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Introduction by Dustin Walcher

Piero Gleijeses. *La esperanza desgarrada: La rebelión dominicana de 1965 y la invasión norteamericana*. Santo Domingo: Editora Búho, 2012.

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Introduction by Dustin Walcher, Southern Oregon University

Throughout his career, Piero Gleijeses's scholarship has conclusively demonstrated the myriad benefits of multi-archival research. Long before conducting research in non-American archives became expected in the field, Gleijeses wrote truly international histories. *La esperanza desgarrada* (broken hope) is no different. The book constitutes an updated version of Gleijeses first monograph, *The Dominican Crisis*.¹ In addition to conducting extensive interviews, Gleijeses has mined the archival materials that have been declassified since the 1970s. From that research, he concludes that by invading the Dominican Republic in April 1965, the Lyndon Johnson administration destroyed the people's hope for democracy and social improvement. Moreover, he finds that although President Juan Bosch was a leftist, he was not a tool of Moscow or Havana. Rather, Bosch represented the best Dominican hope for a peaceful and reasonably prosperous future.

The reviewers offer a good deal of praise for both Gleijeses personally, and for *La esperanza desgarrada*. Alan McPherson writes that Gleijeses is "one of the most gifted researchers in the field of U.S.-Latin American relations history," and that he has "produc[ed] another work of astounding originality and depth that defies received wisdom and provides a compelling alternative explanation for a well-known event." Andrea Oñate calls the book "an exhaustive and compelling account of the years between the assassination of long-standing dictator Rafael Leónidas Trujillo in May 1961 and the United States' invasion of the Dominican Republic in April 1965." She concludes that it "is a valuable historical work and should constitute essential reading for anyone wishing to understand the Dominican Republic." Stephen Rabe is most effusive in his praise, calling Gleijeses "an authoritative presence in the fields of U.S. foreign relations, inter-American relations, and Latin American history."

While the reviewers found much to like in *La esperanza desgarrada*, they differ on a number of important issues. Significantly, those differences are reflective of ongoing discussions among scholars of U.S.-Latin American relations. For instance, the question of how Gleijeses chose to frame his narrative emerges as a point of contention. Oñate observes that the story Gleijeses tells "is largely a bilateral story where Dominican and U.S. political actors take center stage." Methodologically, it constitutes a work of "traditional diplomatic history and does not engage with newer historiography that considers the role of multiple state and non-state actors in seemingly national processes." Rather than frame the Dominican crisis as a bilateral event, Oñate would like to have seen Gleijeses examine the degree to which other regional actors played a significant role. On a related point, she argues that Gleijeses ascribes too much influence to the United States. While acknowledging that the asymmetrical distribution of power made Washington a prominent actor, she holds that Dominican and other Latin American actors enjoyed more agency in the course of determining their social, economic, and political futures than Gleijeses allows. McPherson largely agrees with this latter critique. He observes that Gleijeses

¹ Piero Gleijeses, *The Dominican Crisis: The 1965 Constitutionalist Revolt and American Intervention* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978).

simultaneously finds the United States responsible for stifling social reform in the Dominican Republic and argues that the result was the inevitable result of the political dominance of conservatives and their military allies. “So if the death of social reform was ‘inevitable’, where exactly was the hope,” McPherson asks. By contrast, Rabe offers implicit support for Gleijeses interpretations by emphasizing the significance of U.S. support for Bosch’s opponents.

Oñate goes on to argue that “Glejeses’s state-centric conception of U.S. foreign policy is also not in tune with the current state of research.” Analysis of “the influential role of public opinion, the media, Congress, and non-state actors” would provide a more complete understanding of the policymaking process within the United States. Here Oñate correctly identifies the prevailing trends in the history of U.S. foreign relations, and acknowledges that Gleijeses “has been a central contributor to the evolution of this historiography” in much of his other work.

For his part, McPherson calls for greater precision in Gleijeses’s analysis of causation. Too often Gleijeses identifies the pursuit of empire or hegemony as the critical factor motivating U.S. action. “This staple argument of the left,” McPherson writes, “that the United States pursues empire merely for empire’s sake, is circular and uninformative.” The analysis is more useful, he argues, when Gleijeses specifically identifies anticommunism or economic interests as driving policymaking in Washington.

Both Oñate and McPherson find that Gleijeses’s examination of Dominican politics emerges as one of the book’s major strengths. Indeed, Gleijeses’s substantial research in the Dominican Republic facilitates a nuanced picture of the domestic political process. Oñate and McPherson agree that the insights provided into the Dominican left, and the Latin American left more generally, constitute one of the book’s major contributions. McPherson is if anything even more impressed with Gleijeses’s coverage of the Dominican right, in large part because the right has been subjected to less analysis. Gleijeses is especially critical of mistakes those on the left made – particularly in failing to come together and form a workable popular front in the face of the rise of the right. But while stories of a divided Latin American left are relatively common, Gleijeses finds that the right was just as fractured.

It may well be true that, in the end, Gleijeses is a practitioner of traditional diplomatic history. If that is the case, he makes a strong argument for the ongoing usefulness of those approaches. Gleijeses’s work demonstrates that states remained important actors in the twentieth century; that the asymmetrical distribution of power in the international system mattered in tangible ways to ordinary people; and that great insights are available to those willing to examine Latin American politics closely when researching international questions. As McPherson concludes, “this revision of a classic reaffirms its momentous documentary value as well as the wisdom that runs through it and places it above perhaps all other narratives of the U.S. intervention with the Dominican Republic.”

Participants:

Piero Gleijeses is a Professor of American foreign policy at Johns Hopkins University (SAIS). His most recent book is *Visions of Freedom: Havana, Washington, Pretoria, and the Struggle for Southern Africa, 1976-1991*, University of North Carolina Press, 2013

Dustin Walcher is an Associate Professor at Southern Oregon University who analyzes international political economy, social unrest, and political violence. He is currently revising a manuscript that examines the link between the failure of U.S.-led economic initiatives and the rise of social revolution in Argentina between the 1950s and 1960s.

Alan McPherson is Professor of International and Area Studies and Director of the Center for the Americas at the University of Oklahoma. He is the author of *Yankee No! Anti-Americanism in U.S.-Latin American Relations* and of "Misled by Himself: What the Johnson Tapes Reveal about the Dominican Intervention of 1965," *Latin American Research Review* 38: 2 (June 2003): 127-146. His next book is *The Invaded: How Latin Americans and their Allies Fought and Ended U.S. Occupations*.

Andrea Oñate holds a B.A. in politics and history from New York University and is currently a Ph.D. candidate in Latin American history at Princeton University. Her dissertation, "Insurgent Diplomacy: the internationalized revolution of El Salvador, 1979-1992" examines the diplomatic efforts of the Salvadoran insurgent movement Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) from 1979-1992, as the country made its passage from an authoritarian military order, to revolutionary upheaval and civil war, to an eventual civic peace process that opened the way for multiparty elections. Her dissertation draws upon multi-archival research, including a never before seen private archival from an FMLN faction, and oral interviews conducted in El Salvador, Nicaragua, Mexico, the United States and the Netherlands. She has published in *Cold War History* and the Mexican political magazine *Nexos*.

Stephen G. Rabe is an Ashbel Smith Professor at the University of Texas at Dallas, where he has taught for thirty-seven years. He has taught or lectured in twenty countries, including Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, and Ecuador. He has written or edited ten books, including *The Killing Zone: The United States Wages Cold War in Latin America* (Oxford University Press, 2012). Oxford will publish the second edition of *The Killing Zone* in 2014. He is also writing a book on the United States and Latin America in the contemporary world for Bloomsbury Press and a study on Henry Kissinger and Latin America for Cornell University Press.

Piero Gleijeses, one of the most gifted researchers in the field of U.S.-Latin American relations history, has done it again, producing another work of astounding originality and depth that defies received wisdom and provides a compelling alternative explanation for a well-known event.

We are used to such feats from the author of *Shattered Hope: The Guatemalan Revolution and the United States, 1944-1954*, which delved intimately inside the Juan José Arévalo-Jacobo Arbenz years to argue for the promise of a movement but also offer a clear-eyed view of its ambitions. Gleijeses snagged interviews with key Arbenz players, including his widow.¹ In *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa, 1959-1976*, Gleijeses outdid himself, adding Afrikaans to the list of languages that he has mastered and gaining access to Cuban archives to dispel the notion that Cuban revolutionary foreign policy was a plaything of the Soviets.²

La esperanza desgarrada (“broken hope”) is an update of Gleijeses’s dissertation and first book, *The Dominican Crisis: The 1965 Constitutionalist Revolt and American Intervention*, itself a translation from the French.³ *La esperanza desgarrada* first appeared in Spanish in Cuba a few years ago, and the version reviewed here was re-edited for a Dominican press.

In terms of sources, *La esperanza desgarrada* benefits from more than eighty interviews with participants in these events, ranging from leftists such as Juan Bosch, José Rafael Molina Ureña, and Miguel Ángel Hernando Ramírez to right-wingers such as Donald Reid Cabral, Antonio Imbert Barrera, Pedro Bartolomé Benoit, and Elías Wessin y Wessin and including U.S. policymakers such as Dean Rusk, Thomas Mann, and Bruce Palmer. Any of these would be a major ‘get’ for a book about the ‘April war,’ as Dominicans have called it. To interview all of them and more, as Gleijeses did as a graduate student in the late 1960s and early 1970s, was nothing short of remarkable in a Dominican society still paralyzed by suspicion. Luckily, as I found out myself in the 1990s in talking with many of the same participants, Dominicans are not only transparent in discussing the past but particularly open with foreigners, whom they seemingly perceive to be less threatening to their collective memory. It is of this trust that Gleijeses took advantage and did so responsibly. A caveat: readers will find only a few post-1978 interviews in this updated version. The author has now, however, expanded considerably the narrative by combing through all the relevant archival documents and tapes, especially those at the John Kennedy and Lyndon

¹ Piero Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope: The Guatemalan Revolution and the United States, 1944-1954* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1991).

² Piero Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa, 1959-1976* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

³ Piero Gleijeses, *The Dominican Crisis: The 1965 Constitutionalist Revolt and American Intervention* (Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978). Translated by Lawrence Lipson.

Johnson presidential libraries.

The book's greatest contribution is its comprehensive analysis of the political left before and during the April 1965 civil conflict in the Dominican Republic and the U.S. intervention that soon followed. Gleijeses argues that Bosch, who held the presidency for seven months, was a moderate reformist who erred only in underestimating the viciousness of the right and the anti-communism of U.S. policymakers. Gleijeses is at his best when he adds that the left did itself no favors, with the three radical parties not only doubting the fervor of Bosch to the point of refusing to support him but also being deeply divided—not only between but within the parties. In every group, divisions pitted either 'softs' against 'hards,' 'the youth' against 'the elders,' or 'moderates' against 'revolutionaries.' The 1J4 or 14th of June Revolutionary Movement, a Castro-inspired group, was the most numerous and least doctrinaire of these groups, yet its leaders could not agree on political goals and a faction embarked upon a poorly conceived, suicidal guerrilla offensive in response to Bosch's own destitution. Even Bosch's own party was hopelessly divided, not only throughout his campaign but also during his rule. The saying *mejor cabeza de ratón que cola de león*—'better the head of a mouse than the tail of a lion'—well describes the abiding tendency of Dominican politicians to head fragmented, powerless parties rather than unite and compromise for the sake of victory.

With his emphasis on the era of Bosch, it is no surprise that the author devotes most of his space—275 of 493 pages—to the pre-April 1965 period. The U.S. intervention itself only begins on page 413, which makes sense because, in the author's view, as soon as U.S. troops landed, the 'hope' for any humanistic revolution had already been 'broken.'

The pre-1961 analysis, before dictator Rafael Trujillo's death, is relatively short, and offers a competent retelling of the horrors of Dominican political history highlighting the complacency or collaboration of U.S. policymakers. The denunciatory tone wears a bit thin, however, and it doesn't appear that Gleijeses has read the last generation's scholarship, exemplified by Richard Turits and Robin Derby, that demonstrates that Trujillo, for all his monstrous cult of personality, operated a sophisticated political system that gained the widespread loyalty of the peasant majority, darker-skinned Dominicans, and women.⁴

The author's interpretation of Dominican politics has changed "not one iota" since the 1970s, but he now considers U.S. policy "more squalid, ethnocentric and, not to mince words, cruel and clumsy than I had thought" (4). This judgment applies particularly to the Kennedy administration. After it offered help to Trujillo's assassins in 1961, it was left with the choice to democratize the Dominican Republic by cleaning out the remnants of his regime or to 'Nicaraguanize' it, meaning to tolerate the somewhat less repressive rule of Trujillo's son Ramfis and then that of his 'wicked uncles,' just as the rule of Anastasio Somoza in Nicaragua had given way in 1956 to that of his cosmetically democratic son Luis.

⁴ Richard Turits, *Foundations of Despotism: Peasants, the Trujillo Regime, and Modernity in Dominican History* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2003); Robin Derby, *The Dictator's Seduction: Politics and the Popular Imagination in the Era of Trujillo*, (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2009).

The Kennedy brothers found themselves caught in a dilemma: on one side, they wished for democracy for Dominicans; on the other, they prioritized anti-communism. In such a divided and unequal Dominican society (a situation the United States would again find in Nicaragua in 1979), liberals who could be counted on to be firm against communists were rare and weak. So Kennedy vacillated, at first pressuring Ramfis and Joaquín Balaguer, Trujillo's former right-hand man, to soften their repression, chasing the uncles away with gunships, and eventually showering Bosch with Alliance for Progress funds. Within the administration, notes Gleijeses, Puerto Rican advisers such as Arturo Morales-Carrión, Teodoro Moscoso, and Luis Muñoz Marín were especially strong backers of Bosch. But then, beset by "paranoia," the Kennedy men turned against Bosch when he proved not to be the obedient lapdog they expected (89). Anti-communism easily won out and Kennedy cynically settled on a "façade" or "semblance of democracy" (91). This gave a green light to Dominican rightists to increase their repression by labeling all their rivals communists or leftists. Kennedy publicly denounced the September 1963 coup against Bosch but privately accepted the strategy of his embassy to plan for the eventual recognition of the new regime.

Glejeses is thus a firm proponent of consistency rather than change in the debate over whether the presidency of Johnson transformed U.S.-Latin American relations. It remains unclear, however, whether he believes that U.S. fears of social reform or U.S. concerns over Bosch's weakness before communism were the greater factor in the abandonment of Bosch. I suspect the latter, but a clarification would be much welcomed.

Glejeses also provides an in-depth analysis of the five crucial "glorious" days of April 1965, from the 24th to the 28th, when the constitutionalist rebels revolted against Reid's military, nearly collapsed, then gained the upper hand again against Wessin y Wessin's "loyalists" before the Johnson government pressured the Dominican military to beg it for an intervention (2). Particularly illuminating is the information on the right-wing military, which is rare to find in Dominican accounts of the crisis, written as they have usually been by the political left.⁵ Glejeses demonstrates, both in the April crisis and before, that the right, including the military, was also plagued with "many factions" and as incompetent as Bosch was ever accused of being (229).⁶ Unlike Bosch, the right was also incurably corrupt. Glejeses even accuses Wessin of being cowardly and disloyal to the Triumvirate he was

⁵ See for instance Ramón Alberto Ferreras, *Guerra patria: Santo Domingo, 28 de abril 1965—1ro. de octubre 1966* (Santo Domingo: Editorial del Nordeste, 1985);

Fafa Taveras, *Abril, la liberación efímera (testimonio y análisis)* (Santo Domingo: Ediciones Bloque Socialista, 1990); Fidelio Despradel, *Historia gráfica de la Guerra de abril* (Santo Domingo: Nuevo Rumbo, 1992); Victor Grimaldi, *El diario secreto de la intervención norteamericana de 1965* (Santo Domingo: Amigos del Hogar, 1989); and Grimaldi, *Golpe y revolución: El derrocamiento de Juan Bosch y la intervención norteamericana* (Santo Domingo: Corripio, 2000). A partial exception is Secretaría de Estado de las Fuerzas Armadas, *Guerra de abril: Inevitabilidad de la historia* (Santo Domingo: Editora de las Fuerzas Armadas, 2002).

⁶ For instance by John Bartlow Martin, the U.S. ambassador during the Bosch presidency, in *Overtaken by Events: The Dominican Crisis—from the Fall of Trujillo to the Civil War* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1966), 363.

sworn to protect. Particular scorn is heaped upon the National Civil Union, the self-proclaimed centrist party that in reality vigorously resisted any social reform.

Hope may have been broken long before 1965, and herein seems to appear a contradiction that the author never quite resolves. Throughout the book, the reader gets the impression that Bosch offered hope to Dominicans that the country would emerge as an open, tolerant, pluralistic social democracy if only right-wing Dominicans and the Kennedy and Johnson administrations had left it alone. Yet at a few key points Gleijeses admits that Dominican society was far too dominated by the wealthy and not ready for the kind of redistribution of power or property that an agrarian reform would have brought. “Bosch was neither a bad president, an inept administrator, nor a stupid politician,” he explains. “But his illusions clashed with the realities of his country. As a result, the crushing of his dream was inevitable” (175). He also admits that “not even Kennedy could have saved Bosch in 1963, if he had wanted to,” because Bosch failed to purge the armed forces the previous year (468). So if the death of social reform was “inevitable”, where exactly was the hope? Would a purge of the armed forces really have been enough to restore it?

There are a few instances where Gleijeses seems to believe too readily his interviewees, especially when there are no documents by which to evaluate their statements. For instance, he relates the exact words of phone conversations between Ramfis and his exiled mother, who allegedly expressed disappointment in his cowardice. The source is an interview with Emilio Rodríguez Demorizi, a prolific writer but not someone who likely had first-hand knowledge of Trujillo family phone conversations (93). In such admittedly rare occasions, Gleijeses’s deep familiarity with the left becomes a weakness.

The writing, as one expects from Gleijeses, is crisp, clear, and unrestrained in its skepticism or ironic tone, a welcome breather from the often prolix Spanish and dubious claims to objectivity of Dominican historians. Yet at times the conclusions show tendentiousness, as when the author declares that the intent behind the U.S. intervention was “to consolidate the imperial control of the United States over the hemisphere” (4). The meaning of this phrase is not clear. This staple argument of the left, that the United States pursues empire merely for empire’s sake, is circular and uninformative.⁷ Gleijeses does better when he lays out the anti-communist reasoning of the White House or describes U.S. economic interests threatened by Bosch reforms (175).

Nitpicking aside, this revision of a classic reaffirms its momentous documentary value as well as the wisdom that runs through it and places it above perhaps all other narratives of the U.S. intervention in the Dominican Republic. One can expect more such brilliance from Gleijeses’s next opus, *Visions of Freedom: Havana, Washington, Pretoria, and the Struggle for Southern Africa, 1976-1991*.⁸

⁷ He repeats on p. 73: “The objective of the United States remained: maintain control over the region.”

⁸ Piero Gleijeses, *Visions of Freedom: Havana, Washington, Pretoria, and the Struggle for Southern Africa, 1976-1991* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2013).

Review by Andrea Oñate, Princeton University

Piero Gleijeses has written an exhaustive and compelling account of four decisive years in the modern history of the Dominican Republic. His focus is on the years between the assassination of long-standing dictator Rafael Leónidas Trujillo in May 1961 and the United States' invasion of the Dominican Republic in April 1965. Based on an impressive array of interviews and work in Dominican and United States archives, *La esperanza desgarrada* offers a valuable granular account of how domestic political dynamics and United States foreign policy commingled to shape the fate of this Caribbean nation.

For Gleijeses, the ouster of General Trujillo created a power vacuum that opened the possibility for reforms in a country long crippled by exclusionary and reckless policies. The United States' intervention quickly closed this window of opportunity and stifled the efforts of Dominicans to determine their own fate and comprehensively transform their country. Falling on the heels of the 1959 Cuban Revolution, Trujillo's overthrow coincided with a defensive and interventionist U.S. foreign policy that feared that autonomous reformist efforts in the hemisphere would propagate 'another Cuba.' Initially, United States' policymakers resorted to lobbying, diplomatic pressure, and economic incentives to influence the Dominican transition and safeguard U.S. interests. In April 1965, however, when a popular uprising in the capital, Santo Domingo, was perceived as the start of comprehensive political reforms, the Johnson administration ordered direct military intervention and invaded the Caribbean country. As United States marines marched into Santo Domingo, they shattered Dominican hopes for self-determination.

Thoroughly researched and compellingly argued, *La esperanza desgarrada* is largely a bilateral story where Dominican and U.S. political actors take center stage. Gleijeses follows the methodological approach of traditional diplomatic history and does not engage with newer historiography that considers the role of multiple state and non-state actors in seemingly national processes. The United States' historic influence in the Dominican Republic and the asymmetric nature of U.S.-Dominican relations unquestionably makes the United States a pivotal actor in Dominican history. Yet Gleijeses's story leaves little room for the agency of third powers, and readers of *La esperanza desgarrada* are left wondering what, if any, role other regional actors played in this episode of Dominican history. How other Latin American countries responded to Trujillo's overthrow, the links between the Dominican opposition and leftist and reformist groups elsewhere in the region, if other countries had something to gain by supporting or opposing U.S. intervention, and the broader implications of the 1965 invasion for Latin American politics are questions that *La esperanza desgarrada* leaves unanswered.¹ Gleijeses breaks away from what is largely a

¹ In his global history of the Cold War, Odd Arne Westad argues that Brazil helped the United States invade the Dominican Republic in 1965. If this was the case, what did this cooperation respond to and was it symptomatic of broader regional trends? Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007). Furthermore, in *La esperanza desgarrada*, Gleijeses suggests that Dominican political parties maintained transnational ties with their counterparts in other parts of Latin America. He argues that members of the leftist political movement 14 of June (1J4) traveled frequently to Cuba and that members of the Social Christian Party (PRSC) spent time

bilateral story when discussing how the Organization of American States (OAS) defined the principles of 'non-intervention,' and determined that hemispheric security was interdependent and countries could be held to account for how their internal politics impacted other nations. This is one of the most interesting sections of *La esperanza desgarrada* as it outlines how events in the Dominican Republic, for better or worse, shaped conceptions of international politics in the region as a whole. Rather than uncover how debates in the OAS unfolded and what dynamics led the organization to eventually back United States' policy, Gleijeses reduces this multilateral body to a United States proxy that "prostituted itself" to US interests at decisive moments (423). Uncovering the participation of other regional actors in the events leading up to the Dominican crisis of 1965 might help challenge notions of U.S. hegemony in the region, give voice and agency to other hemispheric powers, and uncover a richer history that involved more than two protagonists.

Gleijeses's state-centric conception of U.S. foreign policy is also not in tune with the current state of research. In *La esperanza desgarrada*, U.S. foreign policy decisions are made at the executive level of government and appear insulated from the dynamics unfolding in society at large. This approach opens a window onto the internal fissures at the top echelons of both the Kennedy and Johnson administrations over how to deal with the Dominican crisis. In recent years, historians of U.S. foreign relations have shifted their attention away from decisions made at the top and begun to uncover how foreign policies responded not only to international realities but also to local forces and domestic concerns. The discretionary power of the executive in devising foreign policy is being increasingly questioned as historians examine the influential role of public opinion, the media, Congress, and non-state actors.² Gleijeses is no stranger to newer historiographical approaches to international relations. With works such as *Conflicting Missions* and *Visions of Freedom*, Gleijeses has been a central contributor to the evolution of this historiography.³ Readers of *La esperanza desgarrada* who had hoped that Gleijeses brought the Dominican crisis in dialogue with some of the newer methodological approaches he helped build will be disappointed.

The strengths of *La esperanza desgarrada* are many. Gleijeses's characteristically clear prose and vibrant narrative make him a pleasure to read, and his granular coverage of events simplifies a complex history with myriad shifting Dominican actors and political

in Venezuela. Piero Gleijeses, *La esperanza desgarrada: la rebelión dominicana de 1965 y la invasión norteamericana* (Dominican Republic: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 2011).

² On the impact of public opinion see Peace, Roger, *A Call to Conscience: The Anti-Contra War Campaign* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2012) or Robert Surbrugg, *Beyond Vietnam: The Politics of Protest in Massachusetts, 1974-1990* (Culture, Politics, and Cold War series, Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2009). On the role of the U.S. Congress see Cynthia J. Arnsperg, *Crossroads* (New York: 1st ed. Pantheon, 1989).

³ Gleijeses, Piero. *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa, 1959-1976*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002 and Gleijeses, Piero. *Visions of Freedom: Havana, Washington, Pretoria and the Struggle for Southern Africa, 1976-1991*, 2013.

parties. While dealing exclusively with the Dominican Republic and Dominican-U.S. relations, Gleijeses unveils a history that sheds light on broader regional processes during the 1960s. Most notably, it outlines the limits of key U.S. foreign policy strategies and evidences central debates faced by the Latin American left in the aftermath of the Cuban Revolution.

Gleijeses's discussion of how the United States' Alliance for Progress unfolded in the Dominican Republic echoes the criticism of scholars such as Michael Latham and Walter LaFeber who have characterized U.S. development policy in the region under the Kennedy and Johnson administrations as an overriding failure.⁴ The Alliance for Progress, launched in 1961 by President John F. Kennedy, aimed to curtail the appeal of popular leftist movements in the region by promoting rapid economic growth and mild political reforms. In raising standards of living and expanding the political clout of the potentially disruptive middle classes, U.S. policymakers hoped to promote a liberal capitalist model of development that would diminish support for more radical revolutionary alternatives such as Fidel Castro's Cuba. In the Dominican Republic, Gleijeses argues, U.S. policy failed to fulfill the stated goals of the Alliance for Progress for a number of reasons. First, political stability and military security took center stage in the wake of Trujillo's ouster and U.S. support for political and economic reforms never materialized. Second, U.S. foreign policy did little to change the interests of the Dominican elite, who proved relentless in their efforts to block the economic and political reforms the Alliance envisioned. Third, the fervent anticommunism of key members of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations led them not only to marginalize parties on the left but also to oppose centrist political leaders that could have brought about structural reforms necessary for sustained growth. Anticommunism, Gleijeses argues, largely fueled U.S. opposition to President Juan Bosch and the moderate wing of his Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD) Party. Bosch's unwillingness to outlaw leftist parties and exile communist sympathizers was the "capital sin" the Kennedy administration simply could not forgive (468).⁵ Bosch, the first democratically elected leader in the history of the Dominican Republic, could not count on essential economic support from the United States, and appeals for U.S. assistance in the face of a mounting coup fell on deaf ears. The reformist Dominican president was left to his own devices by a northern neighbor that seemed eager to watch it fall.

Gleijeses proves the 'catch-22' inherent in the so-called Alliance for Progress by outlining the failures of U.S. development policy in the Dominican Republic. The perceived threat of Castro-communism led the United States to launch a development program in Latin

⁴ Walter LaFeber, "The Alliances in Retrospect" in *Bordering on trouble: resources and politics in Latin America*, (eds.) Andrew Maguire and Janet Welsh Brown (Bethesda, Md.: Adler & Adler, 1986). Michael Latham, "The Cold War in the Third World, 1963-1975" in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War* (eds.) Melvyn P. Leffler, and Odd Arne Westad, Volume II (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

⁵ Gleijeses writes, "Su nacionalismo y especialmente su profunda creencia en la democracia política, le costaron el apoyo de la Administración Kennedy. Los norteamericanos fueron incapaces de aceptar una real, más que formal, independencia dominicana. Sobre todo, quisieron que Bosch persiguiera a los Castro-comunistas. El se negó. Este fue su pecado capital" Gleijeses, *La esperanza desgarrada*, 468.

America that rested on social reforms and political democratization. This same perceived threat however, pushed the United States to increase support for Latin America's armed forces, which had historically opposed political democratization and social reforms (140). Development goals took a back seat to security concerns and above all anticommunism. Ultimately, the inherent contradictions of the Alliance for Progress worked to polarize politics in the Dominican Republic, closing off the possibility of a centrist democratic alternative. The 'peaceful revolutions' in the Americas the Alliance had promised never materialized. The chapter of Dominican history Gleijeses uncovers is perhaps one of the most compelling testaments of the policy's failure.

La esperanza desgarrada also provides key insights into the dynamics shaping the Latin American left in the early 1960s. Gleijeses unearths a Dominican opposition that was fractioned, divisive, and largely inexperienced with democratic political processes. Leftist parties such as the *Popular Socialist Party* (PSP), the *Popular Dominican Movement* (MPD), and the *14th of June* (1J4) were fraught with ideological differences and internal power struggles that limited their ability to elaborate concrete political platforms or form broader coalitions. Gleijeses laments that the Dominican left wasted numerous opportunities in the aftermath of Trujillo's downfall. During the 'seven month vacation' of Bosch's rule, in which leftist parties could operate unhindered, the PSP remained largely inactive (181). In turn, the 1J4, the strongest and most cohesive leftist party, refused to participate in the 1962 elections that brought Bosch to power, declined to join a coalition government under Juan Bosch in 1963, and in the aftermath of the 1965 invasion was "too wrapped up in its internal disputes to think about the party...they proved unwilling to bring the masses a feasible solution to the political and economic crisis the country was facing" (244).⁶ In an already hostile and complicated internal and international context, Dominican leftist parties acted in ways that limited their political and social clout. The story of the Dominican left in *La esperanza desgarrada* is one of tragedy and shattered hope. While U.S. intervention played a decisive role in shattering that hope, Gleijeses holds the Dominican left to account for shortcomings and mistakes of their own making. In this regard, Gleijeses sets a valuable example for historians of U.S.-Latin American relations by virtue of distancing himself from narratives that ignore the agency of Latin Americans in shaping their own histories.

Gleijeses's ability to trace Dominican agency in U.S. foreign policy creates an important tension throughout the book between his overriding thesis and the history his narrative brings to life. A central argument of the book is that United States' intervention in the Dominican Republic stifled justice and social reform in this Caribbean country (2-3).⁷ The

⁶ "Estaban demasiado entregados a sus disputas como para pensar en el partido...se demostraron incapaces de brindar a las masas una solución realizable a la crisis económico-política del país." Gleijeses, 244.

⁷ "Respaldándose en su inmensa superioridad militar, los Estados Unidos impusieron un Gobierno provisional de "conciliación" que prometió llevaría a elecciones libres. Esta solución fraudulenta dejó el poder en manos de los generales *leales* y llevó a elecciones que fueron libres solo para restaurar la *pax Americana* en aquel desdichado país. Fue una victoria de la democracia—aquella democracia bastarda que los Estados Unidos reservaban para sus hermanas latinoamericanas. Para el pueblo dominicano dicha victoria significó

detailed history *La esperanza desgarrada* brings to life in its more than five hundred pages is a markedly more complex story in which local dynamics and domestic political processes play a decisive role in hindering the transformations Gleijeses wishes had materialized. United States intervention is central—it strengthened elite resistance to social change and offered local military establishments the means to suppress popular demands for it when such demands arose—but it is by no means the sole driver of shattered hope. Opposition to reforms by the Dominican elite, fractious and inexperienced political parties, the absence of institutions, a politically unconscious population, and a political left fraught with internal rivalries also account for the failure of substantive social, political and economic reforms in the years after General Trujillo’s downfall.

Gleijeses dismisses the actions of Dominicans who allied with U.S. interests, remained silent in the face of foreign intervention, or failed to promote comprehensive reforms as being out of line with the interests of *el pueblo*- the people. The concept of *el pueblo Dominicano* is recurrent throughout Gleijeses work, yet what the author means by this is never clarified. Furthermore, it is an idea that implies a common interest or identity that is largely absent from the story. Was “*el pueblo dominicano*” the Dominican peasants that Gleijeses characterizes as inured and passive after years of being marginalized and repressed (464)? Was it the urban masses that Gleijeses argues lacked the strength and political consciousness necessary to act as protagonists during the period? (464-5) Was it the fractioned leftist parties with a small popular base? Was it the 1J4 that believed insurgency and revolution were the paths for reform? And where did the Dominican elite, the Church, and the conservative factions of the army that invited and welcomed U.S. intervention fall within this idea of *el pueblo*? What *La esperanza desgarrada* ultimately details are the complexities of forging representative government and inclusive national political identities. In demonstrating how this arduous, contentious, and often violent process of state formation is complicated even further when compounded with foreign intervention, Gleijeses offers a powerful lesson with contemporary relevance.

A final point is that while it seems inappropriate to begrudge an author for not writing the history the reviewer wishes he had written, the temptation to do so in this case is too great. Gleijeses is one of only a handful of experts on Cuban foreign relations. His works on the subject have advanced our understanding of Cuba’s global clout in the decades following its 1959 Revolution. In doing so, Gleijeses has challenged notions of superpower dominance during the Cold War period. Yet in *La esperanza desgarrada* Cuba is largely relegated to a passive role where its importance lies in how its example affected United States policymakers and Dominican leftist groups like the 1J4. As Gleijeses has mentioned elsewhere, the Dominican crisis unfolded in the midst of an active Cuban foreign policy with global reach. In the 1960s, Cuban leader Fidel Castro “had concluded that the best defense was offense...assisting revolutionary movements in the third world would gain

años de repression que desgarraron aquella esperanza de justicia y reformas sociales que en un momento pareció convertirse en realidad.” Gleijeses, *La esperanza desgarrada*, 2-3.

friends for Cuba and weaken U.S. influence.”⁸ Furthermore, Cuba was guided by revolutionary idealism and Castro “believed that he was engaged in a great crusade to help free the people of the Third World from the misery and the oppression that tormented them.”⁹ It therefore seems unreasonable that Cuban leaders would have remained uninvolved with the efforts of movements such as the 1J4, and that they would not have seen in the Dominican crisis an opportunity to advance the “self-preservation and revolutionary idealism” that guided their foreign policy during the 1960s.¹⁰ Where did Cuba stand in the Dominican story and how did its participation affect the history that unfolded? Gleijeses mentions that members of the 1J4 made frequent travels to Cuba. Did they receive advice or assistance during these travels from Cuban leaders? If Cuba leaders chose to remain uninvolved with the Dominican Republic during this crucial time, why did they choose to do so? Furthermore, how did the Cuban model and the lessons of the Cuban Revolution affect the calculations of Dominican actors on all sides? Bringing Cuba into *La esperanza desgarrada* would have helped uncover a richer history more in line with the newer historiography.

Overall, *La esperanza desgarrada* is a valuable historical work and should constitute essential reading for anyone wishing to understand the Dominican Republic.

⁸ Piero Gleijeses, *Visions of Freedom: Havana, Washington, Pretoria and the Struggle for Southern Africa, 1976-1991* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013), p. 25

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ In *Visions of Freedom* Gleijeses argues that “self-preservation and revolutionary idealism” guided Cuban foreign policy during the 1960s. In this assessment he echoes the interpretation made earlier by Cuban foreign policy expert Jorge I. Domínguez. Gleijeses, *Visions of Freedom*, p. 25. Jorge I. Domínguez, *To Make a World Safe for Revolution: Cuba’s Foreign Policy* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989).

It is always a distinct honor and privilege to read and review something written by Piero Gleijeses of Johns Hopkins University. Over the past four decades, he has established himself as an authoritative presence in the fields of U.S. foreign relations, inter-American relations, and Latin American history. His scholarly contributions are numerous and remarkable, but I would like to point to those that have especially influenced my research and analysis. In *Shattered Hope* (1991), Professor Gleijeses updated and expanded upon the pioneering studies of the U.S. intervention in Guatemala, *The CIA in Guatemala* (1982) by Richard H. Immerman and *Bitter Fruit* (1982) by Stephen Schlesinger and Stephen Kinzer.¹ As is his scholarly practice, Gleijeses went to the country he was studying and conducted extensive interviews with key historical actors. He settled the contested issue of the political beliefs of President Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán (1950-1954) of Guatemala. The Dwight D. Eisenhower administration had labeled President Arbenz as a 'Communist,' or, in U.S. Ambassador John E. Peurifoy's memorable words, "if the President is not a Communist he will certainly do until one comes along."² Gleijeses spoke with Arbenz's widow, María Christina Vilanova, and friends and supporters of Arbenz, including former members Guatemala's small Communist party. President Arbenz had indeed accepted Marxist views on the sweep of history. Nonetheless, the Soviet Union played no role in Guatemala, and Arbenz hardly consulted with international Communists, when he issued his land reform program, Decree 900. Land reform in Guatemala incorporated not the ideas of Lenin or Mao on collectivized agriculture but rather emulated the concepts of Jefferson and Lincoln on the civic virtues of private land ownership.³

Conflicting Missions (2002), Gleijeses's study of Cuban intervention in Africa in the 1960s and 1970s remains his *tour de force*. In my review in the *Hispanic American Historical Review*, I started by asserting that, "based solely on the extent of his research," Gleijeses deserved to win major book prizes.⁴ Happily, someone was listening. The Society of Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR) awarded Gleijeses the coveted Robert Ferrell Prize for the best book in international history by a senior historian. Gleijeses had traveled to Cuba fourteen times, gained access to Cuban archives, and interviewed Cubans who had served in Africa. He supplemented his work in Cuba with archival research in Belgium, East and West Germany, the United States, and the United Kingdom. And he

¹ Richard H. Immerman, *The CIA in Guatemala: The Foreign Policy of Intervention* (Austin, University of Texas Press, 1982); Stephen Schlesinger and Stephen Kinzer, *Bitter Fruit: The Untold Story of the American Coup in Guatemala* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1982).

² Ambassador Peurifoy quoted in Stephen G. Rabe, *The Killing Zone: The United States Wages Cold War in Latin America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 46.

³ Piero Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope: The Guatemalan Revolution and the United States, 1944-1954* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 137-48.

⁴ Book review in *Hispanic American Historical Review* 83 (February 2003): 208-10.

systematically read African newspapers in numerous languages and interviewed officials across the Great Continent. I had never encountered such extraordinary research. Gleijeses's research efforts led to a startling finding. Prior to the massive intervention in Angola in 1975, over 2,000 Cuban troops had served in various parts of Africa. By comparison, only forty Cubans fought in Latin America in the 1960s. This included Ernesto 'Che' Guevara and his pathetic mission to Bolivia in 1967.⁵ Throughout the 1960s, U.S. officials exaggerated Cuban activities in the Western Hemisphere, even as the United States repeatedly attacked Cuba, destabilized governments in Brazil and British Guiana, and invaded the Dominican Republic.

Before turning to the 1965 invasion of the Dominican Republic, I point to a small piece by Gleijeses that transformed my thinking and writing on inter-American relations during the Cold War. He wrote an essay or afterword, "The Culture of Fear," to *Secret History* (1999, 2006), Nick Cullather's presentation of the Central Intelligence Agency's declassified history of its intervention in Guatemala. The 1954 intervention was the "original sin." The Eisenhower administration had acted "with supreme indifference toward the fate of the Guatemalan people."⁶ It had acted with "wanton, criminal negligence." Subsequent U.S. presidential administrations adopted the same malign policies, backing and outfitting Guatemala's security forces and then defending their murderous behavior. At least 200,000 Guatemalans perished in political violence, with many of them being the indigenous Mayan people. The Ronald Reagan administration was especially "brazen" and "sordid" in its lying.⁷ Gleijeses's essay anticipated Greg Grandin's chilling *The Last Colonial Massacre* (2004).⁸ Gleijeses further turned the ideas of President Reagan's favorite political scientist and U.N. Ambassador, Jeane J. Kirkpatrick, on their head.⁹ In *Dictatorships and Double Standards* Kirkpatrick was correct; there was not a moral equivalence between the U.S. sphere of influence in Latin America and the Soviet's empire in Eastern Europe. The Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956 was ugly and unjust, but the bloody repression eased, and Hungary evolved into the least repressive member of the Soviet bloc by the late 1960s. By comparison, the anti-Communist policies of the United States condemned Guatemalans to a life of horror for four decades. I tried to impart the moral clarity that

⁵ Piero Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa, 1959-1976* (Chapel Hill University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 217-21.

⁶ Piero Gleijeses, "Afterword: The Culture of Fear" in Nick Cullather, *Secret History: The CIA's Classified Account of Its Operations in Guatemala, 1952-1954*, 2nd ed. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), xxxii-xxxiii.

⁷ *Ibid.*, xxxiii-xxxiv

⁸ Greg Grandin, *The Last Colonial Massacre: Latin America in the Cold War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

⁹ Jeane J. Kirkpatrick, *Dictatorships and Double Standards: Rationalism and Reason in Politics* (New York: American Enterprise Institute and Simon & Schuster, 1982), 23-52.

characterizes Gleijeses's work to *The Killing Zone* (2012), my study of U.S. Cold War policies in Latin America.¹⁰

In *La esperanza desgarrada*, Gleijeses returns to the theme of Latin American hope that has been 'shattered,' 'destroyed,' or 'torn' by U.S. policies during the Cold War. The author's work on the U.S. invasion of the Dominican Republic began as his 1972 doctoral dissertation and involved eighteen months of field work in the Dominican Republic between 1969 and 1975. When *The Dominican Crisis: The 1965 Constitutionalist Revolt and American Intervention* (1978) appeared, other U.S. scholars, as well as U.S. pundits, had begun to offer explanations on why President Lyndon Johnson had violated the non-intervention pledge of President Franklin D. Roosevelt and seemingly undermined the Alliance for Progress of John F. Kennedy.¹¹ Journalists, such as Dan Kurzman and Tad Szulc, political analysts, like Theodore C. Draper, and respected political scientists, such as Abraham F. Lowenthal and Jerome Slater, offered explanations for the 1965 invasion.¹² All were critical, believing that President Johnson and his advisors, however sincere, had acted unwisely, exaggerating the threat that Fidel Castro's Cuba, the Soviet Union, and the international Communist movement posed for the Dominican Republic.

Perhaps the most influential account was prepared by Lowenthal. He conducted 150 interviews in English and Spanish in the United States, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico. He also had privileged access to the cable traffic between the U.S. embassy in Santo Domingo and the State Department in Washington. Like other commentators, Lowenthal judged the intervention to be a "tragic event" and "costly" to the Dominican Republic, the United States, and inter-American relations.¹³ Lowenthal was less interested, however, in rendering a judgment on the merits of the U.S. intervention than in analyzing the internal processes in which policies were made. Out of *The Dominican Intervention* (1972) came Lowenthal's "bureaucratic politics" model in line with the work of Graham Allison on the Cuban Missile Crisis.¹⁴ Lowenthal questioned the "official," "liberal," and "radical" interpretations of the Dominican intervention. Instead, he reasoned that scholars needed to abandon the "rational policy model." The "Dominican intervention was not the single

¹⁰ Stephen Rabe, *The Killing Zone: The United States Wages Cold War in Latin America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

¹¹ Piero Gleijeses, *The Dominican Crisis: The 1965 Constitutionalist Revolt and American Intervention*, translated by Lawrence Lipson (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978).

¹² Dan Kurzman, *Santo Domingo: Revolt of the Damned* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1965); Tad Szulc, *Dominican Diary* (New York: Delacorte Press, 1965); Theodore Draper, *The Dominican Revolt: A Case Study in American Policy* (New York: Commentary, 1968); Jerome Slater, *Intervention and Negotiation: The United States and the Dominican Revolution* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970).

¹³ Abraham F. Lowenthal, *The Dominican Intervention* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972), v.

¹⁴ Graham T. Allison, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971).

outcome of the U.S. government's single minded pursuit of a national objective." In a complex system, like the U.S. government, many decisions and actions are often "random" and unpredictable." No one bore responsibility for the intervention. Lowenthal made the surprising assertion that "one cannot say without qualification that the Dominican intervention reflected a presidential choice to use military force, for the Dominican case exemplifies the fact that 'the ultimate decision' may be largely determined by the time it reaches the president's desk."¹⁵

Whatever the merits of the bureaucratic politics approach as an analytic tool, recent research on President Johnson's knowledge of events in the Dominican Republic and his active role overseeing U.S. policy have cast doubt on Lowenthal's interpretation of an isolated president. In an insightful article, historian Alan McPherson reviewed the declassified telephone conversations of President Johnson.¹⁶ The hardworking Johnson made 75 to 100 telephone calls every day and taped many of them. During the first 9 days of the intervention crisis, Johnson met with key advisors 180 times. When he was not meeting with advisors, the president was on the phone with them. As McPherson notes, the taped telephone conversations demonstrated that Johnson chose to intervene militarily, even though he lacked solid evidence to sustain his fears of communism in the island nation. For example, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara told Johnson in a telephone conversation that the CIA had no evidence of Cuban involvement in the insurgency in the Dominican Republic. McPherson concluded that Johnson primarily feared domestic critics who might accuse him of being oblivious to the dangers of international communism. The president subsequently realized that he badly overreacted and regretted the damage he had inflicted on U.S. international prestige. In a telephone conversation on 23 May 1965 with Abe Fortas, Johnson's loyal friend and future Supreme Court nominee, the president lamented his disastrous decision, crying out that "the man that misled me was Lyndon Johnson, nobody else! I did that! I can't blame a damn human."¹⁷

When Gleijeses's book appeared in 1978 what immediately distinguished it from previous efforts was that he did not begin his account in the spring of 1965. Other authors focused on the decision, or in Lowenthal's case the non-decision, to dispatch U.S. Marines to the Dominican Republic. They briefly outlined the tortured relationship between the United States and the island nation but did not consider the context essential to explaining the intervention. Gleijeses, however, devoted over half of his 1978 text and *La esperanza desgarrada* to U.S. policies toward the dictatorship of Rafael Leonidas Trujillo (1930-1961) and the four tumultuous years in the history of the Dominican Republic that followed the

¹⁵ Lowenthal, *Dominican Intervention*, 132-136, 145, 150.

¹⁶ Alan McPherson, "Misled by Himself: What the Johnson Tapes Reveal about the Dominican Intervention of 1965," *Latin American Research Review* 38, No. 2 (2003): 127-46.

¹⁷ President Johnson quoted in Randall B. Woods, "Conflicted Hegemon: LBJ and the Dominican Republic," *Diplomatic History* 34 (January 2010): 765.

assassination of Trujillo on the evening of 30 May 1961. It was in the aftermath of Trujillo's assassination that President Kennedy issued his famous descending order of preferences. The United States favored "a decent, democratic regime" for the Dominican Republic but would not renounce a restoration of a Trujillo-style dictatorship, until it was certain it could avoid a second Communist or Castro-style system.¹⁸ An analysis of U.S. policies from 1961 to 1965 demonstrated that Juan Bosch, the popularly-elected president who lasted nine months in office in 1963, would never fulfill the U.S. definition of a decent, democratic leader. Bosch, a literary figure, did not fit John Kennedy and especially Lyndon Johnson's concept of a manly chief executive. More important, U.S. officials did not believe Bosch had the fortitude to eradicate political radicals in his nation. He showed too much respect for constitutional processes and human rights. He earned Washington's most damning sobriquet: President Bosch "era blando con el comunismo" ("was soft on communism") (471). As Gleijeses demonstrated in 1978 and reiterates in this updated Spanish-language version, the United States showed little enthusiasm for the Bosch candidacy in 1962, disdained President Bosch in 1963, and used military force in 1965 to keep him and his supporters from restoring the constitution of the Dominican Republic. Since 1916, when it first occupied the Dominican Republic, the United States has wanted a secure and stable island nation that faithfully followed the U.S. lead in international affairs.

Although pundits and scholars criticized President Johnson for overreacting in 1965, they praised his administration for overseeing a 'free' election in 1966 that led to a smashing electoral victory by a former supplicant of Trujillo, Joaquín Balaguer (1966-1978, 1986-1996) over Juan Bosch. To be sure, scholars like Jerome Slater conceded that citizens of the Dominican Republic understood that the Lyndon Johnson administration favored the election of Balaguer. But writing in the late 1970s, Slater added "there has been no evidence that it covertly interfered in the electoral process."¹⁹ Various other accounts underscored the U.S. commitment to free elections in the aftermath of the invasion. General Bruce Palmer, who commanded the occupying forces, claimed the U.S. military and international observers oversaw a "truly honest election."²⁰ Russell C. Crandall, an academic who previously served on the National Security Council during the George W. Bush administration, also wrote approvingly of the election, arguing that "Dominican democracy was unquestionably stronger than it had been before the U.S. intervention."²¹ To be sure, Crandall used the hedged language of "relatively" free elections. He admitted that documents declassified in 2005 revealed that the United States had covertly aided the

¹⁸ Kennedy quoted in Rabe, *Killing Zone*, 97.

¹⁹ Jerome Slater, "The Dominican Republic, 1961-1966," in *Force without War: U.S. Armed Forces as a Political Instrument*, edited by Barry M. Blechman and Stephen S. Kaplan (Washington: Brookings Institute Press, 1978), 329.

²⁰ General Bruce Palmer, Jr., *Intervention in the Caribbean: The Dominican Crisis of 1965* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1989), 133-34.

²¹ Russell Crandall, *Gunboat Democracy: U.S. Interventions in the Dominican Republic, Grenada, and Panama* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), 90-94.

Balaguer campaign. Still, in Crandall's optimistic view, the United States had engaged in "gunboat democracy."²²

What Crandall did not tell his readers was that the new documents further demonstrated that in mid-1965 President Johnson explicitly informed the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) that the U.S.-backed candidate would win the election and that the president expected the CIA to arrange the result. As recounted by Richard Helms, the acting director of the CIA, "the president's statements were unequivocal. He wants to win the election, and he expects the agency to arrange for this to happen."²³ The U.S. embassy in Santo Domingo coordinated with the committee in Washington that oversaw covert interventions, the "303 Committee", spending "substantial" sums of money on the Balaguer campaign,²⁴ constantly polling the electorate, and increasing covert electoral aid whenever Bosch appeared to be gaining popularity. Gleijeses has incorporated these new revelations in *La esperanza desgarrada* (413-62). In 1978, he concluded that the elections had been "technically free" and that fraud at the polls for Balaguer was limited. He argued at the time, however, that "free" elections could hardly be held in 1966, when Bosch feared for his life and the people of the Dominican Republic understood that a Bosch victory "would be followed by a new and more bloody *golpe*."²⁵ Gleijeses's judgment is now harsh and ironic. "Fue una victoria de la democracia, aquella democracia bastarda que los Estados Unidos reservaban para sus hermanas latinoamericanas ("It was a victory of democracy, that bastard democracy that the United States reserved for its Latin American sisters.") (462).

In his new bibliography, Gleijeses lists the work of Eric Thomas Chester.²⁶ Chester suggested that the "bastard democracy" that the United States bequeathed to the Dominican Republic involved vote rigging and ballot stuffing. The voter turnout for the 1966 election was an inexplicable 30 percent higher than in the 1962 presidential election won by Juan Bosch. Chester admitted he could not find the "smoking gun" to prove that the United States stuffed ballot boxes.²⁷ But it was part of U.S. Cold-War strategy in the Western Hemisphere to manipulate the electoral process. In 1968, the CIA and the U.S. embassy in Georgetown helped Prime Minister Forbes Burnham in drawing up fictitious lists of absentee voters in Guyana and in creating lists of Guyanese voters living abroad in the Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The Johnson administration was determined to prevent the former Prime Minister, Cheddi Jagan, from winning an election.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Helms quoted in Rabe, *The Killing Zone*, 102.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 103.

²⁵ Gleijeses, *Dominican Crisis*, 280-81.

²⁶ Eric Thomas Chester, *Rag-Tags, Scum, Riff-Raff, and Commies: The U.S. Intervention in the Dominican Republic, 1965-1966* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2001).

²⁷ Chester, 283-89.

Like Juan Bosch, Jagan was unacceptable to the United States, because he fell under the rubric of being a Communist, soft on communism, or oblivious to the Communist menace.²⁸

In 1978, Gleijeses presented the scholarly world with a most credible interpretation of the role that the United States had played in the history of the Dominican Republic in the twentieth century. Now, with access to documents that were classified in the 1970s, he has updated his study in *La esperanza desgarrada*. Gleijeses has performed a great public service by offering to those who rely on Spanish for their reading this persuasive analysis of the destruction of Dominican constitutionalism in 1965-1966.

²⁸ Stephen G. Rabe, *U.S. Intervention in British Guiana: A Cold War Story* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 139-62.

Author's Response by Piero Gleijeses, School of Advanced International Studies, John Hopkins University

I am delighted that H-Diplo agreed to organize a round table about *La esperanza desgarrada*, and I thank Tom Maddux and the participants. As Stephen Rabe notes, my first book, published four decades ago, was a history of the 1965 revolt in Santo Domingo: *The Dominican Crisis: The 1965 Constitutionalist Revolt and American Intervention*. When the Editorial de Ciencias Sociales of Havana expressed interest in publishing a Spanish edition of the book, I seized the opportunity to write a thoroughly revised version that incorporated the mass of U.S. documents declassified over the last two decades. The result is *La esperanza desgarrada*.

In this reply to the reviewers, I will focus on those points that I consider most important. Before doing so, I want to thank Professor Rabe for his generous words about my scholarship. He has written the best books on the policies of the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations toward Latin America, and his book on the U.S. intervention in British Guiana is a jewel. I am honored by his praise.

Andrea Oñate raises an interesting methodological question. She points out that "*La esperanza desgarrada* is largely a bilateral history where Dominican and U.S. political actors take center stage. Gleijeses ... does not engage with newer historiography that considers the role of multiple state and non-state actors in seemingly national processes. ... Gleijeses's story leaves little room for the agency of third powers." Oñate adds that I am "no stranger to newer historiographical approaches to international relations. With works such as *Conflicting Missions* and *Visions of Freedom*, Gleijeses has been a central contributor to the evolution of this historiography."

Indeed, one of the things I enjoyed when writing *Conflicting Missions* and *Visions of Freedom* was that I was free of the oppressive mold of only two protagonists – the United States and the victim – because there were several protagonists: the United States, Cuba, the Soviet Union, South Africa, African actors and so on. However, the historian must follow the evidence and not be waylaid by the allure of new approaches: in some cases, unfortunately, there are only two protagonists – and the others have only walk-on roles. This is the case for *La esperanza desgarrada*. Let me be clear: in the 1961-66 period – the focus of this book – the Latin American countries played no role either in the formulation of U.S. policy toward the Dominican Republic or in the developments on the ground. Oñate objects to my statement that the Organization of American States (OAS) "prostituted itself" during the 1965 intervention. Let me review the record. In late April 1965, the foreign ministers of the OAS convened in Washington to consider the Dominican crisis. Even though the intervention violated the charter of the OAS, the foreign ministers did not condemn it. Their deference, however, did not satisfy the Johnson administration, which demanded that they create an Inter-American Peace Force to lend a veneer of multilateralism and legality to Washington's unilateral invasion.

The idea was so brazen that even the docile Latin American representatives balked. Washington ratcheted up the pressure. Vice President Hubert Humphrey warned that “the OAS ought to learn how to provide for law and order ... lest we have to garrison place after place to uphold law and order and to protect the lives of citizens.”¹ The OAS capitulated. On 6 May 1965, with one vote shy of the fourteen required to create the peace force, the vote of José Antonio Bonilla Atilas, who had been the Dominican delegate to the OAS under the former government, was added to the count. That Bonilla Atilas represented a government that no longer existed did not matter. The United States needed his vote. No one dared challenge the United States. It was only *after* Bonilla Atilas had cast the decisive vote that the OAS’ Credentials Committee recommended that “the Dominican Republic’s seat ... be declared vacant.”²

Once the United States invaded the Dominican Republic the dramatis personae became even more constricted: the only Dominican protagonists still standing were the constitutionalists. Whereas the constitutionalists, bloodied but fiercely independent, were masters of the handful of city blocks they controlled, the Johnson administration kept the leaders of the rival *Gobierno de Reconstrucción Nacional* (GRN) on a short leash. As U.S. documents demonstrate, U.S. officials had selected the president and the members of the GRN. Thousands of U.S. soldiers occupied the country; others were aboard ships off the coast. American planes and American tanks were masters at the GRN’s major military bases. U.S. dollars paid the salaries of the GRN and of the military. No other groups in the country played a significant role. “The rich ... are waiting passively for the Americans to save them,” the French ambassador reported from Santo Domingo.³ As for the future president, Joaquin Balaguer, the evidence shows that throughout the crisis he endorsed whatever policy Washington adopted, earning, in return, its goodwill.

Cuba, too, had only a walk-on role. Let me summarize what I write in *La esperanza desgarrada*: Cuba was an inspiration for the 14th of June (1J4) political party in the Dominican Republic; it provided training for a handful of its members and in 1962-63 it urged the 1J4 to start guerrilla warfare. But when the 1J4 suddenly began armed struggle in November 1963, it was without guidance or assistance from Havana. None was possible because there was no communication between Cuba and the Dominican Republic. The only time that Cuba sent any weapons to the Dominican Republic from 1961 to 1966 was in December 1963, and that paltry cache of weapons, the motorboat carrying them, and its four passengers were

¹ Humphrey, 5 May 1965, *Washington Post*, 8 May 1965, 8.

² Organización de Estados Americanos, Comisión de Credenciales, *Segundo informe de la comisión de credenciales*, 8 May 1965, Ser. F/II.10, Washington DC, 1965, 3.

³ Fouchet to Quai d’Orsay, 13 May 1965, Amérique 1952-63, République Dominicaine, box 45, Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, La Courneuve, France.

promptly captured.

Oñate writes that “it seems unreasonable” that the Cuban leaders “would not have seen in the Dominican crisis an opportunity to advance the ‘self preservation and revolutionary idealism’ that [Glejises argues] guided their foreign policy in the 1960s.” This statement reveals a misunderstanding of Havana’s foreign policy. What could the Cubans have done? Their reaction to the U.S. invasion of the Dominican Republic was summed up in a CIA document and a report of the British ambassador in Havana: the Cubans feared that they might be Washington’s next target.⁴ As I write in *La esperanza desgarrada*, “There was no way that Cuba could help the constitutionalists” since the country was occupied by tens of thousands of US soldiers and ringed by US warships” (444). Self-preservation does not mean engaging in suicidal acts, and revolutionary idealism is not synonymous with stupidity.

Alan McPherson remarks that I do not make clear whether I believe “that U.S. fears of social reforms or U.S. concerns over [Juan] Bosch’s weakness before communism were the greater factor in the abandonment of Bosch.” Let me restate what I believe. In *La Esperanza Desgarrada* I stress, as Rabe points out, that for the Kennedy administration Bosch’s capital sin was that he was ‘soft on Communism.’ The Johnson administration inherited this assessment and held fast to it. It is true, as Rabe writes, that even National Security Adviser McGeorge Bundy and Defense Secretary Robert McNamara conceded that there was no proof that the Communists were in control of the revolt, but proof was not necessary. In Santo Domingo, U.S. officials saw chaos: a people in arms, civilians defeating tanks, the armed forces falling apart. They believed, as the French ambassador explained, that “the Communists are likely to take over because of their discipline, their courage, and their sense of organization.”⁵ This is why McNamara and Bundy fully supported the decision to invade. And this fear – not anxiety about social reforms – was what drove the Johnson administration to prevent the return of Bosch to the presidency.

As McPherson points out, I argue that political democracy was impossible in the Dominican Republic in 1963, when Bosch was president. In his presidential campaign Bosch had pledged to stamp out corruption and institute social reforms. The Dominican upper class vehemently opposed Bosch, but it did not have the means to overthrow him. The armed forces, on the other hand, opposed Bosch and had the means to overturn him. This meant that Bosch faced a choice: he could break his promises, implement no reforms, and – perhaps – maintain his hold on power; or he could implement reforms and be ousted by the military. This was the tragedy.

⁴ I quote both reports in *La esperanza desgarrada*, 444.

⁵ Fouchet to Couve de Murville, 27 May 1965, Amérique 1952-63, République Dominicaine, box 44, Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, La Courneuve, France.

In 1965, however, there was a possibility of democracy *after* the constitutionalist victory at the battle of the bridge. Without the U.S. invasion, Bosch would have returned to the Dominican Republic to complete his term, and the conditions would have been very different from those that had existed during his presidency in 1963. He would have returned to power after a bitter civil war in which two groups of Dominican officers – and two visions of Dominican reality – had clashed, and those who sought a new, constitutional and democratic future had triumphed over those who sought the old, traditional structures of power. If the United States had not invaded, the first group – constitutionalists – would have occupied the key positions in the armed forces. And they would have been strongly supported by the people in the capital because it was they who had defeated the anti-constitutionalist military and, as I write, had “acquired ... a decisive role.”⁶ Ms Oñate objects that I wrote that the urban masses “lacked the strength and political consciousness necessary to act as protagonists during this period,” but this is mixing apples (1963) and oranges (1965). What was true in 1963 was no longer true in April 1965.

Can I be certain that the constitutionalist officers would have upheld their pledge to respect democracy, that they would not have been swayed by the allure of power – or that the population of the capital would have maintained the degree of political consciousness that it demonstrated in the days of the civil war? No, I cannot, because certitude is impossible in counterfactual history. But what I can say with confidence is that, for the first time, the Dominican people could have hoped to have real democracy and social reform. The American invasion crushed this dream.

The 1966 elections, overseen by the provisional government of Héctor García Godoy and the United States, were only nominally free – not only because the CIA launched a covert operation to prevent the election of Bosch, but also because U.S. officials had controlled the military appointments of the provisional government. “I have ceased to be surprised at most things that happen here,” the British chargé, Stafford Campbell, wrote in late July 1965. “I was taken aback, however, to learn from Hector [García Godoy] that the meetings between himself and the Imbert [GRN] military have been held in [U.S. naval attaché Ralph] Heywood’s private home, with Heywood and the other U.S. service attachés taking an active part in the conversation.”⁷

The men whom García Godoy appointed to the key positions of Secretary of the Armed Forces, Chiefs of Staff of the Army, Navy, and Air Force, and Chief of Police were the men who had held the same positions in the GRN. This was the price García Godoy had paid to become provisional President.

⁶ *La esperanza desgarrada*, 465.

⁷ Campbell to Slater, 29 July 1965, FO 371/179341, Public Record Office, Kew, UK

Technically, the Godoy solution granted the Dominicans the right to choose their next president at the ballot box, but in fact their choice was grim: if they elected Bosch, would the Americans and the Dominican military chiefs allow him to govern or would they drown his victory in blood? The CIA station chief reported from Santo Domingo “that he did not believe that the Dominican military would let Bosch hold office for more than a week.”⁸ On 1 June, 1966, Joaquín Balaguer was elected president of the Republic with 57 percent of the vote to Bosch’s 39 percent. Twelve years of harsh rule followed. Political democracy was trampled, corruption ran rampant, and social reform was denied. Pro-American stability was maintained. Washington called this a victory for democracy.

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⁸ Koren to Hughes, 8 Dec. 1965, quoting the CIA station chief in the Dominican Republic, David Phillips, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*: 32, Washington DC, 2005, 349.