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WHEN WILL THEY EVER LEARN? AN EXAMINATION OF FIDEL CASTRO AND KIM JONG-IL'S OPERATIONAL CODE BELIEFS

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RESUMEN

Después de la desaparición de la Unión Soviética sólo algunos estados comunistas permanecieron en el sistema internacional. Dos de ellos, Cuba y Corea del Norte continuaron en el *status quo* con pequeños cambios en su política exterior. Los investigadores dicen que las políticas exteriores cubana y norcoreana en el período de guerra fría no experimentaron ningún cambio importante porque los sistemas de creencias de líderes cubanos y norcoreanos básicamente no habían cambiado. Nuestro estudio analiza, una década después, si los líderes cubanos y norcoreanos han cambiado sus creencias en el campo de la conducta de la política exterior y, en ese caso, en qué dirección y a qué nivel. Concretamente, nos preguntamos si Fidel Castro ajustó sus creencias desde el período inmediatamente posterior al de la guerra fría y si las creencias de Kim Jong Il y sus gobernantes continúan o rompen con las creencias de su predecesor y padre Kim Il Sung. El estudio también investiga la hipótesis de la frustración-agresión valorando si las disposiciones agresivas de la política exterior se reflejan en los sistemas de creencias del liderazgo norcoreano y cubano.

ABSTRACT

After the demise of the Soviet Union only a handful of communist states remained in the international system. Two such states, Cuba and North Korea, continued on the status quo path with only minor changes in their foreign policy. Scholars have argued that Cuban and North Korean foreign policies in the immediate post-cold war period did not undergo any sizeable changes because the belief systems of Cuban and North Korean leaders did not undergo substantive change. Our study asks a decade later whether the Cuban and North Korean leaders have changed their beliefs in the domain of foreign policy behavior, and if so, in what direction and to what degree. Specifically, we ask whether Fidel Castro adjusted his beliefs since the time period immediately following the end of the cold war and whether the beliefs of Kim Jong Il and his surrounding ruling elite continue or break with the beliefs of his predecessor and father Kim Il Sung. The study also addresses the frustration-aggression hypothesis regarding aggressive foreign policy dispositions reflected in the belief systems of the North Korean and Cuban leadership.

Key words: Cuba, North Korea, belief systems, foreign policies, frustration-aggression hypothesis

Introduction

The end of the cold war stands out as the probably most significant event of the latter half of the 20th century. It brought with it the demise and transformation of the communist bloc led by the former Soviet Union. Reforms and reorientations in the realm of foreign policy that Mikhail Gorba-

chev initiated towards the latter half of the 1980s were welcomed not only by the people of the United States and its policy makers but by people around the world. Confrontational bloc politics came to an end.

As the international environment changes, so should the foreign policy behavior especially of small states such as Cuba and North Korea. This is what the most prominent theory within the realm of security studies, namely structural realism, would lead us to expect (Waltz, 1979; Keohane, 1986; Oye, 1986; Tetlock, 1991). Structural realism calls our attention to incentives in the international environment for particular types of policies. It is posited that "governments respond in a rational manner to the reward and punishment contingencies of the international environment" (Tetlock, 1991: 24). In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the configuration of the international environment, Cuba and North Korea's position within it, and the dyadic relationships between the Soviet Union vis-à-vis Cuba and North Korea changed profoundly. Henceforth continuity in foreign policy behavior equaled punishment in the form of economic sanctions and political isolation emanating from the international community.

Yet, Cuba and North Korea continued on the status quo path with rather minor changes in their foreign policies. In an earlier study we argued that significant changes in foreign policy were missing because of an absence of change at the individual level (Malici and Malici 2005; see also Centeno, 1997; Dominguez, 1993; Mesa-Lago, 1993a; Mazarr, 1991; Ho-yol, 1992; Moon-young, 1994; Ritter, 1994; Suchlicki, 2000; Youn, 1999). In opposition to structural approaches, we concluded that governments and their respective leaders do *not* necessarily respond in a rational manner to the reward and punishment contingencies of the international environment (Tetlock, 1991: 24). Instead, the mechanisms for continuity and changes are located in the belief systems of leaders. Cuban and North Korean foreign policy did not undergo any sizeable change because the belief systems of the Cuban and North Korean leadership did not undergo substantive change. In this study we revisit this conclusion more than a decade later and ask two research questions.

First, have the Cuban and North Korean leaders changed their beliefs in the domain of foreign policy behavior and if so, in what direction and to what degree? More specifically, we ask whether Fidel Castro has adjusted his beliefs since the time period immediately following the end of the cold war and whether the belief systems of Kim Jong Il and his surrounding ruling elite continue or break with the belief system of his predecessor and father Kim Il Sung.

Second, are aggressive foreign policy dispositions reflected in the belief systems of the Cuban and North Korean leadership? Scholars have argued that the Cuban and North Korean leadership increasingly perceive themselves denied of political self-determination (Centeno, 1997; Oh and Hassig, 2000). An actor's pessimism about the realization of his or her goals and the perception that the fate of these goals is in the hands of others are part of a general manifestation of frustration.

This analysis is consistent with the frustration-aggression hypothesis, first articulated in the field of social psychology in the 1930s, which claims that "the existence of frustration always leads to some form of aggression" (Dollard, 1939: 338). In 1941, Miller and his collaborators revisited this conclusion and conditioned its linearity, arguing that behaviors other than aggression are also possible (Miller, 1941). The danger of hostility is acute, however, if actors consider aggression as a means for compensating their frustrations.

Both questions raised here are of immediate policy relevance. As the cold war came to an end, scholars contemplated that we might soon miss it (Mearsheimer, 1990). The reason for such a counterintuitive feeling is simple: With the move from bipolarity to unipolarity, security threats no longer emanate from the rivalry of two superpowers but rather from the existence of rogue states such as Cuba and North Korea. Rogue states are said to be threats because they are driven by hostile intentions and are difficult to deter. Furthermore, rogue states are said (and in part known) to sponsor or practice international terrorism and to engage in the acquisition and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (Tanter, 1998).

In order to answer our research questions, we employ operational code analysis (George, 1969, 1979; Holsti, 1977; Walker, 1977, 1983, 1990). Operational code analysis allows us to determine Castro and Kim's philosophical beliefs about the nature of the political universe—whether it is cooperative or conflictual, the intensity of political conflict and their perceived control within this universe—as well as their instrumental beliefs about the most effective strategies for accomplishing their political goals. When applied over time, operational code analysis makes it possible to trace changes in the belief system of the leadership within a given country (Walker, Schafer, and Marfleet, 2001; Bennett, 1999; Malici, 2005).

Operational code analysis and belief change

The operational code construct is a complex set of elements defined initially by Leites (1951, 1953) as the conceptions of political strategy in Bolshevik ideology, which reflect motivated biases in Lenin's character

and Russian political culture. Alexander George (1969) suggested that a leader's "operational code" be conceptualized as a political *belief system* consisting of two central elements, philosophical beliefs and instrumental beliefs – philosophical beliefs guiding the diagnosis of the context for action and instrumental beliefs prescribing the most effective strategy and tactics for achieving political goals. Taken together, these beliefs act as guides for making political decisions. George formulated the ten questions below to discern these beliefs. When answered they "would capture a leader's 'fundamental orientation towards the problem of leadership and action'" (George, 1969: 200).

The Philosophical Beliefs in an Operational Code	
P-1.	What is the "essential" nature of political life? Is the political universe essentially one of harmony or conflict? What is the fundamental character of one's political opponents?
P-2.	What are the prospects for the eventual realization of one's fundamental values and aspirations? Can one be optimistic, or must one be pessimistic on this score; and in what respects the one and/or the other?
P-3.	Is the political future predictable? In what sense and to what extent?
P-4.	How much "control" or "mastery" can one have over historical development? What is one's role in "moving" and "shaping" history in the desired direction?
P-5.	What is the role of "chance" in human affairs and in historical development?

The Instrumental Beliefs in an Operational Code	
I-1.	What is the best approach for selecting goals or objectives for political action?
I-2.	How are the goals of action pursued most effectively?
I-3.	How are the risks of political action calculated, controlled, and accepted?
I-4.	What is the best "timing" of action to advance one's interests?
I-5.	What is the utility and role of different means for advancing one's interests?

Note. George's Ten Questions about Operational Code Beliefs

As time progresses a leader might give different answers to these questions as a result of *experiential learning*. Experiential learning is defined as "a change in beliefs (or degree of confidence in one's beliefs) or the development of new beliefs, skills, or procedures as a result of the observation and interpretation of experience" (Levy, 1994: 283). This leads to the question that applies to Fidel Castro: Do Fidel Castro's more recent beliefs differ from his beliefs in the period immediately following the cold war?

Obviously, a successor leadership may give different answers to George's questions as it learns by observing the experience of a predecessor. In this case, learning is not experiential, pertaining to the same leadership over time, but *vicarious* or *generational*, pertaining to successive leaderships (Bandura, 1977: 122; Stein, 1994: 162). This leads to the question that applies to Kim Jong Il and his surrounding ruling elite: Is there change or continuity between the beliefs of the recent North Korean ruling elite and Kim Il Sung's beliefs at the end of the cold war?[2]

Research design

In order to assess the belief systems of the Cuban and North Korean leadership, we employ the Verbs in Context System (VICS). As a method of content analysis, VICS draws inferences about a decision maker's operational code beliefs from public statements, such as speeches or interviews[3]. Each public statement denotes a *speech act*. The focus within each speech act is on transitive verbs because these are considered to be a speaker's linguistic representation of perceived power relationships. VICS provides values for six attributes for each recorded verb and its surrounding context: subject, verb category, domain of politics, tense of the verb, intended target, and context[4]. These categories become the basis for calculating the operational code indices in Table 1 (Walker, Schafer, Young, 2003).

The result of these procedures is a set of coded verb constructions manifested in the speaker's rhetoric that demonstrate beliefs about self and others in the political universe in terms of cooperative and conflictual attributions (Schafer 2000: 520). We also use an automated content analysis program called Profiler+. This software retrieves the verbs from each decision maker's public statements, codes them with the aid of an operational code dictionary, and then provides the data to index each element of the decision maker's operational code. The strategy for assessing our research questions is to compare and contrast the recent VICS scores of the Cuban and North Korean leadership (1995-present) to the VICS scores of this leadership from the period immediately following the end of the cold war (1991-1994)[5].

Table 1: Indices for Philosophical and Instrumental Beliefs*

PHILOSOPHICAL BELIEFS

Elements		*Index***	*Interpretation*
P-1.	NATURE OF THE POLITICAL UNIVERSE (Image of Others)	%Positive minus %Negative Transitive Other Attributions	+1.0 friendly to -1.0 hostile
P-2.	REALIZATION OF POLITICAL VALUES (Optimism/Pessimism)	Mean Intensity of Transitive Other Attributions divided by 3	+1.0 optimistic to –1.0 pessimistic
P-3	POLITICAL FUTURE (Predictability of Others Tactics)	1 minus Index of Qualitative Variation***for Other Attributions	1.0 predictable to 0.0 uncertain
P-4.	HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT (Locus of Control)	Self Attributions divided by [Self plus Other Attributions]	1.0 high to 0.0 low self control
P-5.	ROLE OF CHANCE (Absence of Control)	1 minus [Political Future x Historical Development Index]	1.0 high role to 0.0 low role

INSTRUMENTAL BELIEFS

Elements		*Index*	*Interpretation*
I-1.	APPROACH TO GOALS (Direction of Strategy)	%Positive minus %Negative Transitive Self Attributions	+1.0 high cooperation to –1.0 high conflict
I-2.	PURSUIT OF GOALS (Intensity of Tactics)	Mean Intensity of Transitive Self Attributions divided by 3	+1.0 high cooperation to –1.0 high conflict
I-3.	RISK ORIENTATION (Predictability of Tactics)	1 minus Index of Qualitative Variation for Self Attributions	1.0 risk acceptant to 0.0 risk-averse
I-4.	TIMING OF ACTION (Flexibility of Tactics) a. Coop v. Conf Tactics b. Word v. Deed Tactics	1 minus Absolute Value [%X minus %Y Self Attributions] Where X= Coop and Y= Conf Where X= Word and Y= Deed	1.0 high to 0.0 low shift propensity
I-5.	UTILITY OF MEANS (Exercise of Power) a. Reward b. Promise c. Appeal/Support d. Oppose/Resist e. Threaten f. Punish	Percentages for Exercise of Power Categories a through f a's frequency divided by total b's frequency divided by total c's frequency divided by total d's frequency divided by total e's frequency divided by total f's frequency divided by total	+1.0 very frequent to 0.0 infrequent

*adapted from Walker et al. 2003. **All indices vary between 0 and 1.0 except for P-1, P-2, I-1, and I-2, which vary between –1.0 and +1.0. P-2 and I-2 are divided by 3 to standardize the range (Walker, Schafer, and Young 1998).
*** "The Index of Qualitative Variation is a ratio of the number of different pairs of observations in a distribution to the maximum possible number of different pairs for a distribution with the same N [number of cases] and the same number of variable classifications" (Watson and McGaw, 1980: 88).

We also compare the operational codes of Fidel Castro and the North Korean ruling elite to scores of a collection of 164 speech acts given by thirty different and diverse world leaders—leaders of poor and rich states and weak and strong states. We refer to this collection as a norming group. Making this set of comparisons allows us to put the Cuban and North Korean leadership into a broader perspective, which is instructive because it permits us to develop a better sense of how the leaders examined here—leaders that are portrayed as "rogues"—compare to the "average leader."[6].

The operational codes of Fidel Castro and Kim Kong Il

Scholars have concluded that the end of the cold war had no substantial effect on the Cuban and North Korean leadership (Malici and Malici 2005; Centeno, 1997; Dominguez, 1993, 1997; Mesa-Lago, 1993a; Mazarr, 1991; Ho-yol, 1992; Moon-young, 1994; Pickel, 1998; Ritter, 1994; Suchlicki 2000; Youn, 1999). However, did the passing of time leave its marks? In order to evaluate whether or not Fidel Castro's beliefs have changed significantly in recent years, we conducted a one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) between Castro's post cold war and recent operational codes.

The results in Table 2 reveal experiential learning in the form of a number of important differences between Castro's belief system then and now. In recent years Castro believes that the political future is significantly more predictable (P-3), and that he has significantly less control over historical development (P-4). In terms of his instrumental beliefs Castro's strategic approach to goals and the intensity of his tactics are significantly more conflictual (I-1, I-2), he is significantly less likely to ascribe utility to *Appeal* and *Oppose* tactics (I-5c, I-5d) and significantly more likely to ascribe utility to *Threaten* and *Punish* tactics (I-5e, I-5f). In sum, Castro's beliefs about political goals and the best means to attain them are significantly more conflictual in the recent period than they were directly after the end of the cold war.

Next, we were interested to find out whether Kim Il Sung's belief system is significantly different from the belief system of the North Korean ruling elite headed by Kim Jong Il in recent years. We conducted a one-way ANOVA to compare Kim Il Sung's operational code to that of the recent ruling elite.

Table 2: Post Cold War (1991-1994) Operational Codes
Compared to Recent (1995-2003) Operational Codes

		Fidel Castro		North Korean	
Leaders					
Philosophical & Instrumental Beliefs		1991-94 (n = 11)	1995-2003 (n = 8)	1991-94 (n = 8)	1995-2003 (n = 14)
P-1.	Nature of Political Universe (Conflict/Cooperation)	0.183	0.075	.383	0.163
P-2.	Realization of Political Values (Pessimism/Optimism)	0.063	-0.056	0.259	0.079
P-3.	Political Future (Unpredictable/Predictable)	0.097	0.143**	0.147	0.133
P-4.	Historical Development (Low Control/High Control)	0.205	0.150*	0.196	0.148
P-5.	Role of Chance (Small Role/Large Role)	0.980	0.978	0.970	0.986**
I-1.	Strategic Approach to Goals (Conflict/Cooperation)	0.370	-0.084**	0.438	-0.006**
I-2.	Intensity of Tactics (Conflict/Cooperation)	0.182	-0.140**	0.249	-0.084**
I-3.	Risk Orientation (Averse/Acceptant)	0.167	0.295	0.203	0.224
I-4.	Timing of Action				
	a.Conflict/Cooperation	0.610	0.486	0.562	0.583
	b.Words/Deeds	0.632	0.558	0.762	0.647
I-5.	Utility of Means				
	a. Reward	0.213	0.134	0.271	0.146**
	b. Promise	0.054	0.096	0.065	0.052
	c. Appeal/Support	0.418	0.230**	0.384	0.297
	d. Oppose/Resist	0.133	0.056**	0.092	0.172
	e. Threaten	0.059	0.276*	0.079	0.078
	f. Punish	0.123	0.210	0.110	0.255

Significant difference between indices at the following levels: *p ≤ .10, **p ≤ .05 (two-tailed test).

The results in Table 2 indicate that compared to Kim Il Sung, the recent North Korean ruling elite believe that there is a significantly higher role of chance in international events (P-5). In terms of instrumental beliefs about the best means to attain political goals, the recent ruling elite has a significantly more conflictual strategic approach to goals (I-1) and intensity of tactics (I-2), and they are less likely to ascribe utility to *Reward* tactics (I-5a). These results indicate generational learning by the North Korean ruling elite. Their beliefs concerning the best tactics and strategies for accomplishing goals are significantly more conflictual than the former North Korean leader, Kim Il Sung.

How do the Cuban and North Korean leaders compare to the average world leader? In order to answer this question we conducted difference of means tests between Fidel Castro and the North Korean ruling elite's operational codes (1995-2003) compared to the norming group.

The results from these comparisons in Table 3 suggest that there is nothing average about these leaders. Indeed, the Cuban and North Korean leaders are far more conflictual than the norming group on a number of measures. As their philosophical beliefs indicate, both have a negative assessment of the international environment and their place within it. Their instrumental beliefs indicate conflictual dispositions towards other actors in this environment.

Finally, we were interested in finding out if there is evidence to show that one of these states—Cuba or North Korea—is more conflictual than the other. In order to ascertain if there were significant differences in the belief systems of the Cuban and North Korean leadership, we conducted another one-way ANOVA, this time between Castro's operational code and that of the North Korean ruling elite.

The results in Table 3 suggest that there are few statistically significant differences in the operational codes of these two states. In fact only two operational code indices showed significant differences, both of which were at the level of tactical beliefs. Compared to the North Korean ruling elite, Fidel Castro is significantly less likely to ascribe utility to *Oppose* tactics (I-5d), but significantly more likely to value *Threaten* tactics (I-5e) as a means of attaining political goals.

The results suggest that while the Cuban and North Korean leadership may differ somewhat in the preferences for tactics, overall, they are very similar to one another.

Table 3: Recent Operational Codes of Cuban and North Korean Leaders Compared to Norming Group

		Castro	*Norming Group*	*North Korean Elite*
Philosophical & Instrumental Beliefs		(n = 8)	(n = 164)	(n = 14)
P-1.	Nature of Political Universe (Conflict/Cooperation)	0.074**	0.301	0.163*
P-2.	Realization of Political Values (Pessimism/Optimism)	-0.057**	0.147	0.079
P-3.	Political Future (Unpredictable/Predictable)	0.142	0.134	0.133
P-4.	Historical Development (Low Control/High Control)	0.150*	0.224	0.148**
P-5.	Role of Chance (Small Role/Large Role)	0.978	0.968	0.986*
I-1.	Strategic Approach to Goals (Conflict/Cooperation)	-0.084**	0.401	-0.006**
I-2.	Intensity of Tactics (Conflict/Cooperation)	-0.140**	0.178	-0.084**
I-3.	Risk Orientation (Averse/Acceptant)	0.299	0.332	0.224
I-4.	Timing of Action			
	a.Conflict/Cooperation	0.486	0.503	0.583
	b.Words/Deeds	0.557	0.464	0.647**
I-5.	Utility of Means			
	a. Reward	0.133	0.157	0.146
	b. Promise	0.096	0.075	0.052
	c. Appeal/Support	0.229**	0.468	0.297**
	d. Oppose/Resist	0.056*(*)	0.154	0.172(*)
	e. Threaten	0.277**(*)	0.034	0.078**(*)
	f. Punish	0.210*	0.112	0.255**

Significant differences between leader and norming group indices at the following levels: *p ≤ .10, **p ≤ .05 (two-tailed test). The bracketed asterisk (*) indicates significant differences also between Castro and North Korea's ruling elite for I-5d (Oppose/Resist) and I-5e (Threaten) at the p ≤ .05 (two-tailed) and p ≤ .10 (two-tailed) levels of significance, respectively.

Discussion and conclusion

In deciding on foreign policy and security strategies, American decision makers as well as the American public tend to personalize conflicts be-

tween the United Sates and its security contenders. This appears to be an appropriate tendency, particularly in cases in which the leader or small ruling elite in the target country is not constrained by systems of checks and balances or veto points (Tsebelis, 2002). Paraphrasing the French King Louis XIV, we can say such leaders "are the state" and that, therefore, their beliefs play a crucial role in the foreign policy behavior of the states that they rule.

Both Fidel Castro and the North Korean leadership have different beliefs now than just after the end of the cold war. They have adjusted their philosophical beliefs about the nature of the political universe *and* their instrumental beliefs about the best means to achieve their political goals in this universe. Yet the direction of change runs counter to the hopes and expectations of political observers. While they would expect these leaders to develop more cooperative attitudes in light of continuing sanctions, they in fact became more conflictual. This may perhaps be a reciprocal reaction to recent U.S. policy towards these countries. Very few policy-makers and security analysts ever make an effort to imagine how threats are perceived from the Cuban and North Korean perspective, or consider how these perceptions are part of a security dilemma in which the West and U.S foreign policy may be implicated as deeply as the regimes in Havana and Pyongyang. Examples of such threats are President Bush's inclusion of these regimes in the "axis of evil" in early 2002, or the new U.S. National Security Strategy released in September 2002, which outlined in detail the legitimacy of pre-emptive strikes (Bleiker, 2003: 721).

What future policy prescriptions might the foregoing analysis of Cuban and North Korean beliefs suggest? Our answer is engagement. This strategy runs counter to the initial foreign policy conduct of the Bush administration towards both Cuba and North Korea. High-level officials in the administration, such as Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, repeatedly articulated the apparent failure of engagement and the promise of a strategy of isolation. Scholars are divided in advocating more conciliatory strategies (Cha 2002). These judgments are often derived on the basis of interpretative narratives, which are somewhat subjective in nature (Cha, 1999)[7]. Our analysis is different in that it applies a systematic and replicable method to discern the beliefs and intentions of the North Korean and Cuban leadership.

On the basis of our analysis, we infer that both the Cuban and North Korean leadership in recent times are even more pessimistic about their realization of political goals (P-2), not only when compared to themselves just after the end of the cold war, but also when compared to the norming

group. Also, both Fidel Castro and the North Korean decision-making elite perceive themselves as having very little control in the political universe (P-4) when compared to the norming group. Both the North Korean and the Cuban leadership, in other words, express signs of frustration. At the same time they seem to value conflictual tactics (I-1) to a higher degree than they once did. If the prescriptive instrumental beliefs within the operational code construct are indeed related to behavior, as many (including ourselves) would argue, then we may be faced with hostility not only in words but also in deeds in the not too distant future (George, 1979; Walker, 1977; Schafer and Aldrich 2003).

The prediction of increased conflict behavior by the frustration-aggression hypothesis is similar to the "desperation thesis" discussed by Kang (2003: 313) in the context of North Korean politics. He discards the thesis because it is "merely asserted, without evidence that explains the psychological or perceptual base of the North Korean leadership." He argues further that "[s]erious study must … be focused on what available evidence there is regarding the mindset of the North Korean leadership." Our study does indeed examine systematically the mindsets of both the North Korean and Cuban leadership, and therefore, we argue for the applicability of the frustration-aggression hypothesis to the present cases.

In the absence of engagement, the preference for these more extreme tactics may be the only way for these leaders to gain the world's attention – especially when their signals are discarded as mere bluffs in order to attain valued resources. Perhaps a policy of isolation on the part of the world's superpower is not the best method of accomplishing more peaceful relations with North Korea and Cuba. The implications of the frustration-aggression hypothesis suggest that a strategy of direct and immediate engagement with Cuba and North Korea may increase their perceived role in world politics, decrease their sense of frustration, and dampen their inclination towards hostile behaviors. Given the current nuclear crisis on the Korean peninsula this is more important than ever.

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[1] We would like to thank Stephen Walker and Mark Schafer for helpful suggestions and comments. We alone remain responsible for the ideas and perspectives presented in this study.

[2] This question also reflects a continuing debate among experts on North Korea. See for example Kim, 1994; Oh and Hassig, 2000; Suh, 1993, 2001. Operational code analysis allows us to distinguish among three levels of learning: beliefs can change at simple, diagnostic, and complex levels (Deutsch, 1963; Nye,1989; Tetlock, 1991; Levy 1994; Leng 2000; Walker, Schafer, and Marfleet, 2001). S*imple* changes are defined as changes in instrumental beliefs about the best means to achieve goals, and *diagnostic* changes are defined as changes in philosophical beliefs about the

political universe. *Complex* changes occur when both philosophical beliefs about political goals and instrumental beliefs about the most effective means to achieve them are modified.

[3] As far as possible we followed Walker, Schafer, and Young (1998: 182) who set the following criteria for foreign policy speeches: "(1) the subject and object are international in scope; (2) the focus of interaction is a political issue; (3) the words and deeds are cooperative or conflictual." The sample of speeches for Fidel Castro was randomly drawn from the *Lexis Nexis Academic Universe* databank and the University of Texas' *Latin American Network Information Center (LANIC) Castro Speech Database*. Our final sample included eleven foreign policy speeches for the post cold war period (1991-1994) and eight speeches for the recent period (1995-2003). Our samples for the North Korean leadership includes eight of Kim Il Sung's speeches given between 1991-1994 and fourteen speeches of Kim Jong Il and as his ruling elite that were given in recent years (1995-2003). Databases, such as *Lexis Nexis*, and the *Foreign Broadcast Information Service* (FBIS) served as our main sources for the North Korean sample. The rationale for these periods is that Kim Il Sung died in 1994. Because of this, we synchronized the time periods for both cases under investigation.

[4] For a further elaboration of the VICS procedures see Walker, Schafer, and Young (1998) and Malici and Malici (2005).

[5] Unlike his father, Kim Jong Il tends to avoid public appearances, making an at-a-distance analysis of his belief system difficult (Oh and Hassig, 2000: 87, 93). We therefore include an analysis of the beliefs of his surrounding ruling elite. This aggregation, which may be called "a state's operational code" or "cognitions of the state," however, does not interfere with the VICS method. No significant variation on the unit of analysis, the utterance, is to be expected, since the object of analysis remains official statements of the ruling elite. These statements are presumably articulated either after the leader and advisors have assessed the situation and proceeded to take action, or are collectively agreed upon within the administration. It is then not only to the extent that a particular leader is in control of the state's behavior, but also to the extent that a leader's beliefs are shared by those individuals with the power to act on behalf of the state, that inferences become indicators about a state's behavior (Barnet, 1972; Bobrow, Chan, and Kringen, 1979; Herrmann,1985; Schafer, 2000).

[6] The data for the norming group was obtained from Professor Mark Schafer, Department of Political Science, 240 Stubbs Hall, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 70803-5433.

[7] Within these narratives one can find examples of scholars who argue that the intentions of the Cuban and North Korean leadership remain constant (on Castro see Domínguez, 1997; Mesa-Lago, 1993a, 1993b; Ritter, 1994; Centeno, 1997; Pickel, 1998; Suchlicki, 2000; on Castro and Kim see Mazarr 1991; on Kim see Ho-yol, 1992; Moon-young, 1994; Youn, 1999). One can, however, also find examples of scholars who argue that their intentions have changed (on Castro see Smith, 1992; Rich-Kaplowitz, 1993; Fernández, 1994; Erisman, 2000; on Kim see Oh 1990; Sang-Woo, 1991, 1992; Kim, 1994).

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