Colloquium

The Cuban Economy: Recent Trends and Developments

May 27, 2014

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The Cuba Futures Initiative aims at developing a policy-oriented network on changes and transformations in Cuba. Members and participants share a rigorous academic approach and pursue their interests through meetings (including workshops), research, publications, and outreach. The Initiative adopts a flexible process of policy-oriented network development adapted to Cuba’s complex and shifting conditions. One of our aims is to explore links between a changing Cuba and broader Latin America/Western Hemisphere processes to generate sound ideas and frameworks for studying the connection between current (and historical) dynamics and future developments.

The Bildner Center and the Cuba Project are grateful for the generous support from the following foundations:

- Lin and Albert Bildner Foundation
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After 2008, the newly installed presidency of Raúl Castro launched several initiatives to revamp the highly centralized form of socialism for which Cuba had been known. Though Cuba’s Actualización draws from other experiences of socialist reform, it appears to follow a distinctive and unique approach. The 2014 Colloquium on the Cuban Economy places the evolving approach in context and provides an update on current policies and changes. This colloquium closes with a review of policy and research implications.
Session 1: Economic Dynamics in Today’s Cuba
9:00 AM - 10:30 AM

La inversión extranjera directa en Cuba: necesidad de su relanzamiento
Omar Everleny Pérez Villanueva, University of Havana, CEEC

Planificación económica en Cuba: perspectivas y ataduras
Oscar Fernández, University of Havana

Crecimiento económico en Cuba: principales restricciones
Ricardo Torres, University of Havana, CEEC

Introduction: Cuba in Comparative Framework
Mauricio Font, Bildner Center for Western Hemisphere Studies

Moderator: Mauricio Font, Bildner Center for Western Hemisphere Studies

10:30 AM - 10:40 AM -- Coffee break

Session 2: Institutional Reforms
10:40 AM - 12:30 PM

Knowledge and Development: Science, Technology and Higher Education in Cuba
Juan Triana Cordoví, University of Havana, CEEC

Hacia una nueva institucionalidad para la planificación del desarrollo territorial en Cuba
Patricia Ramos, University of Havana

Sistema empresarial en Cuba: actualidad y perspectiva
Ileana Díaz, University of Havana, CEEC

Las nuevas empresas no estatales en Cuba: ¿Rentistas o inovadoras?
Saira Pons, University of Havana, CEEC
Moderator: Julie Skurski, The Graduate Center, CUNY

12:30 PM - 1:30 PM -- Lunch

**Session 3: Cuba and the World: The External Sector**

1:30 PM - 3:20 PM

*Change and Continuity in Cuban Diplomacy after 2008*
Carlos Alzugaray, Unión de Escritores y Artistas de Cuba (UNEAC); Revista Temas

*The International reinsertion of Cuba: Changes and Prospects*
Antonio Romero, University of Havana, (CIEI)

*La unificación del tipo de cambio: el caso cubano*
Augusto de la Torre, The World Bank

*La devaluación del tipo de cambio oficial del peso cubano: costos y beneficios*
Pavel Vidal, Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Cali, Colombia

Moderator: Mauricio Font, Bildner Center for Western Hemisphere Studies

3:20 PM - 3:30 PM -- Coffee break
Session 4: Agricultural Transformations
3:30 PM - 5:00 PM

*Cooperativas y cadenas globales de valor: el caso de la producción tabacalera en Cuba*
Lázaro Peña, *University of Havana, CIEI*

*Formas de propiedad/sector agropecuario*
Armando Nova, *University of Havana, CEEC*

*El cooperativismo en la agricultura cañera cubana: evolución y perspectivas*
Federico Sulroca, *Instituto de Investigaciones de la Caña de Azúcar - INICIA*

*New Forms of Agricultural Commercialization in Cuba*
Mario González-Corzo, *Lehman College, CUNY*

Moderator: Mario González-Corzo, *Lehman College, CUNY*

Session 5: Closing Roundtable
5:00 PM - 5:30 PM

5:30 PM - 6:30 PM -- Reception

While some of our panelists will present in Spanish, each panel/session will have Powerpoint outlines in English. Moreover, the Q&A period will be in both English and Spanish.

Selected presentations will be compiled in a short volume including analyses of each of the areas covered. Each chapter will provide a summary of the reforms and changes since 2008.
This handbook explores key themes in the current debate about Cuba’s contemporary cultural and historical dynamics. Leading academics from Cuba, the United States, and Europe bring to light significant revisions of the artistic and literary canon and the historical archive, and they reconsider often neglected subjects and dynamics in historiography as well as contemporary affairs. The book includes new studies on contentious mobilization, leftist activism, and youth organizations in the pre-revolutionary republic. Current analyses include the relation between the Cuban state and intellectuals; institutional legitimation processes; the formation and reconstruction of national identity discourses; and new framings of gender, race, and sexual orientation. The book illuminates the growing salience of social issues and changes in music, literature, cinema, and theater, thus fostering a fuller understanding of historical and current social dynamics of a Cuba in transformation today.

Book Launch Event
Thursday, July 10, 2014, 4 PM
The Graduate Center, Skylight Room

Panelists:

Rafael Rojas
Princeton University
Global Scholar

Ana María Hernández
La Guardia Community College

Raúl Rubio
John Jay College

Mauricio Font
Bildner Center for Western Hemisphere Studies

Araceli Tinajero
The City College of New York and Graduate Center
Presenters

Carlos Alzugaray is professor at the University of Havana and Cuban diplomat. He is also a member of the Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba (UNEAC) and of the editorial board of Temas. He studied at the International Division of Sophia University in Tokyo, Japan, from 1959-1961 and at the University of Havana from 1961-1965. He has Bachelor’s degrees in Diplomacy (1965) and History of Cuba (1989); Master’s degree in Contemporary History (1999) and Ph.D. in Historical Sciences, all from the University of Havana.

Ileana Díaz (Ph.D., University of Havana) is professor at the Center for the Study of the Cuban Economy (CEEC) at the University of Havana. She is also Adjunct Professor of the School of Advanced Studies in Hospitality and Tourism. Her research focuses on business finance in Cuba, the evolution of the state budget, and small and medium businesses.

Oscar Fernández is assistant professor of economics at the University of Havana. He is head of the National Economy Planning Department at the University of Havana. His research includes the functioning characteristics of the Cuban economy, national economic planning, and comparative socio-economic systems. Dr. Fernández Estrada received the University of Havana Research Prize in 2011 for his work on the Cuban economic model. He has been Director of the Planning and Statistics Office of the University of Havana, and he is currently the Head of the Department of National Economy Planning of the Faculty of Economics. He is Member of the Scientific Council of the Economics Faculty; member of the Permanent PhD Tribunal of Applied Economy at the University of Havana and Secretary of the Executive Board of the Cuban Scientific Society for Planning of the National Economists and Accountings Association of Cuba. He has also been Delegate to the Provincial Assembly of Popular Power in Havana and the provincial parliament for 10 years.

Mario González-Corzo (Ph.D., Rutgers University) is associate professor at the Department of Economics at Lehman College of The City University of New York (CUNY), where he teaches graduate and undergraduate courses in economics and finance. He is also an Adjunct Professor at Columbia University. His research and areas of specialization include Cuba’s post-Soviet economic transformations, the role of remittances in the Cuban economy, and Cuba’s banking and agricultural sectors. Dr. González Corzo is a contributing editor for the section on Cuban political economy and economics of the Handbook of Latin American Studies (HLAS) published by the Library of Congress. He is also a Research Associate at the Cuba Transition Project of the Institute for Cuban and Cuban-American Studies (ICCAS) at the University of Miami (FL), where he publishes Enfoque Económico.

Armando Nova (Ph.D., University of Havana) is a senior researcher and professor at the Center for the Study of the Cuban Economy at the University of Havana. He earned his doctorate degree in economics at the University of Havana in 1989 and his B.A. in economics at the University of Havana in 1969. He has conducted more than 84 research studies on the Cuban economy and has published more than 65 articles in different Cuban and international journals. He is the author of La agricultura en Cuba: evolución y trayectoria, 1959-2005 (Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 2006), Aspectos económicos de los cítricos en Cuba (Editorial Científico-Técnica, 1988) and a third book, as well as co-authored two other volumes.
Presenters

Lázaro Peña (Ph.D., University of Havana) is director of the Research Center on International Economy and executive secretary of the Sugar Chair Álvaro Reynoso at the University of Havana. He graduated with a B.A. in 1978 and a Ph.D. in economics in 1997 from the University of Havana. His research focuses on the Cuban sugar industry and its relationship to the world markets. Dr. Peña has participated in international conferences and congresses in Canada, Mexico, Chile and the United States.

Omar Everleny Pérez Villanueva (Ph.D. University of Havana) is professor at the University of Havana. Dr. Pérez Villanueva earned his doctorate at the University of Havana, M.A. at CIDE/AC (Mexico), and B.A. at the University of Havana. He has taught and lectured at various universities in Cuba, the U.S., Japan, France, Spain, Brazil, Puerto Rico, Mexico, China and other countries. He has published more than 70 works on the Cuban and international economies. He is co-author of “Cuban Economy at the Start of the Twenty-First Century” (with Jorge Domínguez and L. Barberia); “Reflexiones sobre la economía cubana;” “Miradas a la economía cubana, volumes I and II;” “Cincuenta años de la economía cubana,” “Cuban Economic and Social Development: Policy Reforms and Challenges in the 21st Century.”

Saira Pons is a researcher and instructor at the Center for the Study of the Cuban Economy (CEEC) in the University of Havana. A 2008 graduate of the University of Havana in Economics, she completed a specialization in statistical methods and econometrics in 2010 from the University of Havana and Universidad de la República de Uruguay. Ms. Pons’ research interests are foreign direct investment in Cuba, inflation, taxation and human capital.
Patricia Ramos (Ph.D., University of Havana) is professor at the Economics Department at the University of Havana. She lectures on territorial planning at the Public administration School for public employees (Diplomado de Administración Pública para funcionarios del Estado y el Gobierno de Cuba). Her research focuses on territorial planning, methods for regional analysis, economic geography, regional budget, regional economic policies, regional input-output models, and other related topics.

Antonio Romero (Ph.D., University of Havana) is professor at the Center for Research of the Cuban Economy (CIEI). He has been director of the Relations for Integration and Cooperation division at the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA). Dr. Romero has published over 45 articles and has participated in international conferences about the Latin American and Caribbean economy.

Federico Sulroca is a faculty member of the Sugar Chair Álvaro Reynoso at the University of Havana, and senior specialist of the Sugar Group AZCUBA. He graduated from the Instituto Superior de Ciencias Agrícolas de La Habana in 1983 and has been a researcher at the Agrotechnical Division of the Ministry of Sugar since 1980. In 2000, Mr. Sulroca obtained an M.A. on cooperative development at FLACSO (Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales) in Havana. He has been a guest lecturer at the University of São Paulo and the University of Uruguay. His work focuses on the sugar agroindustry, agriculture economy, cooperatives, agriculture organization systems, design of new technology in agriculture, soil classification, management techniques, and agriculture administration.
Augusto de la Torre (Ph.D., University of Notre Dame) is the Chief Economist for Latin American and the Caribbean. Since joining the World Bank in 1997, he has held the positions of Senior Advisor in the Financial Systems Department and Senior Financial Sector Advisor, both in the Latin America and the Caribbean region. From 1993 to 1997, Mr. de la Torre was the head of the Central Bank of Ecuador, and in November 1996 was chosen by Euromoney Magazine as the year’s “Best Latin Central Banker.” From 1986 to 1992 he worked at the International Monetary Fund, where, among other positions, he was the IMF’s Resident Representative in Venezuela (1991-1992). Mr. de la Torre has published extensively on a broad range of macroeconomic and financial development topics. He is a member of the Carnegie Network of Economic Reformers. He earned his M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Economics at the University of Notre Dame and holds a Bachelors degree in Philosophy from the Catholic University of Ecuador.

Ricardo Torres is director of the Cuban Economy Team at the Center for the Study of the Cuban Economy (CEEC) and professor of economics at the University of Havana. He has contributed in various books such as Cincuenta años de la economía cubana (2010), Cuba: hacia una estrategia de desarrollo para los inicios del siglo XXI (2012); and has published in Harvard International Review. He received a fellowship at the University of Hitotsubashi in Tokyo (2007-2009) and has been awarded visiting scholarships at Harvard University (2011), Ohio State University (2012), and Columbia University (2013).

Juan Triana Cordoví (Ph.D., University of Havana) is professor at the Center for the Study of the Cuban Economy (CEEC) at the University of Havana. He received his Ph.D. in economics from the University of Havana in 1999 and an M.A. in Latin American and Cuban Studies from the University of Havana in 1996. He graduated with a B.A. in economics from the University of Havana in 1977 and obtained an advanced degree in Agricultural Development and Planning from FAO-PROCAPLAN, ONU in Buenos Aires in 1990. He has been a guest lecturer at ILAS, University of London, University of Wolverhampton, University of Notingham, Institute of Latin American Studies at Sorbonne University, Cuban
Pavel Vidal (Ph.D., University of Havana) is associate professor of economics at the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana in Cali, Colombia and Adjunct Research Scholar in the Institute of Latin American Studies of Columbia University. Previously, he was researcher and professor at the Center for the Study of the Cuban Economy (CEEC) in the University of Havana (2006-2012). He worked in the Monetary Policy Division of the Central Bank of Cuba for seven years (1999-2006). Dr. Vidal completed his doctorate at the University of Havana in 2007. He has been a visiting professor and researcher at Harvard University, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, and the Institute of Developing Economies (Japan External Trade Organization) as well as in several central banks in Latin America.
The Cuban economy is currently experiencing some of the most profound transformations since 1959. The process of “updating” the Cuban economic model (“actualización”) has been characterized by the gradual application of calibrated policy measures to expand the emerging non-State sector, while preserving socialist centralized planning as the principal form of economic coordination.

In this edited volume, a group of renowned Cuba-based and international scholars explore Cuba’s economic transformations since 2008 and present fresh and timely perspectives on key topics such as: economic reforms and development, the changing patterns of Cuba’s merchandise trade and its prospects under various possible international scenarios, challenges and opportunities confronting micro-entrepreneurs and self-employed workers in Cuba, cooperatives and their evolving role in the Cuban economy, existing and proposed efforts to mobilize micro-credits and micro-finance as sustainable vehicles to support the expansion of non-State economic actors like cooperatives, microenterprises, and self-employed workers, and recent developments in the structure, composition, management, and functions of the Central State Budget.

This (online) book is part of an ongoing series of publications about the recent transformations of Cuba’s economy and society under the Cuba Future Initiatives at the Bildner Center for Western Hemisphere Studies at The Graduate Center, CUNY.

Book Launch Event this summer!

For information on all Bildner Center events, visit www.bildner.org
Agricultural reforms are at the forefront of Cuba’s efforts to “update” its economic model. Since 2008, this vital sector of the Cuban economy has experienced notable structural and administrative transformations. The most significant include: transfers (in usufruct) of idle State-owned lands to individual farmers and cooperatives, the payment of arrears accumulated by the State to cooperatives and farmers, the elimination of fixed prices for selected agricultural products, the authorization of direct agricultural sales to tourism enterprises, the provision of microloans to independent farmers and cooperatives, and the direct commercialization of selected agricultural products in Havana, Mayabeque, and Artemisa Provinces.

This book presents new perspectives on Cuba’s emerging agricultural model after of “Lineamientos de la Política Económica y Social del Partido y la Revolución” (“Lineamientos” or “Guidelines”) in 2011. Written by Armando Nova González, Professor at the Center for the Study of the Cuban Economy at the University of Havana, and an internationally-recognized expert on Cuban agriculture, it effectively delineates the principal characteristics of Cuba’s emerging agricultural model, its principal challenges, and its future prospects.

(Mario González-Corzo, Associate Professor, Economics, Lehman College, CUNY).

Book for sale at registration desk!

Armando Nova (Ph.D., University of Havana) is a senior researcher and professor at the Center for the Study of the Cuban Economy at the University of Havana. He earned his doctorate degree in economics at the University of Havana in 1989 and his B.A. in economics at the University of Havana in 1969.
The Bildner Center/Cuba Project and FLACSO, Chile team up to offer seminar on the Cuban economy in Santiago, Chile on March 2013

The international seminar on the Cuban economy took place in Santiago, Chile from March 25 through March 28. This meeting represented a collaborative effort between the Bildner Center/Cuba Project, CEEC (Centro de Estudios de la Economía Cubana de la Universidad de La Habana), and Flacso-Chile. It deepened the initiative launched at the Cuba Futures: Past & Present conference held by the Cuba Project/Bildner Center in 2011. The five academic economists included four faculty members of CEEC -- Iliana Díaz Fernández, Alejandro Louro, Armando Nova and Saira Pons Pérez -- as well as Reynaldo Jiménez Guethón, Director of FLACSO-Cuba. This Cuban delegation spent a week in Santiago presenting their views and exchanging ideas with their Chilean colleagues, international representatives at ECLAC/CEPAL, United Nations Development Program, International Labor Office, and students at the Universidad de Chile and Universidad Diego Portales. Mauricio Font (Director of the Bildner Center/Cuba Project) and Angel Flisflisch (Director of FLACSO-Chile) hosted this gathering with the economic specialists from Cuba. This event was also supported by Global Americas, Chile.
The Cuban Tradition of Return
Tuesday, June 3, 4 PM
The Graduate Center, Skylight Room

Brazil: The 2014 Elections
Thursday, June 26, 5 PM
The Graduate Center, Skylight Room

Handbook on Cuban History, Literature, and the Arts
Thursday, July 10, 4 PM
The Graduate Center, Skylight Room

Cuba and Venezuela: Revolution and Reform
Monday, October 20, 4 PM
The Graduate Center, Skylight Room

Decentering Cubanidad: Cosmopolitan Citizens and Diasporic Engagement
Wednesday, October 29, 4:30 PM
The Graduate Center, Skylight Room

For more information on Bildner/Cuba Project events visit
www.bildner.org or www.cubaproject.org
Cuban studies is a highly dynamic field shaped by the country’s distinctive political and economic circumstances. The Handbook of Contemporary Cuba is an up-to-date comprehensive assessment offering the latest research available from a broad array of disciplines and perspectives. The handbook offers contributions from leading scholars from the United States, Cuba, Europe, and other world regions. The handbook’s general introduction as well as the introduction of each section survey the key literature in the field in relation to rapidly changing events on the island and in global political and economic affairs. This volume addresses timely development on civil society, including human rights. The handbook presents economic models and forecasts as well as analyses of the recent, pivotal Sixth Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba. For students, scholars, and experts in government, The Handbook of Contemporary Cuba is vital to any collection on Latin American studies or global politics.

The list of Cuba Project publications includes

For a complete list of publications visit www.cubaproject.org/publications
The Bildner Center brings together scholars, policymakers, civil society leaders, and other stakeholders to further understanding and foster policy-oriented research concerning the governance, security, and economic well-being of peoples in the Americas. Founded in 1982 with the support of businessman and philanthropist Albert Bildner, the Center has been directed by sociologist Mauricio Font since 2000.

The Cuba Project is a collaborative effort to study changes in Cuban politics, economics, culture, and society. It focuses on developments in Cuba in an international context. The Cuba Project works with other academic and policy-oriented programs and institutions to promote dialogue between academics, policymakers, business and media figures, as well as students from various countries and disciplines.

The Cuba Project does not assume a single view about developments relating to Cuba. Rather, the events and publications of the Cuba Project bring together diverse sectors to explore complex realities. It aims to contribute to greater international understanding by promoting informed exchange in a pragmatic and constructive spirit and to advance cooperation in the identification and assessment of models, options, and policies.
Organizers

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The Graduate Center
and Bildner Center, CUNY

Mario González-Corzo
Lehman College, CUNY

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For up to date news, events, and publications visit
www.bildner.org
www.cubaproject.org

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