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**Fidel and Raúl Castro's ideological
influence on foreign policy in reaction to the
U.S. trade embargo**

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Rick Padmos

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Literature review

In contrast to most of the countries in the world today, Cuba took a different ideological path and responded differently to international issues. This alternative path could be a result of Cuba's strong authoritarian leader, Fidel Castro. As Hermann (2001) describes, Castro spent his political career engaged in trying to make communism work in Cuba and to export the socialist revolution in Latin America and Africa. Fidel Castro dominated every aspect of political power; he eliminated political power, institutionalized a single-party rule, installed a repressive police system and built a cult of personality to achieve maximum leadership (Horowitz, 2007). However, during his final days he seemed more moderate in his beliefs and opened Cuba up to the rest of the world. It is disputed among many if it was a result of the moderation of Fidel Castro or if it was a result of the power transition in 2008 to his brother, Raúl Castro (Latell, 2005). For this reason, it is important to investigate the two Cuban leaders.

First of all, it is of great importance to verify the level of analysis that is used during this study. IR theory has long been dominated by liberalist and realist scholars without taking the concepts of culture and individuality in mind. However, since the end of the Cold War, this view has gradually proliferated itself as an important aspect in IR theory. Even political realists, under the influence of their Waltzian shift to neorealism, are carefully partaking in this trend (Lapid, 1996). Lapid (1996) is in accordance with Verba (1961), who stated that international relations cannot adequately be described without considering personalist aspects of the decision-maker. For exactly this reason, the individual will be examined in this study. Although larger units of analysis should not be neglected in IR, for the purpose and clarity of this study it will not be fully analysed. However, while using the individual level of analysis it is necessary to meet Singer's (1961) criteria of analytic models. He argues that if an analytical model is used, it is mandatory to fulfil certain requirements. Singer's (1961) first requirement (is that the level of analysis offers a highly accurate description of the phenomena under investigation. Secondly, the analytical model has to explain the relationships among the phenomena that are investigated (Singer, 1961). Thirdly, according to Singer (1961), it has to offer the promise of reliable predictions. An individual level of analysis regarding the US-Cuban trade embargo ticks all Singer's requirement boxes (1961). It describes the situation under the two different Cuban leaders, it explains the relationship between the leaders and the trade embargo and it predicts Raúl Castro's leadership style in the future.

The second question that arises while studying political leaders is why they are relevant for the study of international conflicts. As Hermann., et al. (2001) argue, foreign policy decisions are made through three kinds of decision units: leaders, groups, and coalition. These units change over time, but if the decision unit is a single and powerful individual it becomes a predominant leader. In authoritarian regimes, the political leader becomes the predominant leader, since it is the one person that has the ability to commit the resources of the society and has the power to make decisions that cannot be reversed. This powerful individual dominates the decision-making process and can exert great influence on foreign policy and international conflicts (Hermann, 2001). In such international issues, political leaders matter, because when a serious threat to the values and interest of the country occurs, a strong reaction is needed.

As described in Hermann's article (2014), Stern (2003) argues that crisis situations are considered to be a serious threat to the values and interests of the political unit, which gives the political unit little time to respond. For this reason, a reaction of a political leader is necessary to avoid further escalation of the crisis. The political leader's characteristics have great influence on what this reaction will be. Beliefs, leadership style, reaction to stress, motivation and background factors are the most dominant factors (Hermann, 2014). Renshon (2008) agrees with Hermann and argues that, while studying international politics and foreign policy decisions, the ideology of the political leader is extremely important in understanding foreign policy decisions. Empirically, they are of great importance because they provide a framework to make analysing easier in the otherwise overwhelming amount of information. By excluding information of other political units and including information of only political leaders, it improves the quality of the analysis of policy. Theoretically, ideology is of great importance for the reason that the political leader's opinion is influenced by his ideology, the reaction of the political leader to the public's opinion and what type of international system is constituted by the world leaders' mutual beliefs. Furthermore, as Schwartzmantel (2008) argues, there is plenty of historical evidence that politics cannot be properly understood without taking ideology into consideration. The USSR is such an example. Jervis (2014) elaborates on this argument and holds the opinion that the decision-makers' concepts are tied to an ideology that provides a frame of reference for viewing international relations.

Besides investigating why the Cuban leaders' ideology matters in this international issue, it is also of great importance to identify external factors that could have an impact on the embargo. To begin with, the trade embargo was a policy decision of the United States in order to condemn communist Cuba (Cain, 1994). As described earlier, much research has

been done on state level and from the viewpoint of the United States, while the Cuban side was almost completely ignored. This is a strange development, since the Cuban reaction to the U.S. trade embargo is just as important to investigate. For this reason, solely the Cuban reaction will be investigated in this thesis while bearing in mind other factors outside Cuba's sphere of influence that could have played a role in the shaping of the trade embargo.

As described briefly, in this thesis the long-term trade embargo between Cuba and the United States of America will be analysed. In contrast to other research that has been done on this subject, this research will investigate if the ideologies of Cuba's two political leaders have played a role in foreign policy in the reaction to the embargo and if they had an impact on the recent moderation of the embargo. Almost all of the other literature on the subject focusses solely on the state as an actor. Other scholars such as Walldorf (2014), Corey., et al. (2007), Schreiber (1973) and Boyton (1972) only focus on the macroeconomic effects of the trade embargo, while other scholars such as White (2015) only study national and international law. For this reason, it is important to fill in the gap in the existing literature. Therefore, the research question of this thesis will be: Is there any influence of Fidel and Raúl Castro's ideologies in their response to the trade embargo that the United States imposed on Cuba?

Theoretical framework

In the research for this thesis the ideological influence on foreign policy of the Cuban political leaders Fidel and Raúl Castro will be examined in reaction to the trade embargo which the United States imposed after political differences between the two countries. As Lapid (1996) describes, during the last few decades, not much attention is given to the individual in IR theory. However, as Lapid (1996) further argues, this trend is gradually changing with the rebirth of the concept's identity and culture in IR theory in the recent years. Liberal and neoliberal approaches have come into favour of using the concepts culture and identity in world affairs. This trend is noticeable by recent mappings of IR disciplinary trends, such as "humanistic" and "neoidealist" moments (Lapid, 1996). Where most mainstream perspectives have just recently accepted the role of the individual, other perspectives such as reflectionism, constructivism, post-positivism, postmodernism, post-structuralism and feminism have already derived much of their views from these factors. It is exactly for this reason that the

orientation on the individual gains massive support within IR theory (Lapid, 1996). Political leaders are the most important individuals in world affairs. The way to determine whether the identity of the political leader is of importance is by using comparisons and counterfactuals (Lapid, 1996). By comparing different political leaders in similar circumstances, it is plausible that a difference of (foreign) policy could be a result of the political leader's ideology (Jervis, 2013).

The research on the political leaders will be done in accordance with political psychology. As Manis (1977) argues, political psychology implies an emphasis on personal beliefs and hypotheses, as the reasons for a certain behavior a group or individual show. Furthermore, 't Hart (2010) argues that political psychology includes the political actors' personalities, core values and beliefs, and leadership style are shaped by their family background, socialization and experience. These factors are crucial determinants of their policy stances and behavior. He sees "man as intricate blend of conscious and unconscious traits, drives and styles" (t' Hart, 2010). The previously mentioned factors will be investigated for both Fidel and Raúl Castro. The expectation is that, although Fidel and Raúl were brought up in the same family, there are still differences in their socialization and experiences. These had an effect on their ideological beliefs and will expose the difference in their ideological influence on foreign policy in relation to the trade embargo.

Ideology is a difficult concept to grasp. As Mullins (1972) and Knight (2006) argue, it is difficult to set the conceptual boundaries and not to overstretch its significance. However, the definition of ideology given by Seliger (1976) would fit best. He describes an ideology as a set of ideas which men posits and it explains and justifies ends and means of organized social action and political actions. Ideology defines what a certain individual or a group regards as a desirable system of ideas, beliefs, world-view, norms, or inclinations. These sets of ideas have a significant influence on policy-making and therefore on foreign policy (Chen, 2005). As Chen (2005) further argues, individuals develop their ideologies throughout their lives. Important aspects that influence one's ideology are birth place, language, parents, environment of growing up and other special events or persons. As a consequence, individuals bring their sets of ideas to their living environment and society. They do not only influence one's decisions, but also the decision-making process (Chen, 2005). Since both Fidel and Raúl Castro are authoritarian leaders, they both dominate the decision-making process and therefore define foreign policy (Hermann, 2001). Furthermore, as Fawn (2004) argues, ideology gives a systematic interpretation of foreign policies that were made in the past and of policies which are still to be made in the future.

To identify a specific ideology, to distinguish it from others, and to hold elites and citizens accountable for what is done in its name, it is important to pin the historically contingent content and meaning of the ideology (Gordy, 2015). Furthermore, political ideologies must be responsive in order to be compelling (Gordy, 2015). In this case two types of ideology are present. Fidel Castro was a strong believer of Jose Martí's ideology, which he proclaimed himself in various speeches (Bénat, 2010; Ramonet, 2007). It should be noted that Fidel was also a believer of communist ideology, however, he was more a Martían than a communist (Ramonet, 2007; Latell, 2005). Raúl Castro, on the other hand, believed more in the communist ideology (Bain, 2015; Klepak, 2012; Ramonet, 2007). In addition, these two types of ideologies are compelling, since they both have a significant reflection on foreign policy in response to the U.S. trade embargo.

The ideology of José Martí, which Fidel Castro is a strong believer of, is based on José Martí's book "Nuestra América", which he wrote in 1891 (Hatfield, 2015). Martí was a Cuban literary person and revolutionary who led Cuba to independence from the Spanish colonizers (Lopéz, 2006). In "Nuestra América" Martí argues that there are no races and that everyone is an equal human being. Making a racial distinction between men is a sin to humanity (Hatfield, 2015). In the same book Martí further argues that the people of the United States exhibit characteristics such as ideas of expansion, vanity, acquisition and greed. These characteristics pose a serious threat to weak lands that the U.S. declares to be perishable and inferior (Hatfield, 2015). In Martí's opinion, it was best for Cuba to be an autonomous state without the interference of other states. First Cuba had to undo itself from the Spanish and later from North-American imperialism (Lopéz, 2014). To achieve this, Martí emphasises the importance of the proletariat, which he called: "callados, amorosos and generosos" (silent, loving, generous). By using these words to describe the working class he admired and appraised the importance of the proletariat in Cuban independence (Lopéz, 2006). The key words to describe Martí's ideology are Cuban nationalism and anti-imperialism (Hidalgo, 2011).

The communist ideology, which is present in Cuba was based on the ideas of Karl Marx. Marx's communist ideology was focused on a victorious working class that would defeat the old society by a revolution, which could be chartered beforehand. In addition, capitalism would be defeated by a socialist transformation of the capitalist mode of production (Ollman, 2003). The aim of this ideology is to create a classless, stateless and socialist society based on the common ownership of goods where every individual produces to its maximum and consumes to its needs (Holmes, 2009). Marx and Engels never specified

on imperialism in their Communist Manifesto. However, later on, Marxist philosophers created their own theories on imperialism based on the work of Marx (Thomson, 2007).

Although Martí's ideology is close to communist ideology in Cuba, since they both focus on an equal society and the proletariat as most important actors in their ideology, there is still a world of difference between them. In contrast to communism, Martí's ideology is more focused on Cuban nationalism and anti-imperialism (Hidalgo, 2009). Marxist communism, on the other hand, is focused on social transformation of the political system and the mode of production (Holmes, 2009). Fidel combined the two ideologies in order to make the revolution in Cuba succeed (López, 2006). However, it is to be expected that Fidel was a fiercer believer of Martí's ideology and that communist ideology came in second place. For this reason, Fidel's foreign policy in reaction to the U.S. trade embargo is more nationalistic and anti-imperialistic than the reaction of his brother Raúl, who is a dedicated follower of communism. If Raúl's foreign policy is in line with his communist ideology, it is expected that he will focus on the realization of a well-functioning communist Cuba. Furthermore, Raúl should react less anti-imperialistic and nationalistic than his brother, since Raúl's emphasis lies on his Marxist ideology.

However, it should also be noted that geopolitical constraints should be taken into account while studying this case. Classical realism offers valuable insights in IR. The realist theory is centered upon four principles; states are the prime actors in IR, the international system is anarchic, all states are rational actors and all states want to survive as an entity in the international system (Mearsheimer, 2014). Furthermore, classical realism states that it is human nature that pushes states and individuals to act in a manner that puts interest over ideologies (Baylis, Smith & Owens, 2001). The more realist explanation, according to Javed (2015), could be the recent approach of the rising powers, Russia and China, to Latin American countries. For instance, China helped Argentina build a nuclear power plant, they helped to launch the first satellite of Bolivia and most probably helped Venezuela start a drone program. Russia made similar approaches to Latin America and made multiple deals with Brazil and Argentina. (Javed, 2015). The United States could have felt threatened by these new rising powers' warmer relations with the South American continent. The expectation is that the U.S will change its policy and start to invest in its relations with Cuba in order to maintain its hegemonic position. (Javed, 2015). Cuba might see that closer relations with other, more powerful states gives them more resources to survive as a state in the anarchic world system (Klepak, 2012).

Methodology

Before studying a particular issue, event or person, it is of great importance to systematically think about how to investigate the topic of interest (McDermott, 2007). In this research, the case study method will be applied. Elman, Gerring and Mahoney (2016) explain that while using the case study method, a single case will intensively be investigated. This case study is intended to identify a cause (X) that is necessary to produce a particular outcome (Y). As described earlier, in this study, the individual level will be used on Cuban foreign policy in reaction to the US-Cuban trade embargo. Fidel and Raul Castro's characteristics will be put under a magnifying glass to determine whether or not ideology could have played a role in foreign policy in reaction to the embargo. Ideology will function as X, while Cuban policy in reaction to the trade embargo will function as Y. The ideological reaction to the embargo will uncover the true ideology of the leaders, since ideologies should be responsive in order to be compelling (Gordy, 2015). This will all be done through the historical analysis of secondary literature and Fidel Castro's extended interviews. The historical method of analyzing tries to offer historically grounded explanations of large-scale and substantively important outcomes (Mahoney & Rueschemeyer, 2003). While using this method it is of great importance to have valid sources and multiple sources with more or less the same content (Thomson, 2010).

Besides investigating The Cuban leaders' characteristics and ideologies, it is also necessary to verify which method will be used in analyzing foreign policy and its relation to ideology. Policy has a strong relation with ideology. It provides a systematic interpretation of policies that were made in the past and those that will be made in the future (Fawn, 2004). Ideology functions as the guideline for the foreign policy of the Cuban leaders. For this reason, foreign policy decisions in response to the trade embargo should be studied. Cuban policies regarding the trade embargo will also be studied through historical analysis of secondary literature and documents.

Historical Background

Before investigating the trade embargo that the United States of America imposed on Cuba and the ideological differences of Fidel and Raul Castro in relation to the embargo, through the lenses of political psychology, it is useful to provide a brief history of Cuba and its relations with the United States. In the following part the history of the trade embargo, or “el bloqueo” as the Cubans call it, will be given in order to illustrate a clearer picture of the complex situation.

History of Cuba from 1492-1959¹

During its history, Cuba has long been dominated by foreign powers. In the period from 1492 to 1898 Cuba was ruled by the Spanish (Bethell, 1993; Staten 2015). During that period of time, the indigenous people of Cuba were suppressed by the Spanish conquistadores and were wiped out by either diseases or Spanish brutality or through intermarriage. For nearly four centuries, Cuba functioned as a stop-over point between Spain and Central and South America (Staten, 2015). However, in the 18th century the country underwent a transformation with the British occupation, the emergence of the United States as a trade market and the slave rebellion in Haiti, which changed the world market for sugar (Bethell, 1993). With Haiti no longer producing sugar, the prices for sugar rose and Cuba took over the position of largest sugar producer in the world. In the period from 1868 to 1902 the Cubans fought two independence wars, however, they did not achieve the result that they wanted, hence the country was occupied by the United States in 1902. During the imperialistic dominance of the United States, which ended in 1952, the country faced a big economic and political crisis. Furthermore, social inequality was very high and almost one-third of the Cubans was considered to be poor. This condition spurred the growth of Cuban identity and nationalism. The only aspect that was missing at that time, was the appearance of a charismatic leader in the right place and time to bring all these ingredients together to create a successful revolution in Cuba. The Cubans found this leader in Fidel Castro.

¹ In this section, the main source that was used was the book of C.L. Staten (2015) named “*The History of Cuba*”.

History of Cuba from 1959 to present

When Fidel Castro defeated the Batista regime and he and his revolutionaries entered Havana on the 8th of January 1959, nobody expected the small island of only 6.5 million people to be a key actor in the Cold War between the Soviet Union and the United States. (Mariño & Pruessen, 2012). As a result of his charismatic appearance and smart political game, Fidel Castro dominated Cuba as no leader before him had ever done. He presented the United States as Cuba's enemy and established the first Marxism-based communist country in the Western Hemisphere. Castro created a socialist economy in Cuba and established programs to redistribute wealth and help the poorest (Staten, 2015). After the well-known confrontation between the United States and Cuba in the Bay of Pigs in 1961, and later the nuclear confrontation in 1962, the mutual suspicion and hostility between the two countries increased. As a response, Cuba established strong ties with the Soviet Union. By using each other, the two communist powers achieved their own national objectives (Staten, 2015). Of course, this deteriorated the already weak and hostile ties between Cuba and the United States. During the early 1960s Castro increased its socialist and communist agenda, as he nationalized many American companies in Cuba. This was a shock to officials in Washington, who were affiliated with Cuban domestic policy (Mariño & Pruessen, 2012). As a result of Cuba's communist transformation, the president of the United States at that time, John F. Kennedy, strengthened the trade embargo, which was also present under the Batista regime. However, during the Batista regime the embargo, or "el bloqueo", was only directed at the sales of arms to Cuba. On the 19th of October 1960, almost two years later, the embargo embodied U.S. exports to Cuba except for food and medicine. On the 7th of February, the embargo extended its influence on almost all imports from Cuba to the United States (Huffbauer et al., 2011). Throughout time, the embargo took different shapes through different kind of statutes. In its contemporary form, it is enforced through six statutes². The first statute is the Trading with the Enemy Act of 1917, which forbids the United States to trade with its enemies. The second statute is the Foreign Assistance act of 1961. This act forbids the United States to do business with countries that violate and do not recognize human rights. The third act is the Cuban assets control Regulations of 1963, which supports the Trading with the Enemy act. The other acts are the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992, the Helms-Burton act of 1996 and the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000, where the Cuban Democracy Act

² The information about the six statutes on which the embargo is build is retrieved from Amnesty International (2009) "*The US Embargo against Cuba: Its Impact on Economic and Social Rights*".

only allows the United States to decrease its sanctions if Cuba democratizes and the Helms-Burton Act, which restricts even more trade with Cuba and forbids United States citizens to assist any successor government in Cuba. The last act, which was imposed in 2000, opened the embargo, since the trade for certain medicines and agricultural food was allowed. Through these six statutes, on which the embargo is built, Cuba faces economic and social problems which continue to increase until today (de Cordoba, 2003). The U.S. embargo led to the loss of Cuba's primary source of income, the exportation of sugar cane. As a result, the Cuban people had to live on 20 dollars a month. However, the situation became even worse after the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, which assisted Cuba financially and militarily, and led to extreme poverty in the Marxist country of Cuba. (Jourdane, 2016).

Forging the Castro's ideological spectrum

In the previous chapter a short history of Cuba and the U.S. trade embargo against Cuba has been given. In the following chapter, the theory of political psychology will be applied in order to investigate how Fidel Castro forged his Martían ideology and how Raúl Castro forged his Marxist ideology. More specifically, the three factors of 't Hart (2010), family background, socialization and experience will be analysed.

The making of a revolutionary

The formation of Fidel's values, beliefs and ideology began from an early age, as Fidel explains himself in Ramonet's (2007) extended interview with "el lider maximo". Being not the grandson, but the son of a relatively rich landowner, Fidel Castro was not born with an aristocratic title. This had an effect on his view on how to treat people in equal ways. If he had been from aristocratic birth, he would have had a sense of superiority over people. However, in the region of Birán, where he grew up, everybody was poor (Coltman, 2003). The people who lived there came from humble origins and most of them were unemployed, illiterate and had no food. Although Fidel was a member of one of the richest families in Birán, he identified himself with the poor people and often brought leftover food to the people in Birán. (Skierka & Camiller, 2004). Besides his own sense of equality, his parents also allowed him to play with any child that he wanted to play with, rich or poor, black or white

(Ramonet, 2007; Coltman, 2003). Fidel Castro's rebellious character developed from the time that he was a six-year-old pupil in Santiago de Cuba at a teacher's house. Fidel was sent there to receive a decent education, since the schools in Birán were not of good enough quality. However, the school in Santiago appeared to be even worse; corporal punishments and malnutrition were common during his period at the school. As a reaction to the bad living conditions, Fidel and one of his classmates decided to rebel and bombarded the building with rocks (Ramonet, 2007). Fidel Castro continued to rebel during his stay at the school in Santiago until he was sent to Jesuit schools by his parents (Coltman, 2003). At these schools, he gained another trait that influenced his ideology. The Jesuits are known to have a clear idea of organization, justice and discipline, almost in military form. The Jesuits taught these disciplines to Fidel Castro, who found this very useful during his rebellion and presidency (Jayatilleka, 2007). However, Fidel Castro gained his actual ideology during the time he studied at the university of Havana (Latell, 2005). It is at this university where Fidel first started to read classic intellectual work by Aristotle, San Agustín, Martí and Marx (Bajini, 2010). However, as he argues in Ramonet's (2007) interview, Marx was not his greatest influence. The most important influence on Fidel Castro's ideology came from José Martí (Coltman, 2003). Castro applied Martí's ideology in the iteration of internationalism, which was besides nationalistic and anti-imperialistic, also pan-Latin American. He wanted to create a Cuban model for revolutionaries in suppressed countries (Sobers, 2012). Fidel used Martí's ideology as a weapon to make the revolution and his presidency a success. Fidel's Martían ideology was present in every possible aspect. For instance, Fidel placed a huge billboard opposite the U.S. Interest Section in Havana upon which was written: "Señores imperialistas, we're not afraid of you at all!" (Pérez, 2009). Furthermore, during the 1990s the words and works of Martí were everywhere and were evoked to remind the Cuban people of the duty of sacrifice for their country. Fidel used Martí's "patria" (homeland) as a sentiment of enormous vitality and resonance, it should be defended without compromise, no matter whatever the cost would be; "patria o muerte!" (Pérez, 2009).

Besides Martí's Cuban nationalism, Fidel added Marxism to his ideological spectrum. Nonetheless, Martían thinking was still dominant in his ideology, as Fidel Castro explains himself in Ramonet's (2007) interview. Although Fidel Castro adopted Marxism in his ideology, he did not take over every facet, since he still was a Cuban nationalist in the first place (Latell, 2007). As a result, Fidel developed his own brand of Marxism and avoided the ideological grip of Soviet Marxism even though he embraced a strategic alliance with the Soviet Union (Jayatilleka, 2007). He admired the Soviet Union for its strong communist

legacy, however, he saw many flaws in their system. For instance, he did not agree with the large collectivization of land, a domestic policy that the Soviet Union adopted in order to increase food production. Fidel Castro argued that the Cuban Revolution declared that the will of the “campesinos” (farmers) would be respected and that they would never have to fear to lose their land due to forced collectivization. Another facet of Soviet communism which Fidel loathed, was the cult of personality of Stalinism. From the first days of the revolution he forbade giving streets, statues, buildings, etcetera living leader’s names. Furthermore, Fidel Castro adopted the whole political left during his presidency, while the Soviet Union only proclaimed the communist party as the party with influence in government (Ramonet, 2007).

In the shadow of Fidel

Raúl was the youngest of the Castro family and almost five years younger than Fidel Castro. However, he experienced a more or less similar youth to that of Fidel. After a few years of home education, Raúl was sent to the same school as Fidel in Santiago (Klepak, 2012; Ramonet, 2007). At first, Raúl tended to misbehave at school and as a result Fidel scolded him in order to keep him in line. After many criticisms from the teachers of Raúl, Fidel told his parents that he would take care of his younger brother. Fidel gave him books to read and awakened his interest in studying (Ramonet, 2007). During his childhood, Raúl spent most of his time watching his brother’s successes and rebelliousness (Klepak, 2012). However, Fidel and Raúl created a very strong bond, which lasted until Fidel’s death. After graduation, Fidel proposed that Raúl should do an Administration major at the University of Havana (Ramonet, 2007). During Raúl’s time at university he became very much left-wing and he even joined the Communist Party as a result of the Marxist books Fidel gave him. It is a remarkable fact, however, that Fidel never joined the Communist Party. However, Fidel did nothing to discourage Raúl from participating in communist activities (Coltman, 2003). At the attack of the Moncada barracks in 1953, which was led by Fidel, Raúl held no leader position since he was too young according to Fidel. However, in the period after that Raúl showed what he was capable of. He soon developed himself as an excellent trainer of revolutionaries and he implemented a system of discipline, which he deemed essential if the group of armed individuals would become an effective military force. Furthermore, he gained the reputation of ruthlessness. He believed that without organization, loyalty and discipline the movement was doomed to fail and he imposed strict rules in order to keep the young revolutionaries in line (Latell, 2005; Klepak, 2012).

In 1959, it was not yet clear to the world, what the future would hold for Cuba. Fidel already expressed himself in showing that he was first a supporter of Martí and then of Marxism. However, Raúl did not yet make such a statement. This statement came after an interview with a reporter of “The Worker”, an official weekly of the American Communist Party. Raúl’s fierce communist ideology was also noticed by Nikita Khrushchev, the Soviet Premier. Khrushchev wrote in his memoirs that he was impressed by Raúl and argued that he was a good communist. Khrushchev was, however, less in favour of Fidel because he was not convinced of the discipline that was required for a communist, a trait that was clearly believed to be one of Raúl’s finest qualities (Latell, 2005). Fidel noticed the capabilities of his younger brother and after the successful Cuban Revolution he gave Raúl important political positions. (Klepak, 2012). Fidel was so impressed that he made his younger brother his successor (Sullivan, 2011). During Raúl’s presidency his communist ideology is to a certain degree still present. There are restrictive policies to the private sector, self-employment is banned in most professions, the military is the most important sector and political oppression increased in the country (Corrales, 2014).

While looking through the lenses of political psychology and looking in particular at the three factors of ‘t Hart (2010), it is noticeable that a difference in socialization and experience created a clear different ideological spectrum for both Cuban leaders. Raúl developed different traits to Fidel, Raúl had a better discipline, organizational skills and a stronger communist ideology, while Fidel was more intellectual, rebellious, charismatic and a stronger believer of Martían ideology and less a believer in communism. When looking at the policies of Fidel and Raúl Castro, it is visible that their ideological spectrum had different types of (foreign) policies as an outcome.

Ideology, foreign policy and “el bloqueo”

It appeared, while using the theory of political psychology, that throughout his youth, Fidel gained his Martían and communist ideology which assisted him during his political career. Although Fidel was a strong believer in Marxism, he argued that he was a Martían in the first place. By analysing Fidel Castro’s foreign policy this became clear, since strong Martían nationalism, internationalism and anti-imperialism was present in his (foreign) policy. On the other hand, Raúl is a strong believer of Marxism. This was also visible during his youth and

this political career. In the following chapter, Fidel and Raúl Castro's ideologies will be investigated in relation to their foreign policies regarding the U.S. trade embargo.

Fidel Castro's foreign policy and "el bloqueo"

It is noticeable that Fidel Castro developed a clear ideology during his younger years. This ideology had great influence on his domestic and foreign policy in his political career (Coltman, 2003; Ramonet, 2007), and thus on the trade embargo that the United States imposed against Cuba. After Fidel succeeded in overthrowing the government of dictator Batista in 1959, the U.S. government welcomed Castro's rise to power. The U.S. government predicted that Fidel Castro's rise would lead to a democratic Cuba. However, this appeared not to be the case and the optimism about Fidel Castro soon evaporated (Welling, 1994). As a Martían thinker, Fidel feared American imperialism, or as Martí termed it, "la Roma Americana" (the American Rome). For Cuba's revolutionary government, this required a multifaceted foreign policy in order to recalibrate the dominance of the United States over Cuba (Salazar, 2006). These measures include, among others, the nationalization of American-owned enterprises in Cuba and the creation of the "First Declaration of Havana" as a reaction to the creation of the Organization of American States, also known as OAS (Mariño & Pruessen, 2012; Salazar, 2006). Furthermore, Castro was improving Cuba's relation with the Soviet Union and signed a trade agreement in order to cut off the United States. After all these measures, Castro went even further and acknowledged Marxist affiliation and described the revolution as socialist and anti-imperialist in public. As a result, the U.S. government decided to strengthen the already existing trade embargo to almost all exports and imports in order to isolate Cuba and put pressure on Castro to abandon communism and promote capitalism (Huffbauer et al., 2011; Drain & Barry, 2010). What is clearly noticeable at this stage is that it became a game of action-reaction. Fidel Castro's Martían and anti-imperialistic feelings got fed by President Eisenhower's and President Kennedy's measures to attack Cuba economically, while the communist shift of Cuba triggered the U.S. presidents to aggressive foreign policy towards Cuba. The Martían reaction of Fidel shows he acted in line with his ideology, since Gordy (2015) argued that ideologies must be responsive to be compelling. In 1963, after the attack on the Bay of Pigs and the Cuban Missile Crisis, Fidel Castro tried to gain Cuban nationalist support and tried to anger the Kennedy government by publicly stating the willingness to reach a compensation agreement with the United States, but only if the United States would pay for reparations caused by the trade embargo and the Bay of Pigs

invasion (Huffbauer et al., 2011). As a reaction, Kennedy's administration imposed travel restrictions and the Cuban Assets Control Regulations were issued under the Trading with the Enemy Act in 1963. (Huffbauer et al., 2011). The strengthening of the embargo and the settlement that was negotiated between the Soviet Union and the United States about the conflict in the Bay of Pigs infuriated Fidel Castro. Especially because Soviet Prime-Minister Nikita Khrushchev and U.S. President Kennedy negotiated without Castro's input. For Castro, this meant that Cuba was strategically insecure and he urged the need for a more aggressive approach in order to protect Cuba's revolutionary sovereignty. Although Cuba and the Soviet Union remained communist allies, Castro perceived the Bay of Pigs negotiation as a betrayal by the Soviet Union (Sobers, 2012). As a result, Castro's foreign policy took the form of Martían internationalism, since he tried to apply the Cuban Model for revolution to other third world countries in Latin America and Africa. By doing so, Castro hoped to repair Cuba's hemispheric isolation. Furthermore, it was an effective way to combat the imperialist United States and its allies throughout the world. Castro supported, among others, the Algerian Front de Libération Nationale in Algeria, the Congolese Liberation Movement and the Bolivian revolutionaries (Sobers, 2012).

During the presidential period of President Carter, the embargo took a moderate form. However, this was not a result of Castro's effort to improve the bilateral relations with the United States. Carter tried to improve the relations with Castro by diplomatic means, however, the relations that were slightly restored, broke down in 1978. Castro pumped his troops into Ethiopia in order to enlighten a revolution. Castro placed a higher priority to his Martían internationalist ideal of expanding the Cuban model (Latell, 2005).

After the Collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the international community expected that Cuba would follow rapidly in abandoning communism. This is a logical prediction, since the Soviet Union was an important ally of Cuba and exported, among others, food and military goods to Cuba (Bethell, 1993). The Bush administration and later the Clinton administration had the same prediction and consequently put new life into the trade embargo to speed up the process of collapse of communism in Cuba. The Bush administration reinforced the embargo by the Cuban Democracy Act, also known as the Torricelli Act, in October 1992 and the Clinton administration did this by means of the Helms-Burton Act in 1996 (Latell, 2005; White, 2015). However, contrary to what everyone had expected, the communist government in Cuba did not fall, although the reinforcement of the embargo had a severe impact on the Cuban economy (Domínguez, 2012). In Ramonet's (2007) extended interview Fidel Castro explains why the Cuban government did not fall:

The United States intensified the blockade. The Torricelli and Helms-Burton acts were passed – that last one is extra-territorial. Both our markets for and our sources of commodity supplies suddenly dried up. (..) The country resisted, and it made considerable progress on the social front. Today, it has recovered most of its nutritional requirements and is making rapid progress on other fronts. And even under those conditions, the work done and the awareness created for years produced a miracle. Why did we resist? Because the Revolution always had, has, and increasingly will have the support of a nation, an intelligent populace which is increasingly united, educated and combative (Ramonet, 2007, p. 565-567).

In his argument, Castro is clearly in line with Martíán nationalism and holds on to the ideals of the Revolution. Especially when he mentioned that the intelligent Cuban people are even more united and combative than before. However, it should be noted that as a response to the acts, Castro did introduce capitalist policies in his country, since he wanted to fulfil the basic needs of the Cubans. In a statement by the Cuban Communist Party's Political bureau, read by Raúl Castro, the Cuban government defended their recent policies, however, they still mentioned that the government was holding on to the Revolutionary ideology (Domínguez, 2012). In addition to this argument, Castro presented another argument why the Cuban government did not fall and the Soviet Union did. He argued that Cuban communism was not the same as Soviet communism; there was no forced collectivization in Cuba, no cult of personality of living leaders, and the whole political left-wing was included. In Castro's opinion those were the three critical differences why the Soviet Union fell and communism in Cuba did not (Ramonet, 2007).

While investigating Fidel Castro's foreign policy regarding the U.S. trade embargo against Cuba, it is clear that Castro firmly holds on to the communist ideology. However, as argued by Castro himself, he was first a Martíán ideologist. This had an even greater effect on Castro's foreign policy than his communist ideology. This is noticeable while analysing Castro's foreign policy in reaction to the trade embargo. Martíán nationalism, internationalism, anti-imperialism are the key words to describe Castro's foreign policy. When the United States intensified the embargo, Castro reacted with an even more radical Martíán foreign policy, as can be seen in the period from 1959 to 1996. However, in 1996, Cuba was forced to open up economically due to the Torricelli and Helms-Burton acts, which had a great negative impact on Cuba. Fidel Castro was clearly not in favour of these policies,

since he let his brother do the speech to defend the capitalist measures. Furthermore, in the interview with Ramonet (2007) Fidel Castro stated once again that the Martíán revolutionary ideology would always be present and that the Cuban people were even more combative than ever.

Raúl Castro's foreign policy and "el bloqueo"

In 2006 Raúl started to take over Fidel's responsibilities as political leader of Cuba due to Fidel's serious illness. In 2008 the transition of power was officially announced by a public statement. However, from 2006 onwards a shift in policy in reaction to the trade embargo is clearly present (Benjamin-Alvarado & Petrow, 2012). Raúl's style of government is characterized by gradualism and pragmatism. In one of his first statements Raúl mentioned the need for reform in government institutions, which needed to be more compact and functional (Klepak, 2012). Furthermore, in another statement he spoke out the need for closer ties with the United States (Huffbauer, 2011). Besides institutional reforms and closer ties with the U.S., Raúl also stressed the importance of economic reforms, since he noticed that Cuba was suffering heavily under the U.S. trade embargo. This meant that Cuba needed to boost its export and foster a dynamic domestic market (Sweig & Bustamante, 2013). However, this could only be done by policies which would counter Fidel's and Raúl's ideologies. Raúl lifted the restrictions on commerce and travel for Cubans, allowed privatization of military and government infrastructure, and opening the country up to foreign investment. The gradual economic changes have yielded modest successes. After Cuba had been facing liquidity and balance-of-payments crises during the 2008 global economic crisis, Cuba was successful in restoring the financial stability by cutting imports, resuming its debt payments and reducing public spending (Sweig & Bustamante, 2013).

Raúl is known as the determined and dogmatic member of the Socialist Youth Movement (Klepak, 2012; Ramonet, 2007). Throughout his military and political career, he became known as a ruthless person and a hardliner in communist ideology. Even Khrushchev was impressed by his strong belief in the communist ideology (Latell, 2005). The recent opening of Cuba can, for that reason, certainly be called a remarkable development. Raúl is a dedicated revolutionary who has devoted his career to the Cuban Revolution and its goals of social justice and national independence. The capitalist opening of Cuba is in strong contrast with his communist ideology. Centeno (2017) argues that at the end of the presidency of Fidel, the charismatic ideology of Cuba changed into a collegial arrangement in which a

performance-based legitimacy is present. For this reason, Raúl had to adopt a pragmatist style of governance with policies that counter his Marxist ideology in order to maintain his legitimacy to the Cuban people (Martínez-Fernández, 2014).

Realism and “el bloqueo”

While investigating the American trade embargo, which was imposed on Cuba, from the theory of political psychology, the case can only partly be explained. During the presidency of Fidel, a clear Marxist ideology was present in foreign policy. However, the theory cannot fully explain why Raúl, as a Marxist, imposed capitalist foreign policies which counter his ideology in reaction to the American trade embargo. A possible explanation, within political psychology, could be Obama’s integrative character (Winter, 2011). Obama surprised the world in late 2014 by announcing that the United States would restore its full diplomatic ties and start to ease the bilateral tensions. Consequently, the Obama administration began to ease travel and trade restrictions on Cuba, removed Cuba from the list of sponsors of terrorism and reopened the embassy in Havana (Felter, Lee & McBride, 2017). However, a realist stance shines perhaps a brighter light on this case. It is plausible that the United States does not want to lose grip on its own backyard. China has made major strides in Latin America with the forging of economic relations with Latin American countries (Javed, 2015). If that is not bad enough, the United States’ Cold War rival, Russia, is also making approaches to Latin America in an attempt to leverage itself on the global stage as a world power. Although Chinese and American presence is more visible, Russia is simultaneously expanding its presence in Latin America, while the rest of the world is focussing on Russia’s invasion of Ukraine (Blank, & Kim, 2015). During his six-day tour through Latin America, president Putin even announced that 90 percent of all unpaid Cuban debts to Russia since Soviet times will be pardoned. The other 10 percent would be reinvested in Cuban infrastructure (Javed, 2015). So it is clear that China and Russia are improving their relations with Latin America. The United States could feel threatened by these movements and the country tries to hold grip on his own backyard. As a result, the Obama administration started to invest in its relation with Cuba and other Latin American countries (Javed, 2015; Reid, 2015). At the end of Obama’s presidency, over 300 agreements were signed in order to make it as hard as possible for president Trump to break down the improving conditions for Latin America, should he ever wish to do so. (Felter, Lee & McBride, 2017; Korte, 2017). The opening up of Cuba

offers the country a more stable international situation with more prosperity. Cuba places interest over ideology, as Baylis et al. (2001) mentioned while describing classical realism. While using capitalist policies, Cuba tries to survive as an entity in the anarchic world system. The realist position should be taken in mind while investigating the U.S. trade embargo against Cuba, since it is a valuable contribution to the explanation why Cuba is gradually abandoning its communist policies.

Conclusion

While investigating the U.S. trade embargo against Cuba on an individual level, it became clear that Fidel Castro's ideology had an impact on his foreign policy in reaction to the trade embargo. Fidel Castro explains that although he firmly believes in Marxism, he is a Martían in the first place. His Martían ideology is clearly represented in his foreign policy in reaction to the U.S. trade embargo. Martían nationalism, internationalism, anti-imperialism are the key words to describe Castro's foreign policy. After every conflict, Castro's reaction was harder and even more ideologically driven than before. (Sobers, 2012). Fidel stated that the populace of Cuba is increasingly united, educated and combative and that the country will always resist to imperialistic movements by the U.S. (Ramonet, 2007). Furthermore, Fidel was not such a hard-line communist, since he did not agree with every facet of Soviet Communism, which is, according to Fidel, the reason why communism in Cuba still survives (Ramonet, 2007). Raúl Castro is, however, a firm believer in the communist ideology (Klepak, 2012; Ramonet, 2007). This was noticeable during his military and political career, where he became known for his organisational capacity, ruthlessness and faith in communism (Klepak, 2012). After the unofficial power transition from Fidel to Raúl in 2006, however, Raúl opened Cuba up to the world (Sweig & Bustamante, 2013). This is quite a remarkable foreign policy change, since it appears not to be in line with neither Fidel's Martían ideology nor Raúl's communist ideology. Centeno (2017) argues that Raúl had to adopt these more capitalist policies in order to keep the Cuban people's faith in his leadership. However, a realist point of view offers perhaps a more complete picture of the recent opening of Cuba.

While investigating Cuban foreign policies regarding the U.S. trade embargo from a political psychological point of view, it is arguable that Fidel's Martían ideology is very strong and that he would under no circumstance concede to the imperialistic United States.

After every strengthening of the embargo Fidel reacted with more fury. Raúl's capitalist policies are in strong contrast to his ideology, since he is a strong believer of Marxism. There appears to be no clear ideologically driven motive behind his pragmatic policies. The theory of political psychology offers no clear explanation to this. Through the lenses of realism, a more plausible explanation can be given. Interest is placed above ideology (Baylis et al., 2001). Cuba wants to survive in the anarchic world system, while the United States would like to maintain its hegemonic position (Javed, 2015). This case study shows that political processes can partly be explained through the theory of political psychology by examining ideology, beliefs and values of political leaders. It should, however, be noted that with help of other theories, such as realism a clearer and more complete picture can be provided.

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