, and blamed the United States for the crisis. Within the context of this intepretation, the legitimacy of the system was not challenged and loyalty was not questioned. This was confirmed by one of the presenters in the programme, describing the crowd's reaction to the arrival of Castro as euphoric. The country was assumed to be in a war-like situation under attack, evoking symbolic moments from revolutionary history as well as the Bay of Pigs invasion, building an image of a symbolic revival of the revolution:

> "...una euforia tal que creo que eso es lo que habrán sentido los milicianos en Girón...fue lo que sentimos nosotros hoy, porque íbamos por todas las esquínas gritando Viva Fidel!...cantando el Himno Nacional, cantando el 26 de Julio, y que, de repente, Fidel apareciera entre nosotros, creo que eso no hay palabras con qué describirlo, y volvemos a vivir lo que nuestros padres vivieron en Girón" [...such euphoria that I think that is what the militia of the Bay of Pigs must have felt...it was what we felt today, because we went through all the streets shouting Viva Fidel!...singing the national anthem, singing the 26th July song, and suddenly, Fidel appeared among us, I believe there are no words to describe it, and we return to live like our parents lived during Bay of Pigs] (Ibid: 6).

By referring to *Girón* and the national anthem, the message incited feelings of revolutionary victory and triumph countering any sense of doubt or lack of commitment, by activating the culturally-bound content of Cuban national consciousness. The juxtaposition of current events with historical references gave them meaning beyond the events of the day. Cubans were called to unite and hold fast to their ideals in the new post-Cold War neoliberal context, as the last remaining heroic fighters for justice, independence and revolutionary values:

> "Como nos hemos quedado casi el único adversario del imperio, toda su malicia, toda su perfidia y todo su poder se concentra contra nosotros, así que es dura y difícil esta batalla, pero no le tenemos miedo a esta lucha." [.... As we are now almost the only adversary of the empire, all its malice, all its perfidy and all its power concentrates against us, as hard and difficult as is this battle, but we do not fear them in this fight.] (Ibid: 6).

Despite some derogatory images, the overall content of the hegemonic discourse was less confrontational and insulting than in 1980, possibly due to the recent imbalance in international relations. The event was later described in an article on 13th August, which praised Castro's direct participation despite

any risks, always close to the people (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 164, 13 August 1994b, Susana Lee: 8). Discontent or declining support for the system was not considered while support was emphasised, thus leaving no doubts about the system's future, based on the residual support for 1959 revolutionary nationalism. Castro's appearance in person during the disturbances affirmed his image as an effective leader enjoying widespread support, ready for bold action when necessary, true to his words and ideals at the forefront of the confident revolution.

Victory, Large Scale Support Rallies and Heroic Patriots

The victorious and positive interpretation of the outcome of the incident continued in the weeks to come as support marches were organised, similar to after 1980 Mariel (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 158, 7 August 1994: 1). The participation was described as including a *multitud* [multitude] implying widespread support, and the victims of the incidents as exemplary heroic patriots: *muerto en el heroico acto de defender la dignidad de su Patria* [killed in the heroic act of defending the dignity of his country] (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 159, 8 August 1994a, Oria de la Cruz: 1). The rioters and hijackers continued to be referred to mostly as *antisociales*, *contrarrevolucionarios* [counter-revolutionaries] or simply as *elementos inescrupulosos* [unscrupulous elements] (Ibid: 1). The nationalistic expression *vendepatrias* [those who sold their country] was used, but infrequently (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 159, 8 August 1994, Orfillo Peláey e Isabel Moralea: 3). In some rare cases, they were also referred to as rats:

> "Los antisociales, como ratas que son, se combaten a puño limpio...Como las cosas en el país están difíciles, los enemigos piensan que por fin van a ganar. Creo que olvidan: cuando los revolucionarios salimos, las ratas que tiran piedra se esconden." [The antisocial elements, like the rats they are, are fought with a bare fist...As things in the country are difficult, the enemies think that they will finally win. I believe they forget: when we the revolutionaries go out, the rats that throw stones hide.] (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 159, 8 August 1994b: 2).

Similar to 1980, the difficult times for the revolutionary project were interpreted as an opportunity to cleanse society of weaker, disloyal elements. The popular marches were described as *un acto de reafirmación revolucionaria* [...an act of revolutionary reaffirmation] (Ibid: 2), and other encouraging language included expressions such as *defenderán siempre* [will always defend] or *una alta moral combativa* [high fighting morale] (Ibid: 2), again building up images of popular support. The expression *su decisión* assumed spontaneous participation. The text juxtaposed nationalist signifiers such as *independencia* and *Patria* with the threat from *enemigos internos y externos*, again interpreting the rioters as an instrument of the United States:

> "los revolucionarios salieron...para manifestar en actos públicos su decisión de defensa de la libertad e independencia de la Patria y su convicción de que los enemigos internos y externos no tienen futuro ni ahora ni nunca." [revolutionaries went out...to express in public their decision to defend freedom and independence of the country/homeland

and their conviction that internal and external enemies do not have a future, not now or ever.] (Ibid: 2).

An article about Alfredo Rodríguez, who was in charge of one of the hijacked boats, appeared in the issue of 8th August. Rodríguez was presented as an exemplary patriot, loyal even when offered the possibility of emigrating. The language suggested a link between the family, the Communist Party and the homeland, constructing them as one and interdependent:

> "Soy comunista, militante del Partido, tengo familia, un nieto que quiero y no traiciono a mi Patria" [I am a communist, a Party militant, I have a family, a grandson whom I love and do not betray my country] (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 159, 8 August 1994e, Sara Mas: 2).

The unity of the islanders was expressed explicitly in another article titled *Morir por la Patria es vivir* [To die for the homeland is to live]. The article evoked strong patriotic images, stressed by the fact that the title of the article quoted a passage from the Cuban National Anthem, which most Cubans would have knows as common sense. More accusatory language against the United States was used by Raúl Castro during his speech printed in the same issue. Raúl stepped up the emphasis on the seriousness of the enemy's intentions, by using words such as *derrocar* [subvert], *produzca un baño de sangre* [produces a blood bath], or *reimplantar su dominio neocolonial* [reinstate its neo-colonial domination] (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 159, 8 August 1994g, Raúl Castro Ruz: 4-5). He too linked the disturbances as part of the hostile US strategy aimed against Cuba's nation-building project:

> "...hostilidad norteamericana contra nuestro país y forma parte del plan estratégico del imperialismo para liquidar a la Revolución Cubana" [...US hostility against our country and is part of the strategic plan of imperialism to liquidate the Cuban revolution] (Ibid: 4).

As was the case in the discourse in general, Raúl interpreted the whole nationalist project into one coherent and consistent package of several concepts presented as indivisible:

> "...muerto defendiendo la libertad, la dignidad y la independencia de su país, ha muerto defendiendo la Patria revolucionaria y el Socialismo." [...killed defending liberty, dignity and the independence of his country, he died defending the revolutionary fatherland and socialism.] (Ibid: 5).

In another speech, Raúl Castro referred to the rioters as *gusanos* [worms], *vendepatrias*, *traidorzuelos* [those-who-sold-their-country, traitors], and *los anexionistas de este siglo* [the annexationists of this century], strengthening the condemnations (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 160, 9 August 1994a, Raúl Castro Ruz: 3). Raúl recalled the concept of the annexationists from national memory, who had been willing to give up their absolute national independence, thus betraying the aspirations of the recognised Cuban national heroes and martyrs. This link was aimed at mobilising hatred against the rioters. More importantly,

Raúl suggested that patriotism was not a choice, but a duty: *los deberes para con la Patria* [duties to the fatherland] (Ibid: 3), thus constructing a singular subject position for the public presented as the only socially acceptable. He followed with a warning to dissenters, by quoting Martí:

> "Todo lo que se oponga a la Revolución será destruido por ello." [All that is opposed to the revolution will be destroyed by it.] (Ibid: 3).

By recalling Cuban heroes including Céspedes, Martí, Gómez and Maceo, followed by Fidel, he reiterated the connection between Fidel as the leader of the revolution and its historical origin, thus indirectly arguing for the historical legitimacy of the system as fulfilling the nation's aspirations to sovereignty. Subsequently, Raúl used another expression stressing the authentic-endogenous character of the revolution, as another source of legitimacy, based on *pilares de la cubanidad* [pillars of Cubanness] (Ibid: 3).

On 8th August, another hijacking took place, which resulted in the death of Roberto Aguilar Reyes. The following day, *Granma* published the reaction of Aguilar Reyes's mother, who confirmed her support for her son's fulfilled duty for the nation in the extreme spirit of *Patria o Muerte*. The language suggested the main message demonstrating a lack of options, forcing the audience into a simplified position, leaving support for the system as the only alternative, from all the moral, historical and patriotic perspectives:

> "...él fue valiente, y se murió defendiendo la Revolución, no tengo derecho a acobardarme, aunque llore inconsolablemente, porque es un combatiente, un revolucionario que salió de mi vientre. ...El hizo lo que tiene que hacer un cubano digno." [...he was brave, he died defending the revolution, I have no right to cowardice, while crying inconsolably, because he is a fighter, a revolutionary I gave birth to. ...He did what every decent Cuban has to do.] (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 160, 9 August 1994d, Haydée León Moya: 8).

By juxtaposing the words *combatiente* with *revolucionario*, the language of the interview suggested a link with the concept of the Sierra Maestra fighter, having the duty to make the utmost sacrifice for his or her country. As in 1980, the mother of Aguilar Reyes confirmed her support for the sacrifice, and encouraged others to follow with total commitment. Compared to 1980, the language of the article largely avoided insults. In the same issue, Aguilar Reyes was described in a biographical summary as having demonstrated *incondicional apoyo a la Revolución.* [unconditional support for the revolution] (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 163, 12 August 1994b: 2), as an exemplary role model of a patriotic Cuban.

In an article three days later, the language was somewhat sharper in a transcript of Rear Admiral Pedro Pérez Betancourt's speech, which referred again to the reaction of the *nieta de mambí* [granddaughter of a mambí], the mother of Aguilar Reyes evoking the image of Mariana Grajales, the mother of Antonio Maceo, making Cuban mythology current:

> "¡Me han matado un hijo, pero aún me quedan dos para seguir defendiendo la Revolución, y si cayeran también ellos, tendrán que matarme a mí entonces, porque voy a ocupar su puesto!" [They have killed my son, but I still have two to continue defending the revolution, and if they also fall, they will have to kill me then, because I will take their place!] (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 166, 15 August 1994a, speech transcript, Pedro Pérez Betancourt: 2-3).

Pérez Betancourt evoked the legacy of the *mambí* independence fighters, and described the rioters and hijackers as *gusanos, delicuentes y antisociales* [worms, delinquents and antisocial elements] and *mercenarios y anexionistas* [mercenaries and annexationists], who encountered *la mano dura del pueblo* [the hard hand of the people] (Ibid: 2). The language suggested widespread support and resistance from the unified Cuban people that would counter the *mercenarios*, who had betrayed the homeland. The message indirectly warned of the dangers of being identified as such a person and then confronting the rest of the loyal people, thus encouraging conformity. Betancourt's speech was one of the few instances when the word *gusanos* [worms] was used. This was more of an exception in 1994, when compared to the frequent use of this term in 1980.

Granma of 13th August continued with a five-page transcript of the appearance of Fidel Castro on national television two days earlier. The key message confirmed that the disturbances and hijackings were provoked by the the United States to destroy the revolution, a guarantor of the country's independence. Hence they did not represent reasons for any doubts about the system internally. Charismatically, Castro tuned in the audience by starting with a humble apology for the late hour of the transmission. The transmission represented one of the key moments of interpretation, concluding and demonstrating how to make sense of the situation. Initially, Castro used neutral expressions such as *analizar*, *reflexionar* [analyse, reflect], and factually described the events of the most recent hijacking of the vessel *Unidad Militar 4349*. Castro stressed the peaceful approach of the Cuban authorities, but lamented the friendly treatement of the hijackers in the United States as *impunidad absoluta* [absolute impunity], despite them using violent means to leave (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 164, 13 August 1994a: 2-6). This suggested the immoral behaviour of biased US authorities. He put a construction on the United States as against *nuestro pueblo* [our people] (Ibid: 2), rather than against the Cuban political leadership or the system, directing the threat directly at the people, with the embargo aimed at all Cubans as a sovereign community.

Castro implied the inferior position of the United States, referring to emigration as a Cuban weapon, and indicated he was losing patience and might soon permit *otro Mariel* [another Mariel]. The language also evoked the meaning of Mariel, retained in Cuban national memory as a victory. Castro referred to emigration as *...fenómenos migratorios normales de esta época.* [...normal migratory phenomenon of this period.], supporting the transformed meaning of migration (Ibid: 3). Later in the programme, Castro mentioned rumors about the Miami-based Cuban-American community planning to allow

unrestrained killing in Cuba for three days, if they returned to the island. Thus he was feeding fears of possible consequences resulting from a political change, presented as a direct threat to all Cubans rather than the political class. Castro used repeatedly the word *guerra* [war] and warned of the Miami opposition:

> "...un infierno de terror. Satanás podría contratar allí un buen número de gente para los peores salones del infierno..." [...a hell of terror. Satan could contract a good number of people there for the worst parts of hell...] (Ibid: 5).

Castro called the United States *idiotas* [idiots], and followed with a description of the US military base in Guantánamo as *un campo de concentración de 20 000 haitianos.* [a concentration camp of 20 000 Haitians] (Ibid: 5), ridiculing the United States and evoking an image of Nazi Germany and Spain to condemn the immoral enemy in the midst of issues appealing to popular sentiment (i.e. embargo, Guantánamo). He again conveyed clearly the underlying main message that the situation was the result of US migratory policies, instead of Cuba's internal problems.

The discourse during the rest of August 1994 continued within the same spirit of a victorious interpretation of the outcome of the crisis. The perpetrators were mostly referred to as *elementos contrarrevolucionarios* [counter-revolutionary elements] (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 165, 14 August 1994a, Sara Más: 1). Report of widespread popular support marches continued, providing evidence of the final victory: *Impresionante reafirmación del apoyo de nuestro pueblo a su Revolución* [Impressive reaffirmation of support of our people for their revolution] (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 166, 15 August 1994c, Enrique Atiénzar Rivero e Isabel Moralea: 1). The word *reaffirmation* suggested the link with past support and its renewal, while the revolution termed as *su* was a representation of the people. As in 1980, Cuba and its people were understood as the winners: *Salgamos al combate con la certeza inconmovible de la victoria* [We go into battle with unwavering certainty of victory] (*Granma Internacional*, year 29, n. 33, 17 August 1994, speech transcript, Raúl Castro Ruz: 12-13).

Castro Reiterates Key Messages

Perhaps the next most important article summing up all the major events of August was published in *Granma* on 26th August 1994. It was a transcript of a televised interview with Fidel Castro (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 175, 26 August 1994, Fidel Castro Ruz: 1-7). Castro summarised the past three months and constructed their meaning, repeating and justifying most of the key messages examined so far. He reiterated the moral superiority of the Cuban position:

> "...la única razón que puede tener la administración norteamericana para hacer estas cosas es la razón de la fuerza, mientras que nuestras razones son los principios, la moral, la dignidad, el honor y la verdad" [...the sole reason that the US administration can have to do these things is the reason of force, while our reasons are the principles, morality, dignity, honour and truth] (Ibid: 4).

To support his argument, Castro condemned anti-Cuban interpretations of the crisis by US officials, presenting Cuba as a brutal regime, referring to it as *El régimen de Castro* [the Castro regime] (Ibid: 2), a label out of context on the island with the public constantly reminded of the real benefits the revolution had brought them. Castro reiterated the violence used by the hijackers and their disregard for ordinary passengers, suggesting they were the ones to be condemned, contrary to their glorification by US authorities as heroes. In this way, Castro discredited the arguments of the United States. He referred to the disturbances of 5th August as:

> "Acciones vandálicas de elementos contrarrevolucionarios y antisociales en la Ciudad de La Habana, asociadas al secuestro de embarcaciones para emigrar, provocan la respuesta del pueblo revolucionario de la capital" [Acts of vandalism by counter-revolutionary and antisocial delements in the City of Havana, associated with hijackings of boats to emigrate, provoke the response of the revolutionary people of the capital] (Ibid: 4).

By referring to the riots, he was clearly suggesting that there was no need to ignoring them as they did not represent a threat to the legitimacy of the system. The language confirmed that the rioters were most of all against other Cubans supporting the revolution. He condemned the decision to accommodate the migrants in Guantánamo, thus violating Cuban sovereignty, and drawing attention to an issue that received automatic support from all patriots. He once again pointed out that *...el bloqueo económico es el elemento compulsor esencial y fundamental en estas salidas ilegales masivas* [...the economic embargo is the essential and fundamental compelling element for these massive illegal departures] (Ibid: 6). To support this point, he argued that Cuba would not persecute those departing, since no other country such as Mexico did so, as there were *tanta gente queriendo emigrar* [so many people wishing to emigrate] for economic reasons (Ibid: 6). By contextualising Cuban illegal emigration, Castro reiterated the message that migration was a common phenomenon, especially in the region, implying there was no need to worry about it in relation to internal instability.

During interviews conducted by the author in Cuba, it was also confirmed that the permitted migration was approached by the authorities as unproblematic for the revolution, and there were even cases where Cuban police assisted rafters with transporting their rafts to the sea (May 2010, Dr. Jesús Pastor Garcia Brigos, Institute of Philosophy, Havana).

After the Storm: September to December 1994

From September onwards, the discourse continued in an increasingly factual style. It continued covering the issue of emigration as further negotiations with the United States were taking place, repeatedly affirming the future of the achievements of the revolution despite the economic difficulties (Fidel Castro, Speech at the closing of the World Meeting of Solidarity with Cuba, 25

November 1994). Cuban classrooms may have been full of students unable to concentrate due to empty stomachs, but the country was bound to continue, and changing course was interpreted as cowardly weakness. This encouraging message was contradicting the situation on the ground, where, according to testimonies, some were eating soups from banana peelings. (Havana, May 2010).

Organised marches to express popular support continued filling the pages and social pressure on participation was increased, as the language included expressions such as *convocar* [to summon], *reafirmar voluntad, pasión, unidad y firmeza revolucionarias* [to reaffirm revolutionary will, passion, unity and firmness] (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 181, 3 September 1994a: 1). Rather than the ideological base of the system, the emphasis on patriotic attitudes kept increasing, reflected in expressions such as: *marcha patriótica* [patriotic march], or *defensa moral de nuestro país* [moral defence of our country] (*Granma*, year 30, n. 184, 8 September 1994, Octavio Lavastida: 1). The underlying message was that comitted loyalists, with their *apoyo incondicional* [unconditional support] in the end defeated the weak anti-social elements (Ibid: 1).

An article on 14th September entitled *Poner en orden las ideas* [Putting ideas in order] is an example of the final interpretation of the events, allowing Cubans to make sense of the situation. The article negated any images of a crisis and instead communicated a meaning: *Vivimos un gran instante de la Revolución* [We are living a great moment of the revolution] (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 188, 14 September 1994b, Armando Hart Dávalos: 4). The article distinguished the system from its former allies in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, distancing it from their collapse. The discourse continued emphasising the cultural aspects of the system as a Hispanic construct:

> "Como muestra la trágica experiencia de lo que se llamó 'socialismo real'... la defensa a ultranza de nuestra identidad, pertenencia a América Latina y el Caribe." [As demonstrates the tragic experience of what was called 'real socialism'...the uncompromising defence of our identity, belonging to Latin America and the Caribbean.] (Ibid: 4).

The text interpreted the post-Cold War reality as part of a disorderly *'postmodernidad' a la que se ha caracterizado como 'explosión del desorden'* [... 'postmodernity' that is characterised as 'an explosion of disorder'] (Ibid: 4). The message was that Cubans were to value the stability of their own endogenous system in the new disorderly global context. Unity was assigned the highest priority, while diversity represented *anarquía en el pensamiento* [anarchy in thought] (Ibid: 4). In such times of unpredictable change, only the orthodox revolutionary nationalistic path was desirable. To achieve unity and stability, revolutionaries had to act: *no de manera discordante ni hipercrítica* [not in a divisive or hypercritical way], but rather in loyal support of *nuestra obra* [our work/project] (Ibid: 4). The article provided an interpretation, explaining what was happening abroad, and the meaning of these events for the revolutionary future of Cuba.

Another article examined the causes of the migratory crisis, with migration still at the centre of the national debate. It argued that the event was internationally called the crisis of *balseros cubanos* [Cuban rafters], but this was actually not so, since it was strategically generated from abroad. The article made clear that emigration arose from: *motivaciones estrictamente económicas o de reunificación familiar* [...strictly economic motivations or for family reunification] (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 181, 3 September 1994b, Susana Lee: 4). The period of permitted illegal emigration was even described as *éxodo masivo de emigrantes cubanos ilegales* [massive exodus of illegal Cuban migrants] (Ibid: 4). The article reported about the contradictory fact that the United States was trading with Vietnam, North Korea and China, but not righteous Cuba.

The discourse followed the reconciliatory approach towards the United States at a time when Cuba was struggling economically and its political leadership was worried about the loyalty of the population. The issue of migration continued to fill the pages for the rest of the year. An article from 10th September brought news about agreements regarding 20,000 visas annually for Cubans. The negotiations were described as reaching *compromisos* [commitments] (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 186, 10 September 1994a: 1), suggesting improving relations. The article also reported that

> "Ya no se estimularán salidas ilegales, ni se recibirá automáticamente a los que lleguen a sus costas de esa forma, ni quedarán impunes el uso de la violencia ni los secuestros de barcos y aviones para obtener estos fines. Problemas absurdos...no se habían solucionado en más de 35 años, se abordan ahora con racionalidad y espíritu de respeto a las leyes de cada país." [Illegal departures will no longer be encouraged, nor will those that arrive at its coast be automatically received in this way, nor will people using violence or hijackings of boats and airplanes for these purposes be unpunished. Absurd problems that...have not been solved in more than 35 years are addressed now with rationality and a spirit of respect for the laws of each country.] (Ibid: 1).

The use of words such as *encourage* suggested the intentional misuse of emigration as a political weapon by the United States. The underlying message was of Cuba's victory with regard to the migration issue. Emigration was not negative publicity, and migrants were no longer enemies:

> "Conocemos cuáles son las causas fundamentales que en este momento compulsan la emigración masiva, que son de orden económico, y por ello nos proponemos seguir luchando incansablemente contra el cruel bloqueo..." [We know what are the fundamental causes that in this moment cause massive emigration, which are economic, and therefore we intend to continue fighting tirelessly against the cruel blockade...] (Ibid:1).

The language focused on factual information and to some extent reconciliation. It mentioned *soluciones* sought by the Cubans in the *absurda*

política de agresiones [absurd politics of agression] of the United States. (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 188, 14 September 1994a: 1). This emphasis on cooperation and reconciliation was rather new to the hegemonic discourse as it emerged after the crisis. An interview with Ricardo Alarcón again attributed migration to the embargo: *bloqueo...el factor principal que compulsiona a algunas personas a emigrar* [embargo...the principal factor that forces some people to emigrate...] (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 18, 16 September 1994a, Susana Lee: 2). Alarcón used the word *persona* [person] to describe the migrants unlike terms such as "scum" used in 1980, implicitly confirming their new status. In the interview, Alarcón used very diplomatic language such as: *diálogo, discusiones*, or *negociaciones* [dialogue...discussions...negotiations], while negative expressions were targeted specifically at the Cuban opposition based in the United States, described as *mafia contrarrevolucionaria* [counter-revolutionary mafia] (Ibid: 2). The opposition was presented as separate from the US government, suggesting improving relations with US authorities. The language suggests that in the new unipolar global context, the Cuban leadership, aware of its diminishing defence, was rather careful. In addition, Alarcón also warned that some illegal migrants would be repatriated, which supported the change in the perception of emigration, as Cubans were now to be treated as other migrants from Latin America and the Caribbean.

Cuba's position in the new global context increasingly dominated by liberal democratic rhetoric as a set of guidelines for building functioning, just and pluralist political systems was examined in an article printed on 18th October. The article analysed the liberal democratic model and interpreted its meaning in the Cuban context as *democracia liberal burguesa* [bourgeois liberal democracy] (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 212, 18 October 1994, Roberto Regalado: 4). It then presented the problems of such systems, which implicitly Cuba did not have, such as clientelism, fraud and effective exclusion of some parts of society:

> "El neoliberalismo excluye a grandes sectores poblacionales de participar en la vida nacional... Lo cierto es que quienes propugnan un cambio del sistema político en Cuba no están interesados en la democracia, sino en que nuestro país también se 'acople' al llamado nuevo orden mundial." [Neoliberalism excludes large sectors of the population from participation in national life... It is certain that those who are advocating a change of political system in Cuba are not interested in democracy, but that our country also 'attaches' itself to the so-called New World Order.] (Ibid: 4).

The text reconstructed the meaning of neoliberalism as anti-democratic and argued in favour of Cuba's *democracia real* [real democracy] emphasising participation and social inclusion. Hence, the new neoliberal global agenda was not a programme to bring real freedom, development and accountability, but instead represented *los nuevos mecanismos de dominación global* [new mechanisms of global domination] (Ibid: 4). This implied that maintaining the orthodoxy of the Cuban model was right. The discourse assumed that the system remained beyond questioning and doubt, while the meaning of the new global context was clear.

Interestingly, the discourse referred to the complex issues of liberal democracy and the concept of political change, and instead of omitting these issues, reinterpreted them with an altered meaning in order to integrate it into the Cuban field of meaning. The uncertain times were linked to the whole of the South American region. Stability was interpreted as the safest choice, while other developing nations were slipping into ever worse exploitation driven by the imperialists (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 207, 11 October 1994, Jorge Luis Batista: 1). The language suggested that independence of the homeland was at stake, instead of communist ideology. In this way, the language appealed to Cuban nationalism to generate support. No matter how influential the Washington Consensus was to become in the former Soviet Union or in South America, it was going to fail and Cuba, which had to fulfil its historical duty to defend the right to its own, legitimate, home-grown model against any US led orthodoxy:

> "...un destino ajustado a sus necesidades y a su proceso histórico, equivale a defender el derecho a la pluralidad de caminos frente a los dogmas políticos y económicos que se pretende universalizar." [...a destiny adjusted to its needs and its historical process, is equivalent to the right to plurality of paths against political and economic dogmas that they pretend to universalise.] (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 241, 26 November 1994b: 1).

In December, *Bohemia* brought news about changes in world politics, focusing especially on South Africa, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, sending an underlying message that the world was in constant flux as ever, including the recent changes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe (*Bohemia*, y. 86, n. 25, 9 December 1994c, Alexis Schlachter: 4-9). This confirmed the overall message of the uncertainty of the changing times of the day. The issue confirmed that Cuba was not isolated and continued to enjoy wide international support (*Bohemia*, y. 86, n. 25, 9 December 1994f, Susana Tesoro, Alberto Salazar, Luis Sexto: 32-34). Throughout the end of the year, the converage continued focusing on economic improvements (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 253, 14 December 1994: 1).

After the main disturbances and migratory crisis, the discourse remained focused on the topic of emigration until the end of the year, covering continuing negotiations with the United States. The United States were interpreted as having lost and retreated before a confident and victorious Cuba. At the same time, the language avoided using overtly insulting expressions addressed to the United States, instead emphasising conciliatory discussions. Overwhelming, unconditional support of the patriotic loyalists was reported, implicitly demonstrating the support for the legitimate revolution as an expression of Cuban patriotism, with socialism guaranteeing independence and the achievements of the revolution. The underlying message was that the system was finally rejuvenated, and its fortunes would soon change after the doubts of the early 1990s – the revolution was still alive and well. The system represented a predictable and safe option in the midst of uncertain times of flux, where neoliberalism as yet another form of imperialism was gaining ground. The revolution offering real democracy thus had to fulfil its role of

protecting the interests of Cubans against the threat of the Cuban-Americans and foreign exploitative interests.

Concluding Observations

Over all, the press coverage contained less insulting language compared to 1980 Mariel. Expressions such as *escoria* or *gusanos* [scum, worms] almost disappeared from the discourse in comparison to 1980, when such expressions were used frequently. Instead the rioters were labelled mostly as counter-revolutionaries, traitors and *vendepatrias* [those who sold their country], and the migrants were interpreted as economic. The United States was constructed as a self-contradicing loser. The 1966 Cuban Adjustment Act, granting Cuban illegal immigrants arriving in US waters automatic right to asylum (Gott 2005: 213-214, 299), was denounced as hypocrisy and a political weapon. The crisis was interpreted more as a problem for the United States, with Cuba more concerned with theft and violence caused by US policies, rather than the specific individuals involved in hijackings and disturbances. The crisis was interpreted as the result of incompetent US policies aimed at destabilising Cuba, instead of the island's internal problems. This implied that the system retained all its legitimacy. In 1994, Cuban hegemonic discourse shifted to more diplomatic language compared to 1980, possibly due to the new unfavourable position in global politics in which the island lacked the military-strategic backing of the USSR.

Part III: Findings

Chapter 6

6. 1. Analysis of Evidence

The evidence provides a detailed insight into the mechanics of the hegemonic discourse, allowing us to understand better how Cuban authorities sought to communicate with the public and how they interpreted current issues. It demonstrates what sources of legitimacy were called upon to maintain loyalty, and how the discourse reflected popular concerns to offer appropriate responses as a capable system in control of the situation. It allows us to identify the sources of legitimacy, and their change over time. The two episodes tell us how the discourse functioned in difficult times, to understand Cuba better. Further insights can be derived from a comparison of the two, to observe changes and shifts in the discourse, in relation to internal challenges and the new post-Cold War global context. These observations allow for a better understanding of the ways in which the system argued in favour of stability, shedding further light on how the country remained stable after 1989.

Comparing the Mariel and *Maleconazo* Episodes
The hegemonic discourse from the pre-crisis period focused similarly in 1980 and 1994 on encouraging economic prospects, and presented supporting evidence in confident language. 1994 however was set in the extremities of the unprecedented hardship of the Special Period, unlike the relative prosperity of the 1980s. The Cuban leadership reported the seriousness of the situation, and placed it in relation to the uncertainties of post-Cold War international politics. The 1994 discourse urged Cubans to remain loyal to their patriotic cause and called for patience, endurance and commitment, assuming this was the way to test real revolutionary qualities. This evoked the revolutionary heroes, who had continued their campaign under incredibly adverse circumstances and eventually prevailed. From this experience well embedded in Cuban national memory, Cubans were expected to follow suit. The future was painted in positive language, assuming another victory soon to come, as in 1959 (Cuban revolution), 1961 (Playa Girón), 1962 (Cuban Missile Crisis), or 1980 (Mariel). In 1994, the discourse was more factual and used fewer insults, denunciations and anti-American terms, compared to the language used in 1980, which used derrogatory terms against the United States at a higher frequency. Despite some parallels with the pre-crisis coverage of 1980 Mariel, which also focused on good economic performance, the coverage from 1994 was clearly addressing the desperation of the population by more strongly presenting evidence of developments that would positively affect the near future. The headlines talked about growing confidence, favourable conditions or optimism, and the discourse was as encouraging and morale-raising as possible.

As a key source of legitimacy, the US embargo against Cuba was denounced even more than in 1980 as the main cause of material destitution, following the collapse of the Soviet Union and tightening of the embargo in 1992. It was assumed that difficulties were the result of external factors, rather than any

internal causes such as widespread theft or possible inefficiencies of the centrally managed economy. Some internal problems, such as private profiteering and the black market were also covered, but only in a way conceivable within the context of Cuban communism. In 1994 especially, Cuban communism was left beyond questioning and doubt, despite the post-communist transitions in other parts of the world. Instead, commitment and the individual behaviour of Cubans as revolutionaries, not sufficiently following the communist revolutionary principles, were examined together with external causes. The discourse rejected a radical change in socio-political terms, and instead, Cubans were to renew their commitment, in order to maintain the social achievements of the revolution that they valued. Similar to 1980, in 1994 Cuba was portrayed in the media as not isolated, but instead enjoying worldwide support. During both years, statements from communist and socialist groups from around the world were presented in a way that indirectly suggested that they represented their respective countries, and critical groups were not reported. This was likely to have increased the approval for the positions taken by the Cuban leadership.

The main message in 1980 was that Cuba was being attacked by the United States, who was receiving Cuban criminals as heroes. The 1980 discourse used migration for concrete political purposes, stressing the war-like relationship with the United States, describing those involved as an unpatriotic scum of Cuban society. Hence in 1980, Cubans shouted in the streets *¡Que se vaya la escoria!*, while in 1994, popular marches focused more on demonstrating support for the government and denouncing the politics of the United States. By not reporting Cuban success stories abroad, the discourse increased the impact of its messages and provided a particular interpretation of given issues consistent with the positions of Cuban communism.

Compared to 1980, in 1994 the topic of emigration and those involved was interpreted in a different light. In 1994, those involved were described with less insulting or even somewhat neutral language, while in 1980 the discourse contained a high frequency of insults and derogatory language. In 1980, the discontents and migrants were constructed to a much larger extent as anti-social criminal elements, rats, worms and scum, opposed by loyal and righteous revolutionaries. This transition to a non-problematic and non-poltical meaning of emigration was already evident at the end of the 1980 crisis, signifying an earlier recognition that emigrants were no longer necessarily enemies. This shift since 1980 is confirmed by the evidence from 1994 when migrants were clearly interpreted primarily as economic and the rioters as desperate Cubans, suffering the consequences of the US embargo. In this sense, they were presented more as victims than as criminal elements, as had occurred at the beginning of 1980 Mariel. In 1994, they were set in the context of the embargo aimed at a developing country, and the collapse of Cuba's socialist allies, caused by the imperialist United States and its allies – emigration in such a situation was implicitly somewhat understandable.

Therefore, the migrants and rioters, except for hijackers, were not attacked individually, since the causes were perceived as external. The 1966 Cuba Adjustment Act was denounced, and the discourse interpreted the United

States as the aggressor, positioning Cuba as open to talks. In 1994, Cuba criticised US hypocrisy in not issuing legal visas but still accepting illegal migrants, thus encouraging more hijackings and crimes connected with illegal emigration (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 181, 3 September 1994b, Susana Lee: 4). In 1994, migrants were occasionally called *vendepatrias*, due to the patriotic emphasis of the discourse looking to unite the people. But in general, they were no longer depicted as traitors. The discourse seemed to imply that not all Cubans living abroad were opposed to the revolution, allowing for a perception of diversity in the diaspora. In addition, it explicitly presented evidence of friendly relations with Cubans living abroad (eg. work camps, conferences).

The *La nación y La emigración* conference for example, was held in Havana from 22 until 24 April 1994, to demonstrate the initiative from the Cuban side to normalise relations with Cubans living abroad (www.nacionyemigracion.cu, 2011). The event was organised for Cubans not committed to hostile acts against the island (Rodríguez Chávez 1997: 96). The conference was another real example of a shifting interpretation of emigration, announced publicly. The conference welcomed 221 emigrants from thirty countries, and was followed by the opening of an office at the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Affairs responsible for relations with non-radical emigrants (Antonio Aja Díaz 2000: 11-12). The topics discussed included ways of facilitating visits to Cuba, student exchanges, permission to use private accommodation with relatives, and the new status of Cubans residing abroad: *Permiso de residencia en el exterior* (Ibid.). As a result of the new meaning of migration and relations with migrants abroad, the system started to distinguish between *batistianos* or *mafia contrarrevolucionaria* and *Cubanos residentes al extranjero*, who were not necessarily radically opposed to the system.

The issue of emigration was not addressed in any way as an attack at the legitimacy of the system, and neither as an internal problem. By presenting the context of common migration from developing countries in the rest of the world, and the high level of migration from Latin America and the Caribbean in particular, the discourse portrayed the issue as a common phenomenon. In addition, the discourse acknowledged that many emigrants were leaving to unite with relatives already living abroad. Hence, migration was understandable, representing a threat for the United States rather than Cuba. The discourse included concrete references to the 1980 Mariel boatlift as a weapon against the United States. In 1994, the subject of emigration took longer to dissipate, as the United States was negotiating a change of policy. This change signified the truth in the shifting perception of Cuban migration, not only in Cuba, but also abroad – Cubans were now common economic migrants suffering the wrath of the embargo. This new meaning had a rather legitimating impact on the Cuban system.

In both 1980 and 1994, the system provided arguments related to current issues, which were developed in-depth, even if from a pro-governmental angle, provided by highly trained and experienced intellectuals, political leaders, journalists, academics and other opinion leaders. The underlying common sense was that Cuba had no need to deny facts or hide information,

as the accusations from its oponents were false. Re-examination of such claims was sufficient to prove the superiority of the Cuban position. Credibility was implicitly based on historical legitimacy, with the revolution as the heir to the mass revolutionary movement. Issues and concepts used to denounce Cuba were given alternative meanings, and were then presented as the only possibility based on truth. This was done at times directly and bluntly by the use of insults and condemnations, but often also subtly by presupposing the general knowledge of Cuban history and past events. Alternative interpretations were implicitly discredited, where Cuba was true and righteous, while the United States as the main symbol of opposition was criminal and evil. In such an extreme and disproportionate confrontation of a small Caribbean country with the mightiest world superpower, the discourse assumed that diversity outside the official political structures in such a war-like situation was dangerous. For this reason, those ready to venture beyond this boundary were automatically perceived as enemies.

> "[The Cuban leaders] have claimed the legacy of Cuban history as their mantle of legitimacy, and they deny the possibility that there might be alternate ways of defending the homeland and promoting justice." (Marifeli Pérez-Stable in Baloyra & Morris 1993: 79).

During both years, the discourse showed a high level of interactivity with other discourses, by taking in the adversary's ideas, concepts and arguments, instead of omitting or denying them, and reinterpreted them within its own context of Cuban national history and ideological make-up. Hence, rather than fearing negative claims aimed at the system, it modified and extended their meaning in order to reveal a hidden truth in them and provide Cubans with the whole truth, which it perceived as reduced by its enemies for political purposes. Even if not included in mainstream publications, the liberal concept of civil society, for example, was modified in the context of the Cuban discourse, to represent mass political organisations in Cuba. Such re-interpretations channelled the meaning to have a legitimating impact, as instead of simply rejecting claims against the system, they were reinserted into the discourse with altered meaning reinforcing the existing field of meaning available to Cubans. This was a strategy for the long-term survival and stability of the system, as omitting facts and accusations would have only postponed their arrival and might have threatened the system by allowing these facts to retain the meaning intended by Cuba's critics. Instead, by interacting with them and modifying their meaning, they no longer represented a threat, as their meaning had been made favourable. This generalisation of the discursive strategy provides an insight into the system and its ability to maintain long-term stability before and after the end of the Cold War, despite unfavourable circumstances such as the post-1989 liberal democratic hegemony on a global scale.

This interactive character of the discourse can be perceived as stronger in 1994, since in 1980 the country had less to worry about with the backing of a powerful strategic ally. The empathetic nature of the discourse could be attributed to various explanations, one of which is the unequal structural relationship between Cuba and its economically and militarily stronger

adversaries. Cuba, unlike the Soviet Union for example, could not rely on its military force, and historically had to confront other cultures and discourses from a minority position. Hence rather than military strength, the country had to develop a discourse encouraging loyalty. In addition, the personal leadership of Castro, and his tactic of reinterpreting claims against him and the country in front of his audience in Cuba, is another possible explanation of the empathetic nature of the discourse, following his example.

In 1994, the discourse had to deal with a number of other issues, which were not present in 1980, as global politics were vastly different after the end of the Cold War. For this reason, the discourse in 1994 had to address the post-1989 transitions, with the emergence of the United States as the victor of the Cold War, and the resulting prestige and symbolic legitimacy. Elsewhere, this increased US influence in other countries as a political and economic model. This was however filtered into the discourse through the ideological lenses of the centrally controlled media, and the coverage was simplified to fit Cuba's national politics and continuing focus on internal stability. Therefore, the collapse of the Soviet Union and transitions in Eastern Europe were examined without a specific reason for this to have happened, other than US aggression. The events were given meaning only in relation to the disappearance of valuable economic support, and Cuba's perseverance in response. In *Granma* and *Bohemia*, the events were simplified into factual information about the disappearance, without considering the arguments used by other groups abroad, who interpreted the collapse as caused by economic inefficiency, internal divisions, inherent contradictions and lack of popular support, amongst other reasons that would have potentially had a negative impact on related models such as Cuba. Within the discourse, the Socialist camp simply plunged into chaos that Cuba had to avoid. The Soviet Union was understood as taken over by the imperialist enemy, i.e. the United States. Pre-1989 crimes committed in Eastern Europe, such as labour camps and persecution of dissident groups, coupled with poor economic performance were not considered. It was not covered, as it could have opened the door to a questioning of possible parallels with the Cuban model, built on a somewhat similar ideological model, with many Soviet and Eastern European consultants advising on the island during the 1960s. In this way, the system avoided a potentially delegitimating issue.

The harsh changes in other former communist countries emphasised the negative effects of a transition. In this way, the political changes were interpreted into the discourse in a way to support the stability of the system, without causing harm to its legitimacy. Sudden collapse, transitional chaos and economic recession in previously allied countries were not an attractive picture for Cubans, who were thus more likely to value the guaranteed social provision, stability and predictability of their own system. Since the revolution was originally based on mass popular support, Cubans, unlike many Eastern Europeans under the occupation of Soviet tanks, had a system genuinely of their own. With such a meaning of the transitions, communism and socialism were not discredited and continued to represent legitimating ideological parts of Cuban society. Within this interpretation, the underlying message was that economic and other difficulties on the island, or persecution of critics outside

the revolution, were required as a protection because of external factors. The communist system was interpreted as guaranteeing Cuba's independence in view of the collapse of the Socialist bloc, so the system gainied even more importance in a world where Cuba had to face the United States without external help.

Similarities (and Some Differences)

Similarities between the two crises include most of all the constant and consistent references to patriotism as a consensual source of legitimacy in the discourse, which may have also contained implicit anti-US references. In 1980, however, patriotism was not as prominent as at the end of the crisis and even less so when compared to 1994. Cuban officials killed during violent incidents received substantial coverage, as patriotic heroes. During both crises, mothers of the killed followed a similar pattern of exemplary mothers, ready to sacrifice everything for the revolution and the independence of the nation. They both fitted the model of Bertolt Brecht's *Mother Courage,* evoking images of Mariana Grajales, the mother of Antonio Maceo. Anti-US attitudes were incited as an important drive to overcome challenges to ensure Cuban independence, resisting, overcoming and defending national independence, dignity, homeland, and socialism. These were all integrated into the singular master signifier of the revolution, worthy of the highest sacrifice.

The evidence from both periods demonstrates a strong focus on improving economic outlooks for the near future, as an important source of legitimacy and an element of encouragement for the public. This was more important in 1994, when the discourse focused on increasing tourism and new joint ventures. The discourse in both cases included strong messages for Cubans to follow the symbolic examples of persevering revolutionaries drawing from the historical legitimacy of the Revolution, surrounded by difficult times and hostile forces. Perseverance was required to keep the Revolution alive. This was most important in 1994, after the collapse of communist allies, with a possible negative impact on the stability during the 1990s. The discourse did not question the communist model even in 1994, but looked for solutions to ensure continuity, including a reorientation to tourism to pay for popular revolutionary achievements as important sources of legitimacy. The only conceivable reason for economic hardship in Cuba above all others was the embargo.

During both crises, emphasis was given to historical examples where Cuba was able to overcome any obstacles, such as *Playa Girón.* The threat to national independence had the highest priority, requiring continuing commitment from all Cubans. The use of words such as *sacrificio* [sacrifice] suggested the seriousness of the situation. The possible loss of independence was interpreted as a loss of collective as well as individual self-esteem, and subjugation known from Cuba's colonial past, evoking feelings of cultural inferiority and inequality. These were implicit issues that Cubans had fought and were still fighting against, legitimating the system as a current expression of these. In both 1980 and 1994, the central signifier in relation to which all other signifiers were interpreted was the patriotic revolution and its ideological fabric. In relation to this master signifier, the discourse suggested in 1994 that a transition to a liberal democratic system would also mean the loss of the

revolution as an inherently communist system. Committment was called for in order to allow Cuba to survive as independent, maintaining its socio-economic model despite the global trends towards neoliberalism. For this reason, an ideological change would have also meant a complete reinterpretation of the Cuban historical patriotic project valued by many Cubans: the slogan *¡Socialismo o Muerte!* in 1980 and *¡Patria o Muerte!* were taken seriously.

The meaning and causes of migration also had a direct impact on the legitimacy of the system. Leaving aside the impact of the preceding migratory crises of 1959 and the early 1960s, including Peter Pan and Camarioca 1965, that are not part of this analysis, the perception of the issue shifted significantly between 1980 and 1994. In 1980 the combination of a higher number of seriously committed revolutionaries, together with a better economic situation, may have led the system to interpret emigration and those involved as criminal scum betraying their country to join its enemy. Already at the end of the crisis in 1980, this interpretation started shifting towards something not threatening the stability of the country, nor the loyalty of others. By the end of 1980, and most clearly in 1994, therefore, Cuban migrants were increasingly reclassified as ordinary economic migrants. In 1994 the extreme hardship of the 1990s Special Period led desperate Cubans, encouraged by the policies of the United States, to migrate along with many others from the developing, exploited world. The United States was reported to be contradicting itself: promoting illegal emigration while fearing a large exodus of migrants, unpopular with US voters, on whose behalf the US government had built a heavily guarded anti-immigrant wall between Texas and Mexico. The discourse reported the difficulties of migrants in settling down, facing cultural discrimination, job insecurity and poor working conditions. Hence, during both crises, emigration was interpreted as complicated, which implicitly and subtly discouraged it underneath the official non-problematic posture of the Govenment.

In 1994, the discourse warned that all who wanted to emigrate would not be allowed to do so, as they were gradually losing their politically motivated immigration privileges in the United States. In 1994, the emphasis was on the normality of the migratory phenomenon and its non-problematic perception in Cuba, if committed without criminal means. The discourse in 1994 also argued that the restrictive measures for illegal emigration were to protect public assets, rather than Cuba trying to lock its people in. Cuba in fact wanted the United States to fulfil their quota for legal immigration. For these reasons, the migratory crisis and the issue in general was not a delegitimating issue for the revolution, as the discourse interpreted them in ways supporting the system's legitimacy. Nor was it a problem for Cuba in 1980, as migration was portrayed as against the domestic interests of the United States, allowing Cuba to get rid of the worst elements of its society to refine its truly loyal, heroic and morally superior base of revolutionaries.

Both in 1980 and 1994, emigration was articulated as not posing a threat to the country's stability nor to the loyalty of the majority of Cubans. In 1994, some of the migrants were transferred to Guantánamo Bay and elsewhere, where they had to await their fate and the media reported their difficult position,

which subtly communicated to all Cubans the difficulties connected with illegal emigration. In 1994, the discourse also made references to Mariel, as a threat to the United States rather than Cuba as part of Cuban national memory. The discourse suggested the possibility of organising another boatlift at any time, thus threatening Cuba's adversary rather than its own stability. Despite the less insulting and derogatory language used in 1994, the discourse also contained assumptions of the criminal character and derogatory interpretation of those involved in the disturbances and emigration, even if to a much lesser degree than in 1980. Implicitly, the system interpreted the perpetrators, especially in 1980, as weak and cowardly, as a possible reaction to such a rare phenomenon of a societal division, which it was not used to as a system emphasising unity, and discouraging political activity beyond the control of the state and its ideology. During both crises, emigration was certainly not interpreted as a symptom of declining support.

During both crises, the discourse communicated with a confident tone, with messages well reflecting popular concerns, and addressing the most pressing issues of the time from a historical perspective: *los hombres aman a quien los dirige con firmeza y justicia...José Martí* [...men love those that lead them with firmness and justice...José Martí] (*Granma*, y. 30, n. 164, 13 August 1994b, Susana Lee: 8). The underlying message was the same during both years: the situation was being taken care of and victory was near. The discourse during both periods contained frequent assumptions of the moral superiority of the righteous Cuban position, which was a crucial source of legitimacy proving the continuity of the Revolution as a project with a just cause, and a sacred realisation of the patriotic dream. The ability of the system to respond to popular feelings and preoccupations can be seen as one of its components, which encouraged political involvement and had personnel assigned to research public opinion and attitudes subsequently reflected in the media. This could have been a factor in encouraging the loyalty of the population through political communication, contributing to the over-all stability of the system.

During both crises, Castro played an important role as an opinion leader, with his unique wit to put events and ideas into the context of his perceptions, steering public opinion and providing directions to his political aides. In 1994, despite his unordinary way of addressing the public by apologising for the late hour of the transmission, and use of humour when describing his reasons for attending the August disturbances to receive his "quota of stones and insults", he also demonstrated and exemplified the readiness to defend the revolution by standing in front as a heroic revolutionary. In this way, he demonstrated his genuine nature as during the fights in the Sierra Maestra, once again reviving the legend. The discourse during both periods relied on a significant amount of his public speeches, which provided the most influential interpretations of current issues, and demonstrated his continuing presence as an important source of legitimacy, trust, confidence and loyalty, stemming from his personality and past mythification along with Che Guevara and the heroes of the 1958 independence campaign. By reviving the Revolution, Castro was reviving the immense popular support on which it was originally based, and which had granted its success. His unquestioned historical legitimacy in the context of Cuban national memory, combined with his charismatic rhetoric

skills in touch with his audience, provided a crucial link between the existing system and the Revolution, thus stressing its legitimacy.

The unproblematic interpretation of both crises in the discourse was based on the argument that these small scale events were encouraged by imperialist counter-revolutionaries, and only provided a good opportunity to awaken the revolution's supporters, who represented the vast majority of the public. This delegitimated these crises in the eyes of the supporters of the system. Rather than representing internal instability, the criminal acts and emigration of 1980 and 1994 were interpreted as further examples of provocations orchestrated and financed from abroad, in order to destabilise independent Cuba, similar to the covert *Playa Girón* invasion pretending a revolt in the Cuban army and organised by the United States. The discourse emphasised in both cases the defensive position of Cuba, facing constant attacks from the United States despite Cuba's non-aggressive position. During both crises, the discourse referred to extraordinary demonstrations of popular support and firm revolutionary spirit as an important source of legitimacy. During both years, the crisis was interpreted as a wake-up call for the nation. The resulting message at the end of both crises was victorious, positive and encouraging. Extensive attention was given to the support rallies, which were covered as a popular response to the disturbances. Especially in 1994, these pro-government marches were covered as an encouragement for the the system amidst the extreme desperation of the Special Period. Even though the rallies were centrally organised, they appeared as spontaneous rather than ritualistic, such as the May Day march, and thus signified an important catharsis from the economic crisis of the 1990s. They exemplified the continuing legitimacy of the system in the eyes of the public, and were interpreted as a testimony to the continuing vitality of the system, despite the increasing isolation of Cuba in international politics of the 1990s. In 1994, the discourse expressed the unnecessary nature of the ongoing migratory crisis endangering ordinary Cubans in their daily lives, and suggested it was keen to negotiate to avoid another Mariel. This represents an example of the non-problematic interpretation of the two crises, and the ability of the system to overcome potentially challenging moments.

After the crisis, the discourse reverted back to other issues in both cases, returning to reports of encouraging developments in the country. In this way it shifted the focus of the public to look ahead towards better times to come. In 1994, however, this change was much more gradual and mixed with the continuing coverage of issues related to migration, while in 1980, the discourse asserted complete victory, reported massive popular support, and then reverted to other issues rather abruptly. In 1994, this shift was harder to achieve as the then extreme hardship and lack of food supplies made it more difficult to revert to normality. Even if in 1994 the discourse demonstrated the legitimating expressions of public support, it still had to confront the largely unreported situation on the ground where some desperate Cubans in a situation of near famine were eating soups from banana peelings, and thus might have had continuing doubts about the system. The hegemonic nature of the discourse enhanced the chances that Cubans would remain loyal to the only

model they knew well. In this case, not necessarily because of another source of legitimacy, but simply by silencing alternatives.

Both in 1980 and 1994, the discourse focused on emphasising the positive features of the system, i.e. the achievements of the revolution, as key sources of legitimacy. In 1980, the comparison with the US system, perceived as exploitative and insecure, was stressed whereas in 1994 continuing support for the system was seen as a guarantor of luxuries unknown in many other countries in the region and in the developing world at large. Defending the recognised achievements of the revolution also meant defending the system that made them possible, leading to stability based on loyal support. Stability in Cuba was put in contrast with violence and instability in other countries. This contrast enhanced the legitimacy of the system, despite any internal challenges or criticism. It also made Cubans aware of the complexities of the world and the apparently idealistic life in the United States. The discourse interpreted the country's problems in a pro-establishment way, and gave the public a direction for the future within the existing political structures, thus supporting continuinty and stability.

During both years, the central signifier of *el imperio* referred exclusively to the United States, despite the fact that Cuba was extending its cooperation with countries built on a somewhat similar socio-political model as the United States, who were often US strategic and political allies (more so in 1994 than 1980). Because the disturbances and hijackings were provoked by the the United States to destroy the revolution, the historically legitimate guarantor of the country's national independence, there were no reasons for any doubts about the system, even after the recent collapse of other communist countries. In both years, the hostility of the United States provided useful ammunition for the Cuban leadership to claim legitimacy for its decisions domestically, to protect the country and its citizens.

Shifts between the Two Periods

Mariel and the *maleconazo* took place in vastly different historical contexts, which had some inevitable impact on the discourse in Cuba. The world beyond Cuba was reported by the media through the official ideological lenses of the communist Party, interpreting reality in a way to construct an image of the world that would enhance the legitimacy of the system. Internal transformations of the system were reported as supporting the historical sources of legitimacy and most of all the future of the revolution as a symbol of national independence and egalitarian social provision guaranteed by the state and its ideological foundations that were to be kept despite any pro-market changes. These represented improvements of the existing system, rather than doubts or reconsiderations of the basic foundations on the level of political philosophy or political economy. Unlike in 1980, the discourse in 1994 reflected the new global context and the transitions in formerly communist countries, many of which had adopted the guidelines of neoliberalism and capitalism. No matter how influential the Washington Consensus was in the former Soviet Union, its former satellites or in the South American region, it was going to fail in Cuba, which was to fulfil its historical duty to defend the right to its own, legitimate, home-grown model.

The neoliberal discourse abroad influenced the discourse in Cuba, which publicly rejected it, while the country extended international trade agreements with the European Union, encouraged tourism from capitalist countries and increasingly spoke about improving competitivity and efficiency. The discourse rejected the concepts of neoliberalism, labelling them unsuitable and illegitimate for Cuba and its own path towards development, originating from its own endogenous historical experience. The reaction of the discourse to its neoliberal variant provides another example of its constantly evolving reactive nature, which due to the central control over the media could have also opted for partial or complete omission. Instead, in 1994, the discourse reacted to the current situation abroad, and promoted the legitimacy of its own model in response. It analysed the situation and focused the attention of the public on the less attractive sides and weaknesses of competing models, such as transitional problems in the former communist countries, or the inability of neoliberal and capitalist models to bring levelled development and social provision, often leaving the weakest members of society to self-help. From this perspective, the poor had little to offer and could not pay for education, provided by the state in Cuba as a basic human right.

Events and ideas beyond the discourse were interpreted within its conceivable horizons. Their meaning was constructed and modified to be in favour of the existing structure. Omissions in 1994 and in 1980 included alternative arguments and analyses of reality, such as the possible reasons that led to the collapse of the Soviet bloc. As former strategic allies that had shared similar socio-political models, they were interpreted from within the Cuban ideological perspective, as doing otherwise would have potentially destabilised the system. These omissions and one-sided analysis of competing models can be understood as one of possible factor that enhanced the country's legitimacy during the unstable times, especially during the 1990s. In 1994, the discourse contained references to Mariel as a victory followed by mass displays of popular support. Cuban nationalism had a stronger presence in 1994, despite the generally highly nationalistic nature of the post-1959 discourse. In 1994, Cuba's new partnerships and trade agreements with Western European countries and Canada did not have a delegitimating impact on the revolution, which strived to survive by improving the declining quality of life of the desperate population and by maintaining social provision. To ensure the system's future was the highest priority, above the means to achieve this. Defending the revolution was the supreme source of legitimacy, implicitly nationalistic rather than ideological. In addition, in 1994 the sources of legitimacy started shifting even more significantly towards the cultural element of the revolution as part of Hispanic America, reviving this component of the revolution dating back to the 1960s. This reshuffled the reasons for keeping the system above ideology. Referring to Martí's *Nuestra America*, this was another reason for Cubans to remain loyal to the revolution as the legitimate expression of Cuban-Hispanic cultural distinctiveness, defending Cuba as a cultural community. The cultural character was enmeshed in the ideological content of the revolution without a clear demarcation line, thus supporting the legitimacy of the system as a whole.

In 1994, the discourse used some insults to refer to the United States, but less than in 1980, as the discourse shifted towards a more neutral and diplomatic approach, reflecting the loss of security backing by the Soviets. In 1994, the overall impression of the discourse was not as confrontational compared to 1980. Popular support, based on residual revolutionary patriotism, was emphasised. The outcome of the crisis in 1994, as the worst year, was understood as an important turning point when morale was renewed. This was crucial, given that, in 1994, there were fewer committed revolutionaries than in 1980 (Rogelio Letuse, Havana, May 2010). In both years, a key emphasis was on the historical legitimacy of the revolution and the system, as a successor to Céspedes, Martí, Gómez and Maceo, followed by Fidel, as the leader of the victorious Revolution. The underlyling key source of legitimacy was the ability of the system to fulfil the historical aspirations of the nation to sovereignty, and its ability to defend it. Cuban patriotism and culturalism were still highly relevant sources of legitimacy, and therefore, so was the underlying ideology of the system, that was to be kept.

In 1994, the meaning of socialism and the revolution was modified, mentioning less frequently the egalitarian ethos of the system in terms of distribution of material resources, but instead putting a major emphasis on the egalitarian aspects of universal healthcare, education and social provision as factors still relevant in 1994, which the system promised to maintain as important sources of legitimacy. Education and social provision were assumed to be strengthening the nation-building process of a developing country, aggressed by the *bloqueo*. While the system could no longer prevent the impact of the black market, tourism and other factors negatively influencing the egalitarian ethos, it was able to guarantee with pride the achievements of the revolution. At the same time, socialism was redefined as patriotism and a major component of the revolution. In 1994, patriotism (or nationalism) was the prominent source of legitimacy, relevant to all, as a result of Cuba's endogenous historical development and opposition to the US embargo.

Socialism represented an expression of patriotism, rather than a label making Cuba part of the socialist bloc that no longer existed, and may have appeared obsolete or irrelevant to some. If redefined as patriotism and state-provided benefits, then Cuban socialism (or communism) was still highly relevant. This was the case even more so in view of the perceived chaos in formerly communist countries. Both in 1980 and 1994, *Patria* retained its legitimating force in the Cuban nation-building project, but the importance of patriotism was somewhat more prominent in 1994. The unexpected 1980 crisis shocked the system more than in 1994, when the economic crisis made disturbances more predictable. The 1994 crisis represented a threat of a possible social disintegration, which, potentially, most Cubans feared. The crisis symbolically represented the end of the worst of the Special Period, and thus acquired a positive meaning. Emphasis on patriotism gained more importance in the 1990s, when communism was being challenged abroad. The discourse frequently incited anti-US nationalist sentiment, with the United States as a symbol of the multi-party capitalist model, thus feeding the distaste for its political model. The discourse used the embargo to legitimate the system, as able to stand up to the embargo as a heroic revolutionary, reaffirming the

righteous ethos. In addition, the United States appeared to have retreated in 1994, supporting the image of a victorious Cuba.

The ability of the system to deliver material prosperity had clearly disappeared since the 1980 *edad de oro*. Hence, as a source of legitimacy, this disappeared and the system had to shift emphasis elsewhere to maintain popular support. The system promised a swift recovery. At the same time, it emphasised other sources of legitimacy, along with the perceived value of predictability and stability of the existing system. To some extent, the system resurfaced some sources of legitimacy that went back to the 1959 to 1961 period. Nationalism, culturalism, historical legitimacy, and emphasis on social provision regained more importance than socialism or material prosperity. The major shift can be summarised as moving from an emphasis on socialism, patriotism, anti-Americanism, Castro and material prosperity to patriotism, social provision, historical legitimacy, anti-Americanism, Castro, culturalism and an implicit unpredictability of a transition symbolised by the situation in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. The system, judged by its reflection in the discourse, shifted towards emphasising additional sources of legitimacy that had been used before. The cultural aspect of the system was again emphasised as a source of legitimacy relevant to all Cubans and well enmeshed in Cuban patriotism and anti-US attitudes. The cultural was enmeshed in the ideological without a clear demarcation line, thus supporting the legitimacy of the system as a whole. During both crises, Castro provided a crucial link between the existing system and the Revolution. Thus, some sources remained or were reprioritised, while some were muted. These shifts were subtle, often contained in suggestions or assumptions, instead of direct public announcements, allowing the country to maintain a minimal standard of legitimacy already perceived by Hawkins in 2001 (Hawkins 2001: 77).

The discourse assumed that individuals with different opinions were morally questionable individuals, or anti-social elements, and hence their contributions were illegitimate. The discourse left out minority discourses and alternative analyses of reality that did not fit the hegemony, which ensured the stability of the field of meaning that sustained the system. The discourse argued that hegemony and unity were necessary due to the disproportionate position of independent Cuba in a war-like situation, allowing some diversity only within its secure structures. The discourse retained its dominant position in the media, and provided an endogenous construction of reality, which, if we speculate, may have appealed to large sections of the Cuban public. The interpretation of reality provided by the discourse, as the main source of the identities and consciousness of most Cubans from an early age, may have contributed to the approval for the actions of the leadership. It may have been a significant force to counter moderates, the coerced, dissenters, and the outright opposition. The discourse may have been effective due to its high level of coherence, analysing events in depth, and carefully weaving together sources of legitimacy into a compact, hegemonic discourse (or theory and worldview) legitimating the system. These legitimating components were all closely weaved together under the label of the revolution, and presented as inseparable, continuously suggesting that dropping one would inevitably mean the end of the whole patriotic project. The discourse provided a starting point

for all subsequent analysis, and represented a discursive horizon, where attempts to look beyond were discouraged. The discourse portrayed itself as the only morally acceptable alternative to defend the interests of Cuba as an independent nation. This may have contributed to the discouragement of a possible transition to a pluralist political system during the 1990s in parallel with other formerly communist countries, and the system maintained relative stability in the post-Cold War era despite the turbulent times.

Both in 1980 and 1994, the central signifier in relation to which everything else was articulated was the Revolution. In relation to this master signifier, the discourse suggested in 1994 that a transition to a liberal democratic system would also mean the loss of the revolution, as an inherently communist, egalitarian, emancipatory and humanistic system. Commitment was called for to allow Cuba to survive as an independent nation, maintaining its socio-economic model despite the global trends towards neoliberalism. This link to independence provided immediate legitimacy for the whole system as its representation. Defending the revolution was the supreme source of legitimacy, implicitly nationalistic rather than ideological. The ability of the system to respond to popular sentiment and changing circumstances can be seen as one of its key components, potentially and only partially explaining its longevity.

Sources of Legitimacy: 1980 Mariel and 1994 *Maleconazo*

The examined evidence provides an insight into the mechanics and content of the discourse, which reflected the changing sources of legitimacy to support the system. The analysis demonstrates how the discourse was constructed in relation to events of the time, and how it related to the deeply rooted endogenous cultural codes on the island, and, most importantly, how it developed and shifted crucial sources of legitimacy. On the basis of this insight, further inferences can be made about the impact of the discourse on the perceived legitimacy and hence stability of the system.

During both crises, claims against Cuba were examined and reinterpreted as lies and deceptions, aimed to destroy the revolution as a noble nationalistic and socially emancipatory project in the interests of patriotic Cubans, and against the interests of foreign, exploitative, neocolonial-like groups. Topics and concepts used in capitalist countries were reinterpreted, where the link between the signifier and the signified was reconstructed to fit the revolutionary discourse. The expression *el régimen de Castro* for example, was reinterpreted as guaranteeing free healthcare and education and backed by public support. In this way, such negative descriptors used abroad were ridiculed. Hence, the discourse argued that, from the internal perspective, they simply made no sense. They implicitly made clear that questioning of the legitimacy of the system was out of place. During both crises, the discourse interpreted such positions as misguided, misinformed, dishonest and therefore invalid, with Cubans able to see through them. Such an approach reflected widespread anti-US attitudes and encouraged loyalty. With the lack of widely available competing interpretations, it would have been almost impossible for

Cubans to imagine anything else. The discourse relied on the Cuban nation-building context of a post-colonial society, and interpreted national independence as the highest priority. Independence appealed to Cubans due to their colonial past, remembered as a time of submission, corruption, exploitation and enslavement by despised external actors. Within this context, the historical sources of legitimacy were based on a "common sense" that the system acted as the guarantor of this independence, appealing to popular longing for emancipation from a history of submission. This historical context provided an important starting point for the discourse and its patterns of reasoning.Both in 1980 and 1994, strong emphasis on Cuba's right to independence, which could not be challenged or negotiated in any way, legitimated the system, with frequent references to Martí as an embodiment of martyrdom. Independence was constructed as the highest priority, and the most important source of dignity for Cuba as a nation, and Cubans as individuals. Independence was valued above material well being, ideological experimentation or pragmatic diplomacy. This view was perhaps not shared by all Cubans, but it was a strong component of the discourse, which may have appealed to a sufficient number of loyal Cubans, committed, in various degrees of intensity, to the revolutionary project.

During both crises, the hegemonic discourse was highly ideologically conditioned. Political concepts were articulated solely from the revolutionary communist perspective. The country's communist ideology provided meaning to other political concepts that had to be grounded in a theory. Democracy, for example, was understood as within the scope of Cuba's own heritage of egalitarian democracy, which required redistribution of property and a regulation of property-relations, to achieve real democracy where citizens of all social backgrounds were equally empowered. This was also reflected in the political system and its practices. Government organisations were understood as in need of being more protective, with the state acting as a policeman against selfish individualism perceived as anti-social.

The discourse may have generated some loyalty on the basis of its endogenous interpretations. The system may have survived the changing times of 1989 because of a number of factors, including the impact of the discourse as one variable, enhancing the system's stability. The sources of legitimacy provided reasons why Cubans should remain loyal. The sources remained to a large extent the same. However the emphasis on some, their frequency of inclusion, and their interpretation in relation to current issues varied. During crises, the discourse relied strongly on the historical legitimacy of the system, which had provided real benefits and was initially established on mass popular support. The Revolution radically changed Cuban society and delivered real benefits as a patriotic project. By the end of 1960, almost all U.S. and also Cuban-owned firms were nationalised, while welfare provision, free healthcare and education expanded dramatically (Hamilton 2002: 19). Shortly after the revolution, private clubs and beaches were opened to the public, while ordinary Cubans watched the humbling of the wealthy (Alfred Padula 1993: 19).

During both crises, the discourse focused on Cuba as part of Latin America and the Caribbean, contextualising events and the system within the mix of regional politics, references and issues. The country's media frequently reported support abroad, political violence in other countries of Latin America, or military involvement of the United States. With the Cuban national memory aware of the regional historical heritage of endemic political violence, foreign exploitation, ethnic and class conflict, and struggles for independence at the doorstep of the regional hegemon, the discourse positioned the system in this context. The context of foreign exploitation and lack of land reform in the post-colonial countries of Latin America, where historically wealthy landowners ruled over large land estates while many others lived in poverty, worked in favour of the legitimacy of the Cuban system. The system prided itself in having forced US corporations and large land owners out of the country, emancipating the poor, landless and discriminated. Criticism from Europe and the United States was, and continues to be, interpreted as a campaign organised by the former colonisers, and implicitly *conquistadores*, who first arrived in the region to claim its resources and subdue the workforce with the sword. Critics of Cuba were interpreted as allies of the imperialist United States, as a successor to this history of outside aggression. In this context, the system and its practices were a legitimate response. In this historical context, the system maintained the upper hand, compared to criticism coming from those that were perceived as having caused havoc in the past, and as a result lacked credibility and legitimacy. Consideration of these contextual justifications, ideas and regional history as key components of Cuban political culture, are crucial for truly grasping the nature of the system, its sources of legitimacy and its ability to survive for half a century.

The siege mentality was likely to have helped the Cuban leadership in 1980 and 1994 to ensure its citizens felt the need to stick together, as their very identities were constructed in line with the revolutionary values and interpretation of history. Cuban non-material socialist values were articulated as fundamentally opposed to the materialist capitalist model. This strengthened the need for a closely tied society of trust based on the revolutionary ideology, determining who could be trusted. The siege mentality was a key factor, legitimating the system as a guarantor of security. The signifier of the revolution was defined as the main guarantor of independence and nationalistic pride, and thus the guarantor of the very being of many Cubans. This made it worth fighting for in the spirit of *¡Patria o Muerte!*, in the form of voluntary work, armed struggle, sacrifice or resistance to economic deprivation. This discursive horizon concealed that revolutionary Cuba was only one possible way of being in the world. Appeals to national pride were the central source of legitimacy in both 1980 and 1994, even though its importance grew significantly between the two years. The government sought to represent this national pride and acted on its behalf. Nationalism fulfilled the usual role of maintaining a stable community and a large political unit, and was likely to have added to the strong bonds of trust. This unity was achievable due to the single-party system, and centralisation of the media and mass organisations. The state acted as a powerful policeman against selfish individualism perceived as anti-social. This construction of

Cuban reality was sufficiently sedimented in the country's discourse since 1959, to retain its legitimacy in both 1980 and 1994.

Both in 1980 and 1994, the discourse placed great emphasis on the achievements of the Revolution, as a key source of legitimacy. The achievements also meant defending the system that made them possible. The achievements in a stable Cuba were contrasted with violence abroad, such as civil war in El Salvador in 1980 or political instability in Haiti in 1994. This underlined the qualities of the revolution. It legitimated the system despite any internal issues, which were also interpreted in a pro-*status quo* way, providing a direction for the future within the existing structures of the communist system. Because the disturbances and hijackings were driven by the United States to destroy the revolution, the historically legitimate guarantor of Cuban independence, there were no reasons for internal doubts. Interpretations were constructed to fit the existing discourse reflecting public attitudes and supporting the political system and its practices. The discourse addressed their attitudes and concerns, organising the Cuban field of meaning in favour of continuity. Cubans were deeply embedded in the discourse, within which they acquired their identities, were constructed as beings, and from where they interpreted the world.

Continuing Relevance of Historical Legitimacy

Both in 1980 and 1994, the dominant source of legitimacy along with patriotism was historical, often remembering the past wrongs committed against the sovereign nation. The system reinforced its legitimacy in 1984 by presenting the results of the April 1984 elections to the People's Power, in which according to official results, 98.6% of registered voters cast their ballots, and so symbolically supported the system. In 1986, the country revived its revolutionary tradition during Rectification, when it returned to former revolutionary precepts and equality, in order to contain changes undermining the legitimacy of the system. This provided firm ground by reaffirming the original revolutionary ethics as the sources of historical legitimacy of the leadership.

In 1994, the discourse interpreted the situation as a war economy in times of peace. This interpretation did not refer only to the Special Period, but was part of the overall interpretation of Cuban reality as under threat, which had legitimated the necessity for institutions encouraging political involvement and surveillance, such as the CDRs. These images of an external threat were integrated into the internal mechanics of the discourse, which maintained the heightened polarisation between supporters and dissenters of the system. In 1994, the discourse clearly addressed the desperation of the population by stressing evidence suggesting economic improvements in the months to come. It talked about growing confidence and favourable conditions, encouraging the public as much as possible, at a time when the system could have collapsed suddenly. The July-October 1994 crisis represented a potential social disintegration, and hence the media impact of reports of the extraordinary support march on 6th August and in the following months encouraged the whole nation.

Shifting Perception of Emigration

The interpretation of potentially delegitimating emigration shifted since the end of the crisis in 1980, clearly redefined by 1994, towards a non-problematic perception of migrants as economic, stressing the use of illegal emigration by the United States as a weapon against Cuba. In 1994, migrants were interpreted primarily as economic and the rioters as desperate Cubans, suffering the consequences of the embargo as an attempt to destabilise the country from the inside. Implicitly, they were victims rather than criminal elements, unlike at the beginning of the 1980 episode. The non-problematic interpretation of both crises was based on the assumption that the rather small-scale events were encouraged by imperialist counter-revolutionaries, and provided a good opportunity to awaken the revolution's supporters, who were expected to represent the vast majority of the public. This delegitimated the events as crises in the eyes of the supporters. In 1980, the discourse stressed the attack from the United States receiving Cuban criminals as heroes and political allies. In 1994, the key message was that the disturbances did not delegitimate the system, since they were a result of the embargo representing outside aggression. In addition, the discourse clearly warned that all those who wished to emigrate would not be able to, since they were no longer as welcome, having lost their heroic status in the United States, becoming instead common Latin immigrants on an equal footing with Mexicans and others, who had to climb heavily guarded, barbed-wired fences to seek illegal employment – this was a new chapter in Cuban migration.

This shift in the interpretation of emigrants foreshadowed the general shifts towards perceiving emigrants as economic migrants escaping from an exploited developing country, increasingly losing their political significance. They were increasingly understood as desperate 'have-nots' misled by US lies. This shift was clear in the evidence from 1994, which indicates that the hegemonic discourse shifted as domestic and international conditions changed. This allowed the discourse to reflect new realities and to appeal to the attitudes and concerns of the time.

Cuba as a Developing Country under Attack

In 1994, the nation-building project was defined more in the context of the developing world. Cuba had its own model for leading poor countries out of poverty and subjugation, by successfully providing stability, healthcare and social progress with an emancipating political message, along with a national worldview stemming from its triumphant and encouraging historical experience. The system was an example that victory in hopeless conditions was possible, spicing up the attractiveness of its model at home and abroad. This inspiring image remained an important source of legitimacy, most likely capturing the hearts of many Cubans, who believed in the system and its message in 1980, 1989 as well as in 1994. The model was especially appealing for other developing countries, which had also once been subject to exploitation by colonial powers, and thus welcomed a solution from a fellow developing country. A combination of both spontaneous and centrally organised popular support demonstrated significant loyalty of the population, legitimating the system and possibly allowing it to survive the challenges of 1980, 89 and 94, so that even research conducted in 2009 by Gallup in Cuba

concluded that 47% of Cuban respondents continued to approve of their political leadership (Gallup 2009).

Cuba was interpreted as the legitimate defender of a just cause, as a developing country and part of the Non-Aligned Movement. Cuba's medical internationalism and involvement in military conflicts were part of this interpretation combining the discourses of racial equality, Third World development, economic justice, anti-racism and the unsuitability of the capitalist model of development in the conditions of the developing world, all implicitly legitimating the Cuban system. The system relied on reports of international support as a complementary source of legitimacy during both years. In both 1980 and 1994, the country was portrayed enjoying worldwide support as a legitimate defender of developing world interests. Semantically, Cuba was part of post-colonial processes in other developing countries, some of which also used the labels of socialism or communism to describe their inherently nationalistic aspirations:

> "Indigenous populist traditions became absorbed by Marxist-Leninist terminology and translated into new categories: people became proletariat, nation became class and nationalism became socialism." (Balfour 1990: 188).

The Continuing Relevance of *el bloqueo* and the US Threat

La lucha por la patria was always put forward as the highest priority, reflecting the post-colonial nationalistic atmosphere on the island. This was targeted against the United States, using examples from Cuban history, demonstrating past threats of *intervención* and politically motivated violence. US involvements in other countries around the world, such as Vietnam, Iraq or Panama, were used as examples confirming the continuing reality of the threat, and legitimating the system's policies as responses to the situation. The legitimacy of the system was supported by the defensive position of sovereign Cuba, aggressed by the United States in 1961, and thereafter. The embargo remained as the most important source of legitimacy, gaining even more significance in 1994 as an issue angering all on the island, and perceived as the main cause of material suffering after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The discourse during both periods contained frequent claims of moral superiority, which was a crucial source of legitimacy proving the continuity of the sacred revolution as a just cause backed by assumed moral purity. The threat present only ninety miles from Cuban coast was a key theme. This resulted in a general suspicion about anything without the system's seal of approval. The emphasis on the right to self-rule maintained a strong sense of national identity for Cubans, as the essence of their particular Heideggerian being-in-the-world. Openness, as interpreted by the opposition and exiles, was interpreted as destabilising, dangerous and immoral in the siege situation. Or as Roque et. al commented later in 1997:

> "The Cuban government ignores the word 'opposition.' Those of us who do not share its political stance, or who just simply don't support it, are considered enemies and any number of other scornful designations that it chooses to proclaim. Thus, they have also sought to

> give a new meaning to the word 'homeland' that is distortedly linked to revolution, socialism and nation. They attempt to ignore the fact that 'homeland', by definition, is the country in which one is born." (Roque and others 1997).

Cuban patriotism, as the most important bond, maintained an imagined, closely tied community encouraged by organisations of the state. Trust generated by patriotic identification, with allegiance to the communist system as a key identifier, was set against the background of an uncertain world. Cuban national identity retained significant ideological saturation, bound to the history of the Revolution. The psychological impact of *el bloqueo* combined with the military presence of the United States, generated fear by constantly threatening the revolution, its values and individual identities of its supporters. This immediate necessity for continuous nationalistic mobilisation increased the ability of the system to legitimate its rule, and justify its failures and coercive measures. The siege-mentality legitimated a powerful state, and radical enforcement of revolutionary norms, allowing it to survive crises.

Anti-US rhetoric stressed the negative influence of US business interests that had frustrated the aspirations of Cubans subserviently serving *mojitos* to Al Capone-like thugs and rough foreign sailors on the beautiful beaches of their homeland. Cuba relied on both a real and imagined threat to its existence that legitimated many of its policies, and provided an obstacle for reaching its imagined utopia. In order to reach it, every Cuban was required to engage in a patriotic *lucha* of some sort. We can only speculate to what extent the symbol of the Revolution has been exhausted over the past five decades amongst Cubans, some of whom undoubtedly dreamt about the affluence abroad and may have expressed their approval for the Cuban system more because of social pressure or coercion in the public domain. For a large part of the population, however, the survival of the system was likely to have been a personal question of their identity, existence and survival, especially when in 1994 *Granma* reported the intentions of the Miami exiles to allow three days of killing, after taking over the island (somewhat like the executions shortly after 1959).

Continuing Legitimacy of Fidel Castro

The historical roots of the system provided a special source of legitimacy deeply embedded in the country's national memory. This included those that lived the 1959 historical moment, as well as the following generations, who were socialised by the many representations of the Revolution. This was combined with Castro as an effective leader and persuasive speaker, using humour, appealing arguments and supportive information, speaking from his legitimate position as an independence hero and heir to the father of the nation. Castro received automatic acceptance, as do the founding fathers in the United States, the Queen in the United Kingdom, or Charles De Gaulle in France. Therefore, if approved by Castro from a similar position in the Cuban structure, the legitimacy of the system gained significant credibility, because he was understood as the historically legitimate leader, and a successor to Céspedes, Martí, Gómez and Maceo.

Recognised as charismatic by many other experts, Castro, as the living hero and symbol of this struggle, enjoyed a symbolic role in Cuban political culture. He represented a unique source of legitimacy of the existing system due to his seal of approval as the popular leader of the people, and a valid guarantee of the system. His personal stamp had an immense impact. The automatic loyalty of many Cubans combined with Castro as a convincing political speaker, able to inspire and encourage generations, represented an important legitimating mixture. He provided a key component in both 1980, but even more so in 1994 when the system was deeply shaken by the crisis, but then received reports of Castro turning disgruntled protesters into a cheering crowd. Castro's appearance in person during the 1994 disturbances in Central Havana affirmed his image as an authentic leader with widespread loyalty, ready for bold action. The Cuban nation-building project appears to have remained stable during 1980, 1994 and in between, due to continuing revolutionary allegiance, sustaining the system perceived as historically legitimate, headed by a historically legitimate leader.

Close Communication between the Leadership and the Public

The system relied on an effective ability to listen to the people and involving some in political processes. The resulting feed of information to the political leadership allowed adjustments of the discourse to reflect popular concerns, always interpreting reality in favour of the system. The discourse communicated with the public with regards to the research of the Department of Public Opinion of the Cuban Government (Pastor Brigos, Havana, May 2010). This skill of the system ensured its ability to adapt. It helped to maintain the focus of the public on the embargo, instead of the system's communist economics. This was perhaps different to other communist countries that had struggled with poor economic performance, and had lacked an external factor that would have helped them turn this delegitimating issue in their favour. Poor economic performance was not likely to have had such a delegitimating impact on the Cuban system, which could have otherwise been perceived as unable to deliver.

In combination with historically rooted anti-US attitudes, these two components of the discourse, i.e. the embargo and feedback, provided important ingredients, channelling public focus away from internal problems towards an external enemy. The embargo provided prime argument in favour of unity, social control, and loyalty in a war-like situation, with the people defending their identity as expressed and summed up in the revolution, legitimated in 1959. The discourse reflected a dialogue with the people, which allowed it to reflect their concerns, and persuade them about the proposed solutions and interpretation of reality, evident from the content, contextualisation and mechanics of the discourse. The available solutions and responses to the situation were constructed through a specific problematisation, which supported the system's legitimacy.

The legitimacy of the system was uniquely tied to José Martí, but also to other independence fighters and martyrs. The Revolution, as the origin of the system, was interpreted as the expression of the fulfilment of the dreams of these national heroes. This nationalistic, pro-independence philosophy pre-

dating the Revolution remained deeply integrated into a unique mix of radical patriotism, socialism, communism, and culturalism. The discourse suggested that division of the various components was impossible. The system was referred to as *¡Viva Cuba Libre! ¡Socialismo o Muerte! ¡Patria o Muerte! ¡Venceremos!*, neatly summarising its meaning and demonstrating the complete enmeshment of the separate concepts, where change of one component would be understood as a loss of the whole structure. This unity also encouraged opposition to the post-communist transitions during the 1990s, and enhanced the legitimacy of the system. According to a Cuban dissident group for example, in the 1990s Cuban party members communicated to the public that their departure from power would mean the disappearance of Cuba as a nation (Roque et al. 1997), thus strengthening the arguments for the legitimacy of the system.

In both 1980 and 1994, the concepts of the nation, homeland, independence, and socialism were interpreted in a singular signifier, the revolution, and were the major sources of legitimacy as a symbol of a righteous patriotic resistance. During both years, however, the main emphasis remained on patriotism, as the basis of the nation-building project requiring unity and commitment to secure independence. *Perturbadores* were interpreted as against unity and hence nation-building. National history was used to strengthen the nation-building element, while state-provided education and social provision were strengthening the nation-building process, which was under threat in 1994. Both episodes at the same time provided a useful opportunity to encourage passionate nationalism as a dominant source of legitimacy, a notion proposed by Fernández, and visible in the evidence (Fernández 2000: 117).

Patriotism, as the most reliable source of legitimacy, was prioritised and connected to other signifiers. In 1980, socialism was taken as a source of legitimacy on its own, representing support from the Soviet Union, and guaranteeing a number of real benefits. In 1994 the meaning of socialism shifted more towards a symbol of patriotism, Cuban culturalism and a guarantor of social provision. These represented important reasons for keeping socialism as a component of the system, despite the economic problems and Cuba's increasing isolation during the 1990s. Socialism thus represented less the classical ideological school, and more Cuban patriotism accompanied by a particular revolutionary worldview. Socialism was not necessarily the right choice because it was a proven ideology, but because it was part of the patriotic revolution, which would be destabilised without it. Therefore, even though socialism and its economic theory might have been questioned by some Cubans in 1994, it was interpreted in relation to the most important sources of legitimacy as its component to be retained. For this reason, the emphasis on the unity of patriotism and socialism appear to have grown between 1980 and 1994, and especially since 1989.

6. 2. Conclusions

Conclusions about Legitimacy and post-1989 Cuba

The crucial role of legitimacy in combination with the discourse and its internal mechanics represent a new perspective. In the 1990s, due to the extreme hardship, the legitimacy of the system could not have been material, but instead resulted from social security, low crime, predictability and patriotism, which were all promoted more than ever before (and, specifically, more than in 1980). These may have contributed to the system's survival of the incredibly challenging times. In 1994, the discourse had to address the collapse of communism elsewhere, without causing harm to legitimacy. Eastern Europe was interpreted as a frightening example of what would occur if a socialist system tried to adopt an anarchic *laissez-faire* model, destroying the positive aspects of the socialist model striving for social equality and providing universal healthcare and education. This interpretation provided a complementary source of legitimacy only in 1994, strengthened by the omission of pre-1989 crimes or some of the more successful examples of post-communist transition.

Cuba may have survived well beyond 1989 because of the combination of its legitimating hegemonic discourse, and many other factors, such as control of information flows, social control, discouragement of dissent, international support, emigration, effective leadership, socialist provision, or the impact of state organisations that fulfilled the role of politicising and mobilising the population in favour of the system. All combined, they shed more light on the ability of the system to remain stable over the decades. The hegemonic discourse, however, represents a key factor allowing the system to maintain stability without excessive amounts of force aimed at its own population. Maintaining loyalty through the discourse may have been a better long-term working strategy. A perceived legitimacy of the system may have been the reason why Cubans did not protest in sufficiently large numbers to bring about a 1989-like collapse and post-communist transition as was the case in Eastern Europe. Transitional chaos and economic problems in ex-communist countries were not an attractive picture for Cubans, who might have valued the guaranteed social provision and stability of their own system, thus perceived as legitimate. Since the Revolution was from the outset based on mass popular support, Cubans, unlike many Eastern Europeans under the occupation of Soviet tanks, genuinely had their own, legitimate system.

The system was legitimated by a discourse that had been constructed by the revolutionary leaders, who successfully hegemonised the field of meaning, which appealed to Cubans and others abroad as an alternative to the Western discourse that achieved hegemony in major parts of the world. In the global context, Cuba occupied a minority position, relying exclusively on the hegemony it achieved at home. The discourse gripped Cubans in 1959 and appeared to do so during the 1980s and 1990s, in a degree sufficient for the country to survive the large scale changes in global politics at the end of the

Cold War. The socialisation of the Cuban public and construction of individual identities within the system's institutions, explain the deep roots of the discourse, and its general internalisation. The system was based on a particular discursive construction, which defined and sustained the Cuban framework of meaning, the identities as well as social reality. The construction provided the foundations of legitimacy for Cuba's political institutions and policies. These internal mechanics and sources of legitimacy may have enhanced the stability of the system, while also ensuring its appeal to Cubans. The system involved Cubans in different civil and political organisations, which at the same time provided feedback to the leadership, allowing it in turn to respond to popular concerns and anxieties through the media, policies and other channels. The discourse effectively reflected their attitudes, concerns and memory of the past. This allowed the system to maintain, encourage and stimulate sufficient levels of public support by organising the Cuban field of meaning. Cubans were deeply embedded in this discourse, through which they acquired their identities, were constructed as beings, and from where they interpreted reality.

Despite some associative pro-US currents, the particular geopolitical setting of Cuba with its identity historically opposed to the United States and distaste for other foreign powers as contestants to the country's independence helped the system to define itself as the Other in relation to the United States. This helped Cuba to remain united and opposed to the liberal democratic alternative proposed by the United States and embraced during the 1990s by many countries in Central and Eastern Europe, Russia, Latin America and elsewhere. This would have been perhaps more appealing if it were proposed and symbolised by Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany or France for example, all with a less negative image in Cuba's national memory. In the post-Cold War unipolar world after 1989, where some have predicted the end of history with only one socio-political model represented by the United States as the victor, Cuba strived to remain closed and opposed, instead opting for its endogenous, non-transitional path.

The discourse positioned Cuba as an antagonist to the other America that is the United States, which it interpreted as racist, inegalitarian, exploitative, expansionist, aggressive and materialistic. Within such an interpretation, the home-grown communist system automatically gained significant legitimacy as a symbol of opposition and exhilarating defiance. The discourse denounced US imperialism, giving meaning to more abstract concepts such as freedom, as free from imperialism. US reality was reduced to fulfil its role in the discourse emphasising its negative features, encouraging Cubans to remain loyal to the system. The Cuban meaning of being was interpreted as under direct threat of extinction, since, if US-style democracy were allowed to take over the country once more, it would destroy Cuba's inclusive social system or existing property relations. For these reasons, the system had to be defended in both 1980 and 1994, with both its achievements and shortcomings, as a legitimate representation of the interests of Cubans.

In the 1990s, the system reacted to the neoliberal discourse abroad and rejected its concepts as unsuitable for Cuba's endogenous path to development. The discourse analysed the situation abroad, and focused on the less attractive parts of competing models, such as the inability of capitalist models to offer social provision. Such interpretations and one-sided analysis of competing models was one of the factors that enhanced the system's legitimacy by portraying it as a more appealing alternative.

Implications for Existing Literature

The conclusions of this research have implications for the existing literature. Patriotism remained the most important source of legitimacy during the period, and gained further prominence above socialism in 1994. This supports the widespread notion shared by many Cuba experts, such as Whitehead, Kapcia, Dominguez, Valdés and others, that nationalism was the most important underlying theme of the whole system at most times (Kapcia 2008: 84, Kapcia 2000: 234, Valdés 1992, Balfour 2009: 155-159).

A number of authors, including Huberman, Sweezy, Azicri and Kapcia have emphasised the achievements of the revolution as a key source of legitimacy in relation to the 1960s (Kapcia 2008c: 629). These were shaken by the material hardship of the late 1980s and first half of the 1990s, but remained as the established part of the system, possibly taken for granted by the younger generations. Hawkins, Kapcia, Feinsilver and others have argued for the continuing relevance of this source during the 1980s and 1990s (Kapcia 1995 & 2008, Hawkins 2001, Feinsilver 1993), and this research concludes that achievements of the revolution (high employment, social provision, healthcare and education) did represent one of the sources of legitimacy during the 1980s, whose importance grew even more during the 1990s, when it represented a key source of legitimacy relevant to all Cubans. During the first half of the 1990s, the meaning of the revolutionary system was renegotiated and the achievements of the revolution were assigned the highest priority, a conclusion shared with Kapcia (Kapcia 2008b: 163). Similar to the argument of Roman, equality and social justice remained a relevant source of legitimacy, linking the present system back to the 1960s (Roman 2003).

The threat posed by the US also remained one of the most important sources of legitimacy, and further grew in importance during the 1990s, in close connection with the emphasis on patriotism which it helped to incite, a conclusion shared with Kapcia and other authors (Kapcia 2008c). The importance of this source of legitimacy appears to have grown due to its continuing relevance, being moved above socialism as an ideology negatively influenced by the collapse of the Soviet Union. Socialism was thus redefined in terms of what it meant for Cuba, i.e. the achievements of the revolution. The threat posed by the US retained its real representation in the embargo, widely unpopular in Cuba, providing the system a defensive position as representing the interests of the people. The related siege mentality remained highly relevant during the 1990s, supporting a similar conclusion by

Zimbalist, who argued that it contributed to the stability of the system during the 80s and 90s. (Zimbalist 1992, 2000). During the 1990s, this source of legitimacy was further strengthened by a perceived threat of the potential return of *Batistianos* in the event of a political change in Cuba, which supported the system. The system appears to have focused on calling for support of the people, in order to defend the system as a representation of the real benefits it provided them, a conclusion shared with Gott's notion of a an interpretation of a "people's war" to resist US aggression since the mid-1980s (Gott 2005: 274). It also supports the conclusion of Thomas that the system relied primarily on anti-Americanism rather than classical Marxism (Thomas 1984: 55). The evidence also supports the argument of Pérez Jr. and others about the mutually reinforcing role of nationalism and anti-US attitudes, promoted by the system as key sources of legitimacy dating back to *Playa Girón* (Louis A. Pérez Jr. 1992: 501). The system also continued to rely on a perceived moral superiority, as a contributing and rather implicit source of legitimacy, supporting this notion examined by Valdés, Kapcia and others.

The historical sources of legitimacy examined by Fernández, Azicri, Pérez Jr., Kapcia, Martínez Heredia, Thomas, Valdés, Edelstein and others retained its hold in 1980, and gained further prominence in 1994, backing the system as the guarantor of national independence. Historical legitimacy was at the same time closely related to the endogenous character of the system examined by Kapcia, Landau and others, making it relevant in the 1990s despite the decline of socialism and communism internationally. In this context, liberal democratic political institutions were perceived negatively as an exogenous imposition, fought against during the 1953 and 1958 revolutionary campaigns, a notion shared with the conclusions of Hawkins (Hawkins 2001: 80). Historical legitimacy and the endogenous character provided the second most important legitimating force in 1994, more prominent than in 1980. This appealed to the sedimented revolutionary values of the public, and addressed the material deprivation with its emphasis on anti-materialism and self-sacrifice. This supports Hawkins's and Valdés's conclusion that revolutionary norms were a legitimating force, which retained its hold in the 1990s (Hawkins 2001, Valdés 1992: 213). The emphasis on the system as a representation of Cuban culture was closely connected to the endogenous character, labelled by Kapcia as *cubanía revolucionaria* (Kapcia 1995: 23), and became prominent especially in the 1990s as a legitimating force relevant to the post-communist international context, at the same time functioning as a further encouragement of Cuban patriotism. Along with Kapcia and Balfour, this research concludes that during the 1990s, the legitimating role of nationalism became more prominent, supported by the Revolution's historical roots and Cuban character (Kapcia 1995: 23, Balfour 2009: 155-159).

Material prosperity and economic growth supported the system during the 1970s and beginning of the 1980s (Pérez-Stable 1993b: 74-75). In 1980, this was clearly present in the discourse before and after the Mariel episode, during which focus was shifted towards patriotic sentiment as a more effective source of legitimacy. The material deprivation of the 1990s forced the system to emphasise other available sources of legitimacy, even if it did continue

promising approaching economic recovery. Tourism in 1994 was interpreted as a way of sustaining the revolution and all it represented for the future, despite the negative impact on the egalitarian fabric and the tensions caused by the black market economy, previously discussed by Kapcia (Kapcia 1995: 10-12). Egalitarianism as a source of legitimacy was not prominent in 1980 or 1994 in terms of economic redistribution, but solely as an equal distribution of the achievements of the revolution. It was addressed by the discourse of the Rectification, but is not the main focus of this research. Tourism was implicitly the way to fight the unpopular embargo, while preserving the achievements and delivering more to the people in material terms. For this reason, its meaning remained positive as a legitimate response to changing circumstances.

Referring to Mariel and the *maleconazo*, Thomas perceived a destabilising impact of Cuban emigration and the two crises, a notion contradicting the conclusions of the examined evidence and its function in the system (Thomas 1998: 1484). Emigration was first in 1980 interpreted as an opportunity to counter-attack the United States and relieve Cuba from criminal elements, while in 1990s emigration was interpreted as a weapon against the United States and a common developing-world phenomenon encouraged the embargo. For this reason, it would appear that it did not have a destabilising, delegitimating nor any negative effect on the system, allowing it instead to siphon off the most discontented, opposed and costly individuals. This finding also contradicts Fernández's interpretation of Mariel as a breaking point and its negative impact on the system (Fernández 2000: 87-88). Instead, the conclusions of this research support Azicri's interpretation of the 1980 Mariel as a renewal of the system (Azicri 1988: 26-27). Despite the sudden character of Mariel, the episode was interpreted as a victory. In 1994, the crisis was a result of several years of tensions, and was perhaps more expected, when the system appeared to have been on the verge of a possible collapse, and the outcome of the episode represented a catharsis, when the faith and image of the system were finally restored. This conclusion is shared with Kapcia, who interpreted the period as an encouraging ending of the worst of the Special Period (Kapcia 2008b: 160). The evidence confirmed Chávez's conclusions about the transformation of the interpretation of migration in Cuba, where migration was since the 1980s increasingly perceived as economic and gradually lost its political content, thus not representing a delegitimating issue.

Fidel Castro's charismatic leadership as a legitimating force perceived by many authors such as Hawkins, Azicri, Balfour, Coltman, Kapcia or Szulc, seems to have remained relevant during the 1980s and 1990s. Not only did Castro, as a national icon close to the people, set the national debate about how to understand what was happening during numerous televised and public speeches, , but his role was most evident during the 1994 episode. During this time, Castro was praised publicly on national television for his magician-like intervention during the riots, facing the crowd on his own and turning the rioters in his favour, confirming Kapcia's argument of Castro's ability to avoid using the police force or armed forces on a large scale (Kapcia 2008c: 644). To what extent these forces might have been deployed, however, is not

possible to deduce from the evidence, as the discourse would have been unlikely to have reported government ordered repression, potentially sending a delegitimating image of alienation. The important role of Castro in setting the terms of the hegemonic discourse seem to contradict arguments by Fagen and Gonzalez about the declining charismatic authority of Fidel since the 1960s (Fagen 1972, Gonzalez 1974). The claim would seem more relevant to the 2000s following his withdrawal from the public eye, but appears to have no substantial ground during the 1980s and 1990s, especially during crucial moments such as the two crises.

Finally, despite the underlying emphasis on moral incentives since Rectification, often assigned to *El Che*, in the consulted evidence there appear to have been no substantial references to Guevara in the discourse as a source of legitimacy, thus not supporting Kapcia's argument about emphasis on Guevara in the 1990s as a re-emerging source of legitimacy (Kapcia 2000: 210-211). He was, however, by all means a constant national hero and a model revolutionary at most times, strongly present in Cuban historiography, symbolism and monuments to the Revolution.

Inferences about the Longevity of the Cuban System

In the global context, Cuba occupied a minority position, relying exclusively on the hegemony it achieved at home. The discourse gripped Cubans in 1959 and appears to have done so during the 1980s and 1990s, contributing to the country's ability to survive the end of the Cold War. For a large part of the population, the survival of the system might have been a personal question of their identity, existence and survival. During both crises, the discourse was also effective due to the centralisation of the system's communications. The discourse was effective due to its high level of coherence, analysing events in depth and carefully weaving together strands of Cuban patriotism, culturalism, communism and national history into a compact hegemonic discourse (or a worldview), legitimating the system and providing a starting point for all subsequent analysis. These legitimating components were all weaved together so closely under the singular, symbolic label of the revolution that they were presented as inseparable, continuously assuming that dropping one would inevitably mean the end of the whole national project. Legitimacy for Cuban communism did not come only from social provision and other real advantages, but equally importantly from a semantic unity between the signifiers *la patria*, *la revolución* and *comunismo* understood as one. Such a combination of factors closely knit together, and combined with the complete control of the media, provided little potential for the post-Cold War wave of transitions to pluralist democracy and capitalism. This was one of the possible factors, which may have allowed Cuba to remain stable under its communist system, despite the declining appeal of communism in the rest of the world. Due to the popular character of the Revolution and its effective consolidation and institutionalisation since 1959, it was hard to imagine anything else, especially in the context of censored information flows.

Given the limited choice of discourses in the single-party system, most Cubans lived in a constrained environment where the discourse retained its dominant position, providing an endogenous construction of reality. Similar to other discourses in the United States, Europe or elsewhere, the hegemonic Cuban discourse contained populist simplifications of highly complex phenomena as well as dogmatic political communication, concealing alternative solutions in an environment where it achieved absolute hegemony. The role of discourses is after all to convince, rather than to reveal the full range of possible options and choices. Persuasion of the public may have been possible due to a reflection of popular attitudes and concerns, stressing endogenous sources of legitimacy, thus achieving a system ruled by Gramscian hegemony based on consent. The discourse may have appealed to a sufficient part of the population and encouraged their continuing loyalty, supporting the legitimacy of the regime, allowing it to survive the two challenging moments in 1980 and 1990, as well as the transitional wave of 1989 that completely redefined the character of international politics and the way communism would be perceived. The potential impact of the examined sources of legitimacy provides one possible answer for understanding Cuba's survival of 1989, as well as the 1980 and 1994 crises. The detailed examination also demonstrates how the system coped with the changing context.

Alternative explanations of the longevity and stability of non-liberal political systems are possible, but the impact of political communication combined with other factors and the particular character of the system are a plausible way of understanding the long-term stability of the Cuban system. Cuban social reality operated on the basis of the discourse, which gave the system its *raison d'être*. The system was supported by the discourse, which problematised reality in a particular way to ensure the continuous interpretation of key issues at home and abroad in its favour. By weaving together a number of strands of different sources of legitimacy, the Cuban construct continued to organise the field of meaning from a dominant position, thus achieving hegemony and systemic stability. The discourse successfully maintained its hegemonic position and the communist ideological component, which it refused to drop despite the adverse developments in other formerly communist countries after 1989. Cuba adopted a new constitution in 1992, which allowed it to involve *creyentes* [religious believers], as well as increasingly focusing on involving the younger generations and transmitting the legacy of the Revolution. In this way it minimised the generational gap that would have destabilised the country more, as university students took to the streets and led many anti-governmental protests in Eastern European communist states during the turbulent times of 1989. Cuba remained under the leadership of Fidel Castro as the revolution's general-in-chief, who provided symbolic continuity of the system. The discourse successfully interpreted the historical experience of Cuba, warning of the return to liberal-capitalist Batista's Cuba, while constantly reminding of the achievements of the revolution with the system as their guarantor. It effectively addressed public concerns about the main *raison d'être* of the revolution.

Cuba avoided an open transition from above, such as Greece under Karamanlis after the collapse of the regime of the colonels in 1974. The system avoided unrestrained circulation of information on a large scale, and replaced it with its own discourse. Tightly controlled political communication continued reaching Cubans on a daily basis, always arguing in favour of the legitimacy of the system. The government appears to have avoided large-scale repression, which was instead aimed at a small group of dissidents. By avoiding large scale repression and focusing on the discourse instead, the system may have been able to encourage sufficient numbers of loyal Cubans, overseeing the moderates and pragmatics, thus avoiding another revolution. In other words:

> "The contradictions, the tensions, and the criticisms existing in Cuba today have to do with the search for larger and better spaces in the political system created through the revolution and not outside of it. It is recognized by the majority of the population that the system has permitted the conformation and viability of that which is most important and that which has been the object of a search of more than 100 years: the system has given life to a national Cuban project which recovered the interests of Cuba as a nation." (Carranza Valdés & Weber 1991: 17).

Fidel Castro and the Cuban elite provided effective leadership, never out of step with the public, always reflecting current issues from a position in favour of the system. This was likely to have been possible due to the feedback through its political and social organisations, and research into public opinion. Cuban authorities managed to maintain the opposition in conflict with a significant part of population: the political culture of a country-under-siege required revolutionary unity, where dividing opposition was perceived as anti-patriotic. The impact of the hegemonic discourse may have been significant in view of interpretations by other experts, who perceived the important role of the largest part of the population as middle-ground, or "resigned" with the fervent supporters and outright opposition representing marginal parts of Cuban society:

> "Evidence would seem to indicate that most of those in the middle group seek simply to survive, but given the opportunity, would take great risks to leave Cuba. The nature of Cuban society is such, however, that political passivity is interpreted as opposition. Consequently, the large mass in the middle is manipulated-skilfully one might add-in such a way as to make them appear to support the regime." (Thomas et al. 1984: 52).

In this sense, the role of the hegemonic discourse may have been crucial in inciting at least some level of loyalty in those in the middle.

Castro and the Sierra Maestra veterans maintained their image as representing public opinion, and avoided the loss of connection experienced by Batista for example. The discourse celebrated past victories and the leadership avoided a

major political or military loss during the 1980s and 1990s, avoiding the negative impact of loss experienced by the regime of the colonels in Greece during a brief engagement in Cyprus in 1974, or the military debacle of the Argentinian military regime after the loss of the Falkland Islands war in 1982. Mass emigration was interpreted in the discourse within the context of anti-patriotic scum at the beginning of 1980, shifting to an interpretation as an ordinary phenomenon in the developing world in 1994. Unlike emigration from Eastern Germany, it was thus not perceived as an indicator of large scale dissent and discontent. By reporting on regional instability and political violence taking place in Latin America and the Caribbean, the discourse implicitly praised the stability of the Cuban system, placing Cuba into a regional perspective.

While some authors writing in the 1990s, such as Mesa-Lago, Baloyra & Morris, Del Aquila and others, have predicted a collapse of Cuba, the system appears to have survived for a number of possible reasons, one of which may have been its ability to reinterpret its underlying sources of legitimacy as the basis of loyalty of its people (Carmelo Mesa-Lago 1993; Baloyra & Morris 1993; Del Aguilla 1994). This perspective provides a possible explanation of how Cuba survived not only 1989, but also internal crises of 1980 and 1994. The mechanics, origin and content of its discourse, combined with its ability to adjust to changing circumstances, may have contributed to the system's survival. 1994 represented a significant catharsis, leading the system out of the challenging times with a clearer idea of the system represented then and for the years to come. The survival of 1989 and the longevity of the system have been approached by other authors, but this research demonstrates the possible role of the discourse and its sources of legitimacy as one of the possible factors to explain this puzzle. The prominence of the sources of legitimacy stands out even more significantly during the first half of the 1990s, when the system could not have relied on its ability to deliver in economic terms, but could still emphasise others sources of legitimacy to avoid a collapse.

In Conclusion: New Insights into the System

By examining two crises, it appears that the hegemonic discourse was able to successfully interpret crises, stressing popular support. The system managed to avoid their destabilising potential and maintained itself as a legitimate expression of public opinion. The two episodes were remembered as something not negative for the system, but as proofs of its vitality and relevance. The discourse rallied support in subtle as well as blunt ways, reinforcing certain attitudes and reassuring the public in view of frightening challenges, while also maintaining its hegemonic position based on a Gramscian encouragement of consensus. As such, they represent examples of successful interpretations sustaining the hegemony.

The system appears to have been able to maintain stability by encouraging loyalty, through the discourse, which contained endogenous sources of legitimacy. The shifting sources of legitimacy put forward by the discourse

were certainly not the sole factor in the stability of the system, as is evident from the existing literature, but played a significant role in a system that had previously siphoned off most of the dissenters and delivered real benefits to those who stayed. This research argues that the shifting sources of legitimacy significantly contributed to the stability of the system as its crucial components, especially in an environment with no radically diverging and widely available alternative discourses. The population was exposed to a discourse reflecting its attitudes and concerns, which significantly increased its impact. This research provides an insight into the mechanics of the discourse from within and through the eyes and attitudes of the Cuban public, allowing us to understand the system from within. By focusing on the internal mechanics of the discourse and its sources of legitimacy, this research provides new explanations of why the system may have survived the incredibly challenging times. The research demonstrates what made the system tick, by focusing on its internal mechanics, patterns of reasoning, endogenous concepts and political culture. The findings provide a way of explaining how Cuba was able to survive internal moments of destabilisation, as well as the wave of neoliberalism during the 1990s. The evidence presented and analysed demonstrates how the discourse used crucial sources of legitimacy, and how it prioritised and shifted them over time. The conclusions help us understand why Cuba may have remained closed and opposed to alternative political models, and followed a different non-transitional path compared to other former communist countries.

The discourse in 1980 and 1994 contained both differences and continuities, with the system retaining the basics of its communist socio-political and economic model. Instead of large scale political persecution, the discourse allowed the system to maintain the loyalty of a significant part of the population by interpreting events from its dominant position in a way that supported the established system. The discourse was based on three main pillars: Cuban patriotism, achievements of the revolution and a particular version of Cuba's historical experience, all built into a coherent whole of the hegemonic Cuban discourse. The discourse provided effective leadership, by focusing on the victorious outcomes of each crisis and on future improvements of the system. During both crises, the discourse referred to unprecedented and extraordinary demonstrations of revolutionary spirit as an important source of legitimacy. The resulting message at the end of both crises was victorious. Especially in 1994, pro-government marches were reported as a great encouragement amidst the extreme desperation of the Special Period. The rallies were spontaneous rather than ritualistic, such as the May Day march, and thus signified an important catharsis from the economic crisis. They demonstrated clearly the continuing legitimacy of the system in the eyes of the public, even if they may have involved significant participation based on what Thomas labelled "opportunistic conformity" (Thomas 1998: 1484).

By examining and comparing a case before and after 1989, we gain further insights into how the system reflected transitions and the decline of communism and socialism abroad. If these were discredited internationally, and Cubans were likely to have learned this if not from the official media then

from other communication channels, the system had to rely on different sources of legitimacy communicated through endogenous codes that would remain relevant and effective in the new circumstances to encourage sufficient loyalty. This enhances our understanding of the long-term stability of the system. We can see how the system interpreted crises and issues, such as neoliberalism, in order to give them a meaning sustaining the discursive base of the system without contradicting it. In this way, we gain an alternative perspective on Cuban political history arising from the alternative research method of discourse analysis, allowing us to understand better the system from the point of view of its audience. We may understand better the possible reasons why some Cubans may have remained loyal. The conclusions do not exclude all alternative explanations, but rather complement them. A possible interplay of factors such as a combination of political repression, siphoning off dissenters, centralised media and the political nature of mass organisations, may complement the findings of this research. The highly coherent and consistent discourse may have played its rather important role in this mixture of possible factors in the context of the communist single-party system. In fact, this context was most likely to have increased the impact of the hegemonic discourse, allowing for a controlled and nearly complete hegemony, thus increasing its impact on the audience.

Examining the sources of legitimacy and the mechanics of the discourse, this research demonstrates how the discourse may have effectively employed relevant sources of legitimacy to transmit the endogenous ideology through the use of language, by the means of assumptions, culturally relevant semantics and endogenous codes. In combination with alternative explanations, we can understand better the general longevity of the system since 1959. This provides an answer to how Cuba dealt with crises and, potentially, why it may have survived 1989 as a communist country adapting to new circumstances. The discourse facilitated the legitimation of the system by emphasising sources of legitimacy relevant to the Cuban public as a unique historical and cultural community by reflecting and appealing to their attitudes, fears and concerns, reassuring the public and creating a Gramscian hegemonic consensus. The research demonstrates how the discourse reflected and reacted to the post-Cold War situation to ensure continuity. It provides other collateral insights into the system, such as the impact of its close communication flows with the public, the impact of centralised communications as well as the ability to cope with potentially delegitimating issues.

The discourse employed specific mechanics of argumentations, and effectively defended the system by drawing on specific sources of legitimacy that made sense on the island. In order to achieve this, the system had to rely on what this research labelled as hegemonic Cuban discourse, referring to a national discussion, reflecting public concerns and appealing to widely held attitudes. The discourse reflected public concerns received through various channels, such as research into public opinion, or feedback received through mass organisations and the communist party. This may have encouraged the loyalty of a sufficient part of the population. The longevity of the Cuban system since

1959 and especially after 1989 has surprised many. Despite analyses that have examined Cuban history, political culture or institutions, a detailed analysis of the communication between the elites and the public was missing. This research addresses this gap, and argues that the system has relied on sources of legitimacy to defend and represent the 1959 Revolution at different times.

The crucial role of the sources of legitimacy demonstrates how there were deployed to reflect new realities. This represents a new way of looking at the system in comparison to other studies that have examined the role of emotions, Castro's charisma or material provision. The focus on sources of legitimacy combines the possible influence of these and other factors to explain the inner functioning of the Cuban system and its survival of 1989. During the crises, these sources of legitimacy were the most prominent, as these were decisive times. The system not only survived these crises and interpreted them as total victories, but it is also evident that it shifted the deployed sources of legitimacy and their inner mechanics before and after 1989. In 1980, socialism represented more of a pragmatic and profitable alliance with the USSR and COMECON as well as implicit nationalism and resistance to the United States, Fidel's charismatic leadership played a lesser role. The mechanics of the discourse at this time differed from the situation in 1994, when nationalism and particularly patriotism became the driving sources of legitimacy relevant to the new post-Cold War context. Socialism was reinterpreted in terms of a safety net against transitional anarchy, guaranteeing valued achievements of the revolution including social provision and healthcare taken as given in 1980. In this way, the system returned to some of its original 1959-60 driving forces to make itself current and encourage popular allegiance with sources of legitimacy that were still relevant to the highest possible number of Cubans. To an extent, this represents a return to several source of legitimacy of 1959-60. In 1994, Cuba shifted from a socialist country to an exploited developing state striving for independence and economic equality in international terms. In 1994, material provision was not stressed due to the horrific conditions of the Special Period. At the same time, Fidel's charismatic leadership regained its value, and especially during his intervention at the *malecón* in 1994. These were all significant shifts. This confirms other evidence in the literature, which focused on the 1991 Party Congress that had confirmed the perceptions about how to save the revolution, but which had later, during the 1997 Congress, moved towards debates about what parts of the revolution had to be saved. This represented a reinterpretation of the essence of the system that increasingly focussed on the 1959-60 experience, and the original source of legitimacy as a valued national heritage, relevant under most circumstances.

Part IV: Bibliography

7. 1. Periodicals (Evidence)

Bohemia by date:

4 April 1980, year 72, n. 14,

a Introduction by Fidel Castro: 2.

b *Los días no son iguales*, Magda Martínez: 4-5.

c *Capitalismo: un mundo en plena crisis*, José Luis Robaina: 66-67.

2 May 1980, year 72, n. 18, *Imagenes de Mariel, Nueva Operación Verdad y Antídoto Contra un Veneno*: 54-59.

15 April 1994, year 86, n. 8,

a En el mundo, Controversial controversia, Nestor Nuñez: 43

b Los Lectores Opinan, Marta Matamoros: 14-15

c Educación Popular, A un palmo de la vida, Mirta Rodriguez Calderon: 28-29

d Choferes de alquier, Patente de corso sobre ruedas, Alberto Salazar: 30-32

e Habla el canciller cubano, Diplomacia especial para un periodo especial, Pedro Viñas Alfonso: 34-39

g Turismo, Hora de cambios, Ariel Terrero: 40

h Apagones en la mirilla: 41

i La conferencia de abril, ¿Por qué hoy?, Ingrid Estevenez Arxer, Maria Teresa Fuentes Mora: 24-27

j Tratado de Libre Comercio,¿Quien gana? ¿Quien Pierde?, Marta G. Sojo, Maggie Marin: 10-13

9 December 1994, year 86, n. 25

a En la toma de posesiv de Zedillo, Continuidad y voluntad de cambios: 44-45

b Nicaragua, Cisma en el frente, Maggie Marin: 49-50

c Cambios en la geografía política, El nuevo mapa del mundo, Alexis Schlachter: 4-9

e EE.UU., Proyecto S.O.S: 51

f En Cuba, Solidaridad, Este pais no es una isla, Susana Tesoro, Alberto Salazar, Luis Sexto: 32-34

Bohemia by author where available:

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Viñas Alfonso, Pedro (1994) *Habla el canciller cubano, Diplomacia especial para un periodo especial*: 34-39, 15 April, year 86, n. 8

Granma by date:

2 January 1980, year 16, n. 1
a Las moliendas de fin de año son ejemplos de los niveles que deben alcanzarse desde ahora, Juan Varela Pérez: 1.
b 1979 fue uño de más inflación, de aumento de la desocupación y de mayores précios en países capitalistas: 6.
9 January 1980, year 16, n. 7, *Amílcar González, un mecánico enamorado de su trabajo*, José Gabriel Guma: 1.
12 January 1980, year 16, n. 10, *Celia*: 1.
10 March 1980, year 16, n. 60, *La lucha por el socialismo es una lucha voluntaria: ese fue, es y sera nuestro principio*: 1.
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a Secuestrado avion yanqui por un perseguido politico y religioso de Estados Unidos: 1, 4.
b Declaraciones de Carter: Retrato de cuerpo entero, Hector Hernandez Pardo: 6.
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11 April 1980, year 16, n. 88
a Habla la madre del soldado Pedro Ortiz Cabrera, Santiago Cardosa Arias: 2.
b *¡Comandante en jefe, ordene!, corean los estudiantes en las calles*, Roger Ricardo Luis: 6.
c Amenazante maniobra militar yanqui alrededor de Cuba: 1.
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a Este pueblo merece un lugar en la historia, Este pueblo merece un lugar en la gloria, Este pueblo merece la victoria: 1.
b Los oradores de la gigantesca concentración del 1° de mayo: 2-7.
c De nuevo las calles vacias: 7.
d Hermanos en la lucha y en la victoria: 2-7.
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Dr. Jorge Renato Quitart Ibarra, University of Havana
Dr. Jesús Pastor Garcia Brigos, Institute of Philosophy, Havana
Dr. Ricardo Hernández Otero, Institute of Linguistics and Literature, Havana
Dr. Arnaldo Silva León, Former Member of the Central Committee of the CCP
Dr. Luis Suárez Salazar, Institute for International Relations, Havana
Mr. Fidel Aguirre Gamboa, Subdirector, Editora Política, Havana
Dr. Edelberto Leiva, University of Havana
Mr. Carlos Moreno, Cuban Communist Party, Havana
Mr. František Fleišman, Consul, Czech Embassy, Havana

Other individuals interviewed in Cuba or UK included: Orlando Borrego; Cuban Methodist Pastor in Santa Clara; Two Jehovah's Witnesses in Casilda; and others during a combined time of two months spent during two research visits in Cuba.

7. 2. Literature

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