EVOLUTION OF A REVOLUTION: THREE ESSAYS ON WORKER INVOLVEMENT, LABOR EDUCATION AND UNION REPRESENTATION DURING TRANSFORMATION IN THE CUBAN POLITICAL ECONOMY

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EVOLUTION OF A REVOLUTION: THREE ESSAYS ON WORKER INVOLVEMENT, LABOR EDUCATION AND UNION REPRESENTATION DURING TRANSFORMATION IN THE POLITICAL ECONOMY

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This is a collection of three related essays that reflect realities faced by Cuban workers during fundamental transformation in industrial relations, political economy and international relations. Essay one examines worker involvement during contemporary Cuban economic restructuring and finds a contrary case of extensive worker influence on national reform policy during market liberalization. Essay two fills empirical gaps in our knowledge of the official Cuban trade union's role in adult worker education and lays a foundation for further study of the impact of Cuban liberation pedagogy on labor education in the Americas. Finally, essay three considers the dual role of Cuban communist unions as state mobilizing agents and defenders of workers' rights and presents empirical evidence that Cuban unions have exerted critical independence from the state in the representation of worker interests during the implementation of substantial public sector labor market restructuring.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Tamara L. Lee was born in South Bend, Indiana in 1973. In 1991 she began her undergraduate studies in industrial engineering and management sciences at Northwestern University, where she specialized in industrial organizational psychology and ergonomic design. In 1996, upon completing her studies, she worked for several Fortune 500 food manufacturers as a front-line supervisor responsible for training and supporting high-performance work teams.

In 1998, she started her graduate studies in industrial relations at Loyola University-Chicago. Upon graduation, she served as a Labor-Management Relations Examiner for the National Labor Relations Board ("NLRB"), a position she held from 2000 through 2008. During this time, as the District Vice-President of the NLRBU, the NLRB's staff union, she represented approximately 200 public sector attorneys, investigators and support personnel in NLRB offices throughout the Midwest.

In 2003, while still working full-time for the NLRB, she commenced her legal studies at Chicago-Kent University. She received her J.D. in 2007 with a certificate from the Institute for Law and the Workplace. That summer she was admitted to practice law in both the state of New Jersey and the commonwealth of Pennsylvania. In the fall of 2007, she began the graduate work that culminated in this thesis at the Industrial and Labor Relations School of Cornell University, receiving her MS in 2012, and now her Ph. D in 2016.

Her first visit to Cuba came in 2006 as a member of a United States delegation of healthcare workers and union leaders on a professional research exchange with Cuban labor officials and workers in the healthcare industry. From 2008 through 2012 she returned to Cuba annually as a member of the National Lawyers Guild with the purpose of conducting research relating to worker participation in political and economic decision-making and international labor rights. Her other work in Latin

America includes serving as an international election observer in the March 2009 presidential elections in el Salvador, participating in the 2009 World Social Forum in Belém, Brazil, working on a water reclamation project in Ocotal, Nicaragua, and conducting international human rights work in Honduras in the summer of 2009 in the weeks following the coup in Tegucigalpa that removed Manuel Zelaya as head of state.

In 2014 she commenced her current employment as an adjunct assistant professor in the Labor Studies and Employment Relations department at the School of Management and Labor Relations at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, NJ, where she teaches undergraduate and graduate courses on identity politics and labor market discrimination, current problems in labor relations, and work and society.

I dedicate this thesis to the incredible men and women who have raised me, hurt me, nurtured me, scolded me, supported me, disappointed me, inspired me, challenged me, caused me pain and cured me. I am a sum of all of your efforts.

And to *la gente Cubana*, whose hope is eternal and whose resilience is incomparable, another world is probable.

Cuba, qué linda es Cuba.

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Chapter One

Raúl Castro's Great Debate: Worker Involvement During Political and Economic Reform in Contemporary Cuba

Industrial relations research in emerging and planned economies thus far predicts a negative relationship between economic reform and worker voice, attributed mostly to a decline in formal participatory institutions. Moreover, much of the comparative politics literature tends to view economic transition in developing and communist economies as state-driven co-optative or coercive decision-making processes. Consequently, there has been little expectation of meaningful worker voice during periods of market liberalization. However, "one-actor," top-down reform models have often failed to consider limitations on state strategic choices during transition. Hence, in order to facilitate a more robust understanding of the relationship between economic reform and workplace democracy during market liberalization, I look at factors underlying the strategic choices of states, namely the process, if it exists, by which a state negotiates reform with society.

Contributing to literature on worker participation during reform periods in Latin America and under mature communism, I examine this process in Cuba, an emerging economy and single-party state at the cusp of restored political relations with the United States, and in the midst of substantial and ongoing economic reform. Making use of three years of fieldwork conducted over the entire course of the 2010 national debate over the reconstruction of Cuban socialism, I document the extent and depth of Cuba's "vertical institutions of accountability" that claim to hold the state accountable for worker involvement in economic and industrial relations decision-making. Moreover, through an analysis of a complete universe of 313 proposals for national economic reform in Cuba, I also explore the importance of a functioning participatory

reform process to the ability of workers to influence and create reform policy outcomes during market liberalization.

Literature Review and Argument

It is well-established that despite variance in national institutions, global economic pressures have led to a convergence in market liberalization policy and industrial relations change worldwide (Katz and Darbishire 2000; Kuruvilla and Erickson 2002). However, we know much less about the impact of market liberalization on worker participation. Existing research suggests an antagonistic environment for worker voice during periods of market reform. For instance, in Latin America, common market liberalization policies such as flexibilization and decentralization have been associated with a decrease in worker control and worker participation (M. Cook 1999; Pozas 2003). Scholars have observed similar negative consequences on worker participation during market liberalization in China (Li 2004) [1] and Vietnam (Tran 2007). However, despite evidence of a negative relationship between market transformation and worker voice, several scholars have noted increased, rather than decreased, worker participation and worker control during periods of market reform in socialist Cuba (Zimbalist and Eckstein 1987; Peters 2001). Given the substantial, and arguably most comprehensive, market liberalization currently taking place in the Cuban economy, study of the Cuban case is thus both interesting and timely for updating our existing frameworks for understanding the potential for meaningful worker involvement in the face of market liberalization.

Despite our knowledge of general convergence in industrial relations change and market liberalization policy, there are variances across states because different historical events shape

[1] Li found that with respect to contemporary Chinese economic restructuring, during the transition period, economic reformers generally opposed worker participation as an institution, notwithstanding some legislative reform granting certain participatory rights to workers' representative congresses.

countries in nation-specific ways (Collier and Collier 2002). It is not my intention here to review the extensive literature on corporatism and tripartism in Western European countries; however, I do provide some review of worker involvement in national economic reform in the developing world. Specifically, I consider participatory experiments during socialist transitions in Latin American economies (to which Cuba has often been compared), as well as worker involvement in market transitions in communist economies (to which Cuba is routinely compared).[2]

Participatory Experiments in Latin American Transitions

At key moments in political and economic restructuring, several Latin American regimes attempted to implement broad popular participation. However, regardless of ruling elites' support for fundamental shifts toward worker participation, and notwithstanding the implementation of a range of formal participatory institutions, these experiments failed to create functional processes for negotiating the nature, extent or pace of national economic reform with workers. In some cases, regimes introduced participatory institutions to co-opt worker voice rather than empower it, such as in the Peruvian Revolution between 1968 and 1980, where the military regime's "industrial communities" functioned mainly to substitute the state for existing worker organizations (Stephens 1983). But, there are at least two examples of states that sought significant worker involvement in national economic restructuring: Salvador Allende's "social property program" in Chile and Hugo Chávez's "Bolivarian Revolution" in Venezuela.

[2] Consensus on comparative cases for study of Cuban political economy has yet to be reached, with some scholars suggesting a typology based on political regime, which would situate Cuba in a class with certain Asian, African or Middle Eastern states (Armony 2005), while others would place them in "Latin America, Eastern Europe, and the Third World" (Tulchin, Bobea, Prieto and Hernandez 2005).

In 1970s Chile, Salvador Allende's fragile ruling coalition sought the introduction of wide-ranging worker participation in a transition (Espinosa and Zimbalist 1978) from capitalist to socialist economy.[3] Envisioning deep incorporation of worker control over decision-making at multiple levels, the state created the "social property" sector, a nationalization program in which state-expropriated enterprises were required to introduce "Cuban-style" co-management. Although this cooperative decision-making model was firm-based and limited to approximately 10 per cent of the industrial working class (Gaudichaud 2009: 59), the state conceptualized the social property sector as a fundamental shift in industrial relations extending beyond the enterprise into matters of national economic restructuring. Evidence of the regime's desire for what Erickson and Kuruvilla (1998) would consider deep-seated industrial relations transformation is seen in its expansive policy frame:

> The formation of this enlarged social area was justified on several grounds: one, it would be the basis of a new development model oriented toward serving the interests of the great majority of the population by ending the hegemonic control exercised by small groups of domestic and foreign capital; two, it would create the necessary conditions for launching a program of workers' control over decision making in the economy's most important enterprises; three, it would permit social control over a large portion of the total economic surplus which could be rechanneled to the production of essential consumer items and the further development of the country's basic mineral resources; four, it would enable a development strategy with priority to full employment and substantive income redistribution; five, it would reduce external dependence and promote an economic strategy geared to domestic development needs. (Espinosa and Zimbalist 1978: 46).

[3] By 1970, Chile's middle-class private entrepreneurs enjoyed tremendous economic and political power and "retained the capacity to sabotage the government's economic strategy, which…counted on the cooperation of Chile's capitalists to get a stagnant economy moving again" (Winn 1986: 73). However, immediately upon taking office, Allende attempted to lead the Chilean political economy from "dependent capitalism" toward a more democratic socialism (Zapata 1976: 96; Raptis 1974), including an emphasis on worker participation.

In furtherance of such broad worker involvement in matters of political economy, the state introduced mechanisms of popular participation, such as "peoples' assemblies" at national, regional, local and enterprise levels (Raptis 1974; Winn 1986). Designed to establish a grassroots structure for worker voice in matters of public policy and economic reform (Zapata 1976), the actual usage of these assemblies appears to have been limited (Gaudichaud 2009: 69, fn. 1).

Despite the creation of new institutions for the popular participation of workers, elite political fragmentation over the degree of worker involvement and concerns that a swift and wide-ranging economic transformation could destroy Allende's political alliance with the middle class forced the state to compromise both on the scope of worker participation and the pace of national economic reform.[4] Chile's middle class was somewhat fearful of a "Marxist-led revolution," and thus Allende's government promised a "revolution without sacrifice while allaying their fears of a violent or authoritarian revolution in which they might become victims" (Winn 1986: 140). Consequently, due to political fragmentation, Allende scaled down his participatory model upon taking office and favored a slow and controlled reform process—a socialism *within* existing institutions (Winn 1986: 57), placing him at odds with workers at the base (Raptis 1974).[5] Dissatisfied with the pace of reform, workers engaged in direct action and protest in efforts to induce Allende to yield his gradual transformation to their immediate

[4]Allende had campaigned on a promise of increasing worker participation through broad nationalization of industries. Some reformers within the coalition advocated for increased enterprise-level worker control in the already nationalized sectors, with less in sectors of strategic national importance (Zapata 1976). However, this was at odds with the desires of the workers at the base, who overwhelmingly supported quick expansion of the nationalization of industries and comprehensive worker participation.

[5] *See e.g*. Winn 1986. *See also*, Angell (1973: 59) ("Participation in the running of enterprises has not risen so sharply, however, and the left of Allende's coalition would like to see a much more rapid process of mobilization and integration of the working class into controlled economic activity. But Allende has always preferred to procede (sic) cautiously in this area"). Consequently, opponents within and outside of the coalition criticized Allende's negotiated worker participation model as "propaganda with no basis in reality" (Zapata 1976: 90).

economic demands (Compa 1973), including the nationalization of industries and comprehensive worker participation (Raptis 1974). Notwithstanding the state's desire to increase worker involvement through the creation of participatory institutions, the lack of a functional process to negotiate the scope and pace of reform with workers increased regime instability and set the stage for large-scale worker opposition to state reform choices, amplifying political tension and planting the seeds for the ultimate collapse of Allende's socialist transformation and Chile's participatory experiment as a whole. Thus, despite an empathetic regime, the lack of a functional process for incorporating meaningful worker involvement in economic reform resulted in direct challenge to the legitimacy of the state, and a collapse of the participatory experiment from a "revolution from below."[6]

In another significant Latin American participatory experiment some thirty years later, Hugo Chávez began a similar top-down socialist transformation of the Venezuelan economy and industrial relations system in 2005, calling for the popular participation of workers, the "democratization" of the economy and the transfer of power to workers through community-

[6] Winn's (1986) case study of the Yarur cotton mill workers during Chile's socialist reform period aptly illustrates how the lack of a functional process for incorporating worker concerns and opinions over the pace of reform led to worker opposition, rather than support, for the state choices, notwithstanding shared interests. Winn concludes that "[b]y 1971, the [workers] were ready for the structural transformation that Allende had promised them during his campaign—the socialization of their mill—a step that embodied their understanding of the meaning of the Chilean revolution" (Winn 1986: 140). Moreover, workers saw Allende's electoral victory as a mandate to "take revolution into their own hands" through direct action. Frustrated with the slow pace of state implementation and expansion of the social property program, workers occupied the privately-owned Yarur mill and demanded nationalization of the enterprise. Similar worker occupations spread to other private enterprises, exposing cracks in the relationship between the state and workers, as well as raising questions about the legitimacy of the state's reform process and the effectiveness of its participatory structures. As Winn (1986: 7) notes, "the Yarur *toma* and its aftermath underscored the tension between the revolution from below and the revolution from above, the contest between workers and politicians, the clash between leaders and masses and their differing visions of the revolutionary process. It was a tension that was never resolved, and in the end it proved fatal to the Chilean revolution."

based organizations (Azzellini 2009). Despite some political opposition, his state-driven economic reforms led to a sharp increase in the number of firm-level participatory mechanisms[7], mostly in the form of enterprise cooperatives, which employed joint decision-making processes for matters of enterprise production. Cooperative models, including recovered companies, socialist factories and state-supported private enterprises known as *fábricas adentros*,[8] were found in an estimated 30,000 to 60,000 firms (Azzellini 2009), involving more than 14 per cent of the labor force (Harnecker 2009).

Despite a growing number of firms with co-management mechanisms, Venezuelan worker participation lacked structural support, posing challenges to the implementation, efficacy and enforcement of workplace democracy at the enterprise level (Azzellini 2009), as well as in matters of national political economy. For example, the "social production company" program, one of Chávez's key contemporary workplace democracy models (Azzellini 2009), has been hampered by its voluntary nature, lack of clear purpose, and absence of enforceable legislation. For example, one of the expectations of social production companies was the dedication of 10 per cent of net revenue to "social labor," a concept which was never legally defined, leading to a lack of political consensus with respect to its definition and the role of the communities in its application (Harnecker 2009).

[7] Describing Venezuela's 2005 transformation as a 'revolution from above', Piñeiro (2009: 841) notes "[t]he sharp increase in the number of democratic workplaces, particularly cooperative, in Venezuela has been—far more than spontaneous process from below—largely the result of public policy."

[8] Venezuelan cooperative models employed during Chávez's Bolivarian Revolution include recovered companies, socialist factories and *fábricas adentros*. Recovered companies refer to formerly private enterprises that have been occupied by workers or expropriated by the state due to national interest or as a result of bankruptcy. Socialist factories are worker-managed, state-owned enterprises that produce goods for the state. *Fábricas adentros* is a state program in which private enterprises receive low interest loans or government subsidies in exchange for agreement to use some form of co-management, worker participation on executive boards and a share in company profits (Allezzini 2009).

Even when enterprise-based participatory mechanisms have been successful within Venezuelan firms, they have been ineffective in ensuring meaningful worker voice in broader national economic policy formation. In her study of worker participation in fifteen Venezuelan cooperatives, Harnecker (2009) found that the Venezuelan co-management system failed to ingrain meaningful worker involvement outside of the enterprise, leading her to conclude that influential worker voice in national policy formation required the expansion of participatory mechanisms to "spaces of democratic planning where all communities affected by their production can participate."

In sum, the Chilean and Venezuelan experiments with popular participation during state-driven socialist economic restructuring demonstrate that neither state predilection for worker involvement in economic decision-making, nor the implementation of participatory mechanisms are adequate alone to ensure a functional participatory process for negotiating the boundaries of a nation's economic reform with workers. However, these participatory experiments took place in underdeveloped, mixed political economies in Latin America. As socialist Cuba has been frequently compared to other single-party Communist states, I turn now to a review of worker involvement during critical junctures under communism, for which political legitimacy is traditionally rooted in the existence of institutions of popular participation and worker consensus (Burawoy 2001).

Worker Involvement in Mature Communist Transitions

Reform options for single-party regimes during transition in the political economy have been found to be acutely constrained by political, ideological and structural considerations, which have created windows for labor influence on reform outcomes. Indeed, all centrally-

planned economies face economic and developmental stagnation (Berliner 1984; Ashwin 1999) as communism matures,[9] leading many aging communist regimes to respond to economic crisis with state-driven reform and public policy formation (Dimitrov 2013). In a recent volume comparing collapsed and surviving communist regimes, Dimitrov (2013) notes that survivors often approach economic restructuring using two forms of institutional accountability. Horizontal institutions are mechanisms that allow political elites to hold each other responsible across the party and other organizations, while vertical institutions bolster regime legitimacy by providing for accountability from below. More specifically:

> "[Surviving] communist regimes created institutions of vertical accountability, such as elections, administrative litigation, and citizen complaints… to allow citizens to demand some type of explanation or justification from leaders at various levels of the political system for their behavior—and if leaders are unresponsive, the citizens are permitted to sanction them directly (by not electing them or by holding protests against them)." (Dimitrov 2013: 32)

Moreover, scholars have shown that political legitimacy in single-party communist systems requires not only party and state justification of authority, but also the attainment of worker consent for reform choices (Burawoy 2001). Consequently, those single-party states focused on

[9] Several scholars (see e.g. Berliner 1984; Comisso 1997) have devised typologies of different reform models available to states struggling to adapt to economic inertia and ideological challenges as communism matured. Reform options ranged from conservative models with minor policy changes to radical restructuring of communist systems. In looking at reform choices facing Soviet-style economies, Berliner (1984) explains that most states shunned radical restructuring in favor of minor reforms as long as they could keep economic performance above political and incentive thresholds. By contrast, surviving regimes in China, Vietnam, Laos (and arguably more recently Cuba) all implemented substantial, though more gradual, shifts away from planned economies in order to successfully stimulate economic growth. For example, in the case of Vietnam's radical, though gradual (Dimitrov 2013), economic restructuring, the regime was forced to consider domestic and non-domestic policy concerns (Painter 2005) in addition to the impact of globalization on society. Similarly, in China, whose economic reform institutional economists consider an exemplary case of evolutionary economic transition, market reform was "nurtured and protected within the womb of the party state" (Burawoy and Verdery 1999: 5), implemented gradually, with focus directed exclusively on the economy (Gallagher 2002).

sustaining or augmenting political legitimacy more frequently employ vertical institutions of accountability (Dimitrov 2013) to ensure worker support for state policy. But, under traditional communist ideology calling for shared interests between workers, their representatives and the state, unions are responsible for mobilizing worker support for regime policy choices (Evenson 2003; Ashwin 1999). Given the communist union's traditional role in championing the party's vision and state's economic policy, when can we expect workers to engage existing participatory mechanisms and vertical institutions of accountability to meaningfully challenge regime choices?

Seeking to explain labor's response—or lack thereof—to regime choices at critical junctures in communist political economy, several prominent camps of comparative politics scholars focus on the relationship between the state and workers—specifically on how states coerce worker compliance under the traditional communist industrial relations system (Ashwin 1999). Social contract theory, the most common theory of communist worker incorporation, posits that workers are compelled to support state reform choices in exchange for job security and public goods provision. However, opponents of this theory assert that "[t]he trouble with this concept is… [p]olitics is reduced to a simple barter transaction where cars, refrigerators, and sausages are traded for human rights and political liberties. Such a view… implies a vision of society as a perfectly rational actor able to calculate gains and risks and act according to such calculations" (Ekiert 1996: 4). [10]

Alternatively, discursive approach theorists reject communist industrial relations as a rational, straightforward bargain, and focus instead on the use of class discourse in the mobilization of workers. While there is broad agreement that regimes use class discourse to legitimize their political authority, there are differences in the assessment of whether state-

[10] Ashwin (1999) also critiques social contract theory by noting that, although prevalent in the literature, it fails to explain the lack of worker protest during late Soviet economic reform.

controlled class terminology can also be used by workers to oppose regimes and their policies. One faction of scholarship holds the view that the party-state has sole control over the language of class (Hoffman 1994; Seigelbaum and Suny 1994), prohibiting workers from mobilization in opposition to state reform choices. But, others view class discourse as a powerful "double-edged sword" that can likewise be used by workers to assert their collective interests in opposition to the party-state (Jameson 1981; Kuromiya 1988; Kotkin 1995; Rossman 1997; Davies 1997). Thus, the inevitability of communist worker compliance with state market reform choices remains an open question, particularly in cases where workers are well-versed in class ideology and have long-functioning vertical institutions of accountability.

Empirical research of various mature communist regimes confirms the sensitivity of state political legitimacy to the opinions of civil society. For example, in 1980s East Central Europe, where citizens blamed Marxist-Leninist ideology for economic and political stagnation, the legitimacy of the communist elite was successfully challenged (Ekiert 1996). In contrast, communist parties in China and Vietnam, both of which scholars assert were perceived as having much more political legitimacy than their European counterparts (Chan, Kerkvliet and Unger 1999), enjoyed a higher degree of support during key reform periods:

> "[Stronger legitimacy status] provided these two Asian Parties with greater staying power: they not only faced far weaker potential challenges to Party rule than in Poland or ethnically-divided Soviet Union, but also hold a far stronger confidence in their right and capacity to rule than was the case in much of Eastern Europe." (Chan, Kerkvliet and Unger 1999: 6-7)

In sum, although some scholars of communist industrial relations question the power of workers to mobilize against party-state policy choices, others point to empirical evidence suggesting that empowered workers can challenge state-driven reforms within communist systems and ideology. Given that surviving communist regimes tend to create opportunity for

worker voice via the deployment of vertical institutions of accountability during critical junctures, a question that remains is whether workers in such states can use state-conceived participatory mechanisms to do more than simply voice opposition to top-down reform choices. In other words, is it possible for workers to use institutions of accountability to craft their own policy during economic reform? Until now, scholarly examination of the process by which states negotiate reform policy with workers has been understudied (Eikert 1996; Painter 2005), a theoretical and empirical gap that this study aims to fill. Because of its long history of national reform negotiation between state elites and civil society over fundamental economic restructuring, the Cuban case is ideal for studying worker ability to impact market reform policy through participatory institutions and supporting mechanisms.

Reform Negotiation in the Cuban Political Economy

Before the 1959 revolution, Cuban capitalism had been more developed than any other Caribbean or Latin American country, as well as that of the Soviet Union (Yaffe 2009). However, upon triumph, the revolutionary leaders immediately eliminated the capitalist market economy through agrarian reform and the expropriation of foreign-owned property and private enterprises (Alexander 2002; Mesa-Lago 2004). Under the intensifying Marxist-Leninist guidance of Ché Guevara (Yaffe 2009), Cuba then sought a socialist transformation of the economy along with the creation of working class consciousness (Guevara 1967). Specifically, Guevara developed a centralized system of economic management, with the goal of increasing productivity while simultaneously transferring production decision-making to worker control at the enterprise level (Yaffe 2009). Guevara's system, known as the Budget Finance System ("BFS"), used both material and moral incentives to establish productivity and efficiency as the obligation and social duty of the new Cuban worker.

Although Guevara enjoyed popular support horizontally across the political elite and vertically from workers at the base, his ideas about economic management were strongly debated throughout Cuban society. These differences in public opinion over whether Guevara's BFS system or a more Soviet-style system was appropriate for Cuban socialism have been recorded in history as "The Great Debate of 1963-1965" (Pérez-Stable 1974). The Great Debate has been described as a process of national discussion within Cuba as to the best manner of managing a socialist political economy. For example, Silverman (1971) describes the Great Debate of 1963-1965 as a debate between those, like Guevara, who wanted to create institutions to ensure the development of a socialist consciousness in workers through an emphasis on moral incentives, and the "economic rationalists" who favored the Soviet-model of heavy material incentives in building Cuban socialism.

Since that time, great debates have reoccurred at moments of political and economic importance. For example, Katherine Gordy (2006) notes that a national debate reemerged in the 1970s with respect to the state's 10-million ton sugar drive, later when implementing the Soviet economic model, and again in the late 80s concerning the state's Rectification of Errors and Negative Tendencies campaign. Consequently, from Guevara's Great Debate of 1963-1965 to what I refer to as Raúl's Great Debate of 2010-2011, a pattern of national economic policy oscillation has emerged. Table 1.1 shows the periods of Cuban economic reform since Cuba codified its socialist political economy in its 1976 constitution.

The table makes evident substantial state policy shifts toward and away from market liberalization—an economic policy oscillation that Yaffe (2009) has coined the "Guevarista Pendulum." Although Yaffe points to state-held mass consultations as the state's practice of allowing workers to "contribute to a new Great Debate about Cuba's socioeconomic problems,"

the policy alternation associated with the "Guevarista Pendulum" has been framed in the literature mostly as the result of state-initiated reform choices, leaving unclear to what extent, and how, worker opinion actually factored into policy formation during key reform periods.

Table 1.1: *Economic Policy Alternation in Cuba 1976-Present*

Period	Type of Reform[11]	Key Reform Policies
Sovietization (1976-1985)	Market Liberalization	• Legalization of peasant markets • Self-employment • Foreign investment • Decentralization
Rectification of Errors and Negative Tendencies (1986-1990)	Market Retraction	• Recentralization of major economic decision-making • Closing of peasant markets • Restrictions on private and self-employed sectors • Prohibition on most forms of foreign direct investment
Special Period in the Time of Peace: 1990-2005[12]	Market Liberalization	• "Dollarization" (Legalization of the U.S. dollar) • Self-employment • Expansion of foreign investment • Agricultural worker cooperatives • Decentralization • Increase in internal and external flexibilization
Battle of Ideas: 2005-2010[13]	Market Retraction	• Increased state investment in infrastructure and social programs • Reduction in joint ventures • Recentralization of state enterprise economic decision-making

[11] There is some variance among scholars as to the start and end dates of these well-described periods of Cuban political economy. The instant table relies heavily on Helen Yaffe's (2009) description of the "Guevara Pendulum," in which she convincingly sets forth revolutionary Cuba's alternating economic policy. I note that my reform periods do not directly match Yaffe's, particularly in that she characterizes the policy alternation as swings "away" and "towards" Ché Guevara's BFS economic system, while I describe them as periods of market liberalization and market retraction, respectively.

[12] It is generally accepted that the Special Period commenced in 1990, though whether the Special Period has ended is the subject of considerable debate.

[13] The Battle of Ideas is often thought to have commenced in 2005 (Yaffe 2009); however, market retraction arguably started as early as 2002.

Table 1.1 (Continued)

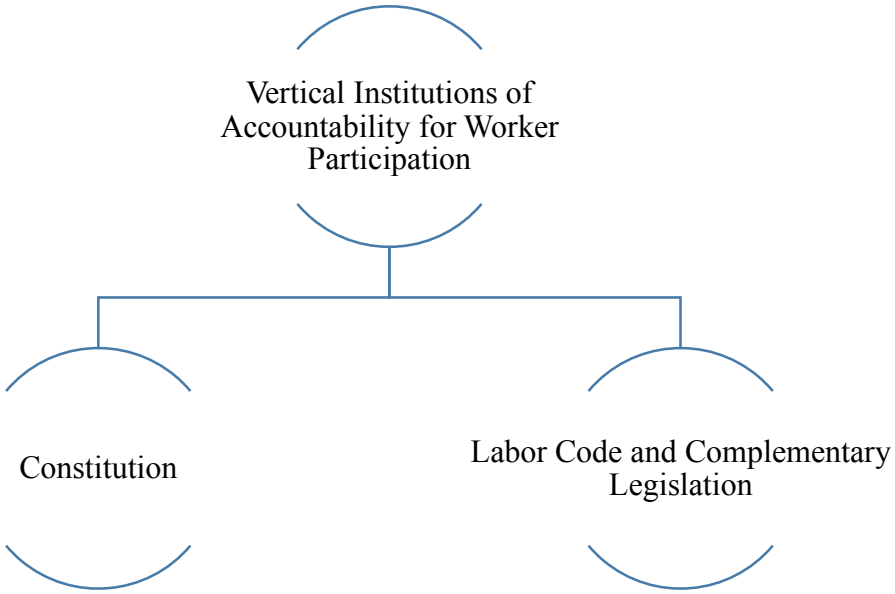
"Vietnamese Solution": 2010-Present[14]	Market Liberalization	• Labor reorientation • Decentralization • Increased foreign investment • Increased private enterprise and self-employment • Subordinated labor

Worker Involvement and the Cuban Economic Reform Process

Under the ideological guidance of the Cuban Communist Party, the Cuban socialist state, like most Gramscian production systems, is responsible for facilitating workplace democracy and behaving legitimately through socially-accepted institutions (Lipset 1960). Structurally, Cuban worker participation is legally mandated, requiring worker involvement, as well as worker consensus, before the implementation[15] of any labor legislation at the enterprise or national level (Evenson 2003; Ludlam 2009). Accordingly, workers' rights to participate in firm-level and national decision-making are supported through two main institutions of vertical accountability: the 1976 Cuban constitution (as amended), and the labor code and its complementary legislation (Martínez-Navarro 2009). Figure 1.1 shows available vertical institutions of accountability for Cuban workers to express their opinions on state-initiated economic and labor law reform.

[14] Some commentators have referred to contemporary Cuban restructuring as the "Vietnamese Solution," apparently referring to economic reform absent political change (Castañeda 2008).
[15] Article 75(b) of the constitution requires submission of proposed legislative changes to the Cuban people for consultation (Republic of Cuba 2002).

Figure 1.1: *Vertical Institutions of Accountability for Worker Involvement in Cuba*



Worker involvement is operationalized under these vertical institutions of accountability via well-developed participatory mechanisms. Although under-researched, at least one Cuban scholar has suggested that Cuban participatory mechanisms are unmatched by Eastern European socialist countries and most of the Western hemisphere (Evenson 2003). The most significant formal participatory mechanisms include collective bargaining,[16] enterprise-based worker assemblies, and national mass consultations. Collective bargaining takes place largely at the enterprise level, while workers' assemblies are used for decision-making at both the enterprise and national level. Mass consultations, the participatory instruments that are the focus of this study, are macro-level mechanisms that facilitate the discussion between the state and workers regarding issues of national import, including political, economic and industrial relations reform.

[16] Collective bargaining rights are codified under complementary legislation to the labor code, which requires every workplace to have a collective agreement. The legislation establishes broad subjects for collective bargaining, including the direction and future of the enterprise, promotion and hiring procedures, work schedules, incentive distribution, and even methods for tip redistribution (Martínez-Navarro 2009).

These consultations between the Cuban government and worker-citizens 16 years and older occur in worker assemblies[17] held at their places of employment (Fuller 1992), schools and community organization centers (Ludlam 2009).

Article 16 of the Cuban constitution restricts one-actor economic policy formation by declaring that workers are to play an "active, conscious" role in the preparation and implementation of production and development plans. Moreover, Article 84 requires the leaders of the National Assembly, [18] to "hear [the people's] proposals, suggestions and criticism," "explain the policy of the State to them," and "render an account of the [state's] performance" (Republic of Cuba 2002). Thus, as a vertical institution of accountability, the national constitution provides workers with an affirmative right to voice their opinions and concerns regarding economic policy formation, as well as the right to a specific accounting from the state as to its performance. If the state does not ensure the exercise of workers' participatory rights,

[17] Worker assemblies serve dual purposes. For enterprise concerns, workers participate in monthly meetings held at their worksites during which enterprise managers provide business reports to workers, who are then allowed to consult on productivity, raise workplace complaints and recommend courses of action (Evenson 2003). For issues of national importance, workers are called together in their worker assemblies to engage in debate with the state over issues of wide concern (Fuller 1992).

[18] Article 69 describes the National Assembly as the "supreme body of state power" that "represents and expresses the sovereign will of all the people" (Republic of Cuba 2002) and holds the power to discuss and approve the national economic plan. Although there is no direct election of the President of the Republic of Cuba, Article 74 provides for his or her indirect election by the people through the direct election of members of the National Assembly, who then elect the president (Central Intelligence Agency 2010). Popular participation was expanded during the Special Period through a 1992 constitutional amendment that permitted citizens to directly elect the National and Provincial Assemblies (Evenson 2003). *See also*, Articles 71 and 135 of the constitution (Republic of Cuba 2002).

Article 54 grants workers and their mass organizations the right to sanction them through protest.[19]

In addition to granting direct participation rights, the 1976 Cuban constitution accords legislative authority to certain officially-recognized workers' mass organizations, including the central trade union federation (the "CTC"),[20] the national women's federation (the "FMC")[21] and the young communists.[22] Each of these mass organizations has the constitutional right to propose

[19] Article 54 states: "The rights of assembly, demonstration and association are exercised by workers, both manual and intellectual; peasants; women; students; and other sectors of the working people, [rights] to which they have the necessary ability (*los medios necesarios*) to exercise. The social and mass organizations have all the facilities they need to carry out those activities in which the members have full freedom of speech and opinion based on the unlimited right of initiative and criticism" (Republic of Cuba 2002).

[20] In a panel interview with the author, a Director of the CTC International explained that the CTC, the only officially-recognized union federation in Cuba, has a union density of approximately 95 per cent of the active workforce, with one union leader for every four workers. There are more than 5,000 union leaders at the national level of the CTC, with 35 per cent of those being described as youth leadership. Adamant that the press incorrectly labels them a "mouth of the Cuban government," union officials say they are autonomous from the state and the party. There is no dues deduction and dues amount to approximately 1 per cent of a worker's salary. Each union leader is elected by the base and works directly with workers in the workforce. The union represents all workers in Cuba, regardless of membership. In the Cuban system, enterprise management, as well as elected parliament leaders, are affiliated with the union (Panel Interview at the Lázaro Peña National Trade Union University on September 29, 2010).

[21] In an interview conducted by the author, FMC attorney Isabel Vidal explained that the FMC, founded in 1960, is an autonomous organization representing approximately 4 million women of all ages. As a constitutionally-recognized mass organization, the FMC makes proposals and offers critiques to the National Assembly, which has a standing commission that creates laws with respect to health, reproduction and family issues of working women. It is organized into multidisciplinary teams of experts from all fields, which it employs to respond to women's concerns. (Panel interview at the Lázaro Peña National Trade Union University on September 22, 2010).

[22] Article 6 of the constitution describes the young communists as "an advance organization of the Cuba youth" that has as "its preeminent function… promoting the active participation of the young masses in the tasks of socialist construction, and of suitably training the youth as conscious citizens, capable of assuming greater responsibilities each day for the benefits of our society" (Republic of Cuba 2002).

reform[23] through their elected representatives, participate directly in the decision-making bodies at all levels of governance, and approve any legislative proposals affecting workers (Ludlam 2009).[24]

Moreover, the 1985 labor code establishes that any proposed terms to a collective agreement may not be implemented, and have no legal force, unless and until approved by workers in their enterprise assemblies, with at least 75 per cent attendance (Ludlam 2009). Thus, the state is legally required to submit any proposed change in labor regulations to the official trade unions for worker debate before enactment (Evenson 2003), providing another source of state accountability for worker involvement in decision-making.

In sum, existing Cuban studies literature describes an industrial relations system in which workers are equipped with well-codified vertical institutions of accountability that purport to guarantee the participatory rights of workers in the preparation and implementation of national economic and labor relations reform. However, if and how Cuban workers actually employ these institutions to negotiate reform with the state has been particularly understudied due to lack of information regarding the frequency and usage of the mass consultation as a participatory mechanism. Hence, in this article I closely examine the most recent great debate under Raúl Castro to establish that Cuba has, and employs, vertical institutions of accountability during reform periods, and that Cuban workers use those institutions not only for the traditional purposes of supporting or challenging regime reform choices, but also to influence reform from below through worker-initiated policy of their own creation. In doing so, I reveal the Cuban

[23] Article 88(d) grants the CTC and other national offices of mass organizations the responsibility of proposing laws (Republic of Cuba 2002).
[24] Moreover, under Article 88(g), citizens appear to have the authority to propose laws, provided "an indispensable prerequisite that the proposal be made by at least 10,000 citizens who are eligible to vote (Republic of Cuba 2002).

reform process as a contrary case of meaningful worker involvement in national economic policy formation during market liberalization.

Methodology

Data for this case study was amassed over approximately three years of field work from fall 2009 through spring 2012, providing for observation of the complete mass consultation process, from the state's initial September 2010 announcement through the party's May 2011 publication of results. Throughout this period, the author was embedded in Cuban society, observing and interviewing Cuban workers, union officials and community leaders throughout the island—including in Havana, Matanzas, Pinar del Rio, Trinidad, Santiago de Cuba and Baracoa. To understand Cuba's reform process, the extent and depth of its participatory institutions and its vertical institutions of accountability, several qualitative methods were employed, including participant observation, one-on-one and panel interviewing and content analysis.

Participant Observation

To achieve a more robust understanding of Cuban political economy and industrial relations, I enrolled in the Lázaro Peña National Trade Union University, located in Havana province. Only the 23rd U.S. citizen to have enrolled in the university in its 45-year history, between September through November 2010 I completed courses focusing on Cuban participatory democracy and labor movement theory, including instruction from over 17 professors of history, economics, law and political science. Matriculation provided access to workers, union leaders, academics and labor lawyers, through whose eyes I was able to understand the national reform process as it was naturally occurring.

Over the course of the reform process, I observed both formal and informal worker participation in enterprises, unions, educational facilities and community centers. I conducted 17 worksite visits, during which I held meetings with various worker mass organizations, including the national Cuban trade union federation (the "CTC"), the national federation of Cuban women (the "FMC"), and the community-based national organization, Committee for Defense of the Revolution (CDR). In all, I met with 11 of 19 existing trade unions organized under the umbrella of the CTC (Table 1.2) at the municipal, provincial, national and international levels. In addition, I participated in educational exchanges with several important Cuban agencies and organizations, including the World Union Federation (FSM), the Union of Cuban Jurists (UNJC), the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the People (ICAP) and the Office of the City Historian in both Havana and Baracoa.

Table 1.2: *National Trade Unions of Cuba*

National Trade Unions of Cuba (2010-2012)	
National Union of Transportation Workers (*Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores del Transporte*)	National Union of Construction Workers (*Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores de la Construcción)*
National Union of Agricultural and Forestry Workers (*Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores Agropecuarlos y Forestales*)	National Union of Light Industry Workers (*Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores de la Industria Ligera*)
National Union of Chemical, Mining and Energy Workers (*Sindicato National de Trabajadores de las Inudstrias Química, la Minería y la Energética*)	National Union of Civil Defense Workers (*Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores Civiles de la Defensa*)
Union of Commercial, Gastronomical and Service Workers (*Sindicato de Trabajadores del Comercio, de la Gastronomía y los Servicios*)	National Union of Communications, Information and Electronics Workers (*Sindicato National de Trabajadores de Comunicación, Informática y Electrónica*)
National Union of Cultural Workers (*Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores del la Cultura*)	National Union of Education, Science and Sports Workers (*Sindicato National de Trabajadores de la Educacion, Ciencia y El Deporte*)

Table 1.2 (Continued)

National Union of Food Workers (*Sindicato National de Trabajadores de Alimentación*)	National Union of Health Workers (*Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores de la Salud*)
National Union of Hotel and Tourism Workers (*Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores de la Hotelería y Turismo*)	National Union of Merchant Marine, Port and Fishing Workers (*Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores de Marina Mercante, Puertas y Pesca*)
National Union of Metal and Electronic Workers (*Sindicato de Trabajadores Metalúrgicos y Electrónicos*)	National Union of Public Administration Workers (*Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores de la Administración Púbica*)
National Union of Science Workers (*Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores de las Ciencias*)	National Union of Sugar Workers (*Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores Azucareros*)
National Union of Tobacco Workers (*Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores Tobacoleros*)	

In addition to formal labor education at the trade union university, I also participated in international labor law conferences held in Havana, Cuba in 2010, 2011 and 2012, which brought labor lawyers and leaders from around the Americas to Havana to discuss a range of issues facing Cuban workers in the context of global and domestic market liberalization. As an attendee and participant, I was able to observe and participate in discussions with and between Cuban elites over the range of reform options and the potential impact on workers, trade unions and Cuban socialism.

Interviews

I conducted multiple one-on-one interviews with over 36 Cuban workers employed in the formal and informal private sector (including owners of private rooms for rent, street vendors, taxi drivers, unlicensed graphic and tattoo artists, DJs, interpreters and translators), tourist sector (including tour guides, service workers in state and tourist hotels, as well as workers engaged in

illegal prostitution) and public sector (including teachers, doctors, lawyers, construction workers and public administration workers). Additionally, I conducted 12 panel discussions with scholars, union leaders, workers, labor lawyers and members of parliament assembled for the specific purpose of discussing the Cuban reform process. All interviews employed open-ended questions on topics covering political economy and industrial relations systems, reform process, state and workers, race in Cuba, self-employment as a right, labor education, labor restructuring, participatory democracy, labor law, worker participation, consensus, role of the communist party, non-state employment, constitutional law, and grievance and dispute resolution. Overall, this case study reflects over 80 hours of interviews.

Content Analysis

Two major, publicly-available documents published by the Cuban Communist Party were analyzed for this study. Published on November 9, 2010, the *Lineamientos de la Política Económica y Social del Partido y La Revolución* represents the complete universe of 291 initial state reform proposals. The second document, *Información sobre el resultado del Debate de los Lineamientos de la Política Económica y Social del Partido y la Revolución*, published in May 2011, contains summary worker participation statistics, as well as the complete universe of the 313 adopted reforms, including state rationale for changes in response worker opinions. In addition to the official party data, I also analyzed Raúl Castro's April 16, 2011 report to the 6th Party Congress, which provided additional state justification for reform choices. Finally, to aid in understanding links between economic reform and labor law, I reviewed an exhaustive compilation of Cuban labor legislation through May 2011.

Results

In this section I show that the Cuban state maintains and employs vertical institutions of accountability that require the state to solicit and respond to worker concerns and opinions on national economic reform policy, and to provide justification for state reform choices. I also demonstrate that through use of these vertical institutions of accountability, workers are able to employ participatory mechanisms not only challenge state reform choices, but to initiate their own reform proposals. I begin by presenting qualitative data on Cuban perceptions of the existence and functionality of the state-provided participatory mechanisms. I then present quantitative evidence with respect to the usage of vertical institutions of accountability during national economic policy formation, and the nature and extent of worker influence on the final reform package.

Cuba Maintains Vertical Institutions of Accountability for Worker Involvement

Interviews with labor lawyers, mass organization leaders, academics and workers make clear that Cuban ideology equates the participatory reform process and its institutions with Cuban socialist democracy broadly. For example, Cuban lawyers often explicitly link the constitutional right to worker participation to Cuban democracy, with one lawyer explaining that "labor rights have a constitutional character. Article 7 provides for participation." Another set forth the role of workers in the Cuban socialist transformation, as well as restrictions on state implementation of reform policy:

> "We can't establish laws just with a pencil. There is a democracy here. The working people are the engine of the revolution."

Likewise, leaders of mass organizations also saw worker participation as an essential democratic institution of accountability and stressed the importance of a functional process to legitimate, worker-inclusive reform negotiation in Cuba:

> "What is important is that it is a process—a democratic process. The fundamental differences in the Cuban model [compared to capitalist models] include: popular consultation, worker participation, political will of the governing elite, social security for workers and the level of information [made available to workers]."

> "One mission of the union is the preparation of workers for political participation. Discussions occur in every work collective, where workers have the opportunity to discuss the political economic plan. There are no laws passed without consultation with workers. Participation is democracy. Without an assembly [of workers], there is no union."

Furthermore, academics stressed the historical importance of participatory democracy to the survival of the revolutionary regime and Cuban socialism:

> "The peculiarities of Cuba are always a concern. It's authentic—different from the rest of the world—and it has been on the walk to socialism for over 50 years. The uniqueness of the system is that it is a participatory democracy, whereas most of the rest of the world is representative."

> "The Cuban political economy is in a process of modification. During the Special Period, the Cuban people maintained unity. This was helped by the consultation with the people. The reordering process requires consensus."

> "These guidelines [referencing a copy of the state's initial proposals in her hand] are going to be discussed in every worker center and community in preparation for the 6th Communist Party Congress. I will be part of the [worker] assembly process. Democratic participation means that Cuba has a participatory mechanism for every political economic decision."

Even those workers skeptical of whether *any* policy reforms—negotiated with the people or not—could improve Cuba's economic condition acknowledged that the participatory process exists and is employed:

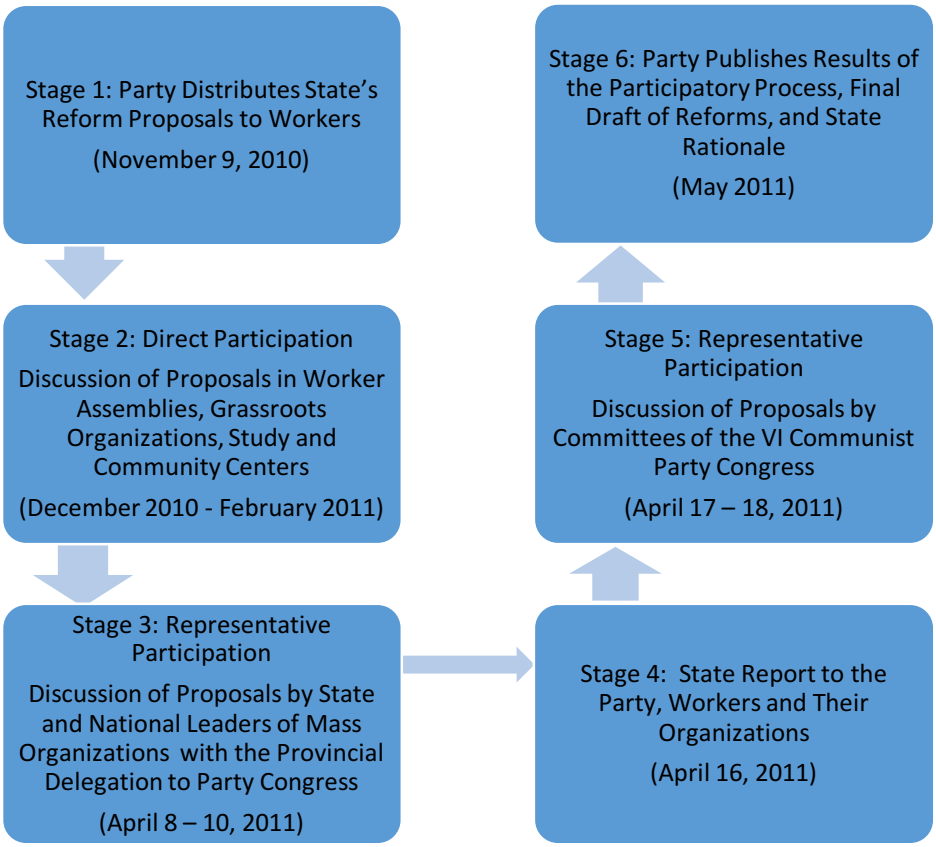
> "The model does allow workers to participate, and it requires officials to listen to worker complaints and suggestions. However, it doesn't function [to actually make conditions better] for the same reason nothing works in Cuba—lack of resources. Workers are frustrated. We have a process on paper, and in practice, but none of our complaints are acted upon. In my office there is only cold water at lunch because it has to be put in a canister to cool and there are limited amounts of canisters. We are also short of paper. What can the union do? They will say, 'There is no canister. There is no paper.' Despite this, I do believe the leaders *want* to help. The process works better when the economy is better."

Regardless of whether Cuba's lack of resources will ultimately condemn its reform attempt to failure, interviews with Cuban civil society support claims that Cuban workers are aware of the existence of vertical institutions of accountability and believe that they are available in anticipation of economic restructuring. In the following paragraphs, I lay out the specific empirical data on the 2010-2011 mass consultation, which establishes the extent and depth of the participatory reform process, as well as the worker involvement in final reform outcomes. Meaningful worker involvement occurred in two forms: worker response to state-initiated proposals and worker-initiated policy creation.

Worker Influence: State-Initiated Proposals

Figure 1.2 shows what I have identified as the six stages of the Cuban reform negotiation process. Stages 1 and 2, respectively, provide workers with notice of the state's initial reform proposals and the opportunity for direct expression of worker doubts, concerns and opinion. Stages 3 and 5 provide for representative participation in reform negotiation conducted by worker-elected representatives of parliament and worker mass organizations. Finally, Stages 4 and 6 meet the state's constitutional obligation to provide workers with explanation and justification for state policy.

Figure 1.2: *Stages of the Cuban Reform Process*



On September 24, 2010, President Raúl Castro informed the Cuban people that the survival of Cuban socialism required a more efficient socialist economy (Granma 2010) and a comprehensive overhaul of existing political, social and economic systems.[25] The sole official

[25] Cuba has spent over fifty years in economic and political isolation from the United States, under whose economic blockade it has been severely limited in global market participation. At the time of the state's reform announcement, Cuba had a population of roughly 11.5 million and a GDP estimated at $111.1 billion USD. [Source: U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2001rank.html?countryName=Cuba&countryCode=cu&regionCode=ca&rank+64#cu (Accessed on July 14, 2010)]. Its largest industry and most important sector was—and continues to be—tourism, officially employing approximately 100,000 workers of a labor force estimated at 5 million, with an unknown number assumed to be working in the informal sectors surrounding the industry (EIU 2008). Other important economic sectors include agriculture (4.3 percent of GDP; 20 percent of labor force), industry (21.6 percent of GDP; 19.4 percent of labor force) and services (74 percent of GDP; 60.6 percent of labor force). Moreover, at the close of

central trade union federation ("CTC") simultaneously notified workers via its newspaper, *Trabajadores*, that the state was in the process of developing a set of "necessary and urgent changes to economy and society," with an end toward achieving a more efficient labor process (Central de Trabajadores de Cuba 2010). The state subsequently distributed an initial reform package consisting of 291 individual proposals. Although some proposals were uniquely Cuban, such as the elimination of the extremely popular state-provided ration book for subsidized basic goods, most were policies commonly associated with market liberalization, including the decentralization of firm decision-making, increased labor market flexibilization, increased foreign investment and the expansion of private enterprise, including large increases in the self-employed sector.[26] Table 1.3 breaks down the state's initial reform proposals by twelve state-defined socio-economic policy categories. On the whole, the state's initial proposals indicated a significant shift of its centralized socialist economy toward a more liberalized mixed economy.

Table 1.3: State Reform Proposals by Policy Category

291 Initial State Reform Proposals by Socio-Political Economy Category (Source: *Lineamientos,* November 9, 2010)	
Economic Management Model (38)	Macroeconomic Policy (25)
External Economic Policy (45)	Investment Policy (13)

2009, the Cuban unemployment rate was estimated at 1.7 percent, the 8th lowest in the world, with approximately 78 per cent of the labor force employed by the state and 22 per cent formally employed in the underdeveloped non-state sector [Source: U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cu.html (Accessed September 5, 2010)].

[26] To give an idea of the unprecedented scope of the state's market reform proposals, included in its reform package was the "reorientation" of 1.2 million of its estimated 5 million active workers (20 per cent of the state-employed workforce) to non-state employment (Granma 2010), with 500,000 state workers to be reassigned to the non-state sector in the first fiscal quarter of 2011 (Central de Trabajadores de Cuba 2010).

Table 1.3 (Continued)

Science, Technology and Innovation (7)	Social Policy (37)
Agro-Industrial Policy (31)	Industrial and Energy Policy (38)
Tourism Policy (14)	Transportation Policy (19)
Construction, Housing and Hydraulic Resources Policy (15)	Trade Policy (9)

Party participatory data shows that during Stage 2, from December 2010 through February 2011, the state held 163,079 meetings with workers, which were attended by 8,913,838 total participants[27] in worker assemblies, universities and community centers at the local level. Workers submitted over 3 million "interventions," which the state grouped into 781,644 worker opinions. Of those, the state included more than 395,000 in the reformulation of its proposals in Stage 3, for further discussion by elected leaders of parliament, worker mass organizations and party officials as part of a provincial delegation.

The party participatory data further breaks down the 395,000 included worker opinions accordingly: "210,000 corresponded to implementation actions; more than 65,000 were doubts or preoccupations that will be clarified through the outreach programs; another 62,000 opinions referred to topics that were already included in different Guidelines and approximately 50,000 were not accepted and will continue to be studied in subsequent stages." (Communist Party of Cuba 2011: 3)

[27] During my field work I frequently watched some of these meetings which were broadcast and covered on state television, as well as in the official Party, union and young communist newspapers.

Table 1.4 shows that at the conclusion of the Stage 2 direct consultation with workers at the base, only 94 of the state's original 291 proposals (32 per cent) escaped modification, meaning that 68 per cent of the state's initial reform package was influenced in some manner by the direct participation of workers. As will be discussed in greater detail later in this section, it is even more notable that of the 36 new proposals generated during Stage 2 of the reform process, 33 of those originated not from the state but from workers themselves, amounting to over 10 per cent of the total reform package.

Table 1.4: *Impact of Worker Response on State-Initiated Proposals at Stage 2*

	Total	**%**
Original State Proposals	291	100
Remain Unchanged	94	32
Modified or Integrated with Others	197	68
Modified	181	62
Integrated with Others	16	6
New Proposals Included	36	
Total Proposals After Stage 2	**311**	

After the direct debate with workers at the base over the state's initial reform proposals, the resulting worker opinions were collected, consolidated and sent up to the provincial level for further debate and analysis by worker-elected members of the parliament and official mass organizations, including the union. In a March 2011 interview about this stage of the reform process, a labor lawyer for the CTC international explained:

> "Concerns of workers were taken in the [assembly] meetings that were happening in the winter, and those have been forwarded to the top leaders. The [reformed] proposals will be debated at the Party Congress."

Table 1.5 shows the number of proposals modified by worker-representatives during Stage 3. As the data shows, worker opinions from the base still weighed heavily at the conclusion of the provincial debate, as 72 per cent of proposals that emanated from the direct participation stage remained unchanged, and only 2 new proposals were generated.

Table 1.5: *Impact of Formal Representative Participation After Stage 5*

	Total	**%**
Proposals from Stage 2 (Direct Participation)	311	100
Remain Unchanged	225	72
Modified or Integrated with Others	86	28
New Proposals Included	2	
Total Proposals After Stage 5	**313**	

In what I have identified as Stage 4 of the reform process, the state responds directly to worker input from the base. Specifically, in his April 16, 2011 Central Report to the 6th Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba, which was broadcast live on state television to Cuban households, President Raúl Castro summarizes more explicitly the role of "top leaders" in the mass consultation process and outlines next steps in the 'great debate' process:

> "The Draft Guidelines were reformulated and then submitted to analysis by both the Political Bureau and the Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers, on March 19 and 20, respectively, with the participation of the Secretariat of the Party's Central Committee and the top leaders of the Central Trade Union (CTC), the Young Communist League (UJC) and the other mass organizations, approved at that level—also as a draft—and then delivered to you for its examination during three days in every provincial delegation to the Congress and for its discussion at the five commissions of this party meeting for its subsequent approval."

Some evidence of the actual impact of worker opinion on state reform outcomes can be gleaned from Raúl Castro's devotion of a considerable part of his Stage 4 report to calming fears and further justifying the state's need for certain reforms:

> "Although worker opinion varied greatly, the state must move forward, though gradually, with the 'indispensable measure' of reorganization of the social welfare system and the elimination of the ration book policy. It is not meant to be a shock therapy, as the state will never abandon those in need. The state understands the historical and economic necessity of the ration book policy, but there are some absurdities in the system. Further, the egalitarian nature of the program contradicts the 'each according to his effort' principle of Socialism. Correcting those economic inefficiencies will reduce hoarding and illegal activity, and will help the state direct its resources more efficiently to those in need." (Castro 2011)

He went on to describe the existing ration book policy as "an intolerable" economic burden, and then provided details on what he meant by traditional absurdities in the ration book policy "such as allocating a quota of coffee to the newborn" and supplying everyone, even non-smokers, with cigarettes (Castro 2011). Hence, it is clear from the state's post-consultation attempt at legitimizing its reform policy, as well as the state's publicized rational for the substantive change in content, that worker response to the state's desire to eliminate a popular social good influenced the state to offer further justification for its reform proposal, and potentially impacted the nature and pace of that particular reform.

In addition to influencing state-initiated reform proposals directly using the mass consultation mechanism in Stage 2, there is evidence that workers also used their mass organization representatives to put pressure on state reform choices in subsequent stages. Specifically, Guideline 159 and related state proposals sought the immediate reorientation of 20 per cent of the state sector workers to the non-state sector. However, workers expressed much concern as to the scope, as well as the procedures for determining which workers would be

deemed "*disponible*," or "available" for job elimination. In an interview with CTC International and provincial union leaders in Matanzas province, a top union director acknowledged that worker complaints to the union at the enterprise and higher levels had led the union to intervene and propose that the state re-evaluate the nature and pace of its reform proposal:

> "Workers were consulted on the need for change before the labor restructuring process began. The national rollout of the process began on January 4, 2011. The original plan was to do it in stages, starting with 5 different state entities in the first stage [of the labor restructuring implementation]. The process is going to be permanently monitored by the trade union and the state. There have been some problems with implementation, and as a result the process is being rescheduled. By original design, it would have been a one-year process, but now the delay could mean the entire [downsizing of the state sector] will take up to 5 years. In cases where the process was not implemented correctly, the parties have to return to a place where they can restore legality. The union expects a lot of workers to use the [enterprise-based grievance boards] in the workplace. I've already witnessed workers crying throughout the process."

Acknowledging the opposition of workers and their mass organizations to implementation of the union-backed reform, Raúl Castro again addressed worker fears directly in his Stage 4 report on the reform process. Much like his defense and explanation of the state's ration book elimination proposal, Castro attempted to legitimize the state's need for reform by promising workers that the process would be gradual with a pace now determined by "[the state's] capacity to create the necessary conditions for its full implementation" (Castro 2011).

Close examination of worker opinions and responses to the state's initial reform package demonstrates the nature and extent of worker challenges to individual state reform proposals. Appendix A[28] shows the 25 reform proposals that reaped the most worker opinions, arranged in order of total number of aggregate worker opinions. Guideline 162, the state proposal to

[28] The table in Appendix A is presented much as it was published by the Party at the conclusion of the mass consultation process. Professional English translation of *Información sobre el Resultado del Debate de los Lineamientos de la Política Económica y Social del Partido y la Revolución* (Communist Party of Cuba 2011) is available from the author.

eliminate the ration book for basic public goods, triggered the greatest number of worker opinions. Specifically, just short of 55,000 workers across the country raised concerns as to the nature, scope and pace of the elimination of the popular revolutionary provision. The state's original proposal had boldly sought to eliminate the ration book, without specifying a pace for implementation. However, after direct consultation with workers at the base at Stage 2 and their representatives at Stage 3 and 5, the final proposal contained language restricting the state to a gradual pace of elimination of the long-standing social welfare program.

Because the party's participation data not only delineates the change in language and content from the original proposal to its adopted form, but also provides both the state rationale and the total number of worker opinions generated for each of the final 313 individual proposals, it is possible to divine the extent of worker response to each of the original regime choices. Hence, with respect to Guideline 162, Appendix A shows that the state's proposal was amended to include the new restrictive language directly in response to 54,979 "concerns" expressed by workers across the country.

The state's proposal to eliminate the ration book was not the only hotly-debated reform. Appendix A shows other state proposals which generated major response from workers during the mass consultation, including Guideline 142 seeking increased efficiency of state health service agencies. In response to almost 17,000 worker opinions, that reform was amended to explicitly state that the quality of state health services would be increased to "achieve satisfaction of the population and improve the working conditions" of healthcare workers. Similarly, with respect to Guideline 133, the state originally proposed the resizing of teaching centers and flexibilization of the work force. Based on 13,126 worker comments, Guideline 133 was amended to require "improvement of teachers [and] enhancement and attention to workers in the

sector." A state proposal to promote national tourism in Guideline 244 was altered, in response to 11,000 worker opinions, to require the state to also prioritize outbound tourism for Cuban nationals. Yet another well-contested reform was Guideline 278, the state's proposal to add flexibility to its housing policy. In response to 10,942 worker opinions, the proposal was amended to provide the right of Cubans to buy and sell houses privately, and to enable other forms of property transmission.

Worker Influence: Worker-Initiated Proposals

As noted earlier, 68 per cent of the state's initial proposals were modified by workers in some way during direct participation at Stage 2 of the reform process. A close examination of the complete universe of the final 313 adopted reforms shows that workers not only meaningfully influenced state-initiated proposals, but also formed their own policy from below. Specifically, the data shows that 12 of the 25 proposals (48 per cent) garnering the most worker opinions were actually new guidelines created by workers themselves. In fact, 33 of 36 total new guidelines (92 per cent) were initiated from worker opinion via direct participation at the base during the mass consultation. Worker-crafted proposals covered a wide range of topics, with proposals made in 9 of the 12 policy categories of the Cuban political economy (Table 1.3). Table 1.6 breaks down the 33 worker-created proposals by policy category and aggregate worker opinions.[29]

[29] All 33 of these proposals were approved at subsequent stages of the reform process, and are now part of the final reform package for a new Cuban socialism.

Table 1.6: *Worker-Initiated Proposals at Stage 2*

Policy Category	Policy Subcategory	Number of New Proposals Created	Guideline Numbers	Total Worker Opinions
Economic Management Model	Business Sphere	1	15	146
Macroeconomic Polices	Monetary Policy Fiscal Policy Pricing Policy	2 4 4	51, 52 58, 59, 62, 65 66, 69, 70, 71	2250 1703 43204
External Economic Policy				
Investment Policy		1	117	4338
Science, Technology and Innovation Policy		4	129, 137, 138, 139	9249
Social Policy	Health	1	156	195
Agro-Industrial Policy		7	190, 192, 193, 194, 198, 210, 214	2801
Industrial and Energy Policy	Industrial Policy Energy Policy	1 2	220 249, 250	77 29722
Tourism Policy				
Transportation Policy		4	283, 284, 285, 286	39465
Construction, Housing and Hydraulic Resources Policy	Housing	2	298, 299	14114
Trade Policy				
Total New Proposals Created From Worker Opinion		33		147264

Likely unsurprising is that many of the topics underlying worker-crafted policies reflected scarcity of resources for basic goods and services. For example, the most popular worker-created proposal (arising from 32,171 worker opinions and supported by four representatives of the National Assembly) was a requirement on the state to adopt measures to stabilize non-state prices for activities linked to the basic needs of the population. The second most-commented upon worker-initiated proposal concerned energy policy and directed the state to offer new forms of cooking technologies and domestic fuels in order to meet the needs of the

population (22,599 worker opinions). Similarly, workers successfully proposed a requirement on the state to increase the efficiency of the repair and maintenance services for electric cooking appliances based on complaints of damages caused by frequent breakage and lack of spare parts (7,123 worker opinions). Reflecting transportation needs, the workers also crafted a proposal to require the state to prioritize attention to passenger transportation and quality of service (16,875 worker opinions). Another popular worker-created proposal was a new reform to allow private purchase and sale of automotive vehicles (13,816 worker opinions). Indeed, the previously-discussed, controversial state proposal to eliminate the ration book caused such trepidation that workers also created their own guideline in response. New Guideline 69 requires the state to take into account the income levels of the population before the ration book can be eliminated.

In sum, the Party participatory data, published and distributed to the Cuban workers at the end of the mass consultation, tend to show that workers engaged in meaningful participation that influenced 68 per cent of state-initiated proposals for which they had concerns and opinions. However, the benefits of Cuba's participatory reform process did not end there. The direct participation of workers through their worker assemblies, universities and community centers also impacted reform outcomes through the creation of 33 new reform policies, over 10 per cent of the total reform package, that reflect their economic and social interests, including imposing restrictions on the state's proposal to eliminate a beloved social welfare provision.

Conclusion

Joseph Stiglitz (2002) has suggested that workers are more likely to support state reform choices, even those that are not in their immediate best interest, if they are provided meaningful worker involvement in economic reform. However, empirical research thus far has shown that

states fail to take that advice, with negative consequences for worker participation during periods of market liberalization.

Through an analysis of 313 state and worker-crafted proposals for the most recent economic transformation of socialist Cuba, I demonstrate the importance of a national participatory reform process to the ability of workers to influence reform outcomes from below. In the Cuban case, the reform process not only allows workers to oppose state reform choices through available vertical institutions of accountability and the traditional threat of opposition, but also provides a mechanism for workers to directly engage the state in the creation of their own policy. Hence, this paper presents a contrary case of substantial worker voice in the crafting of economic and industrial relations policy during market liberalization, highlighting the importance of a well-functioning participatory process in the determination of reform outcomes. A key implication of my argument and its empirical support is that a reform process which requires continual state response to routine worker input is, as Stiglitz has suggested, likely to be seen as legitimate, increasing the probability of meaningful worker involvement in economic reform, and avoiding mistakes made during market liberalization in other countries.

APPENDIX A

25 Proposals with Most Aggregate Worker Opinions

The first column of the table in Appendix A indicates "New Guideline" if a proposal was created by workers. If not so designated, the proposal was part of the state's original reform package. The remaining columns set forth the state's initial proposal, if applicable, followed by the adopted proposal, along with the state's rational for any changes made from its reform package, as well as the total number of worker opinions motivating any change.

Policy Category **Guideline Number**	**Original State Proposal**	**Adopted Proposal**	**State Rationale For Change**	**Worker Opinion**
Social Policy: Gratuities and Subsidies Guideline 162	Implement the orderly elimination of the ration book as a form of regulated, equal distribution at subsidized prices, which favors citizens in need as well as those who are not in need and leads people to barter and resale practices and encourages an underground market.	Implement the orderly and gradual elimination of the ration card as a form of regulated, equal distribution at subsidized prices.	Includes a reference to the gradualness of the elimination of the card, which will be achieved through the creation of conditions that guarantee stability in the levels of production and supply of basic products at unsubsidized prices that are accessible to all citizens. The last part of the original Guideline is eliminated.	54,979 concerns across the country. The last part of the original Guideline is eliminated. Responds to 925 opinions across the country.
Macroeconomic Policies: Pricing Policy New Guideline 71	n/a	Adopt measures to encourage, if possible, the stability of non-state price offers, especially in activities linked to the basic needs of the population, taking into consideration the economic situation.	This is added, considering that while the state must promote the stability of prices by adopting different measures, this does not imply, as a policy, that the prices of non-state offers are administratively fixed.	32,171 opinions across the country and four representatives of the National Assembly of the People's Power.
Industrial and Energy Policy: Energy Policy New Guideline 250	n/a	Study the free sale of domestic fuels and other advanced cooking technologies as an additional option and at subsidized prices.	Responds to multiple requests regarding the offering of new options that give a better solution to the needs of the population.	22,599 opinions across the country.
Transportation Policy New Guideline 283	n/a	Provide priority attention to passenger transportation, urban, rural, inter-municipal and interprovincial, achieving stability and quality of service, ensuring their sustainability, as well as the gradual increase in demand satisfaction, according to the possibilities of the country.	It is included as a new Guideline.	16,875 opinions across the country.
Social Policy: Health Guideline 143	Improve the quality of health service provided as well as savings, the efficient use of resources and elimination of unnecessary expenses	Increase the quality of the health service provided, achieve satisfaction of the population and improve the working conditions and attention to health personnel. Guarantee the efficient use of resources, saving and the elimination of unnecessary expenses.	The wording is improved and includes everything related to satisfaction of the population, improvement of the working conditions and attention to health personnel.	16,600 opinions across the country.
Transportation Policy New Guideline 286	n/a	Establish the buying and selling of automotive resources between private individuals.	Establish the buying and selling between private individuals of the existing resources. The increase of sales by the state is not included at this stage. The improvement of public transportation is maintained as a priority.	13,816 opinions across the country.

Policy Category Guideline Number	Original State Proposal	Adopted Proposal	State Rationale For Change	Worker Opinion
Social Policy: Education Guideline 133	Continue to make progress in increasing the quality and rigor of the teaching-learning process and attain better use of the existing skills, starting with establishing mixed centers that guarantee training of the different teaching levels according to the needs. This implies resizing centers and attaining a better use of the work force.	Continue to make progress in increasing the quality and rigor of the teaching-learning process; hierarchically organize permanent improvement, enhancement and the attention of teaching personnel; and the role of the family in educating children and young people. Attain better use of the work force and existing skills.	Adds the improvement of teachers, enhancement and attention to workers in the sector and the role of the family in educating children and young people. Regarding the mixed centers, they are an aspect of the reorganization of the school network addressed in the current Guideline 148.	13,126 opinions across the country and to the analyses in the Conference.
Construction, Housing and Hydraulic Resources Policy: Housing New Guideline 299	n/a	Construction materials destined for conservation, rehabilitation and building of houses will be sold at unsubsidized prices. When required, the subsidy will be applied to individuals, partly or wholly, within the planned limits.	Ratifies the policy of subsidies to individuals and not to products.	13,012 opinions across the country.
Transportation Policy Guideline 249	Continue the recuperation, modernization and reorganization of transportation, with the objective of improving the quality and efficiency of the transportation services, for freight and passengers, based on the rational use of all resources, especially energy, providing the most economical alternatives possible.	Continue the recuperation, modernization and restructuring of land and water transportation, improving the quality and efficiency of the transportation services, for freight and passengers, based on the rational use of all resources.	Changes the term "reorganization" to "restructuring" which is the term used for the process that is being carried out. Eliminates the text beginning with "resources," for better understanding.	12,247 opinions across the country.
Tourism Policy Guideline 244	Energize and promote the development of national tourism through the creation of offers that enable the better use of existing infrastructure.	Energize and promote the development of national tourism through the creation of offers that enable the better use of existing infrastructure of hotels and other recreation and historical tourist attractions. Study the policies that facilitate travel by Cuban residents to other countries as tourists.	It includes a study of the access to tourism in other countries for nationals (outbound tourism). With relation to the access to tourism by nationals, it confirms that it will maintain unsubsidized prices, taking advantage of the existing possibilities and looking for new offers.	11,195 opinions across the country.
Construction, Housing and Hydraulic Resources Policy: Housing Guideline 278	Apply flexible formulas to the exchange, purchase, sale and leasing of houses to facilitate the solution to the housing demands of the population.	Institute the buying and selling of houses and enable other forms of transmission of property (exchange, donation and others) between individuals. Streamline the procedures for remodeling, rehabilitation, building and leasing of the houses and property transfers, to facilitate the solution of the housing demands of the population.	Includes new elements and makes the wording more specific.	10,942 opinions in the country and to the discussion in the Conference.

Policy Category Guideline Number	Original State Proposal	Adopted Proposal	State Rationale For Change	Worker Opinion
Social Policy: Health Guideline 144	Geographically reorganize the services and use the available technology efficiently. Improve clinical diagnosis and rationally use the means of additional studies, especially the most expensive technology. Consolidate and request the use of protocols for illnesses.	Reorganize, combine and regionalize, based on the needs of each province and municipality, health services, including emergency care and medical transportation. Ensure that the health system makes it possible for each patient to receive the corresponding care with the required quality.	Includes the necessary transformations, including medical transportation and emergency care in the health system and that the system makes it possible for each patient to receive the needed care with quality. Everything related to clinical diagnosis is included in the new Guideline 156.	10,665 opinions across the country.
Social Policy: Employment and Salary Guideline 157	Prioritize the application of salary increases to jobs that create income in foreign currencies or result in saving them, the production of foodstuff and other essential goods for consumption and the development of the investment policy. Special attention should be paid to encourage the introduction of scientific advances and new technologies in production on the basis of real results obtained upon applying them.	Gradually increase salaries, initially aimed at activities with the most efficient results and to the work of workers who provide benefits of particular economic and social impact.	Redefines the priorities for the gradual application of salary increases.	7,276 opinions across the country.
Industrial and Energy Policy: Energy Policy New Guideline 249	n/a	Increase the efficiency of the repair and maintenance services for electric cooking appliances in order to achieve adequate functioning.	Considers proposals originating from damages caused by frequent breakage and the lack of spare parts for cooking appliances.	7,123 opinions across the country.
Social Policy: Employment and Salary Guideline 156	Ensure that the salary measures guarantee that each worker receives according to his/her work and that this creates quality products and services.	Ensure that the salaries guarantee that each worker receives according to his/her work, that this creates quality products and services and an increase in production and productivity, and that the salary income is effectively reflected in meeting the basic needs of workers and their families.	Includes the requirement that work creates an increase in production and productivity and that the salaries cover the basic needs of the workers and their families.	6,670 opinions across the country.
Trade Policy Guideline 284	The structure and organization of retail business must address the diversification of the quality and supply of products and services that are offered to satisfy the demands of the different segments of the population and their access opportunities, as part of the contributing factors that stimulate the work.	Diversify the variety, quality and prices of the products and services that are offered to satisfy the demands of the different segments of the population, according to their access opportunities, since this is one of the contributing factors that stimulate the work.	Improves the wording and expands the scope.	5,804 opinions across the country.
Transportation Policy New Guideline 284	n/a	Implement new payment methods in urban passenger transport in an effort to minimize the avoidance of payment and the diversion of revenue.	Based on 5,008 opinions across the country, it will be included as a new Guideline.	5,008 opinions across the country.

Policy Category Guideline Number	Original State Proposal	Adopted Proposal	State Rationale For Change	Worker Opinion
Science, Technology and Innovation Policy New Guideline 139	n/a	Define and encourage new ways to stimulate the creativity of basic work groups and strengthen their participation in the solution of technological problems in production and services and the promotion of environmentally sustainable production methods.	The promotion of innovation management in the basic work groups is adopted as a Guideline.	4,976 opinions across the country and the opinion of a representative of the National Assembly of the People's Power.
Macroeconomic Policies: Pricing Policy New Guideline 69	n/a	Continue gradually eliminating the excessive subsidies and undue gratuitousness for products and services, setting retail prices based on expenses, without covering inefficiencies, taking into consideration the income levels of the population.	Originates from Guideline 61 of the original project, to highlight the gradual elimination of the subsidies and gratuitousness, "taking into consideration the income levels of the population."	4,789 opinions across the country and a representative of the National Assembly of the People's Power.
Transportation Policy Guideline 254	Prioritize the railroad activity in the road network improvement program, which requires integration into the country's investor program and a joint effort between entities related to construction, maintenance, operation and preservation.	Promote the railroad recuperation and development program within the investment process of the country, prioritizing the improvement and maintenance of the roads and the management of the operations, to improve the speed of the trains, the security, the railroad discipline and to decrease the transportation times for freight and passengers. All of that will be executed according to the plan and real possibilities.	Changes the wording to emphasize that the railroad recuperation program is the main work, within which the improvement of roads will be prioritized.	4,743 opinions across the country.
Investment Policy: Guidelines New Guideline 117	n/a	The first priority will be the technological and construction maintenance activities in all spheres of the economy.	The maintenance activity is separated from the original Guideline 110 to give it the required priority.	4,338 opinions were received across the country.
Social Policy: Education Guideline 134	Train, in each territory, the required teaching personnel to respond to the needs of the educational centers at the different teaching levels.	Train, with quality and rigor, the required teaching personnel in each province and municipality to respond to the needs of the educational centers of different teaching levels.	Includes the need to increase quality and rigor in teacher training.	4,294 opinions across the country.
Macroeconomic Policies: Pricing Policy New Guideline 70	n/a	In the state network, refine the relationship between price and quality of similar products or services, avoiding unjustified price differences.	Added, taking into consideration 4,502 opinions across the country and five representatives of the National Assembly of the People's Power.	4,502 opinions across the country and five representatives of the National Assembly of the People's Power.
Trade Policy Guideline 288	As policy for the development of consumption, prioritize the consumption animal protein, clothing and footwear, the sale of household appliances, building materials, furniture and home furnishings, among others.	Promote the supply of food products conducive to the achievement of a balanced diet and prioritize the sale of clothing and footwear, household appliances, bicycles and spare parts, construction materials and hardware, furniture and home furnishings, among others, as policy for the development of consumption.	Broadens the scope of the Guideline.	3,916 opinions across the country.

Policy Category Guideline Number	Original State Proposal	Adopted Proposal	State Rationale For Change	Worker Opinion
Transportation Policy New Guideline 285	n/a	Ensure compliance with the required quality of the repair and maintenance program of the automotive road infrastructure, as approved in the economic plan and in line with the real possibilities of the country.	The repair and maintenance of the roads is included as a new Guideline.	3,766 opinions across the country.

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Chapter Two

Union-Sponsored Labor Education in Cuba: The Cuban Union as an Agent of Educational Transfer

> *[The Cuban participatory process] created opportunities for workers to expand their comprehension of production and economic matters, one of the aspects of democratization as empowerment. Yet this required of workers a certain level of general and technical knowledge, as well as an understanding of economic planning, if they were to avail themselves of these opportunities. The effort the union devoted to these educational tasks could be the subject of a study in itself.*
>
> Linda Fuller, *Work and Democracy in Socialist Cuba*

When I first moved to Cuba in the fall of 2010 to commence doctoral fieldwork, my interest was in harmonizing empirical dissonance on the question of whether workplace democracy existed under Cuban socialism and, if so, whether it allowed workers to meaningfully participate in the fundamental restructuring of the Cuban political economy under President Raúl Castro (Lee 2016a). In the three years I spent closely examining the relationship between the Cuban state and workers, as well as the relationships between workers and their representative organizations, it became apparent that in order to figure out whether worker participation during market reform was meaningful, I would have to learn more about the union-sponsored Cuban labor education process through which workers are purportedly prepared for participation in economic decision-making. Hence, almost 25 years after Fuller's call for further study of the efforts of the official Cuban trade union federation (CTC) in educating workers for political practice, I respond with a two-fold approach. Primarily, I fill empirical gaps in our scant knowledge of the nature, extent and scope of the union-sponsored labor education in Cuba. Second, merging literatures on Cuban labor education and comparative adult education, I go inside the classroom to closely examine the content of the CTC's international labor education program and assess whether the CTC is a contemporary agent of educational transfer,

transmitting participative education pedagogy to labor movements in both capitalist and socialist economies.

As Fuller hints above, and I provide empirical support for below, the CTC maintains an extensive labor education system for its workers and union leaders, offering university-level education through a web of national and provincial universities. However, the scope of the CTC's labor education programs extends to labor movements well outside Cuba's borders. More specifically, the CTC also offers labor education courses to foreign union leaders, who travel to Cuba to receive technical and theoretical training from CTC educators on subjects such as collectivism, participative education, anti-neoliberal regional integration agreements, and socialist labor movement transformation. Perhaps it is unsurprising that a number of foreign union leaders training at the CTC's universities are from the ALBA member states, with whom Cuba shares close ideological ties in a socio-political and economic alliance. However, more unexpected is the large enrollment of union leaders from capitalist, non-leftist states in which implementation of the CTC's ideological and technical content might be dangerous or near impossible within their respective countries.

It is not my intention here to seek to answer why union leaders from countries in which socialist ideology could be deadly would be willing to hop a plane to Havana and pay school fees to a communist union. Rather, this study tackles two tangential questions. The first asks as-of-yet unanswered empirical questions regarding the nature and extent of union-sponsored labor education in Cuba. Who are its students? What is the curriculum? Who are the instructors? The second research question merges literature from Cuban studies and comparative adult education to ask whether the CTC, in its role as labor educator, is an agent of educational transfer,

facilitating the spread of participative education to labor movements across political and economic contexts.

In taking on those questions, this article presents an unusual case study of labor education programs offered through *la escuela nacional Lázaro Peña* (ENLP), the CTC's Havana-based national trade union university, which along with several provincial schools under its umbrella, comprises the formal, union-sponsored labor education system for domestic and foreign union leaders, as well as Cuban workers at the base. I argue that the CTC's labor education system provides comprehensive technical and ideological training in Cuban participative education for both foreign and domestic union leaders, and that in doing so, the CTC serves as an agent of educational transfer of Cuban liberation pedagogy to foreign union leaders throughout the wider Latin American region. Because comparative education literature traditionally focuses on the state as the fundamental agent of transfer, my focus on sub-national actors takes a more contemporary approach to understanding foreign influences in labor education under the complexities of globalization.

Literature Review

> *"One area in which questions about liberation pedagogy are clearly relevant is labor education."* (Hakken 1983: 115)

In their comprehensive review of education pedagogy in Cuba over four distinct historical periods, from colonial Spanish rule through the Cuban Special Period following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Ginsburg, Belacazar, Popa and Pacheco (2006) chronicle the Cuban state's educational goals for worker-citizens, as well as the educators responsible for their instruction. Table 2.1 summarizes their findings with respect to key ideas, institutions and practices related to worker-citizen development in the periods following the 1959 revolution.

Table 2.1: Cuban Educational Pedagogy at Critical Junctures in the Revolutionary Political Economy

Period	Dates	Curricular Goals for Worker-Citizen Development
Post-Revolution	1959-1991	• Promote collectivism over individualism • Define the Cuban socialist worker-citizen • Define Cuban teacher as educator of worker-citizens
Post-Soviet Era	1991-2003	• Prioritize technical training of worker-citizens • Enhance the "professionalization" of teachers through redevelopment of teacher preparation programs

More specifically, following the triumph of the rebels in the 1959 Cuban revolution, Fidel Castro faced both technical and ideological obstacles to his socialist transformation. First, the country needed to quickly replace the technical skills lost as a result of the mass exodus and exile of the former political and economic intellectual class. Second, the state sought a systematic approach to incorporate workers into the revolutionary process (Kaiser, Kriele, Miethe and Piepiorka 2015). Fidel Castro's policy solution, referred to as his "educational revolution," was a state-sponsored education program that sought to transform Cuban workers into socialist worker-citizens via a free public education system with new, ideologically-favorable content that educators would use to instill a new definition of democracy linked to collectivism (Ginsburg et. al 2006: 35-36).

One of the key ideas underlying Fidel Castro's educational revolution was that educators were to hold dual identities: that of exemplary worker, as well as educator of future workers, requiring continual pedagogical and technical training. Specifically,

> [Under Fidel Castro's view of teacher socialization], teachers were conceived not only as workers or even workers whose job it was to train future workers and citizens, but they were to be exemplary workers—in relation to academic learning as well as productive work activities in school. (Ginsburg et. al 2006: 38).

Hence, under Fidel Castro's educational revolution, the training of workers and worker educators existed to impart a socialist ideology that substituted collectivism for individualism in the Cuban political economy, and "nationalism or socialist internationalism instead of American neo-colonialism" in the construction of working class identity and ideology (Ginsburg 2006: 46-47).

Although it is clear that socialist ideology and a technical skill gap drove the state's post-revolutionary Cuban educational pedagogy and practices, the literature is largely silent on the union's role in the Cuban labor education process. Notably, the CTC was founded in 1939—twenty years before Fidel Castro's educational revolution. At the time Castro assumed power, the existing CTC leadership was at odds with his revolutionary ideology, and a volatile relationship remained, exaggerated by the CTC's ties to the defeated Batista dictatorship as well as its failure to support the guerrilla movement until victory was secured (Alexander 2002). However, once Castro replaced the existing CTC leadership with supporters who shared his ideology and desire for socialist transformation (Alexander 2002), the CTC and state's interests became so closely aligned that, prior to the 1970s, scholars tended to believe that the Cuban communist union's "two-way transmission belt" only functioned one way,[1] in favor of the state without commitment to worker participation (Fuller 1992; Alexander 2002).

In the face of this negative image, the CTC sought to reinvent itself and distinguish its role from that of the party-state (Fuller 1992). In 1975, it founded a post-secondary university,

[1] But see Lee (2016b) for evidence demonstrating that the CTC serves its second role as defender of workers' rights, at least, but not entirely, due to its response to worker concerns during the 2011 labor restructuring of the state enterprise sector.

la escuela nacional Lázaro Peña[2] (ENLP). With the establishment of a brick and mortar facility devoted to continuing labor education for workers and union leaders, the CTC quickly became the institution through which Cuban workers are trained in their rights and duties under Cuban socialism, and mobilized to participate in decision-making at the firm and national levels (Fuller 1992). Consequently, though under-researched, some scholars have linked the CTC's structural commitment to the technical and ideological training of rank-and-file and union leaders to the achievement of critical distance from the state and party by the early 1980s (Dilla 1999), as well as the CTC's ability to create an environment for meaningful worker participation (Zimbalist and Eckstein 1987).

In sum, although researchers have provided a general description of the *state*-sponsored Cuban "educational revolution" which sought to create new worker-citizens in a socialist transformation, existing literature fails to explain the role of *union*-sponsored labor education. Since assuming the role of primary adult worker educator, what are the CTC's curricular goals, content, or methods? How many workers and union leaders does it train? How does it measure its own success? Despite the lack of empirical knowledge as to the specific workings of the CTC's labor education system, foreign union leaders from across the Americas have been, and continue to enroll in the CTC's trade union universities. Hence, this article goes inside the CTC's university classrooms to uncover not only the process and content used to transform Cuban union leaders into educators of the Cuban working class, but also the methods, content and pedagogical approaches taught to foreign union leaders to take home to their respective countries. For insight into why foreign union leaders might look to the Cuban model of labor education, I turn to the

[2] Lázaro Peña is a Cuban national hero and was the first Secretary-General of the CTC.

literature on comparative adult worker education, specifically those areas of scholarship focused on participative education and educational transfer.

Participative Education

Participative education theory asserts that labor education is an important factor in creating a more participatory democracy (Murphy 2001). As a branch of study, it derives from a large body of Marxist and post-Marxist literature within comparative and radical adult education in which scholars debate, distinguish and synthesize the theories of Lenin, Gramsci and Freire with respect to education, democracy and economic and social transformation (Hopkins 2014; Holst 1999; Mayo 1994). Hence, participative education theory is prevalent in neo-revolutionary Latin America as a state model for national and regional development and structural transformation from neoliberalism to socialism (Muhr 2013). This is particularly the case for Cuba and other member states of the Bolivarian Alliance for the People of Our America (ALBA), a self-described "political, economic, and social alliance in defense of the independence, self-determination and the identity of the peoples comprising it," (Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America 2010). Table 2.2 shows a list of the 11 existing members in the ALBA alliance since its 2004 formation.

Table 2.2: Member States of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA)[3]

Venezuela	Antigua and Barbuda
Cuba	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
Bolivia	Saint Lucia
Nicaragua	Grenada
Dominica	Federation of Saint Kitts and Nevis
Ecuador	

[3] Source: ALBA INFO: Information on the Bolivarian Alliance. Available at: https://albainfo.org/what-is-the-alba/ (accessed on May 30, 2016).

The participatory democracy aims of the ALBA member states is demonstrated not only from what we know about the Cuban educational revolution, but also from what we know about participative education in Nicaragua. Muhr (2013: 277) examines Nicaragua's version of a "participative education revolution" and its relation to notions of "revolutionary democracy" and "21st century socialism" under the ALBA alliance. Muhr sees the revolutionary democracy sought by the ALBA member states as essentially a merger of Karl Marx's direct democracy and C.B. Macpherson's participatory democracy, where direct democracy under Marx is described as "social and popular control of the means of production and political organisation in a pyramidal council structure" (2013: 280, quoting Marx), and Macpherson's participatory democracy is defined as "a process of conscientisation (from an individualist consumer identity to personal development and a sense of community), and a substantial reduction of social and economic inequality for the full development of people's capabilities" (2013: 280, quoting Macpherson).

Muhr asserts that as part of Nicaragua's socialist transformation under its Sandinista regimes, the state specifically adopted Cuban literacy models and educational methods, including Cuban-style pedagogical training for educators. Like Fidel Castro's educational revolution to create and incorporate worker-citizens into Cuba's socialist transformation, Muhr notes that the educational revolution in Nicaragua, and other ALBA countries, also seeks to ideologically prepare workers for participatory democracy:

> Literacy within a popular or education rationale is not merely a skill, but services conscientisation and empowerment—altering self-perceptions of historically excluded groups for participation and transformation, to 'seek alternatives' and become actors in their individual and collective development. (2013: 289)

Hence, at least in Nicaragua, and presumably for other ALBA member states, Cuban state-sponsored labor education serves as a model for solving domestic issues of political, societal and

economic transformation and as an important dialectical process in which "education is both an agent of change and in turn is changed by society" (Muhr 2013: 289).

In sum, the participative education literature explains in part why unions from certain Latin American and Caribbean states would be interested in adopting Cuban models of educational pedagogy and participative education, particularly those with whom Cuba is ideologically and structurally aligned in opposition to neoliberalism. However, as will be discussed, data shows that union leaders from both ALBA member and non-member states train in the CTC's courses for foreign union leaders, ostensibly searching for methods of labor movement transformation and revitalization in their own countries. But simply studying the Cuban model is not the same as adopting it. How do we know whether the CTC's labor education process and content have been successfully learned or transmitted to foreign labor movements? To further understand the process by which educational ideas, institutions and practices pass from one system to another, I turn to educational transfer theory, another branch of the comparative adult education literature.

Educational Transfer

Comparative education scholars interested in the relationship between education and globalization have focused on a macro-level process referred to as educational transfer. Defined as "a movement of educational ideas, institutions, or practices across international borders," educational transfer refers to the adoption of a set of educational theories and processes by one country from another to address domestic issues of political economy (Beech 2006: 2).

In post-colonial socialist transformations like Cuba's, educational transfer has been found to serve two main purposes: to prepare peasants and adult workers for formal university-level education, and to create from those groups a socialist intellectual class (Kaiser, et. al 2015).

Largely influenced by Freire, Gramsci and neo-Marxist thinkers, the theory underlying education for the purpose of socialist transformation requires a critical focus on liberation pedagogy, "a praxis contributing to the social transformation of the… oppressed worker" (Hakken 1983: 114).

To evaluate whether educational transfer of liberation pedagogy has occurred, the ideal method would be the social reproduction approach, which measures educational transfer by looking at two variables: the success of a formal education program, placing the level of analysis at the individual, and the "social consequences of education" (Hakken 1983: 116). Although acknowledging the desirability of the social reproduction approach, Hakken warns of its near impracticality:

> [I]n order to evaluate a program of education for liberation [under the social reproduction approach], one must have a way to determine empirically the extent to which the basic educational approach used tends to increase the degree of individual and social self-control. Additionally, one must find a way to do this in spite of the fact that data on such issues is difficult to find. (1983: 117)

Consequently, Hakken suggests that one focus instead on the educative culture of the labor education process, which he defines as the "teacher-created conditions [that] tend to encourage individuals to intervene in the formation of their own consciousness in a manner which increased personal and collective control" (1983: 117). This allows for consideration of the "possible 'liberatory' impact" of a labor education process on individuals (1983: 116-117).

In addition to the methodologically-thorny question of whether educational transfer has occurred, Beech (2006) strongly suggests that identifying agents of educational transfer is a significant contribution to the literature, and is equally fundamental to redefining our understanding of the influence of foreign models on labor education. More specifically, in his comprehensive review of existing educational transfer literature, he states:

> Steiner-Khamsi suggests "turning the normative, practice-oriented question of 'what can be learnt [from other educational systems]?' into the descriptive, research-oriented question 'what has been learnt?' Thus, she recommends that comparative education research should address questions such as 'Why did the transfer occur? How was the transfer implemented? Who were the agents of transfer?'" (2006: 10).

Moreover, although the literature has traditionally identified states as fundamental agents of educational transfer, Beech asserts that under the complexities of globalization, we should direct scholarly focus on sub-national actors (2006: 10). Hence, in examining the role of the CTC in labor education to determine whether it serves as an agent of educational transfer, this article makes an important contribution by modernizing our understanding of foreign influences on labor education pedagogy.

In sum, the comparative adult education literature calls for the identification of agents of educational transfer and provides some explanation of why foreign union leaders would be interested in CTC models of labor education. Acknowledging the methodological limitations of current approaches to determining whether educational transfer has occurred, the scholarly focus here is on the educative culture of the CTC's labor education process, namely the educational content and the educator-created conditions under which the CTC encourages the ideological and technical development of foreign union leaders.

Methodology

This article presents qualitative research collected by the author over a three-month period in 2010, from enrollment through graduation at *la escuela nacional Lázaro Peña* (ENLP), the CTC's national trade union university located in the municipality of *La Lisa* in Havana province. Research methods included semi-structured interviews with CTC professors and union leaders at the university, content analysis of union and university archival documents, and

participant observation as a foreign union leader from the Americas in ENLP's international program.

Interviews

The author conducted interviews, worksite visits and content analysis at both the national and provincial levels of the CTC's labor education system.[4] Overall, this case study reflects 32 one-on-one interviews with 28 subjects, and 13 panel discussions with university professors and official worker mass organization leaders,[5] including union leaders from 11 of the 19 trade unions that make up the CTC[6] at the municipal, provincial, national and international levels, including CTC representatives to the Cuban parliament.

All interviews employed open-ended questions on topics covering Cuban models of participatory democracy, worker participation, the ALBA and other regional economic integration agreements, and the role of trade unions in formal labor education. Panel interviews generally averaged an hour or more, while one-on-one interviews ran approximately an hour. With respect to content analysis, archival documents concerning Cuban labor didacticism, socialist theory in labor education and state and party positions on participatory democracy were researched in the national and provincial trade union university libraries, made available to the author during her enrollment period.

Participant Observation

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[4] Throughout the matriculation period, the author resided at the university's *hotelito*, which served as a dormitory for foreign students and Cuban union leaders from other provinces. The dormitory, *Hotelito Puesta del Sol*, can house up to 250 students.

[5] The author interviewed representatives from several worker mass organizations, including the World Union Federation (FSM) and the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC). Interviews were also conducted with legal scholars at two international conferences held in Havana in 2010 and 2011.

[6] For a list of national trade unions under the CTC umbrella by industry, please refer to Table 1.2 (Lee 2016a).

The participant observation serving as the main research method for this case study included 200 hours of certified class instruction over three months of study at the ENLP. Specifically, from September through December 2010, over 17 CTC university professors from the disciplines of law, history, economics and political science provided instruction for two separate courses attended by over 70 union leaders from 11 countries. Table 2.3 shows a list of countries with participating union leaders, identified by ALBA affiliation.

Table 2.3: Countries with Participating Union Leaders in the ENLP's 2010 "Course for Union Instructors" and "Course on Political Development of Union Leaders for Trade Union Action"

Country	**ALBA member state (Y/N)**
United States	N
Venezuela	Y
Panamá	N
Colombia	N
Nicaragua	Y
Costa Rica	N
Brazil	N
Bolivia	Y
Ecuador	Y
Chile	N
Dominican Republic	N

As the table shows, unions from four (five, counting Cuba) out of the eleven ALBA member states were represented in the two courses under study: *Curso de instructores sindicales* ("Course for Union Instructors") and *Curso de actualización política para la acción sindical* ("Course on Political Development of Union Leaders for Trade Union Action").

Results

I present the results of the study in two sections. In the opening section, I set forth descriptive data on the depth of union-sponsored labor education provided by the CTC through its domestic and international labor education programs. In the second section, I go inside the ENLP's classrooms to closely examine the content and process employed by CTC educators to

deliver the CTC's labor education model to foreign union leaders. I note that data in the second section describing the CTC's ideology, pedagogy and content is presented in the general tone and language used by CTC professors in the classroom. The results section will be followed by a discussion section, in which I analyze the results with respect to the research questions driving this study.

The CTC's Labor Education System[7]

The CTC is financially autonomous[8] from the state and communist party and currently enjoys a self-reported voluntary membership[9] at a union density of 95 per cent. The participation of union members in CTC union leadership is high, with approximately one union leader for every four workers overall. Currently, the CTC, whose universities are accredited by the Ministry of Education, provides certified post-secondary training to over 5,000 full-time union leaders at the national level, as well as approximately 400,000 rank-and-file union leaders who hold other full-time jobs. Roughly 2,000 Cuban workers per year, out of an active workforce of approximately 5 million, are educated at the ENLP alone, with hundreds more trained at 15 additional provincial labor education centers throughout the island. Moreover, Wolf, Penton, Marin and Romero (2011) report that every province in Cuba offers special university courses

[7] The information in this section is based on interviews, internal documents and participant observation during the author's 2010 enrollment at the ENLP, as well as the author's approximately 15 previous research visits to Cuba, particularly her 2008 visit as a member of the National Lawyers Guild delegation of labor and employment professionals. A report from that delegation can be found at http://nlg-laboremploy-comm.org/media/ProjIntl_Cuba_2008Report.pdf. Interview notes and supporting institutional documents are available from the author.

[8] Dues deduction does not exist in the Cuban industrial relations system. Dues are set at approximately 1 per cent of a member's salary (Lee 2016a).

[9] Although no law exists that requires formal authorization from the state to form a labor organization, the CTC remains the only constitutionally-recognized union federation on the island. The CTC and the national unions under its umbrella are responsible for representing all Cuban workers, regardless of union membership (Lee 2016b).

under special regulations that provide workers with up to 45 days a year for such training, though it is unclear whether those special courses are provided by the CTC or the state, or whether the training is conducted in the CTC's facilities or at public universities.

Outside of its brick and mortar universities, the CTC also provides training on-site at the enterprise locations where its members work. For example, in 2008, the author was part of a delegation of U.S. labor lawyers who visited a CTC-provided training course at *La Unión Cuba-Petróleo* (CUPET), a state oil refinery. Union leaders at the facility explained that all stewards at that particular refinery were required to complete the one-week course, with costs paid by the employer pursuant to an enterprise-based collective agreement. Subjects for that particular course included technical skill in labor law, workplace safety, and grievance handling, as well as theoretical courses in how to facilitate participatory meetings at the enterprise.

The more than 300 professors in the CTC's formal labor education system are all degreed, with specialized training sometimes led by adjunct faculty comprised of lawyers and other professionals. The basic degree program for Cuban rank-and-file workers and union leaders offers courses in economics, management, labor law, international labor policy, accounting, finance, work teams, union leadership and other labor-management and economic topics. For example, one provincial training facility visited by the author, *la escuela Jesús Batsinde Batsinde*, located about an hour outside of Havana, specializes in union capacity building and negotiation tactics for building consensus. With 32 on-site living quarters for students, and 80 classrooms for instruction, *Batsinde Batsinde* offers several training courses for different levels of CTC union leadership, including a 40-hour course for leaders at the base and national level, and a one-month required course for provincial-level union leaders. As a result of collective negotiations between the national trade unions and employers, matriculation at the

provincial and national trade universities is free of charge to Cuban workers and union leaders, with both groups maintaining their salary and benefits while attending classes.

Although enrollment in the CTC labor courses is free for Cuban workers and union leaders, foreign union leaders who train at the ENLP pay per course at a rate determined by the CTC, based on the length of instruction and other needs such as language and housing. For instance, Appendix B shows that *Curso de instructores sindicales*, which was taught entirely in Spanish, involved approximately 120 hours of class instruction over 2.5 weeks for a price of $420.00 CUC ($420.00 USD). Appendix C shows that *Curso de actualización política para la acción sindical*, which was taught in both Spanish and Portuguese, involved 80 hours of class instruction over 1.5 weeks, and was priced at $300.00 CUC ($300.00 USD). Prices for both courses included worksite visits, travel to and from the airport (valued at about $25 USD each way), as well as all meals, course materials and a student identification card for access to libraries within the labor education system and for certain travel on the island. Foreign union leaders were also provided single or shared rooms, depending on availability, at the *Hotelito Puesta del Sol*, a small, full service, union-owned hotel attached to the ENLP that serves as a dormitory for up to 250 students (Cuban and international).

The curriculum for foreign students mirrors subjects offered to Cuban workers and union leaders in the domestic labor education program; however, the ENLP is also able to tailor courses for foreign union leaders based on the needs of their sponsoring labor organizations. With respect to the two courses on which this study is based, the curriculum for the first course, *Curso de instructores sindicales* ("Course for Union Instructors"), involved approximately 120 hours of class and worksite instruction focused on the role of trade unions in national and global political economy, and didactic processes that contribute to political actualization—both

modeled on Cuban approaches. Other course topics included neoliberalism and the economic crisis; transformational leadership; economic integration; the political dimension of union capacity; the union instructor as the creator of class consciousness; methodological bases for union capacity; unity as a challenge for the union movement; and gender and social transformation. The CTC's original course announcement and description for *Curso de instructores sindicales* is attached as Appendix B.[10]

The second course, *Curso de actualización política para la acción sindical* ("Course on Political Development of Union Leaders for Trade Union Action"), involved over 80 hours of class and worksite instruction. Specifically designed for union leaders across the Americas, the course explored Cuban and international labor movements in domestic, regional and global political economies, with heightened focus on union and political environments that contribute to policy actualization and transformational union leadership. Course topics included: contemporary Cuban labor movement; international labor movement and the labor movement of the Americas; Cuban reality and its perspectives; impact of the unemployment crisis; the impact of the global crisis in capitalism on workers and on the labor movement; strategies and actions of the World Union Federation ("FSM") in the Americas; transformational union leadership; the ILO and the international sphere before the crisis; tendencies in globalization in the twenty-first century; European Union—Latin American relations; and political systems in Latin America: a view of the geopolitical scenario in the region. The CTC's original course announcement and description for *Curso de actualización política para la acción sindical* is attached as Appendix C.

Inside the ENLP Classroom: Union Leaders as Labor Educators

[10] English translations of Appendices 1 and 2 are available from the author.

This section describes in detail content provided to foreign union leaders during classroom instruction in the international labor education program of the ENLP. I first set forth—in its own words—the CTC's education pedagogy and labor education process, including content employed by CTC professors to encourage foreign union leaders to adopt and implement Cuban models of participative education in their home countries. I then focus on a fundamental concept in the CTC's labor education process: that union leaders are inherently labor educators responsible for building working-class consciousness in the mobilization of a unified labor movement. Finally, in the discussion section that trails, I analyze empirical data to determine whether the CTC's labor education program creates an educative culture that encourages the ideological and technical development of foreign union leaders in Cuban models of participative education, thus establishing the CTC as an agent of educational transfer.

1. The CTC's Education Pedagogy

> *Marxist theory is not wrong. The model is not wrong. How it has been applied has been.*
>
> Professor Teresa Ramón Senset, ENLP Course for Union Instructors

Under the CTC's education pedagogy, labor education is both a didactic *process* and an educational *activity*. As a didactic process, labor education is considered a science with laws and rules designed to enhance worker technical knowledge and develop class consciousness. Labor education can also be an activity, which refers to the conduct of content-specific training by a union leader in the role of labor educator.[11] Examples of labor education as an activity are a union leader's technical training of workers in how to defend their rights or ideological training with respect to workers' duties and obligations as worker-citizens.

[11] For clarity, whenever the term "labor educator" is used in my description of CTC class content, it is in reference to the role the foreign union leader is being trained to assume once he or she returns to their respective labor movement capacity.

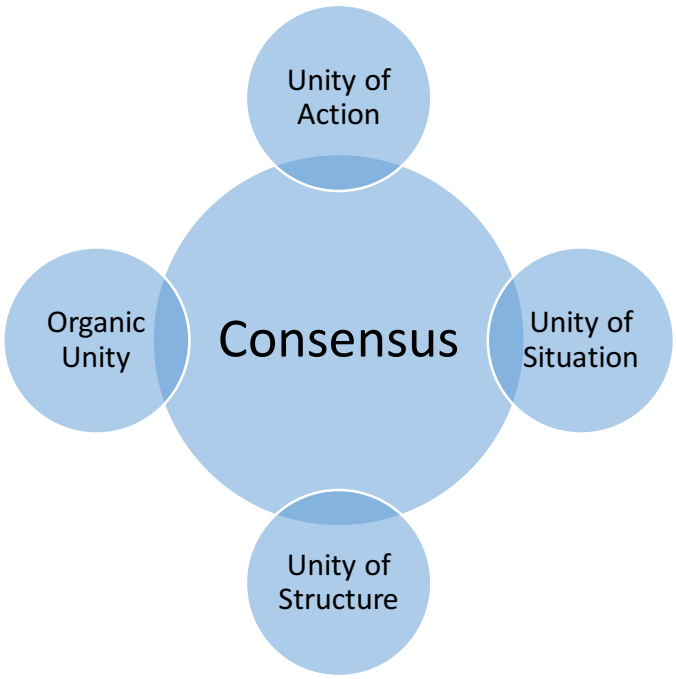
Further, CTC professors frequently stress that the Cuban participative education model requires that "all learn from the others," which means that labor education is a process in which learning occurs vertically and horizontally between worker-citizens (as students) and union leaders (as educators). Moreover, under the CTC labor education model, a successful labor education activity requires four elements: a determination of the union's educational needs, a reflective organizational focus, a participatory pedagogy, and union leaders trained as labor educators. Because CTC professors deem the last two elements the most important, I now discuss Cuban participatory pedagogy and the concept of union leaders as inherent labor educators in greater detail, starting first with the CTC's participatory pedagogy.

Before training foreign union leaders in the concept of participatory pedagogy underlying the labor education process, CTC professors first explain the Cuban concept of trade union unity. With an historical basis in Marx and Engel, the idea behind trade union unity in the Cuban system is that a successful participatory democracy built around consensus requires unity of thought among all political actors. Addressing union leaders from capitalist countries specifically, CTC professors clarify that under the Cuban model of participatory democracy, *unity* of thought does not require *unanimity* in thought, and while it is important that no particular group of workers' interest prevail over others, the process of trade union unification should not hide differences between groups. To give credibility to its content on trade union unity, one CTC professor wrote a quote by Fidel Castro on the classroom chalkboard. In it, Castro states that unity calls for all actors, through debate and analysis, to share the fight, risks, sacrifices, ideas, concepts and strategies (Castro 2008). Thus, by training foreign union leaders to attain unity in the context of presupposed differences between individual workers, CTC course

content specifically links Fidel Castro's educational revolution and its focus on collectivism over individualism to the building of a participatory democracy.

The concept of unity is so central to the CTC's participatory pedagogy that CTC professors identify four types of unity that occur in a successful consensus-building process. Figure 2.1 shows the four types of unity: unity of action, unity of situation, unity of structure and organic unity.

Figure 2.1: Four Types of Unity in the Cuban Participatory Process



Unity of action occurs when different groups (workers, unions, governments, or any actors in a political economy) agree as to a strategy for solving a problem. Unity of situation is a temporal concept and signifies the precise or concrete moment an agreement between groups on a course of action arises. Unity of structure requires the creation of a non-permanent, intermediate structure to carry out coordinated actions agreed upon by groups. Finally, organic unity is expressed through union bylaws and regulations. Under CTC participatory pedagogy,

achieving all four types of unity requires union leaders as labor educators to create spaces for workers to discuss problems and explore differences in opinions on their way to reaching consensus. Furthermore, a union leader's ability to bring about unity from disparate worker opinions becomes an essential working-class tool for reaching worker consensus for transformative labor action. Although CTC professors hold trade union unity as a critical element of a union leader's ability to deliver a successful worker training, it is only one of two major elements of a successful labor education activity under the CTC's labor education process. Also critical to successful worker training is ensuring that all union leaders are trained labor educators.

2. Union Leaders as Labor Educators

The CTC labor education curriculum prioritizes the ideological development of worker-citizens, and thus commands union leaders to serve as labor educators to facilitate the proper ideological growth of workers. In the Course for Union Instructors, Professor Ramón Senset identifies three phases of the union leader as an educational instructor of the working class: learning (by workers), training (by union leaders) and evaluation (by the union). The mastery of these three phases lays the foundation for facilitating participatory democracy, as well as the successful ideological socialization of workers. Of these three, Professor Ramón Senset places heaviest emphasis on facilitating worker learning.

> *"Pedagogy is psychology. Content is the chicken of rice and chicken."*
> Professor Teresa Ramón Senset, ENLP Course for Union Instructors

Under CTC participatory pedagogy, the learning phrase is critical to the ideological development of the desired type of worker-citizen. In other words, it is in this phase that a union leader assists workers in forming the necessary capacities for the development of working class ideology. Hence, when Professor Ramón Senset states that "content is the chicken of rice and

chicken," it is to stress the central importance of ideologically-appropriate and credible training material. To aid educator credibility, union leaders are trained to give cultural and historical context and significance for any learning task given to workers. For example, ENLP instructors recommend that union leaders research scholarly work and find historical quotes and facts relevant to the training activity for use at the start of instruction—a technique CTC professors employed themselves each day, and prior to the introduction of every new course theme. The idea is that providing workers with informed, well-researched academic content provides legitimacy for the educational activity, and thus aids the learning process.

Moreover, a successful learning phase in the labor education process requires a system of educational methods that contribute to the workers' ability to form the convictions that orient and define their worker consciousness and conduct. Under the CTC labor education model, there are five methods available to union leaders for this purpose: persuasion, dialogue, ethical debate, critique and self-critique, and example. Those methods are set forth with a brief explanation in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4: Educational Methods for the Learning Phase[12]

Educational Method	**How It Results in the Creation of Working Class Consciousness in Workers**
Persuasion	A method of influence which reaffirms the convictions of a system of ideas and opinions that transform into valued principles and conduct.
Dialogue	A method that contributes to the formation of attitudes and behaviors of the collective individual.
Ethical Debate	A method for analyzing problems and moral concepts, with the proposition of rising to a system of principles about the base.

[12] Chart assembled from information provided in class lecture for Course for Union Instructors on September 27, 2010.

Table 2.4 (Continued)

Critique and Self-Critique	A method that contributes to the development of the workers' conscience and permits a major advance in the organization.
Example	A method that requires the labor educator to serve as a model of the morality that he or she is teaching.

CTC professor Martina Laza Figuerrero deems learning by example as the preeminent educational method of the learning phase because "to insist of others, you must demand of yourself." However, Professor Laza Figuerrero cautions that while employing any of the methods of Table 2.4, union leaders take care to develop an educational climate that fosters confidence and mutual respect among participants, and maintains the motivation of workers throughout the process.

In sum, the CTC's labor education model places heavy emphasis on a participatory pedagogy that facilitates building worker consensus by encouraging unity of thought rather than unanimity in thought. Further, in building a participatory democracy, union leaders must guarantee that workers are technically and ideologically prepared—which means that union leaders themselves must be both educated and educators, well-trained and equipped with educational methods and credible, ideologically-driven content.

Discussion

The CTC Has a Comprehensive and Extensive Labor Education System

The descriptive data presented in the results section shows an active and deeply-engrained multi-level domestic labor education program that services approximately 5 million active workers and offers specific training for 400,000 local union leaders and 5,000 full-time national union leaders. With over 300 CTC professors, not including adjuncts, on its payroll, the

CTC offers free education covering a broad curriculum of technical and theoretical courses exploring a wide range of subjects from participation to law to macro-level economic planning to historical roots of neo-liberalism. In addition to its massive education effort with respect to domestic workers, the CTC offers a systematic approach to the training of foreign union leaders in basic socialist ideology and an equally wide range of topics including transformational union leadership and tenets of participatory democracy and participative education. For these reasons, I assert that the data demonstrates that the CTC maintains a comprehensive and extensive labor education program.

The CTC is a Sub-national Agent of Education Transfer

As the primary sponsor of Cuban adult worker education and its expanded role as an international labor educator, the CTC is well-positioned to be an agent of education transfer. Further, its curricular goals substantially mirror those of Fidel Castro's original education revolution, which is known to have been transferred to other countries, such as Nicaragua, in pursuit of a socialist transformation. Table 2.5 provides a comparison of the educational pedagogy under Fidel Castro's state-sponsored educational revolution to contemporary adult worker education under the CTC.

Table 2.5: Comparison of State-Sponsored and Union-Sponsored Labor Educational Pedagogy

Fidel Castro's Educational Revolution	**CTC's Labor Educational Revolution**
State-sponsored	Union-sponsored
Target: future workers; adult workers; teachers as workers; teachers as educators	Target: adult workers; union leaders as workers; union leaders as educators
Goal: • transform workers into socialist worker-citizens; • substitute collectivism for individualism; • substitute nationalism/internationalism for American neo-colonialism	Goal: • transform union leaders into labor educators; • substitute collectivism for individualism • substitute regionalism / internationalism for American neoliberalism

Table 2.5 (Continued)

Free public education system	Free public education for Cubans; Nominal fees for foreigners
Content: Link democracy to collectivism: participatory democracy	Content: Link democracy to unity: "all learn from the others"
Educators with dual identities	Educators with dual identities
Model for transformation: participative education theory	Model for transformation: participative education theory

The adoption of Castro's educational pedagogy by neo-revolutionary states across the Americas made the Cuban state an agent of educational transfer. As Table 2.5 shows that the CTC's labor process is closely modeled on Castro's educational pedagogy, I argue that in the assumption of the state's labor education role and pedagogy, the CTC is also an agent of transfer. But, is there evidence that under the CTC's administration of foreign labor education, it creates conditions that tend to encourage the development of foreign union leaders' working class consciousness and the transfer of key ideas, institutions or practices? I assert that it does.

CTC Educators Create Conditions that Facilitate Educational Transfer

I argue that CTC professors create conditions that establish an educative culture that creates the likelihood for transmission of the CTC's labor education model. Additionally, I assert that through the use of the same educational methods they teach, CTC professors guarantee educational transfer, at least in the short term, by conditioning course certification on the direct application of all key elements of the CTC's labor education process.

From the results section, the data shows that in the CTC's labor education model, the two most important elements of a successful Cuban labor activity are a participatory pedagogy and union leaders trained as labor educators. Thus, when discussing whether educational transfer occurs, I look to the conditions created by CTC professors for the development of foreign union leaders in those elements. Similarly, in evaluating whether the educative culture encourages the

adoption of the CTC's participatory pedagogy, I place focus on trade union unity, identified in the data as fundamental to the process. And finally, I will discuss the ample evidence of the CTC's development of foreign union leaders as labor educators, which is in fact the title of one of the courses under study. In demonstrating that educational transfer occurs through these key elements, I point specifically to the CTC educator's use of an important class activity: the final group project, completion of which qualifies union leaders for program certification.

Although the participatory pedagogy content taught by CTC professors is arguably enough to establish an educative culture that favors the ideological development of foreign union leaders, in concluding that educational transfer occurs, I rely heavily on the CTC's in-class practice of its own pedagogy in order to guarantee that foreign union leaders apply the CTC educational methods, at least in the classroom. More specifically, I point to the CTC instructor's use of a mixed-nation group project—a required element for graduation candidacy in both courses—to compel foreign union leaders to learn and apply key ideas, institutions and practices contained in the course content. If a union leader failed to participate, he or she was expelled from the program and prohibited from certification. The final group project for both courses was essentially the same. The specific example used to support my argument below is from the Course on Political Development of Union Leaders for Trade Union Action.

CTC professors assigned union leaders, by country affiliation, to groups composed of at least three nations. Each group was required to (1) identify, evaluate and compare the threats and opportunities facing labor movements in each of the represented countries; (2) identify the strengths and weaknesses for trade union leadership in each member's labor organization, in the region (the Americas) and in the global context; (3) generate "elaborate action plans to harness union leadership in the current context, taking the opportunity to deepen the class struggle

against the exploiting class and strengthen trade union unity in order to create political-ideological changes both inside and outside" each group's labor organizations; (4) offer some conclusions about the possibilities of unifying the respective organizations within the groups in order to transform the trade union movement and "promote trade union and popular action for integration both in thought and action." As a representative of the United States, I was teamed with union leaders from one ALBA member state, Bolivia, and one non-member state, Colombia. Tables 2.6 and 2.7 show our final written submission for graduation candidacy. As I will discuss shortly, completion of the final project also required an oral, instructional component.

Table 2.6: Final Group Project for Bolivia, Colombia and United States Alliance: Threats and Opportunities

Threats	Opportunities
Lack of workers' consciousness for transforming the labor movement	Rising unemployment is a cause for which we can promote worker unity in a class struggle
Politicization of the objective of the union movement	A time of crisis in capitalism is an opportunity to convince workers that another economic system is possible and better

Table 2.6 continued

Individualism as an ideology	It is time for unity with respect for the defense of workers
Social dialogue scenarios have no agenda and no results due to lack of political will by government and enterprise	Regional communication between our unions in the Americas in order to unify the working class through affiliation with the World Union Federation (FSM)
A great gulf between international practice and ILO standards and legislation on the right to organize	Update the call for unified action between the unions in the region using the website: http://encuentrosindical.org/
Criminalization of unionism	Reporting acts against democratic and human rights
Militarization of society/region against social and political organizations and movements	Unity of action with the Carácas Manifesto against military bases

Table 2.7: Final Group Project for Bolivia, Colombia and United States Alliance: Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths	Weaknesses
Participation in collective learning processes (attendance at ENLP)	Lack of working class consciousness
Access to means of communication to maintain contact and exchanges with different organizations	Lack of effective coordination and communication
Trade Union Meeting of Our America (ESNA) – Future institution of labor movement building	Current jobs without rights

Again, from the results section we know that the two most important elements of the CTC's labor education process are a participatory pedagogy and union leaders trained as labor educators. Thus, in using the final group activity to determine whether educational transfer occurs, I look to the conditions created by CTC professors for the development of foreign union leaders in those two elements. So, in evaluating whether the final group project encouraged the adoption of the CTC's participatory pedagogy, I place focus on trade union unity, identified by the CTC as fundamental to the process. I assert that the final group project forced each team of foreign union leaders to apply and achieve the four types of unity in the CTC labor education process (Figure 2.1).

Using my team as an example, we were immediately obliged to achieve *unity of action* when we were tasked with coming to an agreement with respect to how to complete the assignment. This involved differences of opinions on when to meet (many union leaders had a compulsion for using non-class time to dance in Havana nightclubs), how long to meet, or whether to just divide the tasks for individual completion. We achieved unity of action when we finally decided—at a Havana nightclub—that each member would research his or her own country, find an appropriate historical quote in the library to introduce our country's predicament, then meet at the end of the week to discuss our individual results for compilation.

Unity of situation occurred at the end of the following week when we finally reached consensus on which matched pairs of our nation-specific threats, opportunities, strengths and weaknesses we wanted to include in the written document, and which of those we would use to train our fellow classmates during the final oral component of the exercise at the conclusion of the semester. *Unity of structure* was attained when we agreed on the educational methods we would use to train classmates on the issues facing labor movements in our nation states and coalition. For example, in completion of this element, we decided on a lecture format followed by a short question and answer period as the most appropriate learning method. Finally, realization of *organic unity* was achieved when we agreed early in the process on how we would reach consensus. Given that there were twice as many union leaders from Colombia than Bolivia, and I was the only representative from the United States, we decided that each country would decide its contribution by majority rule, then all group decisions were done by simple majority, one country one vote.

Finally, in my conclusion that CTC educators created conditions that would tend to develop union leaders as labor educators—the second key element of the CTC labor education model—I point to the obvious: 200 hours of class instruction, 120 of which were in a single course entitled Course for Union Instructors. The course subjected foreign union leaders to hours of daily training directly on the technical and ideological requirements for union leaders to become labor educators of the working class in our own countries, regionally and internationally. Class coursework also included extensive training in what educational tools to use in helping workers reach consensus, as well as how to determine that consensus has been reached. Moreover, under the conditions of the CTC classroom instruction, every foreign union leader had to traverse the three phases of labor educators: we *learned* (as a worker-citizens seeking

education from the CTC), *trained* (as educators of our classmates during our class presentations) and *evaluated* (each other's presentations). Mastery of the three phases of a labor educator was a condition of passing the course for certification. I end the discussion by noting that one union leader did, in fact, fail the course because—in the words of the CTC instructor who had to explain the absence of said student—of "bad behavior and failure to lead by moral example," which we know from the results section is one of the most important educational tools in the learning phase of the CTC's labor education process. So important, in fact, that it resulted not only in expulsion from the class, but rumored deportation from the country.

Conclusion

As only the 23rd U.S. citizen to ever graduate from a program at the ENLP, this article represents data gathered through a unique opportunity for a U.S. citizen to study union-sponsored labor education as a participant within the CTC's institutional walls. With one union leader for every four workers in an active workforce of five million, the CTC makes a substantial effort in providing formal labor education to union leaders at all levels. Moreover, descriptive data regarding the expansive nature of the CTC's labor education programs for Cubans and foreign union leaders fills an empirical gap about the role of union-sponsored education, especially since the union assumed the primary role of labor educator from the state in the 1970s.

Additionally, the study uses a modernized approach to add to our understanding of the international flow of educational ideas by focusing on the union, a sub-national actor, as an agent of educational transfer with the potential to impact models of education in the industrial relations context. I rely on descriptive and empirical data to argue that CTC educators create conditions that facilitate the learning of key elements of the CTC's labor education process, including participatory pedagogy, and the concept of union leaders as labor educators. What is more, key

to the CTC's ability to transfer its ideas, institutions and practices to foreign union leaders is a commitment to the use of its own model to instruct and to compel adoption and application Cuban liberation pedagogy.

APPENDIX B

CONVOCATORIA

CURSO DE INSTRUCTORES SINDICALES

La Secretaría Regional América de la Federación Sindical Mundial y la Central de Trabajadores de Cuba, a través de la Escuela Nacional de Cuadros Sindicales "Lázaro Peña", convocan a las organizaciones sindicales de América Latina y el Caribe a participar en el Curso de Instructores Sindicales que se efectuará del 20 de septiembre al 8 de octubre de 2010 en la Escuela Nacional de Cuadros Sindicales "Lázaro Peña" de la CTC en Ciudad de La Habana, Cuba.

Objetivos Generales:

- ✓ *Contribuir en la formación de instructores sindicales para enfrentar los retos y las demandas del sindicalismo latinoamericano en el contexto actual.*
- ✓ *Valorar la importancia de la capacitación sindical en la coyuntura política actual.*
- ✓ *Socializar el conocimiento de la realidad latinoamericana desde el punto de vista sindical, laboral, político, económico y social.*

Los temas que se impartirán son los siguientes:

1. *La dimensión política de la capacitación sindical. Su inserción en el contexto latinoamericano actual.*
2. *El instructor sindical, un formador de conciencia de clases.*
3. *Estrategias didácticas en el proceso de capacitación sindical.*
4. *Bases metodológicas de la capacitación sindical: la dialéctica aplicada a la pedagogía participativa.*
5. *El sindicalismo latinoamericano y la coyuntura neoliberal actual.*
6. *El proceso de integración en América Latina. Una perspectiva diferente. El*
7. *liderazgo transformacional en la labor sindical.*
8. *La unidad: reto para el movimiento sindical latinoamericano y caribeño. La*
9. *crisis, estrategia global e impacto en el movimiento sindical.*
10. *La Federación Sindical Mundial. Estrategias y acciones.*
11. *El proyecto socialista cubano. La obra de una Revolución.*

Se realizarán desde el punto de vista curricular, para complementar el conocimiento de la realidad cubana, visitas a lugares de interés y encuentros con dirigentes sindicales cubanos.

La cuota de inscripción es de $ 420.00 CUC (moneda convertible cubana), debiendo cancelar ésta en la carpeta del Hotel "Puesta del Sol" a su llegada, la misma incluye el transporte desde y hacia el aeropuerto de La Habana, hospedaje, desayuno, almuerzo, cena, la docencia y la transportación a las actividades incluidas en el programa oficial del curso. El cambio de moneda se sugiere realizarla a su llegada al Aeropuerto Internacional "José Martí".

El Hotel "Puesta del Sol" es una instalación de la Central de Trabajadores de Cuba, se encuentra ubicado en Calle 264 Esq. a 33, San Agustín, La Lisa, Cdad. Habana, Cuba, Email: puestadelsol@hoteles.ctc.cu; Telfs: (537) 261-7022/262-7605.

El arribo a La Habana está previsto a partir del día 18 de Septiembre y el regreso a sus respectivos países hasta el 10 de octubre, espacio de tiempo incluido en el costo de la matricula. De permanecer más tiempo del señalado antes o después

de la fecha fijada, los gastos correrán a cargo de cada participante debiendo cancelarlo al Hotel por los precios que normalmente oferta sus servicios esta instalación.

Se solicita a las organizaciones que en el proceso de selección se priorice la designación de compañeros y compañeras con aptitudes y condiciones de salud, que le permitan efectuar, sin limitaciones, el programa del curso y desempeñar posteriormente las funciones de instructores en sus respectivas organizaciones. Los convocantes se reservan el derecho de admisión de las matriculas solicitadas.

Se admitirán las solicitudes hasta el 5 de septiembre de 2010 y se confirmará a las organizaciones solicitantes su inscripción y matrícula antes del 10 de septiembre. Sin la recepción de esta confirmación no será posible acceder al curso.

Cada participante debe enviar los datos siguientes:

- *Nombre y apellidos de cada participante.*
- *Organización sindical a la que pertenece y*
- *cargo. Correo electrónico.*
- *Número de pasaporte.*
- *Ciudadanía.*
- *Fecha de nacimiento.*
- *País.*
- *Fecha y hora de arribo a La Habana.*
- *Línea aérea.*

La información se enviará a:

Secretaría Regional América
Federación Sindical Mundial
Teléfono: (53 7) 271-4345
Fax: 53 7 273-5921
E mail: secamfsm@ceniai.inf.cu
martha@fsm.ctc.cu; gilda@fsm.ctc.cu

Central de Trabajadores de Cuba
Teléfono: (537) 2710772
Fax: (537)
E mail: 1mayo@ctc.cu; mayomy@escuela.ctc.cu;

Fraternalmente,

Ramón Cardona Nuevo
Secretario Región Américas
Federación Sindical Mundial

Raymundo Navarro Fernández
Miembro Secretariado Nacional
Central de Trabajadores de Cuba

APPENDIX C

CONVOCATORIA

CURSO DE ACTUALIZACIÓN POLÍTICA PARA LA ACCIÓN SINDICAL

La Federación Sindical Mundial en las Américas, y la Central de Trabajadores de Cuba, a través de la Escuela Nacional de Cuadros Sindicales "Lázaro Peña", dando continuidad a la preparación de los Dirigentes Sindicales de América Latina y el Caribe, convocan al Curso de "Actualización Política para la Acción Sindical" a efectuarse del ***15 al 26 de noviembre de 2010*** *en la Escuela Sindical de la CTC con sede en Ciudad de La Habana, Cuba*

Los temas a impartir serán:

- *Crisis del Capitalismo global. Impacto en los trabajadores y en el movimiento sindical.*
- *Tendencias de la globalización para el siglo XXI*
- *Procesos de Integración en América y el Caribe. Fortalezas y debilidades.*
- *Los Sistemas Políticos en América Latina. Una mirada al escenario geopolítico en la Región.*
- *Impacto de la crisis en el empleo.*
- *Relaciones EEUU-América Latina. Maniobras para profundizar y ampliar el hegemonismo imperial: La militarización como herramienta para ello.*
- *Relaciones Unión Europea-América Latina. Los acuerdos de Asociación Económica y sus consecuencias futuras para la región latinoamericana.*
- *Movimiento Sindical Internacional y de América. Procesos de Unidad.*
- *Liderazgo transformacional.*
- *Estrategias y acción de la FSM en América.*
- *Organización Internacional del Trabajo (OIT). Actuación de la OIT en el ámbito Internacional ante la Crisis.*
- *Realidad cubana de hoy y sus perspectivas.*
- *Taller: Alternativas del sindicalismo latinoamericano ante la crisis actual del capitalismo contemporáneo.*

Este curso será impartido por profesores y conferencistas de alta calificación.

El egresado tendrá la posibilidad de obtener Diploma y Certificado de aprovechamiento.
Los aspirantes aprobados a matricular en el presente curso, deberán cumplir la disciplina y demás exigencias académicas establecidas por la Escuela Nacional de Cuadros Sindicales ¨Lázaro Peña¨

El costo de la matrícula es de $300.00 CUC (moneda convertible cubana) que incluye el transporte desde y hacia el aeropuerto de La Habana, el hospedaje en el Hotel "Puesta del Sol", desayuno, almuerzo, la docencia y la transportación a las actividades incluidas en el programa oficial del curso. El cambio de moneda se sugiere realizarla a su llegada al Aeropuerto Internacional "José Martí".
El Hotel "Puesta del Sol" es una instalación de la Central de Trabajadores de Cuba, el que se encuentra ubicado en Calle 264 Esq. A 33, San Agustín, La Lisa, Cdad. Habana, Cuba, Email: puestadelsol@hoteles.ctc.cu; Telfs: (537) 261-7022/262-7605.

Las organizaciones y/o interesados enviarán carta de solicitud especificando:

- *Nombres y Apellidos de cada participante.*
- *Organización Sindical a la que pertenece y cargo.*

- *Correo electrónico.*
- *Número de pasaporte.*
- *País.*

Los convocantes se reservan el derecho de admisión de las matrículas solicitadas cuyo cupo es limitado.

*Se admitirán las solicitudes **hasta el 25 de octubre** y se confirmará a las organizaciones solicitantes su inscripción y matrícula **antes del 30 de octubre**. Sin la recepción de esta confirmación, no será posible acceder al curso.*

*Se solicita a las organizaciones que en el proceso de selección se priorice la designación de compañeros con edad, condiciones de salud y aptitudes que le permitan ejecutar, sin limitaciones, el programa del curso. Los aspirantes aceptados deberán remitir **antes del 10 de octubre**, la fecha, hora y línea aérea de arribo a la Habana.*

*El arribo a La Habana está previsto sea a partir del **13 de noviembre** y el regreso a sus respectivos países, hasta el **28 de noviembre,** de permanecer más tiempo deberán cancelar al Hotel los días excedidos por los precios que normalmente oferta sus servicios esta instalación.*

Las solicitudes deberán ser enviadas a:

Secretaría Regional América
Federación Sindical Mundial
Teléfono: (53 7) 271-4345
Fax: 53 7 273-5921
E mail: secamfsm@ceniai.inf.cu
martha@fsm.ctc.cu; gilda@fsm.ctc.cu

Central de Trabajadores de Cuba
Teléfono: (537) 2710772
Fax: (537)
E mail: 1mayo@ctc.cu; mayomy@escuela.ctc.cu;

Fraternalmente,

Ramón Cardona Nuevo
Secretario Región Américas
Federación Sindical Mundial

Raymundo Navarro Fernández
Miembro Secretariado Nacional
Central de Trabajadores de Cuba

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Chapter Three

The Union's Dual Role in Cuban Labor Restructuring

In May 2011, the Cuban Communist Party adopted a set of socio-economic guidelines that emerged after a nationwide mass consultation between the state and workers. As the Cuban political economy took another swing toward market liberalization, some of the reforms have been seen by outside commentators as an erosion of worker labor protections.[1] Even on the island, there are concerns. For instance, one of the most worker-contested[2] policies has been the state's workforce reduction plan, seeking to shift 20 per cent of workers from guaranteed security of state employment to the growing non-state sector. Even as the CTC (*Central de Trabajadores de Cuba*), Cuba's official trade union federation, contends with worker concerns, it has continually supported the state's policy. This article focuses on early implementation of labor restructuring to examine the CTC's dual role as state mobilizing agent and defender of workers' rights. I argue that, notwithstanding active support for state-initiated reform that has contradicted workers' immediate interests, the CTC has asserted critical independence from the Cuban party-state in representing workers' rights in several regards.

It is well settled that traditional communist unions are tasked with dual roles arising from simultaneous obligations to support the party-state's economic policy and to represent workers'

[1] For example, Geoff Thale of the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) expressed concern that new labor code governing the private sector "does not specify how employees negotiate collective contracts with their employers in order to protect their economic interests, and it does not distinguish between the interests of the employer and the employee in this sector" [Source: Washington Office on Latin America, http://www.wola.org/commentary/cuba_s_new_labor_code_and_foreign_investment_law_implications_for_workers (Accessed May 29, 2016)].

[2] For example, Ludlam (2013) points to workers' "blunt criticisms" in a "Citizens' Journalism" section in the CTC's newspaper, *Trabajadore*s. For a thorough discussion of the expression of worker voice during the recent market liberalization period, see Lee (2016a).

interests (Evenson 2003). Sometimes referred to as 'mediators' responsible for resolving contradictions between the party and civil society (Ashwin 1999), unions in most single-party states, including China (Kong 2006; Xiaoyang and Chan 2005) and Vietnam (Kong 2006), are most often viewed negatively as 'transmission belts' existing solely to promote state interests. The CTC has weathered the same criticism. For example, Fuller (1992) found that from 1960 through 1970, the CTC was a mere 'mobilizing agent' for state economic policy, lacking commitment to workplace democracy (Fuller 1986; Alexander 2002).

There is no dispute that the CTC is constitutionally obligated to share a close relationship with the party-state (República de Cuba 2002), or that it fulfills that task. For example, it is common for CTC leaders to simultaneously hold high-level government offices, and there is at least some admitted Party influence in the election of CTC officers (Evenson 2003). However, there is no consensus on whether the CTC does more than play at its other role: defender of workers' rights. Some scholars question the CTC's independence (Fernandes 2003), while others point to the CTC's financial autonomy and lack of dues check-off rights as evidence of self-governance (Evenson 2003). Scholars who view the CTC as having at least some degree of independence assert that the it began to show "critical distance" from the state as early as the 1990s (Dilla 1999). However, even researchers from this camp acknowledge that recent labor law reform "challenges the unions in their dual roles of developing the Revolution's 'socialist state of workers' in general, and of protecting workers rights in particular" (Ludlam 2013). Thus, this article's examination of the union's role in contemporary labor restructuring fills a gap in empirical data with respect to the CTC's status as a 'two-way transmission belt' responsible for resolving contradictions arising between the state and workers during reform.

Methodology

Because of its national economic importance and union density, Matanzas, the second largest province in Cuba, is ideal for examining the role of the CTC during labor restructuring. Comprised of 13 municipalities, Matanzas is responsible for 4.6 per cent of total national production, and 45 per cent of the income generated by the tourist industry, a sector to which most workers displaced in the state sector are expected to be redeployed. Moreover, 17 of the CTC's 19 affiliated trade unions[3] have branches in Matanzas, servicing over 290,000 members[4] through 5,828 local affiliates, with 23,000 leaders at the local level. Table 3.1 shows state sector production by product.

Table 3.1: Production in Matanzas Province (reported in 2011)

Product	Percentage of National Production (%)
Electricity	25
Crude Oil	37.8
Natural Gas	41
Fertilizer	100
Mixed Fertilizer	36
Citrus	71
Cow Milk	12.2

This article presents qualitative data collected using three methods: semi-structured interviews with union leaders, participant observation of workers in their assemblies, and content analysis of union documents. Specifically, the author conducted a one-on-one interview with a key CTC official involved with the workforce reduction process at the national level. This semi-structured interview employed open-ended questions about the CTC's support for workforce reduction, workers' response, and the impact of restructuring on workers' rights. Additionally, a

[3] For a review of national trade unions under the CTC umbrella by industry, please refer to Table 1.2 (Lee 2016a).
[4] Nationwide, Cuba has approximately 5 million active workers. The CTC reports a national union density of 95 per cent.

3-hour panel interview with 9 of the 17 CTC affiliates in the region was conducted at the CTC's Matanzas office on the topic of implementation at the local level. To situate this within the mass consultation process described in Chapter 1, all interviews occurred during the representative participation of Stages 3 and 5, in which policy reform negotiation is conducted by worker-elected representatives of parliament and worker mass organizations.

To ground the interview data, the author attended worker assembly meetings at two state enterprises in the vital tourist sector: the Museum of Slavery and *Las Cuevas* restaurant, both chosen because workers were actively engaged in the restructuring of their enterprises. Finally, to understand existing worker protections and the impact of ongoing labor reform, the author participated in an educational exchange with Cuban jurists. In conjunction with the exchange, the CTC provided internal training materials, including paper and digital copies of the constantly evolving labor code up to that point (*Código de Trabajo* 2011), as well as complementary labor law materials. All research occurred in March 2011, three months following the conclusion of the national mass consultation and two months prior to the Party's adoption of national guidelines governing labor restructuring.

Results

"It's an intense process for trade unions and lawyers"

Union responsibility for protecting workers during labor law reform is dictated by the Cuban constitution, labor code and complementary legislation (Martínez-Navarro 2009). Article 16 of the constitution restricts the state's unilateral imposition of economic policy by granting workers an affirmative right to play an "active, conscious" role in economic decision-making. The most significant formal participatory mechanisms underlying that right are collective

bargaining, enterprise-based worker assemblies and national mass consultations (Evenson 2003). Collective bargaining takes place largely at the enterprise level, while workers' assemblies are used for decision-making at both the enterprise and national level. The mass consultation is a process that allows the state and workers 16 years or older to negotiate issues of great national import (Fuller 1992), including the new guidelines framing restructuring in the state sector (Lee 2016a, Ludlam 2009).

In addition to constitutionally-based participatory rights, since 1985 the labor code has established that any proposed terms to a collective agreement may not be implemented, and have no legal force, unless and until approved by worker assemblies (Ludlam 2009). Moreover, complementary legislation codifies extensive collective bargaining rights, requiring a collective agreement in every workplace. Broad subjects of bargaining include management of the enterprise, promotion and hiring procedures, work schedules, incentive distribution, and even methods for tip redistribution (Martínez-Navarro 2009).

Given this extensive body of codified labor protections, including a constitutional right to work, what protections are afforded workers impacted by state labor restructuring? If the CTC is a mouthpiece for validating unilateral regime choices, then we would expect to see highly unpopular decisions like labor restructuring to be muscled through with little challenge. However, empowered workers who can successfully challenge state-driven reforms in a communist system (Lee 2016a) may indicate that the union is functioning in a dual role, especially in the presence of pervasive rank-and-file education (Lee 2016b).

Lawyers explained that enterprise-level redeployments are governed by a socialist doctrine called the 'suitability principle'. Under it, determination of which workers have demonstrated 'suitability' (and thus retain their jobs) and which are labeled redundant (and thus

made 'available' for redeployment) is considered a matter of constitutional law. Final decision-making authority rests with enterprise management. However, all suitability determinations are subject to recommendation by a tri-partite advisory committee (*comité de expertos*) in each enterprise comprised of five or seven members: one appointed by the enterprise, one appointed by the local union, and the others selected by workers. One elected *comité* member described the honor as "prestigious" and as reflecting a "capacity for deep analysis." Jurists described the suitability decision-making process in detail:

> "Initially, management decides how many workers it needs to reduce. Heads of the enterprise are held to a standardized process; it is not arbitrary, but rather a process that must be transparent and duly fulfilled. Management's plan is taken to the worker assembly for consultation and a vote. The *comité de expertos* then decides which of the workers is 'suitable', and remains in the job. The head of the enterprise is capable of determining which employees are 'suitable', but should not make the decision without the *comité's* recommendation. Notification is provided to affected workers in writing when they are made available, with reasons delineated by the enterprise manager. Implementation and control of the process is important, including at the grass roots level."

Lawyers referenced other constitutional, statutory and procedural protections related to suitability determinations by management and/or *comités.* For example, the process must be preceded by payroll analysis and working mothers on maternity leave or other social benefit cannot be considered 'available'. There are also special protections for the disabled and aged workers with 35+ years of service. Additionally, a 'non-discrimination principle' prohibits gender or other forms discrimination in the determination of available workers.

This extensive collection of rights is enforced by an enterprise-based grievance mechanism. Article 5 of Decree-Law 176 (MTSS 1997) establishes the 'Grass Roots Labor Justice Board' (*Organa de Justicia Laboral de Base*, or 'OJLB'), which asserts jurisdiction over disciplinary actions, violations of collective bargaining agreements, discrimination claims under

Article 40 of the constitution, as well as disputes over suitability determinations. Each OJLB has three permanent members:[5] one representative of enterprise administration, one union representative and one rank-and-file member selected by the workers. OJLB hearings are open to the public and its decisions are appealable to the municipal court system. Lawyers confirmed that workers adversely impacted by suitability determinations were filing claims before the OJLB and municipal courts; however, no records of the claims were readily available at the time of inquiry. Hence, for additional detail about worker disenfranchisement with restructuring, the author interviewed union and worker participants in Matanzas.

"The process is complicated, but we are looking for social protection for all."

During an interview, one Cuban jurist stressed, "active participation at all levels of the trade union is needed to represent workers in contradictions that arise during the process." When asked about constitutional requirements to consult workers before reform implementation, the CTC national official stated:

> "Workers were consulted on the need for change before the labor restructuring process began. The national rollout of the process began on January 4, 2011. The original plan was to do it in stages, starting with five different state entities in the first stage. The process is going to be permanently monitored by the trade union and the state."

Explaining the impact of the restructuring process on workers' protections under enterprise collective agreements, the official acknowledged substantial challenges:

> "Many protective labor laws are difficult to keep during the transition, so many of the collective agreements are under review. While individual interests of workers will be impacted by the restructuring process, under the 'principle of need'

[5] It has been reported that the 2013 labor code includes increased worker presence on OJLB boards, and that "between the first stage of the OJLB and the municipal courts, a new stage would give either party the right to appeal to higher management, which must 'consult' with the unions" (Ludlam 2013).

> [another doctrine of Cuban socialist ideology] the state is obliged to keep social, rather than individual, interests in mind."

Moreover, when asked to respond to reports that workers had been bringing suitability claims to the OJLB and municipal courts, both the official and Cuban jurists acknowledged the existence of substantial worker fears:

> "There are many doubts and concerns, but top leadership says it's a process that should not be hasty, but must be done. We expect the non-state sector to grow in a controlled manner. Workers can join cooperatives, work in agriculture, rent homes in addition to being self-employed. In other words, additional non-state opportunities exist."
>
> "The union expects a lot of workers to use the OJLBs in the workplace. I've personally witnessed workers crying throughout the process."

Despite the CTC's continued support for state policy in the face of worker dissatisfaction, there was also evidence of defense of workers' rights. Specifically, it is widely believed that substantial delay in plan implementation was the result of union appeals to slow the process. When asked about this perceived break with the state, the CTC official carefully stated:

> "There have been some problems with implementation, and as a result, the process is being rescheduled. By original design, it would have been a one-year process, but now the delay could mean the entire process will take up to five years. In cases where the process was not implemented correctly, the parties have to return to a place where they can restore legality."

The CTC's appeal to the state on the workers' behalf was substantiated in an interview with a CTC lawyer:

> "[W]orker concerns had been collected during monthly worker meetings held at the end of 2010, and those have been forwarded to top leaders. The worker opinions and subsequent proposals will be debated at the Party Congress."

Indeed, in his address to the Communist Party Congress just one month later, Cuban President Raúl Castro expressly acknowledged worker disenfranchisement and promised that the restructuring process going forward would be gradual in nature, and at a pace determined by

"[the state's] capacity to create the necessary conditions for its full implementation" (Castro 2011). Other scholars similarly assert that the state's change to the pace of reform occurred "when unions flagged up real obstacles or failures to protect workers' rights" (Ludlam 2013). Slowing down the state's restructuring plan by five years in support of workers' interests is compelling, but not the sole evidence of the CTC's commitment to defense of workers' rights. The CTC is also actively involved in training workers with respect to their procedural rights in the reform process. Specifically, during worksite visits to the Museum of Slavery and restaurant *Las Cuevas,* workers at both enterprises reported receiving fully-funded, formal union training administered by the CTC[6] on the procedural requirements of the restructuring process.

Conclusion

The defense of labor rights during market liberalization has been difficult for unions in most political economies. But, for those in systems with high levels of labor protection and constitutionally-mandated dual identities, managing the contradictions of state and worker interests during reform can be as complicated as the roles themselves. After decades as a perceived mouthpiece for state interests, the CTC has since demonstrated crucial independence, allowing it to simultaneously support tough state reform policy while defending workers' rights. Although the 2013 labor law reform is expected to bring even greater challenges for the union in its dual role in the engine of the Cuban industrial relations system, there is growing evidence that its 'two-way transmission belt' functions securely enough to carry it through impending rough terrain.

[6] For a detailed analysis of the role of Cuban trade unions as labor educators, see Lee (2016b).

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