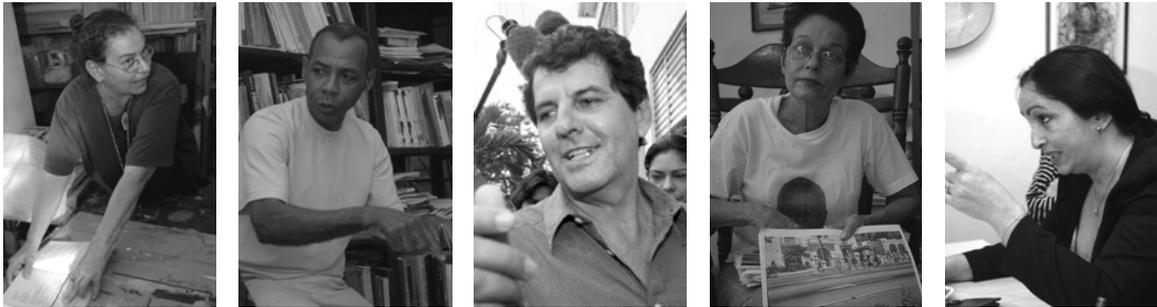




Uppsala University
Department of Government
Masters Thesis
Spring Semester 2007



The Cuban multi-party system



Is the democratic alternative really democratic and an alternative after the Castro regime?

Author Anna Ardin
Supervisor Li Bennich-Björkman

Anna Ardin 2007
Uppsala University
Department of Government
anna@ardin.se

Title: The Cuban multi-party system. Is the
“democratic alternative” really democratic
and an alternative after the Castro regime?

Supervisor: Li Bennich-Björkman

Front page: Miriam Celaya Gonzáles, Dimas
Castellanos Martí, Oswaldo Payá Sardiñas,
Miriam Leiva Viamonte, Manuel Cuesta
Morúa, Leonardo Calvo Cárdenas, Julia
Cecilia Delgado, Fernando Sánchez López,
Oscar Chepe, Lucía Hernández Plascencia

Photos: Mattias Wiggberg
Except: Payá Sardiñas from mclpaya.org
Delgado from miscelaneasdecuba.net
and Sánchez López from psdcuba.org

Abstract

What will happen in Cuba after the Castro regime is a perennial question in discussions about Cuba. Of course this is difficult to answer with accuracy, but one can identify trends that indicate likely outcomes. An interesting element in this discussion of what a post-Castro Cuba would look like is the role that the current opposition would play in a probable transition to democracy. There are several dissident groups in Cuba that call themselves political parties and who have adopted traditional western ideologies. It is likely that this Cuban opposition will play a defining role in a post-transition, especially if it has a common ideological base and some democratic experience. This study is an actor-centered investigation of the preconditions of a multi-party system in Cuba; if the opposition parties have internal democracy and if their members are tied to each other ideologically. The study involves interviewing leaders and members of four of the most important of these social democrat, liberal and Christian democrat parties. The conclusion is that the parties do have a more or less democratic systems set up and to a certain extent do they also follow these democratic rules. The internal democracy nevertheless has serious faults in three parties, for example that the leaders have too big possibilities of not following the statutes, and in the fourth case it works in practice similarly to what they claim to be rejecting, that is similar to the system the Cubans call *caudillismo* and often accuse Castro to employ. This diminishes the possibilities for these parties to lead Cuba towards a social and liberal democratic development. On the other hand, this study concludes that because these political parties have well-developed ideological bases there are possibilities that they will become an alternative political elite and an important factor for the progress after a transition from Castroism.

Resumen en español

¿Qué sucederá en Cuba, cuando el régimen de Castro cese? Es una pregunta recurrente en cualquier discusión sobre este país. No se puede aseverar nada al respecto, todos son supuestos, pero hay algunas tendencias que indican hacia donde podría apuntar. Un elemento interesante a analizar en la discusión sobre la Cuba post-Castro, sería el papel que desempeñaría la oposición en una supuesta transición hacia la democracia. Existen varios grupos disidentes en Cuba, considerados como partidos políticos y que han adoptado ideologías tradicionales occidentales. Esta intervención de dichos partidos políticos, podría ser determinante y definitiva en cómo será Cuba después de Castro, si se rigen por la ideología común y cierta experiencia democrática. Este estudio pretende profundizar en las condiciones previas de un sistema multipartidista en este país; Se fija como objetivo ver si los partidos de la oposición tienen realmente una democracia interna y si hay una coherencia e ilación entre los miembros de unos y otros ideológicamente hablando. El estudio plantea además, entrevistas con líderes y miembros activos de cuatro de los más importantes partidos: Dos liberales, uno social demócrata y uno demócrata cristiano. Como conclusión se puede extraer que dichos partidos tienen sistemas más o menos democráticos y hasta cierto punto se rigen por los parámetros de la democracia. También se denotan serios fallos en tres partidos, por ejemplo que los líderes tienen grandes posibilidades de no seguir los estatutos, y en el cuarto caso, podemos apreciar semejanzas con la manera caudillista de actuar del actual gobierno Castrense. Esto disminuye las posibilidades para que estos partidos puedan reconducir a Cuba hacia un desarrollo democrático, social y liberal. Por otra parte, cabe resaltar que estos partidos políticos tienen unas bases ideológicas bien desarrolladas, lo que puede generar la posibilidad de que se conviertan en una élite política alternativa y en un factor importante para el progreso de Cuba después de la transición post Castro.

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT	3
TABLE OF CONTENTS	4
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	5
FOREWORD	6
1. INTRODUCTION	7
2. PURPOSE	8
2.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS	8
3. STUDY RATIONALE	9
3.1 WHY CUBA AND WHY THE OPPOSITION?.....	9
3.2 THE ROLE OF A PRE-TRANSITION OPPOSITION IN A POST-TRANSITION SCENARIO.....	10
3.3 THE ROLE OF A PRE-TRANSITION OPPOSITION	12
4. METHOD	13
4.1 SELECTION OF OPPOSITION GROUPS	13
4.2 METHODOLOGY	15
4.3 CRITICISM OF SOURCES	15
4.4 HOW INTERNAL DEMOCRACY SHALL BE STUDIED	16
4.5 IDEAL TYPE FOR AN IDEOLOGICALLY TIED PARTY	18
5. INTERNAL DEMOCRACY IN THE CUBAN POLITICAL PARTIES	19
5.1 INTERNAL DEMOCRACY IN THE DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST CURRENT (CSDC).....	19
5.2 INTERNAL DEMOCRACY IN THE CHRISTIAN LIBERATION MOVEMENT (MCL).....	22
5.3 INTERNAL DEMOCRACY IN THE LIBERAL PARTY OF CUBA (PLC)	24
5.4 INTERNAL DEMOCRACY IN THE DEMOCRATIC SOLIDARITY PARTY (PSD)	26
5.5 CONCLUSION	28
6. IDEOLOGICAL TIES WITHIN THE CUBAN POLITICAL PARTIES	29
6.1 IDEOLOGICAL TIES IN THE DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST CURRENT (CSDC).....	29
6.2 IDEOLOGICAL TIES IN THE CHRISTIAN LIBERATION MOVEMENT (MCL).....	29
6.3 IDEOLOGICAL TIES IN THE LIBERAL PARTY OF CUBA (PLC)	30
6.4 IDEOLOGICAL TIES IN THE DEMOCRATIC SOLIDARITY PARTY (PSD)	31
6.5 CONCLUSION	32
7. CONCLUDING COMMENT	34
8. SOURCES	36
8.1 LITERATURE	36
8.2 INTERVIEWS.....	37
8.3 PARTY DOCUMENTS	38
8.4 OTHER SOURCES	38
APPENDIX – STANDARD INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	39

List of abbreviations

The investigated parties

CSDC	Corriente Socialista Democrática Cubana (Cuban Democratic Socialist Current)
MCL	Movimiento Cristiano Liberación (Christian Freedom/Liberation Movement)
PLC	Partido Liberal de Cuba (Liberal Party of Cuba)
PSD	Partido Solidaridad Democrática (Democratic Solidarity Party)

Others

AP	Arco Progresista (the Progressive Arc)
CDI	Christian Democrat International
CEN	Comité Ejecutivo Nacional (national executive committee of PSD)
COSODECU	Coordinadora Socialdemócrata de Cuba (Social Democratic Coordinator of Cuba)
DC	Proyecto Demócrata Cubano (Cuban Democratic Project)
KIC	Kristdemokratiskt internationellt center (Christian Democratic International Center)
LI	Liberal International
MFS	Minor Field Study
MLC	Movimiento Liberal Cubano (Cuban Liberal Movement)
OPC	Olof Palme International Center
PDC	Partido Demócrata Cristiano (Christian Democratic Party)
PES	Party of European Socialists
PLDC	Partido Liberal Democrático Cubano (Cuban Democratic Liberal Party)
SI	Socialist International
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SILC	Swedish International Liberal Center

Foreword

In June 2006 I traveled to Cuba with the intention of staying for at least two months interviewing leaders, members and supporters of various Cuban political parties. Only a couple of days after my arrival to José Martí International Airport in Havana I managed to get my first interviews. During the first two weeks I met one or two representatives from each of the four chosen parties and a few other organizations, including my field tutor, the ex-diplomat Miriam Leiva. Miriam is also a key person for the network known as *Damas de Blanco* (Ladies in White) which fights for the rights of political prisoners in Cuba. I owe Miriam greatly for the help she has given, having provided me with, addresses, phone numbers and other input for this thesis, but maybe it was my frequent visits to her and her dissident husband Oscar Chepe's home that upset the authorities.

One night a young man from the interior ministry came to the house where I rented my room. He told me that I had to stay home the next day because someone would come and ask me a few questions. At eight-thirty the following morning two uniformed men in a police Lada came to take me in for interrogation. They took me to *Control de Extranjeros* (foreigner control) and put me in a hot waiting room. Finally, after many hours, three anonymous men in civilian clothing questioned me: With whom had I spoken? Why? What did I ask them? How did I get their contacts? What had I been doing the other times I had visited Cuba? Who paid for my trip? Who was my boyfriend in Sweden? Was the cook my Cuban boyfriend? Was I going to publish the facts? This is just an indication of the type of questions I was asked during the two-hour interrogation. After the interrogation they told me the "truth" that I did not appear to understand: All of the Cubans I had met were liars. They were not opposing to the political system because "here in Cuba we have unity"¹. They were not political opponents but mercenaries who were paid to say whatever they said to me. They also told me that with a tourist visa I was supposed to do "touristy things", and their suggestions were: going to the beach, dancing salsa, going to the pool and visiting museums. If I did something else they would kick me out of the country. I could not interview the people I had chosen with the kind of visa I had. So I asked if it was possible to get another visa for this type of interview, to which they replied "no". I explained that I had to say goodbye and cancel the appointments I had already made but again they said "no". I had to break the contact immediately to be able to stay in the country, and they would know what I did, as they knew what I had been doing until then. At three o'clock they let me out to walk the long way back, in the Cuban summer sun.

It had become too difficult to continue, and I did not want to put my informants at risk, so I decided to leave Cuba. Instead I went to Miami in December 2006 and continued interviewing Cubans there. Due to this forced shift of material and focus, the thesis has not turned out quite as expected, but given the limits of the material I am satisfied with the result.

Thank you to SIDA and the MFS-committee for giving me this opportunity, thank you Armando and Zaida who opened their home in Miami to me, to Ruben and Marisol who gave me a home in Havana, to Mattias for support and for getting me out of Cuba very fast and to Matthew for proofreading. I would also like to thank my Swedish supervisor Li Bennich-Björkman for all her devoted help.

¹ "Aquí en Cuba tenemos unidad"

1. Introduction

For those who are intrigued about the state of Cuba after the rule of the Castro brothers and their guerilla soldiers, they need only look at what is happening now. Of course it is difficult to predict the outcome with any real accuracy, but broadly speaking, there are trends that can be identified. The transition has probably already started in some respects due to Fidel's poor health, but his men (led by his brother Raúl) are still running the country in the much the same manner as before.

An interesting element in this discussion of what a post-Castro Cuba would look like is the role that the current opposition would play during, and perhaps most importantly, after a probable transition. When the current leaders are no longer able to lead, it is highly likely that a transition will take place and this transition could lead Cuba to different kinds of new systems, for example other forms of authoritarian rule or quasi-democracy. Given the right preconditions Cuba could also head towards a social and liberal democracy, a multi-party system and an end to corruption without Cuba losing its sovereignty, since “a sovereign state is a prerequisite for democracy”². I intend to find out if Castro’s opponents meet sufficient preconditions to become the alternative political elite after a transition and if they have what is needed to lead Cuba to this democracy.

There are several dissident groups in Cuba that call themselves political parties and who have adopted traditional Western ideologies. My study shall investigate the preconditions of a multi-party system in Cuba, and will involve interviewing leaders and members of selected Parties.

I will restrict myself to merely superficial describing the possible indicators that these Parties can or will play an important role in a future transition. It is beyond the scope of this paper to elaborate as to how they may play this role. This paper shall therefore be primarily descriptive in its nature.

² Linz and Stepan (1996: XIV)

2. Purpose

The purpose of this study is to give a better ground for understanding Cuba and what possibilities the current Cuban opposition has to become an alternative elite and to grant a democratic development after a probable transition. All in the light of a certain transition theory I will develop further in the following chapters.

2.1 Research questions

The current opposition would have that they are the new democratic alternative, just as the present regime did during the late 1950's. Castro and his men seized power with promises of democracy and an end to the Batista dictatorship, which granted them great support among the Cuban people. All Cuban opposition organizations I have come across call themselves democratic and thus internal democracy is the first dimension to this paper. As history has shown, democracy in name is an entirely different beast to democracy in practice. The existence and strength of an organization's internal democratic process can tell us more than its words about the organization's fundamentals and its ability to promote democracy. It is also interesting to see how they relate, organizationally, to the non-democratic culture of their country and to, for example, the Castroistic personality cult so many of them criticize.

The second dimension to this paper is the ideological ties. Compared to resistance or opposition groups in the former Soviet Union, that were often tied to each other by friendship or informal business ties,³ the Cuban opposition seems to be uniquely ideological. Several of the existing groups claim to be Parties belonging to traditional Western ideologies. Different democratic ideologies also seem to be a significant mark of identity among the dissidents and it seems to be important for the groups that their members know and express a high degree of political consensus. This is what I call the ideological ties, or ideologization (of the group). The ideological ties include how ideological the groups are, i.e. what types of official written or spoken declarations they have, and how much consensus the members have and are expected to have.

In order to understand what type of society the opposition can construct if they end up in decision-making positions I think we have to look beyond the mere proposals and written declarations that they offer. The two dimensions of internal organization mentioned above, internal democracy and ideological ties, are important to this understanding. The two dimensions I introduce are in fact two sides of the same coin, two sides of democracy. The ideological ties form the substance of democracy, and the internal democracy the form and the procedures. Together I believe that these two dimensions are an important factor or even preconditions for a future Cuban multi party system. At least they can tell us about how well prepared certain groups are for a transition. I develop this further in Chapter 3. *Study rationale*

In order to elaborate on this discussion, I have decided to utilize two research questions. The purpose of this study is to answer these two questions:

- Do the respective groups that call themselves political parties in Cuba have “internal democracy” or do they aim for it?
- Are the members of these groups tied to each other ideologically?

³ Bennich-Björkman (2006), Hedin (2002).

3. Study Rationale

In this chapter I will explain under what theoretical presumptions I am studying the Cuban opposition, and what theories are underlying the analysis.

3.1 Why Cuba and why the opposition?

There are several reasons as to why Cuba is politically and transitologically interesting. There are also several reasons for why the opposition is central in this case. First of all, studies about Cuba are an important contribution to political science while the opposition seems uniquely well organized compared to for example the former Soviet Union.⁴ If it is so that these groups are regular parties with a common ideological identity, who work according to democratic principles, this would make them particularly interesting for transitology. They should have a real possibility to play an important part in an actual transition. The case Cuba is also interesting for transitology because transition has not yet taken place. Much transitology research is concentrated on already completed transitions, while opposition to authoritarian systems is a partly neglected field.⁵ John Mueller develops this point, stating:

... most of the post-communist countries of central and eastern Europe have essentially completed their transition to democracy ... it may be sensible now to decrease the talk of "transition" and to put a quiet, dignified end to the new field of transitology.⁶

I argue that instead of putting an end to this field we should extend it by including non-transitions, like Cuba, in the theory building, and not only focus completed transitions such as those in East and Central Europe, Southern Europe and Latin America.

One of the prime reasons for studying the opposition (within and without the regime) is that it is central for creating good preconditions for a well-functioning democracy - if we assume that a transition from the Cuban system of today *will* take place. Most people working within the Cuban democracy movement have no plans to violently remove the Castro regime from office; they expect it to fall or withdraw by itself as an opening for their work. The sociologist Erik Jennische asserts: "The vast majority of the organizations in Cuba working for democracy strive at a negotiated transition to democracy [...] nobody wants to take power with violence."⁷

Dimas Castellanos, board member of one of the Cuban social democrat parties state that it is only a matter of time before Castro dies and the current regime falls. He states:

The most obvious sign that a regime is in its final years is that whatever it does things go wrong. If Castro lets the Women in White [organization of relatives to political prisoners] go to Europe to receive the Sakharov price [the democracy price of the European Union] he gets bad publicity, if he does not let them go – he still gets bad publicity. Whatever he does, it goes wrong.⁸

⁴ Bennich-Björkman (2006), Hedin (2002).

⁵ Hellquist (2003)

⁶ Mueller (1996: 102-3) in Dryzek & Holmes (2002: 7)

⁷ Jennische (2006: 2)

⁸ Interview Dimas Castellanos (051217)

The French anthropologist Alexis de Tocqueville has spoken of that revolutions take place when there are openings in the regime:

... experience teaches that the most critical moment for bad governments is the one which witnesses their first steps towards reform. A sovereign who seeks to relieve his subjects after a long period of oppression is lost, unless he be a man of great genius.⁹

In his book *The Republic*, Plato explains that the ruling class cannot lose power as long as it is "of one mind"¹⁰. He also claims that it is the regime, and its unity, that is central for whether a system changes or not. In Cuba's case this would mean that a transition is possible when leading politicians turn against (or disagree with) Castroism, or if they start reforming. This explanation can apply to communist states which have gone through transition (not least the Soviet Union), but there the possibility to explain ends. What then becomes interesting is how development continues and what possibilities for further development there are when a regime shift becomes a reality.

To show whether the opposition can become an ideological alternative with the ability to lead the country towards an ideologically characterized democracy, I will investigate if the opposition groups are bound together by ideologies, that is that they are idea-centered, or if they are rather (non-ideological) networks bound by social ties and friendship. The democratic opposition strives rhetorically to achieve democracy for their country. But their ability to succeed seems to a greater extent to depend on their own experience. Can the opposition under the current circumstances be called democratic? Do they themselves work according to democratic principles? To answer these questions I will investigate if the groups' decision making is characterized by something that could be called "internal democracy". It is important to remember that it is - if not impossible - then at least very difficult to have an internal democratic structure in the Cuban dissident movements because of constant fear of infiltrators and other security risks. It is likely that the internal democracy of the groups is extremely low compared to what you can expect from civil society in democratic countries. It is also likely that many opposition groups do not have open and available structures. I will nevertheless try to choose as open and available groups as possible. The more open a group is, the more likely they will be to disclose negative aspects of their organizational structure. It is important to remember this, that they can be vulnerable to unflattering descriptions just because they are open. Having this said, any unflattering description in this paper can at least partly be interpreted as a sign of positive openness. It does not at all have to be arguments against these parties or their legitimacy as opponents to the Castro regime.

3.2 The role of a pre-transition opposition in a post-transition scenario

One reason for studying the currently illegal opposition now is for the probability of it playing a key role in Cuban politics in a post-transition scenario. Research has proven that a new regime structure only has a few years after a transition to set the standards¹¹, "trajectories that were fixed in the years following the first democratic elections have proven to be particularly persistent"¹², which makes a good organization during the authoritarian rule important. The American political scientist Michael McFaul says that out of the 28 states that have left communism since 1989 only eight have become (non-corrupt) "liberal democracies".¹³ He

⁹ Tocqueville (1856/1988: 141). Quoted in Saxonberg (2001: 22)

¹⁰ Plato (1970: 268) in Saxonberg (2001: 22)

¹¹ Bennich-Björkman (2005: 3ff)

¹² Kitschelt (2003: 49) quoted in Bennich-Björkman (2005: 4)

¹³ McFaul (2002: 212)

explains which states became democratic referring to an actor-centered theory on democrats' relative strength within each nation, "where democrats enjoyed a decisive power advantage"¹⁴. He also asserts that "the balance of power and ideologies at the time of transition had path-dependent consequences for subsequent regime emerge"¹⁵.

Li Bennich-Björkman has studied the difference of how well the three Baltic States have succeeded in developing a well functioning democratic system after the process of transition and the fall of the Soviet Union¹⁶. She asserts that Estonia has been better off than Latvia because the alternative elite had a better developed collective ideological identity and a political-organizational experience at the moment of transition. According to Bennich-Björkman, the presence of this mature alternative elite¹⁷ created better preconditions for less corrupt democratic development and more well-functioning institutions than the looser networks of dissidents existing in Latvia during their period of transition.¹⁸ And finally the historian Kristian Gerner also shows that the comparatively successful democratic development in Poland, Hungary, Estonia and Slovenia were due to their stronger civil society during the communist rule¹⁹. The political scientist Juan J. López explains it like this:

The presence of actors in the opposition with whom to negotiate and the ability of civil society groups to fill the power vacuum created by a disintegrating regime substantially increase the likelihood that the transition process will end up in democracy. Note the case of Romania. Without a civil society to fill the power vacuum once the Ceausescu government fell, members of the old elite took over and established another type of dictatorship.²⁰

According to these examples, the presence of a strong pre-transition opposition is an important determinant and predictor of the success of a well functioning democratic system in a given country in transition. Even if an opposition can not produce the fall of the ruling class by itself, it is likely that it will play a defining role in a post-transition, especially if it has a common ideological base and some democratic experience. And even if a transition or the fall of an authoritarian ruling class is a fact, it is far from certain that a democratic transition will be completed. Linz and Stepan also agree that things do not automatically become better simply because a transition has taken place:

We are painfully aware that most political transformations away from a once stable non-democratic regime do not end in "completed democratic transitions"²¹

This is why I focus on the abilities of the opposition, not to promote the transition itself, but to carry the transition democratically forward.

¹⁴ McFaul (2002: 214)

¹⁵ McFaul (2002: 243)

¹⁶ Bennich-Björkman (2005)

¹⁷ In the case of Cuba, this political elite can exist within the communist system, like in many East European post-communist states (see Grzymala-Busse 2002), I will nevertheless concentrate only on alternative elites outside the system.

¹⁸ Bennich-Björkman (2005)

¹⁹ Gerner (2003)

²⁰ López (2002: 31)

²¹ Linz and Stepan (1996: XIII)

3.3 The role of a pre-transition opposition

Much of the research on transition to democracy is regime-centered, that is, that the structure of the regime and its strategies are in focus.²² Research into economic growth (explained through the regime strategies of for example attracting foreign investors or broader structural international factors) also has some explanatory power.²³ The organization of the opposition is often seen as depending on the political system of the state they are working within, and its strategies are seen as reliant on the strategies of the regime rather than that the opposition has different options which will influence the final result (after a transition, the way a society or political system works etc.) differently.²⁴ Therefore, according to this regime-centered research, transition or non-transition can be explained by studying the regime and the system, but not the opposition.

It may be that the regime defines what strategies are possible for the opposition, but the opposition will always have various alternatives on how to act. The alternative/s they choose will affect the shift. In this way the opposition can be said to define the regime. As political scientists Steven Saxonberg and Mark R. Thompson explain:

Yet just as the actions of regimes influence the final outcome in processes of transition or non-transition, the strategic choices of opposition groups also affect the outcomes. In social science terms, opposition is both a dependent and independent variable.²⁵

The political scientist Hanna Hellquist agrees that the dissidents²⁶ play an important part in whether a transition takes place or not. She argues that the split among different democracy activists in Cuba is one basic explanation to why the country has not yet reached a transition.²⁷

For this study it is however of lesser interest whether this is the case or not; there is still every reason to analyze the opposition or the dissident groups as a possible alternative political elite for the coming development. John S. Dryzek and Leslie Holmes claim that producing a coup d'état does not require much from an opposition group when a government is exhausted. It is neither a substantial challenge to seize power in the vacuum after the fall of a regime. The challenge for an opposition is running politics on a daily basis after a transition,²⁸ and the study shall be conducted under this presumption.

²² See Kotkin (2001), Chehabi & Linz (1998), Linz (2000), Suchlicki (1999). Also Saxonberg & Thompson (2002: 3ff) discuss this and point out that literature concerning for example the *Gorbatjev-factor* is a part of this regime-centred transitology.

²³ See for ex. Gallagher (2002), Dimitrov (2005), Sandhu (2003)

²⁴ See Linz & Stepan (1996)

²⁵ Saxonberg & Thompson (2002: 3)

²⁶ People having a different opinion than the officially recognized concerning religious beliefs, political system or such. The word has been particularly used since the 70's and often refers to opponents to communist states. Source: ne.se

²⁷ Hellquist (2003)

²⁸ Dryzek & Holmes (2002: 3)

4. Method

4.1 Selection of opposition groups

Since the early nineties, the opposition in Cuba has grown constantly²⁹. In 1986 there were ten dissidents³⁰, while today umbrella organizations report that there are thousands of dissidents and probably at least 300 organized groups in the country³¹. Many of these groups call themselves political parties and these will be used to represent the opposition in this investigation, since it is likely that they will play a part and possibly become important in the transition process, and will likely offer candidates in public elections as soon as this is possible.³² There is not enough time to investigate all parties, so this study will be limited to four. Comparatively large parties will be selected, and it is preferred that these parties also represent different ideologies in order to maximize the possibility of a valid generalization. Those parties selected for the study will be those that are internationally recognized and deemed to be the most important within their ideological framework. Those with a published party platform, regulations or similar documents have an advantage, since these are indicators of a certain degree of organization and formally most resembling parties with an international standard. If these are not ideologically based, but only socially, it is likely that none of the parties comprising the Cuban opposition are ideologically based. Based on these criteria, the following parties have been selected for this study:

- the social democratic party *Corriente Socialista Democrática Cubana* (CSDC).

CSDC is the most influential social democratic (or democratic socialist) party. They claim to have 150 members apart from their *Red de Ciudadanos* (citizen network). The party was founded in 1991 and since 1996 their leader has been Manuel Cuesta Morúa. Most activities are performed in the broader social democratic assemblage *Arco Progresista* (AP, the Progressive Arc³³) also led by Cuesta Morúa. The majority of the activists in AP are also members of CSDC, and I will investigate CSDC because it is the most apparent party structure within AP and the documents most apt for investigation belong to CSDC. Their homepage³⁴ has stopped working, but some information can be found in the webpage of their sister organization *Coordinadora Socialdemócrata de Cuba* (COSODECU) in Miami. There are two internationally accepted social democratic parties in Cuba; CSDC and *Partido Socialdemócrata* (PS). The latter was founded by the former president of CSDC, Vladimiro Roca. Even though PS has the word party in their name, Roca says he does not want to claim this epithet just yet, since PS cannot yet function as a regular party; does not have a party program and has not had the possibility to hold a congress or any equivalent. CSDC has applied for membership in the Socialist International (SI), but their application has not yet been treated and CSDC are

²⁹ López (2004), Jennische (2006: 1)

³⁰ Gustafsson (1997) and interview Byron Miguel (061206). There was one group of ten marxists, who to some extent were allied with and had close connections within the authorities, who regularly discussed and in some ways criticized official policies. They were dissidents but not opponents. According to Byron Miguel it was completely impossible to organize any other opposition before the end of the 80's.

³¹ Ramírez Cárdenas (2002: 1), interview with Vladimiro Roca (051213) etc.

³² Giovanni Sartori (1976) defines a party with the minimum that is needed for separating them from other phenomenon, namely *a group that offers candidates in public elections*. The Cuban "parties" can with this definition not be called parties but rather groups that claim to become parties after a transition. I will nevertheless continue to use these groupings own designation and call them parties.

³³ refers to the shape of the Cuban main island

³⁴ <http://www.corriente.org/>

accepted only as observers. The issue is sensitive due to SI's historical relationship to Castro. Party of European Socialists (PES) approves the membership of CSDC³⁵.

- the Christian Democratic Party *Movimiento Cristiano Liberación* (MCL).

MCL is the most famous party structure in Cuba. They are credited for the Varela project that collected signatures for democratic reforms. Their leader Oswaldo Payá Sardiñas has also received several international democracy prizes. Some argue he should get the Nobel peace prize for the Varela initiative. MCL does not officially call themselves a party, but a movement. While their main activities do not depend on a member structure they have also nominated people to public elections; they are a member of the *Christian Democrat International* (CDI) and unofficially in interviews describe themselves, just as everyone else does, as a party, or at least as a group that will become a party as soon as possible. They have a national committee board, provincial boards and claim to want to be a part of a future multi-party system in Cuba. Their homepage has not been updated since July 2006 and does not contain any documents about their internal organization.³⁶ In the year 1996 a group separated from MCL, not because of ideology but because of working conditions and founded *Proyecto Demócrata Cubano* (DC)³⁷, which is also a Christian democratic party. *Partido Demócrata Cristiano* (PDC), founded in 1959 is again (or still) existing, at least abroad. I have chosen not to investigate these parties because they are not nearly as large or widespread as MCL.

- the Liberal Party *Partido Liberal de Cuba* (PLC)

PLC is one of two Cuban members of the Liberal International (LI). PLC claims to have at least 800 registered members in Cuba; they also have unregistered but politically active sympathizers who are not included in this figure. They have a fairly well updated homepage which contains their party program, but no other organizational documents.³⁸ In 1991 a group of intellectuals founded the organization *Criterio Alternativo* that through reorganizations and renaming (*Movimiento Liberal Democrático* and *Alianza Liberal*) became PLC in 1996. Since 2003 their leader has been Julia Cecilia Delgado.

- the Liberal Party *Partido Solidaridad Democrática* (PSD);

PSD is, like PLC, a member of LI. PSD is reckoned by all informants asked to be the most influential party of all in Cuba. Of the four chosen parties they also have the broadest interaction with other dissidents and seem to be the most active within Cuba. PSD claims to have upwards of 2000 registered members - only in Cuba - since you can not be a member not living on the island. They also have a homepage that their representatives still refer to and that comes up by searching that has not been updated since 1998, they also have two newer but not easily found homepages, of which none is complete with all existing documents.³⁹ Their leader has been Fernando Sánchez López since the party's foundation in 1993.

The Swedish International Liberal Centre (SILC) estimates that PLC and PSD are equally strong and equally active⁴⁰. This is may well be the case, but PLC has a stronger international organization and PSD has a stronger organization in Cuba according to Cubans interviewed. I have chosen not to investigate a third Cuban liberal party, *Movimiento Liberal Cubano* (MLC)

³⁵ News 051020 <http://www.socialistgroup.org/>

³⁶ <http://www.mclpaya.org/>

³⁷ Interview Siro del Castillo (061207)

³⁸ <http://www.liberalescubanos.com/>

³⁹ <http://www.ccsi.com/~ams/psd/psd.htm> and <http://www.psdcubano.com/>

⁴⁰ E-mail Gainza-Solenzal (060310)

firstly because they are not members of LI and secondly because I did not manage to get in touch with them prior to my trip to Cuba.

4.2 Methodology

To my knowledge there are no available sources or unbiased research done on these parties. The state security denies that the members are an opposition at all, and their organizations are not recognized. It is not legal to investigate these parties without an investigation visa, and no investigation visa can be granted for this purpose.⁴¹ Therefore I will have to use mainly primary sources such as interviews and documents from the parties.

These four parties are based in Havana, but they have local branches in several other districts respectively. It would have been a good idea to include interviews with members of all parties from the interior of the country, but due to the difficult security situation this will only be possible in a very limited scope. Instead former members and other significant people connected to the parties in Miami, (where most exile Cubans of all ideologies live,) will be interviewed. I will also try to get in touch with the former president of PLC, Osvaldo Alfonso, who lives in exile in Sweden. The bulk of my material will be collected from exiles. I will discuss advantages and disadvantages with my sources in chapter 4.3 *Criticism of sources*.

Semi structured interviews will be used to understand the point of view of the leaders and representatives of the four parties, with a standard set of questions⁴² offered to gain comparable material from all interviewees and an open format. With one and a half exception all interviews in Sweden and USA have been recorded and transcribed, but not the interviews in Cuba.

Among many other questions I have asked my interviewees what they think in different political issues and if they agree with their party, and checked the party program in order to be able to judge their knowledge, acceptance etc. I have also let my interviewees help me interpret the rate of ideology and consistency among other members in their party and in the other investigated parties. I have also been studying what the written documents claim to be the ideal way to function. From that I have drawn my conclusions on how strong each parties ideology and ideological ties are.

4.3 Criticism of sources

I recognize my independence as a researcher could be questioned only for having contacts with the dissident movement, since they are not recognized by the regime and regime supporters over the world. It could be argued for that I would have incentives to hide some results that may be unpleasant for the opposition. This paper should not be seen as petition in favor of the opposition though, but rather a critical analysis of whether the “democratic alternative” really is democratic and if it really constitutes an alternative. I want to take the opposition seriously by recognizing them and their struggle, but I have no intentions of writing a flattering description. Extra attention will be paid to avoid this pitfall. I shall therefore assume that my contacts are simply an advantage for performing a thorough investigation.

The people connected to the chosen parties are likely to exaggerate the benefits of their own party and maybe even of the opposition in general – or they want to credit their own party for

⁴¹ Information from the “foreigners control” security police (060707) in Havana

⁴² See appendix

being above the rest, discrediting other parties. Interviewing Cuban exiles is different than interviewing Cubans in Cuba, not only because they are not likely to be as updated in exile as in Cuba. It can also have advantages, like informants not fearing that the state security will get a hold of my notes. I do not think there are any differences in values between oppositional people in Cuba and abroad, at least not concerning the questions in this study. Nevertheless it could be possible that the Cubans abroad know more about for example ideology, since they have easier access to information and in most cases fled because of their high level of involvement.

All this is important to remember in order to avoid loading values into the questions, to avoid letting the informant know about my ideal types or exactly what answers I am looking for. It is also important to be precise and ask for specific occasions rather than the party's ideal types of ideology and democracy. The problem can also be partly solved by asking the informants about other parties than their own, and to include several informants for each party with whom I have contact through a number of different channels.

From each of my four chosen parties I have met central people high in the organizational hierarchies, and complemented their information with that from more easily accessible informants. About three quarters of my informants have been able to provide me with first hand sources they themselves have been to the meetings and have participated in the elections investigated. Of those interviewed abroad half have been active in the parties during the last five years, the others have close contacts with the parties for other reasons. I have not experienced difficulties in getting interviews. The party representatives in Cuba have on the contrary been very keen to talk to me. Some claim that meeting foreigners and being known abroad is a protection against arbitrary treatment or to get their own or their Cuban friends' human rights violated. The interviews have been performed in the informants' home or in another place chosen by him or her.

The sources are the interviews combined with the official party documents if nothing else is stated. I have chosen not to refer every single piece of fact to a certain interview because the result can be sensitive. On the other hand I wanted to be open with which people have been interviewed to give as much information possible on my informants' possible bias.

4.4 How internal democracy shall be studied

In this chapter 4.4 and in chapter 4.5 I will develop an analytic tool, based on ideas of Jan Teorell and the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), for studying the organization of pre-transition opposition.

The first hypothesis for this study is that a democratically-run political party in a non-democratic state constitutes an alternative elite during a period of political transition, and contributes to a greater chance that the transition to democracy will be sustainable. Note that the term internal democracy means that a given party employs democratic rules of the game during all types of internal decision-making; note also that I am employing a view that organizational democracy needs to be representative in order to function adequately. It is given that organizations have representatives and leaders. What is then investigated is how this representative democracy works.

According to many democracy theoretics, democracy seems only to be possible in directly democratic forms (through participation in every decision). One example is Robert Dahl's lack

of explanation as to how his famous democracy criteria work when power is delegated to representatives. Not everyone in a group needs to have for example full information on every issue when they have been participating to choose leaders and other representatives.⁴³

I utilize Jan Teorell's criteria that for a process of decision-making to be considered democratic the following three should be fulfilled:

1. Inclusion – everybody should have an influence over decisions made or representatives chosen, when representatives decide, the delegation should be clear.
2. Theoretical possibility – everybody should have had possibility to the above.
3. Responsibility – Decision-makers can be held responsible for their decisions and acting.⁴⁴

This can be interpreted as a graded scale. Ideally all members should have influence; if not they should have had the possibility, and if not that than they should at least have the possibility of holding the leaders responsible for their actions.⁴⁵

The empirical investigation of power and influence needs further delimitation and will therefore only consist of studies of the formal authority – what does the written regulation or unwritten rules say about how elections and decisions should be made when things work as they should and what indications are there if this is implemented or not. It would also have been interesting to study the actual processes in participating observations, but I have determined that this would be impossible due to the scope of this paper and the security situation in Cuba.⁴⁶

That which is most concrete and researchable within the term "internal democracy" is the culture of decisions. I will study two cases of decision-making processes:

1. elections of president and board members and
2. how the most important party document is set

These questions are both central and of perennial interest, and can be judged to have equal importance in all four chosen parties.⁴⁷

How the election of representatives takes place is without doubt one of the most central questions within parties that aim for a representative multi-party system. In the application of internal democracy to this field, it should also be noted that women and minorities are encouraged to become representatives. This factor is also important with regard to party recruiting.⁴⁸

The most important party document would be a party program, but whether they call it a program or not, I will look for any document that serves as the ideological base for the party's activities. A party program (or equivalent document) is also interesting as it can show whether the group is indeed a party or if it is some other structure. Sartori's previously mentioned definition of a party (to offer candidates to public elections) can not be used for the Cuban parties (except MCL that have actually tried). But a party program is an unambiguous sign that an organization really is a party, beside the party's organizational structure and own

⁴³ Teorell

⁴⁴ Teorell (1998: 34)

⁴⁵ Teorell (1998: 36)

⁴⁶ Teorell (1998: 20), see also Dahl (1970).

⁴⁷ Teorell uses three criteria similar to the criteria "importance", "equivalence" and "representativeness" discussed in Frederick Freys book *Comment: On Issues and Nonissues in the Study of Power* from 1971.

⁴⁸ The Octagon (2000: 10) <http://www.sida.se/>

designation. I will also look for regulations such as statutes to see how setting of documents and election of representatives is formally intended to work.

4.5 Ideal type for an ideologically tied party

The second hypothesis for this study is that a group that is bound together by ideology is a stronger agent in a post-transition process than a group that is only tied together by social or friendship ties. This is important in order for the parties to be prepared for the responsibility of decision making. It constitutes one of the two investigated dimensions of democracy; the rate of ideological consensus defines an important part of the possibilities to become a democratic alternative elite.

The Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) has developed a tool for promoting "the development of robust and democratic civil societies and to strengthen local partner organizations in developing countries"⁴⁹ that they call the Octagon. There they state that among other things the strength of an organization can be shown in that it has a structure that binds together, independent of the leadership or membership of certain individuals. My ideal type is to large extent based on the first of the Octagon's eight steps.

The ideology of the party (identity) can consist in the purpose of the party, its future goals (visions) and what they see as their own role in how to get there or what they can offer society (mission). It is of importance if fundamental values have been written down or in other ways are possible to explain to outsiders. This has already been mentioned above. The members of the organization can of course be supporters of the core idea to varying extents, and a higher extent of support of the core ideas automatically means higher rate of consensus. That the written vision and mission of the group are clear and in line with the outspoken ideology (consistency), that it is known and accepted by all members and the rate of consensus together define the degree of ideologization of the party.

According to the Octagon; highest grades are granted if the party's vision and mission are documented in writing, are known and accepted by all members, and have been spread outside the party. Lowest grades are granted if they have not defined the purpose of their activities, the objectives they wish to achieve, or the party's mission in society. One feature of an in-between situation is that a person who wishes to find out about the party's basic idea can be given information in the form of written and oral descriptions and/or that this concept is known and accepted to a certain extent among members.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ The Octagon (2000: 5) <http://www.sida.se/>

⁵⁰ The Octagon (2000: 10)

5. Internal democracy in the Cuban political parties

In this chapter every party's level of internal democracy will be defined according to the three parameters described in Chapter 4.4 *How internal democracy shall be studied*: inclusion in decisions, theoretical possibilities to influence and whether the decision makers can be held responsible or not. How the parties' basic organization is set up and how it seems to be working out is the first thing described in every chapter. How the four parties elect president and board members and how the most important political document is set will also be superficially sorted out.

5.1 Internal democracy in the democratic socialist current (CSDC)

The people in CSDC are divided in *sympathizers* and *members*. Both members and sympathizers have the right to proposals and to participate in local meetings, but only members have the right to vote, to be elected and to be present in certain meetings such as the national conferences. Everywhere where there are three members or more, a circle can be founded, and this is the smallest entity of CSDC. In order to become a member you must be approved by two thirds of your circle after six months of being a sympathizer. Everywhere where there are three or more members or sympathizers to organize activities, a *circle* of CSDC can be founded. The members in the circle are entitled to vote, directly and secretly every year to elect the leader of the circle. Today there is no more than one circle in every province, and not more than five or ten in the country.

All circles (all members) in every municipality together constitute the *territorial assembly*. This assembly chooses their own *territorial committee*. All members of the territorial committees in a province, and all people in charge of the circles are together the *provincial assembly*. This assembly chooses a group of five people to be the *provincial delegation*, and one provincial *delegate*. Due to the fact that they have very few circles, most provincial members outside Havana are currently a part of the provincial delegation in their province.

According to the statutes, the *secretariat* is the superior organ of CSDC between *congresses* and *national conferences*. In 2003 nine people were elected⁵¹ to the secretariat and elections were supposed to be held in 2006 again. When I met CSDC in 2005-2006 the secretariat was said to consist in five people: Manuel Cuesta Morúa, secretary general (and spokesperson of the AP), Leonardo Calvo Cárdenas, treasurer and party organizer, Dimas Castellanos Martí, head of ideology, Miriam Rosales Rodríguez, Granma province and a man from the province of Pinar del Río. The two people from the provinces are not participating in the daily activities; instead there is a *central group* in Havana running daily business, organizing projects and education, sending declarations and press releases etc. The central group is the people with biggest engagement and possibilities to be active. I have not been able to find out how they were elected or how nine persons in the board became five between 2003 and 2005. In 2007, after I collected most of my material CSDC, went through a crisis and changes. Dimas Castellanos has either been expelled or, according to himself, has quit under his own terms. Several, or most, active Havana members have left CSDC together with Castellanos, in order to instead focus on the progressive magazine *Consenso*. The so called central group of CSDC has been dissolved. Since I do not know what this means, and since it is only by coincidence that I know of these facts I have decided to describe the party according to the material I had before these events. According to the leader of CSDC nothing has changed except that two members have been expelled.

⁵¹ Interview with Dimas Castellanos and Manuel Cuesta Morúa in the digital magazine Encuentro de la Cultura Cubana <http://arch1.cubaencuentro.com/entrevistas/20030405/>

CSDC has institutionalized two types of meeting that are higher than the secretariat, as mentioned above, the *national conference* and the *congress*. The members of the national conference are the members of the *national committee* and the delegates from the provinces. The national committee is the meeting of all provincial delegates and the coordinators of the CSDC projects in progress for the moment. The national committee should have meetings at least every third month and have responsibility for analyzing and advising in organizational and political issues. 2003 was the last time that they arranged a national conference (with 45 people present). Since then they have not had elections of either secretary general or secretariat members. They claim that no new elections can be held because of the repression, but do not, however, elaborate this point. They have not tried other ways to elect or reelect leaders.

The statutes do state that the congress, held every four years, consists of representatives from the circles, but not how many representatives the circles are allowed to send nor how the number of representatives is related to the number of members. This will be established by the “organizing committee” prior to the congress. CSDC has not yet had a congress. They had one planned in 2005 that was not realized. Elections were planned also in 2006 but did not take place, according to the secretariat elections the next national conference is supposed to be held in 2007, but they gave no indications that it is actually being planned. There should be an *ethics committee* of five people, in charge of controlling that elected persons follow the rules. The ethics committee is elected perpetually, but can be removed from office by the congress (or national committee) if needed. I have not been able to discover anything that confirms that this group is functioning.

The black minority is well represented, but women are not as well represented. The three front figures are black men. About 30 % of the members are estimated to be women. Out of five members of the board one is a woman, and in the central group there are two or three women out of about ten. Most power is in male hands, the women in power positions are either not able to participate in meetings (because of not living in Havana) or not formally elected. The women have also much less access to the party resources.

Removing the secretary general from office can theoretically be done, but is most likely difficult in practice. The secretary general has great influence over when and how the congresses shall be arranged since regulations for when to arrange larger meetings are not or can not be followed. This makes it in practice fairly difficult to remove the secretary general, but it is possible if a congress actually takes place. It is easier to remove another leader from office, as long as the secretary general agrees to the removal. The board members, just as the secretary general, can according to the rules not be removed from office unless a congress (or national committee) decides so.

While members have been expelled because of suspected infiltration or disloyalty, it is not easy to expel someone. The statutes decrees that only democratically elected organs may take disciplinary measures against members who fail to fulfill his or her undertaking.

The most important political document of CSDC is a document they call a social democratic platform for a new left (or *Cuadernos del 2002*). It was published as a proposal to the national conference in January 2002 that was postponed until 2003 (before the *Black Spring* of 2003). It is not described how the document was set or who participated in its creation. It is also not clear if the document was discussed fully, however certain sections were discussed and the

secretariat was given authority to continue working with this document as a base. A national conference can not be held at the moment, as the current security situation does not seem to permit larger meetings.

The organizational document is their *statutes*. The statutes are very detailed, for example it is regulated how often the basic member organization, the circles, shall have meetings – “once a month and in *extraordinary* cases as often as the members deem necessary”. In an unpredictable political climate such as Cuba, it could be difficult to realize one, and only one meeting per month. Even in *normal* cases in a predictable political climate things like what and how many current activities are going on, how many active members there are and so forth, define how often basic groups convene. The statutes are very ambitious but do not always seem to be best suited to the actual party. They describe many levels of the organization that actually do not exist, and apparently existing power structures are sometimes not described.

There have been plans to renew the documents during a congress in 2007, but I have not been able to get more specific information or any indications that this work is in fact underway. The documents used on a daily basis are the declarations of current interest that are often written by one or two persons but based on the original party platform that does not change.

All members of the circles have the right to come up with suggestions at all levels. In practice, there is not very much contact between the provinces and the activities in Havana, and most resources are used by a small minority. Except the elected treasurer and the secretary general, few people know what resources the party actually has. Most resources are used for communication, such as Internet access and telephone costs.

CSDC aim for internal democracy and have a system of how to implement this vision. A significant part of their system does not work; the representatives do not put their positions up for elections as often as they should. In theory, all members shall have the possibility to vote for every decision on local level and every year choose representatives to national and provincial committees. It is not likely that this happens regularly in the provinces, since there are not enough members. In Havana, this does not seem to happen, since the members are not organized in circles but in an interim power structure, and the secretariat was elected in 2003.

The inclusion of the members in the daily work, writing of declarations, definitions of projects et cetera is fairly good. But in the investigated areas election of representatives and setting of documents the members are not included, even though there is a good system on paper. On the other hand, they have had a national conference five years ago, and the plans for a new one are not completely disregarded, so there is still some hope of this taking place in the near future. The possibilities to hold the decision-makers responsible are not optimal, but exist to a certain extent.

Since the statutes are not suited to actual conditions, party size etc, and not possible to follow in many cases, it is difficult to know how things work in practice. How can a member apply and be chosen to become a representative, especially if not prioritized by the leader? Most activities take place in the central group in Havana and in the circles with members that have not been formally elected.

5.2 Internal democracy in the Christian Liberation Movement (MCL)⁵²

Currently, the most important political document of MCL is *All Cubans (Todos Cubanos)* which is an external project driven by MCL. Most MCL activities are of this kind; MCL write political programs that are sent out in huge referrals among the Cuban people. Anyone, no matter ideology, can comment on the written proposal in citizen committees (study circles) in what MCL call for example a national dialogue. They also use polls and collection of signatures in order to spread and gain support for their proposals. After the comments, polls et cetera have been collected; a group consisting of Christian Democrats decides which of the thousands comments are to be taken into consideration. In the case of All Cubans the editor group consists of 25 people, mostly from MCL but probably also (Christian Democrat) sympathizers of MCL. This group started writing the proposal on the basis of a poll and will continue editing once comments are collected. The people in this group are mostly recruited among the loyal in the Varela project. It is also a platform for Oswaldo Payá and his political ideas. MCL also has a Transition Program (*Programa de Transición*) that has worked as a base for discussing a new constitution for Cuba. And of course there is also the famous Varela project law proposal.

The representatives abroad claim the main organizational document to be *the Principles of MCL*. This document was written in 1988 when the organization was funded by Payá, and is said to never change since it is the equivalent of a constitution. It is not on their webpage and I have not been able to get a hold of this document from anyone interviewed nor from the official e-mail addresses. Another organizational document, the Statutes of MCL, describe the organizational structure and a way to become a member and the rights to vote that does not seem to have much at all to do with the actual way to function of the MCL.

It is impossible to tell how many members MCL have, since they do not (seem to) have a typical membership structure and it depends upon how you count. Very high figures like twenty five thousand people have been participating in MCL projects and about two or four hundred people are in the permanently organized MCL groups. Around 50 people are called directors, or leaders, of MCL. They organize what they call citizen committees, i.e. discussion groups. Currently there are few people except Payá with authority to for example sign in the name of MCL, these people are called the national coordinator group or “the people around Payá”. MCL has no structure for electing representatives, they have no congresses and they do not elect a board.⁵³ It is the national coordinator group that chooses who can become for example a director. Every person’s task is based on trust by already trusted members. The focus of MCL is not the internal organization but to include as many Cubans as possible to discuss proposals signed Oswaldo Payá. Payá is the founder, leader and front figure of MCL. In order to have influence of the actual proposals and projects you have to be informally accepted by Payá and his closest men since you have no possibility of being elected. That is the members can not submit applications to be elected; it is the directors group that chooses who gets to be a leader or not. Two quotes explaining how the election of representatives is viewed by MCL’s close allies:

⁵² The material collected on MCL does not seem to be as reliable as from the three other parties. The stories told orally and through the documents do not agree. I will draw conclusions from the material in the same way as in the rest of this paper, but further interviews on Cuba would have been needed in order to eliminate existing doubts.

⁵³ Some people compare this with a foundation, rather than with a party, but since they aspire for participating in a democracy it is not on the cards to do that in this study.

You are chosen on the basis of if you live as you learn, stand up for what you say and if you create problems or possibilities. Will this person be someone who can be a coordinator without risking people around him?⁵⁴ The ones who don't agree have never been a part of us, and therefore nobody can be excluded for not agreeing (...) We in this sense are the ones who want a peaceful transition.⁵⁵

The statutes on the other hand talk about everybody having the right to join and to vote in open elections.

The way to remove a person from his position is if the rest of the central group agrees to remove him. If the organization wants to remove Payá from office, they practically have to start a new party and move all members, since Payá probably will stay with the name, the sponsors, international contacts etc. Furthermore Payá has the final say if someone should be in the central group or not, and it is only this group who theoretically could take the decision to replace him. Since there is no structure to register members, you can only be a sympathizer or in a position, the members can never vote for their leaders. There is a strong cult around Payá and people outside MCL criticizing Payá or his projects are often rightly or wrongly accused of infiltration by him.⁵⁶ This means that the responsibility criterion is far from fulfilled. This is clear simply looking at the web page of MCL: www.mclpaya.org. It does not give the impression that anything else is planned other than making Payá a long lasting president (or coordinator) and an icon.

Minorities and women do not seem to be well represented in MCL. In one of my interviews I was told that four of the seven persons in the inner circle around Payá were women and that group of directors of MCL also in other aspects reflects mirror the population. When I later got the names of the inner circle, it was seven male names; Oswaldo Payá, Antonio Diaz Sánchez, Regis Iglesias, Minervo Lazaro Chil Siret, Ernesto Martini Fonseca, Jose Daniel Ferrer and Luis Enrique Ferrer. As far as I have been informed, and been able to see in pictures all of these men are white. When several of the MCL organizers were imprisoned in 2003, some wives have nonetheless stepped in to take on responsibility informally.

MCL has been harder hit by the state security than the other investigated parties. In 2003 when Castro imprisoned 75 opponents many had been working with the Varela project. But whether it is justifiable or not is not what is investigated here, MCL does not have a system that can be called internally democratic when it comes to electing representatives. When they set documents things are a marginally closer to a democratic ideal type. It is equitable in that everyone – no matter membership – can come up with suggestions and have their opinion heard. But there are no advantages belonging to MCL if you are not engaged in any position. Everyone has as much or as little influence in the final document – except the non-elected editorial committee who together with Payá has the final say. MCL does have statutes stating how things should be running, and this is an advantage for the possibilities of applying democratic rules, but these statutes seem to be too little known, discussed and followed to have any real impact in MCL after a transition, if a transition would be taking place in a near future.

⁵⁴ Interview Henrik Ehrenberg (070223)

⁵⁵ Interview Julio Hernandez (061205)

⁵⁶ A big part of the interview with Payá consisted in pointing out traitors and possible traitors not supporting for example the Varela project within the opposition

5.3 Internal democracy in the Liberal Party of Cuba (PLC)

I have not been able to get any statutes or similar document from PLC, and they do not have anything online. The representatives nevertheless have in most respects a quite clear and to an acceptable extent agreeing view of the internal organization. In some aspects the representatives do not tell the same story and the fact that former board members do not know or do not remember fundamental things like how documents were renewed or how the actual proceedings went when electing makes it easy to believe that the systems are not stably rooted in the organization and in practice. Proceedings probably differ widely in the different provinces, but it is not beyond doubt that what is described in this chapter is the way it actually works in PLC. However this seems to be the ideal type for how they want things to be. It is likely that effort is been made for fulfilling these criteria.

There are two types of members in the organization; *activists* and *sympathizers*. Activists are the ones who are openly engaged and registered in their respective province. And sympathizers are the ones who for any reason can not or will not be open with their political sympathy.⁵⁷ The members and sympathizers are organized in *liberal circles*, in which anyone who is liberal and accept the PLC fundamental documents can join. The most basic formally chosen organs in PLC are the *municipal delegations* that are chosen by all members in each municipality in open annual meetings. Any registered member can be a candidate if he or she so wishes. There is also a theoretical possibility for all registered members of sending ballots to this meeting by mail or with a messenger. Each of these boards elects a president/delegate. These delegates, and often also others from the municipal boards, constitute the *provincial boards*. The province headquarters is in the city where the current elected delegate lives. The province delegations have some autonomy and can for example choose to make coalitions or run projects together with other local opposition groups.

PLC has a *national committee* consisting of the delegates of the provincial boards (currently eleven but theoretically up to fourteen, if PLC has boards in each of the fourteen provinces) and the twelve members of the current *national executive (ejecutiva nacional)*. This assembly elects the new national executive (eleven people) with secret votes. The provincial delegates are automatically candidates for the national executive. Except them either the province executives or the province delegates can nominate more candidates; normally they only nominate one or two other persons, if anyone, beside their first candidate; their delegate.

The eleven people who get the most votes become the national executive and the four top names become the *political committee* (comité político) that consists in:

- a) President
- b) Vice president
- c) Secretary general
- d) Responsible for external relations
- e) Youth issues

The president of *young liberals (juventud liberal)* is also automatically a member of the political committee and responsible for youth issues. The political committee is the group who runs the daily activities, controls resources etc. The political committee is also responsible for writing political declarations and in practice they collect opinions from the members and decide if

⁵⁷ For example PLC has a few sympathizers who work at the university, and they are sure they would loose their work if being a registered PLC member. If they are dismissed from the university they can not contribute with their valuable contacts among students and other lecturers.

changes are to be made in the political program etc. Not anyone can be a member of this committee, because of fear of infiltration.

You must combine democracy with security in Cuba, since it is not a democratic country with the preconditions demanded for full democracy. There is a big control of a person before he or she can become a candidate, we analyze well and some things only the president gets to know.⁵⁸

As far as I can interpret it this means that the president (and a few others) can put her veto against candidates. It is not clear if this security check is performed before the provinces elect their delegates. In 2002 they last held a national meeting, a so called *plenary meeting*, where the provinces have sent representatives according to their size. They have not yet had anything they would call a congress, but the plenary meeting should take place every four to five years and evaluate the activities and the representatives' work during the period. The national committee also chooses an ethics committee consisting of three people who have the task of revising the work of the elected representatives. These people may not be members of the political committee while they are in the ethics committee.

PLC seems to be less a party of academics than the others in this study. Many of the leaders and most of the members belong to the working class. At the moment there are only white people in the national executive, but black people are also active in the movement. With the exception of the leader, Julia Cecilia, not many women are in positions of power, she is the only female in the national committee.

Members can and have been expelled, under the guises of infiltration, disloyalty etc. Drug-addicts, alcoholics and prostitutes do also not have a place in PLC, since they want a "clean" party and would avoid giving the Castroists any fuel that could be used against them. It is the ethics committee on each level that decides in these issues. The national ethics committee only decides if the expulsion issue has to do with a member of the national committee, including the president, the ethics committee in the province can expel leaders of the municipalities etc.

PLC's most important document is the *political, economical and social program* (Programa Político, Económico y Social), the party program. Political documents are sent out on referrals to the circles, i.e. the cells, (where all members have the right to participate) and are discussed. The collected opinions and suggestions are considered when the board renews the documents. That is; changes in the program also appear to be possible for the political committee to make continuously, even though the interviewees say it is desirable only to change the document in congress. Nevertheless only very small changes seem to have been made since the document was written and set by the national executive in 1996, except for changing the party name from *Partido Liberal Democrático Cubano* (PLDC) to PLC.

During the last few years PLC claims it has been very difficult to hold meetings with more than two or three participants, since the groups are too often dissolved or threatened. They have not had a congress or national meeting since 2002.

It is important for PLC to point out they are very democratic, that it is always the majority that decides and that everyone is equal. When it comes to practice things are not quite so simple. There is a principle that everyone's vote should count equally in every line of the party

⁵⁸ Osvaldo Alfonso (070318)

program, but this is not possible without a congress and they have no alternative as to how to organize this form of decision making. The political committee does have the authority to decide on most issues, and the members seem to know and accept this, but the delegation is still not completely clear. The spreading of information is not optimal and knowledge of how decisions are made could be better among the grassroots. It is to some extent possible to hold decision makers responsible, but this has certain limitations since the leaders of the political committee are very influential, both numerically speaking in the national committee and by having the possibility to approve or disapprove new representatives of this committee.

5.4 Internal democracy in the Democratic Solidarity Party (PSD)

Any Cuban who agrees on the basic ideas of PSD, who has turned 18 years and does not belong to any armed group, respects other opposition groups and does not have the objectives of joining in order to leave the country can become a member of PSD. The smallest formal groups of PSD are the *quarters* or *municipalities*, depending on the size of the city and the number of PSD members in the area. Every of these groups chose a *delegate* and the municipalities also choose executive committee, called the *municipal delegation*. The *provincial delegations* are integrated by one or more delegates from each municipality. Every member who is interested can apply to participate as a candidate in the provinces from his or her quarter or municipality. The *national executive committee* (*Comité Ejecutivo Nacional, CEN*) is the board of PSD. CEN consists in the president, the vice president and the leaders of the *secretariats*. The secretariats are fifteen specific departments, such as finances, external relations, youth issues etc, each with one elected leader/responsible who often lives in Havana. Sometimes, when there are more important issues to be discussed, CEN is extended and invites in the delegates from the provinces. The *political committee* is a working committee of the CEN, with the possibility of more frequent meetings. The political committee consists of seven people and is elected by and within the extended CEN. In 2007 PSD, just like CSDC, had a split and a crisis. The vice president together with seven other members of the CEN were separated or expelled from PSD for reasons I do not fully understand but having to do with the “institutionalism” of PSD. This same argument was used in CSDC for separating board members in other ways than stated in the statutes. An “urgency committee” was – unknown to me how – formed and elected new members to the secretariats that were left without leaders. The political committee was dissolved until the next elections in 2008. Since I have not been able to talk to both sides in this conflict, and since this has come up after collecting the bulk of my material I have chosen to not investigate this further.

The president, vice president and the rest of the CEN are supposed to be elected by the extended CEN from the past period plus all members of every provincial delegation. These elections are held every three years, the last time being January 2005 and the next in February 2008. The voting in these elections is direct and secret. Everyone entitled to vote gets a printed ballot with names of the nominees from each province and CEN members who have not resigned and three checkboxes, one checkbox for president, one for vice president and one for the CEN, where you can check up to 13 candidates. All candidates for the CEN are eligible to run for presidency. Voting can be done in person in a polling station, by mail or via a messenger. PSD also have used election observers, for example people from CSDC or PLC. In the elections in 2005 the delegations of the provinces did not get the opportunity to vote for the CEN, only the extended CEN voted. The interim CEN was elected by the urgency committee in 2007. The infiltration argument is used in PSD as well, and members can and have been expelled. “Discrediting the party leads to expulsion” says Ernesto Hernandez.

The highest organ of PSD is the national committee. The national committee consists in the political committee, the CEN, the provincial delegations, “some president of adjacent organizations”, delegates from the municipalities and quarters and “certain people who constitute interest for PSD”. As far as I understand, the meeting of the national committee is the same thing as the *convention* that that was arranged the first time in Havana 2001 with 62 participants. The convention could not be held together with the elections in January 2005 as planned, but was held in a different way the same year a few months later, from March to July, whereby parts of the CEN traveled to each province to lead political discussions, collecting votes for how political documents should be set up and chose delegations and representatives for the CEN.

The interim CEN elected in the beginning of 2007 consists of twelve provincial representatives and fifteen secretaries, including the president and vice president. Of these fifteen three are also representatives of their respective province, which makes the CEN twenty four people. Out of these twenty four people one is a woman – in charge of “women’s issues”, in *secretaria de la mujer*. Minorities like black and mixed-race people are represented to some extent in PSD, for example in their president, but the vast majority is white.

The most important document of PSD is the party program (*Programa del PSD*) and this was updated in 2005 in discussions with all members invited to open meetings in each province. Each secretary also has the responsibility to prepare a report on how their area of responsibility is supposed to be taken into consideration in the program. How the document finally was set is not clear, but it is likely that the decision was taken by either the political committee or the CEN.

The internal democracy of PSD seems to be uniquely well-functioning considering the Cuban context. The members are included, or at least invited to be included in discussions on the program and more importantly to vote for representatives. Some things, such as how members are expelled or what authority each level has is not explicitly explained to the members, and is not easy to obtain in written form. But it is possible to hold leaders responsible for their decisions, at least theoretically. Nevertheless; when only the leaders themselves and their closest confidants in the CEN can vote, such as in the last election during 2005, it is not optimally democratic. It is also remarkable that an urgency committee can remove and replace eight out of fifteen secretaries, especially if this committee is not elected by the highest organ. If the president can have the power to alter the composition of the CEN that in practice is the organ electing the president, the internal democracy seems to have some serious flaws.

5.5 Conclusion

To conclude the analysis described in this chapter 5, the grades one to five will be given for each of the three researched areas inclusion, theoretical possibilities and responsibility as described in chapter 4.4 *How internal democracy shall be studied*.⁵⁹ The grades are not exact, but work as a guideline for the judgment of each party. The definition of each grade is as follows:

0. The criterion does not work, and there are no written or spoken declarations that this is desirable
1. There is an oral declaration or written statutes regulating that this should be in place, but little effort is made to fulfill the declaration or no declaration is in place but some effort is made
2. Intermediate position, for example that there is a working system in place, but nothing written down is available (which makes the rules easy to disregard) or that there is no working system in place but substantial efforts are made to fulfill internal democracy
3. Most of the criterion are achieved but there are some serious flaws in either the written or practical standards
4. The criterion work according to democratically acceptable statutes

Internal Democracy	CSDC	MCL	PLC	PSD
Inclusion, documents	2	1	2	3
Inclusion, representatives	2	0	2	2
Theoretical possibility, documents	2	1	2	3
Theoretical possibility, representatives	3	0	3	3
Responsibility	2	0	2	3

In all four parties the documents written are discussed by members and the leaders take these comments and suggestion into consideration to a varying extent. All of the parties claim that as many as possible have been invited to participate in the discussions. Whether the representatives making the final decision about the documents are democratically elected or not has been taken into consideration for the grade given. In three of the parties there is an existing democratic system for how representatives are to be chosen from local to national level, whereby the individual members have a say when their locally elected representative can exert influence at higher levels. In the fourth case (MCL) rules are nevertheless written down, but they are neither followed nor known. The theoretical possibilities are normally as high as the actual inclusion. This is maybe because I have not done any participating observations, but only listened to party representatives. Still there are some smaller discrepancies where the current situation is said to force the parties to hold elections in other ways than regulated. The possibility to hold representatives responsible exists in three cases out of four, but is more difficult than for the leaders to expel members. This criterion has serious flaws regarding the possibility for presidents/secretary generals/coordinators to exercise power outside the written regulations.

⁵⁹ Inclusion – everybody should have an influence over decisions made or representatives chosen, when representatives decide, the delegation should be clear. Theoretical possibility – everybody should have had possibility to the above. Responsibility – Decision-makers can be held responsible for their decisions and acting.

6. Ideological ties within the Cuban political parties

In this chapter the four parties will be described according to the structure described in Chapter 4.5 *Ideal type for an ideologically tied party*.

What kind of declarations the parties have and whether these are written down will be investigated. It will also be investigated as to what extent members know and accept these, and how much consensus the members in a given party have. Below you can find short descriptions of this, which is also shown in the graphics in Chapter 6.5 *Conclusion*.

6.1 Ideological ties in the democratic socialist current (CSDC)

The purpose of CSDC is expressed in several documents. In the statutes it is described why they started, what they want to happen in Cuba, what the party's role in this is and how they, through education, suggestions of politics and organization will try to start and play a part in this development they see for Cuba.

The visions, what future CSDC see for Cuba and the mission, what they can offer the Cuban society are clearly described in many different documents. For example their six-step program for reaching a smooth transition is a core pillar of the organization and their political program for after the transition is extensive. They work hard to spread these programs among the members, to other Cubans both within and without opposition groups and to foreigners. The documents are not available online, at least not easily available and it took a great effort to get a hold of the statutes, whilst getting the political documents both in electronic and paper form was easy in Cuba.

The main content of the political program of CSDC seems to be known and accepted by the members. Most members are intellectuals, many have been members for ten or fifteen years and the vast majority has a clear and similar view of what social democracy or democratic socialism is. The problems they have had do not have to do with ideology except in a very limited extent, but rather with personal behavior and power struggles. In the provinces, where they do not have the same possibilities of discussion and exchange of views about the program and other declaration, the knowledge is probably much lower. The political consensus is widespread and they recruit new members by handing out political documents, electronic copies of their magazine *Consenso* are distributed on flash memories and spread throughout the Cuban intranet to work places and people knowing someone with a computer.

6.2 Ideological ties in the Christian Liberation Movement (MCL)

The statutes of MCL describe the purpose of the party. I got a printed version of the statutes from the hand of Payá, but few others seem to know of their existence and it has been impossible to get them electronically. I have been told that the purpose of MCL is described in the document *Principles of MCL* that was written in 1988 and still exists in the same form, but I have not been able to see it; it is probably of little or no importance to distribute this and make it widely known. It is also logical that a document from 1988 that can not be changed loses most of its importance when circumstances and abilities of MCL changes. The visions of MCL are however clear and extensive. Actually, the main purpose of MCL seems to be spreading vision documents, several can be downloaded and you simply have to meet any representative to get a copy – something I suppose also goes for Cubans. The mission of the work of MCL is also clear; their contribution to society is to spread the visions for a future Cuba.

There seem to be no internal conflicts or disputes within MCL at the moment, but it is a fact that people have quit because they do not feel at ease with the working conditions. It is not surprising however that those who get in and then stay on within the party, have a high ideological consistency. It is true that the members of MCL do not have open conflicts over politics, and that they show outstanding agreement publicly. When asked “what do you think”, the representatives answer “we think” and when asked what the biggest difference between their own opinions and the party’s they say “nothing”. It is quite difficult to separate MCL from the projects they run, and particularly the opinions of MCL from the MCL interpretation of the main stream Cuban opinions they accept and spread. Since the structure is not as open as the other three parties investigated it is difficult to tell if the MCL is a group tied by friendship (and kinship), loyalty to the leader or individual political conviction but it is probably a combination of all three. .

The educational material used on a broad basis, is the self-produced declarations. Consensus within MCL is based on this. This material for the most part does not specifically explain what is based on Christian Democracy, what is based on common sense, what is Payá’s own philosophy and what is the interpreted Cuban main stream opinion. This can mean two things as far as I am concerned. Either the ideology of MCL is very flexible or the members are very flexible. Considerable importance is placed upon consensus or agreeance with the leaders within MCL, but it seems that loyalty is much more important than knowledge in the recruiting process. The members know about political issues and share the opinions of their party, it is also important to discuss and spread politics but to what extent this is the glue that holds the party together is unclear. On the other hand, since the beginning of the party MCL has had an outspoken ideology that is used if not to recruit new members, since MCL hardly does this, then for describing themselves as a group. MCL has clear vision statements that members know and accept to a very high degree, even sympathizers and externals are urged to read, have opinions and sign MCL political statements.

6.3 Ideological ties in the Liberal Party of Cuba (PLC)

The ambitions of PLC are first of all to create a party; educate members and establish a working structure in order to be prepared for a future multi party system. The second purpose is to organize Cubans and together with other organizations in Cuba promote a peaceful democratic transition. This aim is clearly spoken, but I have not been able to obtain documents stating this fully. Like the other investigated Cuban parties they do have clear future goals, expressed in the party program, both short term before a transition, medium term during the transition phase and long term after a transition has taken place. It is also written down what PLC’s own role in this can be. The purpose of the party is well spread even though not easily accessible in written form. The party program, containing the vision and partly the mission of PLC, is important and well spread. It is accessible online and PLC has managed to print it in Cuba and distributes it as a means of recruiting new members.

The members of PLC are aware of the vision and mission of PLC, even though many especially newer members are not quite clear about what liberalism is. Liberal is for many oppositional Cubans a positive word since it is associated with liberty, or *libertad*; the Spanish word for freedom. The party does not demand knowledge before joining, but it is important for PLC to educate their members in ideology and particularly in freedom of market and press, free elections, private property and free trade that is mentioned several times in my interviews. It is also important to know and to accept the party program before joining, which makes the rate of consensus fairly high. Agreeing or not on some issues is non-negotiable, such as the

importance of a small and efficient state and all human rights, while other, issues, for example homosexual rights and whether to accept money from the US or not are more contentious.

6.4 Ideological ties in the Democratic Solidarity Party (PSD)

The aim of the party is very well defined. On their homepage PSD has three documents that are also included in the party program named: *Objectives of PSD at the current stage*, *PSD during the transition* and *PSD in a democratic society*. The party program not only contains the political, economical, ecological and social ideas, but also a description of PSD's history, the above mentioned description of what PSD's motives and role are now, during a future transition phase and beyond. The program also contains some rules and values that are important for the members to share, such as to "profess the deepest love towards the fatherland and its culture" and "total respect for the norms of our organization, working to convert them into our guide for action and reasoning". This document is not very long, but unambiguous, and completed with extensive political declarations about both visions and mission.

PSD also has organizational documents stating how the organization is supposed to work. The distinction between the *ethic functional regulation*, the *organic regulation* and the program is not entirely clear and together they do not contain all information needed about for example what issues are supposed to be decided by what organ, or how documents are set.

Much effort and importance is given to the documents, and the second paragraph out of seventeen in the description of the purpose of PSD in the current phase expresses the importance of disseminating the documents. It states that it aims to "bring to all the members of our party and to society in general the knowledge of our Program, Regulation, Directives and other documents". The documents are easy accessible on the internet, many members can give you a copy and e-mails asking for information are normally responded to in less than a week.

PSD recruits new members through ideology and political ideas. Even though the knowledge of ideology is not very deep among members in general you cannot become a member without knowing the party program. They also have a center for political and ideological studies with the objective of deepening the members' and the rest of the Cuban population's ideological base.

PSD is a bigger party than every other Cuban opposition party, and maybe this is one reason why they seem to be more open to differences in opinions. The rate of consensus is rather high, and it is important to reach consensus. It is also important that all opinions are heard within PSD. Among the PSD's "principles that govern our way of ethic acting and being as an opposition party" the following paragraph is included: "to express without reservations your outlook, even though it is opposite to the rest". And this seems to be well anchored in among the members.

6.5 Conclusion

Every party's ideological ties will be analyzed as described in chapter 4.5 *Ideal type for an ideologically tied party*. The highest grade according to the Octagon described in that chapter is given if the party's purpose, vision and mission are documented in writing, known and accepted by members and spread outside the organization. This also defines the rate of ideology and consensus in each party.

Declarations	CSDC	MCL	PLC	PSD
Purpose of the party	Written	No/Written ⁶⁰	Spoken	Written
Future goals (visions)	Written	Spoken/Written ⁶¹	Written	Written
How to get there (mission)	Written	Written	Written	Written

Categories

No (0) - the party does not have any common declarations

Spoken (1) - the party representatives can explain their declarations

Written (2) - the party representatives can explain and provide their declarations in writing

This shows that the parties' vision and mission declarations are very clear; in most cases the purpose of the party is also explained. The parties' have as an important part of their strategies to spread their documents within and without their own organizations, which makes this criterion well fulfilled.

The next table shows that these documents are also very well known and accepted among the members. The documents, and with that the ideology, purpose, vision and mission, are important, spread, known and accepted.

Members	CSDC	MCL	PLC	PSD
Knowledge of ideology	3	2	2	3
Knowledge of vision and mission	3	3	2	3
Acceptance of ideology	3	4	3	3
Acceptance of vision and mission	3	4	3	3

Categories

0. Don't know basics

1. Some knowledge

2. Know basics

3. Clear view

4. Very clear view

0. Only accept being opponent to the regime

1. Accept basics

2. Accept most with important exceptions

3. Accept most with small exceptions

4. Accept all

The rate of consensus is high in all investigated parties (especially in MCL, and this is probably because you have little possibility to be chosen to become an active member if you are critic). It is important for the members to agree internally because of pressure from the outside and it is very important for all four parties that the members know and accept the program and the

⁶⁰ To some extent MCL do have a written declaration of the purpose of the party, but it does not seem to be commonly discussed and the party representatives can not explain what is in this declaration.

⁶¹ The mission is spoken and widely known and accepted, but the written down version does not really coincide with this spoken mission statement. The grade will be counted as 1 for spoken.

ideology before entering the party. Recruiting is done by handing out party declarations, or in one case other political declarations. Much or most of the activities in all parties consist in producing declarations, discussing and educating members and others about ideology. The parties (except MCL) place a degree of prestige upon reaching consensus and only have a few examples of when they have had bigger discussions on political issues. MCL on the other hand claims both that everybody – no matter what ideology – can participate in the discussions and that consensus does not have to be reached. Once the final document is set, the committee are not said to have important differences in opinions within, “some proposals are valid and some are not” is a returning phrase among MCL interviewees. The consensus within MCL can therefore be said to be stronger than in the other parties, and it is more important for the leaders and members to agree and show to the world that they do agree, but this is apparent in all four parties. The interviewees probably – and according to themselves – have a higher knowledge of ideology, vision and mission than what they estimate the general members to have.

7. Concluding comment

The respective groups that call themselves political parties in Cuba do have systems that aim for “internal democracy” in three cases out of four. In these three cases there are however still some important gaps to be filled. As long as Cuba remains a non-democratic state, many of the non-democratic elements in the opposition parties will probably not change. In the same way that Castro uses the US infiltration as an argument for controlling and punishing opposition in Cuba, the opposition uses the Castro infiltration for using non-democratic methods within their own organizations. The disloyalty argument can in several cases be interpreted as criticizing wrong people in charge of your party. Methods that may or may not be necessary however seem to be accepted by their sponsors, who are the only external force with possibility to demand that the parties follow their own regulations. Since the parties are currently not accepted in Cuba no matter how much internal democracy they have or lack, it is possible for people in charge in each party to take extraordinary measures in order to remain in charge. As a dissident you normally have very small chances to a name, a career or influence outside your party and you are normally under strong pressure.

The investigated organizations seem to be learning a great deal from each other. Several party documents are set up in similar ways in different parties, and probably they are also comparing themselves with other parties in internal democracy, ideology, recruitment methods and so on. And they all put great importance into ideology and ideological consistency. As explained in chapters two and three, the Cuban opposition seemed to be uniquely ideological, compared for example with the former Soviet Union. It is true that the ideological ties are strong, stronger and more important than the friendship ties in the investigated parties. The members of these groups are tied to each other ideologically, political documents are very important; they are to a quite high extent democratically discussed before being disseminated and studied. The documents constitute a good ideological base around which much of the party activities revolve. Consensus, or at least a very high rate of consistency, can be reached. The importance of referrals and broad discussions among the investigated parties on ideology and visions is another sign that the opposition can play an important role in a future transition to democracy. Especially since these parties are probably representative for other oppositional groups.

With these facts as a background, and if these factors are as important as I have estimated them to be, these parties do have good preconditions to become an alternative elite after a transition from Castroism. Given the circumstances the parties are surprisingly open and at least somewhat internally democratic, but there are risks that if, or when, these groups become a new alternative elite on Cuba – they will not be fully prepared to run the country on a direct path to democracy.

To make a short concluding summary and to complete the conclusions in chapters 5.5 and 6.5 I have merged the three tables shown and explained in the mentioned chapters into one. The points given have been summed up and gives an indication of what answers there are to be found to the purpose of the thesis and the questions in chapter 2; what possibilities does the current Cuban opposition have to become an alternative elite and to grant a democratic development after a probable transition.

Internal democracy /democracy promotion	CSDC	MCL	PLC	PSD
Inclusion, documents	2	1	2	3
Inclusion, representatives	2	0	2	2
Theoretical possibility, doc.	2	1	2	3
Theoretical possibility, rep.	3	0	3	3
Responsibility	2	0	2	3
<u>Subtotal</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>14</u>
Percent of maximum	55%	10%	55%	70%
Ideological ties /become an alternative elite	CSDC	MCL	PLC	PSD
Purpose of the party	2	1	1	2
Future goals (visions)	2	1	2	2
How to get there (mission) ⁶²	2	2	2	2
Knowledge of ideology	3	2	2	3
Knowledge of vision and mission	3	3	2	3
Acceptance of ideology	3	4	3	3
Acceptance of vision and mission	3	4	3	3
<u>Subtotal</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>18</u>
Percent of maximum	82%	77%	68%	82%

⁶² No declarations = 0, spoken declarations = 1, written declarations = 2.

8. Sources

8.1 Literature

- Bennich-Björkman, Li. 2005. *Tracing the Post-Communist Elite's Quality: The Cases of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania*. Paper to be presented at the ECPR Joint Session, Granada, Spain, April 14-19 2005, Workshop 9
- Bennich-Björkman, Li. 2006. *Building Post-Communist States: Comparing Estonia and Latvia* in "Building Democracy East of the Elbe" ed Sven Eliaesson, London: Routledge/Sage, 2006
- Chehabi, H.E & Juan J. Linz 1998. *Sultanistic Regimes*. Baltimore/London: John Hopkins University Press
- Dahl, Robert. 1970. *Modern Political Analysis*. Second Edition. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall
- Dryzek, John S. & Leslie Templeman Holmes. 2002. *Post-Communist Democratization. Political Discourses Across Thirteen Countries*. Cambridge University Press
- Gerner, Kristian. 2003, *Tredje gången gillt? Östutvidningen som fredsprojekt* in "Valutaunionen, författningsfrågan och östutvidningen. Europaperspektiv 2003." ed Gustavsson S, L Oxelheim and N Wahl., Stockholm: Santérus.
- Grzymala-Busse, Anna M. 2002. *Redeeming the Communist Past. The Regeneration of Communist Parties in East Central Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Gustafsson, Thomas. 1997. *KUBA - Konflikt och salsa i Karibien*. Stockholm: Carlssons Bokförlag
- Gustafsson, Thomas. 2006. *KUBA*. Stockholm: Carlssons Bokförlag
- Hedin, Astrid. 2002. *The Politics of Social Networks*, Lund University Press
- Hellquist, Hanna. 2003. *Moral Capital and Strategic Dilemmas in Dissident Politics*. Research proposal to be presented at Haga slott, 22-23 September 2003
- Kotkin, Stephen. 2001. *Armageddon Averted*. New York: Oxford University Press
- Linz, Juan J. 2000. *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc.
- Linz, Juan J. & Alfred Stepan. 1996. *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press
- López, Juan J. 2002. *Democracy Delayed: The Case of Castro's Cuba*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press
- López, Juan J. 2004. *The 2003 Crackdown, George W. Bush and the Non-Transition in Cuba*. Problems of Post-Communism vol. 51, no. 4: 2004
- McFaul, Michael. 2002. *The Fourth Wave of Democracy AND Dictatorships – Non-Cooperative Transitions in the Post-Communist World*. World Politics 54, January 2002 p. 212-244
- Ramírez Cárdenas, Francisco. 2002. *Descarta Castro cambios políticos esperados por sus adversarios*. <http://www.cubanet.org/CNews/y02/dec02/2003.htm>

Sartori, Giovanni. 1976. *Parties and Party Systems*. New York: Cambridge University Press

Saxonberg, Steven. 2001. *The Fall. A comparative Study of the End of Communism in Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary and Poland*

Saxonberg, Steven & Mark R. Thompson. April 2002. *Opposition and Dissidence in Transitions and Non-Transitions from Communism – A Comparison of Eastern Europe to Asia and Cuba*

Suchlicki, Jaime. 1999. *Castro's Cuba: More Continuity than Change*. I: Studies in Comparative Development, winter 2000. New York: Americas Society

Teorell, Jan. 1998 *Demokrati eller fätalsvilde – Om beslutsfattande i partiorganisationer*. Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis

8.2 Interviews

The interviews lasted between one and three hours each.

Alfonso Valdés, Osvaldo	Ex leader of PLC	Sthlm, Swe	070318
Calvo Cárdenas, Leonardo	Board member of CSDC	Mar Azul, Cu.	060708
Castellanos Martí, Dimas	Board member of CSDC	Havana, Cuba	051217
Castillo, Siro del	Christian democratic exile Cuban (PDC)	Miami, US	061207
Celaya Gonzalez, Miriam	Member of CSDC	Havana, Cuba	060704
Cuesta Morúa, Manuel	Leader of CSDC	Havana, Cuba	060630
Delgado González, Julia Cecilia	Leader of PLC	Havana, Cuba	060629
Ehrenberg, Henrik	Leader of KIC, rep. of MCL in Sweden	Sthlm, Swe	070223
Fernandez, Lino	Representative of AP (and CSDC) abroad	Miami, US	061206
García, Armando F.	Webmaster and ex member of PSD	Miami, US	061204
Hernandez, Ernesto	Ex member of PSD	Miami, US	061206
- Hernandez was interviewed together with Toledo Hidalgo			
Hernandez, Julio	Representative of MCL abroad	Miami, US	061205
Martini Fonseca, Ernesto	Board member of MCL	Havana, Cuba	060703
- Martini Fonseca was interviewed together with Payá Sardiñas			
Miguel, Byron	Historian, Cuban political ex prisoner (AP)	Miami, US	061206
Payá Sardiñas, Oswaldo	Leader of MCL	Havana, Cuba	060703
Pompa Espinosa, Marisela	Ex board member of PSD	Miami, US	061206
Roca Antúnez, Vladimiro	Leader of PS	Havana, Cuba	051213
Rodriguez González, Ruben	Representative of PSD abroad	Miami, US	061205
Sánchez López, Fernando	Leader of PSD	Havana, Cuba	060701
Socorro, Arístides	Ex board member of PLC	Miami, US	061203
Toledo Hidalgo, Alexander	Ex board member of PSD	Miami, US	061206

The Cuban state security took me in for interrogation and at that time I took the opportunity to ask them questions about the opposition. Havana, Cuba 060707

8.3 Party documents

CSDC

Cuadernos del 2002 (Journal of 2002)

Estatutos (Statutes)

Seis pasos y seis pactos para una transición tranquila (Six steps and six pacts to reach a peaceful transition)

MCL

Statutes of MCL (Estatutos del Movimiento Cristiano Liberación)

Documento de Trabajo para el Programa de Transición (Working Document of the Transition Program)

Todos Cubanos (All Cubans)

PLC

Programa Político, Económico y Social (Political, Economic and Social Program)

Reglamento ético (Ethic Rules)

Código de ética (Ethic Code)

Lineamientos de Trabajo del Partido Liberal de Cuba (PLC) (Working Lines for PLC)

PSD

Programa del PSD (Program of PSD)

Reglamento orgánico del PSD (Organic Rules of PSD)

Reglamento Ético Funcional (Reglamento Fundacional PSD) (Functional Ethic Rules (Foundational Rules of PSD))

8.4 Other sources

Jennische, Erik. 2006. *A Short Manual for Working with Organizations in the Democracy Movement in Cuba, ver 3.0.* Can be obtained through erik@silk.se

Gainza Solenzal, Alexis	Representative of PLC in Sweden	E-mails	060310-070507
Gutierrez Aranda, Erik	Participant, CSDC 2003 national meeting	Telephone	070506
Hernandez, Sergio	Representative of PLC in Chicago	E-mails	061111-070510
Orrego Rodríguez, Mae Liz	Cuba coordinator at SILC	E-mail	070509
Sánchez López, Fernando	Leader of PSD	E-mail	070419

Coordinadora Socialdemócrata	http://www.cosodecu.org/ (visited 070504)
Corriente Socialista Democrática Cubana	http://www.corriente.org/ (visited 060315, site now closed)
CubaNet	http://www.cubanet.org/ (visited 070327)
CubaEncuentro	http://www.cubeencuentro.com/ (visited 070503)
European Parliament Socialist Group	http://www.socialistgroup.org/ (visited 060314)
Kristdemokratiskt internationellt center	http://www.kicsweden.org/ (visited 070402)
Movimiento Cristiano Liberación	http://www.mclpaya.org/ (visited 060315)
Nationalencyklopedin	http://www.ne.se (visited 060313)
Partido Solidaridad Democrática	http://www.ccsi.com/~ams/psd/psd.htm (visited 060403) and http://www.psd cubano.com/ (visited 070505) and http://www.psd cuba.org/ (visited 070505)
Partido Liberal de Cuba	http://www.liberalescubanos.org/ (visited 060315)
SIDA	http://www.sida.se/ > publikationer (visited 060312)

Appendix – Standard interview questions

Introduction questions

What is the Party to you?
How did you get into the Party?
When did the party start?
(How long have you been outside Cuba/in Miami?)
In what provinces do you have representation?
Are there more parties with the same ideology? What's the difference between them and your party?
Why did you join this party and not another one?

Ideology/concordance

What do you think of the embargo/how hospitals should be run/about what to do with the houses claimed by Cubans in Miami? (Etc.)
How do you do to attract new members?
What is it to you to be liberal/social democrat/Christian democrat?
Could you give me some concrete examples of what have been very discussed or problematic within your party?
What importance has it to agree to what the party says/the party program?
How would you describe the concordance of opinions in the party?
Do you think that the majority of the members know what your ideology stands for?

Internal democracy

How many members do you have?
How many percent of these are men/white?
What type of political documents or resolutions do you have? Which are the most fundamental?

How did you do the last time you renewed this document (walk me through it – step by step)
How many of the members have real influence over the political decisions within your party?
Who are the members of the board (/other decision makers)?
Is anyone of them/other members in prison?
When did you have your last elections of: Board and president?
Party program?
Can you tell me how you did then? Step by step.

Who has the external contacts? How was he/she chosen?
Who has responsibility of finances? What do other members know of this?
Who checks e-mails of the party? How does this person spread the information?

What relation do you have with other Cuban parties? (Questions on the parties they seem to know.)

Could you give me an example of when the president has taken a decision lately?
How does information on what happens reach the members? (Different example situations)
Is it possible with internal democracy in Cuban political parties these days?
How is the internal democracy within your party?
Describe what would happen if we have the scenario that there are free elections in Cuba and your party has won.

(Translated from Spanish)