# INTRODUCTION POPULISM AS VERNACULAR PRACTICE

> A black legend has been created around Trujillo. In order to judge him it is necessary to know what was here when he came to power. This was a very savage, very wild and backward country. We had just emerged from an occupation that had come to pacify and disarm because the country was in constant war—a political catastrophe, which made for poverty because the countryside was full of bandits and no one could work and everyone wanted a political position. Trujillo did away with the political disaster; he did away with the disorder, and put everyone to work. People preferred to sacrifice some of their liberty so that the country could rise above the state of anarchy.
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> INTERVIEW WITH JULIÁN PÉREZ, 28 JANUARY 1993, SANTO DOMINGO

> To know the art of impressing the imagination of crowds is to know at the same time the art of governing them.
>
> GUSTAVE LE BON, *THE CROWD*

> Trujillo is the only statesman of this century who has converted dreams into stone.
>
> MANUEL DE JÉSUS GOICO CASTRO

Edward Said has suggested that the essence of Verdi's opera *Aïda* is the way it links power with pleasure. Perhaps no one understood this better than Rafael Leonidas Trujillo Molina, the ruthless dictator who ruled the nation of the Dominican Republic with an iron fist for over three decades (1930–61).[1] Taking full advantage of the authority, opportunities for pillage, and visibility that his position as head of state afforded him, Trujillo was known for his lasciviousness, vanity, and larger-than-life theatricality. This was evidenced in his penchant for grandiose costumes, his immaculate grooming, and the prodigious consumption of food, drink, and women for which he and his inner circle were notorious, and for which he earned the sobriquet "the goat."[2] It may have been this passion for using power in the service of pleasure that drove Trujillo to name two of his children, Ramfis

and Rhadamés, after characters in *Aïda*.[3] Or, in characteristic conceit, it may have been the way the opera itself, which was commissioned for the opening of the Suez Canal, dissembled imperial domination as high art. Whatever the case, *Aïda* captures the theater that was central to the exercise of authority under Trujillo's rule, even if it is precisely the dramaturgy of power that has escaped the attention of scholars.

## EL GENERALISSIMO

Trujillo established one of the longest and most repressive authoritarian regimes in Latin America, characterized by bouts of extreme carnage interspersed with everyday forms of terror such as random abductions, pervasive surveillance, and institutionalized forms of ridicule. Repression was both systematic, such as the infamous concentration camp at Nigüa and "La Cuarenta" prison, where "vagrants" and political prisoners languished, as well as highly arbitrary, since frequently family members, associates, and even entire townships of those accused of "indifference" (which was taken as opposition) to the regime were tortured and assassinated as well. There were periodic waves of heightened repression until 1957, when Trujillo turned over military intelligence to the ruthless hatchet man Johnny Abbes García, who centralized intelligence gathering and formed several paramilitary organizations, after which the terror was taken to new extremes. In contrast to disappearances in the Southern Cone military regimes, abductions under Trujillo were typically public affairs, as official spies patroling the capital in their black Volkswagen beetles created the sensation that Trujillo was always watching. Indeed, a prominent psychologist who directed a mental hospital during the Trujillo period has even argued that, as a result of the regime, paranoia became a national characteristic.[4]

Forms of terror were often chosen to highlight their theatrical effect. Trujillo expanded the military fifteen-fold, developing a formidable air force and a navy second only to that of Venezuela; he took pride in exhibiting his military power through impressive pageants and parades. He also restructured this instrument of national defense into a tool for internal security.[5] The theater of violence included highly public episodes of grotesque brutality such as the slaughter of twenty thousand Haitian border migrants by machete, a tactic chosen to horrify both Haitian victims and Dominican collaborators compelled to assist.[6] Political opponents met with a quick death that could include chilling spectacles to spread the demonstration effect. For example, the assassination of Sergeant Enrique Blanco,

who led the last regional uprising against Trujillo, was fashioned into a macabre ritual when the caudillo's corpse was paraded in a chair throughout the province and his peasant supporters were forced to dance with his remains.[7] These acts of unspeakable cruelty generated a thick fog of fear that permeated the atmosphere.

Formal political repression was thus certainly key to explaining the extraordinary longevity of the regime, as well as its extremely tight and penetrating control over civil society. Indeed, Trujillo's rule has been described by scholars as "totalitarian," since he effectively quashed any form of organized opposition on Dominican soil, establishing a level of iron-clad obedience that has been described as unique in Latin America.[8] Unlike comparable regional strongmen such as Fulgencio Batista of Cuba, whose armed forces lost any modicum of institutional discipline by the end of the regime due to rampant graft, Trujillo maintained strict control of his military and civil service. Systematic torture, espionage, and random arrests made dissent an impossibility on Dominican soil. Trujillo's repressive apparatus even extended overseas, as he repeatedly attempted to assassinate various heads of state, including Fulgencio Batista, Fidel Castro, and Rómulo Betancourt.[9] Indeed, the terror was so appalling that it has been described more readily in literature than in history.[10] In a far smaller population, the death toll probably exceeded that of the chilling military junta in Argentina.[11]

Trujillo established a predatory regime which combined bossism and extensive graft with an ideology of developmentalism and national progress; the implicit logic was that Trujillo represented the very embodiment of the nation, so his personal enrichment somehow aggrandized the republic.[12] He then fashioned all public works, policy formation, and patronage as personal gifts from the dictator to the *pueblo* or people. With his family and a few close friends, Trujillo used the state to develop a system of highly profitable economic monopolies as he gradually took over all core national industries such as meat, milk, sugar, rice, oil, cement, and beer. He then used the law to guarantee their profitability and allocated state contracts to his family and cronies. For example, he prohibited the production of sea salt so that the public would have to purchase salt from the Barahona mines which he controlled. His wife María Martínez was allotted a government bank for cashing state paychecks. Trujillo's sister's husband was given the military pharmaceutical contract, a highly lucrative enterprise given the massive expansion of the armed forces.[13] In this extreme example of prebendelism—the appropriation of the state for private ends—the state be-

came an instrument that guaranteed flows of profit to Trujillo and his circle. Trujillo eventually became one of the wealthiest men in Latin America. Under his regime, there was no effective distinction between the national treasury and the dictator's own purse.[14] He also used the state as a legal screen which shielded the public from the regime's extraordinary lawlessness and corruption. He enabled his own divorce, for example, by altering divorce legislation.

Trujillo eventually "nationalized" even those industries dominated by foreign investment, such as sugar, by buying out foreign investors, as always cloaking his own entrepreneurial designs in patriotic guise. He then spread the wealth by creating a system of kickbacks among subordinates, who were free to collect as long as they did not compete with Trujillo.[15] For example, his control over the rice monopoly was established by prohibiting rice imports, with his campaign in favor of Creole rice couched in nationalist terms.[16] Like the Mafia, the system was informal, cemented by ties of kinship and personal trust, permeated by infighting among minor bosses, and enforced by the threat of violence.[17] Trujillo's deep mistrust of outsiders resulted in efforts to groom his eldest son Ramfis as his successor, as his friend Anastasio Somoza had succeeded in doing with his son.[18]

Trujillo took great pains to create a republican mirage, carefully choreographing elections and even fictive opposition parties, yet this official face camouflaged a personal kleptocracy run by Trujillo and his family. The regime's public face of republicanism is what Rosario Espinal calls "a legal fantasy" (*fantasía del derecho*) or Julio Campillo-Pérez describes as "legalitus."[19] This veil of deception and secrecy also created an intense rumor culture about what truly motivated the hidden recesses of power and a hermeneutics of suspicion owing to the fact that little real information trickled down to the masses.[20] As Trujillo's inner sanctum became a virtual secret society, the veil of invisibility appeared to augment the powers within, as the "milling of the pretense and reputation of secrecy" made the secrets appear to grow in force as well as form.[21] "Secretism" thus generated popular narratives about the occult and even magical powers of the ubiquitous yet invisible inner circle—such as the stories about Trujillo's "animal magnificence," about his never sweating, and about the evil glass eye of his right-hand man, Anselmo Paulino. People knew that Trujillo was up to something, but they did not always know exactly what.[22]

Trujillo's total control over the economy and polity were affirmed through a symbolic apparatus dedicated to el Generalissimo's aggrandizement; one

generated by Trujillo's own megalomania in combination with Trujillo's minions' efforts to accumulate symbolic capital as they competed to garner his favor and avoid his ire. Civil servants were both a highly privileged and particularly vulnerable group, since their salaries were relatively high, yet their proximity to Trujillo and access to the secrets of power made them suspect as potential conspirators; as a result, they were forced to sign letters of resignation when hired, enabling frequent bureaucratic turnover. Bureaucratic shuffling also generated gossip about who was to be ousted next.

In La Era de Trujillo, public space became a hall of mirrors all of which refracted Trujillo's greatness in his many costumes: the statesman in jacket and tie, the caudillo on horseback, or the army general in full military brass with his distinctive Napoleonic chapeau. Trujillo's image was eventually inscribed upon virtually every aspect of Dominican life. Parks, mountains, and provinces were renamed in Trujillo's honor, including the capital city itself, Santo Domingo, which became Ciudad Trujillo. Over 1,800 busts of Trujillo were displayed, as was a thirteen-foot statue of his likeness in gold plate, some say the largest statue of its kind ever produced.[23] National time was also reconstructed to highlight the achievements of Trujillo; not only did the dates of his inauguration and birthday become national holidays, but the calendar itself was transformed to date from the first year of the Era of Trujillo. Hundreds of titles, deeds, orders of merit and decorations were invented for and bestowed upon Trujillo in the course of his regime, as well as for his immediate family.[24] The First Son, Ramfis, was appointed honorary army colonel at age four.

Not all of Trujillo's deification, however, was iconic. The "political liturgy" of the regime involved the creation of a new style of mass participation, including mandatory rites of deference and adulation toward the *Generalissimo*.[25] Citizens were expected to display photographs of the Benefactor, as well as placards such as "Only Trujillo cures us" and "God and Trujillo are my faith" in their homes and businesses. As we shall see, praise to Trujillo became part of a political economy of discourse, one which enabled minions to garner symbolic credit with the dictator, while satisfying Trujillo's need to accumulate the symbolic capital he lacked due to his ruffian background. Elements of this discursive economy over time trickled down into civil society, as hieratic military epithets such as "Capitán" were adopted as popular male forms of address.[26]

This "theater state" commenced and ended with grandiose state processions.[27] Upon his inauguration, Trujillo led a procession of his entire armed

forces throughout the center and northwest of the country on horseback; and months before his assassination in 1961, all able-bodied citizens were asked to march to demonstrate their faith in *La nueva patria dominicana*, Trujillo's era, in a "million man march." These grand militaristic displays which served to remind Dominicans of their subjection were paired with plebeian displays of his generosity, such as the legions of barefoot campesinos invited to the National Palace so that Trujillo could personally attend to their problems and needs. More everyday rituals included *revistas cívicas*, or civic reviews, as well as frequent civic events organized by the Dominican Party to commemorate holidays. Neoclassical economic theory—with its utilitarian logic of investment and returns—cannot explain why Trujillo, the nation's largest employer by the end of the regime, would establish over a hundred new holidays, which, on top of the traditional Catholic calendar of religious events, created a furlough schedule that made a deep dent into productive labor time. Some scholars have dismissed the ideology of "sultanistic" regimes such as the Trujillato as mere "window-dressing" and the culture of adulation as a form of comic opera.[28] In this view, Trujillo was a madman, and the only aspects of his regime worthy of study are its real political and economic effects. Yet to Dominicans, state culture was a very serious matter since failure to comply with the myriad rites of political participation could be met with economic pressure or even death, and nationalism was a powerful political currency which Trujillo deployed very effectively to conjure support for his regime.

Trujillo thrust aside the elite, which saw him as a rogue outsider, and relied upon the military, the United States, and the peasantry to maintain himself in office. These central pillars of his rule have received excellent attention by Valentina Peguero, Eric Roorda, and Richard Turits. Military expansion was crucial to the development of the repressive apparatus of the regime, as well as to the sociology of politics. Trujillo made his army one of the largest in Latin America; in a country of three million, he placed more than thirty thousand men in uniform.[29] He also developed paramilitary organizations within civil institutions such as the university as a means of surveillance. These two aspects of his regime were also central to his populism. He used the armed forces as a system of patronage, giving poor Dominicans a chance at upward mobility by providing them prestige through their "aristocratic" Italian uniforms and establishing them as a privileged status group and the basis of the middle class.[30] And through an extensive policy of land grants, he bought the support of much of the peasantry.[31]

During the Good Neighbor policy when the United States needed a united front during World War II, Trujillo skillfully used the United States as a means of acquiring arms and equipment as well as legitimating his regime at home.[32] He paid U.S. congressmen to disseminate good will about the regime overseas, spending an estimated five to ten million dollars on bribes and public relations in Washington.[33] He then used the appearance of American support to frame the Dominican Republic as a junior partner of the United States, and thus as a modern and powerful country, by scripting the U.S. diplomatic corps into his official pageants. As Roorda has put it, "Trujillo's mimicry of U.S. diplomatic and political projects was not an abdication of independent action; it was an assertion of the sovereign nation's right to choose among options and to put its imprint on the option of its choice."[34] In a small, poor country with a history of United States intervention, this sent a powerful nationalist message. In popular parlance, Trujillo put the Dominican Republic on the map of nations.[35]

This study examines the everyday forms of domination of the Trujillo regime. I explore the political culture of the Trujillato to help explain the cult of excess of the regime, what Achille Mbembe has termed "the aesthetics of vulgarity," and how the combination of patronage and fear created a culture of compliance.[36] In contrast to statist approaches that focus solely on formal political institutions, I consider how the regime extended the state into civil society by fashioning what I term a vernacular politics based upon popular idioms of masculinity, personhood, and fantasies of race and class mobility.[37] I wish to document one of the most pernicious aspects of the terror under Trujillo: the way he adopted popular forms such as gossip, gift exchange, fictive kinship, and witchcraft into the repertoire of domination of the regime, leaving almost no place for Dominicans to hide or resist.

Political scientists often treat the state as an abstraction, favoring structuralist explanations and dismissing personalistic ideologies as without significance since they lack a transcendent message beyond the glorification of the dictator. Yet Latin America has a long tradition of imagining sovereignty through the personal qualities of leaders, one that dates back to the figure of the distant yet divine Spanish monarch who at times became the embodiment of popular expectations and desires; this tendency was reinscribed during the nineteenth century in the era of caudillo rule.[38]

Although I want to focus attention on the cult of the dictator, by no means do I wish to reinstate a "great dictator" theory of history. While Trujillo personally defined policy making under the regime to an extraordi-

nary extent, the literature on Trujillo frequently reduces the regime solely to the man himself, thus buying into the image he wished to project that was so integral to the terror of Trujillo—that he was omniscient and omnipresent. I seek to problematize the role of dictator by rethinking the boundaries of state activity and to consider the president in relation to his inner circle and beyond, and how state practices helped produce the idea that Trujillo was completely in control.

The inner sanctum of the Trujillo regime was constituted as a kind of court society, a mode of authority based on proximity to the dictator in which etiquette was an important idiom of power.[39] Indeed, the monarchical feel of being at Trujillo's beck and call was acknowledged among insiders such as Joaquín Balaguer, who described himself as a "courtier in the era of Trujillo."[40] As Norbert Elias has proposed, a specific social formation develops among the individuals surrounding the king, one bound together by intense competition for status and prestige, and in this case by fear, as well as "envy, ambition and resentment."[41] In Elias's model, the very essence of kingship resides in this new court subculture, the courtesans' distinction from those outside the inner circle becoming the crucial boundary maintaining the social formation. Trujillo, whose favorite drink was Carlos I cognac, extended his royalism into the domain of symbolic politics as well, enforcing strict decorum and flying into a rage if napkins were taken out of turn, or rituals such as baptisms were disturbed.[42] Feudal epithets such as "your Excellency" and "you, Lord of the people" became required forms of address. Trujillo was described as a "slave to etiquette," requiring the use of a jacket at public events regardless of the tropical climate and enforcing proper conduct under threat of denunciation; he pressured his closest associates to move into more luxurious abodes to reflect their status.[43]

Trujillo's pervasive agency was a central myth of state under the regime, and he cultivated it assiduously.[44] The figure of the dictator certainly played a major role in shaping the political arena, yet I wish to suggest that the cult of Trujillo developed at the nexus of a series of exchanges between ruler, ruled, and the class of political brokers who surrounded him. The notion that Trujillo himself was behind every single political move during the regime is itself what Abrams would term an "effect of power."[45] A full understanding of the regime requires bringing both the theater of power and the backstage choreography of politics into the analysis since this was the real scene of politics—the informal practices and deals, and the kingmakers or courtiers who choreographed the state pageants and oratory that

framed Trujillo as larger than life and who helped veil the true rationale behind politics during the regime.

Trujillo's charisma—his superhuman aura or *fucú* as it might be termed in popular Dominican parlance—was the product of a complex series of negotiations and symbolic exchanges between leaders, followers, and these interstitial brokers, who played a key role in concealing as well as at times revealing Trujillo's trickery.[46] The massive expansion of the Dominican Party, which as an institution essentially represented Trujillo and extended his persona into civil society through his surrogates, was a crucial factor in producing his overblown image. The party achieved this through organizing and executing the myriad civic rites that reminded citizens of their subjection, while channeling intelligence about loyalty and treachery in remote regions of the country back to the center. In this study, I seek to contribute to a growing literature within Latin American studies that aims to rethink the boundaries of the state and the locus of politics.[47] Trujillo ultimately became a master symbol of Dominican identity, even if it was less a product of deeply held belief than the entanglement of individuals in the transactional web of exchanges of debt and reciprocity, of honor and stigma, that the regime required. Trujillo's charisma made him not as much a divine king but a state fetish, the diabolical product of a conjuring trick.

There are many styles of populism; Trujillo's was based not on love but fear.[48] An important aspect of his regime's hegemony was his recasting of forms of trust such as gossip and gift exchange into forms of terror. While the regime offered no more than a charade of democratic representation, the adoption of popular cultural forms that made it seem "of the people" helped give rise to a kind of political compliance. But compliance here does not connote active support for the regime. The palpable fear that all Dominicans experienced mitigated against this. Yet most Dominicans, I think, lacked the perspective necessary to see the daily rituals and propaganda as "transparently phony" "command performances" owing to the lack of a free press and any available alternatives.[49] And most people developed a highly pragmatic approach to the overblown ideological apparatus of the regime.[50] Yet if most political subjects were not always consciously dissimulating, they were also not actively resisting, since this option was almost patently impossible under the regime.

Notions of political legitimacy must be evaluated in light of local understandings of social identity, of self and person, and how these vary among social classes.[51] The concept of political consent presumes that the person

is an active agent free to choose among political alternatives—a freewheeling and transcendental political subject able to act autonomously and with clearly defined rational interests. During the regime, there were no political alternatives to Trujillo. Moreover, most Dominicans lived in conditions of great poverty, operated partially outside the cash nexus of the market economy, and held multiple debts and obligations to family and other immediate kin. This interdependence shaped a political subjectivity of accommodation and consensus since one's personhood or public identity was more socially significant than one's private self because poverty forced reliance on social capital or contacts—people who could help out during times of need. This collective form of identity shaped a form of political subjectivity based on, in Mahmood's words, "proximity and coimbrication, not just opposition or accommodation."[52]

Owing to a scarcity of specie—the Mexican peso, the Haitian gourde, and the U.S. dollar were all used but none was readily available in 1930—even wage workers on the plantations relied on advances from the plantation *bodegas,* which charged high rates of interest and were called "stranglers"; and almost all rural petty commerce was conducted via barter and pre-harvest advances.[53] Purchase by credit based on personal relations of *confianza* was the norm throughout the economy, and debt was pervasive and crippling; evidence of this was the common practice of "selling one's salary" among public servants, which was one of the few means of credit outside of loans from a family member or *patrón*.[54] And even the elite purchased their clothes *fiado,* or on credit.[55] This culture of indebtedness is nicely encapsulated in the nineteenth-century saying, "If you see at table a white and a black man in his company, either the white man is in debt to the black, or the black is paying for the meal."[56] The resulting economic and social interdependence also made reputation a highly valued and protected form of social currency, giving rise to a vulnerability which made the poor more available to Trujillo's politics of patronage. Accepting gifts from the regime created a moral economy of reciprocity; recipients felt obliged to the state because they could not reciprocate in kind.

Official patronage constituted a form of vernacular politics, since in framing all state disbursements as gifts, Trujillo cast politics in an idiom from everyday life that all Dominicans were deeply familiar with, one that masked domination in a language of friendship and family. Because they express social relationships, gifts have a patina of innocence, yet they conceal a relationship of obligation, one that becomes domination when the

gifts are highly assymetrical. As Lancaster says, "The power it [the gift] carries is the power to compel reciprocity."[57] With nothing to offer Trujillo besides loyalty, these gifts indebted one to the regime, creating a sense of moral compulsion because with no other means of materially escaping the debt one had to resort to homage. Compliance under Trujillo translated into abjection, a form of self-loathing one could only escape in one's dreams. This may be reflected in the linguistic split in Dominican Spanish between the *dádiva* of the public sphere, which connotes a coercive gift that binds, as opposed to the truly uninterested gifts or *regalos*, which circulate among friends and family. In Spanish, the notion of trust or confianza embeds friendship within debt relationships, since the word contains *fiar* or loan, but this indexes those for whom no interest is generated.[58]

Official prestation created a heavy burden as those individuals who felt compelled to become complicitous with the regime dealt with that shameful fact. Identity was not a choice but rather a problem since it was close to impossible to cast oneself as an honorable subject resisting Trujillo and his depredations; a political subject was then forced to resort to face-saving strategies when a gaping abyss opened between the self one wished to be and the one he or she had become.[59] For some, this created a kind of split identity, a gap between one's self and person, one's view of oneself and one's public face, one's past and one's present, that took much face work to reconcile.

Identity is a complex affair in Marcio Veloz Maggiolo's novels *Materia Prima* and *Ritos de Cabaret*, which treat everyday life among the *pequeña burguesia* in the 1950s barrio Villa Francisca.[60] Veloz reveals the dark secrets kept by those whose scars and nightmares reveal histories they would rather forget, as he explores how people manage to dissimulate to lovers, sons, and daughters so that they can claim respectability and a modicum of social honor. Here we see individuals struggling to camouflage the fact of having informed for Trujillo's secret police—a stigma one would prefer to keep secret but which inevitably was discovered in the intimate face-to-face society of Santo Domingo—using tactics of subterfuge such as plastic surgery or dark glasses. When all else failed, there was always escapism. Individuals would seek to bracket off their dark secrets and moral compromises by investing their true identity elsewhere, from the satisfaction of their new class status as *hombres decentes*, which they claimed through working for military intelligence in their starched Arrow shirts, their Colibri perfume, and their offices (props that framed them as white-collar professionals); to

getting lost in music (bolero, son, or Frank Sinatra, never merengue, which was officialized under Trujillo); to romantic liaisons. Juan Caliente, for example, changed his name to underscore his true identity as an *hombre fatale;* his role as *calié* or regime informer was thus just a day job. Unable to resist frontally, subjects adopted everyday strategies of subversion or *bregar,* a fugitive tactic of dealing with power with roots in colonial Cimarrón society.[61]

Because the perniciousness of the Trujillo regime resided in its vernacular forms of domination, political subjects found it more difficult to step outside the tentacles of state power and resist.[62] I seek to locate Trujillo's forms of rule within deeply embedded assumptions many Dominicans shared about power, authority, and national identity. I hope to uncover how the regime was understood not by the educated denizens of Santo Domingo, many of whom loathed Trujillo and risked their lives to unseat him, but rather the marginal poor, who had far less access to information beyond the seemingly impenetrable surfaces of the official story and, as we shall see, read Trujillo's secrecy and diabolical tendencies as evidence of his sorcery. It is easy to understand why elites despised Trujillo for his unbridled violence and extortion, uncouth narcissism, and gangster style; what is far more difficult to comprehend is why Trujillo made some marginal rural and urban poor feel proud to be Dominican, if at the same time deeply uneasy about who they had become under the Trujillato.

## BACKGROUND TO NATIONALISM

Certain features of the Dominican polity and society helped give rise to the preconditions necessary for Trujillo's style of authoritarian populism.[63] Christopher Columbus landed first on Hispaniola (Española), the island shared by Haiti and the Dominican Republic. After the Spanish crown shifted its attention to the more profitable mainland silver mines of Peru and Mexico, however, its Española colony floundered, and a lucrative if illicit contraband economy of smoked meat and tobacco products arose. At first slaves were imported to work in the gold and silver mines and on tobacco and sugar plantations after the indigenous Taíno and Carib populations declined precipitously, but importation was halted early on since colonial planters were too poor to buy new slaves; by the seventeenth century freedmen already outnumbered slaves. Colonial poverty meant that slave ownership was typically intimate and small scale—a couple of slaves engaged in wage labor alongside family labor on small farms. Slaves were

rarely purchased outright but were frequently acquired through maritime plunder or theft of French colonial slaves.[64] While neighboring Haiti (ceded to France in 1697), Jamaica, and Cuba were developing sugar plantations staffed by massive slave imports in the eighteenth century, Dominican colonists engaged primarily in a mixed economy of cattle ranching, tobacco production, and fine wood exports, activities producing a more paternalistic style of slavery, a looser regime of social control, and a less hierarchical social order.[65]

Dominican historiography laments the Spanish colony's inability to establish the profitable capital-intensive enterprises of its neighbors, but in large measure this was due to the very success of the itinerant Creole subculture of freed slaves, who hunted wild cattle in the interior and sold smoked meat and tobacco to contrabandists based on neighboring La Tortuga island. Locally termed *monteros*, these protopeasants were the Dominican equivalent of the *jíbaro*, the Puerto Rican backlands highlander.[66] This contraband economy of black "masterless men" was so successful that Spanish authorities had to resort to draconian measures to contain it.[67] In 1606, for example, Governor Osorio torched northern settlements to the ground in a failed effort to curb contraband by forcing rural inhabitants to move closer to Santo Domingo. The fact that many of the wealthiest pirates in this pan-Antillean maritime community were mulattos, such as the highly successful Domingo Sánchez Moreno, probably doubly galled the crown.[68] The mixed economy of cattle ranching, tobacco, and foodstuffs expanded as the neighboring colony of St. Domingue became the jewel in the crown of the French empire and provided a thriving market for Dominican goods until the Haitian revolution (1794–1804). Colonial Santo Domingo thus shaped a far more open social order than elsewhere in the Caribbean and offered more opportunities for upward mobility for former slaves and mulattos; this very fact caused no small amount of consternation among elites since the relative success of the montero subsistence economy made it difficult for elites to recruit labor for their farms and ranches.

The nineteenth century brought protracted military conflict, which resulted in the postponement of the economic recovery and resultant state formation that had begun elsewhere in Latin America by midcentury. Fears of European intervention caused Haiti to invade and occupy colonial Santo Domingo from 1822 to 1844; then the Spanish were called in to help protect Santo Domingo from further incursions from 1861 to 1865, as elites sought a bulwark against Haiti's powerful army. And in 1865 the Dominican Re-

public narrowly escaped annexation to the United States by one vote. U.S. annexation was solicited in a pragmatic trade-off between the desire for autonomy and the economic realities of micronationhood in the shadow of the United States, at a time when the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, and Cuba were all highly reliant on the same major product, sugar, and the same point of sale, the United States.[69] Frequent military incursions provided ample opportunities for a new kind of upward mobility for the poor, who were frequently black or mulatto; they were recruited as infantrymen into the insurrectionary armies and some ascended through the ranks.[70] The liberal strongman General Ulises Heureaux (Lilís) took office in 1882; he remained head of state until 1899.[71]

If the multiple interventions of the nineteenth century strengthened national identity, they did so in a highly fragmented and partisan way, since one of the key divisive issues between the blue and red (Liberal and Conservative) parties was the issue of annexation, the banner of the *rojos.*[72] These parties were regional coalitions based on loyalty to particular caudillos, of whom Buenaventura Baez and Pedro Santana reigned supreme until 1874, when the *azules* took over. The basis of caudillo support was not the hacienda, which was not a feature of Dominican land tenure, but rather the peasants' need for protection from the frequent political strife.[73] Indeed, the pattern of isolated homesteads in the interior was the result of a popular attempt to evade the recurrent bouts of military recruitment.[74] As John Chasteen has argued, *caudillismo* fashioned strongmen as culture heroes who created loyalty among followers by means of patron clientelism, patronage, and "political prestige," becoming collective symbols of masculine values such as bravery and skilled oratory.[75] Their appeal to the masses was based on their humble origins; their leadership was a product of both skill and providence. As the prominent Dominican caudillo General Gregorio Luperón put it, "God in his infinite wisdom has made heroes so that the memory of them might serve the oppressed as a lesson of triumph against their oppressors."[76]

If caudillismo was a byproduct of regionalism and a lack of effective state formation or national integration, this pattern continued into the early twentieth century in the Dominican case due to the absence of national infrastructure. Two mountain ranges divided the country, and rail lines linking the central interior of the Cibao plains with the northern coastal town of Puerto Plata, where most export produce was shipped to Europe, were built only in the 1880s and 1890s; and even these lines, of course, did

not link the capital, the administrative center, with the north, the economic center. The high cost of transport by mule train was one major impediment to the development of market agriculture. The country was predominantly rural and underpopulated, with only 638,000 people in 1908, thus providing the peasantry ample access to arable land and giving rise to a majority of subsistence-based small landholders.[77] Much of the land was held not as private property but rather as *terrenos comuneros* or collective plots, access to which was held in common and allocated in shares.[78] Ranching was a mainstay of the economy, so legislation placing the burden of fencing on cultivators also hampered agricultural development.[79]

A distinctive feature of the Dominican rural economy was its predominantly nonmarket character, which lasted much later than that in neighboring Haiti, Cuba, or Puerto Rico.[80] While smallholders close to ports and railroads did grow cash crops such as tobacco, cacao, and coffee, those in the interior remained primarily subsistence farmers.[81] And when the economy shifted to large-scale sugar production, it relied primarily on labor imports from the British West Indies and Haiti, thus impacting the Dominican countryside only indirectly. Rural poverty also inhibited the development of an elite outside of the Cibao, where a small yet affluent tobacco culture flourished.

Liberalism became hegemonic from the 1870s onward, yet with its dictum of "order and progress" it remained socially conservative. The rubric of liberalism embraced an impressively wide spectrum of positions, from the utopic socialist ideas of Pedro Francisco Bonó to the more authoritarian statist vision of Américo Lugo. Bonó had a deep skepticism regarding elite interests and especially development led by foreign investment in sugar plantation agriculture for export; he placed his faith instead in the tobacco smallholding cultivators of the central plains of the Cibao as the true sentinels of a democratic future.[82] His view contrasted sharply with that of Lugo and Eugenio María de Hostos, who argued that the Dominican citizenry were a people but not yet a nation and thus not yet ready for democracy; citizens still needed to be formed by strong state institutions such as public schools, which could help forge a culture of democracy. Influenced by racial determinism emanating from Europe, Lugo held the view that the state must lead because many citizens were at best uneducated and thus ignorant of republican ideals and moral values; at worst, they were seen as degenerate due to racial mixture, a tropical environment, and poor diet.[83] As he stated, the class of workers, day laborers, and peasants (*gente de*

*segunda*), "who can never be governing but rather governed classes[,] have produced high functionaries and even chiefs of state. It's useless even saying that they have been the worst. The city dweller, who is almost as frugal as that of the country, is rash, lazy, sensual, haughty and violent."[84] The prominent liberal Henríquez y Carvajal was even more unforgiving when he wrote that Dominican society is a "chaotic mass of crime and blood . . . most Dominicans are inferior beings, infected by vices or dreams that completely distort their intellectual effort."[85] For all the pessimism of liberals about the state of civic culture, Lugo, for one, held the United States in high esteem as a model of constitutional democracy that the Dominican Republic should eventually follow.[86] Liberals were primarily speaking among themselves, however, since the population was largely illiterate and political parties still did not have deep roots among the popular sectors.[87]

An example of how the conservative potential of liberalism's banner of order and progress could give rise to a highly repressive regime was that of Ulises Heureaux. Lilís came into office as a Liberal, joining the conservative wing once the Liberals split, and held the presidency from 1882 to 1899.[88] Born in 1845 in Puerto Plata, Lilís came from humble origins, the illegitimate child of a civil judge from Haiti, reared by his mother who was from the Lesser Antilles.[89] He entered the army at age sixteen, rising rapidly to general; he was famous for his fearlessness and resilience in battle during the war against the Spanish after reannexation (1861–65), which eventually catapulted him into the presidential seat. Lilís invites many comparisons to Trujillo, from his poor background to his military career, but the most significant may be the way he cultivated U.S. interest and support, using repression to create an image of domestic harmony that he then used to secure financial support in the form of loans. Lilís was responsible for the 1891 reciprocity treaty, which established the United States as the republic's main trading partner. He curried favor via negotiations over leasing Samaná Bay, which the United States wanted for a naval base, to secure loans that he used to buy patronage, dispensed to his supporters in lavish champagne celebrations and sinecures, and to augment the military.[90] Heureaux's emphasis on modernity and progress appealed to liberal elites, who were pleased by his promotion of agricultural development through railroad concessions, fencing laws, monetary reform, and cash crops such as sugar.[91] Like Trujillo, Lilís sought to transform the military into a state organization and to co-opt the opposition through the formation of a national party which drew upon collaborators from a range of regions and

factions.[92] Both regimes also shared a deep split between the public theater of power, which deployed the rituals of republicanism, and the reality of patrimonialism and graft behind the scenes.

By the turn of the century, however, the United States began to look less like a savior or ally and more like a threat, as the quest for geopolitical control in the Caribbean encouraged it to gradually expand its influence in the political and economic affairs of the Dominican Republic. After an American firm took over Dominican foreign debt in 1892, the United States assumed control of customs houses in 1905, maintaining fiscal control until 1941.[93] U.S. Marines then invaded and occupied the country from 1916 to 1924. The development of sugar monoculture took off after the Ten Years' War in Cuba, when a new influx of Cubans migrated to the Dominican Republic, alongside Italians, Puerto Ricans, and North Americans; they soon formed part of a growing Creole group of entrepreneurs who, alongside large United States-owned agribusiness corporations, brought the protoindustrial *central* (sugar mill) form of large plantation structure to Dominican sugar. By the 1890s, sugar was the largest source of foreign exchange, creating utopian expectations of affluence. The internationalization of the economy also meant vulnerability to periodic fluctuations, however, as overproduction and competition from beet sugar caused sugar crises in the 1880s and the 1890s. Prices peaked in 1917 and then crashed with the depression.[94]

During this period, sugar became the key symbol of the wrenching effects of modernization wrought by global capitalism, owing to the way this one crop radically transformed the economy and society.[95] Overnight, regional towns such as La Romana and San Pedro de Macoris were transformed from sleepy hamlets to sugar company towns; a transnational community was forged as immigrants from Haiti and the British Antilles were brought in as contract labor, and North Americans, Cubans, and Puerto Ricans formed a new managerial class.[96] Sugar came to stand in for a range of changes brought by market culture, from conspicuous consumption and urbanization to proletarianization and alienation. These changes were even more dramatic because most of the country still remained largely outside the sphere of commodity exchange.

If many Dominican critics lamented the *desnacionalización* of the country via sugar, one can see why. While Dominicans had grown sugar since the colonial period, the new sugar boom was entirely a foreign affair. By 1925, U.S. firms controlled sugar production. The new plantations were far larger

and more industrially advanced than the rest of the economy, producing a crop solely for export, largely through immigrant labor paid in *vales* or company store tokens. The minority of Dominicans who left their *conucos* or garden plots to participate as semi-proletarianized day laborers in sugar experienced even a change in diet, as fresh meats were replaced by salted jerky, pork, and dried fish, and local tuber staples were replaced by imported corn meal and flour.[97] Moscoso Puello, in his novel *Cañas y bueyes*, condemned sugar as robbing the country of its essence, by ravenously consuming its land and *monte* (forests), marginalizing traditional agrarian pursuits such as tobacco, and rendering Dominicans strangers in their own land. As one character states, "In no part of the world are people more exploited than here. Peons, workers, grocers, we are all enslaved."[98] If Dominican nationhood was compromised in the nineteenth century by frequent military intervention and occupation, sugar was an even more elusive and intractable enemy. Sugar's evils were a product of U.S. economic expansion, but they were blamed on Haitian labor, a more vulnerable scapegoat, resulting in the massive slaughter of Haitian migrants in 1937.

This contested sovereignty was met with an effort to assert state power by the monopolization of the means of violence, which was the only means left since control of the economy was in U.S. hands and state revenue was drastically reduced. And "pacification" (Lilís's mantra) was requisite to continued U.S. support in economic investment and loans. While this process commenced with the Heureaux regime, it was Ramón Cáceres (1906–11) who formed the first professional national constabulary. A modernizer, Cáceres had deepened dependence on the United States by signing the 1907 Dominican-American Convention, which turned the Dominican state into a "semiprotectorate" of the United States by giving it the power to collect customs receipts directly, a move met with fierce resistance. Yet Cáceres also prioritized state-led economic development on the assumption that agricultural growth would help curb the vices associated with cattle culture on public lands, and his policies brought unprecedented economic growth. His campaign against cattle was also a tool to combat his political enemies; he sought to starve the band of the northeastern caudillo Desiderio Arias, for example, by slaughtering all free-ranging cattle. The formation of the first national army and police force was an effort to pacify resistance to his development program. The 1908 constitution was based on the U.S. model but, on the assumption that the citizenry was not yet ready for democracy, it placed more power in the executive by eliminating the vice presidency and

by subordinating the post of civil governor to military governor. Cáceres also added a stipend for cooperative generals as a means of co-opting his opposition.[99]

If the 1907 agreement ceded economic control to the United States, it gained formal political control when it invaded, installing a military government led by U.S. Marines (1916–24) after Cáceres's assassination spun the nation into five years of disruption.[100] The occupation merely "extended and formalized U.S. hegemony there, already made manifest by frequent naval visitors and a 90 per cent share of total Dominican imports."[101] In order to foment economic growth, occupation authorities prioritized public works, for example, constructing the first roads linking the capital with Santiago, the second city where much of the nation's tobacco, cocoa, coffee, and produce were grown. Another major change was the cadastral survey and registry of landed property to enable private acquisition, which was aimed at eliminating the vast expanses of public lands and *terrenos comuneros*, which were seen as an impediment to growth. A process of land grabbing was set in motion that drew much of the peasantry into the market economy, created new stratification among rural proprietors, and dispossessed many without a formal land title. It also enabled U.S. investors to achieve near complete control over the Dominican sugar industry, which more than quadrupled its output between 1916 and 1924 as enormous plantations such as La Romana engulfed whole villages.[102] By 1930, sugar was the principal export, and only one smaller Dominican producer was left.[103]

The U.S. Marines also set out to train and arm a Dominican constabulary to replace the army, navy, and republican guard and thus unify the armed forces for the first time. Their intention was to solve the problem of political stability since the country had experienced intermittent civil war since the death of Cáceres, yet they ended up putting in place a powerful instrument for political domination. While the disbanded servicemen were invited to join, widespread resistance to becoming part of a United States-led force meant that recruiters were forced to enlist what a witness described as "the worst rascals, thieves and assassins in the country."[104] If the military had previously been a means of social ascent for the respectable poor, it now was open to *el montón anónimo*, the anonymous crowd. When the U.S. Marines left the country, they turned over the largest foreign exchange producer to foreign control, flooded the country with duty-free U.S. products that crushed local production, and greatly augmented the national debt.

From his post as *guarda campestre* or security guard at the Boca Chica

sugarmill, Rafael Trujillo had joined the national guard in the first class of Creole officers graduating from the Haina military academy. Trujillo advanced rapidly from second lieutenant to captain, notwithstanding allegations of rape and extortion leveled against him during his court-martial.[105] He came from a family with military roots. His paternal grandfather had come from Cuba as a spy with the Spanish troops during the reannexation effort in 1861; his maternal grandmother was an *hija de la calle* (illegitimate child) of a Haitian couple who migrated westward during the Haitian occupation in the 1840s.[106] Trujillo became the political protégé of Horacio Vásquez, who took office after the departure of the marines and placed him in charge of the national police force which Trujillo renamed the Dominican National Army to reflect its new "professional" status. This became Trujillo's power base as he "transformed the force from a surrogate for marine occupation to an agent of Dominican nationalism."[107] In a move characteristic of Trujillo's duplicitous style, in February 1930 he simulated a military uprising with troops marching on the capital from Santiago, replaced army commanders loyal to Vásquez with his own, and thus generated a political crisis that forced Vásquez's resignation.[108] After the coup, Rafael Trujillo and Estrella Ureña supposedly won the elections with 45 percent of the vote, yet no other candidates were offered. A reign of terror followed as Trujillo's hitmen killed his opponents and spread fear throughout the country. The climate of crisis was heightened by the collapse of sugar prices due to the depression and by a cataclysmic hurricane which devastated the capital city just months after the inauguration.

The cumulative result of the highly invasive role the United States played in Dominican politics was similar to what Jorge Domínguez has argued for Cuba; it fragmented political space by weakening the legitimacy of government. As the United States became the ultimate political arbiter, it became the focal point of political activity and discourse among parties who looked to the State Department rather than to the masses for legitimation.[109] It also weakened the formation of a local bourgeoisie, which was poorly developed as a result of colonial poverty and lacked the capital to take advantage of the late-nineteenth-century sugar boom. The economic integration of the country into U.S. markets primarily benefited the predominantly foreign merchant class.[110] Dependent social elites found it harder to establish ideological hegemony and thus were more prone to resort to coercion.[111] The huge gap between legal and effective sovereignty created by U.S. control also created a potent desire for national integrity

and agency, what Yael Navaro-Yashin has termed a "fantasy for the state," which Trujillo cleverly used for his own means to power.[112]

## BETWEEN TERROR AND RESISTANCE

Analysis of the political and economic rationality of politics under the Trujillato is incomplete without addressing the cultural logic governing statecraft. David Cannadine notes that political analysis, rather than restricting itself to the formal arena, should be cast as the study of power in society, thus as a system of social relations. As he states, "Politics is not confined to the doings of those in authority, and the responses of those who are subordinate, but is . . . the varied means whereby hierarchies of dominance and deference are created, maintained and overturned."[113] Indeed, this is especially so in contexts in which a good part of formal politics operates outside of formal institutions, through traditional face-to-face idioms of exchange such as the circulation of goods through patronage or favors in relations of *confianza* or trust.

By focusing on the apparatus of formal repression, scholars have neglected everyday forms of coercion that were often not necessarily perceived as domination but rather as "legitimate authority."[114] For example, official patronage was not merely a conscious, strategic effort at "co-opting" the populace.[115] Trujillo certainly had strategic objectives, but most Dominicans operated outside the sphere of market exchange in the 1930s and gift exchange was a quotidian means of expressing friendship, which meant that this form of domination worked through the sinews of deeply embedded assumptions about reciprocity that they took for granted. In this context, patronage was an important means of state control, a form of "embedding" the state in the private domain, as well as a technique for coercing consent to the regime.[116] In the public realm, Trujillo gave hand-outs at official ceremonies, offering artificial limbs to the disabled, bags of food to the workers, and bicycles to the children. He was also famous for his monetary gifts while on tour and for offering nuptial trinkets to exemplary newlyweds, such as the "Hollywood Beds" given to couples marrying in 1944, the centennial year of the country's independence. Furthermore, politics within the regime's inner circle revolved around access to honors and perquisites which were defined as gifts from Trujillo, including positions, state monopolies, or land grants. Drawing upon Catholic idioms of paternal authority, gifts from the dictator sought to recast Trujillo's authority in familial terms and to euphemize the violence through which he actually maintained

power. Since these gifts incurred debts, state gift giving also drew people into relations of subjection with Trujillo, thus entangling them in a cultural economy of domination.

I examine the cultural economy of a system of domination which was effective because it was able to produce "practical consent" for a terrorist regime.[117] The ideology of the Trujillo regime has been dismissed in part due to its personalism, since it failed to provide a transcendent message. From the outside, it appears to be an absurdly repetitive and farcical effort to dissimulate Trujillo the ruthless racketeer and thug as a dignified modern statesman by constantly associating the developmental progress under Trujillo—the new roads, bridges, treaties—with the man himself. Yet if state ideology was personal, it was by no means insignificant. As under Stalin, the state (i.e., Trujillo) expanded to become an ubiquitous presence in everyday life, since it dispensed jobs, policed speech, owned radio and television, defined the press, provided public entertainment, stole girlfriends, shaped friendships (by, for example, creating strong reasons to curtail relations with enemies of state), and created new social roles, forms of self-presentation, speech, and interaction. The very invasiveness of the state and its multiple roles endowed it with many meanings that transcended Trujillo himself, even if he became the master trope for a new regime of state penetration.

But the power of Trujillo was as much a result of the constant speech of the state, through a barrage of signs, insignia, and icons, as it was a result of its silence. Trujillo both sacralized his inner circle and created generalized fear through tight control over information flows. Since the press served as little more than a calendar of state ceremonial, carrying little or no behind-the-scenes information about politics, selective leaks were used judiciously by Trujillo and his cronies to create impressions.[118] And gossip about insider activities and conflicts became a highly valued currency within the inner circle. Rumors were rife about the true story behind everyday events, especially the fate of those who were tortured and executed.[119] Of course, secrecy itself creates value; like property, secret knowledge can be possessed. The fact of this possession differentiates social groups, creating an insider-outsider distinction. As T. M. Luhrmann states, "[This] difference can create a hierarchy, wherein secrecy cedes social power to those who control the flow of treasured information."[120] Thus, secrecy was an important element of the boundary separating Trujillo's insiders from those outside; and the wall of silence between the plebeians and the small inner circle

increased the social distance and thus the sense of intrigue and wonder about the power and secrets of Trujillo and his minions.

Patronage enabled Trujillo to cut a profile as Padre de la patria nueva (Father of the New Homeland), a title which located him within a language of paternalism with deep roots in Dominican liberalism as well as popular culture. Paternalism is a highly ambiguous idiom of authority, however, one rooted in affect as well as relations of power, and thus connoting inclusion and exclusion.[121] This holds true especially in the Dominican Republic, where rural poverty, a history of labor migration, and an insistence on male autonomy combined to forge a pattern of matrifocal families, wherein the mother and child define the family unit, and the absent father who comes and goes is a distant figure often associated more with discipline (*respeto*) than tenderness. In casting himself as father, Trujillo certainly drew upon the liberal idea of the tutelary state that would shape Dominicans into citizens, yet he also diverged from the highly derogatory language about the peasantry that had been a staple of most liberal thought.

Trujillo called on Dominicans to join him in the nation as long as they would agree to become *hombres de trabajo* or men of work; he thus offered them the possibility of redemption, rather than the pathology offered by the liberals. As Espinal argues, he invited them as a "disciplinary father" to join him, an outsider who was not a traditional politician and not a professional.[122] If they respected the law, he promised to transform them from scruffy, shoeless peasants and informal street vendors engaged in *chiripeo* (part-time work) into workers, from faceless rabble into people. In a nation of peasants only partially incorporated into the wage labor economy, many of whom were itinerant monteros, this message of incorporation must have held some initial appeal.[123] Unlike Juan Perón, Trujillo did not find a working class to which he imparted an identity; it did not yet exist. Even the urban poor lived as partial peasants with their conucos or patio garden plots; and in 1930 there was only a minuscule manufacturing sector.[124] His populism was more like that of Haiti's François Duvalier, who drew upon the most marginal of social constituencies—urban shantydwellers—those who lacked any kind of organized occupational identity whatever. Trujillo would impose order on the undisciplined masses through the schools and the military.[125]

While his paternalism did not entail the more radical logic of the symbolic equivalence of classical populism, Trujillo's rhetoric did offer the possibility of inclusion within national politics, of transcending a liberal past

that had consigned poor Dominicans to the margins of politics in part due to their race.[126] If Perón offered respect to working-class Argentines as fellow men, Trujillo offered something more hierarchical, a subordinate proximity.[127] Perón offered a symbolic equality of common manhood; Trujillo offered a social order based on deference and hierarchy.[128] The relationship was also conditional: Only if you worked—thus joined the market economy—could you be a friend of Trujillo's. Yet this was a markedly different vision than Lugo's negativism: "Our peasants [are] an ignorant race that vegetates without hygiene, prisoners of the most repugnant sicknesses that due to their lack of foresight, their violence and their duplicity, are generally incestuous, gamblers, alcoholics, thieves and murderers."[129]

As frequently in Dominican everyday life, race is an invisible term in Trujillista discourse; when the term appears it is through furthering the interests of *criollos*, that is, the mixed-race browns who form the Dominican ethnos or *nación.* The fact of extensive racial mixing in the Dominican Republic makes everyone a mestizo or *indio*, a transitional category between white and black which conveys racial mixture through that master symbol of autochthony, the figure of the Indian.[130] Creole identity holds the promise that all Dominicans can possibly pass as white, yet it also means that everyone potentially carries the stigma of blackness. Blackness in this context is thus a latent secret. Even if one is phenotypically white with smooth hair and green eyes, for example, one might have a dark mother or brother, or produce a child with kinky hair. This proximity to blackness may also have made poor Dominicans more available to a political language that cast them as capable of civilization, rather than one which othered them as condemned to backwardness, which was the traditional liberal model.[131] Trujillo took the liberals' emphasis on civilization and made it potentially available to all Dominicans, a message conveyed not only linguistically but also through the myriad state functions hosted by the state, which, for example, avoided Creole dishes in favor of European cuisine, and invited even poor Dominicans from the barrios to sit at table at state functions.[132] As Raymundo González has said, Trujillo as farmer, worker, and industrialist promised to create a society with no castes, no gente de segunda, and no blackness—one of only Dominicans united against Haitians.[133] If blackness in this context was a metaphor for social inequality, the Era of Trujillo thus promised to make whiteness available to all Dominicans by incorporating them into the modern nation.[134] Chapters 1–8 explore some of the techniques through which this was achieved.