

The Franco regime's contradiction: Its foreign policy toward Cuba

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate why the Spanish regime under Francisco Franco (1939–1975) and the Cuban regime under Fidel Castro (1959–2008) maintained diplomatic relations given their opposing ideologies; This is significant, since the Franco regime was internationally isolated after WWII, however it could survive due to its anticommunist stance hence it received U.S. military and economic assistance. The study focuses on Spanish foreign policy toward Cuba, taking into consideration how Spain was able to “utilize” this contradictory position.

First, Franco pleased great attention on maintaining relations with Cuba. Specifically, he felt that Spain's honor, damaged by the American-Spanish war, had been recovered in proxy by Cuba. Additionally, Franco and Castro shared common values in terms of their morals and patriotism. Second, Spanish elites believed that Spain required a “peculiar” policy that would establish its status as a “middle power of an influential state” in a particular region and enable it to distance itself from the Cold War. In addition, it was thought that Spain, although shut out of much of European diplomacy because of non-democratic and anticommunist regime, could still play a role as an “intermediary” between the Occidental World and Latin America, especially between the U.S. and Cuba, without requiring a change to the Spanish regime.

1. Introduction

The purpose of this study is to investigate why the Spanish regime of Francisco Franco (1939–1975) and the Cuban regime of Fidel Castro (1959–2008) could maintain diplomatic relations given their opposing ideologies. Spain was internationally isolated after WWII but could survive because of its anticommunist stance and receive U.S. military and economic assistance. It focuses on Spanish foreign policy toward Cuba, taking into consideration how Spain was able to “utilize” this contradictory position without having to become a democratic country.

Of the works examining the Spanish-Cuban relationship that prevailed following the Cuban Revolution, few are based chiefly on primary sources. This is principally due to the lack of declassified documents in Spain and — needless to say — in Cuba. The Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Spain (AMAE), in particular, has

housed many documents pertaining to Cuba since the 1970s, many of which remain classified.

In addition, the main researchers presently studying Cuba are Anglo-Saxon. Moreover, there seem to be relatively few studies that have examined the bilateral relationship from the Spanish point of view. The following are the two leading researchers who are currently studying Cuba related to our study: Lambie, who admitted to the difficulty of gaining access to the relevant documents, minutely analyzes the Cuban-European relationship on the basis of press articles and economic statistics. Domínguez, who was exiled from Cuba in his infancy, is a prominent American scholar on Cuba. From the Spanish point of view, there exist some studies pertaining to contemporary Spanish foreign policy toward Cuba as a part of studies of Spain's overall foreign policy toward Latin America. In particular, Enrich¹ analyzes the general foreign policy that Spain applied toward this region in 1955–1985, while

Paz-Sánchez² analyzes documents pertaining to Cuba before 1961 obtained from the AMAE. In addition, special mention should be given to Suárez Fernández's works³, which use documents that are dated before or in 1965 and obtained mostly from Fundación Nacional Francisco Franco (FNFF; National Foundation of Francisco Franco). However, because the Cuban theme formed only a part of Franco's overall foreign policy, Fernández's analysis is less profound. Finally, it should be noted that Pardo⁴ has written a detailed account of the foreign policy of Fernando María Castiella, the Spanish foreign minister from 1957 to 1969.

However, our study is based on the AMAE's and FNFF's newly obtained Spanish documents dated in or before the 1970s as well as on American declassified documents. In addition, the present study considers the Spanish-Cuban relationship against the backdrop of the international movements of the 1960s, such as decolonization, the Cold War, and the world's economic development. Moreover, we examine the reason behind the perseverance of Spanish-Cuban diplomatic relations even after the Cuban Revolution. Further, in light of the many Spanish politicians, diplomats, and academicians who have attributed this perseverance to "historic, cultural, and economic ties," we attempt to delve into these ties in our study. First, in terms of the background, we discuss the position of Spain in the world and Spanish foreign policy, followed by specifics of the Spanish foreign policy toward Cuba in the period from the Cuban Revolution in 1959 to Franco's death in 1975, with focus on the 1960s.

2. Spain in the World

Owing to Spain's "collaboration" with the Axis powers at the beginning of WWII, the Franco regime — during the postwar period — could neither become members of the main international organizations nor become a recipient of the Marshall Plan. To overcome this ostracism, the regime attempted to be recognized by the U.N., endeavoring to obtain the sympathy of the Latin American countries as a means of winning their votes. This they accomplished through their philosophy of "Hispanidad," which stresses the

common cultural relationship shared by Spain and Latin America.

Spain's negotiating position was leveraged by the development of the Cold War owing to its geopolitical importance. The regime's main target was its own preservation, holding its anti-communist policy and the ideals of Christianity. Therefore, at the time, the regime was attempting to gain "agreement" with the U.S. and the Vatican. Finally, in 1953, Spain signed the Pact of Madrid (for military and economic aid) with the U.S. and the Concordat with the Vatican, ultimately joining the U.N. in 1955.

Having acquired economic aid from the U.S., Spain could reach a higher stage of economic development, hailed as "Spain's economic miracle" in the 1960s. However, Spain lost its colonies — a part of Morocco and Equatorial Guinea — and was also unable to become a member of the European Economic Community (EEC).

Franco tended to respect world leaders who fought for their country's independence, such as Ho Chi Minh, irrespective of their ideology.⁵ On the other hand, he considered himself to have been given "a special mission" by God to seek salvation for Spain for its "decadence" of the Age of Enlightenment in the 18th century and the period of Liberalism in the 19th century.⁶

Franco's authority was absolute with respect to Spain's foreign policy, while the influence of public opinion and the Spanish Court was very limited. However, this allowed Spain to easily realize its policies without obstacles arising from election campaigns, public opinion, or the Congress, as was the case in the U.S. Moreover, the then Spanish government was composed of various ideologists such as Falangists, Catholics, monarchists, and the military. Because there was considerable friction between these groups owing to the differences in their interests and ideologies, they needed a "boss" whose power was absolute. On the other hand, to successfully develop a non-bureaucratic system, the Spanish government had to depend on each minister's and politician's individual abilities, power, influence, and relations

with others. At that time, censorship was imposed in both Spain and Cuba, and they did not widely publicize their relationship with each other.

As mentioned previously, Franco and Luis Carrero Blanco (admiral, vice president since 1967; president since 1973) had stressed the relationship with the U.S. owing to its military importance and with the Vatican in order to garner moral support from the Christian Democratic parties in Europe. Because Franco and Carrero had full control over Spanish foreign policy, and their priority was the “preservation” of the regime, it often happened that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, rather than being the final arbiter in Spain’s foreign affair matters, would merely receive *ex post facto* reports. On the other hand, Franco did not intend to undertake any active initiatives with respect to Spain’s international relations. Moreover, although Franco rarely intervened directly in ambassadorial appointments (but used his veto power when required), he did ensure that he was accessible to ambassadors by paying them a considerable amount of attention.⁷ Further, Franco’s control over Spain’s foreign policy ensured that it did not stray from its principles, such as its focus on the long-term policy of non-intervention in the domestic policies of other countries, and its moral obligations.

Therefore, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs could only undertake initiatives in other areas of foreign policy. Foreign Affairs Minister Castiella attempted to overcome both the inertia of Spanish foreign policy and Spain’s negative international image created by the Spanish Civil War and the pro-Nazi Falangist regime. Castiella’s policies were based on his previous experiences as an ambassador to Peru and the Vatican. In Latin America, he attempted to weaken the imperialistic Falangist ideology of “Hispanidad” and introduced the Spanish technocrats’ pragmatism. His first priority was to restore Spain to be among the first rank of nations, rather than the preservation of the existing regime at all costs.

In particular, Castiella insisted on the “neutralization of the Mediterranean” (Gibraltar), to which the U.S. was opposed because of the Mediterranean’s strategic importance. In other

words, he wished to increase Spain’s significance in the world. To accomplish this, he attempted to draw up his own foreign policy, seeking to distance Spain from the West-East conflict by becoming a nonaligned nation and forging alliances with Latin American and Mediterranean countries. Although he himself was not liberal, he collaborated with more liberal ministers. This resulted in establishing a more “liberal” system in the regime, which was necessary to be recognized by the Europeans.⁸

The more the Gibraltar issue eroded Spanish relations with the U.K., and the further the relationship with the U.S. deteriorated, the more antagonistic Franco and Carrero became toward Castiella’s policy of Mediterranean neutralization. Moreover, as a result of his tough negotiating stance against the U.S., he was not nominated to be a member of the new cabinet in 1969.

In the 1970s, technocrats from Opus Dei, a Catholic institution; the ex-minister of industry, Gregorio López Bravo; and his successor — also an Opus Dei member — López Rodó placed more emphasis on economic policy and normalizing Spain’s diplomatic relations with Eastern Europe (Spanish “*ostpolitik*”). In 1973, Spain established diplomatic relations with East Germany and China and signed a commercial agreement with the USSR, displaying a positive attitude toward such investments.

3. Foreign policy toward Cuba during the Franco regime

During that period, the regimes in Latin America were not stable because of frequent coups, revolutions, and civil wars. Specifically, since Spain shared a common heritage with Latin America, which was not the case with the U.S., Spain utilized a policy of non-intervention and the Estrada Doctrine (governments or changes in governments should not be judged by other nations) in its approach to Latin America.⁹ As a part of this approach, Spain applied these to Cuba as well. Moreover, Spain maintained diplomatic ties with Cuba even in the face of incidents such as the expulsion of Ambassador Logendio in January 1960 (he interrupted a broadcast where Castro

was criticizing Spain; the ambassador was declared *persona non grata* and asked to leave Cuba within 24 hours), the strong criticism of Spain and Franco in August, and the deportation of Spanish priests in 1961.¹⁰ The Spanish diplomats needed to overcome the contradictions before maintaining the diplomatic relationship and upholding the regime's anticommunist stance.¹¹ To maintain diplomatic relations with a communist state was of great significance if we consider that this anticommunist stance helped Spain win "the U.S. approval" at that moment, and Spain did not have diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, nor other Eastern European states.

For matters related to Cuba, as mentioned previously, Spain adopted the principle of non-intervention and the Estrada Doctrine. Franco as well as Castiella declared the adoption of these principles both privately and officially. Following the Lojendio incident, Franco himself privately referred to the principle of non-intervention, and in 1967, stated it publicly at the Court.¹² Castiella declared that the policy of "non-intervention in other countries' domestic policy" was an important Spanish norm, particularly with respect to its friends like Cuba.¹³ In 1965, in a conversation with U.S. Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Castiella asserted that "in view of the common cultural heritage and the many human ties," Spain "does not wish to break completely" with Cuba. However, at the same time, he stressed that there was "no sympathy for the Castro regime among Spanish leaders."¹⁴ In 1967, he also explained to Alonso Vega, Interior Minister, the importance of maintaining the diplomatic relationship between Spain and Cuba, citing the following reasons: their shared "Hispanic ancestry, independent of the political ideology," the Spanish citizens living in Cuba who could not abandon Cuba, Cuba's status as a "bridge" toward the USSR, the significance of Spain's gesture of following an independent foreign policy, and bilateral commercial relations.¹⁵

In the 1970s, this stance remained unaltered. The then minister of foreign affairs, López Rodó, declared at the U.N. General Assembly that differences in ideologies and political systems did not interfere with normal diplomatic relations

because Spain and Cuba were part of a community with shared "culture, tradition, and ancestry."¹⁶ Similarly, in 1975, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs declared to the U.S. Embassy that generally speaking, Spain based its approach to Spanish-Latin American relations on "the concept of accepting pluralism of ideologies" and "the concept of capitalizing on historical and cultural ties."¹⁷

Now, we will analyze Spain's foreign policy toward Cuba under Franco in terms of the following: 1) social and economic factors, 2) external factors, and 3) physiological factors.

1) Social and economic factors

In the 19th century, Cuba was the last colony in Latin America to remain loyal to Spain. Moreover, many people had migrated from the Galicia, Asturias, Cataluña regions, and the Canary Islands to Cuba, mainly out of economic considerations, and — following Spain's defeat in the American-Spanish War in 1898 — in order to evade military service in Morocco. In 1932, 37% of Spanish immigration to Cuba was from Galicia,¹⁸ a northern region in Spain and the homeland of the parents of both Franco and Castro, and they were mainly conservative. In 1969, even after 10 years of the Revolution, according to the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, approximately 7,000 to 8,000 Spanish citizens and 300,000 Spanish who had Cuban nationality were residing in Cuba.¹⁹ This was a substantial portion of the Cuban population, which was estimated at 8.55 million by the U.N. Thus, Cuba was densely populated with people with Spanish "ancestry" as compared with other Occidental countries.

In the 1960s, there was a "Spanish economic miracle" wherein Spain was transformed from an agricultural country to an industrialized one: in the 1960s, the annual GDP growth rate of Spain was 7.4%, while the average GDP growth rate of the EEC was 3.4%. In addition, during this period, Spain's trade with the U.S. was 18% of its total foreign trade while that with Cuba — which ranked 12th among Spain's trading partners — was 1.6%. The year 1966 was the best trading year for Spain with respect to Cuba, which accounted for 2.8% of

Spain's total trade.²⁰ However, because Spain was not granted membership in the EEC, it was unable to exploit the European market. To compensate, Spain attempted to gain further access to the Latin American market. Similarly, Cuba lacked access to the enormous U.S. market and therefore began to look to other markets, such as Spain.

Cuba's main export item was sugar, whose world market price was not stable. Following the Cuban Revolution in 1959, Cuba and Spain signed a commercial agreement that adopted a payment clearing system; they renegotiated this agreement in 1963, a time when the price of sugar was growing sharply. They signed an agreement for the period 1964 – 1966 granting better terms to Cuba, because Spain was expected to have a reduced harvest that year and the domestic cost and consumption of sugar had increased considerably. Immediately after the agreement was signed, prices fell on the world market. However, in the long run, Spain was able to penetrate the Cuban market, particularly with respect to its manufactured products.²¹ The Spanish ambassador to the U. S. from 1962 to 1964, Antonio Garrigues, explained it as follows: "It is necessary to make a policy not only for each day, but also for the past, present and future history."²² Similarly, Castiella declared that through a "spiritual bond" and "historical tie," Spain was maintaining a warm relationship with Latin America, outside of "any transient political contingency."²³

Following the Cuban Revolution, Iberia was the only Occidental airline company to operate flights to Cuba, although even Iberia temporarily had to suspend its flights after the Cuban Crisis. Because many Spaniards and Spanish-Cubans sent goods to their families through Iberia Airlines, in 1975 it attempted to extend its services to Havana.²⁴ However, at the same time, reductions in both cargo services to Cuba and the number of Spanish-registered vessels trading with Cuba were linked with the negotiation of the renewal of the Spanish-American agreement. Therefore, upon the conclusion of the agreement in 1964, as a gesture of concession to the U.S., Spain put on the appearance of effecting the above-mentioned reductions and decreasing its contact with Cuba.²⁵

In 1969, according to a report by Nicolás Franco, who was invited by the Cuban minister of commerce and received by Castro himself, Cuba also attempted to import Spanish vehicles.²⁶ In 1974, Spain gained membership to the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), while the Spanish minister of commerce made the first ministerial-level visit to Cuba since 1898. Moreover, Spain and Cuba signed "the largest bilateral trade agreement" ever signed by Spain with any foreign country. The U.S. Embassy in Spain noted the strengthening of Spain's economic relation with Latin America and the preference of Spanish investors in that region.²⁷

On the other hand, in the 1960s, there was a vital issue to be resolved in the bilateral relationship, namely, the indemnification of the property of Spanish citizens living in Cuba.²⁸ Following the Lojendio incident in 1960, Spain maintained its representation in Cuba, though not at the ambassadorial level. Before ambassadorial exchanges could resume, the most important problems that the Spaniards had to resolve were securing the release of Spanish political prisoners in Cuba, removing the prohibitions preventing Spanish citizens from leaving Cuba (almost resolved), and indemnifying the property of Spanish citizens living in Cuba. In 1975, Spain sent a delegation to negotiate the indemnification issue, and the delegation came very close to concluding the negotiations.²⁹

Meanwhile, several terrorist and dissident groups who opposed the Franco regime had moved to Cuba. However, the Castro regime chose to focus on the economy rather than on the military, the reason for which can be explained as follows. In the beginning of the 1950s, the Spanish government began to be internationally recognized to a much greater extent, following its entry into global bodies such as the World Health Organization (WHO), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and the U.N. Thus, it held more economic power, which was vital for Cuba. Domínguez termed one of Cuba's decision-making rules as the "Rule of Precedence." According to this rule, the survival of the Cuban government takes precedence over support for another country's revolution, thus

rendering state-to-state relations more important.³⁰ Further, the Spanish Communist Party professed Euro-communism, thereby distancing itself from the Soviet Union. Moreover, its relationship with the Cuban Communist Party was “not very empathetic.”³¹

Thus, for the above economic and social reasons, the exiled Spanish government could not exert much influence on the Castro regime while the Franco regime had a long term interest in maintaining economic relations and communications for the Spaniards and Spanish-Cubans in Cuba.

2) External factors: Spain as an intermediary between the U.S. and Cuba?

For Spain, it was desirable to undertake initiatives in its foreign policy such that its dependence on the U.S. was lessened in the 1960s. Since the 1898 defeat, Spain wanted to have a sphere of influence in Latin America, asserting that their common cultural identity formed the foundation for such influence. That is, Latin America was the most suitable target place where Spain could establish an effective leadership role, as proved by the existence of a separate entity for “America and Cultural relations” in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the early 20th century.³²

Spain attempted to maintain both its commercial relations with Cuba and its aid relations with the U.S. It was true that the U.S. pressured Spain to support its trade embargo on Cuba. However, Spain's dependence on the U.S. was decreasing in the 1960s because of the inflow of European investment and other reasons. On the other hand, for the U.S., the geopolitical importance of Spain — particularly the naval base of Rota — was growing in light of the Middle East situation. In 1963, while negotiating the extension of the Bases Pact, Manuel Fraga — the Spanish minister of information and tourism from 1962 to 1969 — stressed the importance of ties with Cuba and its trade of Spanish products. In addition, he threatened that the pact would not be extended should the U.S. take unfavorable measures such as cutting off its military aid or loans to Spain.³³

Furthermore, following incidents such as the case of *Sierra de Aránzazu* in September 1964 (a Spanish vessel en route to Havana was attacked) and the *Palomares* incident in 1966 (a B-52 bomber carrying four atomic bombs crashed in the Mediterranean; one bomb was lost and found after a massive search), Spanish public opinion turned significantly against the U.S., and Spain found itself in a more advantageous position.

On the other hand, the U.S. obtained information about Cuba through Spain. For example, in 1963, when the Spanish minister in charge at the embassy in Havana returned to Madrid, he briefed the first secretary of the U.S. Embassy with regard to the Cuban political situation. The secretary evaluated the briefing as “very interesting” and passed on the information to the Department of State.³⁴ In May 1964, the Cuban party attempted to establish contact with the Spanish ambassador to France, José María de Areilza, with the hope that Spain would act as an “intermediary.” The American party principally agreed to the possibility of this negotiation, though it was conditioned by some reservations such as considerations for the upcoming presidential election in November.³⁵ In September, Secretary of State Rusk suggested to the Spanish ambassador that the Spanish government “speak frankly to the Cubans that they must stop their interference in other countries.”³⁶ Further, the director of the Diplomatic Information Office, Adolfo Martín-Gamero, met with Castro in 1967. This was not at the initiative of the U.S.; however he stressed to Castro that “Spain was acting as intermediary between the United States and Cuba.”³⁷ In Cairo also, Spanish diplomats played the role of “intermediary” for the U.S. and the U.A.R.³⁸ In short, Spain could play the role of “intermediary” in the world.

In the 1970s, because the U.S. did not want its bilateral relationship with Spain to worsen over the Cuban problem, it gradually became tolerant of Spain's “peculiar” foreign policy toward Cuba.³⁹ Washington's first priority with Franco's Spain was always to successfully conclude the agreement for the use of Spanish military bases. Therefore, for example, in an effort “to avoid a further

contentious issue with the GOS [government of Spain],” the U.S. Embassy in Madrid noted that the issue of Cuba trading with a Spanish company (Barreiros) — which wanted to export Chrysler cars manufactured in Spain to Cuba — was “such a small matter.” Further, the embassy was of the view that the delicate bilateral relationship should not be damaged by U.S. insistence on the matter.⁴⁰ All such issued hinged upon the negotiations, since the bilateral relation was very fragile. Moreover, the U.S. government had to consider the upcoming presidential campaign, which restrained it to from undertaking an active policy. Nevertheless, the percentage of Spanish trade with Cuba was still very limited in comparison to that with the U.S.

3) Physiological factors

In this section, we examine some key words that have emerged through our investigations — honor, passion, and morals.

In Latin America, Spanish Catholic groups, particularly the Jesuits, alternated with the incomplete public educational institutions. The majority of Jesuits were conservative, pro-Francoist, and followers of “Hispanidad”, and they were in charge of higher education in Cuba, particularly that of the upper classes. Frei Betto — during his interview with Castro — clarified that Castro’s former preparatory school, Belén, was owned by the Jesuits. Frei Betto stated that the school was “independent of their political ideas,” “almost every Spaniard has the sentiment of personal honor,” and “the Jesuits particularly have a high sense of personal honor.”⁴¹ The Jesuits in Belén, due to a lack of knowledge about the Anglo-Saxon world, held “strong malice” against it because of the humiliation Spain faced in the past. Castro was educated in Belén and “fascinated” by Franco.⁴²

Furthermore, Castro stated that he believed Christianity and Socialism to have quite a few things in common, and even declared that Christ was the “grand revolutionary.” He explained this comparison as follows: Just like Christ gave the people fish and bread, Socialism provides them with schools, hospitals, and jobs.⁴³ Castro went

on to say that similar to José Martí, he disliked the Spanish system, but not the Spaniards, and disliked Fascism and the Nazis, but did not wish for revenge.⁴⁴

Franco, during his childhood, had witnessed the return of a defeated navy from Cuba to Galicia after the end of the American-Spanish war. This defeat had damaged the honor of the Spaniards. Castro stated that the Cuban Revolution had “restored the feeling and the honor of Spaniards,” and attributed this, rather than economic reasons, as the reason for Franco’s friendly attitude toward Cuba.⁴⁵ Castro may have criticized Franco intentionally. However, on unofficial occasions, Castro did not exhibit any hostility toward the Franco regime.⁴⁶ In fact, following Franco’s death, during an interview with the Spanish newspaper *El País*, Castro praised Franco’s resistance to the pressure exerted by the U.S. without breaking off diplomatic relations. He stated that “Do not touch Cuba” was Franco’s clear order.⁴⁷

Second, we will examine the role that “passion” played in the bilateral relationship. This can be found in Castro’s enthusiastic propagation of Jesuits and his historical consciousness: “History will absolve me.” Castro’s former school, Belén, taught students “the attractive attributes” of José Antonio Primo de Rivera, founder of the Falange, who insisted on “enthusiasm and aggressiveness.” Following these values, Castro was a nationalistic leader who governs with “passion”. Moreover, his heroes are revolutionaries, soldiers, and conquerors, not “Occidental, democratic leaders.”⁴⁸ His “theatricality” was mentioned by the Spanish Embassy in Havana.⁴⁹

Similarly, Madariaga, diplomat, writer, historian, and a press member of the Secretariat of the League of Nations, affirmed the supremacy of Spanish culture in the world. He believed that culture should be a “priority” in and the basis of “the moral power” of Spanish foreign policy.⁵⁰ In 1961, Castiella sent a telegram to the embassy in Havana in which he declared that the Spanish-Cuban relationship should not be affected by the existing tension between the U.S. and Cuba and hoped that Spain would exercise “at any moment

the maximum moral authority" and remain faithful to the "no-intervention principle." In addition, in the case of suspension or a rupture in relations, the embassy was told to maintain "the prestige and dignity of Spain" and "the defense of material and moral interests for the collectivity."⁵¹ Spain had a negative attitude toward its own former dictator Batista owing to the brutality of his political actions as well as the low moral of the army and the administrative corruption that prevailed under his rule.⁵² Meanwhile, the U.S. had adopted a more practical attitude toward Cuba. According to the Spanish ambassador to Cuba, Lojendio, the U.S. only considered its economic relations with Cuba and the defense of American interests.⁵³ At least, "moral reason" was cited less in American or Japanese governmental telegrams.

Furthermore, according to Castro, "morality" is one of the most important standards by which to evaluate other leaders, and he criticized American capitalism on the basis that it was immoral. He admitted that Franco had a "moral and political stature." Similarly, Manuel Fraga, the former president of Galicia (ex-minister of information and tourism under the Franco regime), was welcomed in Cuba — Castro shared a friendly relationship with him not because he was a fellow countryman but because of his achievements in Galicia.⁵⁴ Meanwhile, in 1960 the U.S. (Ambassador Bonsal) also hoped that Spain could help the U.S. because Spain's "moral influence on the Spanish colony and the Cubans in general" and the cooperation of the "other Iberoamerican governments" would help bring about the downfall of the Communist regime in Cuba.⁵⁵

In sum, the "spiritual linkage" between the two countries can be measured by their relations with the United States, or "against the United States." Further, both Castro and Franco had a "moral incentive" and exhibited "historicism" from a long-term perspective. Another Galician businessman, Eduardo Barreiros, pointed out the common values shared by Castro and Franco, such as honesty, passion, and patriotism.⁵⁶

4. Conclusion

The reasons why the Franco regime maintained diplomatic relations with Cuba despite their opposing ideologies have been explained using vague and abstract terms such as "linkage of culture, tradition, and ancestry," "economic reasons," and "Galician connection." Thus, this work intends to render more concrete such explanations.

First, with respect to the bilateral relationship, the "sentimental" reason was fundamental for Franco; namely, Spain's honor that was damaged by the American-Spanish war and restored by Cuba. As leaders, both Franco and Castro possessed common merits such as morality and patriotism, and although they had never met, they "understood" each other. The proportion of Spain's trade with Cuba was extremely insignificant in terms of total trade Spanish trade. However, Spanish policy was based on economic pragmatism, with the "long-term" point of view taking into consideration ties with Spanish immigrants and relatives still living in Cuba.

Second, from the point of view of the elites under Franco's regime, Spain needed a "peculiar" policy that would establish its status as a middle power or an influential state in a region and enable it to distance itself from the Cold War. In addition, non-democratic and anticommunist Spain could play a role of "intermediary" between the Occidental World and Latin America, especially between the U.S. and Cuba, approaching the Occidental World while maintaining relations with Cuba but without changing the Spanish regime. On the other hand, the U.S. had to consider the negotiation of the Bases Agreement with Spain, therefore the U.S. could not apply much pressure on Spain with regard to Cuba.

¹ ENRICH, Silvia, *Historia diplomática entre España e Iberoamérica en el contexto de las relaciones internacionales (1955-1985)* (Madrid: Ediciones de Cultura Hispánica, 1989).

² PAZ-SÁNCHEZ, Manuel de, *Franco y Cuba* (Las Palmas de Gran Canaria: Ediciones Idea, 2006).

³ SUÁREZ FERNÁNDEZ, Luis, *Francisco Franco y su*

- tiempo tomo VII, VIII* (Madrid: Fundación Nacional Francisco Franco, 1984).
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- ⁴ PARDO SANZ, Rosa María, "Fernando María Castiella: Pasión política y vocación diplomática." *Historia contemporánea* 15 (1996), pp. 225-239.
- "La etapa Castiella y el final del Régimen, 1957-1975." *La política exterior de España en el siglo XX*. Eds. TUSELL, Javier, AVILÉS, Juan, and PARDO, R. (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 2000), pp. 341-369.
- ⁵ BAYOD, Angel, *Franco visto por sus ministros* (Barcelona: Planeta, 1981), 390 and *Letter From General Franco to President Johnson*, August 20, 1965, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, vol. XII, Western Europe*, www.state.gov (accessed 10/2/08).
- ⁶ SOPEÑA, J., *España-Cuarenta años con Franco*. (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1977), 64.
- ⁷ PERINAT, Luis Guillermo, *Recuerdos de una vida itinerante* (Madrid: Compañía Literaria, 1996), 133, and ROVIRA, Juan José, "Franco y la política exterior." *El legado de Franco*. Fundación Nacional Francisco Franco (Madrid: Azor, 1993), pp. 423-487; p. 485.
- ⁸ Pardo, *La etapa*, 347.
- ⁹ Pardo, *La etapa*, 353.
- ¹⁰ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) sent a Note Verbal to Cuba stressing that the relationship between the Spanish and Cuban governments was based on "mutual respect for each other's sovereignty," "the principle of no-intervention in the domestic affairs," and "historic ties and friendship." Spanish Embassy in Havana (SEH), *Telegram to Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)*, August 13, 1960, box 5970, file 20, AMAE.
- ¹¹ See PAZ-SÁNCHEZ, M. d., *Zona rebelde: La diplomacia española ante la Revolución cubana (1957-1960)* (Las Palmas de Gran Canaria: Centro de la Cultura Popular Canaria, 1997).
- ¹² FRANCO SALGADO-ARAUJO, Francisco, *Mis conversaciones privadas con Franco* (Barcelona: Planeta, 1976), 278; and U.S. Embassy in Madrid (USEM), *Telegram to Secretary of State*, December 2, 1967, Declassified Documents Reference System (DDRS), www.gale.cengage.com (accessed 9/14/08).
- ¹³ MFA, *Telegram to SEH*, January 27, 1960, box 6536, file 8, AMAE.
- ¹⁴ Department of States (DOS), *Memorandum of Conversation*, October 7, 1965, DDRS.
- ¹⁵ MFA, *Proyecto de Acuerdo hispano-cubano sobre indemnizaciones*, February 8, 1967, no. 6381, FNFF.
- ¹⁶ LÓPEZ RODÓ, Laureano, "El discurso pronunciado por el ministro de Asuntos Exteriores de España ante la XXVIII Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas." *Mundo Hispánico* 308 noviembre (1973): pp. 72-73.
- ¹⁷ USEM, *Telegram to Secretary of State*, January 13, 1975, DDRS.
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