

played out. The study is well researched in official primary sources and thoroughly grounded in the now-extensive secondary literature. Though occasionally sardonic, the text is objective and reliable, providing the first detailed account of the evolution of official Spanish cultural policy abroad during the first half of the twentieth century.

STANLEY G. PAYNE, University of Wisconsin

*Trujillo y las fuerzas armadas norteamericanas.* By BERNARDO VEGA. Santo Domingo: Fundación Cultural Dominicana, 1992. Notes. Bibliography. Index. 520 pp. Paper.

This book should be of major interest to anyone concerned with the twentieth-century history of the Dominican Republic. The Trujillo dictatorship was one of several installed after the occupation of Caribbean countries by U.S. troops in the first decades of the century. Bernardo Vega traces in great detail the continuous relationship between this regime and the U.S. armed forces from Rafael Trujillo's assumption of power in 1930 until his death in 1961.

The first chapter deals with Trujillo's rise in the U.S.-organized Dominican National Guard and his relations with several Marine officers involved in the Dominican government during the occupation. The next 12 chapters examine Trujillo's relations with the U.S. military after he seized power, and the final one presents Vega's conclusions.

Several themes pervade this study. One is Trujillo's continuing admiration for and sentimental association with the U.S. Marine Corps. He maintained personal contact with a number of officers he had first met during the occupation. He steadfastly sought to get the United States to send a military (Marine) mission. And in 1939, he was lavishly entertained by his former Marine comrades during a visit to Washington and Quantico. A second theme is the role of Major Thomas Watson during the early consolidation of the Trujillo regime and afterward. Soon after he joined the National Guard, Trujillo came under the command of Major Watson, beginning a long friendship between the two men. Following the hurricane that leveled Santo Domingo shortly after Trujillo seized the presidency in 1930, the dictator requested a mission to help with relief and reconstruction, and suggested Major Watson to be in charge. Although no mission was dispatched, Major Watson was sent for about a year as naval attaché in the U.S. embassy to oversee U.S. relief efforts. Watson's office, however, was in Trujillo's National Palace.

Vega notes that during this stint, Watson's functions were highly political, trying to defend Trujillo against the official attitude of the U.S. government. Lieutenant Colonel Richard Cutts, a close friend of Watson who in 1930–31 was serving in the U.S. occupation of Haiti, also strongly supported Trujillo and helped organize Marine efforts in Haiti to spy on refugees from the Dominican regime.

“Finally,” Vega observes, “it was Watson who, with his mere presence, created the sensation, both in the internal opposition and in exile, that the United States supported the regime of the young dictator; particularly when he brought about visits of high Marine officials to Trujillo” (p. 143). The two men continued a personal correspondence for two decades after Watson left the Dominican Republic. To Trujillo Watson was “Dear Tommy,” and to Watson the dictator was “Dear Rafael,” during most of this period.

Another theme of Vega’s study is that for most of Trujillo’s regime, the United States had a “two-track” policy toward the Dominican dictator: the State Department’s version, which was critical, and that of the U.S. military, particularly the Marine Corps, which was consistently favorable. The U.S. armed forces’ support for Trujillo was demonstrated in various ways. One was close collaboration with Trujillo by some of the military personnel in the Santo Domingo embassy even when to do so was not embassy policy. Another was frequent “showing of the flag” in Santo Domingo by U.S. naval units, including U.S. military parades in the Dominican capital. A third involved personal visits and expressions of support by high-ranking U.S. military officers. There were two exceptions to the prevailing mode, according to Vega: in the years following the 1953 Bilateral Military and Assistance Program agreement, both State and Defense departments tended to be exceedingly tolerant of Trujillo. Also, during the period 1959–1961, both sectors of the U.S. government collaborated to oust the Dominican dictator.

Vega demonstrates Trujillo’s continuing efforts to build a large Dominican military force. Yet in spite of the friendship of the U.S. military, Trujillo was not markedly successful until after World War II, when he was able to secure considerable numbers of “surplus” planes, guns, even tanks shipped illegally from the United States. He also purchased quantities of arms from Brazil, Sweden, and other countries. By the late 1950s, the Dominican military—particularly the Air Force—was rated the largest in the Caribbean (except for the U.S. presence). In arms negotiations, Trujillo received cooperation from both active and retired U.S. military officers.

Rafael Trujillo undoubtedly had the most tyrannical and brutal dictatorship in Latin America during his domination of the Dominican Republic. It largely owed its origin to the United States, and this book illuminates the continuing support it enjoyed during most of the 31 years “El Generalissimo” was in power. Bernardo Vega has drawn from a wide range of sources in his research, including several presidential libraries and the specialized U.S. Marine Corps library, as well as the U.S. and Dominican archives and private collections in the Dominican Republic. Vega has made excellent use of all these sources.

ROBERT J. ALEXANDER, Rutgers University