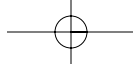


# Introduction

**MARIFELI PÉREZ-STABLE**

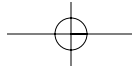
---

*The world still awaits. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, many observers expected a political transformation in Cuba as well. The Cuban regime might have collapsed as did those of Central and Eastern Europe after Mikhail Gorbachev announced that Soviet troops would never again be used to keep Communist regimes in power. In Central and Eastern Europe, citizens took to the streets, and communist leaders simply failed to summon the will for massive repression. But there was no such outcry from civil society in Cuba, nor did Fidel Castro embrace the profound reforms-from-above that China began putting in place in 1979 and Vietnam in 1986. Though they are still dictatorships, these two Asian countries have embarked on radical economic transformations well beyond what Hungary—the most innovative among the former Soviet bloc countries—ever attained under communism. Cuba has not changed.*



Why Cubans have remained politically quiescent is a nagging question that has no easy answers. That the revolution was autonomous and at one point engaged the Cuban people as no other event in the island's history is certainly a factor. Unlike Central and Eastern European communism, Cuba's has reaped the benefit of nationalism. The U.S. embargo has, indeed, bolstered the David-Goliath imagery that serves Castro well. That for most of its lengthy tenure the regime did not bear the stigma of illegitimacy in the eyes of most Cubans—and the rest of the world—is also a consideration. Only in the past fifteen years has its legitimacy been questioned on the island and abroad. So the Cuban regime carries anachronistically on. Fear also plays its part in keeping ordinary Cubans quiet. Repression—which had been fierce in the 1960s—has largely evolved into the “low-intensity” variety: a climate that instills fear and encourages a *doble moral*, where people say one thing in public while believing another in private. Ordinary Cubans resist official Cuba in myriad but politically unthreatening ways—for example, engaging in illegal economic activities, stealing from the state, pretending support while tuning out, planning to leave. Monsignor Pedro Meurice, archbishop of Santiago de Cuba, has aptly characterized Cubans as suffering from “an anthropological lesion” that has, thus far, kept them from being actors for change in the public arena. Long gone are the days when the revolution thrived on the will, energy, and passion of the Cuban people. Largely gone as well is the willingness of broad sectors of the population to listen to official appeals. Fear, apathy, and a sense of impotence are widespread, but those sentiments have, in fact, contributed to the stability of the regime. Human rights activists, a small independent civil society, and other peaceful opponents of the regime are a symbolic, courageous presence but, for the time being, not much more.

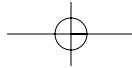
At the Iberoamerican summits of the early 1990s, Spanish Prime Minister Felipe González, Mexican President Carlos Salinas, and Colombian President César Gaviria pressed upon Castro the need to, at a minimum, open the economy to engage the post-Cold War world. In response, Cuba loosened the centralized control over the economy, allowed foreign investors to establish joint ventures with the state, and accepted the U.S. dollar as legal tender. Castro gave these reforms his grudging support but flatly refused to deepen their reach in mid-decade. Cuba would



not bring the China-Vietnam model to the Caribbean. Had full-throttle reforms happened, the leadership would surely have caught people's ears once again. Beginning in 2003, moreover, the regime imposed curbs on self-employment, foreign investments, and the use of the U.S. dollar, which constitute outright regression from the timid openings of the last decade. The concessions that had been made to the market after the disappearance of Soviet subsidies were no longer necessary, the Comandante announced. The income derived from a growing tourism industry, the remittances sent by exiles to relatives on the island, the availability of Venezuelan oil, and new economic agreements with China have served as a lifeline of sorts for Castro.

Unlike Central and Eastern Europe before 1989 or contemporary China and Vietnam, Cuba's leadership has never come to terms with the imperatives of daily life. It has never embraced markets as integral and irrevocable elements of its rule. Castro prefers to mobilize the masses under the banners of socialism and anti-imperialism over allowing citizens the right to open their own businesses. Yet while registering notable advancements in education, health care, and other social indicators, Cuba has mostly fallen short of meeting the basic expectations of its citizens. A popular joke asks: What are the Revolution's three successes? Education, health care, and social security. The three failures? Breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

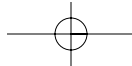
Still, Cuba has survived. At the 1999 Iberoamerican summit in Havana, Castro expressed smug satisfaction in his welcoming remarks. When Cuba was selected as the host country years earlier, no one, he implied, had expected him to be in power. He had, moreover, remained at the helm on his own terms. In Giuseppe di Lampedusa's *The Leopard*, a young Italian aristocrat-turned-revolutionary comments: "If we want things to stay as they are, things will have to change." And so it has been for the Cuban regime: Castro deflected the calls—from within the elite and the citizenry—for broader market reforms in the manner of China and Vietnam and rejected all talk of even a minimal political loosening. The United States has not wavered from a policy of isolation while the European Union, Canada, and Latin America have wagered on a policy of engagement. Havana has stood defiant. Neither approach has worked to prompt a radical economic restructuring, let alone the democratic



transition that is the common objective. While other factors may yet intervene, Cuba will not likely engage in true transformation until Fidel Castro passes from the scene.

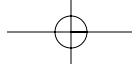
Ironically, the regime has endured under the Comandante's terms long enough that today it finds itself in more favorable international circumstances than could have ever been imagined in the early 1990s. Back then, democracy and capitalism stood triumphant worldwide, and hopes ran high that Latin America would, at last, emerge from poverty and consolidate democracy. By the end of the decade, antiglobalization movements were gaining ground everywhere, and Latin Americans were growing increasingly frustrated at the shortcomings of their democratic regimes, particularly regarding living standards and physical security. More recently, a resurgent anti-Americanism worldwide—fueled by the Iraq war, the wave of elected center-left governments in South America, and the rise of Hugo Chávez's Bolivarian revolution—are stirring winds favorable to the Cuban government. The Castro-Chávez alliance has, indeed, challenged the paradigm of representative democracy and market reforms that held back the left during the 1990s. The two leaders are gathering support, especially through their opposition to free trade and U.S. policies. Fellow travelers Evo Morales, Daniel Ortega, and Rafael Correa moreover, won presidential elections in Bolivia (2005), Nicaragua (2006), and Ecuador (2006). In Peru, however, Ollanta Humala did not fare well. Today, it is democrats of all stripes who seem to be falling short of accomplishing their goals of relieving popular frustrations through economic growth, job creation, and human-capital investments while upholding democratic institutions and civil liberties. State-centered, populist policies—even if historically the source of some social mobility—had run amok by the late 1970s, and Latin American economies imploded. There is no reason to believe that contemporary populism will yield a different outcome. Yet many Latin Americans are angry enough to be swayed by its promises. Cuba after Castro may well have to contend with similar currents.

The direction Cuba will take after Castro's death is difficult to predict and so is the life span of the present regime without his leadership. On July 31, 2006, Raúl Castro—Fidel's brother, the Armed Forces Minister and First Vice President of the Council of State—assumed tempo-



rary charge of Cuba. Intestinal bleeding had forced the elder Castro to undergo emergency surgery. Though alive as of this writing, the Comandante looked stunningly deteriorated in the video images released by Havana. His illness and Raúl's interim command offered the regime a dress rehearsal of sorts. From his sick bed, Fidel had reason to be gratified by how smoothly the temporary transfer had gone. In anticipation of his passing, questions still abound. Is a democratic transition likely sooner rather than later? Do Cuban elites have the wherewithal to consolidate a successor regime? Will ordinary Cubans continue to be quiescent? Can Castro's successors engage them in a new national project? Four plausible scenarios come to mind.

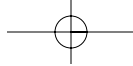
1. A successor regime consolidates. Cuban elites skillfully manage Castro's passing, retain their cohesion, and start moving on economic reforms. The economy heads toward a Caribbean variant of the China-Vietnam model, and living standards improve at a reasonable pace. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner become less of a chore. Ordinary Cubans give the government a chance to deliver on promises long forsaken. While the Cuban Communist Party continues to have a monopoly on power, the pressures of daily life for ordinary Cubans slowly ease. Civil liberties may not be restored, but many economic freedoms are. The succession that official Cuba had heralded since the late 1990s as the inevitable outcome after the Comandante's passing becomes a reality.
2. A successor regime gives way to a democratic transition. Initially, Cuban elites succeed in maintaining political stability and launch an economic reform process. In this scenario, however, forces within the regime itself and from civil society push for a political loosening and are not quieted by improving living standards. The successors do not muster the will to repress on a massive scale and thus agree to unleash a process of negotiations. Some political openings happen in the short term, and a transition to democracy follows in the medium term.
3. A successor regime is confronted with poor or slow economic results. Economic restructuring is either halfhearted or takes longer in producing results, so that ordinary Cubans become impatient and



regime reformers nervous when protests erupt in several major cities. Hardliners lose their case for using force against the demonstrators, and reformers call a national dialogue that rather quickly results in a democratic transition.

4. A successor regime wobbles from the start. Cuban elites are too cautious and merely restore the pre-2003 economic status quo while remaining intransigent at any hint of political loosening. Castro is buried, but his ideas are not as his successors do little for fear of losing control. Yet that's exactly what happens: things simply cannot stay as they were, and real change becomes unavoidable. The advice of Lampedusa's young aristocrat-revolutionary could serve Cuban elites only once. Popular protests spread throughout the island, state security cannot contain them, violence escalates. The army is called to act, but some generals refuse to give the order to shoot and those that do are faced with soldiers that shoot into the air. Chaos reigns, and more rafters begin to head across the Straits of Florida on a daily basis. A U.S. intervention or a multinational peacekeeping force is a real possibility.

While improbable as long as the Middle East looms so large in international politics, a unilateral intervention by the United States cannot be entirely dismissed. Some in the United States government surely contemplate it as do certain sectors of Cuban Miami. If Castro's successors cannot maintain order and chaos takes over Cuba as it did Haiti in 1994 and 2004, the United States might be drawn in, either on its own or in conjunction with regional allies. A post-Castro Cuba in turmoil would test Washington like no other Cuban event since the Missile Crisis of 1962. Beyond the fact that unilateral intervention would be catastrophic for Cuba's future political stability and further fuel the flames of anti-Americanism everywhere, there are two reasons why this doomsday scenario seems far-fetched. One has already been mentioned: the United States is embroiled in Iraq without a clear exit strategy, the U.S. military is overstretched, and tensions can quickly increase to the flash point elsewhere in the Middle East or in North Korea. The other is that a chaotic Cuba is also the nightmare of Cuban elites. Indeed, the desire to avert chaos and outside interference may just be as strong a cohesion factor



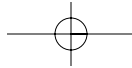
among them as Castro himself has been for decades. Cuban elites are likely to do their mightiest to consolidate a successor regime and, if not, to seek a way out that keeps violence in check. Defending Cuban sovereignty is certainly a motivation but so is self-interest: while Cuban elites would be best served under the China-Vietnam model, they would do better in scenarios two and three than under U.S. or even multilateral intervention. Absent the China-Vietnam scenario, negotiations to cede power may well be preferable. For that, the deep-seated polarization that has existed among Cubans for nearly five decades must be eased through dialogue and compromise. To succeed, Cubans—first and foremost, those on the island—must occupy center stage in a transition from the current regime.

*Looking Forward: Comparative Perspectives on Cuba's Transition* is a reader that imagines the island's future after the "poof moment"—Jorge I. Domínguez's vivid phrase—when the current regime will no longer be or, at least, will not have the profile it has today. *Looking Forward* does not try to predict when and how the "poof" will happen.

The book is divided into twelve topics—politics, the military, the legal system, civil society, gender, race, economic transition strategies, social policy and social welfare, corruption, the diaspora, memory, ideology and culture, and U.S.-Cuba relations. I asked each author to think along the lines of three questions:

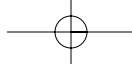
1. What are the experiences of new democracies regarding your topic?
2. How might the Cuba of the 1990s and early twenty-first century condition the transition regarding your topic?
3. In view of the first two questions, what might be plausible and/or desirable alternatives in your topic for a Cuba in transition?

The reader is far from comprehensive. Important topics such as relations between Cuba and the European Union or the play of regional differences in Cuba in either a transition or a succession are missing. I had to make choices; resources were generous but not infinite. The questions carry an obvious bias in favor of a democratic transition. Still, I also asked the authors to consider a scenario that follows the paths opened



by China and Vietnam, which, I believe, would be the best option for consolidating a successor regime. Some of us did that, others did not. Though each author chose the countries or regions he or she deemed appropriate, comparisons were integral to all the chapters. For the sake of readability, I asked authors not to include references, end- or footnotes, or literature reviews. For the most part, only people named are either current actors or of historical significance. Essays are what I aimed for and, happily, that is what I got in the end. While all of us would be gratified if academic experts find *Looking Forward* of interest, our aim is to reach a public beyond the professoriate: students, journalists, analysts, policy makers, and others in the United States, Europe, Latin America, and, of course, Cuba. In 2006, Editorial Colibrí, a Madrid-based publisher of titles about Cuba in the humanities and social sciences, issued the reader in Spanish, *Cuba en el siglo XXI: Ensayos sobre la transición*.

*Looking Forward* opens with my chapter, which is on politics. Two codependent facts lie at the heart of the Cuban political system: Fidel Castro and the leadership's inability to come to terms with the normalization of state socialism as Eastern European communists were able to do—or as the Chinese and the Vietnamese are doing. Markets and institutions are anathema to the Fidelista style of governance. Instead, the Comandante relies on mass mobilizations and an intimate network of unconditional loyalists to promote his agenda. Though he was crucial to the survival of the regime in the early 1990s, Castro may now have become a liability for his successors. No one else can govern the way he has, and his heirs might be left in a stronger position if normalization started before his departure. I offer points of comparison with Latin America and the eight formerly communist countries in Central and Eastern Europe that joined the European Union in 2004. I also make comparisons to contemporary China and Vietnam. The first set consists of largely contrasting experiences of democratic transition and market transformation; the second represents a viable alternative that retains Communist Party control while opening the economy. In any case, Cuba is unlikely to emerge immediately as a full, consolidated democracy. A hybrid regime that combines liberalization and authoritarianism may well settle in, as it has in most new democracies.

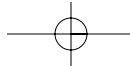


Jorge I. Domínguez looks ahead at civil-military relations in a post-Castro Cuba. The armed forces today are not only professional but have an excellent record winning wars in Angola and Ethiopia. In that sense, the Cuban military is unlike its counterparts in Latin America and Central and Eastern Europe at their respective moments of change in political regime. Military successes abroad have had significant effects on Cuban society. As a result, the claims veterans make on the state and the residues of the social prestige of the armed forces are likely to linger after a transition. This would be a mixed blessing, to be sure, as a democratic regime will face multiple demands from various sources and will need to establish civilian control over the military. Domínguez offers an overview of civil-military relations worldwide and underscores three facts: successful coups have been rare, unsuccessful coups a bit less so, and civilian supremacy—even if incomplete—is intrinsic to the logic of democratic politics. He is less optimistic regarding the capacity of democratic civilian institutions to set policy and oversee the military's internal affairs. So the cutbacks in Cuba's military budget and in the size of the armed forces are two developments since 1990 that augur well for a democratic Cuba. Less auspicious are the continuing confrontation with the United States and the military's expanded importance in politics and the economy, both of which undermine civilian imperatives. Domínguez posits four scenarios: (1) a succession regime that resembles China led by Raúl Castro, the head of the armed forces; (2) a transition to a Costa Rica-like regime where the armed forces are abolished; (3) a transition gone astray with high levels of crime, armed protests, and social unrest; (4) and a democratic Cuba with a small, professional military that becomes an active participant in international peacekeeping operations.

Gustavo Arnavat focuses on the legal reforms necessary to support a transition to representative democracy and a market economy. He cites Poland and Hungary as successful cases where constitutional amendments bolstered political pluralism, protected civil liberties, and guaranteed the right to private property. In no small part thanks to their judicial independence, constitutional courts in those two countries have played critical roles in upholding the rule of law. In the early stages of the transition, Polish and Hungarian civil societies effectively pressured

for constitutional changes and have remained a significant check on those in power. Arnavat then discusses two Cuban constitutions—that of 1940 and the 1976 charter, which draws considerably from the earlier one in terms of the social and economic rights extended to the citizenry. The fundamental difference between the two lies in the limited or non-existent autonomy for the political and judicial systems and the submission of individual rights to the greater socialist good that the 1976 constitution calls for. After the end of the cold war, the 1976 constitution was amended to include the recognition of some property rights that, in turn, led to the modest economic openings of the 1990s. In 2002, the constitution was again amended to consecrate the irrevocableness of socialism in Cuba, a fact that further complicates the future process of constitutional reforms. By way of conclusion, Arnavat proposes the need to legitimize the rule of law by a representative body and to hold a plebiscite or referendum on constitutional amendments or to create a new text altogether if Cuba is to follow the successful countries in Central and Eastern Europe.

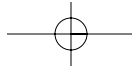
The good, the bad, and the ugly—that is the story of civil society in new democracies told by Damián Fernández. Democratic transitions have opened up spaces for autonomous organizations and thus for opportunities that strengthen civil society. Civil society, in turn, nurtures democracy. That is the good news. The bad and the ugly, however, quickly surfaced throughout Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States, and Latin America. The deflation of expectations, the spread of pessimism, and the disengagement of citizens from the civic sphere resulted in social fragmentation. Incivility is a common condition in post-communist and post-authoritarian societies. Fernández presents a ten-point summary of the lessons that these experiences offer regarding civil society. He emphasizes that historical legacies, the role of external actors, and the acceptance of democratic rules are more central to democratic consolidation than the vitality of civil society. He then sets the Cuban stage after 1990, where a proto-civil society has emerged in the form of human-rights organizations, opposition groups, and other associations. The Catholic Church is the only independent, nationwide institution but, the author argues, one that has perhaps been overly cautious in fully claiming its space. Fernández also



examines the youth sector as a civil-society actor. And he posits three scenarios: (1) succession with limited economic and political change, (2) a democratic transition, and (3) a radical economic transformation as in China.

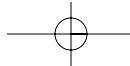
Cuba's government has enacted some of the world's most progressive policies for gender equality. If a transition toward democracy and a market economy begins on the island, what will happen to this progressive approach? Mala Htun makes the useful distinction between regimes that promote positive freedoms, as do Cuba and other socialist countries—which stress the material conditions enabling people to exercise certain rights—and negative freedoms, as do liberal regimes that build hedges to defend individuals from state intrusion. Both regime types have made advances on gender equality. In Central and Eastern Europe and Latin America, democratization has resulted in contradictory outcomes. In Central and Eastern Europe, liberal abortion and reproductive rights were sometimes rolled back and women's representation in politics plummeted as resurgent patriarchal and nationalist discourses often crowded out feminist movements. In Latin America, liberal politics created opportunities for debate and change that military governments had repressed. Democracy also opened space for conservative movements and generated a stalemate on the important policy issue of abortion. While Cuba has made notable advances in gender equality, its experience highlights several disadvantages. Progress hinges on the will of the state and the Communist Party, which posit gender emancipation as solely dependent on participation in the labor force and the public sphere, disregarding the role of culture and ideology. And men and women did not benefit equally from the modest market reforms put in place after 1990: women, particularly, suffered the consequences of the so-called Special Period. Continuing economic crisis will seriously undermine the capacity of a transition state to compensate for market inequities and even its ability to enforce the gender equality laws that remain on the books.

Alejandro de la Fuente notes the deterioration of race relations in Cuba since the early 1990s. Blacks and mulattos are underrepresented in positions of power, the media, and the most desirable jobs, such as those in the tourist sector, while they are overrepresented in the informal economy. Over the past decade, surveys indicate that many Cubans



associate blackness with degrading attributes and despicable behaviors. Virulent racist remarks come too quickly and frequently to the mouths of whites. Cuba, nonetheless, has made considerable progress in reducing racial inequality in areas where the government places high priority, such as education and health care. Since blacks and mulattos have fewer relatives abroad than whites do, they have had a far smaller share of the remittances and therefore have borne a greater burden during the economic crisis. De la Fuente uses two comparative contexts to situate Cuba's prospective transition: the Cuban past and Brazil. In earlier political transitions on the island—the founding of the republic in 1902, the downfall of dictator Gerardo Machado in 1933, and the revolution of 1959—race was as central as it now appears to be to many Cubans. In all three transitions, the outcome was mixed. In the case of Brazil, which shares with Cuba a history of slavery, racism, and racial mobilization, the idea of nationhood and racial democracy are closely knit. That is also the case in Cuba. Under military dictators, Brazilian authorities were—as Cuban authorities are—intolerant to public debate on race. Since the return of democracy, Brazilian governments have implemented rather impressive policies of reparation and affirmative action. Whatever forms a democratic Cuba adopts in race relations, state-directed efforts against discrimination will be needed. Building on post-1959 achievements and addressing the regime's shortcomings are imperative for black and mulatto Cubans to wield their citizenship fully.

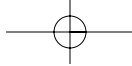
The Cuban economic collapse of the early 1990s did not compel the Cuban government to enact a radical program of economic restructuring or commit to political liberalization. It is, however, only a matter of time before the island embarks on a path toward markets and democracy. Jorge F. Pérez-López outlines the main elements of a plausible transition strategy from the experiences of Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Macroeconomic stabilization (i.e., cutting fiscal deficits and inflation) and microeconomic restructuring (i.e., liberalizing prices) were both necessary first steps, though the timing and strategy for enterprise and institutional reforms differed in the individual countries. The existing conditions at the beginning of the transitions also influenced the pace and results of reforms. Institutions are, finally, central in promoting economic growth; legally protected property



rights, banking and investment codes, and a fair and efficient tax system are imperative. Pérez-López offers a succinct overview of the key reforms of the 1990s in Cuba, including dollarization, self-employment, agricultural cooperatives, the tax code, peasant markets, foreign investment, and the banking sector. He concludes that the reforms were piecemeal, tardy, limited, and shallowly implemented. Since 2003, an ongoing regression on reforms does not augur well for the economy. Finally, he sketches the macro- and microeconomic policies a transition or successor regime would need to follow for a full transformation in the Central and Eastern European model or a less complete but still significant restructuring as those taking place in China and Vietnam.

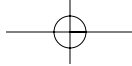
Carmelo Mesa-Lago offers readers a careful overview of social policy and social welfare in Cuba during the crisis of 1990–2002 and explores what could happen under a transition or a succession. In former and current socialist countries, reforms have resulted in increased unemployment, deteriorated social services, increased poverty, and greater inequality. Though its reforms in the 1990s were modest, Cuba suffered similar consequences. Furthermore, Cuba has not implemented the macroeconomic policies necessary to increase GDP, output, jobs, real wages, and fiscal revenue. Without these, social policy is more about sharing poverty than enjoying a modicum of wealth. Fiscally responsible social policies, for which sustained economic growth is imperative, are the best purveyors of social welfare. Mesa-Lago explores three scenarios. Under the first, the regime remains in power and resumes the reforms of the 1990s. Even a modest resumption would bolster political legitimacy by showing a commitment to improving living standards. A socialist-market scenario—possible only after Castro’s passing—is the best road map for a successor regime. The third is a full democratic and market transition. Whatever the scenario, balancing growth and equity need to be at the heart of economic transformation. Adequate economic incentives are indispensable for savings, growth, and employment. Tax policy is a crucial tool in promoting a fair balance.

Corruption has played a crucial role in Cuba’s past and will remain a feature of the island’s landscape whatever happens. That is Daniel P. Erikson’s central premise. The question is not whether corruption can be quickly eliminated but rather how to secure a democratic transition



that is not severely hampered by the breakdown of existing institutions, the explosion of theft of state assets, and a surge in organized crime. New democracies struggle with corruption. Large power disparities, ineffective institutions, weak civil societies, and low levels of social capital all contribute to the high incidence of corruption in the developing world. Though in theory democracy is a corrective for these conditions, in practice it has not made significant enough gains to curb corruption. The crisis of the 1990s highlighted the avenues for corruption in Cuba, namely abuse of power, state capture, the theft of public goods, and a thriving black market. Meeting daily needs requires most Cubans to step outside the law. Erikson suggests that a managed succession, as in China and Vietnam or a democratic transition as in Central and Eastern Europe and Latin America would present different types of corruption problems. In any case, a transition that results in a weak or failed state would compound the dangers of the island becoming the Caribbean hub for drug trafficking and money laundering. Ultimately, the only hope of containing corruption depends on steady progress on improving the quality of democracy once the transition happens.

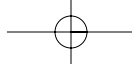
Will the émigré community play a role in the island's future? What is the historical tradition of Cuban émigré communities in the United States regarding the destiny of their homeland? How well is the post-1959 diaspora positioned to play a role the island's future? Do post-socialist experiences offer valuable insights for the Cuban case? What are the experiences of other countries, especially in Latin America, regarding diasporas? What are the likely and desirable alternatives for émigré involvement in Cuba's transition? These are the questions that Lisandro Pérez addresses in his essay. Since the nineteenth century, Cuban émigrés have been central to political developments on the island. Cuban independence from Spain would have been impossible without them. Fidel Castro himself planned his revolution in Mexico and the United States. The current Cuban diaspora draws from that long-entrenched tradition. Exile politics have been closely aligned with ten U.S. administrations, most particularly with the current one, that of George W. Bush. For hard-liners who have long dominated the discourse, a policy of confrontation and embargo are the only acceptable means to combat Castro. Over the past fifteen years, currents of moderation as well as exile contacts



with the island have been on the rise. These moderates, however, have yet to translate opinions into power. Pérez draws upon the German reunification experience, the role of diasporas in the Chinese and Vietnamese transformations, post-Franco Spain, post-Sandinista Nicaragua, and, more currently, Afghanistan and Iraq. In his conclusion, he presents a useful table of possible levels of Cuban émigré involvement in a transition along with various scenarios ranging from conflictive to peaceful.

Rafael Rojas speaks to the symbolic dilemmas of the Cuban transition. For five decades, Cuba has been polarized by a civil war—at first armed and violent, and then political, ideological, and cultural—that has torn the nation, its communities, and its families. Confrontations over memories such as the centennial anniversaries of José Martí's death in 1995, the U.S. intervention in Cuba's independence war in 1998, and the founding of the republic in 2002, as well as the legacies of historical and literary figures rage on between the heirs of the revolution and the opposition. In 2000, the regime launched a "battle of ideas" on ideological, educational, and cultural fronts, emphasizing the revolution's national roots, which permits a certain openness within national traditions as long as the legitimacy of the status quo is not questioned. There have also been some displays of national reconciliation, including the conferences on nation and emigration held in 1993 and 1995, the thirtieth (1992) and fortieth anniversaries (2002) of the Missile Crisis, and, especially, the fortieth anniversary of the Bay of Pigs invasion (2001). The existing polarization must make way for the political competition and pluralism needed in a democracy. Reconciliation will be difficult and, in fact, will not be achieved until the fear of exclusion and annihilation many Cubans feel is forever banished. Rojas refers to the experiences in former totalitarian states such as the Soviet Union and Poland as well as former authoritarian regimes such as post-1958 Spain under Francisco Franco and Mexico under the Institutional Revolutionary Party.

William M. LeoGrande deals with Cuba's future relations with the United States. As the Cold War ended, the island's foreign relations changed dramatically but not with Washington. The administrations of George H. W. Bush, William J. Clinton, and George W. Bush hardened sanctions against Havana. LeoGrande examines the models presented by the succession regimes in China and Vietnam and the democratic



transitions of Central and Eastern Europe, and asks how Cuba's relationship with the United States would emerge under these alternative scenarios. He also looks at Nicaragua, where a pro-United States electoral coalition defeated the Sandinistas in 1990, and where the issues to be resolved in the slow easing of tensions fell into the familiar economic, political, security, and humanitarian categories. The knotted U.S.-Cuba relationship poses similar challenges: the embargo and compensation for U.S. properties, democracy and human rights, security issues such as migration, the U.S. Naval base at Guantanamo Bay, the trafficking of narcotics, and humanitarian concerns, particularly in relation with Cuban Americans. Compensation issues—for properties confiscated from U.S. citizens and Cuban nationals who are now U.S. citizens or residents—are likely to be the most entangled and could turn into a serious crisis after a transition takes place. LeoGrande notes that Havana and Washington have grown used to their "minuet of acrimony." Nonetheless, the inevitable embrace will ultimately occur, even if new challenges and conflicts are sure to arise.

