



# The Cuban Drumbeat (Seagull Books - What Was Communism?)

*Piero Gleijeses*

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Reflecting on Cuba's unique foreign policy—both its meaning and its legacy—and how Cuba has adjusted to a world dominated by the United States, Piero Gleijeses asserts in *The Cuban Drumbeat* that it has been a policy without equal in modern times. During the cold war, extra-continental military interventions were the preserve of the two superpowers, a few West European countries, and Cuba. Gleijeses documents how the rest of the world was regularly stunned by Cuba's massive uses of force, including the 1975–76 dispatch of 36,000 Cuban soldiers to Angola to repel a South African invasion, the 12,000 Cuban soldiers sent to Ethiopia in 1978 to help defeat a Somali invasion, and the 55,000 Cuban soldiers present in Angola by 1988. Even the Soviet Union sent far fewer troops beyond its immediate borders in those years than did Cuba.

*The Cuban Drumbeat* describes how the cold war framed three decades of Castro's revolutionary zeal; but, Gleijeses argues, Castro's vision was always larger than the cold war. For Castro, the battle against imperialism—his *raison d'être*—is more than the struggle against the United States: it is the war against despair and oppression in the Third World—a war that continues even though the future of Castro's policies is uncertain.

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