

## REPORT: CUBA

# The Promise Besieged: Participation and Autonomy in Cuba

By Armando Chaguaceda

**A**FTER THE TRIUMPH OF CUBA'S 1959 REVOLUTION, the country established a state socialist regime based on the Soviet model. This model's features are by now well-known: state-party fusion, the control and colonization of society by the state, and the systematic obstruction of society's self-organizing capabilities. It has fostered a kind of militant citizenship that identifies state order with the nation, favors unanimity as a way of expressing identities and views, and encourages the social redistribution of wealth and the rejection of exclusion based on gender and race. However, the new revolutionary order established after 1959 also deemed alternative, non-“revolutionary” collectivities and identities—such as homosexuals, religious groups, and some artistic movements—as suspicious (and punishable), even if they did not necessarily oppose the revolution.

Given this legacy, exploring the contemporary relationship between the Cuban state's policies of citizen participation, on the one hand, and practices of autonomy that emerge organically from society, on the other, can help us assess the current state of affairs in Cuba and explore the potential for greater citizen empowerment in the future. island-based researchers have studied the issue of the Cuban state's policies on popular participation since the 1990s.<sup>1</sup> However, the Cuban academy, even with its reputation as the best in the Caribbean, has not produced work on this issue that is on par with its treatments of other important problems, like territorial and social inequalities, racism, and generational conflict. The political nature of the subject matter, as well as the possible institutional constraints on research, have not favored those interested in the subject, be they professional researchers or the public.

Instead, most treatments of the issue have been superficial, with the necessary empirical references and concrete policy proposals cast aside in favor of abstract or normative interpretations, formal descriptions of the social order, or the use

of trendy theoretical concepts that are “imported” without the necessary adjustment to the local reality. (These deficits are shared by foreign analysts who profess an uncritical defense of the Cuban government.<sup>2</sup>) Academic contributions are even more limited when it comes to practices of autonomy and self-organization in Cuba. Part of the problem is that autonomous organizations in Cuba have been made invisible both by power (as a sign of rejection) and by their own participants (as a means of survival). Meanwhile, most researchers have scarcely noticed, much less documented, such experiences.<sup>3</sup>

The current model of participation in Cuba emerged in the 1960s, when the counter-revolutionary opposition ended up in exile and defeat. The subsequent revolutionary process socialized millions of people who participated in social, economic, and political tasks directed by the state: literacy campaigns, agricultural plans, and large public assemblies. As pre-revolutionary forms of association disappeared, these gaps were filled by new mass organizations like the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution and the Federation of Cuban Women, both organized at the local level. With time, these were joined by other professional and civil associations of, for example, farmers, lawyers, and environmentalists. Social rights to health, education, social security, and employment, together with cultural rights like access to artistic training and recreation, became preeminent in the collective imaginary. Civil and political rights, meanwhile, were to be conceived and realized only within state institutions and according to the new regime's policies.

By the 1970s, dysfunctions in this scheme began to reveal themselves. Voluntaristic notions of political leadership and social development that appealed to human will, embodied in charismatic leaders and enthusiastic masses, came to obviate institutional mediation and popular deliberation. State-sponsored planning, investment, and production accelerated, generating administrative

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chaos (most dramatically in the failed 10 Million Ton Harvest of 1967–70, when the Cuban state launched a campaign to produce a record amount of sugarcane). As a result, the institutional order was restructured more closely along Soviet lines. Despite popular enthusiasm and creativity, both the personalism and institutionalization of the political regime and its rituals gained strength in subsequent years to the detriment of more autonomous forms of participation. Following the state socialist model, a system of assemblies was formed, called Popular Power, and established at the local, provincial, and national levels, along with centralized ministries. An enormous, more or less professional bureaucracy was put in charge of this system, planning and managing public policy and distributing the economic surplus generated by workers.

The Cuban state has demonstrated its role as the defender of national sovereignty, sponsor of development, and guarantor of social justice through the redistribution of goods and services. But it has also proved its inability to satisfy a great number of Cuban society's expectations for participation, with its vertical model of central management, in which top management positions in the state and in the Communist Party overlap and are occupied by the so-called historical leadership (that is, Fidel Castro's generation of leaders). At the lower levels there is usually a similar overlap among party leaders serving as government leaders; this is particularly visible in the provinces and countryside.

Genuine popular participation would require that people who are not formally part of the state evaluate and correct public policies, a role not currently played by the press or neighborhood associations, human rights defenders, consumers, or parents' associations. Their participation would presuppose the state's respect for and promotion of societal autonomy, which is under siege in contemporary Cuba. Without such participation, institutional performance has become symptomatically precarious, as centralization, administrative discretion, and personalism, from national bodies to local ones, have put a halt on collective dynamism and deliberation. In this system of organizing collective life, social spaces, whether organized or informal, tend to be subsumed or simply controlled by the state within an asymmetrical power structure.

The Cuban press constantly defines the country's regime as a "participatory democracy," while the citizen and the act of participating are viewed in a trivialized and restricted way, bearing the imprint of a state-centric system that weakens

the civic commitment required to successfully implement changes. Since 2007 the government has employed classic administrative and technocratic solutions to address demands for improving institutional performance; these solutions include installing new officials to oversee other officials and shrinking the bureaucracy. But there has been no effort to expand citizen participation based on either the socialist traditions of bottom-up collectivities (workers' councils, self-managed businesses, popular assemblies) or on contemporary democratic innovations that continue to emerge in many parts of Latin America (management boards, social auditing, roundtables). In preparation for the Communist Party's various congresses, the state has sponsored National Debates that call for a broad discussion of national issues and prioritize consultative forms of participation, but they are territorially fragmented and thematically parochial.

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Participation, as it is defined in practice, has a consultative bias in the sense that citizens' discussions take place on courses of action that have already been outlined or determined at higher institutional levels, such as the State Council and Politburo. Thus, the possibilities for participation are minimized to individual voices and the limited aggregation of demands; shaping the agenda, its execution and control is off-limits. Policy corrections are exclusively up to the leadership, which operates with total discretion. This has been the experience in the debates ahead of party congresses (1991, 2010) and discussions of legislative initiatives, such as that of Labor and Social Security (2009), which had great social impact.

This fragmented way of exercising "participatory democracy" and the media's failure to communicate the results of these debates to society prevented the differentiation between personal and social expectations. It also inhibited the formation of collectives capable of advocating policies—in an organized manner and in accordance with existing legislation—with key political caucuses like the Communist Party congresses or National Assembly sessions. This is how the socialization and political participation of the citizenry is repressed.

Participation is thematically parochial because in the so-called neighborhood accountability assemblies of Popular Power, the democratic potential is limited almost exclusively to summoning low- and middle-level officials for evaluation. The issues raised almost always deal with unmet demands for goods and services rather than procedural questions or other broader matters. In the end, although removing rep-

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resentatives by grassroots voters is rare, citizen protagonism in this forum, as well as the relatively greater transparency in institutional performance associated with it, are real. But they are limited by a vertical subordination of local organisms according to a conventional approach to the role of the Communist Party as a driving force for the community and the persistence of traditional models of leadership that are authoritarian and personalist. Meanwhile, participation is narrowly viewed as a means of mobilizing.

The Popular Councils, as territorial entities, gather people at the level of neighborhood streets and blocks, serving as channels for local participation. But their effectiveness is limited, and they have even fewer resources, which is why their promising expansion during the 1990s did not produce the expected results, as they were inserted within a vertical, centralized order (even when Popular Council Law 91 formally provides power to these entities for the promotion and stimulation of citizen initiatives). The weakness of the popular economy, the inexistence of urban cooperatives for anything other than agricultural production, the weakness

of local and national association, and the absence of legislation and policies for (and from) municipalities have lessened the Popular Councils' role as spaces for participation. As seems to be the case in various Latin American nations with, for example, Citizen Power in Nicaragua and Communal Councils in Venezuela, Cuba seems to now have a "sea of participation that is only an inch deep."

If we add the accumulated material and symbolic exhaustion of the Cuban population after 20 years of socioeconomic crisis and the debilitating effects of a vertical system (which so far has limited the resources and powers available to local authorities), one can understand that many people identify participation (and accountability) with traditional practices, thus limiting potentially emancipatory discourses. In this vein, the Cuban experience with popular education, beyond its attractive rhetoric, has not been able to become the generating principle of a liberating pedagogy because it is confined to work spaces and praxis in small communities—with limited impact on the dynamics of national life—and the

## New Autonomous Formations in Cuba

In recent years, pro-revolutionary but generally anti-bureaucratic groups have emerged in Cuba, born at the margins of institutionalism and inclined toward self-management and participatory leadership. One of the more prominent is the Protagonistic Critical Observatory Network, an alliance of collectives representing a broad spectrum of left-wing political positions—together with artistic endeavors, environmentalism, spirituality, and opposition to gender and racial discrimination ([observatoriocriticodescuba.wordpress.com](http://observatoriocriticodescuba.wordpress.com); the author is a member).

Established in 2007 during national meetings of the Saíz Brothers Association, the arts and culture wing of the official Union of Communist Youth, the Critical Observatory convenes yearly meetings and publishes newsletters, both in print and online. Its members engage in a variety of activities, from coastal cleanups to gardening and tree-planting initiatives to campaigns for animal vaccinations. They have also participated in activities organized by other collectives—such as demonstrations in support of nonviolence and commemorative demonstrations against racism in Havana—as well as in mass demonstrations organized by the state. During May Day marches in 2008, 2009, and 2010, members carried signs reading. "Down With Bureaucracy," "Long Live the Workers," and "More Socialism."

Some of the network's collectives include the following:

- La Cátedra de Pensamiento Crítico y Culturas Emergentes "Haydeé Santamaría" (the Haydeé Santamaría Lecture on Critical Thought and Emergent Cultures): a socio-cultural project that brings together three generations of Cuban researchers, professors, writers, and cultural workers.
- El Guardabosques (the Forest Ranger): an ecological project that campaigns for reforestation and against the mistreatment of forests.
- Ahimsa: a project promoting the ideals and practice of nonviolence.
- El Trencito (the Little Train): an autonomous community and family project dedicated to fostering noncompetitive children's games.
- Socialismo Participativo y Democrático (Participatory and Democratic Socialism): a collective that elaborates proposals for self-managed socialism as a possible future for Cuba.
- Black Hat: a computer science group that develops computer literacy in Cuba and creates socially useful software.
- Cofradía de la Negritud (Brotherhood of Blackness): an Afro-Cuban rights group whose work has been essential to the critique of racism in Cuba creating a space for the study and analysis of racial issues.

evasion of an analysis of the structural factors that reproduce authoritarianism.<sup>4</sup>

Furthermore, social autonomy and the development of policies of participation are inseparable from the quality of political representation and the performance of accountability. Understanding participation as a process that stems from individual action by citizens and reaches collective forms that constitute practices and spaces of representation (managing and electoral councils, participatory budgeting, etc.) the relationship between participation and representation is complementary, given that the legitimacy and effectiveness of the two processes are presupposed. And social autonomy must be strengthened through policies of accountability that allow social actors to determine the responsibility and sanction governmental performance. This would presuppose interaction between social and state agents.

**P**ERNICIOUS CONSEQUENCES, BOTH ECONOMIC (CRUSHING productive initiatives and self-management) and political (general demobilization), result from chan-

neling “citizen initiative” through state and party structures and the “mass organizations.” Groups that are independent of the state, including those that are legally registered or recognized (including NGOs, cultural organizations, and neighborhood movements) are made invisible by the establishment and by conservative sectors of the academy. While such groups are recognized as playing subsidiary roles in social functioning, their non-governmental character is a cause of apprehension, and they are sanctioned when they contest the government’s decisions.

In the 1990s, a group of new civil organizations appeared: centers for training and services (some of them religious), foundations, fraternities, and Masonic lodges. These more professional entities had operating expenses and a membership that included some paid staff. The most powerful of them developed complex programs and projects in diverse areas and maintained a formal, stable leadership. They often functioned as mediators between governments, international groups, and various grassroots organizations, and they generally depended on external funding (private, governmental,

- **Salvadera (Sandbox):** a community ecological project that works in Reparto Eléctrico, a poor neighborhood on the periphery of Havana, on the protection of animals and plants.
- **Chequendeque:** an artistic group that defends Cuba’s Afro-diasporic cultural heritage, composed of Cuban poets, painters, sculptors, musicians, and journalists.

There are also bloggers and alternative journalists whose work mirrors or complements that of the Critical Observatory: Bloggers Cuba ([bloggerscuba.com](http://bloggerscuba.com)), the portal *Havana Times* ([havanatimes.org](http://havanatimes.org)), Inter Press Service’s Cuba-focused site ([ipsclub.net](http://ipsclub.net)), and the *Espacio Laical* project ([espacio-laical.org](http://espacio-laical.org)). Furthermore, one of the strengths of these collectives is their connections to and solidarity with anti-capitalist and anti-authoritarian struggles in other countries. Internationally, the Critical Observatory has maintained exchanges with representatives of the Brazilian Landless Workers’ Movement, Mexico’s Zapatista communities, and U.S. and European movements against free trade agreements and international financial institutions. They are also linked to various cultural, environmentalist, and libertarian collectives in Argentina, Chile, Mexico, and Venezuela.

For these collectives, which contest the state’s exclusionary and retaliatory position, the right to create autonomous and participatory spaces is both possible and necessary.



Activists from the Protagonistic Critical Observatory Network participate in the May 1, 2010, march for the Cuban Revolution in Havana. They carry signs reading, “Socialism Is Democracy” and “Down With the Burrocracy.”

Government authorities have repeatedly and, in general, unsuccessfully attempted to stop these activities and weaken the network. They have spread defamatory rumors and threatened to fire (or have fired) people from their jobs; the members of several collectives have been visited at home and work by internal affairs officers; and surveillance has been kept on members in their communications and during public events. So far, however, there has been no criminal prosecution—a sign, perhaps, of the ambiguous official position toward collectives like the network, and the political and moral costs of representing them as “counterrevolutionary” and as “imperialist agents.” —**Armando Chaguaceda**

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or from foundations). Within this segment there were entities concerned with various themes, including sexual diversity, environmentalism, and popular education.<sup>5</sup>

In those years various neighborhood movements also emerged, many of them associated with initiatives like the Workshops for the Integral Transformation of the Neighborhood (TTIB) and other community projects supported by Cuban associations and their foreign counterparts. They were essentially local, with almost no connection among them; tended to be informal and territorial; and have limited access to economic resources. Depending on external sources, they functioned with neighborhood participation and prevalent women's leadership. The TTIB were launched in the 1990s when multidisciplinary teams of planners, psychologists, and cultural activists expanded into 20 Havana neighborhoods with the purpose of working with neighbors' participation, on community issues. Their work was assisted by the Group for Integral Development of the Capital, an entity for metropolitan planning, and they were closely linked to Popular Councils, which generated some conflict because of the latter's traditional authoritarian leadership style and attempts to interfere with the TTIB's work. Despite the group's proved success, the group's expansion to other neighborhoods in Havana and other provinces was limited by governmental decision.

Faced with these experiences, the state played a contradictory role, providing material resources and support to the personnel while blocking legal recognition and the consolidation of self-management in the popular economy, and trying to co-opt local productive initiatives.<sup>6</sup> Even so, these experiences demonstrated reciprocal relations in the form of neighborhood cooperation, food distribution, and donations, and prompted communal benefits for self-employed workers as well as cooperative arrangements to contract their services for projects supported by civil associations.

Beginning in 1996 the state began restricting the expansion of new associations. They were excluded from the official Association Registry, new controls were imposed on existing organizations, and surveillance on external financing was reinforced. Ever since, rather than grow, the Cuban NGO community has shrunk. In spite of this, citizen interest in self-management and organization allows different participatory frameworks to enter state institutions and new associations, or spaces of contact between both—for example, through sociocultural projects—developing activities and performances that occasionally go beyond their formal objectives.<sup>7</sup>

The usual justification for these new measures is the increase in destabilizing U.S. policy, expressed in the approval of the Helms-Burton Act and its Title II, which

proposed work with "civil society organizations in Cuba" as its main axis and identified them as anti-systemic organizations: opposition movements and parties, human rights groups, independent journalists, and so on. Consequently, many associations were reduced to very discreet roles (paying the price of near invisibility); others were shut down under the criteria that their functions would be assumed by the state (for example, the participatory urban planning project Hábitat Cuba). Some organizations were partly able to avoid these results because they enjoy special political protection or because of the importance of their international contacts (for example, the Martin Luther King Memorial Center), which allow them to maintain some impact within Cuban society and to benefit from foreign financial support.

Truncated experiences like those of the post- and neo-Marxist intellectual group Paideia (closed in 1990), the feminist collective Magín (closed in 1996), the leftist student space Che Vive (closed in 1997), Hábitat-Cuba (closed in 1998), and the environmentalist collective Sibarimar (closed in 2005) are a sign of the Cuban bureaucracy's profound and instinctive rejection of autonomous social practices (known as *autonomofobia*). These groups, as well as other, lesser-known ones, suffered official repression and sanctions that led to authentic personal dramas of their members and founders, who were in many cases leading militants of the Revolution. Although they have not received the study and notice that they deserve, their greatest value resides in building initiatives for participation and activism outside the bureaucratic logic of Cuban institutions. These institutions, in turn, reacted apprehensively, seeing the autonomous groups as a threat to the symbolic monopoly through which they have always tried to simplify and represent the Cuban left in its entirety.

Fed up with this, alternative social groups have emerged in Cuba, born at the margins of institutionalism and inclined toward self-management and participatory leadership (see "New Autonomous Formations in Cuba," page 22). They seek cultural experimentation and activism by creating spaces of autonomy and articulation, confronting the state and authoritarian mercantilist threats (be they internal or external). The initiatives include environmentalist and peace groups, art workshops and groups, community intervention forums, and workshops, among others. Notwithstanding this progress, these groups find it difficult to connect with each other, and they have organizational weaknesses, lack resources, and face institutional pressures. Their political culture and praxis is dominated by a form of "self-limited radicalism," as the Polish dissident intellectual Adam Michnik put it, which supports the creation of autonomous islets within a society governed by a state-centric order.<sup>8</sup> This

is a valuable strategy for its civic potential and setting a precedent, but it is constrained by the disarmament and disarticulation that prevail at a social scale.

Through their interaction these collectives develop a particular way of being that comes from the intertwining of knowledge, affection, and shared values that evolve daily. With a more or less coherent discourse, they attempt to transform their communities through testimony and practice. There are still authoritarian positions and internal tensions, but they resolve these tensions and become aware of the nature of these conflicts in substantially different ways than those of traditional institutionalism: Words prevail over sticks.

It is difficult to provide a short summary of the current Cuban situation in regard to participation and autonomy. However, I am convinced that any proposal for a democratic and participative reform (not merely

technocratic) of Cuban institutionalism has to learn from the structural crisis of the current socio-economic and political model. It must consider the strength that the global crisis provides some sectors of the bureaucracy that are eager to extend the militarized logic of the “country camp” or to make a pact with transnational capital in obscure and predatory ways.

Cuba needs to preserve national sovereignty, guarantee the development of a heterodox process of non-neoliberal economic reforms (with the participation of workers’ collectives, democratic planning, and regulated markets), and an expanded form of governance with citizen participation. It must also establish a popular control of the elites, control that can derail both bureaucratic counter-reforms and the privatization of national resources in order to advance toward a true socialist democracy. ▀

## Kind Attention: An Overture Rebuffed in Havana

**On April 29, the Protagonistic Critical Observatory Network (Red Protagónica Observatorio Crítico), an autonomous group of Cuban activists and intellectuals, received the following invitation via e-mail from the U.S. Interests Section in Havana:**

From: Morin, Gerardo G (Havana)  
 To: observatoriocritico  
 Sent: Friday, April 29, 2011 12:27 PM  
 Subject: Solicitud de encuentro

Good afternoon. After becoming familiar of some works by thinkers from the Critical Observatory that appeared on blogs and in the press, Mr. Joaquin Monserrate, Chief of the Pol/Econ. Section of the U.S Interests Section in Havana, would like to invite the director and other representatives of the Observatory to a meeting, with the goal of finding out more about the group’s activities and projects. The second week of May would be preferable.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Gerardo Morin  
 Pol/Econ/Prot Assistant  
 USINT Havana  
 Dir. 833-2282;  
 833-3551/59  
 ext. 2406

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

**The Critical Observatory replied as follows:**

Long Live May Day! Glory to the Martyrs of Chicago!  
 Onward, Revolution!

Good afternoon. After becoming familiar with some unilateral policies of the U.S. government, well-known through blogs, the press, and UN resolutions, the Critical Observatory would like to inform Mr. Sr. Joaquin Monserrate and Mr. Gerardo Morin that for the time being we decline their invitation to a meeting.

Our activities and projects, like the revolutionary praxis that inspires them, and whose objectives are our own and do not concern foreign powers, can easily be discovered by reading our materials.

On the other hand, we are happy to inform you that if before the second week of May the North American blockade of our country is lifted, the Cuban Five are freed, and the restitution demanded by their government for material and human damages are transferred to Cuban banks, as well as if the NATO bombing of Libya is halted—we would by all means accept the invitation to meet with you, preferably around that date.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Red Protagónica Observatorio Crítico  
 de la Revolución Cubana

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## NOTES

### Buenaventura, Colombia

1. "Buenaventura, un puerto de ilusiones?" *Pacífico Territorio de Etnias* 1, no. 5 (undated): 2, [http://issuu.com/territorio\\_pacifico/docs/territorioetnias5/1](http://issuu.com/territorio_pacifico/docs/territorioetnias5/1); Proceso de Comunidades Negras—Palenque Regional el Congal, Pastoral Afro-Colombiana, Fundemujer, Rostros y Huellas del Sentir Humano, with support from the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA), *Buenaventura: Caught Between War and Despair* (August 26, 2010), 1; \$1 million figure cited in Jasmin Hriztov, *Blood and Capital: The Paramilitarization of Colombia* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2009), 22.
2. "Buenaventura, un puerto de ilusiones?," 2.
3. Ibid.
4. WOLA, "WOLA Condemns Murder of Afro-Colombian IDP Leader Jair Murillo," statement, July 19, 2010, available at [wola.org](http://wola.org).
5. Yesid Toro and Adonay Cárdenas, "Buenaventura vive la mas dura epidemia de las desapariciones," *El País* (Madrid), August 16, 2010.
6. Personería Distrital de Buenaventura, *Informe ejecutivo sobre la situación de derechos humanos y DIH en Buenaventura*, June 2011.
7. Ibid., and Toro and Cárdenas, "Buenaventura vive la mas dura epidemia."
8. Comisión de Búsqueda de Personas Desaparecidas, *Instrumentos de Lucha Contra la Desaparición Forzada* (February 2010), 92, n. 155.
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10. Office of the US Trade Representative, "Colombia FTA Briefing Materials," [ustr.gov/sites/default/files/uploads/factsheets/2008/asset\\_uploadfile368\\_14604.pdf](http://ustr.gov/sites/default/files/uploads/factsheets/2008/asset_uploadfile368_14604.pdf).
11. The Labor Action Plan is available at [ustr.gov/about-us/press-office/blog/2011/april/us-colombia-trade-agreement-and-action-plan](http://ustr.gov/about-us/press-office/blog/2011/april/us-colombia-trade-agreement-and-action-plan).
12. The White House, "President Obama Meets With Colombian President Santos" (video), April 7, 2011, [whitehouse.gov/photos-and-video/video/2011/04/07/president-obama-meets-colombian-president-santos?v=accessibility](http://whitehouse.gov/photos-and-video/video/2011/04/07/president-obama-meets-colombian-president-santos?v=accessibility); "Obama and Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos Deliver Remarks at the White House," transcript, *The Washington Post*, April 7, 2011, [projects.washingtonpost.com/obama-speeches/speech/617](http://projects.washingtonpost.com/obama-speeches/speech/617).
13. U.S. Labor Education in the Americas Project, "Obama's 'Labor Action Plan' for Colombia Woefully Inadequate; Doesn't Require Reduction in Violence," April 13, 2011, available at [usleap.org](http://usleap.org).
14. Quoted in U.S. Office on Colombia, *Impact of the FTA With Colombia on Afro-Colombian and Indigenous Communities* (spring 2011), video available at [youtube.com/watch?v=9Q7NOY8Axf4](http://youtube.com/watch?v=9Q7NOY8Axf4).

### Introduction

1. Full text of the *Lineamientos* is available at [cubalegalinfo.com/lineamientos-politica-economica-social-cuba/indice](http://cubalegalinfo.com/lineamientos-politica-economica-social-cuba/indice). For a thoughtful analysis of them, see Archibald Ritter, "El VI Congreso del Partido y los Lineamientos: un punto de viraje para Cuba?" *Espacio Laical*, suplemento digital, no. 132 (June 2011).
2. For an account of the debate and revisions effected at the Party Congress, see *Información sobre el resultado del Debate de los Lineamientos de la Política Económica y Social del Partido y la Revolución* (May 2011), available at [scribd.com/doc/55084978/Tabloide-Debate-Lineamientos-VI-Congreso-Partido-Comunista-de-Cuba](http://scribd.com/doc/55084978/Tabloide-Debate-Lineamientos-VI-Congreso-Partido-Comunista-de-Cuba).
3. Agencia Venezolana de Noticias, "Trabajo por cuenta propia en Cuba genera nuevos empleos," July 20, 2011.
4. See the following works from Monreal: "Sea Changes: The New Cuban Economy," *NACLA Report on the Americas* 32, no. 5 (March/April 1999): 21–29; *Development Prospects in Cuba: An Agenda in the Making* (London: Institute of Latin American Studies, School of Advanced Study, Univsersity of London, 2002); "Cuban Development in the Bolivarian Matrix," *NACLA Report on the Americas* 39, no. 4 (January/February 2006): 22–26; "El problema económico de Cuba," *Espacio Laical*, no. 2 (2008): 33–35.
5. Marc Frank, "Cuba Grapples With Growing Inequality," April 10, 2010.

6. Carlos Pérez Llana, "Cuban Revolution Has Lost Its Last Chance to Reform the Economy," *Taipei Times*, May 11, 2011.

7. Marc Frank, "Cuban State Layoffs Move Slowly, Workers Uneasy," Reuters, March 8, 2011.

### Changes in the Economic Model and Social Policies in Cuba

1. For data sources and a fuller discussion of the new inequalities and social policy, see Mayra Espina Prieto, "Viejas y nuevas desigualdades en Cuba. Ambivalencias y perspectivas de la reestratificación social," *Nueva Sociedad*, no. 216 (July–August 2008): 133–49.
2. On the rise in the Gini coefficient, see Angela Ferriol, "Política social y desarrollo. Una aproximación global," in *Política social y reformas estructurales: Cuba a principios del siglo XXI*, Elena Álvarez and Jorge Mátar, eds. (Mexico: ECLAC-NIER-UNDP, 2004).
3. Figures from State Committee on Statistics Committee, *Censo nacional de población y viviendas* (Havana, 1981) and National Statistics Office, *Anuario estadístico de Cuba* (Havana, 2006).

### Changes From Below

1. James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (Yale University Press, 1987).
2. See, for example, Andres Martinez, "We Support Democratic Uprisings in the Middle East. Why Not in Cuba?" (editorial), *The Washington Post*, April 7, 2011.

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1. See, for example, Haroldo Dilla, Gerardo González, and Ana T. Vicentelli, *Participación popular y desarrollo en los municipios cubanos* (Havana: Centro de Estudios de América [CEA], 1993); Haroldo Dilla, ed., *La participación en Cuba y los retos del futuro* (Havana: CEA, 1996); Juan Valdés Paz, *El espacio y el límite. Estudios sobre el sistema político cubano* (Havana: ICIC Juan Marinello–Casa Editorial Ruth, 2009).
2. See Marlene Azor Hernández, "La izquierda y su relación con la Revolución Cubana," *Nexos* (Mexico City), March 1, 2011, available at [atnexos.com.mx/?P=leer\\_articulov2print&Article=1943208](http://atnexos.com.mx/?P=leer_articulov2print&Article=1943208).
3. There are, however, some works worth mentioning on this topic. See Armando Chaguaceda, "Ser, expresar, transformar. Los proyectos socioculturales como espacios de innovación participativa en Cuba actual: la experiencia de la Cátedra de Pensamiento Crítico y Culturas Emergentes Haydé Santamaría (KHS)," ms. (2009), available at <http://lasa.international.pitt.edu/members/congress-papers/lasa2009/files/ChaguacedaNoriegaArmando.pdf>; Velia Cecilia Bobes, *Los laberintos de la imaginación: repertorio simbólico, identidades y actores del cambio social en Cuba* (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 2000); Armando Chaguaceda and Johanna Cilano, "Entre la innovación y el inmovilismo. Espacio asociativo, estado y participación en Cuba," *Pensamiento Propio* (Buenos Aires) 14, no. 29 (January–July 2009); Haroldo Dilla, Armando Fernández, and Margarita Castro, "Movimientos barriales en Cuba: un análisis comparativo," in *Participación social. Desarrollo urbano y comunitario*, Aurora Vázquez and Roberto Dávalos, eds. (Universidad de la Habana, 1998).
4. See VOCES: Comunicación Alternativa, "Educación popular: participación ciudadana" (2010), available at [http://www.cubaalamano.net/voces/index.php?option=com\\_debate&task=debate&id=17](http://www.cubaalamano.net/voces/index.php?option=com_debate&task=debate&id=17).
5. Chaguaceda and Cilano, "Entre la innovación y el inmovilismo."
6. Dilla, Fernández, and Castro, "Movimientos barriales en Cuba."
7. Chaguaceda and Cilano, "Entre la innovación y el inmovilismo."
8. Cited in and developed by Andrew Arato and Jean Cohen, *Sociedad civil y teoría política* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2002).