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## From the mountains to the podium: the rhetoric of Fidel Castro

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FROM THE MOUNTAINS TO THE PODIUM:  
THE RHETORIC OF FIDEL CASTRO

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
Louisiana State University and  
Agricultural and Mechanical College  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements of the degree of  
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in

The Department of Communication Studies

by  
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## DEDICATION

To my wife, Dori, for providing me strength during this arduous journey

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## ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the rhetoric utilized by Fidel Castro that Castro used in order to maintain his tenure as the sole leader of Cuba for almost 50 years. Castro employs identification through division with an enemy, and he is able to perpetuate this division through an ongoing, dynamically perceived narrative. This narrative takes shape in the form of “the revolution,” a rhetorical construction designed to create a collective Cuban identity, which, in turn, is furthered through ideology by Castro’s elimination of competing points of views. Castro’s unique role as narrator has allowed him to adapt to events and maintain this narrative of revolution.

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Since 1959, Fidel Castro has maintained a prominent position of power within Cuba, whether labeled as Prime Minister or President. Some consider the man a dictator, others, like Nelson Mandela, call him a source of inspiration. Regardless of these descriptions, Castro maintained a rhetorical hold on the Cuban people for his entire tenure. Although Cubans and the United States attempted to oust the Cuban ruler, none of the attempts succeeded in their task. The tiny island nation of about 10 million people has survived the Bay of Pigs Invasion, the Cuban Missile crisis, and the collapse of its former sole benefactor, the Soviet Union, all under the rule of Fidel Castro. After removing himself from public sight in 2006 due to illness, Castro allowed his brother, Raul Castro, to become President on February 24, 2008. Despite his withdrawal as the official leader of Cuba, Castro still maintains his image of prominence as the leader of the Communist Party of Cuba and through his column, "Reflections of Fidel," in the state-run newspaper, Granma. However, his lack of public appearances appears to support the inevitable: the eventual death of a successful rhetor.

The length of Castro's reign over the Cuban people is reason enough to study this particular individual. Due to an insistence on free elections and measures to restrict a politician's term in office, Westerners may criticize governments that do not conform to these standards, going so far as to label the leaders as dictators. Both the 20<sup>th</sup> and the 21<sup>st</sup> centuries have seen several dictators rise to power. Some dictators attempt to control distinct pieces of land and people, while others attempt to expand their control over whole sections of the world. Some rely more on their enormous charisma while others focus more on fear. Either way, all dictators compromise the integrity of the individuals they control. Fidel Castro does not appear to be an exception, but he does spark curiosity in the observer interested in the development of dictators.



Questions such as “how has he managed to stay in power for so long?” and “why have the Cuban people not resisted him?” deserve exploration.

Although historical and political points of view establish criteria to identify dictators, the definition of a dictator from a communication point of view demands interest. The manner in which an individual portrays his or her agenda impacts society’s casting of the individual as a dictator. By analyzing a speaker’s method of communication, an observer can differentiate the speaker from others, thereby associating certain tendencies as either liberating, egalitarian, or authoritarian.

Traditional perspectives often describe dictators in terms of physical power. A powerful military leader with the loyalty of his or her troops may seize his or her country’s government with the backing of his military power. A political party leader may rely on the acts of secret military police as a means to physically control a population who does not support a certain ideology. This control comes in the form of fear and lack of free expression. As a principle of dictatorships, public spheres are eliminated, thus, competing ideologies cannot spread and the ideology of the dictatorship becomes the only available ideology for citizens. Fear by means of physical and mental punishment becomes the enforcing tool that keeps whiffs of public spheres from developing.

This discussion of fear brings to light the importance of analyzing the development of dictators from a communication point of view. The method in which the dictator communicates this fear to his or her audience is a key step to whether the establishment of the dictator is successful or not. Even if a dictator uses physical force to overthrow a current ruling body, the overthrow itself is not the goal of the dictator, rather, the maintenance of power over an extended period of time is the goal. If a dictator fears a coup, he or she may establish a larger armed force. However, it is not the use of the larger force to fight, but rather the use of the larger force as an

intimidation factor. In other words, this dictator's force is more effective as a symbol instead of an actual physical force. So, the establishment of this symbol is itself a method of communication. The dictator who does not communicate his or her power will not hold on to it.

Ethical rhetoric demands individuals enact their voice; however, a dictator takes away the voice of individual citizens. Rhetoric's initial function is to influence others through democratic means, but a dictator's "democracy" reflects the voice of one person, despite an insistence that "the people" support him or her. A dictator will often state that he or she represents the people, offering shouts from a crowd as proof that the people offer support. But these shouts from the crowd are just that, a crowd. Dictators use mob responses over individual voices to support their so-called democracies. This provides clear evidence of a dictator's "democratic" point of view. Through this point of view, the dictator alters the roles of the leader and the people. This creates a definite paradigm for the dictator

Besides outright fear, a dictator can also rely on the establishment of a certain ideology. An entrenched ideology is necessary for the establishment of a mass identity that shrugs a cold shoulder to individuation. It is a doctrine that justifies power arrangements as necessary and inevitable. Involving the masses allows a dictator to either perpetuate fear, membership, or the two combined. If the masses follow a dictator's ideology, and the dictator is the sole leader of a people, then the dictator successfully establishes himself or herself in an optimum situation for enhanced longevity of rule. Ideology also establishes a "legitimate" program that transcends and justifies day to day exercises of power.

## SIGNIFICANCE

Castro's endurance as the sole head of state of Cuba for almost five decades delineates him as an interesting study for the rhetorical critic. Despite major economic and social changes, he has continued to manage his rule effectively. Often, revolutionary movements contain seeds

for the revolutionary's own demise, such as ongoing civil war or takeover by yet another revolutionary figure. Castro provides a message that manages his own country while provoking the United States at the same time. Castro's rule has survived the Cuban missile crisis, the fall of the Soviet Union, economic sanctions, and explicit challenges by the United States. As time progresses, Castro's message still manages to be powerful among his people. On the other hand, this message could not remain univocal. It has been altered in content and emphasis in response to 50 years of social and economic change. Castro's role has also changed from star of a rising world revolution to the last holdout of the former socialist bloc.

Hence, one must account for the differing points of views regarding this famous dictator. The sheer length of time that Castro sustains his power allows negative perceptions of him to develop. Notions of communism, dictators, the evil Soviet Union, and fleeing Cubans on rafts all contribute to an ethnocentric point of view regarding the manner in which Castro should be viewed by Westerners. In a speech titled "This is Democracy," delivered May 1, 1960, Castro explicitly states "This is democracy" several times throughout the speech when referring to the current order in Cuba ("Democracy" 31). Although Westerners criticize Castro's government for its lack of free elections, Castro manages to define his own understanding of democracy. Critics must consider Castro's point of view in order to truly understand the rhetorical devices he employs. In a 1967 interview with Lee Lockwood, Castro makes the statement "...power corrupts men. It makes them selfish. Fortunately, this has never happened to me, and I don't think it will" (84). In this same interview, when Lockwood confronts Castro about a previous speech Castro delivered promising free elections to the Cuban people, Castro responds, "I told no lies in the Moncada speech. That was how we thought at the moment; those were the honest goals we set ourselves. But we have since gone beyond that program and are carrying out a much more profound revolution" (67). Examples such as these can cause an observer either to

point out an inconsistency in his logic or accept his argument. And yet he might argue, as did Mao Tse- Tung, that doctrine must be modified by practice.

Is Castro a believer of his own doctrine or is he merely being strategic in his language? Castro could very well be lying knowingly, or he could actually believe what he says. Michel Foucault assigns the term “dazzlement” to refer to the madman who thinks logically in a cloud of unreason (108), for the mad are truly dazzled, being blind to their initial unreason. If Castro believes that free elections do exist in Cuba simply through the means of public support for the revolution, then this could be evidence of Castro’s own dazzlement, being deluded in his beliefs and not possessing the ability to recognize reason. Only by placing his statements in the context of his political acts can scholars come near to answering this question.

Castro's enormous verbal output leaves scholars with a vast library of speeches and interviews spanning the 49 years he has maintained power in Cuba, a time span unique among dictators. After leading an armed revolution to obtain control over the current government, Castro led a social revolution as well. Finally, Castro established a communist state which grants more power to the working classes, while taking power away from the upper and middle classes.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Numerous authors of books and articles study Castro, but these studies fall under historical or political perspectives (such as: Crain; Fagen; Farber; Geyer; Gonzalez; Landau; Mallin; Mayer; Mills; Montaner; Otero and O’Bryan; Sartre; Schulz; Suchliki). Although these works may analyze his speech in terms of intentions and credibility, few focus on the true power of his rhetoric. Studies of his rhetoric might offer insight into the maintenance of dictatorial regimes. They might also demonstrate just how his rhetorical constructions reinforce his ideology. In terms of quantity, his reign outlasts the reigns of all other modern dictators, begging

scholars to examine the rhetorical foundation of his success. The master element in his career has always been his rhetoric. Thus, Castro deserves extensive rhetorical study.

Despite Castro's uniqueness, only two rhetorical scholars have analyzed his rhetorical devices: Donald Rice's 1987 book chapter, "Castro's Early Rhetoric: The Myth of the Savior," Rice's 1992 book, The Rhetorical Uses of the Authorizing Figure: Fidel Castro and Jose Marti, and Fernando Delgado's 1999 journal article, "The Rhetoric of Fidel Castro: Ideographs in the Service of Revolutionaries."

Donald Rice identifies Castro's use of Jose Marti's image in order to grant himself legitimacy. Jose Marti is Cuba's first heroic figure, gaining respect by sparking the revolution against Spain before the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Due to the reverence attributed to Marti's image, Castro sought out to associate his name with that of Marti's. Both men followed similar life experiences by being arrested for treason and expelled from Cuba. After exile, both Marti and Castro organized and conducted invasions of the island. Due possibly to his guerrilla tactics; however, only Castro succeeded in overthrowing his government in battle. The similarity between the two men allowed Castro to align himself with that of Marti. This alignment grants him legitimate authority in the eyes of the Cuban people.

Communication scholar Fernando Delgado also explores Castro's rhetorical devices. He analyzes Fidel Castro's speech "Words to the Intellectuals," and identifies Castro's use of ideographs to create a revolutionary identity for the Cuban people. Recognizing that Castro geared the speech toward writers and artists in order to make sure they understood that art must be used as a revolutionary tool, Delgado identifies Castro's stressing of the ideographs "revolutionary" and "revolution" to demonstrate Castro's call to a new type of nationalism the Cuban people had not previously witnessed. This revolutionary expression gave Cuban nationalism a sense of being made by its people's actions, rather than growing up organically or

being constructed by outside powers. Due to Castro's ideological creations, Delgado suggests further study into Castro's ideology is necessary to dissect his motivations accurately.

Other rhetorical studies into the field of dictatorial rhetoric consist of works by M. M. Bakhtin, Kenneth Burke, Derrin Pinto, Stanley Longman, and Christina Morus. These studies focus on authoritarian discourse, Adolf Hitler, Francisco Franco, Benito Mussolini, and Slobodan Milosevic, respectively.

In his essay "Discourse in the Novel," M. M. Bakhtin directly addresses the function of authoritative discourse. Bakhtin explores the relationship between authoritative discourse and the development of an ideology within an individual, by focusing on the words themselves that are used by governments, religions, etc. to create modes of preexisting hierarchies (342-46). Bakhtin states, "It is not a free appropriation of and assimilation of the word itself that authoritative discourse seeks to elucidate from us; rather, it demands our unconditional allegiance," (343). Practitioners of authoritative discourse do not enforce their power through the meanings of the words they use, they force individuals to decide if they will be obedient to the hierarchy. This type of discourse allows only two options: either an individual is completely loyal, or the individual is not loyal. The nature of the discourse prevents any middle ground from existing. Individuals also lack the ability to imitate the discourse, simply becoming receivers as part of a one-way communication line (344). Responses to the discourse are not welcome, listeners receive information and continue their obedience toward the hierarchy.

In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Kenneth Burke released an essay entitled "The Rhetoric of Hitler's Battle." In this work, Burke analyzed Adolf Hitler's Mein Kampf in order to discern the true intentions of Hitler. Burke wrote his work before the start of the Second World War, at a time when many did not want to believe in the possible negative intentions of Hitler. By studying the rhetoric utilized by Hitler within the text, Burke was able to determine several

components toward the development of dictatorial rhetoric. First, Burke recognized Hitler's strategic use of a common foe, a single enemy which could be shared by all German people ("Symbols" 212-19). Hitler associated "the Jew" as the ultimate antagonist against the Germans, equating "the Jew" with the devil. Using this method, Hitler denounced the current German parliamentary government in Vienna as being associated with corrupt cities of the devil ("Symbols" 217). This allowed Hitler to elevate the German people under the term Aryan as the pure bloods who must conquer the inferior races associated with the devil ("Symbols" 218). This sparked a rebirth inside the Aryan people where they could now move forward toward a positive goal ("Symbols" 219). Hitler's rhetoric cast his nation's economic problems into a religious and cultural frame.

Hitler used these means to hide economic downfall under the guise of "Jewish" economic downfall. If the devil could be purged and separated from the economic situation, then an increase in profit would ensue. This strategy of Hitler's recognized by Burke advanced our understanding regarding the rhetorical development of dictatorial regimes.

In his 2004 journal article, Derrin Pinto analyzes the use of textbook indoctrination as a means of solidifying former Spanish dictator Francisco Franco's regime. Pinto focuses his study specifically on children's civics textbooks. Franco used the textbooks as a means to instruct Spanish citizens to accept their current government. He saw the indoctrination of children as a successful approach to teach individuals before they had the ability to be corrupted by outside thoughts. These children, in turn, would grow up in complete obedience to his government. This educational strategy was a rhetorical tool to extend his own establishment over Spain. Franco carried out his takeover of the Spanish government through undemocratic means; therefore, he faced the dilemma of being rejected by the majority of the people (650). The use of indoctrinating civics textbooks was a means to add legitimacy to his military takeover. Pinto's

analysis confirmed the use of school textbooks as rhetorical tools used to instill certain ideologies into the minds of a dictator's people.

Stanley Longman focuses his study of Benito Mussolini in terms of the theatre. The fascist state which Mussolini constructed flowed as an extension of Mussolini himself. Longman creates the equation "art=life=politics" as a representation of Mussolini's method (212). To Mussolini, successful fascism was a successful play. In order to win over the minds of his subjects, Mussolini relied on extravagant shows and displays of power. Every act which Mussolini took part in became aggrandized as a rhetorical method to keep the Italian people in awe. The use of mesmerizing spectacles was an effective means for individuals not to have time to question the new government. As people marched through the streets in parades, Mussolini's extravagance established the notion that even government is theatre. Mussolini even wrote two plays in which the superman was loved by the masses and hated by the intellectuals. He admired Pirandello for the fluidity of his characters and their flexibility in taking on new roles. Thus, Longman's contribution to rhetorical studies is the recognition of the attribution of theatre as a means to maintain power in an authoritative government.

A controversial figure at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Slobodan Milosevic garnered an extreme form of nationalism among his citizens. Christina Morus, in her 2007 article, designates the technique to which Milosevic adheres as the reliance on a mythic battle fought centuries in the past. Milosevic used this myth as the basis for a newfound Serbian nationalism. His rhetorical strength came in his successful intertwining of this myth with the constitution of a Serbian people; thus, establishing an extreme nationalism strong enough to incite a war to reclaim lost land, similar to the tactic used by Hitler.



## THE STUDY

Numerous scholars suggest that revolutionary leaders create new visions for their people by dismantling old narratives to create new narratives that justify their power. Once a revolutionary leader discredits old narratives and establishes a new one, the leader is faced with the challenge of managing the new narrative. Leaders become subjects to their own narratives, having to answer to their promises.

Castro's management of his new narrative sets him apart from other revolutionary figures. He appears to succeed in extending his narrative vision over several decades. The reign of most dictators is very brief. Thus, Castro's skill manifests itself in his craftiness regarding the procurement of his vision. Accordingly, this dissertation will examine his management of several crucial revolutionary themes over time.

1. What is Castro's objective, and how is it monitored?
2. Who are the Cuban people, and how have they been transformed from the past?
3. How does Castro explain apparent failures?
4. How will success be achieved in his future and how has it been defined?
5. How are these themes forged into an artistic, convincing and viable narrative?

Castro creates a mythic narrative struggle between the masses of the world and the evil cohorts of a globalized, capitalist society, embodied in the United States. A study regarding Castro's role as sole narrator of this epic struggle will reveal a rhetorical tool which he can continuously utilize, despite the ongoing repetitiveness of the scenario. The repetitious story appears to be effective in the eyes of the Cuban people because Castro has distinguished himself as the sole narrator, placed atop a pedestal by Cubans celebrating his image. Since this narrative is inclusive and never-ending, Castro's strategy becomes one of merely stoking the fire in order

to maintain his power. That is not to say the message does not change to meet new situations, yet its consistency and content have retained an ideological core.

This dissertation follows a broad approach toward determining Castro's macro strategy to remain in power, in light of Castro being atop Cuba's hierarchy for half a century. To implement this approach, Castro's rhetoric from 1953 to 2008 is analyzed. However, due to the sheer volume of Castro's discourse, this dissertation provides in-depth analyses of five separate speeches ranging from the 1960s to the 2000s. Each speech comes from one of the five decades of Castro's control of Cuba and corresponds to five separate moments of crises requiring Castro's rhetorical response. This selection was chosen to determine his strategy over a 49 year time period, as well as provide specific responses to heightened crises occurring within the country during this period of time. With the results from these five speeches in particular, as well as aspects from other pieces of discourse, I formulate Castro's general strategy of maintaining power in Cuba. Repeating themes are identified and analyzed for their contribution toward Cuban identification.

Chapter two will provide a brief background on the history of Castro's rise to power and the rhetorical plays that incited the creation of his hero image. The defeat of previous Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista during the Cuban revolutionary war garnered an image of Castro as a savior hero of Cuba. This chapter provides the reader with a necessary background toward understanding how Castro was ever accepted by Cubans in the first place, and why so many Cubans were willing to overlook Castro's restriction of Cuban freedoms. His image creation formed the foundation that without which his resultant establishment and maintenance of power would not have been achieved.

Castro's strong suit is his adaptability. Where other dictators failed, such as Hitler's overextension of his plans or Saddam Hussein's refusal to accept the reality of a potential

American invasion, Castro possesses an uncanny ability to avoid overplaying his hand. He does this by framing situations so that they are perceived in terms of his ideas, practices, and goals. Thus, Chapters Three thru Seven provide a macro approach to Castro's rhetoric, with each chapter analyzing a speech from one of the five decades Castro maintained power in Cuba. These chapters analyze the strategies utilized by Castro to adapt to specific exigencies confronting the success of his revolutionary narrative. Each exigency posed a strong threat to Castro's leadership, doctrine, and survival. For each of the five exigencies, I will examine a speech that directly addresses the challenge to Castro and his rhetorical skill in framing the issue in a way that mobilized his followers and averted failure from himself and his revolution. Chapter Three addresses Castro's "This is Democracy (1960)" as he confronts his initial establishment of power. Chapter Four addresses Castro's "Angola: African Giron (1976)" as he confronts retaliation against his circumferential expansion. Chapter Five addresses Castro's "Defending Cuba's Socialist Revolution (1981)" as he confronts a renewed threat to the revolution resulting from the Mariel Boatlift and Reagan's rise to the U.S. presidency. Chapter Six addresses Castro's "Capitalism is a Society of Wolves (1992)" as he confronts a Cuban economic failure at the hands of the Soviet collapse. Chapter Seven addresses Castro's "Commemoration...University of Havana (2005)" as he confronts his inevitable death and lack of a viable successor.

Chapter Eight explores Castro's narrative of the revolution. This chapter will identify the necessary traits required to keep the narrative moving forward according to its inclusive repetition. Castro's narrative is dynamic, creating the perception that Cubans are constantly moving forward toward achieving the revolution's goals, although those goals are unattainable. This narrative structure invites Cubans to consubstantiate with the revolution, and, in turn, perpetuate the narrative. On the other hand, this chapter also addresses the counter narrative

developed by the Cuban exile population, who base their sole identifying feature as the removal of Castro from power.

Chapter Nine highlights Castro's use of ideology as a means to perpetuate his social system within Cuba. Castro relies on his revolutionary narrative to create Cuban history and constitute the Cuban "people" as members of the struggling poor against the bourgeoisie. Castro has differed somewhat from other dictators by creating an identity that does not rely on former roots of the people. In fact, the new identity recreates the roots of the Cuban people. The past Cubans Castro refers to are actually his own reconstructed view of history. Thus, whereas charismatic leaders cite the power of their ancient people, Castro simply cites the power of his current people, and reconstructs the past in the process. Castro networks his ideology through educational indoctrination and censorship of the mass media and artists and intellectuals. However, he allocates a "public space" where Cubans are permitted to express their support for the revolution to create the perception of a public sphere.

This radical shift by Castro is the foundation of his ideology. This ideology, or new Cuban identity, offers legitimacy for the establishment of the Cuban people. Although Castro stresses the need for Cuban identity, the name "Cuba" to which he refers is in fact completely different from the established "Cuba" of the past. Therefore, he follows similar patterns established by Maurice Charland and Michael McGee in order to provide a constitutive rhetoric which allows a specific group of people to be recognized as a people. In so doing, Castro also inoculates his fellow Cubans with the key ideas which comprise this new Cuban identity. Cubans can obtain the ability to recognize the physical, as well as abstract qualities which constitute their identity. The rule of the majority and the working class is the primary theme of Castro's revolution. His rhetoric forces Cubans to embody the theme within their hearts. The

discourse of Castro guides individuals down a path where membership in the revolution becomes the greatest of all possible options.

Chapter Ten explores Castro's change in roles as he increases the distance between himself and the Cuban people. Castro emerges as an ideological prophet delivering the narrative of his revolution in the same religious structure as a priest preaching a sermon. While engaging in this priestly rhetoric, his role changes from a patriarchal role to that of a matriarchal role.

Chapter Eleven distinguishes the persuasive strategies of Castro, provides implications of this project, and makes recommendations for further study.

## CHAPTER 2: THE EMERGENCE OF CASTRO'S EPIDEICTIC PROWESS

Much criticism of Fidel Castro stems from onlookers with established notions of freedom and democracy metaphorically placing the man under a microscope and identifying propagandist remarks and empty promises. With the American social stigmas of communism and dictatorships, critics are inclined to find a subject of unethical leadership in Castro very enticing (Aguirre; Morin; Purcell; Roberg & Kuttruff). However, charges of unethical behavior encourage a simplistic certitude, an ideological screen that may prevent us from understanding the complex relationship between the leader and his constituents, a relationship that has developed over five decades. Accordingly, this chapter will take a careful look at Castro's communication behavior. Castro was a master rhetorician; his greatest skill was in epideictic rhetoric. Castro demonstrated skill in the courts and in preparation for legislative deliberation, but his genius lay in the use of ceremonial speech in order to unite people in a community of fate. Epideictic rhetoric has been the engine of social change in Cuba. It was his mastery of epideictic speech that allowed Castro to obtain and maintain control over his homeland. Thus, what follows is essentially a rhetorical biography.

Castro became interested in politics while attending the university in Havana; however, his initial attempt at deliberative rhetoric was developed under the repression of dictator Fulgencio Batista's coup. Joining the Cuban Ortodoxo party, Castro became very involved in Cuban politics. The party's president, Eduardo Chibas, guided Castro toward an understanding of how to align passion with politics by teaching Castro how to utilize publicity and propaganda (Martin 81). Every Sunday at eight p.m. Chibas broadcasted from a radio station in Havana, and fellow Cubans would stop what they were doing, mesmerized by his words (Geyer 87-88). Yet, he was known to have unexpected emotional actions, such as submerging himself in bathwater and fasting for long periods of time, and Chibas took this passion too far by shooting himself in a

dramatic fashion in response to political troubles (Geyer 86, 88; Martin 82). On August 15, 1951, at the end of his Sunday radio broadcast, Chibas cried, “This is my last knock to awaken the civic conscience of the Cuban people,” before shooting himself in the stomach and dying at the hospital, presumably distraught over a political accusation he had made without proof, calling question to his insistence on honesty (as quoted in Geyer 88; Martin 81-82). After the death of his former party president Castro received little support from his fellow party members, due to his unstructured criticism of the leadership of the party and being labeled as a radical (Martin 87).

#### THE DEVELOPMENT OF CASTRO AS A SPEAKER

Castro enhanced his rhetorical development with his run for a seat in Cuba’s Congress. To win his congressional seat in Havana Province Castro spent hours speaking in town hall meetings to establish himself at the community level. He authored two exposes in the Cuban newspaper Alerta, disclosing evidence against the government of President Carlos Prio (Martin 86-92). Castro was on the verge of attaining his seat in Congress in order to debate legislative issues, but the election was cut short with Fulgencio Batista’s takeover of the Cuban government on March 10, 1952. Although this is considered Batista’s second term as dictator of Cuba, it should also be considered a major turning point in the development of Castro’s understanding of Cuban politics. Batista’s coup cut short Castro’s attempt to change his country through democratic means and led him to a different realization about how social change must be conducted. If democratic deliberative political speech could not change Cuba, armed revolution began to seem a necessary alternative.

After graduating from law school, Castro underutilized his forensic ability in his law firm “Azpiazu, Castro y Rosende” by trying very few legal cases (Geyer 93-94). However, Castro’s most famous court case was his own defense in 1953 for his participation in an armed assault on

the Moncada Military Barracks in Cuba. Castro orchestrated an attack as a means to incite an armed revolution against the current corrupt government of Cuba under the dictator Batista. While making his defense, Castro delivered one of his most famous statements, “Condemn me. It does not matter. History will absolve me,” (“History” 79). To this day, critics of Castro, such as Roberto Luque Escalona, refer to this line from his 1953 speech for sarcastic comments insisting that history has still not absolved him. Although Castro delivered this speech within the court system, it paved the way for his epideictic prowess. The speech itself did not act so much as a defense plea; rather, it acted as a declaration of principles. Having been arrested by a corrupt government which denied him basic rights, Castro stated, “It is taken for granted that a lawyer should converse privately with his client. This right is respected all over the world – except here, where a Cuban prisoner of war is in the hands of an implacable tyranny that abides by no code, legal or humane,” (“History” 12). In Castro’s eyes, a reasoned defense would have been futile, due to the corruption of the court itself. Thus, he attacked the legitimacy of the political community itself. With this statement Castro began his epideictic odyssey at the Moncada attack trial on October 16, 1953 in Santiago de Cuba.

As Aristotle states in his Rhetoric, epideictic speech centers around praise and blame of a current situation (32). Therefore, an epideictic speaker seeking change will debunk or praise a particular individual or social system. The speaker will be successful in his endeavor by invoking an ideal image of the community against which conduction can be measured. Like Pericles of Athens, Cicero in Rome, or Daniel Webster at Bunker Hill, the orator develops an image of the community as it appears in its best moments – as it might be if its inhabitants were true to its highest value. This idealized polity can be used either to bring its citizens to greater fidelity and effort or to debunk present conduct that falls short of the communal ideal or undermines it. Castro chose the latter path and in doing so was most successful by constructing a



clear difference between himself and the opposition, in this case the then current dictator Fulgencio Batista. Castro relied on a definition through negation in order to characterize himself for the Cuban people, falling in line with Kenneth Burke's notion of Man as the "inventor of the negative" ("Language" 9-13). Cuba had already seen its fair share of corrupt leaders; therefore, Castro used division rather than identification. In so doing, Castro was able to define himself dialectically, over and against Batista. According to this thinking, he did not even need to be burdened by explaining his own agenda or what made him unique. Castro's definition of himself was clear: he was not one of the former corrupt Cuban leaders. Following Burke's reasoning of what a table is not through endless examples ("Language" 9), Castro was not Batista, nor Machado. This is why Castro spoke out not just against Batista, but against all dictators. Castro created a distinct argument that he was not another Cuban individual who would simply take control of the government, but he wished to bring Cuba back to true freedom, which its people had not seen in some time. "...this is not a dictatorship," Castro stated on January 9, 1959, days after the flight of Batista, "we are never going to use force, because we belong to the people. Moreover, the day that the people do not want us we shall leave," ("Complacency" par. 15). Later that same day Castro remarked, "...it was the people who suffered the horrors of these years, the people who had to decide if ... they... would still be suffering from the horrors to which the people of Cuba were subjected under such dictatorships as those of Machado and Batista," ("Libertad" par. 11).

This reliance on a clear definition was a unique bid to Cuban leadership. The devil's advocate may counter this claim by stating that his definition of himself is not clear, but that it is ambiguous. However, this is the pragmatic functionality of the negative. Generalities appear advantageous, such as the promise of democracy or rights for the underprivileged, but citizens can often expect lofty generalities to result in empty promises. At the time of Castro's revolution

defining himself as anti-Batista created the appearance of something tangible. The Cuban people could picture what Batista and Machado physically looked like, and they had experienced their record of corruption and exploitation. Cubans recalled “antiterrorism” campaigns conducted by Batista’s police killing innocents, then placing weapons in the hands of the deceased after the fact for visual evidence (Matthews, “February 25, 1957” 1, 11). “Antiterrorism” campaigns, such as Batista’s, often had one result: promoting terror among the people. Since Castro presented himself as different from former leaders, Cubans could assume that he would produce a different and better regime. Castro’s challenge was to present himself as different from previous Cuban leaders. He framed the situation in binary terms. They were corrupt while he was a revolutionary savior of the people. Castro provided evidence, stating, “How did the rebel army win the war? By telling the truth. How did the [Batista] dictatorship lose the war? By deceiving soldiers” (“Camp Columbia” 133). Castro also asked if the Cuban people “are going to continue suffering the horrors they have suffered ever since the establishment of the Republic of Cuba, crowned with dictatorships such as those of Machado and Batista” (“Camp Columbia” 135).

As Aristotle points out, several virtues are needed for an epideictic speaker to make an effective case (57). Among Aristotle’s lists of virtues, Fidel Castro appeared to embody the virtues of wisdom, courage, and justice within his character.

#### WISDOM

Castro’s wisdom found expression in his guerrilla strategy. Throughout the revolution, Castro made it his main strategy to rely on a guerrilla campaign in the Sierra Maestra, a mountain range in eastern Cuba. Other revolutionary groups at the time, such as the Directorio Revolucionario Estudiantil, Organization Autentica, and even the urban branch of his own July 26<sup>th</sup> Movement sought to instigate the revolution in the cities. This urban strategy relied on an

expectation that the people would rise up and repel the Batista regime. This difference in strategy created strife between the factions, often with little aid being given directly to the Sierra Maestra. However, Castro insisted that all funds and troops should be sent directly to the mountains for the guerrilla campaign. Victory appeared to vindicate this strategy and establish Castro as the mind of the revolution.

On March 13, 1957, Carlos Gutierrez Menoyo led an assault team from the Directorio Revolucionario Estudiantil against the presidential palace in an attempt to assassinate Batista. Simultaneously, Jose Antonio Echevarria, leader of the Directorio Revolucionario Estudiantil, broadcasted a message of Batista's death over Cuban radio. However, the assassination attempt failed, and both Menoyo and Echevarria were killed, with Castro referring to their strategy as useless bloodshed (Escalona 99-100; Lopez-Fresquet 15-16).

On April 9, 1958, the urban branch of the July 26<sup>th</sup> Movement, led by Faustino Perez, instigated a general strike inside Cuba in an attempt to bring Batista's government to a halt and invoke a popular uprising (Escalona 106). However, the strike failed to meet expectations, which, in turn, cast doubt on the urban branch of the July 26<sup>th</sup> Movement. Thus, failure of the rival strategy helped to establish Castro's success.

As the war against Batista moved forward, Castro and his guerrillas in the mountains were able to establish themselves as celebrities, becoming recognizable beacons of hope. Although fighting in the inaccessible Sierra Maestra, Castro's guerrillas became accessible to Cubans through Castro's newspaper interviews, such as his interview with Herbert Matthews in the New York Times, and, most importantly, Radio Rebelde. After acquiring radio equipment in February 1958, twice in the evenings Castro's guerrillas broadcasted information concerning recent battles between the rebels and Batista's forces (Guevara 207; Martin 227; "Quienes Somos"). During the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Radio Rebelde, Castro commented, "Radio Rebelde

really became our means for informing the masses, through which we communicated with the people, and it became a station with a high rating” (“Radio Rebelde” par. 26). On the other hand, the urban fighters lived in constant states of secrecy, for fear they would be discovered by Batista’s police (Escalona 104-05). Thus, the public perception of Castro as the main revolutionary hero began to develop.

With the annihilation of attempted uprisings in the cities, and the deaths of major urban revolutionary leaders, members of Castro’s own July 26<sup>th</sup> movement finally acknowledged the legitimacy of Castro’s plan. Previous tension between the mountain guerrilla fighters, called sierra, and the urban and plains fighters, called llano, of the July 26<sup>th</sup> Movement ceased after the revolutionary group held a meeting in the Sierra Maestra to discuss the failures and reorganize the organization. Therefore, on May 3, 1958 all control of the revolutionary fighters of the July 26<sup>th</sup> Movement was given to Castro to wage his guerrilla war after heated debate between the leaders (Guevara 252-59).

This internal struggle between revolutionary players offered evidence of Castro’s tactical superiority. Castro himself had suffered a major loss on July 26, 1953 when his attack on the Moncada Military Barracks failed, thus giving him a clearer picture on how military tactics against overwhelming forces should be conducted. Whether luck or true strategy played the key role in Castro’s victories is irrelevant. Rather, the perception that he was winning, or the perception that he was simply not losing allowed him to persevere in the eyes of his fellow revolutionaries. The damage caused by Castro’s forces in the Sierra Maestra did not directly hurt Batista’s government in a quantifiable sense. Castro’s troops fought in mountain land belonging to the peasantry. On the other hand, damage resulting from urban sabotage would have a more immediate result in terms of economic, tangible damage. Therefore, the war waged with Castro’s guerrilla strategy relied on duration, creating an image of freedom fighters who could

potentially last forever. The longer these guerrillas resisted, the more it appeared that they were not losing, or in other words “winning.” Along with “winning” the war, time allowed the success of Castro to brew in the minds of Cubans, thus creating his mythic stature that he cannot be defeated.

Alongside Castro’s macro guerrilla strategy for winning the war, his own troops also witnessed his tactics firsthand in battle. Che Guevara recalled several disagreements between himself and Castro regarding battle tactics, and on these occasions Guevara would later reflect that he did not possess the knowledgeable foresight that Castro did, admitting Castro’s wisdom surpassed his own (77, 111). These instances often involved image creation, as opposed to pragmatic gains such as acquiring an army truck. Castro considered tactics that would create the strongest perception that Batista was losing the war. Stealing equipment and trucks from Batista could be denied by Batista’s government, but taking over military installations offered verifiable facts that helped instill notions of Batista’s loss of control due to Castro.

Castro began his revolutionary struggle alongside other Cuban groups vying for the same cause. However, as the struggle unfolded, Castro emerged under the perception that a guerrilla campaign in the mountains was the most successful strategy of the revolution, bestowing the perception of wisdom upon Castro.

## COURAGE

“Courage,” states Aristotle, “is the virtue that disposes men to do noble deeds in situations of danger,” and Castro’s courage became a staple of his battle prowess (57). Castro’s battle strategy was always to lead his soldiers in a fight, and never command from the rear. When the situation called for it, Castro put himself on the line posing as a colonel and later a major in Batista’s army in order to acquire information directly from the enemy (Guevara 16, 47). Acts such as these allowed Castro’s guerilla fighters to confirm his courage to New York

Times reporter Herbert Matthews when Matthews traveled into the Sierra Maestra to interview Castro (“February 24, 1957” 24). Upon witnessing Castro’s interaction with his guerrilla fighters, and the manner in which they revered him, Matthews also added, “The [guerrilla fighters] were led by Senor Castro with his customary dash and rash bravery, a bravery that frightens his followers, since it is felt that through this rashness he could be killed,” (“June 9, 1957” 13). Che Guevara acknowledged this fear of losing his leader due to Castro’s bravery, and responded by writing Castro a letter asking him to refrain from such bold actions, “Companero...[we] wish to inform you of our troop’s concerns with regard to your participation in combat. We implore you to forsake your practice of always participating, which unintentionally endangers the success of our armed struggle and, more than that, endangers your goal of a true revolution,” (Guevara 242-43). The prominent members of Castro’s guerrilla fighters all signed the letter along with Guevara, such as Raul Castro, Luis Crespo, Juan Almeida, and Camilo Cienfuegos.

Although Castro exuded courage by leading troops into battle, he provided a more specific example of his courage to his fellow Cubans when he attacked the Moncada Military Barracks on July 26, 1953. Although his attack could be considered futile, with almost all participants being killed or captured, including Castro himself, it helped establish Castro’s image as a courageous citizen willing to stand up to a corrupt government that attained power through illegitimate means. The attack provided an active example of revolution, and his accompanying defense plea placed the goal of the revolution into words, establishing a clear message for the attainment of a democratic Cuba with freedom for all citizens. Castro’s courage was enough to inspire the creation of the July 26<sup>th</sup> Movement, whose only goal was to continue the revolution begun at the Moncada Military Barracks and achieve the ideals highlighted in Castro’s defense plea.

## JUSTICE

Although fighting against an immoral enemy in the form of a dictatorship, Castro maintained a sense of justice throughout the Cuban revolutionary war. The revolutionaries often referenced acts by Batista's army of killing and torturing prisoners (Guevara), but despite these acts by the enemy, Castro sought to treat prisoners with respect. Castro told Matthews in an interview, "We are killing many, but when we take prisoners they are never shot. We question them, talk kindly to them, take their arms and equipment, and then set them free," ("February 24, 1957" 34). This treatment of prisoners surprised Guevara after Castro's forces defeated a small army garrison and achieved his first victory. To Guevara's dismay, Castro ordered him to provide medicine for the enemy wounded, knowing this would depreciate the already short supply that Castro's troops possessed in the beginning of the war (20). Based on information such as this obtained from his interviews, Matthews later wrote, "This is the sort of conduct that has helped to win for Senor Castro so extraordinary a place in the hearts and minds of Cubans and has caused the Government's accusations of criminality and communism to be ridiculed," ("June 9, 1957" 13).

Castro's justice when dealing with all people aided in the establishment of himself as a respectable citizen. Matthews displayed his astonishment toward Castro's treatment of the guajiros, poor farmers, of the mountains. Despite a lack of funds and equipment, Castro always paid the guajiros for all the supplies his troops acquired from them (Matthews, "February 24, 1957" 34). These poor farmers were in no position to demand compensation from Castro; Batista's army and the mercenaries of the big landowners both mistreated the farmers. However, payment by Castro for supplies demonstrated his justice, as well as earning him the loyalty of the mountain farmers. Even when dealing with his own troops, he was apt to look past the letter to the spirit of the law, such as pardoning two soldiers who abandoned camp or issuing Guevara a

canvas hammock due to Guevara's allergies to hammocks made out of sacking, even though this broke guerrilla law (Guevara 150, 58).

These three virtues, wisdom, courage, and justice, gave credibility to Castro's leadership and undergirded his epideictic vision of a new Cuba. His actions during the Cuban revolutionary war established an almost god-like image of the deliverer in the eyes of the Cuban people. His success with the guerilla war in the mountains gave him an aura of romance and an identification with the common people greater than the underground urban movement could have fostered.

Castro was able to use the international mass media, charming an influential journalist who worked for what was at that time, the most important and influential paper on the planet, the New York Times. Matthews used such language as describing Castro as a "flaming symbol of this opposition to the regime," and being a man "of courage and of remarkable qualities of leadership," or referring to the "warm hospitality" offered to his wife ("February 24, 1957" 34). Matthews' article focused not only on the interview with Castro, he took his readers on a journey into the Sierra Maestra, detailing the exciting events of passing through roadblocks and hiking through the mountains that Matthews himself lived in order to get the story, allowing the reader to experience the life of a rebel, from a captivating point of view ("February 24, 1957" 34). When reflecting upon the Herbert Matthews New York Times interview with Castro in 1957, fellow journalist Anthony Depalma states, "Before Matthews showed up, Castro was a man, a rebel, a hero. What Matthews did was invent Fidel as an idea, a conception that could remain elusive, always changing, unknowable, unfathomable, and therefore, in the end, undefeatable," (281). It was this image of Castro as a hero on a pedestal that attained him more social clout than any other Cuban citizen. As the Cuban Revolutionary War unfolded, Batista's armies began surrendering, allowing popular support of Castro to flourish even more. Batista himself recalled one of his own commanders, General Eulogio Cantillo, chief of Oriente Province with 15,000



soldiers, for arranging a secret meeting without Batista's knowledge in order to discuss a ceasefire agreement with Castro. Since his top commander arranged the meeting, Batista saw this action as an admittance of surrender by his own army (Batista 110-19). Despite having such large numbers, Batista's army succumbed to the enduring image of Castro.

So, when Castro arrived in Havana a week after Batista fled in January 1959, he did so to the overwhelming support of the Cuban people, who had begun to believe in Castro's created image. The events transpiring from Castro's initial attack on the Moncada Military Barracks in 1953 up to the ousting of Batista in 1959 are what established the foundation for Castro's one man control over Cuba. Previous planning put the new provisional Cuban government into motion on January 1, 1959 with former judge Manuel Urrutia as the acting President. However, with Castro's initial foundation set, he replaced the Prime Minister of the new provisional Cuban government with himself on February 13, 1959. Minister of the Treasury Rufo Lopez-Fresquet recalls from that moment on, President Urrutia had no real power, being expected to just put his signature on new laws (45). On July 17, 1959, Castro replaced Urrutia with a puppet President, solidifying his total control over the new provisional Cuban government. As mentioned earlier, onlookers may question how Castro's greed for power could not be stopped, but it became too late, his popular image as a hero on a pedestal already was entrenched in the consubstantial Cubans' minds.

Some critics, such as Escalona, criticize the revolutionary government for its lack of justice after the war. Numerous executions of former Batista henchmen accused of murder and torture took place, with one such execution even being performed in front of cameras (Franqui 17). Although most Cubans felt justice was served through the execution of these men due to the horrific brutality conducted under Batista, these executions and other so-called trials under Castro became mockeries of justice, desensitizing the "justice doers" and making them into

possible monsters themselves (Franqui 18; Escalona 117-18). Many involved in the activity say it is a necessary part of a revolution, with inhumane acts taking place during the moment. History shows that with social revolution bloodshed usually ensues. It is a maxim that a revolution often devours its own children. The individuals conducting these brutal acts were caught up in the new Cuban fervor that Castro had created. Just as individuals are criticized for summary executions of Nazis taking place after World War II, so too befell the Cuban people (Franqui 18). Releasing one's personal identity for the sake of the group ideology (consubstantiality) impairs logical judgments among the members. How could the new Cuban identity perform similar acts to what Castro identified in the Batista regime with blood splattered torture chambers and citizens with no judicial rights? The answer is the temporary exchange of reason for a mob consciousness brought on by total dedication to a new ideology. Castro appealed to the emotions of his audience as support for the executions (Geyer 212). As mentioned previously in this chapter, Castro's objectives after the ousting of Batista were unclear, but his image as a hero on a pedestal secured the susceptibility of the Cuban people. Whether or not Cubans understood their new ideology, they fully understood and accepted the grand image surrounding Fidel Castro.

As Castro established his epideictic hold on the Cuban people, he orchestrated room for a merger of oratorical categories. As the sole leader of Cuba, Castro placed himself in position to begin constructing new policy. Thus, he emerged from the years after the revolution by reverting back to the deliberative skills he never had a chance to utilize. Castro combined his political oratory with his epideictic speech for the remainder of his tenure as the sole leader of Cuba. The epideictic uses were necessary to control the Cuban people by tying them in to a consubstantial identity, and the political aspects were necessary to formulate new policy for

Cuba. For the remainder of his tenure, Castro masks his political speech within his epideictic oratory.

Castro's life has been one of perfecting the use of epideictic speech. Whether it was him learning the art of creating a spectacle from Chibas or gathering large crowds and playing to their emotions to gain popular support for executions, Castro honed his ability to appeal to crowds. While fighting in the Sierra Maestra, his qualities of wisdom, courage, and justice spread to Cubans through broadcasts from "Radio Rebelde" and articles in The New York Times, establishing Castro as more than just a man, but a symbol of hope in a time of repression. With this image of a hero placed atop a pedestal in the minds of Cubans, the foundation had been laid for Castro to use his appeals to the masses to establish himself atop the social pedestal for real. His established image at the outset of the revolution provided him with the support he required to pursue his selfish desire for power.

### CHAPTER 3: CASTRO'S INITIAL ESTABLISHMENT OF POWER

With his image established and his epideictic prowess accepted by his audience, Castro displays an ability to adapt to all crises placed before him in order maintain his position of power. He is a master rhetorician who is able to frame events in a way that imposes his perspective over any other perspective. As new challenges arise he is able to re-frame or introduce new frames in a way that is coherent and attractive. This chapter will deal with a very powerful and enduring frame, Castro's use of the Spartan action at Thermopylae that saved Greece from the Persian hordes to mobilize the Cubans against the threat from the United States. The Spartan struggle against one of the great world powers of ancient times is used as a metaphor and guide for the Cuban struggle to hold the revolution against the greatest world power of the twentieth century, the United States. This chapter will illustrate the way in which Castro used the myth of Spartan courage in a way that made it attractive, credible and energizing to the Cuban people.

Castro's speech "This is Democracy," which he delivered on May 1, 1960, provides an excellent example of the leader using speech to promulgate a message of national mobilization. Since Castro's new government seized foreign-owned lands and assets within the country, possible military incursions by the United States seemed highly probable, furthermore, rebels within his own country might have been emboldened to destroy the new Cuban identity. Within the speech, Castro made the conventional call for soldiers and workers of the country to stay organized. But in using a powerful classical myth to frame the situation, Castro went far beyond conventional discourse. During this speech, Castro compared his fellow citizens to the Spartan people from the times of the flourishing Greek city-states. In this chapter, I will provide background on the Spartan myth and demonstrate the key elements of the Spartan myth evident in Castro's speech.

Conveying myths to an audience is an effective way of imposing a perspective on events. By framing a present event with a popular myth a speaker highlights certain aspects of the event and darkens others. Like allegory, a myth is an extended thematic metaphor. It invites us to embrace a guiding narrative. As Churchill used the heraldic stories of King Arthur saving England from the Saxon hordes to inspire Brits to fight the German army of World War II, Castro used the old tale of Spartan courage to inspire the Cubans against the American tiger at the gates.

Previous research on myth by Roy and Rowland, Lake, and Dorsey provide valuable insights to the rhetorical functioning of myth. These examples illustrate how myth can be re-appropriated to achieve a desired outcome. Roy and Rowland, in their analysis of the rhetoric used by the Hindu nationalist party, Shiv Sena, and its leader, Bal Thackeray, postulate that national or religious identity movements relate to a mythic story where heroes are needed to combat the evils that threaten the national or religious identity (226-27). Thus, myth perspectivizes and “frames” the event, charging it with sacred passion and providing a guide for individual and group behavior. In this manner, a particular minority group of people is labeled as evil, and inspiration from past heroes or a past identity is needed to combat these evils. Dorsey examines Theodore Roosevelt’s reformulation of the American frontier myth designed to enact the conservation of nature, demonstrating the applicability of a myth to a separate situation (“Frontier Myth”). Besides a handful of Cuban figures leading the rebellion against Spain for Cuban independence, Castro had no ancient heroes to which to refer, which was why he sought out ancient heroes from another culture: Sparta. The sense of distance, of long ago and far away may have added to the attraction of the narrative and given it the power of historical and moral precedent. On the other hand, Lake’s analysis of the Red Power Native American movement dissects the uses of time, myth, and history designed to prevent the assimilation of a minority

culture into the majority culture. Castro's defensive posture for Cuba was designed to resist supposed imperialist tendencies of a larger nation. Dorsey analyzes another situation developed by Theodore Roosevelt as well, by examining the resultant myth, portraying the warping of myth within the media as a result of the American Navy's world cruise at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century ("Sailing"). Roosevelt employed the popular lesson of Alfred Mahon's "sea power" in his Naval performance. Mahon's stories had convinced people that a huge navy was linked to national prosperity. Castro's reliance on the Spartan myth acted as an attempt to change American perceptions of the resilience of the Cuban people.

After understanding how myths function, one can begin to understand the influence of the Spartan myth. On top of being known for their superb fighting skills, Spartans also receive recognition by many for their devotion to fight to the death. The notion that Spartans will fight for what they believe in despite the repercussions finds its roots in the battle of Thermopylae, which Castro referenced in his speech. This particular battle receives a great deal of recognition in the history books, as well as popular culture, due to the nature of the overwhelming odds of the battle.

Taking place in summer, 480 B.C. near Thermopylae, which can be found in northern Greece, the battle saw an overwhelming Persian force, headed by King Xerxes, descend upon the Greeks, led by the Spartan king, Leonidas (Lazenby 83). However, due possibly to religious reasons, the Spartans only contributed 300 soldiers to the lot, yet the entire Greek army numbered several thousand (Lazenby 84-87). Ranging from 300,000 to 5 million, the true number of the Persian force is unknown due to the Greek historian Herodotus' possible inflation of the Persian numbers in order to glorify the Greeks (Gabriel 309; Lazenby). But the fact of the matter remains that the Greek forces were extremely overwhelmed, and the Greeks themselves had never engaged in war on such a massive scale before. The Greeks held a defensive position

at a mountain pass, denying the Persian army the use of their massive numbers. When Xerxes demanded the Greeks surrender their weapons, Leonidas is rumored to have responded, “Come and get them,” a phrase which appears on a modern-day monument to the Spartans at the battle site of Thermopylae (Lazenby 88).

The turning point in the battle came when the Greek fighter Ephialtes betrayed his people to Xerxes by revealing information regarding a foot trail that circled the Greek emplacement (Lazenby 88-90). However, Leonidas and his Spartans would stay behind to hold off the attackers while the rest of the Greek army escaped. It is necessary to point out a prophecy that Leonidas had received from an oracle before the battle that said that Sparta would either lose its city, or lose a king (Lazenby). Due to the nature of the prophecy, Leonidas presumably accepted his fate so that Sparta would not be destroyed, thereby accentuating the ideal that Spartans would dedicate their lives to a cause. The Spartans would always be remembered for their courageous fight to the death against overwhelming odds. This act became a template for heroic resistance to great odds. Thus, a speaker might urge citizens to emulate the Spartans in discipline, in loyalty, in sacrifice, or in fighting spirit.

The unfolding events of the battle at Thermopylae contribute to the development of the Spartan warrior myth. Historian J. F. Lazenby acknowledges the creation of a Spartan myth, where Spartan soldiers prefer to die rather than surrender (83). Lazenby believes this tradition was not apparent among the Spartans until after the loss at Thermopylae (83). Therefore, the creation of this myth arose as a direct result of this particular battle. History was in the ancient world a species of Rhetoric. Both Greek and Roman historians used history to point morals, adorn tales, and indoctrinate their young people. It would seem fitting that Castro would explicitly acknowledge this specific battle in his speech due to its enormous popularity throughout history. Castro obviously referenced the battle in an effort to prepare his own people

for a possible fight to the death. He needed to successfully energize them in an effort to defend what they believed in at all costs. By using this example, he seemed to be offering his fellow Cubans eternal recognition if they chose to enact a courageous stand such as the Spartans did.

Castro was not the first political figure to offer praise to Spartan culture, as Eric MacPhail points out in his analysis of Michel de Montaigne. Born in 1533, and living during the French Renaissance, Montaigne often found himself in the middle of arguments between Protestants and Catholics, especially concerning the rule between Catholic Henry III and Protestant Henry IV. Annoyed with certain elements of politics, Montaigne's rhetoric praised Sparta in an ironic move, due to Sparta's disdain for rhetoric (MacPhail 195). Yet, Montaigne desired a stable environment, which had been tossed into turmoil and wars. Spartan conservatism and stable monarchy appealed to him for these reasons (MacPhail 200). The elite status of the Spartans favored the French nobles, of whom Montaigne was a member. This conservative, stable environment appeared to be an attraction that offered a respite to the constant fighting that spread across the French countryside.

As evidenced through these examples of the Spartan people, certain characteristics come to mind when discussing the Spartans, or referring to the myth which precedes any discussion. First, the Spartans relied on perfect discipline in order to achieve advantage in battle. The Spartan commanders organized their soldiers according to tactical patterns. Whenever confusion within battle may have overcome other soldiers, the Spartans possessed the uncanny ability to follow their training, seek out their commanders and stay organized throughout any possible confusion. Second, as a direct result of the Battle of Thermopylae, Spartans preferred to fight to the death, rather than surrender. But this decision of dying rather than fleeing did not derive from macho mentality. The belief appears to be an honorable belief, where the Spartan soldiers continued to fight so that others might live. If they did not fight to save the other Greek soldiers,



then the Persian army might have plowed through Greek lands without encountering any strategic defenses. Even Leonidas exemplified this ideal with the acknowledgement of his prophecy, yet still choosing to die rather than have his homeland destroyed. Third, mention of the Spartans assumes the listener is aware of the Spartans' strength in battle. The Persians could not penetrate the Spartan emplacement until they surrounded the Spartans. Due to their unparalleled training, the Spartans were feared on the battlefield. The Spartans exuded superiority to all those present.

After understanding the salient themes of the Spartan myth, one can identify Castro's use of the Spartan myth within his "This is Democracy" speech. Castro needed to set a clear message, not only to his fellow Cubans, but to possible enemies as well. He made explicit references to the Spartans in the beginning and end of his speech. Castro asked his audience the following question, "What is it that has converted us into a Spartan people?" ("Democracy" 27). He later answered his own question by stating, "...the reality that the nation is in danger, the reality that the nation is threatened," ("Democracy" 27). Since Castro believed that an invasion by external forces, specifically the United States, was imminent, he had no other choice but to prepare his citizens for an assault. But rather than simply stating that Cuba has become a militarized state, he used the myth of the Spartans to instill a new identity within the Cuban people. The Spartans were warriors dedicated to the city-state. Castro also referenced the previously mentioned Spartan battle, "Let our sister nations know that here there is a Spartan people. Of us can be said what the gravestone said in the Pass of Thermopylae: 'Go tell the world that here there lie 300 Spartans, who preferred to die rather than surrender,'" ("Democracy" 36). This comparison between the two peoples displayed the courageous ability that citizen warriors have for fighting to defend their states. Castro's use of the myth acted as a

persuasive term whose goal was to force the audience to energize the development of this new Cuban identity within themselves.

Within his speech, Castro explicitly referenced Spartans in the beginning and the end of his speech; however, he implicitly referred to the three previously mentioned ideals of the Spartan myth throughout his entire speech. The Spartan ideals of military organization and training, fighting to the death, and strength were all evidenced throughout Castro's speech.

#### MILITARY ORGANIZATION AND TRAINING

Early in his speech, Castro began stressing the idea of organization, stating, "this great majority of the people is organized," ("Democracy" 26). Mass mobilization of a whole people was a necessary benchmark in order for Castro to push his notion of majority rule. The civil war which just took place did not allow Castro to fill a void of governmental leadership; rather, Castro attained his position of leadership because an organized Cuban people supported him. This organization showed in their willingness to join militias, whether the Cubans were farmers, women, or students, Cubans organized militias for all branches of people. Castro referenced each one of these militias, including the soldiers of the army as single forces ("Democracy" 28-29). Without the unity of all of these forces, Cuba would be left in disarray. Hence, Castro focused a great deal of his energy reinforcing this concept of organization.

Castro referred to the organized soldiers and militias as they marched through the streets to display their force ("Democracy" 28-29). He stated, "What formidable training!" to reference the notion that the people endured rigorous training to bring them to their current state ("Democracy" 28). By citing that six months earlier the militias were not trained or organized, he showed the perseverance that the Cubans possessed in order to better themselves. The organization and training of the militias was a direct result of bombings within the country (Castro, "Democracy" 26-29). In order to infer that the organization and training were military

related, Castro “open[ed] ranks” in the beginning of his speech, and had his people “close their ranks” in the end of the speech (“Democracy” 28, 36).

#### FIGHTING TO THE DEATH

Castro littered his speech with the theme that Cubans would fight to the death in order to defend their homeland and their new way of life. Throughout the revolution, this theme rang in the phrase “Patria o muerte!” which Castro himself stated as his closing line (“Democracy” 37). “Our homeland or death!” was an effective rallying cry used to unite the people as part of a communal whole. Before the revolution, many Cubans could not rely on their government for aid, yet Castro created an identification between the Cuban people and the revolution. The revolution allowed individuals to commit to something greater than themselves, and for this they were willing to give their lives in order to defend it.

This sacrifice was a dominant image throughout Castro’s mythic frame. He stated, “The Cuban revolution is a reality...just as the men who are willing to die for it inside Cuba and outside Cuba are realities,” (“Democracy” 34). When referring to the soldiers and the militias, he stated, “[They are] always remembering to resist, to fight against any aggression, always determined to win or to die,” (“Democracy” 35). It became clear that the revolutionary cause was worth dying for in the eyes of Castro. But dying for the cause was the last resort, as soldiers and members of the militias were expected to fight valiantly. To simply sacrifice one’s life was foolish, but to sacrifice one’s life while attempting to halt an aggressor to the revolution was worthy in Castro’s eyes.

Just as the Spartan king Leonidas made the choice to give his life rather than have Sparta destroyed as an oracle foretold, Castro also presented himself as a commander of destiny. Granted, Castro did not have an oracle to predict his future, but he did discuss the possibility that he could be killed. Just as the Spartans continued to fight after Leonidas’ death, Castro urged the

Cuban people to move forward and find a new leader while continuing the revolutionary cause (“Democracy” 35-36). In this sense, both leaders acknowledged the importance of something greater than themselves but also presented themselves as a fated agent of the revolution. In Castro’s case, the revolution dominated all, creating the illusion that it superseded Castro. He stated, “Our revolution would not be destroyed if the enemy should deprive one of us, two of us, or three of us, of our lives. If a leader falls, the duty immediately and without argument of any kind is to replace him with another leader. If a leader falls, whoever the leader may be, immediately another will fill his place,” (Castro, “Democracy” 35). Castro attempted to have the new Cuban revolutionary identity persevere in the hearts of his people, regardless of his presence. By making this claim, Castro invoked personal selflessness, defining his leadership as a means of duty and not as a means of privilege.

By painting a picture where the cause was greater than the people, Castro invited his fellow Cubans to see themselves in the picture. If Cubans acknowledged Castro’s selflessness to the revolution, then they might have recognized themselves as having equal status with Castro; therefore, each Cuban could achieve glory defending the revolution. The point of view that Cubans fight side by side with their leader starkly contrasted images of a people who fight for their leader. In Castro’s case, he allowed his people access to the governing of the state. By linking himself with the mythic stature of Leonidas Castro molded Cubans’ minds into seeing Leonidas in him. They might not have believed or understood Castro’s selfless devotion to the revolution, but the imagery of the Battle of Thermopylae permitted Cubans to view Castro as Leonidas. Then, all characteristics attributed to Leonidas in Cubans’ minds were transferred to Castro.

## STRENGTH

Castro painted past May Days (the current day of Castro's speech where workers used to hold signs of protest for higher wages, etc. under the old government) as mockeries of the Cuban workers; however, he turned the current May Day of his speech into a sign of strength ("Democracy" 29). Rather than allow the day to be a sign of weakness which haunted Cubans regarding their slavery to their old governments, he re-appropriated the day as a symbol of Cuban power. In an effort to symbolically trample on the tarnished past of May Day, Castro reinvigorated strength within the people by having them march for seven consecutive hours ("Democracy" 29). Old images of workers holding useless protest signs were no match for the image of stomping strength in which Cubans witnessed, as well as participated. In one day, Castro recreated May Day for the Cuban people by use of his images. He stated, "today we have had an opportunity to see the tremendous strength of the people, we have had the opportunity to see the incomparable and invincible strength of the people," ("Democracy" 27). Again, Castro referenced the weak Cuban past under repressive governments by stating, "How is it possible that a people with such tremendous and extraordinary strength should have had to endure what our people have had to endure?" ("Democracy" 27).

Castro did not simply speak to his people about strength and have them rely on his character to believe what he was saying. Some individuals in his position could have simply incited the people to believe they were powerful whether they actually were or not, but Castro forced his people to experience the strength firsthand as a means of his rhetorical strategy. He relied on this visual and empiricist rhetoric to be more convincing than just his words alone. Castro affirmed this by stating, "The endless stream of columns marching for seven hours has been necessary so that our people should have a concrete idea of their own strength. And this great lesson should be an unforgettable lesson for us," ("Democracy" 28). This was why Castro

had so many of his fellow Cubans join militias, learn how to handle weapons, and parade in ranks. The people could witness their own individual, as well as communal strength in action.

Although Castro introduced the Spartan metaphor as a means to instill a warrior identity in his Cuban people, the Spartans themselves would have challenged the beliefs that Castro abolished in his revolution. Castro's revolution was a means to grant power to the majority of the Cuban people who were farmers and other types of workers. He despised the aristocrats that privileged themselves and gave ordinary Cubans no voice within the workings of societal functions. Castro displayed this by asking the question, "How was it possible for a handful of men, a band of mercenaries, or a plague of petty politicians to dominate our people and direct the destiny of our people during half a century?" ("Democracy" 28). But in fact, the Spartans, in their own city-state, were the exact people to which Castro referred. They were not a group of citizens who became militarized in order to secure power for the majority of workers. The Spartans endured severe military training in order to keep their slaves in check. The Helots, or Spartan slaves, were the true workers of Sparta, farming the land. The Helots outnumbered the Spartans, so the Spartans had to establish a militaristic order that could crush any attempted uprising by these slaves. When Castro stated, "You, the farmers, the workers, the youth, were the majority of the people. You who produce, you who made sacrifices, you who work, you were always and you are today and will be tomorrow, the majority of the people. But you did not govern. You were the majority, but others governed in your stead and governed against you," ("Democracy" 30), he was basically speaking to the Helot slaves, not the Spartan oppressors.

Although Castro attempted to share a common identity with the Spartans based off of their military organization, his revolutionary ideals would have supported the rights of the Helot slaves; therefore, this may beg one to ask why Castro chose the use of this metaphor. Castro

even states himself that "the rights of the majority should prevail above privileges of minorities," ("Democracy" 32). Due to the withholding of education by the ruling class against the lower classes, it is understandable that the Cuban audience might be unaware of Spartan history; however, if Castro references Sparta to the people, then he must assume the people are aware of its history. If Castro knew enough to reference a Spartan tombstone which states, "Go tell the world that here there lie 300 Spartans, who preferred to die rather than surrender," ("Democracy" 36), then how could he align himself with the epitome of what he despised?

The answer to this question lies within Castro's speech. He redefines the Spartans to fit his purposes. Castro's rhetoric influences the outcome of history by creating his own definition of who the Spartan people were. The application of this myth is a rhetorical strategy that Castro develops in order to establish a new Cuban identity within the hearts, as well as minds, of Cubans. This perception of an organized communal identity is a necessary step for Cubans to relinquish their old mindsets developed under previous dictators. By creating a new label for Spartans, Castro simply selects the information which he intends to pass on to others, thereby taking a misconstrued perception of the Spartan people and using a myth to establish a new identity for his people.

Castro successfully plays contradictory notions off of each other throughout his speech. He calls on the Spartan myth to inspire a militaristic pride in which his people will fight to the death to defend their new revolution, as well as establishes the fact that Cubans are peaceful people. He fuses the dichotomies of peace and war together in a manner that appears completely logical to his audience. Throughout his speech he places all blame of possible aggressions against the revolution on mostly unspecific sources. Aggression and aggressors take on an "other" stigmatism. Castro consistently creates binaries: aggressors/the revolution, Spartan warriors/peaceful farmers and workers, no desire for war/desire to train for war, old Cuban

identity/new Cuban identity, old dictator Batista/new leader Castro. Castro forces his people to take sides on all of these issues, but at the same time, he melds each of the binaries. For instance, he invokes notions of military prowess through the Spartan myth, yet he also refers to his fellow Cubans as peaceful farmers and workers. He takes on the notions of Spartans fighting to the death, but discards notions of Sparta's aristocratic control of slave workers. Castro discredits the old Cuban dictatorial government under Batista, yet establishes a dictatorship himself by simply redefining what constitutes democracy. These melds of the binaries created by Castro might make one question the goals of the leader, but that questioning would doom an individual to the realization of the only important dichotomy: an individual is either a supporter of Castro's new Cuban identity or an aggressor of the new Cuban identity, which Castro labels "counter-revolutionary" in all other forms of his discourse. The message is clear: "you're either with us or against us!"

The inclusion of all Cubans into a collective entity capable of defending the homeland when called upon was a casting call by Castro to include all Cubans in his revolutionary narrative. Castro's orchestration of a revolution offering a new identity in stark contrast to old, corrupt Cuban ways placed Castro as the active director of his envisioned story. The marches in ranks were not merely a show of military strength to ward off thoughts of external invasions, these were acts directed by Castro to offer total inclusion and participation by all Cubans. The past Batista government ruled from atop a tower looking down on the people, whereas Castro established an invitation to all Cubans to become active players. This inclusivity was inspirational; the new Cuban leader showed his people he cared. But most importantly, Castro allowed each Cuban to become the star of his play. The idea of dying for the homeland took on new meaning after Cubans were not simply watching a play unfold from afar, but were actually



actors within the play. Defending the stage, or the homeland, became more meaningful since all Cubans had an active stake in the success of the story.

The allure of the Spartan myth offered a romantic perspective to Cubans, giving them the sense that they were not just acting out commands by Castro, but that they were part of a fantastic escapade. Comparison to the glorious Spartans filled Cubans with pride and acted as an inspirational tool that enveloped Cubans with new characteristics and charm. The revolutionary story that Castro directed became an accepted fantasy where Cubans were given the chance to participate in something greater than themselves. They received the nobility of the Spartans through the Cubans' decision to act out the directions of Castro's play. Within their minds, Cubans truly became neo-Spartans, accepting their newfound characteristics not just as aspects of characters, but as the actual characters themselves. This grand orchestration on Castro's behalf mirrored Mussolini's command of the dramatic (Longman). By adopting the Spartan characteristics of military organization and training, fighting to the death, and strength, Castro inspired Cubans to reenact the endeavor of a courageous people against an imperialist power. From Castro's point of view, his play direction became a formula to infuse Cubans not with Cuban identity, but with his Cuban identity.

## CHAPTER 4: RETALIATION AGAINST CASTRO'S CIRCUMFERENTIAL EXPANSION

Not satisfied with revolution only in Cuba, Castro began campaigns to push his communist revolution across Latin America, and even Africa. Cuba supported the training of all guerrilla soldiers. This led to increased tensions between Cuba and local governments, whom were being threatened by revolutions sparked by the ideas of Castro. In 1965, Cuban soldiers began meeting with leaders from the Marxist-oriented Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA). As ideas of independence swept over Africa after the conclusion of World War II, Portugal struggled to maintain control over its west-African territories. The MPLA began a guerilla war in 1961 in an attempt to take over Angola, and Cuba gladly supplied the MPLA with training and weapons. Finally, in 1975, Cuba sent 20,000 troops to aid the MPLA against a South African invading force after a new Portuguese government agreed to withdrawal (Leonard 58).

Castro had to struggle against criticism of his circumferential expansion in order to maintain a sharp contrast with his adversary: the United States. Castro consistently criticized the United States for involving itself in the affairs of so many other countries, pushing forth its own agenda onto the world instead of allowing individual countries to prosper of their own will, stating, "imperialism holds back the course of liberation in certain countries...; it promotes coups d'etat or draws certain governments into committing treason, either to smash the revolutionaries in a specific nation or to divide progressive forces" ("Angola" 88). The sending of Cuban troops to another country like Angola offered evidence that Cuba was also attempting to push its agenda onto other countries. So, Castro constructed a speech on April 19, 1976 in order to: frame the event by refuting the opposition, naming an African Giron, painting a negative image of the United States, and illustrating a positive image of Cubans, as will be evidenced in the following pages.

Castro successfully expanded the circumference of his revolutionary ideology. In A Grammar of Motives, Burke identifies circumference as the degree by which an agent pictures a scene (“Grammar” 77). As social movements gain force, their agents will naturally want them to spread. However, the manner in which a movement spreads influences outside perceptions about the movement itself. As the context of the movement grows, its message may also grow in significance and scope. In this way, a struggle may be viewed in a synecdochal manner. It forges a connection with a larger struggle (Burke, “Grammar” 77).

After Castro conquered his own country, he began expanding the scope of his circumference to encompass other areas of the world. His ideology of national liberation was a template for nations everywhere. In this way, the local and the regional might become the universal, the mythical, the cosmic. This is how he rationalized supporting revolutions not only in Latin America, but in Africa as well, comparing the Angolan victory to that at Giron, which demonstrated Cubans’ “finest expression of internationalism and transcend[ed] the boundaries of this continent” (“Angola” 90). He saw the scope of communism as a political narrative for the entire population of the world, not just his own country, according to the Soviet plan, and even referred to the ruling “clique” of China as “betray[ing] the principles of proletarian internationalism” (“Angola” 88).

The risk in this strategy was that its sheer scope lay Castro open to charges of imperialism. To counter this Castro invoked the image of the imperial United States as a tiger at the gates and the true oppressor of the Third World. He based his initial establishment of power on the hero persona bestowed upon him by the Cuban people. By exporting the revolution he was able to sustain this power for decades. The constant revolution that never ends, and, specifically in this case, the revolution against an enemy personified in the United States diverted internal criticism from Castro and toward the Yankee Colossus.

Castro fueled this critical fire with images of United States imperialism. This constant criticism may have seemed hypocritical after Castro dispatched troops to Angola to help its leftist revolution. This image went against the sharp contrast that Castro had established between the United States and Cuba. To a third party this might have suggested Cuba's adoption of United States practices, specifically imperialism, and direct military intervention.

This potential counter-narrative – that Cuba had now become an imperial power – could have endangered Cuba's stature as an embattled site of revolution. The strategy Castro utilized in this speech sought to alter perception of Cuba's participation in Angola in order to reestablish the definitive differences between the United States and Cuba. He framed Cuban intervention as liberation and opposed it to U.S. intervention which was framed as aggression. Perpetuating these stark differences was necessary in order for Castro to maintain the image of the United States as the enemy of Cuba.

Throughout his speech, Castro made explicit statements refuting claims of his opposition, essentially claims by the American government. As Aristotle said in his Rhetoric, a speaker must know “what wars his country has waged, and how it has waged them” (36). This is precisely what Castro was attempting to clarify with regards to Angola. Cubans were assisting a war of liberation which was the antithesis of American political, military, economic and cultural domination. Castro defined the imperialistic nature of the United States as “establishing throughout the world a system of military pacts, bases of aggression, centers of corruption, bribery, subversive propaganda and espionage, overt or covert actions, terror, and threats,” but he still asserted that “imperialism [could] not hold back the victorious march of the peoples” (“Angola” 88).

The role of history played an integral part to Castro's revolution. In a role where Castro felt he was viewed as the underdog, whether it was against Batista's regime or against the United

States, he often relied on history as justification for his actions. Where an adversary controls a large portion of history's frame, Castro justified his actions on the notion that people of the future would look back through history under different frames and he would be redeemed. Castro stated, "The history of imperialism is written, without, however, the opportune and forced confessions of its crimes implying the slightest principle of rectification on its own part" ("Angola" 87). This line of thinking produced the idea that a true, virtuous history did indeed exist, which was what Castro attempted to establish through his discourse. In this particular speech, the historical frame held the key to Castro's rhetorical success.

Castro placed his actions, and the actions of his followers, in the Communist narrative of progress. Besides the mention of Cuban revolutionary heroes from before his time like "Marti, Maceo, and Agramonte," (Castro, "Angola" 90) Castro's display of Cuban history only included events since the revolution against Batista. This was due to Castro's reliance on a living history, in a sense, positing that Cubans only became alive since the revolution. Living also denoted activity, as opposed to a stagnant history. According to Castro's living history, all events were designed to achieve a future goal: the success of the revolution. In his speech, Castro weighed the option between "the past and the future," comparing the future to "progress" and "liberation," and the past to "treason" ("Angola" 88). From this point of view, no Cuban past existed, only a living history designed to further progress toward the future.

A major turning point in Cuba's living history was the Cuban victory at Playa Giron, or the Bay of Pigs Invasion. Castro consistently referenced this event as an inspiration for the future, referring to Giron as going down in history "as the first defeat of Yankee imperialism on this continent" ("Angola" 86). From a Cuban point of view, this event was utilized in the same manner as the American phrase "remember the Alamo," which was designed to instill extreme patriotic fervor. However, the emotional intensity of the remembrance of Giron to a Cuban

would probably be comparable to mention of 9/11 in the United States today. Castro made several references to Giron in order to instill its “historic” importance to the lives of Cubans (“Angola” 89).

These iconic moments have constituted dramatic ideographs in Castro’s rhetoric. They were available frames for the interpretation of past, present and future political acts.

In order to undermine the imperial counter-narrative, Castro first established an Angolan invitation. Throughout his speech, Castro stressed this invitation in order to directly combat any claims that Cuba imposed its will on the African country. When referring to the first arrival of any Cuban elements within Angola, Castro stated “the first material aid and the first Cuban instructors reached Angola...at the request of the MPLA,” also adding “when Angola was being openly invaded by foreign forces” (“Angola” 91). This example stressed the idea that Cuba only responded to Angola after Angola asked for help. This was Castro’s first piece of proof that Cuba did not impose its will on Angola, rather, Cuba received an invitation. Also, citing the threat of foreign invasion Castro placed Cuba in the role of rescuer and unselfish helper. From this point of view, Castro struck directly at any imperial counter-narrative: not only had Cuba been invited, but she had only been invited after hostile entities first entered the scenario.

Further, he cast Cuba as a foe of racism as well as imperialism. When describing the MPLA fighters and Cuban instructors being confronted with South African tanks, infantry, and artillery, Castro said “at the request of the MPLA, the leadership of our party decided to send with great urgency a battalion of regular troops with antitank weapons to help the Angolan patriots resist the invasion of the South African racists (“Angola” 91-92). Again, Castro stressed “at the request of the MPLA” to forge ideas of cooperation between Cuba and the MPLA. This highlighted Cuba’s willingness to respond when asked to help, and directly contradicted any charges of invasion and oppression. In addition, Castro noted that “this was the first Cuban troop

unit sent to Angola” (“Angola” 92), stressing his defense that Cuba did not impose its will upon Angolans or utilize the country as a battleground to further Cuba’s revolutionary ideology, insisting that “only the people of each country must and will make their own revolution” (“Angola” 94). With the invitation established, Castro, next, refuted any possible counter arguments that would criticize him for orchestrating an imperialist policy of military intervention.

Castro acknowledged comparisons of the war in Angola to events in Ethiopia and Czechoslovakia; however, he posited an alternative frame through which to view the comparisons. He referred to Mussolini’s hostile takeover of Ethiopia, and Hitler’s abolishment of Czechoslovakia (“Angola” 91). Conversely, Castro’s frame had his audience reorder the unfolding of these events in order to recognize different outcomes. Whereas he responded to alleged accusations by President Ford which equated Cuba to Italy and Germany in this instance, Castro believed in the exact opposite, viewing Cuba not as the aggressor similar to Germany or Italy, but as the successful revolutionary of Ethiopia and Czechoslovakia that defended the homeland against invading forces (“Angola” 93). From this point of view, Castro painted the United States and its allies, South Africa, and anticommunist revolutionary groups within Angola, as fascist elements attempting to destabilize a country.

As a final note following Castro’s refutation of oppositional claims, he attacked the United States for criticizing his country in the first place:

What moral and legal right do they have to protest that Cuba provides instructors and assistance for the technical preparation of the armies of African countries and of other parts of the underdeveloped world that request them? What right do they have to criticize the aid and solidarity we give to a sister people such as Angola, who have been criminally attacked? (“Angola” 95)

Castro established a bold connection by relating the war in Angola to the battle of Giron, calling the event in Angola an African Giron (“Angola” 90). This comparison held great value

due to the nature of the original battle. As mentioned earlier, Giron marked a significant moment of living history that instilled Cubans with extreme patriotism. Castro consistently relied on this connotation of the name to spark patriotic defensive preparations and rallying cries for socialism within his country. In this manner, Castro's technique followed the rhetorical strategies outlined by Ivie, where national motives like honor are offered as justification for war against negative images of an enemy ("Motives"). But not only did the name Giron embody extreme Cuban patriotism, mention of the name went hand in hand with American failure, being a reference of a smaller nation that defeated a superpower. To this day, the Bay of Pigs invasion was recognized as a failure within the United States as well, altering American policy toward Cuba. The event provided evidence that an invasion of Cuba would require considerable planning and bloodshed. But most importantly, the events that transpired at Giron embarrassed the United States.

On another note, Castro also used the event at Giron as an example of the United States attempting to influence another country through villainous means. Castro stated, "Never before in the history of our continent were such corruption, shamelessness, cowardice, immorality, and crime brought together to carry out a military and political action. That is what the mercenary attack on the Bay of Pig symbolizes" ("Angola" 87). So, from Castro's point of view, Giron was not only a patriotic inspiration, he framed United States imperialism as a generic and pervasive threat.

Castro used the reference of an African Giron to instill these two main points into the Angolan war as well. He attempted to make African Giron a charged slogan that imbued the same characteristics as the original. Castro linked the two battles together, stating, "The victory in Angola was the twin sister of the victory at Giron. For the Yankee imperialists, Angola represents an African Giron" ("Angola" 90). If the United States accepted this comparison, it would mean international embarrassment and a change in policy toward intervention in Africa.



The strategy of Castro was to achieve this goal. Relaying the inspiration of Giron to the Angolan war would mean a political victory grander in scale than any physical war. A moral victory energized allies in the Soviet bloc and placed Cuba in the forefront of the anti-imperialist struggle.

Castro painted a negative image of the United States to cast it in a role identified in Robert Ivie's victimage rhetoric ("Savagery"). Throughout his entire speech, he utilized words that placed the United States outside the realm of civilized nations, such as "sinister, traitorous, exploitation, deceit, stole, piratical, treason, violence, treacherous, and domination" ("Angola" 86-87). These words framed the United States as an outlaw power embarked on an evil adventure. For example, Castro stated, "The sinister CIA invested tens of millions of dollars to recruit, train, and equip mercenaries: landowners, bourgeois elements, traitors, war criminals, drug addicts, common criminals, and lumpen" ("Angola" 87). In this statement, Castro began with the inclusion of "sinister" to frame the motives of United States government agencies. Next, he linked the United States to unsavory individuals which he summed up as "mercenaries," which evoked images of bloodthirsty hired guns with no loyalties or honor. Under the heading of "mercenaries," Castro listed labels that already had a negative stigma within his revolution, such as "landowners and bourgeois elements." These labels might not appear harsh to other cultures, but since his victory in 1959, these labels had become synonymous with the enemy. Also, Castro attached "drug addicts and common criminals" to his list so that he presented an amalgam of Communist Devil Terms with popular gangster invective.

Perhaps his most insistent image was that of the United States as an aggressor. When referencing Giron, he referred to the "brutal aggression" of the United States that instigated the conflict ("Angola" 89). Despite the aggression, Castro described Cubans as abiding by "liberty and dignity" when they confronted "the aggression from the powerful empire that subjected all"

(“Angola” 89). According to Castro, despite United States indictment of communist expansion, it is the United States that was the cause of conflict, not Cuba. He illustrated this assertion with a conventional David versus Goliath description. Castro described Cuba’s air force during Giron as “a few rickety old planes, with barely half a dozen pilots” (“Angola” 87). Castro’s portrayal of Cuba as an underdog added credibility to its role as heroic liberator.

Along with the United States, Castro shed a negative light on United States allies as well. Describing South Africans as “fascists,” Castro linked this United States ally with aggression as well. Fascism was a devil term that transcended communist, capitalist and Third World peoples; it was shared by all parties. Castro even stated, “The swastika of the South African racists does not fly over the palace of Luanda” (“Angola” 93). In this example, Castro linked the actions of Hitler with the apartheid government that controlled South African society.

On the contrary, Castro created a positive imagery of Cubans during his speech to counter the negativity brought on by the United States. He began his recounting of the events at Giron by describing it as “one quiet, clear day” before the invasion in order to evoke a sense of tranquility in Cuba before United States aggression (“Angola” 87). And in response to an aggressor disturbing this peace, Castro responded, “The spectacle of a valiant, heroic, victorious people shook the foundations and changed...the old formulas and thinking habits of this continent” (“Angola” 89). When confronted with aggression, this example showed how Cubans demonstrated heroism by rising to the challenge and defending their homeland, and in so doing, altered an understanding of revered obedience to the United States in North and South America. To demonstrate how strong the foundation of the Cuban reserve was, Castro referred to the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis and stated that “not even the children hesitate[d]” (“Angola” 95). By referencing the resolve of Cuban children, Castro provided evidence regarding the absolute resilience of the Cuban people.

Castro celebrated the ardor of the revolution as a force that could be exported, inspiring other peoples to fight for freedom. He stated, “And in Africa, together with the blood of the heroic fighters of Angola, Cuban blood, ...that of the heirs to the internationalist tradition...also flowed” (“Angola” 90). This statement established the blood brother bond between Angolans and Cubans, illustrating an effective adaptation of an ideology from one culture to another through shared experience and not imposition. Along with establishing a blood bond, this also showed that the bond passed on the positive characteristics of Cuban ideology in an attempt to display a universal revolutionary movement. With this global movement in mind, Castro said “no imperialist policy, no cowardice, no betrayal will be able to hold back the inexorable march of history and the triumph of revolutionary ideas” (“Angola” 88).

By refuting his opposition, naming an African Giron, painting a negative image of the United States, and illustrating a positive image of Cubans, Castro provided the frame through which to view Cuba’s involvement in the Angolan war. His frame provided an alternative historical view to that of the United States government’s in order to support his expansion of his ideological circumference. This broad perspective “raised” a small island nation to the same level of significance as the world’s most powerful country. Two nations were viewed as engaging in a struggle for the minds and hearts of the world. And Castro’s reliance on a living Cuban history worked to provide Cubans with a sense of moral superiority during the struggle.

## CHAPTER 5: A RENEWED THREAT TO THE REVOLUTION

From 1972 right up until 1980, relations between Cuba and the United States eased, mirroring the relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union (Leonard 58-59; Duncan 215-16). Both the American and Soviet governments reevaluated the unfolding Cold War in terms of its economic strain. This period, often referred to as *détente*, marked a decrease in the emigration of Cubans to the United States. Nackerud et al. tabulated the number of Cuban emigrants into the United States between April 1972 and March 1980 at 64,885, as opposed to the 547,489 Cubans that emigrated to the United States between January 1959 and March 1972 (188). However, in April 1980, Cuba underwent internal turmoil instigated by Cuban citizen Hector Sanyustiz when he drove a bus through the gate of the Peruvian embassy in Havana in order to seek haven from Cuba. When Peru refused to hand him over to Cuban control, Castro responded by removing the Cuban guards from the embassy. Thus, 10,000 Cubans reportedly fled to the Peruvian embassy seeking their chance to leave the country (Ojito 77-93).

Disciplining such large numbers of people could have tarnished Castro's image; therefore, he allowed all Cuban citizens who wished to flee the country to do so from the port of Mariel. This massive emigration of Cubans, known as the Mariel boatlift, forced then-U.S. president Jimmy Carter to open the United States border to 125,000 Cubans between April and October of 1980 (Koehn 145). Although the Mariel Boatlift offered leave to those wishing to do so, it marked a bitter divide between the two camps of Cubans: those who wished to stay and those who wished to go. Joe Doss, author of Let the Bastards Go, a story of a New Orleans Episcopal Church's journey to sail to Mariel and free fleeing Cubans from Castro's grasp, explained:

A divorced parent who wished to travel with his or her children had a special custody problem. The other parent had to give permission for the children to travel. Not surprisingly, most parents who would be separated from their children refused. There was a reason besides parental affection. Few wanted to sign documents that would put

them on record as collaborating with traitors, suggesting that they wanted their children to leave the Fatherland. (171)

Doss described the story of one such mother who was forced to forge the signature of her ex-husband, who never showed previous interest in the children anyway (171-172). High tensions between the two camps led to the labeling of the emigrants as scum and undesirables (Castro, "Ignore" 305). This incident, coupled with the election of Ronald Reagan as the new U.S. president, altered the former period of détente between Cuba and the United States. Reagan introduced a conservative, right-wing approach toward handling relations with Cuba. Castro even expressed his concern over Reagan's possible enactment of a naval blockade of Cuba during Reagan's presidency ("Fighting" 286).

The Mariel Boatlift and Reagan's rise to the U.S. presidency, together, cast doubt on Castro's ideology while at the same time offering the prospect of external intervention into Cuba. Naturally, Castro responded to his Cuban people by demonstrating how the Cuban revolution benefitted Cubans and reaffirming notions of military defense against a would-be aggressor. Castro's speech on April 16, 1981 expressed these two ideas. He found himself in a situation where he had to use his ideology, rather than physical force, to prevent more Cubans from leaving Cuba, while at the same time transferring that physical force into the hands of the people in order to upgrade defensive preparations against a possible military incursion by the United States. By 1980 Castro faced new problems defending his revolution. A huge brain drain of businesses and professionals had impoverished Cuba's middle class. A large émigré community in the United States constantly pushed for a harsh foreign policy and economic quarantine. Castro faced the charges later leveled against the Soviet bloc. Socialism created stagnation and obsolescence.

In order to halt all whispers of a failing Cuba, as compared to a rumored prospering United States, Castro cited the positive accomplishments that his revolution achieved for the

Cuban people so far. In so doing, he focused his emphasis on aspects of the revolution that distinguished it from the United States. Recognizing that he had lost the minds and hearts of the emigrants who were prospering in Florida he knew that it was internal conflict among the Cuban people that he must quell. He recognized the major difference between Cuba and the United States to be their economic systems. In the teeth of unfavorable contrasts between the rival system Castro attempted to shore up the image of socialism, while demonizing capitalism.

Socialism had long been a god term in communist rhetoric. But as Kenneth Burke noted in his 1939 essay “Freud and the Analysis of Poetry,” and other works, even god terms can lose their power when they no longer validate our beliefs (“Philosophy” 262-63).<sup>1</sup> With the Cuban and other socialist economies stagnant, Castro needed to reaffirm socialism on grounds other than those of economic performance.

Castro spent large portions of this speech identifying the achievements of socialism, imprinting the godliness of the term in the minds of the Cuban people. For example, he stated, “Socialism has sown schools, technological institutes, universities in our own country. Socialism brought us into first place in Latin America in the field of education” (Castro, “Defending” 325). In this act, Castro transferred all success to the abstraction of socialism, thus,

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<sup>1</sup> Later, in his 1953 book, The Ethics of Rhetoric, Richard Weaver provided his definition of a god term by stating:

By ‘god-term’ we mean that expression about which all other expressions are ranked as subordinate and serving dominations and powers. Its force imparts to others their lesser degree of force, and fixes the scale by which degrees of comparison are understood. In the absence of a strong and evenly diffused religion, there may be several terms competing for this primacy, so that the question of [what is a ‘god-term’] is not always capable of definite answer. (212)

Although more than ten years apart, both Kenneth Burke’s and Richard Weaver’s developments of the concept of the god term denoted the use of terms that corresponded with extreme importance upon which all other terms are based within a particular social realm, meaning that god terms only applied to the specific cultures in which they were used (Burke, “Philosophy” 262-63; Burke, “Religion” 2-3; Weaver 212).

utilizing the word as a god term. Through this usage, socialism became more than a way of thought, it became an actual object capable of bestowing power onto others. A critical Cuban might have asked if a capitalist system could have achieved the same results. So, Castro positioned his country's educational success through socialism against that of the United States' education under capitalism, saying, "...not even the United States can claim that it doesn't have illiterates – there are illiterates and many semiliterates in the United States... As a result, we can say that socialism has put us into first place in the field of education in this hemisphere," ("Defending" 325). It is this reliance on either-or thinking that Castro required in order to have his claims accepted. While Castro delivered the speech, the credibility of the evidence was insignificant because most auditors had no way of verifying it. Thus, Castro relied on his passion and character. Questioning the evidence might have led to an auditor being identified as an undesirable or scum, or even worse, a counter revolutionary. Castro's evidence did not rest in the details, rather, he used a plethora of stereotypical images to vilify the United States and to bolster Cuba's socialist achievements.

Using a very broad brush, Castro pitted the socialist model against the capitalist model on several measures, stating, "Has the United States eradicated racial discrimination? Has the United States eradicated discrimination against women, the exploitation of women, the prostitution of women? No, a thousand times no!" ("Defending" 328). This example provided yet another illustration as to the cultural dominance of Cuba over the United States, from Castro's point of view. By consistently pitting the two countries against each other throughout this speech, he simultaneously linked the socialist model with ideal citizens who positively contributed to Cuban society and the capitalist model with scum and undesirables who fled Cuba to live a negative lifestyle. Castro offered evidence from the two different camps in order to illustrate the two possible futures Cubans could have. According to his speech, a future with

socialism would continue the path of social improvements, while a future with capitalism would lead down the path toward social downfall. His technique was like Plato's. He locked two terms into a frame and assigned positive characteristics to one term and contrasting negative terms to the other: Cuba, Si! America, No!

During the events leading up to this speech, an outside observer might have recognized Cuba on a path toward social downfall. The improvements to social welfare promised by Castro in his 1953 trial and later during 1959 after he took power did not appear to be panning out according to plan. Cubans witnessed food shortages and partook in rationing shortly after the overthrow of Batista. Carlos Montaner estimated the rations of food given to the Cubans in 1962 was lower than that given to slaves by Spain in 1842, stating that Spanish slaves in 1842 received 8 ounces of meat, chicken or fish, whereas Cubans in 1962 received only 2 ounces (75). Notions of democracy were redirected according to Castro's insistence that a rule by the majority was a democracy. Supportive shouts during speeches provided all the popular support Castro required as proof that he was in fact the representative of the people. Corrupt politics in Cuba's past helped perpetuate the idea that current formal elections had no merit, thereby presenting Castro with possible legitimate power according to popular support from the streets. However, hundreds of thousands of Cubans leaving Cuba since Castro's rise to power offered proof to the ironic nature of Castro's revolution. The exodus also explained his success. He had exported his critics. Despite his many claims that life in Cuba was better than during Batista's time, and better than life in the United States, it appeared that investments in the utopia of Castro had been rewarded with the irony of dystopia.

According to Giambattista Vico, professor of rhetoric in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, in his New Science, societies follow stages leading up to a display of irony that causes the societies to revert back to the first stage, thus, resetting the cycle. Vico describes these stages as the age of gods,



the age of heroes, and the age of men (172-72, 395). In the age of gods, humans ascribe elements within their surroundings as acts of powerful entities, or gods, such as attributing thunder to a god's anger (Vico 483-85). During the age of heroes, humans align themselves with powerful individuals (Vico 485-86). For example, humans submit to the rule of a leader in order to satisfy a need for protection, such as a peasant working for a feudal lord. With the age of men emerges an understanding of equality, and an individual's understanding of his own self worth (Vico 486-87). Although metaphorical, these stages illustrate an evolution in man's understanding of himself in terms of his relationships to his surroundings. However, Vico uses the trope of irony to explain how individuals recycle the stages after they begin to question truths and falsehoods. Irony allows individuals to realize the problematic distinction between the sign and the signified (Vico; White, "Tropics" 206-17).

The moment of Castro's suspected inability to improve Cuban society constitutes an ironic moment. For 20 years Castro promised improvements and made claims regarding the nature of his ongoing revolution. For example, when critics condemned his lack of free elections, he responded by claiming that Cuba was a democracy or when critics regarded the communist nature of his ongoing revolution he responded by disparaging other social systems like capitalism. Despite this, the instant Cubans began to question any problematic notions of his plan was the instant that Cuba could potentially recycle through the metaphorical stages.

Vico's understanding of societal evolution is suggestive, relaying a trope of revolution; essentially, the three stages delineate the evolution of man toward a developed idealized society. However, this is exactly the wordplay that Castro used to bring about his social revolution. In the beginning, Cubans answered to a colonial power then they attained their independence while having to rely on another imperialist hero, the United States. Castro's testament at his 1953 Moncada trial promoted a revolt to destroy the current society in order to start anew. Although

Vico's descriptions of the three stages are metaphorical, they explain the evolution of a society and a society's downfall and rebirth as well. So, Castro used this trope to draw in the Cuban people toward a better Cuban society, but it later became an item of conflict since the same trope he used to establish his revolutionary narrative was the same trope that he had to resist as well after taking control of Cuba. An exile counter narrative offered the same strategy of social rebirth, hence, Castro silenced this counter narrative from taking root in the minds of the Cuban people and demonstrated his own godly force that would save his current society, similar to how Vico suggested religion as a neutralizing or humbling agent to prevent an ironic recognition of the current society from taking root in individuals' minds. Vico consistently reinforced the contribution of a higher power as society developed, but at the same time, pushed forth an argument that humans directed their own social development, leading from humans living in caves during the age of the gods up to democratic institutions and the age of men, which leads confusion as to the relationship between god and man and Vico's argument (Pompa 51). So, Castro replicated the same strategy by providing his own godly force, the neutralizing/humbling agent, in the name of socialism. Through his rhetoric he presented socialism as the deliverer of ideas, but attributed the fruition of those ideas to the Cuban people.

The narrative of revolution means that one becomes the establishment, consolidating power and hanging on. The creators have become the oppressors. Castro's revolution identified Cuba in a state of peril where Cubans had to answer to a select few aristocrats extending the hand of the United States' imperial power. As part of this revolutionary trope he created his image as the hero to save the Cuban people. Naturally, the romantic hero faced the reality of stabilizing the society, which Castro wholeheartedly accepted by entrenching his narrative of revolution into that stability. Therefore, Castro cycled the Cuban people from one state of terror under a dictator through a period of heroic intervention back to another state of terror under

himself, a dictator. So, the exigency identified in the beginning of this chapter was one of many issues that Castro had to control in order to stop any notions of a counter narrative taking root inside of Cubans' minds. Castro's agreement with power demonstrated the cyclical nature of a trope of revolution, but he also demonstrated his ability to halt the cycle of that same trope by neutralizing any notions of irony or dissent.

Vico's scheme reiterates the trope of revolution. One begins in idealism and one ends ironically hanging on to power. According to Vico's line of thought, Castro delivered a godly spiritual power in the form of socialism during Cuba's moment of irony. Castro attributed the societal improvements that had been made to socialism. This method inspired Cubans to embrace socialism and continue living under current conditions in order to fulfill a collective destiny, where all Cubans worked together, not alone. In this scenario, it was socialism that acted as a neutralizing agent, and it was socialism itself that became a godly presence.

Throughout this speech, Castro personified socialism as a godly savior figure of the Cuban people. From this point of view, Castro was able to demonstrate the empowerment of the Cuban people themselves. Inspired by the godliness of socialism, the Cuban people were able to enact positive changes in their country. This method of delivery by Castro created inclusivity with his audience by placing inspiration in the godly hands of socialism but enactment in the hands of the Cuban people. This method linked the two together: socialism was part of Cuba, and Cubans were part of socialism.

Castro strengthened the importance of the god term socialism by reinforcing it with parallel construction in order to embed the value of the term in the minds of his people. He stated:

Socialism worked the miracle of eliminating many diseases and reducing the number of deaths...Socialism worked the miracle of bringing our country into first place in Latin America in the field of culture...Socialism worked the miracle of eradicating unemployment in our country...Socialism worked the miracle of undertaking the

economic and social development... (Castro, "Defending" 326-27)

This repetition of the phrase "Socialism worked the miracle of..." reinforced images of socialism as a savior figure, offering more evidence for the religious quality of the term. Despite communism's frown upon religion, Castro relied heavily on religious ideals in order to influence the mindsets of his audience.

Castro must ensure that Cubans understand that socialism uses its godliness to inspire individuals, but it is the individuals who must perform the actual work in the physical world. Hence, Castro weaves his speech to create a more receptive, tangible understanding of socialism through metaphor. Linking socialism to a compass, he states, "...and our compass is socialism, our compass is Marxism-Leninism..." (Castro, "Defending" 327). The metaphor of the compass allows previous failures to be explained. This utilization of metaphor falls in line with previous research identifying a user-friendly metaphor designed to explain a complex subject (Mechling & Mechling). A compass is an object easy to understand by many Cubans, and the complex subject is the current economic and social status of Cuba. At this moment, Castro directly accounts for criticisms against his tenure in control of Cuba. Explaining it clearly, Castro states:

We didn't always act wisely, as we said during the Second Congress, we didn't always make the best decisions. But we were certainly always able, with all the honesty in the world, to detect in time any error, any wrong decision, recognize it, rectify it, and carry on; because even when you travel through the mountains with the help of a compass – and our compass is socialism, our compass is Marxism-Leninism – from time to time there can be some drifting away from the right path – just as ships sailing on the ocean occasionally drift off course a little – but you always keep going ahead in the right direction. ("Defending" 327)

In this example, Castro demonstrates the guiding force of socialism, while also illustrating how Cubans occasionally stray from the path, thus, solidifying his notion of socialism as godly inspiration and physical acts taking place by Cubans as a result of that inspiration. This places all blame not in Castro's system, not in socialism, but in the Cuban people. But Castro does not iterate this message by pointing his finger in disappointment at Cubans; he consistently expresses

the idea of “we” in order to further instill notions of a collective destiny. This collective focus is necessary to divert attention away from selfishness and possible irony, thus, ensuring the stability of Cuba under a socialist system.

After Castro restores Cubans’ faith in godly socialism in order to stabilize internal turmoil, he redirects Cubans toward a possible external invasion by the United States by invoking the living history of Giron, previously mentioned, so that Cubans may duplicate its perceived grandeur. With a hardened faith in socialism, and a rallying cry of “Remember Giron,” Castro assures Cubans of their military “organizational ability and experience,” and reminds Cubans of their “sacred duties to [their] country and to socialism” (“Defending” 329-30). Thus, Castro confidently makes such statements:

We don’t want war, we are not in the habit of provoking conflicts and we don’t want to do so, but they should beware of provoking us!...If they impose a conflict on us, if they impose a war on us, they’ll find out what a resolute people are like, what a communist people, a patriotic people, a Marxist-Leninist people, an internationalist people are like. This is because socialism made us even more patriotic... (“Defending” 330)

In conclusion, with the establishment of godly socialism as a spiritual force, or more tangibly as a compass, Fidel Castro resurrects Cubans’ faith in his social system in order to prevent social unrest brought on by the irony of Cuba’s social problems. Castro creates socialism itself as a form of Providence that directs Cubans down a path toward social improvement. Establishing the perception that Cubans control their country’s destiny with the guidance of socialism, Castro diverts attention away from internal social issues that forced the emigration of thousands of Cubans. This diversion offers evidence of Castro’s rhetorical maintenance of a renewed threat from the American government.

## CHAPTER 6: RESPONSE TO THE SOVIET FALL AND RESULTANT CUBAN ECONOMIC CRISIS

Until the late 1980's Fidel Castro's rhetoric had reflected the realities of a bi-polar world. Despite a strong measure of regional independence, Cuba functioned as a client state of the Soviet Bloc. This relationship guaranteed economic aid, military aid, and a sense that their revolution was part of a world historic movement that would lead to the triumph of global communism. The collapse of the Soviet Union created a crisis for Castro's Cuba. Economic retrenchment might have cast doubt on the promise of socialism. The loss of Soviet military protection brought a sense of vulnerability and emboldened internal enemies of the regime. The so-called "end of history" suggested an abandonment of ideology all over the world, increasing the islanders' sense of isolation from the triumphant First World.

Castro might have modified his regime by introducing a measure of free market economics and democratic openness. He might have opened the island to massive international investment from Europe and Japan. He might have stepped aside for a talented successor who would modify the Cuban welfare state with some nuanced free market innovations. But Castro did none of these things. As a steward of the revolution he fought to hold to what had become his orthodoxy. He would continue to exercise centralized power as explicator of doctrine, interpreter of daily events, and guide to orthodox social practice.

So, on April 4, 1992, Castro delivered a speech to the Union of Young Communists in Havana in order to offer rhetorical hope for the economic crisis. Castro's strategy was one of identification through division by demonizing the United States through the creation of a false dialectic between capitalism and socialism in order to portray capitalism in a negative light and socialism in a positive light, despite the downfall of the Cuban economy. In so doing, he geared his terministic screen to frame the situation and created the trope of the scoundrel figure that embodied the negative characteristics of capitalism and the United States. In addition to the

demonization of the United States, Castro distinguished the moral superiority of Cubans partaking in the revolution as a strategy to designate moral rewards as grander than material rewards in wake of Cuba's economic troubles. Lastly, he addressed lax Cubans by instilling a moral revival and stressing a strict revolutionary Puritanism.

When Castro began his revolution in 1959, he began his rhetorical construction of the negativity of the United States, regarding its past relations with Cuba. However, with his demonization of the United States, a world power and major economic supplier, he required an alternative source for economic stability; thus, he allied himself with the polarized superpower to the United States: the Soviet Union. Castro's adherence to the Soviet relationship not only guaranteed economic and military stability for Cuba, it also demanded a complete rejection of the United States. Rather than play the card of diplomatic neutrality, in an attempt to reap benefits from both superpowers, Castro went "all in" and committed himself to a Cuban-Soviet alliance. This total reliance on the Soviet Union would become Castro's Achilles' heel (Pavlov 185-95). With the democratic opposition's cries against Gorbachev's insistence on the Soviet structure, that structure of the Soviet Union had dissolved into a fantasy. Gorbachev resigned on December 25, 1991, bringing forth a finite end to the Soviet Union (Suny 154).

Between 1986 and 1989 the Cuban gross national product already experienced a dramatic decrease before the imminent collapse of the Soviet Union, displaying evidence that Cuba's economy was experiencing its own internal problems (Pavlov 187). As if the economic downfall was not enough, Soviet representatives had established relations with Cuban exile organizations and furthered meetings with Alberto Montaner, head of the Liberal Union of Cuba, and Jorge Mas Canosa, head of the Cuban-American National Foundation and an extremely influential exile regarding American politics (Pavlov 239).

But the most dire situation was the Cuban economic crisis, which was labeled the “special period” in Cuba. Since the Soviet Union was Cuba’s main economic stimulator, the Cuban economy experienced a torrential decrease paralleled with the Soviet collapse. Soviet-Cuban trade had allowed Cuba to sell sugar in exchange for oil at a very generous exchange rate. All industries reliant on oil suffered an immediate setback. Loss of cotton, food for humans and animals, fertilizers, and fuel became a reality to Cubans, as these items were provided through the Soviet Union (Castro, “Wolves” 7). Four billion dollars in exports were lost, the ability to sell sugar, nickel, and fruits at beneficial prices was lost, and importation of oil had dropped from 13 million annual tons to 6 million tons (Castro, “Wolves” 6). Planas cited black market food production as providing 75%-85% of Cuba’s food supply immediately after the special period (85). This shortage of food and fuel posed a catastrophic crisis for Castro to which he would have to adapt and utilize his rhetoric to mend the Cuban economy, but more importantly, to keep himself in power.

Castro delivered his April 4, 1992 speech months after the beginning of the Cuban special period as a means of assurance that the revolution still persevered in Cuba. This speech addressed the closing of the Sixth Congress of the Union of Young Communists in Havana. The Union of Young Communists is a children’s organization encouraging participation in the Cuban revolution, with the famed Elian Gonzalez recently joining the organization in 2008 (“Elian Gonzalez”). Although delivered in person to the Union of Young Communists, the speech was also broadcasted on radio and television across Cuba, making Castro’s audience the Cuban people.

#### DEMONIZATION OF THE UNITED STATES

As a recurring strategy of Castro’s he engineered a false dialectic that established the guise of presenting logical arguments in order to conclude one line of thought as superior to



another. In other words, Castro pitted socialism against capitalism as two methods of thought at opposite ends of a spectrum. However, no dialogue was established between the sides, Castro simply presented his point of view to simulate the arrival at truth. This prohibited the other side of the argument from having voice or presenting evidence of its own in order to counter Castro's. Yet, this was Castro's strategy, to convince Cubans to accept his line of reasoning under the guise of a false dialectic.

Castro began the false dialectic by presenting his claim that socialism was superior to the United States system of capitalism. He stated, "Socialism, with whatever mistakes human beings may make...is the most noble, the most just, and the most worthy work that can be undertaken" ("Wolves" 15). This statement relied on its appeal to the values of nobility, justice, and worthiness in order for the audience to accept the claim. Values became a major aspect of Castro's defense against capitalism, due to his insistence that capitalism ruined the values of society, as will be evidenced later. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Castro accounted for mistakes under socialism as being the fault of human beings, not the system itself, reinforcing his blanket belief that socialism was superior. He pitted the values of Socialism against those of capitalism by stating, "the socialist state is not like a capitalist state. The socialist state distinguishes between essential and nonessential goods" (Castro, "Wolves" 23). Although this statement could have been received in more than one way, it relied on decades of evidence where anti-materialism was taught through schools and military indoctrination. As a major communist component, Castro had been instilling this value into Cubans for decades. So, his statement offered socialism on a moral high ground due to its rejection of nonessential goods. Still, relying on these values created a moral precedent as the foundation of his opposition before moving forward with factual evidence.

After laying a foundation of values as support for his argument, Castro presented more evidence for his audience to continue support for socialism. He offered factual support by stating, “Look at the millions of unemployed in the developed capitalist countries. The United States has about 9 million unemployed right now. France, Spain, Britain – each of them has 2, 3, 4 million unemployed” (Castro, “Wolves” 23). Although Castro offered these numbers, which would have been incomparable to the much smaller population of Cuba, he used them to address the value differences between Cuba and the United States and its allies. So, he presented factual evidence demonstrating large numbers of unemployed workers under a capitalist system in order to ward off any Cuban notions of desire for capitalism, and then explained the relation of these numbers to the two societies. Castro stated:

If a factory here is left without raw materials, we give the workers an income. We do not throw them out on the street. No one is abandoned. That is socialism. Capitalist society is the society of privilege. It is the society of vice. It is the society of alienation. It is the society of selfishness. It is the society of man exploiting man, man the enemy of man, man – as Engels or Marx said – the wolf of man. Capitalism is a society of wolves, and not a new society. (23)

Thus, Castro presented socialism as the “better man.” According to his argument, capitalism did not value the lives of the people living under it, it was a system that lacked respect for human life. He used short direct statements to draw attention to the descriptive nouns of privilege, vice, alienation, and selfishness in order to make them stand out in the minds of his audience. This strategy formulated a specific point of view regarding the differences between the two systems: socialism abandoned no one while capitalism cared for no one. This thought even answered for socialism in times of weakness, that despite loss of work the socialist system still cared for its citizens.

The previous example presented direct comparison between the two social systems; however, Castro proceeded to further demonize capitalism. In order to further demonstrate capitalism as the “society of wolves” where man exploited man he stated, “we cannot return to

that era when slaves worked for so-called free people. That is capitalism, neither more nor less. That is what the wage earners are. That is what the unemployed are, the reserve army of the labor force. That is what the classist society is, the society of exploiters and exploited” (Castro, “Wolves” 24). This portrayal of capitalism as slavery denoted the epitome of an immoral society, considering the former slave population of Cuba and Castro’s insistence of equality for black Cubans. Castro’s revolution adhered to the majority of Cubans who were previously unrepresented in Cuban society under former regimes, such as Batista’s. His platform since the start of the revolution in 1959 was one that fought for the lower classes and blacks, who constituted the majority in Cuba. Both blacks and low wage earners could relate to the concept of exploitation by others; thus, Castro used the image of slavery as further evidence supporting the resistance of capitalism.

#### TROPE OF THE SCOUNDREL FIGURE

At the forefront of his discourse, lay Castro’s terministic screen. Like all speakers Castro had as his intent to persuade his audience by influencing their identification with one point of view over another. Kenneth Burke describes terministic screens, stating, “Even if any given terminology is a reflection of reality, by its very nature as a terminology it must be a selection of reality; and to this extent it must function also as a deflection of reality” (“Symbolic” 45). Thus, Castro construed a reality for Cubans, one that he created as the most viable reality necessary for his rhetorically constructed revolution to stay alive. In so doing, he selected an image, a point of view in contrast with competing frames, yet a true understanding of the competing frames would be unattainable, or at least difficult to attain, for most Cubans. To ensure Cubans accepted his frame Castro made it his strategy to silence competing frames, so the choice for Cubans would be simple. However, deflection of competing frames was Castro’s goal in order to place all focus and identification solely with his constructed point of view. As in people from centuries

ago, if the earth was not the center of the universe, how would they know any better, how could present society fault them for such “savage” thinking?

In order to dissuade any sympathy toward the system of capitalism, Castro orchestrated the trope of the scoundrel, a negative personification of capitalism, designed to invoke one perspective from auditors: disgust. Scoundrels dwell in the pits of society, whether they experience falls from grace or are simply born into their crookedness, they resort to immoral acts to attain selfish gains. Castro did not explicitly delineate capitalism as a scoundrel; rather, his rhetoric assigned characteristics that depended on the audience to piece together the desired personification on their own. Hence, Castro relied on a trope of language as an artistic strategy to demonize his adversary. This was the image that Castro conjured to force division between his audience and capitalism, of which he illustrated the traits of cowardice, a conspiratorial nature, and immorality. This personification became an easy target, a straw man, against which he could unleash his verbal assault.

Castro’s trope attributed the trait of cowardice to the figure of the scoundrel. In this manner, he linked an unpopular trait to his enemy in order for Cubans to dispel any notions of siding with the United States. When referencing the fall of the Soviet Union, Castro stated, “If others tired that was not our fault. If imperialism was able to stab socialism in the back in Europe and the former USSR, it was not our fault because we have fully carried out our duties” (“Wolves” 4). This example of stabbing someone in the back implied a willingness to resort to unsavory methods to accomplish a goal. Most importantly, stabbing someone in the back suggested that the stabber did not possess the confidence to “look the victim in the eye,” which painted capitalist methods as skulking and unconfident, meaning they lacked a sense of honor. In response to the United States establishment of TV Marti broadcasting American support and anti-Castro messages into Cuba from Florida, Castro stated, “they employ the poisonous methods

of publicity” (“Wolves” 28). In line with stabbing someone in the back, using poison also demarcated a cowardly act by the attacker due to the victim’s inability for a chance to confront the attacker. These two acts, stabbing someone in the back and using poison, implied cowardice; however, Castro explicitly referenced the fear of his enemy by stating, “when imperialism gives anything away it is because it fears something,” responding to the reality that Cuba would not be given anything for free from the world (“Wolves” 25). Fear denoted passiveness and capitalism’s unwillingness to confront an opponent, thereby attributing qualities to capitalism that are foreign to socialism.

This image parallels the image of the villain, identified by Anker, which constitutes a “foreign invader” who has as his goal the destruction of cultural ideals (26). Although the trope of the scoundrel may appear to embody similar traits as the trickster as symbolized by Gates, in the sense that the scoundrel commits acts unbeknownst to his victim, the scoundrel is not in a social position of the oppressed. In fact, according to Castro’s usage, the trope of the scoundrel is an oppressor who establishes his position over others through immoral methods. So, unlike the trickster, the scoundrel is not envisioned as a clever fellow, but rather as a sneaky devil character.

As another element of the negative portrayal of the scoundrel, Castro offered proof of the conspiratorial characteristic of the United States and capitalism by means of his trope. Concerning the dissolution of the Soviet Union, he stated, “It was a conspiracy, it was a great imperialist plot, which had internal support” (Castro, “Wolves” 15). This statement placed the destruction of the Soviet Union in the hands of the United States and its allies; however, that destruction only came through scheming, according to Castro. Castro created the frame that the fall of the Soviet bloc was not at the hands of a victorious United States; rather, it was through the shrewd manipulative acts of the United States. As Goldzwig posits, the undesirable

happenings of history, in this case the dissolution of the Soviet Union, become themselves a conspiratorial plot when framed from this point of view (16). This conspiracy rhetoric offered by Castro displayed the five components put forth by Goldzwig: an “imminent danger,” “simple cause” for the danger, a “conspiratorial villain,” verification of the conspiracy, and a “war between good and evil” (17). In Castro’s case, the Soviet fall ushered in the domino effect on Cuba by consumption by the United States, dismantling of the revolution, and more importantly the loss of Castro’s position of power as an imminent danger. The straw man tactic of the trope of the scoundrel figure offered a personified form as to the simple cause of the danger and the conspiratorial villain. Castro verified the conspiracy by arguing that socialism itself could not die from natural causes, hence, he stated the Soviet fall was a result of assassination. Finally, Castro’s revolutionary rhetoric consistently portrayed Cuba’s revolution as righteously devoted to socialism and engaged in a battle against the corruption of capitalism.

As previously stated, Castro claimed the Soviet Union died at the hands of the United States and capitalism by means of assassination. The act of assassination itself can be received as a covert, or even cowardly means of eliminating a threat. Assassination pits the actual killer or killers against a foe more prominent than themselves. The foe is worthy of being targeted, whereas the actual assassin/s only become known, if ever, as a result of the act. For instance, John Hinckley, Ronald Reagan’s attempted assassin, Sirhan Sirhan, Robert Kennedy’s assassin, James Earl Ray, Martin Luther King Jr.’s assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald, John F. Kennedy’s purported assassin, and John Wilkes Booth, Abraham Lincoln’s assassin, all became household names as a result of their acts. The assassins themselves were all unknowns, pointing out that assassins are never as worthy as their targets. The target asserts more prominence than the assassin, marking their assassin rival as unworthy. Thus, assassination provides a “cowardly” means to eliminate an opponent through a decline to meet an opponent in a face-to-face

encounter. Moreover, assassination requires violence as a rhetorical act of furthering the motive of one movement over another (Griffin 125-26). Resorting to such an act of violence may be seen by others as an inability to defeat an opponent through ideas and willpower. Castro displayed this idea when he stated, “The international imperialist conspiracy had internal support in the assassination of socialism. If socialism did not die as a consequence of its mistakes, socialism did die as a consequence of its assassination” (“Wolves” 15). As just mentioned, this assassination was the result of trickery, where one opponent, in this case capitalism by the United States and its allies, was unable to defeat another opponent, Socialism embodied by the Soviet Union, and had to resort to the act of assassination. This implied capitalism’s unworthiness, when compared to socialism, from Castro’s point of view. Castro reiterated his point during his speech, “We have to be clear about this: They assassinated socialism,” in order to guarantee the acceptance of his argument by his audience (“Wolves” 15).

As a third characteristic that Castro established to clarify the scoundrel figure, he introduced an immoral trait designed to lower society and ruin family values. He linked the United States and capitalism to thuggery, delineating it as devoid of any positive contributions to society. To show this, Castro stated, “If [the capitalists] were to come to claim lands, houses, factories, and childcare centers, as I have said once before, to turn the preuniversity schools in rural areas into bordellos, or kindergartens into bars, who do they think they are going to fool” (“Wolves” 30). This image to turn schools into bordellos was designed to place Cubans on the defensive and embolden their resistance to capitalism and the United States. Likewise, converting kindergartens to bars demarcated the United States as interested only in money, while casting family values such as child rearing and education as insignificant. Furthermore, this strategy of painting such a negative portrayal of his enemy sought to instill division with the

United States among Cubans at a time when economic delivery would present enormous temptation.

Hence, Castro's terministic screen furthered his argument set forth in his false dialectic. It framed the overall issue of the superiority between socialism and capitalism by establishing a one-sided, biased point of view of capitalism. In essence, Castro sought to brand capitalism as a devil term in Cuban society. His point of view created the foundation that Cubans would rely on when forming judgments between the two ends of the spectrum. Castro's negative branding was the sole frame on which Cubans relied, due to the inaccessibility of competing frames within Castro's system. Embodied in the trope of the figure of the scoundrel, this personification of capitalism and the United States brought forth the characteristics of cowardice, a conspiratorial nature, and immorality. So, after listening to Castro's speech, Cubans were left with this image that "screened" their points of view.

#### MORAL SUPERIORITY

Castro combined the ideals of the revolution with morality, instilling the message that enactment of revolutionary ideals granted Cubans moral superiority over capitalists. The economic advantage capitalism offered other countries of the world delivered materialistic rewards that epitomized the system. On the other hand, despite being a trait that communism abhorred, materialism was not possible in Cuba anyway because of the faltering economy. So, Castro stressed moral rewards that Che Guevara had stressed three decades earlier under his "new man" doctrine. Fulfillment of revolutionary ideals was to provide a more worthy reward than any materialistic reward that capitalism could offer. This strategy created the perception that an ideal Cuban citizen transcended physical pleasures by existing on a plane above materialism. Thus, Castro's rhetoric embedded Cubans with the notion that zealous participation in the revolution granted them moral superiority over the competition.



As a result of choosing the revolutionary role within Cuba over that of an empty role influenced by the trope of the figure of the scoundrel, Castro portrayed Cubans as having a positive and justified life. The values that Castro relied on so heavily to support his claims also became the reward for complying Cubans. As a compliment for this role, Castro told the Cuban people, “You watch over [the pregnant women] as if they were the apple of your eye,” paying tribute to the Cuban value for life (“Wolves” 26). This compliment demonstrated the moral superiority of Cubans when compared to the figure of the scoundrel that sought to convert schools into bars and bordellos. “If it was an honor to [call oneself communist] then,” stated Castro, “today it is an even greater honor” (“Wolves” 2). Thus was the moral fulfillment of embodying socialism and resisting the United States capitalist scoundrel, according to Castro.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, Castro presented positive characteristics attributable to an individual choosing to embody socialism and continue their role as a revolutionary. The expected role of Cubans was to be a revolutionary, with all other roles amounting to counter revolutionary status. So, between the choice of taking on an empty role or taking on the role of the revolutionary, Castro framed the decision as an obvious one for Cubans, with the empty role being vilified and compared to the figure of the scoundrel. However, due to the extreme economic crisis taking over his country, Castro still had to adapt his message specifically to the situation. As a result, he sought after the innovations of science and technology in order to compete with a capitalist system that gave the impression of a better life. Science itself had become a god term on its own accord in Western society, becoming synonymous with improved living. But the nature of Castro’s false dialectic presented him as being opposed to all things linked to the United States, which meant he was in a position of resistance, as well as one of adaptation. However, Castro did not posit conservative values of resistance; rather, he presented a view that adapted progress for the benefit of Cuban society. Castro stated, “No one can

promote science and technology more than socialism is doing, because no one else can seek the integration, the cooperation among all scientists, all the scientific research centers, all the professionals, all the hospitals” (“Wolves” 25). He backed up this claim by referencing numerous science movements that were currently taking place within Cuba that illustrated cooperation among professionals (Castro, “Wolves” 25). Castro provided details to confirm his claims of scientific and technological usage and discussed the numerous fermentations of bacteria, from nodular to astobacter, within Cuban bio-factories (“Wolves” 8-9). He used these scientific terms within his speech in order to overwhelm his audience with references to science and technology, saturating their minds with the idea that Cuba possessed the scientific achievements that the United States did. But in contrast to the United States, Castro presented Cuba as utilizing scientific achievements for the betterment of the human species, as opposed to employing science in order to exploit people based on capitalistic means. Castro said, “Society has thought of another form of organization now,... a more just society, where man has put science, technology, and machines at the service of man, really. That horrifying inequality that existed between some human beings and others has disappeared” (“Wolves” 24). He established the vision that socialism would not only use science to improve Cuba, but it would do so with morality as justification.

#### MORAL REVIVAL AND REVOLUTIONARY PURITANISM

Although Castro established the moral superiority of revolutionary Cubans over capitalists, he faced a dilemma regarding Cubans who were becoming reluctant to full revolutionary participation. Because of this, he needed to “cleanse” the citizens of his country and reorient them on the correct path of the revolution. Even though participation in the black market had become common place, this type of behavior allowed a lax revolution to spread. So, Castro strategically reset the parameters of the revolution in order designate a more disciplined

approach by Cubans. This revival of ideals called for strict adherence, establishing a revolutionary Puritanism that despised “sinful” behavior.

Despite his negative portrayal of capitalism and the United States, Castro implied the idea that Cubans were still allowed to choose their social role in the Cuban system. Castro did not explicitly state this choice, but it arose as a result of the images he offered concerning socialism and capitalism. On a more specialized choice, he even discussed granting Cubans an ability to choose when discussing the Cuban farmer’s “principle of choice” as to whether or not farmers wished to remain independent small farmers or contribute to larger collective farmland (Castro, “Wolves” 16). This example illustrated the appearance that Castro wished Cubans to make the best choices for themselves; thus, as a result of the negative frame of capitalism and the United States, Castro implied options that the Cuban people could accept in their daily lives regarding their everyday roles. He set up capitalism to fail as a scoundrel, but created the perception of choice although not enough information was present in order for Cubans to truly make an informed choice. Based off of the demonization of one choice, it would be logical to choose against it, again, due to Castro’s monopoly on Cuban frames and punishment for resistance. Despite Cubans’ current hardships, Castro’s argument was to have Cubans make a choice, a choice to remain loyal to socialism and resist the capitalist system brought on by the United States.

Whereas Castro painted capitalism itself as the figure of the scoundrel, he also presented a possible negative role if Cubans themselves chose to side with capitalism and the United States. This negative role embodied emptiness within the individual. Castro linked the notion of suicide to individuals choosing to take up this role in society, referring to Soviets who relinquished their principles in the face of capitalism (“Wolves” 7). He stated, “We will not commit suicide with cowardly concessions and compromise. We will not destroy ourselves,”

linking Cubans who side with capitalists to individuals with suicidal tendencies (Castro, “Wolves” 30). Resorting to suicide would be a choice for the passive, or those who could not face the difficulties of the world. As in many societies, suicide had a negative stigma attached to it, being seen as an unacceptable social action that left family members and friends in a predicament to contend with the dilemma. Thus, Castro presented suicide as a characteristic of someone choosing to accept an empty role in society.

Castro further portrayed an individual choosing to live the empty role as someone who lacked confidence for what they believed. He stated, “There are some who are embarrassed at having been communists, even of having been socialist... We are not embarrassed. We feel proud to call ourselves socialists and feel even more proud to be communists” (Castro, “Wolves” 2). He presented the optimal characteristic of pride in one’s beliefs, distinguishing it from the negative characteristic of embarrassment for one’s beliefs. This example created a clear line of thought regarding individuals who forsook socialism. Whereas individuals choosing to do so might have in fact believed they were cleansing themselves from foolish beliefs in socialism, Castro made it clear that that was not the case, but the opposite. He painted individuals that would choose to change their lifestyles as portraying shame, not rebirth.

Lastly, as a characteristic of the empty social role, Castro discussed individuals who believed they were being revolutionary when in fact they demonstrated apathy. He labeled Soviet leaders as “lack[ing] vision,” which resulted in the collapse of the Soviet Union (Castro, “Wolves” 15). Aligning oneself with this type of individual would have been an admittance that an individual possessed this same negative trait, according to Castro. Castro referred to “two-bit strategists” when referencing individuals who believed they knew how to improve socialism when in fact they implemented its downfall in the Soviet Union (“Wolves” 15). This phrase applied to the same individuals within Cuba who might have been developing ideas of how to

alter socialism along the same lines as the Soviets. Another annoyance of Castro's came in the label of "pseudo-revolutionarism," which offered itself as a potential devil term in Cuban society ("Wolves" 15). The counter revolutionary achieved his place as an anti-christ or disbeliever in Castro's Cuba, and a pseudo-revolutionary was placed on a path with the same results. An individual who masqueraded as a revolutionary possessed a fake personality designed to mask some hidden trait. So, according to Castro, either an individual was a true revolutionary or they were not a true revolutionary; pseudo-revolutionaries were just as useless as counter revolutionaries because they brought nothing to the table except false belief. Individuals choosing to take up this empty role were basically "idiots," according to Castro, and any Cuban considering this choice would be making an asinine decision ("Wolves" 15).

## CONCLUSION

Castro's rhetoric achieved success due to its reliance on an enemy, which furthered the power of identification, as Burke would suggest. In order to influence Cubans in the most successful manner, Castro simplified their possible points of view. As he had done at the outset of the revolution, he divided Cubans along lines of his own design, pointing out differences between the old Cuban lifestyle, which he classified as corrupt and exploitative, and the new Cuban lifestyle embodied in the revolution. Castro painted his view as good, and the former view as bad, presenting a black and white point of view with morality as the sole decider. This strategy remained consistent throughout Castro's tenure, guaranteeing his position as the leader of Cuba. Castro's establishment of this either-or-thinking was the foundation toward establishing the rule of the majority. He often answered critics skeptical of his so-called democracy, which he responded by referencing the large numbers of bodies that were physically present and cheering him on during his speeches as proof to popular support. Corrupt elections in Cuba's past allowed him to offer this popular support as rule by the people. Just as in any

democratically-elected Western society, democracy relied on the support of the majority, which Castro's evidence did seem to offer.

Through the creation of a false dialectic that painted capitalism and the United States in a negative light, Castro simulated the logical conclusion that socialism was the superior social system. Personifying capitalism and the United States through the trope of the figure of the scoundrel presented Cubans with a simplified choice as to whether they should adhere to an empty role that linked itself to the scoundrel figure or to the role of the revolutionary with social values and scientific adaptations that justified it as morally superior. The framed choice that Cubans would take on the role of the revolutionary guaranteed the furthering of the revolutionary social system orchestrated by Castro, but most importantly, it also secured Castro's place as leader of Cuba in the wake of a catastrophic economic crisis. Castro's false dialectic presented Cubans with an image that even if capitalism arrived in Cuba to "save society," it would do so at the expense of their social values and moral conscience, ensuring the stability of the revolution.

Through the construction of his false dialectic, Castro prevented the competition of voices and silenced any chance at dialogue. However, he presented evidence in a manner that would have been recognized as an acceptable argument. Despite the absolute one-sided approach, the negative image of capitalism that he established trumped questions that could have sought evidence in support of capitalism. Castro so demonized capitalism that there was no point in inquiring about possible benefits of capitalism. He created a dichotomy where one social system showed concern for its citizens, whereas another social system did not, and if any Cubans sided with the unconcerned system it meant they also sided with the immoral values of that system, according to Castro's logic. Cubans had been living a life with very limited social frames, due to Castro's elimination of the competition, so expecting Castro's audience to accept his one-sided argument and its evidence was not unbelievable and would have fallen into the

recurring pattern of Castro's tenure. Castro stated, "Capitalist society and imperialism, I repeat, are indefensible. They cannot be defended from any angle, in any respect" ("Wolves" 24). This statement presented an absolute end to the argument. Castro presented evidence, then provided an across the board statement that denied Cubans any access or thoughts of challenging his point of view, demarcating support of capitalism as futile.

## CHAPTER 7: FUTURE OF THE REVOLUTION

Max Weber noted that the greatest problem for charismatic leaders is the survival of the movement beyond their ascendancy. Movements usually fall apart after the removal of the founding leader. However, as Weber argues, a few leaders are able to routinize their charisma. This routinization is often done through a bureaucracy, priesthood or a leadership class who govern through fidelity to the leader's doctrines. Very occasionally, a second charismatic leader emerges: Paul institutionalizes the work of Christ; King is followed by Abernathy. Weber noted that this was rare and that even the greatest successor leaders were often undermined by events.

Fidel Castro addressed students and professors at the University of Havana on November 17, 2005 in order to address these issues. Castro's main focus of the speech was to position Cubans in a manner that would prepare them for his inevitable absence. Despite his insistence since the outset of the revolution that his brother, Raul, would succeed him, Castro failed to produce a true successor. Fears that Cuban exiles would return to Cuba and reinstitute capitalism were a reality for Castro, a reality that would destroy his revolution if he did not prepare for his own absence. In order to address this, first, he expanded the circumference of his revolutionary narrative into an abstract plane. Castro altered the battlefield to a scene that focused primarily on the abstract, or a battle of ideas, thus, removing the necessity for conventional weapons. Second, Castro pitted the revolution against United States globalization using agonistic elements within his speech. Castro's language placed the revolution versus the United States imperialist globalization, discipline versus selfishness and waste, survival versus un-sustainability, keeping faith versus denial, and self criticism versus materialistic empathy.

As the Cuban revolution entered the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Cubans were still recovering from the special period in Cuban history induced by the collapse of the Soviet Union. Although Castro managed to stay in power despite a monumental economic crisis, Cuba would not enjoy the



economy it had developed in relation to the Soviet Union. With the allowance of foreign investors, the Cuban economy saw a major return in its tourism industry, but Cubans themselves required major sacrifices to uphold standards of living. The Cuban government boasted a 11.5% increase in its economy in 2003 (Deutschmann and Shnookal 27), but Cubans had come to rely on other means to secure their well being, such as receiving monetary gifts from exiled relatives, profiting from the black market, or taking advantage of government supplies. In 2004 Cubans began experiencing severe power shortages across the island, with Castro even prohibiting the import of incandescent light bulbs (Robles A13).

The length of Castro's life had always been an issue, as opponents to Castro seemed to be waiting for him to die. On June 23, 2001, Castro fainted while delivering a televised speech, raising concerns of his health in the international media (The Washington Post A16). On October 22, 2004, The Washington Post reported that Fidel Castro had fallen down a step when exiting a stage to return to his seat and broke his arm and fractured his knee after delivering a televised speech (Jordan A16). The CIA divulged on November 17, 2005 that Castro developed Parkinson's disease in 1998 (Luscombe 23). These instances raised the issue of Castro's health, and whether or not the CIA's claim that Castro had Parkinson's was true, it could not be denied that Castro no longer possessed the body of the 33 year old that defeated Batista and began the Cuban revolution. Castro would be forced to address questions about his health. Whereas his death had always been a real possibility due to the nature of the dissent that he inevitably fostered which made threats of assassination a reality, Castro found himself having to address concerns about his possible natural death. Whereas his assassination could be seen as an inspirational catalyst that could perpetuate the revolution, due to the event playing right into the Cuban revolutionary narrative of perseverance and struggle against counter revolutionaries, a natural death would not provide such a display of martyrdom. Rather, a natural death could be

seen as the fading away of the revolution, with no inspirational event to launch the revolution forward.

Castro echoed the possibility of his death to his audience. As much as Castro possessed an unwillingness to allow anyone control but him, he still expressed his acceptance that he was mortal. However, despite the mortality of his physical self, he attempted to plant the seed for the immortality of his ideals. If his revolution still prospered beyond his death, it would be a sign that his legacy still controlled people. Castro discussed his recent fall that broke his arm in order to reveal how much stronger of a person it had made him (“University” 33-34). He also rebuked the CIA’s claim that he had developed Parkinson’s disease, stating, “that’s a little like the guy that said I was the wealthiest man in the world. What a faux pas!” He even referred to the claim as a “little” story, implying the childishness of the accusation, and President Bush as “the guy and all his cronies” (“University” 34). To add greater insult to the United States, he said:

[The empire is] awaiting a natural and absolutely logical event, the death of someone. In this case, they have honored me by thinking of me. It might be a confession of what they have not been able to do in a long time. If I were a vain man, I could be proud of the fact that those guys admit that they are waiting for me to die, and this is the time. They are waiting for me to die, and every day they invent something new. (“University” 33)

Even with his possible death on the horizon, Castro’s language was that of control. This control placed him in power over the enormous globalized empire which he identified as his adversary, despite Cuba’s apparent insignificance to world affairs. But Castro’s language revealed his insistence that he was a worthy adversary of this superpower, identifying his egotistical need for control.

Despite Castro’s trivialization of the issue, he still stated, “Truly, I don’t care if I do have Parkinson’s. The Pope suffered from Parkinson’s and he spent many long years travelling all over the world with great energy, they even tried to assassinate him” (“University” 34-35). Even though Castro previously ridiculed the claim that he had developed the disease, he still offered a

nonchalant brush-off in the case that it was true, which presented his health as a real issue. Whether Castro had Parkinson's or not, it seemed he still found it necessary to address the possibility, along with his dominance over any possibilities. His comparison to the pope demonstrated that he would still persevere despite any negative diagnoses. The prospect of death would take control away from him, which was why he dedicated time to illustrate his dominance over it and address that if he died he was prepared; death was not getting the best of him.

In order to confront the colossus he identified as the empire, Castro needed a new approach to reenergize his fellow Cubans. Whereas the special period in Cuban history after the Soviet collapse saw a severe economic drought in Cuba, the 21<sup>st</sup> century saw acceptance of that economic decrease and the realization that without the Soviet Union, Cuba's voice against the United States dwindled dramatically. However, Castro's resilience through the special period and the tightened embargo of the 1990s ushered in a time of attrition, where Cubans had to learn to survive their lowered economic conditions, and the United States had to wait for Castro to die, bringing back memories of Castro's own war of attrition against Batista. This war over 45 years ago from the date of this speech focused heavily on image, as evidenced in Chapter Two. So, Castro was faced with the issue of redirecting uncomfortable living standards within his own country in order to blame them on the United States. In order to revamp the revolution in the eyes of Cubans, he needed to update his language. Thus, Castro's rhetoric reframed the revolution under a battle of ideas, stating, "Some speak of the battle of ideas, the battle of ideas which we have been waging for several years now and which is becoming a battle of ideas throughout the world. These ideas will triumph, these ideas must triumph" (Castro, "University" 18).

## ABSTRACT EXPANSION OF CIRCUMFERENCE

Although distinguishing this “battle of ideas” in a 1999 speech (“Ideas”), Castro reinforced its repetition in his 2005 speech in order to further expand the circumference of his rhetoric. As discussed in Chapter Four concerning Castro’s expansion into other parts of the world, such as Angola, he once again attempted to reach an audience far beyond the boundaries of Cuba. The Cold War gave Cuba a sense of prominence in world affairs due to Cuba’s position as the only communist state in the American hemisphere, and the end of the Cold War also displayed the end of Cuba’s prominence on a worldly scale. Thus, Castro expanded his circumference in an effort to attain worldly status once more and took the helm of the global socialist revolution in the wake of the Soviet Union. Whereas his circumferential expansion into Angola was done through physical means, this new battle of ideas existed solely on an abstract plane, transcending the previous, more material scene. As Burke explains a broadened circumference, “...all actions [are] interpreted in greatly different terms...by a ‘transcendence,’ a ‘higher synthesis,’ that in effect ‘negates’ the terms of [a narrower] scene...” (“Grammar” 85). This transcendence put forth by Castro allotted for the loss of material needs by placing those needs lower on a hierarchy that deemed the ideals of socialism as more important. Castro did not have the economic means, or more importantly, an economic backer in the form of the Soviet Union, to physically expand his reach. So, an expansion on an abstract scale burdened him with no parameters. Theoretically, a circumferential expansion on this abstract scale could never be lost as long as his revolutionary narrative was rhetorically maintained.

Following the protocol of the revolution, this battle was waged against “the enemy,” only this time, due to the existence of one superpower, the United States, and that superpower’s uncontrollable adherence to capitalism, “the enemy” constituted globalism itself. A globalized empire that influenced all, due to the lack of a competing superpower, presented an even more

unclear enemy than the previous focus on counter revolutionaries and the United States. This battle of ideas presented an unstructured battle plan to defeat an enemy more ambiguous than the previous enemy. Yet, Castro quickly reiterated the dedication of the Cuban people by committing them to this evolved battle under his unfaltering leadership, stating, “I avail myself of the experience or the authority which I have in order to wage this battle. There are millions of Cubans ready to wage this war which is a war of all the people” (“University” 61). Statements such as this provided no choice for Cubans, Castro simply enlisted them into the battle by stating ad populum support. Expectedly, Castro attempted to fill the gap and provide structure to his battle of ideas by using his rhetoric to morph the battlefield, and usher in an updated guide to warfare. Although this abstract battle created the perception that it existed on a grander scale than what Cubans had previously known, this expanded circumference actually reduced the scope of the Cuban outlook by fostering in a more personal relationship between Cubans and the circumference (Burke, “Grammar” 96).

By distancing his rhetoric from military formations, parades of strength, and numerous Cuban brigades, Castro followed in what Robert Hariman saw as the integration of rhetoric and traditional strategic thinking (108). Although adhering to the basic premise of his past rhetoric that stressed vigilance in a fight against the enemy, Castro strayed from previous discourse in that he focused more on the abstract nature of the fight rather than pursuing the abstraction plus tangible references to guns, military training and soldiers that he had consistently referenced in the past. For example, Castro made such previous statements as referencing the Cuban people “form[ing] militias and learn[ing] how to handle arms,” stating that Cubans had “tens of thousands of reserve officers in [their] Revolutionary Armed Forces,” and that “no young people in the world [had] as many physical weapons as [Cubans]” in 1960, 1981, and 1992, respectively (“Democracy” 27; “Defending” 329; “Wolves” 31). Although Castro made previous references

to “moral and political weapons,” these references were always twofold with the physical, conventional references to war as well (“Wolves” 31). In 2005, Castro admitted the futile nature of actual military action when he stated, “We have reached military invulnerability, that this empire cannot afford the price of the lives that would be lost” (“University” 61). With past entrenchments in Vietnam and an unfolding entrenchment in Iraq, it became clear that the United States would never risk the invasion and subsequent occupation of Cuba, a country whose leader had stressed military preparedness for decades. Because of this, the fear of military invasion by the United States became moot, so Castro transferred the battleground in whole to the abstract, or a battlefield of ideas and values. This abstract battlefield had always been present in Castro’s rhetoric through the dialectic of socialism and capitalism, but it changed here in that Castro equipped his Cubans with a new set of weapons, stating, “if we are going to war we need weapons of great caliber” (“University” 19). This meant that Castro had to convince Cubans that abstract weapons of ideas and values could compete in the war against globalization, where the enemy not only had its own ideas, it also possessed powerful conventional weapons.

#### AGONISTIC ELEMENTS

Castro continued a macro strategy of division, perpetuating a polarized society between the revolution in Cuba and the imperialism of the United States. He continued to fill his language with competing terms that highlighted the difference between the two cultures. This division became the strong suit that guaranteed Cuban identification with Castro’s revolution. When viewed from a pragmatic point of view, the Cuban lifestyle, rather than the potential system offered by the United States, became the obvious choice for Cubans. This was due to Castro’s word associations regarding the language he used to describe the competing systems. The application of Burke’s agon analysis to Castro’s speech reveals this polarization of terms. Castro implemented agonistic elements within his discourse to illustrate obvious distinctions

between the two systems, allotting for Cuban identification with the revolution and Cuban division with a demonized view of the United States. A reliance on agonistic terms prevents cultural dichotomies from dissipating, as Lynch concluded in his research between the cultural terms white and black in the United States. Thus, in order for Castro to maintain his understanding of Cuban identity, he had as his goal to maintain the agonistic relationship between Cuba and the United States. Castro based Cuban identification on a harsh division, so perpetuating that dichotomy was a necessary application of his rhetoric.

### THE REVOLUTION VERSUS U.S. IMPERIALIST GLOBALIZATION

With the current state of world affairs, Castro aimed his attention toward the development of a solely capitalized world, due to the Soviet Union's dissolution of the competing force against capitalism. Thus, Castro established the stark difference between the revolution and United States imperialist globalization, accentuating the polarization of the two points of view. The current state of globalization had grown in a manner inconceivable to Castro at the outset of the revolution in 1959. Castro stated, "We were concerned about this island, this tiny island. There was no talk then of globalization; there was no television or Internet; instant communication [was] not possible from one end of the planet to the other..." ("University" 3) when referring to the time he began at the University of Havana over 60 years ago in 1945. Castro illustrated the state of the world in regards to its affect on individuals, saying:

The insensitive world that wastes a trillion dollars each year on advertising to bamboozle the immense majority of humanity that pays for the lies that are spread depriving the human being of the capacity to think for himself, as he is forced to buy a soap that is the same soap with 10 different names, and he must be deceived because a trillion dollars are spent on it and this money is not paid by the companies, it is paid by those who buy the product due to the advertising. ("University" 4)

Castro's claim pointed out the enormous negative impact of globalization, to which some scholars would probably agree, such as, Guy DeBord placing individuals within a spectacle where they lose a true grasp of reality, mistaking the images for the real, or Hardt and Negri's

shift from globalization to the boundary-less Empire, or Owen's and Ehrenhaus's likening empire to the pornographic role of the consumer.

Castro's purpose in identifying the traits of a globalized empire was to establish an updated enemy of the revolution. As he did in the past, he relied heavily on blaming the United States and its embargo for substantial declines in Cuba's welfare. Castro would identify the United States war on terror to be a repressive apparatus of the globalized state; therefore, he painted the picture of the American blockade, linking it on a worldly scale. Thus, he stated, "There must be an end to stupidity in the world, and to abuse, and to the empire based on might and terror. It will disappear when all fear disappears. Every day there are more fearless countries. Every day there will be more countries that will rebel and the empire will not be able to keep that infamous system alive any longer" (Castro, "University" 68). Despite the overwhelming force of his adversary, Castro still insisted hope existed to smash the oppressive restrictions and improve Cuban life. So, the globalized empire, controlled by the United States, became not only an unequivocal source of blame, but its dissolution would offer Cubans an improved life, as Castro framed the situation for his audience.

#### DISCIPLINE VERSUS SELFISHNESS AND WASTE

Castro took his criticism further by rebuking his audience for its inability to consider self criticisms on its own, reminiscent of a parent disciplining his children for their own future well being. Castro challenged his audience:

I asked you a question, companero students. I ask this in light of historical experience and I ask you all, without exception, to reflect on it. Can the revolutionary process be reversed, or not? What are the ideas or what level of consciousness would make the reversal of the revolutionary process impossible? When those who were the forerunners, the veterans, start disappearing and making room for new generations of leaders, what will happen and what will be accomplished? After all, we have witnessed many errors, and we didn't recognize them. ("University" 36)



This example presented evidence of a parent concerned for the next generation, bringing up issues of the past generation, the original revolutionaries, and whether or not their values and traditions would be continued or thrown away. Although in question form, Castro implied to his audience, the university students, that the revolution would not be reversed by the next generation. Castro faced the issue of whether or not the next generation of Cubans would continue his revolutionary ideals; therefore, it was necessary for him to force them to do so. However, as just mentioned, Castro's implicit demand was masked under the guise of a question, creating the perception that it would be the students themselves who would answer the questions, and the students themselves who would want to continue the revolution. As any parent does in life, Castro faced a moment where he had to command his children to be obedient, while at the same time recognizing the fact that once he was gone from the equation, the children would have to make decisions on their own.

With his acknowledgement that a newer group controlled the destiny of his revolution, Castro was left explaining the functioning of the revolution, in order to explicitly state that if the revolution failed, it would be the people's fault, not the fault of any external factors, which Castro had managed to resist up to this point. He stated, "This country can self destruct; the Revolution can destroy itself, but they can never destroy us; we can destroy ourselves, and it would be our fault" (Castro, "University" 38). This statement became a serious charge for the students, with Castro painting a clear picture of the severity of the situation. Castro reiterated the severity by threatening, "Before we go back to living such a repugnant and miserable life there better not be any memory, even the slightest trace of us or our descendants" ("University" 48). Here, Castro made a statement intended to haunt his audience after the fact, in a sort of angel over the shoulder fashion, when Castro would no longer be alive to remind them.

Castro's main dilemma regarding a one front battle on ideas was convincing Cubans that this battle could be won in the first place. Previously, Castro's rhetoric placed Cubans in a defensive posture where they were ready and willing to defend their homeland against a possible military invasion. His past references to moral weapons were motivational tools to encourage his people. However, this new battle of ideas would place Cubans on a moral offensive in order to alter the effects of globalization. This differed drastically from past reliance on the Soviet Union as the leading challenger to American globalization. Since the Soviet collapse Castro placed Cuba in the forefront of this challenge; therefore, Cubans required powerful frames to convince them they had the ability to conduct an offensive against an enemy that not only possessed nuclear weapons, but had also used them. Castro neutralized the American nuclear arsenal and created his own Cuban equivalent by stating, "We have a different type of nuclear weapon: it's our ideas. We possess a weapon as powerful as nuclear power and it is the immense justice for which we are struggling. Our nuclear weapon is the invincible power of moral weapons" ("University" 7). This statement was Castro's attempt to bolster Cubans into acceptance of his refocused battle of ideas. It also presented Cubans with the power of a new concept: that ideas had the strength to match nuclear weapons.

With this disciplined mindset, he was also able to identify a connection between the United States empire and Cuba's energy crisis. Regarding countries like the U.S., which Castro claimed hoarded energy and oil, he stated, "We invite everyone to take part in a great battle, it's not just a fuel and electricity battle, it's a battle against larceny, against all types of theft, anywhere in the world" ("University" 50). Falling under the theater of the battle of ideas, he was able to link internal crises of Cuba with the broader battle. This would allow Cubans to witness the relevance of the battle firsthand. Castro's construction would then place accountability on

Cubans. If the Cuban energy crisis continued, it would be because Cubans failed to wage the battle of ideas correctly, according to his framing of the situation.

#### SURVIVAL VERSUS UN-SUSTAINABILITY

As Castro's speech unfolded, he offered a separate, more macro view of the economic and social situation in Cuba, expanding the situation to not only his country, but to the entire world through an expanded circumference. With this outlook in place, Castro fostered the agonistic principles of survival and un-sustainability regarding the human species under the revolution on one hand and under a globalized empire on the other. Castro's alternate view paralleled the growing environmental movement of the 21<sup>st</sup> century that urges cohabitation with and care of the environment. The tactic of a slippery slope often summarizes the rhetoric of environmental activists such as Al Gore, and this tactic was also utilized by Castro to expand his message from an arbitrary national conflict to one on a more dire, global scale. Survival rhetoric brings an issue to center stage, as evidenced by U.S. Senate hearings concerning the survivability of Americans in the outbreak of a nuclear war (Goodnight). Castro escalated his message not just to an expansion of his socialist circumference referenced in Chapter Four, but to a supersession of humanist ideals in reference to the human species. Regardless of an individual's political views or belief system, all of Castro's auditors could potentially relate to being a member of the human species; thereby, creating a message that removed itself from petty political feuds.

Castro explicitly referenced the extinction of the human species in order to involve his auditors in a new aspect of his revolution. Castro stated, "I would dare say that today this species is facing a very real and true danger of extinction, and no one can be sure, listen to this well, no one can be sure that it will survive this danger" ("University" 2). This reference to extinction took Castro's views against globalization and the U.S. empire and morphed them from

a state of self actualization toward the perception of satisfying basic physiological needs. He created an argument that illustrated the development of human society as a tool of adaptation that allowed humans to survive. Then, he demonstrated the link between the development of society and the establishment of value systems, which are necessary to hold societies together (Castro, “University”). Castro argued that the globalized empire threatened value systems; therefore, it contained the means to destroy those values and, in turn, posed the destruction of the social unit, which is necessary for man’s survival. Castro presented his audience with critical species extinction and pitted it against a solution that would halt the cause of this inevitable extinction. This rhetoric concerning the globalized empire and the extinction of the human species forced listeners to consider a solution to the crisis. Thus, Castro stated, “A humanity that doesn’t care about the preservation of its species would be like the young student or leader, who knows that his life is very limited to just a few short years and, nevertheless, worries only about his own existence,” to prod his listeners into participating with a collective solution of halting the empire (“University” 18). As Castro has done since the start of the Cuban revolution in 1959, he invited his listeners to partake in the journey together. Based on the argument he made, the collective participation in social revolution became the obvious means to counter the globalized empire, since the utilization of society is itself a human tool.

However, the use of fear as a motivating tool to prevent the downward spiral of a species can have its consequences, such as the resistance to apocalyptic environmental rhetoric by audience members (Sowards 131-32). Castro’s argument paralleled that of the case against global warming, where fear for one’s children becomes a motivating factor. In Castro’s push for the prevention of the extinction of the human species, he painted the situation with dire overtones, yet he still provided a window through which humans could escape. Although the impending doom of the empire appeared to be winning out at the time in Castro’s eyes, his

speech also functioned as an inspirational tool that offered hope in light of the looming crisis. In this hopeful style, Castro neared the end of his 2005 speech, stating, “[after the collapse of the empire, the American people] will be able to join all of us who fight for the survival of the species; they will be able to join all of us who fight for opportunities for the human species” (“University” 68).

#### KEEPING FAITH VERSUS DENIAL

With the implied command to his audience, Castro required the students to understand the situation that the revolution faced as motivation for those students to continue the revolution at all costs. Thus, Castro placed the destiny of the revolution in the hands of the Cuban people. He stated “that one of our greatest mistakes at the beginning of, and often during, the Revolution was believing that someone knew how to build socialism,” admitting that the socialist ideals of the revolution were not as cut and dry as some might presume (“University” 37). This went hand in hand with Castro’s desire to identify new weapons of the revolution, emphasizing values and critical thinking over military preparedness for the future. These “weapons” had to be instilled in the newer generation of Cubans in order for Castro’s revolution to live on; his legacy was in their hands. Without their father, the children had to be able to think on their own. Castro furthered his statement by saying, “we need many extremely clear ideas and many questions answered by you who will be the ones responsible for the preservation, or not, of socialism in the future” (“University” 37). This reliance on others grounded Castro’s personal resilience, yet demonstrated an acceptance of reality and avoidance of hubris with the acknowledgement that he had to place his faith in others.

#### SELF CRITICISM VERSUS MATERIALISTIC EMPATHY

Consistent with Castro’s theme of identifying internal conflicts within Cuba as counter revolutionary and linking them with the enemy of the United States, Castro identified

“shameless” Cubans who were taking advantage of the opportunities afforded by the government for their own self gain (“University” 19). Thus, Castro agonistically positioned the use of self criticism and ideas against materialist empathy. So, using government vehicles for personal use, and thus wasting precious gasoline, or taking advantage of governmental supplements after receiving monetary gifts from exile relatives had become marked by Castro as actions against the revolution. Thus, Castro forced Cubans to consider their personal roles in regards to the prosperity of the country, and introduced self gain as a counter revolutionary act. In order to prohibit selfish acts from occurring, he challenged Cubans to become more critical of their own lives. He stated, “The Revolution has to use these weapons [of criticism and self-criticism], and we shall use them whenever necessary!” (Castro, “University” 19-20). Increased self criticism became a combative tool to lower wasted spending and private gains. Most importantly, its tie-in to the battle of ideas required Cubans to comply lest they be labeled enemies of the revolution, according to the criteria of the new battle. Castro went so far as to suggest Cubans “carry out criticism and self-criticism in the school room, in the party cells and then outside the party cells, in the municipality and finally in the entire country” (“University” 19). This move ensured the entrenchment of a more disciplined citizenry, as well as related everyday issues to the greater battle against the empire.

With the introduction of such weapons as criticism and self criticism, Castro set the stage for Cubans to become more aware of the importance that self criticism would have for the future of the revolution. He confronted his audience, and challenged them to consider the happenings of the revolution, in a sense, rebuking them for not being critical enough so far. He asked his audience, “Do you believe that this revolutionary process can fall apart, or not? Have you ever given that some thought? Have you ever deeply reflected about it?” (“University” 32). In so doing, Castro deployed the weapon of self criticism to make his fellow Cubans think, to

challenge them into considering the future. Castro instilled in them these values in an attempt to make the process more natural, as a safeguard for the future in that Cubans take the initiative and utilize criticism without Castro's prod. This offered proof of the design of Castro's revolutionary narrative, Castro was the playwright and sole director of a long-enduring drama, and his position throughout this drama was to direct and reinforce ideas, highlighting the fact that the actors of the drama were the most integral part of the play. Although the playwright/director showed perseverance on his own accord, without the actors the play would fall apart, thus, Castro's questioning demonstrated a peek into the blueprints of his grand rhetorical design.

## CONCLUSION

Castro's speech on November 17, 2005 provided a prime example of his adaptability to any situation, which had been the key to his success as the leader of Cuba for 46 years. His rhetoric was one of persistent adaptability and repetition. Preceding this speech, Cubans found themselves in a difficult situation; they had to adapt themselves in order to survive. The wake of the passing Soviet ship on its path toward dismemberment could still be felt in the Cuban economy a decade later, thus was the integral partnership that Cuba had enjoyed with the Soviet Union. The resulting energy crisis and Cubans' reliance on alternative means to support themselves posed major threats to Castro's revolution. He may have been able to ride out his tenure in control of Cuba despite these events, but the events seemed to be fostering an approach that prepared for Cuban transition. Because of this, Castro faced the issue of his future legacy. If he wished to influence the future of Cuba in a positive sense after his absence, then he had to refocus and reenergize the Cuban people, restoring faith, not just obedience, in their leader and their revolution. Thus, his reconstitution of the revolution's enemy not only in the form of the United States, but also the residual effects of the United States' impact on the rest of the world in the form of globalization, was his strategy to refocus Cubans. His resultant development of a

new type of warfare in the form of the battle of ideas reorganized the revolution in the eyes of Cubans in the sense that they could now accept their roles as the leaders of the resistance to globalization in the wake of the Soviet collapse. One might argue that an abstract battle of ideas was itself unrealistic, but through the frame of Castro, this method of war presented an outcome with a greater chance of success over a conventional assault on the world's only military superpower. Under the guise of newly created weapons for the battle of ideas, Castro employed self criticism as a means to guarantee civil vigilance and adherence to his revolution. This self criticism allowed Cubans to recognize their own relevance toward a grander battle, even though Castro's rhetorical design was such that it controlled the domestic front as a means to distract and unify Cuba. These rhetorical techniques became necessary to guarantee the perseverance of Castro's revolution. However, his role became one of a father preparing his children for a fatherless future. No matter how much influence Castro had over Cubans while he was alive, that control would only be maintained through perpetuation and strict obedience to his ideals. He found himself in a position where he would rely heavily on others if he was to maintain a legacy of immortality.

Castro's rhetoric provided the necessary repetition of his overall revolutionary narrative along with an adaptation to Cuba's global status and Castro's preparation for his own exit. With this in mind, his rhetoric successfully maintained his narrative and his position of power in Cuba. However, Castro offered a very archaic perception of the scene. Whereas his speech reinforced the repetition of his revolutionary narrative, it failed to provide a novel approach toward his inevitable crisis of succession. This speech displayed an exhausted attempt by an aging leader to hold on nostalgically. Castro's rhetoric placated Cubans in the moment, merely offering the wishful thinking of a worn out old revolutionary. The reality of Castro's situation was he was alone, his former political ally (the Soviet Union) had switched sides and assimilated with his



enemy. Castro's newfound partnership with Hugo Chavez during the 21<sup>st</sup> century was simply one of vanity, with a non-Cuban aspiring to be Castro, whom Chavez would never be.

## CHAPTER 8: CASTRO'S NARRATIVE

### ASPECTS OF THE NARRATIVE

The previous chapters addressed 5 separate speeches where Castro molded his message to adapt to 5 separate stimuli; however, this chapter will focus on Castro's all-encompassing strategy, a sort of master narrative that united each one of his adapted messages under one roof. Every event that Castro encountered deserved a unique adaptation of his message to address the situation, but every message that Castro uttered had to be kept cohesive with a larger, more generic message. This generic message was played out in a form that engaged its auditors in a single perspective. Whether Castro spoke out against Batista when Castro was on trial for the Moncada attacks, or whether he attempted to unify his fellow Cubans after massive emigrations, Castro's speech drew upon this legitimizing narrative. Castro himself was the narrator, but he invited all Cubans to participate as characters within the story as well. Throughout this never ending story, the characters constantly faced a conflict that sought to destroy stability. Oftentimes, Cubans, or the characters, were unaware of the conflict, which was why Castro's role as the sole narrator framed situations according to his point of view. Castro was the master story teller, begging his characters to see through his eyes while also blinding them at the same time. But not all of his characters played along, some woke up and recognized the role of Castro as narrator. However, since his trial for the Moncada attacks Castro has written and edited his narrative many times, making it socially difficult for his characters to change the narrative that he created. Kathleen Jamieson and others have lamented the dominance of narrative rhetoric over the traditional Ciceronian agonistic double-voiced rhetoric of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. They note that it privileges a single perspective and downplays rational deliberation.

Castro's overarching narrative invited Cubans on a journey from the beginning with the attainment of revolutionary powers from the hands of Batista in 1959 to the final fruition of the

revolution. Although Castro began a military revolution through physical force at the Moncada military barracks in 1953, his idealized revolution did not begin until January 1, 1959, the day Batista fled the country. Castro's imprisonment, release, organization of the July 26 Movement, landing at, and subsequent guerrilla war in the Sierra Maestra raised his mythic stature, as explained in Chapter Two, but did not directly invite Cubans into the current idealized revolution which he narrates today. Castro and his fellow guerrilla soldiers with their unshaved faces and unkempt beards were characters in a military struggle to oust Batista and achieve notions of democracy. In the eyes of the common Cuban, this story could have been envisioned as an escapist tale with intriguing characters. The story involved a hero, Castro, and a villain, Batista. However, this story did not invite common Cubans to insert themselves as characters into the story. Portions of the July 26 Movement organized public labor strikes, but, generally speaking, the war was an endurance struggle between Castro's guerrilla fighters and Batista's army. However, the day Castro rode into Havana, Cubans became characters in a new story. They participated in person, rallying in the street, screaming cries of "Fidel, Fidel" and providing tangible evidence to the celebratory atmosphere. Batista fleeing the country and Castro riding into Havana with rows and rows of cheering Cubans marked a tangible beginning for the revolution. Cubans could grasp the story and recall the event from experience. Through constant repetition such origin stories become iconic. With this event as the starting point, Castro's narrative moved forward, or what James Phelan would identify as "progression," through time (133).

Castro's idealic revolution marked all Cubans as participatory characters, contributing to the collective goals of the revolution. From this moment in January 1959, the revolution progressed forward on a path that could never reach its end. The nature of Castro's revolution was constant, it could never be fulfilled, yet, ironically, must always move forward. The

revolution created perceptions of time, but was indeed timeless. The revolution was a fantasy, the result of a rhetorical construct on behalf of Castro. This fantasy marked a singular frame through which others were invited to view the world, inviting them to partake in a conjured reality. With the image of an open future, the revolution never became a mere historical event or legacy, and Castro was never obligated to consolidate the gains of the revolution as were the American colonists or the French.

Fisher describes narration as the “master metaphor [that] subsumes” all social understandings that preceded it (“Moral” 6). Castro formulated a narrative encapsulated through revolution that became the end-all for Cuban life. His narrative swallowed competing narratives that came before as well as competing narratives that attempted to arise at the same time. “The world is a set of stories,” wrote Fisher, “which must be chosen among to live the good life in a process of continual recreation” (“Moral” 8). Castro offered this “good life” to his fellow Cubans by means of a metanarrative that provided a macro guideline instructing Cubans how to live. Somers discussed the “paradoxical aspect of metanarratives” as their “denarrativization” due to their basis on abstractions (619). In a sense, metanarratives offer an abstraction of an abstraction, or a narrative, which is itself abstract, based on a social concept, which is also abstract. In Castro’s case, he developed the metanarrative of the revolution, where he invited Cubans to participate in a social struggle of revolutionary world change.

Fisher offers the narrative paradigm as a novel method of the way individuals process arguments and view the world where he values narrativity over rationality, arguing that it is more accessible to the masses, as well as a natural way of thinking, as all humans are storytellers (“Moral”). Also, Fisher posits the notion that people are just, allowing them to evaluate narratives from a frame of moral truthfulness (“Moral”). However, Warnick debates this line of thinking by offering an example of the German people’s acceptance of the Nazi narrative that

Jews were the cause of the world's problems (176). Warnick also challenges Fisher on his lack of explaining how a people "can avoid being deluded" (177). This comes into play concerning the evaluation of Castro's narrative. Castro's metanarrative, which is inclusive for all Cubans, offers an extremely positive vision that beckons Cubans to partake in the revolutionary cause. Due to this vision's inspirational overtones, it calls into question Warnick's criticism of the narrative paradigm as human judgment. Perhaps Warnick's emphasis on common sense folk wisdom as the basis of narrative does not do justice to the inspirational transcendent and charismatic elements of revolutionary narratives. Castro postulated the fantasy of the revolution in a similar manner to West and Carey's identification of President Bush and Vice President Cheney's establishment of the frontier fantasy after 9/11. However, where Bush and Cheney relied on the American image of the cowboy, Castro created his own image of the revolutionary, relying only on its perpetuation as time unfolded. This revolutionary image, conjured by an individual who had already been elevated to that of hero, offered such a great appeal to Cubans that perhaps their willingness to embody a character in the revolution won out over more formal forms of logic.

Offering the revolutionary narrative allowed Castro to present Cubans with an ideology that could be embraced through participation. The formulaic presentation of points in an argument concerning why Cuba should enact social change would not have offered as captive an argument as that of a narrative. Language allows humans to express their inner feelings, making it a very liberating factor of the human existence; however, language also restricts how humans express their feelings due to the confines of vocabulary and grammar. So, Castro's narrative allowed Cubans to experience his argument, not simply listen to it. It was that experience, that act of living, that allowed Cubans to embody the essence of the revolution. Living a narrative allows individuals to experience the narrative, and not have to be answerable to others in terms

of describing it in explicit detail through a formal argument. The subsequent waves of migration from Cuba suggest that identification by the people was sometimes partial, reluctant or even wholly rejected.

Castro engineered his narrative to be radically different from any previous Cuban narratives that simply asked individuals to participate as citizens in their own country. These past narratives would create illusions where Cubans felt they were citizens but had no real say in the development of their own country. Participation in past elections seemed futile due to calls of political corruption and governmental takeovers by coups. But Castro spoke out to all Cubans and established an inclusive narrative, a narrative that invited everyone to be a member. Previous leaders of Cuba, such as Batista, fostered an aristocratic participation in Cuban affairs, making the politics of Cuba an extremely exclusive club. This exclusivity perpetuated the rejection of disenfranchised groups, such as the lower classes. However, Castro sought an inclusive story that charged the majority of people to be active members. To the poor farmer or struggling worker, this presented them with an opportunity to get involved in their country's affairs, but more importantly, it allowed them to feel that they were involved. Castro referenced the former Cuban government by stating, "The people of Cuba broke their chains and by breaking the chains that enslaved them, they put an end to privileges, they put an end to injustices..." ("Democracy" 33). The privileges and injustices referenced by Castro highlight the exclusive aristocratic control of Cuba's past. According to old mindsets, only a select few were allowed to benefit from the happenings of Cuba. Castro's invitation to all Cubans to join his narrative challenged this previous negative Cuban frame.

Inclusion as an active member of a visionary narrative allowed Cubans to develop a new sense of identity; one where they were able to express themselves. Castro allowed Cubans to

truly experience this inclusion through his direct call for participation. He illustrated this, stating:

First, the children and young people marched, opening ranks. Then the soldiers of the Rebel Army marched. Then the farmers' militias marched. Then the militias of Latin America marched, with the flags of their respective countries. Then the student militias marched, and finally the workers' militias marched – first women, then men, and behind or around the militia units, the people. (“Democracy” 28).

When a Cuban recognized himself as a character in Castro's story, he constituted his identity in relation to the revolutionary frame. An invitation to all Cubans increased Castro's odds of high participation, which, in turn, increased the odds of a successful vision, allowing that vision to spread through self-imposed perpetuation. Cubans identifying themselves as characters in the revolutionary narrative possessed high stakes in its success, for they saw their own personal success being linked with that of the revolution. For example, in the absence of a narrator, characters are so invested in the story that they will continue to act out the parameters of the story; thus, the success of Castro's narrative required the continued acceptance of the revolutionary vision by his fellow Cubans.

In essence, Castro provided an ontological frame for Cubans who were dissatisfied with their previous social frames. Fisher stated, “The philosophical ground of the narrative paradigm is ontology” (“Moral” 8). Castro's new vision granted Cubans a reason for living, but only after his narrative convinced Cubans of this in the first place. Being “born again” into a grand vision offered most Cubans a purpose, a purpose that tied them hand in hand with that grandness. Thus, Castro influenced fellow Cubans through identification with his vision. Upon identifying with his vision, Cubans became “consubstantial” with the narrative, meaning they were utterly devoted to the fulfillment of the revolutionary cause (Burke, “Symbols” 181). Somers stated “A narrative identity approach assumes that social action can only be intelligible if we recognize that people are guided by the structural and cultural relationships in which they are embedded and by

the stories through which they constitute their identities” (624). Castro employed identification by heightening a sense of division with previous Cuban governments. One powerful identity often exhibits itself as the true identity, and recognizes certain differences as wrong or evil (Connolly 64-68). Since Castro’s inclusive narrative invited all Cubans to participate and offered an ontological frame that gave Cubans purpose in the revolutionary cause it emerged as the true identity in Cuba. Castro addressed all members of Cuban society, saying, “you, worker...students...child...old person...Black Cuban...women” in order to constitute them as revolutionaries, stating, “In the revolutionary process, virtue opens a way for itself, merit prospers, and conniving, greed, and cheating fail. In a process of revolutionary struggle, as in no other struggle, only the firm – those with true convictions and absolute loyalty – can stay in the ranks” (“Democracy 31, 33). Once a true identity, which, in this case, garnered a communal involvement and collective destiny, it became extremely influential in pushing forth social action. This influence had a great impact in its stressing of difference between the revolutionary narrative and competing narratives. This difference fostered the scapegoat of the counter-revolutionary as the potential aggressor against the revolutionary vision and the source of economic hardships through the immoral application of capital. Castro acknowledged counter-revolutionaries, stating, “We remember workers who lost their lives because of sabotage by counter-revolutionary criminals” (“Funeral” 5).

Whereas the idea of the “heroic citizen” has been portrayed in American discourse through a narrative of a single hero acting alone on a small scale to improve the community in lieu of communal problems (Murphy 203), Castro created an “expected citizen” personified in his term “revolutionary.” According to Castro’s rhetoric, the revolutionary was expected to contribute to the improvement of the country, a message that reflected a lower level of cultural individualism than the United States where orators such as Emerson and Thoreau played to our



famous bias against large institutions. Where the American heroic citizen was portrayed as quiet, humble, and acting alone outside of the macro level of political affairs (Murphy 203-04), the revolutionary acted in accordance with other revolutionaries to promote the grand ideas of the revolution. Castro did not charge his citizens to live ordinary lives as fulfillment of the “American Dream” due to a culture of political cynicism, Castro expected all citizens to alter their lives in alignment with the revolution. This tactic demonstrated an inclusion in the grand scale of social change. In this instance, change did not attain its power from the top, the power came from the micro level of each character in the story. Without the expected citizenship of the revolutionary, social change in the form of the revolution would never occur on the macro level. Castro offered the following example to illustrate the expected citizenship of Cubans:

Imagine a bakery in some block, a bakery that gives service to every neighbor in that block, and an administrative apparatus controlling that bakery from above. How does it do the controlling? How can the people fail to take an interest in how that bakery operates? How can the people fail to take an interest in whether the administrator is a good administrator or a bad one? How can the people fail to take an interest in whether there is privilege, negligence, or lack of feeling? How can the people fail to take an interest in the problems of hygiene in that store? How can they fail to take an interest in the problems of production, absenteeism, amount and quality of the product? Of course they can't! (“Process” 141)

This created the illusion that every Cuban citizen had to be invested in the revolution in order for it to succeed. Hand in hand with this idea is the notion that if hard times arise in Cuba, it is not the fault of the revolution; rather, the expected participation of its citizens has faltered.

Using Hayden White’s understanding of the narrativization of reality based on a moral order (“Narrativity” 26), the distinction between the two Cuban histories in Castro’s narrative became clear. According to Castro, the revolution marked a historical break from Cuba’s past. Events taking place before the revolution lacked revolutionary values; therefore, the writers of these histories were tainted by the influence of corrupt leadership and U.S. control. Through the construction of his narrative, Castro denied a respected voice to the expression of history before

the revolution. According to his story, these retelling of events became inconsequential, relating them to a repressed Cuba. Discussing this repression in the form of a critique would only distract Cubans from the true and solely important story: the revolution. Therefore, Castro wiped the slate clean by discussing Cuba's history only in relation to the revolution. When Castro mentioned the time period before the revolution, he did so through the frame of division, highlighting the negativities of what the revolution was not. When referencing pre-revolutionary days, Castro told the Cuban people, "They invented democracy for you – a strange, a very strange democracy, in which you, who were the majority, did not count for anything," in an effort to deflect criticism for one-party rule ("Democracy" 30). The exception to Castro's establishment of a new Cuban history lay with former fighters of Cuban independence from Spain at the turn of the century. When Castro referenced figures such as Marti, Maceo, and Agramonte, he did so from a revolutionary point of view. These figures became ancestors of the revolutionary cause, which proceeded hand in hand with Castro's narrative.

White wrote that storytelling created the "impulse to moralize reality," associating the storytelling with a particular "social system that is the source of ... morality" ("Narrativity" 18). In this instance, the revolution became the social system that determined the moral makeup of Cuban society. So, all historical accounts were funneled through the moral filter of the revolution, with events receiving acknowledgment based off of their degree of importance to the revolution. Thus was the Hegelian idea of ethics as the immersion of the individual in the social conventions and apparatus of the state illustrated in the politics of 'the ever faithful isle.' For example, the events at Playa Giron constituted Cuban history due to their portrayal of the Cuban revolutionary resolve against the "imperialist" power of the United States. Castro then applied this piece of revolutionary history to impact current situations, such as when he stated "The imperialists should know that whereas our people were strong in the days of Giron, today they

are one hundred times stronger” (“Defending” 330-31). Likewise, mention of the U.S. trade embargo of Cuba displayed a revolutionary enemy and the perseverance of the revolutionary cause.

While the revolutionary moral system anchored the worthiness of history, this system also provided a moral code by which Cubans were expected to live. Rather than being seen as restrictive, Castro positioned the moral code of the revolution as an inviting set of ideals according to which Cubans should abide. The inclusivity of the moral code provided structure and even hope to Cubans who felt they did not actively participate in the Cuba before the revolution.

However, the open narrative that Castro created lacked formal closure in the sense that it could never be achieved. The ploy of an ongoing revolution, a fight that will never end, implied that no end state would ever be reached. It was a journey narrative, one in which the insights and character of the quest became more salient than the socialist paradise itself. The idea that the Cuban revolution was for the poor, a prerequisite to partake in the narrative, and Cubans had to remain poor to fuel the narrative, demonstrated that the narrative was more of a model of conduct instructing Cubans how to live their lives. Means became ends. Since the narrative itself contained no clearly delineated end state, or salvation, the narrative had no appeal to any concept of objective reality. On the other hand, by clenching his identity as the creator of the narrative, Castro challenged Cubans to live a “perfect” life, which, as humans, could never be done. This instance paralleled the Christian charge to model the life of their savior Jesus Christ, in that to live a life like Jesus is impossible, because to be sinless would make you God. So, the Cuban end state could never be achieved, and Castro offered no afterlife, so there would be no reason for Cubans to partake in a lifestyle that could never come to fruition anyway. At least in the Christian example just stated, Christians live their lives with the goal of attaining an afterlife.

Castro's narrative offered a secular parallel – the promise of a more just and equitable society, a struggle against evil, and a better world for their children.

Castro positioned himself as the moral leader of the revolution, averting eyes away from an image that he was a virtual dictator, allowing his tenure not to be one of political adherence to a voting public, but rather an inspirational leader on a difficult journey (Horowitz 73). This made Castro answerable not to his citizens, but to his own moral conscience. Since he was the authority of the moral journey, like Chairman Mao before him, he could make the whole nation one school room of his political thought.

Castro built the narrative of the revolution off of the premise that it was dynamic, meaning that the revolution was always moving, always adapting, and always spreading its message abroad. This dynamism of the narrative guaranteed his continued role as the sole head of Cuba, due to his task as the sole narrator. With the acceptance of the narrative by Cubans also came the acceptance of a continual progression. Castro stated, “The revolution has been concerned not only with surviving but also with making strides forward, building and developing. And the future is entirely in our hands,” providing one instance of many where he consistently reinforced this message (“Establishment” 213). The goals of the revolution were portrayed by Castro to improve life for the majority of Cubans who had previously been repressed. However, Castro offered no criteria for determining the completion of the revolutionary cause. Such rallying cries of “Hasta la victoria siempre!” and “Venceremos!” (“Ever onward to victory” and “We will win,” respectively) offer proof to the rhetorical open-endedness of the revolution (Castro, “Death” 326). Onlookers may have asked the questions of how would victory be achieved and what constituted a win? Castro intentionally orchestrated an ambiguous end state as a means to avoid accountability. There was precedent. Karl Marx himself had been vague about the worker's paradise and Mao told his people that practice would

continually update theory in the course of the struggle. In order for Castro's narrative to be accountable for mishaps that occurred in Cuba since the development of the revolution, current state of affairs had to be compared to the beginning and the prediction of what the end should look like. The lack of a coherent plot denied the formation of standards of judgment. Therefore, occurring mishaps could not be viewed in relation to any kind of standards.

This lack of standards brought up issues relating to Fisher's narrative rationality where audiences analyzed messages according to a narrative mindset ("Moral" 9-10; "Elaboration" 349-50). When applying Fisher's narrative rationality to Castro's story, it became clear that Castro's creation would lack an appropriate acceptability by its audience. According to the parameters of narrative probability, one of two contributing factors that comprise narrative rationality, an audience judges a message according to that message's basic adherence to a formal plot or structure (Fisher, "Elaboration" 349). In Castro's case, as in any story, the plot takes time to unfold and we do not yet know the end. So, Castro's narrative was dynamic, not static. Castro addressed problems, based on Cuba's corrupt history before the revolution, in his narrative that a needed plot would fix. His narrative had not yet reached a climax or resolution because he and the people are making history together. This brought up questions such as: at what point would the revolution be fulfilled for the political scientist, but not for the people who are engaged in a "learning revolution" in which the means and ends may be altered by new conditions of struggle. Further analysis of Castro's narrative revealed issues with narrative fidelity, meaning it possessed problems with "the soundness of its reasoning and the value of its values" (Fisher, "Elaboration 349-50). Several supporters of the revolutionary war against Batista, such as Huber Matos, who fought alongside Castro as a guerrilla against Batista, and Rufo Lopez-Fresquet, who served as treasury minister in the newly formed government after the fall of Batista, appeared to embody the ideal characteristics of a revolutionary yet were defined

as threats to Cuba's leadership and people. Matos served 20 years in prison for treason after expressing disagreement with Castro's political associations and Lopez-fresquet fled the country after serving only 14 months in office. Not only were these two individuals, who were at a critical hour in the forefront of the revolution, not rewarded and honored for their roles in the revolutionary narrative, they were removed from the story altogether. This example provided evidence toward unclear standards of judgment for the revolutionary narrative. Also, when individuals questioned unfulfilled promises of the Sierra Manifesto and Castro's 1953 "History will Absolve Me" speech, they became labeled as counter-revolutionaries, granting criticism to the revolutionary narrative's own value system. These critics and counter-revolutionaries formed the counter-narrative, discussed later in this chapter.

The revolution's constant state of motion is expressed as creative experimentation but is implemented through coercion. The forward moving motion offered by Castro relied on a state of fear, where Cubans always had to be prepared for a possible attack, which could have originated from external or internal sources. This threat forced Cubans to be prepared and always on guard, in a perpetual state of vigilance. Castro described his Cubans as "always alert...always ready to resist any attack" ("Democracy" 35). In a sense, Castro's narrative fostered a culture of mental fitness where the characters in the story had to be ready to respond to a threat at a moment's notice. With a potential threat on the horizon, auditors were told to be ready to confront an enemy. The threat by itself may not have been enough for an audience to grasp the severity of the potential threatening situation as outlined by Castro, which was why Castro backed up the mental preparedness of his characters with physical preparedness as well, such as the ranks of revolutionaries marching in formation ("Democracy" 28). The repetition of this theme promoted an image of unity and strength in numbers in preparation for a perceived invasion. The American-backed invasion at Playa Giron was invoked as tangible evidence that

the constant looming threat was real. Castro used this revolutionary historical moment consistently throughout the narration of his story (“Angola” 88; “Defending” 323; “Establishment” 191; “Assessing” 484).

Nostalgia illicitly elicits an emotional response from an audience by reinforcing a shared identity and linking a speaker to an image of a glorified past (Parry-Giles and Parry-Giles 421). When referencing a historical event, Terry Eagleton classifies this reference as “revolutionary nostalgia,” comparing it to “mourning [or] the ritual invocation of the dead,” due to his insistence that “historical events happen once and then ... are lost forever” (“History” 276). Castro used revolutionary nostalgia as a tool of inspiration to his fellow Cubans. Reference to human success stories appeared to offer evidence supporting the triumph of the revolution.

Eagleton also states, “Only by moving backwards in revolutionary nostalgia can one move forwards in reality” (279). This referral to the past sheds light on Castro’s desire for power being based off of the history before him. Castro lived during the times of the dictators Machado and Batista and he could not escape the past’s influence on him through inevitable repetition (see Eagleton, 273-74).

Memories, triggered by specific places, establish an individual’s identity (Dickinson 20-22). Castro renames physical locations inside Cuba in order to establish Cuban memories of the revolution. For Cubans old enough to remember the old names of places, they find themselves confronted with memories of a pre-revolutionary Cuba, which works to Castro’s advantage, as he has strategically constructed pre-revolutionary history as synonymous with corruption and dictators. Between the choice of the older memories and the new, older Cubans may view this as more of a reason to embrace and accept the newer revolutionary memories.

## PERPETUATION OF THE NARRATIVE

The success of Castro's narrative can only be measured by the degree of its acceptance among Cubans. If Castro failed in inviting Cubans into his narrative, he would not have been able to maintain control of the Cuban people or guarantee his position as long-term leader of the country. Because of this, it was imperative that Castro constituted his audience as a people who were at once revolutionary and obedient. Fortunately for Castro, writers and artists invested in the expression and development of the revolutionary narrative, with many writers, artists, and intellectuals developing romantic ideas of sympathy for the revolution, getting caught up in the fervor (del Aguila 53-54). Foreign writers, such as Jean-Paul Sartre and Pablo Neruda visited Cuba during the outset of the revolution (del Aguila 54). Even Gabriel Garcia Marquez, another non-Cuban, offered support to Castro, stating, "His vision of Latin America in the future is...an integrated and autonomous community, capable of moving the destiny of the world" (3).

The pre-revolutionary culture of Cuba saw writers develop under the influence of Western dominance, but the new cultural values of the revolution allowed younger Cuban writers to create a post-colonial literature (Salkey 13). J.M. Cohen, Penguin Classic translator of Don Quixote, discussed the consensus of Cuban writers; they preferred "Cuban independence under Castro to any kind of foreign dominance" (11). These writers appeared to view the revolution as offering them a future of freedom in a society and voices independent of cultural colonialism. Cuban poets, such as Miguel Barnet, Felix Pita Rodriguez, Fayad Jamis, and Alberto Roccasolano, to name a few, write of positive liberating aspects of the revolution, envisioning the revolution as a means of hope for the Cuban people (Salkey). Where Westerners may view the revolution as being restrictive in nature, Cubans viewed the revolution in relation to life in Cuba's past. Because of this, they were more apt to accept positive aspects of the revolution and rationalize any negative aspects as temporary or unavoidable; they accepted Castro's rhetorical



construction that stressed identification with a hopeful cause and division with the past. In his poem, “Revolution is Not Simply a Word,” Alberto Rocasolano wrote:

In reality, that’s true:  
Revolution is not simply a word  
which sprouts slogans and banners  
or digs up dead papers  
to have them read out cold  
as they were written  
or smashes our identity  
across an Island mirror,  
but rather, the only ways of trampling  
cactus memories  
until the future thrusts up a pattern,  
one day squeezed into another. (58)

Aside from male poets, the Cuban revolution also appeared to foster the poetic aspirations of women, providing a positive stage for the artistic voices of women in the revolutionary culture (Davies 124). The 1961 Literacy Campaign promulgated an explosion of Cuban creativity, issuing educational access on a scale never seen before in Cuba’s history (Fuentes 178).

Although the revolution offered opportunity to those Cubans denied by the previous regime, artistic criticism of the revolution was denied. As long as these writers and artists adhered to the promotion of the revolution, their work was celebrated within the country. Throughout the Cuban revolution, artists and writers danced between conformity and expression, only being successful where their expression abided by the parameters of the revolution (Howe 184-89). Work that appeared to offer support for the revolution but provided a point of view deemed incorrect by the government was censored. The periodicals Revolucion and Lunes and the film P.M. were, in turn, criticized by the government because it was felt they created a false impression of the revolution (del Aguila 54). In essence, the revolution, although expressing creative freedom for material supporting the revolution, created a culture of conformity. However, Castro required this conformity as a means to perpetuate his revolutionary narrative in an unaltered format.

## COUNTER-NARRATIVE

The Cuban counter-narrative falls in line with Dubriwny's take on collective rhetoric, where a suppressed minority of people, in this case, the Cuban "counter revolutionaries," share their experiences in order to foster new understanding of the issue. Outside of the domineering revolutionary narrative, these counter revolutionaries, as labeled by Castro, utilize their voices to identify themselves as Cuban immigrants, Cuban Americans, or just simply Cubans. But in this modern world, the tellers of the Cuban counter-narrative are largely exiles. As evidenced through the Bay of Pigs Invasion and numerous political arrests, individuals embodying the counter-narrative have no direct effect on their country of origin. This effect is largely limited to the maintenance of an economic embargo by their host country the United States. Exiles in Miami simply wait, for they do not possess the strength to alter Castro's narrative.

Edward Gonzalez, after conducting interviews with Cuban exiles on the U.S. trade embargo with Cuba, concluded that middle age and older adults showed strong support of the embargo, with lesser support among the young ("Interviews" 179). On another note, Gonzalez noted that the majority of Cuban exiles lessened support or changed their minds completely during private, one on one interviews ("Interviews" 179-80). Gonzalez attributed the popular support of the embargo to a "herd mentality" as a means to punish Fidel Castro, but recognized that the majority of the exiles, when interviewed privately, viewed it as a failed policy ("Interviews" 180). Also, the Helms-Burton Libertad Act of 1996 increased the levels of the embargo of Cuba beyond that of the Cold War (Wetherell & McIsaac 253). If these Cuban exiles acknowledge the negative aspect of the embargo, why are they so publicly adamant about sticking to the policy? The answer to this question develops in the form of the Cuban counter narrative.

Award-winning poet Jorge Valls described the deplorable prison conditions during his 20 years as a political prisoner. He said the Cuban secret police used mind games, such as altering the perception of time and repeating the same question hundreds of times in order to gain incriminating information to be used against political dissidents in trial (Valls 7-13). Between his imprisonment in 1964 to his release in 1984, Valls was a *plantado*, or long term political prisoner. Whereas the revolution sparked freedom from literary barriers for some Cuban writers, Cuban exiles, with few exceptions, did not seem to develop in-depth literature; rather, their novels showed similarity in their focus on demonizing communism (Menton 215-34). Many artists and intellectuals remained in Cuba until large groups of them came over to the United States during the late 1970s and the Mariel Boatlift, depriving the Cuban exile community in America with an ardent creative cultural base until this time (Gonzalez-Pando 96).

After attending a school reunion in the United States for the Colegio de Dolores, the Jesuit-run boarding school that Castro attended as a child, Patrick Symmes described the struggle of the “Dolorinos” by writing, “Cuban exiles are on a journey that cannot be finished in one lifetime, a two-hundred-mile transmigration of the soul that is at once irreversible, and incompleteable [sic]” (5). While attending the Dolores school reunion, Symmes perused the knickknacks, charts, and maps for sale at the event, recognizing that some of the recollections of Cuban history had never been true, illustrating altered, or wishful, points of view (7). The Cuba that these exiles believed they knew, no longer exists today. Symmes later observed a man step up to the microphone and begin to tell a joke, pausing to apologize for speaking in English and apologizing again because the joke had to be told in English (11). Symmes concluded, “Nobody here was Cuban, anymore. Exile remade them, separated and changed them. Nobody had planned to spend the rest of their lives abroad, but they had. Cuba had gone on living for

decades without them. The exiles might have been born in Cuba...[but] [t]hey were never going home,” (11).

The more Cuban exiles stressed their counter-narrative, the more they established a unique identity separate from “Cuban.” Their identity became one not of Cubans removed from their homeland, but of Cubans whose sole identifying trait was exile. The exile culture became more and more unique from other Cubans because their focal point shifted. A Cuban’s purpose was to be Cuban; a Cuban exile’s purpose was to seek retribution from Castro, not simply to just be Cuban. The rigid dialectic between Castro’s Cuba and the United States contributed to the novel identity of the Cuban exile. The identity between Cuban exiles and Castro’s Cubans, and vice versa, focused on division instead of identification, stressing difference in order to separate the two cultures. After realizing their future home was the United States and not Cuba, Cuban exiles flooded the Castro debate in the U.S. with emotional diatribe, making a logical approach to the issue difficult (Torres 185).

The hostility expressed by Cuban exiles toward Castro appears to be an identifying mark that infuses the exiles with their identity. Like most victims of a diaspora, a longing for a homeland and hostility toward those responsible for the ousting creates a sharp division between the two groups of people. In the case of the Cuban exile, this division is very strong. Forming their entire culture on the overthrow of one man, a Cuban exile’s belief system loosely can be identified in the emotion of hate. Cuban exile Ramon Cartaya states, “We hate Fidel because he deceived the Cuban people. Things were supposed to get better when he took power in 1959. Instead he robbed the Cuban people of their freedom” (qtd. in Medrano). This hate sparks vengeance toward Castro, with Cuban exiles holding him absolutely accountable for his false promises and destruction of former Cuban lifestyles. Because of this, the Cuban exile counter-narrative would pit Castro in the ninth level of hell along with Judas and Brutus in Dante’s

Inferno. Dante demarcates this level of hell as the end state for those who commit the ultimate betrayal. This comparison should shed light on the extreme stance Cuban exiles express against Fidel Castro. Hostility toward Castro by Cuban exiles becomes embodied in this emotion of hate. The Cuban exile's goal of removing Castro "is to be accomplished through hostility and isolation, not rapprochement," stated Grenier and Perez (89). With such intense emotions, any solution toward improved relations between the U.S. and Cuba become strained, as the characters of this counter-narrative express a non-negotiable solution of removal and punishment of Castro.

Non-Cuban Americans may judge the Cuban exiles approach to Castro's Cuba as irrational, highlighting the fact that the Cuban exile stance is founded on emotion over pragmatism (Grenier and Perez 92-93). In an article published on the website of Alpha 66, a paramilitary anti-Castro organization, exile Bonnie Anderson writes, "Cuban exiles can't expect others who have not experienced what we have to actually know our pain and understand our passion for wanting to address the wrongs done us." This emotionally charged attitude created strict identification through division, similar to the rhetorical strategy utilized by Castro. In an atmosphere of such strict division, all forms of dissent place an individual on the opposite side of the spectrum, which is destructive to a Cuban exile, as hostility and division with Castro is the foundation of the exile's identity.

Grenier and Perez wrote that an overwhelming majority of the Cuban exile community believed that Elian Gonzalez should stay in Miami and not be returned to Cuba, displaying a unity of opinion among exiles (107). The affair became an epideictic event, with the Cuban American National Foundation successfully establishing the boy as a symbol of positive perseverance against Castro, as well as a symbol of blame against Castro for injustices done to children (Grenier and Perez 107-09). The exiles appeared to construct the situation as direct

confrontation with Castro himself, offering the broader evidence of quality of life between the two countries as evidence for Elian Gonzalez to stay instead of the micro issue of a parent and child relationship (Grenier and Perez 108-09).

Aside from claims denouncing Cuba's lack of a democratically elected government and adherence to basic Western principles of freedom, such as free speech and a free press, Cuba under Castro presented a major foreign policy consideration after Soviet ballistic missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads were discovered on the island of Cuba (LaRocque 189). From that point of view, this threat to U.S. national security would require extensive thought regarding foreign policy considerations with Cuba. This security threat would demand future U.S. administrations to view Castro as synonymous with that incident. Therefore, the U.S. had legitimate policy claims in order to suppress the Cuban government, and to keep it in check, until that particular government was dissolved, taking a possible nuclear threat along with it.

During the collapse of the Soviet Union, the U.S. government had an opportunity to alter its relational stance with Cuba toward a more positive one by lifting the embargo and offering economic assistance in the wake of the Soviet void, but instead chose to tighten the embargo and maintain uneasy relations with Cuba (LaRocque 190; Wetherell & McIsaac 244). Considering the nuclear threat posed by Cuba during the Cuban missile crisis, it is understandable that the U.S. government would always be wary of the Cuban government under Castro; however, the military means of the missile crisis were now out of the equation with the Soviet collapse and withdrawal of military aid in Cuba. This poses the question of why the U.S. government continued its diplomatic rejection of the Cuban country. The only issue at stake would be the absence of freedoms for Cubans. But historically, the U.S. government has established relations with countries holding questionable human rights records. The U.S. government initially backed the Batista government despite accusations of torture and political imprisonment, as well as

having a current interdependent economic relationship with China despite images from Tiananmen Square, Tibetan occupation, and media censorship. The item that makes the relationship with Cuba unattainable is the long standing counter narrative of hate and punishment toward Castro. With exiles such as Bonnie Anderson making such statements as, “A death from old age is far, far too lenient a punishment for a man who has killed so many people, destroyed the lives of literally millions,” and fellow exile Roberto Luque Escalona cynically “detest[ing] sharks” off-handedly several times throughout his book of Cuban history for their failure to devour Castro when he was forced to swim Nipe Bay years before the revolution, punishment of Castro in the Cuban counter-narrative becomes clear (87, 144). The embargo appears to be aimed at the harming of Castro himself, but instead harms the Cuban people (Wetherell & McIsaac 252), granting Castro rhetorical fuel to rally Cubans toward his cause and against the United States.

Since the resolution of the Cuban Missile Crisis, the U.S. viewed a non-interventionist policy toward Cuba in order to appease the Soviet Union and keep the world powers in check; however, this policy has led to a policy of “paralysis,” in that the policy toward Cuba did not change and the fall of the Soviet Union presented an unknown void where the paralysis was perpetuated do to ritual (Horowitz 4-5).

In conclusion, Castro’s metanarrative set the foundation off of which all of his messages are constructed. When confronted with an exigency, Castro molded a specific message to address the problem; however, all of his messages are relative to his metanarrative of the revolution. This umbrella concept allowed Castro to always have an anchor to a glorified Cuban vision. Whether Castro was faced with a possible invasion by the United States, criticism of his revolutionary expansion in Angola, massive emigrations of Cubans to the United States, the loss of Soviet economic support, or the globalization of capital, his message to address the problem

always adhered to the basic narrative of the revolution. All aspects of his speeches followed a similar pattern of constant perpetuation of the revolutionary narrative. His continued referral to the revolution, in turn, provided the means for the revolution to maintain its dynamic appeal of a never ending story.

Castro's narrative achieved support from the Cuban people due to its division with former Cuban frames. By including all Cubans as main, not simply supporting, characters, Castro replicated his narrative into the minds of Cubans which, in turn, allowed Cubans to self-censor. This meant that they internalized the narrative and lived out the story on their own accord. And this story provided a moral road map that directed the daily lives of Cubans. The inclusive revolutionary vision appealed to masses of Cubans, not only because of its division with Cuba's shady past, but because it presented guidance regarding daily life. The revolutionary narrative offered a collective purpose to those who may have felt inconsequential. As long as the perception of the abstract revolution persisted, Castro maintained his leadership position over Cuba.

Although the establishment of a constant looming threat and no possible resolution to the narrative contained problems with Fisher's narrative rationality, these two aspects of the narrative were necessary fuel to push the revolution forward. The constant threat offered a distraction from any downfalls of the revolution while providing a scapegoat for the state of existence at the same time. The counter-revolutionary threat provided a reminder that should the revolution fail, Cuba would revert back to the days of Batista and corrupt governments that represented a minority of the population.

Castro succeeded in his story telling by gaining the expressed support of Cuban writers and dispelling all formations of counter-narratives from Cuba. Although the Cuban exile community embodies a harsh counter-narrative against Castro, their removal from the main



setting of the story, Cuba, prevents their own story from having a profound impact on the leadership of Cuba. However, their extreme story of hate succeeds in establishing their own identity, separate from Castro's Cuba.

Castro's Cuba and the exile's Cuba are both trapped in a stagnant approach to the homeland. Although Castro created a dynamic narrative, the narrative itself is designed to foster conformity and prevent Cubans from leaving a "poor, struggling" state. Castro's ideology is best achieved as a constant. The exile community appears to have a same constant approach regarding their counter-narrative. A hard-line stance and focus on the past prevents exiles from progressing forward. First generation exiles rely on nostalgia as a motivating tool, whereas second and third generations began establishing their identity as Cuban-Americans (Gonzalez-Pando 96-99). Despite the addition of "Cuban-American" to their identity, the emotional hatred toward Castro persisted, as it is a hallmark to the identity. Insistence on the embargo, despite the end of the Cold War fuels the notion as a constant. The Cuban exile community has adopted an extreme degree of groupthink, disallowing them to investigate change. Not all Cuban exiles agree with this, but the views of moderates become swamped by the emotional majority supporting the same, consistent policy toward Castro's Cuba.

## CHAPTER 9: CASTRO'S IDEOLOGY

While the bulk of this dissertation has dealt with Castro's rhetoric, it may be useful to view the Cuban dictator's influence from the standpoint of ideology. While rhetoric is often associated with episodic persuasion or public debate in an open society; ideology has been associated with systemic persuasion, with material apparatus that recycles its message throughout a society, with a leadership class or politburo that edits it, with a set of anecdotes or cultural narratives that seem to validate its truth day by day, and finally with a leader or leadership class whose life and works enact its truths, and provide a template to guide the thought and action of ordinary individuals. Ideologies justify the power of a ruling class; more often they justify the removal of power from one unjust group of persons and give it to a legitimate and deserving group of persons (i.e. from capitalists to working masses, from colonial exploiters to oppressed people, or from incompetent populists to technocrats and experts).

Ideologies are born, flourish and die. Their proponents would like them to be forever unchallenged and routinely enacted. They would like their messages to be as unconscious as breathing or obeying the laws of gravity. They would like the cultural message of ideology to be viewed as completely natural, uncontroversial and utterly inevitable. But, as everyone knows, they are often undone by social change, by apparent failure, by contradictory doctrines or by applications of their own critical systems. With the decline of orthodoxy in the 18th century, ideologies have filled a void. Although they have emerged as secular doctrines justifying programs of social action, they have appropriated the familiar religious categories formerly associated with western orthodoxy: a sacred text, revolutionary martyrs, a charismatic savior, a diabolical enemy, a moral struggle and a final victory resulting in a new world of peace and justice, an end of history, and a golden age that is paradisiacal and glorious.

This chapter discusses Castro's masterful use of ideology. First he understood two important aspects of its form: Its message must be both narrative and temporal. That is to say its form must have a compelling story that can endure over time. Secondly, he understood the importance of the political network. He utilized the organizations of the schools, the armed forces, the control of the messages of mass media, and the disciplined guidance of artists and intellectuals.

The previous chapter brings to light a viable narrative that Castro created in order to include Cubans in his vision for a new Cuba, one that placed him as the sole narrator. However, the creation of the narrative by itself was not enough to guarantee its acceptance by the general population; to gain that acceptance, he required a system designed to perpetuate his narrative and establish what Althusser described as an ideological state apparatus. With this system in place, Castro guaranteed the repetition of his ideal frame of existence. However, control of the ideological state apparatus did not guarantee his control over individuals; rather, it placed his narrative at the forefront of Cubans' minds while at the same time eliminating competing narratives. An individual cannot control another like a puppet on strings; however, Castro could heavily influence their choice of frame and encourage consubstantiality with his ideology. Auditors are bombarded with numerous frames as active members of social networks. When a frame becomes the dominant organizing tool for an individual to understand his surroundings, that frame emerges as an ideology. Castro describes ideology as:

first of all, consciousness; consciousness is revolutionary militant attitude, dignity, principles and morale. Ideology is also an effective weapon in opposing misconduct weaknesses, privileges, immorality. For all revolutionaries the ideological struggle is today in the forefront; it is the first revolutionary trench. ("Ideological Struggle" 314)

This chapter acknowledges Castro's dilemma of instilling his narrative into the majority of Cubans in order to create their willingness to identify with his ideology and seeks to explain Castro's formulation of his system to do so.

A person can recognize options on how they view existence, which places the person in relation to something else, hence, their ideology, or how they recognize themselves in relation to their surroundings.<sup>2</sup> The concept of ideology has endured an extremely critical journey since Destutt DeTracy established the term in 1796. DeTracy offered the term ideology as a “science of ideas” in order to understand human thought processes after the French Revolution (Kennedy 46). Despite DeTracy’s original understanding of the term, to this day theorists posit several differing perspectives of ideology, ranging from Marx to Althusser to Eagleton, but one area of focus appears to remain constant: the force of social influence. Whether this unknown force comes in the form of power or ritual, it is a force that seems to have influence over individuals. Philip Wander’s 1983 article “The Ideological Turn in Modern Criticism” pitted ideological criticism against Neo-Aristotelian criticism and legitimated its method for rhetorical studies.<sup>3</sup> Rushing and Frenz acknowledge rhetorical criticism’s focus on the external, economic modes of production, over the internal, the inner-workings of an individual, in regards to ideological

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<sup>2</sup> It would be safe to assume that a human being has, as an instinct, the desire to achieve a positive life. I define positive by the achievement of needs put forth by Abraham Maslow, ranging from physiological to security to belongingness to self esteem to self actualization. With this assumption, we can also assume that a human being will actively engage himself to satisfy these needs and achieve a positive state of being. However, discrepancy can arise regarding the acceptance of what constitutes these needs. For instance, two individuals could live in the same home with one individual feeling safe whereas the other individual feels he lives in a climate of fear based off of an increase in reported crimes. Hence, it would appear that an individual’s understanding of a situation is based off of their framing of the situation. This opens the door for competing frames to influence the frame of another; this is where rhetoric comes into play. Based on this reasoning, with a human being’s desire to achieve a positive lifestyle, it would seem that that human would desire frames that contributed to that positive lifestyle. So, when a human discovers a frame that best achieves a positive state of being, he becomes consubstantial with that frame, using it as a guide on how to approach life. This approach, or purpose, seeks distinction as a human’s ideology.

<sup>3</sup> For a full analysis of Wander’s essay and the subsequent responses appearing in the Central States Speech Journal that same year, see Sharon Crowley’s “Reflections on an Argument...” in volume 78 of QJS from 1992.

criticism (403). Likewise, Gunn and Treat are correct in their stipulation that rhetorical studies on ideology need to be refocused.<sup>4</sup> They posit that U.S. rhetorical scholars possess an unwillingness to break away from a “laboring zombie” mentality to a conscious subject when applying the term ideology (155).<sup>5</sup> In his 1947 article “Ideology and Myth,” Burke wrote:

We can think of cases where the “ideological” confusion would be quite unconscious and unintentional, obscuring a distinction which neither the speaker nor his audience was aware of. Or we can think of cases where it was deliberately used by the speaker, as a way of inducing us to identify some national’s interests with the nation’s interest, though he himself knew they were at odds. (“Symbols” 305)

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<sup>4</sup> Gunn and Treat offer the major reason why rhetorical critics focus on deterministic aspects of ideology instead of the subjectification of ideology to be a fear of “a totalizing, determining force” (159). Yet, this fear of a rhetorical critic is not to be taken lightly. Massive marches toward war and otherwise unthought-of immoral acts as the Holocaust force critics to be vigilant defenders of logic. So, the ever-present caution of totalizing rhetorical elements is a worthy cause of this discipline. However, the prospect that one individual can manipulate others on a massive scale is dehumanizing in itself, eliminating notions of free will. The idea that one man could possess the “power” to manipulate large masses and control them at his whim contains the seeds of a prideful fall. This hubris hampers any notion of choice among listeners, eliminating them as auditors, or active respondents. Without choice, rhetoric has no purpose. Yet, the fact that dictators have previously been studied by rhetorical scholars offers proof that some rhetorical strategy must be present. Just as Gunn and Treat state that “ideology does not zombify subjects, but precisely the opposite,” (155) I must agree that ideology does not reduce individuals, rather, it offers them purpose. Believing that one man can possess the minds of others is a simplified view of understanding a shared identity of a large group of people.

<sup>5</sup> Whereas I concur with Gunn and Treat’s take on past ideological rhetorical scholarship through the allegory of the zombie, I must clarify an alternate understanding of the concept of ideology. When a person gets bitten by a zombie, they “die” and become a brainless entity. This implies that the individual can never come back to life or regain consciousness, which defeats the point of ideology, as ideology assumes a conscious subject with the ability to choose exists. In a sense, once you are bitten, it is all over for you. Although Gunn and Treat offer the image of the ravishing zombie in distinction to the laboring zombie that follows the commands of the master, the ravishing zombie, despite its lack of strings to any puppet masters, still succumbs to an irreversible zombification of the subject. Ideologies do not infest subjects. Rather, auditors organize frames in terms of understanding different situations, and the frame that comes to the forefront on how they view the world becomes their “master” frame, or ideology. Rhetors constantly offer auditors choices on how to frame situations, but the successful rhetor influences the auditors to choose his frame. When this frame super-cedes other frames and offers guidance to an individual on how to judge the world, it has become an ideology to that individual.

From these two distinctions presented by Burke, I will focus on the latter, in order to offer thorough understanding of rhetorical strategies utilized by dictators on a conscious level designed to invite audiences to participate in specific rhetorical visions.

With the exchange between individuals in social networks comes the exchange of points of views as well.<sup>6</sup> Whereas a frame is the positioning of a particular situation or even the acknowledgment of a particular situation per se, it merges with narrative when a frame offers a more detailed understanding fresh with agents and scenes, or drama as Burke would say. As Phelan states, “we are made in part by the discourses we experience” (138). Narrative becomes the foundation for the internalization of ideology. Althusser posits ideology as “represent[ing] the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence” (36). The narrative situates us; the ideology gives us purpose. Narratives present dramatic views of situations, and when an individual appreciates one narrative over others and begins seeking application of that narrative toward a more universal understanding of the world and how to live life according to that understanding he accepts that narrative as his ideology, or template. What emerges as an ideology for one individual may only be seen as a narrative among many to others.

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<sup>6</sup> This bears relevance to ideology regarding its origination and dissemination to individuals. Past ideological criticism suffering from the zombie complex posits ideology being advanced in an hierarchical format, originating from the controller and trickling down the hierarchy to the controlled. However, as stated earlier, the arrogant belief that one person can control others in such a manner, thereby eliminating their free will begs us to consider another model to explain the dissemination of ideology. With this being said, individuals are naturally connected through their willingness to interact. When a person encounters another person, they establish nodes of connection on an interactive network. Every interaction comprises a new node, and as a result from these constant interacting nodes, maps begin to take shape. These maps, theoretical in nature, begin to display the awesome scale of the network. To get an idea of this network, a person can visit a rural area away from any big cities on a cloud-free night and witness the amazing display of pulsing stars in the sky. Once that person becomes mesmerized by the overwhelming number of stars, they should then picture stars not on a canvas in the sky, but in a three dimensional format, being completely engulfed by the pulsing nodes.

## CASTRO'S HISTORICAL NARRATIVE: THE RHETORICAL CONSTRUCTION OF A USEFUL PAST

Castro's declaration of Marxism-Leninism on December 1, 1961, ushered in more explicit indoctrination of his ideology. Schools of Revolutionary Instruction taught select students such topics as Marxism and the revolutionary experience to prepare them as future leaders of the revolution (Bunck 27; Geyer 286-87). In Spain, Franco masked his establishment of only one point of view in children's textbooks by arranging the text with questions and answers that gave the illusion of dialogue between multiple points of view (Pinto 665). However textbooks are arranged, totalitarian teachings express the need for unity among participants, which Castro's revolutionary ideology stressed as well (Pinto; Suzuki).

A common strategy used to unite individuals under the umbrella of extreme patriotism is the reliance on a collective past with the people. Morus identifies Slobodan Milosevic's use of this collective past with the Serbian people by relying on the myth of a historic battle over 600 years in the past (3). Morus states, "The reliance on a collective notion of identity that is already in place points to another aspect of constitutive rhetoric. The identities hailed through constitutive discourses are not formed from scratch but are based on existent subjectivities that in some way have lost their force" (70). In the case of Fidel Castro, I argue against Morus' statement. Castro appeals to the workers and Black Cubans, two groups of people whom were excluded from the previous identity of Cuba. Castro offers these two groups participation in a new collective identity, an identity that accepts them. Cuban citizens were Cubans before Castro's revolution, but what Castro provides is a new understanding of whom they are. They are Cubans after the revolution, but "Cuban" is instilled with a whole new meaning. The past identity is not based on "existent subjectivities that in some way have lost their force" because the majority of Cubans were not included in this group in the first place. The workers and Blacks did not lose their force because the old aristocracy excluded them from the identity. In a

sense, these lower-class individuals were never aware of their Cuban status in the first place. But Castro changes this. He makes these individuals aware, and invites them to be a part of his new identity, being inclusive, rather than exclusive. Within this line of reasoning, Castro did indeed establish a new Cuban identity “from scratch.”

Although past research points toward the unification of a people through a collective past (Morus; Roy and Rowland), Fidel Castro’s constitutive rhetoric to establish a new Cuban identity does not. Rather, Castro creates a collective present. Throughout Castro’s discourse, he refers to present events as making history. So, Castro’s new Cuban identity relies on a clean slate. He erases old Cuban mentalities, picking and choosing select aspects of the previous identity that he wishes to remold and re-appropriates historical Cuban figures such as Jose Marti and Roberto Agramonte.

For Castro to retain control of Cuba, the acceptance of his narrative as ideology by the majority of Cubans is not an absolute necessity, just as a small minority of communists altered Russia’s future in Lenin’s October Revolution; however, if a majority of Cubans do not accept his ideology, then Castro has to guarantee that they cannot accept the competing narratives large enough to dethrone Castro’s ideology. Thus, Castro’s insurance became his dominance of competing points of view. As long as he prevented competing narratives from taking hold of the majority of Cubans’ mindsets, he could continue his hold over Cuba, regardless of whether Cubans truly believed in his ideology or not.

#### RHETORICAL CONSTRUCTION OF CUBAN IDENTITY

Although Castro sought control of the educational ideological apparatus, his rhetorical constitution of the Cuban people ushered in the basis of his narrative’s reliance on the majority of citizens needed to secure a legitimate support by the majority. McGee outlines two forms of the phrase “the people” in rhetorical scholarship as either an objective plural of a person or a



“mob” of individuals unable to accept logical arguments (“People” 238). Upon review of Castro’s rhetoric, a rhetorical critic might delineate Castro’s use of the term “people” according to the latter usage of the term outlined by McGee due to Castro’s unfulfilled promises of political freedom and free speech and his establishment as a dictator. However, this belief that a mob lacks the ability to accept logical arguments categorizes the bodies flowing within the mob according to Gunn and Treat’s zombie complex. Rather than view those bodies as lacking the ability to use logic, we must view them through Foucault’s notion of dazzlement; they merely think logically in a cloud of unreason (108). The construction of the phrase “the people” constitutes the unreason, as “the people” do not exist except at the benefit of a speaker by individuals logically playing out roles in a narrative established by the speaker’s constitution of the people.

In “The German Ideology,” Marx states “that the rule of a certain class is only the rule of certain ideas, comes to a natural end, of course, as soon as class rule in general ceases to be the form in which society is organized” (qtd. in Tucker 174). Although purporting to be a communist, Castro continues to rely on class division as a rhetorical method that potentially stagnates a kinetically perceived narrative. Although Castro’s Cuba appears classless, critics must recognize that Castro and any members of an “inner circle” display a rhetorical influence over the citizens of Cuba. This influence exhibits itself in the repressive state apparatus in the form of secret police and political imprisonment. Placing the “ruling class” of Castro and an inner circle aside, Cuba’s class system is apparent throughout Castro’s discourse.

Rushing and Frenzt reference Fredric Jameson’s belief that “class discourse should be interpreted dialogically – as a clash in which the dominant class suppresses oppositional voices” (399). But this begs one to ask who is the dominant class in Castro’s Cuba? Castro created his revolutionary narrative off of the premise of the average working class Cuban against a

repressive upper class with deep U.S. pockets. Playing into his narrative, Castro successfully altered the former dichotomy of Cuban society by reducing or eliminating the competing upper class. However, Castro's revolutionary narrative created a classless Cuba in theory. Accepting Castro's development as a totalitarian dictator, a rhetorical critic will seek the manner of repression in Castro's Cuba. But who or what comprises the dominating class that represses voice in Castro's Cuba? One could respond by stating that Castro's inner circle comprises the ruling class, but I imagine we would be hard-pressed to compose a static list of persons in Cuba's ruling class, due to Castro's ability to alter it on a whim. It was necessary for all offices of government to be controlled by him, through the employment of individuals he picked (Montaner 18). The imprisonment of fellow guerilla Huber Matos, the execution of the Cuban commander in Angola Arnaldo Ochoa, and the imprisonment of interior minister Jose Abrahante Fernandez provide evidence that those close to Castro are always subject to expulsion from the inner circle, solidifying the fact that an inner circle ruling class of Cuba is an illusion, or a mirage to the individuals that seek it or believe they have already attained it (Geyer 383-86).

Castro constructed his narrative in such a way that would include everyone in a hypothetical ruling class of the people. He rearranged the perception of the state apparatus by making everyone an agent of the state by having them be a member of some form of militia, signifying their duty to the state. He constituted Cubans as revolutionaries, changing the understanding of what it meant to be Cuban. Unlike Charland pointing out that Quebecois could be French Canadian, but not all French Canadians identified themselves as Quebecois, Castro's narrative required being a revolutionary as a prerequisite for being Cuban. His ideology ensured that the two went hand in hand. Similar to the American charge to live the American dream, Castro charged Cubans to be true revolutionaries. He utilized revolution and revolutionaries as ideographs that embodied the ideals by which he expected Cubans partaking in his narrative to

live (Delgado). This allowed everyone the opportunity to be a member of the majority ruling class and the chance to advance to a position of Castro's "right-hand man." The current "ruling class" of Cuba is an orchestrated system of peer pressure with all decisions leading back to one man as the standard of the perfect revolutionary: Fidel Castro.

Despite Castro's elimination of the previous aristocratic ruling class of Cuba, and insistence that the common workers rule the country, Castro keeps the class struggle alive and continues the tension of the modes of production by continuing the old narrative of the workers against the upper class. Castro establishes this ongoing revolution to combat counter revolutionaries and capitalism, yet he still relies on the narrative of workers versus the bourgeoisie to perpetuate the material existence of the mode of production (relying on horses and muscle instead of machines during the special period even becomes the capitalists' fault). The workers in Cuba experience their working conditions because they act out the narrative created by Castro. Castro stated, "Comrade workers and peasants: this is the socialist and democratic revolution of the poor, with the poor, and for the poor. And for this revolution of the poor, by the poor, and for the poor we are ready to give our lives," ("Defending" 324). He also stated, "Let us swear to defend this cause of the poor, by the poor, and for the poor!" ("Defending" 332). He constantly repeats the phrase "revolution of the poor" to reinforce this narrative. Castro also repeats phrases such as "we the poor, we the working class," declaring who members of his new Cuban identity are. Those who do not consider themselves to be poor or members of the working class; therefore, cannot consider themselves part of "the people" of Cuba, according to Castro's application of "we." This is how Castro maintains state power, despite the country's socialist framework. The reliance on Cubans maintaining a poor state is an integral aspect of Castro's narrative. Despite the socialist nature of the revolution, Castro frames the existence of Cubans in capitalistic terms in order to maintain the applicability of the enemy represented by

the United States. Ideally, Castro should want to improve the lives of Cubans from a “poor” state, but the fight against the bourgeoisie remains a prominent characteristic of a revolutionary. Castro essentially muscled out the middle and upper classes after the revolutionary war, so no apparent bourgeoisie threat even remained on the island.

After 47 years of the revolution, why did Castro still make the statement “we must struggle and work?” (“Message” 515). Castro rhetorically relied on a narrative that placed Cubans in a difficult lifestyle. One might think that if the revolution was as great as Castro makes it out to be, especially with the increase in education and healthcare for all Cubans, that Cuban life in general would improve. Yet, Castro still chooses the word “struggle” after all this time, reinforcing the mental understanding that the ideals of the revolution have not been achieved, that it will always be a constant struggle to improve life. When given the counter-narrative, Cubans cannot help but consider why other places, such as the United States, do not place citizens in a constant state of escaping a poor, difficult life. It is ironic, due to the influence of a protestant work ethic on the United States, that the United States creates an appeal where some sort of happiness can be achieved, whereas Castro’s Cuba, officially devoid of religion, only offers the achievement of furthering the revolutionary cause.

#### CASTRO’S ROLE AS LEADER

Carlos Ripoll discusses two types of censorship used by totalitarian regimes: one that maintains the power of the current government, and another that forces a government’s people to alter their mindsets, identifying Batista as the first, and Castro as the latter (83-86).

Castro defeated Batista and established the revolution under the premise that the ruling aristocracy would be eliminated and the working class would take over control of Cuba, in effect, placing all Cubans in equal status in relation to each other, thereby creating a classless society. Castro himself, as the leading figurehead of Cuba, displays this lifestyle as well by

donning a plain olive green military uniform without the grandness of multiple medals as seen by dictators such as Mussolini. Whereas other dictators might carry on a dramatic display of their greatness, Castro follows the opposite path by illustrating his narrative that he is a revolutionary just like everyone else in Cuba. This modest image reinforces the belief structure that Castro is in fact one of the people, and maintains his position as the leader of Cuba merely as the representative of the people.

Morus suggests Milosevic portrays himself as a “savior” figure to unite the Serbian people; however, Castro does not portray himself as a savior. “Savior” implies god-like characteristics, putting the savior in an above-human status. Members of “the People” will not look upon their leader as “one of them,” but rather as a god figure. Castro does not enter into this role. He constantly grounds himself as human, as a regular person. He does not don a uniform riddled with medals. He walks among the people, refusing to live as the former aristocracy had. Castro consistently states that the Cuban people elect him as a majority, demonstrating that his power is derived from the people, not from any god-like powers.

Although power derives from the beholder, with an individual allowing another individual to have a power over them, Castro’s method of creating his relation to power was to erase old mindsets and social structures. The perception of his power required new mindsets of rule by the majority of the working class in order to eliminate any aristocratic threat, which no longer had any basis for power after the revolution presented Cubans on an equal footing. Castro creates the perception of referent power by gaining genuine respect from the Cuban people. With thousands of Cubans cheering Castro in the streets after the downfall of Batista’s regime (Geyer 208), Castro gained true respect from his fellow Cubans. Facing rumors of discord between Castro and then-president Urrutia, Castro put himself on the line by resigning, essentially orchestrating a huge farce. The response to his resignation was 50,000 Cubans

screaming for Castro to reconsider (Lopez-Fresquet 124). He created the notion of expert power through the implementation of the armed revolution against Batista, proving his mountain guerilla war to be more effective than urban fighting. Castro's military strategies against a quantifiably superior military force demonstrated his expertise in the field of battle. From his government position, Castro derived perceptions of his legitimate power from his position within the Cuban government, ranging from Prime Minister to the President. He states several times that the people in the streets scream in support of him, providing evidence that the majority chooses him as their leader. Regarding the establishment of his legitimacy, he states:

Our enemies, our detractors, ask about elections...As if the only democratic procedure for taking power were the electoral processes so often prostituted to falsify the will and the interests of the people and so many times used to put into office the most inept and most shrewd, rather than the most competent and the most honest. As I after so many fraudulent elections, as if after so many false and treacherous politicking, as if after so much corruption the people could be made to believe that the only democratic procedure for a people to choose their leaders was the electoral procedure. ("Democracy" 32-33)

Whereas some Cubans accept the revolutionary narrative and possibly appreciate some form of Castro's referent, legitimate, or expert power over them, dissenters probably acknowledge his coercive power over them, meaning they live according to Castro's rules for fear of punishment. Although Castro does not display attributes of coercive power willingly, the actions of the repressive state apparatus send the message clearly. He threatens those who defy him, labeling them as counter revolutionaries, or enemies of the state. These coercive acts also guarantee the stamping out of dissenting voices, which makes a public sphere, the ability to publicly express political views without fear of reprisal, in Castro's Cuba nonexistent.

## NETWORKING AND MATERIALIZATION OF THE IDEOLOGICAL MESSAGE

### THE SCHOOL SYSTEM AS IDEOLOGICAL INDOCTRINATION

Regarding the acceptance of his ideology, Castro had as his goal, the perpetuation of that ideology over time. To accomplish this task, Castro needed to establish a system of

indoctrination, in order to ingrain the ideas of the revolution in the minds of Cubans. Whereas Cubans living through the revolutionary war against Batista and the subsequent birth of the revolution were able to experience the ideals of the revolution firsthand through division with Cuba's past, this did not guarantee the continuance of the revolutionary narrative and consubstantiality with the ideology for Cuba's next generations. In order for Castro to insure his own reign, an acceptance by these future generations had to be established. The Cuban government controls formal education on the island, creating stringent steps in order for curriculum or administrative changes to be enacted (Aguirre 69-70). Althusser notes the dominant ideological state apparatus is not the political ideology state apparatus, it is the educational ideological apparatus, which replaced the social role previously played out by the Church (26-29). The control of the educational system guarantees the repetition of the current state. Naturally, due to children's inexperience and lack of judgment, they unknowingly offer a naïve acceptance to dominant ideologies. Suzuki notes textbook indoctrination occurring in Japan before the onset of World War II in order to align oneself with the emperor and create division with the Western world. Furthermore, due to the liberating nature of education, schools function under the guise of neutrality, creating the impression that they do not instill particular ideologies into students (Althusser 29-31).

On October 13, 1959, the Cuban government, by this time with Castro firmly established as the de facto leader, implemented Article 149 of the Constitution, giving the government authority to eliminate private schools and establish school curricula (Bunck 23). Bureaucratic stability would hamper Castro's absolute control over the revolution. Most important from this statement is the fact that the newly created revolutionary government under the whim of Castro "legally" procured the sole ability to dictate course teachings. This control was very much overshadowed by the 1961 literacy campaign designed to bring education to the less fortunate

and stamp out illiteracy in Cuba (Bunck 23-26). Cuban exile Jorge Luis Romeu acknowledges the improvements toward the availability and affordability toward education for all Cubans on the island since the start of the revolution, but disagrees with the non-monetary price that was paid for Cubans to receive this, referring to the political indoctrination and restrictions on students and faculty (134-36). Truth be told, all states indoctrinate their citizens regarding the functioning of their social systems, but Castro followed a totalitarian indoctrination of his citizens, eliminating competing points of views. As the true director of his well-orchestrated play, Castro the playwright demonstrated prowess by granting scholarships and educational opportunities to children of families that exuded exemplary support for the revolution, while removing those opportunities from the grasps of those that failed in their revolutionary demonstration (Bunck 29). Cubans found themselves in a position where they were forced to conform in order to do what was best for their children, but in so doing they guaranteed their own children be subjected to a sole narrative directed toward establishing a specific ideology.

#### DISCIPLINING ARTISTS AND INTELLECTUALS

In a June 30, 1961 speech to Cuban intellectuals, writers, and artists concerning their creativity, Castro told them “within the revolution, everything; against the revolution, nothing,” which sums up his stance regarding intellectual freedom (“Intellectuals” 220). As long as his singular point of view supporting the revolution was taught in schools and through cultural expression, Castro would support the methods of teachers. On the other hand, teachings “against the revolution” would not be frowned upon, they simply would not be allowed through the muscle of the repressive state apparatus. Guevara’s concept of the new man, put forth in 1965, further established a Cuban’s duty to seek a true communist state and vie for social rewards over monetary ones. Castro’s statement further exemplifies these ideals:

Authoritarianism, demagoguery, a know-it-all attitude, vanity, and irresponsibility are inconceivable in Communists, for they should always have a fraternal and humane



attitude toward others and – especially – an internationalist spirit that, while including deep-rooted patriotism, is based on an understanding that their homeland is more important than any individual and that humanity is the most important of all. (“Ideological Struggle” 315)

Castro’s ideological development possesses traits similar to Suzuki’s “Ideological pronouncement,” which offers a mystified version of reality that forces absolutes in a time of war (254-55). Just as the Japanese developed textbooks indoctrinating individuals to brew nationality and prepare for war against the enemy of the West, Castro’s narrative also relied on identification and division to fuel participation in a never-ending struggle to fight for the revolutionary cause, as evidenced in the previous chapter. Repetition of phrases such as “the United States has always been the sworn enemy of our nation” provide absolutes during this time of war, and maintain the focus of the ideology (Castro, “Ideological Struggle” 307).

#### CENSORSHIP AND INFORMATION CONTROL IN THE MASS MEDIA

Castro creates a mock public sphere, casting out all dissidents in the same manner Goldzwig and Sullivan identified a city’s newspaper coverage portraying a politician as “other.” But unlike Goldzwig and Sullivan’s study, it is the politician, not the print media, who establishes the boundaries of the so-called “public sphere.” Castro’s same artistry that paints his country as a democracy goes hand in hand with his broader painting of a public sphere. Castro makes no secrets about dissidents being unwelcome in Cuban society with his constant dialectic between revolutionaries and counter-revolutionaries.

In an attempt to influence history, by which Castro has consistently adhered, he joined the ranks of Mao and Hitler by altering photographs containing individuals who once shared a voice, but then fell out of favor. Cabrera Infante references a doctored photograph in which Castro had Carlos Franqui, a guerilla fighter and editor of Cuba’s Revolucion after the fall of Batista, removed from a photograph in which the two appeared together, saying, “By an unkind stroke [Franqui] had been rubbed out from the history of revolutionary Cuba, from the

Revolution, from the future itself. Banished, one might say, from Marxist eternity” (qtd. in Franqui viii). Just like Po Ku to Mao and Joseph Goebbels to Hitler, Castro had attempted to erase Franqui from any association with himself, but more importantly, from any reference in history.

Castro controlled all means of mass communication on the island. Television, radio, and the print media became state-run entities, with Radio Rebelde continuing its revolutionary charge reminiscent of its clandestine broadcasts against the Batista regime to provide hope for the Cuban people through the means of Fidel Castro and his guerrilla soldiers, and Granma receiving its name from the yacht that delivered Castro’s guerrilla fighters to start the revolutionary war against Batista and usher in the revolution. Bresnahan argues that Chileans utilized radio as a means to organize resistance and revolt against the Pinochet dictatorship, reminiscent of Castro’s own Radio Rebelde during the Cuban revolutionary war against Batista. But unlike Pinochet, who permitted religious radio stations to broadcast, Castro disallowed all broadcasting of any hints of opposition, or, rather, only allowed broadcasts adhering to the revolution. Contrary to the Chilean situation which saw several broadcasts transmitting into the country from external locations, external broadcasts from Miami, such as Radio Marti, have yet to invoke Cubans to take up democracy.

#### THE CREATION OF “PUBLIC SPACE”

With the construct of “the people” established, Castro had simultaneously orchestrated the creation of a viable public space for the people to express themselves, but, unknown to most Cubans at the time, this space was not a public sphere where ideas could be democratically engaged, and political criticism allowed. Castro’s public space invited participation by the people, creating the perception of a democratic voice, but that participation adhered to the revolution. This public space was, essentially, a podium to support the revolution, and it allowed

him the necessary time to establish his control over the state apparatus. Its public nature meant that Cubans policed themselves regarding support or rejection of the revolution, with only two possible labels being permitted: revolutionary or counter revolutionary.

Although Castro's narrative invited all Cubans willing to embark on the revolutionary commitment, he established a public space of participation where the expected citizen would gather to invoke concepts designed to further the revolutionary cause. This public space, theoretical in nature, due to its inclusivity rather than exclusivity fostered a democratic understanding of society. Whereas the majority of Cubans, coming from the lower classes, never had an opportunity to voice their ideas previously in Cuban society, the public space brought on by Castro's revolution fulfilled that void. From the points of views of these Cubans following the triumph over Batista, Castro had in fact delivered a freedom of expression unbeknownst to most Cubans at that time. Due to this newfound acceptance of a voice never before heard, Cubans who were participants of the initial revolution that later became critics found themselves in an atmosphere where their criticism would not be accepted. Since the revolution brought new freedom to the lower classes, anything that criticized that new system would not be well received; support for the revolution immediately after its birth was too great. Therefore, the critics with the potential to formulate a counter resistance found themselves in an unfriendly environment. Hence, immediate attacks against Castro and the path of the revolution were not accepted during the initial two years of the revolution.

Although Castro consistently refers to cheering Cubans as support of his system, he does so as a strategic means to reinforce the legitimacy of his tenure, and the elimination of a public sphere is an effective method for him to do so. However undemocratic and totalitarian it is, his strategy does achieve his goal of maintaining the most prominent position in Cuba. Eliminating dissenting opinion guarantees the prevention of competing narratives from attaining popular

status, yet creating a public space, or mock public sphere, satisfies the individuals abiding by the revolutionary narrative by creating the perception that their voice, although only in support of the revolution, is valued and appreciated. Castro's encouragement for Cubans partaking in the revolution creates a sense of civic engagement that offers intrinsic reward for the participants. In this sense, through the use of his rhetoric, Castro has successfully orchestrated a plan designed to fulfill selfish needs.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this chapter explains the relevance of Castro's ideology in relation to its strategic usage to maintain the revolution and allow Castro to maintain a dominant position in Cuba. As Gunn and Treat explain in the "zombie complex" of ideological criticism in rhetorical studies, ideology affects individuals internally, and further study should examine the relationship to an individual and how that individual comes to internalize an ideology. I have attempted to do so through the use of a narrative that presents itself as a desirable path to achieve a desirable life in fulfillment of a person's needs. When accepted by an individual as the best of possible frames, that individual becomes consubstantial with the frame, meaning that frame has upgraded to his or her frame used to judge the world, or an ideology. When an ideology emerges on a massive scale the spread of the ideology comes not from force but from the educational system of a society. Educational systems offer individuals, children, as blank slates more willing to accept information due to their less critical mindsets.

By examining Castro's narrative and subsequent ideology as a case study, we see Castro's direct influence on the educational system as a means to present his revolutionary narrative in a purely positive format with the desired effect of individuals choosing to adopt his ideology due to the positive argument for revolution and the lack of competing narratives or frames. To establish an inclusive identity as a rewarding factor for those partaking in the

ideology, Castro constitutes Cubans as “the people.” Not only does the establishment of the people present individuals as active members on a journey to achieve a collective destiny, it also interpellates agents, presenting them the opportunity to choose to become a member of the people if they had not already done so. Castro increases the intensity of its influence by marking the boundaries of the people and making the features of its definition more clear. Establishing the poor revolutionary struggle as defining characteristics of the people ensures the script of his narrative will not change, thereby perpetuating his ideology. To further ensure the consistency of a narrative, a totalitarian rhetor should eliminate possibilities of a public sphere, as this becomes a breeding ground for competing narratives which challenge the rhetor’s narrative. On the other hand, the creation of a public space that encourages civic participation on the grounds of support for the narrative only presents the perception of civic engagement for individuals, satisfying needs to be heard. Whereas Castro’s case study reveals a successful strategy that raises the possibility of individuals choosing to become consubstantial with a particular ideology, as rhetorical critics it becomes our duty to identify the creation of such an occurrence in order to deny the life of a single frame atop the cages of competing frames. Individuals always have a choice; ideologies are chosen through some form of internal transaction of an individual whereby they gauge competing frames of existence. Naturally, when the available frames are narrowed, a rhetor can influence, not control, an individual to accept a frame more easily.

## CHAPTER 10: CASTRO'S IMAGE AND ADAPTED ROLES

Georgie Anne Geyer notes:

In the beginning, the Cuban people had called him “Fidel” – in adoration, in salvation, in love, like a Spanish woman with her husband before marriage. After the magnificence of the triunfo, as after the marriage, they immediately began calling him “Castro” – in sobriety, in respect, in fear. In the end, they called him only “El” or “He,” for he had become finally a differentiated creature existing away from them – that sun so hot that it burned to come close. (394)

This quote bears significance as it offers illustration of the evolution of Fidel Castro the man to Fidel Castro the symbol. Castro left his status as mere mortal behind him as his revolutionary narrative continued to unfold through the decades. But several dilemmas in Cuba's history under Castro, especially the economic collapse after the Soviet fall, bring up questions of how events such as this were not enough to remove Castro from control of Cuba. Could it possibly be a situation similar to Robert Mugabe's in Zimbabwe where the repressive state apparatus maintains order through intimidation and violence? Although Castro controls the state apparatus, he does not position himself in the same luxurious fashion as Mugabe, nor does he utilize the same means of extreme violence. Cubans, on the other hand, were bred into a militaristic culture under Castro in vigilance for a possible United States invasion, demonstrating that Cubans themselves were not foreign to the handling of arms, with the majority of Cubans being members of some form of militia on the island. Based on this military training it would seem that Cubans could possess the ability to overthrow Castro, or even implement a coup by those close to Castro. Yet, none of this happened, because Castro's stature had been elevated from a man to something else.

The display of character is important because rhetoric is more than the simple attempt to change the behavior of others through altering beliefs and values. People also act because of their understanding of their social position or obligation within a social hierarchy. The

relational aspect of a message, matter that has to do with social roles, may be at least as important as the content of that message.

Leaders understand that our perception of their character may strongly affect our interaction with them. When our view of their competence and virtue is damaged, leaders lose their legitimacy and must depend upon coercion alone. Without the legitimacy of character, leaders are seen as oppressors with a mere monopoly on violence.

In relation to his narrative, Castro's image reflects the necessary roles required of him to keep the wheels of his narrative spinning. As Geyer's quote at the beginning of this chapter suggests, Castro's relational balance with the Cuban masses has been altered during his time as Cuba's sole leader. Whereas he began his revolution as a popular war hero who delivered freedom to Cubans oppressed by the former dictator Batista, he took on the responsibility of government manager, and later became a moral prophet. As his roles changed, his image changed with it, which also forced Cubans to view their leader from evolving points of view. As Castro enacted his new roles, the distance between himself and the Cuban people lengthened, a result of his monopolization of actions within the country. His centralization of power has made him accountable for a huge number of different functions and his long tenure has forced him to respond to vast social, political, and economic changes within the nation and abroad. However, his verbal output has corresponded with the expectations demanded by the audience regarding the fulfillment of his roles. He has demonstrated a high degree of communicative flexibility and communication competence over five decades of rule. Castro's switch from big brother and fellow citizen in arms to prophet and protector of the revolutionary flame is a metaphor of long term changes in his role or rather his relationship with the Cuban people. His image signals more than a style of charismatic leadership; it also signals the set of expectations and behaviors appropriate for the people. Thus, identity is reciprocal, and the social identity and parameters are

communicatively produced. Castro has adapted his character to best meet the needs of the country, such as the loss of the Soviet Union and a stagnant, faltering economy.

Fidel Castro's captivating presence cannot be denied. Not only has Castro held power over the government of Cuba for just under 50 years, he has done so in a very public manner, in the sense that he has spent a considerable amount of his time speaking to crowds. In these numerous instances spanning since 1959, he placed himself in positions where he spoke for hours on end. It was this constant speech to Cubans that afforded Castro a connection to the reality of life as a Cuban. However, it must be noted this connection was in no way a dialogue, as displayed through his removal of dissenters to his revolutionary narrative. But Castro's constant oratorical display created either a constant inspirational push or watchful eye for Cubans. Cubans partaking in Castro's revolutionary narrative and becoming consubstantial with his ideology could rely on his constant inspiration, which reinforced notions that the revolution would never die. One must wonder if Castro's oratorical perseverance had wavered would his influence over Cubans and the government had faltered too. Absolutely. Yes, Castro had created a tight net of secret police and encouraged watchful eyes at the most local of levels. Before him Hitler, and after him Hussein, both utilized these same tactics in order to quell any notions of dissidence through fear of punishable repercussions. Yet, Castro's tight control of the repressive state apparatus could not have been achieved without his constant oratorical presence ensuring Cubans of their places in the revolutionary narrative.

Castro did not attain absolute control at the fruition of the revolutionary war on January 1, 1959, he required more time to entrench his strategy into the very arteries of Cuba. Forced takeovers of governments pit a small group in control against a majority of citizens whom these groups cannot trust. Machado's and Batista's previous dictatorships over Cuba resulted in the same outcome, establishing a breeding ground for counter insurgents. Castro did not make this



same mistake. He allowed his image to attain overwhelming support before making any bids at total control. Through his strategic theatrics in July 1959 he even resigned from his post as Prime Minister as a ploy to have Cubans display a public outcry and call for the return of their beloved hero. Thus, when Castro forced President Urritia to resign on July 17, 1959 and replaced him with Osvaldo Dorticos, whom would remain President of Cuba until 1976, Castro orchestrated a move which gave the people the sense that they made the choice, instilling the most powerful support that any political figure can have: the support of the people. By 1961, with the American-backed counter attack at the Bay of Pigs successfully thwarted, Castro's roots had successfully been entrenched in Cuba. After this moment he was clear to openly divulge the socialist nature of the revolution on December 1, 1961.

From these moments on, Castro's created revolutionary narrative required constant repetition. The number of Cubans who participated in the narrative either through willing acceptance or through fear of reprisal can never be known, due to the repercussions for dissent. However, the necessary catalyst for the Castro system is the constant repetition of the narrative. The creator and narrator of that narrative is Castro. Without the narrative, the system loses momentum, as purpose becomes unclear. The question to answer, then, is whether Castro is a unique narrator of the Cuban revolutionary narrative, or if someone else could replace him in this role and still maintain a successful hold over the system.

Warnick considers a possible dilemma in Fisher's narrative paradigm by asking how an auditor is to choose between competing narratives (179). This answer simply lies in the originators of the narratives. When auditors hear competing narratives, they will assess the storytellers. A storyteller's ethos plays a crucial role in bringing auditors to his or her cause. In Castro's case, he constructed an ethos that dwarfed that of all competing storytellers. The ongoing uniqueness of Fidel Castro stems from his successful intertwining of himself with the

creation of his new ideology. The new Cuban identity cannot be separated from Castro. On the same note, mention of Castro implies the new Cuban ideology.

In 2003, Castro made the statement, “There is no cult of personality around any living revolutionary, in the form of statues, official photographs, or the names of streets or institutions. The leaders of this country are human beings, not gods” (“Assessing” 486-87). Yet, after over 40 years in control of Cuba, Castro had elevated his status, and positioned himself atop a pedestal, instilling a symbolic statue of himself in the eyes of Cubans, if not the world. Whether a witness to Castro agreed to Castro’s narrative or not, the symbolic statue still stands. Revolutionaries view the statue in awe, while critics view the statue in terms of it being brought down. Images of Saddam Hussein’s statue being wrenched from its foundation come to mind here; in order to eliminate old systems or regimes, the reminders of those regimes or systems must be removed. Castro’s case is no exception. Although he erected no tangible statues to his greatness like other grand personalities in history, he has, nonetheless, established himself as a grand personality. Even foreign leaders, such as Venezuelan Hugo Chavez, have mirrored Castro’s image, paying tribute to this grand figure in the form of Fidel Castro.

The myth of Castro began brewing since the days of his guerrilla war against Batista in the Sierra Maestra, which contributed to his accelerated rise to prominence after the onset of the revolution. Although a very public figure, as was required to maintain his revolutionary narrative, Castro kept his private life hidden from the public eye. Georgie Ann Geyer states, “The absence of personal information which would make Fidel a man, and not just a myth, made him seem unknowable and therefore omnipotent. That was the idea, of course, and Fidel manipulated it masterfully” (78). Lopez-Fresquet stated, “the people considered him to be a sort of supernatural being,” with a weekly magazine even depicting him as Christ (89). This supernatural status would soon open the path for his message to take on a mythic role as well,

granting him the ability to deliver messages from a heavenly plane of existence in a priestly voice. Althusser describes priests as “the authors of the great ideological mystification” (39). Castro’s status would change during his tenure in Cuba, combined with the mythic emergence of a man that challenged a super power and maintained his foothold on his own country for over 49 years. This myth fused with his character to gradually create a new understanding of the man. Castro’s character or ethos has had decades to develop in the minds of both Cubans and non-Cubans alike. He is generally branded in a negative fashion in the United States, which he himself acknowledges as the conditioned responses taught by the United States to its people and the rest of the world (“University” 48). But he has also gained sympathetic views from individuals within the United States as well for his cause of “revolution” and for his healthcare and education improvements. It could even be argued that Chilean Hugo Chavez imitates Castro’s own rhetoric. However, despite limited engagements in other parts of the world, possibly with the exception of Angola, Castro’s circumference never found widespread acceptance outside of Cuba. So, Castro’s character becomes most relevant to Cubans, as they are his immediate audience requiring influence. Rather than rely on bureaucratic laws to legitimize the new revolutionary government, Castro relied on lengthy speeches to set the agenda of the new government in the eyes of the Cuban people (Montaner 18). As mentioned in Chapter Two, Cubans placed Castro on a pedestal, painting him as an extremely credible and likeable character. Castro required this foundation from which to spread his message to Cubans through his discourse. McGee states, “The advocate is recognized as Leader only when he transcends his own individuality in the estimation of his audience” (241). For example, the Concentracion Campesina celebration saw half a million peasants come to Havana to celebrate the anniversary of July 26<sup>th</sup> in 1959. Despite Rufo Lopze-Fresquet’s, Minister of the Treasury, objections that this would cause riots and epidemics, Cubans of all social classes sought the honor of having the

peasants, a display in the people's utmost respect for Fidel Castro (Lopez-Fresquet 54). On the night of March 13, 1968, Castro's party members secretly confiscated all private businesses, such as shops and groceries, across the entire country (Llovio-Menendez 217-18). I offer this example not to illustrate Castro's government control, but to point out the willing acceptance of Castro's ideology across the island. In this example, numerous individuals were required to carry out this action, an action that amounted to ruining the livelihood of working Cubans, such as commandeering scissors from a barber or a plunger from a plumber. The fulfillment of these actions reveals the consubstantiality of those involved to Castro's ideology. The influence of Castro's narrative and its establishment of an ideology brought the character of Castro to a new realm where his narrative would be linked forever with his character. His role became one of not merely a narrator, but one of priest delivering a spiritual message to his congregation.

#### THE IDEOLOGICAL PROPHET

Since the beginning of known civilization, priests have established prominent positions within society, whether they were the priestess at Delphi privy to information sought from the oracle, the priests privileged to transport the Ark of the Covenant, or the Brahmin atop the Hindu caste system. Although Castro does not establish a religion in the orthodox sense, the system he constructs parallels that of other worldly religions as a means of message delivery. The deliverance of Castro's system possesses religious qualities as a method of instilling devotion/faith in a concept/god greater than the individuals partaking in the system. In so doing, Castro takes on the role of the priest as the intermediary between the godly concept of the socialist revolution and the Cuban people. As discussed in the previous chapter, the Cuban people, as rhetorically constructed by Castro, all become the congregation to Castro's system, as dissenters/unbelievers are simply removed from the system through the repressive state apparatus.

Applying Althusser's terms, Castro takes on the form of professional of ideology as a priest to his people (7). Concerning the power of voice, Lessl describes the priesthood as "given an elite status as well as a formative role in creating a particular society's existential consciousness" (185). Castro's role becomes apparent, the creation of a narrative and its dissemination to Cubans reaches fruition with the acceptance of Cubans as an acceptable ideology. With this acceptance of his ideology as his goal, Castro's duty becomes one of moral preacher, reiterating the aspects of his narrative in order to maintain the choice by Cubans to maintain the ideological mindset. Linking Cubans to a particular "existential consciousness" demarcates itself as Castro's most difficult challenge as an orator. In this realm Castro must look beyond the mere physical needs of his people and demonstrate their needs for self actualization with a power greater than themselves. In his speeches/sermons Castro has revered the revolution as a tool to uphold socialism, placing socialism in a godly realm requiring Cubans/disciples to consubstantiate with it. As evidenced in Chapter Five, Castro defines socialism in religious terms, granting it with heavenly qualities and bestowing it with the power to perform miracles. Lessl further describes the priestly voice saying, "The rhetoric of the priest is largely vertical, descending from above as an epiphanic Word, filled with mystery and empowered with extra-human authority" (185). The overthrow of Batista in 1959 would not necessarily have stood out as a defining moment without the resultant social revolution that followed due to the fruitless regime exchanges in the past. But Castro's revolution introduced new mindsets and freedoms to a majority of Cubans, demanding loyalty to the new system for doing so. When Castro spoke of the revolution and socialism; therefore, his words became "the Word," presenting the wishes of the system to the individuals within that system. This rhetoric, mind you, is a method of delivery; Castro's ideology/religion is utilized in a manner to maintain obedience through the illusion of faith first, before the need for the repressive state apparatus, second. Cubans/disciples

listen to the speech/sermon of Castro do to their need to hear “the Word,” as it grants them new opportunities for social improvements. Verbal appeasement and direction distinguish themselves as a more positive and effective means to influence individuals. As mentioned in the previous chapter, reliance on referent, expert, or legitimate power establishes a positive connection between Cubans/disciples and Castro/priest, making Cubans more likely to want to participate consubstantially with the system.

Despite Castro’s priestly voice, he creates the impression that he is not from an “elite subculture,” (186) as Lessl describes it, so as to be considered no different than any other Cuban. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Castro’s constitution of the Cuban “people” demands poor struggling revolutionaries, with any individuals not meeting this criteria appearing in an aristocratic class, which was removed as a result of the revolution. Any mention of an upper class delineates a counter revolutionary status; hence, if Castro were to set himself apart from Cubans by identifying himself as a voice of God, for example, he himself would violate basic revolutionary principles that he created. However, if he represents the voice of the people, which he claims, then he is simply one of the many Cubans partaking in the revolution. Acting as a common revolutionary just like everyone else on the island grants Castro the opportunity to incorporate mention of the workers with his socialist revolution/religion. “Priestly rhetoric,” Lessl claims, “draws all experience, whether it originates inside or outside the sphere of the church, into the web of theological conceptualization” (187). Castro draws the content of his discourse from the woes of Cubans and alters the perception of troublesome times into qualities of revolutionary fervor. For instance, Castro’s speech morphs the plight of the worker into a positive characteristic representing the epitome of a revolutionary struggle. Whether Cubans witness reward for participation in the socialist revolution or not, Castro illustrates their relevance to the revolution, framing the revolution as an inclusive concept of self actualization

where participation is valued. From this point of view, Castro eliminates any notions of hierarchy that would have created an arrogant image of himself with Castro speaking “down” to Cubans as opposed to speaking “with” them. This inclusion of the “commoner” harnesses identification between Cubans and the socialist revolution that Castro preaches, supporting Lessl’s notion that “priestly communication creates a people’s sense of identity with respect to the wholly other, the gods, or the cosmos at large” (185). As the optimal method of relying on willing participation instead of forced participation through fear or removal from the system completely, the linking of Cubans to the system itself granted Castro the most positive method of spreading his “Word.”

As most religious preachers in the world, Castro expands the audience of his message to all persons on the planet. The expansion of his circumference into Angola is an example of this. He first preached his revolution to Cubans, but with the success of the revolution in his homeland, he attempts to spread his message of socialist revolution to other countries included in the Third World. It becomes a priest’s duty to present a religious framework to individuals who would otherwise not be subjected to the belief system. In so doing, Castro’s speech establishes a world community destined to unite under his frame, or at least attempts to establish this. Cuba’s link with the Soviet Union allowed Castro to link Cubans with this global community; however, similar to a priest embarking on a journey to build his or her own church, Castro also flaps his own wings by preaching his ideology/sermons on his own accord. Especially since the Soviet fall, Castro has attempted to make his message more universally applicable. Preaching the socialist revolution to the Third World countries marked itself as an acceptable narrative to incite his ideology in other countries, but this was not the case in Western countries where he has been branded a communist dictator, both devil terms in Western society. As identified in Chapter Seven, Castro’s strategy of a battle of ideas against globalism allowed individuals even in the

United States to actively identify with ease, as any form of armed civil resistance would be highly ineffective in such a country. Yet, this proves Castro's initial message as designed specifically for Cubans but also adaptable to a greater worldly audience, united in a communal "brotherhood" of sorts, distinguishing the message from the closed system of Cuba and appealing to society as a whole (Lessl 194).

Besides marking Castro with a priestly voice, distinguishing between Castro the priest and the religious structure of his message reveals the strategy on which Castro relied. Defining religion himself, Castro states

Religions repeat their same or identical arguments every year. Otherwise, they would not exist as religions. The same or identical dogma is repeated, otherwise they would not exist as religions. The same or identical principles are repeated. They are not only repeated every year; they are repeated every month, every day, every hour. ("Wolves" 3)

Irony persists, it would seem, in this example of parallel construction where Castro essentially repeats himself, yet immediately contradicts his own words in the following statement by stating

We are not a religion and we are not dogma, but our principles are our fundamental, basic ideas, our arguments must be repeated, not only every year, but every month, every day, and every hour because the truth must be repeated once, 10 times, 100 times, 1,000 times, a million times if we want to spread the word, if we want the truth to be known, and if we want it understood. ("Wolves" 3-4)

Although I position this reluctant testimony to demonstrate Castro's own definition of religion and its similar characteristics to the message of his revolution, I do so not in a trivial attempt to discredit Castro, but rather as a means to distinguish Castro's own understanding of the religious nature of messages and how they are strategically used to influence a people. Despite his insistence that the Cuban socialist revolution is not a religion, when pitted against each other these two examples seem to relay the same information with Castro providing no evidence as to why "We are not a religion" other than his claim itself. Again, as he states previously, Castro does not identify his socialist revolution as a religion explicitly or implicitly. He does, however,



structure the delivery of his message in a parallel fashion to priests preaching sermons to their congregations.

The repetition of principles and arguments referenced in the previous statements from Castro are standard practice in religious systems. Belief structures require repetition to guarantee an unaltered interpretation of a message. In order to maintain tradition and the focus of principles this becomes a necessary strategy that instills the exactitude of when the message was originally created. As oral tradition proved to be the successful manner of perseverance for a message throughout history in light of widespread illiteracy or lack of subjection to writings, Castro continues this method as a means to educate Cubans. Common sense teaches that the more an individual hears the same argument repeated numerously the more likely that individual will be able to repeat that same argument verbatim. Castro speaks of conditioned responses created by the United States by referencing statements such as “communism is bad” and “Cuba is bad,” which he claims are taught to Americans by the capitalist United States system to guarantee a certain mindset among Americans (“University” 48). However, Castro relies on the same type of conditioned responses in order to maintain the reproduction of his exact narrative. Distinguishing the act as a negative method is simply a means to demonize an opposing point of view, whereas Castro classifies the exact same act performed by himself as simply “spread[ing] the word” (“Wolves” 4). He may criticize the strategy of another system, but Castro uses the exact same strategy himself, demonstrating repetition of arguments and principles, which he admits in the past example. Conditioned responses prevent radical thinking that could diminish a particular method; therefore, Castro’s use of them illustrates an effective strategy to maintain a consistent message in the minds of Cubans. Repetition prevents tangential thinking and provides guidelines for individuals participating in a system’s message; thus, it becomes a necessary requirement for maintaining stability within a rhetorical system.

Besides the use of repetition to ingrain his message into Cubans, Castro structured aspects of his message to contain ponderous moments for the Cubans within his socialist revolution. This act placed Cubans in hypothetical situations where they would be forced to contemplate a response or consider explanations for actions that already transpired. Referring to the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the subsequent lack of oil and raw materials in Cuba, Castro stated, “Probably, it was good that this happened, after all. Maybe it was necessary that we suffered as we did, so that we are ready to give our lives a hundred times over before we surrender the country or the Revolution, the Revolution we so deeply believe in” (“University” 44). As mentioned, this statement provides an example where members of Castro’s system must seek out explanation for the failure of the socialist revolution. From a religious perspective, members would be considering why their god failed to provide a better life; in this case, Cubans would be seeking reasons why the socialist revolution failed them. But, as Castro’s strategy, he places all blame for failure in the hands of the people for potentially not enacting the message/Word correctly. Above all, this example follows suit with the qualities of suffering and sacrifice, which many religions require in their believers as commitment to their beliefs and as a means of humbling those believers. As another example where Castro required Cubans to contemplate their devotion/faith, he referenced Cuban revolutionary heroes/saints as examples of guidance in difficult situations, asking Cubans, “what would Che do...what would Mella do...what would Camilo do?” (“Wolves” 29). This method places Cubans alongside their heroes/saints in an attempt for Cubans to replicate the actions of these model citizens. In a sense, through this statement Castro is attempting to provide spiritual guidance, an action that asks Cubans to reflect on an issue internally. This internal reflection begets self criticism by forcing a Cuban to face himself or herself as judge.

As Maddux argues that cycles of atonement be reduced within Burke's logology to grant more agency in discourse (230-31), Castro's discourse provides an example of this pattern in his lack of Cuban guilt. Whereas most world religions incorporate guilt as a means for a person to better herself or himself after committing some form of sin, the religious nature of Castro's discourse eliminates atonement for sins from its message, a distinct play separating it from most religions and grounding it as merely religious structure, not an actual religion itself. Although social mishaps, such as the Mariel Boatlift and the Soviet collapse, required more commitment by Cubans in order to fix them, Castro never asserts blame that requires atonement. In fact, Castro takes a different path by asserting "our country is guiltless, without any blame" ("Wolves" 4). During crisis moments, such as that instigated by the Mariel Boatlift and Reagan's rise to the United States presidency, Castro places fault on the Cuban people to divert criticism of his religiously structured socialist revolution, but he does so through a positive sense of responsibility, not of blame. He faults Cubans for lacking the responsibility to maintain the ideals of the revolution, but he does not cast blame and require atonement from them, he simply attempts to inspire them to live the revolutionary lifestyle more stringently. Castro also asks, "What is Cuba's sin" ("Assessing" 483) as a statement implying that Cuba does not sin. If sin existed in Castro's religiously structured socialist revolution, it would only be applied to counter-revolutionary behavior, not as a strategy of atonement to keep Cubans on the correct path.

#### PATRIARCHAL ROLE TO A MATRIARCHAL ROLE

Castro employed his rhetoric in an aggressive manner throughout the revolution. He demanded Cubans participate in his narrative in order to form a collective action that would challenge systems around the world, demarcating Cuba as an active participant in the global communist revolution. Castro employed labels of counter-revolutionary behavior assertively during the first half of the revolution. He used such labels as a means to influence Cubans to

work hard in their daily lives, even insisting on unheard-of sugar outputs to offer proof of the revolution's ability to compete on a global scale. He also insisted on military strength as a show of force against the United States colossus, egging on the superpower through confidence in his people's militaristic abilities. With the success of the revolution in Cuba, Castro challenged other countries to embark on revolutionary journeys as well, even going so far as to send Cuban soldiers to assist in the revolutionary struggles of these countries. Thus, Castro embodied a patriarchal role of a leader aggressively defending and spreading the revolution.

However, as the revolution moved forward, Castro's role changed as a result of events taking place within the country. The Soviet collapse eliminated military support and supplies, making aggressive revolutionary plays in other countries difficult. With the Soviet collapse, Cuba also lost its only financial backer, forcing a country with few goods to implement even heavier rationing. Cuba never recovered from the resultant economic crisis, with Castro losing the ability to boast about profitable sugar harvests. The country became stagnant, and mirroring this, Castro was forced to accept Cuba's faltering ability to make global impacts. However, Castro adapted his strategy from a patriarchal role to a matriarchal role, where he emerged as a nurturing protector. Because money and equipment became difficult to obtain, Castro relied heavily on the values of life, prospering more as a moral leader. In place of sending soldiers to other countries, Castro sent doctors to aid people in parts of the world, even offering doctors to the United States after Hurricane Katrina devastated the country's coast in 2005. With Cuba alone against the sole superpower, he shifted away from physical military struggle to an abstract battle of ideas. Castro accepted poverty, and saw it as his duty to warn Cubans about the exploitation and horror of the outside world, protecting the Cuban people from capitalist and imperial culture. Whereas he aggressively demanded revolutionary participation in the

patriarchal role, in the matriarchal role he invited Cubans to participate in the revolution as the morally correct thing for them to do.

In conclusion, the display of character through messages is a way of defining oneself socially. Skilled speakers establish a specific relational balance with others using codes that may assert similarity, superiority, equality, deference, exclusion, affection, servitude, or any number of additional social roles. By employing these codes, elders are able to reach a state of consubstantiality with their followers (audiences) based on identification between themselves as speakers and their hearer's roles, experiences, attitudes or values.

Over time it is usually advantageous for leaders to alter or reframe their characters (social identity) in order to mobilize their audience to meet new changes. For a switch to be rhetorically successful, it is the leader's responsibility to meet the audience's expectations, surrounding a new role. Despite enormous challenges to his leadership over five decades, Fidel Castro has been enormously skillful in reframing his role. In increasing social distance, Castro has created a kind of consubstantiality with the masses through devotee and spiritual leader; through increased nurturing, he has sharpened the people's sense of division from the outside world. His rhetoric has created a shared understanding that provides certainty, points of reference, and affective identification in an uncertain and rapidly changing world

When a rhetor embarks on a journey of religious conviction, meaning the rhetor uses a religious structure to demand devotion and instill an exacted narrative through repetition, the rhetor takes on a new, grander role than simply that of speaker. A religious structure in discourse infuses a narrative with a self-actualized goal with which characters become consubstantial. A religiously structured narrative demands ideological acceptance due to the self-actualization involved, since it invites a spiritual participation. The narrative will follow a moral path, which creates hostile criticism from dissenters due to the in-depth consubstantiality

taking place. Thus, the rhetor emerges as consubstantial with the narrative herself or himself, forging an everlasting bond between the religiously charged narrative and the rhetor. To hold the bond, the two depend on each other to maintain their known existence. This does not denote the realistic death of the rhetor in the face of a dead narrative but the symbolic death of the rhetor, as the rhetor has invested his or her livelihood into the narrative. Without the narrative, the symbolic stature of the rhetor dies with it. The priest does not simply represent the narrative, she or he displays a synechdocal connection to the narrative, the sign whose name refers not just to the rhetor's body, but to the actual narrative, a narrative made flesh.

## CHAPTER 11: CONCLUSION

How has Castro been able to maintain power over five decades? Despite challenges and suffocating boycotts from the dominant world power, the United States, the complete collapse of the Soviet Bloc, the apparent failure of international socialism as a viable system, and a failed national economy, Castro was able to maintain power for five decades. I argue that he has used both coercion and persuasion; he has exercised coercion through a monopoly on the instruments of state violence and control of the information system. He has shown himself a masterful rhetorician through the use of several large persuasive strategies.

First, Castro has ingrained himself with the nation and with the revolution. In so doing, he has emerged consubstantial with the very narrative that he created. Because of this, Cubans need him in order for the country to survive under its current state of revolution. Naturally, dissenters will not rely on Castro, but Cubans living out Castro's revolution require the assistance of the sole narrator of the story. Castro constantly reiterates Cuban success under his tutelage during the war against Batista and the Bay of Pigs invasion against the United States. He also provides an official interpretation of history, revolutionary ideology, and political action. Cubans have come to rely on Castro as such a guide so heavily that without him the revolution will waste away. As mentioned in Chapter Four, Castro uses the memory of the Cuban victory at the Bay of Pigs invasion as an inspirational message to further the cause of the revolution, even applying the phrase "Remember Giron" in other speeches as well ("Defending" 330).

Second, by defining the Cuban people as an advance guard of the revolution he is able to maintain the people's belief in their social system. During times of hardship, Castro possessed the necessary leadership required to keep Cubans on an unfaltering path. He framed issues as matters of faith, placing Cubans in the position to enact their faith instead of forsaking their beliefs. Even after the failure of the Communist Bloc, with Cuba remaining as the last true

communist nation, Castro persevered. Also, as a result of this Communist collapse, Cuba experienced a horrendous economic depression; yet, Cubans maintained their faith in Castro's ideals. This faith is based on Castro's constitution of the Cuban people as true believers in the revolution. To truly be Cuban, according to Castro, a citizen had to be a true revolutionary, as mentioned in Chapter Nine.

Third, Castro reframes success and failure by moving the metric of success from material to moral criteria. This allows him to dismiss material failures as unimportant or to redefine them as moral victories. This point of view permits Castro to influence the reception of any event in the minds of the Cuban people. He becomes a master framer by having Cubans self actualize with the ideals of the revolution, and having them understand the significance of the revolution's success over mere material trivialities. As mentioned in Chapter Six, Castro designates moral rewards as more important than material ones in order to maintain the revolution in spite of the Cuban economic collapse. So, despite oil shortages and rationing, Castro illustrated the idea that Cubans were morally superior to individuals living under a capitalist system, emphasizing values and deemphasizing materialism in the process.

Fourth, he adopts a Maoist idea of a continually evolving revolution in order to adjust to hurdles along the way. In this manner, expectations can be postponed or continually revised. In essence, such a strategy allows him to be unaccountable for failures, which simply become errors during a learning journey of the revolution. Such is the case, when Castro addresses temptations of the United States after the Mariel Boatlift. He states,

For us, the socialist road was something new, a course that was being embarked on for the first time not only in our country but in the rest of the hemisphere as well. But we can assert, above all else, that we've known how to use our time, that we've been capable of rectifying mistakes and that today our revolution is stronger and more solid than ever before. ("Defending" 327)



Thus, difficulties are cast aside as a process rather than as a result. Despite the length of the revolution, Castro relies on the repetition of this idea to keep his narrative dynamic.

Fifth, Castro devises a narrative in which the Cuban people can see themselves as participants. The strongest kind of identification, as Kenneth Burke has noted, is one forged not so much by common belief as by continual collective action. Thus, Castro has cast the Cuban people in a role in which they are acting together to preserve the revolution, to defend against foreign invaders and to resist the bankrupt culture of globalism. As mentioned in Chapter Eight, Castro created an inclusive narrative that encouraged all Cubans to participate. With such a mass participation, the revolution became a communal action where Cubans were involved in a collective destiny. For example, Chapter Three addresses such a communal action in Castro's preparation for a military defense against an inevitable invasion sponsored by the United States. In the speech examined in that chapter, Castro morphed Cuba into a militarized state, with all citizens becoming members of numerous organizations designed to instill participation in military and defense drills. This action included all Cubans in a collective patriotic defense of their homeland.

Sixth, Castro socialized the Cuban people to the ideas, means, and values of the revolution. He has done so by control of the schools, the media, the military, and the government. Thus, until recently, he is the ultimate gatekeeper of the information system in the nation. In any system of mass socialization, the instruments of coercion and persuasion are strongly braided together. As discussed in Chapter Nine, Castro eliminates all opposing points of view on the island. With such a limited number of viewpoints or ideologies, Castro insures that the odds of Cubans enacting his ideology are in his favor.

## SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

I began this dissertation in Chapter One by making a case for the study of dictator rhetoric within the discipline of rhetorical studies. The overwhelming impact that dictators have over the people they oppress begs scholars to study the strategies that place dictators in power in order to instill a sense of civic resistance in individuals to avoid the establishment of the dictators' oppression. History has shown the horrible consequences when dictators enact their grand visions that result in the deaths of millions of people. From Stalin to Hitler to Pol Pot, dictators have left absolute misery in their wakes. From Castro to Mugabe to Lukashenka, dictators use fear and violence to eliminate public spheres. With such immoral action at stake, how can rhetorical critics not devote more consideration toward the analysis and prevention of the rhetorical strategies that allow dictators to attain and maintain positions of high social influence? Images of a ragged Hussein caught after hiding from United States forces provide evidence of the mortality of individuals such as himself. Yes, they are monsters in every moral sense of the word, but they are still human; as tautological as it is, a human is only a human. If prevention of a monster status is possible, then it must be studied. Therefore, I presented my case for the worthiness of the application of rhetorical criticism applied to the rhetoric of Fidel Castro.

Castro's success required a foundation from which to become established; as Chapter Two revealed, Castro developed that foundation through his image as a hero. Mugabe established his character as a national hero after Zimbabwe's civil war against its white minority-controlled government and Hitler established his character by offering blame and hope during a German economic crisis period. Just as these two examples reveal, Castro also abided by a similar pattern. Past dictators in Cuba attained power through illegal means, creating a majority that had to be held at bay through violence and fear. Castro on the other hand, had a more

gradual establishment of his dictatorship through popular support. Technically, the provisional government after the revolutionary war was itself problematic, and although Castro appointed himself Prime Minister, he did so with popular support, creating the perception of legitimate power over Cuba's government.

The image Castro created of himself during his guerilla campaign of the revolutionary war afforded him the position to attain prominence through the perception of legitimacy. The war and his emergence from it revealed his prowess as an epideictic speaker. While conducting his guerilla campaign, Castro's traits of wisdom, courage, and justice, identified by Aristotle as necessary virtues for an audience to accept epideictic speech, became apparent to his fellow guerillas and all Cubans as word spread across the island. His wisdom emerged through his understanding of the grand design of the war. His battle strategy of attrition through a guerilla campaign proved more effective than the urban resistance that acted more secretly than the defiance displayed by Castro in the Sierra Maestra. Castro's willingness to lead his troops into battle proved his courage and dedication to the cause. Lastly, Castro practiced justice when crediting peasants for assistance and treating prisoners with respect, placing him in sharp contrast to the brutal tactics of Batista's dictatorship. With the use of "Radio Rebelde" and published interviews with New York Times reporter Herbert Matthews, the image of Castro as a heroic figure fighting against a corrupt and brutal government spread to all Cubans across Cuba. Hence, when Castro travelled across the country to Havana after the flight of Batista, he did so among huge crowds of support. The image of Castro had been raised as a hero on a pedestal.

With the establishment of his hero image, Chapters Three thru Seven identify five exigencies from five separate decades and the techniques used by Castro through five specific speeches delivered to Cubans to adapt to the exigencies and offer a rhetorical solution.

Chapter Three analyzes Castro's speech on May 1, 1960 as he faced a dilemma of preparing his country for an inevitable American-backed invasion of Cuba. In this speech, Castro re-appropriates the myth of the Spartans, highlighting Spartan characteristics of military organization and training, fighting to the death, and strength. He makes the explicit comparison between Cubans and Spartans in order to establish a militarized mindset and preparedness among his people in preparation for military defense.

Chapter Four analyzes Castro's speech on April 19, 1976 at a point where Castro had expanded the circumference of his revolutionary ideology to Angola and faced criticism as an imperialist state for doing so. To distinguish drastic differences between Cuba and the United States, Castro employed demonizing negative language to illustrate the United States and positive language to illustrate Cuba. He also made comparisons between the Angolan people and the Cuban people, establishing the people from both countries in a bond of revolutionary brotherhood

Chapter Five analyzes Castro's speech on April 16, 1981 after the massive emigration of Cubans to the United States in the Mariel Boatlift and Reagan's rise to the presidency. Castro developed a rhetorical plan to minimize future thoughts of emigration by establishing socialism as a god term. Through this usage, he portrayed the positive improvements to Cuban life under the direction of socialism while attributing negative occurrences within Cuba not to socialism but on the Cuban people's failure to enact socialism correctly.

Chapter Six analyzes Castro's speech on April 4, 1992 after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the immediate economic crisis in Cuba. The loss of Cuba's sole monetary and material provider devastated the Cuban economy. To maintain devotion to his revolution and instill resistance against capitalism, Castro employed a terministic screen that placed socialism

and capitalism under the United States in a false dialectic, with Castro praising socialism and personifying capitalism as a scoundrel figure.

Chapter Seven analyzes Castro's speech on November 17, 2005 where he faced an expansion of globalized capitalism under the helm of the United States along with the possibility of his own death. He procures a battle of ideas where a heroic remnant of the Cuban revolution wages an idealized war against the demonic of globalization. He challenges his audience through direct questioning as a means to invoke self criticism in Cubans in order for them to maintain the revolution after his death.

The enduring narrative created by Castro is the focus of Chapter Eight. He constructed a narrative that conjures a framed fantasy, acting as the master story for all Cubans to witness and in which to participate. This frame of reference does not exist in reality, rather, it is a constructed reality that grants its participants a particular vantage point on how to view and understand their surroundings. This narrative became successful through its invitation to all Cubans, avoiding any notions of exclusivity regarding who the participants in the narrative could be. Through his inclusion of all Cubans, Castro allowed them to identify with the narrative by actively positioning themselves as characters within the story. This story came to fruition as the unraveling of the Cuban revolution. Since the establishment of the revolution, Castro encouraged the majority of Cubans to participate in a collective destiny. Thus, their active roles as characters within the revolutionary narrative became evident in their joining of organizations and participation in rallies. This allowed Cubans to witness the evolution of their own character in relation to the unfolding of the narrative, and becoming consubstantial with the narrative. The narrative itself became the moral road map for Cubans, with Castro positioning events against the principles of the narrative to determine the significance of all events and actions. The ideal

Cuban was to become consubstantial with the narrative, so Castro used this as a means to encourage Cubans to act accordingly.

Castro's narrative allowed him to essentially refer to it forever, due to the dynamic quality of the story. The revolution was structured in such a way that it could never be fulfilled, acting as a means as opposed to an end state. The characters of the narrative were expected to constantly struggle to fulfill the revolutionary cause, placing them in a constant active state of mind. As part of the dynamic quality of the narrative, Castro created the notion that the revolution was always under threat of attack by counter revolutionaries and imperialist entities like the United States. This created an atmosphere of constant vigilance and fear of the revolution's destruction. This dynamic quality added to the participation of Cubans within Castro's system, transferring the destiny of the revolution into the hands of the people. As the revolution progressed, it created its own history which furthered the revolutionary flames through nostalgic references.

With the creation of an inclusive narrative demanding identification among Cubans, Castro had also engineered a system to perpetuate the narrative outside of his discourse. Since Cubans became characters within the story, they would, in turn, self-replicate the narrative, becoming proponents of the narrative themselves. However, the construction of Castro's inclusive narrative eliminated other points of views that appeared to be rivals threatening the revolution. So, Cubans who disagreed with Castro were ultimately cast off as dissenters, being labeled as counter revolutionaries and lacking the ability to compete against the inclusive revolutionary narrative of Castro. With the intolerance for opposing viewpoints developed the Cuban counter narrative, with the sole identity of its characters as one of exile. The Cuban counter narrative had as its goal the elimination of Castro, which consumes the characters of this

story, sparking strong emotions of hate toward the man they hold responsible for their exiled situation .

As discussed in Chapter Nine, the revolutionary narrative constructed by Castro became the entry point for Cubans to accept and become consubstantial with Castro's ideology. His fulfillment of this task came through his control of the state apparatus, which allowed him, in turn, to control the educational state apparatus. With his control of the system of educational delivery, Castro was able to ensure the procurement of his revolutionary narrative within schools. Simultaneously, this meant Castro also eliminated all competing points of views, narrowing the choices for Cubans thereby making their choice of becoming consubstantial with his ideology more likely. As Althusser suggested, the reproduction of the ideological state apparatus came through the control of the educational system.

The acceptance of Castro's ideology by Cubans went hand in hand with Castro's constitution of the "Cuban people." According to Castro's rhetorical design, to be a true Cuban citizen an individual had to become a revolutionary. So, mention of Cuban citizenship became synonymous with being a revolutionary. In order to maintain the social structure of Cuba, Castro attributed traits of being poor and always struggling as characteristics required to identify oneself as a true revolutionary. These characteristics place Cubans in a perpetual class struggle to emerge from the lower classes, while also guaranteeing anyone achieving an upper class status be labeled a counter revolutionary for forsaking the characteristics of a revolutionary, revealing the "catch 22" of Castro's strategy.

Chapter Ten offers an understanding of Castro's altered relationship to the Cuban people. As time moved forward, the relational distance between Castro and his people grew as a result of his changing roles within society. Castro emerged as an ideological prophet that acquired a priestly voice in order to deliver his narrative in a religiously structured form. This does not

mean Castro attempted to create a religion according to the common understanding of the term; rather, he delivered his message in a similar structure utilized by practiced religions. As the revolution unfolded, Castro moved from a patriarchal role where he aggressively asserted the ideals of the revolution and pushed for competition on a global scale to a matriarchal role where he altered success to the abstract realm and nurtured and protected the Cuban people in light of expanding globalization.

## IMPLICATIONS

The implications are several. First, Castro's opponents have consistently underrated his talents as a rhetorician. He has been able to adapt his message to accommodate a gaudy string of changes and challenges. Despite assertions by numerous exiles and analysts, all predictions insisting on Castro's demise have become moot, especially predictions after the Soviet collapse. In the end, Castro transferred power in name to his brother, Raul, on his own terms only after it appeared that natural causes were getting the best of him.

Second, the United States has probably over estimated the power of economic coercion and political isolation. Despite these methods, Castro's social system still perseveres in Cuba. A faltering economy and prospect of American rewards have not produced internal revolts on a threatening scale to Castro's control, nor have attempts at broadcasting messages into the mainland altered the social system of Cuba.

Third, there seems to have been a failure of creativity in dealing with Castro. The United States has allowed the exile community to become a sought after voting block and thus to control many of our policies toward Cuba. The few imaginative initiatives toward Cuba that emerged during the Nixon and Carter administrations were savagely attacked by the exile community. Massive groupthink from the exile community has demarcated an insistence on the embargo as part of their identity.



Fourth, Castro's longevity reaffirms the power of a single major strategy, the scapegoat as a rhetorical device. No one who has lost twenty percent of his people through flight, experienced the loss of his entrepreneurial and professional class, and saw the demise of his major allies and sponsors would be able to continue in power for close to 50 years. But, as Kenneth Burke has affirmed, those who cannot unite on anything can always unite in the face of the enemy. The power of the negative is very great. Commonality of division promotes commonality of identification. Throughout his tenure, Castro has been able to evoke the image of the tiger at the gates, and we have always managed to accommodate him. Without powerful allies, without economic success, with little prospect of a return of the old revolutionary optimism and vision, Castro was so carried year after year by the threat of the American demon. It has been said that revolutions devour their own children. Castro, however, is likely to die with his brother and his aging comrades at his side.

Despite each of the speeches I analyzed coming from different decades, all of the speeches conformed to his overall strategy of maintaining his narrative to perpetuate his ideology. Although Castro delivered numerous speeches and interviews, study of such a large number of texts is unrealistic; however, the method used in this dissertation established the generalization from few speeches to identify his overall strategy. Upon achieving this standard the similarity of his speeches becomes reliable. Yet, to use a macro approach requires the luxury of hindsight, which can only be used to analyze dictator rhetoric from a descriptive point of view as opposed to a preventative point of view regarding the subject of study. Regardless, this study details the development and implementation of a dictator's rhetorical strategy, and the results can be applied in a preventative manner similar to Burke's critique of Hitler at the onset of World War II.

## LIMITATIONS

Study of dictator rhetoric poses major limitations in its lack of information. Dictators and their systems can be observed from afar through national media (when admitted, and through the permitted frame of the state) and official statements by the dictator or his or her system. However, getting information proves difficult due to the closed-system nature of totalitarian states. Information procured through state releases force a critic to succumb to a particular frame of reference when reading documents or viewing information. Naturally, if a dictator's system committed atrocities as deemed by the international community, that system will attempt to hide this information.

In order to understand the thought processes behind individuals subjecting themselves to rule under a dictator, these individuals must express their thoughts. However, asking a citizen of a totalitarian government to discuss their dissenting opinions regarding the rule by a dictator poses serious ethical ramifications, as these individuals could potentially face imprisonment or death for divulging such an opinion. Also, due to such fear as a motivating tool to conform, individuals may refuse to divulge the truth in the first place, finding it easier to lie regarding the benefits of the dictator's government.

## FURTHER STUDY

Opportunities for further study are many: First, numerous dictators have yet to be studied from a rhetorical point of view, such as Hussein, Mugabe, Pot, Pinochet, Stalin, Jong Il, and Lukashenka. Dictators attain and maintain state control through various means. Further study is required in order to discern similar patterns demarcating different styles of dictatorship.

Second, a study of the debates in the Cuban-American community over the past 49 years would give insight into changes in a major source of anti-Castro rhetoric in the Western hemisphere. The Cuban exile community offers perspective from multiple generations, and has

maintained its counter narrative toe to toe with Castro's revolutionary narrative. Although the exile community has not succeeded in overthrowing Castro, it must be noted that it has presented an active rhetorical resistance on a grand scale against a current dictator. Although frames of dissent were silenced within Cuba, the exile community has not found fear of reprisal to be a deterrent against their outspoken demonization of Fidel Castro.

Third, further study might take a more tightly focused look at Castro's rhetoric over particular periods, such as the Bay of Pigs Invasion or the Mariel Boatlift.

Fourth, Canada and our European allies have perceived Castro's Cuba very differently from the United States. What is the nature of their discourse about Cuba and what effect has this discourse had on Cuban identity?

Fifth, Different methods might be applied to the study of Castro's discourse. Castro spoke very differently with his Soviet allies than to his Latin American friends or to the United States. Castro's skill as a code switcher and what it reveals about weak or under resourced leaders might be very valuable.

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