**The new relationship between the EU and Cuba:**

**the role of Spain**

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Paper presented at

the European Union Studies Association (EUSA) Conference

Miami, Florida, May 4-6, 2017

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The relationship between Cuba and Spain deserves a special place in the consideration of an analysis of the Cuban regime in today’s world. This assessment is most relevant after the significant re-opening of relations with the United States. However, questions may arise when evaluating the degree of importance for both actors and especially for the government of Raúl Castro.

Any analysis of the Cuba-Spain relationship should include blunt speculation based on common sense and deep historical perspective, addressing in the process such questions as: what is the level of importance of Spain in the evolution of the issues of EU-Cuba relations?; how influential have the successive Spanish administrations of the democratic era been in capturing Cuba’s attention?; how has the alleged “very special relationship” label affected the shaping of certain Cuban actions?; are Cuba and Spain “condemned” to have a lasting common basic agreement?; and would the European activity concerning Cuba in recent years have been the same without the existence of Spain, especially with an active and fully democratic regime installed in Madrid, and the European Union? For those who would respond that Cuba´s activities in the wider context of Europe would be different without Spain, the problem is to evaluate exactly to what degree the relationship with Spain is worthy of special attention.

The Deep Weight of History

An analysis of the relationship should pay attention to certain subtopics and significant developments. The most important one is the role still played by the extremely close ties between both nations. The second should be the specific evolution of the Spanish government and most importantly its insertion into the European Union. Then the basic aspects of the economic relationship should be taken into account. Also crucial is the consideration of the current relationship, given the challenge faced by the government of Raúl Castro in dealing with the new stage of relations with the United States. And finally, attention should be paid to changing times in Latin America.

A study of the evolution of the relationship between the two countries since Raúl took over the helm of the Cuban regime reveals certain novel important trends. The most salient feature is the abandonment of the frequent outbursts of tension between the two governments that were common in the last quarter of the 20th century, most especially during the administration of Spanish premier José María Aznar (1996-2004), but also present during previous stages.

A review of the verbal attacks by Fidel Castro includes referring to the Twelfth of October as an “infausta y nefasta“ (unfortunate and ill-fated) date, considering the colonial past as a “little empire in crutches”, and calling the minister of Foreign Affairs a “colonial corporal”. He also termed the president of the Spanish Congress a “fascistoid crook”, and in response to a challenge by Aznar to make a positive move and open up the Cuban system he referred to him as “caballerito” and a “Führer with a small moustache”.[[1]](#footnote-1)

This animosity had also spilled over in relations with the European Union. The Spanish government took note that the bluntness used in EU messages, announcements, and demands, as well as the adoption of hard line new policies, only served as an invitation for the Cuban government to respond by hitting back with an even higher degree of aggressive attitude and personal references.

The most obvious sign of these longstanding ties between the two countries is the fact that, in spite of the successive changes of regimes and political philosophies, Spain and Cuba never broke diplomatic relations. Tension intensified when Aznar took control in Madrid in 1996. But as later would happen under Rodríguez Zapatero (2004-11) and Mariano Rajoy (2011- present), for Havana the breaking of relations has been a taboo, one never violated by any of the Spanish leaders. Only details of the tensions have changed, very often in colorful and spectacular ways, but never in substance. Moreover, in only one instance did the Cuban government refuse to approve the appointment of a Spanish ambassador.

This solid record is worth noting. Spain has passed through periods of contrasting changes: an authoritarian monarchy under Alfonso XIII, a military dictatorship protectorate under Primo de Rivera, the Second Spanish Republic, the Franco regime, a parliamentary democracy and constitutional monarchy. For its part, Cuba has faced the U.S. military occupation, a controlled republic under the Platt Amendment, corrupt and unstable governments in the 1930s, 40s, and 50s, and finally the Castro regime. Despite these differences, neither government ever displayed any serious inclination to distance itself from the other. Indeed, even when the relationship experienced delicate moments caused by verbal personal confrontations, calm eventually always returned to preside over the general setting.

Some fundamental aspects of this bilateral relationship cannot be forgotten. First, Cuba was the last remaining outpost of the Spanish empire in the Americas (along with Puerto Rico). Cuba´s struggle for independence was the cause for the Spanish-American War, provoked by the sinking of the battleship, the USS Maine. For almost four centuries, Spain’s image of Cuba was dominated by a well-established, idealized description provided centuries earlier by Christopher Columbus: “The most beautiful land that human eyes ever saw”. Spain constructed its centuries-long relationship with the new land, terming it “the ever-faithful island”, as the official labeling of Cuba was inscribed in the royal coat of arms. When the struggle for independence was finally seen as a dangerous threat to Madrid’s control, the Spanish response was to fight “until the last man and the last peseta”, as Antonio Cánovas del Castillo, Prime Minister of Spain, said. The trauma suffered by the Spanish establishment and the people at large is expressed in a popular saying, since even today when a family or a community is struck by a major economic loss or personal tragedy a common reaction is to exclaim “Más se perdió en Cuba” (Even more was lost in Cuba). The expression is used in order to stress the relative importance of the problem, while at the same time recalling the impact of the end of the colonial relationship.[[2]](#footnote-2)

Significantly, the Spanish people responded to the loss not with anger towards the former colony and newly independent state, but rather by accepting that the continued dependence of Cuba was not viable. Cuba now became the destination for even greater migration from Spain than during the colonial period. In addition, thousands of Spanish soldiers decided to remain in Cuba. Life in the former colony was now seen as a more attractive option to staying in the impoverished metropolis. This personal relationship between both countries has been recently reinforced by the “Law of Historic Memory”, granting Spanish citizenship to the descendants of Spanish immigrants.

After the Spanish Civil War, the relationship was maintained. The record shows a continuous Cuban interest in retaining the links with Franco, even when Fidel Castro took over the helm in 1959 and transformed the Cuban republican regime into a Marxist-Leninist state. In one of the most delicate moments of the relationship, the Spanish ambassador Juan Pablo de Lojendio was expelled from Cuba. Surprisingly, both protagonists in the drama did not make any regrettable moves to endanger the relationship. Instead they only lowered the level of the diplomatic status of Madrid’s representative to that of chargé d’affaires. Franco did not support his envoy, and instead lectured the diplomat: “With Cuba, anything, except breaking up”. As a corresponding sample of the respect (if not admiration) on Castro’s part, when Franco died in 1976 the Cuban government decreed a three-day period of mourning. Fidel was grateful that Franco never gave signs of following the overall U.S. doctrine of isolating Cuba.

The positive attitude towards Spain during the Franco years was also seen in Madrid’s attempts to create a favorable, balanced image in Latin America. Franco wanted to avoid a repetition of the Mexican rejection of his authoritarian regime. The Spanish dictator aimed at reducing its conservative image and excessive pro-United States credentials. The end of the colonial struggle in Cuba and the role of the U.S. generated a negative feeling in Latin America known as *arielismo* (focused on the idealistic quality of Hispanic American thought), which was inspired by the seminal work of José Enrique Rodó, and was the base of a more militant anti-U.S. attitude, a precedent of the Latin American spirit of *Bolivarismo* (based on the identification with the 19th century liberator Bolívar) which received new strength with the Castro revolution. For Spain, the strategy was another chapter of the “foreign policy of substitution”. Ironically, this plan actually matched well with the perception of the new Cuban regime in the eyes of the Spanish citizenry, who were attracted early on to the rather folkloric image of the *barbudos* (bearded ones) of the Sierra Maestra, and the mystique of Che Guevara.

An area where the close relationship between Spain and Cuba has been reinforced involves the links with Spanish sub-state regions and communities, a process which provides different examples of *patria chica* (identifying with a particular place or region). None has been favored more than the Spanish region of Galicia. While *gallego* (a person from Galicia) is a synonym for “Spanish” in several Latin America countries, in Cuba it enjoys a special flavor. It is worth noting that in times of tension between the two governments, Manuel Fraga Iribarne (a Galician leader, founder of the Alianza Popular conservative party and a former Franco minister) visited Cuba and insisted on maintaining close ties with the island. The Galician leader, who migrated briefly to Cuba with his family, placed the historical relationship above any political convenience or advantage. The father of Fidel and Raúl Castro traced his origin to a town in the province of Lugo. The latest president of Galicia, Alberto Núñez Feijoo, was the principal guest at a hemispheric congress of Galician communities in America. Fidel Castro, who never managed to make an official state visit to Madrid and only attended the ceremonies of the Olympic Games in Barcelona in 1992, did however make a special, sentimental tour of his father’s region of Galicia.

Cuba’s attitude towards Spain

After independence Cuban leaders noted the deliberate policy of the Spanish government to maintain its relationship with their former colony. The rebirth of democracy in Spain accentuated this policy. This logic was strengthened with the administration of the socialist government headed by Felipe González. Fidel Castro made several moves to lure the Spanish socialist party to his side, but ironically, numerous challenges emerged when the party became very active in pressuring the Cuban regime to reform. This was the time when the model of the Spanish transition was at its highest in Latin America, and in this process the socialists played a leading role.

This foreign policy strategy has been considered very useful and profitable, because it has given various Spanish administrations a non-partisan way to showcase the record of the evolution of the regime. This approach reveals pride in demonstrating the cooperation of the different political parties in strengthening the democratic process. It mirrors the reconciliation process of the European Union after the bloody confrontations of the first part of the twentieth century. The political parties of Spain put aside their differences and stressed the commonalities in approving the democratic constitutional text of 1978, demonstrating its lasting effects. The “Moncloa Pacts” (referring to the residence of the Prime Minister), as they have been known, were a standard approach provided to numerous Latin American states going through their particular evolution from the military dictatorships of the 1960s and 1970s to become constitutional democracies. Cuba clearly presented a different profile, yet Spanish officials and scholars continued to insist upon using the experience as a model.

Observers claim that the essence of the differences of opinion concerning the Spanish approach stems from the fact that the Cuban regime (both during the Fidel Castro era and the on-going administration of Raúl) did not consider the experiences comparable, and does not accept the adaptability of a “one size fits all” prescription. This Cuban logic, in essence, rejects the notion that the Cuban regime is a “dictatorship” and that the resolution of the evolution of the system will end in a similar shape of “democracy”.

However, both actors have shown no inclination to allow this disagreement to jeopardize their long, mutually profitable economic relationship. The importance of Spain during the worst years of Cuba’s economic difficulties due to the collapse of the Soviet regime and the drastic vanishing of the subsidies supplied by Moscow and its allies, was notable.[[3]](#footnote-3) Traditionally, the Spain-Cuba relationship has been dominated economically by the hotel and tourist industry. Spain continues to be the leader in that sector in which the activities of the Melià chain were pioneers when the opening of joint venture investments was made possible. Spanish firms manage 80% of the 5-star rooms and 60% of those below 5-star hotels in Cuba. Spanish interests expect (or hope) that the predictable invasion of U.S. investments will not take effect until the full termination of the embargo, and the subsequent authorization of US hotel chains by the Cuban government.

In sum, Spain has been the principal European country in terms of economic relations with Cuba. Spain is the third largest foreign investor in Cuba, surpassed only by Venezuela and China. Moreover, trade and other economic operations between Cuba and Spain surpassed a billion euros in 2015. All this activity is set in the context of a wider agreement favoring the re-structuring of the debt owed Spain by Cuba, calculated at 2.5 billion euros. As the historical result of long-term activity, Spain is second in the list of creditors to Cuba, with a long history of lack of repayments and often extended delays. In spite of this negative factor, systematically criticized by conservative circles in Spain and hardliners among the Cuban exile community in the United States, there are no signs indicating that this trend will be terminated.

Recent bilateral agreements include cooperation projects in the fields of road transport, maritime operations, railroad maintenance, and air and harbor services. Spanish interests are mentioned as partners in the development of the port of Mariel facilities. Among other recent cooperation activities were the financial restructuring of various projects, the training of engineers, and the promotion of technological development.[[4]](#footnote-4)

Spain in the EU: The Common Position

Spain´s international relations took a decisive turn with its membership in the European Union in 1986. The result was the immediate participation of numerous (socialist, conservative, liberal) government officials, as well as academics and business leaders in European institutions. The EU then made a strategic move towards Latin America, a continent that earlier in the evolution of the organization had barely been present in individual activities of some important member states (such as France, UK, and Italy). In this process, Spain became an important addition to the EU’s traditionally limited reach in the international scene.

Central America was the first major EU area of interest in Latin America, its entry point being the peace negotiations that sought to ameliorate the confrontational experiences of some countries. The San José Process was the result, with trend-setting programs in development, pacification, and regional integration. Cuba was to be the next stage in a wider Latin American initiative of the EU. The problem was that the notion of “transition”, which was an example of the “soft power” frequently brandished by Spain, was not palatable to the Cuban regime.

Given the historical background as well as the need for new economic partners arising during the “Special Period”, Spain was seen by Havana as an alternative outlet to reduce the aggressive continuation of the U.S. *bloqueo* or embargo*.* This Washington reaction was implemented through the double track of the “Torricelli” legislation (which prohibited any dealings by Cuba with U.S. subsidiaries) and its hardening through a more serious comprehensive program of reinforcing and codifying the embargo via the Helms-Burton act.[[5]](#footnote-5)

The Helms-Burton legislation was adopted in the beginning of 1996, thanks in large part to the lobbying exerted by the Cuban-American National Foundation under the leadership of Jorge Mas Canosa and to the effective work of Cuban members of Congress. Initially approval was not totally certain, due to internal and foreign opposition. But then Fidel Castro gave the order to shoot down two planes of Brothers to the Rescue, an organization that evolved from a humanitarian enterprise to become an activist group. The tragic incident forced President Clinton to give the White House support for the Helms-Burton legislation.

Meanwhile, the Spanish political scene witnessed the end of the mandate enjoyed by the Socialist party led by Felipe González. The winner of the election, conservative José María Aznar, decided to mirror certain U.S. policies while also campaigning to obtain influence on the European scene. The centerpiece for these initiatives with respect to Cuba (which became known as the EU Common Position) revolved around imposing preconditions for an EU Cooperation Agreement with Havana. These efforts, which were a direct initiative of the Spanish government undertaken with the support of other conservative and newly-re-elected members of the EU, were ultimately successful. At the same time, the logic of the Common Position aimed at the twin objectives of contributing to the peaceful political transition of Cuba and the evolution of a democratic regime through what was labelled as “constructive engagement”. While the traditional U.S. policy was to pressure the Cuban regime to collapse, the European strategy instead opted for a policy of preparing for the future. However, the Cuban regime systematically blamed the EU, and Spain in particular, for the maintenance of the Common Position. The Castro administration equated the European policy with the U.S. embargo, believing that Madrid and Brussels were taking instructions from Washington. Cuba then saw itself as fighting against two imperialist powers.[[6]](#footnote-6)

After the change of government in Madrid in 2004, resulting in a PSOE (Spanish Socialist Workers’ Party) administration led by Rodríguez Zapatero, government and diplomatic sources began to accept the convenience of a gradual change in Spain’s policies toward Cuba. First they aimed at the suspension of the so-called 2003 government “measures” (branded as “sanctions” by Cuba) against Havana as a punishment for the imprisonment of dissidents, and the execution of three hijackers who had taken control of a ferry in Havana harbor. The Cuban regime had bluntly retaliated against what it saw as an aggressive position with the freezing of high level diplomatic communications.

Maintaining the Common Policy and related measures was increasingly seen by the new PSOE government and many officials in Brussels, as well as EU member states, as “counterproductive” since they were producing results directly opposite to the goals intended.[[7]](#footnote-7) The Cuban regime did not offer any signs of reform under pressure. As a result the new Spanish government insisted on a drastic policy correction and exerted influence on its colleagues to do likewise. After the two-term administration of the Socialists, this logic was maintained by the government of Mariano Rajoy, with no signs of change. Few officials wished to return to an era of confrontation, one which had proved counter-productive.

Taking into account this situation, European observers often made sarcastic comments in private to the fact that the Cuba-EU relationship became significantly a question of Spanish-Cuban relations. At one point, it seemed that the attitude of any one of the actors (be it Cuba or Spain) could in fact result in a noticeable sign of change, which could lead the rest of the partners to pay attention to that change. If, for example, Madrid were to soften its critical view in order to end the diplomatic freezing, then a number of the rest of the partners would also be likely to change gears. If, on the other hand, Madrid favored adopting a harder stance, many partners in the EU would likely side with this new attitude. [[8]](#footnote-8) Aware of this relationship, Havana took advantage of its distinctive relationship with Madrid. When it was convenient for Cuba to reach Brussels through a different channel, it opted for the for the Havana-Madrid one. In sum, the Cuba-Spain link has been very profitable for different actors and in diverse occasions.

The expected ending of this conflict between the EU (with Spain as a decisive leader) and Cuba was the signing of a Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement and the abrogation of the Common Position reinforced the sustained European efforts in contributing to a peaceful transition in Cuba. It also means that Raúl Castro’s government has abandoned opposition to suggestions from European-Spanish soft power practitioners in favor of a more pragmatic attitude.[[9]](#footnote-9)

The Latin American and U.S factors

What other issues can be considered as worthy of close examination regarding the solidification of Spain’s role in the stability of the Cuban regime? To answer this question, one should turn south from Havana. The factor that has increased the importance of the linkage with Europe, and most especially with Spain, is the political change experienced by several Latin American countries. Some significant actors have undergone a shift from a model based in the populist left to a centrist pragmatic model, if not a clear tilting toward more conservative behavior. For example, the situation in Argentina has changed dramatically from government under the Kirchners to that of Mauricio Macri. Brazil under president Michel Temer has turned out not to be the same as it was under Dilma Rousseff.

But the most dramatic reformatting of Cuba’s connections has been caused by the increasing difficulties of Venezuela. During the close relationship between Havana and Caracas under President Chávez, Cuba had less need of the EU and Spain, and to a lesser extent some other European actors. More recently, after the disappearance of the founder of the ALBA, significant problems have become evident. Economic difficulties, the defective management of the oil industry and an increased internal opposition, as well as international pressure over political abuses, have generated the weakening of the control of the country by President Nicolás Maduro, raising doubts about the future of his regime. This setting has affected the role played by Venezuela’s ALBA partners. The group has reduced the activity of Cuba’s role with Bolivia and to a lesser extent Ecuador and Nicaragua.

In sum, Latin America, although still in a general way displaying a pragmatic attitude towards Cuba, has shifted its approach to new and different dimensions. Raúl Castro’s government has taken notice and has been forced to start seeking strategic alternatives. A subtle additional dependence on other actors has developed. As a consequence, Cuba cannot afford weakening the relationship with Europe in general, with the EU specifically, and most especially with Spain. This trend involves not only a need for investments, but also for traditional political support. This has provoked a need for European endorsement, especially from Spain.[[10]](#footnote-10)

However, the most dramatic challenge of this relationship has been the outstanding change of attitude by the U.S. government under President Barack Obama.[[11]](#footnote-11) The decision has challenged the importance of the value of the link between the European Union (with Spain in the lead) and Cuba. Observers of this phenomenon and its consequences should raise some questions in the context of this commentary. Was there any reaction from Spain in view of the speed given to the changes with the U.S.? Were the EU and Spain caught flatfooted as this new policy emerged? What has been the impact of the opening of relations by the United States with Cuba upon Spain? Does the new setting constitute a challenge or even a threat for Spanish investments in Cuba? In more concrete terms, is there a clear signal for the hotel industry to expect serious competition by giant U.S. enterprises in the field? Finally, would the Cuban government increase the level of “cost-price” for the privilege of maintaining a lucrative leadership in this terrain? The initiatives under the Obama administration, overturning five decades of U.S. hostility, were extremely important. It remains to be seen, however, how the election of Donald Trump will affect bilateral relations.

This ample agenda of inquiry exceeds the limits of the present commentary. However, among the scant signs of the consequences of the U.S. move, some clear concerns can be detected. The first is that different sectors of the Cuban establishment have been expressing in private concerns about the future consequences of the new involvement of the United States. Cuban insiders consider the trend of U.S. policies in building the new relationship as a cause of concern. They see a danger of burying alternative links to the U.S. that have been proven to be very profitable during the time of the embargo. These sectors are already expressing some sort of fear that a nostalgic feeling could develop regretting the weakening of the role of Europe and especially Spain in the evolution of the survival of the Cuban regime in the “Special Period” and beyond. Those voices call for a reinforcement of the European and Spanish involvement in Cuba. Some also warn current investors to pressure their governments to confirm their commitment, in order to secure their presence in Cuba. Some act this way out of fear of losing their advantageous position, since in essence they have been serving as intermediaries in the non-U.S.-Cuba international linkages. Fear of U.S. control over Cuba in the post-Castro era is a major concern of those sectors, as well as the mental framework of the Cuban government.

Prospects for the Remaining Term of Raúl and his Successor

In addition to the formidable number of enigmas that hang over the succession of Raúl Castro, the overall political and economic panorama presented by the prospects of Spain and the European Union in the next few years makes any prediction extremely risky. Therefore, it is safer first to review and outline some of the recorded facts and trends and then to speculate about their lasting effects.

As the previous part of this chapter has shown, the relationship between Spain and Cuba has been dominated by a combination of permanent factors and a pattern of some repetitious episodic events that have affected the political and economic link between the two nations. These historical issues have been modified by the recent evolution of events, but they cannot be considered as fundamental novelties, given the deeply-rooted ties between the revolutionary regime established in Havana in the 1960s and the former metropolis.

The current administration of Raúl Castro inherited many of the standing linkages consolidated during the last stages of the Franco regime in Spain and the establishment of the democratic system. Raúl took power in a situation that neither of the two actors wanted to drastically change. In reality, they could modify very little unless they wanted to run the risk of jeopardizing the advantageous framework which they had both enjoyed for decades.

The evolution of the relationship between the two countries since Raúl took the helm of the Cuban regime following the illness of his brother reveals certain important trends. As was noted earlier, the most salient feature is the abandonment of the frequent outbursts of tension between the two governments, especially during the administration of Spanish premier José María Aznar. Stridency in public declarations has vanished, most specifically from the Cuban side. The Spanish governments, both under Rodríguez Zapatero (2004-11) and Rajoy (2011-present ), have wisely accepted that earlier bluntness used in messages and announcements of new policies only served as an invitation for the Cuban government to respond with a higher degree of aggression and personal insults.

Looking to the future, observers should be well aware that the complete normalization of the relationship between Spain and Cuba will not change dramatically until two facts take place. One is of medium term concern, while the second is urgent. On the Cuban side, the panorama will not be better understood until the transition to a different leadership in Cuba after Raúl Castro’s term ends in 2018. But before that occurs, the political stalemate in Spain (caused by the inability to build a government as a result of the legislative elections at the end of 2015 and in mid-2016) needed to end. After a prolonged period of negotiations with no clear signs of a resolution to the Spanish political drama, with either a third election or an innovative multiparty system in the making which could agree on a new government, finally a new government led by Rajoy was formed in October 2016, allowing the international agenda to move forward.   
 With regard to the EU, the historical and recent record shows that Spain has apparently been forced to take the initiative in dealing with Cuba, both in a positive and in a negative way. The subtle difference in today´s circumstances can be reduced to the relative importance shown by the Rajoy administration in the international scene. But Raúl Castro’s government has been very careful not to dramatize this fact. While the absence of Rajoy in Cuba has been noticed, numerous European heads of government have visited Havana (with French president Hollande in the lead). King Felipe VI is also missing, in contrast to his father King Juan Carlos I who went to Cuba within the context of an Ibero-American Community meeting. At that time, an official visit was banned by President José María Aznar. In April of 2017, as result of an invitation by Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez, the Spanish government agreed on trips by Rajoy and the King to Cuba before the end of Raúl’s term in February of 2018.

In any event, what can be said about the relationship between Cuba and the EU, given the evolution of the different attitude of Raúl’s government towards Spain? With certain exceptions, the move by the U.S. and the subtle reforms (mostly economic) exerted by Raúl have softened the critical attitude of certain European actors (e.g., Nordic, UK, and some of the former socialist countries of Eastern Europe). This fact and the continuation of a pragmatic policy of Rajoy (avoiding unnecessary confrontations) have facilitated the situation for Raúl.

The political logic suggests that all of the speculation concerning a substantial change or reformation of Cuba’s relations with Europe in general and especially with Spain will be dependent upon special changes in the overall foreign policy of Cuba. Although this fact may be denied by Cuban officials, sensible observers have agreed that such changes would not be possible until the death of Fidel Castro and substantial modifications in the island’s political system. Raúl Castro’s government is aware of this condition, a fact which is well-known in Madrid and Brussels. Meanwhile, all actors are behaving according to their limitations and possibilities under the dictate of a shared consensus of not generating difficulties. Cuba knows that it can count on Spain for understanding, support, and subtle influence to contribute to a peaceful political evolution and economic and social progress. Indeed, any Cuban government knows that in Spain no one wants a repeat of the “más se perdió en Cuba” syndrome.

1. For a sample of his references, see El País, “Fidel Castro califica a España de "viejo imperio en muletas”,  
   available at [http://internacional.elpais.com/internacional/2009/03/26/ actualidad/ 1238022017\_850215.html](http://internacional.elpais.com/internacional/2009/03/26/%20actualidad/%201238022017_850215.html); for a historical review, see Joaquín Roy, *La siempre fiel: un siglo de relaciones hispanocubanas, 1898-1998*  (Madrid: Los Libros de la Catarata/ Instituto Universitario de Desarrollo y Cooperación, Universidad Complutense, 1999), chapter III; Joaquin Roy, *The Cuban Revolution (1959-2009): its relationship with Spain, the European Union and the United States* (New York: Palgrave/McMillan, 2009), chapter 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Roy, *La siempre fiel*, chapters I and II. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. For samples of my research, see “The European Anchoring of Cuba: from Persuasion and Good Intentions to Contradiction and Frustration”, Miami European Union Center/Jean Monnet Chair, Vol. 2, No. 6, May 2002, available at [http://www.miami.edu/EUCenter/ royworkingpaper\_ cuba.pdf](http://www.miami.edu/EUCenter/royworkingpaper_cuba.pdf); “Cuba and the European Union: Chronicle of a Dead Agreement Foretold” in Michael Erisman and John Kirk, eds., *Redefining Cuban Foreign Policy: the Impact of the ‘Special Period’* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2006), pp. 98-120; “From stubbornness and mutual irrelevancy to stillness and vigil on Castro’s crisis: The current state of European Union-Spain-Cuba relations”, Occasional Paper, Jean Monnet Chair/European Union Center, Special August/September 2006. Reproduced by Real Instituto Elcano and available at <http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/documentos/253.asp>; “The attitude of the European Union and Spain towards Cuba: an assessment, a year after Castro’s illness”, Real Instituto Elcano (WP), available at [http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/ rielcano\_in/ Content?WCM\_GLOBAL\_CONTEXT=/Elcano\_in/Zonas\_in/Latin+America/DT+38-2007](http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/%20rielcano_in/%20Content?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/Elcano_in/Zonas_in/Latin+America/DT+38-2007); and Miami-Florida European Union Center of Excellence, Special July 2007, available at <http://www6.miami.edu/eucenter/Roy_CubaSpainspecial070722edi.pdf>. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. This relationship is reflected in the websites of the embassies of Spain in Havana and of Cuba in Madrid: Embajada de España, La Habana, [http://www.exteriores.gob.es/embajadas/lahabana /es/Paginas/inicio.aspx](http://www.exteriores.gob.es/embajadas/lahabana/es/Paginas/inicio.aspx); and Embajada de Cuba, Madrid, [http://www.cubadiplomatica.cu/espana/ Misi%C3%B3n/Embajada.aspx](http://www.cubadiplomatica.cu/espana/Misi%C3%B3n/Embajada.aspx). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Joaquín Roy, *Cuba, the United States and the Helms-Burton Doctrine: International Reactions* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2000). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. For a sample of his declarations, see Fidel Castro, “La mentira al servicio del imperio”, Reflexiones, <http://www.granma.cu/granmad/secciones/ref-fidel/art103.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. For a review of the official documents of the relationship between the EU and Cuba, see our compilation Joaquín Roy, “[The Cuban Revolution (1959-2009) and the European Union: a documentary selection of Statements and Declarations](http://www6.miami.edu/eucenter/publications/roy-appendixFinal.pdf)”, European Union Center, Papers, 2009, available at <http://www6.miami.edu/eucenter/publications/roy-appendixFinal.pdf>; and for general details, see also the official web of the Delegation of the European Union in Cuba,  
   <https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/cuba_en>. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Joaquín Roy, “Spain Takes the Lead in the EU Policy Toward Cuba” in Finn Laursen, ed., *The European Union in the Global Political Economy* (Brussels: I.E. Peter Lang and Dalhousie University: Halifax, Canada, 2009), pp. 261-92. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. For a selection of analysis of the evolution of this change, see European Parliament Research Service. “A new phase in EU-Cuba relations”, June 25, 2014, available at   
   <https://epthinktank.eu/2014/06/25/a-new-phase-in-eu-cuba-relations/>m.EFE.; European Commission, Press release, “European Commission proposes Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement with Cuba”, Brussels, 22 September 2016, available at <http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-3133_en.htm>; and Erwan Fouéré, “Winds of Change for US and EU Relations with Cuba”, CEPS, 21 March 2016, available at <https://www.ceps.eu/publications/winds-change-us-and-eu-relations-cuba>. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. For a comprehensive analysis, see Joaquín Roy, “Cuba: el papel de EE.UU., América Latina y la UE” in *Las relaciones triangulares Estados Unidos, Unión Europea y América Latina. Pensamiento Iberoamericano*, Número 8, Otoño 2011 (Madrid: Fundación Carolina), pp. 243-69, available at <http://www.pensamientoiberoamericano.org/b/sumarios/>; [http://www. pensamientoiberoamericano.org/articulos/8/172/0/cuba-el-papel-de-ee-uu-am-rica-latina-y-la-ue.html](http://www.pensamientoiberoamericano.org/articulos/8/172/0/cuba-el-papel-de-ee-uu-am-rica-latina-y-la-ue.html); [http://www.pensamientoiberoamericano.org/ xnumeros/8/pdf/ pensamientoIberoamericano-172.pdf](http://www.pensamientoiberoamericano.org/xnumeros/8/pdf/pensamientoIberoamericano-172.pdf). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Joaquín Roy, “Las relaciones entre la UE y Cuba en el marco de la apertura de Barack Obama y Raúl Castro”, Real Instituto Elcano, ARI 10/2015 - 19/2/2015 available at <http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/web/rielcano_es/contenido?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/elcano/elcano_es/zonas_es/ari10-2015-roy-relaciones-entre-ue-cuba-en-marco-de-apertura-de-barack-obama-y-raul-castro#.VPZNJk10yb8>. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)