

The Struggle for Democratic Politics in the Dominican Republic (H. Eugene and Lillian Youngs Lehman Series)

Jonathan Hartlyn

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Over the past several decades, the Dominican Republic has experienced striking political stagnation in spite of dramatic socioeconomic transformations. In this work, Jonathan Hartlyn offers a new explanation for the country's political evolution, based on a broad comparative perspective.

Hartlyn rejects cultural explanations unduly focused on legacies from the Spanish colonial era and structural explanations excessively centered on the lack of national autonomy. Instead, he highlights the independent impact of political and institutional factors and historical legacies, while also considering changes in Dominican society and the influence of the United States and other international forces. In particular, Hartlyn examines how the Dominican Republic's tragic nineteenth-century history established a legacy of neopatrimonialism, a form of rule that found extreme expression in the brutal dictator Rafael Trujillo and has continued to shape politics down to the present. By examining economic policymaking and often conflictual elections, Hartlyn also analyzes the missed opportunity for democracy during the rule of the Dominican Revolutionary Party and the democratic tensions of the administrations of Joaquin Balaguer.



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