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Legitimacy and Efficiency of Political Systems

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## **The International Dimensions of Authoritarian Legitimation: The Impact of Regime Evolution**

Bert Hoffmann

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# **The International Dimensions of Authoritarian Legitimation: The Impact of Regime Evolution**

## **Abstract**

While traditional theories of legitimacy have focused on the nation-state, authoritarian regimes and democracies alike seek legitimation not only in the domestic realm but also from international sources. This paper argues that the degree to, and the form in, which they do so depend on the regime's origins, characteristics, and evolution, rather than being mere consequences of changes in the international context. Empirically, the paper draws on the case of the Cuban regime since the 1959 revolution. In particular, it analyzes how the regime's transition from a charismatic to a bureaucratic model of state socialism in the post-Fidel succession era led to a reconfiguration in the regime's legitimation strategy, wherein it has greatly downsized its once expansive international dimensions.

Keywords: Relations, legitimation, authoritarian regime, Cuba, socialism

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# The International Dimensions of Authoritarian Legitimation: The Impact of Regime Evolution

Bert Hoffmann

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## 1 Introduction

Although Recent research on the durability of authoritarian regimes and the prospects for democratization has put a renewed focus on the question of the legitimacy of non-democratic regimes (Gilley 2009, Holbig 2011, Schlumberger 2010, Sedgwick 2010, Valbjørn and Bank 2010).<sup>1</sup> For normative theorists of democracy, this may sound like a contradiction in

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1 Cf. as well the special issue "Legitimacy and Governance" of the *Journal of Chinese Political Science*, 16, 2 (June 2011), and the forthcoming special issue of *Politische Vierteljahresschrift* (PVS) on the comparison of autocracies, which will include numerous articles on the issue of legitimation.

terms. However, the line of research here follows an empirical methodology, which – in the Weberian tradition – is not inspired by moral judgement. From this empirical perspective, the quest for legitimacy constitutes a key concern not only for democracies but also for non-democratic regimes. Across all areas of the globe, authoritarian regimes of different styles and brands – rather than merely relying on the array of coercive practices at their disposal – invest significant material and immaterial resources into efforts to generate legitimacy.

Traditionally, Western theories of legitimacy – as much the normative as the empirically-oriented ones – have focused on the nation-state and the domestic dimensions, as Holbig (2011) points out. This paper takes up her plea to distinguish between internal and external legitimation strategies. However, it takes issue with the proposition that the importance of the latter is caused by recent changes in the international environment, namely the acceleration of economic and social globalization (Holbig 2010: 161). Rather, I question whether the traditional assumption of legitimation as an essentially domestic game has ever been an adequate explanation for those political regimes which, as in many parts of the Global South, were born out of the struggles for national independence or which stemmed from rebel movements against colonial or neocolonial domination. In such cases, international legitimation strategies have always been at the heart of a regime's claim to rightful rule.

Hence, this paper seeks to move beyond the simple dichotomy of authoritarian versus democratic regimes, and to analytically distinguish between different types and characteristics of non-democratic regimes – characteristics which may, of course, evolve over time significantly even if remaining below the threshold of what is commonly referred to as "regime change." It is this paper's core argument that, while seeking legitimacy from the international arena is not at all new to authoritarian regimes, its role, weight, and form are dependent on the specific nature of the regime.

To better grasp these trends, the paper's second key proposition is that of a distinction between a "defensive" and an "expansive" component in authoritarian regimes' quest to draw legitimacy from the international realm. The defensive aspect is typical for regimes with strong nationalist or anti-hegemonic claims who are prone to stoke confrontation with some external (or externalized) "other" in order to generate domestic legitimacy. Expansive international legitimation, in contrast, seeks a much broader type of support from the international arena – which can be based on formal foreign policy instruments, alliances, military ventures, different sorts of soft power deployment, ideological or religious affinities, or on a charismatic leadership appeal that stretches beyond the nation's domestic boundaries.

Legitimacy is, of course, a much contested concept. Much of the empirically-oriented political science literature on the issue builds on Weber's classic definition, which emphasized that legitimacy was based on the belief of the followers, subjects, or citizens that an authority is morally valid or rightful. In current models on the stability (or not) of authoritarian regimes, legitimacy is regarded as being a core pillar, next to repression and cooptation (for example, Albrecht/Schlumberger 2004; Merkel et al. 2012) – its function being, to guarantee

either active consent, passive obedience, toleration, or indifference. However, also in such nuanced notions, such a concept of legitimacy is a difficult one to either measure or operationalize. Moreover, authoritarian regimes typically impose severe limitations on independent scholarship that seeks to measure the political attitudes of the citizenry. On this basis, the empirical focus in this contribution is not on legitimacy in the sense of analyzing a given population's attitude to a specific regime; instead, in line with the understanding developed by Berger/Luckmann (1967), it focuses on *legitimation*, understood as regime strategies that *seek* legitimacy – be they successful or not, and morally convincing or not.

Legitimacy suggests a static property of a regime, leader, or institution in its relationship to the people or to followers; legitimation stresses the process and its characteristics: the dynamics, discourses, and strategies by which actors seek to gain and maintain legitimacy (Ansell 2001). This process is open-ended; legitimacy may be gained or it may be eroded and lost.

Sedgwick (2010: 252) noted the paradox that, while there was a dearth of research on legitimacy issues in communist regimes prior to 1989, after the downfall of the state socialist regimes it became conventional wisdom to point to lack of legitimacy as a key reason for their collapse. In this sense, analyzing strategies of legitimation by authoritarian regimes is not siding with a thesis either of persistence or of downfall but, rather, aims to contribute to a better understanding of the political dynamics at work, whatever their eventual outcome might be.

To make its case, this contribution draws on empirical evidence from post-revolutionary Cuba: a case where, underneath long-standing regime continuity overall, significant transformations in the nature of the authoritarian regime can be discerned. In this, it connects with the literature which seeks to grasp the variety and qualitative differences of non-democratic regime modes, such as Stepan/Linz (1996), Geddes (1999), or Hadenius/Teorell (2007), but also with studies of regime change in communist countries and the former Soviet Union. In particular, it will seek to use the Weberian concepts of charismatic and bureaucratic rule to underscore regime characteristics evolving below the threshold of an all-out regime change. In this vein, Cuba since 1959 can not only be classified as a “rebel regime,” “military,” or “one-party” rule, but also as a case combining charismatic leadership with forms of “rationalized” bureaucratic authority in ways that have considerably changed over time.

The paper proceeds as follows: In the first section, the nature and characteristics of the regime that emerged in Cuba after the 1959 revolution will be assessed. To accommodate for the dual structures of charismatic and rational–legal authority exhibited under Fidel Castro's five-decade-long tenure, the regime will be described as a case of “charismatic state socialism.” In the second section, the paper will take a closer look at the regime's legitimation strategies, particularly focusing on their international dimensions. In this, it will distinguish between:

- a) a “defensive” legitimation strategy, in which the regime claims to liberate and defend the nation from the country's long-standing hegemon and which decries any domestic opposition as agents of that external power; and,

- b) an “expansive” legitimation strategy, which corresponds with the charismatic leader’s global mission of leading Third World liberation. This expansive legitimation was supported by systematic foreign policy investments, international alliances, and military ventures, as well as such soft power strategies as large-scale international health missions. In this, international recognition of the Cuban “model” and its achievements is the basis for the leader’s claim to “lead by example.”

The third section will then explore the regime’s evolution in the wake of the succession to Fidel Castro; that is, since the charismatic leader fell ill and decided to hand power over to his younger brother, Raúl Castro, in 2006. In particular, it will analyze how this leadership succession implied a major shift in the regime’s characteristics, which I describe as a transformation from charismatic to bureaucratic state socialism. This, as is argued, has far-reaching consequences for both politics and policies.

The final section will explore the implications of regime evolution for legitimation strategies. Specifically, it will address how the bureaucratic successor regime has been gradually discarding the expansive international legitimation process that is so dear to charismatic state socialism. It is shown that such an expansive international approach has simply become incompatible with the bureaucratic regime’s key domestic legitimation strategy, which is based on the promise of economic rationality and efficiency.

The concluding section will raise the question of to what extent gains in legitimacy derived from the bureaucratic regime’s turn towards economic reform can compensate this renouncing of international regime legitimacy. Moreover, an economic reform course may open a new source of international legitimation by associating Cuban regime persistence with the economic and – in terms of regime survival – political success stories of socialist China and Vietnam.

In its empirical analysis, the paper essentially draws on official Cuban discourse from political speeches and state media. Moreover, it benefits from onsite observations, interviews, and conversations that took place in Cuba during close to a dozen field-trips undertaken to the island over the past two decades, the most recent one being in the run-up to the 6<sup>th</sup> Congress of Cuba’s Communist Party, held in April 2011.

## 2 Regime Characteristics: A Case of Charismatic State Socialism

While the underlying dichotomy of democracy versus authoritarianism still structures much of the research on political regimes, the past decades have seen an upsurge in efforts to provide classifications and typologies of different subcategories of authoritarian regimes (for example, Stepan/Linz 1996, Geddes 1999, Hadenius/Teorell 2007, O’Donnell 1973, O’Donnell/Schmitter/Whitehead 1986).<sup>2</sup>

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2 For further refinement, particularly in those cases that are neither clearly democratic nor clearly non-democratic, see also the concepts of “hybrid regimes” (Diamond 2002), “electoral authoritarianism” (Schedler 2006), and “competitive authoritarianism” (Levitsky/Way 2010).



The regime that took power in Cuba after 1959 has never fitted easily into any of these categorizations. O'Donnell's "bureaucratic authoritarian state" served to distinguish Latin America's "modern" military regimes of the 1970s onwards from the older, more patrimonial, and often dynastic personal dictatorships of the Somoza or Duvalier type; but, both were nevertheless clearly conceived as the result of the ongoing development of the international capitalist system.

Similarly, some years later, the landmark study of O'Donnell/Schmitter/Whitehead on "transitions from authoritarian rule" explicitly excluded the Cuban case from its analysis. Remarkably enough, this neglect was perpetuated in Linz/Stepan's (1995) work, which combined the analysis of Southern European and Latin American transitions with those of post-Communist Europe. While this would seem like an ideal context for the study of the Cuban experience, the single mention of the island comes in a passing reference to the pre-revolutionary Batista regime (Linz/Stephan 1995: 357).

In seeking to sum up 20 years of democratization research, Geddes (1999: 122) distinguishes between military, personalist, and single-party regimes, and she puts Cuba squarely in the category of the latter (Geddes 1999: 139). However, in Cuba the pre-revolutionary Communist Party – long an ally of Batista – only belatedly joined with the rebel forces; the party in its present form was not founded until 1965 and did not hold its first party congress until 1975. It is highly doubtful, therefore, that prior to this the "party organization exercises some power over the leader at least part of the time, controls the career paths of officials, organizes the distribution of benefits to supporters, and mobilizes citizens to vote and show support for party leaders," to cite Geddes' (1999: 121) description of the ideal type of single-party regime. As a consequence, Hadenius/Teorell (2007) – building on Geddes' work – separated the Cuban regime into two different categories: the first – which they called a "rebel regime," as a subtype of a military regime (Hadenius/Teorell 2007: 147) – lasted until the first elections in 1976, whereafter it became a "one-party regime."

However, such a demarcation suggests a clearer watershed than what is actually supported by empirical analysis. Also, after 1976 Fidel Castro's primary title always remained a military one ("Comandante en Jefe"), not his Party office. The party itself was arguably never the central axis of power, and Fidel Castro's relationship to the Party's structures was one, at times, of open disrespect – to the point that, after the 1997 Party Congress, the next one was not called for (which by the party's statutes he was obliged to do every five years) until his successor, Raúl Castro, did so 14 years later, in 2011.

In this light, a more detailed analysis that draws on Geddes' categorizations might place Cuba under Fidel Castro into the category of a "personalist regime," defined as differing "from both military and single-party regimes in that access to office and the fruits of office depends much more on the discretion of an individual leader" (Geddes 1999: 121). Most likely, however, to use Geddes' terminology, the case of post-'59 Cuba should be considered an "amalgam regime," as it combined elements of all three types.

Given these classificatory troubles, Stephen Haggard (2011) recently highlighted the distinctively different role that personalist leadership plays in the regimes that have remained Communist until today. Contrasting the personalist cases of North Korea and Cuba on one side, and the institution-based regimes of Vietnam and China he questions the usefulness of putting them together into the “single-party regime” variable in large-n empirical models. He resumes: “We still understand surprisingly little about personalism and the functioning of authoritarian institutions” (Haggard 2011: 2).

It is on this background that this contribution proposes to bring back in the Weberian notions of legitimate authority, as they seem specifically helpful to grasp the critical relation of personalism and institutions in authoritarian regimes, and in particular their evolution over time. In the Cuban case this becomes particularly evident, in the wake of the leadership succession of 2006.<sup>3</sup> To recap, for Max Weber charismatic authority is one of three ideal-types of legitimate authority, alongside bureaucratic-rational and traditional authority.<sup>4</sup> He defines it as, “resting on devotion to the specific and exceptional sanctity, heroism, or exemplary character of an individual person, and on normative patterns revealed or ordained by him” (Weber 1968: 46). Further, the charismatic leader “is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities” (Weber 1968: 48).

In the research on the Cuban Revolution and the political system that evolved out of it, legions of scholars have emphasized the charismatic nature of Fidel Castro’s personality: the heroic example and extraordinary qualities displayed in the guerilla war and as military commander in-chief; his profound sense of having a mission and his notion of leadership by example; his personalist style of leadership, his oratorical skills, his direct communication to the people, and so on. The list of such traits attributed to Fidel Castro is long, as would be a list of authors who have based the claims about Fidel’s charisma on them.<sup>5</sup>

However, unlike physical characteristics, a leader’s charisma is never merely a personal quality; it only comes into existence through the interaction with an audience. Weber himself is clear that charisma must, by definition, be understood as a relational category: “It is recognition on the part of those subject to authority which is decisive for the validity of charisma”

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3 Succession took place in a highly gradualist and negotiated mode. This gradualism eventually stretched the succession process out over a five-year period: it began with Fidel’s emergency surgery in 2006 – when at first it was stressed that Raúl was merely his temporary replacement – then continued through the National Assembly meeting of early 2008 – when Raúl formally became head of the Cuban state –, until the Communist Party congress in April 2011, when Raúl finally took over Fidel’s last formal office, becoming First Secretary of the Communist Party’s Central Committee.

4 See Max Weber’s essay on “The Pure Types of Legitimate Authority,” originally published in his *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* in 1922 (published in English as *Theory of Social and Economic Organization*); this and all subsequent citations are taken from Weber 1968. For a discussion of the Weberian term “Herrschaft,” and its English translation as authority, see Adair-Toteff (2005: 191-192), as well as Rigby (1982: 7).

5 A classic exponent of this is González (1976).

(Weber 1968: 49).<sup>6</sup> An important group of authors in Cuban studies (for example, Fagen 1965, Domínguez 1978, Eckstein 1994, Valdés 2001) have described Fidel's charismatic authority in terms of such a relational categorization. In this mould, Fidel's charismatic appeal was due not only to his flamboyant rhetoric nor only to manipulation,<sup>7</sup> but also to the redistributive measures that his government carried out and which for many Cubans proved the credibility of his rhetoric. This echoes Max Weber's description of charisma as "the greatest revolutionary force" (Weber 1968: 53): the leader's charisma stems precisely from the embodying of a radical, revolutionary break with the past, which in the eyes of his followers provides a remedy for their problems. From this perspective, the leader – despite his extraordinary status – appears as much as a product of circumstances as the motor driving their change.

Weber noted that, in its pure form, charismatic authority only exists "in statu nascendi"; over time its routinization is inevitable. Charismatic authority, Weber writes, "cannot remain stable, but becomes either traditionalized or rationalized, or a combination of both" (Weber 1968: 54). Cuba under Fidel Castro illustrates this point well, as charismatic authority over time came to coexist and combine with rational-legal authority; namely, in a state-run economy with Soviet-style political institutions.<sup>8</sup>

Despite the "process of institutionalization" in the 1970s, Cuba never came to be just one more member of the international family of state socialist single-party regimes. All throughout Fidel's long tenure, strong elements of charismatic leadership persisted that set the Cuban case apart from the brand of bureaucratic state-socialism that emerged in Eastern Europe and the post-Stalin Soviet Union. To accommodate for this amalgam of both charismatic and rational-legal authority, the Cuban regime under Fidel Castro can be characterized as one of "charismatic state socialism."

This conceptual approach is particularly suited to account for the regime's evolution since Fidel Castro fell ill in 2006 and handed over the reins of power to his younger brother, Raúl Castro. Before we analyze this process, however, we will first turn to the international legitimation strategies pursued during the era of charismatic state socialism.

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6 Underscoring this relational understanding, Madsen/Snow (1996) speak of "the charismatic bond," Eisenstadt (1968: xxviii) points to the importance of "communicative situations" for the emergence of charismatic authority, and Beyer (1999: 309) even defines charisma as a "social structure."

7 Friedrich/Brzezinski (1956) reject the use of charisma due to the leader's possibilities for media manipulation; similarly, Easton (1957: 304) argues that charismatic leaders "are able to manipulate large numbers of followers precisely so that they can appear to be what in fact they are not." While charismatic leaders, as others, will use media in all ways that they see as being advantageous for themselves, some element of material or symbolic deliverance on rhetorical promises seems essential to sustain followership over a prolonged period of time.

8 Susan Eckstein is particularly explicit in making the point that Fidel Castro, while being "in many respects a textbook case of a Weberian ideal-typical charismatic leader," also "turned to traditional and especially to rational-legal bureaucratic forms of legitimation and authority as well" (Eckstein 1994: 20).

### 3 The International Dimensions of Regime Legitimation: Defensive and Expansive Strategies

As is typical in the aftermath of revolutions, the Cuban leadership that came to power in 1959 sought legitimacy not according to the rules and norms of the toppled regime, but from altogether different sources. In his classic work on the Cuban Revolution, Jorge Domínguez (1978: 201) identifies four key elements in the legitimation of revolutionary rule: charisma, political deliverance, distributional performance, and nationalism. A fifth element gradually emerged over time: the routinization of charisma, which began in the 1960s and which evolved more forcefully during the institutionalization process of the 1970s (Domínguez 1978: 201).

Typical for the domestic bias of Western legitimacy studies,<sup>9</sup> all of these aspects are essentially internal – except for nationalism, which inherently refers to a country's relations with the outside world. In the Cuban case, nationalism's core tenet is the defense of the island's interests and identity against the political and economic dominance and encroachment of the United States. However, this paper argues that the international dimensions of the Cuban regime's legitimation strategy reached, and went, much further than this singular cause. In doing so, the argument henceforth distinguishes between "defensive" and "expansive" international legitimation strategies.

The first, defensive legitimation, essentially refers to the notion of nationalism that is addressed by Domínguez. Fidel Castro presented the revolution as the culmination of the century-old struggles for national independence, which had been betrayed in 1898-1902, when Cuba was liberated from Spanish colonial domination only to fall under U.S. tutelage (Pérez 1995). The nationalist discourse thus evolved into a historical master narrative, in which the revolution was the fulfillment of the nation's destiny, and in which it was the charismatic leader's historic mission to lead this process.<sup>10</sup> Fidel Castro spelled out this legitimation through the articulation of a historic mission; emblematically, this happened in his famous 1953 trial defense, which ended with the proclamation, "History will absolve me!"

However, nationalism also had very practical implications, justifying the militarization of Cuban politics and the extreme concentration of power. Soon after the revolution a sharp confrontation with Washington ensued, in which the U.S. government did not shy away from escalating the conflict in military terms, from covert action to the support of the Bay of Pigs invasion. In Cuban politics, this international confrontation became the legitimation for the trumping of civilian logic by military thinking. Fidel Castro was the political as well as military leader, and both functions were inseparable. The external confrontation with the

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9 For example, Beetham (1991); for a reformulation of Beetham's concepts that takes into account the international dimensions cf. Holbig (2011).

10 As "political deliverance." Domínguez (1978: 199) refers to the idea that the revolutionary government is legitimate because it saved the country from the past; however, this past is described not as one of merely domestic evils, but precisely as that of a "pseudo-republic" under U.S. tutelage, so that the notions of political deliverance and nationalism ultimately meet in the same master narrative.

U.S. consolidated the rebel regime, to use Hadenius/Teorell's (2007) terminology, and it allowed the charismatic leader to repeatedly demonstrate his "extraordinary" (Weber) qualities. Moreover, official discourse held that the external aggression could only be confronted by a "unified command" thus not allowing a division of powers in the sense of institutionalized "checks and balances."

International conflict also legitimated the prohibition of political opposition. According to the logic of the besieged fortress, internal dissent or divisions were framed as inevitably playing into the hands of the external enemy, if not, moreover, being directly organized and orchestrated by it. Thus, dissent and opposition became by definition anti-nationalist attitudes. Later, restrictions on the freedom of speech and on the freedom of assembly were codified in the 1976 Constitution. But they originate from this primacy of military logic. Even deviant voices from within the regime's own ranks were purged for representing a "fifth column of the enemy" (e.g. PCC 1996).

The domestic political conflict that resulted from the revolution's profound social upheaval became framed in internationalized terms. The Cuban government evaded direct confrontation by opening the gates wide for emigration; hundreds of thousands of the old upper and middle classes left the island permanently in the years after the revolution's triumph, settling in the U.S. and putting their hopes in their host taking action to bring Castro down.<sup>11</sup> Over time, most Cuban emigrants took U.S. citizenship, while maintaining strong political interest in their country of origin. As a result of this "export" of opposition, the political and the national questions have become structurally bound together (Hoffmann 2007), providing the feeding ground for a perennial legitimation of authoritarian politics through nationalist discourse.

If these elements of "defensive" international legitimation have been of enormous importance for the regime's ability to guarantee either active consent or passive obedience, the regime also sought a wide range of additional elements that I propose to describe as part of "expansive" international legitimation.

The most notorious is the disproportionate role of Cuba in world politics over the course of the past half-century. This has been out of any reasonable balance with the island's rather limited population size, economic weight, and military capacity; it has, however, been no historical accident but to a large extent the fruit of deliberate political action by the Cuban leadership. Fidel Castro progressively "upgraded" the nature of his historical mission from one of Cuban national liberation to one of global anti-imperialism. His charismatic authority quickly transcended the nation-state's boundaries, as he became a venerated prophet of liberation for much of the Left in Latin America, and, to varying degrees, for people worldwide.

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11 Cf. Hoffmann (2005). Between 1959 and 1962 no fewer than 230,000 Cubans left the island; in a second wave, occurring between 1965 and 1973, another 330,000 Cubans migrated to the United States, again mostly from the former "white" upper and middle classes. From the third migration wave of 1980 onwards, the social origins of the emigrants became more mixed.

As the United States sought to delegitimize the Cuban regime by isolating it (through expulsion from the Organization of American States, economic embargo, and so on), the island's alliance with the Soviet Union provided international recognition and support. Moreover, highly subsidized trade relations gave the Castro regime the material means to turn Cuba into a model of socialist welfare in a Third World country, with celebrated accomplishments in education, health, and social security. In international politics, this much-praised Cuban development model, was the foundation for Fidel Castro's claim to "lead by example."

The regime in Havana invested considerable resources in the international promotion of the "Cuban model," including financing a wide array of outward-oriented state media, cultural projects, or festivals with an international reach, a vast program of medical internationalism, including missions to dozens of countries (Kirk/Erisman 2009), and major investments in sports development (Bunck 1990). For the Cuban leadership sport triumphs became landmark proof of the regime's social achievements. At the Olympic Games, Cuba became used to ranking among the top medal-winning nations, far ahead of other Third World nations.<sup>12</sup> Here, as in world politics, Cuba was "punching above its weight" Huish (2011). For the regime, this "oversized" international role of a country with 11 million people was a much cherished element of legitimation, and one with considerable popular appeal.

In their sociopolitical analysis of the post-Stalin Soviet Union, scholars recognize a "Soviet social contract," that is, "a tacit agreement to trade social security for political compliance."<sup>13</sup>

Under Fidel's tenure, this equation not only included social security but also the symbolic gratifications associated with a charismatic leadership acting on the global stage: any night watchman in a remote village could now feel elevated to being a hero in the global fight against imperialism; being an artist, musician, or writer from Cuba brought international recognition and invitations; any material sacrifice could be framed as Che Guevara-inspired selflessness in the pursuit of higher goals. Over time, the heroic non-material compensations lost their initial glamour; but under Fidel, international recognition remained the charismatic "currency" in Cuba's "socialist social contract."

Even the very domestic social accomplishments of Cuban socialism acquired an important international dimension. For one, social achievements, in order to be regarded as such, demand comparison. In the initial years, developments in health, education, or other sectors naturally were compared to pre-revolutionary standards. As the years passed, however, for the new generations historical comparisons became much less striking and emotive. Official rhetoric, hence, turned to comparisons not so much with the past, but rather with

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12 Cuba's historic ranking in detail: 1960: 0; 1964: 31; 1968: 30; 1972: 14; 1976: 8; 1980: 4 (Western boycott); 1984 and 1988: Cuba boycotts; 1992: 5; 1996: 8; 2000: 9; 2004: 11; 2008: 28; Source: Wikipedia online: <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Template:Olympic\\_games\\_medal\\_table](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Template:Olympic_games_medal_table)> (14 August 2011).

13 Cook (1993: 1), building on works by Bialer, Breslauer, Hauslohner, and Lapidus, among others.

other Latin American or Third World nations.<sup>14</sup> The international ranking of Cuban social, health, or educational indicators became a recurrent, if not to say obsessive, theme in Fidel Castro's speeches. As once-revolutionary social accomplishments became part of the citizenry's "accustomed environment," attempts to keep their legitimation potential alive were made through the recourse to international comparisons.

Cuba's historic alliance with the Soviet Union was initially born out of the raw need to find a powerful ally and backer against U.S. pressures and threats. Over time, as the Cuban regime adopted an explicitly socialist/communist orientation, siding with the socialist camp was heralded as the guarantee of future success and prosperity. However, even more emphatic, perhaps, was the regime's claim about Cuba's extraordinary responsibility to spearhead the Third World's anti-imperialist emancipation. This crystallized in Fidel Castro's high-profile engagement with the non-aligned movement; in Cuba's support for Latin American insurgency movements; and, in the military interventions in a number of African wars, most importantly in Angola (Domínguez 1989).

As a result of the desintegration of the socialist countries in 1989-91, Cuba suffered a profound economic crisis. This severely curtailed the resources that could be channeled into its external projection activities. However, while overseas military ventures came to an end, medical internationalism or cultural projects were maintained. Moreover, what did not come to a halt was the emphasis on Cuba's historic role on the world stage. Defending socialism continued to be framed as a responsibility for all those in the world who looked to Cuba as a bastion of anti-imperialist resistance.

Remarkably enough, less than a decade later Fidel Castro claimed to be, once again, at the vanguard of international change, as Hugo Chávez took power in oil-rich Venezuela. As he did so, he declared his admiration for Cuba and its leader, and proclaimed a "socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> century" for his country. Castro and Chávez publicly displayed a bond not merely of political concordance, but one of an intimate father-and-son relationship.<sup>15</sup> In practical terms, they established a far-fledged alliance that not only brought immense economic benefits to the island but also allowed for the revamping of its expansive international legitimation policies. The electoral victories of left-wing forces in Bolivia and Ecuador – and the increasing number of countries joining the Cuba-Venezuela-inspired ALBA economic integration scheme – all played into the reviving of the traditional legitimation leitmotif according to which the march of history was inevitably on the side of evolution and socialism.

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14 Typical of this has been the "None of them are Cuban" theme – for example slogans such as "Today, 200 million children sleep in the streets. None of them is Cuban" (see the photo 1 in the Appendix) which were widely proclaimed on billboards and in publications of all type.

15 This image has been explicitly confirmed by Chávez on numerous different occasions, for instance when he used his radio show "Aló Presidente," in February 2007, to tell Fidel, "You know that I don't have any complex about it: I call you 'father' in front of the entire world." For visual illustrations of this, see also the photos in the Appendix.

In contrast to the ALBA euphoria, relations with socialist China and Vietnam remained low-profile.<sup>16</sup> Even though the Asian countries gradually became poster children for economic success, Cuba's charismatic leader never praised them as examples of socialism's superiority. Rather than endorsing the Chinese model, Fidel Castro saw the economic reform path essentially as being a proto-capitalist deviation. As a result, he did not seek to gain legitimation from the Chinese success story, as this would all too easily provoke the question of why the Cuban government refused, then, to embark on a similar reform process.

#### 4 The Post-Fidel Succession Era: From Charismatic to Bureaucratic State Socialism

When Max Weber introduced the concept of "charismatic authority" to the social sciences, he immediately pointed to the severe problems with succession that are inherent in charismatic leadership (Weber 1968: 55 f.). In Cuba, the model of charismatic state socialism came to an end when Fidel Castro fell ill, in 2006. Formally, the rational-legal side of Cuban socialism would have sufficed to unequivocally define the successor. Raúl Castro was Fidel's deputy in all offices; the Cuban constitution defined him as the immediate replacement "in case of absence, illness, or death" of the head of state (República de Cuba 1976, Art. 94). Similarly, the statute of the Communist Party and the military's regulations were unambiguous about the succession of the second-in-command.

However, none of this was ever actually invoked. Succession was staged in a form typical of charismatic authority: through personal delegation. In a news bulletin broadcast on television, Fidel's personal secretary read a hand-signed "Declaration by the Commander-in-Chief," which stated that Raúl was to take over *ad interim* as head of state, as head of the Communist Party, and as head of the armed forces.<sup>17</sup> For Raúl Castro, this type of anointment was indispensable to the claiming of legitimacy through continuity. At the same time, he distanced himself as far as he possibly could from seeking a charismatic model of leadership himself. In the first public statement as head of state – an interview in the Party newspaper –, Raúl called himself a "discreet man," acknowledged to being unaccustomed to frequent public appearances, and proclaimed that he did not intend this to change.<sup>18</sup> A few months later, in December 2006, Raúl programmatically declared that Fidel had been a one-

16 In 1992 the then number three in the regime's hierarchy, the Communist Party's Head of Ideology, Carlos Aldana, was spectacularly fired. As Aldana was widely believed to have been an advocate of Chinese-style reform, his ousting sent strong signals to the party faithful that the advocating of the Chinese model was off limits.

17 What was declared as provisional actually proved to be permanent, as over time Raúl took over all delegated functions for good. Initially, there had been widespread speculation about whether Fidel, while stripped of his formal offices, continued to be the authority behind the throne. However, more than five years after the delegation of functions it is now beyond doubt that Raúl Castro has become the center of power in Cuba, and that Fidel Castro is in a position of dignified retirement.

18 R. Castro (2006). Original: "Siempre he sido discreto, esa es mi forma de ser, y de paso aclaro que pienso seguir así."



off phenomenon and that the only possible heir to his leadership was the Communist Party, not another individual.<sup>19</sup> Charismatic authority, according to this message, was now a thing of the past; henceforth, legitimate authority was to be based on institutionalization and bureaucratic administration (or, put it in Weberian terms, on the consequent routinization of charismatic authority). Even, regime critics recognize the decreased personalism of the Cuban regime. For instance, prominent blogger and opposition activist Yoani Sánchez (2011) writes that, “five years later [after Fidel handing power to his brother] we have entered a new phase in our relationship with our government, one that is less personal.”

As a result, under Raúl Castro the Cuban regime comes much closer to the Geddesian concept of a single-party regime than in the Fidel era. However, the charismatic leader’s heir was not the Communist Party alone, but rather an amalgam of state, military, and party structures. In particular, as Raúl has been at the helm of Cuba’s armed forces for half a century, there has been a clear power increase for army generals, as much in public functions as behind the scenes. Since Raúl took over, the Communist Party, as an institution, hardly had the lead role in the regime, and it is telling that the position of First Party Secretary was the last office that Fidel formally gave up, only a few weeks prior to the 6<sup>th</sup> Party Congress, in April 2011. As a result, even under Raúl Castro it is doubtful whether the “party organization exercises some power over the leader,” to again cite Geddes’ definition of a single-party regime. More precisely, therefore, Cuba continues to be an amalgam regime that combines different aspects of the categorizations put forward by her, as well as by Hadenius/Teorell (2007).

As a consequence, the Weberian term “bureaucratic” seems well suited to the characterization of the regime as it:

- a) contrasts with the charismatic notion of the Fidel era;
- b) refers to a broader set of formal institutions of power that encompass military, party, and state apparatus, rather than just singling out the party; and,
- c) at the same time implies top-down institutions with clear hierarchies, rather than broader institutional frameworks – as developed, for instance, in the modern governance literature.

The Weberian terminology also connects to Jowitt’s thesis of a communist evolution from “mobilization” and “consolidation” regimes – marked by command, arbitrary, and dogmatic modes of action and organization – to an “inclusion regime” with more procedural and empirically-oriented modes, in which the leaders are political managers rather than commanders (Jowitt 1992: 77).

Holding the long-overdue 6<sup>th</sup> Communist Party Congress in April 2011, after several postponements, was the most crucial point in Raúl Castro’s claim to socialist re-institutionalization.<sup>20</sup> A different aspect of the procedural agenda has been Raúl’s promise to make the

19 Speech held at the Congress of the Federación Estudiantil Universitaria, 20 December 2006.

20 The return to the formal institutions of Cuban socialism also became strikingly apparent in Raúl’s swift dismantling of the vast and once-powerful apparatus of parallel institutions that, in the 2000s, had emerged under the slogan of “the battle of ideas,” and which had been directly subordinated to the office of Fidel Castro.

regime more participatory.<sup>21</sup> This is not to be mistaken for political pluralism, as it refers to actors within the general state socialist framework. However, as such, it is typical of what Jowitt (1992) analyzed with regard to communist regimes – which, as they move towards an “inclusion regime,” seek to enhance legitimacy through the greater appreciation of discussion and the incorporation of a wider set of “articulate social audiences” (Jowitt 1992: 120). At the same time such inclusion will, when it gains sufficient momentum, challenge the party-state’s monopoly on power and constrain the exercising of authoritarian leadership. The Cuban experience provides perfect illustrations for the resulting stop-and-go process: while Raúl Castro initially called for a crucial national debate (R. Castro 2006), a number of cadres who took this call to heart – but who were also seen as “going too far” – were quickly removed from office (cf. Hoffmann 2011: 19-20).

In terms of policy, the shift from charismatic to bureaucratic socialism in Cuba echoes what Lowenthal (1970), with the Soviet Union in mind, described as the poles of utopia versus development in communist policy. Take the case of labor motives: while Fidel Castro never ceased to evoke a utopian “new man” ethos, Raúl made it a key concern to restore the value of state-paid salaries and to strengthen material incentives, so as to raise productivity and work discipline.

The shift to the bureaucratic socialist model thus goes hand in hand with a need to readjust the socialist state’s “social contract.” If the charismatic “currencies” of heroism and international recognition already lost much of their appeal during the 1990s and 2000s, they became irretrievable in the post-Fidel succession era. Moreover, social security also profoundly suffered with the economic crisis since the 1990s, as much in the eroding quality of education or health services as, more pervasively, in the sharp devaluation of state-paid salaries or pensions.

Against this background, the bureaucratic socialist regime seeks to reinvent the “social contract” through economic reform that promises individuals more economic opportunities to raise their material living standards. In this quest, the leitmotif is the downsizing of the state, the promoting of administrative rationality and cost-efficiency, and the gradually liberalizing of private sector activities. The farewell to the “überfather,” Fidel, is thus mirrored in the dismantling of his paternalistic “daddy state,” therein creating for Cubans a sense of “orphanhood” (Sánchez 2011) – as much in a symbolic as in a material sense.

While slow-moving in its implementation, this economic policy agenda contrasts with the voluntary economic policies typical of Cuba’s charismatic model, in which campaigns, ad-hoc mobilization, and moral appeals more often than not outweighed economic rationality. Moreover, the form of economic policy-making also differs: rather than coming as an order from the “Comandante,” the new economic policy orientations are processed through the formal institutions – albeit essentially top-down in an authoritarian style –, culminating in their ratification by the April 2011 Party Congress in Havana (PCC 2011).

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21 For example, Raúl, after formally being elected by the National Assembly in February 2008 to be the successor to Fidel as head of state, programmatically proclaimed that, “if the people are firmly cohered around a single party, this party has to be the most democratic party” (R. Castro 2008).

This overhaul of the Cuban development model<sup>22</sup> has also had profound implications for the regime's international projection. Foreign policy has become much more moderate and predictable. In particular, while the alliance with Chávez's Venezuela remains a cornerstone of foreign policy – due to the sheer weight of its economic benefits –, it has been ridden of much of its emphatic ideological overtones. Moreover, it no longer relegates relations with non-ALBA countries to second place; instead, Raúl Castro has courted economic engagement from and with countries without close ideological affinities, such as Brazil.

Under Raúl, Cuba has, in general, sought much less prominence in international politics. Certainly, the conflictive relations with the U.S. continue to be ever-present in public discourse, as the regime continues to frame all domestic dissent and opposition within the dichotomy of Cuba versus the U.S., as outlined above. Beyond this defensive international legitimation, though, political priorities and, hence, Raúl's legitimation strategy, have clearly shifted to domestic policies. In contrast to Fidel's largesse, the funding of foreign policy ambitions increasingly passes through a more stringent cost-benefit analysis.

Most notoriously, the Cuban leadership has downsized Cuba's role in international politics by the ceding of the epic internationalist mission of stewarding Third World anti-imperialism to Venezuela's Hugo Chávez. A closer look at the modalities of succession shows how intrinsically this shift is bound up with the passage of power from Fidel to Raúl, as well as with the corresponding change from charismatic to bureaucratic socialism.

Political succession is normally analyzed within the framework of the nation-state. However, in the case of charismatic leadership this is not always fully adequate as a methodology. As charismatic authority is not necessarily bound to the formal aspects of citizenship or eligibility to vote which come with the nation-state, then a charismatic leader's appeal can go well beyond a nation's domestic constituency. The case of Fidel Castro highlights how, in such an instance, succession can be effectively split into a two-level game: on the domestic level, where the highest offices in the Cuban state, army, and Communist Party were passed on to Raúl; and, on the transnational level, where Fidel's charismatic authority as a leader of Third World liberation was transferred by ritual means – a mode of succession from charismatic authority that was explicitly foreseen by Weber – to Hugo Chávez.

The stage for this ritual transmission was the hospital bed in which Fidel Castro recovered from medical intervention in 2006. The photographic and video material that Cuba's state-controlled media trickled to the public showed Hugo Chávez – not Raúl Castro – at Fidel's bedside, with them chatting, eating yoghurt together, and with Chávez taking notes. These political theatrics bore all the elements of charismatic designation by ritual means, culminating in a scene of Fidel handing Chávez a wooden pole, thereby reenacting the ancient symbolic gesture of passing on the baton of authority (see the photo in the Annex).

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<sup>22</sup> For a more detailed analysis of this, see Hoffmann (2010).

While this ritual anointment allowed Chávez to tap into Fidel's charisma, for the Cuban side there were also political benefits. If the Raúl Castro-led government is seeking to foster bureaucratic rationality in the country's politics and economy, then any grand "internationalist" mission – typical of his predecessor's charismatic leadership model – would constitute a heavy burden. In this sense, for Raúl it was a godsend that he could "export" this mission in a dignified manner and thereby have someone else shoulder Fidel's oversized internationalist legacy.

## 5 Downsizing Cuba: Bureaucratic State Socialism's Retreat to Defensive International Legitimation

In bidding farewell to the charismatic model of state socialism, the Raúl Castro government has not only acknowledged the differing character traits between the revolution's historic leader and his successor. It also responds to what it has recognized as an exhaustion of the charismatic model. This running out of steam is clearly perceptible among the population at large, where two decades of depressed salaries and economic shortcomings have led to profound disenchantment; apathy prevails and participation has become, for the most part, mere habit, at best. But the exhaustion of the charismatic leadership model has also struck hard at the level of the administrative staff, where the anti-corruption drive that was kicked off by Raúl Castro has uncovered a seemingly endless stream of moral decay that runs up to the highest levels of government.<sup>23</sup>

In such a context the move from charismatic to bureaucratic socialism requires substantial changes in the regime's legitimation strategy. Given that the successor to Fidel had been the country's ever-loyal second-in-command for half a century, it is little wonder that the general line of legitimation has been one of continuity. However, this has been combined with the discursive leitmotif of change. One of the most widely promoted slogans after Raúl took power was exactly this: "Revolution means changing all that needs to be changed." This phrase is, for sure, a quote from Fidel. The successor government thus combines continuity with the outgoing leader with a call for "change," but it has been a call that does not actually stipulate what needs to be changed, nor how and when.

In the years following succession, this discourse of change has materialized in the form of the economic reform agenda that Raúl has been slowly but surely sketching. While imple-

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23 In 2008 Raúl Castro created the Office of the Comptroller General, and put the comptroller on the ruling Council of State, thereby unleashing a wave of dismissals of high-ranking cadres on charges of corruption and the abuse of authority. The most prominent case was the firing of Vice-President Carlos Lage and the Minister of Foreign Relations, Felipe Pérez Roque, in 2009; since then, however, dozens of other officials in the administration or in state-run companies have been purged, including high-level organized personnel in the civil aviation, cigar, and nickel industries, the state telecommunications company, at least two ministries, and in one provincial government (Frank 2011).

mentation is gradual and slow, the economic guidelines approved by the 2011 Communist Party Congress run counter to much of what in the past were the sacred achievements of Cuban socialism, such as state-subsidized consumption or full employment (PCC 2011). In exchange, the new course promises to return more efficiency to the economy – thereby raising salaries and living standards – and to open up the possibilities for private initiatives and small-scale business activities. A broad anti-corruption campaign seeks to restore confidence in the state authorities. However, the political effects of such a drive may be quite to the contrary; Holmes (1993) has shown, anti-corruption campaigns were an important catalyst for the Soviet Union's legitimacy crisis and, moreover, its eventual demise.

Regarding the international dimensions of regime legitimation, continuity reigns in the nationalist narrative described above as defensive international legitimation. While some moderation in attitudes towards the Obama government and towards Cuban emigrants can be detected, it remains a steadfast pillar of the regime's legitimation strategy to portray itself as the only possible defendant of national independence in the face of U.S. neocolonialism. Similarly, any calls for more political pluralism on the island continue to be framed as playing into the external enemy's hands (for example, R. Castro 2006).

At the same, however, the regime has massively downscaled the expansive side of international regime legitimation. In sharp contrast to his predecessor – as well as to the high-profile travelling diplomacy of other current Latin American left-wing leaders such as Hugo Chávez or Bolivia's Evo Morales –, Raúl Castro hardly ever leaves his home country. In international fora the leading voices of anti-imperialist discourse from Latin America have been others: no Cuban appearance in the past five years has come close to the international attention that Hugo Chávez received for his Bush-bashing at the UN General Assembly in 2006 or for his encounter with Spain's monarch at the Iberoamerican Summit in 2007. While the Cuban government firmly maintains state solidarity with Chávez' "revolutionary" projects, in the international arena it has opted for a much more moderate tone.

The alliance with Venezuela remains of key economic importance for the island, but the relationship is dealt with more pragmatically. Chávez continues to be a frequent visitor to Cuba, but public display is given far more to his meetings with the retired Fidel than to those with Raúl. While Cuba continues to adhere to the ALBA integration scheme, the times of triumphant overtones in doing so have long since passed. Health missions abroad – a key aspect of Fidel Castro's soft power diplomacy – do continue, but they are more and more perceived as a money-earning export of services rather than as selfless acts of international solidarity.<sup>24</sup>

The scaling down of Cuba's extraordinary international profile has also reached the sports field. While, under Fidel Castro, Cuba maintained its top ranking in the Olympic medal tables all throughout the crisis years of the 1990s (ranking 5<sup>th</sup> in the 1992 games and 8<sup>th</sup> in 1996), the country fell to rank 28 at the Beijing Summer Olympics in 2008. When compared

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24 The estimated 50,000 Cuban medical staff and other experts operating in 77 countries worldwide have become one of the most important sources of foreign-earned revenue for Cuba.

to other countries of this size this could still be considered impressive, but in comparison to Cuba's historical standards it is miserable. More remarkably still was the fact that this poor performance did not produce any political outcry from the government or spark new programs to return the sports sector to its former glory.

In sum, Raúl's announcement that he "has been discreet and intends to stay that way" has not only held true for domestic purposes but also for international affairs. The "social contract" deal that Raúl Castro has put to the Cuban people is, roughly speaking, that they will receive from him less glamour on the world stage but more food on the dinner table. The downsizing of Cuba's international overstretch thus comes as part and parcel of the move towards a bureaucratic model of socialism, and one that emphasizes, above all, administrative and economic rationality and efficiency. In this, it deliberately foregoes the potential legitimization gains available from the international arena when such an engagement would contradict the far more important priority of concentration on the success of the Cuban domestic economy.

## 6 Conclusion

That authoritarian regimes seek legitimation from the international arena is not a new phenomenon sparked by globalization, but has been a classic facet of regimes resulting from, or identifying with, anti-colonial or anti-hegemonic struggles. The case study of Cuba confirms, however, that the weight and form of this recourse to international legitimation vary over time, in particular as a consequence of the evolving regime characteristics.

For such an analysis, the standard classifications of authoritarian regimes – such as those proposed by Geddes (1999) or Hadenius/Teorell (2007) – have proved to be insufficient. Instead, the recourse to the Weberian categories of charismatic and bureaucratic authority have proved fruitful for understanding the role of personalisms in authoritarian regimes, and for grasping the changing nature of the Cuban regime in the post-Fidel succession era. Moreover, it provides a key for understanding the re-adjustment of the regime's legitimation strategy.

The description of the Cuban turn to a bureaucratic state socialist regime connects with some of the literature on the Soviet Union, such as the thesis of an implicit "social contract" (Cook 1992), of the "de-utopization of Leninist regimes" (Lowenthal 1970), or of "inclusion regimes" (Jowitt 1992). Regarding the international dimensions of regime legitimation, however, the Soviet experience provides only limited clues:

- If, by playing on world stage, Fidel Castro punched above his weight, the Soviet Union was well within its weight class – it was one of the world's two superpowers in the bipolar Cold War era.
- Scaling down the Soviet Union's international projection was seen to risk the entire international arrangement on which the Soviet Union and its allied states in Eastern Europe

were built. When Gorbachev did eventually do so (by withdrawing from Afghanistan and not repressing the Baltic States' quest for independence), the fundamentals of the post-WWII world order did indeed quickly crumble.

- If, according to Jowitt, inclusion regimes shift away from arbitrary and dogmatic modes of action and organization (Jowitt 1992: 77), in the international realm this can be seen as being reflected in Raúl Castro's more moderate and more predictable foreign policy. However, the parallel with other communist regimes ends when defensive international legitimation is the issue. While – according to Jowitt – at the stage of inclusion, communist regimes come to a positive ideological reevaluation of nationalism and the nation-state, this is not true for the Cuban regime which, in contrast, was from its very beginning defined by emphatic nationalism.

With the shift to bureaucratic state socialism, the main compensation for the loss of the legitimation resources of the charismatic model is the promise of material well-being, through the raising of economic efficiency and the allowing of private initiatives. Whether the government can live up to these promises or not – and whether the nascent reforms do indeed bring about better living standards for a broad section of society – will be of crucial importance for the future of the regime.

To be credible, the legitimation discourse of domestic reform makes it imperative that expansive international legitimation is discarded, and that Cuba's prominence on the world stage is "resized." Yet, while this involves foregoing the international legitimation resources of the previous, expansive model, embarking on economic reform might nevertheless allow the regime to tap into a different kind of international legitimation: to present Cuba as a homologue of the successful Chinese and Vietnamese models of socialism, in which Communist Party rule goes hand-in-hand with impressive economic growth.

Under Fidel's tenure, pointing to the success of the Chinese model was taboo; it was seen as being politically corrosive as it questioned the wisdom of Cuba's stubborn rejection of market reforms. Under Raúl Castro this concern could diminish. The Chinese government publicly applauded Cuba's 2011 Party Congress. In its wake, Chinese Vice-President Xi Jinping visited Cuba, in June 2011, and was given high-profile attention in the state media. Bilateral economic relations have gained momentum since Raúl took over.<sup>25</sup> While Havana remains reluctant to embrace Beijing's path as explicitly as it did the Soviet model four decades earlier, there are nonetheless increasing omens that the Cuban leadership is gradually incorporating references to the successful Chinese development path into its international legitimation strategy.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> *Oxford Analytica Daily Brief*, 15 June 2001: Chinese engagement will not speed up Cuban reform.

<sup>26</sup> A good indicator of this is the April 2011 issue of the island's most prominent intellectual publication, *Temas*, whose thematic section is entirely dedicated to the socialist models of China and Vietnam (Temas 2011).

At this point we need to recall that a regime's legitimation strategies do not yet answer the question of how much, in the eyes of its audience, legitimacy it actually garners. As Holbig (2011: 169) points out, not even positive economic performance necessarily translates automatically into political legitimacy; this, rather, depends on the regime's ability to frame economic improvements in such a way that they are actually credited to being the outcome of its policies.

Moreover, legitimacy is also too quickly equated with regime stability, and a lack of legitimacy with collapse. However, political mechanics are more complex. A loss of legitimacy may as much spur an acceleration of reform as it may lead to hard-line retrenchment. Economic success may not necessarily quench the thirst for change, but spur demand for more. Popular discontent may not only have the choice of loyalty or rebellion, but might also exit in the form of emigration or accommodate itself in apathy.

Finally, the bottom line of authoritarian regime stability is the ability to prevent alternatives from coming to power. This does have to do with the regime's legitimation, repression, and cooptation capacities, but not only those: it also has to do with the behavior, actions, and credibility of its opponents, both on and outside the island, as well as, ultimately, the attitudes and behaviour of the population at large.



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## Appendix

**Photo 1:** Billboard in Cuba: "9 million children in Latin America suffer from malnutrition. None of them is Cuban."



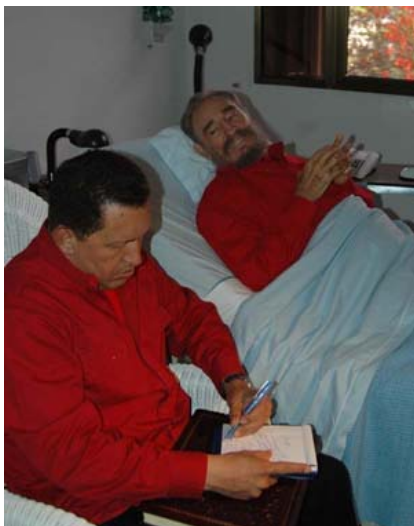
Quelle: <[www.profesionalespcm.org/cuba/Cuba97/ninguno.gif](http://www.profesionalespcm.org/cuba/Cuba97/ninguno.gif)>.

**Photo 2:** Hugo Chávez at Fidel Castro's hospital bedside, 2006



Quelle: <[www.cubadebate.cu](http://www.cubadebate.cu)>.

**Photo 3:** Hugo Chávez at Fidel Castro's hospital bedside, 2006



Quelle: <[www.cubadebate.cu](http://www.cubadebate.cu)>.

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