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Contrapunteo Dominicano: Pedro F. Bonó and Nineteenth-Century Santo Domingo

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in

Literature

by

Diego Ubiera

Committee in charge:

Professor Sara Johnson, Co-Chair
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Professor Luis Martín-Cabrera
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2015

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University of California, San Diego

2015

DEDICATION

For my parents

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Contrapunteo Dominicano: Pedro F. Bonó and Nineteenth-Century Santo Domingo

by

Diego Ubiera

Doctor of Philosophy in Literature

University of California, San Diego, 2015

Professor Sara Johnson, Co-Chair
Professor Misha Kokotovic, Co-Chair

This dissertation explores the understudied Dominican intellectual Pedro Francisco Bonó (1828-1906). I argue that his texts are critical for studying the moment of capitalist transformation in the Dominican Republic between 1870 and 1930 and also for examining key questions in nineteenth-century Dominican historiography. Examining the historical roots of his works, the dissertation explores the ways his essays

relate capitalism, race and Dominican history in his defense of the peasantry and the "democratic" effects of tobacco production. It argues that his essays draw from the anti-colonial legacy of mid-nineteenth century revolutionary movements in the wider Caribbean and the resilient counter-plantation legacy of the Dominican peasantry. His texts are read as an elite adaptation of popular sentiment during Santo Domingo's labored independence from the 1820s through the 1870s. In addition, his essays are read as part of an intellectual tradition of Dominican anti-imperialism and anti-slavery, challenging approaches that see him as standing completely apart from other nineteenth-century Dominican writers.

Chapter 1, "El Montero: Popular History and Memory in Santo Domingo" sets up the historical context for understanding Bonó's writings and the historical roots of his political critique. Primary documents that deal with black popular struggle in Santo Domingo and figures like Antonio Sánchez Valverde and Moreau de Saint-Méry are studied to narrate Santo Domingo's remarkable agrarian history. Chapter 2, "Pedro Francisco Bonó and Dominican Independence" is an exploration of Bonó's earliest writings within the frame of the Haitian period and the first republic (1822-1865). It argues that his later radicalization is informed by the anti-imperial legacy of this mid-century period. Chapter 3, "Bonó and Capitalist Transformation, 1880-1895", focuses on close readings of his texts during the development of the sugar industry. Chapter 4, "Contrapunteo del Tabaco y el Cacao: Bonó and Antillanismo, 1895-1906", reads his proto-ortizian *contrapunteo* of "democratic" Dominican tobacco and "oligarchic" cacao. The dissertation concludes with a discussion of the relevance of Bonó for the current neoliberal moment in the Caribbean.

Introduction

> *That foreign capitalists come here and establish four to six sugar mills on top of fertile lands that were given almost freely or very cheaply on the shores of the sea or on navigable rivers – bravo – that they introduce the machinery, housing, and transportation without paying a cent – bravo, bravo – that the masters see themselves surrounded by a population that before were owners of the land and are now their serfs, that this same population who not only have been converted into serfs, also have to defend the farms with guns that they have to purchase at their own expense – and let the bravos continue. Well, general [Luperón], defend the worker who is the nation, and the nation encompasses all. Since I live in a very isolated area of the country I have savage opinions, but general, the more I see the government protect the sugar industry, the poorer I see the blacks of Sabana Grande and Monte Adentro, and if this continues, all of the small farmers that have been citizens until today will become peons and serfs, and Santo Domingo will become a mini Cuba, Puerto Rico or Louisiana. But the issue goes far beyond current demands and it is inappropriate for a letter of congratulation."*[1]

It is not clear how Pedro Francisco Bonó's (1828-1906) letter entitled "Privilegiomanía" ended up in the hands of the editors of the Puerto Plata newspaper, *El Porvenir*.

[1] See "Privilegiomanía" in the newpaper *El Porvenir*, No. 337, Puerto Plata, March 6th, 1880. "Que vienen capitalistas extranjeros y establecen cuatro o seis haciendas de caña de azúcar sobre terrenos feraces, casi a precios de regalía a orillas del mar o de ríos navegables – bravo- que introducen la maquinaria, casas, techo, carros, etc., sin pagar un céntimo – bravo, bravo- que los amos se ven rodeados de una población que antes eran los dueños del terreno y ahora son sus braceros, que esta misma población además de haberse convertido en siervos defienden y custodian estas fincas con el Remington, y a sus propias costas, y que muchos no quieran que los productos sacados no paguen siquiera el Remington con que el peón defiende la finca y que paren y se detengan los bravos, bravos. Pues, general, defienda al peón que es la patria y la patria el todo. Como vivo en un lugar muy atrasado, tengo opiniones todavía más atrasadas, pues le aseguro General, que mientras más veo proteger la caña de Santo Domingo, más pobre veo al negro de Sabana Grande y Monte Adentro, y si sigue ello, no está lejos del día en que todos los pequeños propietarios que hasta hoy han sido ciudadanos, vendrán a ser peones, o por mejor decir, siervos; y Santo Domingo una pequeña Cuba o Puerto Rico o Luisiana. Pero el material es por demás larga e impropia de una carta de felicitación". All citations of Bonó's texts in this text are from the 1980 edition of Demorizi's compilation *Papeles de Pedro Bonó*. All translations of Bonó's texts are mine.

Figure 1: The only known photograph of Pedro Francisco Bonó (1828-1906).

Critics responding to the letter were baffled that Gregorio Luperón[2] would even be associated with its author. Apparently, *El Porvenir* had just recently been praising and welcoming the sugar industry, white immigration and foreign investment. One essayist claimed, "*El Porvenir's* behavior is strange – does it just decide on publishing whatever it wants based on their mood when they wake up in the morning? – The newspaper exuberantly praises foreign immigration but then fights against it. It is this lack of consistency in its opinions that makes me think that if '*El Porvenir*' continues to be an official newspaper, the government should then exert a sort of super vigilance over it, in order to prevent the publication of articles that are pernicious to the true interests and progress of the Republic and contrary to the spirit of the current administrators of public life". [3] Bonó's letter produced outcries like this one in newspapers all across the island that demanded the censoring of *El Porvenir* for their inconsistencies and dangerous ideas. The letter was reprinted several times in the capital Santo Domingo and elsewhere. Some critics wondered if newspaper published the letter as a joke.

Bonó was a leading member of the elite in the Cibao, a region traditionally known for its role in the rise of a Dominican nationalist sentiment. Often the preferred presidential candidate of the liberal *Partido Azul* - an important nineteenth-century political party in Santo Domingo - he was a novelist, essayist, legislator, soldier,

---

[2] Luperón, Gregorio (September 8, 1839-May 21, 1897), soldier, writer, politician and important figure during the nineteenth century in Santo Domingo.

[3]See the article "Bien Bien!" in El Eco de la Opinion, Santo Domingo, April 3rd 1880, Num. 46. "… estraña la conducta de la redacción de "El Porvenir" que unas veces – (¿Será según el humor con que amanece?) – ensalza hasta las nubes la inmigración estranjera, i otras es un campeón decidido contra ella. Esa falta de consistencia en sus opiniones hace que opine … que si "El Porvenir" sigue siendo órgano oficial, el Gobierno ejerze alguna supervijilancia sobre él, para impedir la publicación de artículos dañosos a los verdaderos intereses i progreso de la República i contrarios al espíritu de los presentes directores de la cosa pública".

economist, doctor, tobacco farmer, distiller and freemason. He spent much of his life in Santiago - the main city of the Cibao region - but would retire early from the public arena in the late 1860s. Indeed, he would go on to write his most compelling texts when he later settled in San Francisco de Macorís, a small village in the eastern part of the Cibao, away from the officialdom of the different governments of the late-nineteenth century. As far as we know, he wrote the first novel ever published by a Dominican, *El montero*, which appeared as a series in a Parisian Spanish-language newspaper in 1856. He began a second novel entitled *En el cantón de Bermejo* about the annexation of the country to Spain from 1861-1865. We only have the first chapter and a sketchy outline of the novel. His other writings include socio-historical essays, newspaper articles, and various other legislative writings that were published when he held different public offices. These texts, along with several of his personal letters, were recovered and published for the first time by the well-known Dominican historian Emilio Rodríguez-Demorizi in 1964, after the end of the Trujillo dictatorship. Some of his essays and letters remain scattered in the archives of the Dominican Republic, particularly in Puerto Plata.[4]

Bonó's writings deserve a wider readership. Although scholars are beginning to examine his writings, he still remains relatively unknown in Caribbean studies. His texts are critical for studying the moment of capitalist transformation in the Dominican Republic between 1870 and 1930 and also for examining general questions of nationhood, race, the convoluted process of Dominican independence and the transition from slavery to free labor. Examining the historical roots of Bonó's critique, I explore

[4] This is according to Raymundo González, leading Dominican historian and specialist on Bonó. Personal communication, August 2013.

the ways his essays study capitalism, race and Dominican history in his defense of the peasantry and the "democratic" effects of tobacco production. Indeed, Bonó examined Dominican history and nationhood through commodities like sugar, tobacco and cacao many decades before the famous Cuban anthropologist, Fernando Ortiz (1881-1969). Of course, Ortiz's *Contrapunteo del tabaco y el azúcar* (1940) and his work in general has had a tremendous effect on Latin American and Caribbean studies. As Martínez-Fernández writes, "perhaps the first person to systematically compare [plantations and frontiers] was Dominican sociologist Pedro Francisco Bonó, who … linked different regions and agricultural products of the Dominican Republic with contrasting social, political, and economic realities. Decades later … Fernando Ortiz contrasted these models in his masterful *Cuban Counterpoint*" (4). It is not clear if Ortiz read Bonó since the Dominican intellectual's texts were collected and published for the first time in the 1960s. In any case, Bonó deserves much more of a presence in Latin American studies.

This dissertation argues that his essays draw from the anti-colonial legacy of the restoration war against Spain (1861-1865) and the resilient counter-plantation legacy of Caribbean peasantries.[5] His essays are a *letrado* adaptation of popular sentiment during Santo Domingo's labored independence from the 1820s through the 1890s.[6] The island went through at least three significant independence movements in the nineteenth century

[5] For a recent discussion of Jean Cassimir's term "counter-plantation" see Laurent Dubois, "Thinking Haiti's Nineteenth Century". Small Axe 2014 Volume 18, Number 2, 44: 72-79.

[6] I am using Angel Rama's concept of the *ciudad letrada*. Dabove aptly defines Rama's concept: "It is a particularly useful hybrid that names, among other things, the cluster of institutions that depend upon the ownership or administration of the technology of the written word as a basis for their political power … it also names the cluster of individuals who obtain a differentiated social identity from their belonging to the aforementioned institutions… the term also refers to the ideology and rituals that sustain this dominance, in particular the ideology that sustains the dominance of literature … as a dominant practice within society" (295). See Dabove, *Nightmares of the Lettered City* (2007).

in 1821, 1844 and 1865. Occupation, re-occupation and debates over emancipation, free labor and forced labor were a constant in the nineteenth century. In addition, I read his works as part of an intellectual tradition of Dominican anti-imperialism and anti-slavery, eschewing approaches that see him as standing completely apart from other nineteenth-century Dominican writers.

Overview of Dominican Political and Economic History

A brief overview of Dominican political and economic history helps to set the context for reading Bonó's works. Much has been made of Dominican "firsts", a narrative that may perpetuate a problematic Dominican exceptionalism: the first cathedral in the Americas, the first university, the first European settlement, the first colonial plantation, etc. As Torres-Saillant argues, the colony of Santo Domingo inaugurated the black experience in the New World and served as "the cradle of blackness" ("Tribulations of Blackness" 110). Expressions of Dominican exceptionalism are perhaps driven by historians' need to put the island "on the map" or to attract more work on the history of the island. Indeed, the Caribbean nation has been relatively unknown and overshadowed in the field of Latin American studies, at least in the English-speaking academy. Recently, however, the island is becoming the topic of excellent and compelling work, especially ones that study the island in a pan-Caribbean, hemispheric frame.[7]

[7] See Eller, *Let's Show the World we are Brothers* (2011) and Johnson *The Fear of French Negroes* (2012).

The arrival of colonists to the island of Hayti[8] brought devastating disease, forced labor and repression that destroyed whole towns. Within fifty years of the encounter, much of the native population almost completely died out. According to one of the first Spanish estimations in 1496, there were around one million *Taíno* people before the devastation.[9] *Taíno* history has often been ignored and downplayed in traditional Dominican historiography, many accounts, "… underrepresent the size and relatively advanced state of the island's indigenous society and minimize the intense violence and massive scale of the Spanish assault on it" (Roorda, Derby and González 2). Pre-Colombian Caribbean history remains a rich, understudied field.

After the disappearance of indigenous labor, the colony began to import enslaved Africans to exploit the mines on the island. But soon the Spanish empire would put its attention elsewhere. With the discovery of silver and gold mines in the continent, Santo Domingo eventually became a neglected port of the Atlantic world. This allowed for a thriving rural creole culture in the island's frontier that resisted Santo Domingo's officialdom. Forms of peasant labor outside the reach of plantation monoculture existed throughout the Caribbean and Santo Domingo was no exception.

Colonial poverty and frontier resistance prevented the establishment of plantation monoculture for centuries on the island. A return to plantation monoculture in Santo Domingo was unimaginable until the rise of French Saint-Domingue in the west, a colony

[8] Pedro San Miguel has provocatively argued that there is no historical foundation for naming the Eastern part of the island "Quisqueya" – apparently meaning "mother of all lands" in Taíno. He argues that it was a term appropriated by the island's elite and was meant as a way to distance the eastern part from the west and for the development of the island's own autochthonous indigeneity. See the essay "La importancia de llamarse República Dominicana, o por qué nombrarse de otra forma que no sea Haití" in *Crónicas de un embrujo*.

[9] See Roorda, Derby and González, *The Dominican Republic Reader: History, Culture, Politics* (2014).

that originated in the contraband trade of the northwest of the island. Indeed, the rise of the French colony on the western third of the island was due, in part, by the Spanish colony's attempts to control its rural frontier. The *devastaciones* of 1606 were designed to stop illegal trade in the northern part of the island. Whole towns were destroyed in an attempt to bring settlements closer to Santo Domingo.[10] State violence was not able to control this frontier activity, however, leading to the eventual establishment of the colony of Saint-Domingue when the western part of the island was ceded to the French in 1697. The rapid growth of the French colony in the eighteenth century regenerated Santo Domingo's economy, leading to the development of an important cattle-ranching, fine woods and foodstuff sector which supplied the booming colony in the west. Saint-Domingue's tremendous rise as the richest colony in the Americas initialized an elite-imagined plantation modernity in Santo Domingo that continued into the twentieth century. Many elites looked west, hoping to emulate the brutal, slave-based plantation economy.

Eighteenth-century Hispaniola is a fascinating story of a fluid border, plantation slavery, and slave resistance. The French colony "… blossomed with cotton, sugar, tobacco, coffee, indigo, and cacao. Africans captured by the slave trade arrived by the thousands annually to cultivate the fertile valleys and hillsides on the western side of the island" (Roorda, Derby, González 91). Santo Domingo, meanwhile, remained a relatively poor cattle economy. The mountainous, sparsely-populated eastern side also allowed a space for runaway slaves from the French side. To the frustration of elites

[10] For recent work on the Spanish colony in the 1600s and the *devastaciones* see Ponce Vásquez, *Social and Political Survival at the Age of Empire* (2011).

across the island, the weak Spanish state could not effectively control *marronage*. Maroons and their descendants throughout the island anticipated the Haitian revolution of 1791-1804 which would have an enormous impact on the island and the rest of the Americas. Haiti, the second independent nation in the western hemisphere, transformed the political contours of the eastern side. For example, various colonial projects attempted to retake the black republic from the east. This made Santo Domingo a crucial space where intense struggles over independence, emancipation, citizenship and freedom played out. Indeed, Santo Domingo was an integral part of the Atlantic world. Recent work has challenged representations of colonial Santo Domingo as marginal within the nineteenth-century Caribbean.[11]

Fearing European intervention, the black republic would eventually take control over the entire island in 1822, ushering in the period of the so-called "twenty-two years". Recently, scholars have questioned the traditional labels of this period. They argue that the dominant labels of the "Haitian Occupation" or "Haitian Domination" obscure nuances of the period. "The Haitian Unification" or "The Haitian Period" are preferred categories. This is important because, for example, the majority of the eastern side welcomed Haitian control and slave emancipation. Most of the east did not see the Haitian presence as a savage war of conquest, as the dominant, *trujillista* narrative goes. This language attempts to break with older historiography that represents both sides of the island as inherently and permanently antagonistic. On this debate, Johnson argues that "the very semantics of the discussion focuses on 'occupation' as opposed to

[11] See chapter 2 of Johnson, *The Fear of French Negroes* (2012). Also see Nessler "They Always Knew her to be Free" (2012) and Eller, "All would be equal in the effort" (2011).

unification and integration. Indivisibility is blithely reconstituted as predatory and rapacious" (*The Fear of French Negroes* 52). She argues that revising the language on the period helps to recover important details – like Haitian-Dominican collaboration efforts - that traditional historiography obscures.

Nineteenth-century Santo Domingo, soon to be known as the Dominican Republic in 1844, is still under much-needed debate and revisionism but I will briefly go over some of the issues here. Due to internal divisions in Haiti, the autocratic nature of Jean Pierre-Boyer's[12] unification government, and proto-nationalist Dominican independence movements, the east claimed independence from Haiti in 1844, leading to the establishment of the "First Republic" from 1844-1861. One of the forces of Dominican independence, the small, urban, liberal and idealist *Trinitario*[13] movement was overtaken by ambitious *caudillos* like Pedro Santana (1801-1864) and Buenaventura Báez (1812-1884) who held dictatorial control throughout mid-century. Internal and external issues led to reactionary *caudillista* control of the island as opposed to control by *Trinitario* idealists like Juan Pablo Duarte (1813-1876) and Francisco Rosario Sánchez (1817-1861) - liberals who may have been more open to cooperation with the Haitian state and the sincere development of a truly democratic civil society. Instead, the sparse population, a hostile, imperial plantation Caribbean, opportunistic *caudillos*, domestic rivalries, debt, and a weak national infrastructure, contributed to the fragmentation of the 1844-1861 period. These issues led to the annexation back to Spain from 1861-1865. *Caudillos*

[12] Jean-Pierre Boyer (1776-1850), president of the island during the period of unification.
[13] *La Trinitaria* was a liberal independence movement that contributed to the eventual independence from Haiti.

used Haiti – an emancipated state constantly harassed by a plantation Caribbean – as an excuse for annexation. Reactionary *caudillos* took advantage and profited.[14]

Traditional historiography overemphasizes the "Haitian Invasions" of the 1850s as the conditions which forced *caudillos* to annex the island. "Protection from the Haitian threat" was a common excuse for opportunistic annexation. There was a brief moment, however, that interrupted *caudillista* annexationism from 1857-1858. Cibao liberals in the tobacco-dominant economy of Santiago led what is known as the Moca rebellion, a movement that attempted to rewrite a much more liberal constitution. It called for direct elections for major elected posts, prohibited reelection, decentralized authority, and prohibited the death penalty for political crimes.[15] However, this movement was eventually crushed by the *caudillo* leadership, sending many to exile – including Bonó - and reinstating the 1854 constitution which gave almost absolute power to the president. Later, *cibaeño* liberalism and anti-slavery would play a crucial role in the war of independence from Spain from 1863-1865.

The 1863-1865 War of Restoration was an unprecedented event in the mid-century Caribbean. Spain, a slave-holding imperial power, annexed the Dominican Republic, a territory fiercely against slavery and forced labor. As Eller recounts, whole towns in the eastern part island emptied as news of Spanish reoccupation spread.[16] Surrounded by the entrenched slave colonies of Cuba and Puerto Rico, the population feared re-enslavement across the entire island. Allied to Dominican nationalist liberals like Gregorio Luperón (1839-1897) and others in Haiti, the island successfully drove the

[14] For a fascinating reading of the first republic see Eller, *Let's Show the World* (2011).
[15] See Hartlyn, *The Struggle for Democratic Politics in the Dominican Republic* (1998).
[16] See Eller, *Let's Show the World* (2011).

Spanish out in 1865 in a bloody war that further weakened the internal infrastructure of the island. Dominican unity against the Spanish proved to be brief, however. Political fragmentation and the politics of annexation continued after the war.

Internal power struggles began again soon after independence in 1865. Patronage systems, opportunistic *caudillos* and a hostile imperialist Caribbean contributed to the continued fragmentation of the poor, rural nation. The main political parties, the *Azul* and *Rojo* parties, fought over control of the state. Pedro Santana had died but Buenaventura Báez still held power and continued the annexationist tradition. Báez almost annexed the island to President Ulysses S. Grant in 1870 but the proposal failed before the US senate by one vote. Indeed, Bonó was part of a group of elite anti-colonialists that tried to deal with this fragmentation – and with *caudillos* like Buenaventura Báez - with little success until the late 1870s, when Báez was finally expelled from the country. It is compelling that most of Bonó's writings come from this period of relative stability when liberals like Luperón and Ulises Francisco Espaillat governed. These governments would be short lived, however. Bonó and others would be silenced for some time, when the dictator Ulises "Lilís" Hereaux would take control of the island from 1886-1899. Bonó wrote few essays during this period, except for the seminal essay *Congreso Extraparlamentario* (1895) which fiercely criticized Lilís' collusion with imperial, free trade capitalism in the late nineteenth-century.

Lilís' dictatorship embraced the neocolonial pact of the late-nineteenth century and the designs of Latin American positivist intellectuals. As Halperín-Donghi writes:

> The relationship between Latin America and Europe after about 1870 is generally described as neocolonial … the middle years of the nineteenth century saw the gradual arrangement of a new colonial compact, one

> orienting Latin America toward the industrializing centers of the European economy … Essentially, Latin America became a producer of primary products for European markets, while Europe traded its manufactures in return … the almost universal adoption of free-trade policies – only partially accepted earlier – facilitated Latin America's new function in the international economy (118).

Lilís opted for this "order and progress" model that heavily indebted the country. He pocketed much of the foreign loans that were part of this new economic order and also brutally murdered, imprisoned and exiled his critics. Bonó and other liberals of the War of Restoration generation would criticize this neocolonial orientation, imagining a modernity in opposition to this neocolonial pact. Bonó was able to remain in the country during the dictatorship while others like Luperón had to resist from exile. Lilís would eventually be assassinated in 1899 but the impact of his rule would be long-lasting.

Partially in pursuit of hemispheric hegemony and unpaid debts from the Lilís dictatorship, the US occupied the island from 1916-1924 setting the stage for the Trujillo dictatorship of 1930-1961. Trained by the US marines, Rafael Leonidas Trujillo collaborated with the first US occupation. Twentieth-century *trujillismo* would continue with Joaquín Balaguer after the second 1965 US invasion that intended to, in the words of the US government, "prevent another Cuba in the western hemisphere". Balaguer's twelve-year government from 1966-1978 led to intense political repression, torture and disappearance of the Dominican left just as in other areas of Latin America during the Cold War. Neoliberal doctrine would reign in the 1980s and 1990s through more Balaguer governments (1986-1996). Neoliberalism continues uninterrupted in the Dominican Republic through the twenty-first-century administrations of Leonel Fernández (1996-2000, 2004-2008, 2008-2012) Hipólito Mejía (2000-2004) and Danilo

Medina (2012-2016). [17] There has been no successful large-scale political movement in the Dominican Republic since the 1970s that has challenged neoliberal rule.

Pedro Francisco Bonó (October 18th, 1828 – September 13th, 1906)

Historians usually focus on Bonó's life before and after 1865. His life changed significantly after the War of Restoration in 1865. Bonó was born into a comfortable merchant family that eventually settled in the northern town of Santiago de los Caballeros, now the island's second largest city. With the development of the small-holding tobacco sector in the Cibao in the nineteenth-century, many became successful merchants. These commercial merchants were the intermediaries between peasant smallholders that produced the tobacco and the foreign exporters that were located in Puerto Plata or Santiago. After the Spanish lost much of the Dominican tobacco market, German buyers came to dominate this tobacco sector starting in the 1840s. But there were also many rich French, Dutch, Spanish and local planters.

This tobacco sector produced a fortune for many planters. Baud argues that, "although tobacco was a smallholder crop, even in the 1850s some tobacco was already being produced by a group of rich, market-oriented cultivators … well-known entrepreneurs like José Joaquín Díaz and the brothers Espaillat had larger farms and employed wage labor to care for their crops" (*Peasants and Tobacco* 18). However, Bonó's idea of a "democratic tobacco", which I summarize in detail in this dissertation, was modeled more on the smallholder family model that owned the land, where even the

[17] For an account of the interruption of neoliberalism in Latin America see Postero and Goodale, *Neoliberalism Interrupted*: *Social Change and Contested Governance in Contemporary Latin America* (2013).

poorest had access to a comfortable living. Bonó's vision was not of the Jeffersonian variety where very few owned the land and idyllic, white, yeoman, farmers worked the land for wage labor.[18] In any case, Bonó's family made a lot of money from this tobacco sector. Baud's rich study addresses more of the complexities of this tobacco economy.

Bonó's paternal grandparents owned large plantations in Saint-Domingue before the start of the Haitian Revolution in 1791. His grandfather, Lorenzo Bonó, of Italian and French descent, was killed in the revolution. His grandmother, Eugenia de Port was able to escape along with nine-year-old José Bonó (Bonó's father) to the border town of Bánica. According to Minaya, Bonó's father and grandmother escaped through the help of one of their slaves.[19] They eventually made their way from Bánica to Puerto Plata and then finally to Santiago.

His father, José Bonó, would marry Inés Mejía and have six children. They became tobacco merchants first in San Francisco de Macorís and then in Santiago. Unfortunately, I have no detailed information at the moment on the background of Bonó's mother, Inés Mejía. Pedro Francisco Bonó was the second-oldest sibling and was sent early on to live with his grandmother who owned a cattle ranch with many *peones* in Puerto Plata. Bonó never studied formally and spent most of his young adult life helping on the ranch and working in his father's tobacco business. Historians mention that he had several mentors but he was for the most part an *autodidacta*. He eventually earned a *Licenciado en Derecho* to practice law in 1851 while he worked in the tobacco business.

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[18] For a recent description of the Jeffersonian vision see Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery and Empire in the Cotton Kingdom* (2013).

[19] For more on Bonó's life see Minaya, *Pedro Francisco Bonó: Vida, obra y pensamiento crítico* (2014).

He lived mostly with his grandmother in Puerto Plata for the first 23 years of his life until he moved to Santiago to work as a lawyer and politician in 1851.

His mother, Inés Mejía, died in 1853 and Bonó had to make the trip from Santiago to San Francisco de Macorís for the burial. Rodríguez Demorizi collected a document detailing the assets of the family. This document reveals much of Bonó's social class. In 1853 his family owned 96 heads of cattle, several bank accounts, three houses, jewelry, and horses, among other things.[20] His family was well-off compared to most in the Cibao in the 1850s. Throughout the 1850s, he worked as a lawyer and held many different governmental posts. In 1856 he was a senator for Santiago. He met most of the elite figures of the island because of this extensive experience with Dominican politics.

Bonó began his political activities in the late 1850s and 1860s. Along with others, he founded the masonic lodge *Logia Nuevo Mundo No. 5* in Santiago, where many anti-annexationists and *anti-Baecistas* met in secret.[21] He participated in the 1857 Moca rebellion against Báez and was sent to exile. In 1858 he ended up in Philadelphia for six months with several other Cibao liberals that were exiled. Upon his return, he worked mainly as a lawyer and tried to avoid Dominican officialdom. After the Spanish annexation of 1861, he was given a post as a public defender in Santiago. When the war against the Spanish began, however, he became a military general and fought against the Spanish. He lost everything in the 1863 War of Restoration. In a letter he narrates, "I used to live in Santiago in 1863, and I was one of the victims of the fires of that year.

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[20] See Demorizi's compilation of Bonó's texts, *Papeles de Pedro Bonó* (1980), 602.
[21] See Minaya, 106. For a rich study on masonry and politics in the Caribbean see Arroyo, Jossianna. *Writing Secrecy in Caribbean Freemasonry*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013.

House, store, warehouse, everything burned down, and I only survived with the clothes that I had on, which in 8 days were all torn to shreds".[22]

Bonó's life would change significantly after 1865. He refused most of the government posts offered to him and moved permanently from Santiago to San Francisco de Macorís for the rest of his life. He stayed in the small town for the last 32 years of his life, except for a six month governmental post that he held in Santo Domingo in 1867. Most historians point to the internal divisions of the post-restoration government to explain his distancing from Dominican officialdom. His good friend and post-restoration President, José Antonio "Pepillo" Salcedo (1816-1864), was killed by opportunistic generals of the restoration war. This prompted him to live permanently in the small village of San Francisco de Macorís – where his family had some connections - as a doctor, distiller and lawyer. J.M. Ricardo Román adds several other professions. In San Francisco de Macorís he was a, "lawyer, doctor, botanist, tinsmith, tailor, shoemaker, tanner, carpenter, farmer, politician, economist, publicist, philosopher and playwright".[23] Although he lived a comfortable life in San Francisco de Macorís, historians represent his remaining years as comparatively modest.

He would write little between 1867 and 1875, avoiding the repression and intrigue of Báez's reign. In 1875 he travelled to France, Belgium, Germany and England to visit friends and to escape persecution – he clearly had some money left after the War of Restoration. These friends in Europe were exporters who were intimately tied to his

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[22] *Papeles de Pedro Bonó,* 8. "Vivía en Santiago en el año 1863 y fui una de las víctimas del incendio de ese año. Casas, tienda, almacén, biblioteca, todo se quemó, y solo salvé la ropa que me cubría, que a los ocho días ya estaba hecha jirones".

[23] Minaya, 113. "abogado, médico, botanista, hojalatero, sastre, zapatero, curtidor, carpintero, agricultor, político, economista, publicista, filósofo y comediógrafo".

family's tobacco businesses. He returned from Europe once Báez was overthrown. He continued living as a farmer in San Francisco de Macorís, despite being offered the presidency several times throughout the 1880s. Bonó never married but had two daughters with two different women. Dominican biographers curiously judge Bonó for this, Ricardo Román wrote, "As we don't always find perfection in the individual, this point without a doubt is the weak point of the personality of my biographee, but he must have had his reasons and since we do not know them, we should silence this one detail that could tarnish the many good qualities of Don Pedro Francisco Bonó".[24] Ricardo Román ignores that marriage was not part of everyday life in nineteenth-century rural Santo Domingo. It is hard to take these early biographers seriously, however. For example, Ricardo Román described Bonó as, "… white, pinkish, tall and elegantly dressed".[25] The only picture we have of Bonó does not seem to show him as white and pinkish. His house burned down again in the 1890s and he lost a lot of property. Bonó was by no means poor, but I can safely say that he was not as well-off in his later years, when he wrote his most interesting essays. Bonó died in Santiago on September 13th, 1906.

"Privilegiomanía" (1882) and Bonó's Critique of Plantation Modernity

The epigraph that I reproduce at the start of this dissertation is a part of Bonó's most compelling essay. He wrote it to Gregorio Luperón (1839-1897), president and

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[24] Quoted in Minaya, 170. "Como no siempre hallamos la perfección en el individuo, este es, sin duda, el punto débil en la personalidad de mi biografiado, pero sus razones tendría para ello, y como no las conocemos,debemos silenciar este detalle único que podría empañarla serie de buenas cualidades de Don Pedro Francisco Bonó".

[25] Quoted in Minaya, 95. "…Blanco, rosado, alto y elegante de vestir…".

leader of the governing *Partido Azul* and important figure of the annexation war against Spain. Somehow the editors of *El Porvenir* got a hold of the letter and published it but kept Bonó's identity secret. The essay begins with the reasons why the editors decided not to reveal the name of the author:

> With true satisfaction we present the following document written by an impartial and competent person, whose name we do not reveal so as not to violate the modesty of his character, which has been imposed by the isolation in which he lives, and from afar allows him to see the movement of the actors of our political theater with clear and serene vision.[26]

The editors of *El Porvernir* clearly sympathized with Bonó's ideas, meaning that he had some allies. The publication caused outrage in elite circles throughout the country, however, many were offended and newspapers responded violently. Several writers demanded that *El Porvernir* never publish anything like it again and called for a public shaming of the author. Many thought Bonó's ideas on sugar production, foreign capital and Dominican nationhood were reactionary and against progress. I begin with the reaction of the press to "Privilegiomanía" because these critiques serve to introduce the questions at stake in this dissertation.

The critiques have two compelling points in common: 1) Bonó's ideas are "Haitian", and that 2) the sugar industry should be protected at all costs because it turns the *vulgo*, el *montón anónimo* and itinerant peasants – a problem since the earliest of colonial times - into dignified "soldiers of work," as one writer put it at the time. Sugar would then eventually usher the nation into modernity and progress. The following

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[26] *Papeles de Pedro Francisco Bonó*, 251. "Con verdadera satisfacción damos cabida al siguiente documento emanado de persona imparcial y competente, y cuyo nombre reservamos por no violentar la modestia de su carácter, que le ha impuesto el aislamiento en que vive, y desde lejos le permite ver moverse los actores de nuestra escena política con visión clara y serena "Privilegiomanía."

discussion of the controversy over the letter will shed light on how Bonó's writing fits into larger conversations about Dominican modernity, slavery, nationhood, popular struggle and Dominican historiography.

The most aggressive critique came in an article entitled "Supine ignorance or Extreme Malice" published in Santo Domingo's *El Eco de la Opinión* a few weeks after Bonó's letter appeared in Puerto Plata. I will quote extensively here to showcase the political language of the Dominican press at the time. The writer is infuriated with Bonó's critique of the sugar industry:

> It is no longer with sadness nor contempt, but with true disgust that we have seen in the "El Porvenir" of the 6th of September, one that presumes to be a letter-article; it is a horrible hodgepodge of badly composed and worst of ideas. It is certainly not now, no, not when the country deserves confidence and capital from abroad, it is not when reason and good will accompany current administrative acts, it is not when we show palpable proof of being a thinking nation, civilized and progressive, it is not now, we say, that such *foolishness* can appear, a purpose so base and despicable, a deformation of Haitian politics so clearly set apart from the dignified aspirations that today distinguish and characterize Dominican society [Emphasis in the original].[27]

Bonó's "Haitian ideas" are misplaced, according to the author. Indeed, since the establishment of the Haitian Constitution in 1804, the Haitian state had always been wary of the interests of foreign capitalists. The Haitian state prohibited foreign investment in its constitution. Some newspapers on the eastern side of the island used Haiti's politics concerning foreign capital as a way to construct the black republic as absolute "other".

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[27]In *El Eco de la Opinion*, March 27th, 1880, Santo Domingo. "No ya con pesar ni desprecio, sino con verdadero asco hemos visto en "El Porvenir" del 6 del presente una que presume de carta-artículo i es un horrible fárrago de mal perjeñados conceptos i peores ideas. No es ciertamente ahora, no, no es cuando el país merece ya la confianza y el crédito del estranjero, no es cuándo la sensatez i el buen deseo acompañan los actos administrativos, no es cuándo damos palpable pruebas de pueblo pensador, civilizado i progresista, no es ahora, decimos, cuando puede cuadrar una *necedad* como esa, un propósito tan bajo i ruin, un aborto de política haitiana tan manifiesto entre las dignas aspiraciones que distinguen i caracterizan hoi la sociedad dominicana."

The above critique of "Priviliegiomanía" reformulated Bonó's own words as rhetorical strategies for insult. It continues by calling the uncivilized writer of "Priviliegiomanía" an imbecile (Bonó's own "*modesto aislado"* becomes "*modesto imbécil"*) that wants to go back to the times of the Haitian period of 1822-1844:

> But doesn't this modest imbecile know that he is pathetically wrong, who talks as if he were on Uranus or on the moon, trying to discredit the country, to wake up preoccupations that on top of being barbarous and savage, are, have been, and will always be very far from us … wanting to return immediately to the good times of the 22 years, and continue in this generous land the wicked and inhumane politics of our neighbor?[28]

Another critical part of this "othering" was to characterize the Dominican landscape as radically different from Haiti, echoing not only twentieth-century works like Balaguer's *La isla al revés* but also current discussions on Hispaniola's ecology after the 2010 earthquake.[29] In addition, every critique of the essay reformulated his original words and labeled him a "dangerous" Haitian that is trying to awaken racial-hatred among the majority population of workers. The writer above felt that Bonó's critique, which connected race and capitalism, would awaken "*preocupaciones*" among the working class population. Critics also claimed that Bonó wanted to go back to the period of Haitian unification from 1822-1844.

One writer represented Bonó as a *modesto incógnito* which, in my view, echoed the case of *El negro incógnito* ("The Uknown Black") analyzed in Chapter 1 of this

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[28] See "Supina Ignorancia o Estrema Maldad", *El Eco de la Opinion*, March 27th, 1880, Santo Domingo. "Pero no sabe ese modestísimo imbécil que yerra lastimosamente, que habla como si estuviera en Urano on en la luna … tratando de desacreditar el pais, de despertar preocupaciones que a fuer de bárbaras i salvajes están, han estado i estarán siempre mui lejos de nosotros …queriendo volver de un golpe a los buenos tiempos de los 22 años, o continuar en esta tierra jenerosa la aviesa e inhumana política del vecino."
[29]Balaguer, *La isla al revés: Haití y el destino dominicano* (1983). See Sherie Baver. "Hispaniola's Environmental Story: Challenging an Iconic Image" (2014).

dissertation. This event was from a much earlier period, shortly after the start of the Haitian Revolution in 1791. It was a complex story of black popular struggle on the eastern side of the island during the Haitian Revolution that merits an extensive description. The following discussion should suffice to understand the way in which Bonó's ideas were "othered" as Haitian. The newspaper stated, "we finish talking about this badly composed article expressing our desire to see published the response that the garbage *modesto incógnito* - whom *El Porvenir* has found so impartial and competent - received from the dignified president of the government.[30] Bonó's original *modesto aislado* went first to *modesto epistolario, to modesto imbécil* and then to *modesto incógnito.* In another essay published in *El Eco de la Opinión*, one writer picked up on this reference and even more clearly represented Bonó as a *negro incógnito*:

> Haiti is very close to us geographically; but is very far from us politically, socially and economically. May he go there he who does not accept what good doctrine teaches … may the director of *El Eco de la Opinión* continue to thrash the *modesto epistolario*. Why hasn't *El Porvenir* published his name? That'd be good, so that even little kids would run away from him, the *modesto incognito*.[31]

I argue that this writer's reformulation was a clear reference of the *comegente* or *negro incógnito* in his attempt to "Haitianize" Bonó's ideas.

I will describe the story of the *negro incógnito* in more detail in chapter one but I would like to mention one source for this story that comes from one of Bonó's letters to

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[30] *El Eco de la Opinión*, March 18th, 1880, Santo Domingo. "Terminamos este mal perjeñado artículo espresando el deseo de ver publicada la contestación que ha recibido del digno Presidente del Gobierno el modesto *incógnito* a quien 'El Porvenir' ha encontrado tan imparcial i tan competente para desbarrar como lo ha hecho".

[31] See "Carta Abierta a Casimiro N. De Moya." *El Eco de la Opinión*, March 18th, 1880, Santo Domingo. Haití está mui cerca de nosotros jeográficamente; pero dista mucho de nosotros, política, social i económicamente. Váyase allí quien no se avenga con lo que la buena doctrina enseña … continúe el Director de "El Eco de la Opinión" vapuleando al *agazapado epistolar*. ¿Por qué no habrá publicado "El Porvenir" su nombre? Sería bueno, para que hasta los muchachos huyeran de él: del *modesto* incógnito.

back up my claim. Bonó's letter to Luperón in March of 1895 contains some interesting details on popular memory about the *negro incógnito*. Luperón had asked Bonó for his take on the origins of the story because Luperón's friend, Casimiro N. De Moya (1849-1915)[32] was interested in writing a series of *Episodios nacionales,* in the spirit of Benito Pérez Galdós' work of the same name.[33] Bonó remembered:

> In my childhood (as you see the story is from many lustra ago) the *comegente* was a legend, an old wives' tale weaved and undone by the popular masses since the beginning of this century about a horrible social phenomenon towards the end of the last century. According to current nomenclature it can be labeled as a judicial cause célèbre whose facts and aggravating circumstances were taken advantage of by heads of family to make him into a bogeyman [*Cuco*] of childhood while at the same time decorated and embellished by the more modest, it served as subject for the stories of the short rural soirees of the Cibao.[34]

Based on Bonó's take, the *comegente* was a popular story meant to entertain and scare children. Calling someone a Haitian *comegente* was a popular form of insult. The author critiquing Bonó's article is clearly making this reference to represent Bonó's ideas as barbarous and "other". In any case, these writers saw Bonó's essay as dangerously Haitian and absolutely not Dominican. I mention this event of black popular struggle of the late-eighteenth century in more detail in chapter one of this dissertation.

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[32] Casimiro N. de Moya was an important political figure of the time and was known for designing the current shield of the Dominican flag. He wrote a number of texts about Dominican history, and participated in an armed revolt against Ulises 'Lilís" Heureaux. Assassinated in 1915. See Moya, *Recuerdos de la Revolución Moyista* (2010).

[33] For a a rich reading of this short story see chapter 2 of Johnson (2011).

[34] *Papeles de Pedro Bonó*, 572. "En mi niñez (y ya usted verá que a la cosa le corren lustros) el comegente era una leyenda, una conseja tejida y borrada por las masas populares desde el comienzo del siglo sobre un fenómeno social horrible de fin del siglo pasado. Según las denominaciones de este fin de siglo puede calificarse como una causa judicial celebre cuyos hechos y circunstancias agravantes supieron aprovechar los padres de familia para constituirlo en Cuco de la niñez al mismo tiempo que exornada y engalanada por los discretos, sirvió de tema para los cuentos de las cortas veladas campestres del Cibao".

These discussions about Bonó's Haitianness lead to other questions regarding tobacco and popular resistance in Santo Domingo. Tobacco represented something like a "poor man's crop" and it reminded of the Haitian period from 1822 to 1844. Fascination with sugar as represented in the press was often opposed to tobacco's backwardness. As Turits and Baud have argued, Jean-Pierre Boyer's policies during the Haitian period regenerated small-scale tobacco production in the Cibao from 1822-1844. As Baud describes:

> Following the expulsion of the Spanish colonial rulers, a Haitian interim government took power from 1822 to 1844 in the eastern part of the island of Hispaniola … During this period, simple commodity production regenerated in the Cibao as thousands of small freeholders cultivated tobacco (Baud 136).

For the Santo Domingo newspaper *El Eco de la Opinión,* tobacco was Haitian and backwards.

Bonó's article also produced anxieties over the possibility of violence and popular struggle against the growth of the sugar industry. One article, which originally was published in The United States' *The Journal of Commerce* and later translated and published in a newspaper in Puerto Plata, expresses this anxiety when the writer argues that Luperón should do everything he can to stop the spread of dangerous ideas especially when among "the races" that populate the island:

> Let's hope from Luperón that he will show a liberal spirit and will use his power with the goal of resisting the efforts of various people trying to introduce ill-will amidst the races that live among us.[35]

[35] See "Bien Bien!" in *El Eco de la Opinión,* April 3rd, 1880, Santo Domingo. "Esperemos de él [Luperón] que mostrará un espíritu liberal i usará de su poder en el sentido de contrarrestar los esfuerzos que varias personas están haciendo para introducir la mala voluntad en medio de las razas que viven entre nosotros."

This shows elite fears over popular struggle against sugar plantations. This is important since it is evidence that revolts were real possibilities even in the Cibao during the late-nineteenth century, a region that is often written as a place of historically utopian labor relations. The Cibao has been narrated as having developed paternalistic and "soft" labor relations during slavery as even Bonó would narrate in his 1882 essay *Apuntes sobre las clases trabajadoras dominicanas*. The Cibao, of course, would later become the source of "authentic" dominicanness for writers in the twentieth century – especially during the Trujillo Dictatorship (1930-1961). As Johnson argues, more historical work on the Cibao is needed – especially the connections between *Cap Haitien* and Puerto Plata in the North Coast –in order to rewrite it as an important site for black revolutionary struggle.[36] These debates over Bonó's letter supports Johnson's claim that, "Black revolt and revolutionary events are usually associated, not with Dominicans themselves, but with blacks from 'afuera', the Haitians and the revolution they brought with them" (*The Fear of French Negroes* 86). Johnson's point is critical and calls for future work to revisit the history popular black struggle on the eastern part of the island.

El montón anónimo

Critiques of "Privilegiomanía" also represent the sugar industry as necessary for pacifying the unruly *montón anónimo*. On March 27th, 1880, *El Eco de la Opinión* published a two-part series called "La Carta en El Porvenir." The second article describes life on the island before and after the sugar industry:

[36] See chapter two of Johnson, *The Fear of French Negroes* (2012). See Eller, *Let's Show the World we are Brothers* (2011) for connections between the north coast, the Cibao and Haiti.

> When years ago the first sugar mill was established, there were places – where today are populated by thousands of men – with thick and intricate forests that could serve as lairs for all of the delinquents of the republic, [these men] who took advantage of the misery and corruption that their living conditions produced, would pounce on an innocent traveler demanding his money lest lose his life. This had never happened in the good old days; but in time, since the revolutions have occurred without end, without interruption, it is not surprising that we had arrived at such a situation. Today, those forests have fallen victim to the axe, today, it is a very extensive land that pleases and delights the heart when one contemplates a man whose calling was previously to be a bandit, asking the earth for its treasures, and ennobling himself through the habit of work.[37]

It is interesting how the writer calls for clearing *el monte* in order to prevent popular revolt. In addition, the similarity is striking between the language of this article and earlier elite travel writings describing the activities of free people of color – runaway slaves, *monteros* and other itinerant peasants that were not tied to any state apparatus, as I describe in Chapter 1. For this writer, *el monte* was full of *malhechores* and bandits – until idyllic sugar plantations turned them into "men of work".

> When one sees at every step enormous steam engines in constant activity, the smoke of the highest chimneys; the sugar cane fields in the distant horizon, the movement of cars and oxen; the multitude of happy and satisfied men in daily work and happier and more satisfied in receiving from the hands of the administrators of the farms large sums of *pesos* weekly…[38]

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[37] "La Carta en El Porvenir II", *El Eco de la Opinion*, March 27th, 1880, Santo Domingo. "Cuando en años atrás se estableció la primera hacienda de caña, había en los lugares que hoi pueblan millares de hombres un espeso e intrincado bosque que podía servir de guarida a todos los malhechores de la República, para aprovechar el instante en que su miseria i la corrupción que ella enjendra, les impulsase a ir encima al viajero en demanda de la bolsa o la vida. Esto nunca había acontecido; pero a la larga, después que las revueltas se han sucedido sin interrupción, nada estraño era que a tal situación hubiesemos llegado. Hoi, esos bosques han caido bajo el hacha; hoi aquello es un dilatadísimo campo donde la vista se complace i el corazon se regocija cuando contempla al hombre que estaba llamado a ser un bandido, pidiendo a la tierra sus tesoros, i ennobleciéndose con el hábito del trabajo".

[38] Ibid. "Al ver a cada paso enormes máquinas de vapor en constante actividad; el humo de las altísimas chimeneas; los campos de caña haciendo horizonte; el movimiento de carros i bueyes; la multitud de hombres contentos i satisfechos en las faenas diarias i más contentos i satisfechos en recibiendo de manos de los administradores de las fincas muchas cantidades de pesos semanalmente."

Similar to other representations of sugar plantations in the wider Caribbean, the writer paints a rather utopian picture of life and labor there, describing the "multitude" of happy workers collecting their pay in the cane fields. For many conservative elites, the sugar industry symbolized progress and civilization, "progress and modernization became synonymous with the production of cash crops for export. In the long term, they envisioned the creation of a prosperous republic made up of hardworking small farmers, rather than what they saw as lazy peasants" (Veeser 56). However, this vision of small farmers working on large export plantations was different from Bonó's. Perhaps it is no surprise that the editors of *El Porvenir* chose to keep Bonó's identity secret. He was going against what many powerful circles on the island saw as progress.

La carta en el porvenir

The longest and most elaborate critique of Bonó's letter was written by Casimiro N. de Moya, an important political and literary figure of the time. In fact, the essay was reprinted several times in newspapers across the country.[39] In an essay entitled "*Una Rectificación*" Moya reacts to Bonó's defense of tobacco and *el negro de Sabana Grande y Monte Adentro*:

> Where, then, does the crouched epistolary find the property owner converted into serf? Never is man freer than when, full of aptitudes, finds the land where he can employ them as he sees fit. And that is exactly what happens today for our laborers, especially the ones near Santo Domingo. Almost left abandoned not long ago, [laborers were] limited to cultivating four to six *tareas*[40] of land, the minimum for personal subsistence, or to live off of the wild forests; while now the honest and

[39] For this information see the article "Bien Bien!" in El Eco de la Opinion, Santo Domingo, April 3rd 1880, Num. 46. An English-language newspaper called *The Journal of Commerce* reprinted de Moya's letter and included it in one of their issues.

[40] Unit of measurement equal to about half an acre.

> hard-working citizen *if he wants* finds one, ten, fifty agricultural establishments demanding work and offering in exchange from *fifty centavos* to even *four, six or more pesos* per day's work, earnings that would have appeared fabulous ten years ago, and that provides even the least talented enough to sustain a modest family [emphasis in the original].[41]

Moya defends the emerging sugar industry because it offers employment to a population who used to live off of subsistence farming and hunting in *el monte*. Typical of the particular brand of liberalism at the time, he argues for championing the "rights of the individual" and the autonomous worker. Moya continues with:

> And how accept the false assertion that while we protect Santo Domingo's sugar industry, the poorer we see the *inhabitant* of Sabana Grande and Monte Adentro, given that the demand of continuous work offers a salary? What would they do, what would we do, with all of those two thousand or three thousand workers that occupy and work the plantations if all of a sudden they would not have that work? But … why waste any more time saying anything more? [My emphasis].[42]

It is significant that Moya changes Bonó's El *negro* de *monte adentro* to *el habitante*. Moya's change signals his unease with associating the peasant population with blackness. In addition, Moya believes that if the sugar plantations were not there, thousands of itinerant laborers would be a threat to the nation. This echoes the centuries-old trope of

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[41] De Moya, Casimiro. El Eco de la Opinión. March 12th, 1880, no. 43. "¿En dónde, pues, sueña el agazapado epistolar encontrar al propietario convertido en siervo? Nunca es más libre el hombre que cuando lleno de aptitudes encuentra campo donde emplearlas a su arbitrio. I es exactamente lo que pasa hoi a nuestros labradores, con especialidad a los vecinos de Santo Domingo. Casi abandonada hasta hace poco la agricultura estaban los más limitados a cultivar en cuatro o seis tareas de terreno los frutos menores indispensables para su consumo, o bien a vivir del producto silvestre de las incultas selvas; mientras que hoi el honrado i laborioso ciudadano si *quiere* encuentra uno, diez, cincuenta establecimientos agrícolas demandando trabajo i ofreciendo en cambio desde *cincuenta centavos* hasta *cuatro, seis o más pesos* por jornal, precio que habría parecido fabuloso diez años atrás, i que da aun al menos favorecido lo suficiente para sostener una modesta familia".

[42] "¿Ni cómo aceptar tampoco la falaz aserción de que mientras más se proteje la caña de Sto. Domingo más pobre está el *habitante* de Sabana Grande i Monte Adentro, siendo así que la demanda de trabajo da contínua ocupación i ofrece el salario? Qué harían, qué nos haríamos, con esos dos o tres mil jornaleros que ocupan i pagan las fincas si de improviso les faltará esa ocupación? Pero…. ¿a qué divagar más?"

the dangerous, itinerant, free peasants of color on the island. The last paragraph of the article is equally fascinating:

> He has said it well, the *modesto aislado*. His ideas are very backwards, and it doesn't appear that they are inspired by a democratic country such as this one, that has reached such an honest timbre because of the character of its inhabitants, [the ideas come from] the massacre river, they are nurtured by our neighbors, who so many and so ominous obstacles have put in place to impede progress in its territory because of its terrible legislation. But fortunately the spirit of progress encourages the majority of Dominicans, as well as the development of the habits of hard work. They will not be enough – the panegyrists – to stop this progress….[43]

Moya also attacks Bonó for being inspired by "Haitian" political and economic ideas that have flowed from the Massacre River (A river that divides an important part of the border) just like the other newspapers that I have commented on above. Again, it is interesting Moya and all of these writers seem to use "Haitianness" to marginalize Bonó's critique.[44] In the rest of the essay, he calls for unity between sugar capitalists and peasant laborers:

> Yes, that in addition to this there will always be *sugar workers*, independent people, decided defenders of good liberal economic doctrine, who will not be discouraged or give up by any setbacks, they are now a legion – a considerable number now – of soldiers of work, who have finally arrived to understand the advantage of continuous labor and the disadvantages of free time and laziness, things that make man the worst of

[43] Bien lo ha dicho el *modesto aislado*. Sus ideas están mui atrasadas, i no parece que se han inspirado en el país por excelencia democrático, que alcanzado tiene tan honroso timbre por la franqueza de carácter de sus habitantes, sino que, traspasando el Masacre, se han nutrido al calor de nuestros vecinos, que tantas i tan ominosas trabas han opuesto siempre al progreso de la industria en su territorio, con su detestable lejislación. Pero afortunadamente el espíritu de progreso alienta a la mayor parte de los dominicanos, i va también desarrollándose considerablemente la inclinación al trabajo; i no serán suficientes a detener las leyes de aquel ni a desvirtuar esta todas las capciosas reflexiones de sus presentes i futuros contrarios, por más que en su apoyo cuenten i contar puedan con panegiristas como lo ha sido esta vez, - es lo que nos ha causado sorpresa – el señor redactor de 'El Porvenir'.

[44] For the Haitian case see Trouillot, *Haiti: State Against Nation* (1990), where he argues that small-scale coffee peasants in Haiti always had a problematic relationship with elite economic legislation.

> serfs, chaining him to vices and ill-advised passions [Emphasis in original].[45]

These sugar plantation workers are becoming legionary "soldiers of work", instead of, as Moya would have it, Haitian-like hunters and small-scale tobacco farmers that are full of *vicios i malas pasiones*. From these discussions of Bonó's article it is clear to say that some elites were not interested in Bonó's alternative project of modernity. Indeed, the critics were partly right about "Privilegiomanía." It represented an alternative that many saw as dangerous. This sheds more light on Sybille Fischer's point that:

> With a state next door that originated in revolutionary antislavery and whose foundational ideology centered on racial equality, most Dominican statesmen, intellectuals and writers were acutely aware that Creole modernity was not the only option: Haiti represented an alternative, and it needed to be avoided at all costs. At the center of the fantasies that characterize the Dominican cultural imaginary is Haiti as the nightmare of a barbarian future … In the anti-Haitian imaginary, Haiti becomes the force of darkness and underdevelopment – a primitive, dangerous predator that threatens to "denationalize" Dominican civilization through weed like proliferation on Dominican soil (Fischer 146).

Bonó was part of an elite Dominican intellectual tradition that was partly inspired by the revolutionary legacy of *Ayiti's* peasantry. After the 1880s, Bonó would keep developing this alternative form of nationhood in his essays.

A month after the publication of "Privilegiomanía", Bonó kept being attacked for his Hatianness in the press. On April 3rd 1880, the article "Bien! Bien!" appeared in El Eco de la Opinión, celebrating all of the critiques heaped upon the *modesto incógnito*:

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[45] De Moya, Casimiro. "Rectificación". El Eco de la Opinión. Santo Domingo, 11 March, 1880. "Sí; que por encima de todo eso habrá siempre *azucareros*, caracteres independientes, decididos defensores de la buena doctrina liberal i económica, que no se desalentarán ni cejarán por contrariedad ninguna, i una legión también – considerable ya – de soldados del trabajo, que al fin han llegado a comprender la ventaja que reportan de una continua ocupación, i la ninguna que han sacado de la ociosidad i la holgazanería, que hacen del hombre el peor de los siervos, unciéndolo al yugo de los vicios i de las malas pasiones".

> Not only here in Santo Domingo but even in the city of Puerto Plata the author of the celebrated anti-sugar letter has received a good beating … in a well-written text of the English newspaper "The Journal of Commerce" … the *modest incognito*, the *crouched epistolary*, the *seditious mañé* [Haitian], has been ripped apart … the Journal is not content with molesting that no-name's crotch but also criticizes the strange actions of the newspaper El Porvenir…[46]

As I have already mentioned, Bonó's essay was not only criticized in the capital of Santo Domingo. Everyone was "*manoseándole el bulto*".[47] The first US occupation of the island (1916-1924) and the economic crises of the 1920s and 1930s produced many more Bonó-like critique of capitalism. I have extensively cited these critiques of Bonó's letter to Luperón to introduce the questions of this dissertation, namely the importance of Haiti, black popular struggle and the nature of his alternative project of Dominican nationhood.

Bonó, Peasant and Nation, 1880-1906

"Privilegiomanía" marked a transition in Bonó's intellectual production. Since 1865, after the end of the annexation war, he had already started to distance himself from Dominican politics and intellectual circles. But by 1880, disillusioned with the sweeping changes that were occurring in the country due to the growth of the sugar industry, he continually refused to participate in political institutions, declining the presidency four times. The controversy that was produced over this letter, as seen above, hastened

[46] "No solamente aquí [Santo Domingo] sino en la misma ciudad de Pto. Plata se ha dado una buena *felpa* al autor de la célebre carta contra la industria azucarera … En un bien escrito editorial del periódico inglés "The Journal of Commerce" … se pone *como nuevo* al *modesto incógnito*, al *agazapado epistolar*, al *sedicioso mañe*[46] … i no solo se contenta "The Journal" con manosearle el bulto a aquel tercio sino también estraña la conducta de la redaccion de El Porvenir …"

[47] See the article "!Bien! Bien!" in April 3rd of 1880 in *El Eco de la Opinión*.

Bonó's decision to break with Dominican officialdom and isolate himself in the quiet, Cibao town of San Francisco de Macorís.

Exploring Bonó's ideas in "Privelegiomanía" is an appropriate way to begin this dissertation. I oppose Bonó to other conservative Dominican *letrados* like Manuel de Jesús Galván (1834-1910) and José Ramón López (1866-1922) who – since the *trujillato* - have often been taken as representatives of all of nineteenth-century Dominican thought. For example, Lewis is wrong in claiming that:

> Bonó alone among the educated classes manages to rise above the psychotic miasma to declare in his letter of 1887 [sic] to Luperón, that the blacks and mulattoes have something to contribute to the cultural patrimony of the Americas … (284).

My claim in this dissertation is that what is "unique" about Bonó is the proto-ortizian *contrapunteo* description of "democratic tobacco". Nineteenth-century elite nationhood in the Dominican Republic was not always anti-Haitian. I would place Bonó in the tradition of those of the War of Restoration generation (Luperón, Rodríguez Objío, Duarte, etc.) who did not ascribe to the anti-Haitianism of conservative *letrados*.[48]

Bonó identifies the nation in the figure of the free-colored peasant in opposition to the sugar industry that was fast developing in the southeastern region of the island. He laments that peasants were losing rights to the land, going from property owners to servants of large sugar companies that did not even provide the peasants with the arms they use for securing the plantations. He also criticized the destruction of the landscape and the shortage of national food crops due to the growth of the sugar industry. Indeed, Bonó is part of an understudied tradition of nineteenth-century elite Dominican

[48] See Eller, *Let's Show the World* (2011) for a reading of these "counterhegemonic" liberals in the context of the War of Restoration.

nationalism that imagines blackness as a critical component of Dominican national identity.

Modernity via sugar was supported by specific elite sectors of Dominican society. This support was due to several reasons. The appearance of large sugar plantations in the late-nineteenth century signaled, in the eyes of some, an entrance into Atlantic modernity after centuries of the island being a colonial backwater. Colonial Santo Domingo's economic history from the late 1500s through the nineteenth century has been written off as years of tragedy and misery by traditional Dominican historiography.[49] This has been formulated from colonial times to the present. Even Joaquín Balaguer and Juan Bosch, the two *"caudillos*" of twentieth-century Dominican letters and politics, wrote of the Dominican colonial period in similar ways. Indeed, as Turits has shown, part of Trujillo's power was sustained by the belief that the regime finally put an end to the parenthesis that were the years from the late 1500s to 1931, when Trujillo came to power.[50]

Bonó was one of few – "I cry out in a desert" - as he would later write in another essay - that fleshed out a substantial critique of capitalist transformation via a defense of peasant labor and small-scale tobacco culture. Although he was still a nineteenth-century Latin American *letrado* and tied to certain problematic ideological positions, Bonó's defense of the peasantry is compelling. Bonó was keen on the peasantry's historically problematic relationship to Caribbean plantation modernity. This is perhaps why Ernesto Sagás and Orland Inoa write that "Bonó is considered the best interpreter of Dominican

[49] See Pedro L. San Miguel, *La isla imaginada*: *Historia, identidad y utopía en La Española* (1997).
[50] See Turits, *Foundations of Despotism* (2003).

society in the late-nineteenth century" (Sagás and Inoa 106). Bonó's essays introduce a type of historical sociology that had not yet appeared in Dominican writing. The scholarship on Bonó identifies this project as unique but my dissertation goes further in arguing that his work builds off of the resilient legacy of the Dominican peasantry and other – silenced - elite forms of Dominican nationhood. Although other elite Dominican writers did not formulate these ideas in quite the same way, Bonó had company in writers from the War of Restoration generation as well as other counterhegemonic liberals in the rest of the Americas. [51] Further research will show that he comes from a tradition of other radical liberals of the nineteenth century that have not been read as such like Francisco del Rosario Sánchez, Manuel Rodríguez Objío and Luperón.[52]

Una Súplica, Bonó responds

Bonó would in fact respond to Moya and company two years later in the Santiago newspaper, *El Eco del Pueblo*. In an essay entitled "*Una Súplica*," Bonó continues his critique on the growing sugar economy in the south. He develops his idea of a *dominicanidad* based on the interests of "the dispossessed classes". Bonó begins surprised that the letter to Luperón was even published:

> On Saturday, March 6th of 1880 appeared – who knows how - in issue 337 of El Porvenir, a newspaper from Puerto Plata, a letter that I sent privately to a friend in rapturous gratitude who lives in that city. If I was surprised that it was even published, I was even more surprised of the incredible sensation that it produced in all of the intellectual circles of the country, especially those in Puerto Plata and Santo Domingo, where the press, with few exceptions, unleashed insults at the hapless author. The insults were

[51] See Florencia Mallon, "Dialogues Among the Fragments: Retrospect and Prospect" (1993).
[52] Manuel Rodríguez Objío (1838-1871) was a poet and soldier and part of the most radical of Dominican liberals in the nineteenth century. He fought in the restoration war and opposed annexation schemes of the 1870s. He was eventually captured by the caudillo Buenaventura Báez (1812-1884) and executed in 1871. See Eller (2011), for his place in the War of Restoration.

> not enough, the unexpected publication of my private and personal ideas produced grave suppositions … when identifying and summarizing their insults, I see that I was accused of being a reactionary, an exclusivist, and even a revolutionary… Ah![53]

After this introduction and his lament of the sensation that his letter caused all over the island, Bonó continues his earlier critique of capitalism in "Privilegiomanía" by citing Eugenio María de Hostos, a figure that would later be glorified by traditional Dominican historiography. Hostos also criticized the sugar industry a few years after the appearance of Bonó's "Privilegiomanía" in 1882. I argue that Bonó decides to take responsibility for the controversial letter years later because he then had a strong symbolic ally in Hostos as well as in the crisis in sugar prices:

> I do not have the honor of knowing Mr. Hostos personally, but I am authorized as a Dominican that loves the Ozama as much as the Cibao - until others who … know how to appropriately pay tribute to literary merits and merits of profound scientific study - to give him thanks and shake his hand over the Sillón de la Viuda [a valley separating the north and south of the island], as a token of gratitude, because he fights for the rights of the dispossessed Dominican classes, for equity, for equality - the essence of the Republic - and because he signals with clear eyes the dangerous path that agriculture has taken in Santo Domingo.[54]

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[53] *El Eco del Pueblo*, Santiago, No. 14, July 9th, 1882. "El sábado 6 de marzo de 1880, apareció sin saber cómo en el número 337 de *El Porvernir*, periódico de Puerto Plata, una carta que privadamente y en un rapto de patriótico agradecimiento dirigí a un amigo de aquella ciudad. Si sorpresa debió causarme verla publicada, más sorpresa aun me causó la inmensa sensación que produjo en todos los círculos del país, sobre todo, en los de Puerto Plata y Santo Domingo donde, la prensa, con pocas excepciones, se desató en injurias contra el desdichado autor. No bastando las injurias, la externación impensada de mis ideas privadas personales, dio lugar a suposiciones graves, y por último, precisando y condensando más en los agravios, se llegó a acusarme de retrógrado, exclusivista, y hasta de revolucionario… Ah"!

[54]See *El Eco del Pueblo*, Santiago, No. 14, Jul. 9th, 1882. "No tengo el honor de conocer al señor Hostos, pero como dominicano que ama al Ozama tanto como el Cibao estoy autorizado, hasta que otros más instruidos sepan encomiar como merece los méritos literarios y profunda ciencia … para darle las gracias y tenderle mi mano por encima del Sillón de la Viuda, en prueba de agradecimiento porque aboga por las clases desheredadas dominicanas, por la equidad, por la igualdad, esencia de la Republica, y porque señala con ojos certeros los escollos de la ruta que ha emprendido el trabajo agrícola de Santo Domingo".

Bonó praises Hostos for defending the interests of the peasantry and small-scale national industries like tobacco. However, as Raymundo González has shown, there are marked differences between Bonó and Hostos' ideas of nationhood. Hostos' particular brand of liberalism saw Dominican society as, "an embryonic society that has not been able to shed its colonial heritage. Especially the popular classes, poor peasants and the urban poor are part of a society that is biologically sick that needs to recover in order to advance towards higher social states, where it can develop its physical, moral and intellectual aptitudes" ("Hostos y la Conciencia" 216).[55] In Hostos, there's never the kind of defense of popular subjects that we see in Bonó's essays - even though Bonó at times also uses similar clinical metaphors to describe some aspects of rural popular culture.[56] This places these writers within a larger positivist movement in Latin America.

In this letter he also foresaw the kind of rural insurgency that was to come in the form of the *gavillero* conflict of the early-twentieth century.[57] He argues that popular resistance will intensify because of the excesses of the sugar industry, which will eventually discredit the capital of Santo Domingo as capable of governing the entire nation:

> But it would be good to know that the situation is grave, very grave, and so grave that if not careful, it sets the stage for a sudden transformation of half of the country and of disasters that are soon to come. Not of armed revolution, but, for example, of emigration, exodus towards more

[55] González, Raymundo. "Hostos y la conciencia moderna en la República Dominicana". *Clío*, año 71, No. 165, ene-jun 2003, pp. 205-224. "Una sociedad embrionaria, por su lastre colonial, del cual no ha podido desembarazarse. Sobre todo los sectores populares campesinos y urbanos pobres, forman una sociedad biológicamente enferma, que necesita convalecer, para avanzar hacia estados sociales superiores, donde pueda desarrollar sus fuerzas físicas, morales e intelectuales".

[56] For an analysis of the use of clinical metaphors in the discourse of a similar writer, the Peruvian Manuel González Prada (1844-1918), see Beatrice Pita. *Rhetorical and Ideological Strategies in the Discourse of Manuel González Prada* (1985).

[57] The *gavillero* war was an armed resistance movement against the first US occupation from 1916-1924.

> fortunate regions, strikes and resistance to a work without hope, and even a total discredit of the region of Santo Domingo to function as it corresponds in dealing with the future vicissitudes that may befall on the Republic.[58]

Indeed, he would be wrong about the potential for violent revolution – as armed rural insurgency would develop significantly after his death in 1906 and after the intensified encroachment of the United States - but his distrust of the sugar industry, as seen through these essays in the early 1880s, would be the beginnings of his increasingly radical project of nationhood that he would keep defending until the end of his life in 1906. Bonó's "*Una Suplica*", years after the first critiques of "*Privilegiomanía*", served as a way to warn the island of what was to come in the form of the first US occupation.

I began thinking of this dissertation first via "*Privilegiomanía*." In the initial stages of this project I felt that this essay contained the most radical points of his political thought especially because of how he clearly connects issues of race, color, nationhood and capitalism in the essay. I found that in order to fully understand this text and his other essays I had to explore the following general topics of Dominican and Caribbean history: the significance of the island's peasant history, its transition from slavery to free labor, capitalist transformation at the end of the nineteenth century, the complexity of Caribbean emancipation and independence movements, how the "bandit trope" - critical to the field of Latin American studies - fits into the Dominican case, the writing of the

[58] *Papeles de Pedro Bonó*, 255. "Pero es bueno que se sepa que la cuestión es grave, muy grave, tan grave que, si se descuida, apareja una súbita transformación de la mitad del país y desastres en no lejano día. No de revoluciones armadas, pero por ejemplo, emigraciones, éxodos hacia comarcas más afortunadas, huelgas y resistencia de un trabajo sin esperanza, y cuando no, una invalidez reconocida de la común de Santo Domingo para funcionar como le corresponde en las probables vicisitudes que tiene que sufrir la República".

frontier in Dominican historiography, and the relationship of these issues to the contemporary neoliberal moment and recent Dominican discourse. I was interested in exploring the utopian future offered by Bonó and other intellectuals of the nineteenth-century Caribbean - despite some of their ideological limitations - to think of ways of challenging current neoliberal politics in Santo Domingo.

Although reading Bonó is interesting in itself, exploring these questions through his writings fills a void in the field of Dominican history, particularly the history of nineteenth-century elite nationhood. The most interesting reading of Bonó, I would suggest, is exploring his texts while also questioning important conversations in nineteenth-century Dominican historiography. Reading him reveals that many aspects of nineteenth-century Dominican history may have been misunderstood, namely the narrative that Santo Domingo can be read as an "exception" in Caribbean history. Recent work has shown the importance of questioning this narrative.

Some recent scholarship also challenges us to reread Dominican history. Anne Eller's critical work refocuses Dominican historiography to a pan-Caribbean frame. One of her most important points is that Santo Domingo's history read as an anomaly "…forecloses study of the nation as an emancipated state, together with Haiti, in a hostile Atlantic".[59] In other words, studying Santo Domingo in this way and digging more into the archives reveals that the island is crucially part of a "Caribbean story" with its clear traditions of anti-slavery, collective identities built around blackness, and solidarity with other areas in the Caribbean seeking emancipation and independence. This can be seen

[59] See the abstract for Eller, "'Awful Pirates' and 'Hordes of Jackals': Santo Domingo/The Dominican Republic in Nineteenth-Century Historiography" (2014).

throughout the nineteenth century but especially when studying the early to mid-nineteenth century, she argues.

Another important contribution is her point that Dominicanist historians have for too long used conservative elite thought as "synecdoche for all Dominican thought" (92). She mentions that some histories have suggested (perhaps unwittingly) that the general Dominican population participated in the construction of anti-Haitian and, therefore, anti-black national identities in the nineteenth century. Certainly, many elite writers in nineteenth-century in Santo Domingo were anti-Haitian and anti-black but this was not the sentiment of the majority of the population, as Eller's archival evidence suggests. She excavates popular sentiment on the island as well as other elite forms of nationhood that were expressions of popular thought.

Scholars like Raymundo González and Sibylle Fischer have pointed out Bonó's unique position in this conversation on the divide of elite and popular nationalisms.[60] They have rightly identified Bonó as different from many nineteenth-century elites. These scholars have also explored his more positive representations of Haiti, for example, which is definitely unique. But, as I argue in this dissertation, Bonó was not the only one of this tradition of counterhegemonic liberals in nineteenth-century Santo Domingo, as the scholarship seems to suggest. It is misleading to read Bonó as completely isolated from other elites and to see him as the "pioneer of the emancipation of Dominican culture", as a recent book claims.[61] Other elites similar to Bonó have been completely misread. The great Gordon K. Lewis is again mistaken to claim that Luperón is "… the

[60] See González, *Bonó: un intelectual de los pobres* (1994) and Fischer, *Modernity Disavowed* (2004).
[61] Minaya, *Pedro Francisco Bonó* (2014), 326.

politician with aristocratic prejudices … that … will retire to his private *finca* or go into exile to St. Thomas in his moments of defeat rather than spearheading a popular movement based on popular discontents" (280). This is a complete misreading of Luperón's popular politics. My point here is that non-conservative elite nationhood in nineteenth-century Santo Domingo has not been fully explored and much revisionism is needed. April Mayes' recent work provides a welcomed nuanced reading of nineteenth-century Dominican intellectual history.[62]

The argument of this dissertation is that Bonó's political essays originate in the anti-imperialist, anti-slavery Dominican tradition of the nineteenth century and are part of an elite tradition that expressed popular sentiment.[63] I also argue that his politics are inspired by the long history of peasant autonomy and resistance to monopoly capitalism. Reading Bonó and questioning some key issues in nineteenth-century Dominican historiography reveals that there is a long tradition of counterhegemonic liberals – to use Florencia Mallon's term - in Santo Domingo who indeed were the *letrado* allies of popular thought as they often acted as anti-imperialist, anti-racist and in solidarity with the emancipatory, revolutionary politics of the Haitian state.[64] Bonó, Gregorio Luperón, Francisco del Rosario Sánchez and Juan Pablo Duarte and others were part of this tradition.

The Dominican "proto-peasantry"

[62] Mayes, *The Mulatto Republic: Class, Race, and Dominican National Identity* (2014).
[63] Eller also makes this case for mid-nineteenth-century liberals of the War of Restoration (1863-1865). See *Let's Show the World We Are Brother* (2011).
[64] See Mallon, *Peasant and Nation: The Making of Postcolonial Mexico and Peru* (1995).

As Baud indicates, work on Caribbean peasantries is fairly recent. Attention to Caribbean peasant history perhaps began with the ambitious projects on Puerto Rico in the 1950s, after which Sidney Mintz would be an important standout. Before this pioneering work, historians were generally concerned with the dynamics of forced plantation labor and paid little attention to other forms of labor in the Caribbean. The work of Julien Steward, Mintz and others, made it very clear that "… there existed an important small-scale agricultural sector" in the Caribbean which had not been fully explored (*Peasants and Tobacco* 35). Out of this work, Mintz developed the idea of Caribbean rural sectors as "reconstituted peasants" or "proto-peasants", groups who became peasants in resistance to an externally imposed, coercive system of plantation labor.[65] This, of course, would tremendously influence Caribbean studies.

There were several critiques of the term "reconstituted peasants". For example, some historians first challenged Mintz's ideas as irrelevant to the history of the Spanish Caribbean peasantry:

> Critics alleged that Mintz's ideas were based on the history of those Caribbean islands where plantation slavery had been predominant and that it was not possible to speak of reconstituted peasantries everywhere in the Caribbean. In the Spanish Caribbean … an independent peasantry came into existence in the seventeenth century which did not have any relation to plantation agriculture … this peasantry did not form itself in opposition to a dominant plantation economy, but, on the contrary, originated in the political and economic vacuum left by the impotent Spanish colonial administration (Baud 36).

This dissertation challenges this conception of Spanish Caribbean peasants first growing out of this "vacuum", for, in Santo Domingo especially, the possibility of the imposition

[65] See the essays collected in Mintz, *Caribbean Transformations* (1974).

of a strong plantation system tremendously affected both elite and popular consciousness, making resistance still absolutely relevant.[66] Quintero Rivera's "counter-economy" (which reincorporates the idea of peasant resistance so important in Mintz's term) is perhaps more useful for understanding the Dominican peasantry, where the island's looser regime of control allowed peasant producers to oppose the designs of "… an authoritarian colonial state" (Baud 37). As I describe in chapter one of this dissertation, this Dominican proto-peasantry would often be in conflict with the intentions of a paternalist colonial state that aimed to have a monopoly on violence and control.

At stake for this dissertation is the extent to which Bonó's essays reject or incorporate the "fugitive", maroon-like nature of the Dominican proto-peasantry.[67] Indeed, most liberal elites of the late-nineteenth century considered rural subjects as unfortunate elements of a semi-barbarous nationhood. As Derby writes, "the Dominican 'protopeasantry' or backwoods *monteros* – the nomadic hunters and gatherers who did minimal cultivation of domestic subsistence – had come increasingly under fire with the rise of liberal thought in the nineteenth century and had been portrayed in increasingly negative terms" (*Dictator's Seduction* 69). As I show throughout this dissertation, Bonó's position on the Dominican proto-peasantry was contradictory and ambivalent. In several essays – especially in his earlier texts - he desired a more settled, less rebellious, market-oriented peasantry. He often argued that elites and a paternalist state had the obligation to mold *el vulgo* and the rebellious *montero* into civilized subjects.

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[66] See Eller, *Let's Show the World* (2011).
[67] See Valentina Peguero's description of the "fugitive" nature of the Dominican peasantry in *The Militarization of Culture in the Dominican Republic* (2004). See chapters 1 and 2.

This modernizing impulse also went hand in hand with the issue of *terrenos comuneros*. *Terrenos comuneros*, "were a type of group or jointly owned property claimed by an exclusive association of co-owners who possessed rights … to the property pro-title. These titles did not refer to any specific plot or quantity of land. Instead they supported rights to utilize any unused area within a comunero site's vaguely defined parameters". Turits also claims that "the ambiguous character of land ownership in terrenos comuneros … provided former slaves, marginal colonists, and their descendants with the material foundations for an essentially autarkic existence; that is, free access to woodlands and natural pasture for hunting and grazing animals, slash-and-burn-farming and collecting wild fruits (Turits 40).

While Bonó often rejected *montería* and *terrenos comuneros* as atavistic, he also considered particular elements of peasant life and *terrenos comuneros* as inspiration for an alternative modernity. First, Bonó saw the relative equality of *terrenos comuneros* (access to land, continuous, year-round work, shared ownership, abundant food etc.) as critical for just Dominican modernization. He saw the sweeping changes of the late nineteenth-century and capitalist modernization as inevitable but he often repeated that the island should try to "… look for solutions in accordance with equality and justice" since the masses of the overwhelmingly peasant nation were being disenfranchised as large sugar plantations started to appear in the southeast.[68] Secondly, Bonó incorporates the *montero's* spirit of resistance to coercion and autonomy in his conception of Dominican nationhood, especially in his later, more radical essays set in the context of

[68] *Papeles de Pedro Bonó,* 376.

Caribbean *antillanismo*. For him, *el negro de monte adentro* – who represents autonomy, fierce independence, access to continuous work – is *la nación misma*, the nation itself. These ideas on pride, happiness and access to continuous, dignifying labor – so present in almost all of Bonó's essays - may have been inspired by Marx's early writings.[69] In short, as a *mulato* intellectual invested in citizenship for the peasantry, he incorporates and identifies with some of the elements of the *montero economy* and *terrenos comuneros* as he imagines an alternative to plantation modernity "*a todo trance*."[70]

Citizenship and Bonó's mulatismo

It is important to clarify what I mean about citizenship in my description of Bonó's project of Dominican nationhood. I argue in this dissertation that Bonó's "democratic tobacco" is related to Sheller's "peasant democratic ideology" in post-slavery Caribbean societies. Sheller argues that "… those who struggled out of slavery … developed a shared radical vision of democracy based on the post-slavery ideology of freedom. In addition to the clear demand for full political participation and equal citizenship, it was an ideology that included an explicit critique of white racial domination and of the unbridled market capitalism that built a world system of slavery" (*Democracy after Slavery* 5). Sheller continues by arguing that this ideology was also accompanied by a degree of economic redistribution and land reform and that this

[69] It is likely that Bonó read Marx, he had many personal connections in Germany and traveled there and to other parts in Europe in the 1870s. According to some of his letters, he was known to have one of the most extensive libraries of the *Cibao* region. See *Papeles de Pedro Bonó* for a short list of some of the texts in one of his libraries. Demorizi wrote, "La biblioteca de Bonó fue en el Cibao, en su tiempo, la más rica, especialmente en sociología…", 605-606.

[70] *Papeles de Pedro Bonó,* 191.

"alternative path to a future free from domination provided not only a counter-narrative to modernity and an ethical critique of capitalism, but also an alternative vision of true grassroots democracy (5)". Citizenship for Bonó and his allies meant a commitment to relative egalitarianism, real claims and influence on political decision making for everyone and, above all, access to land.[71] This "grassroots peasant democracy" had an important impact on Bonó's later radicalization in the 1890s, as he lives the last thirty years of his life in the tiny rural village of San Francisco de Macorís. I argue that in this later period, Bonó becomes a sort of "Gramscian", organic intellectual who attempted to express popular sentiment in his essays. Indeed, his politics was informed by his engagement with the everyday life of the Dominican peasantry. The evidence for this is that he not only led an autarkic, semi-autonomous peasant life in his last years but also participated in the major social movements of the nineteenth century when the peasantry took center stage, like the *Restauración* of 1863-1865.

As a *mulato* intellectual, he served as a mediator between the elite and popular classes. This is clear in his most radical essay, *Congreso Extraparlamentario* (1895), where an alternative, just modernity is ascribed to the political agency of the majority, rural population. In addition, as one of the few Dominican intellectuals that imagined blackness as part of Dominican nationhood, as seen in my discussion of his essay "*Privilegiomanía"*, his cosmopolitan *mulatismo*, mediated between popular sentiment, elite thought and regional context. Mayes writes that Bonó's, "Dominican *mulataje* made the country a model for racial inclusivity for the entire hemisphere" (27). In his essays,

[71] For recent work on citizenship see Sheller, *Citizenship from Below: Erotic Agency and Caribbean Freedom* (2012). For a rich conversation of citizenship and "the politics of belonging" in Latin America see Postero, *Now We are Citizens: Indigenous Politics in Postmulticultural Bolivia* (2007).

he attempted to express the political demands of the peasant majority, challenging white supremacy, inequality and land dispossession. As I show below, he did this in a contradictory way, understandable to an elite audience. Especially in his later essays, he tried to incorporate popular sentiment and elite projects in his peculiar brand of *antillanismo.* Mayes describes this form of *antillanismo* that Bonó and others were a part of as a "project oriented around sovereignty, solidarity and resistance against imperialism in all of its forms, from Spanish rule to the commercial, political and military intervention of the United States" (34).

Bonó's Legacy

It is important to recover Bonó's legacy. Fischer has contributed to an interesting conversation on the absence of Bonó in Dominican intellectual history. She argues that his novel *El montero* is absent from Dominican anthologies because his work makes present the history of Dominican anti-revolutionary slavery. She writes, "modernity in the Dominican Republic had to invent a genealogy for itself that would not lead back to the revolutionary age and to projects of racial equality and emancipation. Instead of *costumbrismo*, we thus find a literature devoted to producing a future out of a reinvented past" (195). In addition, she argues that Bonó's ideological position was too uncomfortable for subsequent, *trujillista* generations. This dissertation contributes to recuperating Bonó's legacy and some of the silences of nineteenth-century Santo Domingo.

The way I came to Bonó was through an initial interest in the relationship between neoliberalism and cultural production in the Caribbean and Latin America. I

aimed to investigate how Dominican cultural production responded and critiqued the implementation of neoliberal policies beginning in the 1980s. I was also invested in the history of the Dominican left and its reactions to these policies and what alternative forms of political discourse were being generated as a response to neoliberalism. As I struggled with the periodization of neoliberalism in the Dominican Republic and contemporary cultural production I began thinking about the "neo" of neo-liberalism. This, of course, took me to the nineteenth century and earlier forms of "intense globalization".[72] I found Bonó's critique of nineteenth-century liberalism fascinating and looked to see if his legacy was maintained or continued in contemporary discourse.

Methodology and Chapter Breakdown

This dissertation is composed of four chapters and a conclusion. Each chapter focuses on a particular period of Dominican history. I explore the period of Spanish imperial decline and frontier adaptation (1600-1780s), the Haitian occupation and the first republic of Santo Domingo (1822-1861), and the period of capitalist transformation (1880-1906). I look at each of these eras as critical terrains for understanding debates on modernity and nationhood in the Dominican Republic. The goal of the dissertation is to reread Bonó by interrogating key debates on nineteenth-century Dominican historiography.

My methodology is based on close readings of his essays but it is also inspired by more recent approaches to intellectual history, as Baud writes, "…it is necessary to

[72] See Benedict Anderson's analysis of "intense globalization" in the nineteenth century. *Under Three Flags: Anarchism and the Anticolonial imagination* (2005).

understand knowledge production by politicians and intellectuals as an element of hegemonic policies … it is the confrontation of, and struggle between these different forms of knowledge [subaltern and elite] that provides us with essential understandings of societal development. Ultimately, this intellectual history thus tries to understand the production of knowledge and, thereby, the archaeology of power in order to invent new forms of social history" ("Intellectuals and History" 282).

The texts that I analyze are travel narratives, journalism, essays and fiction. Each of these materials are explored in their historical context in order to shed more light on this "archaeology of power." In addition, the dissertation intervenes in fields such as Caribbean intellectual history, the Black Atlantic, slavery in the Americas, and social movements and popular struggle.

Chapter 1, "El Montero: Popular History and Memory in Santo Domingo" sets up the historical context for understanding Bonó's writings and the historical roots of his political critique. It introduces the issues of the dissertation by examining writings on the earliest forms of the *montero* economy. I mention the "long-seventeenth century" (1580-1700) and the significance of this period to understand the contours of Dominican slavery as well as Bonó's early writings. I look at texts in the Spanish Caribbean that illustrate the conflict between plantations and peasantries. Exploring primary documents that deal with black popular struggle in Santo Domingo, I study figures like Antonio Sánchez Valverde and Moreau de Saint-Méry's writings on Spanish Santo Domingo. I also provide a reading of Bonó's novel *El Montero* to describe the contours of his early political thought. Chapter 2, "Pedro Francisco Bonó and Dominican Independence, 1822-1865" is an exploration of Bonó's earliest writings within the frame of the Haitian

period through the first republic (1822-1865). I analyze his intellectual trajectory as well and how he fits into nineteenth-century Dominican intellectual history. I argue that his later radicalization is informed by the anti-imperial legacy of mid-century. Chapter 3, "Bonó and Capitalist Transformation, 1880-1895", focuses on his texts during the development of the sugar industry. Chapter 4, "El tabaco es demócrata y el cacao oligarca: Bonó and Antillanismo, 1895-1906" explores his writings during the dictatorship of Ulises (Lilís) Heureaux. The dissertation concludes with a discussion of the relevance of Bonó for the construction of anti-neoliberal politics in Latin America

Chapter One

El Montero: Popular History and Memory in Santo Domingo

"Los negros libres son los peores … aquellos no tienen sugeción, se sitúan por lo común dentro de los montes, ven su antojo con toda libertad e independencia, van quasi desnudos y son la causa y origen de todos los daños que se cometan y puedan ocurrir en la ysla.[1]*"*
-Pedro Catani (1788).[2]

"Los revolucionarios y el cerdo son los dos enemigos del país."[3]
-Emiliano Tejera (1906).[4]

This chapter examines literary sources for studying the free-colored peasantry on the island of Hispaniola since the seventeenth century. This peasantry first arose in the late-sixteenth century within the interstices of colonial Santo Domingo, the first experiment in colonial modernity in the Americas. Beginning in the 1600s, often lamented as the "century of misery" in traditional Dominican historiography, Santo Domingo became a colonial backwater as the Spanish crown diverted its attention from the Caribbean to the more lucrative mines of continental Latin America. As Antonio Benítez-Rojo recounts in his seminal *La isla que se repite,* this colonial poverty spawned a truly creole free-colored peasantry of runaway slaves and other "vagrants" who lived in opposition and resistance to the restrictive, slave-holding metropole in Santo Domingo.

The chapter attempts to trace this subculture of free-colored peasants, locally termed *monteros*, in Dominican literary discourse. I propose that tracing the *montero* in

[1] "The free blacks are the worst, they are impossible to track down, they generally live in the woods completely free and independent, they are barely dressed and are the cause and origin of all of the problems that occur and could occur on the island."
[2] Colonial official in Santo Domingo in the 1780s and 1790s.
[3] "The revolutionaries and the pig are the two enemies of the country." See Raymundo González, "Dos relaciones inéditas del siglo XVIII" (1993).
[4] Secretary of agriculture in the early 1900s in Santo Domingo. Cited in González, Raymundo. "Ideología del progreso y campesinado en el siglo XIX" (1993).

Dominican literary sources is helpful for questioning some key blind spots in Dominican literary history. In addition, this exploration generally follows a long line of research that questions the counterpoint of two interpretative frameworks key in Caribbean Studies: the plantation and the frontier. By focusing on this frontier society, the aim is to develop a literature of the understudied *montero* and to attempt to excavate a historical memory of subalterns in the wider Spanish Caribbean since the seventeenth century.[5] The chapter also sets up the historical context for understanding the roots of Bonó's critique.

I started thinking about the *montero* first by way of Domingo F. Sarmiento, a now classic case for studying nation-formation in Latin America. Scholars often study Sarmiento to think about the anxiety of Latin American elites during nineteenth-century projects of nationhood. Sarmiento, like others during the early-nineteenth century, was "torn between the desire to create a virtuous republic in his homeland and his disdain for the human ingredients with which, inevitably, such a nation must be built" (Scarano, 1398). The rural masses, then, became the constant nightmare and source of anxiety of elite writers who designed projects of nationhood and "progress."

However, even though many elites abhorred the idea of building a nation based upon the non-elite classes, – the rural poor, the outsiders of the "lettered city", the undesired "ingredients" of the nation - this reaction was not universal. As Scarano argues in his study of the figure of the Puerto Rican *jíbaro,* some creoles attempted to "imagine

[5] For work on the figure of the *montero,* see chapter 1 of Turits, *Foundations of Despotism* (2003) and González, "La figura social del montero" (2004). Also see Derby "National Identity and the Idea of Value in the Dominican Republic" (2003). There's a much more developed literature in the case of the *jíbaro* in Puerto Rico. See Scarano, "The Jibaro Masquerade" (1996).

a broader national community amid the sharp contrasts of race, class, gender by elevating a mythologized peasant figure to the status of national icon" (1400).

Thus the initial idea of this chapter was to study a perhaps heretofore unknown elite discursive performance of "*montero* masquerades" in Dominican literary discourse where the *montero* appears, in typical *costumbrista* fashion, as the bedrock of the nation. I soon discovered though that very few Dominican writers came close to elevating the figure of the *montero* and that there was no dominant parallel performance in Dominican writing. There is thus a particularly challenging blind spot to account for in Dominican literary history. While the *montero* does appear in a few literary texts, the literary performance never became a traceable, dominant event, as could be said of the Cuban *guajiro* and the Puerto Rican *jíbaro*. What this chapter attempts to do then is to understand this outright rejection of the figure by looking at how the *montero* appears as an outsider in elite writing in different periods and by studying the few exceptions of writers that played with the idea of elevating the figure of the *montero* in literary texts. In any case, investigating these narrative constructions of the *montero* helps challenge the normalization of some elite perspectives on the peasantry in Dominican history.

I organize this chapter by starting with the 1600s during the "century of misery" and then move into the eighteenth century when French Saint-Domingue emerges as the richest colony in the Americas. I then analyze the case of the *comegente* (1790s), a particularly fascinating case for the study of rural criminality shortly after the Haitian Revolution. I conclude with Bonó's novel *El montero* (1856) to describe his earliest political ideas and to set the context for reading his later texts.

Peasant Politics in El Monte

This chapter draws from the work of historians Richard Turits and Raymundo González on colonial Santo Domingo. Turits provides a suggestive analysis of the relevance of the montero economy since the sixteenth century for understanding twentieth-century Dominican history. Turits' rereads the *trujillato* by questioning the "…peasantry's paradoxical acceptance of the Trujillo dictatorship in the twentieth century" (27).

To understand this later alliance with the Trujillo regime, he explores how the peasantry since the 1600s came to valorize economic independence and access to land, "deeply rooted in peasant's moral economy was a right to land … an independent means of subsistence became associated with freedom – autonomy from economic subordination to and control by others as well as from the vagaries of market and central state forces" (27). The conditions that allowed for the success of this peasantry, then, were "the spectacular failure of Santo Domingo's sixteenth-century plantation society, the long history of Spanish neglect, the dearth of commercial agriculture, the irrelevance of legal property forms, and the transformations provoked by the Haitian Revolution and the Haitian occupation" (49). These conditions allowed for a remarkable rural history of opposition to the plantation system. In Turits' reading, Trujillo instituted both repressive measures as well as policies that benefited the peasantry in order to maintain his dominance over Dominican society. In other words, Trujillo was able to domesticate the peasantry by creating a repressive "rural populism that would … finally bridge the centuries-long divide between the city and countryside" (51). The Trujillo dictatorship is

unreadable without taking into account this long divide that is overcome in the 1930s, he argues.

Turits draws from González's foundational essays on the rural economy of colonial Santo Domingo.[6] González explores how the *montero* economy, in its different forms since the sixteenth century, actively resisted the many attempts by colonial authorities of reestablishing a productive, modern plantation system on the island. According to González, the *montero* was a critical agent in the political transformations of the rural economy since the seventeenth century and continuously resisted plantation slavery throughout the history of colonial Santo Domingo.

Derby has also studied the importance of this dynamic for understanding Haitian-Dominican relations. She looks at eighteenth-century intra-island trade on Hispaniola. She explores the moment when Saint-Domingue became the richest colony in the Americas through the production of sugar while at the same time colonial Santo Domingo – still a poor, mainly semi-autonomous peasant rural society - became Saint-Domingue's main supplier of cattle. Derby argues that it is critical to look at this period in order to understand Haitian-Dominican relations because it was through these networks of exchange that a Dominican creole idea of Haiti first came about. Derby thus challenges traditional ways of approaching Dominican-Haitian relations that focus entirely on the Haitian occupation (1822-1844) and the series of wars between the two sides shortly after Dominican independence.

[6] See especially, González, "Ideología del progreso y campesinado en el siglo diecinueve" (1993).

This story of the *monteros* must begin by going through some of the particularities of Dominican economic history. During the early-sixteenth century, the economy of colonial Santo Domingo rested mainly on gold mining and native Indian slave labor. But as the native population was exterminated within 50 years of the arrival of the colonists – some 500,000-750,000 people - Santo Domingo began producing sugar beginning in the late-sixteenth century, driven by the massive importation of slaves from Africa. As a result, at this point in the late-sixteenth century, 70% of the population was composed of slaves and free blacks.[7] While many of the slaves at this time worked in the sugar *ingenios*, historians have shown that from the mid-sixteenth century onwards a significant shift occurred in the use of slaves in colonial Santo Domingo. Slaves were used more in the *estancias*[8] that were dedicated to providing the *ingenios* with foodstuffs and cattle. With the eventual collapse of the sugar economy in colonial Santo Domingo these estancias remained, dedicated either to subsistence or the cultivation of crops like ginger for export or in the selling of hides. This is when towards the sixteenth century, the peasantry resorted to other economic activities such as cattle hunting, or illegal trading with pirates or other European colonists that started to challenge Spanish dominance in the Caribbean. Benítez-Rojo has told this story where smuggling became so important to the inhabitants of the island, especially the ones living further away from the city of Santo Domingo - in the *banda norte* - that the Spanish crown decided to destroy these settlements. These are the famous *Devastaciones* (1605-1606), an extreme act of brutality against the local population. This colonial violence stemmed in part from

[7] See San Miguel, "The Making of a Peasantry" (1990).
[8] *Estancias* were farms of varied sizes dedicated to cultivating various food-crops.

the Spanish crown's mercantilist policies. In the end, these acts facilitated the establishment of French settlers on the western part of Hispaniola. The peasantry and the *monteros* originated in these early forms of conflict with the colonial system.[9] Indeed, Santo Domingo's peasantry fits well into Mintz' well-known argument that, "… Caribbean peasantries are … reconstituted peasantries, having begun other than as peasants – in slavery, as deserters or runaways, as plantation laborers or whatever – and becoming peasants in some kind of resistant response to an externally imposed regimen" (*Caribbean Transformations* 132).

As in other islands in the Caribbean, the conquistadores not only wiped out the indigenous population but also overhauled the agricultural structures that were previously in place. The Taino's agricultural system completely changed once the Spanish introduced cattle, pigs and other animals that later spread wildly throughout the island. Traditional sedentary farming gave way to a roaming, pastoral economy. The free or enslaved blacks working in the estancias described above – as well as isolated communities of runaway slaves – hunted these animals. *Monteros* primarily hunted pig either for subsistence, domestic markets, or illegal trade with other foreign powers in the Caribbean. As should be expected, this hunting activity was always seen in a negative light by colonial elites, "… from early on, *montear* was the occupation of rural peoples that lived in the *hatos*, especially free people of color and slaves. Consequently, it was an activity abhorred by all of the sectors of colonial society, including the ones that

[9] For this period see Peña Pérez. *Cien años de miseria en Santo Domingo* (1995) and Antonio Osorio, *Monopolio, contrabando y despoblación* (1980).

benefited from their work, like the *hateros*" (González, "La figura social").[10] The colonial elite had contradictory views on the *monteros*. They were either seen as the bedrock of the productive forces of the colony or the vagrants that were the source of all of the colony's problems.

Santo Domingo's peasantry was able to cultivate a semi-autonomous subsistence economy due to a variety of factors. Among these was the absence of institutional ties to Santo Domingo, allowing former slaves and free blacks to hunt, cultivate tobacco on small plots locally called *conucos*, sell hides, and grow various foods and trade with whoever happened to be around. Perhaps one of the earliest representations of the *monteros* is Père Labat's memoir of the late-seventeenth century.[11] Stranded in the northwestern part of Hispaniola, Labat writes:

> On this point we saw some men making signals whom we took to be hunters … I then went ashore with a couple of men to ascertain if there was anything to fear, and returned with two hunters, who gave us fresh pork and *cochon boucanné* while we regaled them with wine and brandy … we were to pay for the meat and *mantegne* [pig's fat] in powder, shot, and cloth, etc… We arrived rather late at the hunter's *boucan*. They had plenty of meat dried or being dried, and two or three pigs which they had killed that day, so we made a very hearty supper (176-178).

From Labat's memoir we can see how this proto-peasantry made use of its autonomy from the weak colonial system to trade at will. These peasants that Labat ran into were part of this peasantry that originated in the early 1600s after the *devastaciones*.

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[10]"… La práctica de montear fue desde temprano una ocupación de gente rural que habitaba en los hatos, especialmente de negros libres y esclavos. En consecuencia, una actividad mal vista por todos los sectores de la sociedad colonial, incluidos los que se aprovechaban de su trabajo, como era el de los hateros."

[11] Jean-Baptise Labat (1663-1738) was a French clergyman, writer and explorer. See *The memoirs of Pere Labat* (1970).

This so-called "century of misery" has led many historians like Juan Bosch to describe the period "… 'as the very image of backwardness,' a time 'when the country languished in almost complete wretchedness" (Turits 29). But this colonial neglect may have "… provided certain advantages for the majority of the population. The end of the plantation economy in the seventeenth century was a boon for freed people and runaways … who swelled the ranks of a growing independent peasantry" (29). Thus two social sectors co-existed in the 1600s. One was the semi-autonomous peasants that lived dispersed throughout *el monte* – like the *monteros* who traded with Labat – and the slaveholding colonial metropole in urban areas that were primarily in Santo Domingo and Santiago. However, these two worlds were not completely separate from each other. Runaway slaves and *monteros* had to be wary of colonial officials and *buscadores* - officials in charge of recapturing runaway slaves - so there was a constant tension between these two sectors of the population.

During the eighteenth century, the rise of the plantation economy of French Saint-Domingue reactivated the economic production of colonial Santo Domingo as well as the elite's attempt to domesticate these *monteros*.[12] As historians have noted, Saint Domingue became a critical market for the production of several commodities on the Spanish side, especially meat and tobacco. The *hatos* and *estancias* as a result became the main suppliers of cattle and other kinds of meat to Saint-Domingue. One of the most important primary sources for studying this period is Antonio Sánchez Valverde's *Idea del valor de la Isla Espanola*. Sánchez-Valverde, a mulatto-criollo elite, yearned for the

[12] For a detailed history of Santo Domingo in the eighteenth century see Rubén Silié, *Economía, esclavitud y población: ensayo de interpretación histórica del Santo Domingo Espanol en el siglo XVIII* (1976).

kind of slave-intensive plantation development occurring in Saint-Domingue. Pedro San Miguel argues that "for Sánchez Valverde's social class, Saint Domingue constituted a utopia. For him, a faithful representative of the Dominican elite – a creole of 'dark color', a priest and landwoner – the French colony was a model worthy of emulating" (*La isla imaginada* 68).

Sánchez-Valverde's plea for slave-intensive plantation culture in this text also included lengthy descriptions of the *monteros*. In an effort to convince the crown of the economic potential of the colony, Sánchez-Valverde exalted the image of the *montero*:

> The *montero* is generally barefoot and on foot, with a spear and his dogs. If he is on horseback, he has to leave the horse at the entrance of a forest or a mountain, because they are impenetrable unless he goes by foot. Even then, he has to make all kinds of contortions with his body in order to hunt. He lets two or more dogs loose that he trains to chase the prey. When these dogs bark, he goes with his spear, breaking branches, stepping on spines and tripping on branches where his rags are left caught and not a few times his own skin as well. He is happy if he finds a good bull or a big boar that furiously charges him and which he fights to the death. He butchers it after skinning it, leaves the head and many other parts, taking only that meat which he can carry on his shoulders to his house or leaves it on a road for when he can recruit for help. Many times that's the terrain of his victory, in which he sees obligated to throw away parts of the animal, because carrying them would be dangerous. This is the truly *sad* life of our *monteros* (196-197).[13]

[13] Sánchez-Valverde, *Idea del valor de la Isla Española*, 196-197. "Sale el Montero descalzo y a pie por lo regular, con una lanza y sus perros. Si va a caballo, tiene que dexarle a la entrada del bosque o montaña, porque son impenetrables si no es a pie. Aun así ha de hacer mil contorsiones con su cuerpo para entrar y poder seguir la caza. Suelta uno, dos o más Perros, a los quales, más el exercicio y la necesidad que su inclinación nativa, les enseña a rastrear la Pieza. Al ladrido de éstos corre el Pastor con su lanza, rompiendo ramas, pisando espinas y tropezando con ganchos, en que quedan los arapos de la camisa o calzones, y no pocas veces la carne. Tiénese por feliz si encuentra un buen Toro o un Berraco grande (especie de Jabalí) que le embiste con furia y con el que lidia hasta matarle. Divídele en viandas, después de sacado el cuero, dexa la cabeza y mucha parte de él, aprovechando sólo aquella carne que puede llevar al hombro hasta su casa o dexar en parage que vuelva con el auxilio necesario a conducirla. Muchas veces logra su victoria en tal terreno, que se ve obligado a echar a rodar las Piezas, porque cargado de ellas se precipitaría. Esta es la vida verdaderamente *apaneada* de nuestros Monteros.

Sánchez-Valverde paradoxically both lamented and exalted this rustic economy. He insisted that this arduous hunting activity would be much more productive if the crown invested in developing a market-oriented agricultural economy. He argued that controlling and domesticating the semi-autonomous peasantry would make the colony much more useful to the crown. Wishing for a more market-oriented agricultural economy he wrote:

> This would reduce all of the thieves, who are no other than the children and family of the *monteros*, who, after consuming or wasting what they inherited, go sniffing from each *hato* to the other, stealing for necessities or bad habits. These are the true vagabonds and the ones that have discredited the true *monteros* (197).[14]

While not completely writing-off the free-colored *monteros* – he clearly admired the tenacity and hard work required in the *montero* lifestyle just as Sarmiento does with the figure of the *gaucho* – he wanted to reform the autonomous lifestyle of the *monteros* and emulate the regimented, ordered plantation economy of Saint-Domingue. Sánchez Valverde's description of the "verdadero" *monteros* is almost a *costumbrista*-type sketch – the *montero* is desired as the bedrock of progress but at the same time represents everything that must be undone and overcome. In other words, Sánchez-Valverde's representation of the *monteros* is doubly conditioned by writing them as the source of the colony's problems but also the as the potential ingredients for his project of colonial modernity.

[14] "[Esto] rebajaría el número de los ladrones, que no son otros que estos mismos hijos y parientes de Monteros, los quales, después de consumir o dexar perder lo que heredaron, van oliendo de un Hato en otro para comer; y hurtando, para las otras necesidades o vicios. Estos son los verdaderos holgazanes y los que han desacreditado a los verdaderos Monteros.

Moreau de Saint-Méry's important *Descripción de la parte española de Santo Domingo* also describes the *montero* economy during this critical moment of the rise of Saint-Domingue. As he travels around the Spanish side, he describes the peasantry as a mass of roaming vagrants:

> What I have said in the article about Cotuí, of inhabitants that live always in the countryside, spread throughout here and there is also common in La Vega, whose territory is made up of about 8000 individuals. It is necessary to add that in the different areas of the La Vega Valley, one finds also a large number of these vagabonds, these should be watched and policed but the Spanish are far from able to do this (224).

Moreau de Saint-Méry's conception of the peasantry as an uncivilized mass is clear: the peasantry should be disciplined by a stronger Spanish state. Moreau and Sánchez-Valverde's texts illustrate the elite's desire for domesticating the peasantry and for reviving the plantation system in colonial Santo Domingo. These texts give us a sense of who the *monteros* were: semi-autonomous free people of color who were in constant negotiation and conflict with the urban, colonial elite.

El negro incógnito o Comegente

The *monteros* started to become more of a nightmarish threat to elites and their projects of colonial modernity after the Haitian Revolution (1791-1804). Indeed, the revolution shook the colonial foundations of the Americas as well as the way that the *letrados* imagined the nation. The "specter" of the Haitian Revolution was the recurring nightmare of elites whose conceptions of modernity were based on slave labor and racial violence. This nightmare was characterized by a fear of "africanization" and the fear of a revolution similar to the one witnessed in Saint-Domingue. This event was and still is

critical in the configurations of Dominican nationhood. Scholars have been right in pointing out that Haiti is central to conceptions of national identity in *trujillista* Dominican writing. Suffice it to mention the thoughts of Joaquín Balaguer to stress the centrality of Haiti in hegemonic conceptions of "dominicanness":

> Santo Domingo is, as a result of the instinct of conservation, the most Spanish and traditionalist nation in the Americas. It has hung on to its Spanish ancestry as a way to defend itself from the denaturalizing labor realized against it by Haitian imperialism. Language and the Hispanic tradition were … the only barriers that served as a defense against the horrific wave of color and against the disjunctive forces that since 1795 have been systematically invading Dominican territory without interruption. It is possible, then, that that danger, if not stopped in time, will facilitate, in the end, the absorption of the Dominican Republic into Haiti (Jáuregui 45).[15]

Although not unchallenged, Balaguer's writing represents a dominant ideological position in Dominican letters. As Jáuregui writes, "images like the disjunction or absorption of the national body that Balaguer mentions are imbricated in more than two hundred years of representations of Haiti as a threatening savage dystopia and as one of the most important fractures of colonial modernity" (46).[16] Therefore, after the revolution, there were some significant shifts in the way that the elite wrote of the peasantry.

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[15] "Santo Domingo es, por instinto de conservación, el pueblo más español y tradicionalista de América. Se ha aferrado a su abolengo español como un medio de defenderse de la labor desnaturalizante realizada contra él por el imperialismo haitiano. El idioma y la tradición hispánica fueron … los únicos muros que le sirvieron de defensa contra la pavorosa ola de color y contra las fuerzas disgregativas que desde 1795 han ido invadiendo de manera ininterrumpida y sistemática el territorio dominicano… Es posible, pues, que ese peligro si no se detiene a tiempo, facilite al cabo la absorción por Haití de la República Dominicana".

[16] "Imágenes como la disgregación o absorción del cuerpo nacional que menciona Balaguer están imbricadas en más de doscientos años de representación de Haití como una amenazadora distopía salvaje y como una de las fracturas más importantes de la modernidad colonial".

For example, there is a remarkable story of rural criminality that is particularly instructive in understanding some of the shifts after the Haitian Revolution.[17] For more than three years (1790-1794), authorities reported that several cities and haciendas were being terrorized by a criminal locally named *el comegente* (man-eater) or sometimes called *El negro incógnito* (The unknown black). Colonial authorities hired *buscadores* to catch this one criminal, offering lavish rewards to anyone who could catch him. Sources mention that even two thousand people with weapons and dogs went through mountains and forests on the tracks of the *comegente*.[18] The colony was terrorized by rumors of a *negro incógnito* brutally killing and mutilating slaves. Jáuregui adds that, "It was said that he was a sorcerer, who danced around his victims that he would agonize, that he would mutilate them and collect their genitals in a collar that he wore and that he ate human flesh (46)". This myth seems to have gripped colonial Santo Domingo for some time.[19]

Oidor Pedro Catani's 1793 text shows that these complaints of a serial killer roaming *el monte* were mostly about the nightmares of an elite that yearned for control over the countryside than about a sadistic, lone terrorist.[20] Catani, a Catalan administrator with experience in containing slave revolts, arrived in Santo Domingo in 1784. He was eventually commissioned in 1793 to investigate the crimes of the *negro incógnito* that

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[17] For a reading of the *comegente* in pan-Caribbean perspective see Johnson, *The Fear of French Negroes.* Also see González, Raymundo. "El comegente, una rebelión campesina al final del periodo colonial" and. *Homenaje a Emilio Cordero Michel*. Santo Domingo: Academia Dominicana de la Historia, 2004, p. 175-224. For the Pedro Catani text see González, "Dos relaciones inéditas del siglo XVIII." *Ecos*: 1:2, (1993): 183-203.

[18] See González, "El comegente, una rebelión campesina al final del periodo colonial" (2004).

[19] An interesting parallel event is studied in Derby, "Imperial Secrets: Vampires and Nationhood in Puerto Rico," (2008).

[20] See González, "Dos relaciones ineditas del siglo XVIII" (1993).

apparently occurred between 1790 and 1792. According to his report he spent 33 days in pursuit of vagrants, eventually capturing peasants that allegedly committed various crimes, "I sent twenty four criminals to the *real audiencia* along with other vagabonds, thieves, runaway slaves, fugitives and other delinquents" (González, "Dos relaciones" 196).[21] As this shows, Catani imprisoned many people, eventually concluding that there were many *comegente*. What this story shows is that during the Haitian Revolution there was a heightened sense on the part of the Santo Domingo elite to domesticate the unruly peasants and *monteros*:

> The sole, inexistent monster multiplies in the social monstrosity that does exist. The notion of a plural and perhaps subversive subject would explain why Catani – with his experience of peasant counterinsurgence – was commissioned by the real audiencia to deal with this problem; it would also explain as well the ample spectre of his campaign based on a modern notion of social disciplining of subjects that are considered dangerous (Jáuregui 60).[22]

It is no surprise that after identifying the *comegentes* to be living autonomously all around the colony, Catani then recommends that the crown invest more in state mechanisms of control and labor coercion:

> This population, that because of its circumstances, could be one of the most flourishing, abundant and of the most honorable neighbors, is full of lazy vagabonds, protectors of runaway slaves and other evildoers. The ones that live in the towns are very few, the rest live in the forests, where they all have things called *conucos* or farmlands, surviving off of the thievery of the fruits of other nearby *haciendas*. Specific rules that would be established for the regimen and government of that town, I think, would

[21] "Veinte y quattro reos remití a disposición de la Real Audiencia con sus sumarios correspondientes entre vagos, ladrones, cimarrones, fugitivos de cárceles, y otros delincuentes".
[22] "El monstruo singular inexistence … se multiplica en la monstruosidad social que sí existe. La noción de un sujeto plural y acaso subversivo explicaría por qué Catani – con su experiencia en contrainsurgencia campesina – fue comisionado por la Real Audiencia para lidiar con este asunto; explicaría asimismo el amplio espectro de su campaña basada en una noción moderna de disciplinamiento social de sujetos considerados peligrosos."

> transform these vagabonds into useful vassals of the town and of your majesty (González, "Dos relaciones" 200).[23]

Even though Catani was confident that his recommendations would prove successful, his suggestions were unrealistic since the colony was far from being capable of following through. Catani boasts of his attempts to domesticate the population but eventually admits that the peasantry was far from being under permanent state control, "in effect, after my return from the commission there has been no news of more violence … but this is no indication of its permanence" (202).[24] This event, as Johnson argues, shows the importance of revisiting the history of black popular struggle on the island, especially areas like the *Cibao*, a region that has been read as the white Dominican ideal and devoid of black popular struggle, "the Cibao thus emerges once again as the heart of the rebellion and unrest, despite the efforts of later historians to claim it as the country's idealized white heartland" (Johnson, *The Fear of French Negroes* 83).

Elite rejection of the *montero* then must also be understood in terms of Haiti. The *montero* was disavowed, perhaps as this story of the *comegente* shows, because the free peasantry of color from then on also started to become associated with the "specter" of Haiti. Indeed, "the story of the *comegente* appears as another repressed form of national history that tries to exorcise the terrorizing specter of the 'fierce', 'enigmatic' Haiti and that, by doing so, it evokes said specter and invites to populate the nightmares of the

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[23] "Este pueblo, que por sus circunstancias, podía ser uno de los mas florecientes, abundantes y de honrados vecinos, está lleno de vagos, malentretenidos y viciosos, protectores de cimarrones y otro malhechores. Son muy pocos los que viven en el pueblo, los más habitan retirados en el monte, en donde apenas tienen nombre de conucos, o labranzas, manteniéndose por consiguiente del robo de los frutos de las haciendas inmediatas …. *Ciertas reglas*, que se estableciesen para el régimen y gobierno de aquel pueblo, me parece que los transformaría de hombres vagamundos y abandonados a vasallos útiles a V.M. y al público".
[24] Catani, "Dos relaciones inéditas del siglo XVIII", 202.

nation" (Jáuregui 47).[25] In short, the colonial nightmare of the *montero* as expressed in elite writing is intensified following the Haitian Revolution.

Bonó and El Montero

Considered the "best interpreter of Dominican society in the late nineteenth-century," Bonó is known for being deeply concerned about the fate of the popular classes in the face of sweeping changes in capitalist labor relations from the 1870s to the early 1900s (Sagás 106). While the Dominican Republic began to be inserted into the international capitalist system, Bonó wrote in the small town of San Francisco de Macorís, always skeptical of the effects of the development schemes of economic liberalism that were championed at the time. This has led some to claim that "Bonó fractured the presumed linkage of technology and large-scale commercial agriculture with improving general living standards and the advancement of the nation, and argued that there were multiple paths to, or forms of modernity" (Turits 63).

Bonó's texts are compelling given that he wrote in detail about the social reality of the peasantry – not writing them off as a degenerate mass of savages. In his essays he identifies the peasantry as *la patria* and champions the "democratic" nature of local, smallholding tobacco production. Thus he is known for claims such as "tobacco is the father of the nation," "tobacco is democratic and cacao oligarchic" and "…. defend the peon who is the nation." For him, progress would not come from unfettered modernization projects; instead, he championed the smallholding tobacco cultivator as

[25] "El relato del Comegente aparece como una forma reprimida de la historia nacional que trata de exorcizar el espectro aterrador del 'fiero y enigmático' Haití y que, al hacerlo, convoca dicho espectro y lo invita a poblar las pesadillas de la nación".

the "… true sentinels of a democratic future" (Derby, *Dictator's Seduction* 15). Critics have interpreted these statements as evidence of Bonó's radical national development project "from below". Although these ideas appear most clearly in his later works of the 1880s and 1890s, there are hints of this radical project in his earliest work, like his 1856 novel, *El montero.* The following section explores Bonó's *costumbrista* novel.

Bonó's detailed engagement with Dominican rural life is compelling. As previous scholarship has suggested, the *montero* can be studied as an oppositional figure to the logic of the plantation system. Although Bonó does not depict life in *el monte* as a utopian racial democracy and as a space of resistance against plantation modernity, his contradictory valorization and critique of rural life is a precursor for later ideas when clear threats to rural traditions appear in the 1880s and 1890s. Along with institutions that would help with preventing rural violence (more *guardas campestres* a vigorous justice system, etc.), the novel preserves the best of "authentic" Dominican rural cultural practices and values: dances, music, courtship and marriage rituals, and access to abundant food. The novel's project is to preserve these values of *el monte* – that are opposed to the city - as the nation attempts to progress from *montería* to export-oriented capitalist agriculture. Bonó's novel and essays of the 1850s saw this transition as inevitable and paramount. However, he categorically rejects these earlier projects of capitalist modernity later in his life. As I show below, he abandoned the novel's ideas once he had seen how the transition to export agriculture disenfranchised the poor in the 1880s.

He wrote the novel in 1848 and later published it in 1856 in *El Correo de Ultramar*, a newspaper that circulated widely in Santo Domingo and Europe.[26] As far as we know the novel was not published again until Rodríguez Demorizi reprinted it in 1968.[27] In 1880, his friend Pedro A. Bobea tried to publish it in the newspaper *El Esfuerzo* but Bonó was not very keen on the idea. He responded to Bobea's request with skepticism:

> As satisfying as it is for me the courtesy of your request for permission to re-edit … *El montero* … I nonetheless have serious fears to see appear … a little novel forgotten and relegated among old papers … my fears are legitimate … when I wrote and published it I was very young and even though I have not had the chance to reread it, since it has been eighteen years since I have lived in a place from which I never leave and where such publications do not arrive; said novel is full of very serious defects … it was a work written when I was twenty-three, … when I was not able to acquire the classic instruction that other young men of my age received…".[28]

Bonó asked that these reservations be published as a preface if Bobea decided to go ahead and publish the novel anyway. Part of the rest of the preface was to read as follows:

> My grandmother was French and in her company I lived the first half of my life. She was part of one of the richest planter families who were exterminated by the Haitians in their grand revolution of the last century. She so miraculously escaped from the grasp of these that I remember

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[26] According to Vallejo, this newspaper circulated throughout Santo Domingo as well as Europe. See Vallejo, Catharina. *Las madres de la patria y las bellas mentiras: Imágenes de la mujer en el discurso literario de la República Dominicana* (1999).

[27] Fischer makes an interesting argument about why Bonó's novel seems to be absent from Dominican literary history. She connects Dominican literary history, memory and slavery in her argument claiming that Bonó's "unusual politics" contributed to the novel's marginalization. See *Modernity Disavowed* (2004), 192-197.

[28] *Papeles de Pedro Bonó,* 55. "Por satisfactoria que para mí sea la cortesía de Ud. Solicitando mi permiso para reimprimir en el periódico *El Esfuerzo* mi novela *El Montero*, publicada anos hace en el *Correo de Ultramar* no dejo de abrigar serios temores al ver reaparecer para esta generación una obrita relegada y olvidada con los papeles viejos en que está incorporada. Estos temores en verdad son legítimos en muchas partes… cuando la compuse y publiqué era muy joven y aunque no he tenido la oportunidad de volverla a leer, puesto que hace diez y ocho años que vivo en una localidad de donde nunca tales publicaciones llegaron ni llegan, dicha novela la veo plagada de defectos y estos de gran bulto".

> having seen on both of her eighty-year old hands the black circles left over by the ropes used to tie her up when she was thirty-years old and on her way to *Fort Liberté* at *Cap Haitien* to be executed. Raised by her, who professed blindly and exclusively to the French, I drank France through all of my pores and I thought myself French … I frenchified my last name and would write… Bonau, Bonneau or Bonneaux. Craziness.[29]

When visiting his father - who lived far away in another town - Bonó learned that his grandfather was in fact Italian. Convinced, he tells Bobea that he would forever sign his name, "Bonó". His reservations and embarrassment about publishing the novel in the 1880s speaks to his distancing from *letrado* ideological positions. I argue that his embarrassment for the novel goes beyond issues of style and structure that other scholars have already pointed out – for example, in parts of the dialogue characters would strangely conjugate in the *vosotros* and *ustedes* form in the same sentence. More importantly, he no longer wanted to be associated with the ideas in the novel as he became more radicalized later in his life. In his words, he did not want "younger generations" to be influenced by some of the problematic, modernizing impulses found in the novel that sought to modify and mold rural traditions. Bobea heeded Bonó's warnings and did not republish the novel.[30]

There are few comprehensive studies of *El montero*. Lamenting the novel's supposed lack of literary merits, Rodríguez Demorizi nevertheless described its importance as a "foundational" document that ought to be studied for the betterment of Dominican morality. Ciriaco Landolfi argued that it had little aesthetic interest and that it should not be considered a novel but a collection of Dominican traditions for studying

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[29] Ibid., 55-56.
[30] Raymundo González looked through editions of *El Esfuerzo* in the 1880s but did not find the novel reprinted in the newspaper. Personal Communication, December 2009.

nineteenth-century folklore.[31] Conservative literary critic Giovanni di Pietro avoided a historical approach and tried to rescue the novel's literariness by focusing on Bonó's use of narrative techniques like irony and suspense. He saw it as a "good novel" that should be read mostly for its pleasing love story.[32]

Gender and El monte

The most interesting reading of the novel to date is Catharina Vallejo's work on gender and nineteenth-century Dominican literature.[33] Vallejo rightly reads the novel as *letrado* anxiety over *civilización y barbarie*. In addition, she argues that it seeks to replace reactionary *montería* with export-oriented capitalist agriculture. She also argues that the novel relegates women to the domestic sphere – to tending the *conuco* exclusively - in its modernizing goal of shifting from *montería* to emerging forms of patriarchal, capitalist relations.

Bonó's novel could be useful to think of non-patriarchal forms of gender relations in *el monte* or in Latin American frontier zones more generally. More archival work needs to be done in order to consider *montería* as non-patriarchal but it is compelling to think of this in light of Bonó's representation of *monteras* in the novel. Bonó's representation of female *monteras* indicates that hunting and other forms of labor outside of the *conuco* was experienced across gender. The text makes this clear in a description of a wedding feast, "everything pointed to the fact that if not a necessarily exquisite meal was going to be served, it was at least going to be an abundant one, for the robust

[31] See Ciriaco Landolfi, "La cultura vernácula en la novela dominicana" (1973).
[32] See Giovanni Di Pietro, *Temas de literatura y de cultura dominicana* (1993).
[33] Vallejo, *Las madres de la patria* (1999).

stomachs that were going to digest it. Also, take in the interior perspective of the kitchen, where the last touches were just made for a stew by a multitude of poor *monteras* who were transformed into cooks, but whose new job did not prevent them from participating in all of the delight of the party" (53).[34] This description seems to indicate that *montería* was not an exclusively male domain. Bonó's novel, then, could help in reexamining how the development of patriarchal gender relations went hand in hand with traditional liberal projects of modernity and efforts to domesticate the peasantry.

Barreta and Markoff's classic 1978 text, "Civilization and Barbarism: Cattle Frontiers in Latin America" argued, among other things, that the Latin American frontier was a masculine space where a weak state did not hold a monopoly on violence and other aspects of frontier life.[35] In 2002, Markoff revisited these arguments by adding that, "… cattle frontiers had far fewer women than men; the nineteenth-century ranch owners were likelier to have a family life than were ranch hands; and that ranch hands spent long periods without women in barracks, on trail drives, or in shacks tending isolated parts of the great ranches …. but there are too many sentimental depictions of gauchos being torn from woman and child by the police or the military recruiters to dismiss such attachments as a nullity" (76). Markoff mentions that more in-depth studies of gender and the frontier are critical for understanding nineteenth-century Latin American history. Archival research on gender and Santo Domingo's frontier is needed.

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[34] Bonó, *El montero* (2007) [1856]. "En resolución todo anunciaba que se iba a servir una comida si no exquisita, a lo menos abundante y en armonía con los robustos estómagos que la iban a digerir. Probábalo además la perspectiva interior de la cocina, donde acababa de darse la última mano a los guisados por un enjambre de pobres monteras transformadas en cocineras, pero a quienes este oficio no privaba de participar todos los regocijos de la fiesta".

[35] Baretta and Markoff. "Civilization and Barbarism: Cattle Frontiers in Latin America" (1978).

El Montero and Creole Modernity

The novel takes place around 1843 in the northeastern remote port village of Matanzas. The story is about a love triangle between two *monteros* and the daughter of an established *montero* family.[36] One of these, the forty-something Juan, is jealous of the soon to be consummated marriage between the young Manuel and María, who is the daughter of Tomás and Teresa, a comparatively wealthy family with many workers, *conucos* and ranch-hands. Since Juan and Manuel both work for María's father as *monteros,* they go out hunting one day. Jealous of the young couple's relationship, Juan seriously wounds Manuel, almost killing him – if it were not for a wild pig that scares Juan into thinking that there were other *monteros* around who may have witnessed the crime. Juan disappears for a while until he barges into the couple's wedding a few weeks later and kills María's father. Even though Juan manages to escape again, we learn that he was caught stealing and was sentenced to prison in Santiago. However, Juan escapes again and finds María alone tending to her *conuco*; he assaults her until Manuel, hearing the news that Juan escaped from prison, runs back to the *conuco,* saves María and with the help of a group of *monteros* finally kills Juan like a hunted *jabalí,* avenging the death of his father-in-law. In between these turning points in the plot, Bonó dedicates many essayistic pages on the traditions of the *monteros*: dances, food, etc. The novel is clearly written for a paternalistic European audience in mind that is eager for descriptions of "traditions" from the Americas.

[36] This village appears in old maps of Santo Domingo. Apparently, the town was destroyed in a tidal wave in the 1940s. See González, *Bonó: un intelectual de los pobres* (1994).

It reads like a battle for preserving "real" Dominican values; María - perhaps the embodiment of a fragile nation as some critics have noted - and her family's well-established smallholding are constantly threatened by the maliciousness of a wayward, barbarous *montero*. Like Sánchez Valverde's description of the *monteros*, the characters in the novel are contradictorily represented as poor, yet resourceful, "half-barbarous", yet good-hearted:

> In this semi-barbarous life, it would not be assured that the young lady would have a heart so loving and arduous as any other well-educated mistress, because it is known that it is not education which creates constancy, nor are cities the ones that possess hearts of delicate and long-lasting sentiments, but at least María had not found a person that would make her heart beat to the sweet word of love nor anyone who could perhaps develop her hidden sensibilities (24).[37]

Bonó continually represents the *montero* as quaintly semi-barbarous but full of potential. For Bonó, the *montero* is, " … generous, and even though he is missing that bit of know-how that has the civilized man always accompany himself by a witness and a surgeon in his challenges in life" (32).[38] The point here is that, predictably for a nineteenth-century intellectual, the *monteros* are living an uncivilized way of life, yet they are identified as the body of the nation that needs to be cured.

This typically *costumbrista* novel, however, is made more interesting given Bonó's intellectual trajectory. Although Bonó is clearly uncomfortable with the semi-barbarous *monteros*, his later, more radical projects that defend *terrenos comuneros* and other forms of popular cultural and economic practices take root here. Indeed, in the

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[37] Bonó, *El montero* (2007) [1854].

[38] Ibid. "El montero es generoso, y aunque le falta aquel tinte de saber vivir que hace al hombre civilizado acompañarse de un testigo y un cirujano en sus desafíos, no por eso en cuanto su enemigo cae deja de socorrerlo o de avisar en su Socorro, pero esta vez no sucedió así".

1850s, Bonó saw *terrenos comuneros* as the barriers to progress. In the 1857 essay, *Apuntes para los cuatro ministerios,* he writes about communal lands as one of the biggest problems of the island, "… in communal lands, the owner of a small plot has the ability to extend his work limitlessly, destroying forests that perhaps belong to others … This is the origin of thousands of ruinous problems. We can very well say that the Republic has no laws on property rights … because almost all of the lands are communal, and this is one of the most transcendental issues for current legislation. As long as the owner is not convinced that his property is sacred, and as long as he is not guaranteed safety against usurpations, there will be no agriculture and … love for work" (82).[39] In the 1880s and 1890s Bonó sees *terrenos comuneros* in a very different light, as I show in chapter two of this dissertation.

The novel attempts to describe the *monteros* as representative of authentic, Dominican life. One of the lengthiest passages of the novel is his description of the *fandango* dance where he describes courtship and *montero* family values. In his description, he makes sure to distinguish the dance from other European customs, "and what is the fandango … oh! It should not be interpreted as an Andalusian fandango or of another country or race that is not of the *monteros*" (26).[40]

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[39] Ibid. "…en los terrenos comuneros … el dueño de un corto pedazo de tierra tiene facultad de extender sus labranzas ilimitadamente, destruyendo bosques situados tal vez en el derecho de otro, que tienen cien veces más. Esto es origen de mil pleitos ruinosos … podemos muy bien decir que la propiedad … no tiene leyes en la Republica, porque casi todos los terrenos son comuneros, y esta es una de las faltas más trascendentales en legislación. Mientras el propietario no esté convencido de que su propiedad no es sagrada, en tanto que no se le garantice lo suyo contra usurpaciones, no habrá agricultura, no puede contar ni aun con lo suyo y por consiguiente no cobra amor al trabajo".

[40] Ibid. "¿Y qué es el fandango? Se preguntará. !Oh! que no se vaya a interpretar por el fandango andaluz o de otro pueblo u otra raza que no sea la de los monteros."

Campesino family values are expressed at these gatherings. According to Bonó, the *montero* is not an uncivilized *seductor*, all courtship takes place only at the *fandango.* They use the dance as a site to preserve family and marriage as an institution. If a woman accepts a man's proposal at the dance, then they will immediately marry, unlike courtship in the city, "in the countryside, where private conversations with women could be frequent, a seducer could find all of the space necessary for the fulfillment of his designs, but this liberty is usually not taken advantage of by the *montero*, who needs to abandon his normal tendencies to ignore the shyness that multiplies with love, and take on the audacity of the worldly man" (25).[41] The *montero* is not corrupted by "worldly" values. Again, this is a typical *costumbrista* narrative where cultural practices in the countryside are represented "…as the about-to-disappear essence of the national or local being" (Fischer 194).

Catharina Vallejo reads these portrayals of cultural practices as false representations motivated by the "… liberal-catholic program of *petit-bourgeois* hegemony" (Vallejo 50). Whether nineteenth-century *petit-bourgeois* sectors could be described as a hegemonic is questionable but Vallejo's point is that Bonó's depictions of *montero* cultural practices come from the ideological position of a liberal reformer that seeks to modernize the countryside. This leads to idealized, inaccurate representations of rural life, she argues. For example, Bonó does not represent African-derived religiosity – even though these practices were surely an important part of nineteenth-century rural

[41] Ibid. "En el campo, donde las conversaciones a solas pueden ser tan frecuentes, un seductor hallaría todo el lugar necesario para la consecución de sus designios, pero esta libertad no es aprovechada por lo común del montero, que necesita salir de u estado normal para arrojar la timidez que se le redobla con el amor, y vestirse con esa capa de osadía que posee el hombre de mundo. El fandango es la arena de las declaraciones.

society as recent Dominican historiography has shown. In addition to idealized representations of courtship, Bonó portrays *montero* religiosity as purely catholic.

Investment in whiteness is another characteristic of Bonó's representation of the countryside. As other critics have suggested, his representation of the soon-to-marry María illustrates this point, "her skin color was bronzed by the race and sun, but her face was so fine and terse, her feet and hands were hardened by the arduous work of the countryside, but they were so small and fine; alas, her waist had that richness of form that lights up vices in older single men" (Vallejo 52). This description of María's whitened *mulatismo* (the repeated "*pero*" is revealing) is similar to other elite representations of the folk in the Caribbean, like the *jíbaro* in Puerto Rico and the *guajiro* in Cuba.[42]

As I have already suggested, the novel holds up the countryside in a positive light vis-à-vis the city especially when it comes access to food. Food is clearly abundant for the *montero*, "digesting a pound of meat and two plantains is common for every day … Manuel scarfed down the eggs and fried plantains that he had in front of him with a velocity that would have quickly ended a less abundant dinner. Fortunately, this appetite is known by the wives of the *monteros* who take the necessary measures to satisfy this need. A traveler to these parts will remember the hospitality of our ancestors expressed by the *monteros*, in their disinterested abundance and integral simplicity" (69).[43] In addition, the *montero*, "… only considers worthy of eating the fat and meat; the entrails,

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[42] For more on the *jíbaro*, see Guerra, Lilian. *Popular Expression and National Identity in Puerto Rico* (1998) and Scarano, "The Jíbaro Masquerade" (1996).

[43] Bonó, *El montero*, 69. "Digerir una libra de carne y dos plátanos es cosa de todos los días, así es que Manuel engullía los huevos y plátanos maduros fritos que tenía por delante con una velocidad que hubiera agotado una menos abundante cena. Afortunadamente, este apetito creído general, es conocido de sus mujeres y toman las medidas propias a satisfacerlo, y un viajero que recorra estos lugares, recordará al ver las mesas lo que se cuenta de la hospitalidad de nuestros antepasados, conservada en medio de los monteros, en su desinteresada abundancia e integra simplicidad".

the skin, the blood is all thrown to the dogs … who circle the *montero*" (74).[44] This seems to support the claim that Dominicanist historians have made of easy access to food in *el monte*. By contrast, Bonó represents the city as exploitative. The encroachment of the city is corrupting the old days. After a visit to Santiago, one of the characters complains, "nothing can be purchased in the city since any knick-knack is expensive … and if this continues I do not know what the poor will do to dress themselves" (70).[45] While the novel clearly represents some aspects of *montería* as backwards and stresses the need for the development of organized, export-oriented agriculture, it is also nostalgic for the *compadrazgo* of the colonial period as well as the access to abundant food for the poorest.

What is most clear in this *costumbrista* novel about life in *el monte* is Bonó's call for maintaining order in the countryside. This is where the modernizing, paternalist impulse appears most clearly. The narrator often complains that there are no state mechanisms to control violence in the frontier. Juan's crimes are too easily committed, the state is not strong enough. The novel criticizes the lawlessness of *el monte*, alcohol, and the predisposition to violence in the Dominican psyche left over from the violence of the colonial period. In one of the many essayistic passages where Bonó's voice surely comes through, the narrator asks, "if civilization has sweetened the customs of European man, the man from these lands without said modification remain in the primitive times of the discovery of the Americas, and also, was not brutal force the thing that ruled the

[44] Ibid.
[45] Ibid., "Nada se puede comprar en el pueblo según está de cara cualquier bagatela … y si esto sigue no sé cómo harán los pobres para vestirse".

country the most in past centuries and what took over everything"? (61).[46] These *costumbres* can be controled, however, with a stronger institutions of order.

One of the final events of the novel illustrates this point. María, fearing that Juan was stalking her, asks a neighbor to look out for her while her husband Manuel is out of town. The neighbor responds that he will ask the captain of the *guarda campestre* to look around for Juan but María immediately interjects, "please do not abandon us. You know how the Captain delays these sorts of things and it will probably not be until tomorrow that he will arrive around here … I am very afraid of being alone" (73).[47] María forces Feliciano to stay as a guard, an act which eventually helps with Juan's capture. Indeed, Juan's death at the end of the novel, hunted down like a wild *jabalí,* is symbolic of *civilización* overcoming *barbarie.* Although the novel is nostalgic for some of the cultural practices of the *montero, letrado* paternalism ultimately overshadows the novel's ideas.

This chapter has explored narratives about the peasantry throughout many different periods in Santo Domingo's history and Bonó's early political thought. The aim was to provide a foundation and historical context for understanding Bonó's essays, which otherwise would not be as accessible. I argue that his essays about "democratic tobacco" and his opposition to economic liberalism and expansionist imperialism in the late nineteenth-century are based on this long history of peasant conflict with a modernizing elite. Bonó's ideas changed when the consequences of capitalist modernity

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[46] Ibid., "Si la civilización ha dulcificado las costumbre del hombre en Europa, los de estos campos sin semejante modificador, están aún en los primitivos tiempos del descubrimiento de la América, y dígasenos, ¿no era la fuerza brutal lo que campeaba más en los siglos pasados y se enseñoreaba a todo"?

[47] Ibid. "Padrino ... no nos abandone. Usted sabe la dilación que pone el Capitán para esas cosas y tal vez mañana será que el vendrá por aquí, y yo tengo mucho miedo para estar sola".

became immediately relevant to *el pueblo*'s everyday lives. In other words, the oppositional *ethos* of the peasantry would inform his later critiques of plantations. No longer as paternalist, he would eventually use the figure of the exploited peasant to urge citizenship for the masses under a rapidly expanding capitalist system. The rest of the dissertation now turns to an analysis of all of his later essays, fiction and letters.

Chapter Two

Bonó and Dominican Independence, 1822-1865

In *La guerra silenciosa: Las luchas sociales en la ruralía dominicana,* Pedro San Miguel explores the role of peasantries in Caribbean historiography. Focusing on the Dominican Republic, San Miguel argues that, "ironically, the peasantry, who have been so important in the historical formation of the Caribbean, have been marginalized with very few exceptions … few times has the peasantry been conceived, as part of the complex historical processes that have influenced the social and political contours of the Caribbean" (*La guerra silenciosa* 203). Engaging debates about the development of Dominican nationhood, San Miguel examines specific power struggles between peasants, elites and the state in the Dominican Republic from the nineteenth century to the late-twentieth century.

While he emphasizes uncovering subaltern perspectives through original archival sources, San Miguel also investigates representative elite intellectual figures of Dominican history. Interestingly, the nineteenth-century Dominican writer Pedro Francisco Bonó (1828-1906) appears throughout the text as one of the few *letrados* that did not write off the peasantry as the source of all of the nation's discontents. In San Miguel's intervention, as is in most other works of Dominican intellectual history, Bonó appears as radically different and unique for identifying the nation in the figure of the tobacco smallholder in opposition to the "oligarchic" cacao, coffee or sugar plantation. In this dissertation I argue that Bonó was not entirely alone, however. His political ideas were shared among several *letrados* in Santo Domingo, especially those of the War of

Restoration generation. Bonó also appears in the scholarship as one of the few elites who did not ascribe to the ideology of *anti-haitianismo*. Given his exceptional position within the literature of Dominican intellectual history, Bonó is a compelling writer to look at in detail. I argue that Bonó opened up a new kind of political critique by exploring capitalism, race and inequality in his defense of Santo Domingo's exceptional peasant population and the "democratic" effects of tobacco production. This critique is based on a conception of a radical *dominicanidad* that does not exclude the best interests of the masses, for Bonó's project always goes back to the significance of the *restauración* (1861-1865) – which represented anti-slavery, emancipation and *ciudadanía* across the whole of the island - as a patriotic referent.

I organize this chapter by examining key moments in Dominican history through Bonó's life and works. I investigate his texts from the first Republic (1844-1861) and his writings that appeared between 1865 and 1880. The third and fourth chapters of this dissertation will focus on his later texts from 1882-1906. Most of his texts are from this later period since he wrote very little before the 1880s. But in order to understand his critiques of modernization projects of the last third of the nineteenth century, it is critical to go through these earlier writings. To situate these earlier texts, I explore some of the most recent research done on the Haitian occupation (1822-1844) and the first republic (1844-1861).

Despite his at times paternalistic, elite perspective, Bonó warned of the neocolonial forces that were to come in the form of mechanistic, completely foreign-owned sugar plantations of the early twentieth-century. His writings are a precursor to novels like Ramón Marrero Aristy's *Over* (1939) and Francisco Moscoso Puello's, *Cañas*

y Bueyes (1935), novels that expressed anxiety over how sugar plantations and U.S. corporate enclaves were taking over large areas of the eastern part of the island and destroying local food production. He identified the mistakes of the "governing classes", whose errors prevented the Dominican Republic from becoming both rich and socially just. Bonó believed that "*juntar la riqueza con la justicia*" could be achieved by marshalling an alliance between a genuinely patriotic *ilustrado* class, the tobacco smallholder from the Cibao, and the democratic labor culture of the rural Dominican masses. This formulation of labor relations was much less alienating and exploitative for the majority of the population than what many other intellectuals came up with at the time.

In addition, Bonó's political ideas are informed by the convoluted process of Dominican independence. He lived the long struggle that started in the 1820s, when there was an initial independence from Spain, to the annexation attempts of the 1870s. The struggles over land and citizenship from 1820 to the 1870s serve as constant referents when he is criticizing the development of sugar and modernization schemes during the dictatorship of Lilís from 1882 to 1899. Bonó's romanticized democratic tobacco is related to the purpose he assigns Santo Domingo/Haiti – the only independent island in mid-century in a thoroughly colonial Caribbean - in forming a pan-Antillean confederation. The island's purpose, according to Bonó, is to strengthen citizenship and labor rights for the majority of Caribbean subjects in general, a region always subjected to imperial designs and forced labor. The restoration - and the alliances formed during it - especially serve as inspiration for these goals.

Literature Review

The most striking characteristic of the literature on his texts is the originality and "authenticity" ascribed to his writings. Franklin Franco claims that Bonó was the most sophisticated intellectual of the nineteenth century. Franco later makes the now popular claim that Bonó was both the very first Dominican sociologist in his earnest appeals to elite circles and newspapers to study the *vitalidad* of rural culture.[1] The well-known Dominican novelist, Andrés L. Mateo, argues that Bonó was even an *anti-trujillista avant la lettre*, Mateo writes, "in a sense, Bonó was an anti-trujillista a priori" (152).[2] Another testament to his originality and significance is that Harry Hoetink, one of the most important scholars of Dominican history, cites Bonó – along with Hostos - more than any other writer in his seminal work *El pueblo dominicano* (1850-1900).

Despite these testaments to his originality and significance, Bonó is still a relatively unknown writer, especially in the more general field of Caribbean and Atlantic studies. This absence is probably due to many reasons, principal among them that Dominican studies is still an understudied field, even though it is now gaining currency. Some interesting arguments have been made for Bonó's absence in Caribbean studies. For example, Fischer claims that Bonó's *El montero,* the first novel written by a Dominican, was not included in major anthologies of Dominican literature because of Bonó's "unusual politics" (194). She argues that some Dominican authors have conveniently ignored him in order to "normalize Dominican history and to erase struggles

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[1] See Franco, Franklin. *El pensamiento dominicano, 1780-1940* (2001).

[2] "Como el trujillismo fue el heredero ideológico de este postulado, Pedro Francisco Bonó se transformó en el intelectual menos aprovechable por la dictadura, y la figura proveniente del pensamiento dominicano del siglo XIX, más ignorada por la legitimación ideológica del gran mito burgués del trujillismo modernizador".

around conflicting notions of emancipation and modernity" (192). According to Fischer, Bonó's thoughts complicate many dominant literary histories of the Dominican Republic.

González identifies three key moments in Bonó's works: 1) From the 1850s to the 1870s his texts primarily address top-down legislative issues, 2) from the 1880s to the 1890s, he becomes a more direct advocate for the "working classes" and calls for a national development project "from below", and 3) a more disillusioned and religious period where he further isolates himself from public life but builds relationships with *antillanistas* like Ramon E. Betances and Antenor Firmin who called for an Antillean confederation.

In addition, González argues that due to a variety of factors – principal among these is the development of the sugar industry and its disastrous social consequences for the masses on the eastern side of the country - Bonó became disillusioned with "top-down" social projects. Thus as the liberal *Partido Azul* ceded rule to the dictatorship of Lilís, and as the Dominican Republic shifted from a semi-autonomous subsistence economy to an international capitalist economy mainly driven by foreign interests, Bonó abandoned the juridical as his principal realm of analysis and delved into the social reality of the peasantry. According to González, "in the search of a solution to the issue of progress, a social aspect was formed which displaced the juridical from his ideas. He develops a national project based on the popular classes" (*Intelectual de los pobres* 52).

Pedro L. San Miguel reads Bonó's thought vis-à-vis the complex interactions of history, race, identity and nationhood in the history of Hispaniola. His intervention is to understand the relationship between writing and power and to unearth a collective memory of the people – a collective memory that has been silenced by the elites of the

island. In general, the essays in this book reveal the crucial importance of nationhood and identity in the making of Dominican and Haitian society up to the present.

He also examines how Bonó's ideas diverge from other thinkers of the time. San Miguel sees in his work the influence of French historian Jules Michelet (1798-1874) because both figures emphasized, "the social substratum of political processes and institutional life … the people are an image of the collective memory's inspiring power" (*The Imagined Island* 13). According to San Miguel, most other intellectuals focused on the institutional and structural weaknesses that have historically worked against the development of a viable nation-state. In contrast, Bonó focuses on the "social substratum" of Dominican life – the peasantry, the people. San Miguel calls this project of Bonó's and Michelet's a kind of progressive, populist romanticism" (13).

Another distinguishing factor is that all of Bonó's writings are grounded in the material and economic processes that have shaped Dominican society. Thus, for example, Bonó lamented the colonial past because it impeded the development of an effective agricultural system. By relying on materially-grounded socio-economic analyses and by lamenting the colonial project in general, San Miguel claims that Bonó separated himself completely from many other writers of the time. Further, he preferred to defend those agricultural activities that contributed to the vigor of the collective – "above all, those of the *campesino* base" (15). Anchored in González's analysis, San Miguel argues that Bonó's thought is concerned with highlighting the creativity and ability of the working classes and pointing out the limitations of the ruling classes. In the end, for San Miguel, Bonó is arguing that despite the "errors" of the colonial project, a

thriving agricultural society developed "from below," specifically in the tobacco industry of the Cibao region, proving the creativity and agency of the "working classes":

> … Bonó's observations suggest that the tobacco industry developed in the colonial period in spite of a system of institutions that limited economic initiatives and, as a result, shackled Dominican society. The tobacco economy was, nevertheless, an achievement attributable to the positive energy of colonial society, seen especially in the hardworking Cibao *campesinos* (15).

San Miguel describes Bonó's ideas on race. In terms of the relationship between the races, Bonó does "not see the racial element as an immutable factor, destined to be a permanent impediment to relations between the two nations. He even imagines the possibility of a harmonious relationship between blacks, mulattoes and whites" (51). This diverges dramatically, he argues, from the racist discourses of other intellectuals at the time. Ultimately, San Miguel is concerned with the social forces that led Bonó to his conclusions on race and nationhood. For example, where did his both favorable and unfavorable views on Haiti come from? Where did his unique ideas on race come from? In this reading, Bonó was genuinely democratic and liberal; his sense of identity and nationhood – not based exclusively on Spanish origins – was based on "the new realities of the New World" (52). In sum, his argument is that Bonó's notions of race, history, and nationhood, were guided by his acute awareness of the specific challenges and realities of the late nineteenth-century Atlantic world.

Dominican historian José Guillermo Guerrero Sánchez sharply disagrees with San Miguel and González. He agrees that Bonó is definitely a unique figure claiming that "… he is perhaps the most original thinker of the Dominican Republic" (115). But the way that Guerrero Sánchez deals with the seemingly contradictory elements of Bonó's texts is

by understanding them as "…a political thought in the making, complex and even contradictory, of multiple readings. Only simple readings, superficial and mythical ones would categorize him as a thinker of a sole paradigm. On the contrary, he is a difficult author, not amenable to recipes, not apt for stereotypes and of the few of the nation who teaches how to think critically and ethically" (117). He disagrees with González's view that Bonó is "an intellectual of the poor". Guerrero Sánchez claims that Bonó is in solidarity only with a certain sector of the people – the Dominican *campesino* land-owner who was part of a well-connected elite. As I show in the following chapters, I argue that this is a misreading of Bonó's political thought.

The Haitian Period and the First Republic, 1822-1865

Before exploring Bonó's earlier texts it is important to revisit debates on the Haitian Period of 1822-1844 and the First Republic of 1844-1861. The Haitian period - contentious and misunderstood - still remains understudied although some recent research has challenged nationalist, xenophobic representations of the period.[3] In an effort to contain pro-slavery imperial aggression against it, the Haitian state unified both sides of the island in 1822. It was an event that formed part of the revolutionary currents of the early nineteenth-century in the Americas. The entire island would be unified until 1844, when an independence movement developed in the east. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to offer a nuanced portrayal of the period but a quick summary of the historiographic questions at stake is helpful to situate Bonó's early works.

[3] See Lora Hugi, Quisqueya, *Transición de la esclavitud al trabajo libre en Santo Domingo* (2012).

There are countless racist sources that depict this moment as the root of insurmountable conflict between Haitians and Dominicans. Eller quotes Augelli's extremely problematic statements, "beginning with the first Haitian invasion of Santo Domingo in 1801, the relations between the two countries became stained with racial and cultural hatreds that gave rise to repeated, savage bloodletting. Any Dominican, no matter how illiterate, knows of the Haitian occupation of his country (1822-1844) and of the countless battles fought a *machetazo* (with machetes or long knives) without quarter between his people and their western neighbors. Time has done little to soften the feelings of fear and hatred that the Dominicans harbor toward Haiti. For many Haitians the feelings are mutual" (*Let's Show the World* 37). Balaguer's xenophobic and at times unreadable text, *La isla al revés* (1983), is also a good example of this kind of representation of the period. Recent work, however, signals that the period was much more collaborative than conflictual. At the root of these analyses is that the majority population on both sides of the island welcomed the abolition of slavery, which the Haitian state had imposed across the island.

Popular consciousness around slavery was fundamental during the Haitian period but it was probably even more critical during the War of Restoration, when the eastern side rebelled against slave-owning Spain.[4] Eller mentions, for example, that news of the Spanish arrival emptied whole towns because of the fear that slavery was going to be re-imposed. This should not to be surprising since Cuba and Puerto Rico were entrenched slave colonies at the time and news of this was readily available.[5] Evidence of popular

[4] See Eller, *Let's Show the World we are Brothers* (2011).
[5] Ibid.

consciousness about slavery on the island, then, seriously challenges representations of the Haitian period as well as conceptions of Santo Domingo's supposed more "benign" history of slavery and race relations. This re-reading questions much of the historiography on colonial Santo Domingo. In any case, the unification of Santo Domingo's remarkable rural peasantry and the Haitian revolutionary state from 1822 to 1844 is a fascinating period that begs further study.

The unification ended once Boyer's autocratic system could not hold. Intense outside aggression, an earthquake that devastated the whole island in 1842, internal elite conflicts in Haiti, and the rebellion of a rural population used to its autonomy and the lack of state control, among other things, collapsed the regime.[6] Indeed, a utopian liberal movement that called for island-wide collaboration led by Juan Pablo Duarte, called the *trinitarios*, did develop that championed Dominican statehood in 1843. Duarte's famous poem "*El criollo*" is often read to describe his utopian project. Duarte wrote, "whites, browns, copper-coloreds, mixed, united and brave, we will save the nation from vile tyranny, and let's show the world that we are brothers" (52).[7] But Duarte and others' idealism would be outmaneuvered by classic caudillos like Pedro Santana and Buenaventura Báez who would silence and exile the *trinitarios* and trade ownership of the island from 1844 through the 1870s. As Eller writes, "the sparse population, difficult transport and lack of a national market, minimal formal education, patriarchal rural landholding in much of the cattle regions, and foreign intervention precluded the

[6] Ibid.
[7] Quoted in Eller, *Let's Show the World We Are Brothers* (2011). "Los blancos, morenos, cobrizos, cruzados, carchando serenos, unidos y osados, La patria salvemos de viles tiranos, y al mundo mostremos Que somos hermanos".

development of a vigorous civil society. Rather, control of the head of state "volleyed between two men with very few liberal instincts between them: Pedro Santana and Buenaventura Báez" (56).[8]

Imperialism, personal intrigue and ambition led to the annexation of the first republic in 1861, which the population rejected categorically. It was especially the combination of outside aggression and Dominican *caudillismo* that shut out liberal reformers that sought a truly democratic state and even utopian collaboration with Haiti. There were many of these liberals with their own contributions and stories like Francisco del Rosario Sánchez (1817-1861), Gregorio Luperón (1839-1897), Manuel Rodríguez Objío (1838-1871), and Ulises Francisco Espaillat (1823-1878). Bonó was part of this tradition.

It is critical to understand the revolutionary fervor of the mid-century and the place of these Dominican liberals to understand Bonó's intellectual trajectory. He was part of this Dominican liberal tradition that was always outmaneuvered by outside interests and reigning conservative *caudillos* – even shortly after the momentary alliance of different Dominican class sectors during the war of restoration. This conservative sector had no investment in Dominican independence, as Bonó repeatedly argued in his essays. This is especially evident when, working as state secretary for the post-restoration government of Cabral he claimed that, "the political parties that since the restoration of our independence have appeared again in the country, lacking personal merits, construct malicious propaganda to delegitimize the government and to rise to

[8] See Eller, *Let's Show the World we are Brothers* (2011).

power. With weapons of such evil, they deliver this propaganda from abroad in colonial newspapers of the United States or of Europe, attempting to ridicule the current administration of General Cabral".[9] This shows the struggles of the post-restoration moment. Short lived liberal governments in Santo Domingo's nineteenth century were always under siege by intense outside colonial aggression and conservative *caudillos* that took advantage of the barriers to constructing an independent civil society. It is these constant failures of Dominican independence that inform Bonó's essays and his eventual decision to live away from Dominican politics in quiet San Francisco de Macorís.

Raymundo González argues that Bonó does not radicalize until the late nineteenth-century at the arrival of sugar. This narrative may have to be rewritten since there is evidence that in earlier periods he had some remarkable ideas on the nature of tobacco production as well as ideas about federation with Haiti. "Democratic tobacco", anti-imperialism and his critique of importing theories of economic liberalism from abroad appear throughout his writings in the 1850s and 1860s. This is evident when considering an important historiographical debate like the so-called "Haitian Invasions" after Santo Domingo's first independence in 1844. The "Haitian invasions" in the 1850s were apparently a part of daily life under the first republic. Nationalist propaganda and historiography constructs these events as evidence for ever-lasting Haitian-Dominican conflict. The end of the conflicts are often narrated as the triumph of *dominicanidad* over Haiti. Eller suggests, however, that "the invasions" need to be rewritten as struggles between corrupt, militarist elites on both sides of the island.[10] The conflicts of the 1850s

[9] *Papeles de Pedro Bonó*, 128.
[10] See Eller, *Let's Show the World We Are Brothers*, 99.

and 1860s were skirmishes that the majority of the population wanted nothing to do with, and served more as isolated events that revealed the personalist, *caudillista* politics of the time. Bonó was aware of this, he was completely against having a permanent army and considered "The Haitian threat" a fantasy of the corrupt elite. In his critique of militarism during the first republic he mentions that Dominican soldiers would often desert, suggesting popular disinterest in the wars with Haiti.[11] He attributes Dominican desertion to a badly organized military but he also suggests that many soldiers had no interest in sustaining a war with Haiti. Bonó's unique ideas, then, perhaps originate much earlier than has been acknowledged.

There is more evidence of Bonó's radical politics in an earlier period. There was an attempt to write a new constitution during the Moca rebellion of 1857-1858 which was eventually crushed by Báez. The revolution came about in the Cibao region when Báez attempted to defraud tobacco producers by printing money to buy one of the most promising tobacco harvests in history. This led to an armed revolution that ended with a brief triumph for the Cibao. These Cibao liberals were later defeated and sent to exile by Báez, however. During their rebellion, they were debating whether a federalist system or a centralist system was the best way of organizing the island. Challenging unrealistic fears over Haiti, Bonó writes, "let us not fear the weakness that would supposedly result in the country with respect to the Haitians; the federal system leaves the nation as strong as before with respect to the Haitian invasions; it in fact makes the nation stronger with respect to internal invasions of power; [federalism] is not weak against external

[11] See *Papeles de Pedro Bonó*, 72.

invasions, it is stronger against internal ones, it would prevent revolutions and despotism, which are the things that weaken it.".[12] Haiti is not a threat, he argues that federalism would fix the regional divides of the island, making the island less susceptible to *caudillista* intrigue and corruption.

In this debate Bonó also identified the different regional interests between the Cibao and the south. He long believed that the Cibao's economy was better for the poorest – less inequality and less exploitation because of the nature of tobacco production. He writes that both regions have different interests, "I confess that there are similar customs in the nation, but maybe there are not the same interests in the nation".[13] Bonó's "democratic" tobacco and his defense of the peasantry, then, appear as early as the 1850s. It is true that with the restoration he would radicalize even more, moving permanently to tiny San Francisco de Macorís, but his anti-imperial, perhaps socialist tendencies are also found in earlier periods. Indeed, in a response to these debates on federalism or centralism, the writer Alejandro Angulo Guridi would pick up on Bonó's critique of differing regional interests, "if the honorable Bonó establishes that there is a disparity in interests because there are different occupations for different provinces, that ones are producers of some products and others produce others, he should be advised that it is not enough, economically speaking, to say that these different provinces have different interests".[14] Guridi is talking about tobacco in the Cibao, and cattle and wood in

[12] Ibid., 107.
[13] Ibid., 105. "Confieso que hay unos mismos usos y costumbres en la nacion, pero tal vez no hay unos mismos intereses…"
[14] Ibid., 115. "Si el honorable Bonó asentó que hay disparidad de intereses porque hay diferencia en las ocupaciones de unas y otras provincias, y porque consiguientemente unas son productoras de tales artículos, y otras de cuales, es de advertírsele que eso no basta, económicamente hablando, para decir que no son unos mismos sus intereses".

the south (sugar had not yet appeared in a massive scale). Guridi's rebuttal, then, is evidence that Bonó's proto-ortizian defense of tobacco originated in the 1850s and not later on in the 1870s and 1880s.

His characteristic, frank portrayals and solidarity with the peasantry were also present in early writings like *En el cantón de Bermejo* where he depicts a scene of the restoration war. It was intended to be his second novel but he would never finish it. Derby is right in arguing that Bonó, "broke with the social conservatism of the day, to the extent that this populism and love for his compatriots make him sound more like a Fabian socialist than a liberal state-builder, a trait that colors his description … of the war's leadership as well as his portrayal of the generosity of the local landowner" (Roorda, Derby, González 149). His engagement with Santo Domingo's remarkable rural peasantry, the long struggle against outside aggression, the convoluted process of Dominican independence and his attempt to adapt liberalism to the specific realities of Santo Domingo were the roots of the political essays he would write in the 1870s and 1880s. The rest of the dissertation now provides close readings of these texts.

"Un intelectual de los pobres:" Un Proyecto (1880)

All his life Bonó was engaged with the daily lives of the rural, Dominican peasantry, whether working on his grandmother's large cattle ranch in the 1840s or later in his life. This makes him an interesting non-exilic figure, engaged with the rural masses (as opposed to other similar Caribbean writers like Betances, Firmin, Hostos and Martí who were political in exile). Bonó travelled twice outside of the island, in the 1850s and the 1870s, but this was never for more than a few months. As I have

mentioned, he was part of a very rich family in his early life but later on he would live more modestly in San Francisco de Macorís. In many of his letters and essays he mentions his activities helping the poor and especially offering medical or legal help for free. *Un Proyecto*, an 1880 essay that appeared in a newspaper in Puerto Plata, charts his activities as a free lawyer and doctor in the rural interior. Through this autobiographical travel narrative, he elaborates on Dominican history and offers solutions to Santo Domingo's socio-economic problems. The essay also sheds more light on his position as a liberal catholic - he is rightly read as being influenced by French liberal catholics like Hugues Félicité de Robert de Lamennais (1782-1854) and other French liberal-Catholics, as González mentions.[15] *Un Proyecto* is an autobiographical account of one of his few trips from Santo Domingo back to the Cibao. Indeed, a striking element of the text is his confession that he knows very little of the capital city or any other areas outside of the Cibao, again revealing the regional dynamics of the island. Unlike comparable, exilic, intellectual Caribbean figures who fought for an Antillean confederation like Hostos, Martí, Firmin and Betances, Bonó stayed put in his tiny town in the Cibao for the last 32 years of his life.

Dismayed at the conditions of the peasantry, three travelers named "Pedro", "Francisco" and an unnamed narrator have several conversations about Dominican history, the economy and the peasantry. Though he is still paternalist in this text (the national body is sick, morally and economically) the essay critiques the errors of the

[15] For this comparison, see González, *Un intelectual de los pobres* (1994).

ruling classes and demands citizenship for the existing rural masses (as opposed to white foreign immigration) who have been ignored and have sickened since colonial times.

The story is simple. On their way back to the Cibao from Santo Domingo, the three travelers are looking for somewhere to stop for the night but both Pedro and Francisco are very concerned of the illnesses going around in the rural areas, apparently leprosy and forms of bubo. After a lot of skepticism from Pedro and Francisco, the travelers and their serfs stop at a *bohío* because of the narrator's insistence on resting for the night – the narrator is unaware of the dangers. What they find is a sick peasant family, the narrator is horrified and "has never seen such a sad and repugnant spectacle. The mother did not have a nose, only two holes that made her look like a skeleton. The husband supported by his two crutches was an amputee with a gash that came up to the elbows, they were covered with dirty rags filled with pus."[16] They decide to leave the *bohío* and rest outside, respectfully rejecting the peasant family's offer to have them stay over. Of course, this mutilated peasant family appears in the essay as a metaphor for the nation. The rest of the text is then a discussion between the doctor Pedro, the economist Francisco and the narrator who at the very end of the essay is identified as Bonó himself, the creative writer who then thinks critically of the situation and provides imaginative insight. The writer-narrator synthesizes Pedro and Francisco's thoughts and offers a solution: citizenship for the masses through extra-official charity. A gradual healing of the rural interior will create a legion of *conciudadanos*.

[16]*Papeles de Pedro Bonó,* 170. "Nunca he visto espectáculo tan triste y repugnante. La madre no tenía narices, solo dos hoyos que la hacían parecer calavera. El marido apoyado en sus dos muletas estaba manco por una llaga que le venía hasta el codo, cubiertas con trapos sucios empapados de pus".

In this conversation after the encounter with the peasants, the three men discuss some of the challenges of public hygiene. Pedro knows how to cure the diseases with a mixture of European and creole methods. Many pages of the essay are detailed accounts of the diseases, showing some of Bonó's medical expertise. But the problem, Pedro concludes, is that there are not enough funds to help the great number of the poor who suffer from the diseases and there is little possibility for systematic funding and help. Elite designs are incapable of helping, as Dominican history has shown. The rich are not willing to help and the government is corrupt. The solution is found outside of the realm of nation-state officialdom. In the end, the three decide to use their own money and invite all readers of the newspaper (but preferably the poor because the rich will monopolize the remedies for the illnesses) to go to Bonó's house so that he can help personally, at no charge. All of this is a clever way for Bonó to write autobiographical fiction – something that in his letters he repeatedly wishes he had more time for – and also to study Dominican political economy. He again argues that the elite are welcoming dangerous economic theories from abroad that are disenfranchising the peasantry, which he identifies as the foundation of the (sickly) nation. The text defends the needs of the poor, and reveals Bonó's own brand of liberalism, Catholicism and social democracy.

After brief descriptions of the diseases, the characters talk about the challenges facing the peasantry. Some of Bonó's paternalism is evident here in his critique of *montería* and peasant life, "public and private hygiene does not exist. Nutrition is abominable. Pork from sick pigs is the common and only food".[17] One of the men then

[17]*Papeles de Pedro Bonó,* 175. "La higiene pública y privada no existe. El alimento es abominable. Carne de cerdo y de cerdos maricosos y enfermos, es la comida ordinaria y exclusiva".

suggests that this nomadic population must be converted into sedentary, small farmers that cultivate for export. He also argues that with white immigration this sickly population could learn the ways of family and agricultural life. The economist quickly interjects, however, and argues that, "nobody will exchange the advantages of civilization to enter these *monterías* to live like a savage unless there are concessions and exorbitant privileges that will make the situation worse for the current inhabitants".[18] Foreign immigration is not the answer but a gradual healing of the nation. This would in the end be the right kind of "immigration" because:

> It would be a benevolence like the one desired by Christ, worthy of true Christians and would save a great mass of the nation from pains and immense hardship. Seen from the economic perspective it would be an immigration coming from heaven, robust and Dominican, replacing in production a population that is at the moment decimated, without hope, crippled and useless. From the political perspective we would acquire a strong legion, exercising all of the functions of the citizen with the elements and aptitudes provided by health. From the perspective of the people, there would be less immorality, more births and finally more happiness for families.[19]

The goal is to heal the currently crippled masses of the nation. One of the most interesting aspects of this essay is Bonó's ideas on the role of immigration and development. They contrast sharply with hegemonic elite projects of nationhood throughout Latin America in the nineteenth century.

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[18] Ibid., 174. "…nadie cambiará las ventajas de la civilización para meterse en estas monterías a vivir como salvaje a menos de concesiones y privilegios exorbitantes, que hará peor la situación de los habitantes actuales".

[19] Ibid., 176. "Sería una caridad como la quiere Cristo, digna de verdaderos cristianos, y que ahorrará dolores y penalidades sin cuento a una gran masa de la nación. Vista del lado económico sería una inmigración llovida del cielo, robusta, dominicana, reemplazando en la producción a otra población diezmada, sin esperanzas, tullida, inútil. Por el lado político adquiriremos una fuerte legión, desempañando todas las funciones del ciudadano con los elementos y aptitudes que da la salud. Del lado de la población habría menos inmoralidad, más nacimientos; y por fin en la familia más felicidad".

It is in the early 1880s – as first seen in *Un Proyecto* - when he seriously begins to question the role of the elite and political institutions to bring about "curing the nation". The only way to go about saving the nation is with direct, charitable contact with the poor. Bonó in his later essays argues that the elite have never shown solidarity with the peasantry. For example, one of the travelers asks if both the rich and the poor should be cured at no charge. The economist says that only the poor should be attended to since once a cure is found, the rich will monopolize its production and distribution, "say whatever you like Pedro, said Francisco, I will not consent to your desire that will open a divide because of the malice of the rich, who, as always, will monopolize the remedy and the poor will not be able to try it".[20]

Dominican history is represented as tragic. As Pedro and Francisco debate, the narrator writes a speech for the other two in order to reveal the urgency of the situation, contributing to the discussions of the doctor and economist. Inspired, the narrator synthesizes Dominican history:

> I have seen entire generations dragging in the middle of desperation and pain. I saw Spanish colonialism and its terrible errors. I saw the slave full of pain, almost naked in a swarm of mosquitos. I have seen him starving, thirsty, full of ulcers … running in the forests, cut by sharp brambles, all day starving, except for access to a few wild fruits that he picks in competition with the pigs that he hunts … looking desperately for the pig that he needs to bring home to the master, finally catches him and on his shoulders carries it at night … I saw the master, lazily on his rope hammock, in a dwelling barely of a better living condition than the slaves' … living in the same ignorance and the same savage and painful life … I saw the present times with our impotence, spreading everywhere brilliant

[20] Ibid., 181. "Diga Ud. Lo que quiera Pedro, dijo Francisco, no consentiré que a su deseo de hacer bien abra una brecha de la malicia de los ricos, que como siempre, monopolizaran el remedio y el pobre quedara sin probarlo".

> and sterile formulas … [finally] There in the shadows, I see an image of the family of tomorrow, the last touch of this heartbreaking scene.[21]

This image of the future "Dominican family" will be living the same kind of barbarism that he describes of past generations, unless his project succeeds of slowly healing the masses and if the elite are in solidarity with the poor.

Eliminating corruption is a critical component of the argument in *Un Proyecto.* The doctor receives money from both men and insists on providing evidence for all of the expenses - an indirect critique of the governing elite's corruption. In addition, the elite are not just corrupt but among them there are also, "many evil ones that do not believe in good, and even less of these believe that there are other human beings of skin and bones … these [elite] are many, some know how to write and even to reason, through which they acquire considerable influence in society".[22] Bonó constantly criticizes the elite sharply. Indeed, his unabashed writings contributed to his isolation in San Francisco de Macorís.

As Bonó concludes the essay, there is a problematic section where he compares race in Santo Domingo to race in the United States. He mentions the United States has had a different method of "civilizing and developing good hygiene in a nation".[23]

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[21] Ibid., 179. "Vi… a generaciones enteras arrastrándose en medio de la desesperación y del dolor. Al coloniaje español con sus errores terribles. Al esclavo lleno de dolores, casi desnudo, en medio de un enjambre de mosquitos … lo vi, hambriento, sediento, calzado de clavos, cubiertos de empeines y ulceras … corriendo entre los montes, desgarradas las carnes por zarzales y yabaocales; todo el día en ayunas, salvo algunas frutas silvestres que en competencia con los puercos que caza, de prisa engulle. Buscando afanoso el sustento del amo, por fin lo encuentra, lo carga al hombro y se lo entrega… vi al amo, tendido en su hamaca de sogas, en otra choza algo mejor del esclavo … en la misma ignorancia y con la misma vida salvaje y doliente. Vi los tiempos presentes con todas nuestras impotencias, esparciendo a todos vientos formulas brillantes y estériles… allá en la penumbra, la familia e la mañana se dibujó, como último toque de este cuadro desgarrador…"

[22] Ibid., 176. "…muchos malvados que no creen en el bien, ni menos en que existan seres de carne y huesos, como ellos … estos son numerosos, algunos saben escribir y hasta discurrir, por lo cual adquieren bastante influencia en la sociedad…"

[23] Ibid., 174-175. "…donde se quiere civilizar y formar una buena higiene…"

Francisco, the economist, argues that "in the United States … occurs what always has occurred there … at the instruction of *go ahead,* refractory races are exterminated and replaced … and by taking over the places of those previous races, sing harmoniously their victory and the excellence of their [racial] composition, justifying violence. Other indolent or ignorant races, lose or do not acquire their rights to land - their life goal and refuge - and are reduced to servitude, acts that are intended to be avoided in the present case, where one is trying to make sure that sick Dominicans live, are cured, and are masters, as they have been in the past of their land, and to, in the end, live happily".[24]

Although he is defending peasant land rights, he sees "race" pathologically – he describes the United States as having oppressed, "refractory races". To Bonó's credit, however, he would later shed these more positivist ideas in much later essays arguing that the Santo Domingo does not suffer from the problem of "race" but of "the inertia of tradition". He privileges the Dominican peasantry as part of the nation in this essay but still would not develop the more radical ideas on race until the late 1880s and 1890s.

***Cuestiones Sociales y Agrícolas* (1880)**

The year 1879 seemed like a watershed moment for the *Partido Azul* when Báez and his supporters were ousted for the last time. He was sent off to slave-holding Puerto Rico where he would eventually die a few years later in 1884. Báez was expelled but

[24] Ibid., 175. "En los Estados Unidos… sucede lo que siempre ha sucedido en el tiempo y en el espacio. Al grito de *go a head*, las razas refractarias se exterminan y las reemplazan otras razas, que al ocupar los huecos que aquellas dejan para justificar la violencia, cantan armoniosamente su victoria y la excelencia de su composición. Otras razas indolentes o ignorantes, pierden o no adquieren la propiedad, su ultimo bien y refugio, y se ven reducidas a la servidumbre, cosas que se tratan de evitar en el caso presente, donde se quiere conseguir, que los enfermos dominicanos vivan, sanen, sean los amos como hasta aquí de su tierra, y por tanto felices."

annexationist politics would not quite die with him. Political opportunism, along with outside aggression, continued up until the first occupation of the United States of 1916. Luperón and the priest Fernando Arturo de Meriño's 1879 coup was seen as a return to the democratic hopes of the short-lived 1876 government of Ulises Francisco Espaillat. These events definitely had an effect on Bonó's increased engagement with public life. He wrote most of his life's works after the initial optimism of the 1880s. The 1879 coup seemed like another triumphant restoration, one that could even unify what 1861-1865 could not.

One text that captures this moment well is *Cuestiones Sociales y Agrícolas*, written between 1880 and 1882. In essence, it is a series of letters that he wrote to Meriño describing agriculture in San Francisco de Macorís. As president, Meriño was asking regional elites for detailed accounts of the island in an effort to understand national regional dynamics. Bonó describes in the letter the state of the small town that he would eventually live in for the rest of his life, San Francisco de Macorís in the eastern Cibao. He is much more positive here about Dominican politics and the economy, thanks to this hopeful period of stability while Luperón ruled the north and Meriño the south.

The most interesting element of this essay is his detailed description of landholding in San Francisco de Macorís. It describes how one of the most isolated areas of the Cibao was able to transition from *terrenos comuneros* to more modern forms of property rights. To do this, he gives a detailed account San Francisco's migration history. According to him, it started with the wars with Haiti in the 1850s and later, after the *Restauración*. These events and conflicts in the middle of the island brought people from more populous areas like Santiago east to San Francisco. These waves of

migration, Bonó estimates, grew the population from 8000 in 1849 to 30,000 in the 1880s.[25] The increased population density forced the transition away from *terrenos comuneros* to more modern types of landholding. The essay generally comments on this transition and praises San Francisco's ways of adapting to new kinds of land tenure justly (thanks to the input of the peasant's themselves), something he opposed to the dispossession of land happening in the southeast. This gradual dispossession began in the 1870s due to the ten year's war in Cuba and the migration of wealthy Cuban planters to southeastern Santo Domingo.

The point of the letter is to offer San Francisco de Macorís as a model for the rest of the island. He hopes that it will serve as inspiration to prevent inequitable peasant dispossession. Indeed, this positive model for the nation is also based on Bonó's nostalgic perception of San Francisco's past, "until recently, the pastoral life that since colonial times this population has lived …was the most adequate form of general industry for this area. So it was, then, that full of livestock, forests and savannahs, it allowed the population to … secure abundant and indefinite subsistence for a large family. And, in effect, still in my childhood, I knew people in this area that would slaughter daily for the food for his family and workers."[26] The vitality and access to landownership that *montería* allowed (due to low population and large amounts of free-roaming cattle) should inspire the transition to settled, export agriculture. In order to do this it is critical

[25] Ibid., 263.
[26] Ibid., 262. "La vida pastoril en que desde entonces las generaciones hasta hace poco vivieron … fue la forma más adecuada a la industria general de esta común. Entonces fue, en que repletos de ganados, montes y sabanas permitieron a los pobladores … asegurar abundante e indefinidamente la subsistencia de una larga familia. Y con efecto, todavía en mi niñez, conocí a individuos en esta común, que mataban diariamente para la comida de su familia, peones y allegados…"

not to copy foreign ideas without first adapting them to the realities of Santo Domingo. Santo Domingo's history of landowning should be studied seriously without haste and without "using laws originating from other societies".[27]

He ends the essay with a discussion of the positive and negative aspects of *terrenos comuneros*. Although he repeatedly argued that *terrenos comuneros* were inefficient and the source of all kinds of conflict since colonial times, the archaic system's weaknesses benefited the poorest who were willing to take advantage of it, "the confusion regarding the rights to land are the reason for knotty and repeated conflicts, but it also presents a favorable situation to the hardest-working, who sometimes with only two pesos of land is as industrious as the indolent one who owns 500 pesos. This … is contrary to acquired rights and equality, but it has produced inspiration among all, this is perhaps in great part one of the reasons for the relative progress that this town now enjoys".[28] He tells Meriño that these positive aspects need to be maintained once the government finally intervenes but this eventual intervention "… requires extreme prudence, lots of tact and grand sentiments of equality and justice, in order not to produce lamentable disasters that will exhaust the productive efforts of laborers".[29] He would continue this study of Dominican landholding in his much longer *Apuntes sobre las clases trabajadoras Dominicanas* that he would write a year later in 1881. This letter served as an announcement for this future, foundational essay, "this material is more than

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[27] Ibid., 265. "…leyes estudiadas para otras sociedades…"
[28] Ibid., 266. "La confusión apuntada de derechos a la cosa originan pleitos continuos y enredados, pero también presenta ocasión favorable al más laborioso, que a veces con dos pesos de tierra se extiende a la par del que es dueño indolente de quinientos. Estímulo en verdad, contrario a los derechos adquiridos y a la equidad, pero que ha producido tanta emulación en todos, que quizás a él deba en gran parte esta común el relativo adelanto que hoy goza".
[29] Ibid., 266. "… requiere suma prudencia, mucho tacto y grandes sentimientos de equidad y justicia, para no producir desastres lamentables que agoten los esfuerzos productores".

appropriate to occupy the attention of a talented observer, who would like to study in all its phases the evolution of a society that is transforming all of its industries without the help nor the intervention of authority".[30] Bonó would later categorize this transformative work as "the sufficiency of the working classes" in his future essays.

This chapter explored Bonó's earliest essays in the context of nineteenth-century Dominican politics from 1844-1880. It argued that some of Bonó's most radical ideas were present in his earliest texts. His ideas on the importance of solidarity with the poorest, "democratic tobacco" and federalism with Haiti were present before his radicalization of the 1880s. The rest of the dissertation turns to the essays he wrote in response to the growth of the sugar industry in the 1880s.

[30] Ibid., 264. "Materia es esta por demás propia para ocupar la atención de un observador de talento, que quiera estudiar en todas sus fases la evolución de una sociedad que está transformando todo su taller industrial, sin la ayuda ni la intervención de la autoridad".

Chapter Three

Bonó and Capitalist Transformation in the Dominican Republic, 1880-1895

This chapter explores the more radical essays that Bonó would write after the drastic changes of the 1880s. The texts were written between 1881 and 1885, during Santo Domingo's sugar boom. It investigates his critique of sugar and the arguments he made in favor of tobacco production during the more hopeful period of the *Partido Azul* governments of the 1880s.

The introduction of large-scale plantations in the 1880s would transform the island significantly. There was an unprecedented growth of agricultural commodities like coffee, cotton, cacao, and tobacco – products that were previously grown on a limited scale - due to improvements in transportation, international demand for tropical consumer goods, and the growth of financial capital during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. This produced a significant shift in the political landscape of the island. Tobacco had been the main crop until the 1880s. After a steep decline in tobacco prices, the northern Cibao economy shifted to producing cacao. A plantation-based sugar economy developed simultaneously in the south. Bonó's texts are a response to the steep decline of tobacco and the unprecedented growth of sugar.

A quick review of the significance of tobacco and its eventual fall is helpful to set up the historical context of the essays that I study in this chapter. Tobacco had played a critical role in the historical development of the island. Easy to grow, carry and transport, it was an important crop for the proto-peasantry throughout colonial times. Before the Haitian Revolution, tobacco was sold primarily to Spanish buyers. Later on, following

the first expulsion of the Spanish in the early nineteenth century, an interim Haitian government ruled the entire island from 1822-1844. During the Haitian period, the small peasant tobacco sector grew enormously. Governor Jean-Pierre Boyer's (1776-1850) policies benefitted the small peasant producer as thousands grew tobacco for the recently opened Haitian market.

But by the end of Haitian rule, German ships started to export raw tobacco from the Cibao to ports in Hamburg and Bremen. Baud estimates that beginning in the 1840s, German merchants bought about 90% of Dominican tobacco in the nineteenth century. At this point in mid-century, land was abundant and these peasants were mostly self-sustaining. From the 1840s to the late 1870s the tobacco sector kept growing in the Cibao, but it would soon change because of a transformative tobacco crisis, "in the second half of the 1870s, the tobacco world market became oversupplied with the enormously increased production of Brazilian and Dutch East Indian (Deli) tobacco. Falling tobacco prices were exacerbated by a long economic recession between 1883 and 1896. The price of Dominican tobacco per quintal (forty-six kilograms) fell from between fourteen and twenty Dominican pesos in 1849 to nine pesos in 1872 and to four pesos in the 1880s" (The Origins of Capitalist Agriculture 138). In addition, the number of tobacco commercial houses decreased from twenty four to six. Baud argues that this crisis activated a cacao sector that was promoted at all levels of society, "by 1888, an estimated 5 million cacao trees were planted" (139). Due to the nature of cacao production at the time, as Bonó analyzes in his essays, it became associated with the idea of a "rich man's crop". Cacao production required a lot of capital and it would take

several years to harvest – time that the poorest did not have. It is these changes to the Dominican economy that Bonó reacts to from the 1880s onward.

As Hoetink observes, there was little formation of a commercial elite between 1844 and 1875, the initial years of the unstable Dominican Republic.[1] The later consolidation of a close-knit, mercantile elite in the 1880s went hand-in-hand with the development of sugar monopolies and Lilís' dictatorship. This strengthened and renewed racial hierarchies, which Bonó explored and protested in his writings. His essays offer an opportunity to explore how monopoly mechanisms began to solidify class and racial hierarchies.

He also passionately reacted to drastic changes in the value of land and peasant dispossession. Peasant land-holding was loosely controlled, and foreign capital made sure to take advantage - snatching up land from the peasantry for very cheap. As Baud argues, however, the creation of an enclave economy was not a foregone conclusion in the Dominican Republic in the late nineteenth-century.[2] It would take the Trujillo dictatorship to solidify commercial monopolies. Bonó's texts capture the beginnings of these dynamics, however. His alternative economic model was inspired by the remarkable Dominican peasantry. The peasant economy served as his model for a system outside of the sugar *latinfundia*. His essays explored how the peasantry refused to give up on the hopes of more democratic labor relations.

[1] See Hoetink, "The Dominican Republic in the Twentieth Century: Notes on Mobility and Stratification" (2000).
[2] Baud sustains this argument throughout his monograph, *Peasants and Tobacco* (1995).

"Un desaforado gigante echado encima de un enano enclenque:" Apuntes sobre las clases trabajadoras (1881)

Bonó's *Apuntes sobre las clases trabajadoras dominicanas* is his first systematic reaction to the changes of the late 1880s. It appeared throughout October and November of 1881 in the newspaper *La Voz de Santiago*. The essay – his longest and most well-known work - is an elaborate draft of the more radical ideas that he would develop in the late 1880s. Later texts have clearer, more incisive arguments. He published eight of these *apuntes* with an addendum that explained his initial intensions for the essays. In this last part he explained that he planned to explore all of the small industries of Santo Domingo, "while I was writing the current study I initially intended to cover the workers in all of our national industries; rural ones like cattle ranchers, herders, tobacco planters, wax chandlers, and urban ones that are now fast developing in the country: The makers of straw hats and footwear, tanners, saddlers and chair-makers formed separate chapters".[3] Although writing about these workers was interesting in itself, he decided to abandon detailed descriptions of these industries so that the readers of *La Voz de Santiago* would not lose sight of the overarching argument. The essay was getting too long for the newspaper.

In the addendum he outlined the main argument for the reader: progress must begin by studying the ingenuity of small-scale peasant labor. Focusing on the vigorous labor culture of the peasantry and its historical contributions to Dominican nationhood,

[3] *Papeles de Pedro Bonó*, 226. "Los presentes apuntes en el primitivo plan que al escribirlos me propuse debían abarcar todas nuestras industrias; tanto las rurales de ganaderos, hateros, rancheros, vegueros, cereros, como las urbanas que van tomando en el país un vuelo desconocido hasta hoy. Los sombreros de paja, calzado, preparación y adobo de pieles, la talabartería o sillería formaban capítulos separados".

he attempted to show the importance of studying the daily lives of the working classes and how they were "saving the nation". Indeed, the phrase "*estudiar las clases trabajadoras*" is repeated throughout the essay. The text intends to be foundational for it takes seriously – and without disdain - Dominican popular society, something that in his view had been ignored by other forms of elite expression and study so far. These intentions have clearly contributed to Bonó later being canonized as "the first sociologist." In fact, in 1981 the Dominican government declared October 18th - Bonó's birthday - as "the day of the sociologist".

The essays also offer a solution to the free-trade economic theories that have destroyed local industries, contributed to annexation attempts, and increased internal regional violence. La "*situación geográfica*", as he terms it, is the overarching problem for Dominican nation-building. A vital area for imperial interests, Santo Domingo/Haiti was the only independent island at the time as Bonó often reminded the reader. Invoking the war of restoration (1863-1865) as a patriotic referent, he argues in the essays that the solution to La *situación geográfica* – imperial interests and its effects on local labor politics – lies in the careful study of small-scale work and the Dominican peasantry, "let us meditate on this work, its mechanisms and results, past and present, so that in the end we are persuaded that we are wasting time complaining about a misery that does not exist."[4] He insisted that Santo Domingo as a new nation should be led by actually existing work and not visions of progress that are, "…an enormous giant thrown on top of a sickly dwarf".[5] He questions the obsession with progress narratives, "it is no longer

[4] Ibid., 191, "…meditemos este trabajo, su mecanismo y sus resultados pasados y actuales, para que persuadidos de que malgastamos el presente en quejarnos de una miseria que no existe…".
[5] Ibid., 227. "…Un desaforado gigante echado encima de un enano enclenque".

necessary to write and narrate what has been said and repeated so often, that the enlightenment is the great lever of progress, that education is needed, that schools are needed, and that family education and capital is needed. Who denies that? Who can ignore tried and tested truths of such merit"?[6] Instead of forcing modernization schemes in vogue at the time, progress must first begin by studying the very particular moral and economic lessons of everyday Dominican work. Witnessing the increasing presence of foreign capital that surely reminded of previous forms of foreign interventions, he called on the elite to think on the vitality of small-scale Dominican industries, "it is for this research that these articles are written, written only for love of the nation … perhaps they will attract more exploration of the active, actual and useful work of Dominican society and the modifications that this work is realizing as well as the laws that form and protect property rights and finally [these articles] will capture the attention of the enlightened men of the country who will see in this study consoling facts from where fecund ideas will surge for the happiness of the nation".[7]

He begins this critique of ideologies of progress by focusing on the *vitalidad* and *raza* of the working classes throughout the whole of the island, including the Haitian side. Indeed, he mentions how Cibao tobacco facilitates a thriving trade between Haitian and Dominican work. His discussion on race is influenced by the spread of positivism - most

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[6] Ibid., 191. "No basta escribir y narrar lo que tanto se ha dicho y repetido, de que la ilustración es la gran palanca del progreso, que la instrucción se necesita, que faltan escuelas, que la educación de familias, capitales. ¿Quién ignora eso? ¿Quién puede desconocer verdades de tanto bulto, tan probadas y definidas?".

[7] Ibid., 192. "Es a este estudio que se encaminan estos artículos escritos por solo amor a ella… quizás también atraiga hacia el trabajo activo, actual y útil de la sociedad dominicana, hacia las modificaciones que está realizando su taller general y hacia las leyes que forman y deben proteger la propiedad, la atención de los hombres ilustrados del país, que en ello encontraran vasto campo para observar hechos consoladores de donde surjan ideas fecundas para la felicidad de la nación".

elites were pessimistic about the racial makeup of the island. For example, elite forms of nationhood called for white immigration as a solution and reduced socio-economic problems to the unfortunate racial "ingredients" of the island. Reacting to these ideas, he celebrates the working classes and the Dominican "race," arguing that "the Dominican is a hard worker, his muscular effort reaches such thriving heights like any strong nation, he only requires that senseless measures not obstruct the continuous and legitimate aspirations of his work, that they let him work freely, and that supporters of progress at any cost not throw away his savings".[8] The current failure of progress is due to the importation of dangerous ideas and not the racial makeup of the island. Indeed, many years before similar conceptions of race and "racelessness" in Latin America by more well-known *antillanistas* like Hostos and Martí, Bonó writes for a radical cosmopolitan *antillanismo* with Santo Domingo/Haiti as the center of this new race for a free Caribbean. Hispaniola works as a centerpiece in this conception because it is the only free independent in the Caribbean at the time.

Tobacco is a critical part of this project. It offers year-long, active labor for poor families across the island and across gender. It also promotes vibrant trade with the northern part of Haiti (Puerto Plata to Cap Haitien had always been in intimate contact throughout the island's history), "to the northern department of Haiti the Cibao also provides. A mass of workers … are for many days earning salaries".[9] It thrives and keeps all sectors of Dominican society active, "everywhere I see bales and packs of

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[8] Ibid., 191. "El dominicano es gran trabajador, su esfuerzo muscular llega a tan pujante altura como el pueblo que más, solo le falta que medidas insensatas no obstruyan de continuo la legítima aspiración de su trabajo que lo dejen mover a sus anchas en sus faenas, y que sus ahorros no lo esparzan a todos vientos los ardientes partidarios del progreso a todo trance".

[9] Ibid., 200. "Al departamento Norte de Haití también provee el Cibao".

tobacco, everywhere I see stores full of this plant and a crowd of workers of both sexes, separating, handling and packaging tobacco. I see the stores full of buyers, new stock comes in and it disappears, in a word there is a circulation of wealth triple that of the rest of the year".[10] Focusing on the life of a hypothetical young peasant who chooses to plant tobacco instead of coffee, cacao or sugar – the three other main exports of the island - Bonó shows how a young family can earn a living within just a few months. This is very different from sugar and cacao which require time, capital and coerced labor.

In addition, not only the poorest of Dominican families benefit from tobacco but also lenders, *recueros* (leaders of pack mules), port merchants, foreigners and the state, all of the sectors that work in exporting Dominican tobacco have something to gain, "at the end of six months all have been compensated. The young man has paid the storekeeper, the storekeeper has paid the merchant who pays the state its tax, the manufacturer is also reimbursed for the material, the banker also his money and all prosper, the government included".[11] Tobacco also supports poor urban sectors, "urban day workers who are almost all women proceed to its classification just as in regulated professional workshops … it employs previously idle groups of people".[12] In contrast, other products like cacao, coffee and sugar do not support the interests of the poorest and do not contribute to the rest of the small Dominican industries, "comparing now the

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[10] Ibid., 193. "Por doquier cruzan tongos, serones y pacas de tabaco; por doquier veo los almacenes atestados de esta hoja y a un enjambre de trabajadores de ambos sexos, apartando enmanojando, pasando y enseronando. Veo a las tiendas atestadas de compradores, llegan y desaparecen los surtidos, en una palabra hay una circulación de riquezas triple a la del resto del año"

[11] Ibid., 194. "Al cabo de seis meses todos se han cubierto. El mozo ha pagado al tendero, este al comerciante, quien paga al Estado el impuesto, al fabricante sus tejidos, al banquero su dinero y todos han vivido, el gobierno inclusive".

[12] Ibid., 198. "jornaleros urbanos casi todos mujeres proceden a las clasificaciones como en taller profesional regulado … está empleando grupos antes ociosos".

products tobacco, coffee, cacao and sugar cane, who can deny that the first is the industry par excellence for the small, poor, emerging agriculture of the Cibao? Who that plants cacao or coffee sees its fruits at the end of six months, and who that is naked can have the luxury of waiting years"?[13] In addition, he also insists that the Cibao has always responded in opposition to attempts to abandon tobacco production. Despite misguided "novice economists", the Cibao has continued to focus on tobacco, "the *cibaeño* will insist for a long time, because he does not see in the horizon the viability of working with another product for a better return".[14] He argues that perfecting tobacco production, despite the tobacco price crises of the early 1880s, will eventually save the nation.

Tobacco becomes the "father of the nation" because it keeps every sector of the economy active, "he has been, is and will be the true father of the nation, for those that observe him in his economic effects, civil and political. He is the basis of our infant democracy for the equilibrium in which it maintains the fortunes of all individuals, and from there comes to be the most serious barrier of possible oligarchies; he was and is the most firm support of our autonomy and he is, finally, who maintains the economy of the republic for the interchanges that he realizes and the industries that he promotes and needs".[15] For Bonó, Tobacco helps prevent annexations, regional conflict and inequality. He then goes on to specifically mark these industries that tobacco needs and sustains.

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[13] Ibid., 194. "Comparando ahora el producto tabaco y los productos café, cacao y caña a quien se le escapa que el primero es la industria por excelencia para la pequeña, pobre, incipiente y contrariada agricultura del Cibao, ¿quién que siembra cacao o café ve sus granos a los seise meses, y quien que esté desnudo podrá espera años".

[14] Ibid., 195. "El cibaeño insistirá por mucho tiempo, porque no divisa en el horizonte los elementos indispensables de otro cultivo a que pueda dedicarse con mejores rendimientos."

[15] Ibid., 199. "Él ha sido, es y será el verdadero *Padre de la Patria* para aquellos que lo observan en sus efectos económicos, civiles y políticos. Él es la base de nuestra infantil democracia por el equilibrio en que mantiene a las fortunas de los individuos, y de ahí viene siendo el obstáculo más serio de oligarquías

He focuses on a variety of Dominican industries including husbandry, the local transportation industry, textiles and guano production to illustrate his point of how tobacco is the engine for all other industries. He argues that, "entire communities are productive, in the picking of leaves and weaving, there are thousands of men, women and children working. Wicker baskets, saddles, backpacks, brooms, leather bags, hats, saddlebags and overall large baskets of tobacco are the products."[16] He ends the article insisting that the government should trust the economic and moral impulses of these small industries and the Dominican worker in general, "we should have confidence in the ones that work to save the country and hope that the ones who direct them will show more reason than they have up to now by taking away the obstacles that prevent the progress of this work".[17] He concludes, "in short, tobacco today for the Cibao directly and the republic indirectly, is the crop that should be favored given its beneficial contact with all *criollo* industries. Its effects are: activate the division of labor by a permanent demand of various services offered by the working classes".[18] After concluding this, he dedicates several more articles to analyzing Dominican transportation because it is another industry that tobacco indirectly helps to develop.

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posibles; fue y es el más firme apoyo de nuestra autonomía y él es por fin quien mantiene en gran parte del comercio de la Republica por cambios que realiza con las industrias que promueve y necesita".

[16] Ibid., 199. "Comunes enteras, están ocupadas en ellos, y en recolectores de las pencas y tejedores, hay miles de hombres, mujeres y muchachos ocupados. Árganas, enjalmas, macutos, escobas, zurrones o capachos, bias o alforjas y sobre todo serones son los productos".

[17] Ibid., 201. "Debemos pues tener confianza en los que trabajan para salvar el país y esperar que los que lo dirigen mostrarán más cordura que hasta aquí en quitar los obstáculos que embarazan el progreso de este trabajo".

[18] Ibid., 205. "En resumen, el tabaco hoy día para el Cibao directamente y para la República indirectamente, es el cultivo que debe favorecerse en vista de su contacto beneficioso con todas las industrias criollas. Sus efectos y tendencias son: activar la división del trabajo por medio de una demanda permanente de variados servicios ofrecidos por las clases laboriosas."

Transportation and Tobacco

Transportation infrastructure is critical for dealing with national fragmentation and regional *caudillismo*. Bonó's solutions are pragmatic. One of the most cited passages of any of Bonó's texts appears in the fifth article entitled, "*Caminos*". To describe the fragmented regionalism of nineteenth-century Santo Domingo, Dominicanist historians often cite Bonó's comment that, "every older Dominican, who is obligated to travel (if he is not then he does not do it), spends the night before as anxious as one that precedes a battle."[19] Given the island's rough terrain and poor infrastructure, region was critical. The article describes - after again praising the initiative of Dominican workers and their constant calls for better roads - the actual possibilities for better infrastructure. Neither local nor foreign efforts have succeeded in developing adequate transportation infrastructure. Local efforts to build better roads almost always end in disaster as well as attempts to attract foreign capital to build railroads, "up until now the government and its actors have done the frivolous work of the squirrel, and the working classes docile to the spurs of necessity, succeed to satisfy it only in part, scratching their heads about the inexistent roads".[20] As he is always trying to bridge the gap between idealistic liberal discourse and pragmatism – especially after the disillusionment of the *restauración* and after mid-century revolutionary struggle - his solution is to work on developing actually existing roads as opposed to ambitious railroad projects. He writes of "*caminos*

[19] Ibid., 206. "Todo dominicano viejo, que se ve obligado a hacer un viaje (pues si no es obligado no lo hace), pasa la víspera tan agitada noche como la que precede a un combate".
[20] Ibid., 208. "Hasta ahora el gobierno y directores han hecho el frívolo trabajo de la ardilla, y las clases trabajadores dóciles a la espuela de sus necesidades, logran solo satisfacer una parte, dándose fieras cabezadas en los innominados caminos existentes".

verdaderos del pueblo" which he opposes to "*caminos posibles*" (railroads). The point is that his solutions are practical:

> Without succumbing to futile theories, one must rudimentarily compose roads that are not in the least rudimentary…widen the too narrow, so that the sun and wind dry and harden what the rain moistens, shadows and softens; make bridges less dangerous, even if they are rustic they allow for traffic on both sides and for lateral defenses that will serve as banisters, make the downhill easier by constructing them as zigzags … instead of underground drains, build trenches on the sides inclined towards the edge.[21]

His call is for much more practical roads is also based on his distrust of the railroad industry. For example, in another more literary essay, he describes peasants complaining about the increase of bandits due to the railroads. One peasant laments, "there are so many thieves in my neighborhood since the railroads that I can't leave my house and *conuco* for one day. I don't even know what I'll find missing, because last night before coming here they stole from me four chickens, eight clusters of full, lustrous, glorious plantains, they were picturesque on the tree and I had them ready for an important event."[22] He sees railroads as extraction from the peasantry as well as unfeasible, "… better roads [railroads] are not industries that belong to us, they belong absolutely to the foreigner, and Dominicans only need to be ready to serve them as peons in such vigorous work".[23]

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[21] Ibid., 213. "sin contraerse a vanas teorías, componer rudimentariamente caminos menos que rudimentarios … dar anchura a lo muy cerrado, para que el sol y el viento sequen y endurezcan lo que la lluvia moja y la sombra reblandece; hacer menos peligrosos los puentes, y que aunque rústicos den cabida a dos de frente y con defensas laterales que sirvan de pasamanos; hacer más suave las cuestas con eses o zigzags … En lugar de drenajes subterráneos, zanjas al ras inclinadas hacia lo más bajo".

[22] Ibid., 377. Hay tantos ladrones en mi vecindario después de los ferrocarriles, que ni un día puedo dejar solos, la casa y el conuco. Ni aún se lo que hallare de menos, porque la noche antes de venir a esta me robaron cuatro gallinas y ocho racimos de plátanos, llenos, lustrosos, que era una gloria, estaban ya pintones en la mata y los tenia para un empeño".

[23] Ibid., 208. "…caminos mejores no son negocios nuestros, pertenecen en absoluto al extranjero, y el dominicano solo debe estar listo en servirle de peón en los trabajos más recios".

The development of "*caminos verdaderos*" will benefit the interests of the majority of the population, but corruption prevents this. He cites a figure of 30 million pesos that have been collected by the government but no progress has been made in building roads. He attributes this to the "greedy public directors that for a long time cling to money with their nails and teeth; because our own greed or our timid position of a Republican nation, mulatto, white and black, situated in the middle of the Gulf of Mexico, allows and easily produces in great number all of the possible aggressions that serve the opposite interests of our peace and good fortune".[24] The greed of the elite and aggression from abroad impede even his practical "*caminos verdaderos*." He sees this situation as typical for all nations "that were Spanish colonies with slaves".[25] He argues that the governing elite has never privileged the interests of the masses, "they have not been able to organize and discipline a majority or minority that expressed a single thought of practical governance for Dominicans … [they show] no interest for the working classes or anything of relevance for the masses of the nation".[26]

He concludes his articles on transportation arguing that poor roads have worsened internal power struggles, "we need good roads, positive links of union, concord, and not palliative measures that every day end up being unsatisfying".[27] Imitating the patriotic work ethic of the working classes, the elite must be pragmatic in

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[24] Ibid., 213. "…presupuestívoros que desde remotos tiempos se agarran con uñas y dientes a sus fláccidas mamas; porque nuestra codicia o tímida posición de Nación republicana, mulata, blanca y negra, sentada en medio del Golfo de México, da ocasión y presenta facilidades sin número a todas las agresiones imaginadas por los que sirven intereses opuestos a nuestra paz y a nuestra dicha".
[25] Ibid., 214. "Colonias españolas con esclavos".
[26] Ibid., 214. no han podido los tales organizar y disciplinar una mayoría o minoría que expresase y significase un pensamiento de gobierno práctico para los dominicanos … desprovistos de interés para las clases trabajadoras o siquiera de actualidad para la masa de la Nación".
[27] Ibid., 216. "[se] necesita buenos caminos, vínculos positivos de unión, fraternidad y concordia, y no medios paliativos que cada día dejan más que desear".

attempts to build internal infrastructure. Better roads benefit the poorest, help with internal *caudillista* power struggles and prevent annexations and foreign interventions. And again, part of the answer to all of this is in protecting tobacco for its indirect benefits to the whole of the island and safeguarding the interests of the peasantry.

He anticipates the critique that tobacco is no longer viable because of recent crises in prices. In the early 1880s tobacco prices dropped sharply in part because of the growth of tobacco industries elsewhere in the world – particularly in Southeast Asia – and the slow loss of the German market in Hamburg and Bremen which had a monopoly on Dominican tobacco.[28] He suggests a few reasons for the tobacco crisis of the 1880s: Dominican tobacco has been, "badly organized, worse handled, too humid, too dirty, fraudulent and would end up in Europe discrediting itself".[29] Indeed, this could have been a sort of "weapon of the weak" – peasants would fill bales of tobacco with rocks because the price of tobacco was so low and it was hard to make a living off of it.[30] But Bonó ascribes these events to "ignorance, clumsiness, greediness, and the poor methods of cooperation of any infant agriculture."[31] Overseeing the production and distribution of tobacco more carefully and organizing all of the sectors involved in exporting tobacco will help in attracting more European investment in tobacco and regain its lost markets.

Tobacco and Terrenos Comuneros

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[28] For a recent study on this topic see Maischak. *German Merchants in the Nineteenth Century Atlantic* (2013).
[29] *Papeles de Pedro Bonó,* 198. "…mal apartado, peor enmanojado, muy húmedo, muy sucio, fraudulento en fin que llegaba a Europa desacreditándose a sí mismo."
[30] See Scott, *Weapons of the Weak* (1987).
[31] *Papeles de Pedro Bonó,* 198. "ignorancia, codicia torpe, y los malos métodos de cooperación de toda agricultura infante."

The rest of Bonó's essay is concerned with property rights, Dominican history and the "*situación geográfica*" of the island. He tackles the issue of property and *terrenos comuneros* which he previously had written about in a much earlier article as one of the biggest obstacles to Dominican agriculture. In his 1857 essay, *Apuntes sobre los cuatro ministerios*, he complained, "the owner of a small piece of land has the ability to extend his work limitlessly, destroying forests perhaps situated in the rights of others … this is cause for all kinds of ruinous conflicts … we can certainly say that property … has no laws in the Republic, because almost all of the land is *comunero*, and this is one of the most transcendental legislative problems. Until the property owner is convinced that his property is sacred … there will be no agriculture".[32] In addition, throughout this earlier essay, he is quite paternalist concerning the role of "*el vulgo*" in building democratic institutions, claiming that "only the thinking man can unchain the bonds of faulty institutions, but how much he has to work so that the masses [*el vulgo*] also unchain them".[33] In the 1850s Bonó had not yet developed his ideas on the peasantry being the agents in bringing about what he saw as democratic institutions. This radical change in perspective – this focus on the vigor of the Dominican working class as opposed as to the pains that the "civilized" elite have to go through to change "barbaric" Dominican habits and institutions - is most likely due to his distrust of elite interests after the failures of events like the Moca Rebellion of the 1850s. In addition he was deeply marked by the

[32]Ibid., 82. "Hasta ahora … el dueño de un corto pedazo de tierra tiene facultad de extender sus labranzas ilimitadamente, destruyendo bosques situados tal vez en el derecho de otro ... Esto es origen de mil pleitos ruinosos … Podemos muy bien decir que la propiedad … no tiene leyes en la República, porque casi todos los terrenos son comuneros, y esta es una de las faltas más trascendentales en legislación. Mientras el propietario esté convencido de que su propiedad no es sagrada … no habrá agricultura".
[33] Ibid., 84. "solo el hombre pensador puede sacudir el yugo de las que son erradas, mas, cuanto no debe luchar para hacer que el vulgo las sacuda".

regional conflicts that still existed even after the at first inclusive *restauración* and annexation attempts in the 1870s and elite jockeying for personal gain within the new imperial currents of the late nineteenth-century.

In the much different *Apuntes sobre las classes trabajadoras dominicanas*, however, Bonó interestingly argues that there are positive elements to *terrenos comuneros*, changing his mind about earlier thoughts he had on property rights. Bonó sees the system of *terrenos comuneros* as, "one that deserves study and meditation by the well-intentioned observer".[34] Although he feels that it is an outdated system that needs to change, Bonó admires the cooperation and industry inherent to the system of *terrenos comuneros* as well as the opportunity it gives to the poorest to work rigorously and collectively on the land. His stress on the collective is what makes him defend a system that for many was the main impediment to Dominican agriculture. Raymundo González is right to argue that Bonó's ideas on property rights and *terrenos comuneros* are unique for elite liberals in nineteenth-century Santo Domingo. According to González, Bonó identified in the *terrenos comuneros* a vibrant, rigorous labor culture, "Bonó does not reject communal lands, criticized by the faithful in ideologies of progress. Inversely, *terrenos comuneros* enter in his analysis as elements of efficiency in the absence of other measures to regulate property rights" ("El pensamiento social 105").[35]

Indeed, although Bonó is always eager in his essays for a transition from semi-nomadic production to sedentary agriculture, he sees in the "democratic" social relations

[34] Ibid., 222. "… que es digno de estudio y meditación para los buenos observadores".
[35] "Bonó no rechaza la propiedad pro-indivisa, anatemizada por los partidarios del progreso. A la inversa, los llamados 'terrenos comuneros' entran en su análisis social como elementos de eficiencia a falta de otros medios para procurar la propiedad del suelo".

and efficiency of *terrenos comuneros* (continuous, motivating, active labor for the poorest) an alternative to progress as large, mechanized sugar plantations and seasonal, precarious work for the poorest. As peasants become sedentarized on their own terms, regional conflicts will end, "the ranchers, changing their current life in part nomadic, will enter completely in the family life that the sedentary nature of agriculture offers, and perhaps this may be one of the most efficient ways to diminish the revolutions".[36] Ending regional conflicts can be achieved by respecting the traditions of the peasantry and slowly transitioning according to the designs of the peasantry. His propositions are pragmatic, the goal is to organize the *terrenos comuneros* with practical input and measures from the peasantry themselves. He describes these as, "prudent measures, like the *indirect,* in order not to violate the rights, obligations and traditions of the owners of the land".[37] As González suggests, Bonó's ideas on the role of the peasantry in bringing about a transition to organized agriculture goes against elite nationalisms that excluded the peasantry as agents for Dominican nationhood.

Samaná, Constantinopla, Gibraltar*: *Santo Domingo as "frontera imperial"

As Bonó finished his last articles collected under *Apuntes sobre las clases trabajadoras* he continued writing about Dominican history and imperial interests in the late nineteenth-century in the Caribbean. Interestingly, these drafts were left unpublished – they probably did not appear in any Dominican newspaper - and Rodríguez Demorizi

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[36] *Papeles de Pedro Bonó,* 225. "…los criadores cambiando su vida actual en parte nómade, entrarán de lleno en la vida de familia que dan las ocupaciones sedentarias de la agricultura, y quizás sea esto uno de los medios más eficaces para disminuir las revoluciones."

[37] Ibid., 225. "un medio prudente, tal como el *indirecto*, para no lastimar ni violentar los derechos, servidumbres y tradiciones de los poseedores de la tierra". Emphasis in the original.

claims that a lot of it was illegible. These last essays are more radical in tone as is the case with the works that he ended up not intentionally sending out to the press. He is clear about no longer wanting to be identified as an intellectual or *hombre pensador* as he does in his earlier works. In his focus on *las clases trabajadoras,* he tries to shed his elite background, "I am not about pure politics. I am a worker, a laborer; and work is my battlefield; work in general but Dominican work above all in all its aspects of production, consumption, appropriation, commerce, and transportation".[38] In addition, in his later writings he mentions that the repeated losses of his family's property – dating back to when his maternal grandmother lost the plantation she owned in Northern Haiti due to the Haitian revolution and up to when his house was suspiciously burned down in 1895 – had brought him closer to the living conditions of most people in small San Francisco de Macorís. He was still part of the elite, however. He was known to be "charitable" in his older years and owned a small distillery[39]. In any case, the essay reads less as *letrado* lamenting the "ingredients" of the nation and more as an attempt to become a sort of Gramscian, "organic" intellectual" in solidarity with the interests of the working class.

The general goal of these unpublished essays is to understand the difficulties of Dominican nationhood – especially those related to property rights and the stability of democratic institutions - in all of the nineteenth century. He compares other Latin American "postcolonial" nations to Santo Domingo concluding that, "none of these Latin American nations has been more agitated than Santo Domingo in all of the century, none

[38] Ibid., 230. "Ruego también no se crea que trato de política pura. Soy trabajador, obrero; y el trabajo es mi campo de batalla, el trabajo en general pero el dominicano sobre todo en su variado aspecto de producción, consumo".
[39] See his last published essay, "Petición de un alambiquero" (1900), in *Papeles de Pedro Bonó,* 413.

has suffered more calamities, no other has had a more difficult road to securing its interests and this recrudescence of ills ought to have a philosophical and rational explanation that can be found in remote causes".[40] His answer for understanding Santo Domingo's process of independence is based on four points, the "geographic situation", Haiti, "relics left by the Spanish" and theories imported from Europe".[41]

In his section on *la situación geográfica* he mentions how the bay of Samaná is as contentious and important as Constantinople, Gibraltar and Malta in the new realities of the Atlantic world. He writes that Santo Domingo has always been an imperial frontier but sensing the increasing presence of the United States in the Caribbean basin, the bay of Samaná now becomes even more critical because of renewed transatlantic conflicts between Europe and the Americas in the late nineteenth-century. Now, "the geographic situation of Santo Domingo puts the island in the worst possible situation to be in peace. The sole Antillean island that is free, it is the base for all kinds of operations, aspirations and struggles in the Caribbean, in the Gulf of Mexico and even all of the American continent with its shores on the Atlantic, from Ecuador to Florida … glance at a map of the Americas and see who owns the Caribbean. Cuba and Puerto Rico's are Spain's. Martinique, France. Santa Cruz and Saint Thomas, Denmark. Curacao, Holland. The rest is England's, the owner of all of the commerce of the world".[42] As the only free

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[40] Ibid., 232. "…ninguno de estos pueblos latinos ha estado más agitado que el de Santo Domingo en todo el siglo, ninguno ha sufrido más calamidades, ninguno tiene menos abierto el camino de su seguridad y esta recrudescencia de males debe tener una explicación filosófica racional que puede encontrarse en causas remotas".

[41] Ibid., 233.

[42] Ibid., 234. "La situación geográfica de Santo Domingo la pone en las peores condiciones posibles para estar en paz. Única Antilla libre, puede considerarse como base de operaciones de todas las aspiraciones y contiendas en el mar Caribe, en el golfo de México y hasta en todo el Continente americano que baña el Atlántico desde el Ecuador hasta la Florida" … "Véase el mapa de la América y véase a quien o a quienes pertenecen las Antillas. Cuba y Puerto Rico son de España. Martinica de Francia. Santa Cruz y Saint

island in the Caribbean, it is subjected to even more internal corruption because of the various interests participating in the neocolonization of the Americas. For Bonó, none of the elite that have been in power have protected sovereignty and the interests of the majority over personal gain in this political climate. Even the few who have understood these geopolitical issues, "have not had the cold blood necessary to take advantage of the permanent international interests of the Republic, reducing everything to personal gain".[43] Bonó is indeed reacting to the recent politics of the 1870s where Báez and others were willing to sell or annex parts of the island to any imperial power, especially England, Spain, France or the United States. In short, he looks to analyze both the internal and external factors that have troubled the island, reading Santo Domingo's history and political situation in an Atlantic frame.

Las reliquias dejadas por los españoles

After making the point of the vulnerability of the island to corruption and foreign intervention, Bonó then writes about the traditions left over by Spanish colonization or what he calls "*las reliquias dejadas por los españoles*", a sort of psychological reading of Dominican history. He laments that Santo Domingo never became a thriving economy during most of the colonial period (which he periodizes between 1600 and 1791), given that Santo Domingo was surrounded by some of the most lucrative slave economies in the Caribbean. He does not locate anything positive in that colonial period, "… the

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Thomas de Dinamarca. Curazao de Holanda. El resto de Inglaterra, es decir de la dueña del comercio del mundo".

[43] Ibid., 236. "no tuvo la sangre fría necesaria para sacar el provecho que los intereses permanentes que la República demandaba, reduciéndose todo a una notoriedad personal".

Spanish part of the island - with its neighbor the immensely rich French part - could have, surely, with a local, semi-enlightened government, taken advantage with better fortune the permanent consumptions of that colony [Saint-Domingue]."[44] Santo Domingo was a key producer of protein and other goods to Saint Domingue in the eighteenth century but Bonó wishes that the Spanish colonists would have taken advantage of this. The effects of this history, he argued, produced a dependent personality in the inhabitants of the Spanish part of the island describing that "the colonists expected everything to come from the metropolis".[45] Spanish colonialism which produced the following scenario: "A ton of changes in nationality in the course of 80 years … the misery of four centuries, the constant bending over, the group of pure Dominicans that form the nation, the group that constitutes it, the group that has sacrificed and sacrifices to sustain it, is pathetic".[46] In short, Spanish colonization left an indifferent character in the population of Santo Domingo which left the island in a sort of morose, dependent state, open to all kinds of interventions.

These "relics left by the Spanish" contribute to the difficulties of the Dominican Republic in the late nineteenth-century but he makes an additional point. He distinguishes the "pathetic" group that I describe above from the real "*pueblo dominicano*", who are also "*the clases superiores*". Later in the essay he makes this opposition between the "*clases superiores vs clases inferiores*" in which the elite here, of

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[44] Ibid., 239. "La parte española, con su vecina la inmensamente rica parte francesa en esa época, pudo muy bien con un gobierno local medianamente ilustrado aprovecharse con mejor fortuna de los consumos permanentes de dicha colonia…".
[45] Ibid., 243. "Todo lo esperaban de la metrópoli".
[46] Ibid., 243. "Un tropel de cambios de nacionalidad en el decurso de 80 años responden que no ha encontrado esa dicha ni bajo la dominación de otro ni bajo su propia dirección. La miseria larga de cuatro siglos, el encorvamiento cada vez mayor hoy día del grupo de puros dominicanos que forma la nación, del grupo que la constituye, del que ha hecho y hace sacrificios para sostenerla, es lastimoso

course, are the "*inferiores*." The masses have had to live through greed and corruption of the elite, "it happens always to be that the Dominican masses ends up defeated, choked by laborious burdens".[47] Anticipating critiques from others, he also makes sure to clarify though that the dependency that he sees in the population is not a problem of "race" but of "*inercia tradicional*". His point is that the island's "traditions" and the elite's political choices – namely, always looking to the metropolis and never to the interests of the majority on the island – make the nation even more susceptible to foreign intervention.

He ends these essays by exploring his last point about the relationship between Haiti and the process of independence in Santo Domingo. Unfortunately, Rodríguez Demorizi claims that a lot of this section was hard to read and some of it could not have been reproduced. The section that we have titled "República Haitiana" is one of the more incomplete sections in all of Rodríguez Demorizi's collection. But in any case, far from demonizing Haiti as many elites started to beginning in the late nineteenth-century, he gives an interesting description of Haitian-Dominican history. His representation of Haiti is nuanced, he focuses on different class interests – arguing that the Haitian elite contributed to the difficulties of the "*clases trabajadoras*" across the entire island. He explores the great inequality that Saint-Domingue produced and how this was maintained after the Haitian Revolution by Haitian elites. Haiti in the 1880s is seen as "an aristocracy based on money, in skin color, as every colony follows the habits of its metropolis because the latter comes from a devouring ambition, [Haiti] went to the

[47] Ibid., 243. "Resulta siempre que el pueblo dominicano viene a quedar vencido, yugulado bajo el peso de cargas onerosas".

extreme of wanting to be independent, but did so without developing its middle class".[48] In addition, he recognized that the Haitian Revolution placed the entire island in a difficult position because of relentless outside aggression. Dominican nationhood is inextricably linked to these consequences.

El error de Boyer

It is interesting to compare these thoughts to a letter written in French that Rodríguez Demorizi found in the Dominican archives called "*El error de Boyer*" which I have already partially discussed. Unfortunately, we do not know when he wrote it. He probably wrote it in the 1870s because he mentions the increasing presence of the sugar industry which he, of course, criticizes, "the sugar plantations are new among us and the mechanisms of this industry demands special research that we are not capable of realizing, dragged as we are by the expectation of its excessive earnings and above all the European theories and risks that siege our respective nationalities".[49] He is also most likely in conversation with a Haitian political figure because the letter above all is concerned with Haitian-Dominican relations. Bonó writes that Boyer was the most talented politician in all of the nineteenth century in Haiti but for one error, "not having founded the union of the two nations based on something more equal and advantageous, for example, a confederation. If it had been that way, we would be calmer, happier and

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[48] Ibid., 244. "Una aristocracia basada en el dinero, en el color de la piel y en las prerrogativas que en toda colonia siguen al hijo de la metrópolis por el hecho de venir de ella devorada de ambición, hasta el extremo de quererse independizar de la Madre Patria, quiso realizar este pensamiento sin haber hecho subir su clase media …"

[49] Ibid., 610. "Las fincas de caña son una novedad entre nosotros y el mecanismo de este trabajo demanda estudios especiales que no estamos en estado de realizar, arrastrados como estamos por la pendiente de las ganancias excesivas y sobre todo por las teorías europeas y los riesgos que cercan a nuestras nacionalidades respectivas".

more civilized. The different elements of the two nations … isolated as they are, would have maintained an equilibrium between the white and black race".[50] His point is clear: Haitian-Dominican union is only possible if there is more economic equality which would in turn help with racial relations and help with dealing with outside aggression. Both class and race are important in Bonó's assessment of Dominican and Haitian nation-building.

I mention this letter because it helps with understanding the points he makes in his concluding remarks about Haiti in *Apuntes sobre las clases trabajadoras dominicanas*. The inequality produced by colonization never changed after the Haitian Revolution – if Boyer would have set up a federation based on equality, the whole of the island would be more at peace, Bonó would argue. Class and racial hierarchy is a problem on both sides of the island. The letter concludes that with the arrival of sugar in the east in the 1870s, the same mistakes of the colonization of Saint-Domingue are bound to be made again - increased Haitian-Dominican conflict, foreign intervention, racial inequality, class hierarchy.

The conclusion to *Apuntes sobre las clases trabajadoras dominicanas* is made up of the four categories that he enumerates towards the end, "la situación geográfica, la República Haitiana", "Las reliquias dejadas por los españoles" and "Teorías que en tropel nos vienen de Europa." We do not have the part where he elaborates on the imported theories at the end of the essay – the last part is left incomplete. But the argument for the

[50] Ibid., 610. "… no haber fundado la unión de los dos pueblos sobre una base más equitativa y provechosa, por ejemplo la confederación. Si hubiese sido así, nosotros estaríamos más tranquilos, más felices, más civilizados. Los elementos diversos de los dos pueblos que hoy no tienen punto de contrapeso, aislados como están, habrían concurrido a mantener el equilibrio de las razas negra y blanca".

essay in general seems to be clear: in the face of crippling outside and internal forces, Santo Domingo's elite must learn from the vigorous collective of the working people – which he sees as having an inherent ethos of equality and fraternity in the Caribbean. Haitian-Dominican sovereignty is paramount given the hostilities in the Americas of the late nineteenth-century.

Opiniones de un Dominicano, Bonó as Presidential Candidate (1884)

Y hasta más dice la gente:
dice que el de Macorí
no lo harán salir de allí
ni a fuerza de agua caliente.

Que él sabe perfectamente
que él no es gallo espuelero;
que sin con pluma y tintero
no se puede defender,
sin en apuros se ha de ver
prefiere su gallinero

People also even say:
That the one from Macorís
Will not be taken away from there
Not even with force

That he knows perfectly well
That he is no spurred rooster;
That without quill and inkwell,
He cannot defend himself,
If he finds himself in a predicament
He prefers his chicken coop

-"Gallos de Espuela", Juan Antonio Alix on Bonó's rejection of the presidency, 1885.[51]

[51] Ibid., 454.

Bonó was most active in the press during the years that Luperón held control of the government from 1879-1884. Indeed, 1879 became a year that was much celebrated as foundational for a new era of democratic politics in the country. This was one of the more politically stable periods since the annexation because Luperón was able to unite the interests of much of the country. The majority of Bonó's writings that have been collected so far were written from 1880-1884, most likely because of the alarming changes in the economy due to the growth of the sugar industry and Luperón's freeing up of the press.[52] By this point Bonó commanded a prestigious position within the *Partido Azul* and he was nominated to be president more than five times but declined it on every occasion, as Alix's décima "Gallos de Espuela" suggests. There is also an urgency in *Opiniones* that is absent from his other articles. From now on his essays would be more radical in their critiques of sugar.

To the frustration of Luperón's blue party, Bonó never wanted to become president. We have many documents where he explains his reasons for declining the presidency but one striking text is the letter for his friend, the priest, J.F. Cristinacce. Bonó mentions in this humourous anecdote that when he was endorsed as the presidential nominee in 1884 in Puerto Plata, he was immediately accused of illegally producing and selling alcohol in his town of San Francisco de Macorís. He had been a distiller for a while in the town as he explains in the letter, "…once upon a time there was an elderly, honorable, and calm man that lived in a town of the Dominican Republic called Macorís, where he worked for about 20 years the profession of distiller or *alambiquero* ... his

[52] Not all of Bonó's texts have been collected. In conversation with the Dominican historian, Raymundo Gonzalez, there is still archival work to do in Puerto Plata, where there may be more documents.

products, whether rum or *tafiá,* were well-known as far as ten leagues away".[53] As he relates in the story, the government in Macorís used the opportunity to take advantage of him, since it was going around in the town that Bonó was soon to become a powerful man. In an attempt to extort some money from him, the local government accused him of not observing two particular tax laws: that any money or property held in a safe in the *ayuntamiento* had to pay a tax and that any owner of a house made out of iron had to pay a tax as well. Once in court, Bonó reminded that a new law was passed exempting someone with an iron house from paying taxes for 10 years, as well as another law that temporarily exempted taxes on the safes in the *ayuntamiento.* Eventually exposing the ineptitude of the *ayuntamiento,* Bonó was absolved of any wrongdoing.

He uses this opportunity to make a few political points, however. He declares that it is wrong not to tax the rich who are able to construct their houses out of iron and wrong to tax the poor who have to build from palm. He also decides to donate the money that he thinks he should have paid for the iron house and the 20 pesos he had in a safe at the *ayuntamiento* to poor schools and other people in need in Macorís. In addition, he is unwilling to give any money to the government because of recent corruption scandals where local politicians were sharing public money amongst themselves. He explains the consequences of this political move, "since that day, poor Pedro [Bonó] is considered a pest, nobody visits him, everybody ignores him, in a word, he is incommunicado and very sad. He says that the world disgusts him and even though he knows that there are good people, the event has frightened him so that he will in no way go to the capital to

[53] Ibid., 500. "… érase un hombre de alguna edad, honrado, tranquilo, que vivía en un pueblo de la República Dominicana llamado Macorís, donde ejercía, habrá veinte años la profesión de destilador o alambiquero… sus productos ya fueran romo o tafiá, eran conocidos a diez leguas a la redonda".

assume the presidency, even if dragged in chains".[54] As he explains to the priest Cristinacce in this letter, he refused the nomination because he felt that corruption and incompetency ruled at every level of Dominican government and that he wanted nothing to do with public life.

Also, it was not that Bonó was incapable of being a "gallo de espuela" or presidential strongman, as Alix would have it in the *décima* above. Rather, he was aware that his political ideas would never apply within the entrenched *caudillista* politics of the moment. In several letters he mentions that he would seriously consider the presidency once the time was right for him to test his ideas as a president. In other words, he seriously entertained the idea of becoming president but felt the time was not right. Apparently, Bonó was about to accept the presidency until this event in San Francisco de Macorís. In fact, Cristinacce writes in a letter to Lilís arguing that, "one thing I do know is that he was about to accept when suddenly appeared his rejection; the various parts of society put into motion by budding presidents, have been, for me, the reason for his rejection".[55] The "budding presidents" here refers to the resurging *caudillista* movements around the country. Bonó did not want to participate in that. Other letters also suggest that some in San Francisco de Macorís maneuvered to prevent a Bonó presidency. Because of this "*caos caudillista*" as he called it, he declined the presidency every time.

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[54] Ibid., 502. "Desde ese día el pobre Pedro es considerado un apestado, nadie lo visita, todo el mundo separa su vista de él, en una palabra esta incomunicado y muy triste. Dice que el mundo le da asco y que aunque sabe que no deja de haber mucha gente buena, el suceso lo ha espantado de tal modo que ni amarrado ira a la capital a ceñirse a la corona".

[55] Ibid., 503. "…una cosa sí sé, que él estaba por aceptar cuando de repente apareció la renuncia; las varias capas sociales movidas por los Presidentes *in erba*, han sido para mí el móvil de su renuncia".

Disappointing many in the *Partido Azul*, he was more interested in living a quiet life in Macorís, dedicating himself to writing political essays criticizing structural corruption and working as a local distiller and unpaid doctor. In the story to Cristinacce he explains, "the referred to distiller that was called Pedro, worked with great charity the career of medical doctor in this town and neighboring towns, he cured all of them freely, giving out medicine and even food, and sheets for the more sickly. There was not one in the town that he was not able to cure from a malady, from the haughtiest to the most modest, and all without asking for any pay".[56] This story seems to be more evidence for supporting Cassá and González's label of Bonó as "*un intelectual de los pobres.*" All of the sources show that he was sincerely in solidarity with the poor peasantry. His distrust of Dominican officialdom and charity for the poor are crucial parts for his political critique in the essay "*Opiniones de un Dominicano*" and of course the rest of his works.

He wrote the essay during an election period and it works most generally as an explanation for rejecting the presidency. He repeats many of the same points he makes in the letter to Cristinacce but here, as the title indicates, he is responding as a patriotic citizen, as an anti-imperialist, bi-partisan "*Dominicano*", "without pretending to be a government adviser or caudillo".[57] It appeared as seven different articles in the span of two weeks in the Santiago newspaper *El Eco del Pueblo* in 1884. There is an incomplete, yet compelling eighth article that was never published in the press. Rodríguez Demorizi found the barely legible draft of the chapter in the archives. He writes, "we ignore why

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[56] Ibid., 500. "El referido destilador que se llamaba Pedro, ejercía con gran caridad el oficio de médico en el pueblo y campos vecinos, curaba a todos y daba de balde asistencia, medicina y hasta alimentos, y sabanas a los más necesitados de sus enfermos. No había uno en el pueblo que él no hubiera curado de alguna dolencia, desde los más encopetados hasta los más humildes, y todos de balde."
[57] Ibid., 273. "sin la voz de consultor ni de caudillo".

this last chapter in *Opiniones* was never published. We have used the draft, transcribed with great difficulty, because of the hard to read writing, editing, and notes throughout."[58] Indeed, *Opiniones* is his most organized and carefully argued essay because it reacts urgently to the dramatic changes in the economy that kept accelerating since the end of the 1870s. This urgency responds to the need for a unified leadership in the face of these changes.

It has been well documented that the country was divided regionally due to the ruggedness of the island and other factors. The historically poor and isolated capital barely held control over the rest of the island. To make this point historians often turn to one of Bonó's essays where he describes these regional divisions. As I mentioned earlier on the section on *Apuntes sobre las clases trabajadoras dominicanas*, Bonó wrote that any person setting out from the Cibao to the capital would usually write a will because of the poorly maintained roads. This in turn contributed to the deep divisions between the various political parties, especially the liberal *Partido Azul* of the Cibao and the conservative *Partido Rojo* from the capital. It makes sense, then, that he begins the essay by describing the divisions across the island as an "insoluble antagonism of two different principles".[59] His goal in the essay, then, is to find a way beyond this antagonism, regionalism, and lack of communication between the northern and southern parts of the country.

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[58] Ibid., 295. "Ignoramos por qué causa permaneció inédito este capítulo final de las Opiniones. Hemos utilizado el borrador, transcrito con penosa dificultad, por la oscura caligrafía, a lo que se agregan las inextricables tachaduras y agregados".

[59] Ibid., 274. "antagonismo insoluble de dos principios".

He starts out discussing the importance of overcoming these divisions. Even though he was a member of Luperón's *Partido Azul*, he has no real attachment to either party since, "any blue today, for example, who loses his job or pension that he enjoys, will be tomorrow a red, and that red from yesterday who gets said job or pension, will immediately be a blue".[60] Indeed, in an 1886 letter to Federico Henríquez y Carvajal, Bonó felt that the only viable party was a worker's party because of the corruption and greed of the political elite.[61] Each government, whether ruled by the *Rojos* or *Azules* have been "terrible for the masses of the nation".[62] He wrote again to Cristinacce explaining, "…from my perspective I do not accuse the government nor the blue, red or green parties. They are all the same, except for very few exceptions".[63] He argues that all of the political parties are irrelevant because most of the members are interested only in personal gain, thus the need for a worker's party.

In these introductory points he looks for a way to go beyond regional, *caudillo* politics. To do this he finds it critical to "abandon that superficial talk that says nothing … and also not make drowsy the work and energy of the nation with fictitious changes, with fantasies, with senseless theories".[64] These theories are, of course, the dominant free trade policies of the 1880s that very few criticized in the press. He mentions that he "dissents against all of the general opinions in the national press and in the things [I] hear

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[60] Ibid., 275. "Tal azul de hoy, por ejemplo, a quien quiten el empleo o pensión de que goza, mañana será rojo…"
[61] Ibid., 553. "me parece que no existe ya otro partido contrario al azul más que el de los trabajadores".
[62] Ibid., 274. "pésima para la masa de la nación"
[63] Ibid., 517. "por mi parte yo no acuso al Gobierno ni a los Partidos Azul, Rojo y Verde. Son todas las mismas personas con escasas excepciones".
[64] Ibid., 277. "… abandonar esa parlería superficial que nada encierra… [y] no aletargar el trabajo y energía nacionales con virajes ficticios, con lucubraciones, con teorías insensatas".

in circles that discuss our situation".[65] He felt that he had few allies among the elite of the island, "I haven't heard of anyone, except General Luperón, Hostos, and three or four others who are at the cusp of the opinions and studies in which I have located myself in order to examine our situation".[66] The first step towards breaking down regional divisions, then, is to stop importing theories from abroad that have little to do with the everyday lives of the peasantry, in his view the most critical element of the nation. Always feeling isolated in his opinions, - except in the company of Luperón, Hostos and others - his ideas concerning a "*Partido de los Trabajadores*" are intended to expose the historical irrelevance of the other political parties on the island and the "*clase directora*" in general.

He continues by reacting to the elite's blind faith in the growing sugar industry. Two critical elements of this response are the description of the radical change in the peasantry's relationship to the land and the memory of the *Restauración* (1861-1865). According to him, the peasantry used to be connected to the land as citizens but now due to the shift towards transient, temporary plantation labor, the peasantry no longer has any notion of property. The shift from tobacco to sugar destroyed "the link that unites the landowner to the land, [this link] which makes man's work energetic and forward-thinking". The consequences are that the elite have become "Enemies-in-the-flesh of an innocent population". Destruction of the energetic labor of peasant tobacco agriculture and the system of *terrenos comuneros* have not inspired a sense of citizenship in the

[65] Ibid., 277. "… disiento en todo y por toda de las apreciaciones generales que veo en la prensa nacional y oigo en los círculos donde se examina y discute nuestra situación".
[66] Ibid., 518. "… yo no he visto más que al General Luperón, a Hostos y a tres o cuatro que están a la altura de las opiniones y de los estudios en que yo me he colocado para considerar nuestros asuntos".

masses, or, as he significantly labels them, "the nation itself." However, he is at times quite paternalist, insisting that peasant culture needed guidance from better-intentioned elites. He at times sees sectors of the peasantry as illiterate agriculturalists who have worked without the input from enlightened elites.

In addition, he wanted to strengthen a more authentic sense of Dominican citizenship that had been passed down from the revolutionary culture and popular politics of the *cantones* of the Restoration period. Indeed, in much of Bonó, as well as in Luperón's writings, there is a strong nostalgia for the anti-colonialism and anti-racism of the *Restauración*. He argues that the elite are forgetting the principles of the *Restauración* in their defense of sugar as they are "… recently in a great hurry destroying everything that was left over by the *cantones*".[67] The entire period after 1865 appears in the essay as a continuous failure because the promises of the *Restauración* are never realized.

He reacts to the unprecedented growth of mechanized sugar plantations when the island becomes, for the first time since the late 1500s, another Caribbean zone of intense commodity production. It is a tremendous moment in the history of the Caribbean as Cuban planters that formerly depended on slave labor in Cuba now shifted their operations to a free-labor based system in Santo Domingo. Sugar was now producing a sort of "second slavery" in the Dominican Republic.[68] Sugar traveled from Saint Domingue to Cuba in the early 1800s and now from Cuba to Santo Domingo in the late

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[67] Ibid., 281. "… a toda prisa acabando de destruir los restos que dejaron los cantones".
[68] For the Cuban context see Ferrer, Ada, "Cuban Slavery and Atlantic Antislavery" (2008). Also see Tomich, Dale, *Through the Prism of Slavery: Labor, Capital, and World Economy* (World Social Change). New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003. Also see Ferrer's recent, *Freedom's Mirror: Cuba and Haiti in the Age of Revolution* (2014).

1800s. This transition, in part due to the Cuban wars of independence, was a critical event in Dominican labor history. Bonó's essay provides a fine space to explore these changes.

In opposition to how most of the elite saw the emergence of the sugar industry as utopic, Bonó represents it as a geographic and economic catastrophe. The industry has destroyed the *conucos* and *terreros comuneros* where a previously poor yet free population now only have access to highly exploitative and temporary labor that in the end only benefits the interests of foreign capital. Few saw the emergence of sugar as "a situation pregnant with catastrophe … to be seen with terror".[69] He writes that "the soul of the nation itself"– the peasantry - has been, "dislocated, dispossessed, pushed towards barbarism, and in such a way that it has been made incapable to fruitfully help the same capital which exploits it, who in the end will not be able to realize its responsibilities of citizenship, nor with the responsibilities of family life, and falling into pauperism, will demand from the rest of the nation impossible services, or from the foreigner, protection and shelter".[70] In addition to separating families and destroying any sense of citizenship among the peasantry, sugar has done away with "…the way in which a population of nomadic and ambulant customs could move around freely, daughters of the pastoral profession and the secular work of harvesting mahogany". He concludes that the peasantry now only have access to alienated labor.

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[69] *Papeles de Pedro Bonó,* 280. "Situación terrible preñada de catástrofes… y no hay hombres de Estado dominicano que la vea sin terror".

[70] Ibid., 280. "… dislocada, desposeída, empujada hacia la barbarie, y de tal modo inhabilitada para ayudar con fruto al capital que la explota, que al fin no podrá ejercer sus deberes de ciudadanía, ni cumplir con los de padre de familia, y cayendo en el pauperismo, exigirá del resto de la Nación servicios imposibles, o del extranjero protección y amparo".

It is compelling that Bonó asks the press, "did you fear that we were enemies of capital?" He argues that he is not anti-capitalist but for the alliance of labor and capital and against "the social injustices that drags along infinite disasters, injustices that make man fall from his high position of rational, intelligent and independent being, to a brute, to a thing".[71] He wants a "better-advised capital" where the sugar workers could somehow become co-owners of what is produced. He later concedes though that the industry would never implement these kinds of alliances since it never came in to the island with these ideas in mind. Instead, the industry seeks accumulation without regard for how it is produced, as it comes from former slave-owning Cuban planters and US expansionists wishing to continue the same labor practices.

An important element of this essay is its defense of manual labor - in the tradition of Andrés Bello. Indeed, Bello's poetry is quoted throughout Bonó's texts - which appears as anti-colonial. He notes that all manufactured products on the island are imported, "from the cooking pot to even the fork and spoons, are produced by foreigners".[72] For him, this has produced a kind of national inertia that prevents national cohesion. He reminds of José Martí when he claims that these are "the remnants of ignorance and supremacy of the dominating castes, of nobility, its privileges, and the remains of slavery".[73] The existing traditions of the working class – even the humble professions of carpenters, blacksmiths, construction workers, gun-makers etc. - should

[71] Ibid., 282. "Temieron acaso que fuésemos enemigos del capital?" … as injusticias sociales que arrastran consigo desastres infinitos, las que hacen descender al hombre de su alta posición de ser racional, inteligente, independiente, a la de bruto, a la de cosa
[72] Ibid., 283. "… desde la cazuela hasta el tenedor y las cucharas, son producidos por extranjeros".
[73] Ibid., 285. "… restos de ignorancia y de la supremacía de las castas dominadoras, de la nobleza y sus privilegios [de] las reminiscencias de la esclavitud".

have been continued and perfected after independence in order not to be at the mercy of monoculture and foreign capital. For Bonó, the loss of this domestic labor has stalled the growth of Dominican nationhood. Interestingly, he writes that there no longer exist "centers of free and ennobling learning of manual work similar to the three or four that there were in the country forty years ago".[74] He must be referring to "*centros*" that existed during Boyer's period, which is compelling, yet unclear - more archival research is necessary. In the end, his argument is that the end of dignified, manual labor has not been able to inspire citizenship since, "one cannot love, no matter how hard one tries, what makes us unhappy".[75]

The relationship between the city and the countryside is critical in all of Bonó but he develops it further in this essay. He argues that the elite are completely disconnected from the real elements of the island, in this case the peasantry and its labor. This disconnection is due to giving "more emphasis on word than spirit; it is all about form, the ideal of saying it well is sought, an excessive cult for things that are empty, senseless, details, numbers, trivialities and infantile phantasmagoria".[76] In their way of going about Dominican social problems – using theories from abroad not applicable to the island - the elite have not found the best method for understanding the peasantry.

To develop this argument he specifically addresses the issue of worker protest and rural insurgency. Bonó knew that the peasantry were susceptible to injustices in the way

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[74] Ibid., 286. "centro de aprendizaje gratuito y enaltecedor del trabajo manual parecido a los tres o cuatro que hace cuarenta años había en el país".
[75] Ibid., 287. "No se puede amar, las más de las veces, lo que nos hace infelices".
[76] Ibid., 287. "… más extensión a la letra que al espíritu; la forma lo abarca todo, se persigue el ideal del bien decir… se le rinde un culto excesivo en materias de suyo vacías sin sentido, en detalles numerosos de trivialidades y fantasmagorías infantiles".

that the production and distribution of tobacco worked, he always criticized the various middle men involved in the process of exporting tobacco, "can a tobacco planter keep loving the urban man that defrauds him of thirty pounds in each quintal of tobacco?"[77] He notes that the Dominican elite falsely attribute these "*protestas del trabajador*" to the supposed inherent barbarism of the peasantry. He also argues that this reaction – blaming the peasantry - is fundamentally racist. Interestingly, he sees the European elite as capable of understanding the issue, but not the Dominican elite, "in Europe … such explosions of the proletariat are rightly attributed to the exploitation of capital, to the bad organization of work in general, to the little participation of workers in the benefits realized by capital".[78]

The consequence of this dynamic between the city and countryside is that the peasant always goes against "whatever political party is supported in the city".[79] The peasant prefers to ignore the city and "fix his differences in the *monte*".[80] Bonó's answer is to this conflict is to form a pact between the city and countryside by dignifying national industries, "these pacts would establish relationships of mutual economic services that would unify the population, in general, they would make it more enlightened, more moral … because in addition to the accumulation of national riches that would be cast on the market, they would engage all of the professions in the sole spirit of unifying property

[77] Ibid., 289. "Podrá un veguero amar más al hombre [de la ciudad] que le defrauda treinta libras en cada quintal de tabaco".
[78] Ibid., 289. "En Europa… atribuyen con más fundamento parecidas explosiones del proletariado a los sufrimientos de este, a la explotación del capital, a la mala organización del trabajo en general, a la poca participación de los trabajadores en los beneficios realizados".
[79] Ibid., 288. "… casi siempre abraza … el partido contrario al que siguen las ciudades".
[80] Ibid., 290. "… arreglar sus diferencias en el monte".

against the common enemy, which are those who do not work materially nor liberally".[81] Without this, the island remains fragmented, dependent and open to foreign intervention.

As Rodríguez Demorizi mentions, Bonó's last article of *Opiniones* was never published and we only have a few parts of it that were difficult to transcribe. It mainly addresses the issue of public debt. It is uncanny that he presages the first US occupation of 1916-1924 and the accompanying rural *gavillero* insugency, "the public debt and the creation of a bank with foreign capital surprises of a danger that no great wisdom can prevent … it is by necessity that the foreigner be who administers the bank and from that moment enters directly and personally in the public administration of Dominicans … the government is substituted in every way".[82] This occurred in 1907 when total control of Dominican finances were handed over to the U.S, which later turned into a full occupation of the island and the development of the Trujillo dictatorship. He later mentions that violent reactions from the peasantry would be inevitable, presaging the political dynamics of the early twentieth-century in the Dominican Republic.

In this brilliantly organized essay, Bonó synthesizes many of his previous ideas. He acutely explores the major issues that were key for him in thinking about Santo Domingo after the restoration. The essay explores the structure of political parties, foreign capital, Dominican post/coloniality the changes due to the sugar industry and the

[81] Ibid., 290. "Estos oficios establecerían relaciones de servicios económicos mutuos que unificarían a la población en general, la harían más ilustrada, más moral… porque además de la suma de riquezas nacionales que arrojarían al mercado, trabaría todos los gremios en el solo pensamiento de la propiedad uniéndolos contra el enemigo común, que son los que no trabajan material ni liberalmente".
[82] Ibid., 297. "el empréstito exterior y la creación de un banco con capital extranjero extraña un peligro que no hay sagacidad que pueda evitar... es de necesidad que el extranjero sea quien administre el banco y desde ese momento entra directa y personalmente en la administración pública de los dominicanos … se sustituye el gobierno en todo y por todo".

peasantry's relationship to land.[83] He had already examined these issues before but the difference now was a growing sense of urgency, and the need to articulate his thoughts in a forceful, presentable manner. Clearly his warnings were never taken seriously but a few of the elite welcomed the essay, especially Luperón, Hostos and Federico Henríquez y Carvajal. Interestingly, the essay was also published in Cuba, as a letter from Pedro Gautreaux shows. Gautreaux, a Dominican living in exile in Havana, refers to the political parties that Bonó analyzes as "vampires that … are filthy rich … their main objective is themselves; and later they let foreign capital run its course, because from that they take their share and care very little what happens to others".[84] He later writes, "…there is no shortage of men in exile of honorable and patriotic spirit, if not of great intelligence, that contribute and share in your ideas".[85] I mention this letter in order to show that he had support abroad and to start reworking the narrative that Bonó was completely alone in his political ideas. This dominant narrative is partly due to how he constantly refers to himself in personal letters as *clamando en el desierto* but it is also because there is much more archival work to do to understand nineteenth-century Dominican intellectual history in a pan-Caribbean frame.[86] There seemed to have been networks of exiled figures that shared Bonó's anti-imperial ideas. He clearly had allies in surrounding areas of the Caribbean.

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[83] For recent work on the coining of and significance of the term "post/colonial" see Chris Bongie, *Friends and Enemies: The Scribal Politics of Post/Colonial Literature* (2009).
[84] *Papeles de Pedro Bonó*, 496. "Vampiros que… están repletos de dinero… su principal objeto es sostenerse; y luego dejar correr los capitales extranjeros, porque de estos recogen ellos su parte y poco les importa los demás".
[85] Ibid., 497. "…no faltan también en el extranjero hombres de corazón honrado y patriota, si no de gran inteligencia, que coadyuven en sus [Bonó's] ideas".
[86] See Eller. "A Sea of Jackals: Santo Domingo/The Dominican Republic in Nineteenth-Century Historiography" (2014).

La República Dominicana y la República Haitiana (1885)

The mid-1880s are an interesting time of renewed Dominican-Haitian tensions. In the press, especially in Santiago, there were concerns over renewed military conflict with Haiti. These concerns were probably in part due to the increasing outside pressure facing Haiti during Lysius Salomón's 1879-1888 government. According to Luperón, in 1885 Salomón had been on alert about possible aggression from abroad and dramatically increased military efforts, "…[Salomón] increases his army, buys enormous amounts of modern weapons, rebuilds the old fortifications of both borders, repairs his three steam warships and installs in them cannons of greater caliber, orders a new, bigger warship from Europe".[87] Apparently, these military efforts were Salomón's response to the growth of the sugar industry in the east, the Haitian state saw the growth of sugar in Santo Domingo as a threat. Luperón, in turn, saw this military growth as a threat to Dominican sovereignty. For all of Luperón's previous collaborations during the restoration war with Haiti, he is quite negative towards "Musú Salomón" (as he intends to insult him) and average Haitians as well, "he is as all of the Haitians are and will always be, enemies of Dominican Independence, of our progress, of our liberties, of our benevolent hospitality to foreigners".[88] Indeed, the point is that the development of massive sugar plantations in the east of Santo Domingo affected Haitian/Dominican

[87]*Papeles de Pedro Bonó*, 523. "Aumenta su ejército, compra grandes cantidades de armamentos modernos, reedifica las viejas fortificaciones de ambas fronteras, repara sus tres vapores de guerra y embarca en ellos cañones de mayor calibre, manda a comprar en Europa otro vapor más grande".
[88]Ibid., 523. "… él es como todos los haitianos lo son y lo serán siempre, enemigo de la independencia del pueblo dominicano, de nuestro pobre progreso, de nuestras libertades, de nuestra benévola hospitalidad con los extranjeros".

relations significantly. The east was now opening up to foreign capital, producing newer tensions between a Haitian state wary of the interests of foreign capital.

Bonó writes directly of Haitian-Dominican relations for the first time in this 1885 essay. He writes it to stress the hemispheric realities of Santo Domingo – that Santo Domingo has been more susceptible to foreign intervention than any other island in the Caribbean since the 1600s - and how this presents a problem for the consolidation of a viable Dominican nation-state. He uses this opportunity of renewed tensions between Haiti and Santo Domingo to meditate on the development of foreign investment in San Pedro de Macorís and its implications for Dominican nationhood and the everyday lives of average Dominicans. He argues that corruption and personal gain (represented by the historical lessons of Báez and Santana especially) are what should trouble Dominicans, not necessarily the real or imagined development of military conflict with Haiti. At first he mentions that such a war is unlikely, but ends the essay rallying the press in case it were to happen. Using strong military language, he writes, "if the traditional enemy [Haiti] … is mining all of its bastions, if … the Dominican Republic thinks that the moment has arrived to set fire to the counter-mine, then so be it with good methods and resolution".[89]

This "*contramina*" does not necessarily refer to developing a strong military, however. What needs to happen, he argues, is to organize a nation-state that the masses would actually want to be a part of by finding a way to privilege the interests of the

[89] Ibid., 348. "Si el enemigo tradicional [Haiti] que desde 1863 por nuestros desaciertos viene minando todos los baluartes, todo el suelo en que sus fundadores asentaron la República Dominicana, cree que ha llegado el momento de pegar fuego a su mina, es preciso empezar la contramina con buenos instrumentos y con resolución".

peasantry – a peasantry long used to urban disdain and skeptical of urban labor designs. Again, he constantly refers back to the restoration war in the essay. The peasantry, used to autonomy and free access to land, had good reasons for overwhelmingly fighting against Spanish annexation due to the fears of the return of slavery - Spain was an entrenched slave power in 1861. In the 1880s, with the appearance of sugar plantations that remind of slavery, the peasantry would shrug at military incursion into the east from Haiti (Haitian military efforts that were rooted in legitimate concerns over newer imperial currents), Bonó argues. Nationhood would have to come "from below", since, as he ends the essay, the goal is to have a labor model that privileges the daily well-being and freedom of the "*clases trabajadoras*", "it is not enough, we repeat, it is not about dying well: one wants to live; but to live free and restfully". Here he again repeats his ideas that appear in *Opiniones de un Dominicano*. What is important is for the majority of the population to live well and to not be misguided by misplaced ideas of progress.

Corruption and the excess of the growing sugar industries have made the peasantry indifferent to the creation of a Dominican nation-state. The state has not, " known how to make itself loved as a loving mother by the majority, which are the downtrodden, and it will have a hard time finding stockpiles of arms and supplies if extravagance and greed have wasted the source that produces them, which is the respect of the worker and the fruits of his labor".[90] He again attributes this indifference to the mistake of importing ideas that have destroyed small-scale labor, "the small-scale worker of the Cibao, after sterile attempts at café, cacao, and cotton, imposed by petty politicians

[90] Ibid., 342. "… sabido hacer amar la patria por el mayor número que son los pequeños, como madre amorosa; y mal podrá encontrar acopios de armas y bastimentos si la prodigalidad y la codicia han agotado la fuente que los produce, que es el respeto al trabajador y al fruto de su trabajo".

that do not let them calmly direct their own work, is now errant from mine to farm; from farm to railroad; from swamps to the cultivation of logwood; he has forgotten his *bohío*, his farm, his *conuco* and with his ruin the resources that offered the *cantones* and the family of the wars of the first republic and the restoration have also been destroyed".[91] These new developments in Dominican labor have alienated the majority of the population who now feel little need to defend against Haiti if conflicts were renewed, he argues. Again, he continually contrasts this sharply with previous moments when statehood may have mattered to the masses of the island.

Indeed, the memory of the *Restauración* is a critical element in all of Bonó's texts after the 1880s, after the initial struggles of the second Republic (1865-1879). Luperón, Bonó and other radical elites who fought against the annexation saw themselves as part of a disappearing, older generation. The new generation who led the government in the late 1880s were only interested in personal gain, they argued. In a letter to Bonó, Luperón wrote, "this corrupt generation, with difficulty will make sacrifices in the holy name of the nation. The stomach dictates his actions and now very few remain of that legendary generation that with its unending grandeur, still live in the heart of the grateful nation".[92] Nostalgia for what the restoration represented – anti-imperialism, anti-slavery, the end of regional *caudillismo* and racial, class, and pan-Caribbean alliances – was very real in Dominican literary currents of the 1880s and 1890s. But unfortunately, the development

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[91] Ibid., 342. "El pequeño labrador del Cibao después de pruebas estériles sobre el café, cacao, algodón, impuestas por politicastros que no lo dejan tranquilamente dirigir su trabajo, anda errante de minas a fincas; de fincas a ferrocarriles; de ciénagas a cortes de Campeche; ha olvidado su bohío, su fundo, sus conucos y con su ruina han quedado destruido el abastecimiento que tuvo el cantón y la familia en las guerras de la primera República y Restauración".

[92] Ibid., 523. "Esta generación corrompida, con dificultad hará un sacrificio en el ara Santa de la Patria. El estómago le dicta su proceder y ya quedan muy pocos de aquella generación legendaria que con su grandeza inmarcesible, vive aún en el corazón de la Patria agradecida".

of the sugar industry served up another blow to the goals of the restoration war, especially for Bonó and other radicals. These older racial and class alliances are being dismantled by the corruption of the 1880s which is "recent and reprehensible" but still corrigible.[93] Bonó calls on the press to remember the *Restauración* in order to help end the corruption:

> I myself had the honor of participating with those of the restoration, who are nothing less – if comparison is even merited – than the heroic, most classical of nations. Grand epochs of my nation, I salute thee with respect and if moved I evoke you, it is so that such grand and beneficial lessons are not forgotten by the present generation, so that having them in sight, guided by them, can counsel and help the governments that rule us, to not convert empirical methods so foolishly employed in the Republic into generalized system, which consist of the following formula that synthesizes it: wring out the worker, to the degree that he is exhausted, desperate, and ends up indifferent to the conservation of the Republic.[94]

He fears that the ideas brought on by the development of the sugar industry are being converted into a generalized system. Protecting the working classes and remembering the restoration are critical to face the changes produced by foreign investment in the east.

In his effort to "reorganize patriotism" and to mark the importance of defending the interests of the peasantry to face a real or imagined threat from Haiti, he returns to his earlier ideas on Santo Domingo's mixed-race cosmopolitism. This idea is a reaction to the outside aggression that both Haiti and Santo Domingo have endured since the Haitian Revolution. Both states - intensely isolated historically, always threatened – are subject

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[93] Ibid., 341."Ella es reciente y represible [sic]".

[94] Ibid., 341. "Yo mismo tuve el honor de participar en los que se hicieran en la Restauración, que ni menores fueran, ni comparación tienen, solo con los heroicos de los pueblos más clásicos de todos los tiempos. Épocas grandiosas de mi patria, yo os saludo con respeto y si conmovido os evoco, es para que tan altas y provechosas lecciones la sociedad presente no las olvide, para que teniéndolas a la vista, y guiada por ellas, aconseje y ayude a los gobiernos que nos rigen, a no convertir en sistema los métodos empíricos corrientes tan torpemente empleados en la República y que consisten en esta fórmula que los condensa: estrujar al trabajador, hasta el grado que exangüe, desesperado, le sea indiferente la conservación de la República".

to interests that "other American nations can forget."[95] To deal with these historical conditions, he develops this idea of Santo Domingo's "*cosmopolitismo*" while opposing it to Haiti's "*exclusivismo negro*". Significantly, Bonó does argue that this "*exclusivismo negro*" is a product of elite interests within Haiti and not necessarily representative of popular sentiment on the island. "*La política ultanegra*" serves against the interests of a thriving *antillanista* coalition, since "international solidarity, which is such an immanent right, so extensive and absolute, that every civilization, even the Roman, has had to submit itself to it".[96] In other words, outside influence must be dealt with and racial alliances are necessary for Santo Domingo/Haiti's "*situación geográfica*". Lessons from both Santo Domingo and Haiti serve as a map for *antillanismo*, generally. He sees Santo Domingo/Haiti as the starting point for these coalitions to face imperialism.

This essay is often misread as an expression of Bonó's anti-Haitianism.[97] There are moments in the essay where he describes Haitian-Dominican relations as "a fundamental, indestructible antagonism", a "perpetual antagonism" and as "hereditary enemies". He writes, "¿which statesman that by observing the origin, language, traditions, habits, race, and dominant tendencies of each nation, especially the ones that refer to policies with white foreigners, since the respective foundations of each autonomous nation and ceaselessly followed by each state throughout its vicissitudes,

[95] Ibid., 345. "… que otras naciones americanas pueden olvidar".
[96] Ibid., 345. "…la solidaridad internacional que es un derecho tan inmanente, tan lato y omnímodo, que toda nación, hasta la Romana, ha tenido que someterse a él".
[97] See Francisco Avelino Stanley, "La interpretación de Pedro Francisco Bonó sobre la dominicanidad y la haitianidad." Ponencia presentada en el IX Seminario de Historia Local Pedro Francisco Bonó a 100 años de su fallecimiento, celebrado en San Francisco de Macorís el sábado 9 de septiembre de 2006. Clío, 2006, 172.

does not maintain each nation as having such opposite purposes?"[98] What he is referring to, however, is not some timeless, natural conflict located in 1822-1844, as the traditional, *trujillista* narrative goes. He criticizes the misguided ideas of heads of state, not popular sentiment, "the blame falls entirely on the directors of national life … statesmen … are not able to take on the collection of facts and general interests, in their relationship with sovereign life".[99] In Bonó, popular sentiment is prioritized over state-led efforts. His main object of critique is always the elite in both Haiti and Santo Domingo.

In sum, Bonó tries to play down the renewed tensions between Haiti and the Dominican Republic due to the growth of the sugar industry, focusing instead on the challenges shared across the island. In addition, instead of seeing Haiti in complete opposition to "dominicanness" – as the *trujillista* narrative goes – Bonó chooses to focus on the socio-economic disparities within Dominican society itself that interrupt the rise of a strong nationalist sentiment. Since the current system favors a small oligarchic elite, the masses are increasingly detaching themselves from a *dominicanidad* worth protecting. He believed that this had to be remedied by defending industries like tobacco and creating a more just system of relations between city and countryside. He believed his ideas would better Haitian-Dominican relations.

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[98] *Papeles de Pedro Bonó,* 343. "Cuál es el hombre de Estado, que al observar el origen, el idioma, las tradiciones, hábitos, raza en mayoría y tendencias dominantes de uno y otro pueblo, sobre todo en lo que se refiere a la política con los extranjeros de raza blanca, desde la fundación respectiva de ambas autonomías e imperturbablemente seguida por uno y otro Estado al través de sus vicisitudes, no mantiene a ambas naciones tan opuestos propósitos".

[99] Ibid., 345. "La culpa toda entera recae en los directores de la vida nacional … los hombres de Estado … no pueden abarcar el conjunto de los hechos e intereses generales, en sus relaciones con la vida autonómica".

This chapter examined Bonó's essays in the context of elite optimism in the 1880s. He would radicalize further during the "order and progress" dictatorship of Lilís in the 1890s when he developed ideas of anti-imperialist Caribbean unity with Santo Domingo/Haiti as the center of a new, free Caribbean.

Chapter Four

Contrapunteo del tabaco y el cacao: Bonó and Antillanismo, 1895-1906

Congreso Extraparlamentario is Bonó's most radical text. It was published in 1895, during the height of the "order and progress" dictatorship of Ulises "Lilís" Heaureaux (1845-1899). The text synthesizes his earlier ideas on tobacco and citizenship. Building on his earlier thoughts, it is here that the remarkably "ortizian" claim appears, that "tobacco is democratic and cacao oligarchic". His alternative to massive sugar plantations is also more clearly developed in this essay. I argue that, in his isolation in San Francisco de Macorís, he becomes an "organic intellectual" in the Gramscian sense, using the flexibility of the essay as genre to express a type of popular politics that was comprehensible to an elite, public realm.

It had been ten years since Bonó published anything by the time that this tremendous essay appeared in newspapers throughout the country in July of 1895. The last full-length essay he published, *La República Haitiana y la República Dominicana*, dated from 1885. From 1885 to 1895, all we have are a few letters rejecting offers for the presidency and news to his friends addressing health issues or reasons explaining his inability to participate in public life. Part of the reason for this silence was undoubtedly the repressive political apparatus that Lilís had set up, dissent was unapologetically punished. Writing about Bonó's essay, the early twentieth-century historian Manuel Ubaldo Gómez y Moya was in part correct in affirming that "the deliberations of the imagined congress were a fine and subtle critique of the poor administration and the

rampant corruption of those days" (207).[1] But Bonó's arguments on the growing sugar and cacao industries are not so subtle, they are a virulent, direct and personal attack against "egoism and abandonment … and the phantom of progress that many laud without proof".[2] He had already been writing against the imminent, drastic changes in the Dominican economy since the late 1870s but this text goes further in its critique of these changes in both method and content. The essay is in many ways a reformulation of *Apuntes sobre las clases trabajadoras Dominicanas* (1880). In this later version he repeats many of his earlier thoughts on Haiti, colonialism, tobacco, hemispheric conflicts, sugar and Dominican history but here he is more explicit in what he thinks the role of the peasantry should be in bringing about an alternative model of development that in the end would delegitimize the *latifundia*. Finally bridging the chasm between idealistic liberal discourse (*a la* Gregorio Luperón or Manuel Rodríguez Objío or other earlier restoration idealists like Francisco del Rosario Sánchez) and practice, he argued for the creation of a broad *antillanista* coalition of mixed-race republics (Haiti and Santo Domingo at the forefront) that would end intra-island regional conflicts as well challenge newer, imperial encroachment coming from the north. Elites and peasants would create a *transacción* (agreement). Elites would respect the *trabajo silencioso* of revolutionary peasant culture and wait for change to come from the designs of peasants themselves. Through this *transacción*, an orderly agricultural republic would finally be created based on active,

[1] "Las deliberaciones del Congreso imaginario eran una crítica fina y sutil de la mala administración y de la corrupción implantada en aquellos días".
[2] *Papeles de Pedro Bonó*, 574. "El egoismo y el abandono y… el fantasma de progreso del país que muchos sin pruebas decantan".

albeit humble, labor. *Antillanista* citizenship would also be inspired by the social relations that tobacco produced, both symbolic and concrete.

Before going into the details of the essay, it is interesting to look at a few of his letters written around this time. A month before the publication of *Congreso Extraparlamentario*, Bonó asked Lilís for a better printing house for San Francisco de Macorís, the tiny Cibao town he had been living in since 1865. Interestingly, Lilís had sent his condolences about a recent fire that burned down Bonó's house. Indeed, the letters suggest that Lilís had something to do with the fire. This would not be surprising given Lilís' well-documented, violent, political maneuvering to consolidate power as well as his tense relationship with Bonó (After his 1899 assassination, for example, Lilís always appears as "*El tirano*" in Bonó's letters). By 1885 Lilís had full control of the government since most of his political opponents were exiled, assassinated or silenced. His main opposition, Luperón - once Lilís' mentor and now enemy - was living out the final two years of his life in Saint Thomas after unsuccessfully trying to get help from Haiti to overthrow Lilís. Comfortable in his control over his political enemies, Lilís wrote Bonó sarcastically, "it seems like this year begins with a bad omen … both the unfortunate and the fortunate have to suffer the consequences of so many calamities".[3] In response, Bonó is broken by the loss of his house. Returning Lilís's sarcasm, he apologizes for not participating much in public life and admits that he had done little to collaborate with Lilís's government. But he was finally ready to offer something, "despite my years and health, I would like to offer some help to the public conversation.

[3] Ibid., 574. "Parece que este año se nos presenta con mal cariz … el que más y el que menos, tiene que sufrir la consecuencia de tantas calamidades".

I see so many sad and miserable people that I would like to do something for my poor nation. My weapons are in discourse, but I have nowhere to lecture. There is only one small, miserable printing house".[4] Later in the letter he promises not to criticize the government for which Lilís responds, "a man blessed with such prudence …could he be suspected of hurting or destroying the interests of his ally? … Definitely not". Bonó did not keep this promise for the essay is a personal attack on the political corruption that Lilís had come to embody. It is surprising that nothing happened to Bonó after this essay. Lilís was probably too embroiled in the political intrigue that kept developing in the years before his assassination in 1899.

The essay is a great document for studying the period from 1886-1899 in Santo Domingo, the years under which Lilís definitively integrated Santo Domingo into the international economy and commanded almost total control over other *caudillos*. He was named "*El Pacificador*" for ending the rivalries that characterized the period of the Second Republic, from the 1860s, after the Restoration, through the 1890s. Writing ten years into the dictatorship, Bonó was allowed to publish because Lilís was finally loosening his grip on the press as he was under growing pressure from other elite circles. Criticism was growing as observers noticed that he was pocketing much of the foreign capital that was entering the country supposedly for investment in transportation infrastructure and agriculture. Political movements were strengthening to overthrow Lilís, and he was assassinated just four years after Bonó published this essay.

[4] Ibid., 575. "Yo, a pesar de mis años y achaques, quisiera hoy poner un poco de ayuda en la cosa pública. Veo a todos tan tristes, tan miserables, que desearía hacer algo por mi pobre patria. Mis armas son la predicación, pero no tengo púlpito donde subirme. Aquí solo hay una imprentica tan mísera …".

It is this heightened tension towards the end of Lilis's dictatorship that the text captures so well. *Congreso Extraparlamentario's* tone is initially humble and self-effacing. For example, Bonó demands that it be published without any advertisements and that it should be free to the public, "it is free and few copies will be published because of the lack of funds without payment and it does not accept advertisements".[5] This modesty is a general characteristic of all of his writings but it also clearly functions in part to oppose the excess and inequality the sugar industry produced during these last years of the century. Interestingly, this was also the moment when newspapers started publishing more advertisements for products than journalistic, political or cultural content.[6]

Bonó was anxious about the possible dangerous consequences of its publication. He was surely aware of famous cases like that of the La Vega newspaper, *El Cibaeño*, whose editors, Manuel A. Salguero and Arismendi Robiou, were threatened and imprisoned for publishing radical ideas about something as seemingly innocuous as the death penalty.[7] Lilís allowed for no dissent, and the text carries this anxiety throughout as Bonó's representation of his imaginary *congreso* always ends in overwhelming disapproval and violence after each meeting (Or at the end of each publication since the essay was published as a series). Bonó nonetheless hopes that "by entering the *palenque* of journalism … the newspaper will welcome it with benevolence and, pardoning its

[5] Ibid., 352. "Es gratuito y su tirada muy limitada … por la escasez de fondos … sin exigir … retribución alguna … no admite colaboraciones ni anuncios".
[6] See Baldasty, Gerald. *The Commercialization of News in the Nineteenth Century* (1992).
[7] See Gómez y Moya. *Resumen de la Historia de Santo Domingo* (1922), 207.

faults, as it is only a report of a reunion taking place in the forests."[8] As I show later on, for all of the anxiety over disapproval from Lilís's government and the media, only two responses to *Congreso Extraparlamentario* appeared in the press.[9]

The essay is structured as a series of seven meetings in clear, everyday language and asks for no public reaction until the third article, the part where he details the bulk of his argument. It works as a conversation in the middle of the *monte* between "*Diputados*" elected from all over the country while peasants – tobacco farmers, cattle ranchers, young men and women selling *comida criolla* - listen in and react to the *Diputados'* proposals. Aside from a scene between the peasants themselves speaking about the ideas of the *Diputados*, the text works as a dialogue on the state of the Dominican economy, particularly the shift that was occurring from tobacco to cacao and sugar. It is performed "*en lengua propia*," in a language that the surrounding peasants can understand. One peasant appreciates the lack of jargon, "that president went up, up, but did not remain in the air like a party balloon, like many who talk to us all the time in a type of jargon that we don't understand, that they themselves don't even understand. [The president] after all of this then went straight to us to defend us, to protect us, good heavens, I did not jump up and hug him because it was not appropriate!"[10] The last article is a conversation among the *Diputados* analyzing why the *Congreso* was bound to fail due to the nature of Dominican politics and its "*reliquias del coloniaje espanol*." As

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[8] *Papeles de Pedro Bonó*, 353. "al entrar en el palenque periodístico … espera de ella y del público lo acojan con benevolencia perdonando sus faltas, ya que solo es el diario de una reunión congregada entre los bosques".

[9] See "Exposición de los vegueros del cibao" in *Papeles de Pedro Bonó*, 407.

[10] Ibid., 376. "Ese presidente fue subiendo, subiendo, pero no se quedó en los aires a manera de globo de papel de fiestas, como muchos que cotidianamente se mantienen hablándonos en una especie de jerigonza que no comprendemos, ni ellos mismos entienden. Este después de subir, bajó derechito entre nosotros a defendernos, a protegernos, ¡caramba! No salté y lo abracé … porque no era bien visto".

I explore later in the chapter, Bonó's project in *Congreso Extraparlamentario* is concluded in the 1896 essay, *Exposición de los vegueros del Cibao*, a conversation among the ex-*Diputado*s lamenting that the ideas of the *Congreso* were largely ignored both by the press and the public.

While most of the *Diputados* have something important to contribute to the conversation, from *diputado* A, of the populous district of the capital and thus president of the *Congreso*, to *diputado* K from the tiny region for Espaillat, it is convenient that Diputado B(onó), from Santiago, the most important city of the Cibao region, offers most of the ideas. The first article of the essay sets the scene. It focuses on the organization and setting of the *Congreso* and has one of the first presidential speeches. As a sort of *costumbrista* sketch, the text insists on the beauty of the *monte*. In part responding to the changes in landscape that were occurring in the east due to the growth of the *latifundia*, he writes, "there … in the open air, under the thick brush, under the immense plain … with enchanting views and surrounded by all of the luxury of our exhuberant vegetation … [the *diputado*s] start to seriously discuss the challenging and difficult problems that our society demands that we fix with urgency".[11]

Diputado A's first speech focuses on the urgency of their gathering and on the problem of using outside theoretical frameworks for studying the Dominican economy and argues that the point of this meeting in *el monte* is to find "…more rational approaches with the natural state of the Republic".[12] Bonó argues that in order to find

[11] Ibid., 355. "Allí … al aire libre, bajo el espeso y verde follaje de árboles … en medio del inmenso llano que a veces tiene por límite el horizonte, con vistas encantadoras y rodeados de todo el lujo de nuestra exuberante vegetación … entran de lleno a discutir los altos y difíciles problemas de que la sociedad … pide que con gran urgencia se resuelvan".
[12] Ibid., 356. "Adaptaciones más racionales con el modo de ser natural y estable de la República".

these "natural elements" Santo Domingo should, "analyze the means that are available to the country, its men, its education, its habits and traditions, its property, its neighbors, close and far".[13] The goal is to reframe the methodology for studying Santo Domingo by not applying ideas from elsewhere and studying the very particularities of the country.

Bonó's language in this text is clearly positivist.[14] The second entry is mostly a conversation between the *Diputados* about how to methodically go about studying Santo Domingo's economic problems. In response to one member who wants to understand why Dominican agriculture has brought in so little wealth, *diputado* B(onó) argues that it is too general of a question. Using fashionable clinical metaphors characteristic of the time, he claims that Dominican society is an organism too complicated and that its "body" must be studied in parts, starting with "el tronco", which is, compellingly, the island's "geographic situation". Clinical language is maintained through the end of the *Congreso* when the *diputado*s ask themselves, "it is definitely very strange … that sick patients seen by free doctors consulted to study a case of grave sickness complain and get unfairly irritated wanting to kill the doctor".[15] Bonó the sociologist faithfully ascribes to the belief in rational and "scientific" processes to study Santo Domingo's economy, insisting that there must be a methodology for understanding Dominican social problems. With its emphasis on material growth and well-being, the philosophy seemed appropriate for elites who grappled with the changes occurring in Latin America during the last

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[13] Ibid., 355. "Analizar los medios de que dispone el país, en sus hombres, en su educación, en sus hábitos y tradiciones, en su propiedad, en sus vecinos cercanos o lejanos".
[14] For the influence of positivism in Latin America see Burns, Bradford and Julie A. Charlip. *Latin America: A Concise Interpretive History* (2002).
[15] *Papeles de Pedro Bonó*, 386. "Es por cierto bien extraño … que los médicos gratuitos llamados a consulta en caso de enfermedad grave … vean al enfermo que no alcanza resuello, irritarse inopinadamente queriendo matar al médico de cabecera".

quarter of the nineteenth century. However, he reformulates the way that positivist thought usually worked when imported into Latin America. While other writers focused on the accumulation of private wealth as sacred and called for the importation of European institutions into Latin America, Bonó would sharply criticize this perspective.

It is interesting that the essay also uses the narrative of the devil pact to represent the shift from tobacco to sugar, with its accompanying changes in the landscape. [16] Bonó is surely representing what was a popular way of talking about this shift in the economy. Theories from abroad changed the elite's opinion on the Dominican economy, "opinion changed and they looked for and found sufficient ways to confuse and annihilate tobacco. The following happened to us: we inhabited Eden and instead of enjoying it innocently, they listened to the serpent which in the end banished them from there … it was the abomination of abominations … *vade retro.*" Interestingly, Bonó also represent the peasants as seeing "only wizards and witches that suck the life out of us without knowing who they are".[17]

The third essay continues with how sugar destroys *el monte* and a description of how tobacco benefits the cattle industry. The great proto-ortizian phrase appears here, "… while in tobacco it is all of the workers in action, all of the gaining, all producing and consuming national foods and in the meantime livening society. If it is plausible to

[16] On Devil pacts in the contemporary Dominican Republic see Derby, Robin. "The Devil Wears Dockers: Devil Pacts, Trade Zones and Rural –Urban Ties in the Dominican Republic," (2014). For Latin America in general of course see, Taussig. *The Devil and Commodity Fetishism* (1980).

[17] *Papeles de Pedro Bonó,* 361. "Peor cambió la opinión y buscó y encontró instrumentos suficientes para confundir y aniquilar al tabaco. Así sucedió a nuestros primeros padres; habitaban el Edén y en lugar de gozarlo inocentemente, oyeron a la serpiente que los hizo arrojar de él … fue la abominación de las abominaciones … *vade retro* … hay brujos y brujas que nos chupan hasta el quilo sin saber quiénes son".

categorize both products, I'd say that cacao is oligarchic and tobacco is democratic".[18] In addition to his usual arguments of the democratic nature of tobacco, he also mentions how cacao hurts the cattle industry, "with the destruction of the forests … cattle found itself without being able to forage the fruits that were so important to its nutrition".[19] He argues that for centuries the environment produced a thriving cattle industry thanks to the *monte* - both for exportation and for the daily subsistence for the peasantry. Cacao does not allow for the active, organized, agricultural labor that tobacco promotes. Tobacco provides for a thriving cattle industry, both for export and for the daily subsistence life of the peasantry.

The essay also contributes to understanding the roots of the Dominican tobacco crisis of the 1890s. For Bonó, the tobacco crisis happened because of the different levels of fraud involved in distributing tobacco. At the height of the crisis, as Baud studies, tobacco producers would often fill bags of tobacco with sticks or rocks to try to deal with the tremendous price drops in tobacco.[20] One peasant argues, "… the greedy middlemen cheat us when they buy our tobacco, they cheat us like they cheat the *recueros* with their fraudulent, rocky bags of tobacco that kill their horses, they cheat the Germans, placing the best tobacco on the top and hiding rotten tobacco on the bottom".[21] He argues that the root of the crisis is not global speculation, but these acts of *mala fe* that discredit Dominican tobacco and contributes to these dramatic price drops. His response to the

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[18] Ibid., 363. ". mientras que en el tabaco son todos los trabajadores en acción, todos ganando, todos produciendo y consumiendo víveres nacionales y por tanto vivificando la sociedad. Si fuese dable calificar a ambos productos diría que el cacao es oligarca y que el tabaco es demócrata".
[19] Ibid., 365. "Destruidas las matas y cejas … se vio privada del ramoneo y de las frutas que tanto cooperaban a su alimentación".
[20] See Baud, *Peasants and Tobacco* (1995), 183.
[21] *Papeles de Pedro Bonó,* 370.

problem is to exclusively export high quality tobacco, leaving tobacco of lesser quality for the domestic market in order to help raise the prices once more. Indeed, he argues that if there is anything to learn from sugar it is the simplicity of its distribution: it is produced in the east, and directly sent and sold to markets in the north, without being susceptible to the possibility of fraud. The corrupt networks of middlemen in tobacco are the causes for the tobacco crisis. Therefore, to emulate the way sugar worked, he suggests that foreign inspectors be installed at every point of its distribution.

While much of the essay focuses on these practical fixes, the main argument of the essay is the need to develop a vigorous national economy in the context of the failures of the *fin de siglo* and the "order and progress" regimes in the hemisphere. Opposing prescriptions by fashionable theories, he argues that the whole *fin de siglo* project has discredited itself, "in this epoch, this *fin de siècle,* so full of expired science and progress, not even science nor progress has fulfilled their promises".[22] He criticizes global imperialism and affirms that "everywhere, including metropoles and colonies, we see the whole world moaning and crying".[23] In addition, despite the "defects of organization and equilibrium" in Europe and the United States, the Dominican elite religiously import economic theories from abroad, "we take indistinctly here and there their political and social essays, just as we take all of their odes. We try their constitutions, their monopolies, their free trade; grand industries, railroads". The imported models coming from discredited, imperial regions are what have destroyed an active Dominican labor

[22] Ibid., 374. "En esta época, este fin de siglo tan decantada de ciencia y progreso tan acabado, ni la ciencia ni el progreso han cumplido sus promesas".
[23] Ibid., 375. "En todas partes, incluyendo metrópolis y colonias, a todo el mundo, lo vemos gimiendo y llorando".

culture. He calls for an independent "*obra dominicana*" and "solutions more apt for equality and justice", solutions that ought to come from the peasantry.[24]

Eventually the peasantry that listens in to these arguments overwhelmingly support Bonó's proposition. They come together to offer a party in celebration of the *Diputados* "*a la antigua usanza*". The essay celebrates Dominican traditional culture in order to validate it and to oppose it to the importation of European and North American culture; they have a party that looks like this, "various *lechón* grilling, nice and tender with nicely toasted skin, seasoned with leek and other Caribbean peppers with different orchestras throughout: guitars, *guiras*, *décimas*, accordeons, and everyone eat and dance".[25] The peasants lament that the country has not progressed enough materially but that it still should defend its own traditions. Although these traditions are still seen as quaintly "backwards" in this essay, Bonó defends them in opposition to outside influence.

Despite Bonó's celebration of Dominican peasant culture and tobacco, he criticizes popular leisure activities as he looks inward. This should not be surprising since he was always interested in extracting organized labor from a peasantry long used to its nomadic, semi-autonomous existence. He argues that sugar and cacao industries have exacerbated the problem by producing too much free time due to the nature of its production. As he sees it, this has moral consequences, "… we have seen all of our good traditional habits of moderation change, with so many occasions for waste … parties end up many times with gun fights or fires … and the cockfights are theaters of deadly war

[24] Ibid., 375-376. "hagamos obra dominicana … soluciones más conformes con la justicia y la equidad".
[25] Ibid., 378. "Varios lechones al asador, bien tiernos y con cueros bien tostados, sazonados con el mojo de puerros y ajíes caribes… diferentes orquestas esparcidas: aquí cuatros, güiras y decimas; allí acordeones… y coma y baile quien quiera y pueda".

including the coup de grace that they give to good labor".[26] Since the 1850s Bonó had been critical of popular leisure so it is not clear where he locates these "*buenos hábitos de moderación*". In an 1885 letter to Luperón he seems to locate it in a rural peasant culture that is always interrupted by outside meddling:

> The nation, if there still is one, *does not have a shred of the true Dominican politics of the past*. Our good traditions were broken by the Spanish in 1861 and now what is left is the dislocations of various lunatics brought in by Haiti, Spain, Cuba etc… The free work of the countryside has been replaced by colonial work, commerce is the monopoly of four or six businesses, small national businesses have been dissolved; civil and military services are in disarray, all subordination and discipline has disappeared; everybody thinks, especially in the capital Santo Domingo, that in becoming a nation of doctors nobody will attack us and that meanwhile we do not need an army, navy, arms nor organization, what is needed, for them, is to become a poet and musician; *the severities of life have been completely unloaded on top of a small portion of rural producers.* [Emphasis in the original].[27]

He responds to new forms of imperialism and the cultural and economic prescriptions of the *fin de siglo* by constructing this idea of an active, traditional, moral Dominican labor culture that he nostalgically locates in the Cibao.

The last essay that he publishes for his *Congreso Extraparlamentario* is a private conversation between the *diputados* in their "*Vacaciones de Otoño*," that goes back and

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[26] Ibid., 384. "[se] ha visto en un abrir y cerrar de ojos cambiar todos los tradicionales Buenos hábitos de moderación, a la vista de tanta ocasión para gastar … fiestas acaban muchas veces a pistoletazos o con incendios … y las galleras son teatros de batallas mortíferas sin contar el golpe de gracia que están dando al trabajo".

[27] Ibid., 537. "La patria, si patria aún hay, no tiene *un ápice de la política propia dominicana del pasado; las buenas* tradiciones fueron rotas por los españoles en el 61 y no queda en pie solo la dislocación que han introducido infinitos dementes heterogéneos introducidos por Haití, España, Cuba, etc. El trabajo rural libre ha sido suplantado por el trabajo colonial, el comercial es el monopolio de cuatro a seis casas, y la anulación del pequeño comercio nacional; los servicios civiles y militares son una confusión, toda subordinación y disciplina ha desaparecido; todo el mundo cree, sobre todo en la Capital [Santo Domingo], que en llegando a ser una Nación de doctores nadie nos atacará y que por tanto no se necesita ni ejército, ni marina, ni armas, ni organización, lo que se necesita es ser poeta y músico; las severidades *de la vida se han descargado completamente sobre una pequeña porción de productores rurales*".

forth between hope and despair - between heady optimism and defeated cynicism - wondering if the ideas in the *congreso* will produce any immediate change. In the specific context of the dictatorship there is no room for dissent under Lilís, "independent thinking men … know and are familiar with the force of hate of a government, and they do well to keep quiet".[28] These comments are also a justification for Bonó's isolation and internal exile in San Francisco de Macorís. However, he is hopeful that his essays will contribute to political changes since, "… it cannot be that providence will condemn a nation that dragged the chains of slavery for three centuries, to a misery and slavery much worse than it is used to. There are hidden causes that we must investigate … if independent thinking men would discuss, with the spirit of prudence and patriotism that should inform them, the current administration would not commit the grave errors that we see them committing".[29] However, Bonó admits that his ideas are not welcomed by elite circles or the government, one *diputado* complains, "very few, but very few approve our ideas, and this with many qualifiers. This is why I think we will be declared public enemies … meanwhile, I declare, that I regret having accepted such an enormous task and what I desire the most now is to return to my house and to see my kids".[30] After

[28] Ibid., 388. "Los hombres pensadores independientes … saben, conocen la fuerza de la cólera de un gobierno, se callan y hacen bien".
[29] Ibid., 388. "…no entrará en los designios de la sabia Providencia condenar a un pueblo que arrastró la cadena del esclavo por tres siglos, a una miseria y esclavitud peores que la que conllevó tan largo tiempo. Causas ocultas hay que debemos investigar… que si los hombres pensadores independientes, discutieran… con el espíritu de prudencia y patriotismo que debe dirigirlos, la administración no cometería las graves faltas que la vemos cometer".
[30] Ibid., 390. "… muy pocos, pero muy pocos nos aprueban, y esto con muchos reparos y distingos. Así es que yo creo que seremos considerados como enemigos públicos … por tanto, declaro, que estoy arrepentido de haber aceptado tan ímproba labor y lo que más ansió es, volver a mi casa a cuidar de mis hijos y de mi hacienda

proposing an alternative Bonó always immediately contradicts his optimism. This may be due to his characteristic self-effacing form of writing or fear of backlash.

The sometimes puzzling contradictions in Bonó's writings (For example he sometimes celebrates brotherhood with Haiti and sometimes sees insurmountable differences) are probably a product of his experiences. Subject to Lilís' political intrigue in a very real way – the burning down of his house - he had to produce a sort of pragmatism that is absent in the writings of figures like Luperón and other radicals since exile for him was not a long term option. Earlier in his life he was able to go to exile twice, to the US in the 1850s and briefly to Europe in the 1870s. He did not have the financial resources or connections to be political in exile. This in part explains why his texts are rarely optimistic and celebratory and indeed sometimes reluctantly support hegemonic politics.

Haití y la Confederación Antillana

Scholars have recognized that Bonó's ideas on Haiti are refreshingly unique – compared to the perspective of conservative elites by the late-nineteenth century. In an often cited letter, he mentions that during the Haitian period from 1822-1844 Boyer could have formed a federation between the two states. Instead of forcing a centralized government that was bound to fail, Boyer could have developed a federalist system that invested in the interests of the masses on both sides of the island. Bonó was not the only one who imagined unity, this was an important conversation among the elite throughout mid-century especially. But Bonó still insists on Dominican and Haitian difference, he represents the Dominican Republic and Haiti as "…two nations with completely different

language and customs".[31] In an earlier text, *La República Dominicana y la República Haitiana,* he describes Dominican-Haitian relations as "…an antagonism, fundamentally indestructible".[32] What is present in Bonó and absent in other writers is his focus on class and inequality. His critiques of elites on both sides of the island shows his investment in the interests of the majority of the people across the island.

Haiti becomes central in the last, most compelling argument of *Congreso extraparlamentario*. Bonó believes that the biggest problems concerning, "the inertia of our nation", is that, "…we have not engaged with what every free nation must do". Not enough has been done to go beyond the lasting effects of colonialism. His answer to Dominican post-coloniality is quite compelling. He argues that Santo Domingo has a great responsibility to the rest of the Caribbean due to its "*posición geográfica*," "our central geographical position in the Americas, our affinities, our multiple nexuses with the Antilles … allows us to claim with more fortune than anyone else … the inevitable Antillean Confederation".[33] He bestows upon Santo Domingo/Haiti the responsibility for bringing together the Antillean Confederation. He especially highlights the history of anti-colonialism and free labor that was seen during the Haitian/Dominican collaborations of the restoration war (1863-1865) for inspiration in constructing the confederation. While he criticizes Haiti's "*exclusivismo negro*", this new confederation can come about if it looks to the island's history of freedom and anti-imperialism, "…two

[31] Ibid., 390. See Mayes, *The Mulatto Republic* (2014) for a rich reading of Bonó's racial politics.
[32] Ibid., 343. "El tiempo urge y tal peligro vemos en la tardanza que en breves pero fundadas razones haremos conocer el antagonismo fundamental, indestructible, que hay entre uno y otro pueblo…"
[33] Ibid., 393. "Nuestra posición geográfica central e insular en la América, nuestras afinidades, nuestros múltiples nexos con las Antillas… nos ponen en actitud de pretender con más fortuna que nadie … la inevitable confederación antillana".

sibling nations, united by so many connections, overall by liberty, acquired at the same time with mutual aid, isolated, in the middle of the ocean, the new and unique representatives of one race, that until now had not appeared in the political theatre of the world, as civilized and free, and sieged by slave-owning colonial powers".[34] The rest of the Caribbean should look at Santo Domingo/Haiti for inspiration in charting the contours of the Antillean Confederation, Bonó argues. All of this, however, must begin first by reactivating Dominican labor through the democratic effects of tobacco, actually existing *ciudadanía* for the masses and earning the trust of the worker.

Clamo en el desierto

Bonó imagines that all of these ideas will produce "a deplorable scandal" in the press but *Congreso extraparlamentario* was largely ignored. Only two essayists responded (ignoring most of Bonó's arguments), mentioning that the island should not privilege either tobacco or sugar, that a variety of agricultural products should be cultivated. Eighteen months later, Bonó responded to this silence in the 1896 essay *Exposición de los vegueros del Cibao*, "a profound silence was the response to our exhortation. Only two echoes were heard, one who vehemently, violently disagreed, who did not want to keep in mind the spontaneity of sacrifice, and another one who approved in part".[35]

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[34] Ibid., 395. "dos pueblos hermanos, unidos ya por tantos vínculos, sobre todo por el de la libertad, adquirida a un mismo tiempo por ayudas recíprocas, solitarias, en medio del océano, únicos y nuevos representantes de una raza, que hasta hoy no había aparecido en la escena política del mundo, con el tipo de civilizada y libre, y cercada por colonias esclavas".

[35] Ibid., 407. ""Un silencio profundo fue la respuesta a esta exhortación. Solo dos ecos se oyeron uno desaprobador rotundo y algo violento, que no quiso tener en cuenta la espontaneidad del sacrificio, y otro que con corteses reparos, aprobó en parte".

However, he uses the opportunity – a sugar and cacao crisis would hit the country while tobacco prices were going up globally - to show that his ideas on privileging tobacco were relevant. Despite the crisis, and acknowledging that tobacco also suffers from these ups and down, he insists that the nation learn from the "wisdom of the worker" and to trust how the peasantry have always dealt with these situations.[36] The nation keeps working to perfect tobacco production and maintain access to land as well the collective. "Our *conucos*," Bonó argues, have taught the peasantry that there will always be economic crises. However, the peasantry does not react in despair since its main concern is to retain access to land as well as continuous, dignified work, "we, whose sole purpose on earth is to work and sweat, with no more instruments than our natural ones, our arms our spirit, we are not stopped we are not afraid. We are, through our efforts, propertied, a grand word that means grand things".[37] Accumulation should not be the driving concern, "our tobacco goes up and down constantly, sometimes it gives incredible profits, sometimes enormous losses. But industry as it is seen now is sad and dislocated, because its mission is only to profit for profit's sake."[38] Modest, continuous work and access to land trump private accumulation.

Since the government ignored Bonó's propositions in *Congreso extraparlamentario* – especially his suggestion of hiring inspectors not connected to the corrupt government to assure the production of high quality tobacco – he calls on the

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[36] Ibid., 408. "…sagacidad del trabajador".
[37] Ibid., 409. "…nosotros cuya sola misión terrestre es trabajar y sudar, sin más instrumentos que los naturales de nuestros brazos y nuestros bríos, nosotros no nos aturdimos ni espantamos. Somos por nuestros esfuerzos, propietarios, grande palabra que significa grande cosa".
[38] Ibid., 409. "…nuestro tabaco sube y baja constantemente … unas veces da beneficios increíbles, y a veces pérdidas enormes. Pero el comercio bajo la impresión de estas últimas queda cabizbajo, triste y dislocado, porque su misión es solo ganar y más ganar y sus instrumentos capital y crédito.

working classes to maintain the vigor of the collective which he marks as authentic *ciudadanía* throughout the text. The peasantry should not rest, "if the price goes up, more active should our vigilance and diligence remain in maintaining the same level of excellent quality of our tobacco".[39] He contrasts this modesty and *trabajo silencioso* with the pompositiy and waste of Lilís' recent visit to San Francisco de Macorís, Bonó sarcastically and indirectly criticizes "the General, President and Pacifier [Lilís], who this year came explicitly to the *Borrego* with his secretaries of state, admirals, governors and its numerous and brilliant followers, in order to congratulate the *Congreso* for its patriotic work".[40] Citizenship, again, is located in the peasantry's dedication for access to work and autonomy in opposition to the wasteful exhibitionism of Lilís' government, a government that comes to represent the same patterns of the elite during all of the nineteenth century in Santo Domingo.

[39] Ibid., 411. "Mientras más subiere su precio, más activa sea nuestra vigilancia y diligencia en mantener a la misma altura las excelentes cualidades de nuestra hoja".
[40] Ibid.,, 411. "… el general Presidente y Pacificador, quien el año pasado llegando expresamente al Borrego con sus secretarios de Estado, Almirantes, Gobernadores y un numeroso y brillante séquito, para felicitar al Congreso por su labor patriótica

Epilogue

Bonó and the Counterplantation

This dissertation has examined all of the writings of the understudied figure, Pedro F. Bonó. It reads Bonó's critique by exploring the remarkable history of the Dominican rural peasantry and the convoluted process of Santo Domingo's independence in the nineteenth century. As a non-exilic figure who remained on the island during almost all of his life, his essays stem from his engagement with the everyday life of the rural peasantry in nineteenth-century Santo Domingo. I argue that his essays, especially his later ones, are an expression of popular thought throughout the process of Dominican independence and are part of a tradition of counterhegemonic liberals in the Dominican Republic that has been ignored by traditional historiography.

He forms part of a remarkable intellectual tradition that expressed "the counterplantation" system of Hispaniola through literature. As Laurent Dubois argues in the Haitian case, "what broadly defines the nineteenth century is the forward motion and ultimate success of what Jean Casimir famously dubbed the 'counterplantation' system. Though resisted by successive Haitian regimes and circumscribed and sapped by the actions of local merchants – who over time became increasingly imbricated with foreign merchants – this system nevertheless offered a high quality of life to the rural population throughout most of the nineteenth century" (72).[1] In addition, the counterplantation "offered economic stability thanks to a combination of three types of production: for individual and family consumption, for local and regional markets, and, finally, for

[1] Dubois, "Thinking Through Haiti" (2014).

export into the international market … it was centered on an intensive focus on the creation and preservation of forms of autonomy, rooted in and deeply connected to the aspiration developed through the Haitian revolution itself, in which control over land was seen as a core value" (72). Dubois also argues that the counterplantation was "to a crucial extent built by women" (72).

Bonó is part of a Caribbean intellectual tradition that attempts to express this popular, counterplantation system – as Dubois defines it - through the political essay. In addition to the recent research done on figures like Betances and Firmin, more should be done on writers from Haiti, Santo Domingo and the rest of the Caribbean during the second half of the 1800s.[2] My future research will expand on Haitian economists who opposed the plantation system like Edmond Paul and Joseph Justin, figures that criticized economic liberalism, as Trouillot mentions.[3] Trouillot claims, however, that this intellectual, counterplantation tradition in Haiti "… were the voices of a few liberals, and signified little, perhaps since those liberals themselves took little action to redress the injustice when they ran the affairs of the state" (*Haiti: State Against Nation* 63). But recovering and investigating this tradition, I would argue, helps in imagining alternative forms of modernity in the current, neoliberal Caribbean. As Jean Stubbs asks, "where is the Bonó vision for the twenty-first century?" ("Reinventing Mecca" 32). Answering this question requires further elaboration on how Bonó's vision was shared throughout the Caribbean during the revolutionary, *antillanista* and anti-imperialist fervor of the second half of the nineteenth century.

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[2] See Chaar-Pérez, "A Revolution of Love: Ramón Emeterio Betances, Anténor Firmin, and Affective Communities in the Caribbean" (2013).
[3] Trouillot. *Haiti: State Against Nation, The origins and Legacy of Duvalierism* (1990).

Bonó's radicalization would continue into the 1900s. The last essay we have of his is the striking *Petición de un alambiquero* that appeared in Santiago in 1900. Here again Bonó defends the small, secular work of the nation against the "sickly modern industries of perfection".[4] Importing foreign models and economic liberalism is again seen as the "greatest ill of the end of the nineteenth century." In the essay he is reacting to a new tax placed on all of the liquor produced on the island. This, he argues, will destroy a whole group of small-scale Dominican labor, "… distillers, foundry workers, coopers, loggers, millers, oxen and an unlimited number of cooperators that were involved in this industry will now end up without work and live like vagabonds".[5] In order not to give up national sovereignty and economic sustainability, he urges the repeal of the tax. He again writes against the inequality produced by ideologies of progress in his defense of humble but active Dominican industries, this time assuming the identity of the peasant worker, an *alambiquero*. His solidarity with working classes continues throughout the early 1900s as he appropriates the position of the "*alambiquero*". He would also argue for "raising the salary of the *desposeídos*" so that the peasantry would finally "try to live, to live free and rested".[6]

[4] *Papeles de Pedro Bonó*, 413. "…febricitante trabajo moderno perfeccionado".
[5] Ibid. 414. "destiladores, fundidores, toneleros, leñadores, albañiles, ingenios, trapiches, bueyes de molino, de carga, baterías y un sinnúmero de cooperadores que de esta industria Vivían que quedarán sin empleo y en condición de vagos".
[6] Ibid., 348. "…se trata de vivir; de vivir libres y descansados".

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