

THE SWORD AND THE CRUCIFIX: Church-State Relations and Nationality in the Nineteenth- Century Dominican Republic*

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Like the precarious colonial state demeaningly referred to as “España la Boba,” the Dominican Catholic Church of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries endured the Caribbean ramifications of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars. This onslaught included the cession of Santo Domingo to France in 1795, the protracted and bloody revolution in St. Domingue, disruptions in international trade, and invasions by Haiti in 1801 and 1805.¹ Both the colonial state and the colonial church were further undermined by the declaration of Dominican independence in December 1821. Only weeks into Dominican independence, twelve thousand troops under the command of Haitian President Jean-Pierre Boyer invaded the eastern part of the island, fulfilling the long-held Haitian goal of unifying the island under Haitian rule.² Although considerably weakened, the Dominican church survived as the single truly national institution in the sense that it retained influence

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1. The number of clerics in the Dominican Republic serves as a good indicator of the impact of these events. In 1739, 247 priests were serving a population of 31,915 (1 priest for every 129 people), but in the early years of the nineteenth century, only 24 clerics were ministering to a population of 119,425 (1 curate for almost every 5,000 inhabitants). For a discussion of the changing fortunes of the Catholic Church between 1795 and 1810, see Fernando Pérez Menén, *La iglesia y el estado en Santo Domingo (1700–1853)* (Santo Domingo: Editora de la Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo, 1984), 13–16, 51, 312–30.

2. See Frank Moya Pons, “The Land Question in Haiti and Santo Domingo: The Socio-political Context of the Transition from Slavery to Free Labor, 1801–1843,” in *Between Slavery and Free Labor*, edited by Manuel Moreno Fraginals, Frank Moya Pons, and Stanley L. Engerman (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 181–214, esp. 185–86.

throughout the Dominican territory. The church was also national in providing a central element in Dominican elite culture: fervent Catholicism. Thus it was not coincidental that clerics gravitated to the heart of the Dominican struggle for liberation and that the church continued to play a major role in defining political alignments during the forty years following Dominican independence.

This article will examine the complex relations between the Dominican clergy and the state during three distinct phases: the First Republic (1844–1861), the period of Spanish annexation (1861–1865), and the first decade and a half of the Second Republic (1865–1879). My contention is that while the political leadership (mainly caudillos Pedro Santana and Buenaventura Báez) flip-flopped in their political stances according to which way the geopolitical winds were blowing, the Catholic Church remained a bastion of Dominican nationality, which it sought to define on the basis of religious purity, anti-Haitianism, and Europhilia. Hence close ties with the church became critical for the survival of any political regime during the convulsed middle decades in the nineteenth-century Dominican Republic.

HAITIAN OCCUPATION AND THE FIRST REPUBLIC

Perhaps no sector of Dominican society endured deeper losses during the twenty-two-year Haitian occupation (1822–1844) than the Catholic Church.³ Boyer nationalized land belonging to the church and its religious orders and abolished *censos* and *capellanías* to which Archbishop Pedro Valera had been personally entitled.⁴ The new Haitian regime also stopped paying priests' salaries, which were previously financed under the *patronato real*. Archbishop Valera, scorned openly by Boyer as "nothing but a subject of King Ferdinand VII," refused to cooperate with Haitian authorities even after they offered to restore clerical salaries, which included a three-thousand-peso yearly stipend for him. The church endured more blows when the regular monasteries were suppressed and the Universidad de Santo Tomás, where priests staffed

3. For a study of the eastern part of the island during the period of Haitian domination, see Frank Moya Pons, *La dominación haitiana, 1822–1844* (Santiago, D.R.: Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra, 1971). For a detailed report on the state of the church right after independence, including the number of priests and the physical condition of church buildings, see Archbishop Tomás de Portes to U.S. agent John Hogan, 15 June 1845, in *Documentos para la historia de las relaciones dominico-americanas (1837–1860)*, edited by Alfonso Lockward (Santo Domingo: Editora Corripio, 1987), 32–37.

4. See the work published by José María Bobadilla under the pseudonym "Un dominicano," *Opinión sobre el derecho de las iglesias y dominicanos emigrados, en los bienes de que fueron despojados por el gobierno haitiano durante su ocupación de la parte del este de la isla de Santo Domingo* (Santo Domingo: Imprenta Nacional, 1845). Also see Frank Moya Pons, "Notas para una historia de la iglesia en Santo Domingo," *Eme* 1, no. 6 (1973):3–18. *Censos* and *capellanías* were financial obligations in which individuals pledged installment payments to support the church.

the faculty, was closed.⁵ As a result, the church's standing and political influence sunk to their lowest levels during the Haitian occupation. One Dominican prelate described the period as one of official "indifference . . . if not disdain," when the church was reduced to the level of any other inconsequential institution. Church buildings deteriorated due to little or no maintenance. Some were demolished outright by the Haitians, who used the rubble for secular construction projects. One Dominican editorialist, on recalling some of the abuses, later denounced the manner in which "the temples of the Virgin Mary were turned into slaughter houses of human sacrifice."⁶

To alienate the Dominican clergy further, the Haitian state promoted the immigration of Protestant blacks from the United States in order to "darken" the racially whiter, less populated eastern part of the island. Lured by the prospects of full citizenship, free land, and religious toleration, some five thousand black Protestants (mostly from Philadelphia and New York City) settled in Samaná, Puerto Plata, and Santo Domingo beginning in 1824. Their presence and local interest in their religious activities soon produced tensions with the local clergy. On one occasion, for example, the curate of Samaná threatened to excommunicate any parishioner who dared to attend a Protestant service.⁷

Given these circumstances, it is no surprise that anti-Haitian liberation movements found natural allies among the Catholic clergy and that the Dominican underground independence movement found inspiration within Catholicism. La Trinitaria, vanguard of the pro-independence struggle, and its leader, Juan Pablo Duarte, were profoundly influenced by Catholicism as a source of symbols as well as motivation. Composed predominantly of young urban patriots, La Trinitaria remained committed to full Dominican independence. The movement's name and struc-

5. Frank Moya Pons, *Manual de historia dominicana*, 8th ed. (Santiago, D.R.: Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra, 1984), 228, 233; and Moya Pons, "Land Question," 189–91.

6. Portes to Hogan, 15 June 1845, in A. Lockward, *Documentos para la historia de las relaciones*, 36–37; and *El Oasis*, 13 Jan. 1856, reproduced in *Documentos para la historia de la República Dominicana*, 4 vols., edited by Emilio Rodríguez Demorizi (Santo Domingo: Editora Montalvo and Academia Dominicana de la Historia, 1944–1981), 2:183–84.

7. An ample body of literature, primary and secondary, exists on the Protestant presence in Puerto Plata and Samaná. See, for example, Nathaniel P. Jones, *A Brief History of the Wesleyan Church in Puerto Plata* (Puerto Plata, D.R.: Tipografía Mathew, 1930); *Correspondencia de Tindall, primer misionero protestante en Dominicana*, edited by George A. Lockward (Santo Domingo: Universidad CETEC, 1981); *Cartas de Cardy, primer misionero metodista en Samaná*, edited by George A. Lockward (Santo Domingo: Editora Educativa Dominicana, 1988); George A. Lockward, *El protestantismo en Dominicana*, 2d ed. (Santo Domingo: Universidad CETEC, 1982); José Augusto Puig Ortiz, *Emigración de libertos norteamericanos a Puerto Plata en la primera mitad del siglo xix* (Santo Domingo: Alfa y Omega, 1978); Ellen Martha Davis, "That Old-Time Religion: tradición y cambio en el enclave americano de Samaná," in *Cultura y folklore de Samaná*, edited by Dagoberto Tejeda Ortiz (Santo Domingo: Alfa y Omega, 1984); Harry Hoetink, "Americans in Samaná," *Caribbean Studies* 2, no. 1 (1962):3–22; and G. Lockward, *Protestantismo en Dominicana*, 198, 180.

ture, which was based on three-member cells, recalled the Holy Trinity, to whom all members swore allegiance. The Trinitarios' "sacramental motto," was "Dios, Patria y Libertad," which later became the Dominican national motto. And the movement's flag and shield featured a cross and an open Bible, which later became national emblems.⁸ Gaspar Hernández, Pedro Pamiés, and other priests participated actively in the actual struggle for independence and thus influenced the course of La Trinitaria. Several clergymen were apprehended by Haitian authorities, who exiled some and tortured and harassed others.⁹ According to a later account, one priest was savagely beaten under the portals of his own church, while two others were forced to march halfway across the island from El Cibao to Port-au-Prince, escorted by an irreverent and abusive squadron of Haitian soldiers. Feeling personally threatened, Archbishop Valera fled the island in 1830 and settled in Cuba, leaving behind Tomás de Portes to serve as the island's highest ecclesiastical authority.¹⁰

The attitudes of the Protestant minorities from the United States toward Dominican independence were somewhat ambivalent. They were grateful for the religious tolerance granted them by the Haitian state since 1824, but they too began to feel the oppression of the Haitian yoke, particularly after Charles Hérard assumed the presidency in 1843. Because of the uncertainty that marked the early stages of Dominican independence, the Wesleyan missionary in Puerto Plata, William Tawler, sought neutrality by raising the British flag, under which many foreigners took refuge and sought consolation in reading the Psalms. In that context, Britain (whose subjects supported the Wesleyan mission) appeared to be a source of protection against religious intolerance and possible abuses at the hands of the new Dominican state. The Protestants' fears about the intolerance of Portes and other clerics were confirmed when they insisted that Dominican authorities arrest one of the mission's teachers for allegedly criticizing Catholic dogmas. Other Protestants fled

8. José María Serra, "Apuntes para la historia de los Trinitarios, fundadores de la República Dominicana," *Boletín del Archivo General de la Nación*, nos. 32–33 (Jan.–Apr. 1944):49–69; Gordon K. Lewis, *Main Currents in Caribbean Thought* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), 279; and Valentina Peguero and Danilo de los Santos, *Visión general de la historia dominicana*, 8th ed. (Santiago, D.R.: Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra, 1983), 169–70.

9. Juan F. Pepén, *La cruz señaló el camino: influencia de la iglesia en la formación y conservación de la nacionalidad dominicana* (Santo Domingo: Editorial Duarte, 1954), 75; and Vetilio Alfau Durán, *El derecho de patronato en la República Dominicana* (Santo Domingo: Editora Taller, 1985), 19. For information on the role of churchmen in the military, see Antonio Camilo González, "Las capellanías castrenses en el proceso histórico de la República Dominicana," *Eme Eme* 15, no. 84 (Sept.–Dec. 1989):61–79.

10. Proclamation of Buenaventura Báez, 27 Feb. 1850, in A. Lockward, *Documentos para la historia de las relaciones*, 133–37; Moya Pons, *Manual de historia dominicana*, 271–74; and Max Henríquez Ureña and José María Morillas, *El Arzobispo Valera* (Santo Domingo: Amigo del Hogar, 1991), 52–55, 156–57.

the island.¹¹ The first years of independence were also marked by apprehension in Santiago, where local leaders demanded guarantees of freedom to worship and protested the appointment of Portes as the new archbishop of Santo Domingo. The Santiagueños' concerns proved valid when the archbishop began to maneuver to block an article granting religious tolerance in the Anglo-Dominican treaty being negotiated. He deemed such concessions "germs of dissolution" that could be worse "than forcing [Dominicans] to speak in another language."¹² The British envoy to the Dominican Republic, Robert Schomburgk, criticized Portes's intolerance, which he blamed on the influence of "the Vicar General, a Jesuit and blindly bigoted."¹³

The Dominican struggle for independence exhibited many elements of a crusade. Santana publicly proclaimed that God Almighty had vanquished the Haitians, whose rule Santana equated with demonic oppression. Another contemporaneous observer concluded that independence was not simply a political phenomenon but also "a great moral and religious revolution."¹⁴ Dominicans thus defined their nationality in religious terms, juxtaposing it against that of Haiti.¹⁵ The "Dominican Christian family" continued to contrast itself with its "fetishist" and "sacriligious" neighbors even beyond independence because the threat of a Haitian invasion persisted well into the late 1850s. Haitians were compared with the biblical Chaldeans and their occupation of Dominican territory was interpreted as a divine punishment from which God in his infinite mercy finally redeemed the Dominican people.¹⁶ In a pastoral letter issued shortly after independence, Archbishop Portes cited the

11. G. Lockward, *Protestantismo en Dominicana*, 177–80; and Pérez Menén, *Iglesia y estado*, 641–44.

12. French consul at Santo Domingo to the French minister of foreign affairs, 24 Oct. 1848, in *Correspondencia del consul de Francia en Santo Domingo, 1846–1850*, 2 vols., edited by Emilio Rodríguez Demorizi (Santo Domingo: Editora Montalvo, 1944–1947), 2:107; see also Portes to the British consul at Santo Domingo, attached to Benjamin Green to United States Secretary of State John Clayton, 15 Feb. 1850, National Archives, Washington, D.C., General Records of the Department of State, Record Group 59, Communications from Special Agents, vol. 15.

13. Robert Schomburgk to Lord Palmerston, 29 Jan. 1850, Public Record Office, Kew, Engl., Foreign Office (FO) file 140, doc. 2 (hereafter cited as PRO, FO).

14. See Santana's proclamation in *El Dominicano*, 1 Jan. 1846, 34–35; and T. S. Heneken to Robert Peel, Treasurer of Great Britain, 1 Sept. 1845, in Rodríguez Demorizi, *Documentos para la historia de la República Dominicana*, 3:82–91.

15. Examples of such juxtapositions can be found in early nationalistic journalism. For examples, see "Haití," *El Dominicano*, 8 Oct. 1845, p. 6; "Más sobre Haití," *El Dominicano*, 13 Nov. 1845, p. 19; and the sonnet entitled "La Batalla de Beler," printed in *El Dominicano*, 13 Dec. 1845, p. 28. See also letter by Portes to the Holy See, 1 July 1844, cited in Pérez Menén, *Iglesia y estado*, 632.

16. Presbítero José Santiago Díaz to Presbítero Eugenio Espinosa, 8 June 1844; Pastoral Letter of Portes, 24 July 1844, both in Rodríguez Demorizi, *Documentos para la historia de la República Dominicana*, 2:42–43, 2:52–54. See also Consejo de Ministros de la República Dominicana to the Captain General of Puerto Rico, 4 Apr. 1849, Archivo Histórico Nacional, Madrid, Ultramar, leg. 3524, exp. 52, doc. 2 (cited hereafter as AHN, Ultramar).

prophecy in the Book of Deuteronomy: "The Lord will bring against you a people from a remote end of the earth, who are swift as the eagle, whose language you will not understand, shameless people without respect for the elderly nor compassion toward the tender aged, a people who will eat all of your fruits, and spare not your animals, neither the oxen, nor the cows, nor the sheep. . . ."17

Dominican patriots made it clear that their movement was Catholic. The declaration of independence of 1844, alluding to Haitian abuses and excommunication of the Dominican clergy, promised that the church would be restored to its earlier splendor and would be declared the official church of the state. The document also promised, however, that no one would be persecuted or punished because of religious opinions. Yet this provision of the declaration included some rather contradictory statements to the effect that Catholicism had to be protected from "sectarians and enemies."¹⁸ These propositions were later confirmed by the constitution, which declared Catholicism the official faith of the Dominican Republic and gave no significant protection to non-Catholic worship.¹⁹ Eight of the signers of the constitution (about one-fourth of the total) were priests, and the chairman of the constitutional convention, Manuel María Valencia, was a devout Catholic who became a priest a few years later.²⁰ Yet despite strong clerical support, Archbishop Portes refused to swear alliance to the new constitution, arguing that it contained "evil laws," an allusion to its tolerance provisions and sanctioning of earlier abolition of censos and capellanías.²¹

The first five years of the First Republic were marked by profound political disorientation, and the Haitian menace continued throughout this period. At least six different administrations claimed power during this convulsed phase. In this context of political conflict and instability, two distinct political factions emerged: the liberal group with Trinitario inclinations who maintained a nationalistic posture versus the conservatives with strong ties to the church and other Europhile sectors, whose ultimate goal was to establish a European protectorate. Eastern caudillo Pedro Santana, whom many looked to as the only one capable of defeating the Haitian foe, soon gravitated to the center of the conservative faction, where he assumed direct or indirect national leadership during most of the time from 1844 to 1849.

17. Pastoral letter of Portes dated 24 July 1844, in Rodríguez Demorizi, *Documentos para la historia de la República Dominicana*, 2:47–54; see also *El Dominicano*, 1 Jan. 1846, p. 34.

18. Declaration of independence of 16 Jan. 1844 in República Dominicana, *Colección de leyes, decretos y resoluciones*, 52 vols. published to date (Santo Domingo: Publicaciones ONAP, 1982–), 1:7–15.

19. Dominican Constitution of 1844, in República Dominicana, *Colección de leyes*, 1:53–83.

20. Hugo E. Polanco Brito, "La Iglesia Católica y la primera constitución dominicana," *Clio*, no. 125 (Jan.–Aug. 1970):3–12.

21. *Ibid.*, 9.

Unlike the general Latin American experience, in which positions taken regarding the church and its powers divided liberals and conservatives, liberals as well as conservatives agreed on the centrality of the Catholic Church in the years surrounding Dominican independence. No anticlericals were found among the most liberal Dominican patriots, not even among Freemasons. What differentiated the Dominican experience was that its patriots had fought not against Spain and by extension its official church but against French-speaking Haiti and its open hostility toward Dominican Catholicism. In the Dominican case, furthermore, the Catholic Church's presence and power had been relatively weaker than in, say, Peru or Guatemala, and it therefore was not considered an oppressive tool of Spanish colonialism. Consequently, in the early years of Dominican independence, fervent Catholicism was not deemed an antinational and conservative stance but rather a nationalistic and anti-Haitian posture that cut across the political spectrum.

Archbishop Portes and most of the clergy supported Santana because he seemed to offer the best guarantees for territorial security, favored the annexation or protectorate alternative, and moderated some of the secular and tolerance positions of the liberal Trinitario pole.²² The increasingly close relations between conservatives and the church were accompanied by a distancing between the clergy and the Trinitarios based mainly on Trinitario rejection of a European protectorate, a formula that the church's leadership deemed critical to its survival. Highlighting the church's support of the conservative pole was Portes's fiery pastoral letter of 28 July 1844, in which he threatened anyone involved in obstructing the "wise government" of Santana with excommunication.²³ Similar pastoral letters were issued during the rest of Santana's first term.²⁴ Once ensconced in the presidential mansion, Santana became the best guarantee against Haitian aggression, and he continued to seek a foreign protectorate. He failed, however, to deliver the clergy's other demands. To the contrary, Santana ratified acts of the Haitian government confiscating church lands and abolishing the censos and capellanías. He also tolerated the presence and religious activities of Protestants and Jews, some of whom even joined the ranks of public service. When faced with mounting opposition to his regime, however, Santana made several major concessions to the church in 1848 by abolishing divorces, declaring civil marriages invalid, and reestablishing the national seminary.²⁵

22. Portes, for example, welcomed Santana's coup on 16 July 1844. See Pérez Menén, *Iglesia y estado*, 628.

23. Pastoral Letter of 28 July 1844, quoted in Moya Pons, *Manual de historia dominicana*, 293.

24. See, for example, pastoral letter of 26 Dec. 1847, in Rodríguez Demorizi, *Documentos para la historia de la República Dominicana*, 1:117–22.

25. Moya Pons, *Manual de historia dominicana*, 297–98; Harry Hoetink, *The Dominican People, 1850–1900*, translated by Stephen K. Ault (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University

Following a ten-month interlude of Trinitario-oriented control under Manuel Jimenes González, Santana returned to power in the spring of 1849 to confront renewed Haitian aggression. During this period, Archbishop Portes, an admirer of Santana's annexationist inclinations, remained openly partial to him, even granting him asylum in the archbishop's palace.²⁶ But after only four months in office, Santana stepped down and allowed his partisan, Buenaventura Báez, to assume political control. Báez soon began to carve out his own base of political support. Critical to this process was his manipulation of church issues. An extreme Francophile whose father was the illegitimate son of a liaison between a married woman and a priest, Báez proved more attentive to the demands of the church. His administration permitted the convocation of a synod in 1851, the first one held since 1683. The synod produced a number of provisions that clashed with Dominican laws, but Báez and his partisans refused to confront them.²⁷ Báez dispatched priest Elías Rodríguez, a relative and friend, to the Vatican with instructions to negotiate a concordat. Moreover, Báez passed a decree banning non-Catholic churches from ringing their bells, raised clerical salaries, and further strengthened laws against civil marriages.²⁸

At the end of Báez's term in February 1853, Santana assumed the presidency for a third term. But this time, he was opposed by Báez and his followers, who ironically had emerged as a distinct "party" after Santana handpicked Báez as his successor in 1849. The Dominican political scene for the next eight or nine years was dominated by the struggle for power between these two caudillos and their respective partisans, a

Press, 1982), 23; G. Lockward, *Protestantismo en Dominicana*, 129, 190, 202, 227; Cazneau to Marcy, 23 Jan. 1854, in A. Lockward, *Documentos para la historia de las relaciones*, 222; *El Dominicano*, 1 Nov. 1845, p. 16; and República Dominicana, *Colección de leyes*, 2:24–25, 142.

26. Rafael C. Senior, *Santana: libertador, gobernante, anexionista* (Santiago, D.R.: La Información, 1938), 56; see also correspondence between Portes and President Jimenes González, in Rodríguez Demorizi, *Documentos para la historia de la República Dominicana*, 2:78–82.

27. Miguel Angel Monclús, *El caudillismo en la República Dominicana*, 4th ed. (Santo Domingo: Universidad CETEC, 1983), 21–22. See "Sínodo diocesano celebrado por su señoría ilustrísima el Sr. Dr. D. Tomás de Portes e Infante, Dignísimo Arzobispo de Santo Domingo y Primado de las Indias, en los días 12, 14 y 17 de Mayo de 1851" (hereafter cited as Synod of 1851), mimeographed copy at the Archivo del Arzobispado de Santo Domingo (hereafter cited as AASD); and Pérez Menén, *Iglesia y estado*, 656.

28. Báez to Elías Rodríguez, 7 Sept. 1852; *Papeles de Buenaventura Báez*, edited by Emilio Rodríguez Demorizi (Santo Domingo: Academia Dominicana de la Historia, 1969), 428–29; and proclamation of Báez of 1 Aug. 1853, in Rodríguez Demorizi, *Documentos para la historia de la República Dominicana*, 1:320. See also Samuel Hazard, *Santo Domingo, Past and Present, with a Glance to Hayti* (London: Sampson, Low, Marston, and Searle, 1873), 250; Jaime de Jesús Domínguez, *Economía y política: República Dominicana, 1844–1861* (Santo Domingo: Editora de la Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo, 1977), 123; and Jaime de Jesús Domínguez, *La anexión de la República Dominicana a España* (Santo Domingo: Editora de la Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo, 1979), 37. While the salaries of other functionaries remained stagnant, that of the archbishop doubled between 1849 and 1852. See budgets for 1849 and 1852 in República Dominicana, *Colección de leyes*, 2:202–16, 403–8.

contest reinforced and aggravated by growing international rivalry over the Dominican Republic. Attitudes toward foreign powers and the role of the church were central to these new political realignments. While the Santanistas sought stronger links and the protection of the predominantly Protestant United States, Báez and his so-called French party or clerical party reaffirmed their Europhilia and Catholicism. Prior to the polarization in Dominican politics between 1853 and 1855, annexation had not been a divisive issue. Santana, Báez, Tomás de Bobadilla, Jimenes González, and other statesmen all had been willing to hand their country over to any power willing to take it. As Báez stated, he would favor "whatever power, be it British, French, or Anglo-American, whichever would offer the best advantages. . . ." ²⁹ But by the mid-1850s, the mounting presence of the United States and the consequent formation of a European coalition to curb it forced the caudillos to choose sides: Santana looked westward to the United States, while Báez looked east to France and Spain. ³⁰

Tensions between the two Dominican "parties" became evident after the end of Báez's first term when Francophile Archbishop Portes refused to appear at Santana's inauguration. Viewing the act as a serious affront, Santana summoned the prelate and demanded that he take the oath of alliance to the constitution, something Portes had refused to do since 1844. At first Archbishop Portes declined, but when threatened with exile, he reluctantly took the oath. ³¹ Fathers Gaspar Hernández, Elías Rodríguez, José Díaz de Peña, Francisco Vionet, Buenaventura Báez, and others in the clerical party had no choice but to flee the country to avoid prosecution for high treason and conspiring to install Báez as the republic's perpetual dictator. ³² Meanwhile, Europhile clerics were preaching politically charged sermons against Santana and his close ties with the United

29. Quoted in letter of the British consul to the Dominican foreign minister, 23 Nov. 1849, in Rodríguez Demorizi, *Correspondencia*, 2:196.

30. For a more extensive discussion of the impact of imperial rivalries on the development of political tendencies in the Hispanic Caribbean, see Luis Martínez-Fernández, *Torn between Empires: Economy, Society, and Patterns of Political Thought in the Hispanic Caribbean, 1840–1878* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1994). For a discussion of how these rivalries affected Dominican politics, see Luis Martínez-Fernández, "Caudillos, Annexationism, and the Rivalry between Empires in the Dominican Republic, 1844–1874," *Diplomatic History* 17, no. 4 (Fall 1993):571–97. In both works, I argue that polarization became evident around 1854 in the struggle for hegemony over the Hispanic Caribbean, with the United States at one pole and a coalition of Spain, France, and Great Britain at the other. This international polarization permeated the regional level, where members of the political elites in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic gravitated toward one pole or the other.

31. See Santana's decree of 14 March 1853, in República Dominicana, *Colección de leyes*, 2:458; Proclamation of Báez, 1 Aug. 1853, in Rodríguez Demorizi, *Documentos para la historia de la República Dominicana*, 1:296–97; Peguero and de los Santos, *Visión general*, 197–98; and Santana's decree of 23 Mar. 1853, PRO, FO 140/4.

32. For deportation documents, see República Dominicana, *Colección de leyes*, 2:524–27; Santana's decrees of 23 Mar. and 13 July 1853, PRO, FO 140/4; and Alfau Durán, *Derecho*, 32–33.

States.³³ In response, Santana claimed that the pro-Báez clergy had turned the pulpit into a political tribune. He also blamed them for the prevailing state of confusion in which clerics had taken over several of the state's prerogatives, including tax collecting and arresting alleged criminals.³⁴ Santana retaliated by removing cemeteries from church control and banning burials inside churches. It soon became clear that the "Báez party" enjoyed the full support of the Dominican church, partly because of Báez's pro-Spanish and pro-European stance. Meanwhile, relations between the pro-U.S. Santana and the church continued to deteriorate. Reflecting this erosion was Santana's removal from his will of a bequest of two hundred pesos to the church.³⁵

The Dominican church and the clerical party consequently welcomed Báez's return to power in 1856, an outcome in which the church and Spanish agents had been instrumental. Significantly, a mob of Baecistas celebrating their leader's inauguration gathered in front of his mansion, proceeded to the residence of Spanish Consul Antonio María Segovia, and finally paid a visit to the aging archbishop. On that occasion, one of the Baecistas exclaimed, "No longer will the Primate Church of the Indies be compared to a prostituted widowed matron. . . . Mr. Báez's rise to the presidency signifies evangelical democracy with its origin in the manger of Bethlehem and its culmination in Golgotha."³⁶ Once in office, Báez addressed the pope personally, promising "to restore to the Catholic Church all those things of which it was despoiled with sacrilegious impudence in the time of our predecessor" (referring to Santana). Báez later proclaimed that never before had "the splendor of Catholic worship nor the dignity of the clergy nor the rights of man enjoyed such solid guarantees in our country as they do now."³⁷ Now also Elías Rodríguez and other Baecista clerics could return to the Dominican Republic.³⁸

In his second administration, Báez faced strong opposition from tobacco growers, merchants, and professionals in the Cibao region. This movement culminated in a large-scale revolt in 1857 that called on the man who had twice defeated the Haitians and twice marched trium-

33. Robert Schomburgk to Lord Clarendon, 5 Mar. 1856, PRO, FO 140/4.

34. See Santana's proclamation of 3 July 1853, in Rodríguez Demorizi, *Documentos para la historia de la República Dominicana*, 1:276–79; and Santana's decree of 23 Mar. 1853, in República Dominicana, *Colección de leyes*, 2:458–60.

35. See decrees issued in 1853 in República Dominicana, *Colección de leyes*, 2:477–79; and Santana's wills, in *Papeles de Santana*, edited by Emilio Rodríguez Demorizi (Rome: Tipografía G. Menaglia, 1952), 107–18.

36. Rodríguez Demorizi, *Papeles de Báez*, 131–33; and statement by Nicolás Ureña, cited in *El Eco del Pueblo*, 12 Oct. 1856, reproduced in *ibid.*, 128–37.

37. Báez to the Pope, 1 Jan. 1857, quoted in William L. Wipfler, "The Churches of the Dominican Republic in the Light of History," M.Div. thesis, Union Theological Seminary, 1964, p. 44. See also proclamation of Báez, 21 July 1857, in Rodríguez Demorizi, *Documentos para la historia de la República Dominicana*, 1:370.

38. Alfau Durán, *Derecho*, 32–33, 36; and República Dominicana, *Colección de leyes*, 3:517.

phantly to Santo Domingo: Pedro Santana. Báez was quick to denounce the insurrection as “pro-North American and a filibusterer,” and he requested military aid from Puerto Rico’s Spanish captain general.³⁹ In the meantime, Santana and the Santiagueño revolutionaries moved on to besiege Santo Domingo. There Báez’s troops held firmly inside the city’s walls for a little over a year, until combined British, French, and Spanish mediation allowed the besieged Báez to swap the city for his own life and those of his associates. Following their surrender in 1858, Báez and the Baecista clergy once again sought exile in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and other Caribbean destinations.⁴⁰

SPANISH ANNEXATION

Political crises in the United States and the consuming civil war from 1861 to 1865 profoundly transformed geopolitical realities for the Dominican Republic. U.S. political and commercial influence retrenched briefly from the Hispanic Caribbean and Mexico, a development that encouraged European naval powers to infringe on territories heretofore barred by the Monroe Doctrine. Although preparations for annexing the former colony of Santo Domingo were underway as early as mid-1860, Spanish officials recommended utmost prudence and prescribed waiting for the impending breakup of the United States. Actual annexation of Dominican territory by Spain took place only in the spring of 1861, once the fighting between the U.S. North and South had begun.⁴¹

Spanish annexation of Dominican territory was a combined effort of the Spanish expansionist state and Santana’s administration. Up to the late 1850s, Santana had ardently promoted annexation or concessions to the United States. Suddenly, however, when annexation to the United States was no longer plausible, the caudillo turned his attention to Spain. Santana’s administration began to maneuver toward annexation in 1859, when agent Felipe Alfau traveled to Madrid to convince Spanish officials of the numerous benefits of annexation. The following year, Santana personally addressed Queen Isabella II, underscoring that “Our origin, our language, our religion, our customs, our sympathies” and other cultural affinities between the two countries facilitated annexation. Finally on 18 March 1861, Santana, former ally of the United States and the

39. Báez to the captain general of Puerto Rico, 12 July 1857, quoted in Carlos F. Pérez, *Historia diplomática de Santo Domingo (1492–1862)* (Santo Domingo: Escuela de Servicios Internacionales, Universidad Nacional Pedro Henríquez Ureña, 1973), 335.

40. See *Crónica de ambos mundos*, 5 June 1863, in Rodríguez Demorizi, *Papeles de Báez*, 169–73.

41. Dexter Perkins, *The Monroe Doctrine, 1826–1867* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1933), 284–85; Moya Pons, *Manual de historia dominicana*, 340–41; and Herminio Portell Vilá, *Historia de Cuba en sus relaciones con los Estados Unidos*, 4 vols. (Havana: Montero, 1938–1941), 2:153.

caudillo who once promised to “look out for the conservation of [Dominican] independence,” declared his nation’s annexation to Spain: “Our anxieties and dangers are over!” He described his country proceeding “from being a weak nation whose independence was an empty banner repeatedly blown around by powerful winds” to being “the robust offspring of a mighty power.”⁴² Within the next two months, while civil war raged in the United States, Spain formally annexed what was once its oldest colony in the Americas. Spanish soldiers, bureaucrats, and priests began to stream into the extinct Dominican Republic.

Santana’s new Hispanophile posture was paralleled by a rapprochement with the Dominican church, as evidenced by his 1861 decrees barring civil marriages and divorces. When he returned to power in 1858, Santana promised to reestablish the church to its previous splendor. In defending the annexation, Santana was also quick to highlight religious affinities between his country and Spain: “Together we shall kneel in front of the altars built by that nation, in front of the altars that it will find as they were left, intact, unmoved, and still crowned with its coat of arms. . . .”⁴³ This comment echoed one made a few years earlier, when a Spanish official was welcomed warmly by the archbishop of Santo Domingo and other prelates. One of them pointed out that the Spanish coat of arms remained above the cathedral’s altar, kept there “as a reminder of better days and as a symbol of our hope for a happier and more tranquil future.”⁴⁴ The traditionally Europhile Dominican clergy welcomed the Spanish annexation, which promised to restore the island’s supposed religious unity and consequently the church’s power and wealth. More important, annexation by Spain offered protection against the dreaded influences of both Haiti and the United States.⁴⁵ According to a list produced by Santana, a score of clerics—the majority—favored the new

42. Santana to the queen of Spain, 27 Apr. 1860, quoted in Luis Alvarez López, “Historia de la anexión de Santo Domingo a España, 1861–1863,” M.A. thesis, Universidad de Puerto Rico, 1977, pp. 76–77; José de la Gándara y Navarro, *La anexión y guerra de Santo Domingo*, 2 vols. (Madrid: El Correo Militar, 1884), 1:223; Proclamations of Santana, 15 Feb. and 16 July 1861, in Rodríguez Demorizi, *Documentos para la historia de la República Dominicana*, 1:267, 2:393–94; and Santana to the captain general of Puerto Rico, 18 Mar. 1861, AHN, Ultramar, leg. 5485, exp. 1.

43. See Santana’s decree of 19 Jan. 1861, in República Dominicana, *Colección de leyes*, 4:140; and Santana to the Dominican People, 31 Jan. 1859 and 18 Mar. 1861, in Rodríguez Demorizi, *Documentos para la historia de la República Dominicana*, 1:468–69, 1:504–6.

44. De la Gándara y Navarro, *Anexión y guerra*, 1:223.

45. Santana, “Relación nominal de eclesiásticos que cooperan a la anexión de Santo Domingo (Dec. 20, 1862),” in *Antecedentes de la anexión a España*, edited by Emilio Rodríguez Demorizi (Santo Domingo: Academia Dominicana de la Historia, 1955), 308–9. The list included Gabriel B. Moreno del Christo, Calixto María Pina, Francisco Díaz Páez, Benito Díaz Páez, Andrés Rosón, Manuel González Bernal, Antonio Gutiérrez, Pedro R. Suaso, Narciso Barriento, Dionisio V. de Moya, Domingo Mota, Juan Puigver, Francisco Roca, Silvestre Núñez, Miguel Santos Quezada, Manuel González Regalado, Francisco Octaviani, José Eugenio Espinosa, and Francisco X. Billini.

status.⁴⁶ An interesting parallel can be seen between the annexationist tendencies of the Dominican clergy and the postures assumed by their counterparts in Mexico and Ecuador, both of which assumed promonarchical, annexationist, and Francophile stances in the early 1860s. In all three countries, these factions deemed French or Spanish presence necessary to curb the secularizing and liberal influences associated with the increasing power of the United States.⁴⁷

In the Dominican Republic, one notable exception to the annexationist leanings of the native clergy was its interim head, Father Fernando Arturo de Meriño, who had been selected by Santana as Portes's trusted successor in 1859. In a speech commemorating the declaration of independence, Meriño publicly challenged Santana's maneuvers and the impending loss of the Dominican nationality.⁴⁸ In response, Santana first tried persuasion and then outright bribery, offering to name the uncooperative cleric as archbishop of Santo Domingo in return for his support of annexation. Meriño not only rejected the offer but proceeded to organize opposition to Santana and the annexation, a move that earned him deportation in April 1862.⁴⁹ While in Spain later that year, Meriño felt compelled to take an oath of loyalty to the queen of Spain and the laws of her kingdom.⁵⁰

Justification of Spanish annexation rested on defending Dominican culture from Haitian and U.S. encroachment and on common bonds of language and religion shared by Spaniards and Dominicans. Aware of the importance of these ties, Spanish officials in charge of annexation promoted Catholic fervor in order to buttress reincorporation of the former colony. As one Spanish statesman explained, "the ecclesiastical arm, as it ought to be, should be not only the defender and propagator of Christ's doctrine but also a powerful auxiliary to temporal authority."⁵¹ Captain General of Cuba Francisco Serrano, who was in charge of the military aspects of the annexation, noted that the Catholic Church had been weakened as an institution and the number of priests had dwindled,

46. See Sumner Wells, *Naboth's Vineyard: The Dominican Republic, 1844–1924*, 2 vols. (New York: Payson and Clarke, 1928), 1:126.

47. Nathan L. Ferris, "The Relations of the United States with South America during the American Civil War," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 21, no. 1 (Feb. 1941):65–66.

48. Domínguez, *Anexión de la República*, 113. See also Meriño's sermon of 27 Feb. 1861. Although he did not mention Santana by name, it is obvious that whenever Meriño used the term "el egoísmo," he was referring to Santana. See also Fernando Arturo Meriño, *Obras del Padre Meriño*, edited by Manuel A. Machado (Santo Domingo: La Cuna de América, 1906), 13–24.

49. See Meriño to Carlos Nouel, 27 Sept. 1902, in Rodríguez Demorizi, *Papeles de Santana*, 262; Wipfler, "Churches," 45; and Moya Pons, *Manual de historia dominicana*, 343. See also Santana to the Spanish minister of state, 14 Apr. 1862, AHN, Ultramar, leg. 2048, exp. 14, doc. 2.

50. Document signed by Meriño in AHN, Ultramar, leg. 2048, exp. 14, doc. 8.

51. Mariano Torrente, *Bosquejo económico político de la isla de Cuba*, 2 vols. (Madrid: M. Pita-Barcina, 1852–1853), 1:202.

but he was quick to characterize the new Spanish subjects as “profoundly Catholic in sentiments and habits.” Such sentiments, Serrano continued, “are inseparable from *españolismo*,” adding that in his judgment, Dominican love for the “motherland” had never died because of the Catholic link.⁵² In another communication, Serrano called for the appointment of a Spanish prelate who could “fix” the Dominican Church. Motivated by similar intentions, Queen Isabella II adopted as her pet project erecting a chapel commemorating the site where the first Catholic mass was said in the New World some 370 years earlier.⁵³

Serrano’s plea for a prelate to repair the colony’s religious situation was answered with the appointment of Archbishop Bienvenido Monzón, a zealous Spanish cleric who was determined to purify the Dominican flock and reestablish “religious unity” in the regained colony. Monzón arrived in Santo Domingo on 1 August 1862, flanked by a sizable entourage of peninsular priests. He was immediately scandalized by the generalized practice of cohabitation by unmarried persons. As he later described the situation: “I soon realized that the institution of the family, the primary element of every society, was being degraded and illegitimized by the remnants of the so-called civil marriage of the French code (adopted during the republican era) and also by the practice of keeping concubines, which were unfortunately quite common. . . .”⁵⁴ Decades of legally-sanctioned civil marriage, the geographic isolation of most of the population, and the high cost of marriage fees had made Catholic marriages rather rare.⁵⁵ According to the new archbishop, alternative matrimonial unions were sinful and unacceptable, and he sought ways to force nominal Catholics and Protestants to contract church-sanctioned marriages. Civil marriages were declared void by a royal decree on 4 May 1862, and Monzón’s pastoral letter of 1 January 1863

52. Report of Francisco Serrano, 5 Sept. 1861, in Rodríguez Demorizi, *Antecedentes*, 250.

53. Communication of Captain General Serrano dated 6 Sept. 1861, Archivo General de la Nación, Santo Domingo (hereafter cited as AGNSD), Colección Herrera, vol. 23, no. 452. See also the file pertaining to this church erection project in AHN, Ultramar, leg. 3531. I am indebted to Jaime de Jesús Domínguez, who provided me with photocopies of this file. See also royal decree of 18 Jan. 1862, AGNSD, Fondo de la Anexión y Guerra de Restauración (hereafter cited as Anexión), leg. 7, exp. 2.

54. Pedro María Archambault, *Historia de la Restauración* (Santo Domingo: Biblioteca Taller 20, 1973), 13; and the deposition of Bienvenido Monzón before the Spanish Congreso de Diputados, 25 Jan. 1865, quoted in Domínguez, *Anexión de la República*, 281. De la Gándara y Navarro agreed that “illegitimate unions” and “carnal vices” were more abundant in the Dominican Republic than elsewhere in Latin America. See de la Gándara y Navarro, *Anexión y guerra*, 1:224. For more facts pertaining to the status of religion, see Roberto Marte, *Cuba y la República Dominicana: transición económica en el Caribe del siglo XIX* (Santo Domingo: Universidad APEC, n.d.), 105; Torrente, *Bosquejo*, 1:188, 1:197; and Monzón’s deposition, reproduced in María Magdalena Guerrero Cano, *El Arzobispo Monzón* (Santo Domingo: Amigo del Hogar, 1991), 65–89.

55. Memorial of General Luis J. Golfín (1861), in *Samaná, pasado y porvenir*, edited by Emilio Rodríguez Demorizi (Santo Domingo: Editora Montalvo, 1945), 162.

mobilized local priests, requesting them to report on the number of legitimate marriages, unauthorized separations, and the extent of concubinage and civil unions.⁵⁶

In this pastoral letter and other communications, Monzón lambasted another of his favorite targets—Protestantism. He ordered clerics to investigate “whether or not there are heretics within the radius of the parish, how many, of what origin, what sect they belong to, [and] whether they publicly celebrate their services in some chapel or fixed location.”⁵⁷ These inquisitorial attacks continued throughout the remainder of the annexation period. Monzón’s correspondence reveals his visceral disapproval of the few hundred Protestants who quietly lived and worshiped in Puerto Plata, Samaná, and Santo Domingo. In his eyes, their mere presence was “scandalous,” and he expressed great concern about their schools and other proselytizing activities in which “books and pamphlets impregnated with the venom of error and heresy” were being distributed.⁵⁸ Like other observers of the day, Monzón underscored the political repercussions of harboring so many “foreigners with interests that are contrary to those of Spaniards and who oppose our domination. . . .” Their “dangerous ideas,” he concluded, could well lead to insurrection.⁵⁹

The religious toleration that had prevailed to some extent in Dominican territory since the mid-1820s ended suddenly when the Spanish Consejo de Ministros brought the reconquered territory under the jurisdiction of Title 1 of Book 2 of the Spanish legal code. The decree, published in *La Gaceta de Santo Domingo* on 26 February 1863, prescribed banishment and prison terms for those practicing, promoting, or publishing doctrines contrary to the Roman Catholic Church.⁶⁰ Armed thus with the full weight of Spanish law, Monzón and the colonial administrators staged an assault against non-Catholics that was unprecedented in the island’s recent history. Dominican Protestants were forced to evacuate their churches and other buildings in the capital city. The Wesleyan chapel in Samaná also fell prey to colonial designs when it was confiscated by military authorities, who turned it into a temporary hospital. Protestant churches and schools in other locations were burned to ashes.⁶¹

56. Royal decree of 4 May 1862, in República Dominicana, *Colección de leyes*, 4:194–95; and G. Lockward, *Protestantismo en Dominicana*, 212–13.

57. Cited in de la Gándara y Navarro, *Anexión y guerra*, 1:226.

58. Monzón to the governor of Santo Domingo, 24 Sept. 1862, in AGNSD, Fondo al Archivo de la Nación de la República Dominicana Cortesía del Archivo Nacional de Cuba, book 17; and Monzón, cited in Domínguez, *Anexión de la República*, 284.

59. Domínguez, *Anexión de la República*, 285.

60. Leopoldo O’Donnell to the governor of Santo Domingo, 21 Dec. 1862, AGNSD, *Anexión*, leg. 4, exp. 11; and *La Gaceta de Santo Domingo*, 26 Feb. 1863, p. 1.

61. Captain general to the intendant of the army, 10 Feb. 1863, and intendant of the army to the governor, 31 Aug. 1863, AGNSD, *Anexión*, leg. 7, doc. 4, and leg. 10, doc. 27; draft of

These repressive measures ignited the furor of the black Protestant community and its advocates, the British and U.S. merchants and consuls. Members of the Samaná congregation addressed a letter to President Abraham Lincoln, complaining of having been deprived of their right to worship, their schools, and even Christian burial. Protestants had opposed the republic's annexation from the outset, and by mid-1863, many had fled to escape the repression.⁶² The Puerto Plata congregation found itself without a minister when James Darrel sailed to the Turks Islands, taking the church books and records with him.⁶³

Freemasons, traditionally at odds with the European Catholic clergy, also endured unrelenting persecution during Monzón's tenure as archbishop. Freemasonry had been widespread in the Dominican Republic, with some of its adherents having played significant roles in matters of church and state. Tomás de Bobadilla and eleven other Freemasons signed the declaration of Dominican independence.⁶⁴ Several priests reputedly belonged to secret societies, and Santana himself boasted among his many titles that of Protector e Inspector General de la Masonería. One contemporary observer noted that Masonic garb and symbols were as visible as national folk costumes.⁶⁵ Monzón confronted Santana personally about his participation in secret societies, ordering him to surrender his Masonic records, although to no avail. Meanwhile, the zealous prelate instructed parish priests to deny sacraments as well as sacred burial to all known Freemasons until they recanted their vows and turned in their documents. The wave of anti-Masonic repression proved successful, and all lodges were soon closed.⁶⁶

Blinded by zeal reminiscent of the inquisition, Archbishop Monzón alienated his own natural allies: the Dominican clergy, who had

letter by the unnamed British consul to Santana, 28 Jan. 1862, PRO, FO 140/5; see also AGNSD, Anexión, leg. 4, exp. 14.

62. Significantly, the extensive lists of supporters of the annexation from Samaná and Puerto Plata included only one Anglo name, that of John Keller, who was probably not related to the Protestant congregation of Samaná. See Ramón Lugo Lovatón, "Pronunciamientos anexionistas de 1861," *Boletín del Archivo General de la Nación* 16, no. 76 (Jan.–Mar.):53–74; and report by Manuel Buceta, 25 Sept. 1864, in Rodríguez Demorizi, *Antecedentes*, 332–33.

63. William Jaeger to William Seward, 3 Mar. 1863, quoted in G. Lockward, *Protestantismo en Dominicana*, 218, 226–27; Jaeger to Seward, 2 July 1863, members of the Protestant church of Samaná to the U.S. consul at Santo Domingo, 24 Mar. 1863, and members of the Protestant church of Puerto Plata to President Lincoln, 24 Mar. 1863, U.S. National Archives, Department of State, Record Group 59, Despatches from U.S. consuls in Santo Domingo, vol. 4; and AGNSD, Anexión, leg. 8, doc. 30.

64. G. Lockward, *Protestantismo en Dominicana*, 128.

65. See Hoetink, *Dominican People*, 151; G. Lockward, *Protestantismo en Dominicana*, 223; Domínguez, *Anexión de la República*, 283; G. Lockward, *Protestantismo en Dominicana*, 232; and de la Gándara y Navarro, *Anexión y guerra*, 1:223–24.

66. G. Lockward, *Protestantismo en Dominicana*, 232; A. A. Guridí, *Santo Domingo y España* (New York: n.p., 1864), reproduced in Rodríguez Demorizi, *Antecedentes*, 356; de la Gándara y Navarro, *Anexión y guerra*, 1:223–24; and Domínguez, *Anexión de la República*, 283.

enthusiastically welcomed the advent of the new regime. One of Monzón's first acts was to remove several Dominican prelates from their posts and to replace them with Spanish men of the cloth.⁶⁷ Perhaps even more alienating was his crackdown on long-established practices among parish priests, including associating with Masonic lodges and keeping mistresses. Monzón's decrees also attacked the economic basis of the rural clergy, reducing salaries to fifty pesos per month and depriving priests of previous sources of income, including baptismal, marriage, and burial fees. Under the new regime, all such services were to be provided at no cost to those who could not afford to pay for them.⁶⁸

In the end, the fanatical actions of Monzón and his associates undermined the new regime by alienating various sectors within Dominican society. Santana, Captain General José de la Gándara y Navarro, and other contemporaries blamed Monzón personally for the failure of annexation. It is therefore not surprising that Freemasons and Protestants participated prominently in the Guerra de la Restauración (1863–1865). Annexation records of the Archivo General de la Nación in Santo Domingo include several documents attesting to the uneasy relations between parish priests and state officials.⁶⁹ Among the embittered Dominican-born priests who joined in the struggle against Spain were José del Carmen Betancourt Pérez, Francisco Díaz Páez, Miguel Quezada Castro, Manuel González Regalado, Dionisio Valerio de Moya, and José Eugenio Espinosa.⁷⁰ Once again, the Dominican clergy assumed a critical role in national definition and nation-building.

THE FIRST YEARS OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC

The end of the U.S. Civil War and the Dominican patriots' victory created new geopolitical circumstances. First, the Union victory in the

67. Archambault, *Historia*, 13; G. Lockward, *Protestantismo en Dominicana*, 214; Guerrero Cano, *Arzobispo Monzón*, 44; and royal decrees of new appointments, 23 June 1862, in República Dominicana, *Colección de leyes*, 4:203–5.

68. Wells, *Naboth's Vineyard*, 1:241; Moya Pons, *Manual de historia dominicana*, 348; and Domínguez, *Anexión de la República*, 279–80. More than a decade before the annexation, Portes tried to stop abuses in collecting sacramental fees. In the Synod of 1851, he prescribed limits and established that three-quarters of the fees could be retained by the curates but the other quarter belonged to the church *mayordomos*. See AASD, Synod of 1851, book 4, title 6, chap. 3, and book 4, title 7, chap. 5. Also see República Dominicana, *Colección de leyes*, 2:128–29.

69. See Santana to the Spanish minister of state, 10 Oct. 1863, in Rodríguez Demorizi, *Documentos para la historia de la República Dominicana*, 2:431; de la Gándara y Navarro, *Anexión y guerra*, 1:228–29, 1:459; Santana's letter of 11 Oct. 1863, quoted in Archambault, *Historia*, 154, 313; and G. Lockward, *Protestantismo en Dominicana*, 225, 326. For examples, see documents on the clash between the lieutenant governor of Neyba and the local curate; between the priest of Sabaneta, Juan Pineda, and local authorities; and between the parish priest of Bonao, José María Barosela, and Captain Estanislao Robles, in AGNSD, *Anexión*, leg. 17, unnumbered exp.; leg. 18, exp. 2; and leg. 21, exp. 21.

70. José Luis Sáez "La Iglesia Católica y la restauración de la República Dominicana," *Amigo del Hogar* 40, no. 410 (July–Aug. 1981):8–10.

United States signaled the end of European political domination over Dominican territory. Dominican politics could no longer be based on the rivalry between those seeking annexation to the United States and those looking to Europe for protection. Moreover, Santana's death in 1864 (from natural causes) left one party of the First Republic without a head. Some of the former Santanistas joined forces with liberals from El Cibao to form the Partido Azul, which opposed the more autocratic Partido Rojo of Buenaventura Báez.

Báez, Manuel María Gautier, and other Rojos adjusted rapidly to the new geopolitical realities of the Second Republic. Like Santana before them, they believed that the best way to retain power and keep the popular segments of society under control was to exchange territorial sovereignty for foreign support. The formula was the same, but this time the only viable protector was the United States, whose administrations during the U.S. era of reconstruction were exhibiting expansionist ambitions of their own. The new political alignments of the Second Republic split the Dominican clergy into two factions that paralleled the stances of the Rojo and Azul parties. When Báez assumed power for a third time in 1865, he counted on the support of his longtime allies in the Dominican Catholic Church and maneuvered to retain it. Priest Gabriel Moreno del Christo warmly welcomed Báez on his return to the country in December 1865, while prelate Calixto María Pina issued a circular praising Báez's role as protector of Dominican Catholicism and calling for obedience to the president's "good authority."⁷¹

This time round, however, support for Báez among clerics was far from unanimous. Meriño and other nationalist priests who were inclined toward the Azules rejected Báez because of his complicity in the Spanish annexation and even more for his renewed annexationism, which now looked to the United States.⁷² One of the first acts of Báez's third administration (1865–1866) was to banish Meriño and at least seven other nationalist priests. In their places, Báez named some of his partisans, whom the opposition dubbed "thugs" and men of "bloody antecedents" and "anti-evangelical principles."⁷³

When José María Cabral and the Azules claimed power in 1866

71. Jaime de Jesús Domínguez, *Notas económicas y políticas dominicanas sobre el período julio 1865–julio 1886*, 2 vols. (Santo Domingo: Editora de la Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo, 1983–1984), 2:431–33; and Father Calixto María Pina to the priesthood, 1 Feb. 1866, in AASD, "Documentos eclesiásticos, 1866–1879" (transcribed documents compiled by Antonio Camilo González).

72. See Meriño's speech of 8 Dec. 1865, in Meriño, *Obras*, 27–32. See also Rafael Peralta Brito and José Chez Checo, *Religión, filosofía y política en Fernando A. de Meriño (1857–1906)* (Santo Domingo: Amigo del Hogar, 1979), 111–12.

73. Rodríguez Demorizi, *Papeles de Báez*, 205, 336; proclamation of Luperón, Cabral, Pimentel, and others, 17 Apr. 1869, in Gregorio Luperón, *Notas autobiográficas y apuntes históricos sobre la República Dominicana*, 2d ed., 3 vols. (Santiago, D.R.: Editorial El Diario, 1939), 2:119.

following Báez's resignation, they sought to undermine the position of Baecista priests Francisco Billini and Calixto María Pina, rejecting the papal appointment of Belgian prelate Louis Nicholas de Buggenoms as head of the Dominican Catholic Church.⁷⁴ Cabral's letter to Pope Pius IX recommended Meriño and stressed that heretofore the Dominican church had been led by a "virtuous and national clergy" and that neither Buggenoms nor Billini were acceptable. "My government," wrote Cabral, "is ready to accept whichever delegate you choose, as long as he is neither foreign nor has ever figured as an enemy of the fatherland or nationality."⁷⁵ In a later document, the Azul secretary of foreign relations spelled out instructions for drafting a concordat, which was to bar foreign-born clerics from serving as archbishop, vicar, or ecclesiastical governor. The instructions also conveyed demands for broad powers in ecclesiastical matters for the state, which included the right to grant religious toleration, appoint clerics, block papal bulls, and reduce the number of holy days.⁷⁶ Unmoved, Vatican officials continued to support Buggenoms.⁷⁷ In the meantime, Baecistas energetically protested the exile of Father Pina and accused the government of having "reviled [the church] in a scandalous way."⁷⁸ By that time, several clerics were siding with Báez and Buggenoms, as evidenced by the latter's list of thirty-one churchmen, eighteen of "good conduct," eight of "dubious behavior," and five of "bad conduct."⁷⁹

The fortunes of the dwindling Rojo, pro-Buggenoms faction of the clergy were momentarily restored when Báez assumed power for a fourth time in 1868 after his troops defeated Cabral's forces. Báez and his rubber-stamp senate proceeded to recognize the Belgian prelate formally as official apostolic vicar and to banish Dionisio Valerio de Moya, who was opposing annexation vocally. Along with Báez's religious policy of appointing a foreigner to head the Dominican church, he intensified his pro-U.S. annexationist maneuvers, actions that further alienated most of the

74. See letter of José Gabriel García dated 27 Apr. 1867, explaining to Vatican officials his government's actions against Fathers Billini and Pina in AASD, "Documentos Eclesiásticos, 1866-1879." See also José Luis Sáez, *Cinco siglos de iglesia dominicana* (Santo Domingo: Amigo del Hogar, 1987), 83, 87-91; and Alfau Durán, *Derecho*, 60-61.

75. José María Cabral to the pope, 1866, AASD, "Documentos eclesiásticos, 1866-1879."

76. Instructions to Meriño from José Gabriel García, 8 Apr. 1867, AASD, "Documentos eclesiásticos, 1866-1879."

77. Meriño to Dominican Minister of Foreign Relations, 24 Oct. 1867; and Rodríguez Demorizi, *Papeles de Meriño*, 66-69.

78. See the Baecista proclamation of 7 Oct. 1867, signed by General Antonio Gómez and others, U.S. National Archives, Department of State, Record Group 59. Notes from the Legation of the Dominican Republic in the United States to the Department of State, vol. 1.

79. Louis Nicholas Buggenoms, "Relación nominal de los párrocos residentes en la Arquidiócesis de la República Dominicana, con expresión del lugar de la residencia, edad aproximativa y conducta en general [1866?]," in AASD, "Papeles del Padre Buggenoms, 1866-1870," compiled by Guillermo Soto Montero, 2 vols. (mimeographed documents compiled in 1987), 2:55-58.

clergy.⁸⁰ The ambitions of Billini and other clerics eroded whatever support had originally existed for Buggenoms. The only three clerics who obeyed the Belgian prelate's summons of September 1868 were Bartolomé Pinelli, M. Zubiría, and José María Perdomo. The rest argued that Billini was the real ecclesiastical authority. Buggenoms responded to these "heretical objections" by barring rebel clerics from officiating at mass, preaching, and giving the sacraments.⁸¹ Critical to this process of growing opposition to Báez's protégé was the Rojo caudillo's increased interest in annexing the republic to the United States, a predominantly Protestant country. Eventually, even some of the clergy who had been ultra-Baecista (Díaz Páez, Billini, and Pina) withdrew their support from the caudillo and his foreign-born appointee.⁸² By early 1876, Báez was referring to Pina as a Cabral partisan who was "*un energúmeno*" (possessed).⁸³

Those opposing Báez and his annexationist schemes also employed religious arguments in their attacks. For example, one anonymous anti-annexationist group responded to inquiries on the proposed annexation of 1871 by warning that the Dominican Republic could not be incorporated into another country "with a church in which the God of the Catholics is not worshiped." In the same vein, a contemporary broadside gloomily forecast that annexation would force Dominicans to renounce their religion and language. One prelate candidly stated that annexation would bring with it another religion, and that although there would be religious toleration, he "too would have to tolerate others."⁸⁴ Nationalist priest Meriño and by now most clerics, convinced of the dire consequences of annexation to the United States, continued to fight this outcome during Báez's fifth and last presidential term (1876–1878) by playing active roles in organizing anti-Báez guerrillas. The years 1879 and 1880 marked the epitaph of the Rojo party and annexation as a viable option in Dominican politics. Significantly, Meriño, who had spent the last two decades fighting annexationism, momentarily assumed the presidency of the Dominican Republic in 1880.⁸⁵

80. See Báez's decree of 25 Sept. 1868, in AASD, Soto Montero, "Papeles de Buggenoms," 2:263–64; and Senate proclamation of 25 Sept. 1868, in AGNSD, Fondo de Relaciones Exteriores, leg. 19, exp. 4; and Sáez, "Iglesia," 8–9.

81. Peralta Brito and Chez Checo, *Religión, filosofía y política*, 106; and Buggenoms to Manuel María Gautier, 28 Sept. 1868, AGNSD, Fondo de Relaciones Exteriores, leg. 19, exp. 4.

82. See Buggenoms's letter of 18 Oct. 1868 attacking Father Billini's writings as blasphemous in AASD, Soto Montero, "Papeles de Buggenoms," 2:316–18; and Armando Boni, *El Padre Buggenoms* (Santo Domingo: Amigo del Hogar, 1991), 34.

83. Buenaventura Báez to Damián Báez, 21 Jan. 1876, in Rodríguez Demorizi, *Papeles de Báez*, 467.

84. See "Algunos dominicanos a la Comisión de Estados Unidos [Feb. 3, 1871]," and an anonymous proclamation dated 18 Mar. 1870, both in *Proyecto de la incorporación de Santo Domingo a Norte América*, edited by Emilio Rodríguez Demorizi (Santo Domingo: Editora Montalvo, 1964), 105, 9–10; also memo by Carlos Nouel and others to the U.S. Senate, 30 Mar. 1871, in Rodríguez Demorizi, *Proyecto*, 139–40; and Hazard, *Santo Domingo*, 227.

85. Peralta Brito y Chez Checo, *Religión, filosofía y política*, 117.

The Protestant communities, composed mostly of immigrants and their descendants, welcomed Báez's annexationist overtures of 1866, 1868–1874, and 1876–1878. The Wesleyan congregation of Samaná celebrated the temporary establishment of sovereignty by the U.S.-backed Samaná Bay Company in 1869 with a special service in which the preacher stressed the benefits of the new arrangement. Those attending, according to Joseph Fabens, responded emotionally "with tears and sobs of grateful joy."⁸⁶ The Protestant communities of Samaná and Puerto Plata in particular had endured much suffering and material loss in the convulsions of 1857–1858 and 1862–1865. Although the Second Republic regimes of Báez, Cabral, and others did not pose an imminent threat to their lives, many Protestants recognized the familial, cultural, and religious affinities still tying them to the country that they had practically been forced to leave four decades earlier.⁸⁷

CONCLUSION

Forged in a struggle for independence that resembled a crusade, the Dominican Republic emerged in 1844 as a Catholic country in which the church was perhaps the only truly national institution offering a semblance of stability during the first decade and a half of republican life. The political groupings that established ties with the church during the First Republic were precisely the ones that achieved stronger political coalitions: Santana (1844–1848), Báez (1849–1858), and Santana again (1859–1861). The stances taken by members of the clergy toward the political leadership depended on the government's position toward church issues (such as priests' salaries and control over marriages), and perhaps more importantly, on issues pertaining to foreign policy and annexation. Santana enjoyed the support of the church while taking a Europhile annexationist stance. When international developments forced his attention to shift to the United States in the mid-1850s, his standing with the clergy deteriorated to the point that his rival Báez could boast of being the leader of the "clerical party."

Proponents of Spanish annexation on both sides of the Atlantic heralded Catholicism as one of the most critical links uniting the new colony with its former colonizer. The strengthening of Catholicism and the attack on all forces deemed contrary to the purity of the church thus became one of the central strategies of the annexationists. Shrouded thus in a religious mantle, annexation of Dominican territory became the culmination of a crusade that had begun almost five centuries earlier. But as

86. Quoted in Wells, *Naboth's Vineyard*, 1:381–82.

87. Joseph P. Hamilton to the Commission of Inquiry, in U.S. Commission of Inquiry to Santo Domingo, *Report of the Commission of Inquiry* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1871), 222.

it turned out, the brash inquisitorial practices of Monzón and his Spanish lieutenants achieved the opposite result in galvanizing nationalist opposition to the Spanish regime.

The return of the United States to political and commercial preeminence in the Hispanic Caribbean after 1865 profoundly altered the political options of the Dominican elite, including the clergy. Aware of the impossibility of continuing to seek a European protectorate, Báez (the former leader of the Francophile clerical party) turned his gaze to the United States, but in doing so, he alienated many of his former allies, especially the growing nationalistic faction of the clergy. By the late 1870s, Báez could no longer count on the support of his former allies in the church. In March 1878, he left the republic, never to return, this time without any man of the cloth accompanying him.

Catholicism and the Dominican church, despite all the attacks endured since the cession of 1795 and the profound political realignments at national and international levels, remained as defining elements of the embattled Dominican nationality well into the 1870s. In the eyes of the church, Haitian expansionism, pro-U.S. annexationism, and Protestantism would continue for many decades to be anti-Catholic as well as anti-national factors. Consider, for example, the statement made by Father Juan Pepén more than a century after Dominican independence: "The history of Dominican heterodoxy remains unwritten; but experience demonstrates that our nationality ends where the [Protestant] 'Churches' and 'voodoo' begin."⁸⁸ This kind of sentiment reveals the persistence of such ideas far into the twentieth century.

88. Pepén, *La cruz*, 142–43.

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