

When the Subaltern Speaks:

Challenging Normative IR Discourse Through a Study of Cuba's International Relations

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ABSTRACT

International Relations continues to be a predominantly Eurocentric field of study. The dogmatic theories such as Realism and Neorealism are still built through perspectives of the West. Through an interpretive analysis of the October Crisis of 1962 and a postcolonial critique of Cuba's post-1898 politics, by using speeches, articles, interviews and letters of Fidel Castro and Che Guevara normative treatise of security studies is critiqued. Any postcolonial approach must be considered through four key factors: the representation of power, the applicability of agency, self-determination, and forms of knowledge production. This analysis introduces a new perspective of Subaltern realism as a postcolonial critique of realism and as an approach for production of IR discourse.

KEYWORDS: *Subaltern realism, Realism, Eurocentric, Discourse analysis, perspective, postcolonial critique*

List of Abbreviations:

CIA: Central Intelligence Agency

IR: International Relations

IRT: International Relations Theory

JFK: John F. Kennedy

NAM: Non-Aligned Movement

NGO: Non-Governmental Organisation

OAS: Organisation of American States

U.S: United States of America

USSR: The Soviet Union

WWII: World War II

WHO: World Health Organisation

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1. Introduction

In 1988, Gayatri Spivak challenged academia on the invisibility of the subaltern's voice with her question, *Can the Subaltern Speak?*¹ In the years since, although IR scholarship *has* developed more introspective and intersectional lenses of enquiry, much of it often remains unheard and overlooked. Even today, when the world is confronted by issues of a global scale, such as the COVID-19 pandemic or climate change, the modes of inquiry to understand a truly global crisis have been largely Eurocentric.² The subaltern, or the non-Western, still sees little agency within the dogmatic structures of IR, oft left to the peripheries of critical discourse. This, however, does not mean the subaltern does not speak. The fallacy within IR scholarship—as will be argued through this thesis—lies in the disengagement between the Western and the non-Western on matters of shared histories and collective solutions for contemporary conflicts in the world. Thus, what is offered through the analysis herein is a subaltern perspective that demands from IR discourse, the inclusion of voices from peripheries. The research aim, therefore, is to challenge the neorealist dogmas of world-politics using a postcolonial critique of post-1898 independent Cuba and an interpretive discourse analysis of the October Crisis of 1962 through a subaltern perspective. The perspective here, does not claim to be a repository of ‘truth’; it does, however, offer an alternative to the way in which the study of IR is produced, in the undercurrents of which lies the purpose of this thesis: to rewrite world politics from a non-Western perspective.³

Although, the focus of this thesis is on the history of Cuba, the non-Western perspective offered here does not concern itself with a revisionist agenda. On the contrary, the perspective here reestablishes Cuba’s voice within its own history. In such efforts, the historical analysis is not approached to understand “what actually happened,” rather, it is undertaken to explicate on how IR scholarship is produced on histories of subalterns such as Cuba. The asymmetric overlook of Cuba, this author argues, is not unique; it is, in fact, the norm within the study of

¹ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, “‘Can the Subaltern Speak?’”: Revised Edition, from the ‘History’ Chapter of *Critique of Postcolonial Reason*,” In *Can the Subaltern Speak? Reflections on the History of an Idea*, edited by Rosalind C. Morris, 21–78. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010.) https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-19059-1_20

² Chole Patterson, “Context Matters: Science, Policy and the Lingering Effects of Colonialism,” *AQ: Australian Quarterly* 93, no. 2 (2022): 31–39, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27113174>.

³ Mohammed Ayoob, “Inequality and Theorizing in International Relations: The Case for Subaltern Realism,” *International Studies Review* 4, no. 3 (January 2002): 27–48, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1521-9488.00263>, 28.

IR.⁴ To that end, to explicate how an unequal production of IR has systematically shaped the overarching character of international community, this author finds it pertinent to discuss colonial legacies and imperial endeavours that have shaped the fabric of contemporary world order today. The implications of the Eurocentric study of IR—discussed in the Theoretical Frameworks—and its epistemological foundations are critically analysed, through a postcolonial critique that is instrumental in highlighting how colonialism is a continuing phenomenon that goes beyond any periodisation of a colonial ‘past.’ Consequently, the postcolonial approach here is considered through four key factors: the representation of power, the applicability of agency, self-determination, and forms of knowledge production. Furthermore, critique of normative theories such as realism (or other IR dogmas) is derived through an inspection into the dichotomy of both how IR is *produced* and how international systems are *ordered*.

The problem within IR—is analysed in this thesis through decolonising “watershed” moments such as the October crisis of 1962—is that the system of international order is entrenched in the colonial ideas of hierarchy and power. In other words, while a military history of the British can be written without mentioning the Indian subcontinent, to write a history of the Indian military one cannot overlook the British because their involvement in the subcontinent lies at the foundation of a modern-day India and is intrinsic to its historical narrative. Thus, in the case of Cuba, while other hegemonic powers may be able to write out the colonisation of Cuba from their histories, Cuba cannot. Moreover, the transition from a colony to a self-determined country with its own political, social, and economic agendas, in Cuba, was challenged by neo-colonial attacks from hegemonic powers such as the U.S. And has shaped the way the world perceives Cuba and extends to the way in which Cuba continues to be depicted at the world stage. As a smaller yet equal and able country within and beyond Latin America, Cuba has pushed for alternative international order that goes beyond the confines of hegemonic powers.⁵ Through their own principles and agendas, Cuba has been a contributing member of the world. Yet, Cuba’s international relations is alienated within the world order. Alienating the subaltern or that which is different or unexplainable within our study of how the world works highlights the lack of stability and the limits of IR and IRT.

⁴ Mark Laffey and Jutta Weldes, “Decolonizing the Cuban Missile Crisis,” *International Studies Quarterly* 52, no. 3 (September 2008): 555–77, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2478.2008.00515.x>, 555.

⁵ Fidel Castro, “Speech Delivered by Commander-In-Chief Fidel Castro Ruz, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, President of The Non-Aligned Movement, before the 34th Session of The General Assembly of The United Nations on October 12, 1979,” transcript at LANIC- *Latin American Network Information Centre*.n.d., <http://www.cuba.cu/gobierno/discursos/1979/esp/f121079e.html>.

Lastly, the colonies have throughout history, sustained and created the world that exists today. The continued disengagement, therefore, with politics that emerges from the non-Western or former colonies only undermines the structures of the current international system. As Castro once said, 'the colonies do not speak, the colonies are not known in the world until they express themselves. That's why our colony [is] not known by the world,' thus through a postcolonial critique of IR dogmas, the subaltern speaking here is Cuba.⁶ In the subsequent sections of this introduction, the key theoretical frameworks, historiography, methodology and sources outlined build a postcolonial critique of IR.

1. Theoretical Frameworks

1.1. Postcolonialism

Postcolonialism is a critical theory which foregrounds colonial and imperial legacies within the creation of the modern world.⁷ Therefore, the 'post' in postcolonialism is not so much a study of a period 'after colonisation', in so much as it is a study of its consequences and impact(s), the analytical framework of which is critical of the intersection between knowledge and power, specifically within the paradigm of a coloniser and a colony.⁸ Given that 'knowledge production is never neutral [and] rather, it reinforces the power relation from which it emerges,' postcolonial theory herein, challenges conventional security studies to 'rethink [their] epistemological and ontological frameworks.'⁹ Furthermore, in analysing the epistemological framework of the inherently Eurocentric foundations of IR, postcolonialism works to critique the dogmatic theories of realism and neorealism that are built and codified through largely Western perspectives.

The argument of postcolonial critique and its usage here is built on the work of Sanjay Seth who gives a three-pronged critique, first on the 'centrality accorded to Europe as the historical

⁶ Fidel Castro, "Speech Delivered by Commander Fidel Castro Ruz, Prime Minister of the Revolutionary Government, at the Headquarters of the United Nations, United States, on September 26, 1960," transcript, www.cuba.cu, accessed December 26, 2021, <http://www.cuba.cu/gobierno/discursos/1959/esp/f030259e.html>.

⁷ Shampa Biswas, "Postcolonialism," In *International Relations Theories, Discipline and Diversity*, ed. Tim Dunne, Milja Kurki & Steve Smith, (United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2021), 220-233, p. 220.

⁸ Biswas, "Postcolonialism," p. 8.

Sanjay Seth, "Postcolonial Theory and Critique of International Relations," in *Postcolonial Theory and International Relations: A Critical Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2013), 15–31, p. 1.

⁹ Laffey and Weldes, "Decolonizing the Cuban Missile Crisis," p. 558.

source and origin of the international order', than on the 'universality accorded to moral and legal perspectives (of Europe) which reflect and reproduce the power relations characteristic of the colonial encounter', and finally, on the 'epistemological privilege accorded to (the Western-centric) understanding of knowledge'.¹⁰ The unchanged nature of Europe's centrality within the production and application of knowledge is not limited to the way in which IR discipline has evolved, but also extends itself towards the reality of the international system. Thus, by critiquing the nature of IR discourse, this thesis also critiques the contemporary state of the international system.

To further elucidate how the structural apparatus of IR and international politics at large are shaped by the continuum of colonial legacy, postcolonial critique is furthermore applied to the critical concepts outlined in the next section.

1.2. Postcolonial critique and the conceptions of decolonisation

Keally McBride and Margaret Kohn argue in their postcolonial critique of decolonisation that for many 'post-colonial' states, the decolonisation moment has not yet been realised, specifically because of the continuation of the colonial apparatus.¹¹ More specifically, they argue that since the colonial state was structured to compel subordination, the post-colonial state is also 'structured by colonial ideas and institutions that [are] designed to enforce subordination and exploitation.'¹² Thus, insofar as agency and self-determination are formative in creating the modern statehood (and are central principles of a decolonised state), the Western centric nature of their conception continues to prove itself as a problematic foundation.¹³ Taken within the postcolonial framework, the process of decolonisation in the subsequent chapters, therefore, is both a medium of analysis and a mode of enquiry on 'issues of power, domination and... self-determination in relation to hegemonic powers.'¹⁴ As Tarak Barkawi argues, the decolonising process will entail 'critiquing the ways in which Eurocentric ideas and historiography have informed the basic categories of social and political thought.'¹⁵

¹⁰ Seth, "Postcolonial Theory and Critique of International Relations," p. 17.

¹¹ Margaret Kohn and Keally McBride, "Introduction: Political Theory and Decolonisation," In *Political Theories of Decolonization: Postcolonialism and the Problem of Foundations* (New York: Oxford University Press, Cop, 2011), p. 3.

¹² Kohn and McBride, "Introduction: Political Theory and Decolonisation," p. 5.

¹³ Kohn and McBride, p. 9.

¹⁴ Kohn and McBride, p. 6.

¹⁵ Tarak Barkawi, "Decolonising War," *European Journal of International Security* 1, no. 02 (May 6, 2016): 199–214, <https://doi.org/10.1017/eis.2016.7>, p.199.

Within the paradigm of the empire-to-nation narrative often espoused by Eurocentric doctrines to periodise colonialism in a 'before' and 'after' perception, 'twentieth-century decolonisation... [is seen] as a culmination of a long history in which a nation-state is progressively globalised and becomes the counter to empire,' gravely underrepresents the reality of what 'decolonisation' really entailed.¹⁶ To understand the implicit imperialism within the nation-state, Adom Getachew argues that much of the state-making of post-colonial state coincided with the 'civilising mission' that many Western powers conducted in the early 20th century.¹⁷ This mission, Getachew and Barkawi argue, was an "internationally" (in the early 20th century, the "international" only consisted of Western Empires or newly constitutionalised Western states) sanctioned imperial mission that aimed to colonise much of Africa under the pretext of 'civilising' them.¹⁸ The combination of both, the creation of an international order as well as the continuation of imperialism within the so-called 'empire-to-nation' era codifies the foundation of Western and non-Western hierarchy in the making of the international order. Since the conceptions of self-determination and agency within this context of 'decolonisation' were granted at the behest of the West, the appropriation of Westernised language of sovereignty was inadequate to truly represent the 'post-colonial' reality within the empire to nation era.¹⁹ As Getachew argues, for the subaltern to truly decolonise, it required, 'a radical rupture—one that required a wholesale transformation of the colonised and a reconstitution of the international order.'²⁰ To that end, Getachew's conception of a 'rupture' is employed to challenge neorealist and realist theories of IR, in this thesis by using the perspectives of the subaltern and subaltern's representation of what agency entails.

The next section outlines how Eurocentrism, and to that extent the dogmatic theories of IR, are critiqued through a postcolonial framework.

¹⁶ Adom Getachew, "A Political Theory of Decolonization," In *Worldmaking after Empire: The Rise and Fall of Self-Determination* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2019), 14—36, p. 16.

¹⁷ Getachew, "A Political Theory of Decolonization," p. 18.

¹⁸ Getachew, p. 18.

Tarak Barkawi and Mark Laffey, "The Postcolonial Moment in Security Studies," *Review of International Studies* 32, no. 02 (April 2006): 329–52, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0260210506007054>, p. 351.

¹⁹ Getachew, "The Fall of Self-Determination," p. 181,

Barkawi, "Decolonising War," p. 200.

²⁰ Getachew, "A Political Theory of Decolonization," p. 17.

1.3. Postcolonial critique of Eurocentrism, Realist and Neorealist theories of IR

While the complex idea of Eurocentrism, at its core, is the 'assumption of European centrality in the human past and present', the engagement with Eurocentrism for the analysis herein is not so much concerned with the geographical centrality of Europe, but on the contrary, as Barkawi argues, 'the location of Europe shifts, expands and contracts, eventually crossing the Atlantic and the Pacific and becoming synonymous with the 'West.'²¹ Therefore, much of the critique applied is to challenge the centrality of perspectives that emerge from this aforementioned 'West', 'Western' or 'Eurocentric' perspective. Furthermore, one of the foremost makings of the 'Western' perspective is the theoretical treatise of realism and neorealism, which the research argues as being 'dogmatic' or 'normative'. These dogmas of IR are both primarily concerned with the concepts of war and peace within the international system. For them, the underlying nature of the international system is anarchic and thus 'great powers' or 'hegemonic powers' are central to the ordering or stabilising the international system under that anarchy.²² Within the realism resides the most foundational concept, 'the security dilemma'; this dilemma, they argue, is applied when proximate groups of people suddenly find themselves newly responsible for their own security.²³ In Chapter three, which analyses the October Crisis within the Cold War, 'normative or dogmatic' would essentially be adopted to mean the realist norms of security dilemma, within which emerges the key identifier of the Cold War era, the theory of 'offence-defence' balance. As argued by Barry Posen it states that, 'when offensive and defensive military forces are identical, states cannot signal their defensive intent - that is, their limited objectives - by the kinds of military forces they choose to deploy.'²⁴

The postcolonial approach here does not claim to negate these normative theories itself; it rather aims to highlight its limitations and, as Barkawi argues, mainstream IR has only paid attention to the so-called Third World 'when they threaten 'systematic stability'...[which] for realists means 'great power' interests.' The exclusion of the non-Western in the production of dogmatic theories or the 'Eurocentric account of great power competition (or politics) [which] tends to take the weak—the 'natives', the colonies, the periphery, the Third World, the global

²¹ Barkawi and Laffey, "The Postcolonial Moment in Security Studies," p. 331.

²² John J. Mearsheimer, "Structural Realism," In *International Relations Theories, Discipline and Diversity*, ed. Tim Dunne, Milja Kurki & Steve Smith, (United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2021), 51-67, p. 62.

²³ Barry R. Posen, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict," *Survival* 35, no. 1 (March 1993): 27-47, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00396339308442672>, p. 28.

²⁴ Posen, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict," p. 28.

South—for granted' and has had a continuous destabilising effect on the world at large.²⁵ In most cases, as Mohammed Ayoob argues, realist theories ignore that 'the stability in Europe was achieved at the expense of the stability and order in much of the world,' and that colonialism has left behind an economic dependency in postcolonial states that cannot be overcome through theories of 'absolute gains.'²⁶ To that end, this thesis argues that for the non-Western, colonialism and by extension its Neo-colonial vestiges are a force of an instability, 'identical to war,' that will continue to create strife and conflict unless it is reckoned with. In extension, the subordination of the so-called 'weak', as Barkawi argues, is what creates the subaltern and thus by 'denying (the subaltern's) own history, [Eurocentrism also denies] their difference.'²⁷

The effects of subalternation as well as its implications within the postcolonial framework of the subsequent analysis is outlined in the next section.

1.4. Postcolonial critique & Subaltern Realism

'Although the term 'subaltern' conventionally denotes an inferior military rank, it is more generally used as a 'name for the general attribute of subordination'²⁸. Therefore, the Subaltern here is emblematic of the hierarchical nature of IR within which agents or actors outside the great power dynamics often hold a subordinate position. The introduction of the subaltern discourse began with Spivak's seminal work into questioning the intersectionality—or lack thereof— within larger academic discourses that were speaking to colonial identities or their representations, specifically in her case South Asian women. The application of the subaltern in the analysis of this thesis, therefore, borrows the framework of representation as a mode of analysis from Spivak. Specifically, since her core argument focuses on the dichotomy of representing the subaltern in contrast to how the subaltern represents itself—which is an intersectional dilemma of itself.²⁹

To that end, to introduce the subaltern voice within the context of IR security studies, herein applies Ayoob's perspective of Subaltern realism, which argues for a greater integration of subaltern voices within theoretical treatise.³⁰ Furthermore, he argues that, as it stands now,

²⁵ Barkawi and Laffey, "The Postcolonial Moment in Security Studies," p. 346.

²⁶ Ayoob, "Inequality and Theorizing in International Relations," pp. 35- 37.

²⁷ Barkawi, "Decolonising War," pp. 205-206.

Barkawi and Laffey, "The Postcolonial Moment in Security Studies," p. 246.

²⁸ Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" p. 287.

²⁹ Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" pp. 287-289.

³⁰ Ayoob, "Inequality and Theorizing in International Relations," p. 48.

realism and to that extent, neorealist theories are inapplicable to the non-Western as they are built on a polarising historiography that is Western-centric and Western-led.³¹ However, at the same time Ayoob argues that realism, as a theoretical framework, has far more applicability, as it can theorise on both domestic and international order issues. As a result, when it comes to the ability to understand the current 'dilemma facing the Third World countries, namely violence [that] inevitably accompanies the process of state formation and consolidation,' realists are unable to situate colonial structures that constructed the very edifice of governance in non-Western states.³² Thus, rendering any applicable solution to conflicts arising from this area as incomplete and to that extent, 'radical' ³³.

The application of Subaltern realism within the subsequent chapters is not to retrace or rewrite any analysis of events; it is instead applied to effectively argue that involving the subaltern within the paradigms of interaction between the Western and the non-Western helps to explicate a more realistic approach to IR, turning it into a truly global IR. The next section outlines the interplay of Global IR and Subaltern realism.

1.5. Subaltern Realism & Global-IR

Thus far, the postcolonial critique has argued that Eurocentric approaches to represent colonial encounters or lack thereof are one of the key issues within the frameworks of IR. To circumvent this issue, Ayoob argues that Subaltern realism is an alternative that could help convert IR from Eurocentric to truly global.³⁴ Global IR, therefore, is an alternative IR framework that posits removing 'simplistic structural assumptions' by having a better understanding of the Global system and its actors and most importantly, by subsuming within normative discourse, what is referred to as critical theories. Barry Buzan and Amitav Acharya argue, as does this author, that challenging Western scholarship is, 'out of antagonism for the West, or contempt for the IRT that has been developed there, but because we think Western IRT is both too narrow in its sources and too dominant in its influence to be good for the health of the wider project to understand the social world in which we live.'³⁵ Buzan and Acharya argue that the urgency to develop a more pluralistic and multifaceted approach to the production of IR is because many Eurocentric doctrines, such as the Westphalian (that centres

³¹ Ayoob, p. 40.

³² Ayoob, p. 43.

³³ Ayoob, p. 43.

³⁴ Ayoob, p. 48.

³⁵ Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan, "Why is there no non-western international relations theory? An Introduction" in *Non-Western International Relations Theory: Perspectives on and beyond Asia* (London; New York: Routledge, 2010), p. 2.

anarchy within international order as do realists) model are inherently too far apart—in empirical sense that its application is inherently flawed ‘in relation to Asia, elements of this are visible in the idea that East Asia may be dressed up in Westphalian costume, but is not performing a Westphalian play. Because of its Confucian culture, East Asian states are more likely to bandwagon with power rather than balance against it.’³⁶ Thus, the Global IR framework employed herein argues for a pluralistic structure of IR in both power and knowledge production, which helps to challenge the hegemony of the West.

2. Historiography

The field of study on Cuba's international relations has grown significantly in the recent years, yet mostly through a Eurocentric perspective.³⁷ Thus, to go beyond traditional scholarship of IR on Cuba which entails primarily an American perspective in contrast to a Cuban one, much of the historiography is tightly linked to the theoretical frameworks outlined in the section above. At the same time, to contextualise Cuba within larger folds of scholarship of security studies within IR, instrumental in the critique of Eurocentrism, the historiography is predominantly made up of authors who critique or engage with neorealist and realist scholarship. This historiography therefore adopts a thematic division, in which the first section focuses on imperialism and colonisation within Cuba, the second focuses on the missile crisis within the Cold War security studies discourse, and the final section focuses on Cuba's internationalism.

The colonial epoch of Cuba, which began in the early fifteenth century, has been written about extensively by the English historian Hugo Thomas. His handbook on Cuban history is focused on the nature of economic order under the Spanish empire that is centered around the production and cultivation of sugarcane.³⁸ By the early eighteenth century, Cuban economy he writes, was directly dependent on the import of industrial weapons to harvest sugarcane into refined sugar and on the export of more than half of their production to the North American states.³⁹ Thus, by the 1800s, Cuba was entirely limited in its trade network and heavily dependent on the consumption of sugar by Spanish, French or English metropolises.⁴⁰

³⁶ Acharya and Buzan, “Why is there no non-western international relations theory?” p. 5.

³⁷ Laffey and Weldes, “Decolonizing the Cuban Missile Crisis,” p. 556.

³⁸ Hugh Thomas, *Cuba: A History* (London; New York: Penguin Books, 2010).

³⁹ Thomas, “Enter North America,” p. 70.

⁴⁰ Thomas, “Sugar and Society,” p. 42.

The socio-political foundations, on the other hand, were made up of transnational slave trade.⁴¹ A continuation of the influx of slaves even after the Haitian Revolution of 1791-1804 made Cuba, argued Thomas, only strengthen the American interest in the islands.⁴² The economic policies and agrarian based social fabric of Cuba under the Spanish inquisition according to Thomas was replicated when the Americans involved themselves directly on the islands after the islands were granted a pseudo-independence in 1898: 'the US took over the old Spanish administration root and branch.'⁴³ To that end, Thomas, in line with the English school of Whig historiography (which postulates a progressive narrative of history), constructs the colonial history in Cuba through a lens of "progressive" development, by employing language, such as 'if it was not for the American involvement,' representing Cuban independence through the narrative of the elite.⁴⁴ Furthermore, in his employment of a progress narrative to discuss socio-political ordering methods, his assessment produce a narrative of industrialisation and development through lens of "positive" vestiges of colonialism.

On the contrary, Louis A. Pérez Jr. states that the America's involvement in the war of 1898 turned a 'a Cuban war of liberation...into a North American war of conquest.'⁴⁵ For Pérez Jr., the accelerated purchase of North American colonies for the unification under one Union made the now-US interest in Cuba heighten, specifically because the well-established networks of slaves and trade.⁴⁶ Thus, according to Pérez Jr., when Americans formally involved themselves on the islands, they used old colonial system through a new imperial design.⁴⁷ To that end, he argues that even if American involvement is seen as a vehicle for Cuba's independence it was indeed a modern brand of imperialism that was evoked under the pretext of 'right to intervene'.⁴⁸ Subsequently, when the Americans signed the Treaty of Paris, as a way of granting Cuba independence from Spain, they established the Cuban islands as American protectorate for another three-four years. Pérez Jr. states that Cuba became an American colony.⁴⁹ Subsequently, he observes that the imposition of the Platt Amendment

⁴¹ Thomas, "Sugar and Society," p. 42.

⁴² Thomas, "The World of Sugar," p. 119.

⁴³ Thomas, "Cuba Prostrate," pp. 334, 355.

⁴⁴ Adrian Wilson and T. G. Ashplant, "Whig History and Present-Centred History," *The Historical Journal* 31, no. 1 (1988): 1–16, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2639234>, p. 3.

⁴⁵ Louis A Pérez, *Cuba under the Platt Amendment, 1902-1934* (Editorial: Pittsburg, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1986), p. 30.

⁴⁶ Louis A Pérez and Inc Ebrary, *Cuba and the United States: Ties of Singular Intimacy* (Athens Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 2003), p. 4.

⁴⁷ Pérez and Ebrary, "Cuba and the United States," p. 94.

⁴⁸ Pérez, "Cuba under the Platt Amendment," p. 29.

⁴⁹ Pérez, p. 45.

once the “formal independence” was granted further deepened the American imperialism within Cuba, specifically as Americans’ justified their intervention under the sentiments of ‘Cuban Liberation’.⁵⁰ To that end, Pérez Jr. claims that admittedly, Cuban liberation was an ad hoc movement, which had not decided whether they wanted American help or not, this he continues, is how the American intervention was able to attach itself to the cause of Cuban liberation. Thus, he says that Cubans spoke more to aspiration than action, and that even after the initial independence from Spain, the liberation movement remained uncertain until Fidel Castro and his brother, Ruiz Castro, began codifying the language of what *Cuba Libre* entailed.⁵¹ Yet, Pérez Jr. argues that in the undercurrents of this, the previously ignited consciousness of Cuban statehood was intrinsic in their evoking the sentiments of *Cuba libre* or free Cuba. The production of sugar as discussed above, was central to the relationship between Cuba and America as observed by James H. Hitchman.⁵² In his outline of the Cuban economy under American protectorate, Hitchman paints a favourable picture of American involvement in Cuba by stating that, ‘Notwithstanding the land question, further indication of the lack of American economic exploitation of Cuba prior to 1902 may be seen in the small amount of investment that occurred.’⁵³ His argumentation outlines a deliberate attempt to revisit the years of 1898-1902, with a clear agenda to separate economies from politics of colonisation. Yet, even though his detailed account does portray the American involvement as a positive phenomenon for Cuba, the underlying fact remains, that even if American involvement yielded positive outcomes, it was still done out of coercive policies.

Furthermore, Cuba after the 1950s and in the run up to the Cold War era had undergone drastic changes in its political apparatus, with the installation of the Revolutionary government under Castro. James O’Conner outlines the changes after the Revolution by discussing that ‘the revolution oriented itself from the beginning around the problem of economic and social development, which required a basic reorganisation of society...and modifications of the private property system which went far beyond conventional reform.’⁵⁴ The issue of the reordering of the Cuban society was not taken at face value. After the expulsion of many American-backed businesses, private properties were seized by the new government and

⁵⁰ Pérez and Ebrary, “*Cuba and the United States*,” p. 46.

⁵¹ Pérez and Ebrary, “*Cuba and the United States*,” p. 77.

⁵² James H. Hitchman, “U.S. Control over Cuban Sugar Production, 1898-1902,” *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 12, no. 1 (January 1970): 90–106, <https://doi.org/10.2307/174847>, 91.

⁵³ Hitchman, “U.S. Control over Cuban Sugar Production, 1898-1902,” 96.

⁵⁴ James O’Conner, “Political Change in Cuba, 1959-1965,” *Social Research* 35, no. 2 (1968): 312—47, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40969909>, p. 313.

immediately labelled as public property.⁵⁵ This O'Conner argued was central in making the relationship between America and Cuba contentious. To that end, it is important to note that O'Conner's article was written at the time of a new-wave of heightened tensions between the U.S. and Cuba and is highly influenced by the distrust of American-led policies in Cuba.⁵⁶ Thus far, the historiography has mainly focused on the implications of colonialism on the archipelago of Cuba, in the undercurrents of which is the beginning of its revolution and the subsequent breakaway from American influence, at the intersection of which are aspects of economic dependency and coercive political interference. The next section of this historiography shifts its focus to the discourse within security studies on the missile crisis and its implications during the Cold War.

In the run-up to the Cold War, Cuba had already solidified its ideological leanings, which were decidedly socialist policies.⁵⁷ At the same time, Cuba's ideological representation produced in normative discourse of Cold War sporadically contextualises its colonial history; at most it is usually represented through its ideological familiarities with the Soviet Union.⁵⁸ Furthermore, within the Cold War era, perceptions of Cuba's political agendas are highly centralised to the subject of the missile crisis in 1962, within which the narrative is either American-centric (focused on American actions) or American-led (focused on American version of the crisis which includes their perceptions of the Soviet's or Cuban actions).⁵⁹ In the nexus, lies the work of the prominent Cold War author, Odd Arne Westad, that breaks away from bipolarity-focused narrative and introduces a multipolar analysis, wherein he argues that as intrinsic as ideology was to the creation of the Cold War contention, it is not an adequate analysis of the actual political climate of the era.⁶⁰ He thus argues that 'the Cold War is still generally assumed to have been contest between two superpowers...In a historical sense and especially seen from the South—the Cold War was a continuation of colonialism through slightly different means. As a process of conflict, it cantered on control and dominance, primarily in ideological terms.'⁶¹ Yet, even with this deconstructed ideological approach, Westad often ends up imposing it, which undercuts not only how ideology is constructed

⁵⁵ O'Conner, "Political Change in Cuba, 1959-1965," p. 312.

⁵⁶ O'Conner, p. 334.

⁵⁷ Laffey and Weldes, "Decolonising Cuban Missile Crisis," p. 564.

⁵⁸ Jutta Weldes, "Introduction: The Problem of National Interests" In *Constructing National Interests: The United States and the Cuban Missile Crisis*, vol. Borderlines, Volume 12 (Minneapolis; London: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), p. 2.

⁵⁹ Laffey and Weldes, "Decolonising Cuban Missile Crisis," p. 571.

⁶⁰ Odd Arne Westad, "The Cuban and Vietnamese challenges," In *the Global Cold War Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 158-206.

⁶¹ Westad, "Conclusion: Revolutions, interventions, and great power collapse," 396- 407, p. 396.

through contextual experiences, but also diminishes the implications of national interests and political agendas of states outside the paradigm of ideologically led narrative.

While Westad is an important figure of Cold War discourse, Robert Jervis focuses on the so-called lessons of the Cold War and their role in shaping the discourse of security studies, specifically on how the precarious nature of perception formulates the discourse and subsequent dilemmas of power politics within IR.⁶² Jervis introduces through his analysis another critical lens that focuses on aspects of “motivations” and agency, albeit he is primarily focused on John F. Kennedy and Nikita Khrushchev, observes that ‘statements by Kennedy, Khrushchev, and their colleagues about why they held their views and why they thought others would act in specified ways may be simultaneously completely honest and untrue. Self-knowledge is inevitably limited.’⁶³ To some extent, Jervis, when writing a reappraisal on the missile crisis, is more critical to not produce another binary analysis of the crisis. Yet his argument on ‘perception of threat’ remains focused (as are most realist) on perceptions and motivations of the great powers’ actors. To that end, in his argument he states that

Khrushchev's desires to protect Cuba...implicitly endorses the Soviet name for the episode the Caribbean Crisis..., started with the American attempt to overthrow the Cuban revolution. (Interestingly, the Cubans call it ‘the October Crisis’ which gestures toward the American blockade but does not imply that the missiles were placed to ward off an American attack, which is consistent with the Cuban view that they were not needed for that purpose.) But starting points are not only crucial... [and are] highly subjective and usually involve judgments, often implicit, about counterfactuals.⁶⁴

Thus, two important points come through in Jervis's arguments. First, (this author specifically includes Jervis's comments on Cuba within the bracket) the implicit overlook of Cuba's narrative in his analysis does posit Cuba's subalternation within the outcome of the crisis. Second, Cuba's agency was limited to a reactionary one. At the same time, because he includes within his analysis the implications of representations and interpretations (although very much through a Eurocentric approach), his approach towards writing about the crisis does open the discourse to include within its discourse aspects of agency and self-determination to relate security studies more closely to the way in which states behave.

⁶² Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 224.

⁶³ Len Scott, “The only thing to look forward to's the past: Reflection, revision and reinterpreting reinterpretation,” In *The Cuban missile crisis: a critical* (London; New York Routledge, 2016), 225—247, p. 230.

⁶⁴ Robert Jervis, “The Cuban Missile Crisis: What Can We Know, Why Did It Start, and How Did It End?” in *The Cuban Missile Crisis: A Critical Reappraisal* (London; New York Routledge, 2016), 1–39, p. 7.

To explicate on the role of national interest and political agendas in framing the missile crisis of 1962, Jutta Weldes provides a reinterpretation of the crisis by included all *three* actors of the crisis, Cuba, America, and USSR in her assessment.⁶⁵ Thus, she argues,

before state officials can act for the state, they engage in a process of interpretation...to understand both what situation the state faces and how they should respond to it...[this] presupposes a language shared...by those state officials involved in determining state action and by the audience for whom state action must be legitimate... The content of the national interest...emerges out of...representation through which state officials (among others) make sense of both their domestic and their international contexts⁶⁶

Interpretation's own dichotomy within the production of knowledge, therefore, yields powerful implication in the creation of narrative, which in turn greatly affects the production of discourse. To that end, the way Cuba is interpreted within the crisis is a problem of its own. The implications of such interpretations, Weldes argues, affects how the world at large codifies issues within IR, 'the national interest, that is, is constructed, is created as a meaningful object, out of shared meanings through which the world, particularly the international system and the place of the state in it, is understood.'⁶⁷ Thus, to understand Cuba's role, Weldes argues, it is important to understand its national interest, shared history as well as its position within the world order. Furthermore, in her work with Mark Laffey they together write a critical body of work that aims to decolonise the October Crisis of 1962, by using the interpretations and information that emerged out of the Havana Conference in 2002 (the first meetings of sorts between all the actors of the crisis, with representatives from Cuba, the former USSR, and the U.S).⁶⁸ Their argument, employs a postcolonial critique and introduces the agency of subaltern Cuba, if the nuclear warheads were placed in Cuba, why has Cuba been overlooked?⁶⁹ To that end, they argue that invisibility of Cuba, lies in the inherently Eurocentric production of IR scholarship, 'power is both external to historical narrative and constitutive of it, inscribed in the narrative and in the sources on which it draws. Castro and Cuba are present in the historic myth (of the October Crisis) but always on someone else's terms.'⁷⁰ Moreover, Weldes and Laffey argue that the constant threat and attempts made by the Americans to overthrow the government under Fidel Castro did not emerge overnight but were an underlining characteristic of interactions between the governments of the two

⁶⁵Jutta Weldes, "Introduction: The Problem of National Interests," in *Constructing National Interests: The United States and the Cuban Missile Crisis*, vol. Borderlines, Volume 12 (Minneapolis; London: University of Minnesota Press, 1999).

⁶⁶ Weldes, "Introduction: The Problem of National Interests," p. 4.

⁶⁷ Weldes, p. 4.

⁶⁸ Laffey and Weldes, "Decolonizing the Cuban Missile Crisis," p. 572.

⁶⁹ Laffey and Weldes, "Decolonizing the Cuban Missile Crisis," pp. 555-556.

⁷⁰ Laffey and Weldes, p. 564.

countries.⁷¹ Therefore, Weldes and Laffey interpret that any attempts that Cuba made for military armament was in line with the neorealist theory of offence-defence balance; the only missing variable for Cuba was its relative position in the world order.⁷² The great-power politics of the Cold War era etched in IR theory the discursive role of hierarchy that built a structure for the domination of Eurocentric world view.⁷³ Yet, while Laffey and Weldes are working to conduct a postcolonial approach of Cuba, they simultaneously focus on responding to American narrative: 'at the same time, it was agreed that...had U.S policy makers been Cuba, they too would have expected an invasion. As McNamara (Secretary of Defence under JFK) said, "if I'd been Cuban, I would have thought exactly what I think you thought" ...the reasonableness of Cuban (and Soviet) fears is thus acknowledged.'⁷⁴ While Weldes and Laffey are instrumental in sparking the discourse on decolonising the crisis, they are very much limiting their analysis (through Cuba's responses to America within the Havana Conference) to counter the narrative of the hegemonic power, the U.S. Their aim to create a postcolonial approach of refocusing the subaltern in the narrative the larger discourse of IR therefore, in turn, remains somewhat incomplete. Lastly, while Weldes and Laffey are concerned about the October Crisis and its implications vis-à-vis the inherent discriminate world order, this author is focused on the implications of larger Eurocentrism within discourse that claims to represent in its folds, the representation of the subaltern.

The fallout from the missile crisis resulted in heavy consequences on Cuba, specifically applied through economic sanctions and expulsion from the OAS. The last section of this historiography outlines the discourse that outlines how economic sanction are employed and exerted on Cuba and the way in which Cuba's expulsion from the OAS was argued. The implications of economic sanctions, are outlined by Nicholas Mulder, who argues that economic sanctions are essentially employed as an alternative to 'coercive' force, 'described in 1919 by U.S. president Woodrow Wilson as "something more tremendous than war": the threat [of economic sanctions] was "an absolute isolation...that brings a nation...suffocation [and] removes from the individual all inclinations to fight... this economic,[is] peaceful, silent, deadly remedy and there will be no need for force.'⁷⁵ To that end, Mulder observes that while the emergence of sanctions was as an alternative to war, the consequence of their employment

⁷¹ Laffey and Weldes, p. 565.

⁷² Laffey and Weldes, p. 565.

⁷³ Laffey and Weldes, p. 566.

⁷⁴ Laffey and Weldes, p. 567.

⁷⁵ Nicholas Mulder, "Introduction: Something More Tremendous than War," in *The Economic Weapon: The Rise of Sanctions as a Tool of Modern War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2022), p. 2.

is nothing short of devastating, 'a nation put under comprehensive blockade was on the road to social collapse.'⁷⁶ Through the political realities created out of the Cold War, the application of sanctions, he argued, were primarily rationalised by arguing its imposition to register within the world order, the object of collective disapproval, according to him, sanctions created a shift in how war and peace were dealt with, specifically how they were perceived by hegemonic states and that the use of sanctions made 'coercive policy that used to be possible only in time of war—isolating human communities from exchange with the wider world—now became possible in a wider range of situations.'⁷⁷ The central concern in his work, focuses on the question of validity and the success of economic sanctions specifically to outline whether or not economic sanctions had efficacy in achieving the goals that they set out to produce 'the true historical significance of sanctions lies, in the era of the world wars as much as in the present,' and that, finally, above all else, levelling economic sanctions, does not limit consequences to economy alone and has other political and social impact and origins.⁷⁸

In addition to the sanctions, within America's sphere of influence, the inter-American organisation of the OAS also was strongarmed (through economic dependency and military support) into expelling Cuba from its organisation of states. The OAS, as outlined by Andrew F. Cooper and Thomas Legler, was an organisation that was built on loosely constructed on collective agendas of upholding 'democracy' within the continent of America.⁷⁹ Cooper and Legler observe, that in the aftermath of the October Crisis, the OAS worked more as an US centric organisation than a predominantly Latin American focused, from which emerges the underlying issue with the reliability of the OAS. They further argue this by highlighting that the uncertainty on the aspect of intervention and non-intervention policies and '[the] collective initiatives to safeguard democracy underscores the conflicting foreign policy principles found in the region;...notably, the perennial tension between prodemocracy collective interventions and the respect for non-intervention and state sovereignty.'⁸⁰ Together, the removal of Cuba from the OAS and the economic sanctions came into effect almost immediately after the culmination of the October Crisis. As Pérez Jr., had previously discussed, 'the end of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States...did not mean that the island was

⁷⁶ Mulder, "Introduction: Something More Tremendous than War," p. 4.

⁷⁷ Mulder, p. 3.

⁷⁸ Mulder, "Conclusion: From Antidote to Alternative," p. 296.

⁷⁹ Andrew F. Cooper and Thomas Legler, "The OAS Democratic Solidarity Paradigm: Questions of Collective and National Leadership," *Latin American Politics and Society* 43, no. 1 (2001): 103, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3177015>, p. 115.

⁸⁰ Cooper and Legler, "The OAS Democratic Solidarity Paradigm," p. 120.

free of its past. On the contrary, for years thereafter Cubans struggled to overcome the consequences of historic ties to the United States...⁸¹

Lastly, in focusing on aspects of Cuba's internationalism through two key facets, first through the socialist bloc and later by way of Cuban involvement in the Non-Aligned Movement that intrinsically link subaltern agency and its application, Richard L. Harris, thus observes that Cuba sustained the political ideology of socialism, by using its own brand of diplomacy in an inherently liberal, American dominated world order.⁸² To that end, he critiques the liberal internationalism by stating that, '[Eurocentric] form of internationalism...[do] not provide an effective critique of the exploitative nature of the existing international order and...[its] advocates are prone to accept the self-interested and/or hegemonic actions of (their) nation-states when actions are taken in the name of internationalism and/or to defend their so-called national security.'⁸³ Harris's (favourable) inclinations towards the internationalist agendas employed under Guevara and thereafter Castro are aspects of his analysis that play heavily in his critique of the international hegemonic system. At the same time, by situating Cuba's agendas within the primary goals of the revolution such as education development, science, and health care, he highlights the important ways in which Cuba extends its aid throughout the world which he claims appealed because 'socialist and internationalist ideals of the Cuban people [which were] to defend the achievements of the revolution in health care, education, science, culture, and international solidarity,' and that 'the cornerstones of a socialist revolution are its internationalist project and uncompromising social (class) struggle.'⁸⁴

At the same time, by the 1970s, much of the Cuban focus began shifting towards participation in organisations such as NAM to avert itself from the competition of the great power politics. Yet, when Cuba officially entered the NAM alliance much of the initial impact of the movement that began in the 1960s was waning, as argued by Lorenz Lüthi, '...individual national interests as well as the onset of Soviet–American détente in the early 1970s weakened the internal glue of the movement...after the inflated worldwide presence of the movement during its initial decade, it disappeared from a position of international influence rather

⁸¹ Pérez and Ebrary, "*Cuba and the United States*," p. 250.

⁸² Richard L. Harris, "Cuban Internationalism, Che Guevara, and the Survival of Cuba's Socialist Regime," *Latin American Perspectives* 36, no. 3 (May 2009): 27–42, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0094582x09334165>.

⁸³ Harris, "Cuban Internationalism," p. 28.

⁸⁴ Harris, pp. 37–38.

quickly.⁸⁵ Moreover, Lüthi argues that while the movement was aimed to introduce an alternative to the bipolarity of the Cold War, it very much a participant in it, 'in the period from 1961 to 1973 the Non-Aligned Movement was as much a participant in the Cold War as it was a victim.'⁸⁶ However, to Cuba, NAM continued to exist as an additional platform to evoke its dissatisfaction with the international order at large. In summation, Cuba's internationalism, while codified through its expansive history with the American and the introduction of socialism through the Cuban revolution amplified Cuba as a comprehensive study for how subalterns or post-colonial states mitigated through the changes within the world order.

The literature review thus reiterates two key points: first, that in representation of the behaviour of post-colonial states within IR, it is important to consider the implications of their colonial history. Secondly, the underrepresentation of post-colonial states within issues concerning their own sovereignty and domestic security requires a reassessment of its agency and self-determination. The importance of language and linguistic narrative within the representation of historical narrative is further analysed in the Methodology section. Furthermore, the implicit Eurocentrism within IR discourse which extends its hegemony to the production of knowledge ties in the previously outlines theoretical frameworks to further analyse the case of Cuba through the primary sources outlined in the Sources and Methodology section.

3. Sources and Methodology

The representation of the subaltern and its perspective has been mainly achieved by using primary sources, predominately Cuban, and specifically, speeches given by the Cuban leaders: Fidel Castro and Che Guevara. In her use of mainly Guevara and Castro's speeches in this thesis, the author by no means claims to represent the "whole" truth of Cuban people—on the contrary, these sources are used herein, to explicate the notions of "social truths," and to help in the formulation of a perspective.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Lorenz Lüthi, "The Non-Aligned: Apart from and Still within the Cold War," in *The Non-Aligned Movement and the Cold War: Delhi - Bandung - Belgrade* (Abingdon, Oxon; New York, Ny: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 2014), p. 97.

⁸⁶ Lorenz Lüthi, "The Non-Aligned: Apart from and Still within the Cold War," 107.

⁸⁷ Anna Holzscheiter, "Between Communicative Interaction and Structures of Signification: Discourse Theory and Analysis in International Relations," *International Studies Perspectives* 15, no. 2 (April 5, 2013): 142–62, <https://doi.org/10.1111/insp.12005>, 1 p. 153.

3.1. Sources

Fidel Castro's main speeches, which are referenced and used herein, were found in the collections and publications from databases of different Universities namely, The National Security Archive at The George Washington University and the Latin American Network Information Centre at the University of Texas.⁸⁸ Furthermore, additional reflections and memoirs of Castro were found in the archives of the *Granma*, a national 'Communist' Cuban newspaper that emerged after Castro came to power in the 1950s.⁸⁹ The primary database for speeches is called *Discursos e intervenciones del Comandante en Jefe Fidel Castro Ruz, Presidente del Consejo de Estado de la República de Cuba*, which may be translated as “Speeches and declarations by Commander- in-Chief Fidel Castro Ruz, President of the Council of State of the Republic of Cuba.”⁹⁰

Che Guevara's speeches and articles were far more easily available, as he was a prolific writer and published several books on his beliefs, principles, and ideology in his lifetime. A key database for Guevara was a collection of his works called *The Awakening of Latin America*, which includes edited versions of essays, articles, speeches by him, as well as a reading list of what Guevara read to inform his writings.⁹¹ Other referenced materials includes speeches that Guevara had given at organisations outside of Latin America, for example the Keynote Speech that Guevara delivered at the 19th United Nations General Assembly, which can be found at the United Nations digital archive, called *The United Nations Digital Library*.⁹² The speeches and articles chosen for this analysis have been chosen because of their relevance to the argument of thesis, but also, more importantly, because of the date on which they were delivered. For instance, to explicate Cuba's perception of the October Crisis, an interview given by Castro during and in the aftermath of the crisis helps to understand how political leader perceive actions during conflict in contrast to decades later. As Cuba's politics were so

⁸⁸ “Castro Speech Database - LANIC,” Utxas.edu (University of Texas, Austin, 2015), <http://lanic.utexas.edu/la/cb/cuba/castro.html>.

Laurence Chang, Peter Kornbluh, and National Security Archive (U.S, *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962: A National Security Archive Documents Reader* (New York: New Press, 1998).

⁸⁹ “Castro Speech Database - LANIC,” Utxas.edu (University of Texas, Austin, 2015), <http://lanic.utexas.edu/la/cb/cuba/castro.html>.

⁹⁰ “Discursos E Intervenciones Del Comandante En Jefe Fidel Castro Ruz,” [www.cuba.cu](http://www.cuba.cu/gobierno/discursos/index.html), accessed December 5, 2022, <http://www.cuba.cu/gobierno/discursos/index.html>.

⁹¹ Che Guevara and Maria García, *The Awakening of Latin America: A Classic Anthology of Che Guevara's Writing on Latin America*. (New York: Ocean Press, 2013).

⁹² Che Guevara and Cuba, “Record #381483,” United Nations Digital Library System, 1964, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/381483?ln=en>.

closely linked to those of the personal policies of central figures such as Castro and Guevara, it is important to apply the same importance to them as Western-centric discourse does to a Kennedy or Nixon within IR. Within the postcolonial approach to the understanding of Castro's and Guevara's reflections of Cuba's colonial history, it is imperative to understand how the subaltern here has interpreted its own history.⁹³ Specifically, when outlining the impunity with which colonial structures (such as states, actors, or government) of power placate their position in the world order, helps the subaltern here to reclaim some form of agency within the production of knowledge. Furthermore, by using Castro's or Guevara's speeches, this analysis here aims to produce an independent counter-narrative, through which it does not aim to challenge perceptions of the Cold War, but to challenge the way it is studied. The Methodology section further exemplifies the use of these speeches in the context of the approach adopted by this thesis. Since subsequent chapters for the intended analysis are divided based on three key themes of colonial structures in Cuba, Cuban agency, and Cuba's participation in the international world order, for all these themes, while Castro and Guevara are primary Cuban sources, the analysis has also employed some American primary sources.

To discuss colonial implications within Cuba's post-independence constitutions and politics, the *Platt Amendment* of 1903 and the *Ostend Manifesto* of 1854 are two key sources.⁹⁴ Furthermore, to discuss American perceptions of Cuba as a Spanish colony, the key sources are letters written to and between American Heads of State such as John Adams and Thomas Jefferson. Thereafter, in the analysis of the primary case study on the October Crisis, beyond Castro's speeches, the sources used are official documents produced by the CIA called Situational Reports, namely *the Situation and Prospects in Cuba: Notes. (Aug 1962) Intelligence Report: NIE 85-64: Situation and Prospects in Cuba* and the CIA memorandum report titled, *Deployment and Withdrawal of Soviet Missiles and Other Significant Weapons in Cuba*, November 29, 1962.⁹⁵ Furthermore, to analyse the aftermath of the crisis and its consequences in Cuba, document of the United States Publishing Office is used, specifically, the *Document Edition Title 22 - Foreign Relations and Intercourse Chapter 32 - Foreign Assistance Subchapter III - General and Administrative Provisions Part I - General Provisions Sec. 2370 - Prohibitions against furnishing assistance*, within which different

⁹³ Laffey and Weldes, "Decolonizing the Cuban Missile Crisis," p. 560.

⁹⁴ James Buchanan et al., *The Ostend Manifesto, 1854*. (New York: A. Lovell & Co, 1892).

"Platt Amendment (1903)," National Archives, September 15, 2021, <https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/platt-amendment#transcript>.

⁹⁵ Chang and Kornbluh, and National Security Archive (U.S., *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962: A National Security Archive Documents Reader* (New York: New Press, 1998).

economic sanction on Cuba are discussed between the years of 1962-2010.⁹⁶ To that end, this thesis also uses UN Security Council Resolution A/73/85, August 29, 2018: *Necessity of Ending the Economic, Commercial and Financial Embargo Imposed by The United States of America Against Cuba*, to discuss the continued internationally supported calls to end the embargo on Cuba.⁹⁷

3.2. Methodology

The methodology for this research is firstly an interpretative analysis, which argues that reality is directly impacted by socio-cultural context. To that end, interpretative analysis together with the postcolonial theory, as outlined by Iveta Silova, Zsuzsa Millei, and Nelli Piattoeva, argues that 'colonial patterns of power extend beyond post-colonial administration, 'defining culture, labour, intersubjective relations and knowledge productions.'⁹⁸ The methodological framework herein is to analyse three key aspects: Cuba's post-1898 nation building, the October Crisis of 1962 and Cuba's international policies during the years of 1960s and 1970s. Silova, Millei and Piattoeva's argument, that the

Western hegemony must be addressed not only as a geographical issue aimed at expelling the colonizer from colonized territories but also as an epistemic one aimed at the decolonization of knowledge... [Therefore, the theory of] decoloniality entails both 'the analytic task of unveiling the logic of coloniality,' which constitutes the Western modernity project, and 'the prospective task' of building a world in which many alternative worlds can coexist.⁹⁹

Thus, decolonisation within this thesis, is applied primarily as an analytical tool that helps in outlining a critique of Western hegemony towards building a more global IR. To achieve this decolonisation, the focus is on the creation of a Cuban perspective, which entails, as outlined in the section on sources, an analysis of Castro's and Guevara's speeches, for the purpose of which, this thesis applies the method of discourse analysis.

⁹⁶ "U.S.C. Title 22 - FOREIGN RELATIONS and INTERCOURSE," www.govinfo.gov, accessed January 6, 2022, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/USCODE-2020-title22/html/USCODE-2020-title22-chap32-subchapIII-partI-sec2370.htm>.

⁹⁷ Un Secretary-General et al., "Necessity of Ending the Economic, Commercial and Financial Embargo Imposed by the United States of America against Cuba", *Digitallibrary.un.org*, August 29, 2018, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/1648511?ln=en>.

⁹⁸ Iveta Silova, Zsuzsa Millei, and Nelli Piattoeva, "Interrupting the Coloniality of Knowledge Production in Comparative Education: Postsocialist and Postcolonial Dialogues after the Cold War," *Comparative Education Review* 61, no. S1 (May 2017): S74–102, <https://doi.org/10.1086/690458>, p. 75.

⁹⁹ Silova, Millei and Piattoeva, "Interrupting the Coloniality of Knowledge Production in Comparative Education," 75.

The term discourse, as Anna Holzscheiter argues, is a 'space where intersubjective meaning is created, sustained, transformed and, accordingly, becomes constitutive of a social reality,' and discourse analysis is then an 'examin[ation] [of] what is achieved by using...discursive repertoires and strategies, in which dimensions of reality and options for political action are included and excluded by specific representations of reality.'¹⁰⁰ Although she writes from the perspective of the constructivist school of IR, the broader aspects of what a discourse analysis entails are important to this thesis. To that end, this thesis uses Holzscheiter's argument for the use of language, linguistics, ideas and opinions to construct the reality of 'agency and identity of individuals or groups... [which uses] any singular event of speaking or producing text, thus is a part of a larger social and political process, it is conceived of as 'text in social context.'¹⁰¹ At the same time, this author wants to reiterate that the usage of terms such as "the third world," "subaltern" or "non-Western" within this thesis, in no way is trying to represent or perpetrate any Eurocentric language on the position of these nation states as either developed or underdeveloped countries. They are simply used to exemplify as well as engage with the subordination that Eurocentric linguistic narrative or words can have on the general study of IR, specifically in their representation of the non-Western. In other words, Guevara and Castro's speeches help in creating Cuba's "social truth," specifically since their relative positions of power are intrinsically linked to their ability to create social historical truths, 'individual actors that are authoritative because of their material, positional, or representational authority are, in analogy, taken to be in a privileged position to shape, sustain, and eventually transform discourses and the structures of signification they represent.'¹⁰² Within this paradigm, discourse analysis is especially important in furthering the contextual character of historical so-called truths, through contextual parameters such as: 'Who (which groups, individuals) is allowed to participate? Who is considered a legitimate speaker? How are opinions exchanged and decisions taken? What extent are marginalized voices represented in discourse (those affected by the norms and policies)?'¹⁰³

Together, the primary sources for this thesis as well as the methodology employed have many implications and limitations, such as the influence of internal bias, ideology, and self-interest. While integral in providing a more authentic perspective, these sources can be very limited in terms of the factual or quantitative analysis made for this research. As mentioned in the

¹⁰⁰ Holzscheiter, "Between Communicative Interaction and Structures of Signification," p. 144.

¹⁰¹ Holzscheiter, p. 144.

¹⁰² Holzscheiter, p. 156.

¹⁰³ Holzscheiter, p. 152.

beginning of this section, the aim of this thesis is not to provide anything more than a perspective; it is important to understand that perspectives too are shaped through certain narratives and paradigms, which could ultimately evoke certain elements of bias. To a large extent, this thesis has limited the use of 'historical narrative' as a way of argumentation. Even so, it does (wherever possible) include larger historical phenomena or events within the analysis, to help further contextualise why specific speeches are used to convey the intended perspective.

Lastly, the narrative that is so-often produced about Cuba is challenged herein, through a theoretical framework that adopts postcolonial lenses to outline how the subaltern is represented within discourse the study of IR. The implications of engaging with peripheral states such as Cuba helps in highlighting asymmetries within the production of normative theories, specifically those that are often employed on issues of security and conflict within IR. Thus, this thesis, in answering the research aim of this thesis, the subsequent analysis is divided based how the subaltern speaks or engages with discourse and norms. The second chapter outlines how aspects of post-colonial governance continues to be entrenched in colonial vestiges through the analysis of Cuba's post-1898 worldmaking, by employing a postcolonial critique of the process of 'decolonisation.' The third chapter discusses how entrenched power politics remain in the representation of subaltern agency, in both reality and academic discourse, by employing a postcolonial critique of realism and neorealism. The fourth chapter focuses on how 'post-colonial' states build an alternative to Western-centric internationalism, by employing a postcolonial critique of Eurocentric IR. In the concluding chapter, this thesis outlines how through its analysis it outlined a theoretical framework of Subaltern realism which if employed, could truly make the corpus of IR into a more global study of the world.

2. Colonialism in Cuba

“We are not sovereign by the grace of the Americans, but in our own right.”

Fidel Castro, Interview, October 23, 1962.¹⁰⁴

The progressive historical narrative, that reiterates the inception of colonial ordering as a way of “modernised” worldmaking, often underscores the desires of the peoples within the colonies they speak of.¹⁰⁵ The outward expansion of Eurocentric measures of economic and political prosperity, as replicated within the policies adopted by international organisations today, drastically circumvents ideas of agency and self-determination.¹⁰⁶ In simplest terms, the dilemma of IR is that first it imposed an economic and political order that was built to colonise augment subordination by way of imperial expansion.¹⁰⁷ After this, once nations in the West began developing metrics of independent statehood such as sovereignty and self-determination, the West continued to suppress these agendas in their colonies.¹⁰⁸ At the same time since many colonies began exhibiting a newly unified expression of consciousness and self-hood, the West began codifying the rules of entry into the newly formulating international order.¹⁰⁹ At each point of this dilemma, the Eurocentric approach limits the representation of the subaltern within lenses that are relative to their position to the hegemonic powers.¹¹⁰ Thus, the transition from a colony to a nation-state, often theorized under the ‘empire-to-nation’ narrative, perpetrates a seamless chronology of a period of colonization divided on the parameters of a distinctive ‘before’ and ‘after,’ as argued by Getachew outlined in the Theoretical Frameworks.¹¹¹ The pre-existing notions of empire regulated the behaviour of ‘post-colonial’ states both domestically and internationally, in the undercurrents which, imperialism, colonisation and neo-colonialism emerges—as is the subject of this chapter—three distinct methods of colonisation based on: the creation of economic dependency, decline of political autonomy and external interference and interventionism.¹¹² These offshoots of

¹⁰⁴ Fidel Castro, “Fidel Castro’s 23rd October 1962 Interview,” transcript on *Lanic.utexas.edu*, October 23, 1962, <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/castro/db/1962/19621024.html>.

¹⁰⁵ Getachew, “A Political Theory of Decolonization,” 16,

Getachew, “From Principle to Right: The Anticolonial Reinvention of Self-Determination,” 40.

¹⁰⁶ McBride and Kohn, “Introduction: Political Theory and Decolonization,” 8.

¹⁰⁷ Getachew, “The Counterrevolutionary Moment: Preserving Racial Hierarchy in the League of Nations,” 68.

¹⁰⁸ Getachew, “Revisiting the Federalists in the Black Atlantic,” 74.

¹⁰⁹ Getachew, 74.

¹¹⁰ Laffey and Weldes, “Decolonizing the Cuban Missile Crisis,” 559.

¹¹¹ Getachew, “Introduction: Worldmaking after Empire,” 9.

¹¹² Getachew, “A Political Theory of Decolonisation,” 22.

colonisation are outlined in this chapter through Cuba's interactions with two hegemonic powers, the Spanish empire and the U.S at different “watershed moments” of Cuban history.

2.1.'Economies of a single product:' Cuba's economic dependency under the colonial Spanish rule

Under the expansive Spanish empire in Cuba, Havana was ordered on the production and trade of sugarcane, which was labour intensive crop from its cultivation to its harvest.¹¹³ At the same time, due to the labour-intensive nature of sugar's production, the influx of slaves and cheap labour was interwoven into the economic stability of Cuba.¹¹⁴ Thus, the export of refined sugar (and other products made from sugarcane) was the bedrock for the setup trade networks between the islands and other colonial hegemonies such as France, Britain, and Spain.¹¹⁵ As a result of which, Guevara, in an article he wrote in 1962, argued that the economic order of Cuba was laid based on the success of two congruent processes: the influx of slaves and the production of sugar, in the undercurrents of which emerged the social demographic of Cuba.¹¹⁶ To that end, he also points out that to consider economies separate from politics is fallacy, as much of the social-political fabric of Cuba was related to the economic order that was created by its colonisers, the Spanish.¹¹⁷ Thus, the allure of Cuba, which Guevara highlighted in his two speeches at the Inter-American Economic and Social Council, was embedded in the continuation of the slave trade, successful production of sugar and the subsequent agriculture based social fabric which according to him, was one of the main reasons that Cuba has still unable to completely disengage from its colonial past.¹¹⁸ Thus, Cuba and to that extent Latin America, observed Guevara, were 'economies of a single product,' which continue to follow an inherently disadvantageous model of economy, as they

¹¹³ Thomas, “Sugar and Society,” 40.

¹¹⁴ Thomas, 42.

¹¹⁵ Thomas, “Enter North America,” 72.

¹¹⁶ Che Guevara, “Tactics and Strategy for the Latin American Revolution,” in *The Awakening of Latin America: A Classic Anthology of Che Guevara's Writing on Latin America.*, ed. Maria García, trans. Manuel Talens and Sue Ashdown (New York: Ocean Press, 2013), 200.

¹¹⁷ Che Guevara, “Economies Cannot be Separated from Politics,” transcript of first speech, CIES Conference at Punta del Este, August 8, 1961, In *the Awakening of Latin America: A Classic Anthology of Che Guevara's Writing on Latin America.*, (New York: Ocean Press, 2013).

¹¹⁸ Guevara, “Economies Cannot be Separated from Politics,” transcript of first speech at CIES conference, August 8, 1961, Che Guevara, “The Real Road to Development,” transcript of second speech at CIES conference, August 16, 1961. In *The Awakening of Latin America: A Classic Anthology of Che Guevara's Writing on Latin America.*, (New York: Ocean Press, 2013).

were dependent for their prosperity and growth on economic orders of their colonial pasts.¹¹⁹ The inability to reorder the already established economic foundations within Cuba, which are entrenched in racist and colonial policies of the Spanish empire, argued Guevara, has been one of the main reasons for why they have been unable to fully decolonise, 'the [current] so-called deterioration...of trade is nothing but the result of the unequal exchange between countries producing raw materials and industrial countries (or colonial monopolies), which [continue to] dominate markets and impose the illusory justice of equal exchange of values.'¹²⁰

By the end of the nineteenth century, the growing Cuban cognisance of the self and the weaning power of the Spanish empire meant that 'Cuba had to confront Spain.'¹²¹ Thus, after a long-drawn struggle for independence in 1898, ended the five centuries of "formal colonisation" of Cuba. To that end, Cuba's independence was only in name; the economic dependency so created out of imperial strongarm, as discussed above, dictated the post-colonial state, wherein people were conditioned to the systems of economy that were inherently of colonial nature.¹²² At the same time, as is discussed in the Theoretical Frameworks section, the inability to fully circumvent colonialism does not speak to the so-called "weakness" of the non-Western, but to the intrinsic Eurocentric nature of IR, that considers the transition from "empire-to-nation" as a seamless process of shedding colonial past for the non-colonial present.¹²³ Furthermore, according to Castro, the 'precarious nature of economies' that are built through historical networks of imperial order, continues to impose unjust and arbitrary control over the 'post-colonial' state, and that the struggle for independence, '...are continuously threatened by the external control of their natural resource and financial imposition' of the international system today.¹²⁴ The so-called, "peaceful coexistence" within international order, therefore, for Guevara was a façade co-opted by

¹¹⁹ Guevara, "Economies Cannot be Separated from Politics," August 8, 1961.

Guevara, "The Real Road to Development," August 16, 1961.

¹²⁰ Guevara and Cuba, "Record #381483," United Nations Digital Library System, speech transcript, 1964, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/381483?ln=en>.

¹²¹ Castro, "Reflections on a Crisis, a Tripartite Conference on the Cuban Missile Crisis," *LANIC- Latin American Network Information Centre* (Havana: Havana Cuba Vision Network, February 20, 1992), PART 3. <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/castro/db/1992/19920224.html>.

¹²² Castro, "Speech Delivered by Commander Fidel Castro Ruz, Prime Minister of the Revolutionary Government, at the Headquarters of the United Nations, United States, on September 26, 1960," transcript, www.cuba.cu, accessed December 26, 2021, <http://www.cuba.cu/gobierno/discursos/1959/esp/f030259e.html>.

¹²³ Getachew, "A Political Theory of Decolonization," 14.

¹²⁴ Castro, "Speech Delivered by Commander-In-Chief Fidel Castro Ruz, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, President of The Non-Aligned Movement, before the 34th Session of The General Assembly of The United Nations on October 12, 1979," transcript at *LANIC- Latin American Network Information Centre*.n.d., <http://www.cuba.cu/gobierno/discursos/1979/esp/f121079e.html>.

former colonisers to retain control of 'post-colonial' states in position that would reiterate the power differential and create the illusion that peaceful co-existence is somehow, a conception of the West, imposed on the rest, 'imperialism attempts to impose its version of what coexistence should be.'¹²⁵ The implications of this, together with the continuation of economic dependency of colonial making, have invariably affected Havana's worldmaking efforts after its independence. Thus, according to both, Castro and Guevara, the void of economic dependency today is born out of what was once prosperous to the imperial cycle, and that 'imperialism does not cease, however, in its tenacious effort to keep other peoples and countries subjugated, oppressed, or occupied...'¹²⁶ In lieu of which, much of Guevara's revolutionary ideas stemmed from as Getachew outlined, in creating a "rapture" from this imperialism.¹²⁷

Thus, by highlighting the context of economic dependency through an interpretive analysis, it is not farfetched to link the emergence of socialism within Cuba as a direct consequence of its colonial history. In adopting the lens of imperialism to describe present day phenomenon, through the example of Spain, Cuba's difference in economic policies adopted today are better described. Through which emerges the first asymmetry still plagues the international systems of states, wherein economic models which were setup upon slavery and overproduction under colonies, still exists as the main source from which many 'post-colonial' states still align their economic structures to. Which means that realist theories that posit, an overlook of economic gains within their metric of discourse invariable limit to how much the subaltern can derive from their treatise equitable solutions and realpolitik. The next section of this chapter describes another form of colonisation, which resides in the erasure of sovereignty and autonomy.

¹²⁵ Guevara, "Response to the Attacks against Cuba in the UN General Assembly, New York" December 11, 1964. In *The Awakening of Latin America: A Classic Anthology of Che Guevara's Writing on Latin America.*, (New York: Ocean Press, 2013).

¹²⁶ Castro, "Speech Delivered by Commander-In-Chief Fidel Castro Ruz, at the Inaugural Session of the vi Summit Conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, Held at the Palace of Conventions, Havana, on September 3, 1979," *LANIC- Latin American Network Information Centre*, <http://www.cuba.cu/gobierno/discursos/1979/esp/f030979e.html>, Che Guevara, "Response to the Attacks against Cuba in the UN General Assembly, New York" December 11, 1964. In *The Awakening of Latin America: A Classic Anthology of Che Guevara's Writing on Latin America.*, (New York: Ocean Press, 2013).

¹²⁷ Getachew, "A Political Theory of Decolonization," 17.

2.2. Undermining Cuban Autonomy: America's Pursuit of Cuba

The inability to acquire Cuba began to plague the American political agenda as early as 1783, when John Quincy Adams described the Cuban colony as a "ripe fruit" waiting to be "plucked," by the Americans and when in 1823, President Thomas Jefferson wrote, 'I have ever looked upon Cuba as the most interesting addition which could ever be made to our system of States.'¹²⁸ The desire to purchase the Cuban islands because of the high rewards from its lucrative slave trades, exemplifies the de facto nature of commodification of colonial peoples, to that end, by 1856 a formal inquisition was made by the Americans to Spain under the *Ostend Manifesto*, which described the natural reasons for why Cuba should be a part of the North American union of states, which was masked under the pretext of mutual interests, 'Cuba is as necessary to the North American..[and] belongs naturally to that great family of states of which the Union...[and] immediate acquisition by our government is of paramount importance, and we cannot doubt but that it is a consummation devoutly wished for by its inhabitants'¹²⁹ By speaking for the Subaltern Cuba, the invisibility of Cuban autonomy becomes conditional to the colonial structure and here, by extension, to the Americans. During the nineteenth century this was a normative expression of imperial power and a defining characteristic of international relations that emerged from this era.

In the underscores of the manifesto, congruent to subaltern erasure is the intersection of race and colonialism, '[the] system of immigration and labour, lately organized within its limits... humanity may in vain demand the suppression of the African slave-trade in the island...the infamous [slave] traffic remains an irresistible temptation and a source of immense profit to needy and avaricious officials, who, to attain their ends, scruple not to trample the most sacred principles under foot...'¹³⁰ Racism and colonialism, intertwined in their application—as discussed in the economic dependency subsections—are interwoven in their together to shape the way in which America's colonial expedition into Cuba emerged, '[history] forbids that we should acquire the island of Cuba without the consent of Spain, unless justified by the great law of self- preservation.... [we should] be recreant to our duty, be unworthy of our gallant forefathers, and commit base treason against our posterity, should we permit Cuba to be

¹²⁸ "From Thomas Jefferson to James Monroe, 24 October 1823," Founders Online, National Archives accessed February 2021. <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/98-01-02-3827>, Fidel Castro, "The Empire and the Independent Island," *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 20, no. 2 (August 5, 2009): 212–28, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09592290903001479>, 212.

¹²⁹ James Buchanan et al., *The Ostend Manifesto, 1854*. (New York: A. Lovell & Co, 1892).

¹³⁰ Buchanan et al., *The Ostend Manifesto, 1854*.

Africanized...with all its attendant horrors to the white race, and suffer the flames to extend to our own neighbouring shores, seriously to endanger [our right] to consume the fair fabric of our Union.¹³¹ Evoking and interlinking the idea of racial subjugation as a worldmaking phenomenon, reiterates the argument of this thesis, and furthermore, proves that within the production of knowledge and discourse of IR, systematic subalternation, racism is foundational.¹³² Thus far, the intersection of autonomy and power within the dynamic of colony and colonisers are imposed on the subaltern to purpurate a colonial apparatus that not only conditions or justifies imperial expansion, but simultaneously, instils in the colony the phenomenon of subjugation, as argued by Getachew, 'a people "long subjected to foreign domination" become habituated to their dependence,' and to an extent their subjugation.¹³³ As a result, the Cuban American relationship, founded on the premise of imperial expansion, shaped, according to Castro, the subordinate position of Cuba, '[Cuba was] like an apple hanging from the Spanish tree, called to fall, as soon as it ripened, into the hands of the United States.'¹³⁴ Thus, by employing the undermining of autonomy as a colonial tool, America can—and does continue to impose a colonial world order on Cuba. The second asymmetry within international systems, therefore is, the foundation of racial hierarchy and commodification of peoples, which creates within the current system a paradox, wherein, post-colonial people are assumed to be unable or ill-equipped to govern themselves yet are expected to fully adopt Westernised concepts of sovereignty even if it is conditional, this issue is further outlined through the section of this chapter.

2.3. External Interference and Military interventionism: Cuba as an American Protectorate, 1898 – 1923:

The Cuban Independence War of 1898 more famously known as the Spanish American War of 1898 (another example of Eurocentric production of knowledge) was the formal introduction of America within Cuban politics.¹³⁵ In 1898, The USS Maine docked at Havana exploded, which the Americans saw as a sign of Spanish aggression, in the aftermath of which Congress passed a joint resolution that deployed military to the Cuban islands.¹³⁶ The joint resolution read that 'United States herewith declare that they have no desire or intention to

¹³¹ Buchanan et al., *The Ostend Manifesto*, 1854.

¹³² Getachew, "A Political Theory of Decolonization," 20.

¹³³ Getachew, 17.

¹³⁴ Castro, "The Empire and the Independent Island," 216.

¹³⁵ Laffey and Weldes, "Decolonizing the Cuban Missile Crisis," 566.

¹³⁶ Castro, "The Empire and the Independent Island," 212-213.

exercise sovereignty, jurisdiction or control over said island, except for pacification thereof, and they affirm their determination, after this has been accomplished, to leave the government and control of the island to its people,' in Castro's account, this was a false pretext evoked by the Americans to realise their aforementioned, doctrine of "ripe apple."¹³⁷ In the aftermath of the war of 1898, Castro believed that America went on to 'colonise' the islands, by way of inserting themselves as signatories of Havana's independence, 'the Treaty of Paris was signed between the representatives of Queen Regent of Spain and those of the President of the United States...Cuba would be occupied by the United States on a temporary basis...'¹³⁸ Because of which, Castro asserts that Cuba's self-determination within the 'post-colonial' state building were taken away.

Thereafter, in Castro's outline of the implications of the indoctrination of the Platt Amendment, 'by the legislative body of a foreign country, it was imposed on [Cuba] by force...[and] the right to intervene and the right to lease naval bases or stations,' effectively, granted America the right to establish within Cuba a military presence in the name of "protecting" the islands, 'a fait accompli' or irreversible.¹³⁹ The implementation of the Platt Amendment, in all respects made Cuba a protectorate of the Americas ratified the "rotten apple doctrine" and for Castro this represented the 'hypocrisy, deceit, Machiavellianism, and the cynicism with [Americans had] concocted the plan to take over Cuba, to the lengths of publicly proclaiming the same arguments made by John Quincy Adams in 1823, about the apple which would fall because of gravity...[the] apple finally did fall, but it was rotten,' "rotten" according to Castro was Cuba itself.¹⁴⁰ Even after the Platt Amendment was repealed in 1930s, the continued presence of an American naval base in Guantánamo, indicated to Castro, a divisive show of American supremacy and unchecked privilege.¹⁴¹ Insofar as Cuba was concerned, it was under the protection of the Americans but remained colonially subjugated.

The interventionist policies as exemplified through Americas post-1898 interference in Cuba signalled according to Castro the beginning of Cuba as America's neo-colony, independent only in name, 'we have never been independent, ever. They said that this was a sovereign and independent republic and that was a lie. Here the American Ambassador was the one who

¹³⁷ Castro, 212, 213, 215.

¹³⁸ Castro, 213.

¹³⁹ Castro, 214.

¹⁴⁰ Castro, "The Empire and the Independent Island," 216.

¹⁴¹ Castro, 219.

gave orders and ruled in most cases, ‘and that ‘[Cuba] was something like an appendix of the United States’.¹⁴² Castro's interpretation of the formative years of American involvement in Cuba, explicates a narrative within Cuba, that Americans were vital to the sustenance, survival and intrinsic to the governance of Cuba, ‘[America] had accustomed the people to thinking that intervening was a good thing...to such an extent...that they had created a complex of helplessness for the people.’¹⁴³ To that end, Castro also observes that, never has Cuba ever proclaimed a memo that said, Havana would not be intervening, it is only American leaders who need to proclaim that they are not going to intervene. This Castro believes happens because American intervention has not been checked since it began intervening in Latin America in the early years of the twentieth century, ‘when the United States intervened, they occupied Cuba for several years. They occupied Puerto Rico at the same time, and they kept Puerto Rico. They occupied the Philippines, and they kept the Philippines.’¹⁴⁴

Together, the cycle of economic dependence, the subversion of Cuban autonomy and American interventionism discussed above are indicative towards the continuation of colonial vestiges within Cuba. The treatise of realism outlines the agendas of ‘relative gains’ which argues that states must compete with each to be able to increase their own gains, overlooks within its study the impact years of economic subjugation that continues to undermine political autonomy as well as the ability to resist foreign intervention.¹⁴⁵ From its beginnings as a colony of Spain to a pawn of American imperialism agendas, Cuba continues to exist on the periphery of international discourse, with little attention paid to the implications of Cuban history in world politics.¹⁴⁶ As a member of the international community and by extension a part of its system, Cuba has dealt with, and engaged with hegemonic powers of the world in ways that require a more meticulous examination than what is granted.¹⁴⁷ To understand the

¹⁴² Fidel Castro, “Speech Delivered by Commander Fidel Castro Ruz, Prime Minister of the Revolutionary Government, at the Headquarters of the United Nations, United States, on September 26, 1960,” transcript, www.cuba.cu, accessed December 26, 2021, <http://www.cuba.cu/gobierno/discursos/1959/esp/f030259e.html>.

Fidel Castro, “Speech Delivered by Commander Fidel Castro Ruz, In Guantánamo on February 3, 1956,” speech transcript at *LANIC- Latin American Network Information Centre*.n.d., <http://www.cuba.cu/gobierno/discursos/1959/esp/f030259e.html>

¹⁴³ Castro, “Speech Delivered by Commander Fidel Castro Ruz, In Guantánamo on February 3, 1959,” speech transcript at *LANIC- Latin American Network Information Centre*.n.d., <http://www.cuba.cu/gobierno/discursos/1959/esp/f030259e.html>

¹⁴⁴ Fidel Castro, “Reflections on a Crisis, a Tripartite Conference on the Cuban Missile Crisis,” *LANIC- Latin American Network Information Centre* (Havana: Havana Cuba Vision Network, February 20, 1992), PART 1. <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/castro/db/1992/19920219.html>

¹⁴⁵ Ayoob, “Inequality and Theorizing in International Relations,” 36.

¹⁴⁶ Laffey and Weldes, “Decolonizing the Cuban Missile Crisis,” 556.

¹⁴⁷ Laffey and Weldes, 556.

abovementioned forms of colonialism in Cuba, the analysis has highlighted the different aspects of Cuban history that outline how different facets of colonialism are continuously imposed. These different strands of colonisation together created within Cuba the anti-colonial sentiments that shaped as outlined by Castro, the anti-American principles that governed the revolutionary government.

In conclusion, to explicate on the nexus of empire and the post-colonial state through an analysis of the different forms of colonisation in Cuba is to implicate colonialism as an ever-present phenomenon, in the post-colonial-state, structural apparatus of the international order and by extension IR discourse.¹⁴⁸ Specifically, to challenge the mainstream epochs that represent Cuban agency through non-Cuban actors, in contrast therefore, it is important to centre the Cuban perspective through its political, and national interests.¹⁴⁹ Contrary to the normative discourse constructed through Eurocentric perspectives of Cuba, this chapter has engaged with Cuba in capacities that explicate on the intersection of power and politics to outline the impact(s) of colonisation in Cuba. Employing a postcolonial critique, the main argument of this chapter, focuses on the representation of power and that explicate on the dynamics of exclusionary politics of international relations, which reiterates how Eurocentric doctrines have continued to uphold and reiterate colonial structures of hierarchy, dominance, and privilege. The precarious nature of the international system of states is limited in their engagement not because the subaltern has not exerted in some form agency through its own agendas, but because important factors that position them as subalterns are often overlooked. If colonialism itself is an act of war, then any conceptions of Cuba as a peripheral actor within the dilemmas of power politics limits the capacity to fully able to engage with it today, that is if one argues that the world today, is ‘post-colonial.’¹⁵⁰ However, is the burden of engagement limited to the West? Perhaps not, the responsibility to actively engage with the subaltern also falls on the non-Western to develop, discourse that is espoused out of their own concerns and are built to integrate within the international systems their colonial past and their ‘post-colonial’ aspirations.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁸ Getachew, “A Political Theory of Decolonization,” 31.

¹⁴⁹ Weldes, “Introduction: The Problem of National Interests,” 12.

¹⁵⁰ Barkawi, “Decolonising War,” 205.

¹⁵¹ Ayoob, “Inequality and Theorizing in International Relations,” 29.

3. October Crisis of 1962

“We have had the privilege of being actors in this transcendental moment of history”

Fidel Castro, United Nations General Assembly, September 26, 1960.¹⁵²

In brief, the normative security studies describe the October crisis as, the moment where the threat of nuclear Armageddon engulfed world politics.¹⁵³ The security dilemma that emerged out of the bipolar world order in the aftermath of the WWII, was focused on the competition between great powers or hegemonic powers, The US and the USSR. Thus, when the issue of nuclear threat arose in the crisis, the swift diplomacy of the hegemons and their use of the treatise of ‘offence-defence’ balance was considered successful in mitigating the world out of a full-blown nuclear war. In the undercurrents of this narrative, resides the role of those actors that remained outside the constraints of great powers. Most of the proxy wars and ‘hot’ wars were fought in geographies often considered outside of the Western hemisphere.¹⁵⁴ Yet, the normative approach in discourse creation for the study of Cold War, is constructed out of the perception of threat and security dilemma that focuses on the experience and politics of the West.¹⁵⁵ The overwhelmingly subversive approach to representing the subaltern and by extension their political agendas and actions within the production of normative theory, speaks to how the Eurocentric international ‘regime’ positions itself to be more powerful in aspects of worldmaking. At the same time, the consequences or the outcome of the aftermath of such crisis takes a heavier toll on countries upon which these ‘hot’ war played out, for instance in the Korean War of 1950-1953, the culmination of the conflict resulted in the division of the Korea into a North and South, or in the Vietnam or Cambodia which was similarly destabilised because of the confrontation between the two blocs of the Cold War.¹⁵⁶ Aspects of subaltern’s agency within these folds, for many years remained relative to their importance to the agendas of the hegemons. Similarly, in the case of the missile crisis, much of the discourse either focuses on agency and self-determination of the two hegemonic actors who were either furthering their ideological goals as outlined in the Historiography or on consequences of

¹⁵² Castro, “Speech Delivered by Commander Fidel Castro Ruz, Prime Minister of the Revolutionary Government, at the Headquarters of the United Nations, United States, on September 26, 1960,” transcript, www.cuba.cu, accessed December 26, 2021, <http://www.fidelcastro.cu/en/discursos/speech-un-headquarters-us-september-26-1960>.

¹⁵³ Martin J Sherwin, *Gambling with Armageddon: Nuclear Roulette from Hiroshima to the Cuban Missile Crisis 1945-1962*. (S.L.: Alfred A Knopf, 2020).

¹⁵⁴ Barkawi, “Decolonising War,” 204—205.

¹⁵⁵ Barkawi, 205.

¹⁵⁶ Barkawi, 209.

Cuba's friendship with the socialist Soviet Union. Either way, Cuba's role is limited, or their political agendas are assumed.¹⁵⁷ The introduction American-centric of "principles of morality" due their position of power within the world order, was critical to the independent and alternative methods of world making employed by countries such as the USSR or Cuba.¹⁵⁸ In the undercurrents of which, emerges the focus of this Chapter, the application of subaltern agency the consequences thereof, through an analysis of the October Crisis of 1962.

In the run up to the missile crisis, Castro was cognisant to the ways in which American imperialism as outlined in the previous chapter, affected the relationship Cuba had with the world.¹⁵⁹ The subversion of Cuban autonomy and sovereignty as exemplified through the interventionist agendas adopted by the Americans towards Cuba and in the era of the Cold War, towards other non-Western states, only strengthened Cuba's perception of a possible American military threat in Cuba. Already with the Bay of Pigs or Playa Giron display of American aggression had solidified according to Castro, Cuba's rationale to participate in nuclear armament.¹⁶⁰ If one examined Cuba's action (before the crisis) under realist theories that posits perceived threat could lead to war, for which balance of power through mutual armament can be employed to deter an outbreak of conflict are emblematic of Castro's ability to engage with *realpolitik*. On the contrary, however, Cuba's actions are always considered as aberration, that exists outside the norms of international system. Therefore, the next section of this chapter challenges realist and neorealist dogmas of the missile crisis, through an analysis of Cuba's agency and role in securing weapons on its islands.

3.1.Cuba's role in the October Crisis: The Subaltern applies its agency

In two separate interviews, one at the time of the crisis, and other 40 years in its aftermath, when asked about the Cuba's perception of what they thought the crisis was sparked by, Castro

¹⁵⁷ Laffey and Weldes, "Decolonizing the Cuban Missile Crisis," 556.

¹⁵⁸ Laffey and Weldes, 561.

¹⁵⁹ Castro, "Speech Delivered by Commander Fidel Castro Ruz, Prime Minister of the Revolutionary Government, at the Headquarters of the United Nations, United States, on September 26, 1960," transcript, www.cuba.cu, accessed December 26, 2021, <http://www.fidelcastro.cu/en/discursos/speech-un-headquarters-us-september-26-1960>

¹⁶⁰ Che Guevara, "Economies Cannot be Separated from Politics," transcript of first speech, CIES Conference at Punta del Este, August 8, 1961, In *the Awakening of Latin America: A Classic Anthology of Che Guevara's Writing on Latin America.*, (New York: Ocean Press, 2013), Fidel Castro, "Speech delivered at the Central Act for the 20th Anniversary of the Fall in Combat of Commander Ernesto Che Guevara, held in the City of Pinar del Río, on October 8, 1987," transcript of speech in at *LANIC- Latin American Network Information Centre*.n.d. <http://www.cuba.cu/gobierno/discursos/1987/esp/f081087e.html>

remarks that '[Cubans] realized that it had something to do with us [when we began] receiving a series of reports about peculiar meetings...going on in Washington...[through] meetings with political leaders of both parties, and [through] meetings of the [UN] Security Council, plane movements, ship movements.'¹⁶¹ Thus, for Castro, on all matters of diplomacy within the conflict, Cuba was not only overlooked, but from the very beginning uninvited to the negotiations. At the same time, Castro believed that if the Americans were truly invested in mediating the crisis, why did they not attempt to employ direct and official channels of communications between all three participants of the crisis.¹⁶² The implication that America was suddenly made notice of a possible military buildup in Cuba, according to Castro, perpetrated an image of Cuba trying to engage in a covert operation subversively and secretly against Americans.¹⁶³ On the contrary, according to Castro, Americans were aware to some extent that there was a continued and deepening friendship between the Soviet Union and Cuba, which could or possibly would end up in a relationship of military aid and development in Havana.¹⁶⁴ In juxtaposition and to supplement Castro's claim that Americans were aware of a weapons build-up in Cuba, a report within the recently declassified CIA documents states that,

the military build-up in Cuba is to strengthen the Communist regime...against what Cuban and the Soviets conceive to be a danger that the US may attempt by means or another to overthrow it, The Soviets evidently hope to deter any such attempts...[by] enhancing Castro's *defensive* (Italics mine) capabilities...at the same time, they [Cuba and the USSR] evidently recognise that the development of an offensive military base in Cuba might provoke US military intervention and thus defeat their...*purpose* (Italics mine).¹⁶⁵

Insofar as the security dilemma of the crisis is concerned, the discourse related understanding the threat of war in an era of nuclear weapons, the treatise of 'offense-defence' balance which theorises that mutual armament of weapons reduces the risk of arbitrary use of force, as such Castro argues that '[if the US] was extremely concerned about the number of missiles [in

¹⁶¹ Castro, "Fidel Castro's 23rd October Interview," transcript on *Lanic.utexas.edu*, October 23, 1962, <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/castro/db/1962/19621024.html>.

Fidel Castro, "Reflections on a Crisis, a Tripartite Conference on the Cuban Missile Crisis," *LANIC- Latin American Network Information Centre* (Havana: Havana Cuba Vision Network, February 20, 1992), PART 4. <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/castro/db/1992/19920219.html>

¹⁶² Castro, "Reflections on a Crisis," *LANIC- Latin American Network Information Centre* February 20, 1992), PART 4, <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/castro/db/1992/19920224.html>.

¹⁶³ Castro, "Reflections on a Crisis," *LANIC- Latin American Network Information Centre* February 20, 1992), PART 3, <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/castro/db/1992/19920224.html>.

¹⁶⁴ Castro, "Reflections on a Crisis," PART 3, <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/castro/db/1992/19920224.html>.

¹⁶⁵ Mary S. McAuliffe, ed., "The Military Buildup in Cuba," *Naval History and Heritage Command Research Archive* (CIA Documents on the Cuban Missile Crisis October 1992: Special National Intelligence Estimate 85-3-62 (Excerpt), September 19, 1962), <https://www.history.navy.mil/content/dam/nhhc/browse-by-topic/War%20and%20Conflict/cuban-missile-crisis/pdf/Cuban-Missile-Crisis1962.pdf>.

Cuba], despite the 5,000 nuclear warheads [Americans] had, [since for Americans] anything is a U.S security threat, [then, American] can imagine what it is like to be a neighbour and adversary, 90 miles from such a powerful nation...that also has a base (Guantanamo Bay) on (Cuban) territory.¹⁶⁶ Thus, Castro argues that 'the thing that determines the offensive or defensive character of the weapons is not their shape but their use, their employment. And since our weapons were used to defend ourselves, our rifles, our cannons, our tanks were defen[sive]',¹⁶⁷

Castro's emplotment of realpolitik thus, is evidence to the fact that, if the subaltern spoke or could apply agency (at the same level as a hegemon like America does) security issues such as the October Crisis, can be interpreted in a completely different light. Which entails that perhaps engaging the subaltern in matters of security studies could mean for a more peaceful co-existence within the international system.¹⁶⁸ Thus, as Castro's perceptions of threat are exemplified through his argument of American power and looming threat, speaks to the power of representation and production in discourse and more importantly, towards the asymmetry between perceiving the agendas of hegemonic powers such as US to that of "weaker" states such as Cuba. This can be argued as far more powerful lesson from the crisis, than the facts of the events itself. If the Americans were aware of the military build-up in Cuba and were engaging in a diplomatic relationship with the subaltern Cuba, or vice versa, if the Cubans were able to engage with America, miscalculations that stemmed from the lack of engagement between the two could have been avoided. At the least, the implications of the crisis of being at levels of an "Armageddon" could have been substantially undercut. In using Castro's perceptions of the crisis to argue for Cuban agency it is important within discourse analysis to engage with his claims to order to create a perspective of the subaltern, specifically in this case, the reasons behind Cuba acquiring weapons.

At the same time, it is important to understand Castro as a political leader who infers Cuba's action differently in the years after the crisis than he did in its inception. To that end, when Castro outlines reasons for why Cuba agreed to have weapons on their islands, in his initial arguments he outlined that Havana *asked* for weapons in response to Cuba's defense, 'we

¹⁶⁶ Castro, "Reflections on a Crisis," *LANIC- Latin American Network Information Centre* February 20, 1992), PART 3, <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/castro/db/1992/19920224.html>.

¹⁶⁷ Castro, "Fidel Castro's 23rd October Interview," transcript on *Lanic.utexas.edu*, October 23, 1962, <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/castro/db/1962/19621024.html>.

¹⁶⁸ Che Guevara and Cuba, "Record #381483," United Nations Digital Library System, speech transcript, 1964, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/381483?ln=en>.

declare this clearly and honestly.... we be [not] the victims of any aggression. We also declare that with the same determination and the same security we know how to defend ourselves, and we shall repel any aggressor. That is what our weapons are for.'¹⁶⁹ However, in 1992, while reflecting on same question, he contradicts his previous statements and states that 'we did not like the missiles. If it was a matter of our defences alone, we would not have accepted the missiles here...we really saw in the issue of the missile installation something that would strengthen the socialist bloc, something that would help in some way to improve the so-called correlation of forces.'¹⁷⁰ Notwithstanding, the question that is important here, in relation to Cuba's agency, which Castro believes they were able to exert, through their own national interests within the crisis. Additionally, this also highlights the importance in representing how Cuba played an active role in the installation of the weapons. Thus, Cuba played an active role in the crisis, regardless of whether that role is directly related to its own defense or in accordance with the ideological bloc they were a part of. Furthermore, by employing the realist treatise, it can be argued here, that Cuba behaved in both international and domestic politics through their national interests' agendas. The only aspect of within the realist theory of power politics is that Cuba does not possess power or a position of hegemony within the world order. Nonetheless, Castro remained undeterred on the fact that however the missiles were acquired, they were in fact defensive in nature, 'we never saw the missiles as something that could one day be used against the United States, [as] an unjustified attack or a first strike.'¹⁷¹

At last, Castro asks (perhaps as most subalterns do) 'Do[es] [Cuba] not have the rights... with which international norms, laws, and principles [are] recognise[d] for every sovereign state everywhere in the world?''¹⁷² The issue of sovereignty for both Castro and Guevara dictated their own analysis of how the crisis broke out, specifically since they believed that it was out of the non-compliance with American inspection on the islands that lead to the fallout from the crisis. Consequently, for them, by keeping their islands security and to that end, their own military armament under the threshold of sovereignty and right to self-preservation, Guevara

¹⁶⁹ Castro, "Fidel Castro's 23rd October Interview," transcript on *Lanic.utexas.edu*, October 23, 1962, <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/castro/db/1962/19621024.html>.

¹⁷⁰ Castro, "Reflections on a Crisis," *LANIC- Latin American Network Information Centre* February 20, 1992), PART 4, <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/castro/db/1992/19920228.html>

¹⁷¹ Castro, "Reflections on a Crisis," *LANIC- Latin American Network Information Centre* February 20, 1992), PART 4, <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/castro/db/1992/19920228.html>

Castro, "Reflections on a Crisis," *LANIC- Latin American Network Information Centre* February 20, 1992), PART 3, <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/castro/db/1992/19920224.html>.

¹⁷² Castro, "Fidel Castro's 23rd October Interview," transcript on *Lanic.utexas.edu*, October 23, 1962, <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/castro/db/1962/19621024.html>.

and Castro believed they defied the American aggressions. Castro states that, '[Cuba] could not accept the matter of inspections. I think that would have reduced our sovereignty.'¹⁷³ At the same time, for Castro, the removal of the missile from Cuba (which is also one of the reasons why Cuba, in the next years, joined the NAM) were a congruent to Cuba's continued subalternation and subversion of autonomy within the world order, 'the withdrawal of the missiles reduced our sovereignty.'¹⁷⁴ Lastly, Castro observed that,

so long as the concept of sovereignty exists as the prerogative of nations and of independent peoples, as a right of all peoples, we will not accept the exclusion of our people from that right. So long as the world is governed by these principles... those concepts that have universal validity because they are universally accepted and recognized by the peoples, we will not accept the attempt to deprive us of any of those rights, and we will renounce none of those rights.¹⁷⁵

Thus, even if Cuba's expression of agency was misunderstood or misperceived within normative discourse, the underlying fact remains that within the missile crisis, Cuba had an active role in the making and the outcome of the crisis and thus, should be engaged with to bring out more nuanced discourse about the missile crisis. Simultaneously, it should also signify that even if IR discourse ignores the voice of the subaltern, they continue to speak and mitigate their positions in the world order. The conception of sovereignty here, is precarious to Cuba as it is being simultaneously demanded (as much of the crisis stemmed from the fact that the Soviet-led block was being strengthened by the weapons in Cuba) and denied (since Cuba's own reasons were not considered as important enough) by the Eurocentric international system. Hence, the next section of this chapter shifts its focus from the application of agency to the consequences of subaltern agency to discuss further the precarious nature of sovereignty exemplified through the consequences faced by Cuba in the aftermath of the October Crisis.

3.2.The Aftermath of the October Crisis: Consequences of Applying Cuba's Agency

After the Cuban Revolutionary Government came into power, by 1959, America had then imposed its first economic sanction on the island, which had intensified Cuba's economic

¹⁷³ Castro, "Reflections on a Crisis," *LANIC- Latin American Network Information Centre* February 20, 1992), PART 4, <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/castro/db/1992/19920228.html>

¹⁷⁴ Castro, "Reflections on a Crisis," PART 4.

¹⁷⁵ Guevara, "Response to the Attacks against Cuba in the UN General Assembly, New York" December 11, 1964. In *The Awakening of Latin America: A Classic Anthology of Che Guevara's Writing on Latin America.*, (New York: Ocean Press, 2013).

stagnation as the American's imported the largest share of Cuban sugar.¹⁷⁶ Building on to which, by the early 1962, Cuba was expelled from the OAS, which had further isolated Cuba within the Western hemisphere. The expulsion from the OAS or what Guevara called the "Ministry of Colonies" as well as the early economic blockade had greatly undermined Cuba's position in the American continent.¹⁷⁷ Thus, in the aftermath of the October crisis, in 1962, Cuba was experiencing varied forms of aggression and subversion of its sovereignty, most acutely by the Americans.¹⁷⁸ On the heels of which came the economic sanctions that were applied against Cuba during the missile crisis. The overlap of continuous and congruent forms of American-backed policies that resembled a political agenda that was more anti-Cuba than democracy-led, which became a focal point in Cuba's engagement with many international organisations.¹⁷⁹ At the same time, by the early twentieth century and in the post-WWII era, much of IR was concerned with either post-WWII reformation or in trying to deal with the newly introduced nuclear weapons within the study of war and peace. At the same time, with the emergence of economic sanctions in the early nineteenth century, created out of the exigency to grapple with the introduction of nuclear weapons with the security dilemma, threatened newly 'decolonising' states' sovereignty. Specifically, through economic blockades, which were employed to destabilise Cuba, even with its preexisting economic dependency and economic stagnation, which was outlined in chapter one.

For both, Castro and Guevara these economic sanctions were nothing short of an internationally sanction act of war, 'subversive activities, launching and landing of weapons and explosives by air and sea, organization of mercenary invasions, infiltration of spies and saboteurs 'the mask of humanitarianism with which it attempted to disguise the aggressive

¹⁷⁶ Pérez and Ebrary, "*Cuba and the United States*," 220.

Castro, "Speech Delivered by Commander Fidel Castro Ruz, Prime Minister of the Revolutionary Government, at the Headquarters of the United Nations, United States, on September 26, 1960," transcript, www.cuba.cu, accessed December 26, 2021, <http://www.fidelcastro.cu/en/discursos/speech-un-headquarters-us-september-26-1960>.

¹⁷⁷ Che Guevara, "Response to the Attacks against Cuba in the UN General Assembly, New York" December 11, 1964. In *The Awakening of Latin America: A Classic Anthology of Che Guevara's Writing on Latin America*, (New York: Ocean Press, 2013).

¹⁷⁸ Guevara, "Response to the Attacks against Cuba" December 11, 1964.

Castro, "Speech Delivered by Commander Fidel Castro Ruz, Prime Minister of the Revolutionary Government, at the Headquarters of the United Nations, United States, on September 26, 1960," transcript, www.cuba.cu, accessed December 26, 2021, <http://www.fidelcastro.cu/en/discursos/speech-un-headquarters-us-september-26-1960>

¹⁷⁹ Castro, "Speech delivered at the Seventh Summit Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement, at the Palace of Culture in New Delhi, India, on March 7, 1983," transcript in *LANIC- Latin American Network Information Centre*, <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/castro/db/1983/19830307.html>

nature of its blockade against the people of Cuba.’¹⁸⁰ The efficacy of these economic sanctions at this point still remained uncertain, however—as outlined in the historiography, economic sanctions were born out of American politics—they were a remained a popular strategy of the Americans that was able to limit the use of force and instead strongarm subordination through economic stagnation and isolation. The embargo, which read, under the heading of *Interdiction of the Delivery of Offensive Weapons to Cuba*: ‘the United States, in accordance with its international obligations, is prepared to take all necessary actions to promote national and hemispheric security by isolating the present Government of Cuba and thereby reducing the threat posed by its alignment with the communist powers.’¹⁸¹ Even if the nature of the embargo changed since its inception after Castro came into power, the underlying remnants of America’s first colonial interventions continues to shape and undercut any display of sovereignty that Cuba was able to display during the missile crisis, or to that end, even by declaring themselves to be socialist.

At the same time, Cuba’s own state formation was consequently overshadowed by the impending American attacks on its sovereignty, which Guevara and Castro blame on the covert aggression and the expansion of American agendas within the region of Latin America. As Guevara observed, that ‘covert interventions are carried out through military missions that participate in internal repression, organizing forces designed for that purpose in many countries, and in coups d’état, which have been repeated so frequently on the Latin American continent during recent years’¹⁸² To that end, Castro states that, as was echoed earlier in his speeches, that ‘[Americans] project themselves on the continent according to their economic interests and [through] their military strategy: [yet they] maintain their exploitation and control of Central America and the Caribbean [by] intentionally distort[ing] the drama caused [out of] the misery and backwardness of [Latin Americas] peoples, inscribing it as part of the conflicts between East and West.’¹⁸³ Castro’s believed that, at the end, even under the American influence, Latin America was connected through its language, shared histories of subjugation and continuous underdevelopment. Yet, the American influence was able to subvert their

¹⁸⁰ Guevara, “Response to the Attacks against Cuba in the UN General Assembly, New York” December 11, 1964., (New York: Ocean Press, 2013).

¹⁸¹ “U.S.C. Title 22 - FOREIGN RELATIONS and INTERCOURSE,” www.govinfo.gov, accessed June 6, 2022, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/USCODE-2020-title22/html/USCODE-2020-title22-chap32-subchapIII-partI-sec2370.htm>.

¹⁸² Guevara and Cuba, “At the United Nations Record #381483,” United Nations Digital Library System, speech transcript, 1964, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/381483?ln=en>.

¹⁸³ Castro, “Speech delivered at the Seventh Summit Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement, at the Palace of Culture in New Delhi, India, on March 7, 1983,” transcript in *LANIC- Latin American Network Information Centre*, <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/castro/db/1983/19830307.html>

similarities and include within the region, differences, and contradictions. For Castro, this was most exemplified through Americans approach towards sanctions, specifically the ones that isolate subalterns such as Cuba, as Castro believed that if America was truly intervening in the region to augment stability, using such a destabilising force of action not only limits Cuba's ability to grow economically, but also gravely affects the routes of trades, long established under the era of empires

The economic sanction and the faulting economic conditions of Cuba, for Castro were congruent to each other. Consequently, much of the discourse that is produced on the efficacy of the sanctions, in the early years of the embargo, attempted to argue that if only Castro stepped down from his position, America would renew its normal trade with Cuba. Putting up a subaltern's agency as collateral to ensure compliance remains even today a central tenant of how the international system behaves with the non-Western. Thus, Castro argues that the fact that the international systems allow for one nation to project control and power over another through sanctioned approaches speaks to how little autonomy subalterns really have within the world order. To that end he states that, 'we must [have] justified fear [of] the fact that one nation assumes the right to blockade another nation, to prevent that country from freely receiving the arms...[this] violates the sovereign right of our country and violates international law—which is to say, the right of all the nations and establishes a precedent that must be alarming to all the countries of the world.'¹⁸⁴ Although, the embargo in question was applied through a mutually agreed or sanctioned backing from the UN, over the years and as recent as 2018, UN has denounced the continuation of an almost 60 years of embargo.¹⁸⁵

In conclusion, the subaltern's position as exemplified through the two sections of this chapter, remains to be conditional and relative to that of a hegemon, in this case, the American. However, this is not indicative to whether the subaltern can speak or exert its agency. Within the world of realpolitik, a state driven by its own self-interest and position of power, it can adequately exist in a world of anarchy or conflicts. The underlying question, therefore, is who has the power? Through this analysis, power remains entrenched in the world of empires and imperial expansion and little movement has been made in ways to adequately engage with complex states such as Cuba. Employing binary metrics of representation to understand a

¹⁸⁴ Castro, "Fidel Castro's 23rd October Interview," transcript on *Lanic.utexas.edu*, October 23, 1962, <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/castro/db/1962/19621024.html>.

¹⁸⁵ Un Secretary-General et al., "Necessity of Ending the Economic, Commercial and Financial Embargo Imposed by the United States of America against Cuba", *Digitallibrary.un.org*, August 29, 2018, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/1648511?ln=en>.

multifaceted state such as Cuba reduces—as outlined in section one, small displays of agency. The almost a ‘fortress-like conception of state sovereignty,’ that ostensibly rejects non-Eurocentric displays of sovereignty, condemns subalterns such as Cuba on arbitrary grounds through coercive means.¹⁸⁶ Cuba here is not outlined to absolve Castro of his mistakes or shortcomings, on the contrary, as a leader of a nation that has been in projected through overtly American-led discourse, it is important to reiterate how state formation for many post-colonial states ran parallel to many contentious moments of our history. To bridge the gap between discourse that assumes agency or represents the subaltern, this chapter has analysed subaltern’s perspective through its own perceptions of realpolitik and IR.

¹⁸⁶ Getachew, “A Political Theory of Decolonization,” 31.

4. Cuba's Internationalism

“When analysing the structure of the contemporary world, it is found that these rights of our peoples are not yet guaranteed.”

- Fidel Castro, 34th UN General Assembly, October 12, 1979.¹⁸⁷

The anti-colonial fervour and the continuation of the Revolutionary idealism within Cuba continued to shape Cuba's political agendas in the early 1960s. The impact and implications of Cuba's agency, both in terms of its application and subsequently its elimination, as discussed in the previous chapter, only heightened Cuba's anti-imperial and anti-conformist agendas, 'we must fulfil the obligation of our government and people...that we morally support and stand in solidarity with peoples who struggle anywhere in the world to make the rights of full sovereignty a reality, as proclaimed in the UN charter.'¹⁸⁸ In the aftermath of the October Crisis, Cuba's international political agendas were co-opted out of the 'points of friction' as Cuba remained 'one of the places where the principles of upholding the right of small countries to sovereignty are put to test every day, every minute.'¹⁸⁹ Thus, in Guevara's perspective, Cuba could now exemplify an anti-imperial and non-Western front, with the ability to stand as a bulwark against the continued hegemony of America within the international system declaring that, '... [the] United States is not a champion of freedom, but rather the perpetrator of exploitation and oppression against people of the world...'¹⁹⁰

Although, much of Castro's political inclinations lay within the domestic ordering of Cuba, Guevara showed a more active involvement in the international realm, 'we want to build socialism...we are supporters of those who strive for peace...'¹⁹¹ At the same time, Guevara's political agendas were rooted in the success of the socialist bloc; as a result, much of the international agenda of Cuba in this period saw its involvement within the socialist agendas of worldmaking and anti-colonialism, 'we have declared ourselves to be a part of the

¹⁸⁷ Castro, “Speech Delivered by Commander-In-Chief Fidel Castro Ruz, before the 34th Session of The General Assembly of The United Nations on October 12, 1979,” speech transcript at *LANIC- Latin American Network Information Centre*.n.d., <http://www.cuba.cu/gobierno/discursos/1979/esp/f121079e.html>.

¹⁸⁸ Castro, “Speech Delivered by Commander-In-Chief Fidel Castro Ruz, before the 34th Session of The General Assembly of The United Nations on October 12, 1979,” speech transcript <http://www.cuba.cu/gobierno/discursos/1979/esp/f121079e.html>.

¹⁸⁹ Guevara and Cuba, “At the United Nations Record #381483,” United Nations Digital Library System, speech transcript, 1964, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/381483?ln=en>.

¹⁹⁰ Guevara and Cuba, “At the United Nations Record #381483,”

¹⁹¹ Guevara and Cuba, “At the United Nations Record #381483,”

Nonaligned countries, although we are Marxist-Leninist, because Nonaligned countries, like ourselves, fight imperialism. We want peace. We want to build a better life for our people.'¹⁹² For Guevara, the socialist bloc represented an alternative to the larger liberal international system which continued to expel and isolate Cuba, thus, socialism and by extension the doctrines of Marxism-Leninism, were applied by Cuba to achieve the agency that they believed was unattainable within the Eurocentric international order. The international agendas of Cuba were always fraught with contention specifically because socialism within the international order, was seen as the antithesis of liberal democracies and was therefore robustly denied.¹⁹³ The doctrine of international order, heavily influenced by American and European ideas of post-colonial worldmaking was therefore, unable to engage with ideals that went beyond the conscriptions that they proclaimed and enforced on the world at large.¹⁹⁴ In the next section, this chapter discusses to key points of Cuba's alternative to Eurocentrism as well as agency and active involvement within the worldmaking agenda of the 'post-colonial' state. This is analysed by means of a two-fold approach, wherein the first sub-chapter focuses on how Cuba's involvement in anti-imperial revolutions under the flag of socialism augmented Cuba's agency as a participant within conflicts and security dilemmas across the world. Furthermore, the second sub-chapter focuses on the implications of Cuba as a participant in the Nonaligned Movement to counter the great power politics within the Cold War era, beyond ideological frameworks, which is often evoked within Eurocentric representations of Cuban international politics. Through these alternative subaltern-led and subaltern-focused networks, the subaltern Cuba in this chapter is challenging the international world order.

4.1. Solidarity and armed involvement of Cuba in anti-imperial conflicts in the decolonisation era

The colonial vestiges of 'post-colonial' state making as discussed in the theoretical frameworks, is further examined in this section, to outline how institutional bias within the international order overlooks non-Western forms of international cooperation. The aspect of the subaltern's agency within this paradigm informs on the inadequacy of current forms of IR scholarship to fully envelop in their narrative, the wishes or aspirations of the non-Western. In the post-WWII era, the international world order required new forms of global cooperation. However, due to the bipolar nature of world politics, there were only two ways in which many

¹⁹² Guevara and Cuba, "At the United Nations Record #381483," United Nations Digital Library System, speech transcript, 1964, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/381483?ln=en>.

¹⁹³ Getachew, "From Principle to Right," 81.

¹⁹⁴ Getachew, "A Political Theory of Decolonizing," 24.

decolonising states could order their agendas in both international and domestic spheres, of which one was the Soviet-led socialist bloc and the other, American-led capitalism.

In the backdrop of heightened Cold War tensions after the October Missile Crisis of 1962, Cuba's representation within international organisations, such as the UN, was very important to Cuba's position vis-à-vis the great powers. Specifically, since the issues of ideology were still constructing the fault lines of conflicts arising in 1960s and 1970s. Guevara believed that Cuba's sustained fight to continuously deflect American imperial aggressions was synonymous with the success of their ideological standpoint, 'our country is in the trenches of freedom...just a few steps away from US imperialism, leading by example...that in present conditions of humanity, the peoples can liberate themselves and keep themselves free.'¹⁹⁵ This standpoint, he believed, was worthy of further dissemination and thus was foundational to Cuba's outward intervention (through invitation) into the conflicts that arose in other 'post-colonial' states, such as Congo in Africa.¹⁹⁶ The example of Congo Crisis of 1960-1965, for Guevara was very illustrative of the duality of what he called, 'the white man'(s)', imperialism. To that end, he says,

We remember it as if it were yesterday: when we saw a small country in Europe, a civilised and industrious country, the Kingdom of Belgium, invaded by Hitler's hordes. We were embittered by the knowledge that this small nation was massacred by German imperialism, and we felt affection for its people. But on the other side of the imperialist coin was something that many of us did not see. Perhaps the sons of Belgium patriots who died defending their country's liberty are now murdering thousands of Congolese in cold blood¹⁹⁷

Guevara's assessment of the Congo crisis was not incorrect, the post-colonial state of Congo, much like Cuba was suffering constant intervention and political interference in its domestic affairs. Thus, in this context, the Cuban involvement in Congo's crisis, under the tenants of ideological frameworks of socialism and the inability of both countries to achieve equality within the international order, were a unifying element according to Guevara's perspective. To that end, though the instrumental ideological framework of socialism within Cuba's domestic order, it was far more instrumental in shaping their international agendas, which were decidedly anti-imperial and thus by extension against most Eurocentric approaches of

¹⁹⁵ Guevara and Cuba, "At the United Nations Record #381483," United Nations Digital Library System, speech transcript, 1964, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/381483?ln=en>.

¹⁹⁶ Castro, "Speech delivered at the Seventh Summit Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement, at the Palace of Culture in New Delhi, India, on March 7, 1983," transcript in *LANIC- Latin American Network Information Centre*, <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/castro/db/1983/19830307.html>

¹⁹⁷ Guevara and Cuba, "At the United Nations Record #381483," United Nations Digital Library System, speech transcript, 1964, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/381483?ln=en>.

internationalism.¹⁹⁸ 'As Marxist we have maintained that peaceful coexistence among nations does not encompass coexistence between the exploiters and the exploited, between the oppressors and the oppressed.'¹⁹⁹ Yet, for Castro, socialism was not without its faults, specifically the way in which many military junta's applied the ideology to their unfair and illegal tactics of military aggression, specifically, he condemned the way in which Cambodian dictator Pol Pot, turned socialist frameworks to assume dictatorship, stating that Cuba 'condemn[s] with all [its] strength the genocidal government of Pol Pot...it is a shame for the progressive forces of the world that such crimes have ever been committed in the name of revolution and socialism.'²⁰⁰ Thus, for Castro, socialism was not an ideology that was adopted through reckless abandonment of principles, rather socialism was only applied because it is bound in its conceptions principles that are applied to achieve a peaceful co-existence even if it uses revolutionary ideals.²⁰¹

Thus, together, ideology as well as solidarity were two key factors for Cuba's political agendas on the international level, in the undercurrents of which was Cuba's critique of IR systems that continued to deem revolutionary forms of solidarity (as expressed within the socialist framework) as 'insurgency.' At the same time, for both the Cuban leaders, the contention with the normative frameworks of IR lay in the fact that United States explicitly based its political agendas on ideological frameworks that legitimised its involvement in conflicts across the globe, (Vietnam or Korea). Guevara confronts this asymmetry within IR by stating that, 'it is the United States that intervenes,' Furthermore, Castro also challenges the same disparity by stating that 'what at one point of time was a tactic by revolutionary and irregular war [has] also [become] a US tactic.'²⁰² Why then, is then Cuba persecuted and not America? The answer lies in the nature of the international order, while it lauds American agendas due to the

¹⁹⁸ Castro, "Speech Delivered by Commander-In-Chief Fidel Castro Ruz, at the Inaugural Session of the VI Summit Conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held at the Palace of Conventions, Havana, on September 3, 1979," transcript of speech in *LANIC- Latin American Network Information Centre*, accessed December 26, 2021, <http://www.cuba.cu/gobierno/discursos/1979/esp/f030979e.html>.

¹⁹⁹ Guevara and Cuba, "Record #381483," United Nations Digital Library System, speech transcript, 1964, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/381483?ln=en>.

²⁰⁰ Castro, "Speech Delivered by Commander-In-Chief Fidel Castro Ruz, at the Inaugural Session of the VI Summit Conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, Held at the Palace of Conventions, Havana, on September 3, 1979," <http://www.cuba.cu/gobierno/discursos/1979/esp/f030979e.html>.

²⁰¹ Castro, "Response of the President of the Republic of Cuba to the statements of the United States government on biological weapons. May 10, 2002" speech transcript in *LANIC- Latin American Network Information Centre*, <http://www.cuba.cu/gobierno/discursos/2002/ing/f100502i.html>

²⁰² Castro, "Reflections on a Crisis," *LANIC- Latin American Network Information Centre* February 20, 1992), PART 4, <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/castro/db/1992/19920228.html>

inherent Eurocentrism, it vilifies Cuba.²⁰³ This dichotomy arises not only from hierarchy of international relations because of economic or political superiority of America (in relation to Cuba), but also from the construction of IR scholarship that codifies Western-centric representations of IR as normative and others as peripheral.

The intervention model adopted by Cuba, according to Guevara and Castro in this era, was important to their cause of anti-imperialism, but more importantly, it was a vehicle to introduce Cuba as a willing and participatory member of the international system. At the same time, through their participation in issues of peace and war specifically within regions of the Third World, Cuba was able to simultaneously create a subaltern version of interventionism. The difference of between the two, according to Castro, was where the 'problem of Cuba' arose, the indoctrination of an unequal representation of intervention and to that extent, representation of subaltern's agendas and agency were foundational to how the Eurocentric IR viewed the subalterns voice.²⁰⁴ The impact of representation, as outlined through Spivak's argument in the theoretical frameworks, is consequential to the place the subaltern is conferred within the world order, as Castro said, in 'analysing the structure of contemporary world, it is found that the rights of our peoples are not yet guaranteed,' and that, '[Cuba] aspire[d] to a new world order, bases on justice, equality and peace that replaces the unjust and unequal system that prevails today.'²⁰⁵ To that end, if the Congolese or the Cuban 'problem' is seen through more equitable representation and the colonial context, within IR scholarship the so-called conflicts of the non-Western can have more informed and applicable solutions. In the next sub-chapter, this issue is further analysed through the example of Cuban involvement in the Non-Aligned Movement which were beyond the contours of ideological frameworks and truly exemplify Cuba's involvement in a more international scale.

²⁰³ Laffey and Weldes, "Decolonizing the Cuban Missile Crisis," 561.

²⁰⁴ Castro, "Speech Delivered by Commander Fidel Castro Ruz, Prime Minister of the Revolutionary Government, at the Headquarters of the United Nations, United States, on September 26, 1960," transcript, www.cuba.cu, accessed December 26, 2021, <http://www.fidelcastro.cu/en/discursos/speech-un-headquarters-us-september-26-1960>

²⁰⁵ Castro, "Speech Delivered by Commander-In-Chief Fidel Castro Ruz, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, President of The Non-Aligned Movement, before the 34th Session of The General Assembly of The United Nations on October 12, 1979," speech transcript at *LANIC- Latin American Network Information Centre*.n.d., accessed December 26, 2021, <http://www.cuba.cu/gobierno/discursos/1979/esp/f121079e.html>.

4.2. Cuba and its involvement in Nonaligned Movement: Implications for Global IR

Building on Cuba's application of subaltern agency through subaltern networks, this sub-chapter focuses on the non-ideological aspect of Cuba's policy by analysing the involvement of Cuba within larger transnational organisations such as Nonaligned Movement or NAM. Castro's rationale to Cuba's involvement within the NAM even as a socialist country was argued by his statement, 'we are decidedly anti-imperialist, anti-colonialism, anti-neo-colonialist, anti-racist, anti-Zionist, anti-fascist, because those principles are a part of our conceptions and in the essence, origin...of the Non-Aligned Movement...' ²⁰⁶ Furthermore, his participation, he claimed did not necessarily negate the principles of socialism, on the contrary, he believed that through NAM, Cuba would be able to circumvent the great power politics in its region and refocus the international concern towards the aspects of imperial and colonial legacies.

The NAM was founded by five newly independent 'post-colonial' -- namely, India, former Yugoslavia (currently, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, certain regions of Serbia and Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina), Indonesia, Ghana and lastly, Egypt—to essentially establish a 'third bloc' against the growing calls for de-nuclearization in the period of the Cold War. ²⁰⁷ Cuba, after its involvement in the October Crisis of 1962, had already established its claim to not confer to de-nuclearization unless it was universally applicable, 'we are decidedly in favour of disarmament...[but] we also declare that we shall not be victims of any aggression...' and that if the 'united states [wants to peruse a policy of nuclear disarmament] that is magnificent! Let us *all* disarm (italics mine). ²⁰⁸ Castro's international agenda in this context, began to shift its narrative from ideology to a focused critiquing of the international order at large, his proclamation through NAM to

fight tirelessly for peace, to improve international relations, to stop the arms race...[to] fight relentlessly for cessation of unequal exchange...[to] fight for the establishment of equitable, stable, and universal international monetary and financial systems...[to] fight for the development, with international help...[to] fight to raise the prestige, authority, and role of the United Nations and its specialised agencies; to fight for peace and security of all...[so that together] ... [we] form an indestructible bundle of people...

²⁰⁶ Castro, "Speech Delivered by Commander-In-Chief Fidel Castro Ruz, before the 34th Session of The General Assembly of The United Nations on October 12, 1979," speech transcript <http://www.cuba.cu/gobierno/discursos/1979/esp/f121079e.html>.

²⁰⁷ Nataša Mišković, "Introduction," In *the Non-Aligned Movement and the Cold War*, ed. Nataša Mišković, Harald Fischer-Tiné & Nada Boškowska, (London, New York: Routledge, 2014), 1- 18, 2-4.

²⁰⁸ Castro, "Fidel Castro's 23rd October Interview," speech transcript on *Lanic.utexas.edu*, October 23, 1962, <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/castro/db/1962/19621024.html>.

[who] demand [that] our aspirations, our legitimate interests, our inalienable right to survive, as Third World countries and as an inseparable part of humanity [are met]²⁰⁹

In contrast to the revolutionary interventionist approach of Cuba in the years of 1960s, the era of 1970s saw Cuba trying to integrate itself into the larger international system, by criticising the inadequacy of the system it was trying to participate in. Cuba, in this context was actively assuming agency through its critique, 'we are 95 countries on all continents, representing most of humanity...united in our determination to defend collaboration between our countries... [and our] sovereignty, security, equality, and self-determination.'²¹⁰ As outlined in the theoretical frameworks, the conceptions of agency and self-determination while appropriated from the West, were very much part of the fabric of non-Western's international aspirations. The NAM even in its weaning years remained an important avenue for Castro to reiterate his decidedly anti-American and anti-nuclear weapons, political agenda, '[NAM] have always attached great importance to the possibility and necessity of détente between the great powers.'²¹¹ The inability of NAM to project a united and codified doctrine, as many of its founding members such as India, continued to become a nuclear weapons superpower. However, for Castro, NAM was not limited to the principles non-nuclear proliferation, it was a place where Cuba was positioned at a more equitable position than in international institutions such as the UN. The already tumultuous relationship with the OAS pushed Castro towards adopting a more leadership role within the NAM, specifically in terms of addressing or discussing the adverse effects the economic sanctions continue to have on Havana. The solidarity in respects of underdevelopment, the process of 'decolonisation' and to project agency through non-Western nations, Castro approached the leadership of NAM by restructuring the nature of NAM as an organisation that was primarily focused on creating a bulwark against American agendas. Consequently, Castro announced that the,

universal resonance the denunciation that the [Non-aligned] Movement has just made in Havana against the acts of hostility, pressure, and threats of the United States against Cuba, calling them a flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the

²⁰⁹ Castro, "Speech delivered at the Seventh Summit Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement, at the Palace of Culture in New Delhi, India, on March 7, 1983," speech transcript in *LANIC- Latin American Network Information Centre*, <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/castro/db/1983/19830307.html>

²¹⁰ Castro, "Speech delivered at the Seventh Summit Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement, at the Palace of Culture in New Delhi, India, on March 7, 1983," speech transcript <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/castro/db/1983/19830307.html>

²¹¹ Castro, "Speech Delivered by Commander-In-Chief Fidel Castro Ruz, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, President of The Non-Aligned Movement, before the 34th Session of The General Assembly of The United Nations on October 12, 1979," speech transcript at *LANIC- Latin American Network Information Centre*.n.d., <http://www.cuba.cu/gobierno/discursos/1979/esp/f121079e.html>.

principles of international law, as a threat to world peace. Once again, we respond to our brothers and assure the universal community that Cuba will remain faithful to the principles of international solidarity.²¹²

At the risk of being proclaimed as anti-American, Castro knew that to achieve voice and agency, specifically in the aftermath of the missile crisis, he had to apply rhetoric that was able to envelop more engagement. Thus far, Cuba's approach within international system has been two-fold, one through ideological solidarity and the other through involvement in transnational organisations. Within which, two critical aspects of subaltern agency are analysed, first through the model of representation and the other through a critique of international order through the Movement of non-Aligned countries. In both methods of Cuba's internationalism, the objective to reclaim their image after the missile crisis, remained Castro's and to a certain extent Guevara's primary goal. Through this analysis, it is important to realise that even through their international policies, Cuba's international relations continues to be isolated. Within the realist theory is state-centric, it does posit a version of internationalism that is driven by self-interest or national interest which is essentially how the power politics of the Cold War era is defined. However, in the post-Cold War era, wherein, a unipolar system of world emerged, realism and to that extent their treatise on security studies remains inadequately

²¹² Castro, "Speech Delivered by Commander-In-Chief Fidel Castro Ruz, before the 34th Session of The General Assembly of The United Nations on October 12, 1979," speech transcript <http://www.cuba.cu/gobierno/discursos/1979/esp/f121079e.html>.

Conclusion:

One of the functions of international relations theory is to theorise approaches that address concerns of war and peace, international governance, and collective action.²¹³ To do this, the basic requirement of the subject is to produce solutions, actionable or otherwise and to learn from conflicts that have happened, are happening or could arise. It is oft said that history repeats itself, perhaps its repetitive because structures of governance, knowledge production, self-determination and the legacy of power and agency are still constructed by idealogues of our shared colonial, imperial, and hierarchical past and present. To incur change, or to experience a relative shift in IR discourse to our continuing path, we must convert decolonisation from an unrealised concept to one that is realisable. This thesis has answered through its analysis that a subaltern perspective can challenge dogmatic theories such as realism and neorealism because at their theoretical inception, the subaltern remains absent. Thus, by questioning if the study of IR is still imperial in nature, this author has argued that the nature of discourse production in IR continues to remain centred through the power dynamics that emerged out of colonialism.²¹⁴ The political implication of colonisation in both the *creation* of IRT and the *application* of it are built on the assumption which considers ‘norms’ adopted by the West as normative towards the rest.²¹⁵ The subalternation of the non-Western, in this case Cuba, and to that end the employment of the concept of the ‘subaltern’ (even within this thesis) is indictive to the fact that nexus of power that emerged through the dynamic of the colony and the coloniser continues to define the ‘post-colonial’ state within IR.

Through the outline of IR discourse in chapter one, it has been highlighted how Eurocentric stronghold on subjects of social and political thinking together, undermine the way in which colonialism continues to shape the world order. Alternatively, if the missile crisis was a conflict that arose between two subalterns, for example, Cuba and Turkey (where U.S had placed their Jupiter missiles before the missile crisis) the mode of theoretical inquiry would have been substantially different. As such, the analysis of Cuba through its relationship with hegemons such as the U.S is a deliberate measure taken by this author to explicate on the

²¹³ Ayoob, ““Inequality and Theorizing in International Relations,” 28.

²¹⁴ Ayoob, 29.

²¹⁵ Navid Pourmokhtari, “A Postcolonial Critique of State Sovereignty in IR: The Contradictory Legacy of a ‘West-Centric’ Discipline,” *Third World Quarterly* 34, no. 10 (November 2013): 1767–93, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2013.851888>, 1784. Laffey and Weldes, “Decolonizing the Cuban Missile Crisis,” 558.

inequalities that continue to persist in the difference of power between Western and non-Western states. Or in an entirely different case, if the subject of analysis here focused on a conflict between countries such as India and China or India and Cuba, many of the authors within the theoretical frameworks, herein, would not be engaging with normative schools such as realism or neorealism, they would perhaps, be writing from the peripheries of critical discourse. To that end, as reiterated in the Theoretical Frameworks, the production of knowledge can never be neutral, rather it reiterates the power relations from which it emerges.²¹⁶ Thus, to understand America as an imperial power it is also to understand what the role power within representation and agency plays in the production of discourse and theories within IR. The modalities of knowledge production, therefore, need to move outside of realists' paradigms of power politics to include within its production the voices of the subaltern.²¹⁷ Thus, in conflicts such as the missile crisis, it is important to ask, why could Cuba not have missile on its islands? Why were Cuba's intentions inherently denounced and vilified? What is the reason for an ipso facto distrust of Cuban intentions? Even today, as remarked upon in the introduction, in the case the global issues such as the COVID-19 pandemic, Cuba was the one of the first countries that produced a vaccine, the *Abdala* created by the Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, under the imposition of the economic embargo.²¹⁸ Yet, the World Health Organisation, has still not recognised the vaccine's efficacy.²¹⁹

The origins of such asymmetric world order, indeed originates from Cuba's position as a colony during the era of empire outlined in chapter two. Where, the analysis showed how normative representation of the subaltern can be challenged if the subaltern represents itself. As a result of which, new modalities of inquiry emerge that includes intersectionality and the dichotomy power politics. Furthermore, chapter two also highlights the consequences of operating out of pre-existing positions of relative power which renders the subaltern to diminished capacities of autonomy and agency. Thus, from chapter two the question that arises is that if conceptions of self-determination and agency are language of the West, why has the

²¹⁶ Laffey and Weldes, "Decolonizing the Cuban Missile Crisis," 561.

²¹⁷ Ayoob, "Inequality and Theorizing in International Relations," 40.

²¹⁸ Dave Sherwood and Anett Rios, "Cuba Soars to near Top of COVID Vaccination Charts on Decades-Old Bet," *Reuters*, December 21, 2021, sec. Americas, <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/cuba-soars-near-top-covid-vaccination-charts-decades-old-bet-2021-12-20/>.

Sam Meredith, "Why Cuba's Extraordinary Covid Vaccine Success Could Provide the Best Hope for Low-Income Countries," *CNBC*, January 13, 2022, <https://www.cnbc.com/2022/01/13/why-cubas-extraordinary-covid-vaccine-success-could-provide-the-best-hope-for-the-global-south.html>.

²¹⁹ Mary Beth Sheridan, "How Cuba Became a Pioneer in Covid-19 Vaccines for Kids," *Washington Post*, May 18, 2022, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/06/18/cuba-coronavirus-vaccine-abdala-soberana/>.

Western hegemony of IR, unable to allow the non-Western to fully apply it in theory and reality? The issue of the IR system as it exists today is that it holds the power to deem one perspective as more normative, important and therefore, replicable and applicable and renders, the peripheral perspective as unimportant. To that end, even from positions of the peripheries, Cuba is very much engaging in realpolitik or rational politics.

Furthermore, since realist axioms of ‘relative gains,’ anarchy, self-interest and desire for power all outline the way in which states behave in the international order, they remain limited in their application towards states that, this author has described to be subaltern.²²⁰ At the same time, it is not to day that normative discourse if not of value.²²¹ Applied differently, as explained through the analysis of this thesis, can exemplify how subaltern can mitigate the anarchical world order, if only anarchy is taken to mean the continuation of imperial politics that create for the subaltern a destabilising world.²²² From chapter one, it is argued that realism’s relative gains, undermines the impact of economic dependency and stagnation of economic growth, which emerge out of subaltern’s foundational economic model as ordered by hegemonic empires. Alternatively, if realism is employed through a subaltern perspective, the economic stronghold of empire-era of economic order would hold a higher metric within discourse creation.²²³ By employing empire-to-nation narrative of historicisation, self-interest and self-determination, the realist paradigm, continues to overlook the continuation of neo-colonial subversion of autonomy. Thus, in using Ayoob’s treatise of Subaltern realism founded on grounds of what he ‘perceives to be the existing realities of the international system,’ can be employed as an alternative for the current realist perspectives.²²⁴ Subaltern realism is therefore, applied in this thesis to integrate realism with critical theories such as postcolonialism, makes an imperative argument to realise that normative IR is not incorrect, but insufficient in its metric of evaluation.²²⁵

An American reporter once asked Nelson Mandela on why South Africa’s continues to have a friendship with Cuba, to which Mandela responded by saying that ‘one of the mistakes some

²²⁰ Acharya and Buzan, “Why is there no non-Western international relations theory?” 80-81. Ayoob, “Inequality and Theorizing in International Relations,” p. 38.

²²¹ Ayoob, “Inequality and Theorizing in International Relations,” p. 34.

²²² Barkawi, “Decolonising War,” p. 205.

²²³ Getachew, “A Political Theory of Decolonization,” p. 17.

²²⁴ Ayoob, “Inequality and Theorizing in International Relations,” p. 47.

²²⁵ Ayoob, “Inequality and Theorizing in International Relations,” p. 34.

political analysts make is to think that their enemies should be our enemies.’²²⁶To reach peaceful co-existence consisting of states from both the West and the non-Western, it is important question the narrative of the hegemon and to break away from imperial cycles of power dichotomy of ‘West *against* the rest.’²²⁷

To that end, the historical significance of colonialism within the inception of the modern-Cuban state is not an aberration within world-politics, on the contrary, it is normative to the birth of most nations in the world such as India, Egypt, Ghana to that end, even the United States of America. Yet, what is unique the study of Cuba is that in this thesis, Cuba’s history is represented through their defiance to the norms of IR. In other words, at each point of Cuban history analysed within this thesis, the subaltern Cuba has been speaking in defiance of the Eurocentric normative imposed on its own realpolitik. To that end, this author wants to point out that the underlying point of enquiry adopted for Cuba is not employed to judge whether Cuba as a ‘post-colonial’ state has been successful. Or whether the Cuban revolution could be seen a model of success, rather, the purpose of the study as outlined at different point of this thesis, is to argue that the subaltern has always been speaking. Therefore, the perspective offered here, has shown that through a narrative of its colonisation, in chapter two, the subaltern speaks. Through applying agency and self-determination, in chapter three, the subaltern speaks, and through the practice of its own political agendas within world-politics, in chapter four, the subaltern speaks. The lack of Cuban narrative within IR, thus, does not, de facto signify to the failure or success of Cuba as a nation state, rather it speaks more to the inability of IR to contain within its dogmas a narrative of the subaltern. Thus, through an interpretive analysis of Cuba’s post-1898 state building and a postcolonial analysis of the October crisis of 1962, this thesis has challenged neorealist and realist dogmas of IR.

²²⁶ Richard Pyle, “Mandela Explains Support for PLO, Gadhafi, Castro with PM-Mandela, Bjt,” AP NEWS, June 20, 1990, <https://apnews.com/article/f7cc35e2e78be9a2bd132ebdedc0aaeb>.

²²⁷ Laffey and Weldes, “Decolonizing the Cuban Missile Crisis,” 558.

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