

**Vietnam, China and Cuba Foreign Policies
towards the United States.
A comparative analysis in Conflict / Cooperation.**

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Abstract

1. Note about this report

This report is aimed to present the elaborated conclusions of my research.

The large and diverse amount of information I have gathered covers a wide variety of primary and secondary sources:

- 1) Over 20 books from IDE's library and 45 selected articles published in specialized journals;
- 2) documents and other materials collected in Vietnam and China research institutes, think tanks, government offices, political and social organizations;
- 3) field research interviews with 44 international relations and political officials, government experts, academics, NGOs, churches, in Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Beijing and Shanghai; and with research fellows at IDE.

This report presents the main subjects, perspectives and common bilateral agendas of these three countries (Vietnam, China and Cuba) with the United States. This report may be further elaborated in a book. However, it may be published as a research report advance.

Rafael M. Hernandez

Havana, December, 2014.

2. Objectives and problems

Objective:

This is a comparative study on Vietnam, China and Cuba foreign policies towards the U.S, with a focus on their conflict/cooperation, and the “human rights/democracy” issue.

Problems

- 1) What are the diverse political circumstances and factors that have shaped Vietnam, China and Cuba foreign policies and influenced their evolution in terms of conflict/cooperation with the United States?
- 2) To what extent and why H.R./democracy is a contentious issue on the bilateral agenda of these Asian countries and Cuba with the US?
- 3) What are the lessons to be learned from a comparative analysis of the selected Asian case-studies and Cuba to foresee the evolution of the US-Cuba conflict and eventually improve cooperation and negotiations?

Specific tasks and problems to study:

- 1) Evolution of factors and issues (domestic and international), that influenced these countries’ foreign policies in the pre- and post-Cold War period.
- 2) Interaction between a) these countries’ regional and international relations and b) their relations with the US.
- 3) Bilateral dynamics with the US (progress, setbacks). The role of third parties.
- 4) Good (and bad) practices that facilitated (or harmed) cooperation before (and after) normalization.
- 5) Significance and political weight of the human rights (HR)/democracy on their US bilateral agendas. Cooperation experiences.
- 6) Roles of political actors (lobbies, émigrés, NGOs, businesses, congress members) in the US policy towards these countries. Vietnam, China and Cuba perceptions and interactions with them.
- 7) Views of interpreters and actors from these countries about relations with the US (experts, think-tanks, government agencies, policy-makers, NGOs, churches)
- 8) Cooperation experiences that may be considered or applied for political purpose.

3. Analytical framework and methodology

Sample criteria: China, Vietnam, Cuba.

The original project was aimed to discuss four Asian countries: Vietnam, China, Myanmar and Singapore. It has not been possible to conduct the field research in the two latter cases. The comparative analysis presented here is restricted to China, Vietnam and Cuba. The other two will be postponed until it is possible to collect the field research data.

Vietnam, Cuba and China have some similarities and differences. The main ones considered to be chosen as comparable test-cases are the following.

Commonalities:

The three cases are socialist systems, led by Communist parties that played a key role in radical national liberation and socialist revolutions, not as a product of post-World War II political divisions and the bipolar international system, or the rise of the USSR.

The three political systems were established during the Cold War: Vietnam (1945-54), China (1949), Cuba (1959), and evolved since then.

They have played a very active role in the international and regional contexts (Asia, Latin America).

They shared a history of conflict (including military clash or even war) with the United States.

They have implemented market/private oriented reforms: China (1978), Vietnam (1986), Cuba (2011)

Their bilateral agendas with the US include opposed views over the Issues of democracy and human rights.

Differences:

Very disparate physical sizes: geographic extension, population, and socioeconomic development index.

Population, Size, Human Development

http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR2013_EN_Summary.pdf

Country	Population (millions)	Size (thousand km ²)	Human Development
China	1353.600 (#1)	9706.961(#3)	#101
Vietnam	89.730 (#13)	331.210(#66)	#127
Cuba	11.249 (#76)	110.860(#106)	#59

SOURCE: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/data>, <http://www.prb.org/publications/datasheets/2014/2014-world-population-data-sheet.aspx>, <http://alldownunder.com/australian-facts/compare-size.htm>, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_and_dependencies_by_area

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Regional geopolitics. China (East Asia) and Vietnam (South East Asia) share a common border, but belong to different subregional areas; Cuba is in the US sphere of influence, and shares a common maritime border.

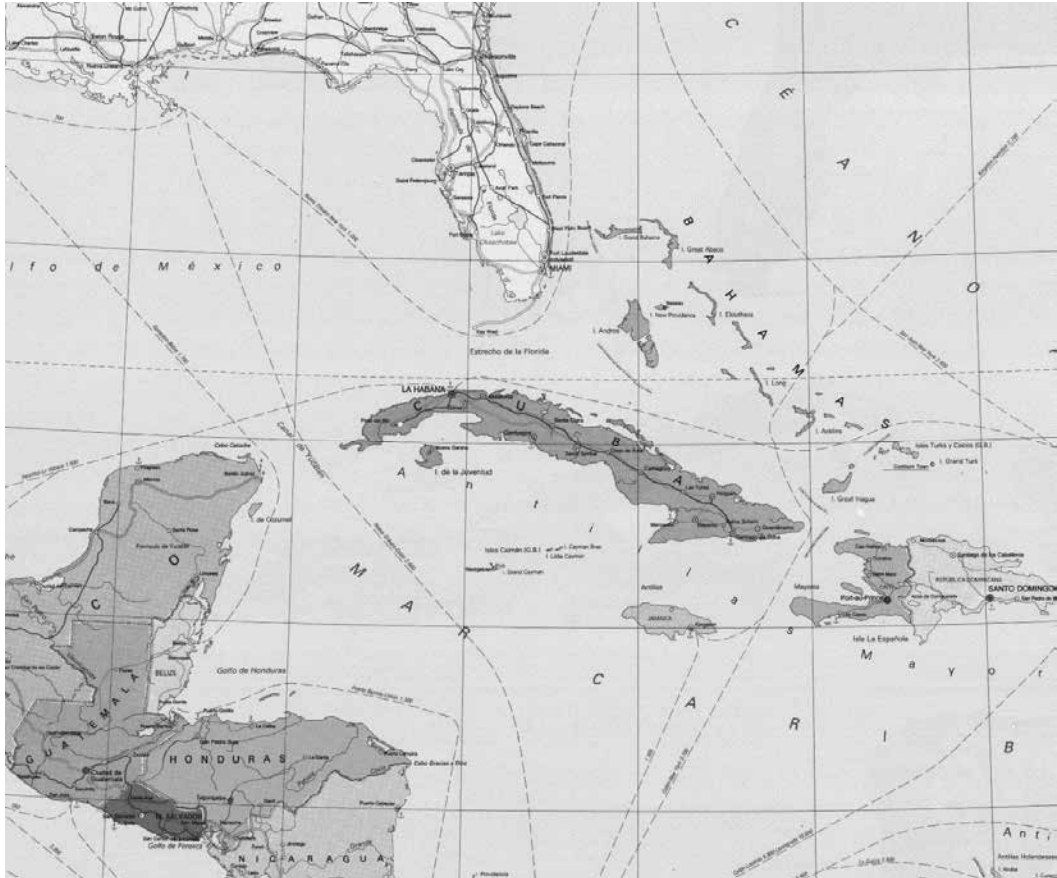
Geopolitics. Borders, Neighbors. U.S.

Country	Region	Borders	Neighbors	Distance/ Time to US
China	East Asia	14	Bhutan, Myanmar, India, Kazakhstan, Afghanistan, PDRK, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Laos, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Vietnam	6277/13h.
Vietnam	South East Asia	3	China, Laos, Cambodia (Thailand, Myanmar)	6658/16h.
Cuba	Caribbean / Gulf of Mexico	5	United States, Mexico, Jamaica, Haiti, Bahamas (maritime boundaries)	90 miles/ 50 minutes.

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_and_territories_by_land_borders

Cuba, U.S.

CUBA AND THE GULF OF MEXICO



Source: Instituto de Geografia Tropical

Conflict/cooperation history with the US is not the same. China and Vietnam conflicts with the US are relatively more recent and shorter than Cuba's, which is older than the revolution and the socialist system.

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Market/private oriented reforms. The three cases have implemented reform policies during different time periods, and with a different scope and degree of economic liberalization, political transformations, and social changes.

Report

1. Analytical framework

1-1 A paradigm to study the foreign policy making in a communist political system

This is a multidisciplinary approach, that combines different fields: Political Science, International Relations, History, and Theory of Negotiation. In terms of focus definition, its perspective is the construction of a comparative analysis on foreign policy making in communist political systems, its actors, structures, national interests, domestic and international context, visions and principles.

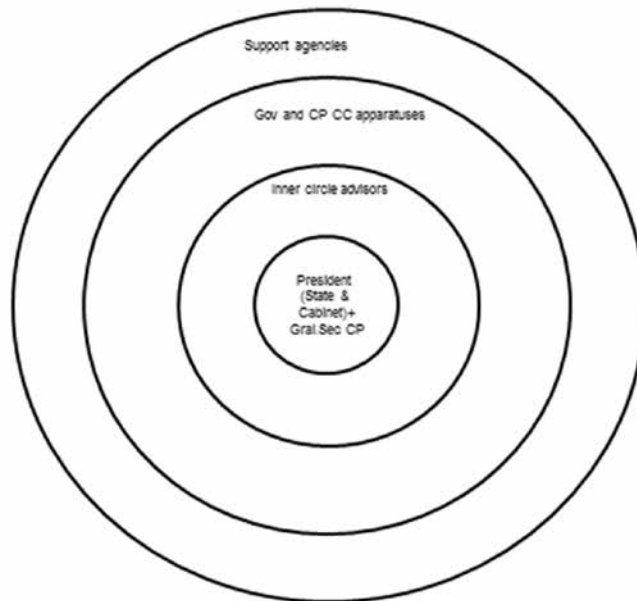
The following graphic representations describe the main concepts and issues involved in this foreign policy making process, to be used for a comparative purpose.

Few authors have reviewed the interpretations of Cuban policies after the Cold War (Dominguez, 1989; Fernández, 1992). Fernandez points out the importance of considering the reaction to the international environment to understand the processes of Cuban outreach, as well as other factors of its foreign policy since the 60s, such as the charismatic leadership and ideology, the political system, and relations with the superpowers. According to this author, the decision-making power in foreign policy is highly centralized --as it is usual “in most Third World countries” (p. 60), and lies in the President, above other state institutions and the Party. But decision-making and implementation is neither linear nor monolithic, so that the various individuals and institutions leave its own footprint. Dominguez had noted that “the Cuban foreign policy remains one of the most centralized areas in a highly centralized regime” (p. 263), although this centralization explained as a derivation of “concentration of authority needs to have a system in combative disposition to act effectively in external policies”(Ibid.). However, he adds, “although the key foreign policy decisions are highly centralized, the implementation falls on many agencies and officials.”

The structural-functional scheme proposed by Fernández pose four levels of decision-making process (Fig. 1):

- I. President of State & Ministers Council President + Gen. Sec CP
- II. His closest advisors
- III. The Government and the CCP CC apparatuses
- IV. The “support agencies”

Fig. 1



Source:The Author

The closer to the center (Fig. 1), the greater ability to influence decision-making; the more separation, the more focus on the purely administrative role of implementing policies. As in the classic models of bureaucratic politics, this concentric representation clarifies the degrees of competition, number of players involved, rationality, efficiency. In an attempt to “open the blackest of black boxes” - as he describes the process of decision-making in Cuba -, Fernandez arrives at a series of conclusions relevant to our discussion.

President Fidel Castro (after 2006, Raul Castro) would be the referee in the strategic decisions of Cuban foreign policy, but not the only actor that makes them. The other actors influence not only from its bureaucratic positions, but its ideological stands, in various formal and “informal” ways. The implications of this idea, argued by other authors (Dominguez, 1989), is that Fidel or Raul Castro has to build and maintain a consensus within the leadership, based on a framework of coalitions, to carry on a comprehensive foreign policy, and especially to ensure cohesion in times of risk and new directions.

Although - according to Fernandez - in crisis situations these two higher levels, especially the president, would take his hands directly in foreign policy, in routine situations lower levels would be in charge, and he would print his own stamp interpreting command lines. The outer circles to center would deal with “programmatic issues” and would work “compartmentalized” manner (p. 61). The third would be composed of the Foreign Ministry, the armed forces and the Ministry of Interior and the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Central Committee of the CCP. And the fourth would include the “support agencies” - ministries such as health, education, construction or “official news agencies” and “centers of specialized studies in foreign relations” - that participate in the execution of foreign policy and in some cases contribute to “form perceptions.”

In short, according to this model formalized, further institutionalization of the system would have led - have remained subject to the dominant role of President Fidel Castro – “the opening of a more dynamic, pluralistic and competitive political space” (p. 62) determined by the diversity of “agendas and interests” involved, and the distance of the theaters of operations where the policy is made. Moreover, and in line with the above, the role of actors in the third and fourth level has increased to the extent that “problem areas” of different types require different care, ie, not on specific topics crisis or issues are the highest priority for the country, but “not regular decisions about priority issues” (p. 63). Fernandez argues that there are more similarities than differences between the processes of formation of Cuban foreign policy and most states (p. 53). Dominguez had already pointed out that, despite the high centralization in Cuba, as elsewhere, agencies and individuals make many decisions on how to meet the general policies of the government (p. 263).

The exemplary construction formalized Fernández - whose referent are largely previous studies Domínguez own - has the merit of identifying hierarchies and concatenate the Cuban decision-making, without disassociating the international environment, and generally seek to rationalize their complexity and internal differentiation, usually simplified, ignored or reduced to ideological formulas. In my view, the main weakness of this model is epistemological, theoretical from their own sources. The application of bureaucratic politics models of authors like Allison, Halperin, Hermann, Hilsman, HQ Wilson and others, designed for the case of the United States, as well as the Sovietology (Alexander, 1984), the Cuban case, let drain key elements for understanding both levels - Fernández and Domínguez - do mention, but which fails to fully integrate organically to model the internal socio-political context.

That domestic context would not be reduced to the dynamics of the institutions of the political system, the trends are manifested in them or their possible discrepancies, but relation to the operation of consensus on a social level. While, according to the thesis Fernández, Cuban public opinion – “as in most countries of the world” - not dictate foreign policy, its weight in supporting

a government initiative has no value purely ex post facto, but part of the premises of the decision.

A second limitation of the model is the lack of a diachronic view, to incorporate the development of control units of foreign policy within the political system. Ironically, the “totalitarian Cuba” has happened in the past four decades more different schemes institutional political organization the United States. American decision makers and politicians in general have not had to learn to work within structures that have transformed more than once, as it was the case of Cubans between 1959 and 2002.

A corollary of this is that the institutional forms and organizational schemes prevailing today that incorporate the sediment of a culture of decision making driven by successive and different social groups who have accessed the state apparatus and the match between 60 and 2000. This culture and mentalities within political and Cuban officials incorporates “pre-institutional” or “para-institutional” forms, which would be covered as Fernandez repeatedly called, so maybe too lax or indefinite, as casual. This is combined with that emerges from organic successive orders in place since 1959, starting with the first legal regulations from 1959 to 1968; institutionalization, 1975; those introduced in 1985 and from 1993 to 1996; and the new mentality that brought foreign affairs professionals trained in colleges, which nourish today a considerable part of the leadership and staff of institutions such as the Foreign Ministry, and whose culture also interacts with preexisting within established agencies .

The third objection to this model is the relegation of a computer on priority criteria that constitute the agenda of Cuban foreign policy on a regional basis. Despite its recognition of the “problem areas” - paradigm also empresta studies Americans making decisions (Hermann, Wilson, Low) -, they are not entirely organically integrate the proposed scheme, nor explicitly include the specific content of what the Cuban regional outreach. This criterion relativize regional computer - to the extent that the difference - the accents on “programmatic issues” and “compartmentalization” identified as guiding the Cuban bureaucratic functioning. The emphasis of Cuba since 1959 in its relations with Latin America and the Caribbean, and Africa - beyond its ups and downs - and against the U.S. position - where mutant conflict - has made these regions constant priorities of its foreign policy. However, the place occupied by, say, the PRC between 1966 and 1991, not to mention Eastern Europe has not only changed sign, but has moved considerably in their level international attention. Moreover, this paradigm also require greater analytical refinement to explain the “special relations” with Cuba held historically by countries as diverse as Vietnam, Algeria and Mexico.

Finally, the dimension of national security is not listed in this explanatory model emphasized on Cuban foreign policy. However, this is key to understanding the operation of appliances Cubans, to the extent that, for example, coordination of actions to the United States of the various

institutions and agencies, both state and PCC, and even generated by actors of civil society, have been subject to a high level of monitoring and coordination - as opposed to the aforementioned “compartmentalization” - in contrast to those made to other countries-eg, Canada, Panama, Italy. On the other hand, the “programmatic” Interest and actions towards Bulgaria, or former countries like the GDR, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, definition has been anything but constant thing, especially when taking into account the changes of the cold war. Recognizing that “in Cuba, and the United States, Mexico, Brazil and most countries, the ultimate authority over foreign relations rests in the president and commander in chief” (Fernández, p. 74) is primary consideration in terms of the context and comparability of the Cuban case .. Both authors seem to converge on the idea and the unpredictability of Cuban politics.

From my point of view, however, this question refers to a theoretical position: it is not only to investigate what the decision maker wants, but his power, the limits of that power and the nature of these limits - as would some authors rarely mentioned today (Marx, 1844). Moreover, the problem of the predictability of Cuban foreign policy also would require more extensive treatment and from other possible comparative perspective.

Let's Consider the following hypothesis:

- 1) Means of generating foreign policy in its various stages have responded to moments of political history of the country; their transformations have affected domestic factors simultaneously, reactions to external changes and policies to reintegrate into the international system and to preserve continuity of the revolutionary process values (Fig. 2). Cuban sociopolitical process is a continuum with the external or international environment. His vessel communicating relationship with the outside world requires represent analytically as a heteronomous rather flat, interactive, internal / external relationships, which produces a certain level and type of political consensus (Fig. 3).
- 2) Effective power of charismatic leadership, the actual functioning of the political system, the dynamic interaction with the international environment and counterpoint with superpowers are “independent variables” about Cuban foreign policy, in the sense that condition; but all these variables, particularly the first three, are “dependent” on the internal / external socio-political process and consensus it generates, in the sense that they are conditioned by it (Fig. 4).
- 3) Cuban foreign policy is comparable and predictable in terms of its principles, limitations, capabilities and directions (Fig. 5).

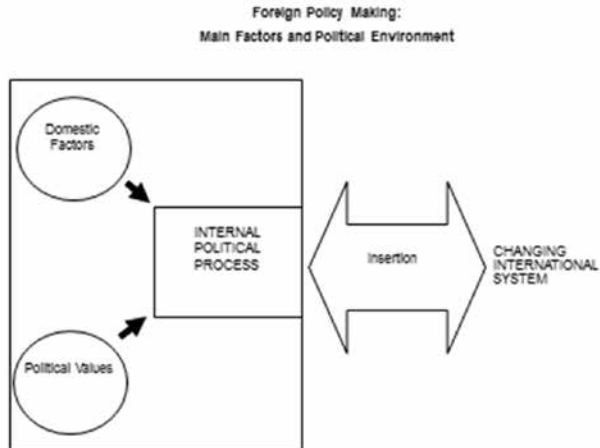
The generation of foreign policy.

In the Cold War, there has been a redistribution of functions of foreign policy - not only operational but strategic - in favor of the Foreign Ministry and other state organs. Under the

conditions of critical shortages of resources, thrift and surplus workforce, restructuring and generational (and professional) relay for external relations has followed a trend to maximize efficiency of available resources, trying to keep the overall coordination and regional foreign policy, as well as trying to increase their efficiency in the reintegration of Cuba into the international system, the global market and multilateral agencies.

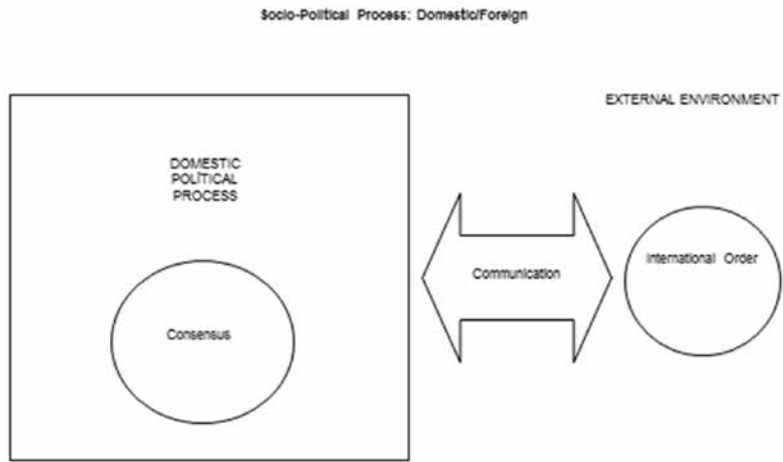
This silent “revolution” in appliances leading foreign affairs replied to greater weight of diplomacy resources in Cuban foreign policy after the Cold War, the strategic growth of his activism, both to break the effect of political isolation associated with the end of the socialist camp, to serve as a facilitator to the new Cuban economic policy. In that vein, the Cuban diplomacy would also enhancing four decades of internationalism.

Fig. 2



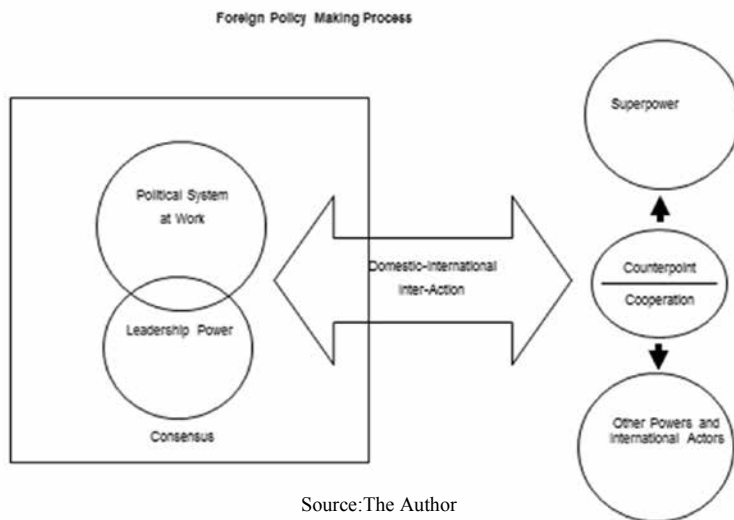
Source: The Author

Fig. 3



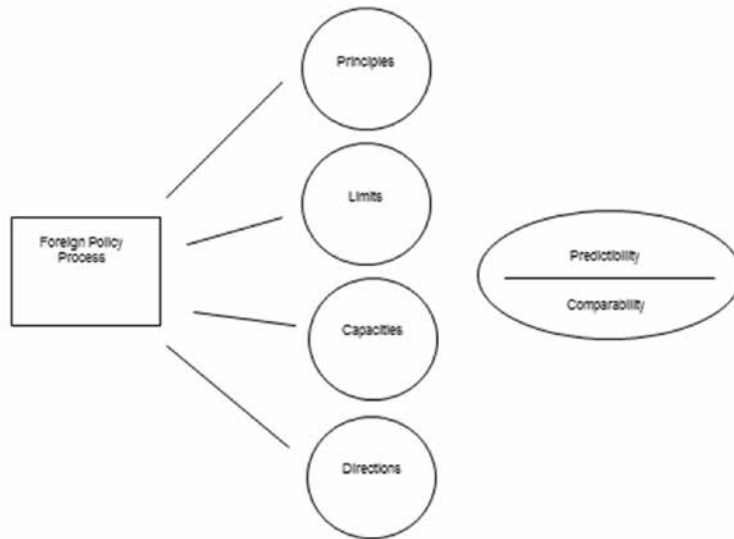
Source: The Author

Fig. 4



Source: The Author

Fig. 5



Source: The Author

The role of internal / external socio-political process, the architecture of consensus and foreign policy decisions.

The Cuban leadership, particularly Fidel Castro - as happens to some extent with all Governments and perhaps to a greater extent, given their personal style from the time of the guerrillas in the Sierra Maestra, have not stopped making estimates of the resources support that you can count on the population when planning to embark on a policy, and especially if this involves mass mobilization. A case in point was the Cuban involvement in Angola.

A not inconsiderable ingredient in efforts to seek an end to the protracted conflict, was the change in the chemistry of that consensus over fifteen years of Cuban military presence in Angola. The changes between the mid-70s and mid-80s in the internal / external political process explains that the initial enthusiasm feverish participation in Angola was being replaced by the psychology of duty or “politically correct” as a factor of compulsion. Although this was not the

only factor in the entry and exit of Angola, both decisions also reflected the domestic political process, and had a profound domestic impact beyond government structures and armed forces.

Leadership, political system, environment and international superpowers: the consensus interacting factors.

The degree of the international and regional specific weight for the training of Cuban foreign policy with regard to relations with the superpowers, has historically relied on the perception of “the international correlation of forces” have leadership in a given time. This perception includes the anticipation of an effective response of the regional political consensus and internal. The example of Angola is also relevant to discuss this affirmation, and particularly its impact on other regions such as the Greater Caribbean.

Although the counterpoint to the superpowers and the dynamic interaction with the international system are key part of the context in which the Cuban foreign policy towards Africa was exercised, a fact that was not the USSR its drive motor, any adverse reactions from the United States (and other Americans supposedly neutral, like Canada) that contained impediments deployment. In any case, these factors were subordinates in the immediate response to regional countries in the Front Line and the Organization of African Unity, as well as the actual conduct of armed conflict against South Africa and the guerrilla UNITA. The ability to lead this operation for almost fifteen years to nine thousand kilometers of its territory could only be understood as a function of a political process in which the regional dimension was a central component.

This policy was a chapter in a previous projection to the Third World, which was articulated in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in the 70s. Environment in the Third World, countries like Cuba Mexico converged with others in the Wider Caribbean and the rest of the region, which had an impact on their intra-hemispheric relations angles. Hardly any other country in the Wider Caribbean have projected an African strategic bridge - although not for lack of affinity and mutual interests with the causes of that region. Indeed, although Cuba's African policy was not animated by its relations with the wider Caribbean, its impact, especially in several countries in the Caribbean islands - space African cultural and historical heritage - evident sympathies elicited during the stage of war cold. Moreover, although the Cuban policy in Angola and Ethiopia could be a stumbling block in relations with the United States was not an insurmountable barrier.

To what extent this approach would be overcome by the conditions of the Cold War, under which Cuba would become supposedly “another little island in the Caribbean”? Is it confined to events and history of the Cold War processes? Are they oblivious to the Cuban relations with North America, the wider Caribbean and the rest of the hemisphere?

Although, according to the lens of realpolitik, Cuba should have now lost all projection to Africa, have vanished assets held in the years of its African wars, political-diplomatic and economic exchanges, including the ingredient of cooperation, have continued to develop and occupy a significant space in the structure of its external relations. More than a decade after the end of the Cold War and the Cuban campaigns in southwest Africa, the Cuban government remains the best known and most African countries close to the Latin American and Caribbean actor.

This continuity of African diplomacy and cooperation Cuba remains active in its relations with many countries of the insular Caribbean, to the extent that these African-American ethnicity plays a role in regional and international perceptions. The credentials of this ethnicity - shared with other Caribbean countries speaking African ancestry, but not necessarily close to the rest - the Cuban internationalist aid to Africa, especially in the civil partnership has served as a building of trust, and has facilitated dialogue with the Cuban government many of them.

Principles, limitations, capabilities and foreign policy directions.

It is clear that the Cuban policy has been inspired by principles and has pursued objectives that the Cuban leadership has bothered to ask, repeatedly, clearly and distinctly. These have been identified, prominently, the preservation of the safety of the Revolution, the confrontation with the conditions that reproduce underdevelopment and economic dependence, the promotion of unity and integration of Latin America and the Caribbean, supporting national liberation struggles (anti-colonialism, anti-imperialism, claim of sovereignty), and maintaining and disseminating a model of democracy based on popular participation and social justice (Valdés Paz, 1992). At the same time, the process of generation of that foreign policy is not confined to the realization of these preset objectives through certain free and means chosen centrally, according logicist and proposes an abstract view, a model of the unitary rational actor for USA.

What factors have determined cycles or stages in Cuban politics? Are the limitations of their political, economic or military power; depletion of certain measures or instruments; changing the correlation of forces in the international system; crisis that has engulfed; changes in the ideological inspiration; their success or failure?

The predominant policy at each stage were not a planned product entirely designed by the free will of the leaders, from a balanced calculation of costs and benefits, but a combination of these factors, operating at various junctures and in a game of opportunities and impediments combined. Each step depends on what policies have been implemented and which predominate objectively as central in a given time; and is composed of booms and wear, they do have their base in a foreign policy doctrine, but not explained as translation preconceived ideological programs applied as a code. In other words, the principles and objectives of the foreign policy reflect a doctrine whose values are characterized by continuity; however, their precise addresses depend

on the possibility of its realization. This is a function of capabilities and limitations, both internal and external, that weigh on the objectives, and mark these addresses.

Ultimately-and assuming all these caveats - the weight of continuity in Cuban foreign policies would be higher than expected in the cold war. Indeed, despite the transformations in Cuban insertion into the international system and its international alliances within the bipolar world order prior, everything has changed in Cuban foreign policy. An immediate explanation might be that there are internal factors that remain constant, such as leadership and the political system. We have noted above, however, that even these factors have not remained unchanged. In any case, the premise that everything that happened during the cold war faded in the current international system could prove inaccurate.

2. Main Research Findings

2-1 Traditional political culture, mentality, civic values

Vietnam

Vietnamese position vis-a-vis conflict and war is described as “only if imposed from outside.” As perceived from the current circumstances, the only sources of war may arise from border or other territorial disputes. They describe themselves as never able of a first strike, or willing to attack, but only ready to defend themselves if they are invaded.

After the terrible experience of the war with the US and its consequences, which still last, the Vietnam people is fed up with the war. Vietnamese Buddhism preaches peace and harmony, avoid fighting, hatred, the evil, practice the good.

China

In terms of strategic goals, as defined by the Chinese, China’s main objective is to improve its national interest and strengthen its position in the world. Western civilization is based on the idea they are the people chosen by God, what makes them able to decide what is wrong and right. Chinese believe in their capacity to communicate with God, not based on wrong and right, but on justice and good fortune. China does not pretend to tell others what to do, or to dominate or attack them, as a new “rising power”. Instead of invading others, Chinese believe in respecting diversity, harmony and self-improvement. (Han, the original Chinese people, were not the invaders of other nations, but the Mongolians). China disagrees with the current international system, but it is not a reason to invade others.

Cuba

Cuba’s strategic goal is described in terms of the search for peace and the quest for international coexistence and solidarity, particularly among Third World countries –the South. Cuba’s alliances with these countries are not based on ideological affinities, particularly, its relations with other republics in Latin America. Its common grounds are shared nationalist values: the defense of self-determination and the principle of non-intervention. Main events that take place in Cuban foreign relations are interwoven with its relations with the United States, but the Cuban government doesn’t perceive Cuba’s alliances as just a way to confront the U.S. policy. In many cases, these Cuban allies have more normal relations with the U.S. than Cuba –including its socialist partners, China and Vietnam. As a moral issue, the Cuban government considers a case of double-standard the US behavior vis-à-vis these countries, as opposed to its policy towards Cuba. For Cuba’s policy, the search for peace is a wide-ranging objective that must reach beyond the peace among the big powers.

2-2 Reforms as the context of foreign policy changes (and relation with the us)

Vietnam Doi Moi

The Doi Moi basic political assumption is to accept peaceful competition between socialism and capitalism.

The ideological challenge was very strong, the Party had to explain “don’t be afraid of the market, capitalism and market are two different things”. The Doi Moi factor (1986) increased rice exports, and attracted direct foreign investments. The new business sector was an attractive factor in VN-US relations. US business favored normalization, but were not a proactive factor.

(According to some VN sources, the state sector will pass from 70% (1986) to 25%, in the near future.)

Doi Moi aimed to improve relations not only with US, but with all Asia, and the European Union (EU). EU didn’t isolate VN, but facilitated negotiations to join international organizations (IMF, World Bank: 1993). France restored relations in 1992 (F. Mitterand). That growing international relations web, not one single channel, contributed to rapprochement with the US. Normalization (1996) was the last step in a process of international reintegration. A foreign investment rush took place when normalization with the US was announced. But normalizing diplomatic relations (1995) was not enough to reach full trade relations, not until the Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) was signed (2005).

Doi Moi weakest sectors are healthcare and education, because they were privatized and marketized. Land privatization led to land speculation and a new group of nouveaux riches; local officials malpractices of selling public land (not property, but usufruct rights) also had a negative impact. A key question is to control the growing power of money, particularly, corruption. The “evil triangle” of the corruption dynamics is: 1) local governments, 2) state land enterprises, 3) banks. That triangle led to land speculation and corruption (1996-2006).

In Doi Moi current political agenda, the government recognizes the need of political reforms, not only economic. New constitutional reforms are announced. Vietnam Communist Party (VCP) has prioritized democratic changes and goals: equality, prosperity, democracy. It is necessary a legal framework defining what the government or the party can do. And an independent judiciary system.

China “Reform and Opening” (R&O)

In 1978, the CCP XI Congress took place, and adopted the R&O policy. As a coincidence, China and the US normalized diplomatic ties. For the US, the economic gain was technology, and for the US the Chinese market.

In the early years of R&O, admiration of the US was higher among the Chinese people. They are today more confident about their political system. Young Chinese can understand that the US is much younger than China, and China is prepared to absorb Western values in its millenary culture without risk. For instance, the assimilation of terms like “democracy”, “constitutionalism”, etc.

Cuba’s reforms: “Updating Socialism”

In the current Cuban situation, movement from a highly centralized management system to one that is more participatory and less vertical has been recognized as a major axis in the “updating of the model”. Along this path to reorder the economy, free productive forces, and restore social development and the standard of living, the watchwords are decentralization, less bureaucracy, more participation and better control.

Such priorities -- essentially political rather than purely “economic” -- require that regional and local institutions must have greater control and decision-making power over their own resources.

Policies today rely much more on gradualism, the success of decentralization, the transformation of the state sector towards greater autonomy of its institutions, the expansion of the non-state sector and the role of new business entities, the effective application of laws and citizen participation.

2-3 Foreign policies: International and regional. The third party role

Vietnam

As part of the Doi Moi agenda, the recognition of the VN position in the world meant to reconcile domestic problems with foreign relations necessities. Improve VN people living standard demanded progress with US and Europe.

VN foreign institutional decision-making has three main institutional actors: a) Minister of Foreign Affairs (MoFa), b) Vietnam Communist Party (VCP), c) Vietnam Union of Friendship Organizations (VUFO).

VN troops in Kampuchea was a negative factor in its international relations in three different ways: a) created regional isolation, b) a key issue on the US bilateral agenda, c) an obstacle to integration into international organizations (Ex. WTO)

One basic premise of VN Doi Moi foreign relations is that it should not ignore the existence of the developed capitalist countries. VN needs to use political wisdom to employ their technology and capital, while keeping an eye on their political intentions.

One fundamental foreign relations factor is China. “When Chinese invaders were going to leave, the ancient Vietnamese tradition was to give them gifts for happy return to their country”. VN imports 80% of China; only 20% of its total trade is with the US. Relations with China are a mixture of sovereignty + pragmatism. From the VN viewpoint, China did not like that they won the war against the US. When VN invaded Kampuchea (1979), China supported the Khmer Rouges (“These ones were more Maoists than Mao”). VN resisted alignment pressures from China and the USSR since the early 60s. China was a negative factor in VN relations with the US. From the US perspective, relations with VN were functional to its China policy. However, VN does not count on the US in a military confrontation scenario with China.

VN relations with ASEAN was a principal dimension in its foreign policy. (It was created in 1967, to replace SEATO, the regional security mechanism created by the US to avoid the domino effect in SE Asia.)

Some ASEAN countries favored Vietnam integration to the organization, like Indonesia; some opposed, like Thailand and Singapore. When VN intervened in Kampuchea, all ASEAN opposed. Only when VN military withdrawal from Kampuchea took place, VN was admitted in ASEAN.

ASEAN was not a mediator in VN-US normalization, but played an indirect influence. When VN joined ASEAN in 1995 (coincidence with normalization, but separate tracks), it contributed to VN international visibility. ASEAN economic integration (similar to the EU) is planned for 2015.

China

In terms of international security, Vietnam and Iran are third parties that interact with China-US relations. Vietnam is a neighboring state, that is involved with the territorial differences over the South China Sea. Philippines as a China neighbor and a US ally plays a third party role in China-US relations. Tensions between China and Philippines to the point of destabilizing the region are a concern for the US interest.

Taiwan-China relations are less antagonistic, since Deng Xiao Ping deferred the problem, when redefined it as “the next generation will take care of it”. Its remains an issue as long as the US military supply to Taiwan is kept.

A recent China Communist Party Central Committee (CC CCP) meeting decided to launch a new Chinese regional policy towards its neighbors. Most of them have a complex relationship with China. 1) Their first trade partner is China, 2) Their relationship with the US is meant to balance security relations with China. They try to restructure their relationship with the US before China becomes a superpower. Deng strategy was to leave aside territorial disputes and develop stronger economic ties. In terms of the US interest, the best scenario is for Japan and China to dispute, but not really to fight.

The Senkoku islands and the South China Sea (2010) are two regional issues that have implications for China-US relations. As for the South China Sea issue, the Chinese perception is that the statu quo will be kept. From that viewpoint, the US China policy has been readjusted. US cooperation will ease Vietnam and Philippines concerns. From the Chinese perspective, the US policy is not intervention in South East Asia. As for the Senkoku islands, US policy is formally neutral, but considers it part of it “protected sphere” with Japan; South China Sea is not. Other regional issue that entails cooperation scenarios with the US are their interest for China to put pressure on North Korea to start a strategic dialogue with the US. Chinese sources affirm that China does have influence on North Korea.

Cuba

In the post-Cold War period (1991-2001), the two governments’ objections and reactions to each other changed dramatically. Between 1959 and 1990, the United States accused Cuba of acting as a Soviet proxy and of exporting the Revolution to Latin America and Africa. The Cuban response was that neither its internationalism nor its alliances with governments or revolutionary movement were negotiable. With the demise of the socialist bloc in Eastern Europe (1989-91), the end of the conflict in southwest Africa (1988), and the cessation of the Central American wars (1988-90), Cuba was no longer an ally of Moscow (the U.S.S.R. had disappeared), nor did it have troops in Africa or military advisors in the Sandinista army in Nicaragua, nor did it support the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front in El Salvador in any way. In 1980, when the Cuban government opened the port of Mariel for a free migration, relations with the Carter administration had already cooled thanks to several Congressional incidents spurred by leading figures on the National Security Council, and, above all, by the change in the regional climate wrought in 1979 by the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua and the New Jewel Movement government in Grenada. In the post-Cold War period (1991-2001), the two governments’ objections and reactions to each other changed dramatically. Between 1959 and 1990, the United States accused Cuba of acting as a Soviet proxyⁱ and of exporting the Revolution to Latin America and Africa. The Cuban response was that neither its internationalism nor its alliances with governments or revolutionary movement were negotiable. With the demise of the socialist bloc in Eastern Europe (1989-91), the end of the conflict in southwest Africa (1988), and the cessation of the Central American wars (1988-90), Cuba was no longer an ally of Moscow (the U.S.S.R. had disappeared), nor did it have troops in Africa or military advisors in the Sandinista army in Nicaragua, nor did it support the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front in El Salvador in any way.

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In the post-Cold War context, it is hard to maintain that the United States has the same bottom line as it did in the 1960s or 1980s -- to avoid at all costs the emergence of "other Cubas" in the region. (If anything, the current concern may be "other Venezuelas" or "other Bolivias.") Cuba has accumulated vast experience not only in socializing education within its borders, but also in international cooperation. This could be a basis for cooperation with the United States both at a basic level of social policy and in terms of educational quality (in comparison with the rest of the region), access to special education, etc. the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) has been one of the few hemispheric bodies in which Cuba and the United States have been able to sit down together. More than once, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) in Atlanta has cooperated with Cuban authorities in the response to epidemics of diseases such as hemorrhagic dengue and polyneuritis. Given that PAHO has identified the Cuban health care system as one of the best in the region, and given the importance of this issue in the domestic U.S. agenda (especially that of the current administration), existing ties could multiply. An example is helping victims of the Haitian earthquake and ebola epidemics in West Africa. As for the third party role, Latin American and Caribbean governments, the European Union, Canada and the Vatican proved to be facilitators in the US-Cuba dialogue started in 2014.

2-4 Relations with the US: background to conflict / rapprochement

Vietnam

Before the US-VN war, Ho Chi Minh tried to dialogue with Truman. In the VN independence declaration, Jefferson was quoted. The OSS (CIA antecedent during WW II) supported VN independence against France after World War II. US officers trained VN military troops after Japan surrendered. In those postwar years, VN looked for cooperation with the US. Declassified documents show first airport built by the US in March 1945. US recognized the Republic of Vietnam before China and the USSR (1950). US did not answer Ho Chi Minh proposal, instead, they supported the French come back in 1946.

After the war ended (1975), Vietnam suffered poverty and low technical level. VN asked for war compensation to the US, as part of the Paris agreement (3 billions USD). When US introduced the MIA/POW issue, VN accepted and requested cooperation to eliminate land mine fields and the Haiphong port mines. (VN renounced compensation only in 1986).

Normalization was a goal very soon after the end of the war. Carter accepted the Socialist Republic of Vietnam as a member in the UN. VN demanded compensation (morally justified, politically unrealistic). VN US policy reflected the war wounds in the 1970s. US early political trend to restore diplomatic relations ended when VN intervened militarily in Kampuchea. US embargo (since end of war until 1993) blocked access to international organizations (WTO, IMF).

China

China launched a theoretical war against the USSR in 1960s as a “power chauvinism” and call Soviet political thinking “Soviet revisionism”. Conditions asked by China to restore relations with the US were: 1) US break relations with Taiwan, 2) Withdraw US troops from Taiwan, 3) Cancel US-Taiwan mutual defense treaty. Nixon accepted, but had no time to accomplish it, because of Watergate.

Cuba

Specific agreements about boat hijacking and migration, ad hoc cooperation between the two countries' coast guard and meteorological services, licenses for academic exchange or the sale of food by U.S. companies, permission for overflights and dialogue between military officials at the Guantánamo base, opening and maintaining interests sections in the two capitals -- all these have been significant cooperation agreements between the two sides, before and also after the end of the Cold War. None, however, can be shown to have resulted from a policy of action-reaction, nor to have the capacity to extend its effect to other areas of relations. With the exception of the emigration issue (1994-95), which implies for the United States control of its southern flank and, therefore, a national security priority, no other issue has been resolved in any stable way by any multiplier effect of the isolated examples of cooperation -- not even in the area of drug trafficking, environmental protection, and prevention of natural disasters. Experience suggested that if some step-by-step policy could function effectively it would be a unilateral one, in which each party would take its own initiatives without tying them to the other party's response or seeing them contaminated or threatened by “lack of reciprocity.”

2-5 The people to people diplomacy in relations with the US

Vietnam

People to people diplomacy (as defined by Ho Chi Minh) meant to be “a step ahead”, giving priority to the human contact. Objectives: a) change VN image in the US, b) change US image in VN. Main interlocutors were the US antiwar movement, war veterans associations and personalities. During the war, encounters with these actors took place in third countries: Sweden, Canada, Japan. After the war (before normalization) NGOs influence on the US government was recognized as fundamental. VN looked for contacts with US war veterans encounters in each US state. VN asked US war veterans families: “what we can do for you?”. VN invited war veterans to visit VN, to rediscover the country, including representatives of the two parties, Democrats and Republicans, to learn about the real VN.

VN government and US NGOs started a relationship before normalization. VN called “objective allies” their US counterparts, in terms of setting a dialogue between the US veterans and the

National Association of Combatants, Former political prisoners Association (underground fighters). US anti-war activists and veterans had the legitimacy, the moral authority, and the international public opinion against the war. Vietnam veterans were a bipartisan factor (Kerry and McCain) pushing for normalization.

10,000 VN students now in the US.

China

Despite the “ping pong diplomacy” story, China US policy never emphasized people to people, but was kept within official channels. Civil society voices are listened by the government, but they are not involved in actual foreign policy implementation, because it will complicate bilateral issues. Mao article on relations with the US was a general political orientation to all Chinese people. China public opinion about China-US relations, expressed via Internet, includes conservative and leftists; but it is not a key factor in defining foreign policy; academics and think tanks are.

Students exchange have played a role in bilateral relations. First Chinese students went to the US in 1979, financed by the Chinese government. Currently, Chinese students in the US are supported by their parents and some institutions, not by the government. American tourists play a role in this people to people relations.

200,000 Chinese students overseas; 1/3 in the US (also in UK and France).

Cuba

Self-appointed good will ambassadors between Cuba and the US have proliferated throughout forty years: pastors, reporters, African-American leaders, rabbis, former US Presidents and Secretaries of Defense or Attorney Generals, congressmen, academics, and other governments in Latin America and Europe.

In the last twenty years, a new middle level network of communication between Cuba and the US has developed. Official US actors, like the military, the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Coast Guard increased their contacts and cooperation with Cuba, despite the lack of political will to support their achievements by the White House and other agencies within the US Gov.

Compared with the early 1960, today metadiplomacy is not just responding to secret exchanges between the governments, but to specific interests within each civil society.

Representatives of CNN, the American Chamber of Commerce, the Council on Foreign Relations, the Grammy Awards, Cigar Aficionado Magazine, the American Farm Bureau Federation and sister city programs, church leaders, university presidents, businessmen, employees of foundations and nongovernmental organizations, baseball managers, journalists, artists and even some former hard-line anti-Castro activists have joint this metadiplomacy.

2-6 Normalization making

Vietnam

By mid-1980s, VCP Politbureau decides to overcome international isolation (including normal relations with the US). It was a decision forced by the near economic collapse.

Policy of restoring relations with the US reflected Vietnamese traditional values and national character: avoid political reactions dictated by emotional motivations. "Heal old war wounds". VN new foreign policy strategic view of the US was based on: a) Stop seeing the US as an enemy, b) Economic factor. VN doi moi and US trade relations led to 30% VN exports to the US. c) National defense cooperation. Meetings between VN and the US to exchange viewpoints (agreement on free circulation in South China Sea) reflects today a common perspective over the international sea law.

First contacts towards normalization took place through the VN and US UN delegations. Issue # 1 in conversations: MIA/POW. VN renounced to war compensation claims (3,5 billion USD). And a roadmap was set: 1) Cooperation over MIA/POW, 2) VN military withdrawal from Kampuchea, 3) Step by step. VN wanted to join the IMF, and the US allowed it. (Neither USSR nor China contributed or mediated in the normalization process.)

Main obstacles to overcome on the VN side. 1) Some VN government members were afraid of political instability as a consequence of rapprochement with the US. 2) VN domestic conservative resistance: "We should advance certain political conditions. What do we restore relations for?" A debate over that decision took place. Prime Minister and MoFa were the leading actors in the rapprochement ("VN needs international and regional economic integration"), they prevailed over conservative trends, that were afraid of the US presence in VN as a destabilizing factor, ideological influence. A domestic debate on conditionality to VN-US normalization process took place. VN adopted a step by step negotiation strategy.

Rapprochement with the US may not have immediate bilateral consequences, but will bring about VN regional integration. Consensus about the need to be cautious, going step by step, was reached.

Main factors that influenced VN relations with the US: 1) Objective necessities conditions. 2) Overcome immediate obstacles. After the war, VN was isolated in the Asian context.

Major US interests towards VN: 1) MIA, 2) VN withdrawal from Kampuchea, 3) Find political solutions in Kampuchea. Clinton hesitated to restore relations because he was afraid of being perceived as soft with communism in VN. VN needed to keep troops in Kampuchea as long as the *khmer rouge* regime might come back.

The US VN normalization bloc was formed by the antiwar movement+veterans+politicians. As a bipartisan factor, Vietnam veterans were a powerful pro-normalization force. The anti-normalization lobby was composed by Vietnamese-Americans (ex-VN government, anticommunists)+ US politicians (critics of human rights situation in Vietnam, Chris Smith, Ed Royce). Their constituency were not Vietnamese voters, but the “moral majority” (who voted against abortion, etc.). The only congressperson with a Vietnamese constituency is Loreta Sanchez.

MIA/POW was a key issue, that responded to a real constituency. They sent MIA lists to Vietnam. VN government facilitated families search for MIA. But also search for Vietnamese MIA. US veterans came to Quang Tung to search for VN MIA (2012). The main war remaining issue now is Agent Orange.

Clinton wanted to be the president that normalized with the former enemy, but he was afraid of being named “soft with communism”. Normalization in 1995 had not domestic political cost in the US: “Vietnam is cooperating to bring back the MIA/POW home”. From the VN viewpoint, in the post-Cold War the problem for the US was China, not Vietnam. VN withdrew from Kampuchea (1989) and normalized with China (1991). International organizations (WTO, FMI) were under US pressure not to admit VN (until 1993), Paris Club. VN had 40 years of peace with France. Turning point, that led to the lifting of the embargo (1994). BP had explored in the early 90s, and IBM, both were stopped by technology embargo.

US business favored normalization, but were not a decisive factor. VN new business sector was an attractive factor in VN-US relations. France restored relations in 1992 (F. Mitterand). Normalization (1996) was the last step in a process of international reintegration.

“US-VN conflict lasted 30 years, France dominated VN for 100 years, China for over 1000.”

China

China US relations have had 6 different stages, driven by different factors:

1) 1949-1972. As a consequence of the Chinese Revolution, China became a communist government, that joined the Cold War international political division between East and West. The Korean war opposed the US and China in the battlefield, as both sides supported and participated in the armed conflict, that divided the Korean peninsula in 1954. They were ideological, political and strategic enemies.

2) 1972-89. Pragmatism and national interest prevailed over ideological differences. US and China found a common ground against the USSR (third party factor). Bilateral cooperation over security issues improved between the two countries, mainly during Reagan years, the US shared vital military information with China.

3) 1989-92. The end of the Cold War and Tianamen split the two countries policies and cooled down relations. As the USSR factor disappeared, China's significance for US global strategy declined.

4) 1992-2001. Deng Xiao Ping launched a new economic strategy that emphasized the central role of the market in China's development policy. This policy created new opportunities for US businesses in China, and US-China trade and foreign investments increased. New bilateral issues related to international commerce regulations and intellectual property emerged. In terms of security, China's special relationship with the PDKR played a role keep stability in the Korean peninsula, as North Korea becomes a nuclear power, a major concern for the US.

5) 2001-2007. 9/11 created a new framework for strategic cooperation between the two countries, as the US antiterrorist strategy unfolded. China was a key ally for the US in its crusade against the new enemy (third factor effect).

6) 2007-present. The negative effects of the international financial crisis on the US economy and China capacity to preserve its growth had a combined positive influence that strengthened bilateral relations and increased interdependence.

Carter and Z. Brzezinsky agreed with Chinese conditions (1978), established diplomatic relations and tried to stop selling weapons to Taiwan.

Cuba

Despite what prior experience showed, one issue proved to be negotiated on the basis of reciprocity in 2014. The exchange of prisoners charged and convicted on both sides for undercover activities (espionage, create a Cuba. clandestine network aimed to political destabilization and propaganda) opened the path to a major breakthrough in bilateral relations, that led to the decision to normalize relations, recently announced by Raúl Castro and Barack Obama (Dec.17, 2014).

2-7 After normalization: the path to cooperation

Vietnam

Normalization by itself did not mean closer ties. It was a gradual process. Access to the US market had to be negotiated, in 2002. The Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) increased VN textiles exports to the US, more than imports from the US. It was a very strong incentive on Vietnam agriculture and exports, 10 billions USD. Direct Foreign Investment (DFI) increased, but the US was not a major foreign investor, but UK, Taiwan, Singapore and Japan. Politicians and NGOs were the leading actors in the process of normalizing relations, not businesses.

Cooperation included increase of economic relations, avoiding US tax barriers to VN products (fish, textiles). Second area was education; VN students were allowed in the US. Their main destinations were 1) Australia, 2) US, 3) China, 4) Russia.

VN should expand its exports to US and EU, and other countries (Russia will become in 4-5 years a large market).

Normalization facilitated business expansion, and VN international integration. VN is now “almost 100% a market economy” (80% production is private). But some strategic sectors remain public (land property, loans, subsidies). The public sector was transformed (public and private education).

China

Right after normalization, the US Congress issued a Taiwan Relations Act (April 1979), that created tension with the normalization agreement. (Every time the US sells military equipment to Taiwan, China suspends military exchanges between the two countries. Obama has not sold weapons to Taiwan.) This year, China joined for the first time the US Pacific Basin military maneuvers.

Cuba

The main issue in the US-Cuba path to full normalization, after diplomatic ties are restored, is the multilateral embargo. This set of regulations, encoded in the Helms-Burton Law (1996), not only closed off bilateral trade and financial transactions, but is aimed at crippling all Cuba’s international relations, isolating the country, obstructing its banking, and challenging its registered trademarks everywhere. The US has only used it in war zones, and has never applied it for so long to any of its enemies, even during the Cold War.

The US president has no power to cancel the Helms Burton Law, but he can manage the embargo and the travel ban to Cuba with flexibility and determination. If travel licenses are liberalized by presidential decision, instead of 170,000 Americans and 400,000 Cuban-Americans who visited the island in 2013, that figure could double, and come quite close to the main flow of tourists from Canada (over one million).

The embargo prohibits US citizens’ investments in Cuba. However, the presidential announcement on December 17 increased ceiling authorized for remittances (from \$500 to \$2000 USD quarterly). Cuban-Americans that already participate informally in the emerging Cuban private sector through micro- (and not so micro) investments legally owned by their relatives on the island, can take advantage of this new remittances ceiling, that may double the amount of the remittances –from estimated \$1.5 to \$3 billion–, not as a simple contribution to household consumption, but an investment of capital with prospects for profit.

Normalization is not just about the economy. Some Cubans are worried about this new ballgame, full of uncertainty. They have been prepared for generations to confront an enemy, and now must learn to talk and cooperate with an adversary. They wonder what's behind US intentions; and how much the US government is really committed to respecting Cuban sovereignty. On the other hand, Americans also must learn to understand Cuba, instead of following their old Cold War stereotypes.

2-8 Current agenda with the US: Tensions and cooperation

Vietnam

VN foreign policy: a) leave the past behind, b) peace and international cooperation, c) cope with poverty and low economic development.

The current relationship with the US involves a military dialogue on the South China Sea conflict, ASEAN, the 2nd phase of the TPP, and the question of the Comprehensive Strategic Alliance. Business interests prevail.

China

China rise as an economic power challenged the US global predominance, and played a key role in the emerging Asia-Pacific bloc.

The US has not abandoned the idea of influencing and changing China, what they call “peaceful evolution”. After Chinese experts, US culture is aggressive; Chinese is not. It has absorbed Marxism and modernity, without changing its basic matrix. And it is difficult to invade, militarily or culturally. All depend on China: if it remains as a stable political system and based on the law, the US can hardly influence it. In any case, mutual influence is a possibility.

Common ground and shared values in China and US foreign policies: 1) pragmatism, 2) self-confidence, 3) secular orientation.

1) Taiwan was a divisive issue, not anymore; as China and US relations get closer, this issue becomes more marginal. 2) Most dangerous issue now: Japan. “Japan traditional policy is to attack without declaring war”. “Japan follows a racist behavior towards other Asian countries (Korea, China).” “Japanese elites believe in their industrial supremacy”. “Since China didn’t adopt their industrial model, Japanese look at China as inferior”. “Japan experiences an identity conflict. They were number 1 in Asia; they don’t want to accept they are not any more”.

Main divisive issues: 1) Senkaku islands (Japan), 2) South China Sea, 3) North Korea nuclear weapons.

Cuba

Cubans have become used to preparing for war with the United States, not for dialogue and negotiation. US policy-makers specialized in attacking the island, which has kept them from learning to understand it. Neither side has been trained in dealing with an adversary rather than an enemy. Each side's success in a scenario of rapprochement depends on its ability to acquire such knowledge and turn it into real policy.

What does the United States have to lose and to gain in a dialogue-negotiation with Cuba? The costs are having to confront long-established resistance within the permanent bureaucracy and the Cuban-American right wing; offering de jure recognition to the Cuban regime after half a century of despise; submitting exchange with the island to reciprocal agreements in place of unilateralism.

The benefits will be responding to a constituency of interest groups (agribusiness, biomedical, tourism, maritime transportation, healthcare, higher education, sports, entertainment, perhaps oil) and freeing Cuban-American business, hostages of established policies, to organize in favor of tighter ties; paving the way for companies nationalized in 1960 to compensation under Cuban law; removing a point of contention with Latin America and with US allies that rejected the Helms-Burton Act on free trade grounds, easing the bilateral tension within international organizations.

US recognition of the revolutionary government favors Cuba's independence and self-determination; lessening the cost of security and defense, and the burden on economic development imposed by hostility; gaining access to U.S. markets and to U.S. capital flows, with a multiplier effect on all Cuba's foreign relations;

In terms of costs, although many Cubans favor détente and appreciate its economic benefits, they also remain worried about its political and ideological effects. These could affect the national consensus in a period during which social and political cohesion are of strategic value. Die-hard anti-communist could have more avenues by which to influence the Cuban domestic context.

2-9 Achieving a special relationship status with the US

Vietnam

The Comprehensive Strategic Partnership with the US means cooperation in all fields encouraged by the two governments, including political parties. "We don't share the road end, but work together". Vietnamese officials think that "within next 10-15 years, US will be the only superpower, because China's huge GDP must be divided into 1,3 billion people". Cooperation with the US is needed.

Bilateral trade rules with the US imply that VN must prove all products have VN origin. Otherwise VN products may be taxed (6-8%).

September 11 was another factor that improved relations. Defense and security were important areas of cooperation. Healthcare also.

Main pending issues on the VN agenda have been 1) Agent Orange 2) Mines and unexploded bombs that remain in 40 % of VN territory. Both issues still affect the environment and human lives, have a genetic effect, particularly on poorest people.

Last VN-US presidential encounter (July 2013): total cooperation (economic, social, cultural, military).

On the meaning of Comprehensive Strategic Partnership: all areas (economic, social, political, security). Both US and VN presidents encourage cooperation, including political parties in the US and VN. Remaining problem today: Agent Orange and mines (on the US side); human rights (on the VN) “US and VN don’t share the road end, but can work together”.

China

New concept in Chinese foreign policy: “Major power relationship”. It is based on a few strategic ideas: 1) Growing within the current international system. Deng defined US position within the international system, not within “a socialist bloc”. 2) Benefits of this China strategy: a) Market, b) Capital investments, c) Legitimacy, d) Become a modern nation. US and EU don’t have the size and population of China. In this stage, main goal is increase exports to the largest world market (US) 3) Economic interdependence must lead to international respect. US policy towards China respects its core interests (Taiwan, Tibet); it may confront over other issues (South China Sea). US strategists look at China as a successful, competitive model (economically and internationally). 4) US rebalancing strategy towards China accepts partnership on an objective basis (other powers were no more than 23 US GDP in manufacture sector; China is 126% of US GDP manufacture sector). Most US industry is located in China.

Communication network system between China and the US, to avoid conflict and facilitate cooperation and negotiation: 97 established official channels (SED).

20 % China foreign direct investment abroad goes to the US. Chinese capital exported to the US is larger than US capital in China.

The strategic next step is to skip MADE IN CHINA and get to MADE FOR CHINA.

Economic development is the Chinese priority, as Deng said. If China hard power increases, strengthens its defense and economic capacity, and becomes a big power, the US will have no choice but to cooperate with China, and its leverage with the US will grow.

CCP just created a new National Defense Group, led by the President (MoFa is not a member, minister is not in the Politbureau) to adopt strategic decisions. This mechanism is in charge of articulating a explicit strategy –not clear so far.

Problems on the China-US agenda: 1) Economic: trade deficit, 2) Security: internal policy. 3) Most important issue Taiwan, but not pressing, since Kuomintang is in the government. 4) Most pressing problems: a) Senkuku islands, b) South China Sea. Senkuku islands have a strategic value, defined as “first defense chain”. China’s national security demands go overseas, a strong navy and control over its maritime space.

Cooperation is higher than conflict with the US: 1) Antiterrorism, 2) Prevent nuclear proliferation, 3) Global issues (environment), 4) Trade and investment. Other areas for cooperation: put pressure on North Korea to start a strategic dialogue with the US. China does has influence on North Korea.

The main problem between China and the US is mistrust. Last 10 years mistrust (driven by the Chinese side?) has prevailed in China-US relations. The “Major Power Partnership” concept express the will to overcome that mistrust. A turning point was 9/11. US needed China as an ally to fight terrorism, particularly in East and SE Asia.

Hard power (economic and military) is a factor in bilateral relations. The US get benefits from Chinese economic power, an incentive to bilateral cooperation. Main progress in recent years was to upgrade the relationship in order to avoid conflict. “Major power relationship” has been welcome by the US.

After 35 years of normal relations in 2013 (Vietnam, 18 years), most FDI was from the US in China (30 years), China investment in the US just started to increase 5 years ago.

Party to parties relationship. Structural differences: 1) Ideologies, 2) Exchange of ideas, not ideologies. Both sides shared their experiences running their countries (the content of the meeting is not disclosed). For the CCP, this exchange facilitates its knowledge on the US political process, its understanding of the Americans, the Congress, and gives the opportunity to share its views about China with the US. CCP had this kind of dialogue with other parties in the world, before the US parties.

Mutual understanding facilitates that both countries can contribute to world problems, they are key players in the current international system (environment protection, antiterrorism).

Asia is a strategic region for the US, 60 % of the US Navy is displayed in the region. Regarding the issue of the Senkuku Islands, the US de jure position is neutrality, but de facto recognizes the Japan administration over these islands.

The most important issues on the bilateral agenda are 1) economic, 2) a common interest in preserving international security and stability. They need each other.

Cuba

Is it possible to develop a special relationship between Cuba and the US? The main obstacle that separates the two societies is not just the embargo or the different ideologies, but the legacy of mistrust. However, the cases of China and Vietnam may show that mistrust can be approached and decreased, as long as the political determination to make progress in bilateral relations is real.

Cuba's ability to use the available resources of political power will be decisive, particularly to build up alliances and consensus. US allies in Latin America, Europe, and on the Island are quite obvious; those of Cuba include some paradoxical ones, such as US businesses, the US Coast Guard, the DEA, the INS. A new Cuba-U.S. relationship can open new relationships between Cuban-Americans and their counterparts on the Island.

Besides the current bilateral agenda, the two countries have a long list of issues to consider in terms of taking the relationship from normalization to cooperation. For instance, improving the flow of information between the two countries via legitimate exchange of radio and TV programs, a fiber-optic cable connection, and improved mail, telephone, and internet service; consolidating the stability of migration agreements and the fairness of migration policies; reaching formal agreements to cooperate in drug traffic interception, naval and air security, military and coast guard coordination, environmental protection, and other areas.

Cuba could form alliances of interests not only with these specific agencies, but with various sectors of U.S. society; facilitate cooperation in areas related to geographic contiguity like environmental protection; and start a dialogue to renegotiate the Guantánamo naval base 1934 treaty, in order to plan the return of the territory to Cuban control, following the Hong Kong, Macao and Panama negotiation models.

2-10 Human rights: Domestic and bilateral

Vietnam

HR DOMESTIC SITUATION AND POLICIES. Improvement in HR situation is part of a domestic agenda --not just US bilateral. VN position regarding HR: "right to have own view about HR, and live in peace." VN HR agenda: improvement in freedom of expression, movement, education. Labor rights: minimum salary, health, etc. Right to strike (with a plan and according to legal channels). A recent Public Demonstration bill is under consideration. Anti-government demonstration or activity are illegal.

VN defines its policy as “democracy under control”. They perceive their National Assembly as more democratic than China’s: political initiatives and debate government bills. VN National Assembly: ministers exposed to questioning from members. HR Amendment was debated in last session. Meet two periods each year, 45 days each. Political dissent grows, as individual expression, not organized.

“HR/democracy” is a politicized issue on the bilateral agenda. VN government worried about the US use of the HR/democracy issue to undermine the political system. “VN HR policy changed responding to US pressure, now more relaxed, but still worried.” Contradictory situation: growing democracy and also government concern.

Religious freedom has been a hot issue in the past. Conflicts arouse in the central highlands (2003, 2004). VN government religious policy was aimed to “stop foreign protestant sects from doing religious activism”. Policies toward ethnic minorities were revised. According to the law, all protestant churches must register legally, to make them visible. If churches are not registered, they are considered illegal.

In the religious sphere, new policies were adopted. New temples and pagodas are built, increasing number of Buddhist priests (40 000). Diversity of Buddhist trends were unified in one organization. Buddhist universities were allowed (3 or 4, in Hanoi and HCMC). Encounters on religious celebration days, not only in churches, but in public spaces. All churches are members of the Fatherland Front, facilitated friendship and dialogue among Catholics and Buddhists. In some occasions, “the Cardinal and Buddhist priests share meditation sessions”. Few US Buddhist churches come to VN. “They have prejudices on Buddhism in VN, don’t understand, perceive socialism as opposed to churches”. “Buddhist organizations in the US have no relations with Vietnamese churches.” But VN believers in the US contribute to temples in VN.

A policy to cope with poverty, particularly increasing in the central highlands (when coffee land was for sale). Migration control in central highlands was also established.

A Constitutional reform (1992) was implemented. There was ideological resistance; the military opposed the elimination of the term “US imperialism” in the reformed Constitution. A new constitutional reform is planned today (2013), aimed to change a) Land use, b) Economic structure, c) Growth of private sector. This next constitutional reform has been debated publicly for one year. Article 4 (one party system) has been discussed; it has been opposed by a sector of the public opinion, intellectuals, journalists, and some VCP members, including a former Minister of Justice (Petition 72). The argument to keep this article: “VCP has played an outstanding role in great national struggles, not just in keeping the communist ideology”. Territorial disputes have been raised as a Constitutional issue (posed by overseas Vietnamese, that also debated the Constitution). And the local governments role (a separate constitutional chapter). Another main issue was property rights, specially land property.

VN policy is aimed (today) to reform the political system, to have a more democratic system, not a multiparty democracy (it is not the moment to adopt it). VN government likes the Singapore system: democracy is important, but not an asset for a small country (Lee Kuan Yew), as “democracy under control”. VN current leadership agenda includes democratization, according to socialist principles.

Freedom of expression. It has developed in the public arena: the National Assembly debates (and challenges) government bills.

Political opposition. VN government is still too worried about some political opposition leaders, put them in prison with long sentences. However, political opposition grows only as individuals, not movement.

HR AS A VN US BILATERAL ISSUE. The main controversial issue on the VN-US bilateral agenda is human rights, raised by the US Congress and some executive branch offices. US VN HR policy encourages political opposition in VN. The US financial support to opposition groups is not open, it was aimed mostly to project political opposition internationally, as the “real Vietnam civil society”. The US tried to promote these groups and increase the role of some NGOs and companies, to facilitate the so called “peaceful evolution” of the VN system. This HR agenda emphasizes freedom of expression, freedom of the press, religious freedom.

Issue of “human rights/democracy” was faced in the early 2000s by the VN government in terms of internal opposition groups, religious freedom and freedom of expression. VN government created an inter-ministerial body to take care of human rights, formed by the MoFa, Minister of Justice, Public Affairs, and Government Committee on Religious Issues.

Some Vietnamese observers considers that “VN human rights policy changed under US pressure, now is more relaxed.”

US government policy does not support VN opposition (Overseas VN right wing does)

VN-US dialogue on HR and religious freedom: three rounds of conversations on HR (every two years). US HR agenda: a) religious and church freedom, b) situation of Catholics, c) Catholic church documents distribution. VN took the initiative of inviting the US government to visit VN. US government visited (2011) to check up religious freedom, particularly Christians. No antisocialist churches in VN, they are overseas.

VN approach to the HR issue with the US: 1) “The US is a civilized country, they can understand our agreements/disagreements”, 2) “Many people in the US can understand VN position vis a vis HR”. VN argues the US has also HR problems. HR issue: not to take it on the defensive, “get things right”, “study the enemy”. In the context of economic and defense cooperation, the question of HR tends to get a lesser relevance.

The US –Vietnam meetings on HR have taken place responding to the US initiative and agenda. VN informs the US about their progress on HR. VN-EU have had also rounds of conversations, particularly on the issue of the death penalty.

Today, HR/democracy is less important for both sides, as long as bilateral relations have increased. US VN policy has changed in terms of security concerns. VN is still too worried about ideological undermining; US policy is less aggressive than it was.

US government does not support the political opposition in VN; some VN-Americans do, and some human rights NGOs.

China

China was a closed society, but is has been opening up. HR is not a Chinese concept, it can be assimilated to Chinese culture, but it has other meanings.

HR IN DOMESTIC DEVELOPMENT. HR is an important area in China domestic politics. “Reform and opening” (R&O) policy includes legal reforms. It was a priority in the 1990s. Human rights theory was emphasized in those years, based on Chinese traditional philosophy, Marxism and Chinese leaders thinking. Main areas were the study of 1) HR in other countries; 2) Content of HR in China: economic, social, political development. HR theory is important to generate a new legal framework. As a subject in the R&O, it includes people’s wealth and property rights, freedom, wellbeing.

In 2013, a White Paper on HR was issued. Recent Chinese Communist Party (CCP) III Plenum (XVIII CCP Congress) defined the goal of “Consolidating a state of rule of law”.

Land property is one fundamental juridical issue, that passed from collective ownership to private usufruct. Urban land property has been considered, as part of a market economy. In the rural area, the state is the land owner, the only one that can buy and sell. The restrictions to move to some urban areas (Beijing) will be eliminated.

Penal code and practice is changing. New regulations on arrest and treatment of prisoners are issued. Redefinition of the kind of offenses to be considered crimes or administrative violations. The judiciary must become more independent. Reeducation sanctions for certain offenses (prostitution, etc.) will be eliminated.

As China pass from a central planned to a market economy, new labor rights and practices must be implemented.

China is building a “consultive democracy”, based on the right to participate more freely, express opinions and being listened.

Economic HR in China must improve, as well as the market, that must be extended according to the law. Equal rights to enjoy wellbeing, education, healthcare, and a “consultive democracy”. The local governments must be strengthened, with the active citizens participation.

China has made progress in the HR area. It needs its own way to democracy. Local level has more democratic elections, CCP internal politics too, progress is made step by step.

2-11 Human rights in China-US relations

It is not an issue that undermines bilateral relations, as it was 20-30 years ago.

HR and democracy have been a bigger or lesser issue on the bilateral agenda, depending on the circumstances. (For instance, when Tienamen, its was bigger). The US recognizes China progress in HR: 1) 200 millions less poor people, 2) abolition of the forced labor in prisons, 3) Decreased pressure on forced family planning.

Two factors that shape human rights as an issue in US-China relations: 1) Economic and social situation in China, as a developing country, is not the one prevailing in the US; 2) The US China policy over human rights has made great progress, it is not longer a critical or fundamental issue.

According to Chinese perceptions, US views and practice of HR are shaped by 200 years of capitalism. Individual HR prevail in the US; in China, a balance between collective and individual rights is needed. State rights can't be subordinated to individual rights.

China and US HR policies are different: 1) US emphasizes political rights; China, economic and social. 2) HR theory differs in its concept of law: between the “ideal” and the “real” human being. China is a more complex country than the US. 3) Economic and social wellbeing predominates In China as the corner stone of rights theory. 4) US HR theory is based on the Illustration philosophy, the natural law. China HR doctrine emphasizes moral obligation, based on human actions, not in laws. 5) US HR view believes that political rights will lead them to increase economic and social access. China perspective understands the complexity of all these economic, social, political sides of HR, and chose to develop each one as a separate area.

US political culture is based on a diversity of small social groups or strata. China is one single nation, 1300 millions size, with very few small groups, and emphasizes obligations and duties. US legislation is full of specific regulations that guarantee specific rights, but with less laws that provide obligations and duties. Secret or restricted associations, like the US, don't exist in China. A China government principle in times of crisis is not to protect individual rights, but to help the people.

US citizens can hardly understand China, because they don't know its history. Sometimes they don't understand it because of ignorance or ideology –according to some observers-- but because of their political intentions.

Tiananmen (called in China, “the June 4th incident”) changed China's good image in the US. US policy (Bush) tried to isolate China. In 1991-92, a new progressive phase developed, not because of more democracy or HR in China, but because of its expanded relations with SE Asian countries and the EU, and increased bilateral trade with the US. China got the “most favored nation” commercial treatment in 1983. The US-China lesson was that economic sanctions don't work, but diplomatic pressures; and “the more trade, the better HR in China”.

US policy has not given up about changing the China political system, but they know they can't use too much political pressure, they are pragmatists, and chose alternative political means, like trying to influence Chinese people's values.

When the US issues a critical statement on HR violations in China, China protests, both sides publish HR White Papers, but relations are not harmed. As a consequence of growing exchanges, the US is more influential on Chinese public opinion.

If China adopted Western democracy, instability would grow, which is not in the US interest. Democratization should better go step by step. China is more aware of the HR problems. As dialogue with the US develops, measures to cope with HR problems are implemented.

HR and democracy are lower on the bilateral agenda, and less difficult than security topics. HR may become more important when security issues will be gone.

2-12 The role of the media (as part of the democracy and human rights agenda)

Vietnam

Some observers perceive that VN media policy should be updated: “current regulations don't work anymore with social networks demands”. Internet: 30 million Internet users; 70% of VN have cell phones. TV broadcasts reach the whole country. 30% have access to Internet. Bloggers are allowed to criticize the government. Official websites are open to the public opinion. Bloggers that violate Article 57, may be punished with prison, on the grounds of promoting destabilization and conflict that threatens VN national security.

China

China use of media to promote public relations has not been very successful. Confucius Institutes have deployed, but not NGOs and transnational companies that could change China image.

Cuba

Human rights and democracy has occasioned deep disagreement between the two governments, and also the two countries and political cultures. The U.S. idea that Cubans are unable to govern themselves and that the mission of the United States is to “save Cubans from themselves,” is older than the Revolution. During the Cold War and after, the respective positions on the two political systems have remained symmetrical. For the US, Cuba is a totalitarian dictatorship, without a scintilla of democratic qualities / For Cuba, the US is nothing but an imperialist superpower lacking in any democratic practice. Each side thinks the institutions on which the other prizes itself do not function, because they are anti-democratic and manipulated by a powerful elite. Each side thinks the other lacks a legitimate, fair, and truly popular electoral system and fails to elect the best officials.

Although the U.S. system is not a model for the majority of Cubans, and they may find its imperial politics repugnant, still they believe that it is desirable to coexist in peace with their powerful neighbour. Besides mutual economic interests, Cubans share with the US a common interest for baseball, modern technology, the work ethic, business organization, U.S. music and film, that create a cultural ground for both sides to coexist.

Many Cubans are surprised to see how accepting the majority of U.S. citizens are of their own version of democracy. If the question of democracy were so important to the United States in its relations with the Island, majority public opinion would not have come to favor normalization and the lifting of the embargo. This evolution does not imply that those in the North have stopped seeing Fidel, Raúl, and the Cuban system as totalitarian. But many in the United States dream of visiting Cuba to enjoy its culture and society, but also to “see Castro-style communism before it disappears”.

2-13 Relations with overseas nationals and expatriates

Vietnam

Normalization with overseas VN preceded bilateral normalization. VN Government policy (before normalization) was aimed to normalize relations with Vietnamese exiles and Vietnamese-Americans, on the basis of identifying their interests, regardless of their ideological stands, facilitate encounter, help their families.

Government wanted they know the new VN. [In contrast with Cuba] Overseas Vietnamese were not involved in overthrowing the VN government. National links facilitated communication: “we are all members of the same family”. The case of Nguyen Cao KY (former South Vietnam president) who decided to visit and support independence and reunification. Two kinds of VN-American overseas: 1) Left before 1975; 2) Former military and SV government officials who left after 1975. Type 1) had good relations, their children were educated to have normal relations with their country; type 2) had lost their properties, and played a politically active role in US-VN relations.

From South VN, many exiles went to US, Germany, Australia. A few years after the war, the Orderly Departure Program (1990) was implemented. Many VN left because of economic, not political reasons. VN emigres were afraid to return, misinformed (“Fear of Viet Cong revenge”). Businessmen and artists were the first invited to return. VN accepts double citizenship. Overseas VN can buy land, if approved by the government, on a case by case basis. The Fatherland Front organizes Tet celebrations with overseas VN and locals; they are informed on reforms, and economic, political, social development, and on foreign investment opportunities. Their questions and opinions are listened. “The past must be left aside”. “We are all Vietnamese”. “Work together to build a new Vietnam”. Invited to return to their fatherland. Welcome *ancien regime* members, as long as they come in peace. Former combatants and torturers come across in the streets. “As long as they respect the law, they are VN citizens, they have children, family.” Easier dialogue with second and third generation Vietnamese-Americans. Elderly Vietnamese-Americans like to retire in VN. They have become economic actors in the doi moi policy: a) Business, b) Remittances.

There are 4 million overseas Vietnamese; and 1 million Vietnamese-Americans.

They did not penetrate the US government institutions [as deeply as the Cuban-Americans]. Very few held official or elected positions (Ex. Joseph Cao, a Congressman who served only one term). Second and third generations visit VN (as opposed to their parents). Die-hard Vietnamese-Americans are anachronism (history clock stopped in 1975). Right wing VN exiles are noisy, but not powerful.

Post-normalization relations with overseas VN prioritized young scientists (from Silicon Valley) invited to share their knowledge with young VN scientists; also artists, movie makers. Facilitate expertise inflow.

Overseas Vietnamese are recognized as citizens, they can invest, buy houses, do businesses. Allowed by VN law and VCP policy.

Anti-normalization lobby: Vietnamese-American (ex-VN government, anticommunists)+ US politicians: critics of human rights situation in Vietnam (Chris Smith, Ed Royce), not

Vietnamese voters, but “moral majority” (they vote against abortion, etc.). Loreta Sanchez (only with Vietnamese constituency). Some antisocialist churches overseas.

VN policy was aimed to attract VN overseas. “All VN are part of the same people”. They can contribute to VN development, particularly young educated overseas VN. Senior VN return to their homeland to spend the last part of their lives. Businessmen can invest. Remittances play a role in VN economic growth.

Second group (left after 1975), 38 years later, their children have a different approach to their parents motherland.

Those who left VN in the 1980s and later were motivated by economic, not ideological or political interests.

“All VN have a special link with their country, they want to return or to visit, regardless of their position towards the VN government”.

Younger generations are better educated and interested in their country of origin. VN government was less strict in customs control with overseas VN. They come to teach and conduct research in VN. They get married very often with VN residents. When they invest, they can choose if they do it as foreign or national investors (VN recognizes double nationality). If they travel with a VN passport, they don’t need visas. VN policy towards overseas VN professors and scientists gives them a special treatment (incentives) to motivate them to work in VN. The only strict rule established by the VN government is they can’t try to change the VN political system. What overseas VN can see in VN changes their mind about their country.

Some observers still think that the main obstacle in US-VN relations are VN-Americans, the majority of them still don’t support the VN government, although the minority that does is growing. “VN government should adopt a policy that facilitates reconciliation between VN-Americans and VN”, which remains a problem (ex. To launch a MIA program for former VN military).

China

China has no differentiated policy towards US different political actors and groups, just to “show China reality to all of them”. US congressmen were invited to know firsthand China in 1992-2005, not anymore.

China implemented a successful public relations campaign in the US. They managed to change US public opinion about China. Taiwan lobby was strong because of the Cold War, it was led by a strong group of extremist Democrats and Republicans. China policy towards those anti-China groups is not to negotiate with them. China just bought the Republican lobby companies that worked for Taiwan.

The basic actors in the current anti-China lobby are Taiwan and the Dalai Lama. The House of Representatives pushes for selling weapons to Taiwan, but it usually fails. In the Senate, the majority converges with the Executive branch China policy.

Very conservative (and anticommunist) US politicians are concerned with the rising China military power, and very liberal ones are worried about HR. US think-tanks are pro and con. Academics are a moderate factor, mostly favor growing bilateral relations.

Open door policy to Chinese-Americans did not play an important role in normalization. Most Chinese-American politicians were (and are) in state legislatures, not in the federal congress. The Dalai Lama has a negative impact, as a political exile, not as a religious leader.

Overseas Chinese were really attracted when China adopted the Kuomintang agenda. Most Chinese migrants in the US belonged to the same generation of reformers. They were ready to invest in China. China open door policy implemented in the 1980s facilitated their participation.

In the early years of R&O, many overseas Chinese and other foreigners bought houses in China –not anymore.

Cuba

The current Cuban migration flow has a different composition than previous stages. It occurs in contexts other than those of the 1960-90s. During the last three decades, social and political changes on the island and the Cuban emigration have taken place.

Some lessons from the Chinese experience and Vietnamese to Cuba are:

1) The policy towards Cubans living abroad should be separated from relations with the US and with any other government.

Cuba policy towards overseas nationals was originally conceived (1978-79) as a separate realm, not as part of relations between the two governments. That first encounter was planned as a meeting among Cubans, regardless of their ideological positions, and contributing to national unity. However, developments in bilateral relations, and some national security concerns, made this policy a hostage to bilateral conflict. Radio Martí (1984), the Helms-Burton Act (1996), specially designed US migration policy toward Cuba, impunity of terrorists in Miami, sentencing of the Cuban Five (1999) to long prison sentences, made Cuba overseas nationals to pay a high cost. This reactive policy still has a counterproductive political effect on national interest.

2) Recognition of citizen rights to all Cubans who leave the country, according to the new migration law (January 2013) that normalized the whole travel process, demands to be progressively extended to all foreign residents who request their rights to return, and submit themselves to the strict rule of Cuban law.

Overseas nationals have been classified as “expatriates”, “disaffected”, “definitive migrants”. They are subclassified as “before or after 1959”, “foreign born”, “prior to 1971”. The categories of immigration status include “permanent permit to visit Cuba”, “foreign residence permit” (pre), etc. Since January 2013, Cubans who travel are just “temporary residents abroad” or simply “travelers”. They are Cuban citizens temporarily residing outside the country without losing their civil rights (property, access to state services, social security), particularly, the one to travel and return freely at any time.

3) The institutional link and the protection of residents abroad should be strengthened, as a policy aimed to safeguard their interests and rights in a foreign country, and preserve its relations with Cuban institutions, society and the national culture.

This is the practical experience not only in China and Vietnam, but in other Latin American and Caribbean countries with higher proportions of their nationals residing outside their territory (Mexico, Haiti, Jamaica, Guatemala, El Salvador, etc.). Besides consular services, Cuba should protect their rights by establishing bilateral agreements with other countries, and legal advice and defense of their rights. A network of support services should be available in country areas where Cuban population is higher.

4) A specific institution, with a high state rank and autonomy, must be created to serving the overseas Cubans necessities and interests, and develop public policies aimed to serve their interests and that of the country.

Relations with overseas nationals has been limited so far to migration consular services and the promotion of solidarity. An institution with hierarchy and authority is needed, capable of facilitating their contribution to the country socio-economic development; encourage educational, scientific, artistic, sporting opportunities for residents in Cuba; investigate the overseas Cubans problems; and maintain an information policy on their topics of real interest, and their contributions to national development.

5) A national policy should be adopted vis a vis the increasing number of Cubans who assume another citizenship.

Although Cuban law does not recognize dual citizenship, the phenomenon of increasing Cuban citizens who, for work or personal reasons, acquire another, must be recognized and considered by the Cuban state.

2-14 Lessons for Cuba policy to promote cooperation with the US

[comments by interviewees when asked about their advise]

Vietnam

VN lessons for Cuba would be the following: 1) Gradual rapprochement (better than faster, a perceived mistake made by VN), 2) Stress economic relations (UN votes massively against embargo), 3) Show the real Cuba, not only to the US, but to the world, 4) Persuade the US government and civil society that the Cuban system is stable (US only restored relations when realized VN system was strong). 5) Emphasize Cuba internal strengths: health, education, culture.

Some VN observers: “Improve relations and normalize with the US would increase Cuba’s living standard”. “Every country must follow its own national interests vis a vis the US, not to adopt another country’s pattern”. “Normalization would facilitate a fastest way to Cuba’s economic development”.

A few factors that influence favorably Cuba-US relations: 1) International isolation of US policy towards Cuba. 2) Cuba’s regional integration and Latin American demands vis a vis the US about normalizing relations with Cuba. 3) US businesses interests. 4) Cuba should find something equivalent to the MIA issue with the US. 5) Show the quality of the Cuban people, to touch the US human fiber. (“Obama may want to change relations in this favorable circumstance”).

China

1) Increase business exchanges, start dialogue with US nationalized corporations (1960). 2) Look for a third party threat. 3) Advance marketization. 4) Reshape relations with overseas Cubans. (In the case of China, the open door policy to Chinese-Americans did not play an important role in normalization.)

[What China should learn from other countries’ experience]

After some observers, China must negotiate with other powers, not only the US. “China-US relations are not well understood, only a few Chinese academics understand the US; they read documents and write articles, don’t present new ideas.”

The great question between China and the US is cultural, to know more about the US culture must be a priority. Many analysts perceive US policies just as bad intentions, because they don’t understand American culture and ideology, which are the underlying factors behind their behavior. The main problem between China and the US is mistrust. Last 10 years of mistrust (“driven by the Chinese side?”) have prevailed in China-US relations. The “Major Power Partnership” concept express the will to overcome that mistrust.

Cuba

To what extent is there any historical and strategic basis for a projection of the changed U.S. policy toward China and Vietnam onto the Cuban case? When the United States modified its relations with China in 1972, China was very far from the market socialism of today. Its main attraction for a politician like Nixon and a strategist like Kissinger was its antagonism toward the USSR, which represented a deep division within the socialist bloc and within the international revolutionary movement. When the Clinton administration restored relations with Viet Nam in 1995, the most symbolic catalyst was not the country's economic liberalization but rather the opportunity to finally bring an end to the longstanding trauma of the U.S. prisoners of war (POWs) and missing in action (MIAs) whose remains had not been recovered.

Naturally, U.S. corporations were in favor of these diplomatic and commercial openings. But any comparison of these two cases with the Cuban one must include the differences in scale between the geo-economic interests at play. If Cuba had a billion potential consumers or were located in a region with an intense financial and commercial dynamic and galloping growth like that of the Asian "tigers," then U.S. policy would face completely different challenges. But there are no Caribbean tigers, nor are Cubans tending to multiply (in fact, they are doing the opposite).

Finally, if one takes Washington's position toward the Island literally, the policy is not to demand mere economic reforms or some changes in the political system, but rather a fundamental break with its economic, social, and political order. Nothing indicates that the United States government would be content with a form of market socialism; it seeks nothing less than a capitalist restoration.

Nevertheless, the Obama-Raúl Castro announcement on December 17, 2014, shows that such statements are only one side of the coin. The other one, what José Martí called the invisible side of politics, may be the real one.

Appendices

Appendix I. Sources:

Vietnam, China, Cuba and U.S. official documents on foreign policy, bilateral relations, and H.R./democracy.

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Appendix II . Questionnaire: Interview Questionnaires of Field Research applied in China and Vietnam.

Objective of this research:

Understand the key strategy and political practices that led China and Vietnam negotiations with the US.

Analyze to what extent these policies have managed to minimize conflict and maximize cooperation, while fulfilling national interests.

Assess the progress and boundaries of the dialogue with the U.S. about divisive issues, particularly, human rights and democracy.

Questions:

1. Are bilateral relations with the U.S. well understood?
2. How would you define your country foreign policy towards the US?
3. What are the main areas of conflict and cooperation with the US: trade, security, regional issues, migration, drugs, sovereignty, energy, environment, organized crime, terrorism, ideology, environment, science & tech, human rights, democracy.
4. How positively or negatively the following events or actors have influenced bilateral relations with the U.S.?: End of the Cold War, domestic developments; social, ethnic, religious issues; regional or international organizations; U.S. lobbies.
5. What are the most difficult bilateral issues? Have these issues evolved in the last years? How? Why?
6. How successful cooperation has developed in the last years? Why? Whose initiative?
7. Any turning point in recent bilateral relations with the US in the last two decades? When? Why?
8. Main interest groups (agencies, institutions, sectors, actors) that influence U.S. policy towards your country?
9. Main U.S. legislations or decisions that have influenced bilateral relations with your country?
10. What have been your country's policies towards interest groups (lobbies) in the US that influence bilateral relations?
11. Most effective political decisions or instruments adopted by your country to facilitate cooperation with the U.S.?
12. How effectual have been the "step-by-step", the "quid-pro-quo", or other "negotiation tactics" in getting to a dialogue/cooperation with the U.S.?
13. How important is the issue of "human rights/democracy" on the bilateral agenda with the U.S.?
14. Costs and benefits of improving cooperation over "H.R./democracy" with the U.S.?
15. Lessons to be learned (by other countries) about negotiating successfully with the U.S.?

Appendix III. Field research: Interviewees (officials, experts, decision-makers, academics, non-governmental actors).

VIETNAM INTERVIEWS (Hanoi & Ho Chi Minh City)			
#	NAME	POSITION	INSTITUTION
1	Vu Xuang Hong	President President	VUFO (VN Union Friendship Org) Ntl. Assembly., VN-US Parliam. Group
2-3	Hoang Thi Khanh Tran Thi Hai	President Vice-president	VN-Cuba Friendship Assoc., Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC)
4-5	Ton Nu Thi Ninh Ngô Thị Phương Thiện	Ex-dep Chair Ex-diplomat General Secretary	National Ass. Fgn Aff Committee MoFa HCMC Peace Committee
6	Tich Thien Tam	Abbot	Pho Minh Pagoda, HCMC
7	Mac Duong	Ex Director	Institute Social Sciences HCMC
8	Vo Anh Tuan	President VP Ex.Ambas Cuba	HCMC Peace & Dev Found VN Peace Committee MoFa
9	Tran Huu Phuc Tien	CEO Ex-journalist	VN Centrepoint Education & Media Group
10	Le Hung Quoc	President	HCMC Union Friend Org (HUFO)
11	Huynh Ngoc An	Ex Director Ex – Ambassador	Overseas VN Committee HCMC (MoFa)
12	Cu Chi Loi	Director	Inst of Americas Stud. (VASS)
13	Tran Dac Loi	Dep. Head	CPV CC Com External Relations
14	Le Dinh Tinh	Dep. Director- Gral	Inst. Fgn. Pol& Strat Stud, Diplomatic Acad of VN
15	Duong Trung Quoc	VP Sec Gral Chief Editor Member	Ass. VN Historians Past & Present Review National Ass.
16	Ha Huy Thong	Vice President Co-chair	Fgn Aff Com, National Ass. VN-US Dialogue Agent Orange
17	Pham Khac Lam	Ex VicePresident	VN Overseas
18	Hoang Chi Trung	Director Gral	Dept Intl Org (MoFa)
19	Le Duy Truyen	Dep. Director Gral	VN News Agency
20- 21	Nguyen Huan Phong Pham Tien Tu	Ex Ambassador VP	MoFa VN-Cuba Ass, VUFO
22	Vu Khoan	Ex- Dep.P.Minister	VN Government

23	Tich Gia Quang	Abbot VP	Lien Phai Pagoda VN Buddhist Sangha Exec Com
24	Nguyen Hoanh Nam	Dep Director	Dept Americas, MoFa
25	Do Duc Dinh	Dep. Director	Institute of World Economy
26	Nguyen Viet Thao	VP	HCM Natl Acad Politics & Public Admon
27	Tuan Quang Bui	Dep director	VN Inst of Economics, VASS
28	Nguyen Quoc Tuan	Director	Inst for Relig Stud., VASS
29	NguyenThanh Xuan	VP	Gov Com Relig Aff of VN
30	Dang Xuan Thanh	Vice director (Strateg. Stud.)	VN Institute Northeast Asian Stud

CHINA INTERVIEWS (Beijing & Shanghai)			
#	NOMBRE	POSITION	INSTITUTION
1	Cheng Enfu	Director	Academic Div. Marxist Studies, CASS
2-3	Wang Rongjun He Xingniang	Director Professor	Div. Strat. Stud. , Inst. Amer. Stud., CASS Inst. Amer. Stud., CASS
4-5	Gao Pengcheng Wang Puqu	Professor Professor	School Govmnt, Beijing Univ. School Govmnt, Beijing Univ.
6	Jin Canrong	Ass. Dean	School Intl Studies, Renmin Univ.
7	Shulan Ye	Professor	Dept. Pol Sci, East Ch. Normal U, Shanghai
8	Liu Ming	Exec. Director	Inst of Intl Rel, Shanghai Acad. of Soc. Sc.
9	Shao Yuqun	Director	Shanghai Institutes for Intl. Stud.
10	Cui Lei	Researcher	Dept American Stud., China Institute of Intl Rel.
11	Wu Zuron	Exec. Director	Center of US Stadies, China Found. for Intl. Stud.
12	Xufeng Zhu	Professor	Sch Public Pol & Mgmnt, Tsinghua University

Japan External Trade Organization(IDE- JETRO) INTERVIEWS

#	Name	Position	Institution
1	Boo Teik Khoo	Executive Sr. Research Fellow	IDE
2	Dennis D. Trinidad	Head	International Studies , De La Salle University, Philippines

About the Author

Rafael M. Hernández Rodríguez

Rafael M. Hernández Rodríguez (Havana, 1948) is a political scientist, professor, researcher and chief editor of *Temas*, a Cuban quarterly in the field of social sciences and the humanities; he is also a published poet, essayist and playwright. His university training was in French Literature and History of Philosophy (University of Havana, 1973), Master's in Political Science (El Colegio de Mexico, 1977) and Latin American Studies (PhD program, UNAM, Mexico). He has been professor and researcher at the University of Havana and the Higher Institute of International Relations; director of US studies at the Centro de Estudios sobre América (CCP Central Committee think tank) for 18 years; and a Senior Research Fellow at the Instituto Cubano de Investigación Cultural "Juan Marinello", in Havana (1996-2008). He has taught as a visiting professor at Harvard, Columbia, the University of Texas, the Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas (Mexico), the Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de Mexico and the University of Puerto Rico; and conducted research at the Woodrow Wilson Center (Guest Scholar), Johns Hopkins, the Institute of Developing Economies (Japan), and other academic institutions. He was coordinator of the Cuba's exchange program with LASA (Latin American Studies Association). He has received the Illiteracy Campaign Medal and the LASA Academic Excellency Award (2006).

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