

**Power, Race, Class and Gender in Colonial Santo Domingo: An Analysis of Spanish  
Dominican Marital Patterns in the Archbishopric of Santo Domingo, 1701-1801**

by

**Christine D. Rivas, B.A., M.A.**

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### Abstract

This dissertation uses marriage and baptism records from the Archbishopric of Santo Domingo (1701 to 1801) to chart how people used marriage and fictive kinship ties to form power relations and alliances. Central to understanding Spanish Dominican societal dynamics is the underlying colonial relationship between the territory of Santo Domingo and the Spanish metropole, as well as the intra and cross-class interactions.

The politics of empire provide the context for colonial dynamics; the metropole's racialized ideal of the social hierarchy played a significant role in the creation of elite identity. The ruling group recognized the importance of representing themselves to the Spanish Crown in terms it understood. They adopted the characteristic traits the Spanish Crown associated with a ruling group: whiteness, legitimacy and purity of blood. Despite obvious practical discrepancies between the ideal and accepted practices in this colonial society, the elite sought to reflect the metropole's idealized image through a widespread manipulation of the official record. The shared socio-cultural language formed the basis for opening and maintaining a dialogue between Spanish Dominicans and the Crown.

Intra and cross-class relations shaped the formation of family networks through marriage and fictive kinship. The elite, lower class, and slaves were active participants in creating their own society. Horizontal ties created class solidarity, not just for the elite but for the subordinate groups as well, while vertical ones forged cross-class alliances. The two types of ties acted as natural checks and balances, which determined the limits of racial domination.

My dissertation also employs gender analysis to determine the different meanings and values of men and women's roles in the formation of family networks within each socio-

economic group. The higher male than female immigration advantaged women on the marital market because they had access to greater spousal selection, which also translated into more opportunities for social mobility. Women, therefore, became instrumental players in family marital strategies.

Santo Domingo's reputation as a peripheral colony within the Spanish empire led historians to overlook its development. However, the experience of Spanish Dominicans provides a valuable counterpoint to the more densely populated and resource rich Spanish American colonies.

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## Table of Contents

<b>ABSTRACT</b>	<b>II</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	<b>IV</b>
<b>TABLE OF FIGURES</b>	<b>VIII</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Primary Sources</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Methodology</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Secondary Sources</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Presentation and Organization</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE- THE TERRITORY OF SANTO DOMINGO: ECONOMICS AND DEMOGRAPHY</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Santo Domingo's Place in the Spanish Empire</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Economic Development</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Hispaniola: The Legal Economy</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Illicit Trade: The Bread and Butter of the Dominican Economy</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>CHAPTER TWO- SPANISH DOMINICAN SOCIETY</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>Economics and Dominican Society</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>Economic Classes, Wealth and Spanish Dominicans</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>Race and Class</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>CHAPTER THREE- THE ELITE AND THE ESTABLISHMENT</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>The Elite and Island Economics and Politics</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>Corruption, Border Trade and the Regiment</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>Corsairs, Privateers and the First Families</b>	<b>112</b>
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>114</b>
<b>CHAPTER FOUR- MARRIAGE AND NETWORK FORMATION</b>	<b>116</b>
<b>Marital Unions in the Americas</b>	<b>118</b>
<b>The Sacrament of Marriage and Impediments</b>	<b>125</b>
<b>The Church, the Crown and Consent</b>	<b>131</b>
<b>Other Royal Marital Regulations</b>	<b>140</b>
<b>Legal Inheritors</b>	<b>145</b>
<b>Multiple Marriages and the Reaffirmation of Marital Ties</b>	<b>148</b>
<b>Fictive Kinship Ties</b>	<b>153</b>
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>154</b>
<b>CHAPTER FIVE- FOREIGNERS AND ELITE MARRIAGE</b>	<b>156</b>
<b>Elite Marital Patterns and Network Formation</b>	<b>157</b>
<b>Methodological Approach</b>	<b>159</b>
<b>Brief Description of the Family</b>	<b>161</b>
<b>Immigrants and the Elite Marital Pool</b>	<b>163</b>
<b>Dynamics of the Marital Pool</b>	<b>199</b>
<b>Foreigners, Promises of Marriage and Dowries</b>	<b>212</b>
<b>Fictive Kin Ties</b>	<b>215</b>
<b>Conclusions</b>	<b>216</b>

<b>CHAPTER SIX- ELITES, THE LOWER CLASS AND MARRIAGE</b>	<b>218</b>
<b>The Lower class</b>	<b>221</b>
<b>Sources:</b>	<b>223</b>
<b>The Economics of the Lower Class</b>	<b>223</b>
<b>Identity Construction and Racial Perceptions</b>	<b>227</b>
<b>The Lower Class and Racial Politics</b>	<b>228</b>
<b>Agency and the Lower Class</b>	<b>230</b>
<b>The Dominican Tiger and Identity Construction</b>	<b>230</b>
<b>Social Mobility</b>	<b>233</b>
<b>Marriage, the Elite and the Lower Class</b>	<b>237</b>
<b>Social Control and Fictive Kinship Ties</b>	<b>238</b>
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>243</b>
<b>CHAPTER SEVEN- THE ELITE AND THE SLAVES</b>	<b>245</b>
<b>Sources</b>	<b>246</b>
<b>Slave Trading in the Spanish Empire</b>	<b>248</b>
<b>The Slave Trade in Santo Domingo</b>	<b>249</b>
<b>The Slave Group</b>	<b>251</b>
<b>Maroonage</b>	<b>255</b>
<b>Employment</b>	<b>257</b>
<b>The Elite, the Spanish Crown and the Slaves</b>	<b>259</b>
<b>Master-Slave Relations</b>	<b>260</b>
<b>Personal Relations</b>	<b>280</b>
<b>Conclusions</b>	<b>281</b>
<b>CHAPTER EIGHT-THE LOWER CLASS AND SLAVES</b>	<b>284</b>
<b>Lower Class Immigration and the Marital Pool</b>	<b>286</b>
<b>Foreigners in the Lower Class Marital Pool</b>	<b>288</b>
<b>Lower Class as a Whole</b>	<b>300</b>
<b>Lower Class and Slave Marital Ties</b>	<b>303</b>
<b>Slave Marriages</b>	<b>306</b>
<b>Slave Marital Patterns</b>	<b>307</b>
<b>Lower Class and Slave Godparentage</b>	<b>309</b>
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>311</b>
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>312</b>
<b>APPENDIX A</b>	<b>319</b>
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS</b>	<b>320</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>321</b>

## TABLE OF FIGURES

Map A- Dominican Exports to Foreign Colonies.....	52
Map B- Foreign Imports to Hispaniola.....	53
Map C- Dominican Exports to Other Spanish Colonies .....	54
Map D- Foreign Imports to Hispaniola .....	55
Table 1- Family Persistence in the <i>Fijo</i> from 1725 to 1777, and the Volunteer and Cavalry Units of 1777 .....	107
Table 2- Marriages between Specific Elite Spanish Dominican Families by Generational Cohort .....	150
Table 3- Families That Contracted Multiple Marriages with the .....	153
Table 4- Length of Military Service for Each Member of the Officers' Corps in the Eighteenth Century in Santo Domingo .....	168
Table 5- Marriages of Foreign Officers Stationed in Santo Domingo throughout the Eighteenth Century.....	174
Table 6- Marriages of Military Officers into Elite Spanish Dominican Families .....	185
Table 7- Gender Separated Elite Spanish Dominican Marriages to Foreigners .....	189
Table 8- Quality of Officers in the Fixed, Cavalry and Volunteer Regiment in 1725, 1749, 1763 and 1777 .....	202
Table 9- Birth Place of Foreigners by Generational Cohort.....	207
Table 10- Marriages of Foreigners to Spanish Dominicans who Also Emigrated.....	210
Table 11- Legal Lower Class Immigration from the French, English and Dutch Caribbean Islands to Santo Domingo .....	290
Table 12- Marriages of French, English and Dutch Immigrant Men in Santo Domingo by Place of Origin.....	292
Table 13- European and Mainland Immigrant Women who Married in the Archbishopric of Santo Domingo .....	294
Table 14- Marriages of Men who Immigrated to Santo Domingo from the Spanish Caribbean Islands.....	295
Table 15- European and Mainland Spanish American Men's Marriages in the Archbishopric of Santo Domingo by Place of Origin and Racial Selection of Bride	296
Table 16 Spanish Dominican Lower Class Women's Marriages to Spanish Dominican.....	301
Table 17 Marriages of Male Slaves in the Archbishopric of Santo Domingo .....	305

## Introduction

Marriages lay at the heart of the social fabric of Spanish Dominican society. During the Ancien Régime, marital unions were the primary way of cementing commercial, political, and trade alliances between families. The union of a son and a daughter was not unlike the signing of a contract binding both parties to each other by inextricably uniting the families' economic, political and social resources. Marital unions, therefore, stitched families together into kinship networks. These were further extended through fictive kinship ties through godparentage. Each new connection enhanced the families' ability to provide mutual assistance, support, and protection for its members.

This study sets out to consider the formation of power relations and alliances through marriage and fictive kinship ties in the Archbishopric of Santo Domingo in the eighteenth century. Key to understanding Spanish Dominican societal dynamics is the underlying colonial relationship between the territory of Santo Domingo and the Spanish metropole.

My doctoral dissertation was inspired by Verena Stolcke's pioneering work on the mechanics of courtship and marriage for all socio-economic groups, but more particularly the whites and coloureds, in Cuba in the nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup> The paucity of white women and the rise of a large free coloured class were central to a discrepancy between the Spanish metropole's marital ideal and the Cuban reality. Although the Spanish Crown wanted its subjects to contract marriages along orderly class lines, Cuba's particular circumstances made it difficult to do so. First and foremost, by the eighteenth century Cuba's population was heavily miscegenated. The inevitable result was that racial slippage was common and

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<sup>1</sup> Verena Stolcke, *Marriage, Class and Colour in Nineteenth-Century Cuba: A Study of Racial Attitudes and Sexual Values in a Slave Society* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition), (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986), *passim*.

that class often trumped caste. At the turn of the nineteenth century, Stolcke states that there was still a lack of white female spousal partners in Cuba and that this situation led men of their class to seek relationships with coloured women. Although, some of these relationships clearly resulted in legitimate marriages, white men's fears of a loss of status ensured that the majority of these unions remained illicit. Interracial concubinage and unions between white males and coloured females led to the marginalization of coloured men in regard to access to women of their own class.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, an exclusive study of a particular population group is inadequate as the dynamics of one affected those of another and more to the point, marriage was not just about gender but about power.<sup>3</sup>

Like Stolcke, my thesis explores the marital patterns and formation of kinship networks of all the population groups in the Archbishopric of Santo Domingo. My research reveals that the elite, lower class, and slave groups largely married within their own groups and that few marriages were contracted across race and class lines. This, of course, did not mean that interracial unions did not occur, as they most certainly did. However, their invisibility in the official records simply signals that these unequal relationships were never formalized or that they were covered up by a stubborn refusal to record racial labels.

Furthermore, the elite, lower class, and slave groups all suffered from a gender imbalance caused by higher male than female immigration. The situation advantaged women on the marital market as there were more suitors than there were brides. It goes without saying that women enjoyed more opportunities for social mobility because they had access to

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., revised introduction. In her original work, Verena Stolcke emphasized the coloured population's desire for whitening but in her reconsidered introduction, Verena Stolcke acknowledged coloured female agency in marriage. She states that the male-centric position took for granted that women wanted to marry out of their race or class without taking into account the disadvantages associated with such illicit unions. Moreover, the prevalence of concubinage may have been the result of coloured women, who may not have cared to legalize their unions so as not to become dependents in the eyes of the law.

<sup>3</sup> Joan Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 91, No. 5 (December, 1986): 1053-1075.

greater spousal selection. Women, therefore, became instrumental players in family marital strategies. Their central role in network formation was particularly striking for the elite group. Given that the immigration was largely male, the daughters of the Spanish Dominican elite shouldered the burden of forging bonds with the high ranking foreigners appointed to fill commissions in the royal bureaucracy. Through these marital ties, the local elite were able to influence the behaviour of these officials. The incorporation of these foreign men, coupled with the fact that the Spanish Dominican elite occupied nearly half of all the high ranking positions on the island and had achieved control of entry-level military commissions, as well as the most reliable sources of income, allowed Spanish Dominicans to virtually control their own affairs. Elite daughters were also instrumental in building family networks with the circum-Caribbean elite, allowing Spanish Dominicans to make a smooth transition from Santo Domingo to Venezuela, Puerto Rico and Cuba when the island was ceded to the French in 1795.

Furthermore, my research also traces the formation, meaning and value of family networks within each socio-economic group and across them. It is important to differentiate the formation of vertical and horizontal ties, as the dynamics of the relationship between the individuals is quite different. Horizontal bonds can be defined as connections forged between persons of the same status. They are therefore reciprocal as the individuals came from the same socio-economic background. On the other hand vertical bonds can be described as connections established between members of one socio-economic class and another one. Thus, these ties reach across classes and are non-reciprocal, as one of the individuals was always of a lower socio-economic level than the other. The horizontal ties connected persons of a certain class together. The intra-class networks provided mutual aid and support to each

other or in the face of a threat. Moreover, these particular ties could serve to rally members of a particular group against another one as a pressure tactic to either ensure accountability or resist the actions of the supra-ordinate class.

The creation of vertical ties either through marriage or godparentage was the foundation upon which a stable social order was built. The cross-class ties linked members of one socio-economic group to another in a patron-client relationship. Given that these ties were non-reciprocal, loyalty was usually exchanged for protection. For the elite it was also a form of social control as it created cross-class networks. Persons of the subordinate classes with personal relationships to the ruling elite were less likely to take up arms against their benefactors. The bonds created between the lower class and the slaves also represented cross-class alliances, giving these groups agency in shaping the limitations on elite power.

Underlying this discussion of class relations is the notion of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's social contract as used by James C. Scott.<sup>4</sup> Rousseau defines the social contract as the subordinate classes willingly subjugating themselves by curtailing some of their rights, to a legitimate authority in creating and jointly preserving social order. Thus, the government is a reflection of the will of the people and, when it ceases to be, a renegotiation occurs. If the government is unresponsive to a directional reorientation and continues to act without the consent of the people, rebellion can occur. Scott believes that the social contract, however, has come to mean more than simply actions in the political sphere but also those in the social one as well. Each social contract is essentially rooted in a particular time, place, and culture. Moreover, the ruling powers' actions are always judged within the context of the acceptable

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<sup>4</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, translated by Maurice Cranston (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1968), passim and James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), passim.

norms and standards of their societies. The government's public and private behaviour, as well as how it interacts with its subjects is as important as its political decisions.

Thus, although the Spanish Dominican elite's right to rule was given to them by the Spanish Crown, their ability to maintain it rested in the hands of the lower class and the slaves. The elite sought to make good politico-economic decisions at the island level and responded to the aspirations of those over which they held power. They did so out of a sense of accountability. The horizontal networks of the lower class and slaves, as well as their interrelationship, represented the greatest direct (coup) and indirect (removal from office) threat to their continued rule. In an attempt to avoid general uprisings, the elite sought to personalize the vertical relationship to the lower class and slaves by establishing fictive kinship ties to them. Inclusions in elite patron-client networks afforded these persons protection and, perhaps, help in times of dearth. Individuals benefiting from this privileged status were less likely to rebel against their patrons, thereby limiting the scope of the uprising. In a sense, the governing model the Spanish Dominican elite employed was the very same one as that of the Spanish Crown. The patron-client relationship was established between the King and the Spanish Dominican elite. The monarch sought to reward services rendered and respond to the colonial elite's aspirations in return for their continued loyalty and obedience.

Finally, my dissertation also takes its inspiration from María Elena Díaz's study on the King's slaves in the copper mines of El Cobre, Cuba, and Ben Vinson III's research on the free-colored militia units in colonial Mexico.<sup>5</sup> Díaz's and Vinson's works on these groups living in frontier societies essentially rethink the way historians read the colonial

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<sup>5</sup> María Elena Díaz, *The Virgin, the King and the Royal Slaves of El Cobre: Negotiating Freedom in Colonial Cuba, 1670-1780* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), passim and Ben Vinson III, *Bearing Arms for His Majesty: The Free-Colored Militia in Colonial Mexico* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), passim.

correspondence. They understand it as a dialogue that shaped the origins of the formation of a group's identity. In their studies, the obstinate defense of customary working arrangements and public claims to entitlements granted to their particular groups from the beginning of the colonial period, as well as services rendered in the name of the King, formed the basis of a racial identity.

Although there is no doubt that group agency played a role in the fashioning of elite identity, the influence exerted by the Spanish metropole's own conception of the socio-economic and racial characteristics required for membership in this exclusive group is undeniable. In short, the metropole projected an ideal image, which elite Spanish Dominicans responded to by adopting the characteristics of that ideal and reflecting it back to the metropole by utilizing a mutually accessible language, the language of empire, and by manipulating the data contained in the official record. Interestingly, the elite's corruption of institutional documents was not limited to their exclusive group but to the whole of Spanish Dominican society, creating what could be construed as a proto-nationalist identity for the territory. There is no doubt, however, that Silvio Torres Saillant is correct when he states that this project was driven and implemented by the Spanish Dominican elite.<sup>6</sup>

The identity itself was one that was associated with both the traditional Spanish structures of power and the premier position of Spaniards in the Americas in the early conquest period. At the heart of the construction was the idea of whiteness, legitimacy, and purity of blood. As such, blackness, illegitimacy and racial mixture were associated with persons of low status and slaves. Moreover, elite Spanish Dominican identity did, as Lauren

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<sup>6</sup> Silvio Torres-Saillant, *El Tigueraje Intelectual* (Santo Domingo: Editora Manatí, 2002), *passim*.

Derby concludes, attempt to block any connection with blackness.<sup>7</sup> There is, however, no evidence to suggest that in the late colonial period there was an anti-Haitian or anti-French Dominican sentiment. Spanish Dominicans may well have perceived, as Derby asserts, that Saint-Domingue's success was obtained at the expense of its Spanish counterpart. They may also have associated plantation slavery as an institution existing in the French colony. After all, unlike its French neighbour, Santo Domingo had never developed a land based economy, therefore, most of the slaves were domestics.<sup>8</sup> Thus, blackness and slavery, as well as commercial agriculture, which went hand in hand with this sort of regime, may have been thought of as un-Dominican but this was not clearly expressed during the colonial period.

I do accept, however, that these connections became overt during the period of Haitian rule in the Dominican Republic and that it entrenched itself during the first American occupation from 1916 to 1924. The latter period, of course, was the result of the country's troubled paths towards independence, which saw it declare its independence for the first time in 1844, only to lapse back into Spanish colonialism from 1861-1864. The Dominican Republic once again declared its independence in 1865. Political stability, however, was elusive. Furthermore, the country's still dysfunctional economy drove the fractioned and changing Dominican governments to borrow large sums of money from American and European creditors, which they could not repay. In the face of threats of intervention by these foreign nations, the United States and the Dominican Republic signed the Dominican-American Convention of 1907, whereby the American government assumed the external and internal debt of the Dominican government under the condition that the United States took

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<sup>7</sup> Lauren Derby, "National Identity and the Idea of Value in the Dominican Republic," in *Blacks, Coloured and National Identity in Nineteenth-Century Latin America*, ed. Nancy Priscilla (London: Institute of Latin American Studies, 2003), 5-37.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 19-20.

charge of all customs receipts in order to amortize the debt.<sup>9</sup> Continued political instability after the signing of the convention ultimately led to the American invasion of 1916.<sup>10</sup> American tutelage and financial management of the Dominican exchequer basically guaranteed the security of foreign investors, which led to the development of sugar cane plantations.<sup>11</sup> The transition from a labour to a land based economy brought with it a change in the ethnic demographic landscape. The need for labourers was filled by Haitian immigrants. This employment situation increased the number of blacks in the territory. Moreover, the association between blackness and the United States is not one that was based on Southern plantation slavery but rather the importation of “cheap” Haitian labour to work the sugar mills in the Dominican Republic. In effect, the Dominican Republic was defining itself in terms of what it was not: Haitian, which itself was associated with blackness and slavery.

In the nineteenth century, Derby also believes that Spanish Dominicans defined themselves in opposition to Spain, which had held the island back from progress, keeping it as a military outpost and forcing its citizens to turn to a contraband economy to survive. As Rebecca Earle notes, de-Hispanicization was a rather common phenomenon in the newly established Latin American nations.<sup>12</sup> Spanish culture was suppressed, the colonial institutions rejected and racial inequality abolished. Although there was undoubtedly a connection between whiteness and Spain, or Europe more generally, was this also rejected? Derby concludes that it was because Dominicans developed a mixed race identity: a creole

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<sup>9</sup> Frank Moya Pons, *The Dominican Republic: A National History* (Princeton: Markus Weiner Publisher), 295.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, ch. 16, Moya Pons explains that it was the influx of US capital that led to the development of the sugar industry.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Rebecca Earle, “Padres de la Patria and the Ancestral Past: Commemorations of Independence in Nineteenth-Century Spanish America,” *Journal of Latin American Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 4 (2002), 775-805.

one. However, Meindert Fennema and Troetje Loewenthal define the creole identity as an admixture of identification with the “noble savage” and the Spanish conquerors.<sup>13</sup> Their definition is in keeping with the larger Latin American trend observed by Earle, who saw an increased value placed on indigenous identities at the outset of the national period and a re-evaluation of the Spanish past around the centennial celebrations.<sup>14</sup> Indigenous and Spanish heritage were combined and became the dual basis upon which Latin American nationalism rested.

The origins of Dominican identity are the focal point of many studies in the Dominican historiography. There are two competing narratives of nation. The Euro-centric identity emphasizes the Dominican peoples’ Spanish roots to the exclusion of all others, whereas the anti-colonial literature pushes the African influence and, to a lesser extent, the indigenous one to the forefront.<sup>15</sup> These competing narratives of national identity, which define themselves in mutually exclusive terms, have an agenda of either justifying Rafael Trujillo’s white-centric nationalism or denying it.<sup>16</sup> Although this dissertation emphasizes the elite identity within the context of empire, it does not deny the African and native inheritance of the Dominican people. It simply seeks to explain the origins of the construction of elite identity within the context of empire. There is no doubt in my mind that other ethnic and

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<sup>13</sup> Meindert Fennema and Troetje Loewenthal, “Construcción de raza y nación en la República Dominicana,” *Anales del Caribe del Centro de Estudios del Caribe*, Vol. 9 (1989), 191-227, state that by invoking the indigenous past, the myriad of racial labels created under the Spanish colonial hierarchy were obliterated and replaced by simply the term indio. Africans and blacks became indio oscuro (dark Indian), indio quemado (burnt Indian) or “blancos de la tierra” (whites of the land).

<sup>14</sup> Earle, “Padres de la Patria and the Ancestral Past,” 797-805.

<sup>15</sup> Bernardo Vega, “La Herencia Indígena en la Cultura Dominicana de Hoy,” in *Ensayos Sobre Cultura Dominicana*, eds. Bernardo Vega, Carlos Dobal et al. (Santo Domingo: Fundación Cultural Dominicana, 1981), 55-105.

<sup>16</sup> Carlos Esteban Deive, “La Herencia Africana en la Cultura Dominicana Actual,” in *Ensayos Sobre Cultura Dominicana*, eds. Bernardo Vega, Carlos Dobal et al. (Santo Domingo: Fundación Cultural Dominicana and Museo del Hombre Dominicano, 1981), 105-142.

class identities existed during the colonial period. Rescuing these from the scarce colonial sources, however, is difficult.

### **Primary Sources**

I consulted three archives: the Archivo General de la Nación (AGN) Dominicana, the Archivo del Arzobispado Metropolitano de Santo Domingo (AAMSD) and the Archivo General de Indias (AGI), located in Seville, Spain. In the AGI, I consulted four subsections housed in the over-arching section entitled *gobierno* (government).<sup>17</sup> First, I researched documents relating to the Audiencia de Santo Domingo and more particularly those specific to the captaincy general of Santo Domingo, as well as the *papeles de Cuba*. I also consulted *Indiferente General de Nueva España* and *Indiferente General (de Perú y Nueva España)*. The correspondence is between the colony and the Council of the Indies (*via del consejo*) or the colony and the newly created (in 1715-1718) Spanish Ministries (*via reservada*). The former deals with matters relating to justice, law, royal patronage and grace, while the latter deals with trade, navigation, finance, war, navy and the royal monopoly on mercury. Documents sent through the *via reservada* before the 24 of December 1734 are not available as they were previously stored in the Alcázar de Madrid, which burned down on that date. This is the only lacuna in the material from the AGI. Thus, the outgoing letters from the island of Hispaniola can be found in the above described correspondence, thereby making the loss of the Spanish Dominican libros copiadores a non issue given that the books only contained copies of the outgoing correspondence.

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<sup>17</sup> The AGI contains millions of bundles of documents relating to all the Spanish colonies. The actual breakdown of the collections is too lengthy to discuss in this section. Please refer to the archival guide produced by the AGI: *Guía del Archivo General de Indias*, (Madrid: Subdirección General de los Archivos Estatales, 2000).

The AGN and the AAMSD are located in the capital city of Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic. The AGN is a public archive and has for mandate to preserve all documents relating to the Dominican past for both the colonial and national periods. However, the colonial collection is mainly comprised of documents relating to two of the poorer and sparsely populated outlying parishes on the eastern end of the island: Higüey and San Bautista de Bayaguana. These parishes were positioned further inland than Santo Domingo was from the Rio Ozama and thus, unlike the capital city and parishes closer to the west, were not affected by pirates and enemy attacks. They also were situated further to the east, thereby exempted from the bitter and repeated border conflicts between the French and Spanish Dominicans and in the final analysis the Haitians. Moreover, the archival collections of these two parishes avoided wilful and mischievous destruction. Unlike other parish archives, which only contain sacramental records, these two collections include some notarial documents. The latter deals mainly with land sales and livestock procurement, as well as some testaments.

However, there were twenty-one documents that related to marriages exclusively and they can be divided into three types: *cartas de dote* (dowry cards), *cartas de arras* (bridal gifts) and *inventarios de bienes* (inventory of assets). The dowry cards stated the sum of the dowry and defined what items (i.e. parcels of land, money, livestock or clothing) would be given to the groom to cover the dowry. The bridal gift cards were usually given in honour of the notorious virginity (if it was her first marriage) or notorious honour (if it was a remarriage) of the bride. The documents' main function was to specify the amount of the bridal gift, which could be no more than ten percent of the capital assets of the husband under Spanish law. In effect, this legal provision was a safeguard from other creditors in the event

that the groom did go into bankruptcy, given that the bridal gift along with the dowry were to be returned to the future wife, as she became a privileged beneficiary of the husband's estate, before the rest of the assets were divided up to pay the remaining creditors. The imposed limit thus made it impossible for financially embattled grooms to protect their assets by putting them under their wives' names. The inventario de bienes was an inventory of the groom's assets, which was usually completed while he was alive to justify the amount of the bridal gift.

These three types of notarial records, although there are only a few, are invaluable given the fact that no other notarial records have survived in the Archbishopric of Santo Domingo and, as far as I can tell, the rest of the Spanish side of the island. Aside from the political chaos that reigned for almost three centuries in the Dominican Republic and the many destructive tropical storms, one other possible reason for the apparent lack of preservation was that the position of notary (*escribano*) was purchased from the royal administration by individuals with means. Moreover, the Spanish Crown farmed out this type of record keeping to private individuals. Given this situation, the notaries kept copies of the original documents they drafted and, supposedly, those of their predecessors. It is difficult to say what these private individuals did with these papers given the political turmoil the Dominican Republic was plunged into after the Haitian Revolution. There is also uncertainty as to whether the French Crown did continue to use notaries in the same manner and who would have taken over these papers. As of yet, these archival deposits have not been uncovered and probably do not exist anymore.

Furthermore, the papers generated by the Captaincy General (Capitanía General), the Audiencia and the treasury (*cajas reales*) seem to have vanished. Although Wendell G.

Schaeffer provides detailed information on the relocation process, there is no mention of what happened to these archival collections.<sup>18</sup> Specifically, he states that the first ships that arrived in Santo Domingo in December of 1795 to remove the military personnel stationed in town as well as “those subjects who might wish to be transferred to other Spanish possessions”<sup>19</sup> wanting to take advantage of a royal decree by His Majesty dated September 8, 1795, “which would give to his subjects as might want to leave Santo Domingo, property in Cuba equal to that which they already possessed,”<sup>20</sup> actually left with the remaining citizens, Spanish officials and what was believed to be Christopher Columbus’s skeleton.<sup>21</sup> The military personnel could not be removed given that there were “no French troops available to replace the Spaniards.”<sup>22</sup> Schaeffer also mentions that on September 15, 1799 the Archbishop departed and the Audiencia was transferred to Cuba.<sup>23</sup> If the papers themselves were transferred at the same time as the royal court, or at any other time during the relocation period of 1795-1801, they were not integrated into the Cuban archives in Havana. This collection of papers, better known as the *papeles de Cuba*, was transferred from Havana, Cuba, to the AGI in Seville, Spain when Spanish occupation ended. The archived bundles contain no substantial Spanish Dominican material. They do include the occasional letter but no more or less than those written by Mexicans or Puerto Ricans. Given that the archival material in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, does not contain Dominican documents either, it can be surmised that these papers no longer exist.

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<sup>18</sup> Wendell G. Schaeffer, “The Cession of Spanish Santo Domingo to France, 1795-1801”, *Hispanic American Historical Review (HAHR)*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (Feb. 1949), 46-68.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 51.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 52.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 51-52.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 59-60.

Also, there is no private correspondence between individuals within the colony. It may be that it was lost or that it is still in the possession of the particular families, who may have chosen not to donate them to the AGN. Finally, the *libros copiadores de cartas* (ledgers of copies of letters sent out), registers of letters sent to and from Spain have not survived. However, the latter is not a loss in the true sense of the word as the letters were themselves sent to Spain and are archived in the AGI, a matter I referred to in my discussion regarding the Spanish sources. The tragic lack of document preservation is not unique to Hispaniola. Almost exactly the same problem plagues Panama and other poor Spanish colonies that experienced extended periods of turmoil.

The AGN and UNESCO carry incomplete sets of copies of the sacramental records of the AAMSD's holdings, which is a private church archive held by the Archdiocese of Santo Domingo. The complete collection is still held in the first Cathedral to be erected in the "Indies." I am unsure as to when and how copies of these records came into the possession of the AGN, but we know that in 1969, the Archbishop of Santo Domingo agreed to take part in a UNESCO World Heritage Project, aimed at preserving the patrimonial past of third world countries. The project not only microfilmed the original sacramental records but allocated funds for the refurbishment of the colonial enclave and quite particularly the old fortress and the house of Christopher Columbus. Although I am uncertain of the scope of the microfilming part of the project, the results were disappointing as the records were not microfilmed in their entirety and the quality is abysmal.

These deficiencies were remedied in 1982, when the Genealogical Society of Utah, a branch of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, based in Salt Lake City, Utah, once again obtained His Eminence's permission to microfilm the sacramental collection. This

time the collection was microfilmed in its entirety. The films are of better quality probably due to new technology which fluoresced the page to accentuate the contrast between the white background and the hand writing. Although the machine operator was mostly careful in capturing the images, there are quite a few of the records that are unreadable because the documents themselves were in such poor condition. There are also some human errors, such as frames that are out of focus or were recorded with bits and pieces of paper on them. On the whole, however, the images on these films are now better than the actual original documents held in the AAMSD, the archive of the Archbishop/Cardinal himself, who is currently His Eminence Nicolás de Jesús López Rodríguez. The main problem is that the ink with which these documents were penned was composed of an acidic base. Over the centuries, the ink has slowly eaten away at the paper, leaving the pages in a very delicate state. Also, the documents were and possibly continue to be afflicted by fungi and worms. A lack of capital has relegated these priceless documents to storage in metal file cabinets in an airless humid room. However they are guarded jealously by the archivist and few of us are afforded the luxury of entering the archival vault—I will forever be grateful to His Eminence for this privilege. The sacramental records contain birth, marriage and burial records and although some weeks, months and years are missing and some of the pages have been rendered illegible by the acidic ink or are afflicted by the climate and fungi, the records form a complete set.

The marital records are in particularly poor state, as there are approximately fifty years missing, leaving only 2069 entries for the entire eighteenth century. Unlike richer Spanish colonies, such as Mexico, these books were not divided into white, coloured and black ledgers. This is not to say that racial categorization and status were not recorded: they

were, as well as: the date the sacrament was performed, the given and family names of the bride, groom and their parents, as well as that of the witnesses and the officiating priest. Legitimacy, employment or slave status was clearly identified and the date at which the veiling ceremony was performed was also recorded. The marital registers only record legitimate marriages performed in the Catholic Church by an ordained official. Therefore, by their nature, these documents are silent on illicit unions and their prevalence in contrast to legitimate marriages.

However, a comparative analysis of the marital and baptismal registers, which are in a considerably better condition, can reveal certain truths regarding illicit unions. There are, more or less, forty thousand entries for the same period. The baptisms include mainly newborns but also contain a significant number of adult baptisms, some of which also mark a conversion from any other faith to the Holy Mother Catholic Church. These registers are also fully incorporated in regard to race and status. The entries also recorded the date at which the sacrament was performed, the age and given name of the individual at baptism, the given and family names of the parents, godparents, witnesses and priests. Similarly they recorded the racial and social status of each individual, employment, place of origin and the legitimacy of the child. The latter is divided into three categories: legitimate, natural (*hijo natural*) and blank. Entries were, of course, recorded by the “lieutenant priests” and not the Archbishop.

For most of the eighteenth century, there were two lieutenant priests working in tandem in the cathedral but in case of death, illness or other duties, one of the outlying parish priests was temporally promoted to fill the gap. Like in the rest of Spanish America, the majority of priests presiding over marital and baptismal sacraments, were drawn from the elite class, as is suggested by the use of the term “don” or “licenciado” in front of their

names. In the case of creole Spanish Dominicans, family genealogical reconstruction clearly identified the priests as members of the local elite. Although very little is known about these men, they were obviously literate, ordained and held an academic degree. As was indicated in the religious audits, there are frequent omissions and mistakes in the records, which will be the subject of further discussion later on. The accuracy of the entries depends entirely on individual lieutenant priests. Some were clearly more diligent than others and obtained more help from their colleagues. In the records, there are two periods during which there appears to have been friction between lieutenant priests. The first period is marked by an outright antagonistic relationship, while in the second case it seemed to indicate more of a disdain for each other's work but this is speculation on my part. Furthermore, it is clear that one of the priests chosen among the local elite was reprimanded for poor record keeping and he seems to have been in that position a very short time only.

Last, I would be remiss in my explanation if I did not indicate that it is possible to cross reference the elite marriage and baptismal entries; however, it is difficult to do so for the free population and practically impossible for the slaves. The reason behind these differences is very simple and relates directly back to the lieutenant priests' record keeping practices. The full name and title of elites were always recorded. The only potential problem with family genealogical reconstructions is difficulties in following the naming patterns, comprehending societal rank and observance of inheritances. For instance, doña Ana María Fernández de Oviedo y Bardecí could also appear in the records as doña Ana María Fernández de Oviedo Castillo or doña Ana María Fernández de Oviedo Torresquemada. The reason that she is most often referred to as doña Ana María Fernández de Oviedo was that the Fernández de Oviedo family was more prominent in the eighteenth century than that of the

Bardecís or Castillos. The use of “Torresquemada” dates back several generations and the reason she sometimes appears in the sacramental records by that name is that she was the heir of the *capellanía* (private chapel) of the Torresquemada family. In most cases, the heir and prominent officials were listed by all their family names to remind those around them of their lineage and that they were the heir apparent. An example of this would be the Lieutenant-Colonel don Francisco Mieses Ponce de León y Rodríguez Franco de Quero. His family name is an amalgam of four different lines: Mieses, Ponce de León, Rodríguez and Franco de Quero.

Although the information noted for the free class almost always contained the given and family name of the bride and groom in the marital registers and that of the father and mother in the baptismal ones, many of these names were very common. For the early eighteenth century, given names seemed to be mostly biblically inspired, such as Antonio, Nicolás, Juan, Pedro, Manuel, José, Vicente, Gonzalo, Gabriel, Gregorio, Tomás or Ramón. For the women, typical names included Antonia, Juana, Juanita, Catalina, Ana, Teresa, Gregoria, Vicenta, and Jacinta. Family names were equally limited, as is evident from the nine volume genealogical work of Carlos Larrazábal Blanco.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, it is difficult to ascertain with any degree of accuracy whether Juan Rodríguez who married María Pérez was the same couple that appeared in the baptismal registry with the same names. Given the reliable indicators of titles and slave status, it is possible to discern whether individuals bearing the same last name belonged to the elite, free or slave class. Elite names were almost always identified in the record with their title, as well as their complete name. Furthermore, the witnesses to the marriages and baptisms, as well as the godparents in the baptismal

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<sup>24</sup> Carlos Larrazábal Blanco, *Los Negros y la Esclavitud en Santo Domingo* (Santo Domingo: Editora de Colores, 1975).

registers were listed in the same manner. In some cases, the officiating priest was not the regular lieutenant priest but a much more senior royal or ecclesiastical official. In contrast, slaves were generally only identified by their given name. Thus, persons identified by their complete name but not designated as slaves, must be categorized as belonging to the free class. For the free class, it is possible but difficult to cross reference the marital and baptismal registers to each other. The task becomes impossible for the slave class, as in other slave societies, they were deprived of a last name. Moreover, it is difficult to assert without substantial doubt that Juan, slave of the Heredia family, who married Juana, slave of the Heredia family, are the same parents (Juan and Juana, slaves of the Heredia family) who appear in the baptismal registers.

### **Methodology**

The information contained in the AAMSD marital and baptismal records was entered into two separate Microsoft Excel databases. The date of marriage and nuptial benediction, the bride and groom's names, occupation and race, their parents' names, as well as details on their witnesses, the officiating priest and any other noteworthy information, such as dispensations was entered in the marital database. The baptismal database captured information related to the date of baptism, age of the child at the time of baptism, the mother and father's names, occupation and race, as well as the names of the godparents, witnesses and officiating priest. Again, I also kept track of noteworthy information relating to orphans or baptisms performed outside of the church, among other things. The data was disaggregated through searches of the databases.

### **Secondary Sources**

The field of Latin American history only began in earnest in the 1960s and 70s and at its inception studies on colonial Santo Domingo were undertaken and published, albeit in the Spanish Dominican press. A few of these works can be described as document collections.<sup>25</sup> Given the already advanced deterioration of these primary sources, the value of these works lies in the preservation of the information contained in these original archival documents. Aside from these document collections, the histories vary greatly in topic and breadth.<sup>26</sup> The most notable of these were Larrazábal Blanco's<sup>27</sup> reconstructed Spanish Dominican family genealogies from the sixteenth to the twentieth century and Tomás Báez Díaz' trilogy of essays on Dominican women from the colonial to the national period.<sup>28</sup> Since the end of the 1970s, there are very few studies available on the colonial period.<sup>29</sup> Some of the more recent publications, however, are no longer exclusively written in the Spanish language or published in the Dominican Republic. For example, María Rosario Sevilla Soler and Antonio Gutiérrez Escudero's doctoral theses were both published in Seville,<sup>30</sup> Spain, while Frank Moya Pons's

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<sup>25</sup> Fray Cipriano Utrera, *Noticias Históricas de Santo Domingo* (Santo Domingo: Editora Taller, 1979), Vol. 1-4; Emilio Rodríguez Demorizi, *Hojas de Servicio del Ejército Dominicano, 1844-1865* (Santo Domingo: Editora del Caribe, 1967), Vol. 1 and Emilio Rodríguez Demorizi, *Las Milicias de Santo Domingo, 1786-1821* (Santo Domingo: Editora del Caribe, 1978).

<sup>26</sup> Emilio Rodríguez Demorizi, *Tradiciones y Cuentos Dominicanos*, eds. Julio D. Postigo e Hijos (Santo Domingo: Editora del Caribe, 1969); Larrazábal Blanco, *Los Negros y la Esclavitud en Santo Domingo* (Santo Domingo: Amigo del Hogar, 1975); Rodríguez Demorizi, *Salomé Ureña y el Instituto de Señoritas* (Santo Domingo: Impresora Dominicana, 1960); Rodríguez Demorizi, *Riqueza Mineral y Agrícola de Santo Domingo* (Santo Domingo: Editora del Caribe, 1965).

<sup>27</sup> Carlos Larrazábal Blanco, *Familias Dominicanas*, Vol 1-9. His study was a massive undertaking, especially in an electronicless age. The nine volumes were published in sequence starting in 1967 through to 1980. In terms of genealogical reconstruction, Larrazábal Blanco also published "Origen Hispano-Dominicano de Algunas Familias Caraqueñas," *Boletín del Instituto Venezolano de Genealogía* (Caracas: Italgráfica, 1974), 8-42.

<sup>28</sup> Tomás Báez Díaz, *La Mujer Aborigen, La Mujer en la Colonia y la Mujer Dominicana* (Santo Domingo: Editora Educativa Dominicana, 1977), passim, three essays won the Premio Salomé Ureña de Henríquez in 1977.

<sup>29</sup> Guaroa Ubiñas Renville, *Historias y Leyendas Afro-Dominicanas* (Santo Domingo: Editora Manatí, 2003).

<sup>30</sup> María Rosario Sevilla Soler, *Santo Domingo: Tierra de Frontera 1750-1800* (Sevilla: Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americanos de Sevilla, 1980) and Antonio Gutiérrez Escudero, *Población y Economía en Santo Domingo 1700-1746* (Sevilla: Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americanos de Sevilla, 1985), both relied exclusively on the colonial correspondence and therefore did not make use of any of the colonial sources in the Dominican Republic.

very popular overview of the history of the Dominican Republic was translated and published in the English press.<sup>31</sup> In 1980, Carlos Esteban Deive produced the definitive work on African slavery in Santo Domingo.<sup>32</sup> In 1996 and 1997, he also published a monograph on piracy and one on maroon communities, respectively. In 1993, Margarita Gascón's article on the interconnectedness of Spanish Dominican families in Santiago de los Caballeros and the resulting networks of power within the royal administration on the island, more specifically the military, appeared in one of the most respected journals in the field.<sup>33</sup> Starting in 1998, Lynn Guitar began publishing a number of articles on Taino culture and their relationship to the colonial structure.<sup>34</sup> Using men and women's testaments from the remaining colonial archives of Higuëy and San Bautista de Bayaguana, Dora Davila Mendoza published in 1999 a preliminary study on the role of women in locating family memory,<sup>35</sup> as well as an article in 2001 on gender relations between slaves.<sup>36</sup> The research efforts on the colonial period of the Dominican Republic since the late 70s are patchy at best. It comes as no surprise then that this doctoral research relies on secondary sources from other regions of Latin America.

### **Presentation and Organization**

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<sup>31</sup> Moya Pons, *The Dominican Republic*.

<sup>32</sup> Carlos Esteban Deive, *La Esclavitud Del Negro En Santo Domingo (1492-1844)* (Santo Domingo: Museo del Hombre Dominicano, 1980); "La Herencia Africana en la Cultura Dominicana Actual," in *Ensayos sobre cultura Dominicana*, (Santo Domingo: Fundación Cultural Dominicana and Museo del Hombre Dominicano, 1981), 105-142; *Tangomangos: contrabando y piratería en Santo Domingo 1522-1606* (Santo Domingo: Fundación Cultural Dominicana, 1996) and *Los Guerrilleros Negros: Esclavos Fugitivos y Cimarrones en Santo Domingo* (Santo Domingo: Fundación Cultural Dominicana, 1997).

<sup>33</sup> Margarita Gascón, "The Military in Santo Domingo," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol. 73 (August 1993), 431-452. My article on the effectiveness of the military followed hers: Christine Rivas, "The Spanish Colonial Military: Santo Domingo 1701-1779," *The Americas*, Vol. 60, No. 2 (October 2003), 249-272.

<sup>34</sup> Lynne Guitar, "Willing it So, Intimate Glimpses of Encomienda Life in Sixteenth Century Hispaniola," *Colonial Latin American Historical Review*, 7:3 (Summer, 1998), 244-263 and "No more Negotiation: Slavery and the Destabilization of Colonial Hispaniola's Encomienda System," *Revista/InterAmericana*, Vol. 29, No. 1-4 (1999), 1-15.

<sup>35</sup> Dora Dávila Mendoza, *Un Concierto de Voces: Mujer, Familia y Sociedad en Santo Domingo Colonial* (New York: Dominican Studies Working Paper, CUNY, 1999).

<sup>36</sup> Dora Dávila Mendoza, "Es Mi Voluntad: Esclavos Domésticos y Memoria Familiar en el Santo Domingo Colonial," in *Familias Iberoamericanas: Historia, Identidad y Conflictos*, Pilar Gonzalbo Aizpuru (ed.), (México: El Colegio de México, 2001).

The economy of the territory of Santo Domingo in the eighteenth century produced a corporate model that stood in sharp contrast to both the mineral rich Mexican and Peruvian Spanish colonies on the mainland and the racially stratified and agriculturally successful English and French colonies in its vicinity. From the mid seventeenth century on, its political situation also distinguished itself from the other European colonies in the Americas because the island was governed by two distinct sovereignties. Spanish officials' failure to oust the French presence on the western part of the island of Hispaniola resulted in the inevitable establishment of the colony of Saint-Domingue. French sovereignty created a charged political atmosphere, particularly when the French and Spanish Crowns were at war with each other. European power politics periodically reared its ugly head on the island itself leading to skirmishes along the Spanish/French border. On the whole, however, the political scene was fairly stable in order to permit the border trade to operate smoothly. Although official commerce between the two nations was not permitted whether by France or Spain, French and Spanish Dominican officials developed a tacit tolerance for the illicit activities conducted by their citizens across the border because they were mutually beneficial. The tangible economic opportunities that commerce with Saint-Domingue, the richest Caribbean colony during that period, offered the territory of Santo Domingo were just too good to be permanently disabled by France and Spain's bickering over trade protectionism.

The peculiarities of the Spanish Dominican colonial situation, however, should not be considered as unique and incomparable to any other regions of the Spanish Empire. Until the mid to late eighteenth century, it reflected the experience of coastal, peripheral and frontier regions in the Viceroyalty of New Spain that became economically dependent due to neglect, isolation and administrative management centered on Spain's interests, which were often

contrary to local needs. Characteristically, these zones had not transitioned from a labour to a land based economy. They were unable to do so for a variety of reasons, the most important of which was the Spanish Crown's unwillingness to invest in the development of its colonies. The economy affected the demography of these regions. They essentially tended to have a low density rate and a high rate of miscegenation, resulting in large free coloured populations.

In Santo Domingo itself, racial mixing occurred early. The lack of white women led Spanish men to enter into sexual relationships first with native and later with African women. The rapidly declining rate of white immigration, combined with the cessation of African slave importation, ensured that free coloured people would become the largest demographic group on the island. In addition, although Santo Domingo was probably the first colony in the Spanish empire to make the transition from an economy based on plunder to one of exploitation of native labour under the *encomienda* (grant of labour) system, it failed to move beyond this stage of development. The rapid depletion of the island's mineral wealth and the discovery of riches on the American mainland touched off a massive emigration of colonists out of the territory. Insufficient investment by the metropole, the waning indigenous labour pool and inadequate African slave procurement all combined to impede the colony from developing a land based economy. Santo Domingo's place in the Spanish empire and its economy are examined in chapter one. The resulting effects of the colony's financial problems, mainly the collapsing of the socio-economic classes are explained in chapter two. In effect the lack of wealth and the high rate of miscegenation created a society based on micro-differentiation. The Spanish metropole's racialized societal ideal, which placed great value on the golden triad of whiteness, racial purity and legitimacy, became the focal point

for elite expressions of identity in their negotiations with the Spanish Crown. The adoption of these characteristics reflect the existence of a mutually accessible medium of communication between the colony and the metropole—the language of empire.

By reflecting the ideal racialized image of the metropole, elite Spanish Dominicans marked themselves as members of the ruling class, which allowed them to achieve and maintain power. Chapter three describes the relationship of the elite to the colonial structure, the cornerstone of which centered on opening a dialogue with the Spanish Crown, which enabled this group to acquire a suffocating hold on power. Chapter four discusses the importance of marriage in the elite construction of identity, as well as in maintaining the tightly knit character of the group. Intermarriage was the norm. The reaffirmation of blood ties between Spanish Dominican elite families reinforced their own status through exclusion. Although the marital pool contained a core group of local families, it was not static. High ranking foreign men appointed to fill commissions in the colony diversified spousal selection. The higher male than female immigration ratio resulted in a gender driven marital pattern difference which advantaged women over their male counterparts. Elite daughters were, in fact, responsible for bonding these unattached high ranking officials to the Spanish Dominican elite. Marriages created ties through which the elite could exert its influence on the newcomer, thereby, attaining a measure of control over them. Elite status, however, was maintained not only through the Crown's appointments or the groups' self- reaffirmation but through those they ruled, namely the lower class and the slave groups. In chapters six and seven I focus on the social contract that existed between the elite and the subordinate groups. In effect, the lower class and slaves did not challenge elite rule as long as they governed and conducted themselves within the accepted norms and codes of behaviour. Key to maintaining

good inter-class relations was the establishment of a negotiated dialogue in which the lower class and slaves exchanged loyalty for protection. Moreover, the subordinate groups were not passive pawns but active participants in shaping and defining the limits of racial domination. The patron-client relationship was strengthened through the creation of cross-class personal ties, mostly through godparentage. These family connections acted as a tool of social control as they effectively bonded members of the subordinate groups to the elite, possibly helping to avert mass rebellion. Finally, chapter eight discusses the lower class and slave groups and their interconnectivity. Both the slaves and the lower class preferred to marry within their own group. These horizontal connections bonded families together within a family network, which acted as a resource for mutual aid but also protection. Extensive vertical ties, however, also existed between the two groups. These were largely created through godparentage. Whereas the horizontal bonds connected a group together, the vertical ones created cross-class alliances.

Although Santo Domingo was the beginning of the Spanish colonial enterprise it has been sadly neglected by historians. Perhaps because of its lack of vast riches, scholars of colonial Latin America have tended to look past this island and its role within the empire to other more typical scenes in Peru, Mexico and for the Caribbean, Cuba. Nevertheless, the experiences of the people of Santo Domingo are instructive and a useful counterpoint to more popular wealthy colonies. With this dissertation I will correct the imbalance of historical examination and provide a view of how men and women interacted in a peripheral society.

## Chapter One- The Territory of Santo Domingo: Economics and Demography

The territory of Santo Domingo's economic situation is central to understanding the development of colonial Spanish Dominican society and the context in which marriages were contracted. As one of the Caribbean islands, there is a tendency to associate the territory's past to its more recent history as a sugar cane producer, or alternatively, the eighteenth century plantation slave regimes of the French, English or Dutch colonies and, more closely to the nineteenth-century Cuban plantations. Although it is true that the territory experienced a golden age in which *ingenios* (sugar plantations) and *trapiches* (sugar mills) sprouted up across the island, it was already over by the late sixteenth century. Thereafter, the territory of Santo Domingo slowly slipped into economic obscurity, from which it would not fully recover until the twentieth century. The shift from centerpiece to relative backwater can only be understood by examining the colony's changing importance within the Spanish Empire and how this affected the development of Spanish Dominican society.

Although the Spanish Crown was not interested in developing its colonies economically, its decision to regard the territory of Santo Domingo as a key defensive military zone, and nothing more, had severe economic consequences, particularly in view of the island's development, or rather the lack thereof, at the time. The scarcity of immigrants never allowed the population to recover from the mass exodus it experienced in the 1520-30s. However, it was the *devastaciones*, or scorched earth policy, that crippled the economy.<sup>1</sup> The depressed financial situation resulted in a general lack of economic opportunities in trade and agriculture, making the island unattractive to newcomers. The low population density

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<sup>1</sup> Silvio Torres-Saillant, "The Tribulations of Blackness: Stages in Dominican Racial Identity," *Latin American Perspectives*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (May, 1998), 126-146.

combined with both an ineffective procurement system of black slaves and a half hearted attempt at relocating poor white Canary Island citizens to the territory, greatly reduced the available labour pool. By its nature, the paucity of workers precluded the possibility of developing a booming export oriented agricultural sector. The economic and demographic situation of the territory of Santo Domingo forced Spanish Dominicans to rely on illicit trade with foreign powers and in particular with the French colony of Saint-Domingue. The Spanish Crown, although aware of the situation, allowed it to continue because it recognized both that it was unable to procure its colony with even the most basic of necessities and that Spanish Dominicans performed an important defensive role on its behalf. By turning a blind eye to the illicit trade, the Spanish Crown allowed the colony to obtain basic staples, goods, and slaves and avoided resistance, which could have resulted in a breach in the colonial defence. Moreover, the Crown bought Spanish Dominican loyalty by granting them concessions, establishing a dialogue between them.

### **Santo Domingo's Place in the Spanish Empire**

At the outset of the Spanish conquest, the entire island of Hispaniola was at the forefront of the empire's expansion.<sup>2</sup> It was not only the seat of colonial Spanish administrative power but also the port of destination for all arrivals to the Americas.<sup>3</sup> Its glory days were numbered. The simple fact was that the island's gold deposits had been completely exhausted by the 1520s and its labour force, the indigenous population, had been decimated by punitive expeditions, overwork, a lack of immunity to common European

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<sup>2</sup> Javier Malagón Barcelo, *El distrito de la Audiencia de Santo Domingo en los siglos XVI a XIX* (Trujillo: Editora Montalvo, 1942), 36, states that the city of Santo Domingo was, in fact, the capital city of Spanish America in the early colonial period. It was, of course, stripped of this honour when the Spanish Crown chose Mexico City as the capital.

<sup>3</sup> Noble David Cook, *Born to Die: Disease and New World Conquest, 1492-1650* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 19.

diseases, suicide and flight from oppression.<sup>4</sup> Hernán Cortés's conquest of the Aztec empire in 1521, as well as Francisco Pizarro and Diego de Almagro's defeat of the Incas in 1532 opened up new and more lucrative opportunities to get rich quickly.<sup>5</sup> The discovery of gold mines in Mexico, Central America, New Granada, central Chile and Peru shortly after conquest, as well as the silver mines at Sultepec, Zumpango, Taxco, Tlalpujahua, Zacatecas, Guanajuato, Sombrerete and San Luis de Potosí starting in 1530, compelled many of the colonists living in the territory of Santo Domingo to emigrate.<sup>6</sup> Throughout the Spanish Caribbean, a population exodus ensued around 1530 despite the Spanish Crown's attempts to stem the out-migration<sup>7</sup> flow of colonists through the imposition of emigration licenses, carrying penalties of control forfeitures over the labour provided by the indigenous natives granted to them through *encomiendas*.<sup>8</sup> Eventually the Spanish Crown also came to focus its attention on consolidating its position in the newly conquered territories on the mainland, as well as devising the most efficient way in which to retrieve the enormous amounts of silver

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<sup>4</sup> Mervyn Ratekin, "The Early Sugar Industry in Española," *HAHR*, Vol. 34, No. 1 (February, 1954), 1-19, states that the decline in gold mining began in 1516 and came to an abrupt halt in the 1520s. For his part Cook, "Disease and Depopulation of Hispaniola," Vol. 2, 213-246, 214-215, notes that although there is disagreement regarding the estimates of the number of Taino peoples at conquest, which vary between 60,000 and one million, all are unanimous on the outcome. Cook writes that "By 1542, a half century after contact, all was over, in spite of importation of Indians taken in slaving raids from nearby islands and the mainland to replace the disappearing Taino; the native Americans of Hispaniola were virtually extinct."

<sup>5</sup> Gott, *Cuba*, 20.

<sup>6</sup> Mark A. Burkholder and Lyman L. Johnson, *Colonial Latin America*, (Sixth edition) (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 157-158.

<sup>7</sup> Guitar, *Cultural Genesis*, 267-284, discusses the Spanish Crown's policy in regard to the mass emigration of settlers. The Crown started to prohibit settlers from leaving the island without its express permission; neither were they allowed to take indigenous persons with them. A fine was levied against all those caught breaching the royal orders. Individuals also ran the risk of losing their offices and any Native Americans given to them as part of a *repartimiento* (repartition of Native Americans to *encomenderos*). It further required all married men to bring their wives to live with them because the Spanish Crown believed in the settling qualities of marriage. In the same spirit, it prohibited any single men from immigrating to the Americas. This initial heavy handed approach was replaced by concessions to attract settlers to the island, such as: "free solares (city/house plots), farmland and water rights", free passage, "sustenance for one year, exemption from tribute for twenty years....free work materials....free cattle; help to build their homes" "the best situated lands"; security in matters of land ownership and the right to bequeath property to their heirs." Finally, the Spanish Crown also consented to allow each settler to "...bring along 100 African slaves "with their women." All these measures were not sufficient to stem the outflow.

<sup>8</sup> See Gott, *Cuba*; Suchlicki, *Cuba*; Sonesson, *Puerto Rico's Commerce*; Dietz, *Economic History of Puerto Rico*.

and gold from the mineral rich Mexican and Peruvian lands. Consequently, Spanish Dominican issues were relegated to secondary or tertiary concern within the Spanish empire.

In this new climate, Cuba, Puerto Rico and Hispaniola became economically secondary.<sup>9</sup> However, they remained of primary military strategic importance to the Spanish Crown.<sup>10</sup> Sovereignty over these islands allowed it to control the sea lanes in the Caribbean basin, thereby ensuring the exclusivity of monopoly trade between Spain and Mexico through the major port of Veracruz. Cuba also provided a geographically convenient rallying point for the *galeones* (galleons) and *flota* (fleet) before they sailed back to Spain and a defensible port where the Armada de Barlovento made berth until it escorted the trading convoys back across the Atlantic. The future of these three islands was permanently sealed when Juan de Tejeda and Juan Battista Antonelli designed the fortifications for the three major ports of Havana, San Juan and Santo Domingo.<sup>11</sup> A lesser but still significant defensive structure was built in Santiago de Cuba.<sup>12</sup>

Although the ships' arrivals and departures from Havana gave birth to additional industries to service and feed the foreign sailors, as well as to repair and build the fleets' vessels, the cosmopolitan flair that engulfed the city as a result of these developments did not

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<sup>9</sup> Franklin W. Knight, *The Caribbean: The Genesis of a Fragmented Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), throughout his book adopts a Caribbean wide perspective that makes it very clear that the Spanish Caribbean colonial experience differs markedly from the French, English and Dutch ones. In the eighteenth century, the non-Spanish colonies had small white populations (eight percent or less) and very large slave populations. The French, English and Dutch islands were leading sugar producers based on plantation economic systems. Class cleavages were indicated by skin colour. The Spanish Caribbean, however, had larger white populations, small slave ones and very important coloured ones. Eighteenth century Spanish Caribbean economics rested on small plot farming and the social hierarchy was not defined by skin colour. Cuban and Puerto Rican export oriented economies developed only in the nineteenth century. The importation of slaves to work the sugar and coffee estates skewed the population ratios, creating a small white class that governed a large coloured and slave population.

<sup>10</sup> Jorge Duany, "Ethnicity in the Spanish Caribbean," *Ethnic Groups*, Vol. 6, No. 2-3 (1985), 101 and Santiago Gerardo Suárez, *Marina y milicias y ejército en la colonia* (Caracas: Academia Nacional de la Historia, 1971), 21.

<sup>11</sup> Kris Lane, *Pillaging the Empire: Piracy in the Americas 1500-1750* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1998), 52.

<sup>12</sup> Gott, *Cuba*, 30.

extend to the rest of the island.<sup>13</sup> The Spanish Crown's economic investment in Cuba, and for that matter Puerto Rico and the territory of Santo Domingo, was centered solely on the defensive military capacity of their port cities. The countryside, with the exception of Santiago de Cuba, was ignored and left undefended, leaving it vulnerable to enemy incursions.<sup>14</sup> Royal control was therefore strongest in these three cities and weakest in the countryside, a situation that promoted the rise of illicit trade.

### **Economic Development**

Although generally speaking, Spain's interest in its American colonies did not lie in their economic development, as in the case of the British and French West Indies, but rather in the extraction of their wealth, the Spanish Caribbean possessions were dealt a particularly bad hand.<sup>15</sup> The Spanish mercantilist trade system supplied Puerto Rico, Cuba, and Santo Domingo with what amounted to no more than basic goods and subsistence foodstuffs such as paper, wax, flour, hardware, whiskey, cheese, olive oil and wine.<sup>16</sup> The lack of other types of goods, such as farming tools, furniture and weapons, was constant throughout the colonial period, even though attempts were periodically made to address these shortages. One such solution was to farm out the responsibility of procuring the colonies with basic staples to the Real Compañía Guipuzcoana, better known as the Caracas Company.<sup>17</sup> The monopoly trade company was created in 1728 with the dual purpose of supplying Santo Domingo, Puerto Rico and the Margarita Islands, and increasing the export of cocoa from Venezuela to

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>15</sup> Burkholder and Johnson, *Colonial Latin America*, 156.

<sup>16</sup> Victoria Stapells-Johnson, *Corsairs of Santo Domingo* (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation: University of Ottawa, 1985), 19.

<sup>17</sup> For more on the Caracas Company please see: Roland Dennis Hussey, *The Caracas Company 1728-1784; A Study in the History of Spanish Monopolistic Trade* (New Haven: Harvard University Press, 1934).

Spain.<sup>18</sup> Given that the Caracas Company had no competition, it conducted its affairs with the goal of deriving the maximum amount of profit at minimal expense. The exceedingly low prices it offered farmers for their crops caused nothing but discontent amongst Venezuelan cocoa growers while the exorbitant prices it charged customers for imported goods was openly repudiated by Spanish-Americans. The general disgust expressed by Spanish Dominicans and other islanders at merchandise prices pushed them to circumvent legal trade with the Caracas Company and obtain their goods illicitly and at significantly cheaper rates.<sup>19</sup>

The procurement problems were not nearly as crippling as the Spanish Crown's unwillingness to invest in a concomitant agricultural and industrial development of Santo Domingo, Puerto Rico and Cuba. Although it had initially promoted the development of sugar plantations and mills on the island by making small loans available to planters, the financing was inadequate and the colonists lacked the motivation to make these enterprises successful.<sup>20</sup> Wealth through agricultural production was much less attractive than what the mainland had to offer.<sup>21</sup>

Aside from the lack of financial and personal incentive, the territory suffered from a shortage of labour. In 1518, a smallpox epidemic decimated the already declining Caribbean indigenous population.<sup>22</sup> The Spanish Crown responded to the steep native demographic decline by granting monopoly contract licenses, known as the *asiento*, to bring African slaves

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<sup>18</sup> Sevilla Soler, *Santo Domingo*, 176-177.

<sup>19</sup> Stapells-Johnson, *Corsairs of Santo Domingo*, 15-16.

<sup>20</sup> Guitar, *Cultural Genesis*, 180, states that the establishment of sugar plantations could only occur if the gold deposits had been exhausted because no one on the island was willing to divert labourers from the mines to raise crops. The latter were less valuable and the harvests more uncertain than gold mining.

<sup>21</sup> Deive, *La Esclavitud Del Negro En Santo Domingo*, 52, states that 11 ingenios and 11 trapiches were in operation in the eighteenth century. Rafael P. Brugal, "La Producción del azúcar en la zona de Puerto Plata 1520-1919," *Eme eme*, Vol. 7, No. 39 (1978), 120-136, specifies that of these 11 ingenios, five were in Puerto Plata as of 1575.

<sup>22</sup> Noble David Cook, "Sickness, Starvation, and Death in Early Hispaniola," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Vol. 32, No. 3 (winter, 2002), 349-386.

to Santo Domingo. The number of in-coming Africans, however, did not make up for the shortfall in the labour pool resulting from the steadily declining native population.<sup>23</sup> This result was largely due to licensees' failure to complete the importation of their cargoes within a reasonable time frame.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, the companies that were granted the *asiento* to bring slaves to the Americas (first the Portuguese, the French and later the English) learnt quickly that the citizens of Puerto Rico, Cuba and Santo Domingo were poor and, therefore, sought to have the terms of the contracts amended so as to include other ports of call.<sup>25</sup> By the early seventeenth century, slave importations were cancelled by the Spanish Crown.

Santo Domingo's inability to develop a land based economy obviously limited the colonists' financial capacity. Moreover, when slave shipments did arrive, they were unable to purchase a workforce that was efficient enough to permit the smooth running of a sugar plantation, the construction of mills and specialized labourers (particularly Canary Islanders) to run their enterprise.<sup>26</sup> The lack of slaves and investment capital made it impossible for the agricultural sector to expand. As a result revenues did not increase and therefore planters did not have the means to purchase slaves, which brought the woeful tale full circle.

The total sugar output for the early period of conquest speaks volumes regarding the development of sugar plantations in Santo Domingo. At its apex, in 1530, production was 80,000 arrobas per year.<sup>27</sup> In the early eighteenth century, production was down to an estimated 5,000 arrobas<sup>28</sup> per year but rebounded in the mid to late eighteenth century to

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid, ch. 3 and Cook, "Disease and Depopulation of Hispaniola," 214-20.

<sup>24</sup> Guitar, *Cultural Genesis*, 267-284.

<sup>25</sup> Larrazábal Blanco, *Los Negros y la Esclavitud en Santo Domingo*, 45-46.

<sup>26</sup> Ratekin, "The Early Sugar Industry in Española," 9-11.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 13. Larrazábal Blanco states that an arroba is a weight of twenty-five pounds or a liquid varying between 2.6 and 3.6 gallons. The sugar industry collapsed in 1570.

<sup>28</sup> Gutiérrez Escudero, *Población y Economía en Santo Domingo*, 103, writes that the territory produced 5,000 arrobas in 1734.

22,000 arrobas per year.<sup>29</sup> In comparison, Jamaica's highest raw outputs were 59,000 tons (5,286,400 arrobas)<sup>30</sup> per year in 1785-1789 increasing up to 80,740 tons (7,234,304 arrobas)<sup>31</sup> per year in 1800-1804.<sup>32</sup> In the second half of the eighteenth century, there were only 11 sugar ingenios and 11 trapiches on the lands between the Ozama and Nizao rivers and another 20 in the surrounding area of the capital involving a workforce of an estimated total of 600 slaves.<sup>33</sup> Obviously, their revenues were insignificant compared to the ones from Jamaican sugar estates that had 419 sugar mills in 1739 and 1,061 of them by 1786. These were manned by 130,000 African slaves in 1754 and up to 324,000 in 1808.<sup>34</sup> Furthermore, Spanish Dominican sugar in this early period was of a coarser and less valuable grade than the one produced in the French and British colonies and its target market was internal and not

<sup>29</sup> Sevilla Soler, *Santo Domingo*, 98, states sugar production rebounded toward the mid to late eighteenth century. However, Rafael P. Brugal, "La Producción del azúcar en la zona de Puerto Plata 1520-1919", 124-126, points out that sugar production in the Puerto Plata region did not rebound until the beginning of the eighteenth century. Thus sugar production was mostly in the fertile lands of the Cibao valley.

<sup>30</sup> The British ton is equal to 2,240 pounds. The Spanish arropa is equal to twenty five pounds. Thus I multiplied 59,000 tons by 2,240 to obtain the number of pounds and divided the product by twenty five to obtain the quantity in arrobas.

<sup>31</sup> I used the same calculation as above to determine the number of arrobas contained in the 80,740 British tons.

<sup>32</sup> Audra Abbe Diptee, *Atlantic Connections: An African Cohort in the Making of a Slave Society, Jamaica 1775-1807* (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation: University of Toronto, 2006), 25.

<sup>33</sup> Sevilla Soler, *Santo Domingo*, 98-99 and Deive, *La Esclavitud Del Negro En Santo Domingo*, 53, 100-101, both state that there were 600 slaves working on ingenios (sugar plantations) and trapiches (sugar mills). The number, however, does not cover those working on tobacco and coffee plantations or in domestic service. Deive provides a breakdown of slave ownership of eight out of the eleven ingenios on the island in 1767. It is as follows:

<b>Ingenio</b>	<b>Proprietario</b>	<b>Esclavos</b>
Engombe y Carelio	Lorenzo de Angulo	?
Sabanabotana	José de la Vega	27
El Pedregal	Coronel Antonio Álvarez	43
Parra	Nicolás Guridi	5
San Cristóbal	José A. Zárraga	87
Nigua	Casimiro Bello	41
Camba Abajo	Felipe Guridi	50
Camba Arriba	Nicolás Guridi	70
Cumba	Gregorio de Heredia	40
La Jagua	Nicolás Guridi	?
	<b>Total</b>	<b>363</b>

<sup>34</sup> Diptee, *Atlantic Connections*, 25-26.

export oriented.<sup>35</sup> In the eighteenth century, Spanish Dominicans were more likely to grow coffee or tobacco than sugar because these crops were less labour intensive and, unlike the sugar production, they yielded enough surpluses to export the product to Spain.<sup>36</sup> Tobacco, in particular, was easy to grow and matured rapidly.<sup>37</sup> At its peak in 1774, tobacco exports reached 24,000 arrobas, while coffee, in conjunction with cacao and cinnamon, climbed as high as 88,360,502 arrobas in 1789.<sup>38</sup>

Thus, even though Santo Domingo was located in the Caribbean and was surrounded by land based societies, such as those found in the British and French West Indies and Saint-Domingue, it did not exhibit the same economic model.<sup>39</sup>

### **Hispaniola: The Legal Economy**

Hispaniola's descent into economic dependence on the Mexican royal treasury was caused by two royal orders. First, in 1543, the Spanish Crown ordered that all ships were to travel in well-guarded convoys along a predetermined itinerary.<sup>40</sup> The decision left the territory of Santo Domingo's capital port city, Santo Domingo, isolated from Spanish trade routes. The port and its harbour effectively became no more than a way station for Spanish

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<sup>35</sup> Ratekin, "The Early Sugar Industry in Española," 4.

<sup>36</sup> Spanish Dominicans also harvested indigo, maize, rice, potatoes, cacao, ginger, annatto (dye), cotton and wheat.

<sup>37</sup> Michel Baud, "El Surgimiento de un Campesino Criollo: La producción tabacalera en la Española 1500-1870," *Ecos*, Vol. 4, No. 5 (1996), 9-39.

<sup>38</sup> Gutiérrez Escudero, *Población y Economía en Santo Domingo*, 108-114; Baud, "El Surgimiento de un Campesino Criollo," 9-39 and Sevilla Soler, *Santo Domingo*, 97-130, explain that coffee cultivation was not introduced into the territory of Santo Domingo until 1735, but tobacco had been present since its earliest days. Tobacco was grown alongside subsistence crops in the Cibao valley. It was cultivated irregularly on small plots of land by the lower class to supplement their income. The sale of the crop was mainly for internal consumption, but as discussed above, some tobacco was shipped to Seville by way of the official trade connection between the Factoría de Tabacos, created in 1763, and the Factorías Reales de Sevilla. Baud estimates that at its height in 1770, there were about 202 slaves working in the tobacco sector in the territory of Santo Domingo.

<sup>39</sup> Knight, *The Caribbean*, 125 and Dietz, *Economic History of Puerto Rico*, 9.

<sup>40</sup> Moya Pons, *The Dominican Republic*, 42-43.

vessels to make berth in case of distress.<sup>41</sup> Moreover, what little agriculture had developed on the island in the early colonial period was effectively crushed, not only because of the inadequate slave procurement and the lack of capital investment, but due to the simple fact that Spanish Dominicans had no reliable way of getting their cash crops to Spanish markets. This lethal combination caused the agricultural sector to decline steadily and finally to self-limit itself to local consumption.

Second, the island's legal economy collapsed in 1605 when Governor Antonio de Osorio implemented the depopulation policy, known as the *devastaciones* or the scorched earth policy, in February of that year.<sup>42</sup> The goal of the policy was to relocate citizens living in the north-western zone and their livestock herds to a safer area closer to the capital city of Santo Domingo. The decision for the move was driven by a double agenda: that of the Church on the one hand and the city officials' one on the other. The former thought that the relocation would protect its citizens from falling under the "protestant" influence exercised by the British and the Dutch through the illegal trade.<sup>43</sup> The second goal was to ensure that the city would have a dependable meat supply.<sup>44</sup> However, the whole project was doomed to failure, not only because of the distance involved or the lack of infrastructure, but, unlike in the north-western region, there were few lush grazing lands around the city of Santo Domingo itself. Nonetheless, the governor alongside 150 soldiers from the garrison of Puerto Rico were dispatched to the affected towns, where they dutifully read aloud the royal order

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<sup>41</sup> Stapells-Johnson, *Corsairs of Santo Domingo*, 11-18, explains that once the *flota* or *galeones* arrived in the Americas, permission ships were approved to trade with the Spanish Caribbean, but there were not many as these ships and they were required to sail to Santo Domingo unprotected through corsair infested waters. Furthermore, she states that "in the first two decades of the eighteenth century, ships coming from Spain almost disappeared from Caribbean waters. As a result these colonies had no choice but to depend on foreign contrabandists."

<sup>42</sup> Torres-Saillant, "The Tribulations of Blackness," 126-146.

<sup>43</sup> Moya Pons, *The Dominican Republic*, 46-47.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

informing the citizenry that they would have to move their personal belongings, livestock and slaves to settlements that would be built in Monte Plata and San Bautista de Bayaguana, on the outskirts of the capital. Although the instructions seemed simple enough in practice, they were a logistical nightmare. In the short time they were given, livestock owners were only able to round up an estimated 10 percent of their herds (approximately 110,000 animals).<sup>45</sup> Once the towns were emptied, the buildings and remaining crops were burnt to the ground to discourage resettlement in these areas. On the long and arduous journey to the capital, some slaves ran away and many of the animals escaped or died. Only 8,000 of the estimated 110,000 animals remained by the time the convoy had reached its destination, of which 2,000 died shortly thereafter because of the lack of pasturage.

The relocation proved to be an enormous miscalculation. First, it financially ruined the citizens affected by this policy. The loss of their material possessions, slaves and almost 90 percent of their herds left them impoverished. The burning of their mainly subsistence crops with some limited cash crops, such as tobacco grown on small properties, left these families famished.<sup>46</sup> There is no question that the immediate and most direct impact of the implementation of the depopulation policy hit these families the hardest, but the ramifications rippled throughout the island.

First, upon arrival, the resettled individuals put an additional strain on existing food sources because they had not been able to harvest their own crops before they left since the fields had been burnt to the ground. The families were forced to rely on the agricultural output of their new region, which was already stretched to the limit. As mentioned earlier,

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 48-50.

<sup>46</sup> Baud, "El Surgimiento de un Campesino Criollo," 9-39, states that the tobacco that was grown was sold illegally to the French colony of Saint-Domingue and to foreign ships anchoring off the northern coast. The revenues from these small scale sales supplemented their incomes.

only 10 percent of the animals in the herds were rounded up and many died during or shortly after arriving in the surrounding areas of the capital city. Of the remaining animals many were in terrible shape and had to be slaughtered. An unknown percentage of these relocated ranchers also decided to kill their entire herds based on the knowledge that the animals could not be sustained in good weight on the inadequate pasturage.<sup>47</sup> Moreover, the intended improvements to the diet of the citizens of the city of Santo Domingo, as laid out by the depopulation policy, were only temporary. The initial abundance of meat produced by the mass slaughter of cattle, was replaced by a period of dearth worse than any experienced until then. By removing the citizens from the north-western areas, the city of Santo Domingo lost its ability to receive meat from the ranchers through the system of *pesas* (quotas).<sup>48</sup> The animals that had not been rounded up for the move survived just fine on their own but there was no one to manage the herds. Thus, the dietary source remained but was now inaccessible.

Contrary to achieving the policy's purpose of safeguarding this rural population and their herds by bringing them closer to the capital city, the loss of livestock caused the subsequent dearth of meat in the capital and the starvation of its citizens. It further contributed to the continued stagnation of the agricultural sector; there was no harvest for that year on the north and western coasts given that the crops were never planted due to a lack of labourers. Needless to say that the delicate Spanish Dominican economy did not withstand the blow dealt by the depopulation policy and it crashed.

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<sup>47</sup> Moya Pons, *The Dominican Republic*, 49, mentions that some ranchers slaughtered their entire herds, but there were of course others who did not follow this course of action. Some of them probably attempted to consolidate their losses by protecting the healthiest of their cattle in view of rebuilding their herds through reproduction. These animals were, therefore, not available for slaughter because they became the base upon which the new herds would be rebuilt. For years, thereafter, there were few surplus animals available.

<sup>48</sup> Gascón, "The Military of Santo Domingo," 431-452.

The results were at least as devastating for the Spanish Crown since the depopulation of the north-western part of the island left that land undefended. It provided the perfect opportunity for the French living in Tortuga to gain a toe hold on the western side of the island.<sup>49</sup> Through what basically amounted to squatting and little effective opposition from Spanish troops, French nationals carved out their own colony, thereby limiting Spanish Dominican activities to the eastern lands. The annexation of part of the island of Hispaniola was part and parcel of a larger territorial loss for the Spanish empire in the Caribbean basin, which saw the English and French establish their sovereignty over Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, the Bahamas, Guadeloupe and Martinique.<sup>50</sup> The ever increasing import of black slaves went hand in hand with this territorial usurpation and high yield agriculture, increasing the demographic contours of all of these French and English colonies, and quite particularly Saint-Domingue.<sup>51</sup> The establishment of permanent foreign colonies at no more than a day's sail, and in Santo Domingo's case, no less than a few hours journey on foot was threatening.<sup>52</sup>

In due course, the Spanish Crown acknowledged the economic problems facing the island and the defensive weakness. The first step it took to remedy the problem was to grant Spanish Dominicans an exemption from paying several taxes, the most significant of which was the *alcabala* (sales tax). It also responded by "lower(ing) export duties on the island's products and assign(ing) a subsidy from the royal treasury of Mexico, to pay for the general expenses of the government, including the salaries of the royal bureaucracy, the church,"<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Lane, *Pillaging the Empire*, ch. 4.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> Philip D. Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade*, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 75-83, explains that Saint-Domingue went through a very rapid growth from 1680 to 1739, a slower growth (comparable to Jamaica's) from 1739 to 1778 and again another brisker development in the 1780s.

<sup>52</sup> Moya Pons, *The Dominican Republic*, 64-72.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 49.

and the army. The concessions granted by the Spanish Crown merely unburdened the royal administration from carrying out futile attempts at collecting these taxes from a population that was simply too poor to pay them. Given that the economy only started to heal in the late seventeenth century and it crashed again at the end of the eighteenth century, the Spanish Crown never reintroduced the sales tax in the territory of Santo Domingo.<sup>54</sup> In any case, the lowering of the export duties was, in fact, for all practical purposes meaningless given Santo Domingo's isolation from Spanish trade routes and the already depressed agricultural sector.

In the end, the Spanish Crown was forced to assign a portion of the revenues from the Mexican treasury to sustain the colony. The Mexican money ships, known as the *situado*, became the central point around which the Spanish Dominican economy revolved.<sup>55</sup> Its arrival produced economic peaks and their frequent delays resulted in long lasting troughs that spread hardship across the Spanish half of the island. The moneys were dispatched in arrears because the Mexican Viceroy, regardless of the person in office, resented having to financially support underperforming areas of New Spain, such as Hispaniola, Puerto Rico and Cuba. Perceived as a drain on the Mexican treasury instead of an investment in the overall defensive structures protecting the main Mexican port of Veracruz, the Viceroy proceeded to ship the moneys only when nagged by the Spanish Crown. The *situado* was therefore only sent irregularly. The result of the Mexican Viceroy's actions had a roller coaster effect on the Spanish Dominican economy. When the *situado* arrived it was used to

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<sup>54</sup> There are several petitions from Spanish Dominicans to the Council of the Indies asking for the tax exemption to continue and all were approved, such as AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 281, 54-6-96, Cartas y expedientes del Gobernador de la Isla Española; Carta de don Alfonso de Castro y Maso que da cuenta del estado de la isla española, 30/11/1748 and AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 281, 54-6-96, Cartas y expedientes del Gobernador de la Isla Española; Carta a SM del cabildo Justicia y regimiento de la ciudad de Santo Domingo 01/01/1738.

<sup>55</sup> For more on the *situado*, please see: Carlos Marichal and Matilde Souto Mantecón, "Silver and Situados: New Spain and the Financing of the Spanish Empire in the Caribbean in the Eighteenth Century," *HAHR*, Vol. 74, No. 4 (1994), 587-613.

pay off the debts that had accumulated since the previous arrival.<sup>56</sup> The payments in arrears included, but were not limited to the salaries of the civil and military officials, as well as the import of supplies and goods.<sup>57</sup> In 1795, the total revenues received from the situado corresponded exactly to the total expenses owed: 731,607.00 pesos, one real and 20 maravedís.<sup>58</sup> Given that the Mexican moneys were almost always equal to the accumulated debt, the Spanish Dominican economy was only in the black when the situado arrived and then promptly started to slip back into the red.<sup>59</sup> The longer the moneys took to arrive, the more desperate the situation became. The colonial correspondence reflects this pattern. Although letters petitioning the Spanish Crown for financial aid or salaries in arrears can be found throughout the period under study, the volume increased proportionally to the number of years the Mexican moneys were delayed. Unsurprisingly, the largest numbers of letters pertained to the period in which the situado was already more than six years late.<sup>60</sup> The

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<sup>56</sup> Schaeffer, "The Delayed Cession of Spanish Santo Domingo to France," 46-68, explains that the situado was finally terminated in 1801 when the territory of Santo Domingo was claimed by Toussaint L'Ouverture on behalf of the French government.

<sup>57</sup> Sevilla Soler, *Santo Domingo*, ch. 4.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 228-229.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, ch. 4.

<sup>60</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 279, 54-6-94, Minutas de Consultas, Despachos y otros papeles sin fecha; Consulta la reina al Maestre de campo don Ignacio de Zayas Bazán; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 281, 54-6-96, Cartas y expedientes del Gobernador de la Isla Española; don Antonio de Landeche cavo subalterno al Consejo de Indias, Isla Española 24/04/1714; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 281, 54-6-96, Cartas y expedientes del Gobernador de la Isla Española; Carta de don Alfonso de Castro y Masó que da cuenta del estado de la isla española, 30/11/1741; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 281, 54-6-96, Cartas y expedientes del Gobernador de la Isla Española; Carta a SM del cabildo Justicia y regimiento de la ciudad de Santo Domingo 01/01/1738; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 294, 55-1-1 Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1645-1713; carta a SM del Alférez don Manuel Ignacio de Hinojosa 02/12/1705; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 294, 55-1-1 Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1645-1713; Carta a SM de las hermanas de don Jerónimo de Robles 8/12/1710; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 294, 55-1-1 Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1645-1713; carta a SM de doña Isabel de Altamira y Cárdenas, 14/01/1707; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 294, 55-1-1 Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1645-1713; carta a SM de don Pedro Morel de Santa Cruz 20/12/1708; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 294, 55-1-1 Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1645-1713; Carta a SM de doña Beatriz Lucía Catano de la Paz, 01/04/1702; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 295, 55-1-2 Cartas Y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1714-1725; Expediente a SM del Coronel don Antonio Landeche cavo subalterno y gobernador de armas de Santo Domingo por don Joseph Félix de Robles, 07/07/1712; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 294, 55-1-1 Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1645-1713; Carta al Consejo de Indias del Alférez don Joseph de Acevedo 21/08/1719 relación de méritos; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 294, 55-1-1 Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1645-1713; Carta al Consejo de Indias del capitán don Manuel Ignacio de Hinojosa 04/01/1719; AGI,

Mexican Viceroy's procrastination regarding compliance with the royal will in sending the money ship certainly made a difficult economic situation worse.

The Spanish Crown also sought to reverse the negative impact of the depopulation policy through a repopulation of the north-western lands. The policy, implemented in 1684,

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Santo Domingo, leg. 294, 55-1-1 Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1645-1713; Carta a SM del Maestre de Campo don Pedro Morel de Santa Cruz 20/03/1719: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 294, 55-1-1 Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1645-1713; Carta a SM de Beatriz de Añasco 30/04/1716: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 294, 55-1-1 Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1645-1713; Carta a SM del Capitán don Juan Dionisio de Ledesma tesorero oficial real de Santo Domingo 26/11/1721: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 296, 55-1-3, Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1726-1736; Carta a SM de Andrés de Ocaña, 12/02/1726: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 296, 55-1-3, Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1726-1736; Carta al Consejo de Indias del Sargento Miguel Sánchez, 04/07/1727: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 296, 55-1-3, Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1726-1736; Carta al Consejo de Indias del Capitán don Isidro Miniel 28/01/1727: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 296, 55-1-3, Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1726-1736; Carta al Consejo de Indias de Marcos, Ruiz, Joseph, Manuel, Bárbara y María Ruiz 28/07/1725: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 296, 55-1-3, Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1726-1736 Carta al Consejo de Indias de Marcos González de Aranjó soldado de Santo Domingo, 20/11/1728: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 296, 55-1-3, Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1726-1736; Carta al Consejo de Indias de Francisco de Olavaria, 26/09/1729: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 296, 55-1-3, Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1726-1736; Carta al Consejo de Indias de doña Bernarda García 1729: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 296, 55-1-3, Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1726-1736; Carta al Consejo de Indias del Sargento Rodrigo de Agras 18/08/1729: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 296, 55-1-3, Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1726-1736; Carta al Consejo de Indias del Sargento Vicente de Castro 25/01/1731: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 296, 55-1-3, Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1726-1736; Carta al Consejo de Indias del sargento Antonio Pérez 14/11/1731: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 296, 55-1-3, Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1726-1736; Carta al Consejo de Indias de Manuel Caballero 11/07/1731: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 296, 55-1-3, Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1726-1736; carta al consejo de Indias de don Antonio Francisco González de Osorio 13/09/1731: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 296, 55-1-3, Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1726-1736; Carta a SM de don Manuel de Revenga, 28/06/1732: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 296, 55-1-3, Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1726-1736; Carta a SM de don Manuel de Revenga 28/06/1731: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 296, 55-1-3, Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1726-1736; Carta a SM de don Manuel de Revenga 02/02/1731: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 296, 55-1-3, Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1726-1736; Carta a SM de don Manuel de Revenga 23/04/1732: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 296, 55-1-3, Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1726-1736; Carta al Consejo de Indias de Marcelo Rodríguez Camejo condestable de la artillería de la plaza de Santo Domingo 21/07/1732: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 296, 55-1-3, Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1726-1736; Carta al Consejo de Indias de Marcos de Lagos soldado 23/04/1732: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 296, 55-1-3, Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1726-1736; Carta A SM de don Nicolás Guridi 19/06/1732: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 296, 55-1-3, Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1726-1736; Carta a SM de don Miguel de Venecia Satelices 1736: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 296, 55-1-3, Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1726-1736; Carta a SM de don Miguel de Venecia Satelices (no date): AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 296, 55-1-3, Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1726-1736; Carta a SM de doña María Pérez Polanco 05/09/1726: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 320, 55-1-27, Cartas y expedientes de Personas Eclesiásticas de Santo Domingo 1610-1731; Carta de Francisco González de Cosío a SM 25/01/1731: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 320, 55-1-27, Cartas y expedientes de Personas Eclesiásticas de Santo Domingo 1610-1731; Carta de Miguel Díaz a SM 13/10/1727: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 1002, 78-6-26, Inventario de Expedientes diarios de Santo Domingo 1690-1800: AGI, Indiferente, leg. 3, 136-4-3, Consultas, Reales Decretos y Ordenes 1705-1710; Carta a la Junta de Guerra de don Francisco de Aperregui, 16/12/1705: AGI, Indiferente, Nueva España 46, 136-5-10, Inventario Secretaría de Nueva España 1610-1815; Carta del consejo de Indias a doña María Isabel López Velahuerta 09/09/1773. The years of 1713-14 and 1731-35 stand out as higher volume years.

was designed to achieve two things: increase the population through immigration in the hopes that these newcomers would pursue economic activities, particularly in the agricultural sector and repopulate the north and western lands that had been left bare by the depopulation policy. This policy called for forced immigration of residents from the Canary Islands<sup>61</sup> and their forcible resettlement in new towns strategically located along the border and the coast. The repopulation policy was aggressive; it stipulated that for every 100 tons of goods shipped out of the Canary Islands, five families, consisting of five members each must be relocated to Santo Domingo.<sup>62</sup> In compensation, each person was to receive one doubloon and four escudos. As well, each family was entitled to two plots of arable land, two axes, one iron rod, four heavy carts and two machetes or 200 pounds of iron and fifty pounds of steel to allow them to fashion their own tools.<sup>63</sup> Although the total number of families expected to immigrate never arrived in Santo Domingo,<sup>64</sup> the ships' log information on the individuals transported to the island confirms that those who did were on average five person family households.<sup>65</sup> According to Antonio Gutiérrez Escudero, an extra 37 single persons also arrived.<sup>66</sup> The Spanish Dominican treasury was hardly in a position to shoulder the burden of the administrative and material expenses involved in implementing the repopulation policy.

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<sup>61</sup> The Canary Islands were over populated and poor at that time.

<sup>62</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 276, 54-6-91, Consultas y reales decretos sobre envío de familias aquellas islas y otros puntos; don Domingo López de Calo Mondragón por el rey a la audiencia de Santo Domingo, Madrid, 05/02/1700.

<sup>63</sup> Sevilla Soler, *Santo Domingo*, 51.

<sup>64</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 276, 54-6-91, Consultas y reales decretos sobre envío de familias aquellas islas y otros puntos; don Domingo López de Calo Mondragón por el rey a la audiencia de Santo Domingo, Madrid, 05/02/1700.

<sup>65</sup> Gutiérrez Escudero, *Población y Economía en Santo Domingo*, 67-68 and Sevilla Soler, *Santo Domingo*, 54-55.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.* Gutiérrez Escudero states that 582 families and 37 individuals arrived between 1698 and 1764, for a total of 2,947 individuals. Sevilla Soler indicates that 323 families and 32 single people arrived between 1749 and 1764 for a total of 1,639 individuals.

Once again, the Spanish Crown ordered that the necessary moneys, some 16,000 pesos<sup>67</sup> for each group of fifty Canarian families, be deducted from the Mexican treasury and sent to the territory of Santo Domingo via the situado.<sup>68</sup> As previously discussed, the Mexican funds arrived too irregularly to be used to compensate the newcomers monetarily or in kind in accordance with the royal ordinance. The Spanish Dominican treasury could certainly not afford to advance the moneys, as it was always operating at a deficit. The Canary islanders themselves were poor and, therefore, were hardly able to afford the meagre start up capital required to start farming.

According to Sevilla Soler, 323 families and 32 single persons in all immigrated from the Canary Islands, representing a total of 1,639 individuals.<sup>69</sup> This number fell far short of the expected estimate of four thousand people. The Canarian families, who stayed, repopulated the following cities: San Felipe de Puerto Plata (1749), San Fernando de Montecristí (1752) and San Juan de la Maguana (1756).<sup>70</sup> They were also part of the founding of the new towns of Manzanillo (1749), Gulf of Guanabano (1749), San Miguel de la Atalaya (1749), Santa Barbara de Samana (1756) and Sabana de la Mar (1760).<sup>71</sup> Many of

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<sup>67</sup> Sevilla Soler, *Santo Domingo*, 53, 56, states that the money was to be divided up in the following manner: "para la manutención de las 250 personas de las 50 familias durante un año a un real de plata por persona y día...11.406 pesos y 2 reales; para su curación si la necesitasen y algún otro gasto extraordinario...400 pesos; para su transporte desde la capital a su punto de destino a 12 pesos por familia...600 pesos; para la congrua de dos curas para dos poblaciones de 25 familias...400 pesos; para dos vacas de vientre para cada familia...200 pesos; para cinco puerkas de vientre por familia...75 pesos; para cinco gallinas y un pollo que se deben dar a cada cinco personas...75 pesos; para una yegua y un caballo para cada familia...400 pesos; para una fanega de maíz para sembrar a cada una...75 pesos; para una arroba de arroz a cada familia...150 pesos; para costear 50 casas y dos iglesias...1700 pesos; para los ornamentos de esas dos iglesias...150 pesos; para mantener a 100 hombres que habrán de emplearse en el desmonte y la tala de los sitios elegidos para las nuevas fundaciones...375=16.056 pesos y 2 reales."

<sup>68</sup> Gutiérrez Escudero, *Poblaciones y Economía en Santo Domingo*, 64-75.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 56 and Gutiérrez Escudero, *Población y Economía en Santo Domingo*, 67-68, and Sevilla Soler, *Santo Domingo*, 54-55, both explain that the Mexican Viceroy was quick to point out the discrepancy between the expected number of immigrants in comparison to those who actually arrived, expecting that he would not be required to send more moneys than necessary.

<sup>70</sup> Sevilla Soler, *Santo Domingo*, 54-60.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 56-60.

these settlements grew by attracting free coloured and black persons, as well as runaway slaves. Thus, the western and coastal areas repopulated through the influx of these newcomers. The towns acted as buffers that would repel enemy invasions and expansion from the French colony. However, the dismal economic opportunities on the island made these outlying populations reliant on trade with enemy powers and Saint-Domingue.

Needless to mention that the Canary Islands immigrants did not improve the territory's agricultural situation. Don Domingo López de Calo Mondragón noted that many of the families, after their arrival, fled to other islands because of alleged mistreatment at the hands of Spanish Dominicans.<sup>72</sup> The newcomers fled the island at their first opportunity. According to royal policy, the immigrants were placed with Spanish Dominican families for three days, after which they were reassigned to an outlying town. It would seem that the placements in these homes were less than ideal as many immigrants suffered from mistreatment at the hands of Spanish Dominicans. The abuses actively contributed to the flight of some families to other Spanish Caribbean Islands, such as Puerto Rico and Cuba. The Canarians, who remained, were established in the new towns created in the north-western part of the territory of Santo Domingo. They were not given the necessary tools or moneys to develop their farms. The Governor of Santiago de los Caballeros, the second largest city in the territory, don Juan de Morla, thought that these immigrants only contributed to the impoverishment of the colony.<sup>73</sup> The Governor's statement was probably true because the Canary Islanders were poor and their situation could not change as long as

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<sup>72</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 276, 54-6-91, Consultas y reales decretos sobre envío de familias aquellas islas y otros puntos; Testimonies of mistreated Canarians recorded by don Francisco Talgle Bustamante to don Pedro Colombo de Vargas, Regidor de Tenerife y Procurador Mayor del cabildo, 14/04/1721.

<sup>73</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 276, 54-6-91, Consultas y reales decretos sobre envío de familias aquellas islas y otros puntos; don Andrés de Acrobarrutia in response to consulta de 16/11/1724 of don Juan López de Morla, Gobernador de Santiago en Hispaniola, 19/10/1725.

they did not receive the promised supplies and moneys. Moreover, they became dependent on the island's existing resources for survival, which in turn probably further impoverished the Spanish half of the island.

The official repopulation policy was accompanied by an unofficial one. Spanish Dominican officials were in the habit of not returning runaway slaves. Although the Spanish Crown openly condemned this practice, it also extended amnesties<sup>74</sup> and land grants<sup>75</sup> to coloured and black illegal immigrants, which obviously encouraged a steady flow of persons into the territory. It was undoubtedly true that this set of policies increased the island's population, but it was also flawed in two ways. First, it goes without saying that these individuals had also limited financial resources. Second, despite the fact that the amnesties and land grants were supposed to settle these potentially disturbing elements of society into the newly created towns, there was no mechanism to ensure that this actually occurred. The majority of the battalions were stationed in the city of Santo Domingo and to a lesser extent in Santiago de los Caballeros. The towns of San Carlos, Santa Cruz del Seibo, Concepción de la Vega, San Fernando de Montecristi, San Felipe de Puerto Plata, Hinchavilla and Azua were also home to a regiment but the remainder of the countryside was patrolled infrequently by *cinquenteños* (cavalry units of fifty men).<sup>76</sup> These units were ineffective at establishing royal control over the entire territory. Thus, Spanish Dominican authorities could not ensure that the newcomers actually settled in the newly created towns rather than joining the very large maroon communities in the countryside. Even if they did settle in the designated areas, it can

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<sup>74</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 973, 78-5-24, Inventario de la Sección de Santo Domingo 1648-1798 and AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 983, 78-6-7, Cartas y Expedientes; 1771-1773.

<sup>75</sup> Gutiérrez Escudero, *Población y Economía en Santo Domingo*, 54-55, states that the most famous of these edicts was also accompanied by a charter to establish the new, now legal residents, in the city of San Lorenzo de las Minas.

<sup>76</sup> Sevilla Soler, *Santo Domingo*, 215-218, explains that the fifty man units were usually cavalry detachments referred to as *cinquenteños*.

hardly be said that they fell under royal control. In summary, the unofficial part of the repopulation policy further impoverished the island and created a whole new set of problems related to population control. Carlos Larrazábal Blanco reports that Governor Uribe's attempt to bring to order certain settlements in the countryside ended in the easy defeat of the small Spanish forces by the settlers.<sup>77</sup> Moreover, the Spanish Crown's policy of granting amnesties to illicit immigrants did increase the population, but, again, these individuals were poor. Nonetheless, the official and unofficial repopulation policies were pursued because they ultimately contributed to an increase in the Spanish Dominican population. The negative economic and social consequences of the policy were overshadowed by the military strategic advantage that a larger citizenry represented in the face of increasing French and British threats to its sovereignty.

It was not until the mid to late eighteenth century that the island's economy started to recover according to the colonial accounts. In reality, however, this was a false positive. The upward economic swing was actually due to the legalization of certain previously illicit forms of trade.<sup>78</sup> The ramifications of an operational change in royal policy made the invisible, visible.<sup>79</sup> Income revenues, previously pocketed by individuals, were now subjected to taxation and/or collection by the state, thereby allowing the data to be officially recorded according to administrative protocol.

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<sup>77</sup> Larrazábal Blanco, *Los Negros y la esclavitud en Santo Domingo*, 147-150.

<sup>78</sup> Sevilla Soler, *Santo Domingo*, ch. 5.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 306-308, 366-372.

The change in attitude can be traced to both the reformist thinking of Charles III<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> For more on the Bourbon Reforms, please see: Bourbon Reforms: Jacques Barbier, *Reform and Politics in Bourbon Chile 1775-1796* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1980); Politics and Government Administration: Burkholder, *Politics of a Colonial Career* and Susan Socolow, *The Bureaucrats of Buenos Aires 1769-1810*; *El Amor al Real Servicio* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1987); Military: Allan J. Kuethe, *Cuba, 1753-1815* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1986); Economics: D.A. Brading, *Miners and Merchants in Bourbon Mexico 1763-1810* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971) Social Reform: Pamela Voekel, "Peering on the Palace: Bodily Resistance to Bourbon Reforms in Mexico City," in the *Journal of Historical Sociology*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (June, 1992), 183-208. As alluded to in chapter one, the accession of Charles III to the Spanish throne signalled a new era in the colonial relationship in which the Crown played an active role in identifying problems and establishing logical steps or detailed plans to remedy them. Thus, the royal government took on a more leading role and expected the people to follow. The massive bureaucratic reorganization was perceived as necessary in the wake of what seemed like a loss of military and administrative control over the American colonies. The fall of the heavily fortified port of Havana to the English empire in 1762 embodied the disorder that existed in the colonial relationship. Defensive capacities were improved by creating regular standing armies supported by provincial and urban disciplined militias. The changes significantly increased the size of the forces, at least on paper. The Spanish bureaucracy was reorganized based on the French model. Some of the changes included the creation of ministries to deal with particular portfolios and *intendants* (superintendents) to oversee the newly created provincial districts, which controlled the smaller regional units. In order to ensure the loyalty and honesty of the new royal officials, they were paid decent salaries. The selected individuals were generally peninsulars hand picked by the Crown. These individuals were to replace the creoles (Spaniards born in the Americas), who had risen in the ranks of the royal bureaucracy and were now occupying a significant number of positions of power. In the eyes of the Crown, the creoles' position simply gave them too much control over the future political and economic direction of their regions. The Bourbon Reforms strictly limited the number of creoles in high ranking positions through attrition and by severely limiting new hiring from that group and ending the sale of offices. Their peninsular replacements were the cornerstone on which the rest of the administrative changes were made in order to keep the colonies under the yoke of Spanish rule. These bureaucrats were given direct oversight of the public administration, finance, administration of justice and military preparedness within their provinces. They were also supposed to improve local governance, promote economic growth and encourage the creation of public works (street lights, bridges, roads, better sanitation). The intendants were responsible for overseeing the collection of revenues from taxation and were granted the power to exercise royal patronage over the ecclesiastical institutions in their province. The latter was part of the more general attack on the power and privilege of the Catholic Church. In 1763, Charles III reduced ecclesiastical immunity, principally the privilege of asylum and also the personal legal immunity that clerics enjoyed in many areas with the *fuero eclesiástico* (ecclesiastical privilege). The jurisdiction of Royal criminal courts was extended to hear marital conflicts and civil courts were allowed to hear suits against spouses. The Church also lost its rights to punish individuals for small misbehaviours and the ability to uphold a free will in contracting marriages. Strong objections to marriages by parents, before the Royal Pragmatic of 1776, could be overridden if the couple was deemed to be an acceptable and consenting match by the parish priest. "Secret" marriages were performed by priests to unite the lovers in holy matrimony. This special provision was not a rehabilitation of other forms of marriage such as personal exchanges of vows and fidelity by the bride and groom, as it still required an ordained priest to officiate and witnesses to be present. However, the ceremony itself was held in a private setting such as a relative's house. This was the case of the first and second marriage of the widow Francisca Betancour to Francisco Pimentel in 1738 and to Vicente de Mella and Margarita Cotes's son, Manuel, in 1753. Although "secret" marriages continued to be an option after 1763, the Catholic Church did lose its ability to ensure the safety of the spouses because it was no longer authorized to use the royal guards for religious ends. Moreover, requests for secret marriages were still an option but perhaps one that became less attractive in the second half of the eighteenth century as the safety of the bride and groom could not be guaranteed. Furthermore, the Bourbon Reforms redirected the revenues collected from the tithe to provincial coffers. The Royal Pragmatic on Marriage should be construed as first and foremost a further attempt by the Spanish Crown to wrest administrative control from the Church. By legislating the terms under which marriages could be contracted, the Spanish Crown undermined the Church's authority. It should also be conceptualized as the product of the Spanish Crown's growing unease over the

and escalating French pressures on the Spanish Crown regarding the legalization of trade with Saint-Domingue.<sup>81</sup> In a little less than a century, the French managed to parlay their tenuous initial toe hold on the western half of Hispaniola in the mid-seventeenth century into a very prosperous plantation based colony, the world's largest sugar producer by the mid-eighteenth century. French planters' access to labour and livestock was critical to the expansion and success of Saint-Domingue. Although the French Crown met the planters' labour needs by importing African slaves, they were unable to procure them with the necessary livestock to farm the land and feed the slaves, not to mention grow the tobacco for which they had acquired a taste. This glitch in the French trading system limited Saint-Domingue's productivity and by extension diminished the revenues available to the French Crown.<sup>82</sup> The most cost effective way of procuring these animals and foodstuffs, as well as the tobacco that slaves consumed, was to purchase them next door. Though trade with enemy powers, such as the French in Saint-Domingue, was expressly forbidden under Spanish mercantilist policies, it was, for the most part, tolerated by French and Spanish Dominican officials.<sup>83</sup> The success of the French colony was therefore conditional on Spanish cooperation or at the very least on a moratorium to curb the illicit trade.

However, the Spanish Crown was initially unmoved by French pressures. The refusal to broker an agreement can undoubtedly be attributed to sour grapes over the initial loss of half of the island of Hispaniola, which was itself occasioned by the fatal decision to implement the depopulation policy in 1605. The Spanish Crown was unwilling to take any

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social development and racial miscegenation in the Americas. By requiring marriages to be contracted between persons of the same race and class, the Spanish Crown was effectively trying to halt the blurring of racial and economic groups and classes.

<sup>81</sup> There is no doubt that the reassessment of trade relations with the French Crown had much to do with the fact that the Spanish and French monarchs were both Bourbons. Good relations were periodically asserted in a very public manner with the signing of the Family Compacts between the French and Spanish Bourbons.

<sup>82</sup> Moya Pons, *The Dominican Republic*, ch. 4.

<sup>83</sup> Stapells-Johnson, *Corsairs of Santo Domingo*, 18.

further measure beyond what it had already grudgingly done in the Treaty of Ryswick: officially recognizing the French occupation on the Western half of the island from Cabo Rosa on the north to Punta de la Beata on the south shore.<sup>84</sup>

For years, the Spanish Crown referred to the “border” between the two colonies as the *raya* (line) in order to consciously avoid setting an official demarcation line between the French and Spanish sides.<sup>85</sup> Attempts at negotiations always ended the same way. The Spanish Crown believed the border should be much further to the west of the line it was already recognizing unofficially.<sup>86</sup> For their part, the French felt that Spanish demands were unreasonably miserly, given their current occupation of the lands in question. Furthermore, the French argued that the border should be pushed much further to the east because their colony was more densely populated and agriculturally developed. Giving them more lands to the east was in no way taking away acreage under cultivation from the Spanish population since the fields in question were fallow. The Spanish side simply had fewer inhabitants per square kilometre and, as mentioned previously, fewer slaves due to low cash crop agriculture. The French and Spanish authorities finally settled their disagreement on August 28, 1776 and the Spanish Crown ratified the treaty on June 3, 1777 at the Bourbon summer palace of Aranjuez.<sup>87</sup>

The treaty of Aranjuez, also signalled a reassessment of royal trade policy with the French colony as it delineated quotas and prices for livestock to be sold by Spanish Dominicans to French Dominicans.<sup>88</sup> There is no question that the reconsideration was

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<sup>84</sup> Deive, *La Esclavitud Del Negro En Santo Domingo*, 134, 140.

<sup>85</sup> Moya Pons, *The Dominican Republic*, 64-72.

<sup>86</sup> Stapells-Johnson, *Corsairs of Santo Domingo*, ch. 1.

<sup>87</sup> Carlos Nouel, *Historia eclesiástica de la arquidiócesis de Santo Domingo primada de América* (Santo Domingo: Editora de Santo Domingo, 1979), 370.

<sup>88</sup> Sevilla Soler, *Santo Domingo*, 306-308, 366-372 states that Charles III also created the *Factoría de Tabacos* in 1763 to stimulate tobacco production in the territory of Santo Domingo.

largely based on the fact that the trade would provide the Spanish Crown with badly needed revenues. Upon legalization, the profits of the sale of tobacco and cattle became visible to royal officials and historians alike. Given that the trade was now subject to taxation, a percentage of the profits were deposited in the royal treasury instead of disappearing into ranchers' pockets.<sup>89</sup> Instead of construing the data in terms of a late colonial economic recovery, it should be interpreted as the culmination of a gradual recovery from the wounds inflicted by the depopulation policy.

Obviously, for a few golden decades, trade (legal and illegal) with the French colony seemed to have produced an economic upswing, which enabled the farming of cash crops such as tobacco, coffee and cotton, albeit still only on small plots. As positive as the development was for the territory of Santo Domingo, it was not significant enough to balance the books. The island still had more expenses than it had revenues; the imports exceeded the exports.<sup>90</sup> Sevilla Soler's calculation of Hispaniola's total import and export costs to and from other Spanish and foreign colonies were as follows. The total value of exports to other Spanish colonies for the period 1754 to 1775 was 666,528.00 reales and 32 maravedís, while those to foreign colonies was 255,868.00 *reales* and 16 maravedís.<sup>91</sup> For the same period, the imports from the inter-colonial trade were 6,307,323.00 reales and three 3/8 maravedís and from the extra-colonial sales 4,181,535.00 reales and 11 maravedís.<sup>92</sup> Moreover, the shortfall from trade with the other Spanish colonies was 5,640,795 reales and from foreign trade 3,925,667.00 reales.<sup>93</sup> Below, Sevilla Soler's maps of inter and extra colonial trade, (Graphs A, B, C and D) identify the specific types of goods and foodstuffs Dominicans exported and

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<sup>89</sup> Moya Pons, *The Dominican Republic*, ch. 2-3.

<sup>90</sup> Sevilla Soler, *Santo Domingo*, 208, 214.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*

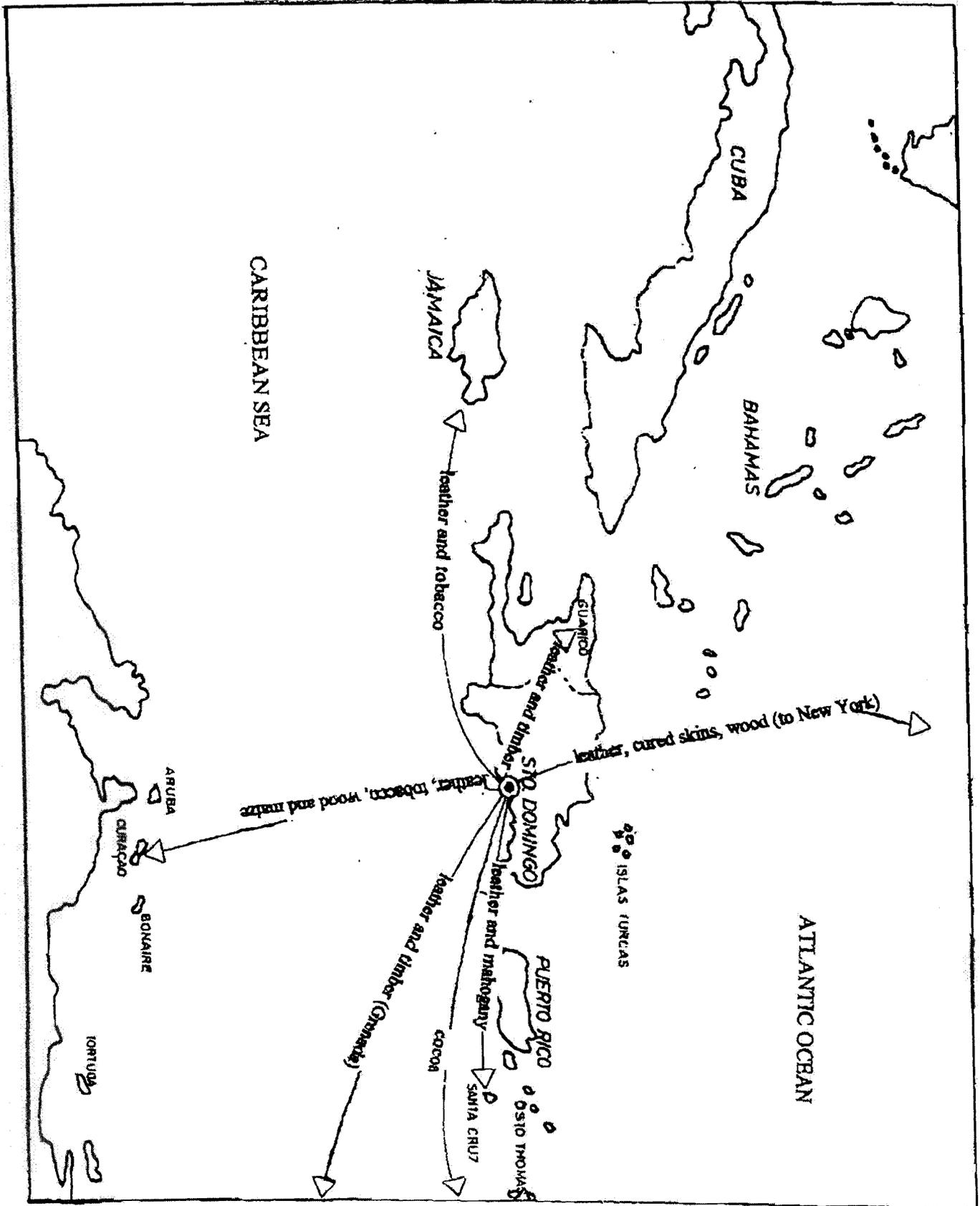
<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 214.

imported. It is not surprising to note that the main exports were leather and small amounts of tobacco, while the main imports were all foodstuffs.<sup>94</sup> Moreover, even at its economic apogee, Hispaniola still had a trade deficit and continued to depend on Mexican moneys to pay its bills.

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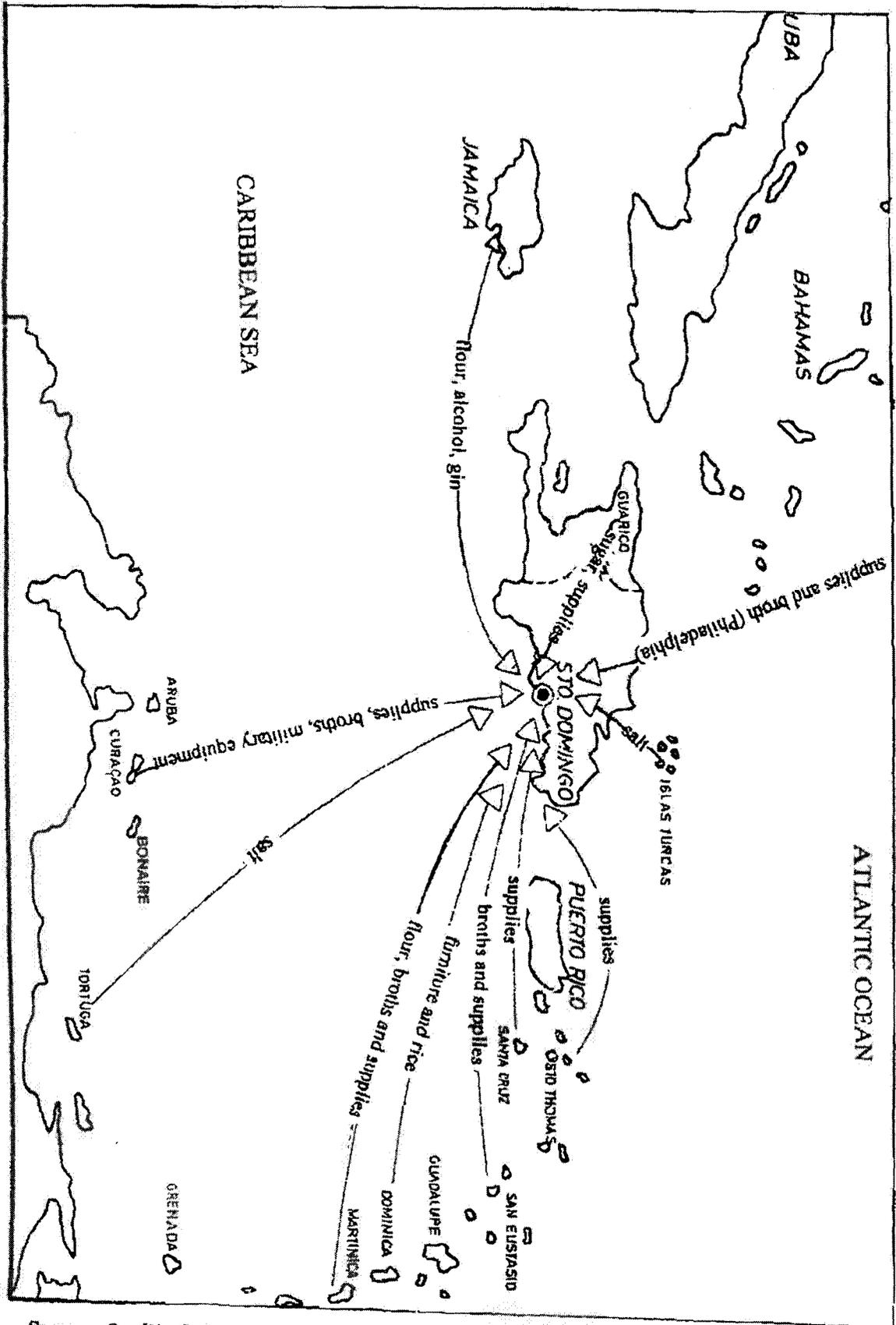
<sup>94</sup> Ibid., 207-210.

Dominican Exports to Foreign Colonies



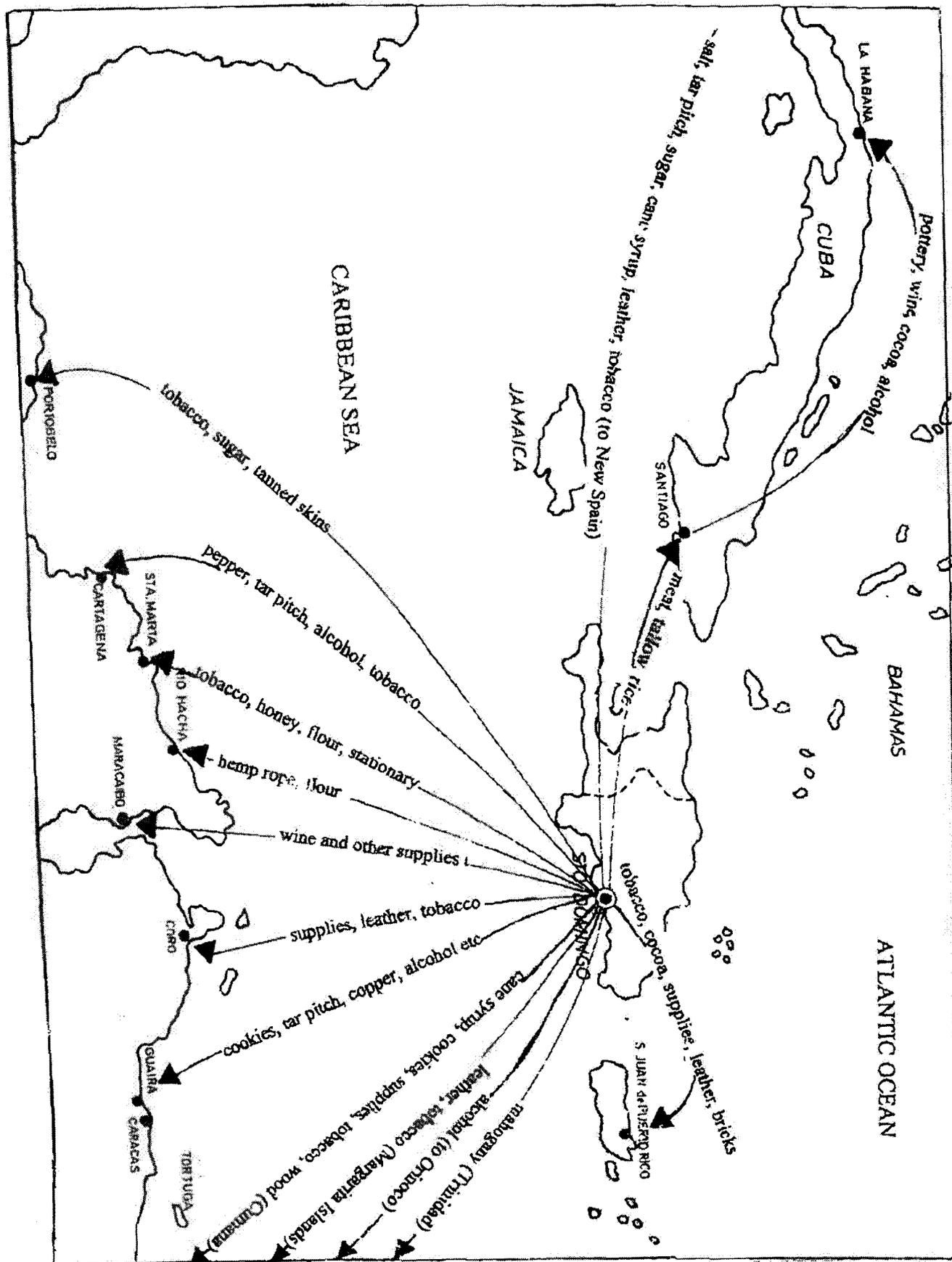
Source: Sevilla Soler, Santo Domingo, 214. exportaciones a la colonias extrajeras

**Foreign Imports to Hispaniola**



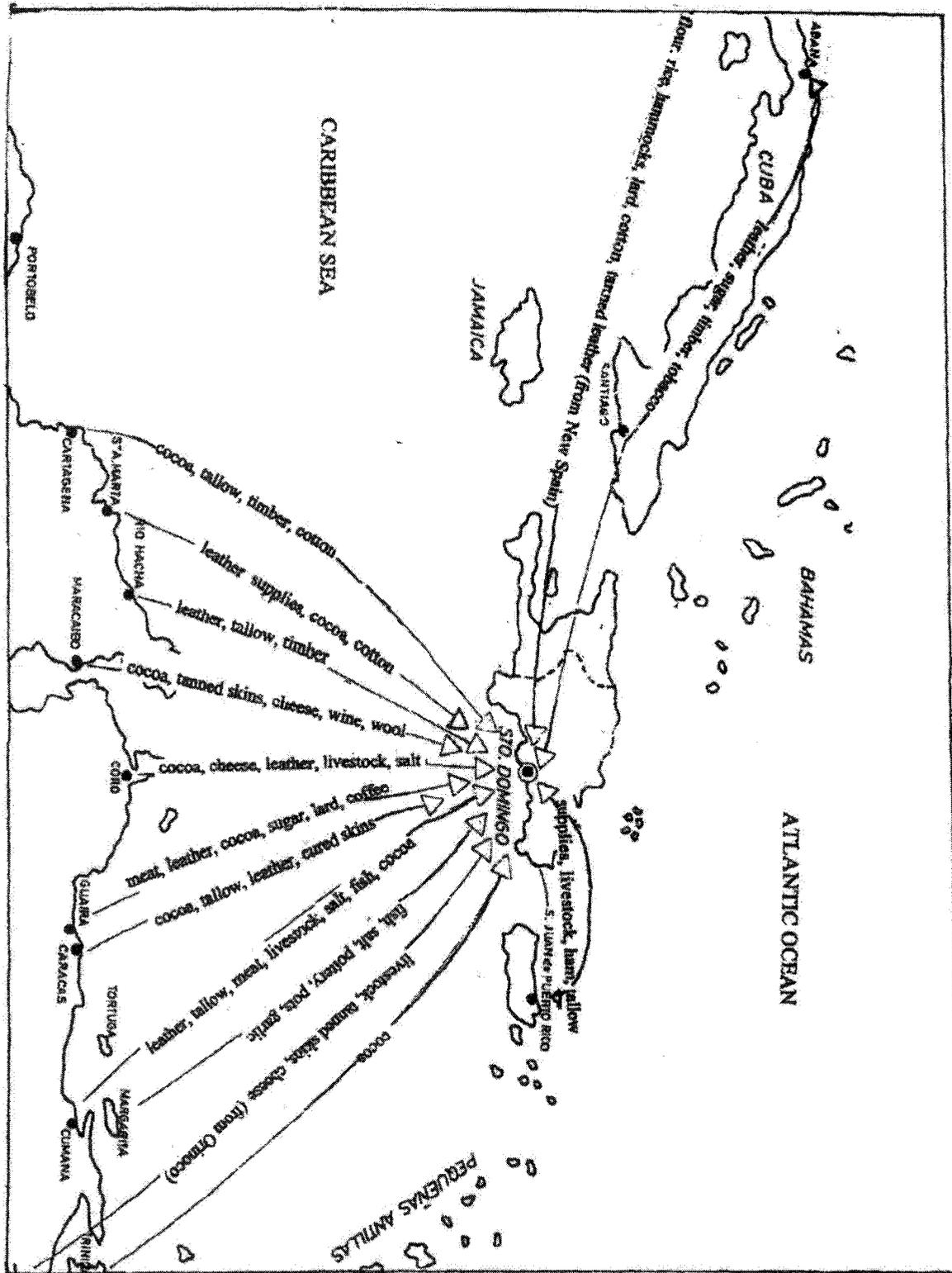
Source: Sevilla Soler, Santo Domingo, 215. Importaciones de la colonias extranjeras

Dominican Exports to Other Spanish Colonies



Source: Sevilla Soler, Santo Domingo, 206. exportaciones a las colonias espanoles

Foreign Imports to Hispaniola



Source: Sevilla Soler, Santo Domingo, 207. importaciones de las colonias espanoles

The economy wavered and collapsed again between 1793 and 1801. The causes were twofold. First, increasing tensions between the white planters and the mulattos in the neighbouring colony disrupted trade along the border. As the conflict escalated and morphed into a general uprising, trade ceased. Second, the Spanish Crown ceded the territory of Santo Domingo to France in 1795 as part of the Peace of Basel<sup>95</sup> that brought an end to the War of the Pyrenees. As part of the terms of the treaty, the French monarchy gave the Spanish Crown one year to relocate its bureaucracy, military and citizenry.<sup>96</sup> The formal cession in 1801 of Santo Domingo brought an end to the *situado*.<sup>97</sup> Given that the Mexican moneys were the only thing keeping the island afloat, an economic disaster was predictable. As if the situation was not sufficiently bleak, the Spanish Crown offered Spanish Dominicans as compensation, lands of equal size for the loss of their properties.<sup>98</sup> At the outset, the only destination where this offer was valid was in Cuba. However, pursuant to complaints from relocated Spanish Dominicans that the properties granted were inferior in quality, the Crown expanded the land compensation program to include Puerto Rico and Venezuela.<sup>99</sup> The offer was attractive and resulted in the out migration of much of the elite class, leaving the territory of Santo Domingo rudderless because there were no policy makers left in charge. The elite emigration occasioned other economic problems for the Spanish half of the island.

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<sup>95</sup> Schaeffer, "The Delayed Cession of Spanish Santo Domingo to France," 50-51.

<sup>96</sup> AGI, Indiferente, Nueva España leg. 15, 136-4-15, Consultas, Reales Decretos y Ordenes, 1795-1800; Tratado Definitivo de Paz concluido Entre el Rey Nuestro Señor y la República Francesa firmado en Basilea a 22 Julio de 1795.

<sup>97</sup> Schaeffer, "The Delayed Cession of Spanish Santo Domingo to France," 53, 56.

<sup>98</sup> AGI, Indiferente, Nueva España, leg. 15, 136-4-15, Consultas, Reales Decretos y Ordenes, 1795-1800; Tratado Definitivo de Paz concluido Entre el Rey Nuestro Señor y la Republica Francesa firmado en Basilea a 22 Julio de 1795.

<sup>99</sup> Schaeffer, "The Delayed Cession of Spanish Santo Domingo to France," 46-68, explains that the complaints were legitimate given that the lands being offered in compensation were parcels left unused by Cubans for one reason or another.

Before they left the island, they sold their cattle at reduced prices to the English stationed on the south-western and northern coasts of the island in exchange for transportation to their destination of choice.<sup>100</sup> The sales depleted the territory of one of its richest resources. The loss of the situado and the general disorder of the immigration when coupled with the frenzied sale of large cattle herds were probably enough on their own to crash the Spanish Dominican economy several times over. The mayhem and destruction that engulfed the island during the Haitian Revolution grafted itself onto the existing problems, causing acute poverty and food shortages.<sup>101</sup> Moreover, when Toussaint L'Ouverture took control of the eastern half of the island in 1801, he came into possession of an agriculturally underdeveloped, resource compromised, economically depressed and leaderless territory. An influx of capital from the once thriving Saint-Domingue was not possible as its economy had also come to a grinding halt.

### **Illicit Trade: The Bread and Butter of the Dominican Economy**

From the above discussion, it is clear that the territory of Santo Domingo prior to 1795 did not survive on legal trade but rather on illicit commerce, which was always more lucrative and reliable. As mentioned earlier, the most significant source of income as of the early eighteenth century was the “border” trade with Saint-Domingue. As the needs of Saint-Domingue grew, so did the illicit trade. Consequently, the Spanish Dominican ranching and tobacco industry was revived and expanded to meet French needs. Over time, the ranchers, who were members of the elite, preferred to sell their livestock, hides and meat to their much richer neighbours to the west than to their own citizens to the south.<sup>102</sup> This preference of trading with Saint-Domingue created substantial problems for the city of Santo Domingo that

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 54-55.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 46-68.

<sup>102</sup> Gascón, “The Military of Santo Domingo,” 431-452.

suffered from a chronic lack of meat. The response of the Spanish Dominican administration was to introduce the *pesa* (quota) system.<sup>103</sup> It required Dominican ranchers to put aside a percentage of their livestock to be sent to the capital city for slaughter in return for a set pre-determined price, which was always lower than what they obtained from French planters. The notorious lack of purchasing power of their own compatriots was only too well known by the Spanish Dominican cattle ranchers. Moreover, when royal officials came around to gather data for an agricultural census on which to base the prices and quotas, the ranchers falsified the number of livestock they owned in order to avoid being assigned a heavy quota.<sup>104</sup> Also, the numerous edicts by Spanish Dominican governors on the need for ranchers to comply with the *pesa* system indicated that cooperation in this matter was less than forthcoming. The attraction of the French Dominican market and their reliability in terms of ability to honour their payments, given their access to sugar and slaves was compelling. Spanish Dominican ranchers put French needs first and largely ignored those of their fellow citizens. The inability to bring the cattle ranchers under the thumb of the royal administration left the capital city to starve.

As for the tobacco cultivation, it too flourished under the aegis of the *Factoría de Tabacos*, created in 1763 but the crop continued to be grown on small plots of land.<sup>105</sup> The revenues from the illicit sales, in this case, were not the preserve of the elite but of all Spanish Dominicans. There is no question that the illicit trade conducted along the *raya* was generating wealth. The lucrative nature of this commerce was revealed after it was legalized in the late eighteenth century.

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<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, 431-452.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, 444.

<sup>105</sup> Baud, "El Surgimiento de un Campesino Criollo," 25-27.

Spanish Dominicans derived other benefits from sharing the same island with Saint-Domingue. The French colony was rich in resources, particularly in sugar and slaves; this was not the case for Santo Domingo. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the Spanish side of the island was agriculturally underdeveloped and suffered from a constant shortage of labourers. Spanish Dominicans conducted slave raids across the raya, a tactic that caused much bitterness and frustration, particularly in the early period when there was no official border between the two colonies.<sup>106</sup> The captured slaves were either kept or re-sold at lower prices in the territory of Santo Domingo and sometimes in other Spanish possessions such as Puerto Rico or Venezuela.<sup>107</sup> The Royal administration was once again at a loss for controlling this illicit activity. First and foremost there was no established border until 1777 and second the administration lacked the manpower to patrol the entire raya. Thus, unlike in Puerto Rico, whose illegal trade in ginger could be curtailed by clamping down on port security, there was no way of putting an end to the cattle trade or the slave raids on the French colony.<sup>108</sup>

Stappells-Johnson suggests that what appears to be an inability to enforce royal control over the entire territory of Santo Domingo should actually be interpreted as a strategic move by the Spanish Crown. She argues that it was conscious of the problems facing the island and responded by turning a blind eye to illicit activities since it remedied some of the problems plaguing the Spanish half of the island.<sup>109</sup> In effect, the Crown knew that it was not providing adequate amounts of basic staples, goods and slaves to Santo Domingo. By taking a passive approach to outright participation in illicit trade, Spanish

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<sup>106</sup> Derby, "National Identity and the Idea of Value in the Dominican Republic," 15.

<sup>107</sup> Stappells-Johnson, *Corsairs of Santo Domingo*, ch. 1.

<sup>108</sup> Dietz, *Economic History of Puerto Rico*, ch. 1.

<sup>109</sup> Stappells-Johnson, *Corsairs of Santo Domingo*, 2.

Dominicans were able to obtain the goods they needed through trade with the English, French and Dutch merchants, whose ships were anchored off the undefended north and western coasts. The Spanish Crown's laissez-faire approach was easily maintained in regard to Spanish Dominican trade with British vessels because the English had the perfect front: the monopoly rights to trade slaves in Spanish America. The *asiento* (monopoly contract) gave the British the exclusive right to procure slaves to the Spanish colonies in the Americas.<sup>110</sup> As part of that contract, the English had the right to include one registered ship full of goods to the Spanish trade convoys. Under the project of 1720, the goods on the registered ships were packed in sealed barrels of a certain dimension that customs officials were prohibited from opening.<sup>111</sup> Thus, contraband English goods, such as wine, flour, cloth and linen, were easily shipped to the Americas.<sup>112</sup> The sale of this merchandise was also conducted under the auspices of seemingly legal trade in slaves. The British only had to display slaves on their decks to engage the locals in presumably legal trade.<sup>113</sup> This situation was beneficial to all involved. Spanish Dominicans avoided paying the over inflated prices and taxes on peninsular goods, which were never guaranteed to arrive when needed anyway. The illicit trade also benefited the foreigners as it created a new market for their goods within what should have been a restricted sphere of influence of the Spanish Crown.<sup>114</sup> As an added bonus for the English, trade with the territory of Santo Domingo was on their sailing route and did not require them to deviate from their course from England to Jamaica.<sup>115</sup> Finally, by

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<sup>110</sup> Larrazábal Blanco, *Los Negros y la Esclavitud en Santo Domingo*, 45-46.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>112</sup> Cordingly and Falconer, *Pirates*, 25.

<sup>113</sup> Stapells-Johnson, *Corsairs of Santo Domingo*, 21-22, estimates the value of the trade to have been 5,000,000.00 pounds between 1700-1739.

<sup>114</sup> Lane, *Pillaging the Empire*, ch. 1.

<sup>115</sup> Stapells-Johnson, *Corsairs of Santo Domingo*, 20, explains that: "As the prevailing trade wind in the Antilles is easterly, the most common course for English ships was to position themselves in the correct latitude before reaching the Caribbean islands. Then, they would run down with the wind to Jamaica, passing both Puerto Rico

taking a passive approach to illicit trade between foreign nations and Spanish Dominicans, the Spanish Crown solved, at no cost to itself, the procurement problems it faced for its Spanish Caribbean colony.

The same unspoken agreement between Spanish Dominicans and the Crown existed in regard to privateering and piracy. Although one was legal and the other was not, the two often went hand in hand. Spanish Dominican privateers were notoriously aggressive and ruthless.<sup>116</sup> This was good for Spain in war time as the corsairs achieved their stated purpose of defending Santo Domingo and putting an end to enemy powers attempting to breach the Spanish mercantilist trading system, but this situation was embarrassing and chaotic in times of peace.<sup>117</sup> After all, it was difficult to explain to allies the reason for which such depredations were carried out on their crews, ships and cargoes when there were no declared hostilities. In the latter instance, the Spanish Crown attempted to curb bad conduct by: limiting the number of privateer licenses issued, by giving more precise definitions of what constituted an enemy ship engaging in contraband trade, and therefore, what constituted a valid prize. In wartime, the checks and balances on corsair activities were generally ignored and aggression was promoted.<sup>118</sup> Moreover, Spanish Dominican corsairs fulfilled an important defensive role as coast guards for the Crown.<sup>119</sup> Although loyalty to the empire was probably not the honourable reason for which Spanish Dominicans sought privateering

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and Santo Domingo. On the return trip, there were two choices, both of which brought English ships close to the Spanish colonies' coasts. One route was through the Windward Passage between Cuba and Saint-Domingue and the other was to sail through the Gulf of Florida. Commerce between North America and the English or French islands was even more tempting for contrabandists: the route to and from the North American ports was through the Windward Passage to Jamaica or past Puerto Rico to the other islands."

<sup>116</sup> Derby, "National Identity and the Idea of Value in the Dominican Republic," 18-19.

<sup>117</sup> Stapells-Johnson, *Corsairs of Santo Domingo*, ch. 2-3.

<sup>118</sup> Lane, *Pillaging the Empire*, ch. 4-5.

<sup>119</sup> Stapells-Johnson, *Corsairs of Santo Domingo*, ch. 2-3.

licenses, the services they rendered to the Spanish Crown were invaluable, particularly in wartime. There is no doubt that ultimately, the real motivation was economic.

In terms of legal trade, after the Spanish courts declared captured vessels to be valid prizes, they were resold. The liquidation at below market prices of ships and their cargoes created a buyers' market in Santo Domingo, attracting purchasers from other parts of the Caribbean.<sup>120</sup> Stappells Johnson calculates that the total value of these activities between 1720 and 1779 averaged out to approximately 9,753 pesos per year.<sup>121</sup> Of course, this total does not include the income generated from the sale of illegally captured ships, sold in secrecy on the black market. Either way, both legal and illicit sales generated badly needed income for the territory of Santo Domingo.

Also, lawful privateering expeditions were combined with illegal trade with other Spanish or foreign colonies.<sup>122</sup> In particular, Stappells Johnson writes that privateer licenses were the front through which Spanish Dominicans carried out inter-island trade in order to acquire needed goods and foodstuffs they were not receiving through the legal mercantilist trade with Spain. Prosecution of privateers for conducting illicit trade was rare, indicating that the Spanish Crown was once again taking a laissez-faire approach instead of bringing to justice those who clearly violated royal policy. The inter-island trade gave Spanish Dominicans access to supplies the Spanish Crown was not able to procure for them. Also it was hardly honourable to deny citizens, who were willingly bearing the cost of colonial defence by equipping corsairs to defend the Spanish empire, concessions improving the territory of Santo Domingo's abysmal economic situation. Reciprocity formed the basis for

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<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, 135.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>122</sup> Lane, *Pillaging the Empire*, 33-61, states that some privateers attacked perfectly legitimate trade ships, killed the crew and sunk the ships in the hopes that evidence of their piratical activities would not be discovered.

the colonial relationship. The Spanish Crown recognized the problems facing the island were in large part of their own making. In order to maintain and encourage the loyalty of Spanish Dominicans, the Crown granted them concessions, for example by generally ignoring the illicit trade.

The revenues from the illegal trade fell off toward the end of the eighteenth century because previously illegal activities were rendered legal. As discussed earlier, a good portion, though not all, of the tobacco sales were re-oriented towards legal trade through the *Factoría de Tabacos* and the cattle trade along the border between Saint-Domingue and the territory of Santo Domingo was legalized through the Treaty of Aranjuez between the Spanish and French Crowns in 1777.<sup>123</sup> Also, the royal ordinance of 1779 brought privateering to an end by taking coast guarding duties out of private hands and making it part of the duties of the Royal Navy.<sup>124</sup> As mentioned in the previous section, the shift towards legalizing illicit forms of commerce should be conceived as part of the more general reforms carried out under Charles III. These broad reforms were geared towards maximizing revenues and re-establishing royal control over the colonies. The legalization of the cattle trade allowed the Spanish Crown to replenish the royal treasury by collecting a percentage of the revenues generated by the border trade through taxation. Similarly, although the Crown incurred costs by making the Royal Navy responsible for patrolling the Spanish Empire's waters, it also reaped the profits from the resale of captured prizes, as well as put an end to the illicit commerce carried out under privateering licenses.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> Torres-Saillant, "The Tribulations of Blackness," 135.

<sup>124</sup> Stapells-Johnson, *Corsairs of Santo Domingo*, 141.

<sup>125</sup> The drive to improve trade, as well as stamp out illicit commerce in the territory of Santo Domingo started with the royal decree of October 16, 1765, in which the Spanish Crown opened the port of Santo Domingo to trade with the ports of Barcelona, La Coruña, Gion and Santander, in Spain. By increasing the number of Spanish ports with which the port of Santo Domingo could trade, the Spanish Crown hoped that it would incite a more vibrant commercial sector. This initial measure failed to produce results. However, the gradual shift

## Conclusion

In conclusion the territory of Santo Domingo was a key defensive military zone within the Spanish Empire. Its premier position in protecting the monopoly trading routes ensured that the Spanish Crown would always have an interest in its development, albeit only from a military perspective. Years of neglect and mismanagement produced a dysfunctional legal economy with few opportunities for employment and profit. Spanish Dominicans came to rely on illicit trade with Saint-Domingue and the other Caribbean colonies to obtain the barest of necessities. The Spanish Crown did not attempt to remedy the situation through force or heavy handed measures because it understood the value of the role Spanish Dominicans played in the context of the colonial defensive plan. Inaction allowed islanders to obtain badly needed goods and supplies. The Spanish Crown's laissez-faire approach should be construed as a concession to Spanish Dominicans in return for their military services in protecting the empire and not disinterest and neglect.

The island's economic situation and defensive function had far reaching repercussions on the demographic, political and social milieu. The heavy militarization of the island produced stronger male than female immigration, which skewed the gender ratio for all groups while the lack of wealth collapsed the social classes, creating a hierarchy of micro-differentiation based mostly on a racial ideal projected by the metropole. Both situations, of course, affected the marital patterns.

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from mercantilism to free trade did increasingly legalize the various forms of illicit trade that had kept the Spanish Dominican economy afloat, thereby closing the elite's ability to embezzle the profits of those activities.

## Chapter Two- Spanish Dominican Society

The major social consequence of the impoverishment of the island was the collapse of the socio-economic classes. In terms of wealth, the gap that separated the elite from the lower class was minimal. The high rate of miscegenation in the territory of Santo Domingo also ensured that skin colour was not a reliable marker of social class. The economic rapprochement of the island's social groups and the lack of visible racial differentiation between them produced a very particular type of society. Socio-economic status was defined through identity construction and expressed in a mutually accessible language: the language of empire. Elites sought to embody the racial ideal of "whiteness" projected by the metropole and conveyed it to the Spanish Crown in terms that it understood. Although the apparent racism expressed in the colonial correspondence was part of the language of empire, it was, in fact, not primarily racist, it was rather merely an expression of class struggle.

### Economics and Dominican Society

The lack of wealth created a zero sum game in which Spanish Dominicans competed for opportunities to generate revenues. Sevilla Soler identifies the following structure: an elite class; a high middle class (merchants, free professionals, small landholders, engineers, civil servants, scribes and doctors); a lower middle class (small merchants, tradesmen, judges and artisans); a lower class (vendors) and the slave class.<sup>1</sup> She suggests that the salaries of the first group ranged from 14,847 to 55,147 reales and two maravedís, the second group's revenue varied between 800 and 2,400 reales and the third one's between 1,096 and 1,152 reales.<sup>2</sup> There is no income range for the last two groups. Furthermore, according to Sevilla Soler, the first three groups were white, while the last two were of mixed race or black. There

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<sup>1</sup> Stapells-Johnson, *Corsairs of Santo Domingo*, 63-69.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

are two problems with Sevilla Soler's social hierarchy: the division of the Spanish Dominican population into five classes and the blanket application of a racial label to each one of these groups. Both assumptions are problematic. Let us first address the question of the socio-economic hierarchy.

Sevilla Soler's division of the Spanish Dominican population into five clear cut groups is based on salary lists. However, these lists do not reflect a definitive reality or an accurate reconstruction of an individual's wealth. In fact, the salary list does not even reflect the most important revenue generating activity on the island. Given that the Spanish Dominican treasury could not pay out bureaucrats' salaries in a regular manner because it was dependent on the arrival of the Mexican *situado*, colonists were forced to look elsewhere for revenues. The source they turned to was likely the border trade with Saint-Domingue or informal commerce within the territory. It goes without saying that some Spanish Dominicans also acquired wealth through piracy or other illegal activities. Furthermore, a salary list cannot take into account income generated by other family members, particularly women.

Aside from dowries, elite Dominican women did engage in financial transactions relating to land and livestock.<sup>3</sup> For example, Petronila Hernández owned a ranch by the name of Los Garlitos with 1,600 head of cattle.<sup>4</sup> Ana Valero and Catalina Hernández had 350 and 300 cows respectively on their properties: Sabana Enmedio and San José.<sup>5</sup> Widowed women, such as María de Castro, wife of Bernardino de Tapia, were particularly active in these

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<sup>3</sup> Dávila Mendoza, *Un Concierto de Voces*, 8-9, 11.

<sup>4</sup> Gutiérrez Escudero, *Población y Economía en Santo Domingo*, 138.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

dealings as they became the administrators of their husbands' properties.<sup>6</sup> In their capacity as administrators, they controlled the finances and some elite women even invested in companies or factories, such as *pulquerías* (drinking establishments) and placed relatives in charge of the business. In Castro's case, she became the head of a plantation with five slaves.<sup>7</sup> Susan Socolow indicates that widowed women in Mexico City accounted for seven percent of the shop owners, whether they were *pulquerías*, *obrajes* (textile factories) or others.<sup>8</sup> Pilar Gonzalbo Aizpuru writes that women had to fill in for their absentee, sick or dead husbands in order to keep the family solvent.<sup>9</sup> Women acting as "deputy husbands," as Laurel Thatcher Ulrich terms it, was not only true of elite women but of women of all social classes and was not limited to Spanish America but was common internationally in this period.<sup>10</sup> In the role of deputy husband, these women were active in the buying and selling of slaves.<sup>11</sup> In this role, elite women rented out rooms or sent their slaves out to work to make ends meet, while middle to lower class women replaced their husbands as shopkeepers or simply obtained licenses to sell liquor or tobacco out of their homes.<sup>12</sup> However, they were not just present in the economic sphere only as temporary replacements for their husbands

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<sup>6</sup> Dávila Mendoza, *Un Concierto de Voces*, 10, and Carmen Castañeda, "La Formación de la Pareja y el Matrimonio," in *Familias Novohispana Siglos XVI al XIX: Seminario de Historia de la Familia Centro de Estudio Históricas*, ed. Pilar Gonzalbo Aizpuru (Mexico: El Colegio de México, 1991), 73-90.

<sup>7</sup> Gutiérrez Escudero, *Población y Economía en Santo Domingo*, 140.

<sup>8</sup> Susan Socolow, *The Women of Colonial Latin America*, 112-113.

<sup>9</sup> Pilar Gonzalbo Aizpuru, *Las Mujeres en la Nueva España: Educación y Vida Cotidiana* (Mexico: El Colegio de México, 1987), ch. 2.

<sup>10</sup> For a more information on women's roles as "deputy husbands" in Northern New England society, Europe and Russia please see: Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *A Midwife's Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard, Based on Her Diary 1785-1812* (New York: Random House Publishing, 1990) and *Good Wives: Image and Reality in the Lives of Women in Northern New England 1650-1750* (New York: Vintage Books, 1980); Merry E. Weisner, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993) and *Russia's Women: Accommodation, Resistance and Transformation*, eds. Barbara Evans Clements, Barbara Alpern Engel and Christin D. Worobec (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

<sup>11</sup> Gonzalbo Aizpuru, *Las Mujeres en La Nueva España Educación y Vida Cotidiana*, 8, 11, states that women were active in buying and selling slaves, which meant that they were cognizant of the value of their slaves. Moreover, women also determined manumission.

<sup>12</sup> Socolow, *The Women of Colonial Latin America*, 114.

but in their own right. According to Gonzalbo Aizpuru more than one third of Spanish women, half of Indian and *mestiza* women and three-quarters of free black women, as well as all black slave women, worked in New Spain.<sup>13</sup> Women's contributions, however, should not only be broken down by racial group but also by marital status. Juan Javier Pescador calculates that forty-nine percent of women were single,<sup>14</sup> thirty-one percent were married and twenty percent were widows.<sup>15</sup> Elite women in particular found employment in the upper administrative echelons of convents as abbesses, nuns, secretaries, assistant secretaries, head mistresses, supervisors and rectors.<sup>16</sup> Kathryn Burns reveals that the Santa Catalina nuns were at the very centre of the economic transactions of the city.<sup>17</sup> The spiritual economy, as coined by Burns, establishes the nuns as "purposeful dealmakers, creating fruitful, productive relationships with uncloistered men and women through the conduit of credit."<sup>18</sup> This was not unusual given that the Church acted as money lenders to the public throughout the colonial period. It was able to fulfill this role because churches, monasteries and convents often owned large tracts of land as part of their endowments.<sup>19</sup> They received income from the rents of properties built on those lands, or use of them. The Catholic Church also accrued revenues from the sale of the harvested agricultural products or livestock raised on these lands. Some orders, such as the Santa Catalina nuns, also produced goods for sale within the convent walls.<sup>20</sup> Moreover, women in ecclesiastical positions not only wielded power but

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<sup>13</sup> Gonzalbo Aizpuru, *Las Mujeres en La Nueva España Educación y Vida Cotidiana*, ch. 6 and Juan Javier Pescador, *De Bautizados a Fieles Difuntos: Familia y Mentalidades en una Parroquia Urbana : Santa Catarina de Mexico, 1568-1820* (México: El Colegio de México, 1992), 212-224.

<sup>14</sup> Gonzalbo Aizpuru, *Las Mujeres en la Nueva España*, ch. 2, calculates that half of the women were single.

<sup>15</sup> Javier Pescador, *De Bautizados a Fieles Difuntos*, 243.

<sup>16</sup> Socolow, *The Women of Colonial Latin America*, ch. 8.

<sup>17</sup> Kathryn Burns, *Colonial Habits: Convents and the Spiritual Economy of Cuzco Peru* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999), ch. 3.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, ch. 2, 5.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, ch. 6.

came into contact with persons from all economic and racial groups in their daily dealings. Elite women who did not choose the religious life often took on work in their home in the capacity of weaver, tailor and laundress.

Middle to lower class women had to seek work outside the home as midwives, wet-nurses, domestics, waitresses, bread, fruit, vegetables and stand vendors, bakers, managers of informal eating and drinking establishments, as well as industrial workers in textile and cigarette factories.<sup>21</sup> Other possibilities included working in the sex trade as prostitutes or in the occult.<sup>22</sup> Although one typically thinks of prostitutes as single women, Donna Guy states that lower class married women were also pushed into it by necessity.<sup>23</sup> Finally, women living on the margins of society, typically those not subject to direct male control, such as spinsters, worked in the occult as *curanderas* (healers), diviners and fortune tellers.<sup>24</sup>

Moreover, there is no doubt that women were present in the workforce in Santo Domingo, even though the male/female employment ratio was probably lower and that women faced fewer employment options than in the more urbanized and industrialized zones of the Spanish empire, such as Mexico. I infer this from the general lack of employment opportunities in Santo Domingo but also from the striking difference in the size of Spanish Dominican families as compared to those of Mexico. Juan Javier Pescador calculates that the majority of *criollos* (creoles) and *casta* (mixed race) households in the neighbourhood of Santa Catalina, Mexico, consisted of two to three people.<sup>25</sup> Another, twenty-two to thirty percent counted four or five persons and nine to twenty percent included six or more

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<sup>21</sup> Gonzalbo Aizpuru, *Las Mujeres en la Nueva España*, 8-11.

<sup>22</sup> Martha Few, *Women Who Lead Evil Lives: Gender, Religion and the Politics of Power in Colonial Guatemala* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002), ix and Donna Guy, *Sex and Danger in Buenos Aires: Prostitution, Family, and Nation in Argentina* (Lincoln University of Nebraska Press, 1991), 1-4.

<sup>23</sup> Guy, *Sex & Danger in Buenos Aires*, 43.

<sup>24</sup> Socolow, *The Women of Colonial Latin America*, 120-121.

<sup>25</sup> Pescador, *De Bautizados a Fieles Difuntos*, 184-185.

individuals. In contrast, Antonio Gutiérrez Escudero indicates that the average Spanish Dominican family for the regions of El Seibo, Higüey, Baní, Azua, Neiba and Hincha varied between 6.12 and 6.89<sup>26</sup> San Juan had an average of 7.57 and Bánica of 8.69, whereas Boyá had only 4.92 and Samaná 3.92 family members per household.<sup>27</sup> The rather large size of Spanish Dominican families restricted the total availability of women in the workforce. However, this was counterbalanced by younger or older women, who were propelled into the job market to contribute to the family economy. Moreover, it is certain that Spanish Dominican women were present in the workforce throughout the colonial period, and given the data on household size, that like Mexican women, they brought their children or extended family members to work with them.<sup>28</sup> Thus, Judith M. Bennett's conclusion that British women's employment was continuous, although different in nature from 1300 to 1600, is also true of Latin American women's work for the colonial period.<sup>29</sup> Bennett's statement that the work remained poorly remunerated, of low status and low skill, is also true with a few exceptions: elite women who managed their own plantations and businesses. Nonetheless, women's employment did contribute to the family economy and should not be overlooked.

A distinction cannot even be made on the basis of land tenure as Santo Domingo stands out as one of the few regions in the Spanish Empire that still had large tracts of vacant land in the eighteenth century. This was certainly due to a sluggish economy that created few employment and trade opportunities, thereby pushing people to emigrate to other areas of the empire. The overall result was that the Spanish side of the island had a low population density and anyone could own a plot of land. Furthermore, the amount of land held by any

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<sup>26</sup> Gutiérrez Escudero, *Población y Economía en Santo Domingo*, 50.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> González Aizpuru, *Las Mujeres en la Nueva España Educación y Vida Cotidiana*, ch. 2.

<sup>29</sup> Judith M. Bennett, *Ale, Beer and Brewsters in England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 1-10.

one individual is difficult to ascertain as Spanish Dominican landholding was by all accounts a very messy affair, which featured a combination of private and communal landholdings.<sup>30</sup> The boundaries of the properties were ill defined because legitimate titles for lands, whether they were legally purchased or lawfully granted<sup>31</sup> were rarely issued. This was particularly true of families that had received properties as gifts from the Crown in times immemorial.<sup>32</sup> In the event that the Spanish bureaucracy had produced a title, the official documents often ended up being misplaced or damaged by the humid climate.<sup>33</sup> The only designations remaining are those in the colonial documentation.

In the San Bautista de Bayaguana testaments studied by Dora Dávila Mendoza the properties are described both in terms of acreage, such as six leagues of land, or geographical references and acreage.<sup>34</sup> For example, the Jesuit order based in the city of Santo Domingo owned a sugar plantation that was on the nearby Nizao River, in the Jagua region, at about fifteen leagues from the city of Santo Domingo. Captain Rodrigo Claudio Maldonado also had a sugar mill on the nearby Nigua River, close to the ocean. Other owners included: don Francisco Franco de Torquemada (Senior Cadet and Mayor of Santo Domingo), Gerónima de Coronado, (widow of the royal official don Gonzalo de Castro y Ribera), don Antonio de Guridi (Captain) don Francisco Marocho Fernández de Castro, don Juan López de Morla (*Maestre de Campo*), don Damián del Castillo (Lieutenant-Colonel), and don Ventura de Abreu (capitán). Land tenure in the suburbs of the city of Santo Domingo and Santiago de los

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<sup>30</sup> Derby, "National Identity and the Idea of Value in the Dominican Republic," 28-29, explains the problems inherent in the lack of clear ownership of communal lands (*terrenos comunes*).

<sup>31</sup> Gutiérrez Escudero, *Población y Economía en Santo Domingo*, 86-98, discusses the lands granted in the early period to Spanish Dominican families. He states that although the titles to the land seem to have been lost in the three intervening centuries, the land did change hands. However, proof of ownership could not be produced.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 89.

<sup>33</sup> Gutiérrez Escudero, *Población y Economía en Santo Domingo*, 80-97, illustrates this situation perfectly as he explains that the Jesuits discovered almost seventy years after the fact that San Lorenzo de los Minas, a town founded to settle the black refugees of Saint-Domingue, was actually on their land.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, ch. 4 -5 and Dávila Mendoza, *Un Concierto de Voces*, 33-62.

Caballeros was also described in terms of the economic activity pursued on these properties. The designations are as follows: *hatillo* (small ranch with no slaves), *hato* (ranch), *estancia* (plantation) and ingenio.

The confusion over land tenure became a very thorny issue during the relocation period as the Spanish Crown had agreed to compensate Spanish Dominicans for the loss of their properties by granting them land first in Cuba and then in Puerto Rico, as well as in Venezuela. Although I have found no reference to the instructions issued by the Spanish Crown for this compensation, it is likely that proof of landownership, such as deeds and land titles had to be provided to obtain this favour.<sup>35</sup> However, as discussed above, most Spanish Dominicans were not in possession of those titles. Don Joaquín García is a case in point. His wife, as part of her dowry, was given a section of the family's land for which neither he nor she had received a notarized title. It is not known whether the wife's family had a title for that land and, in the affirmative, whether they had simply refused to give it to the new couple nor for what reason. In his letter to the Council of the Indies, García indicated that his fate was shared by others. The problem of land tenure was never resolved in the colonial period nor under Haitian rule (1809-1843) and was therefore carried over into the "independence" period.<sup>36</sup>

Even if a full reconstruction of land ownership patterns could be achieved the revenues obtained from farming and livestock ranching were not regular.<sup>37</sup> For example, although Antonio Gutiérrez Escudero states that the elite, whether urban or rural, owned large properties in the surrounding areas of the cities, especially Santo Domingo and

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<sup>35</sup> As previously stated land compensation suffered an initial set back because the quality of the parcels of land distributed to the earliest immigrants to Cuba was inferior to those they possessed in Santo Domingo.

<sup>36</sup> Moya Pons, *The Dominican Republic*, ch. 6.

<sup>37</sup> Gutiérrez Escudero, *Población y Economía en Santo Domingo*, 91.

Santiago de los Caballeros, he also states that many of these *latifundias* (general plantation) or ingenios owners lived at the same economic level as their slaves and peons throughout the eighteenth century.<sup>38</sup> Although it only seems logical to assume that individuals, who owned larger properties were probably able to grow a variety of crops, as well as raise livestock, lived a more comfortable existence, this was not always the case. The reason for his observation is, of course, that large estates were mostly used for raising livestock but a few individuals grew coffee, tobacco, sugar and cacao.<sup>39</sup> Both ranching and agriculture were subject to fluctuating market prices and the vagaries of political posturing in relation to the illicit border trade with Saint-Domingue. Also a successful crop depended on climatic conditions.

Moreover, although I agree with Sevilla Soler that there definitely was a broad range of socio economic classes, I would suggest that the only conclusions Spanish Dominican colonial historians can come to in regard to this subject is that there were three identifiable groups: the elite, the lower class and the slaves. Furthermore, I do not agree with Sevilla Soler's definition of the composition of the elite. She asserts that the elite class was composed of two sub-groups: the old families and the high ranking royal officials. She states that the former were large landholders, who derived their power from extensive clientele networks, while the high ranking royal officials were part of a new class of bureaucrats that she claims emerged in the eighteenth century. These individuals were appointed by the Spanish Crown to serve in their assigned jurisdiction and held political power.<sup>40</sup> Sevilla Soler states that in the eighteenth century the old families and the "newcomers" belonged to separate groups that limited themselves to either landholding or political office. This division

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<sup>38</sup> Gutiérrez Escudero, *Población y Economía en Santo Domingo*, 93, 103.

<sup>39</sup> Sevilla Soler, *Santo Domingo*, ch. 3.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 63-65.

was certainly not true of that period and, in fact, probably never existed in Santo Domingo. The only families that remained after the massive population exodus between the 1520s-1530s, were those that had a vested stake in the territory, such as encomenderos, mine and plantation owners and, of course, royal officials.<sup>41</sup> Moreover, these individuals comprised the small ruling elite and it would have been natural for them to intermarry. In the eighteenth century, at least, bureaucrats were readily incorporated into the older families. For example Ignacio Pérez Caro, who was Governor, President and Captain General of the island, married into one of the oldest and most prestigious Spanish Dominican families, the Fernández de Oviedo.<sup>42</sup> Also, it was, in fact, commonplace for the elite to supplement their civil or military commissions with agricultural pursuits, such as livestock raising.<sup>43</sup> The result of the absorption of high ranking newcomers into powerful old families created a small but tightly knit elite community. Given the lack of economic opportunities, I would also suggest that the Spanish Dominican elite also included merchants, free professionals, engineers, civil servants, scribes and doctors.<sup>44</sup>

This is not to say that there were no gradations of status within the elite.<sup>45</sup> On the contrary, I accept that the very high ranking officials such as the Governor, President,

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<sup>41</sup> Ratekin, "The Early Sugar Industry in Española," 3, states that at the outset of the colonial period the Spanish Crown granted colonists parcels of land on their arrival, as well as grants of labour (encomiendas). For those individuals whose encomiendas had not been completely decimated, the ability to rely on indigenous labour was priceless, particularly if they had attempted to establish plantations. As for the mine owners, they were granted the right to keep one third of their enterprise's revenues. Even though the gold deposits were waning, it is likely that many clung to the hope that more veins would be found.

<sup>42</sup> Larrazábal Blanco, *Familias Dominicana*, Vol. 1-9.

<sup>43</sup> Sevilla Soler, *Santo Domingo*, 89-131, mentions that leave from duties for the officers from the fixed regiment to farm were severely curtailed throughout the eighteenth century.

<sup>44</sup> Jacques Barbier, *Politics and Reform in Bourbon Chile*, 31-54, indicates that the Chilean elite was small and encompassed not only landholders and bureaucrats but professionals. Given that the economic conditions in Chile were far better than those in Santo Domingo, it can be inferred that a similar situation occurred in Spanish Dominican society.

<sup>45</sup> John Tutino, "Power, Class, and Family: Men and Women in the Mexican Elite, 1750-1810," *The Americas*, Vol. 39, No. 3 (January, 1983), 359-381, also noticed gradations of wealth in his study of the Mexican elite, however, he too has difficulty placing the exact divisions and therefore concludes that gradations of wealth existed within the elite class.

Captain General, Cathedral Canon, Lieutenant Colonel, Audiencia judges and Commander probably formed the very upper crust, while the rest of the officers' corps, civil servants, scribes, engineers, merchants, doctors, and others at this rank comprised the rest of that group. Moreover, the elite may have accounted for the high to middle class but a more exact division cannot be determined solely from a salary list issued by the Spanish Crown for the colony as it does not account for their extra-curricular activities in farming or illegal trade and there is no indication of any income accrued or brought in by other family members, especially women.

I do, however, agree that the salary list provides a basis from which to identify the Spanish Dominican elite. As discussed, the elite, whether urban or rural, distinguished itself by simultaneously holding land and royal offices, whether civil, military or ecclesiastical. Notwithstanding the fact that the salaries were quite paltry<sup>46</sup> and were frequently in arrears, the fact remained that these individuals did receive wages, even though they were paid out irregularly and not always in full. The revenues and loyalty of service allowed the elite to purchase other offices for themselves or their sons, buy land and loan money to the Crown in time of need.

The lower class constituted the second clear group.<sup>47</sup> Although many were vendors, some of them were probably tradesmen, artisans and cowboys. The income of this group was

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<sup>46</sup> Sevilla Soler, *Santo Domingo*, 273-274, explains that the yearly salary of the governor was 55,147 reales and 2 maravedís; a judge 17,647, the treasurer 14,847 reales and 2 maravedís; an engineer 8,000 reales, a senior official 5,512 reales and an artillery officer 1,320 reales.

<sup>47</sup> This group was the largest of the three groups on the island. It probably accounted for two-thirds of the population. The trouble with an actual demographic count is twofold. First the population estimates in the historiography vary between Manuel A. Amiama, "La Población de Santo Domingo," *Clio*, (July/December, 1959), 116-134, who states that there were 27,771 persons in this group. Fernando Pérez Memen, "La Mentalidad Dominicana en el Siglo de las Luces," *Casas Reales*, No. 13 (1982), 47-96, 56, on the other hand explains that there were 31,915 individuals in this group. Although the exact number cannot be estimated exactly, the reality was that the total population of the territory of Santo Domingo in the late eighteenth century was 60,967. If the slaves accounted for between 7,500 and 15,000 people and the elite a few hundred inhabitants, the lower class was very large indeed.

unstable and depended wholly on demand from the first group at any one time. Life for individuals in this second group was difficult, as numerically it was the largest and it continued to grow throughout the period due not only in small part to manumissions, but mainly through illegal immigration from runaway slaves from French and British Caribbean colonies. Escudero estimates that six to seven thousand *cimarrónes* (runaway slaves) lived in the Spanish Dominican countryside between 1700 and 1741.<sup>48</sup> The lower class group has largely been understudied because of a lack of available documentation but also because they have generally been perceived as powerless and therefore unimportant. This assumption is based on the fact that very few members of the lower class held low ranking rural positions in the royal bureaucracy. However, power can be attained and exercised in many different ways. I believe that, given the sheer size of the group and the lack of macro wealth differentiation, the lower class represented a significant threat to elite power, a notion I will discuss in chapter six. The elite, therefore, had to negotiate their relationship to the lower class. A threatening approach was likely to only illicit a violent response. Thus, the dialogue established between the two groups allowed plebeians to exercise a great deal of agency.

The slaves were the last identifiable group. Aside from the previously mentioned 600 slaves working on sugar plantations and in the mills, the total slave population for the territory of Santo Domingo is unknown.<sup>49</sup> Sevilla Soler estimates it to be about one eighth of the Spanish Dominican population, which would place it at 7,762.<sup>50</sup> Although there were few

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<sup>48</sup> Gutiérrez Escudero, *Población y Economía en Santo Domingo*, ch. 1-2.

<sup>49</sup> Sevilla Soler, *Santo Domingo*, 68, approximates the number of blacks in the colony between 7,500 and 15,000, however this included both free people and slaves. Given that the latter group included both Africans and persons of mixed race, the exact number of slaves in the territory of Santo Domingo is unclear.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, Sevilla Soler's estimate of the slaves in Santo Domingo were actually a little over 5,037, the number reported by Alejandro O'Reilly in the mid to late eighteenth century. Given the island's poverty and lack of agriculture, Sevilla Soler's numbers are in sharp contrast to Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade*, 45, who estimated the slave population to be around 30,000. Curtin's figure is problematic because in the second half of the eighteenth century, the entire population of the island (1740) represented 25,806 persons. Therefore, one quarter

slaves, their contributions as rural and urban labourers were very important to those sectors that employed them. In Santo Domingo's underperforming economy, work stoppages or destruction of property delivered a crushing blow to the elite. Like the lower class, the slaves were active participants in defining the master slave relationship. Slaves' knowledge of the social, political and economic dynamics of Dominican society empowered them, particularly the fact that the Spanish Crown had difficulty establishing its control over the entire territory and the colony's desperate need for labour. Moreover, similar to the elite's relationship to the lower class, the master-slave one was also negotiated on a regular basis.

In summary, my research indicates that there were three identifiable population groups: the elite, the lower class and the slaves. A full socio-economic class spectrum existed within each group. However the range of wealth differed little. For example, the elite group had no ceiling but the floor can be identified by persons holding the lowest ranking urban positions in the royal bureaucracy, while the lower class's ceiling was fixed at low ranking rural commissions but had no floor. There was certainly a blurring of status in regard to wealth between the lowest rungs of the elite and the highest echelons of the lower class, making it difficult to clearly differentiate one from the other. The gap between the two was in fact minimal.

### **Economic Classes, Wealth and Spanish Dominicans**

Given the problems of determining land tenure and basic family incomes due to the revenues received through the thriving illegal trade, the only indications of wealth that have survived are censuses and testaments. However, the censuses are unreliable because ranchers lied about the size of their herds so that they would not be forced to contribute to the system

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to one eighth of that number would be 6,465 or 3,232, respectively. In the late eighteenth century (1782-83) the population had doubled, reaching 60,962. One quarter to one eighth of that number would be 15,240 or 7,620, respectively.

of pesas and the testaments are only available for Higüey and San Bautista de Bayaguana. In 1740, the population of Higüey was composed of 318 individuals. That number grew to 508 by 1782-1783.<sup>51</sup> For the same periods, San Bautista de Bayaguana's population started at 380 and grew to 679.<sup>52</sup> Obviously, these places were towns and not cities, like Santo Domingo or Santiago de los Caballeros that had respectively 8,384 and 5,200 citizens in 1740 and 10,702 and 12,024, in 1782-3.<sup>53</sup> Furthermore, given the poverty of the island, it can be inferred that the testaments mostly pertained to the elite of these two towns, since they would have sought to protect whatever wealth they had amassed. Although the documents pertain to the rural elite they still provide information on the socio-economic standing of Spanish Dominicans.

Dávila-Mendoza's study of the testaments from San Bautista de Bayaguana from 1733 to 1823 indicates that livestock (cattle, horses, donkeys, and pigs), land, properties and personal effects such as jewellery, clothes or shoes were the most often mentioned.<sup>54</sup> In terms of livestock, Spanish Dominicans from Higüey and San Bautista de Bayaguana each owned between 16 and 120 head of cattle.<sup>55</sup> The cattle census, although flawed, indicates that the elite in Santiago de los Caballeros owned between 300 and 1,000 heads of cattle whereas farmers' herds in the surrounding areas of the city of Santo Domingo could vary from a number of 260 up to 1,600 animals.<sup>56</sup> As well, the inventory of personal goods reveals slight differences between the urban elite of Santo Domingo and the rural one of San Bautista de Bayaguana. For example, the inventory of Antonio Vazquez, who owned a ranch outside of the city of Santo Domingo, stipulated that he possessed a variety of jewellery made of gold,

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 35. The bipolarity of the cities remains the same to this day as Santo Domingo still dominates the landscape to the north-east and Santiago de los Caballeros that on the south-west.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 21 and 29.

<sup>56</sup> Gutiérrez Escudero, *Población y Economía en Santo Domingo*, 138-139.

pearl and shells, as well as several outfits.<sup>57</sup> In contrast, Francisca Yrena Mendoza of San Bautista de Bayaguana itemized each piece of jewellery: two gold crosses, one made out of wood, another with the figure of Christ, some gold earrings and silver barrettes, a gold awl, as well as other miscellaneous valuables.<sup>58</sup> However, Vazquez used the same precision as Mendoza in itemizing his valuable possessions, such as the tools found on his ranch. Moreover, although both Mendoza and Vazquez painstakingly listed certain items, Vazquez did so in relation to the tools of his trade, whereas Mendoza did it for everything, including her jewellery because that was all she owned. Although gender was perhaps a factor in the obvious difference in wealth between Mendoza and Vazquez, the rural/urban divide was probably more central. In financial terms, the difference in wealth between the rural and urban elite is significant, especially for the inheritors; Mendoza's goods had little to no value (between 0 and 200 pesos), while Vazquez would leave behind a total of 1,391 pesos, exactly 278 pesos for each of his five children. However, if this financial information is placed within larger socio-economic classes on the island the gap between them was quite narrow. After all, if one accepts that the poor had nothing, only a couple of hundred pesos separated them from the rural elite. Moreover, wealth varied along urban and rural lines. This pattern is not unusual or unexpected and not applicable to Santo Domingo only.

Dávila-Mendoza indicates that money was rarely mentioned but that many testaments indicated the material possessions brought by each spouse at the time of their marriage down to the most ordinary of items.<sup>59</sup> For example, one of the testaments indicated that the owner had six acres of land, one domestic slave, a donkey, three able horses, fifty-four cows, six swine and their litters, a dog, a new blue woollen cloth cape, two outfits, a hat, new shoes,

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 135-136.

<sup>58</sup> Dávila Mendoza, *Un Concierto de Voces*, 33.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 2-62.

farming clothes and shoes, a gold cross, a cross with the figure of Christ, a wedding band, a tea cup, two silver spoons, a gold awl or simply “*unos bienes*” (a few things).<sup>60</sup> If no items were brought to the marriage, whether a dowry, bride price or material possessions, this too was recorded, as were debts owed. For example, María Basilia Sánchez’s testament declared, among other things, that her nephew, Pedro Sánchez, owed her a cow and not a heifer<sup>61</sup> in lieu of the one that he killed on her son’s consent but not her own.<sup>62</sup> Her other nephew Diego also owed her a cow to replace the one that he had killed in the Monte Grande, which Joseph Muñoz had bought to pay her back for a cow he had killed without her authorization in 1767.<sup>63</sup> Given the delay in payment, María Basilia Sánchez now felt it fair to demand that the cow be one that had already given birth. Finally, her son also owed her a cow he had slaughtered.<sup>64</sup> Although he had been forced to do so because it had eaten fermented maize,<sup>65</sup> he had killed it without his mother’s consent. In contrast, the urban ranch owner Vázquez indicated that he owed 1,000 pesos to the Church in taxes, which he obviously did not have the money to pay.<sup>66</sup> I assume that the debt was to either be paid in kind or out of the liquidation of his assets after his death. The fact that debts were usually paid in kind confirms the absence of money in circulation on the island, whether in urban or rural zones. Overall,

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> I wish to thank Mr. Mark Schellings for patiently answering all questions relating to agricultural processes. A heifer is a cow that has not given birth. Thus the cow has reached physical maturity and the advantages of receiving one instead of a heifer are fourfold. First the cow was lactating therefore milk could be drawn for family use. Second, the cow had been proven to be fertile and therefore able to produce other calves in the future. Third, there was a guarantee the animal had reached adulthood and therefore would be of a minimum size. This detail translated into more meat (although possibly tougher if the cow was much older), should the animal be destined for slaughter. Finally, no initial capital outlay was required to raise and fatten the animal up. There were only the maintenance expenses.

<sup>62</sup> Dávila Mendoza, *Un Concierto de Voces*, 26.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Fermented in this case probably meant spoiled, as today it is common practice to mix equal parts of fermented and non-fermented feed to cattle. Therefore, the cow in question would not have died from eating fermented feed but eating spoiled food would have caused the animal to colic.

<sup>66</sup> Dávila Mendoza, *Un Concierto de Voces*, 26.

the accuracy of the itemization of owned goods and debts owed clearly indicates that wealth was measured not at the macro level but the micro one.

The picture that emerges from the testaments and cattle censuses is one of an economically comfortable urban elite. In contrast, the rural elite and the urban middle classes probably did not enjoy financial security and could possibly be living at subsistence level, like the other groups on the island. The situation, however, was always fluctuating according to the political and economic climate, not to mention in the case of environmental disasters. Moreover, at the best of times it was problematic to draw a clear cut line between the socio-economic classes, let alone divide them into five distinct groups.

### **Race and Class**

The other major problem in classifying Spanish Dominican society is that of race. Generalizations, such as Sevilla Soler's, that the elite were white, while the lower class and slaves were of mixed race or black origin create decisive racial groupings that are hierarchal in nature, whereas there were actually no clear demarcations. In the territory of Santo Domingo, miscegenation occurred as early as the second voyage of Columbus as white Spaniards took indigenous women as wives, concubines or by force. As the indigenous population disappeared, African slaves were imported as labourers, adding to the racial mix early in the colonial period.

The racial pigmentation of the Spanish Dominican elite is difficult to ascertain because the three primary sources that contain comments regarding the biological phenotype of the elite are: observer accounts, military reviews, sacramental records and the colonial correspondence. All are problematic because they contain biases. It cannot be ascertained whether the "white" or "non-white" character of the Spanish Dominican elite was merely a

reflection of the author's prejudices or the unvarnished truth. For example, in the case of Méderic Louis Elie Moreau de St-Mery, a traveling Frenchman, it is difficult to evaluate whether the statement in his travel journal "that by 1780 most of the "Spanish" colonists were actually mestizos, who have still more of an African characteristic."<sup>67</sup> was the truth, a case of mistaking tanned skin for miscegenation or the manifestation of an unconscious European bias towards these Spanish colonial subjects. Moreau de St-Mery was after all a French national, who traveled to the Americas between 1793 and 1795. He could not have empirical knowledge about the reproduction habits of the Spanish Dominican population. The statement then is the result of observation but how accurate was it? Did the tanned appearance of the colonists reinforce a Euro-centric bias that placed Americans subjects as inferior to European born ones?

The military reviews, sacramental records and colonial correspondence do not support his conclusions but these primary sources are also suspect because the authors all had an agenda. They were all conscious of the fact that the information they related to the metropole painted a certain image of the colony. Elizabeth Anne Kuznesof states that although the records "appear as objective, statistical information about individuals (they) really constitute a coded text, in which social categories were manipulated."<sup>68</sup> Moreover, the information recorded in the official record carried an imbedded message which was written in a mutually accessible medium of communication: the language of empire.<sup>69</sup> The common

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<sup>67</sup> Méderic Louis Elie Moreau de St-Mery, *Moreau de St-Mery's American Journey 1793-1798*, (New York: Double Day and Co, 1947) as cited by Derby, *Tigueraje*, 20.

<sup>68</sup> Elizabeth Anne Kuznesof, "Ethnic and Gender Influences on 'Spanish' Creole Society in Colonial Spanish America," *Colonial Latin American Review*, Vol. 4, No 1. (1995), 163.

<sup>69</sup> Adele Perry, *On the Edge of Empire: Gender, Race and the Making of British Columbia, 1849-1871* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 1-19, discusses the resistance from the colonist to London's attempts to transform the colony of British Columbia into a "white" and law abiding settler society. Ann Laura Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), passim, also discusses how the lower class understood what it was to be European,

language was not a simple matter of a shared idiom but of its attachment to common socio-religious and cultural systems.

Peter Gose traces the origins of this shared language to a “racialized religious orientation”<sup>70</sup> that was borne of the reconquista and consolidated thereafter through the Spanish Inquisition. The Spanish Crown’s connection to Catholicism created not only a religious divide between Christians and Jews and Muslims but a distinction between old and new Christians. The former indicated individuals who had never practiced any other faith, whereas the latter, identified persons as *conversos* (converts) from another faith to Catholicism. Given that Catholics believed in hereditary transmission of sin, such as heresy, through semen and breast milk, the blood that coursed through individuals veins became an adequate measure of their religious orientation. *Limpieza de sangre* (purity of blood) became the central lynch pin upon which status rested.<sup>71</sup>

The explicit link between employment and purity of blood was established in the Royal Pragmatic of 1501.<sup>72</sup> The royal decree contained a list of forty offices, most notably all civil positions, from royal councillors to local mayors, which could not be granted to individuals unable to prove their purity of blood. Over time, the requirement shifted from an exclusion of employment for those who could not prove their blood lines to a granting of commissions to only those who could. Certificates of purity of blood were obtained by presenting family genealogies dating back seven generations, which had no more than one-

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bourgeois, respectable and white. In doing so, both Perry and Stoler, like Roediger and Frye Jacobson, clearly identify race as a construct but in the colonial context.

<sup>70</sup> Peter Gose, “An Inquisitional Genealogy of Race: ‘Purity of Blood’ in Early Modern Spain and Colonial Lima,” (Unpublished paper, 1997), 1.

<sup>71</sup> Elizabeth Anne Kuznesof, “Gender Ideology, Race, and Female-Headed Households in Urban Mexico, 1750-1850,” in *State and Society in Spanish America During the ‘Age of Revolution’: New Research on Historical Continuities and Change ca. 1750s-1850s*, ed. Victor Uribe (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources Press, 2001), 149-170.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 46-47.

eight percentage of Jewish or Moorish blood.<sup>73</sup> The focus on lineage emphasized the need to contract legitimate marriages and of spouses to remain loyal to one another for the duration of their lives. In the eighteenth century purity of blood, legitimacy and employment were the golden triad that governed public life in Spain and its American colonies.

The racialization of the construct occurred because of the Catholic connection between the quality of one's soul and outward appearances. Physical deformities or darker skin, as in the case of the curse of Hamm, were visible manifestations of the stain that afflicted an individual's quality. Gose writes that although blacks and indigenous peoples were not the targets of Spanish racialized religious orientation, collateral damage to their reputation was inevitable when the ideology was exported to the Americas. The phenotypical appearance was not in and of itself the root of discrimination but rather its connection to the contaminated blood of heretics.<sup>74</sup> Therefore, skin colour was not the basis for discrimination but it did become an index for the invisible nature of the soul's state. Moreover whiteness was placed as the ideal biological phenotype in the racial hierarchy in the Americas because it represented the purity of the individual's lineage.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Ann Twinam, *Public Lives, Private Secrets: Gender, Honor, Sexuality, and Illegitimacy in Colonial Spanish America* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 44, mentions that colegios, congregations and military orders required proof of the purity of blood as far back as seven generations.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>75</sup> For more on whiteness, please see: Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York: Routledge, 1995) and David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (New York: Verso, 1999), discuss the Irish immigrants' efforts to differentiate themselves from blacks in antebellum American society. They did so by creating associations between themselves and the symbols of American power, which themselves were themselves encompassed in the idea of whiteness. Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1998), explains the evolution of whiteness over three periods. Essentially, he states that at the outset, whiteness was contrasted with blackness. In the second period of this binary opposition was replaced with a more nuanced perception of the levels of whiteness, in which the Anglo Saxons were of higher status than the Irish. Finally, in the third period, Jacobson states that whiteness again became a black and white divide. Jacobson, Frye and Roediger's discussion all seem to stem from an initial construct of whiteness which is based on a complicated association of a Caucasian ethnic identity and power, in much the same way as it was constructed in Spanish America.

Furthermore, in the early colonial period in Spanish America, peninsulars occupied the highest social, economic and political positions in the Spanish administration. Although the situation did not last, a connection between the biological whiteness of the peninsular and the power they exercised was forged. Ben Vinson III explains that whiteness came to symbolize the possession of economic, political and moral power.<sup>76</sup> Certain characteristics were inextricably connected to persons detaining power through the employment restrictions discussed. Moreover, white people were pure of blood, legitimate and occupied positions of power.<sup>77</sup> For example, both Lynn Guitar and Elizabeth Anne Kuznesof note that the many mixed race sons and daughters of conquerors were entered in the population census as white.<sup>78</sup> This construction was never more true or visible as in the Spanish Caribbean, where the economics left little room for social mobility, therefore placing greater emphasis on status and lineage.<sup>79</sup>

The commanding officers and ecclesiastical officials' awareness of the statements they were making to the Spanish Crown through the military reviews and sacramental records indicate that Spanish Dominicans consciously manipulated the official record.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Ben Vinson III, "Estudiando las razas desde la periferia: las castas olvidadas del sistema colonial mexicano (lobos, moriscos, coyotes, moros y chinos)," in *Pautas de convivencia étnica en la América Latina colonia (Indios, negros, mulatos, pardos y esclavos)*, ed. Juan Manuel de la Serna Herrera (Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Centro Coordinador y Difusor de Estudios Latinoamericanos, Gobierno del Estado de Guanajuato, 2005), 247-307.

<sup>77</sup> Patrick J. Carroll, "Black-Native Relations and the Historical Record in Colonial Mexico," in *Beyond Black and Red: African-Native Relations in Colonial Latin America*, ed. Matthew Restall (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), 245-267, identifies that royal officials manipulated the official records to reflect a particular identity. Carroll further states that: "The Church too encouraged racist and ethnocentric mechanisms of control over persons of color and non-Hispanic ethnicity for the same reasons."

<sup>78</sup> Guitar, *Cultural Genesis*, ch. 5 and Kuznesof, "Ethnic and Gender Influences on "Spanish" Creole Society in Colonial Spanish America," 153-175, confirm that Guitar's observations for the territory of Santo Domingo were part of a more general trend in Spanish America in this early period.

<sup>79</sup> Stolcke, "Elopement and Seduction in Nineteenth-Century Cuba," *Past and Present*, No. 55 (May, 1972), 91-129 and Twinam, *Public Lives, Private Secrets*, ch. 6, both conclude that the abysmal economic situation of the Spanish Caribbean islands forced islanders to place increased importance on status and lineage, as it was sometimes the only marker of differentiation between the elite and the lower class.

<sup>80</sup> Carroll, "Black-Native Relations and the Historical Record in Colonial Mexico," 249 and Vinson III, "Estudiando las razas desde la periferia," 249-252.

Moreover, instead of rejecting Sevilla Soler's and other Spanish colonial Dominican historians' assertions that the elite was white in phenotypical terms, it is far more useful to simply re-conceive their statements in terms of identity politics, in which the Spanish Dominican elite presented itself as white. Phenotypical reality and self-perception are entirely different. The former relies exclusively on the skin colour of the individual, while the latter involves the creation of a group identity

In the case of Spanish Dominicans, Guitar was struck by the surprising lack of racial labelling in censuses from the first half of the sixteenth century and interpreted this to mean that the categories were relatively unimportant. She argues that the phenotypical reality was subordinated to the socio-politico-economic status of the individual. She locates the seat of this conscious manipulation of the racial reality in the settlers' inability to come to terms with their ethnic origins.<sup>81</sup> A more positive view would merely place the manipulation as a conscious application of the language of empire. The information was coded so as to reflect the idealized image of the Spanish metropole, thereby enabling the racially mixed offspring of the conquistadors to be considered as white, placing them in the same socio-economic class as their fathers. The intentional blurring of ethnic origin in favour of social status may well be the reason from which the tradition of *tigueraje* was born. Although the concept is discussed in depth in chapter five, the Dominican Tiger or Trickster is best characterized as a behaviour that allows individuals to control those around them through the manipulation of their identity.<sup>82</sup> The ultimate goal of the deception is social mobility.

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<sup>81</sup> Guitar, *Cultural Genesis*, ch. 7.

<sup>82</sup> Christian Krohn-Hansen, "Masculinity and the Political among Dominicans: 'The Dominican Tiger'," in *Machos, Mistresses and Madonnas: Contesting the Power of Latin American Gender Imagery*, eds. Marit Melhuus and Kristi Anne Stølen (New York: Verso, 1996), 108-133.

There is no doubt that Spanish Dominicans also manipulated the data in the military reviews and sacramental records. Although they, like the censuses, were designed to capture subtle social gradations within the larger framework of race and economic class, there was a peculiar absence of racial designations in the military reviews and the cathedral registers. In fact, except for the odd notation that someone was *castellano* (Castilian) or *español* (Spanish), most entries were left blank, even for members of the elite.<sup>83</sup> For the ecclesiastical hierarchy, the omissions were a source of frustration. Ecclesiastical auditors made several attempts throughout the period under study to improve the accuracy and transparency of the sacramental records by providing lieutenant priests and scribes with foolproof templates for recording the necessary information.<sup>84</sup> Despite these repeated attempts, the “errors” persisted in the marital and baptismal registers. Blanks in the racial designations came to represent a value in the language of empire: not racially mixed or black, as these were noted.<sup>85</sup> The obvious resistance at the local level provides further proof of Patrick J. Carroll’s argument that local and viceregal officials, as well as ecclesiastical ones, used the official records “as a tool for social engineering.”<sup>86</sup> In effect, “no entry” indicated whiteness and should be

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<sup>83</sup> Kuznesof, “Ethnic and Gender Influences on ‘Spanish’ Creole Society,” 158, confirms that most Spanish American ecclesiastical registers also did not have racial labels.

<sup>84</sup> Real errors were corrected and the two cases highlighted hereunder are indicative of Spanish Dominicans getting caught manipulating the records. The first case was a notation in the margin of an illegitimate boy’s baptismal record. Although the entry clearly identified a mother, there was no father. In the margin a note was subsequently added that simply stated that it was suspected that the boy’s father was a captain in the fixed battalion. In such a litigious society, strong suspicions had to exist for an entry of that nature to be made in the official document: enough to amend the record. The second notation is even more interesting. It indicates that the individual identified as the mother was not in fact the biological birth parent. The recorded name was a stand in to protect an elite woman’s identity. The protection was necessary because the child was not white, and therefore could only be the result of an interracial and cross class union. This time, however, the notation appears in parentheses in the text and not in the margin. It also appears to have been added at the time of entry and therefore probably under duress, as there is no reason that one would attempt to falsify the record and then divulge that they were doing so. That type of behaviour is self-defeating.

<sup>85</sup> Tomás Calvo, “Concubinato y mestizaje en el medio urbano: El Caso de Guadalajara en el siglo XVII,” *Revista de Indias*, Vol. 44, No. 173 (1984), 204-212, comes to the conclusion that blanks stood for whiteness, or, in racial label terms, Spanish.

<sup>86</sup> Carroll, “Black-Native Relations and the Historical Record in Colonial Mexico”, 249, states that the records of the central urban zone of the villas of Jalapa and Orizaba overwhelmingly identified its citizenry as white,

construed as part of a system of informal passing.<sup>87</sup> The apparent whitening was a conscious manipulation of the archbishopric's sacramental records in order to reflect a certain image.

When racial labels were indicated, only four out of the myriad of those available were commonly used: mestizo, mulatto, moreno and negro. This is not an unusual pattern according to Ben Vinson III. After extensive research using sacramental records, Vinson understands the dominance of certain labels in these documents as a streamlining of the administrative process.<sup>88</sup> It was not efficient to use all of the possible designations for persons of mixed race and, therefore, it was inevitable that they would be reduced to a few overarching labels. In the Spanish Dominican records, racial labels began to appear in the free black and coloured population and were most regularly used for the slaves.<sup>89</sup>

It is important to note that although the records were fudged for everyone, it was done at differently intensive rates. For the elite, racial origin and legitimacy were altered in order to conform to an ideal of upper class society within the empire. Moreover, the result served as public recognition of the status of each specific individual. According to Ann Twinam, Spanish Dominicans were not alone in their intentional corruption of the official records.<sup>90</sup> Twinam highlights what she terms "The Politics of Recognition from the Font to the

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while the outer core zone was mixed race and the outlying areas were indigenous. It is clear that the racial and demographic distributions affected the way in which officials manipulated the records. Given the obvious differences between the villas of Jalapa and Orizaba and those of Santo Domingo, the pattern of identity was not the same. Calvo "Concubinato y mestizaje en el medio urbano: El Caso de Guadalajara en el siglo XVII," 208, also asserts that ecclesiastical officials consciously manipulated the official records.

<sup>87</sup> Twinam, *Public Lives, Private Secrets*, ch. 7.

<sup>88</sup> Vinson III, "Estudiando las razas desde la periferia: las castas olvidadas del sistema colonial mexicano (lobos, moriscos, coyotes, moros y chinos)," 247-307.

<sup>89</sup> Guitart, *Cultural Genesis*, 185-196, notes that the Spanish did not differentiate black slaves from mixed race ones in the earlier colonial period. This certainly was not the case in the eighteenth century. Dominican baptismal records for adult slaves not only indicated that the individuals were black but at least half of the cases also stated the country or ethnic group origin. Also, although the designation of negro should be found in the records less frequently than in those used for individuals of mixed race given that the slave group in Santo Domingo in the eighteenth century was quite small, more or less one quarter of the total population, it is conspicuous that the term was generally only used to describe male foreigners and single mothers.

<sup>90</sup> Twinam, *Public Lives, Private Secrets*, 126-157.

Grave.”<sup>91</sup> In this chapter of her book, she describes the many informal strategies utilized by the royal administration, as well as by individual families, to manipulate public and private knowledge of the legitimacy of their children. In particular, Twinam observes that offspring’s racial designations within one family unit could change over time and that only one parent and a monetary contribution was needed to have children listed as natural instead of illegitimate.<sup>92</sup> In fact, the royal administration and the citizenry were engaged in constant negotiations over self-constructed identities. This situation was made possible because race, honour and illegitimacy were always in flux in Latin American society.<sup>93</sup> Moreover, Spanish Dominican elite’s bureaucratic machinations reinforced their position within society were much the same as elsewhere in Latin America. The only difference, which Twinam herself highlights, was that the Caribbean had higher rates of internal discrimination, at least in the late eighteenth century, and placed more value on markers such as legitimacy and racial origin because they were more self-conscious about these matters.<sup>94</sup> It is clear that the ecclesiastical and military records were manipulated by Spanish Dominicans in order to convey a particular message about themselves to the metropole.

The same encoding occurs with the colonial correspondence. The majority of colonial correspondence that has survived is between the elite and the metropole. It contains many racist remarks which, in the past, have been interpreted as emanating from members of the white elite expressing their disdain for the other racial groups in society. Although the colonial correspondence certainly contains racist language, it should be construed in terms of

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<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, ch. 5.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 33.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 196, 204, 324, 336.

a class struggle and not a biological phenotypical reality.<sup>95</sup> For instance, the accusation against Alonso Muñoz of having “pardo” blood through his grandmother probably started out as an attempt to merely discredit him and therefore reduce his chances of obtaining the commission for which he had advanced his candidature but it stirred the proverbial pot.<sup>96</sup> It turned out that Muñoz was related to the Acevedos, an elite family. Moreover, the accusation against Muñoz became a major problem for the Acevedos because many of them held offices. If Muñoz was denied his position on the basis of his racial composition, their own positions could very well have been in jeopardy as well. Joseph de Acevedo promptly petitioned the Crown for a correction of the apparent stain on the Acevedo lineage through a *gracias al sacar*,<sup>97</sup> which was granted to him. From that day forth, the Acevedos, as well as Muñoz, were to be regarded as “white” and therefore had no racial impediments preventing any of them from holding office under Crown regulations. The case is instructive because it conveys the importance of presenting oneself as “white” within the Spanish Empire, particularly in the eighteenth century when stricter controls over employment criteria, proof of legitimacy and racial purity made it increasingly difficult to win offices simply through an informal pass system.<sup>98</sup> By presenting themselves as “white,” whether they were or not, the Spanish Crown accepted the legitimacy of their claims. Consequently, Dominicans were able to use the language of empire to open and sustain a dialogue with the Spanish Crown.

## Conclusion

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<sup>95</sup> Torres Saillant, “The Tribulations of Blackness,” 126-146.

<sup>96</sup> Santo Domingo, leg. 286, 54-6-41, Cartas y Expedientes de los Oficiales Reales 1691-1760; Expediente a SM de la ciudad de Santo Domingo 19/11/1715.

<sup>97</sup> There is no literal translation for *gracias al sacar* in the English language. The term refers to the royal decrees issued to citizens of the Spanish empire in matters of grace. Petitioners asked and received, in return for set prices, changes to their legal status as they related to their physical or mental capacities, as well as questions of lineage.

<sup>98</sup> Twinam, *Public Lives, Private Secrets*, ch. 7.

The underperforming economy collapsed the socio-economic classes on the island. Spanish Dominicans understood that minimal differences in wealth differentiated the elite from the lower class and slave groups. There were poor and elite whites, as there were poor elite and slave persons of mixed race. Given the high rate of miscegenation and the lack of wealth, Spanish Dominicans sought to open a dialogue with the Spanish Crown by using the language of empire. This solution meant focusing on reflecting the metropole's racialized ideals through a mutually accessible medium: language of empire. Although there is no denying that racism existed in the territory of Santo Domingo, the racist language of this shared idiom should be understood in terms of class struggle. The elite constructed themselves as "white" because "whiteness" had come to be associated with power and authority. They also manipulated the official records to "whiten" most of the lower class, thereby ensuring that the Spanish Crown understood, which it did, that the island's population was worthy of its attention and privileges. Thus, the language of empire opened and maintained a dialogue between the colony and the metropole, through which islanders could negotiate concessions for services rendered.

### **Chapter Three- The Elite and the Establishment**

Santo Domingo's depressed economy provided the starting point for a dialogue between the local elite and the Spanish Crown. The Crown recognized the island's difficult financial situation and understood that it would be impossible to replace the Spanish Dominican elite with immigrants without incurring substantial cost. For their part, the Spanish Dominican elite were conscious of the value of their position and the services they provided to the Spanish Crown. However, the key to maintaining their status was to make the Spanish Crown understand that they were the only respectable individuals on the island capable of acting as the Crown's representatives in the territory of Santo Domingo. To accomplish this feat, they used the language of empire— a mutually accessible language in their correspondence with the Spanish Crown. The elite constructed themselves as “white,” not because they were phenotypically light skinned but rather because of what the racial label represented: persons in positions of power and authority. Recognition of the Spanish Dominican elite's premier socio-economic and political status had to be established in order for the dialogue with the Spanish Crown to be maintained. This dialogue provided the basis for the elite's power. The Spanish Crown protected the elite's status by allowing them to govern the colony in return for their cooperation in enforcing the royal will and effectively defending this key military defensive area from enemy powers. The on-going negotiations, in which the elite blatantly bartered their loyalty for concessions from the Crown, resulted in the Spanish Dominican governing class's ability to exercise control over the political and economic direction of the island.

This chapter explains the relationship of the elite to the establishment and describes how a small group of Spanish Dominicans acquired a suffocating hold on power in island politics and economics. The elite occupied most of the high ranking positions in the royal bureaucracy and quite particularly in the officers' corps. From these positions of power, entry level commissions were requested for the next generation, who rose in the ranks through their continued devotion to the service of the King, eventually attaining the same status as their fathers and thereby perpetuating the Spanish Dominican elite's presence in the military ranks. The purchase of more offices and loans to the Spanish treasury strengthened the cycle of generational employment in the early eighteenth century. The suffocating control the elite acquired over the military establishment provided the spring board from which they also came to dominate the most significant sources of revenue on the island: the situado and the cattle trade. The Spanish Crown continued to empower the Dominican elite in recognition of their loyalty and support in the face of Spain's inability to adequately supply the colony and the realization that the late and/or irregular arrival of the situado subjected it to frequent economic fluctuations. However, the picture here is not of a rich elite, similar to the grandees of Mexico, but of a moderately comfortable landowning one, also employed in royal service and who regularly used and abused their power to further their own ends.<sup>1</sup>

### **The Elite and Island Economics and Politics**

The place of the territory of Santo Domingo within the Spanish empire was militarily defensive. The Spanish Crown's unwillingness to develop the colony economically by actively promoting the development of an agricultural sector resulted in a general lack of

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<sup>1</sup> The lack of monetary wealth was really not that unusual in outlying areas within and outside the Spanish empire. As mentioned in chapter one, Puerto Rico did not have any currency circulating on the island either but other examples existed. See: Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, *Montaillou: Cathars and Catholics in a French Village 1294-1324* (Markham: Penquin Books, 1978), ch. 3.

employment opportunities, most particularly in farming and trade. In the late sixteenth century, the waning gold deposits further aggravated the situation. Although the territory of Santo Domingo was one of the first Spanish American colonies to receive colonial administrative structures, its declining importance resulted in the subsequent underdevelopment of the royal administration in comparison to other Spanish American colonies. Employment opportunities were therefore limited to the Church and the military.

In reality, however, there were relatively few ecclesiastical positions as the capital city had only two parishes.<sup>2</sup> Also, according to Frank Moya Pons, what civil positions were available had been fused with the higher military commissions since the town councils had lost their independence in the Thirty Years War.<sup>3</sup> A perfect example of this was the position of Governor, which was amalgamated with that of Captain-General, President of the *Audiencia* de Santo Domingo, Superintendent of the *Real Hacienda* and Ecclesiastical Vice-Patron.<sup>4</sup>

The military was therefore the only viable source of respectable employment on the island. Derby estimates that the military to civilian ratio was “127 military personnel to each 1,000 inhabitants, a full four times that of Cuba or Chile.”<sup>5</sup> The overwhelming military presence affected the character of the island, first and foremost by skewing the gender ratios for all racial groups as, not only was the military a male preserve but Hispaniola was saddled

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<sup>2</sup> Sevilla Soler, *Santo Domingo*, ch. 2, states that additional priests were actively requested for the new settlements created through the repopulation-by-immigration policy at the end of the seventeenth century. The chronic problem of providing priests for the rural areas throughout the territory was also discussed by Catherine LeGrand in her presentation on the Dominican/Haitian section panel at the XXVI LASA International Congress, 2006.

<sup>3</sup> Moya Pons, *The Dominican Republic*, 58-63.

<sup>4</sup> Sevilla Soler, *Santo Domingo*, 287-290.

<sup>5</sup> Derby, *Tigueraje*, ch. 9, 23 and Gascón, “The Military of Santo Domingo,” 434, both stated that by 1724 there were 3,798 military men, of which 499 could be considered professionals out of a population of 30,000.

with every type of imaginable military units,<sup>6</sup> of which the centerpiece was the fixed regiment stationed in the city of Santo Domingo. Veteran officers appointed to commissions in the fixed regiments, as well as to the cavalry units, were supposed to patrol the border and north-western coast.<sup>7</sup> Of those veteran officers, some were also burdened with the training of the militia and volunteer regiments in the outlying areas (see appendix A) such as San Carlos, Santa Cruz del Seibo, Concepción de la Vega, Santiago de los Caballeros, San Fernando de Montecristi, San Felipe de Puerto Plata, Hincha and Azua.<sup>8</sup>

Since military service was the main source of dignified public employment, it was also the primary source of legal personal income. This fact did not escape the local elite's attention. Through prior services rendered, retired officers maintained influence over entry-level military appointments. They achieved and maintained their influence by writing to the Council of the Indies and the King's ministers. The letters were sent by individual elite members who often sat on the town council or had a direct connection to someone serving on it. Although the request was the same, the language was somewhat different. The town council petitioned the Council of the Indies to ask that the military positions of Sergeant-Major, Captain of Infantry, Mayor of the main fortified town, the positions of Comptroller and Treasurer of the Royal Finances, as well as the Secretary of the Royal Tribunals, be granted to Spanish Dominicans of

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<sup>6</sup> Sevilla Soler, *Santo Domingo*, 328-339 and Santiago Gerardo Suárez, *Marina milicias y ejército en la colonia*, (Caracas: Academia Nacional de la Historia, 1971), 15, both state that the island had a fixed battalion, which was supposed to have 36 officers and 847 soldiers, divided into companies of grenadiers, infantry and artillery. It also had six infantry companies with three officers and 61 soldiers each. On top of this, the island had anywhere between two to six cavalry companies with 18 officers and 300 soldiers each, which were supposed to patrol the border. There were also 15.5 militia infantry companies for a total strength of 1,500 men. Three of these were labelled 'morenos', while the others were white. As well, five of these units were stationed in the capital city, while the others were in San Carlos, Santa Cruz del Seibo, Concepción de la Vega, Santiago de los Caballeros, San Fernando de Montecristi, San Felipe de Puerto Plata, Hincha and Azua. The island also had urban militia or volunteer units, the strength and number of which varied greatly over the century. Finally, the island could also periodically count on four ships of the Armada de Barlovento to protect its coastline.

<sup>7</sup> Gascón, "The Military of Santo Domingo, 1720-1764", 431-452.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 215-219.

noble lineage.<sup>9</sup> The specific reference to status demonstrates understanding of Spanish administrative language— or language of empire. The town council members, who were part of the Spanish Dominican elite, requested these positions be reserved for them because they were the only respectable individuals on the island worthy to fill these commissions. Choosing someone of lesser status diminished and possibly undermined their position within island society. There was also a sense of entitlement to these positions for services rendered as the petition specifically excluded outsiders of similar rank. This particular feeling was the product of the on-going negotiation between the Spanish Crown and the Spanish Dominican elite.

The individual letters of petition, written by both men and women, emphasized the distinction and loyalty with which the petitioning individual had served and the extraordinary quality of the author. These statements of loyalty and quality were sometimes accompanied by a reminder that this particular individual had remained loyal to the Spanish Crown despite certain challenges, which ranged from unpaid salaries to being wounded or taken prisoner of war. The letters were always deferential in tone and acknowledged the munificence of the royal person either in relation to past favours bestowed upon them, for future considerations or both. Hereunder is an excerpt of one of these letters illustrating the general format utilized by petitioners.

“I (Mr. Pedro López de Osorio) hereby address you with all due respect, apologizing for distracting your attention to this matter and always grateful for the many favours granted to me as well as to my son-in-law don Antonio de Villaurrutia, senior member of this royal audience chamber, for having appointed his son Manuel as second lieutenant, on behalf of whom I renew my pledge and gratitude, I hereby deign to ask Your Honour to assign him some salary or instruct that he may be given the property in the event it were vacant, being eleven years and a few months old. My son-in-law has other children as

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<sup>9</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 941, real cédula 3F1690 refers to a real cédula in answer from Francisco de la Rocha Ferrer to SM on the 25 Apr. 1729.

well, whose names are Joseph and Antonio, for whom I beg that they may be appointed cadets in this battalion that I am in charge of.”<sup>10</sup>

The dynamics are clear. Don Pedro López de Osorio and don Antonio de Villaurrutia’s (y Salcedo) used their clout to pressure the Crown for three favours. In this particular case, the request could certainly not be ignored. Both don Osorio and don Villaurrutia y Salcedo were very prominent men in Spanish Dominican society. Osorio had once been Governor, President and Captain-General of the territory of Santo Domingo and don Villaurrutia was an Audiencia judge, who after this posting went on to serve in the prestigious Mexican tribunal.<sup>11</sup>

Unsurprisingly, the men wrote to the Crown while in office. Their wives took over after their husbands’ deaths.<sup>12</sup> The women were not as precise in relating the specific ranks and titles held by their spouses, as well as names of the battles they had participated in during their military careers. However, they always included the number of years of service and the highlights of their husbands’ military careers.<sup>13</sup>

Like the other petitioners, don Osorio used his service record and doña Zambrano detailed her husband’s service record in the King’s employment as leverage. For his part, Osorio dutifully reminded the King that he had served His Majesty faithfully for over fifty years, starting in the position of second lieutenant (together with another one of his brothers in the Spanish regiment) and then working his way through all of the various ranks until he reached his current position of Lieutenant Colonel.<sup>14</sup> Don Osorio went on to specify that, on an

<sup>10</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 1011, 78-6-35, Expedientes e Instancias 1759-1783: Carta a SM de don Pedro López de Osorio 02/01/1759.

<sup>11</sup> Larrazábal Blanco, *Familias Dominicanas*, vol. 1-9.

<sup>12</sup> Gary M. Miller, *Status and Loyalty in Colonial Spanish America: A Social History of Regular Army Officers in Venezuela, 1750-1810* (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation: University of Florida, 1985), 174-75, notes that in Venezuela, it was common for both men and women to write to the Crown with regard to salaries.

<sup>13</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 294, 55-1-1 Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1645-1713; Carta a SM de doña Luisa Guerrero Zambrano (mujer de don Ignacio Pérez Caro declarado difunto 1706), 28/10/1711.

<sup>14</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 1011, 78-6-35, Expedientes e Instancias 1759-1783: Carta a SM de don Pedro López de Osorio 02/01/1759.

interim basis, and for a period of time, he was also President, Governor and Captain-General of the territory of Santo Domingo. He was effectively justifying the validity of his petition through his own worthiness—hallmark of all of the petitioners' letters.

Doña Zambrano also related her husband's services but sought to establish her own worthiness. Although women could not serve the Crown by occupying paid positions, they were expected to morally support their husbands by being good wives. A happy man was a productive man, who contributed to the smooth running of the royal administration. The women were therefore, ultimately serving the Crown by supporting their husbands throughout those years. Doña Zambrano described to the Crown how she had stood by her husband throughout his appointments, moving to the Americas with her family to be with him in compliance with the royal will.<sup>15</sup> Her fidelity and loyalty to her husband established her worthiness in addition to her husband's. The double claim strengthened the legitimacy of the petition.

Requests also reminded the Spanish Crown of the precarious financial situation of the petitioners. Men and women both used "male breadwinner" rhetoric to outline their claim. The men, like don Andrés de Ocaña, requested that the Crown grant them promotions, financial aid (never in the form of alms) and the payment of their salaries so that they could provide for their families. Wives expected husbands to take care of them with a certain moral and material standard.<sup>16</sup> A good husband financially and materially provided (at the very least) the basic

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<sup>15</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 279, 54-6-94, Minutas de Consultas, Despachos y otros papeles sin fecha; Consulta la reina al Maestre de campo don Ignacio de Zayas Bazán. Doña Isabel María Mosquera petitioned the Crown for six entry level commissions for her sons.

<sup>16</sup> Sonya Lipsett-Rivera, "Marriage and Family Relations in Mexico during the Transition from Colony to Nation," in *State and Society in Spanish America During the 'Age of Revolution': New Research on Historical Continuities and Change ca. 1750s-1850s*, ed. Victor Uribe (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources Press, 2001), 121-148. For the later period, please see: Christine Hunefeldt, *Liberalism in the Bedroom: Quarrelling Spouses in Nineteenth Century Lima* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), 14. For more on the

necessities to their wives and children, protected them, judiciously managed the family's finances and respected his wife.<sup>17</sup> The inability to do so was to be a failure as a man and construed by women as a breach of the marital contract, which could entail separation. Given that the Spanish Crown had always considered married men to be better employees than single ones, because of the stability that the institution of marriage offered, it was only natural for husbands to hold the Crown partially responsible for their ability to provide the minimum material standard for their wives. Failure to do so presumably resulted in unstable marriages and poor job performance. An orderly society functioned well if men were able to materially look after their families enabling their wives to take care of the household and children, instead of debasing themselves by having to seek work outside the home or worse to beg. The continuation of reliable earned income was therefore the basis for petitioning entry-level commissions for their offspring, as their sons would succeed their fathers as the main breadwinners.

Before the establishment of the *Montepío Militar* (military pension) through the *Reglamento de la Fundación y Establecimiento del Monte de Piedad* (Regulation for the Foundation and Establishment of the Charitable Pension), women whose husbands died in the line of duty were left with no income, unless they remarried quickly.<sup>18</sup> Therefore it only seemed normal for them to petition the Crown for entry-level commissions for their sons, who became the source of income for the family. However, in order to obtain any *mercedes* (grace) from the King, women too had to demonstrate that they were worthy. Women established their quality by exemplifying the feminine ideals of obedience and faithfulness. They also

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ecclesiastical and legal code see: Sarah Chambers, *From Subject to Citizens: Honor, Gender and Politics in Arequipa, Peru 1780-1854*, (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999).

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> D.S. Chandler, "The Montepío and Regulation of Marriage in the Mexican Bureaucracy 1770-1821," *The Americas*, Vol. 43, No. 1 (July, 1986), 47-68.

highlighted their role in raising the children and managing the household.<sup>19</sup> Women justified the need for the Spanish Crown to grant their offspring entry-level commissions and requested financial aid (usually in the form of alms) for themselves by demonstrating to the Crown their loyalty to their husbands and their dedication to raising good citizens.<sup>20</sup> There is no question that the women recognized their status in Spanish Dominican society and used it to play a vital role in the island's political context.<sup>21</sup>

Doña Zambrano did this especially well. She not only reminded the Crown that she stood by her husband (and her son) but that she had followed him to Santo Domingo. Although there is no supporting documentation, it is likely that the argument of the "good wife" was still used even after the royal decree of 1783, which stipulated that wives and children had to follow their husbands to their new postings.<sup>22</sup> Given that her husband was dead and her son in jail, the lack of financial support by a male member was making her a failure as a woman because she could not keep house and raise "moral" children without a husband's salary. There is also an underlying sense that doña Zambrano felt that her untenable financial situation did not befit her status and was hardly a fate for a woman, who had fulfilled her biological role of producing a legitimate heir.<sup>23</sup> She felt entitled to protection and financial security for "services rendered" and placed the onus of the provision of these services, not on her dead husband, but on the Crown.

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Miller, *Status and Loyalty in Colonial Spanish America*, 161.

<sup>21</sup> Susan Kellogg, *Weaving the Past: A History of Latin America's Indigenous Women from the Prehispanic Period to the Present* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), *passim*, discusses the concept of women's agency in shaping Latin American history is very applicable to the Spanish Dominican case, particularly in regard to the elite women. This notion of the importance of women's actions in infusing meaning and purpose will become clearer in my discussion on gender driven marital pattern differences in chapter five.

<sup>22</sup> AGI, Indiferente, Nueva España, leg. 11, 136-4-11, Consultas, Reales Decretos y Ordenes, 1780-1786; Carta a SM de don Miguel de San Martínez Cueto 05/03/1783.

<sup>23</sup> Muriel Nazzari, "Sex/Gender Arrangements and the Production of Class in the Latin American Past," in *Gender Politics in Latin America: Debates in Gender and Power in Latin America: Methods, Theory, and Practice*, ed. Elizabeth Dore (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1997), 144.

The women's petitions probably did not abate after the introduction of the Montepío Militar.<sup>24</sup> The fund not only disbursed moneys to retired officers but to their wives and children after their husbands' and fathers' deaths through the Widow and Orphan Plan.<sup>25</sup> The main goal of the pension was to provide widows with enough funds to maintain themselves with decency during their retirement, as well as their families after their death. Although there were clear cut criteria as to which spouses were eligible for the pension, Gary M. Miller states that those, who were formally denied the pension in accordance with the regulations, were generally awarded monthly stipends from the *ramo de vacante mayores y menores* (vacant salaries of high and low (ecclesiastical) positions).<sup>26</sup> Moreover, the military, at least, felt it had a responsibility to maintain the status of officers' families.

This sense of earned entitlement to security of status is also present in the men's letters. Don Osorio provides the clearest articulation of this sentiment in his letter. He began by telling the Crown that even in times of shortages— an allusion to the delays in payment of salaries due to the irregular arrival of the *situado*— that he had managed his money carefully, while he was earning a salary that covered his maintenance.<sup>27</sup> After establishing good fiscal management, don Osorio explained to the Crown that at his advanced age (he died only a year later at the age of seventy five), he had to rely on his numerous grandchildren to support him. Moreover, he felt that the favour he requested should be granted, for he had devoted his life to serve the King. Refusal to do so condemned him to poverty. The financial security that the royal salaries represented was protection against poverty.<sup>28</sup> Thus, by granting the requested

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<sup>24</sup> Chandler, "The Montepío and Regulation of Marriage in the Mexican Bureaucracy," 47-68.

<sup>25</sup> Miller, *Status and Loyalty in Colonial Spanish America*, 130, 161-170.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 167-168.

<sup>27</sup> Nazzari, "Sex/Gender Arrangements and the Production of Class in the Latin American Past," *HAHR*, Vol. 66, No. 4, 144.

<sup>28</sup> Gary M. Miller, "Status and Loyalty of Regular Army Officers in Late Colonial Venezuela," *HAHR*, Vol. 66, No. 4 (November, 1986), 667-696, writes that officers petitioned the Crown for appointments and financial

commissions to the elite's children and grandchildren, whether they were men or women petitioners, the King was effectively not only providing elite Spanish Dominicans with protection against poverty but also against loss of status.

Osorio's request sheds further light on the dynamics of elite-Crown relations by explicitly putting his petition into perspective by reminding the Crown that a precedent existed for children of Dominican officials to be awarded military commissions under the same circumstances and for precisely the same reasons.<sup>29</sup> Don Osorio clearly saw his request as being no different than those already awarded to other elite Dominican families. The precedent established by positive answers to previous letters thereby became a justification for the continuation of the practice.

Both the women and men's requests were accompanied by a supporting letter from the Governor, Captain General and President of the island, who authenticated their situation and supported the applicants' claims. This recommendation generally strengthened the legitimacy of the claim by referring to specific salary amounts owed to both the men and their spouses. For instance, in the case of don Manuel Ignacio de Hinojosa, it indicated that the Spanish Crown owed him 300 pesos spread over his 31 year military career;<sup>30</sup> don Juan García had a credit of 942 reales over his 37 years of service<sup>31</sup> and don Gaspar Calvo claimed a payment imbalance of 3,941 1/3 reales over six years of service.<sup>32</sup>

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maintenance in the belief that the Crown would protect these officers, deemed to be poor nobles, from a decline in status.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 294, 55-1-1 Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1645-1713; Carta al Consejo de Indias del gobernador, capitán general y presidente de Santo Domingo 04/01/1719.

<sup>31</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 294, 55-1-1 Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1645-1713; Carta a SM de del gobernador, capitán general y presidente de Santo Domingo 31/05/1718.

<sup>32</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 296, 55-1-3, Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1726-1736; Carta al Consejo de Indias del gobernador, capitán general y presidente de Santo Domingo 1729.

At times, the President, Governor and Captain-General added facts or details designed to promote the Crown's understanding or sympathy toward a particular petitioner's situation. For example, the supporting letter accompanying doña Luisa Guerrero Zambrano's request added the more specific ranks and titles her husband had received, such as the title of Royal Admiral the King had bestowed upon him for his loyal service, as well as the battles in which he had participated.<sup>33</sup> He further elaborated on the reasons for her impoverishment. Her husband had, in fact, died in the line of duty. He passed away after seven months of imprisonment on an inhospitable beach at twenty leagues from the city of Santo Domingo.<sup>34</sup> Her son was unable to help her out given that he was being held in jail by creditors, who had come to collect on the family's debt. Generally speaking the President, Governor and Captain-General of the island not only supported the elite's petitions but generally improved the chances that their requests would be approved.

The essential goal of the petitions was to remind the Spanish Crown of the unflinching loyalty and continued service of Spanish Dominicans in the face of their difficult financial circumstances, attributable to the lack of investment in island development. This situation naturally constricted revenue generating opportunities. Aggravating the situation, of course, was the problem of the irregular salary payments. As discussed in chapter one, the Mexican *situado* sometimes arrived more than six years late. This meant that all royal officials, including the military cadres, had gone without salaries for that length of time. Although the officers regularly wrote to the Council of the Indies to ask that the amounts due be paid to

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<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 294, 55-1-1 Cartas y Expedientes de Personas Seculares 1645-1713; Carta a SM del gobernador, capitán general y presidente de Santo Domingo (mujer de don Ignacio Pérez Caro declarado difunto 1706), 28/10/1711. Don Ignacio Pérez Caro was a prisoner of war as a result of a skirmish between Spanish and English forces.

them at the arrival of the next available *situado*, the financial strain of living for extended periods with no incoming revenues was painful for the families and affected the territory in general. To deny elite Spanish Dominican petitions for entry-level commissions was to invite a possible revolt. The threat of riots, or worse, rebellions, in a key defensive zone was not only unpalatable but dangerous for Spain. Thus, the content of these letters, the specificity of the services rendered, the moneys owed and the troubles of meeting the demands of daily family life, coupled with the fact that there were no other “acceptable” candidates for the job, placed a value on Spanish Dominican loyalty, which the elite used as a bargaining chip to get what they wanted: control of their own affairs.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Colin M. MacLachlan, *Spain's Empire in the New World: The Role of Ideas in Institutional and Social Change* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 18, 44, explains that the Hapsburg and early Bourbon monarchs were receptive to this kind of negotiation because it “emphasized the monarch’s duty to guarantee Christian justice to his subjects (and) divorce the sovereign’s interests from those of the administration, exalting his duty to control its excesses and to legislate against its abuses.” The result, when taken to the extreme, was that the Spanish legal system strived to protect the rights of the oppressed as well as those of the oppressor. For his part, Jacques Barbier, *Elites and Cadres in Bourbon Chile*, 3-4, explains that: “Under the circumstances the provisions of one decree often violated those of another. Colonial officials thus had to be allowed to use their discretion in implementing directives, for to enforce all laws in all particulars was impossible. Naturally, the course they chose was dictated by political considerations. The Crown’s servants measured the competing pressures from the metropole and the colony, weighed their ability to overcome them, and considered where their own interests lay. This capacity to choose from among a variety of ‘legal’ modes of behavior allowed administrators to become autonomous from their superiors and turned them into an effective moderating force—one which interpreted the wishes of the crown for the colonists and of the colonists for the crown in such a way as to bring about a compromise. The bureaucracy became an intermediary body.” Furthermore, Barbier explains that this type of ideology which portrays the king as both working toward the common good and in need of counsel resulted in a long standing tradition of declarations by various officials of obedience and loyalty to the person of the king but of non-compliance with the royal will. It also enabled what Colin MacLachlan described as a “broad and fluid political arena (which) offered assurance of predictability while permitting flexibility.” The system enfranchised people by pushing them in the public arena. Although the governing ideology of the Bourbon state placed its “confidence in the state’s ability to effect change in accordance with a concrete pattern designed to achieve overall goals it was not felt until the advent of Charles III.” This change in ideology, although very real, did not make one iota of difference in Santo Domingo. Members of the elite continued to write letters to the Council of the Indies and the ministers because even though they may have been disenfranchised from the public participatory process, the Bourbons understood the politics of *quid pro quo*. Moreover, the endless letters written by Dominicans should be seen as an avenue through which they established a direct dialogue with the Crown. The Dominican elite achieved their goals under Hapsburg and Bourbon rule because there was no one else to replace them and the Crown was always in debt to them either from the salary in arrears or the loans. Moreover, their petitions for entry level commissions for their sons, endowed positions in the convent for their daughters, promotions and financial aid were granted by the Crown in consideration of the excellence of service but also for their continued military and financial loyalty. The entry level commissions and the promotions ensured that Spanish Dominicans would continue to be appointed and, subsequently serve in high ranking civil, military and ecclesiastical positions, from which they could continue

When the elite felt as though the Crown was, in fact, attacking their privileges, it did not hesitate to exchange the carrot for the stick. The Captains' Rebellion in Santiago de los Caballeros in 1721 began because of one of the many attempts to institute a customs house to control the cattle trade with the French Colony. Captain Isidro Miniel was to oversee the operation, but he was not part of the kinship system of the Morel de Santa Cruz family. Santiago Morel, along with three other captains and the local militia of the town and possibly a contingent of French soldiers, rebelled, usurped official power in the town and forced Miniel to abandon his post.<sup>36</sup> Martial law was declared on the island in the wake of what looked like the eve of a civil war between the Morel de Santa Cruz family and the authorities. In Gascón's words: "the only reason for the rebellion was the desire to control the Dajabon River passage."<sup>37</sup> Gascón's article indicates that the rebellion obtained the desired results—a return to business as usual.

The outcome of the sustained letter writing and political negotiations with the Spanish Crown was significant; fully twenty-five and a third percent of positions were awarded to local elite's sons for the fixed battalion.<sup>38</sup> For elite Dominican families, this practice ensured that they continued to obtain military commissions generation after generation. The repeated granting of entry-level positions meant these elite families established a dynastic presence in

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to draw salaries that permitted them to loan money to the Crown. The high ranking positions also gave them influence, which they used to petition the Crown for entry level military commissions and promotions. Furthermore, the endowed positions and financial aid, over and above the men's salaries or as a type of pension, allowed Dominican elite to monopolize the entire economic pie. The latter was easily achieved because whatever financial aid was granted, it was always accompanied by a note, which stipulated that the payment of these funds should be given a high priority when the *situado* arrived. The only items that had a higher pay out priority, after Cuba had helped itself, were the officials' salaries and government expenses. Given that royal officials and the petitioners of financial aid were all in the same group- elite- it is clear that they monopolized all of the incoming moneys. This situation ensured that no one else got a piece of the legal economic pie, thereby keeping the elite in power and allowing them ultimate control over their affairs.

<sup>36</sup> Gascón, "The Military of Santo Domingo, 1720-1764", 444-447.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 442.

<sup>38</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 1093, 1095, and 1092. The fixed battalion was more commonly known as simply the *fijo*.

military royal service in the territory of Santo Domingo.<sup>39</sup> The data in table 1, which traces the officers through the patrilineal line, demonstrates this phenomenon.

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<sup>39</sup> Miller, *Status and Loyalty in Colonial Spanish America*, ch. 1, also notices a dynastic presence of elite families in his study of the Venezuelan military.

**Table 1- Family Persistence in the Fijo from 1725 to 1777, and the Volunteer and Cavalry Units of 1777**

<b>Family Name</b>	<b>Year of Service</b>			
	<b>Review</b>			
	<b>1725</b>	<b>1749</b>	<b>1763</b>	<b>1777</b>
<b>Pérez-Caro y Fernández de Oviedo</b>	Juan Pérez-Caro	Juan Pérez-Caro	Juan Pérez-Caro	Ignacio Pérez-Caro
		Ignacio Pérez-Caro		Ramón Pérez-caro
				Mariano Pérez-Caro
				Francisco Pérez-Caro
<b>Figueroa-Valcárcel</b>	Francisco de Figueroa-Valcárcel	Francisco Figueroa-Valcárcel	Francisco Figueroa-Valcárcel	
			Francisco Figueroa-Valcárcel	
<b>Leos-Échalas</b>	Francisco Leos-Échalas	Gaspar Leos-Échalas		Gaspar de Leos-Échalas
				José de Leos-Échalas
				Mateo de Leos-Échalas
				Nicolás de Leos-Échalas
<b>Fernández Lara</b>	Juan de Lara		Manuel Fernández Lara	Manuel Fernández Lara
				Antonio Lara
<b>Ortega</b>	Ignacio de Ortega			Gabriel de Ortega
<b>Infante</b>	Juan Infante			Thomas Infante
<b>Castro-Coronado</b>	Pedro de Castro	Vicente de Castro		José de Castro Coronado
				Baltasar de Castro
				Juan de Castro
<b>Heredia</b>	Domingo de Heredia	Nicolás de Heredia	Andrés de Heredia y Melgar	Andrés de Heredia y Melgar
				Felipe Heredia

<b>Maldonado</b>	Alonso Maldonado			Gaspar Maldonado
<b>Hinojosa</b>		Bartolomé Hinojosa		Juan de Hinojosa Pedro Hinojosa Blas Hinojosa
<b>Caballero</b>		Francisco Caballero	Francisco Caballero (not same)	Francisco Caballero Manuel Caballero Alejandro Caballero
<b>Mieses Ponce de León</b>		Francisco Mieses Ponce de León		Ildefonso Mieses Ponce de León
<b>Guridi Acevedo</b>	Luis de Acevedo	Nicolás Guridi	Nicolás Guridi Mateo Guridi Luis Franco Guridi Acevedo Juan Franco Guridi de Acevedo	
<b>Coca-Landeché</b>	Antonio de Coca-Landeché			Antonio Coca Landeché Damián Coca Landeché
<b>Lousel Montero</b>		Pedro Lousel Montero	Pedro Lousel Montero Pedro Lousel Montero (jr.)	

Source: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 1092, 1093, and 1095 and Larrazábal Blanco, *Familias Dominicanas*, Vol. 1-9

The left hand column represents the family names of elite Spanish Dominican families, while those in the right hand column identify the particular individual who was serving in the years in which military service reviews were performed.<sup>40</sup> The pattern of service is clear. By controlling entry level military commissions, the Spanish Dominican elite also ensured that a certain percentage of the high ranking commissions would also be occupied by their own. Fully fifty percent of all the high ranking commissions were granted to elite native sons, placing this group firmly in control of that institution.

Petitions to the Council of the Indies were not the only way that Dominicans received appointments. Some quite blatantly paid for them. As in other parts of the Spanish empire, the purchase of offices, until the end of the War of Spanish Succession, served as a basis for a continued presence and influence of Spanish Americans in the royal administration.<sup>41</sup> Hispaniola was no different than elsewhere in the empire and the impact of these sales lasted a good many decades after the war. Don Antonio Coca-Candace bought his position as Commander of the battalion and Captain of one of its companies for 3,000 pesos in 1707.<sup>42</sup> The most frequently purchased position was that of Regidor. The following individuals purchased their positions: don Joseph Guridi (Regidor),<sup>43</sup> don Joseph Campuzano Polanco, don Antonio Pérez Caro, don Domingo de la Rocha y Landeche, don Juan de Mieses, don Francisco Martínez and don Joseph de Castro.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Many of these families owed their continued presence to particularly important family members- notably the Mieses Ponce de Leons (Juan Melgare Ponce de Leon); Girón to Sebastian Cereceda y Girón and Landeche Rocha Ferrer to Francisco Rocha Ferrer y Lobaces. The Pérez Caro y Fernández de Oviedo family had an impressive record of service from the very early colonial period but the military presence began with Ignacio Pérez Caro, who was Governor, Captain-General and President of the territory in the late seventeenth century.

<sup>41</sup> Burkholder and Johnson, *Colonial Latin America*, 299-301.

<sup>42</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 281, 21 Nov. 1707.

<sup>43</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 299, 55-1-6, Expedientes y Confirmaciones de Oficios Vendibles y Renunciabiles 1729-1758.

<sup>44</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 278, 54-6-33- Minutas de Consultas y Despachos: Y Algunos papeles de Secretaría años 1753-1759; representación del Rey a los oficiales reales de Santo Domingo, Madrid 30/04/1753.

Furthermore, elite Dominicans were the most regularly (despite the problems with the *situado*) and highly paid individuals on the island. They naturally, although sometimes unwillingly, became money lenders to the Crown when the royal coffers ran dry.<sup>45</sup> The loans were used for supplies, rebuilding fortifications and outfitting expeditions. The latter refers mostly to corsair activities. Given that the elite had some revenues and that privateer licenses were only issued to individuals, who could “prove that (they) had the funds to pay for the expedition and guarantee (their) responsibility for it,”<sup>46</sup> these same officers were the only people meeting these criteria. The risk of this type of loan, however, did not outweigh the benefits. Two-thirds of the moneys grossed from the sale of prizes (captured enemy ships) declared legal went directly to the officers, the last third went to the officials and crew, over which they had civil and criminal jurisdiction.<sup>47</sup> Elite control of privateering is confirmed by both Carlos Esteban Deive and Stapells-Johnson. She writes that “the Governor only accepted the backing of a selected three or four merchants of the city.”<sup>48</sup> Finally, although there are no recorded instances of loans to individuals, this may also have been a possibility. The money lending gave the military cadres influence and established them not only as supporters of the royal cause but also as loyal subjects.

### **Corruption, Border Trade and the Regiment**

The nepotism with which the elite ruled often resulted in corruption. Early in the eighteenth century, the outgoing President, Captain-General and Governor don Ignacio Pérez Caro was the subject of a royal inquiry regarding his activities as Captain General, Governor

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<sup>45</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 281, 21 Nov. 1707. The letter simple reads: “El presidente SM, acerca del testimonio de los autos obrados en razón de haberse negado a don Antonio de Coca Landeche a prestar cien pesos a las Cajas Reales para el socorro de la infantería de este presidio.”

<sup>46</sup> Stapells-Johnson, *Corsairs of Santo Domingo*, 38.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 38, 41.

<sup>48</sup> Deive, *Tangomangos*, 79-106, confirms members of the elite’s monopoly over privateering and illicit trade in the sixteenth and seventeenth century and Stapells-Johnson, *Corsairs of Santo Domingo*, 67, does the same for the eighteenth century.

and President of the island in 1693.<sup>49</sup> He was found guilty of personally defrauding the royal treasury of some 16,000 pesos by selling illegal shipments of goods, such as wine, sugar and textiles, out of the main reserves and illegally obtaining French slaves from the unauthorized port of Puerto Rico during his time in office.<sup>50</sup> He was found to have been aided and abetted by the individuals listed hereunder.<sup>51</sup> It should be noted that a good majority of them were also of the elite class, with family members holding other military or civil commissions. They are: don Juan de Soria (Contador), don Rodrigo Claudio Maldonado (Captain), don Manuel Calderón (Captain), don Juan López de Morla (Captain), don Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo (Regidor), don Juan Pérez Caro, don Antonio Guridi, don Juan de Aranjó, don Vicente Álvarez, don Francisco de Rosas, don Juan Alexandro Fortun, don García de Carrasco, don Juan de Recaldes, Manuel de Abrego, don Joseph Laguna, Joseph Martínez, Francisco Aguilar, Gregorio Bazán, Francisco del Rosario, Manuel Sánchez, Pedro Ortiz, Pablo Sánchez, Lorenzo Jirón, Luis de la Paz, don Joseph del Castillo, Juan Marcelino, Joseph de Acevedo, don Thomas Antonio de Lucena, Juan Baptista Fernández, Juan de Hozes, Juan Antonio de Velasco (Alférez), Joseph de Sarre, Simón de Castro, Baltasar Simón (de Castro), don Juan Mañón and don Juan Flamenco. It is clear that don Ignacio Pérez Caro conducted these illegal activities through his extensive clientele and kin networks with the other members of the elite and the help of the men, who served him in the fixed battalion.

This one case, however, was not aberrant in nature. Corruption pervaded Spanish Dominican society. Margarita Gascón's study emphasizes the flagrant abuse of power of the

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<sup>49</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 276, 54-6-91- dated 1696-Consultas y reales decretos sobre envío de familias aquellas islas y otros puntos; subject: pesquisa contra don Ignacio Pérez Caro y otros.

<sup>50</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 306, 55-1-13 expediente de lo obrado en la pesquisa contra don Ignacio Pérez Caro y otros: años 1698-1704.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

Morel de Santa Cruz family in the territory's second largest city, Santiago de los Caballeros.<sup>52</sup> The family used their high ranking civil and military commissions to build extensive clientele networks, stretching across racial and class lines. Their extensive kin and patron-client connections allowed them to exercise great influence over the city's affairs, including the outcome of their own trial for having orchestrated a rebellion against the authorities in the capital city. Although Gascón focuses on the Morel de Santa Cruz family, she makes it clear that the military cadres, members of the elite, assigned to train the urban militia and volunteer units in the outlying areas, were all corrupt. She explains that officers used their positions as "mechanisms for appropriating and regulating the cattle trade."<sup>53</sup> The power these officers exercised was not unlike that of *caudillos* (strong men) in nineteenth-century Latin America. The officers built extensive clientele networks and used violence to keep the population from turning against them. For example, the Morel de Santa Cruz forced their few slaves to commit crimes against those who opposed them.<sup>54</sup> Their power stemmed not only from their role as legal authorities but simply from the revenues they received from the illegal cattle trade.

### **Corsairs, Privateers and the First Families**

Privateering was also a preserve for the elite, as well as a vehicle for further corruption. The financial proof required to obtain privateer licenses, as well as the cost to equip and maintain ships, ensured that elite families, such as the Herrera, Rocha, Louzel, Maldonado Castro, Ayala, Ponce de León, Heredia and Aponte<sup>55</sup> were involved. Although

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<sup>52</sup> Gascón, "The Military of Santo Domingo, 1720-1764," 452.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 436 and Miller, "Status and Loyalty of Regular Army Officers in Late Colonial Venezuela" 667-696, also highlights the fact that Venezuelan military officers supplemented their income by participating in illegal trading activities.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 438, 443.

<sup>55</sup> Stapells-Johnson, *Corsairs of Santo Domingo*, Appendix.

privateering entailed a certain level of violence, depredations were committed and excesses were frequent and renowned amongst Spanish American corsairs. In acknowledgement of this, the Spanish Crown agreed to pay 95,000 pounds to the English in compensation for said actions in 1730.<sup>56</sup> Although there were probably many instances of mistreatment, the case of don José Campuzano Polanco is instructive. Campuzano Polanco was born to an elite family.<sup>57</sup> His father was a civil servant and his brother a Lieutenant Colonel and Alderman (Regidor) in La Vega.<sup>58</sup> His long list of depredations included mistreating the crew of one of the ships he captured and confining them to his home while he awaited the court's verdict. He also threatened a royal official if he reported his misdeeds.<sup>59</sup>

Polanco's misbehaviour provides further proof that the elite acted without fear of retribution or consequences. His proclivity towards violence reflects the more general strong arm tactics utilized by the elite to establish their power and authority over a given area. The combination of frontier life and an elevated number of enlisted men likely produced a society in which a certain level of male violence was common and tolerated. However, excesses, such as Polanco's, were prosecuted and punished. Families also seemed to have attempted to self-regulate the conduct of some of their more troublesome members. Similar to the French *lettres de cachet*,<sup>60</sup> Spanish Dominican families pleaded with the Spanish Crown to keep certain members incarcerated "for their own good." The tone of these petitions was one of

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 102.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 107. Stapells-Johnson mentions that Polanco's wife was also reported to have been a "menace" because she too threatened the same official for keeping her husband in jail for having killed the crews of two French ships he had seized, as well as writing "indecorous" letters to both the archbishop and the governor of the island on her husband's behalf. Although I can understand that her behaviour towards the official was described as indecorous, I am somewhat surprised that this term was applied to her letters, as it seems perfectly acceptable within the context. She was financially dependent on her husband and Polanco's incarceration prevented him from earning money, which represented an overall loss in family income.

<sup>60</sup> *Le Désordre des familles : lettres de cachet des Archives de la Bastille au XVIIIe siècle*, eds. Arlette Farge and Michel Foucault (Paris: Gallimard-Julliard, 1982).

desperation and shame as parents exposed the depth of their offspring's misdeeds and their inability to control their actions. For example, don Ignacio de Hinojosa's letter exposed the sad truth of the violent behaviour of his son, don Joseph de Hinojosa, particularly towards his wife.<sup>61</sup> It was the father's hope that the King's intervention might reform his son so that he might settle down and live, once again, companionably with his wife. The President, Governor and Captain-General of the island, don Joseph Solano, confirmed that don Joseph had a severe behavioural problem but added that it was far worse than that mentioned in the father's letter. Solano also thought that it was high time someone put an end to this young man's shameful delinquency.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the small but powerful elite group of Spanish Dominicans acquired control over the territory of Santo Domingo's politics and economics. Their preeminent position was largely due to their ability to harness the language of empire and negotiate concessions from the Spanish Crown in return for services rendered. I discussed the first step of this process in the preceding chapter. Elite Spanish Dominicans conveyed to the Crown their status in the territory of Santo Domingo's society by reflecting the metropole's racialized ideal: white, legitimate and pure of blood. The Spanish Crown understood that these Spanish Dominican families were the only respectable individuals suited for high ranking royal employment. The recognition opened a dialogue between the elite and the Crown. The island's abysmal economic situation was combined with the services provided to the Crown to form the basis for subsequent petitions for entry level military appointments for

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<sup>61</sup>AGI, Indiferente, Nueva España, leg. 45, 136-5-10, Inventario Secretaría de Nueva España 1610-1815; Expediente del Consejo de Indias al presidente de Santo Domingo, 1773; AGI, Indiferente, Nueva España 64, 126-5-29, Cartas y Expedientes de Nueva España 1773; Expediente a SM del Consejo de Indias, Madrid 22/04/1773; AGI, Indiferente, Nueva España leg. 64, 126-5-29, Cartas y Expedientes de Nueva España 1773; Expediente a SM del Consejo de Indias, 15/05/1772.

their sons. Both Spanish Dominicans and the Crown understood the value of loyalty in a region where living conditions were very harsh because of the irregular payments of the royal officials' salaries, as well as the scarcity of basic goods and staples. Members of the elite were the King's representatives in the territory of Santo Domingo. Given that there was simply no alternative group that could be appointed to these high ranking positions, the Spanish Crown was dependent on the Spanish Dominican elite. Their compliance was necessary in order to ensure that royal control was upheld and that military defence continued to be provided. The Spanish Crown could simply not afford to alienate the elite as they might refuse to loan the administration money to cover the most basic island expenses when the situado was delayed, refuse to enforce the royal will or worse, induce a riot or a rebellion. Moreover, the Spanish Crown entered into negotiations with the Spanish Dominican elite. In return for their loyalty and services rendered in the service of the Spanish empire, the Crown continued to grant them commissions in the royal bureaucracy, as well as generally ignored any infractions they committed regarding mercantilist trade regulations. The position of the Spanish Dominican elite was therefore guaranteed by the Spanish Crown.

#### **Chapter Four- Marriage and Network Formation**

The small but tightly knit elite group was held together by close interpersonal ties, generally cemented through the Roman Catholic sacrament of marriage. As I explained in chapter two, two key components of elite identity were legitimacy and purity of blood. The ability to demonstrate these qualities to the Spanish Crown established individuals as members of the elite, which in turn made them eligible for royal service. After the Council of Trent in 1563, the sacrament of marriage was the only vehicle through which the elite's sons and daughters could prove they possessed these qualities. It is therefore not surprising that the elite, above any other group on the island, sought to marry lawfully.

Contracting marriages in the Roman Catholic tradition was expensive and time consuming, even more so if dispensations were required for the endless list of marital impediments. As a small group that intermarried amongst themselves, it was inevitable that the elite were more likely than any other socio-economic class in the territory of Santo Domingo to seek dispensations for reasons of consanguinity, which they successfully obtained by using the language of empire. Despite the added expenses and delays, the Spanish Dominican elite were determined to receive the sacrament of marriage because they understood the value it represented in terms of their social standing on the island and within the empire. Therefore, the Catholic sacrament of marriage served two purposes. First, it was the central component around which the elite's identity was created and, second, it was the vehicle through which they controlled entry into their group.

Finally, although there was an evident proliferation of royal regulations on marriages in the second half of the eighteenth century, they presented no new challenges to existing marital practices in the territory of Santo Domingo. The regulations were merely

implemented in an effort to enforce compliance of the generally disregarded legislation. Although Charles III's overriding goal was to curtail power network formation of officials in the regions in which they served, loopholes embedded in the legislation actually ended up encouraging officials to marry within their own ranks. Given that the Spanish Dominican elite was small and largely composed of royal officials, it was rather hard to approve of marriages between officials' families while denying the formation of power networks. It was simply not possible. Moreover, the royal legislation merely served to reinforce existing marital practices, instead of limiting this group's power.

Given that marital unions represented the alliance of two families, including those forged through marriage, formed the strongest and therefore the most reliable bonds. However, fictive kinship ties, that is to say non-blood relatives, such as those through godparentage were also effective in maintaining and reaffirming family loyalty and support. For the elite, spousal selection was not unlike a membership to an exclusive club. Generation after generation, they intermarried within these select families in what can be understood as a renewal of the ties within the same circle. The complicated family networks created through marriage cemented commercial, political and trade alliances between these elite families. The tight interpersonal networks within the core group of Spanish Dominican elite families served to re-assert their own status, while keeping undesirables out. This is not to say that the elite was composed of a static group but that marriage was the vehicle through which members maintained their position or, as in the case of royal foreign officials, were accepted into the fold. In the end, marriages bound the elite together, which in turn enabled them to operate with a unity of purpose: achieving control of their own affairs.

## Marital Unions in the Americas

The Roman Catholic sacrament of marriage was certainly not the only type of marriage present in the Americas.<sup>1</sup> Spain had a history of informal unions, which ranged from personal exchanges of vows and fidelity to *barraganía*:<sup>2</sup> a quasi marriage. In the latter option, the couple entered into a contract, which held the same marital restrictions as those of the Catholic sacrament of marriage: to be single, faithful and not related by the prohibited degrees of kinship.<sup>3</sup> The union was terminated through a notary because no promises to wed were exchanged and a priest had not officiated. Betsy Kuznesof believes that when *barraganía* was imported to the Americas by the Spanish conquerors, the practice evolved into a more lasting form of concubinage and became the norm in interracial unions between Spaniards, Native Americans and Africans.<sup>4</sup> This type of long term partnership was also found in early British and French colonial regimes in the Americas. French and British men married Indian women “according to the custom of the country.”<sup>5</sup> The customary way merely

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<sup>1</sup> Kellogg, *Weaving the Past*, ch. 2, explains that from the earliest period of conquest three types of relationships existed in the Americas: violent and fleeting, transient (of undetermined length) and long term stable unions. She notes that although conquistadors overwhelmingly favoured unions to Spanish women, in the early colonization period it was advantageous to form ties to the indigenous elite. Kellogg even states that marriages between the two groups were arranged and cemented alliances.

<sup>2</sup> Heath Dillard, *Daughters of the Reconquest: Women in Castilian Town Society, 1100-1300* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984), ch. 5, asserts that the word *barraganía* comes from *barragana*. A *barragana* is a concubine to bachelors, priests or married men. The *barragana* of a married man was of course not lawful as it was considered adultery, if not bigamy. After the Council of Trent a *barragana* to a priest was also unlawful. However, the practice of *barraganía* was perfectly lawful and widely accepted in the case of bachelors. Dillard defines a *barragana* (a woman in a state of concubinage to a priest, a bachelor or a married man) as “...the lawful companion of a townsman’s youth and was herself characteristically a young woman. He (the bachelor) was in principle, the brave young bachelor who would someday marry a woman of comparable social status” but not the *barragana*. The essential role of the *barraganía* was to tame the young men, root the reckless and discourage abduction (*raptó*) of the high status townsfolk’s women. The children born of these unions were designated in the parish registers as *hijos naturales*- natural children. Although there were regional variations through the Spanish empire, the children born of these unions were allowed to inherit.

<sup>3</sup> Twinam, *Public Lives, Private Secrets*, 37.

<sup>4</sup> Kuznesof, ‘Raza, Clase y Matrimonio en la Nueva España: Estado Actual del Debate’ *Familias Novohispanas Siglos XVI al XIX: Seminario de Historia de la Familia Centro de Estudios Históricos*, ed. Pilar Gonzalbo Aizpuru (México: El Colegio de México, 1991), 373-388.

<sup>5</sup> Jennifer Brown, *Strangers in Blood: Fur Trade Company Families in Indian Country*, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1980), 51.

referred to the local traditional practices of the ethnic group in question of uniting spousal partners, which could be strikingly different from one community to the other. In Latin America, marital ceremonies probably evolved differently by region given the varying racial composition. The resulting form of this type of union was a syncretic product of the three cultures' original ideas.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, these informal pairings were presumably inexpensive, or at least, less costly than the sacrament of marriage. The historical presence of concubinage in all three societies, the ease with which it was adopted in the Americas and its affordability were central to its persistence in Latin America, particularly amongst members of the lower class. Unfortunately, there were no registers to record this practice therefore it is difficult to determine the exact number of illicit unions that took place in society and their durability. It should suffice to say that it was prevalent throughout the period.

It is important to remember that marriage in the Roman Catholic tradition remained an option in Latin America. However, selecting it brought tangible benefits to certain socio-economic groups, such as the elite. The fact of the matter was that the Decree Tametsi of the Council of Trent (1545-1565)<sup>7</sup> created a distinction between the Roman Catholic sacrament of marriage and these other forms of unions. Although they were all previously legitimate, the decree, accepted by the Spanish Crown, stated that the Roman Catholic sacrament of marriage was the only legitimate form of marriage and that, from this point forward, the other types of unions were illicit. The distinction brought about a legal change. Thereafter, the Spanish Crown only recognized unions celebrated in the Roman Catholic tradition as lawful. This decision had far reaching ramifications in terms of Spanish administrative

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<sup>6</sup> Ramón A. Gutiérrez, *When Jesus Came, The Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality and Power in New Mexico, 1500-1846* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1984), 259.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 242, 249. It is important to note that the simple exclusion of legality of the other forms of unions did not suddenly bring them to an end in either Spain or the Americas.

practice, particularly with regard to legitimacy. The decision merely meant that the Spanish Crown would not recognize unions celebrated in any other tradition than by the Roman Catholic Church. It is probable that the appeal of the latter hinged mostly on the fact that each ecclesiastical marriage was duly recorded in the marital registers.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, this administrative practice left tangible evidence of the authenticity of these unions, available for consultation should the need arise. Moreover, the administrative paper trail was compatible with the Spanish Crown's insistence on certificates of purity of blood.

The legitimacy of the union served as a marker of distinction. As discussed in chapter one, the economic situation on the island was difficult, even at the best of times. Small differences in wealth and lineage essentially separated the elite from the poor. Persons able to demonstrate legitimacy of birth and purity of blood were eligible for the meager royal employment opportunities available on the island, and by extension gave them access to wealth, in the form of salaries, paltry though they were.

Finally, the celebration of marriage also publicly reaffirmed the status of the elite vis-à-vis the rest of the population because it served as a public display of their wealth, as weddings were costly and public. The visibility of the event was a chance for the elite to be seen and to remind the other socio-economic groups of their status. A Roman Catholic marriage was a public event due to its procedural ritual, which required a priest to officiate and witnesses to be present. For the elite, witnesses were selected from within their own ranks and, with a little luck, from the very cream of society. Thus, the sacrament could only be administered publicly and the attendance of royal officials served as a display of the elite's powerful ties within the community.

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<sup>8</sup> Decree Tametsi (Council of Trent 1563) states that; "The parish priest shall have a book, which he shall keep carefully by him, in which he shall register the names of the persons married, and of the witnesses, and the day on which, and the place where, the marriage was contracted."

## Courtship and Engagements in View of Marriage

Courtship was as highly regulated as the Roman Catholic sacrament of marriage. During the courting process, the suitability of the candidate was evaluated by the parents. If he/she was judged acceptable, parents allowed the relationship to continue and, perhaps, even encouraged it, whereas if the candidate was determined to be inadequate, parents likely attempted to end the relationship before the question of marriage arose.<sup>9</sup> If the spousal partner was approved by the parents, the first step towards marriage was the social visit of the groom's parents to the bride's house to present a formal letter asking for the bride's hand in marriage.<sup>10</sup> A negative response was tendered quickly, while an affirmative one usually took fifteen days. The latter was hand delivered by the bride's family. At that time, the betrothal (*prendorio*) occurred with an exchange of gifts (*prendas* and *donas*) and culminated in the formal exchange of the dowry and the bride price (*arras*).<sup>11</sup> The couple was then considered engaged to be married.<sup>12</sup>

Twinam and Socolow write that in Spanish society there was a customary tolerance for premarital sex between persons, who had exchanged *palabras de futuro* (promises to marry), taken solemn oaths to each other or exchanged goods.<sup>13</sup> Popular acceptance of premarital sex<sup>14</sup> was reflected in Spanish law, which created a "special" category of illegitimate children born of these seemingly stable unions expected to end in marriage. The

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<sup>9</sup> Stolcke, "Elopement and Seduction in Nineteenth-Century Cuba," 91-129, states that the suitability of the candidate was evaluated according to birth, conduct/reputation, professional background, wealth and religion.

<sup>10</sup> Gutiérrez, *When Jesus Came, The Corn Mothers Went Away*, 261-263.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Sergio Ortega Noriega, "El discurso teológico de Santo Tomás de Aquino sobre el matrimonio, la familia y los comportamientos sexuales," in *El placer de pecar y el afán de normar. Seminario de historia de las mentalidades*, ed. Joaquín Mortiz (Mexico: UNAM, Dirección de estudios Históricos del Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1987), 40.

<sup>13</sup> Twinam, *Private Lives, Public Secrets*, 36-37 and Socolow, *The Women of Colonial Latin America*, ch. 5.

<sup>14</sup> Asunción Lavrin, "Sexuality in Colonial Mexico: A Church Dilemma," in *Sexuality and Marriage in Colonial Latin America*, ed. Asunción Lavrin (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), 47-95.

*hijos naturales* (natural children) stood out from the other types of illegitimates as the parents were known but simply unmarried.<sup>15</sup> This designation made it easier for children to be legitimated and designated as legal inheritors at a later date than for children of unknown parentage<sup>16</sup> or of the more distasteful categories of illegitimates, such as priests or nuns' offspring.<sup>17</sup> The act of legitimizing a child often occurred towards the twilight years of a man's life, perhaps as the result of a crisis of conscience.<sup>18</sup> In their old age or on their death bed, fathers recognized offspring precisely so that they would be included in the partitioning of the inheritance.<sup>19</sup>

Unlike in the Anglo-Saxon tradition, marriage was a process, which began with a promise to marry or an engagement. Twinam writes that it was not uncommon for couples to live together openly and have children before receiving the sacrament of marriage.<sup>20</sup> In Santo Domingo, notations to this effect appear in the marital entries of don Francisco de Figueroa and doña Isabel Rodríguez de Moralez, as well as don Gregorio García and María Ramírez, Diego Felipe and doña María Escobar.<sup>21</sup> However, the fact remains that the designation "natural" was extended to only children worthy of it: offspring born of a stable union

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<sup>15</sup> Dillard, *Daughters of the Reconquest*, ch. 5, states that the designation of *hijo natural* was applied in the Peninsula to children born of unions involving *barraganía*. Elizabeth Anne Kuznesof, "Raza, Clase y Matrimonio en la Nueva España: Estado Actual del Debate," in *Familias Novohispanas Siglos XVI al XIX: Seminario de Historia de la Familia Centro de Estudios Históricos*, ed. Pilar Gonzalbo Aizpuru (Mexico: El Colegio de México, 1991), 373-388, mentions in her article that Woodrow Borah and Sherburne Cook were the first to use the term *hijos naturales* in response to the designations they saw in the Latin American sacramental records.

<sup>16</sup> Children of unknown parentage, quite specifically foundlings and orphans, have their own tortuous and difficult history with regard to Spanish law. In general foundlings were treated as legitimate children, while orphans only were given that status in the late eighteenth century.

<sup>17</sup> Ann Twinam, *Private Lives, Public Secrets*, 38.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, ch. 4.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.* ch. 8., Twinam discusses legitimacy in Spanish colonial society and explains that legitimation did not necessarily translate into an ability to inherit. This second consideration was also determined by Cámara officials.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 40. The English Statute of Merton 1236 decreed according to Twinam that: "the eventual marriage of unwed parents did not legitimate offspring born prior to the ceremony."

<sup>21</sup> AAMSD, 636858, 636859.

expected to be legitimized at a future date. If the anticipated marriage did not occur, for whatever the reason (death at the time of delivery, illness, disease or separation), the label of “natural” still remained. The only way to absolutely ensure, from the very beginning, that children would be legitimate was for their parents to marry before or shortly after they were born.

Children whose parents had intended to marry but never did for whatever reason could petition the King<sup>22</sup> in matters of grace (*gracias al sacar*) to purchase a change in their status.<sup>23</sup> However, the parameters for a successful application gradually became more stringent. Ann Twinam divides the eighteenth century into three periods, which she terms: “Petition and Pay” (1717-1760), “Petition, Prove and Pay” (1761-1775) and finally “Petition, Prove, Prejudice and Pay” (1776-1793).<sup>24</sup> She explains that in the first period anyone would be legitimated, while in the second period documented proof of natal status, as well as the marital status of the parents were required. Officials also looked to the local elites, who sent clear signals of whether the applicant should be approved or not. It was also the start of concerns about higher morality standards and the beginning of biases towards legitimating illegitimates in the following birth categories: *adulterino* (adulterine), *sacrilego* (sacrilegious: priest’s children), *incestuoso* (incestuous), illegitimates and unknown (foundlings and orphans). The success of the applications in the third and last period depended on the ability not only to substantiate the claims in writing but that no evidence to the contrary surfaced in

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<sup>22</sup> The petitions actually went to the Cámara in the Council of the Indies, which was responsible for naming civil and ecclesiastical appointments and dispensing favours. There is some discontinuity in the records given that the Cámara itself was abolished in 1701, re-established in 1714 and abolished again in 1717. The Council of the Indies itself no longer reported to the King after 1717 but to the Ministry of the Indies and did so until 1787. After that date the Ministry of the Indies for *Gracias y Justicia* (Grace and Justice) took over until 1790 and finally the Ministry of Justice was in charge until 1808. The petitions were sent through crown attorneys to the fiscal for the Viceroyalty of Peru (South America) or New Spain (Caribbean, Central America and Mexico) and then to the Cámara.

<sup>23</sup> Twinam, *Public Lives, Private Secrets*, 50-55.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, ch. 9-10.

the independent investigations carried out by the Cámara. Also, a divide on the basis of prejudice was created between the most privileged category of illegitimates, the “naturales,” and the true illegitimates (bastards). Whereas the former could obtain legitimation by demonstrating the intention of the parents to marry and their ability to do so without ecclesiastical impediment, the latter had to also prove their merit, whether through royal service or acquired status. Applications, however, were not accessible to all, given that the Cámara of the Council of the Indies assigned a cost for reviewing the requests.<sup>25</sup> Similarly to the dispensations discussed in the following paragraphs, the *gracias al sacar* occasioned a change in the status of the person to whom it was granted vis-à-vis the law. Moreover, legitimacy was not a fixed status.

The Spanish Crown’s recognition that marriage was a process meant that special provisions existed in order to accommodate the expectation that engaged couples with natural children could receive the sacrament of marriage. For the couples who finally made the trip to the altar, the law permitted a retroactive change in their children’s status from *hijo natural* to legitimate. The individuals whose parents, for whatever reason never lawfully married, could petition the king for a *gracias al sacar*. Due to the high costs associated with these requests, it is clear that this second option was only available to those who had the financial resources: the upper classes.

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 250-251, 260. Twinam indicates that in the early period service fees for reviewing these petitions varied but that to legitimate an *hijo natural* one might pay 2,292 *reales*, while for an *adulterino* the cost would be 2,749 *reales* and for a *sacrilego* 2,800 *reales*. In the second period, a price list (*arancel*) was established which clearly itemized the price of *gracias al sacar* for each category. Thus, for the *hijo natural* the price was set at 1,650 *reales*, for an *adulterino* at 9,900 *reales* and for a *sacrilego* at 12,100 *reales*.

## The Sacrament of Marriage and Impediments

After the engagement, the first step towards receiving the sacrament of marriage was the *diligencia matrimonial* (marital investigation).<sup>26</sup> The marital investigation required that the potential bride and groom, as well as two witnesses for each of them, appear before the parish priest to provide proof of identity, eligibility for marriage and to answer a list of questions in order to ascertain if any impediments existed to their union. The number and classification of these impediments<sup>27</sup> to marriage have changed over time and were admittedly ill defined. However, the Catholic Encyclopedia recognizes fifteen impediments to marriage as of the Council of Trent.<sup>28</sup> They were divided into two overarching categories: *impedimentos prohibitorios* (prohibited) and *impedimentos dirimentes* (decision based). The former were obstacles that rendered a marriage illicit, while the latter rendered it invalid.<sup>29</sup> These were further divided into relative (temporary or affecting only certain persons) and absolute (total prohibition) impediments and again into public (known breaches of regulations) and private (dissimulated or hidden breaches such as certain criminal acts).<sup>30</sup> The recognized impediments were grouped into six categories: 1) clandestine marriages: marriages not performed by priests or undertaken between the beginning of the advent period and the Epiphany and again between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday; 2) religious difference: marriages to persons of another faith; 3) personal capacity to marry: general character flaws, such as religious vows, divorce, mental health, impotence or being under the age of puberty; 4) problems with consent, such as non-consent (abduction), forced consent;

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<sup>26</sup> Ramón A. Gutiérrez, "From Honor to Love: Transformations of the Meaning of Sexuality in Colonial New Mexico," in *Kinship Ideology and Practice in Latin America*, ed. Raymond T. Smith (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 237-263.

<sup>27</sup> Impediments for marriage are any obstacles arising from natural or divine law which do not permit a person to enter into a marital contract.

<sup>28</sup> *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Online Edition, Volume 1.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

5) previous marriage: valid consent but one of the spouses was already married (adultery/bigamy/polygamy) and finally: 6) affinal and consanguine problems: prohibition of any marriages in the direct line (ascending or descending) or to the fourth generation in a collateral line.<sup>31</sup> The latter extended to spiritual and fictive parentage, rendering illegal marriages between godfathers and godchildren or the family of the godchildren, as well as between parents and adopted children.<sup>32</sup> The impediment or blood ties also extended to anticipated marriages that were in the engagement stage. Although the list was quite extensive and appeared to limit endogamy within limited genetic pools, dispensations<sup>33</sup> were available from the Holy See for all impediments dirimentes, including consanguinity and affinity.

The process, however, was costly and lengthy because the requests for a dispensation, as well as the payment had to be sent to the Vatican and if it was granted the certificate had to be sent back to the Americas. Therefore, dispensations were an option mainly reserved for the elite.<sup>34</sup> However, granting of a dispensation relating to the prohibitions of consanguinity or affinity regulations allowed the elite to intermarry within a very limited circle of families with whom they were either directly (consanguine tie) or

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 6-11.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> In Canon Law a dispensation is a certificate granted by the Vatican that removes in part or completely the particular obstacle (impediment) to natural or divine law.

<sup>34</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 278, 54-6-33- Minutas de Consultas y Despachos: Y Algunos papeles de Secretaría años 1753-1759; Consulta Consejo de Indias al Arzobispo de Santo Domingo, 15/01/1755. Although no monetary figures are mentioned, the consultation recognized that the costs were prohibitive and were, in fact, getting more horrendous as time passed, there were also problems to retrieve payments for these favours from the Americas. The letter indicates "un gran gasto para obtener genero de dispensaciones en Roma, llega a ser excesivo y intolerable a los vecinos de la América porque o bien remitan el dinero de Santo Domingo, e las Indias o bien lo traen a interés en España luego el gasto de una dispensación a tan excesiva cantidad por los premios y dichos que fuera de las costas de cambio ha de pagar que no pueden absolutamente satisfacerla si se precisan, a acudir a dicha corte para colegirla."

indirectly (collateral or affinal tie) related.<sup>35</sup> The dispensation of impediments was duly recorded in the marital registers and in Santo Domingo there were eighteen cases of dispensations alone due to consanguinity out of 216 granted in the eighteenth century.<sup>36</sup> Given that almost 50 years are missing from the marital records, the approximate total number of dispensations granted in the territory of Santo Domingo for the entire period can be estimated at double the original number, approximately 432.<sup>37</sup> Moreover, inbreeding was often the result of these marital strategies. In Santo Domingo, many fourth or fifth generation family members had the same two last names, such as the children of the three following siblings, who married within the same family line: Julian Fernández Castro y Fernández Lara and María Antonia de la Coronación Fernández de Castro; Pedro Fernández de Castro y Fernández Lara and Luisa María Fernández de Castro, as well as Domingo Fernández Castro y Fernández Lara and Ana Victoria Fernández de Castro.<sup>38</sup> Their children thus bore the name Fernández de Castro y Fernández de Castro. Also, don José Francisco Julián Núñez Lausel married doña María de los Dolores Núñez Lisle and don Antonio Landeche married doña María del Rosario Landeche Bastidas.<sup>39</sup> The children of these two unions therefore had the same double last name, Núñez y Núñez and Landeche y Landeche, respectively.

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<sup>35</sup> Claude Levi-Strauss, *The Elementary Structures of Kinship* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), 9, 45, discusses the natural inclinations of society to exclude certain types of affinal and consanguine marriages and the rule of endogamy/exogamy. He further states that these inclinations vary not only according to ethnic groups but by class as well. It is clear that the cases of known Spanish Dominican marriages involving very close kin were limited to the elite. Moreover, the data appears to validate Levi-Strauss's underlying thesis. However, it is important to remember that all known kinship structures are derived from official records, which, by necessity, do not include people on the margins. In these cases, illicit unions, of which there were probably many, cannot be analyzed and therefore, I can come to no firm conclusion regarding the prevalence or limitation of close kin marriages in the territory of Santo Domingo in the eighteenth century.

<sup>36</sup> AAMSD, 636858, 636859. The query was extracted from the database.

<sup>37</sup> I simply multiplied the above number by two.

<sup>38</sup> AAMSD, 636858, 636859 and Larrazábal Blanco's *Familias Dominicanas*, passim.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.* The data is based on reconstructions of the Coca Landeche Angulo and Núñez de Cáceres families.

The high number of requests and the limited number of members of the secular clergy<sup>40</sup> in most areas of the Americas led the Catholic Church to grant dispensatory powers to some orders of the regular clergy, such as the Jesuits.<sup>41</sup> In accordance with the papal brief dated 1701 (re-issued in 1734), the Jesuits in the territory of Santo Domingo were given the power to grant dispensations for impediments in the second degree of consanguinity and the first degree of affinity.<sup>42</sup> However, the decree led to confusion. The problem rested on the uncertainty regarding the proper use and extent of these new powers. In the Dominican case, scandal erupted over a perceived abuse. Father Martín Garicano's interpretation of the decree led him to grant consanguine and affinal dispensations to his parishioners.<sup>43</sup> The Archbishop of Santo Domingo felt that the decree had not in fact given Father Garicano the right to grant dispensations and therefore came to the conclusion that all the marriages he had performed, for which he had issued dispensations, were invalid. The ensuing panic in that parish was condemned by the Pope, as being unnecessary given that the Jesuit priest Garicano had been following the papal instructions correctly. The Pope further responded to the Archbishop that even if a marriage was suspected to be null or invalid, the union could be declared legal once again by obtaining the consent of the two parties and re-administering the sacrament of marriage. In any case, problems such as these probably led to the creation of the position of

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<sup>40</sup> Although the territory of Santo Domingo had many parishes, they were constantly understaffed. The rural ones were forced to rely on traveling priests, who visited these areas only on an irregular basis. Lauren Derby indicates that the problem was particular to the territory of Santo Domingo as the situation was not the same in neighbouring Saint-Domingue or Cuba.

<sup>41</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 277, 54-5-92- Minutas de consultas y despachos: y Algunos papeles de Secretaría años 1745-1752; Consulta el Rey al Arzobispado de Santo Domingo, Buen Retiro 05/10/1751.

<sup>42</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 277, 54-5-92- Minutas de consultas y despachos: y Algunos papeles de secretaría años 1745-1752; Consulta el Rey al Arzobispado de Santo Domingo, Buen Retiro 05/10/1751-(Al arzobispo de Santo Domingo, avisándole el recibo de su carta en que dio cuenta de lo ocurrido con motivo de su privilegio que se hallaba el colegio de la compañía de Jesús de aquella ciudad de dispensar con los neófitos en los impedimentos del matrimonio y encargándole lo demás que se expresa. And AGI, Santo Domingo, Leg 278, 54-6-33- Minutas de Consultas y Despachos: Y Algunos papeles de Secretaría años 1753-1759; Consulta Consejo de Indias al Arzobispo de Santo Domingo, 15/01/1755.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

*defensor de matrimonios* (defender/protector of matrimony) by a papal bull in 1741.<sup>44</sup> Individuals appointed to this position were to deal specifically with questions of impediments to marriage in their region of the Americas, thus making the process of dispensation more expeditious.

It is significant to note that in the territory of Santo Domingo, the dispensations pertained only to the Spanish Dominican elite and to no other group. Although the elite group was not static, it did include a core group of families. Nonetheless, the marital pool contained a limited number of potential spouses. The result, of course, was that many members of the elite were quite closely related and therefore, problems pertaining to blood relations were a reality. In order to obtain dispensations, the elite, in fact, argued that the marital pool was so limited for persons of this status that they had no choice but to marry amongst themselves because if they did not, only unequal marriages would be contracted, which was unacceptable to them. The reference to the disdain for unions contracted outside of one's socio-economic and racial group is a clear example of Spanish Dominicans using institutional rhetoric to further their own goals. The Church, like the Spanish Crown, always encouraged marriage within one's own status group. It is inconceivable that the lower class encountered these same problems with as much regularity and, even if they did, it is unlikely that they advanced the same argument regarding a limited marital pool with any credibility given that they represented two-thirds of the island's population. The largest population group could not have as limited a spousal selection as the other smaller groups, such as the elite and the slaves.

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<sup>44</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 277, 54-5-92- Minutas de consultas y despachos: y Algunos papeles de Secretaría años 1745-1752; al Secretario de Justicia del Tribunal de la Nunciatura- Madrid 12/06/1745.

If no impediments to marriage were discovered during the diligencia matrimonial, the marriage was then announced publicly at three consecutive Sunday masses.<sup>45</sup> If the publication of the three banns revealed no other ecclesiastical impediments to the union, the couple could receive the sacrament of marriage itself. If further impediments surfaced, other dispensations were required.

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<sup>45</sup> Donald Ramos, "Marriage and the Family in Colonial Vila Rica," *HAHR*, Vol. 55, No. 22 (May 1975), 200-225, states that the publication of the banns could occasion lengthy delays in marriage as they had to be published not only in the city in which the marriage would take place but in the home cities of the bride and groom. For African born slaves this requirement caused nothing but frustration as the Church decided that the banns had to be published not only in the city in which the marriage took place but in all the areas in which the bride and groom had resided. The reasons for publishing the banns in this manner was to ensure that the bride and groom were single and had not been or were not still married. The Decree Tametsi (Council of Trent, 1563) states that: "the sacred Council of Lateran celebrated under Innocent III, it ordains that, for the future, before a marriage is contracted, the proper parish priest of the contracting parties shall three times announce publicly in the Church, during the solemnization of mass, on three continuous festival days, between whom marriage is to be celebrated; after which publication of banns, if there be no lawful impediment opposed, the marriage shall be proceeded with in the face of the church; where the parish priest, after having interrogated the man and the woman, and heard their mutual consent, shall either say, "I join you together in matrimony, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" or, he shall use other words, according to the received rite of each province. But if upon occasion, there should be a probable suspicion that the marriage may be maliciously hindered, if so many publications of banns precede it; in this case either one publication only shall be made; or at least the marriage shall be celebrated in the presence of the parish priest, and of two or three witnesses: Then, before the consummation thereof, the banns shall be published in the church; that so, if there be any secret impediments, they may be the more easily discovered: unless the Ordinary shall himself judge it expedient, that the publications aforesaid be dispensed with, which the Holy Synod leaves to his prudence and judgment. Those who shall attempt to contract marriage otherwise than in the presence of the parish priest, or of some other priest by permission of the said parish priest, or of the Ordinary, and in the presence of two or three witnesses; the Holy Synod renders such wholly incapable of thus contracting and declares such contracts invalid and null, as by the present decree. It invalidates and annuls them. Moreover, it enjoins, that the parish priest, or any other priest, who shall have been present at any such contract with a less number of witnesses (than as aforesaid); as also the witnesses who have been present thereat without the parish priest, or some other priest; and also the contracting parties themselves; shall be severely punished, at the discretion of the Ordinary.... The parish priest shall have a book, which he shall keep carefully by him, in which he shall register the names of the persons married, and of the witnesses, and the day on which, and the place where, the marriage was contracted. Finally, the Holy Synod exhorts those who marry, that before they contract marriage, or, at all events, three days before the consummation thereof, they carefully confess their sins, and approach devoutly to the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist. If any provinces have herein in use any praise-worthy customs and ceremonies, besides the aforesaid, the Holy Synod earnestly desires that they be by all means retained. And that these so wholesome injunctions may not be unknown to any. It enjoins on all Ordinaries, that they, as soon as possible, make it their care that this decree be published and explained to the people in every parish church of their respective dioceses; and that this be done as often as may be during the first year; and afterwards as often as they shall judge it expedient. It ordains, moreover, that this decree shall begin to be in force in each parish, at the expiration of thirty days, to be counted from the day of its first publication made in the said parish."

## The Church, the Crown and Consent

At the ceremony, the ecclesiastical regulations mandated that an ordained priest officiate with a minimum of two witnesses, whether they were men or women.<sup>46</sup> The sacrament itself was composed of a dual ceremony: consent of the parties and the nuptial blessing.<sup>47</sup> The consent of the contracting parties was important, as all marriages not contracted of the bride and/or groom's free will were invalid. It is therefore not surprising that spousal partners were required to make their statement of consent to the marital union in person, thereby acquiring a legal validity of a testimony taken under oath. The parish priest would then unite the bride and groom by uttering the phrase "I join you together in matrimony, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."<sup>48</sup> The second sacrament described by the same Holy Synod was a blessing of the union, allowing the couple to live together in the same house. This second sacrament was also commonly referred to as the *velación* (veiling ceremony of the bride and groom in nuptial mass). While the first sacrament ensured the parties were acting of their own volition, the second united

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<sup>46</sup> Professor Roland Jacques in a personal communication advised me that women were valid witnesses during that period and that the only reason for the disqualification of a witness was if he or she was not Roman Catholic.

<sup>47</sup> Decree Tametsi (Council of Trent, 1563): "Los rituales españoles, especialmente el de Toledo y hasta tiempos modernos, definitivamente sí reconocen una ceremonia doble. En la primera, luego de una solemne advertencia de manifestar cualquier impedimento que pudiese existir, los contrayentes dan su consentimiento "per verba de presenti", y el sacerdote, al menos en las formas más recientes (véase "Manuale Toletanum", Antwerp, 1680, 457), pronuncia las palabras: "Yo, en nombre de Dios Todopoderoso, os uno en matrimonio." Furthermore, the same Holy Synod exhorts the groom and bride not to live together in the same house until they have received the sacerdotal benediction, which is to be given in the church; and it ordains that the benediction shall be given by their own parish priest, and that permission to give the aforesaid benediction cannot be granted by any other than the parish priest himself, or the Ordinary; any custom, even though immemorial, which ought rather to be called a corruption, or any privilege to the contrary, notwithstanding. And if any parish priest, or any other priest, whether Regular or Secular, shall presume to unite in marriage the betrothed of another parish, or to bless them when married, without the permission of their parish priest, he shall—even though he may plead that he is allowed to do this by a privilege, or an immemorial custom,—remain *ipso jure* suspended, until absolved by the Ordinary of that parish priest who ought to have been present at the marriage, or from whom the benediction ought to have been received.

<sup>48</sup> Decree Tametsi (Council of Trent 1563) states that: "where the parish priest, after having interrogated the man and the woman, and heard their mutual consent, shall either say, "I join you together in matrimony, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" or, he shall use other words, according to the received rite of each province."

them as man and wife. For the ceremony to be valid, both sacraments had to be performed by the couple's parish priest.<sup>49</sup> In the case where the bride and groom did not belong to the same parish, permission to marry the couple had to be sought from both individuals' parishes of origin. This was mostly to ensure that the bride and groom couple to be united were Catholics and were valid candidates, thus not already married. The two ceremonies were celebrated at the same time, as they were meant to be, in Santo Domingo as elsewhere in Latin America.<sup>50</sup>

The Church's concern over free will was not shared by Charles III. Given that the Spanish Crown was able to pass laws affecting marriage in accordance with the conditions contained in the papal bull of Patronato Real, it too could regulate the sacrament of

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<sup>49</sup>Decree Tametsi (Council of Trent 1563) further states that: "It ordains that the benediction shall be given by their own parish priest, and that permission to give the aforesaid benediction cannot be granted by any other than the parish priest himself, or the Ordinary; any custom, even though immemorial, which ought rather to be called a corruption, or any privilege to the contrary, notwithstanding. And if any parish priest, or any other priest, whether Regular or Secular, shall presume to unite in marriage the betrothed of another parish, or to bless them when married, without the permission of their parish priest, he shall—even though he may plead that he is allowed to do this by a privilege, or an immemorial custom,—remain *ipso jure* suspended, until absolved by the Ordinary of that parish priest, who ought to have been present at the marriage, or from whom the benediction ought to have been received."

<sup>50</sup> Calvo, "Matrimonio, Iglesia y Sociedad en el Occidente de Mexico: Zamora siglos XVII a XIX," in *Familias Novohispanas Siglos XVI al XIX: Seminario de Historia de la Familia Centro de Estudios Historicas*, ed. Pilar Gonzalbo Aizpuru (Mexico: El Colegio de México, 1991), 101-108, explains that there were two types of marriages at the beginning of the seventeenth century: the Catholic sacrament of marriage and the indigenous custom of what has been termed the veiling ceremony. Calvo writes that the veiling ceremony was simply incorporated into the Catholic sacrament so that churches could concentrate on stressing the indissolubility and monogamy of marriage. The syncretism is an example of how the Catholic Church incorporated "praiseworthy" customs in order to make the Catholic religion's version of marriage more comprehensible to indigenous peoples in the Americas. Moreover, although the sacrament of marriage itself did not change over the centuries, the rituals surrounding it did. Native American and African traditions and customs were integrated into the Catholic celebration. In the early colonial era, the local priests were the ones, who initiated these changes in an attempt to make the teachings of the Church more intelligible to the new converts. Their actions were not distortions of Catholicism but adaptations to local circumstances, which were fully acceptable to the Catholic Church, given that the Decree Tametsi of the Council of Trent of 1563, stipulates that: "If any provinces have herein in use any praise-worthy customs and ceremonies, besides the aforesaid, the Holy Synod earnestly desires that they be by all means retained." This flexible approach had two advantages. First, by combining whatever local marital tradition with that of the Catholic Sacrament, the meaning of the two practices was connected in the most concrete way. Second, the flexibility of incorporating elements of other cultures into the Catholic ceremony allowed priests to concentrate on doctrine, mainly the indissolubility and monogamy of the Catholic marriage instead of quibbling over the esthetics of the ritual. The particular evolution of the rituals surrounding marriage by race and class in Santo Domingo, however, remains unknown as no accounts of the marriages have been found to date.

marriage.<sup>51</sup> In terms of the general population, the most significant piece of legislation passed in the period under study was the Royal Pragmatic on marriages of 1776, implemented in the Americas in 1778. This decree should be construed as an extension of the Bourbon Reforms of 1763, which sought, as its primary goal, to re-assert royal control in the Americas by systematically limiting the power of Spanish American elites.<sup>52</sup> The Royal Pragmatic on Marriage made parental consent mandatory for marriages of persons under the age of twenty-five and required formal parental notification for unions of those over that age to be valid.<sup>53</sup> For the first time, the formal requirement of obtaining parental consent gave parents the ability to veto marriages. In the case where the veto was exercised, the case was adjudicated by a royal court and not, like previously, by an ecclesiastical one, thereby stripping the Church of the right to hear prenuptial conflicts. Furthermore, ecclesiastical courts were forbidden to rule on the validity of engagements until the royal court had handed down its ruling on the parental veto. For the first time in history, parents could effectively stop a wedding from taking place by simply refusing to give their consent.<sup>54</sup> Furthermore, parents were given the right to disinherit children, who married against their wishes. Of course, the threat of disinheritance was only effective against those who stood to inherit anything from

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<sup>51</sup> James Muldoon, *The Americas in the Spanish World Order; The Justification for Conquest in the Seventeenth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994), ch. 6.

<sup>52</sup> The primary goal of the Bourbon Reforms was to reassert royal control over the Americas. The program necessarily meant disempowering rival authorities such as the Catholic Church. There is no question that the Bourbon Reforms were deeply anti-clerical. The Royal Pragmatic changed the balance of power between secular and lay authority. Effectively, the Bourbons empowered parents by giving them a right of veto on their children's marriages. To lend weight to parental objections, parents were given the right to disinherit children, who did not heed their counsel. Of course, the threat of disinheritance really only affected children, who stood to inherit something- mainly the elite.

<sup>53</sup> Steinar A. Saether, "Bourbon Absolutism and Marriage Reform in Late Colonial Spanish America," *The Americas*, Vol. 59, No. 4 (April, 2003), 475-509.

<sup>54</sup> Patricia Seed, *To Love, Honor and Obey: Conflicts over Marriage Choice, 1574-1821* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 202-203, states that couples were still able to marry between 1776 and 1784 if they were disinherited by the parents, but a ruling in 1784, originating in Cuba revoked that right. Moreover, although the Spanish Crown was slowly stripping the Church of its power and privileges, it was empowering mothers and fathers.

their parents—the elite. For a short time (1776 to 1784), marriages contracted without parental consent could still be performed by parish priests but only if the contracting parties were officially disinherited by their parents. However, the Spanish Crown closed that loophole making all marriages performed without parental consent invalid, thereby affecting all socio-economic classes. The Crown surmised that with more authority over spousal selection, parents would be able to control their children’s marriages, resulting in orderly intra class and intra racial unions.<sup>55</sup>

In effect, the Royal Pragmatic on Marriages declared socially unequal marriages illegal.<sup>56</sup> Although the definition of socially unequal marriages did not specifically refer to racial inequity, the notion was certainly present.<sup>57</sup> Patricia Seed writes that in twenty-eight percent of the cases, parents objected to a marriage for racial reasons.<sup>58</sup> In the few remaining documents pertaining to objections to marriages in the territory of Santo Domingo, racial inequality was a central feature of these disagreements.<sup>59</sup> Moreover, racial accusations were incorporated into the argument on social inequality, whether the charges were actually valid or not, in order for the cases to be heard and adjudicated by the royal courts.

Although the notion that parents selected spousal partners for their children has acquired a negative connotation in today’s society, it is largely due to literary tales that emphasize the potential problems these types of unions created, such as images of brides and

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<sup>55</sup> Saether, “Bourbon Absolutism and Marriage Reform in Late Colonial Spanish America,” 476, explains that by strengthening parental control and filial obedience, the Spanish King also reaffirmed his own control over his subjects and his place at the head of the hierarchical order.

<sup>56</sup> Seed, *To Love, Honor and Obey*, 200, 205, indicates that the Crown was particularly concerned with unions between Spaniards and blacks or Indians and blacks.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 206.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 207. It is important to note that 72 percent of the cases in which objections to marriages were made, racial reasons were not mentioned. Seed concludes that the other explanations advanced for opposing the unions “were as significant as differences in racial heritage.”

<sup>59</sup> AGI, Indiferente, General Leg. 654, 140-4-20, reales cédulas, decretos y circulares 1739-1749; Ordenanza de Su Majestad sobre prohibición de Casamientos de oficiales sin su real permiso, Buen Retiro, 30/10/1760; I would like to thank Professor Ben Vinson III at John’s Hopkins University for taking the time to discuss the results of my research in regard to the documents I consulted on Santo Domingo.

grooms meeting for the first time on their wedding day or parents selecting spouses, who were wholly incompatible (or much too old) for their offspring. After all, during the Ancien Régime, the goal of arranged marriages for all social classes, whether in Europe or Latin America, were aimed to “*adelantar la familia*” (advance the family)<sup>60</sup> or at the very least maintain the social status quo.<sup>61</sup> Marriages were the primary way in Europe and Latin America to cement political, economic and social alliances.<sup>62</sup> The union of a son and a daughter was not unlike the signing of a contract binding both parties to each other by inextricably uniting the families’ economic, political and social resources.<sup>63</sup> The stakes were, of course, highest for the upper social classes as they had patrimony to protect. It is therefore,

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<sup>60</sup> This is a translation of the commonly used Spanish expression “*adelantar la familia*.”

<sup>61</sup> Levi-Strauss, *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*, 48-49, states that “Marriage between outsiders is a social advance” which is part of a reciprocity system that integrates wider groups. The notion of expanding family networks through marriage is, of course, at the heart of elite unions. Lomnitz and Pérez-Lazaur introduce the notion of the grand family, which they define as a three generational descent group, as a cultural structure. Essentially, these three generations, formed a cultural group that set norms to govern “expected behaviour between kin and, as part of the grammar of behavior, reinforces the economic, social and ritual aspects of solidarity. Such behavior is grounded in repeated acts of exchange and is reflected in an ideology shaped by the values and beliefs of the kin group and its members.” In other words, these three generations were inextricably linked and expected that each member of each generation would actively cooperate in order to enrich the family socially, economically and politically. This family plan was subject to periodic changes in response to outside events. A central feature of compliance and participation was in the selection of marital partners. See also: Larissa A. Lomnitz and Marisol Pérez-Lazaur, “Dynastic Growth and Survival Strategies: The Solidarity of Mexican Grand-Families,” in *Kinship Ideology and Practice in Latin America*, ed. Raymond T. Smith (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 183-195.

<sup>62</sup> Although many authors refer to intricate ways in which marriage bonded one family to the other, however, most do so indirectly. The following three monographs are particularly good at highlighting the value of marital ties during the ancien régime: Sylvia Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur Trade Society 1670-1870* (Winnipeg: Watson and Dwyer Publishers, 1983); Jennifer S.H. Brown, *Strangers in Blood* and Margaret H. Darrow, *Revolution in The House: Family, Class, and Inheritance in Southern France 1775-1825* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1989). For more on arranged marriages in Europe see: Darrow, *Revolution in the House*; Jean-Louis Flandrin, *Families in Former Times: Kinship, Household and Sexuality* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976); Yves Castan, *Honnêteté et Relations Sociales en Languedoc 1715-1780* (Paris: PLON, 1974) and Arlette Farge, *La Vie Fragile: Violence, Pouvoirs et Solidarités à Paris au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: Hachette, 1986). For more on arranged marriage in Latin America, please see: Richard Boyer, *The Lives of the Bigamists: Marriage, Family, and Community in Colonial Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995); Gutiérrez, *When Jesus Came, The Corn Mothers Went Away*; Susan Socolow, *Women of Colonial Latin America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Asunción Lavrin, *Latin American Women: Historical Perspectives*, ed. Asunción Lavrin (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1978) and Raymond T. Smith, *Kinship Ideology and Practice in Latin America*, ed. Raymond T. Smith (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1984).

<sup>63</sup> Dávila-Mendoza, *Un Concierto de Voces*, 19, states that, for Spanish Dominicans, marriage was a contract that created a marital fellowship between the husband and wife, protected and strengthened by the material goods each brought to the union.

unsurprising that parents arranged marriages for their sons and daughters. The ideal unions were, therefore, contracted within or above the individual's socio-economic class. Although there is no explicit evidence to support the position that Spanish Dominican mothers and fathers contracted marriages for their offspring, marital trends, discussed in this chapter, indicate that this was the case.

Despite the fact that unions were arranged, the literary tales have always depicted the ugliest aspects of the system. The reality was far different. Couples met during organized social activities, such as mass and other church related events or seasonal festivals.<sup>64</sup> They might also get to know each other during one of their regular *paseos* (walks).<sup>65</sup> Thus, the spousal partner was generally not a stranger.<sup>66</sup> Parents recognized that children had personal preferences and that imposing their will might result in rebellion or rejection.<sup>67</sup> Certainly, if the parents did not approve of the spousal partner, some daughters and sons attempted to force their parents' hands by using the accepted Latin American practice of *rapto* (abduction).<sup>68</sup> The male suitor abducted his intended bride and they consummated their relationship. The reality that their daughter had lost her virginity pressured fathers into accepting the marriage proposal from the future groom. Although young people resorted to

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<sup>64</sup> Gutiérrez, "From Honor to Love," 242, explains that Church related events included religious celebrations and feast days, as well as mass. Seasonal festivals usually celebrated the sowing of the seeds, harvest and first fruits.

<sup>65</sup> Juan Pedro Viquiera Albán, *Propriety and Permissiveness in Bourbon Mexico*, translated by Sonya Lipsett Rivera and Sergio Rivera Ayala (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources Inc, 1999), xx-xxi.

<sup>66</sup> Gutiérrez, *When Jesus Came*, 236, states that brides and grooms generally knew each other since childhood or adolescence.

<sup>67</sup> Socolow, *The Women of Colonial Latin America*, ch. 6.

<sup>68</sup> Lipsett-Rivera, "The Intersection of Rape and Marriage in Late-Colonial and Early-National Mexico," *Colonial Latin American Historical Review*, Vol. 6, No. 4 (November, 1997), 559-590, defines *rapto* as "the extraction of daughters from their paternal homes in order to force the parents' approval of a marriage they opposed, and despite the drama created by parents, who complained, the woman was generally a willing partner." This is in opposition to the two other types of rape defined in Spanish law: *estupro* and *violación*. The latter two imply a lack of consent and force. *Estupro* is quite particularly used in cases pertaining to the rape of innocent virgins, an ill defined category in and of itself. See also: Muriel Nazzari, *Disappearance of the Dowry: Women, Families, and Social Change in Sao Paulo, Brazil (1600-1900)* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991).

this practice throughout the colonial period, it remained a gamble for the potential bride to be, not only because the man could still back away from the marriage but also because raptos did not always sway the parents.<sup>69</sup> Moreover, children exercised agency in marital selection and parental control, and although marriages were arranged, parents generally considered their children's personal preferences.<sup>70</sup> In fact, the degree to which parents were able to control their offspring's marital selection has spawned a veritable historiographical debate.

In her seminal work on marriage, Patricia Seed concludes that the works of dramatuges of the early colonial period, such as Tomás Sánchez, indicated that children had a priority in marital selection and although parents advised their offspring, they recognized that imposing their will might result in rejection, rebellion or flight.<sup>71</sup> Seed also thinks that the literary works on which she based her study pointed to a society that condemned marriages for economic, political or social gain.<sup>72</sup> A shift from this indulgence in the child's will in the eighteenth century was brought on according to Seed by a change in the law and the honour system but her argument actually points more towards the Bourbon Reforms, which attacked the privileges and status of the Catholic Church and, more specifically to the Royal Pragmatic on Marriage.<sup>73</sup> In essence the Church's ability to enforce ecclesiastical decrees was greatly diminished, leaving it impotent to continue to perform secret marriages.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Stolcke, "Elopement and Seduction in Nineteenth-Century Cuba," 91-129, is quick to point out that the practice of raptos was more likely to succeed if the partners were of the same or a close socio-economic class but that it was more likely to fail if the union was unequal. After all, the stain of an unacceptable union tainted the whole family lineage.

<sup>70</sup> Robert McCaa, "Calidad, Clase, and Marriage in Colonial Mexico: The Case of Parral 1788-1790," *HAHR*, Volume 64, No. 3, (August, 1984), 477-501, 490-493, notes that "...the wishes of the bride and groom seem to have been paramount [in Parral]."

<sup>71</sup> Patricia Seed, *To Love, Honor and Obey in Colonial Mexico: Conflicts over Marriage Choice, 1574-1821* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), ch. 3.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, ch. 14.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, ch. 6.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 78. I also wish to thank Professor Roland Jacques of St-Paul's University for patiently answering all of my queries with regard to Canon law and for providing me with an English translation of the Decree Tametsi (Council of Trent, 1563). The decree states that: "Although it is not to be doubted that clandestine marriages,

This inability directly affected women, who had committed sexual transgressions resulting in pregnancies. Secret marriages had been performed in private settings, which sometimes permitted indiscretions from entering public knowledge but such was no longer the case. This loss of control over the protection of their flock, combined with an inability to pursue men for not honouring their marital promises, led parents to step in and play a more controlling role in their offspring's lives. This was acceptable, explains Seed, because parental authority was increasingly valued in a society concerned with protecting social status and economic interests. Moreover, obedience was enforced by threats with real consequences such as disinheritance.<sup>75</sup>

In contrast, Muriel Nazzari argues that parental authority and arranged marriages decreased in the same period.<sup>76</sup> Brazil's integration into the world market caused a change in the economy from one based on land and labour to one based on trade and commerce.<sup>77</sup> The shift undermined parental authority because it no longer controlled the future economic success of their male offspring, who could now earn wages. Sons with entrepreneurial skills could seek their fortune from non-agricultural sources.<sup>78</sup> The change from a production family unit to a consumption one, transformed the status of women as well. The rise of waged labour based on family sustenance made women economically dependent on men.<sup>79</sup>

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made with the free consent of the contracting parties, are valid and true marriages, so long as the Church has not rendered them invalid; and consequently, that those persons are justly to be condemned, as the Holy Synod doth condemn them with anathema, who deny that such marriages are true and valid; as also those who falsely affirm that marriages contracted by the children of a family, without the consent of their parents, are invalid, and that parents can make such marriages either valid or invalid; nevertheless, the Holy Church of God has, for reasons most just, at all times detested and prohibited such marriages.”

<sup>75</sup> Twinam, *Private Lives, Public Secrets*, 36-37, emphatically rejects Seed's methodology, which is based on period writings contained in novels and not empirical archival research.

<sup>76</sup> Nazzari, *The Disappearance of the Dowry*, introduction.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, ch. 4.

<sup>78</sup> Gonzalbo Aizpuru and Cecilia Rabell Romero, *Familia y Vida Privada en la Historia de Iberoamerica; Seminario de Historia de la Familia* (Mexico: El Colegio de México, 1996), part II-Estrategias Familiares.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, ch. 7.

Parents, extended family members, or pious organizations (in the case of orphans) originally established the dowry to protect the daughters' status in the marital union.<sup>80</sup> Whereas previously, the dowry had formed the lion's share of the financial basis for a new couple to establish themselves, women now brought less initially and over time to the union, which Nazzari argues decreased women's overall status in society.<sup>81</sup> For the lower classes, the new waged economy signalled the disappearance of the dowry and the bride price, but not for the elite, who continued this practice. Unlike Seed, Nazzari's conclusions are based on a series of overall patterns discerned from historical records. Also, her findings do not ignore the variation, which occurred by economic class. Although each region is different and Santo Domingo is undoubtedly not Brazil or Mexico, Nazzari's argument is compelling and is supported by the increased value placed on parental consent and class/caste regulations on marriage imposed by the Royal Pragmatic on Marriage.

The Bourbon legislation increased parental authority in theory; but the rise of waged labour granted children more freedom in marital selection since they no longer had to wait for the family's wealth to be passed on to them. In Brazil, except in the elite group, this resulted in the disappearance of the dowry and in a decline in the status of women given that they were no longer entering the union on an equal, if not greater, economic footing than the groom. If I apply these premises to Santo Domingo, the conclusion must be that parents retained control of their children's future because the Spanish half of the island never progressed to a land based economy, let alone an industrialized one and therefore did not provide alternative ways of earning money aside from inheritances. Thus children continued

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<sup>80</sup> Gonzalbo Aizpuru, "Las Cargas del Matrimonio, Dotes y Vida Familiar en Nueva España" in *Familia y Vida Privada en la Historia de Iberoamerica: Seminario de Historia de la Familia*, ed. Pilar Gonzalbo Aizpuru (Mexico: El Colegio de México, 1996), 207-226, writes that husbands also used dowries to protect their wives from destitution after their death.

<sup>81</sup> Nazzari, *The Disappearance of the Dowry*, ch. 6-11.

to depend on the inheritance cycle to establish a new familial group. Basically, one generation replaced the next. It must therefore be concluded that internal as well as external factors resulted in different child/parent dynamics within the various regions in the Americas. By extension, this would also indicate that the status of women in marital unions did not change in the territory of Santo Domingo. It is clear that network formation through arranged marriages have come to be associated with elite families in Santo Domingo as elsewhere because they had interests to protect, whether they were the family business, landed estate or other wealth. Moreover, it is rather easy to understand why priests were so concerned with parental bullying, particularly when dealing with the elite.<sup>82</sup>

### **Other Royal Marital Regulations**

The Royal Pragmatic on Marriage was only one example of the Spanish Crown's attempts at regulating marriages. However, it was not the first. As early as 1575 Philip II began to regulate the marriages of his royal officials in the American colonies.<sup>83</sup> The goal of the legislation was to prevent them from forming power networks in the area in which they served. One can only assume that the Crown believed that local ties would secure individuals' loyalty to the Crown and the officials' impartial application of royal decrees.

Military regulations regarding marriages were first introduced in 1632 and reissued in 1701, 1720 and 1728.<sup>84</sup> The original regulations divided the military into commissioned and

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<sup>82</sup> Gutiérrez, *When Jesus Came, The Corn Mothers Went Away*, 250, states that in certain cases, the bride, the groom or both were sequestered (en depósito) from outside influences in order for the priest to question the individuals and determine whether they consented to the marriage of their own free will.

<sup>83</sup> Chandler, "The Montepío and Regulation of Marriage in the Mexican Bureaucracy 1770-1821," 48, states that the first prohibitions on marriage were first applied to Audiencia ministers but were quickly broadened to encompass treasury officials.

<sup>84</sup> Santiago Gerardo Suárez, *Jurisdicción eclesiástica y capellanía castrenses: El matrimonio militar* (Caracas: Italgrafica, 1976) and Evangelino Díez Muñoz, "El matrimonio de militares en España; legislación y problemática canónica en el siglo XVIII a la luz de documentos inéditos," *Revista de Historia Militar*, Vol. 27 (1969), 57-91, both discuss the military regulations, however, Muñoz notes that the original military regulations

non-commissioned officers. The former had to obtain written licenses from the Crown, whereas the latter only needed approval from their commanding officer. Philip V introduced addendums to the military requirements in the early eighteenth century, namely that officers were to be selected from the nobility and that the spouses be able to provide for themselves by bringing a dowry into the marriage.<sup>85</sup> As part of the Bourbon Reforms, Charles III continued his father's work and issued the *Ordenanza de Casamientos* (Marital Regulations) of October 20, 1760.<sup>86</sup> The legislation required officers to marry with persons of equal social status and generally denied lower ranking officers the right to even petition for a license. This piece of legislation was followed by the royal decree of August 9, 1779 that sought to correct the general lack of enforcement of marital regulations imposed on high civil and military royal officials over the last two centuries.<sup>87</sup> The decree prohibited all royal officials, of all ranks, from marrying locally. Ties to the local elite, the power base in the region, were perceived as a corrupting influence and to be avoided at all costs. Bureaucrats were therefore required to obtain marital licenses and the penalty for non-compliance was a loss of employment.<sup>88</sup> Essentially, the difference between the marital legislation passed prior to the advent of Charles III to the Spanish throne and that enacted after he acceded to power was a determination to achieve compliance with the royal will.

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were amended in 1716. The Spanish Crown as well issued a royal decree in 1741 and another in 1790 regarding officer and soldier marriages without royal licenses.

<sup>85</sup> Gary M. Miller, "Bourbon Social Engineering: Women and Conditions of Marriage in Eighteenth-Century Venezuela," *The Americas*, Vol. 46, No. 3 (January, 1990), 261-290.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 263-4.

<sup>87</sup> Chandler, "The Montepíos and Regulation of Marriage in the Mexican Bureaucracy", 47-68, states that the Spanish Crown sought to regulate the marriages of its most senior civil and military officials as early as the late sixteenth century. Chandler notes that in 1575 the Spanish Crown decreed that Audiencia ministers and their children were prohibited from marrying persons native to the Audiencia district in which they served. The prohibitions were extended to treasury officials in 1582 and *Contadores* in 1612.

<sup>88</sup> Díez Muñoz, "El matrimonio de militares en España," 66-91, explains that the Spanish Crown encountered strongest resistance from the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Clergymen were most concerned with Canon law and generally ignored the royal will. The number of royal edicts specifically addressed to ecclesiastical officials on the matter points to the persistent tensions between the church and the state in marital matters. See also Suárez, *Jurisdicción eclesiástica y capellanía castrenses: El matrimonio militar*, 51-58.

Pensions for royal bureaucrats and the military introduced in the second half of the eighteenth century were administered so as to enforce the marital regulations. The three montepíos: the montepío de ministros (pension for ministers), the montepío de oficinas (pension for bureaucrats) and the montepío militar (military pension) clearly spelled out criteria for suitable spouses, which were based on equal marriages.<sup>89</sup> In order to ascertain the spouses' eligibility to the pension, the bodies that administered them required a bride's baptismal certificate, the Crown or a superior's consent to the marriage, depending on the rank of the individual, and three legal depositions ascertaining the character of the individual.<sup>90</sup> The montepíos required proof that the brides of royal officials were of the same quality. For the military, the *Reglamento del Montepío Militar* (The Regulation Regarding the Military Pension) of April 20, 1761, required that brides be of noble or hidalgo birth and have a dowry of 1,000 pesos.<sup>91</sup> If they were not of noble birth, the dowry was increased to 2,500 pesos.<sup>92</sup> Interestingly, an amendment to the legislation in 1792 waived these requirements if the bride was the daughter of a commissioned military officer and she was marrying a fellow officer above the rank of captain.<sup>93</sup> The logic behind the exception was

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<sup>89</sup> Chandler, "The Montepíos and Regulation of Marriage in the Mexican Bureaucracy," 47-68 and Saether, "Bourbon Absolutism and Marriage Reform in Late Colonial Spanish America," 481 and Miller, "Bourbon Social Engineering," 264, 271-273, all discuss the pension regulations. The *Reglamento del Montepío Militar* of April, 20, 1761, stipulated that: "women who chose to marry officers must have a dowry of 1,000 pesos if they were of noble or hidalgo birth, or 2,500 pesos if they were not. There was, however, one important exception: daughters of military officers were exempt from the dowry stipulations if they married an officer of the rank of captain or above. This was because these women were already entitled to the montepío benefits as daughters of military officers." The other two montepíos affecting royal bureaucrats were issued in the early 1770s.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 56. Chandler explains that in 1788, a man's baptismal certificate was also required given that the Crown sought to deny the pension to wives of military men who married after their sixtieth birthday. Chandler believes that the new prohibition on the pension was to guard against young women's marriages to elderly royal official in return for financial security, assured by the royal pension, after the man's death.

<sup>91</sup> Miller, "Bourbon Social Engineering," 264, 271-273.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 264.

<sup>93</sup> Díez Muñoz, "El matrimonio de militares en España," 64 and Suárez, *Jurisdicción eclesiástica y capellanía castrenses*, 70, explain that the regulations stipulated that subordinate officials were only permitted to marry if they could prove that they were able to financially support their family. Military salaries were designed to support, and barely at that, the enlisted man. Notarized proof of the individual's economic standing was therefore required in the total amount of 60,000 reales, whether it was in property, goods or specie. Although

that these women were financially secure as they were already entitled to the montepío benefits through their fathers. In an impoverished region like the territory of Santo Domingo, where the small elite was mostly military, this particular exemption reinforced the marital strategy keeping the upper class small and tightly knit. In effect, the division of potential brides into two groups, daughters of royal officials and others, encouraged the Spanish Dominican elite to intermarry in order to continue to concentrate wealth into the hands of a few and because, practically speaking, it would have been hard for these families to meet the dowry requirements given their lack of wealth.

Also, although marriage licenses were supposed to be obtained before the wedding and, in theory, the montepío administrators were simply to deny the military pension to brides deemed an unsuitable match or who were native to their groom's district, the royal legislation contained yet another loophole that made adjudicating cases in black and white terms difficult. In fact, the special clauses in the royal legislation regarding frontier regions, such as Louisiana, Florida and the islands allowed marriages to take place without first having obtained a marital license. The Spanish Crown recognized that the mail system was inadequate in these areas to permit reasonable delays for responses regarding marriage petitions or pension requests. Moreover, sometimes officers married before obtaining licenses. Miller writes that after the sacrament was received, the situation forced the Crown's hand. Once the wedding license was granted it was also difficult to deny the spouse the military pension because the license effectively marked the bride as a suitable marital partner. Whether the petition for a pension was later refused or not, Miller remarks that the military tried to take care of their own, scraping pensions together for normally ineligible

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the preference was that soldiers not marry, they could in fact do so but only with a royal license. Failure to abide by military regulations resulted in a loss of employment and pension for officers and a loss of seniority and six months extra service with no salary for soldiers.

members by reassigning funds from income that was left in reserve from vacant ecclesiastical positions.<sup>94</sup>

All in all, the Royal Pragmatic probably had very little impact in Santo Domingo. First, although a certain percentage of all the socio-economic groups on the island married lawfully, there were many more, who opted for concubinage. Thus the regulations contained in the royal legislation on marriage were only effective if the individuals married within the Roman Catholic tradition. Although I will not hazard to speculate on the impact of the requirement for parental consent to marriages, I believe that the threat of disinheritance was hardly effective. Given the general lack of wealth, I would assume that only elite Spanish Dominican children were in a position to inherit anything of significance and therefore were the only ones affected by the new legislation. Also, it is likely that objections to socially unequal marriages, although present in the eighteenth century, did not suddenly begin in this period, but rather were a constant occurrence during the colonial period.

The Spanish Crown's marital prohibitions on civil and military officials were not effective either because they pursued a contradictory goal of preventing royal officials from establishing local ties by making it illegal for them to marry within their administrative districts, while also encouraging the officials to marry within their own ranks by creating a dual class of women: the daughters of these officials, who were pre-approved choices as spousal partners and all the other women who were not. In Santo Domingo, as will be discussed later, elite Spanish Dominicans seemingly complied with the underlying recommendation of marrying within their own ranks. The advantages were clear in so doing as no proof of dowries was required. In this impoverished island, this tactic ensured the financial stability of wives and their children's futures as they were eligible to receive the

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<sup>94</sup> Miller, "Bourbon Social Engineering," 284.

military pension. Finally, in marrying within their own ranks, the Spanish Dominican elite remained a small tightly knit group.

### **Legal Inheritors**

Lawful marriages were also important because they established legal inheritors. The importance of maintaining or advancing the family was paramount and even more so in this generally impoverished corner of the Spanish empire, where small differences in wealth established to which socio-economic group one belonged. As discussed in chapter two, the dearth of material trappings, which existed in Spanish Dominican society, led heads of families to specify very clearly what possessions they owned and to whom they were to be given. The clarity of the wills, testaments, dowries and bride prices, coupled with the legal statutes defining legal and unlawful inheritors, acted to stonewall outsider claims, such as those from illegitimate children. The role of legal inheritors in conserving the family wealth was of primary importance to families that had patrimony to protect: the upper classes.

Although, in theory, the sacrament of marriage was accessible to everyone, the church's necessary proofs of identity and eligibility for marriage was not only time consuming but required a certain level of literacy.<sup>95</sup> Also, the cost alone was prohibitive for the lower class and the slaves and the delays occasioned by the highly regulated process were frustrating. The cost was determined in accordance with a price list (arancel) published by the Holy Mother Church, which stipulated the fees for each service rendered by clergy members. Catholic weddings cost forty-three reales. Although this does not sound expensive by today's standards, it was far beyond the reaches of even some officers, let alone members

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<sup>95</sup> Sandra Lauderdale Graham, *Caetana Says No: Women's Stories from a Brazilian Slave Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 27.

of the lower class.<sup>96</sup> Gary M. Miller states that after the Venezuelan officers paid their rent and bought their groceries, they had on average 12 to 24 pesos of monthly discretionary income, which could easily be taken up with monthly costs to pay for household upkeep, basic necessities and personal services, such as barbers.<sup>97</sup> Obviously, paying the fees for the sacrament of marriage alone involved income saving strategies. However, marriages could be performed free of charge at the discretion of the parish priest.<sup>98</sup> Typically, if such were the case, the Dominican lieutenant priest would have indicated so in the left hand margin of the sacramental records, under the contracting parties' names. There are no such entries in the Spanish Dominican documents.<sup>99</sup> In fact, the cost of marriage at the outset reduced its accessibility as did the subsequent cost of dispensations. As mentioned earlier, even some members of the elite legitimized their unions only after having lived together for numerous years, presumably in time to legitimize the children in order to give them a better chance to enter royal employment.

However, the sacrament of marriage was the only lawfully recognized union in the Spanish empire. It stood at the intersection of the entire construct of the Spanish Crown's hierarchical policies. Moreover, although some members of the elite put off marriage for some time, they could not do so indefinitely. Lawful marriage was the vehicle through which individuals could establish both their legitimacy of birth and their purity of blood. For the

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<sup>96</sup> Miller, *Status and Loyalty in Colonial Spanish America*, 99, explains that only the following positions qualified for abnormally high salaries: Gobernador y Capitán General (9,000 pesos); Regente de la Real Audiencia (5,000 pesos); Gobernador e Intendente (4,000 pesos), Oidor de la Real Audiencia and Fiscal de la Real Audiencia (3,300 pesos); Comandante y Justicia Mayor and Contador Mayor de la Real Hacienda and Director de Ingenieros, Brigadier (3,000 pesos); Coronel, Teniente de Rey (2,616 pesos); Subdelegado de la Real Hacienda and Ingeniero en Jefe, Coronel (2,000 pesos); Oficial de la Secretaría (1,800 pesos); Secretario de la Capitanía General and Auditor de Guerra and Ingeniero segundo, teniente coronel (1,500 pesos) and Sargento Mayor (1,200 pesos), Sargento Mayor (1,164 pesos); Ingeniero ordinario (1,000 pesos).

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 202-208.

<sup>98</sup> Sevilla Soler, *Santo Domingo*, 65, states that baptisms cost only 10 reales. In the margin of the sacramental records there are notations to the effect that the wedding or baptism was performed *gratis* (free).

<sup>99</sup> In the baptismal records, there are quite a few notations of "gratis" in the left hand margin but no clear group emerged as the beneficiary of the munificence of the priests.

elite, it was unquestionably the foundation of their identity as members of status in whichever region they lived. For a small group, like the Spanish Dominican elite, the decision to marry within the Roman Catholic tradition represented extra expenses and delays occasioned by the need to purchase dispensations for reasons of consanguinity. To obtain these documents, the Spanish Dominican elite again turned to the language of empire. They, as many other Spanish colonials, had argued that dispensations should be granted in each individual case because there were no other suitable spouses within the elite class.<sup>100</sup> Spanish Dominicans reflected the Spanish Crown's desire that individuals marry within their own socio-economic class. The granting of the dispensations enabled the formation of a tightly knit group of elite members as it perpetuated their ability to marry strictly within their own ranks, thereby controlling entry into their exclusive group. All in all, it is clear that the ability to seek dispensations for a price rendered ineffectual the marital prohibitions imposed by the ecclesiastical regulations.

In Santo Domingo, it is therefore not surprising that elites are strongly represented in the marital registers and that ninety-eight percent of children born to parents with the title don or doña were recorded as legitimate.<sup>101</sup> The sacrament of marriage legitimized unions, which reinforced the couple's social status in that society through the visibility of the act and the permanency of the record. The aura, conferred by the sacrament of marriage on Spanish Dominicans identified them, as well as their children, as worthy members of the elite. By extension, this designation enabled sons to work in the employ of the sovereign, and more

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<sup>100</sup> Miller, *Status and Loyalty in Colonial Spanish America*, ch. 3, states that royal legislation imposed restrictions on acceptable spouses for these officials which naturally limited the marital pool.

<sup>101</sup> AAMSD 636213, 636214, 636215, 636798, 636216, 636217, 636218, 366799, 636800, 636801, 636802, 636858, 636859. Interestingly there are 3 children born of parents with the title of don or doña that were labelled as hijo natural and 23 others (or just under two percent) that had no designation at all. These blank entries should be understood as standard errors in the records as the designation of illegitimate was never used.

particularly for military service. The significance of marriage was therefore central to the elite's status and Spain's comprehension of their position within that society. The negotiations relating to the elite's role in controlling island affairs, described in chapter one, were only possible if Spain recognized the Spanish Dominicans as an elite group. Thus the positioning of the elite as "white" meant that their members were pure of blood and legitimate, clearly identifying marriage as part of the discursive nature of "whiteness."<sup>102</sup> This dialogue was less important to the other socio-economic groups on the island as they were subject to prohibitions, making them technically ineligible for royal employment. Also, as will be discussed hereunder, in the second half of the eighteenth century, this group faced greater restrictions on acceptable marital partners. Moreover, there was no incentive for the free or slave groups to spend so much of their hard earned income or to wait so long to marry within the Roman Catholic tradition. The devaluation of marriage for the free and slave class brought the cycle full circle as it helped the elite to differentiate themselves from the other socio-economic groups. Thus, elite identity was based on that triad: white, legitimate and pure of blood.

### **Multiple Marriages and the Reaffirmation of Marital Ties**

In light of the situation I have just described, it is not surprising that the data reveals a very tightly knit community, especially among the following families: Alarcón Coronado, Campuzano Blanco Polanco, Castro Rivera, Fernández de Castro, Fernández de Lara, Guridi, Heredia, Bastidas (Lavastidas), Leos Échalas, Mieses Ponce de León and Pérez Caro y Fernández de Oviedo. Multiple marriages, unions contracted in generational sequence, sealed their interconnectedness. This phenomenon is at once to be expected from a group trying to

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<sup>102</sup> Ramos, "Marriage and the Family in Colonial Vila Rica," 200-225, argues that marriage was a marker of elite status in Brazil in the colonial period. He writes that members of the elite had a higher incidence of marriage than the other social classes in Brazil, precisely because marriage stood as a symbol of status.

maintain an exclusive hold on power on the island and peculiarly interesting for its regular re-occurrence.<sup>103</sup> The table below illustrates the interconnectedness of elite Spanish Dominican families. Identified in each row of the left hand column are the two families in question. The number of marriages between the two families identified in the left hand column is indicated under each heading representing a generational cohort. The marriages were extracted from the compiled genealogical reconstructions. Spanish family naming conventions make it necessary to devise a methodology for creating such a table. Generally speaking, children acquire their father and mother's first last name. For example, María Cabral Páez Maldonado and don Luis Tejeda Montenegro's children would be identified as Tejeda Cabral. However, there were many exceptions to this rule. For example, the apparent family heir might actually have all four family names or just those of the father. If the family was titled, the heir again might not carry any of the last names but only the title. Finally, some families were more important than others. The children were identified by the line of greatest importance whether it was through matrilineal or patrilineal descent. The ever-changing family names are a real blessing for historians as they make it easy to track the matrilineal and patrilineal lines. However, it is a real challenge to illustrate multiple marriages in a comprehensive and simple table. Moreover, the Spanish Dominican families in the left hand column of the table are identified one branch at a time. For example doña Juana de la Rocha y Landeche's marriage to Juan Pérez Caro y Fernández de Oviedo would have counted as one marriage for the Rocha Ferrer line to the Pérez Caro y Fernández de

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<sup>103</sup> Tutino, "Power, Class, and Family: Men and Women in the Mexican Elite, 1750-1810," 359-381, demonstrates the complexity and control involved in Mexican elite marital strategies. He concludes that only a small number of the members of these elite families were actually powerful but that the entire elite set behaved in the same manner. He also notices that Mexican elite residing in smaller communities mirrored the behaviour of the more powerful elite in Mexico City. Undoubtedly, there is a parallel between the behaviour of the Dominican elite and this more general culture that Tutino uncovered in his research.

Oviedo family and another for the Coca Landeches.<sup>104</sup> Although I realize that this doubles the actual number of marriages, it is the most accurate way of illustrating the complex ties that had developed within this internal pool. The only exceptions to this methodological approach were individuals carrying the same last name twice (Castro y Castro). Obviously counting it twice was counterproductive. Also, names that remain as composites of two last names, such as Pérez-Caro y Fernández de Oviedo or Mieses Ponce de León, were left intact because the two lines became inextricably fused to each other for the period under study. Thus the table demonstrates marriages through both the patrilineal and matrilineal line.

**Table 2- Marriages between Specific Elite Spanish Dominican Families by Generational Cohort**

<b>Spanish Dominican Family</b>	<b>1688-1708</b>	<b>1709-1730</b>	<b>1731-1751</b>	<b>1752-1772</b>	<b>1773-1795</b>	<b>1796-1816</b>
Alarcón Coronado & Angulo (Medrano)	1			1	1	
Alarcón Coronado & Castro Rivera	1	2		2		
Almonte (Delmonte) & Álvarez			1	1	1	
Almonte (Delmonte) & Heredia			1	1		1
Caballero Bazán & Angulo Medrano				1	1	1
Caballero Bazán & Campuzano Blanco Polanco			1	2	1	1
Caballero Bazán & Guridi			1	2	2	
Caballero Bazán & Heredia				1	2	2
Caballero Bazán & Mieses Ponce de León	3		1	1	3	1
Caballero Bazán & Pérez Caro y Fernández de Oviedo		1		1	1	
Caballero Bazán & Coca Landeche	4	2	1		1	1
Campuzano Blanco Polanco & Mieses Ponce de León			1	1	1	
Castro Rivera & Campuzano Blanco Polanco		1		1	2	1
Castro Rivera & Fromesta		1		1	1	

<sup>104</sup> Larrazábal Blanco, *Familias Dominicanas*, Vol. 3.

Balmaceda						
Castro Rivera & Heredia	2	1		3	3	1
Castro Rivera & Mieses Ponce de León			1	1	1	
Castro Rivera & Pérez Caro y Fernández de Oviedo		1		2	1	
Fernández de Castro & Fernández de Castro			1	3	2	
Fernández de Castro & Fernández de Lara	3			1	2	
Fromesta Balmaceda & Leos Échalas			1	1	1	
Leos Échalas & Castro Rivera	1	1		1		
Leos Échalas & Guridi		1	1	2		
Leos Échalas & Heredia	1	1		2		
Leos Échalas & Rocha Ferrer	1	1		1	1	
Leos Échalas & Fernández de Castro			1	2		
Mañón & Campuzano Blanco Polanco		1		1	2	
Mañón & Leos Échalas		3			1	1
Mañón & Mieses Ponce de León		1		1	1	
Mañón & Pérez Caro y Fernández de Oviedo	1	1		1	1	
Páez Maldonado & Campuzano Blanco Polanco		1		1	2	
Páez Maldonado & Fromesta Balmaceda			1	1	1	
Páez Maldonado & Garay	2			1	4	
Páez Maldonado & Leos Échalas		4			1	2
Páez Maldonado & Mieses Ponce de León			1	1	1	
Páez Maldonado & Pérez Caro y Fernández de Oviedo	2		1	1	1	
Paredes & Mieses Ponce de León			1	1	1	

Source: AAMSD 636858, 636859 and Larrazábal Blanco, *Familias Dominicanas*, Vol. 3.

Each line of the table above indicates strong affinities between two core Spanish Dominican families. The table as a whole reveals the very interconnectedness of a group of families. Although it is true that marital unions were not present between each of the families in each generation, the larger picture can be said to be indicative of an active approach at maintaining marital ties and thus points towards the utilization of marital strategies. The behaviour,

however, was probably no different than in other small elite marital pools as it sought to establish and maintain ties between those particular families. The marital pattern concentrated power into the hands of select families but was it also a commentary on the durability of marital ties? After all, over time, marital ties can lose their strength. In some cases the bond was non renewable for example if one of the families emigrated or was posted elsewhere, but this was not the case for Spanish Dominican families constituting the internal marital pool. Thus, I believe that multiple marriages served as a reaffirmation of the ties between two families— a sort of generational tune up. The Pérez Caro y Fernández de Oviedo family provides a wonderful illustration of this phenomenon.<sup>105</sup> The marriage in the first generation should be construed as the strengthening of ties between the Fernández de Oviedo y Bardecí (Castillo Torresquemada) and Pérez Caro lines given that don Juan had married a Fernández de Oviedo. Similarly, in the second generation, one of the Pérez Caro sons married doña Antonia Fernández de Lara, sister of doña María Manuela Fernández de Lara, who had married don Antonio Pérez Caro in the first generation. Also in the second generation, one of the Pérez Caro's daughters married don Tomas Mieses Ponce de León y Pérez Caro, son of Lieutenant Colonel don Francisco Mieses Ponce de León y Rodríguez Francisco de Quero and husband of doña Francisca Pérez Caro y Fernández de Oviedo of the first generation. Finally, a Pérez Caro son and daughter married a brother and sister, doña Luisa and don Lorenzo Fernández de Castro Mélendez Bazán. Table three demonstrates the multiple marriage phenomenon for the family in question.<sup>106</sup> Each X represents a marriage contracted by a particular local or circum-Caribbean family, identified in the left hand column. The right hand columns indicate the Pérez Caro's by generation. Although Xs are

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

not present in each generation for all families listed, it is obvious that multiple marriages were common.

**Table 3-Families That Contracted Multiple Marriages with the Pérez Caro Family<sup>107</sup>**

Last Name of Family	Generation A	A1	A2	A3	A4
Fernández de Oviedo	X	X			
Fernández de Lara		X	X	X	
Heredia				XX	XX
Campuzano Blanco			X	XX	X
Peralta				X	X
Machado				X	XX
Logroño Orenes/ Brito			XX	XX	X

Source: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 1092, 1093, and 1095 and Larrazábal Blanco, *Familias Dominicanas*, Vol.1-9.

### Fictive Kinship Ties

The bonds secured through marriage were strengthened through godparentage. A third of the elite families chose godparents from within their own siblings and parents, while two-thirds of them selected either other relatives from their extended families or from amongst the other elite Spanish Dominican ones.<sup>108</sup> Also, throughout the eighteenth century, Spanish Dominican children had only one godparent, generally a godfather but in about one third of the cases, a godmother. There are very few instances of Spanish Dominican elite

<sup>107</sup> The Fernández de Oviedo are mother and daughter. The Xs in the Fernández de Lara columns A1 and A2 represent sisters, while A3 is the son of a third sister. The Heredia relationship is as follows: mother (A3), daughters (A3 and A4) and son (A4). The Peraltas are father-daughter. Column A3 of the Machado row is the father, A4 is the son and the "X" in A4 is the grand-daughter. Finally, although the last column "Logrono Orenes/Brito" contains three family names, the families are inseparable as Pedro Brito's daughter married Antonio Orenes. Antonio's son married José Logroño's daughter María Merced Logroño.

<sup>108</sup> This information was extracted from the baptismal registry database.

children with both godparents, although there definitely were some. Although the selection of godparents stemmed from an existing horizontal relationship between the parents of the child and the chosen individual, godparentage served to renew ties between the adults and to create a new inter-generational one. In effect, the fictive kinship ties connected not only the chosen godparents to the parents of the child but to the child itself. Finally, bonds were also created between godparents in the case when two were selected.<sup>109</sup> Moreover, godparentage established intra and cross-generational bonds. The creation of vertical ties, members of the elite choosing within their own group, also bonded the small number of families together, thereby reconfirming their own status. Of course the formation of bonds also ran along socio-economic gradations of wealth within the elite. The higher the individual ranked in society the more powerful the chosen godparent appeared to be. For example, militia Lieutenant don Felipe Firado and his wife doña Rosa Hinojosa selected don Josef de Brioso, a presbyter while señor judge don Antonio Villaurrutia and his wife doña María Antonia López de Osorio chose the President, Governor and Captain-General of the island señor don Francisco Rubio y Peñaranda. It goes without saying that these horizontal fictive kinship ties were instrumental in maintaining the elite's tightly knit character and their exclusive power network.

### **Conclusion**

The Catholic sacrament of marriage yielded concrete benefits for the Spanish Dominican elite because it conferred legitimacy and by extension purity of blood to its members. In the language of empire, these two elements were central in determining how the Spanish Crown understood to which social group the various families belonged and whether their quality was elevated enough to grant them commissions in the royal administration.

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<sup>109</sup> Ebaugh and Curry, "Fictive Kin as Social Capital in New Immigrant Communities," 192.

Moreover, the Spanish Dominican elite continued to marry within the tradition of the Catholic Church despite the financial burden and unavoidable delays, because the ceremony identified them as members of the elite.

Although the theoretical marital restrictions in canon and civil law should have prevented the formation of tight interpersonal relationships within a small group of royal officials, the Spanish Dominican elite circumvented both. Spousal selection thereby became a vehicle for controlling admittance to the elite group for a limited number of persons. Multiple marriages re-affirmed familial ties amongst the elite families and excluded undesirable ones. Through this strategy, the Spanish Dominican elite concentrated power into the hands of select families and continued to identify themselves to the Spanish Crown as persons of the upper class, worthy of its attentions and concessions.

The interconnectedness of the elite was strengthened through the creation of fictive kinship networks. The selection of godparents from within their own group served not only to reassert existing relationships between elite parents but also to create new ones with the younger generation. Moreover, the bonds were intra and inter-generational. Like marriage, fictive kinship ties therefore perpetuated family alliances and extended vertical power networks within the elite group. Protection and mutual assistance ensured that the core group of families retained their position in Spanish Dominican society and prevented the rise of those deemed unworthy of acceptance into this exclusive network.

## **Chapter Five- Foreigners and Elite Marriage**

The Spanish Dominican elite were shrewd enough to recognize that self confirmation of their status as members of the elite was only effective in a society in which they controlled all of the high ranking royal positions and the officers' corps. However, this was not the case. Spanish Dominicans held only fifty percent of the commissioned military positions and a small number of the civil and ecclesiastical ones. The remaining ones were filled by individuals, hand picked by the Spanish Crown. These immigrants exercised significant power and influence over policy and therefore were valuable allies. However, rather than employing overt coercion methods, which might have resulted in bitter factionalism, the Spanish Dominican elite utilized more subtle marital strategies to achieve their goals.

Although the elite carefully controlled admittance to their group by limiting their marital pool, they readily incorporated men appointed to positions of power in their region, as well as those who had "arrived," in terms of social position. This integration did not make the group any less exclusive. Despite the fact that elite Spanish Dominicans were not as socially important as other elites in the Spanish empire, they were giants in their corner of the world. As such, their connections to power were an invaluable asset to newcomers. They were willing to make room into their group for these specially selected individuals sent to fill commissions in Santo Domingo in return for the prestige their rank, legitimacy and purity of blood brought to their family lines. The elite community supported desirable power alliances, but when these threatened to shift the balance of power within their group, some of these unions created embittered battles over marital selection, pursued sometimes decades later in the courts. Given that seventy-six percent of the legal immigration was male and "white," only daughters of the Spanish Dominican elite could provide that central connection between these newcomers and the

core group. In essence, the vital links that continued to make these complex marital strategies possible fell upon elite Spanish Dominican women.

### **Elite Marital Patterns and Network Formation**

Elite marital patterns have generally been defined as endogamous, which tended to be construed as marriages occurring amongst a set group, systematically excluding outsiders. In contrast, the definition of exogamous conveyed a sense that the marriages were mostly contracted outside of the group. In an effort to avoid using terms like endogamous and exogamous, I went in search of another theoretical model and found it in Jacques Barbier's article "Elites and Cadres in Bourbon Chile,"<sup>1</sup> which preceded his book *Reform and Politics in Bourbon Chile*.<sup>2</sup> He examines the Chilean elite's composition pre and post 1763 to determine whether the Bourbon Reforms had curbed the interpersonal relations between the elite and the new royal officials and by extension kept the Chileans out of power. He utilizes two different approaches. First, he cross-references people, who received, created or were awarded titles, entails and memberships into major associations, to their occupations, thereby constructing collective and individual biographies. Gary M. Miller, who adopts the same methodological approach in his study of the regular army officers in Venezuela in the second half of the eighteenth century, describes this methodological approach as prosopographical analysis.<sup>3</sup>

Barbier determines that pre 1763, the old families and royal administrators formed the core group of individuals under study, but after that date, the individuals were of more "obscure stock and engage(d) in trade in a more prominent way...and lacked the high level political

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<sup>1</sup> Jacques A Barbier, "Elite and Cadres in Bourbon Chile," *HAHR*, Vol. 52, No. 3 (August, 1972), 416-435.

<sup>2</sup> Barbier, *Reform and Politics in Bourbon Chile*, passim.

<sup>3</sup> Miller, *Status and Loyalty in Colonial Spanish America*, vii.

involvement of the earlier group.”<sup>4</sup> Second, after having identified individuals belonging respectively to the new and old elite, Barbier measured the interrelatedness of the two groups’ marital patterns. His research indicates that throughout the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the new and old elite increasingly intermarried, thereby achieving a high degree of interrelation.<sup>5</sup> The major change was that the old elite no longer married within itself, preferring to create ties to the new bureaucratic one. This shift in marital pattern occurred at the same time as the Creoles were being purged from high administrative positions. In Chile, the most drastic example was the elimination of native sons in the Chilean Audiencia from one hundred percent to zero.<sup>6</sup> If one considers the change that occurred in the marital patterns alongside the power struggle engendered by the Bourbon Reforms, the conclusion must be that the Chilean elite had found a way to overcome the handicap placed upon them by Charles III. They merely co-opted through marriage the new officials, who were in the positions now systematically being denied to them. The marital ties bound the immigrants to the Chilean elite, allowing them to exert a measure of influence over the newcomers, and therefore, continued to give them control over their affairs.

It is Barbier’s concept of influence that is of direct interest to this dissertation. As already discussed, the Spanish Dominican elite were both major landholders and employed in the royal bureaucracy by the eighteenth century. The dual nature of the elite was due to two reasons. First, as of 1519, Santo Domingo was an integral part of the Spanish defensive plan and was therefore highly militarized from the outset. An elevated percentage of royal, ecclesiastical and military

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<sup>4</sup> Barbier, “Elite and Cadres in Bourbon Chile,” 422.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 417.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 432-435.

positions were reserved expressly for *peninsulares* (peninsulars).<sup>7</sup> Thus, a small but continuous flow of in and out-migration of royal officials established itself throughout the colonial period. The transient nature of these men and the need to control them was therefore always present. Second, as discussed repeatedly in the preceding chapters, the income generating potential of the sluggish Spanish Dominican economy was a zero sum game and the elite had successfully managed to harness the most lucrative parts of it. Within the tightly knit group, each slice of the economic pie was ferociously contested. Elite Spanish Dominicans went as far as making racial accusations in order to impede others from profiting at their expense. It is my belief that early Spanish Dominicans developed the same sort of control and influence mechanisms that the Chileans did in the mid eighteenth century. The continuous imposition of outsiders and the narrow economic opportunities led old Spanish Dominican families to turn to marriage to control the newcomers and “whiten” themselves in the process. The immigrants accepted incorporation into the elite society because it provided them with invaluable access to the established network of power. The seamless integration into the exclusive elite network immediately legitimized their authority towards islanders. Thus, both the Spanish Dominican elite and the immigrants found advantages out of these marriages.

### **Methodological Approach**

My methodological approach to this chapter is two-fold. First, I adopted Jacques Barbier’s definition of elite: individuals who were deferred to by others in society.<sup>8</sup> I have interpreted this to mean persons to whom the title don or doña was attributed commonly in the

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<sup>7</sup> *Peninsulares* is a term used to designate people born in the Iberian Peninsula.

<sup>8</sup> Barbier, *Reform and Politics in Bourbon Chile*, 41-42, states: “An individual was a member of the elite when he was deferred to by lesser mortals, and dealt with on a footing of equality by his peers. In other words elite status was essentially based on their reputation and as such difficult to establish today with any degree of certitude, especially since a scholarly social history of the group remains to be written.”

sacramental records, as well as in the colonial correspondence from both the Archivo General de la Nación Dominicana in Santo Domingo and the Archivo General de Indias in Seville, Spain.<sup>9</sup> Second, I employed genealogical reconstructions to identify all of the members of the elite families. These genealogies were derived from Carlos Larrazábal Blanco's master work, *Familias Dominicanas*,<sup>10</sup> as well as the excel databases based on the AAMSD records. Members of the elite were easily identified in the database because their full name and their title (don or doña) were always recorded. Furthermore, the witnesses to the marriages and baptisms, as well as the godparents in the baptismal registers were chosen from the same socio-economic class. In most cases, the officiating priest was not the regular attending one but a much more senior royal or ecclesiastical official. The families falling in this category of analysis were also considered to be in the elite by Carlos Larrazábal Blanco.

Although I also reconstructed many Spanish Dominican genealogies, I have chosen to use as the main example the Fernández de Oviedo family, which in the eighteenth century appears under Pérez Caro y Fernández de Oviedo, to explain and illustrate the eighteenth century Dominican marital patterns discussed in this chapter. The reason I have decided to do so is that the genealogical reconstruction of this one elite Spanish Dominican elite family stretches from somewhere near the early fifteenth century into the 1850s. The line of descent is complete and free of ambiguities. Another important factor for my choice was that more information was available through the primary sources for this genealogy than for any other Spanish Dominican elite descendants. At this juncture, it seems most logical to briefly introduce this family before

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid. Barbier was able to validate his definition of elite by positively identifying members of the elite. He did so by connecting elite families to entails. I cannot replicate this process as there are no remaining archival indications that entails were established in the territory of Santo Domingo.

<sup>10</sup> Larrazábal Blanco, *Familias Dominicanas*, Vol. 1-9.

describing the prevalent trends in the Spanish Dominican elite marital patterns in the eighteenth century in the Archbishopric of Santo Domingo.

### **Brief Description of the Family**

The first member of the Fernández de Oviedo family is none other than the famous Spanish chronicler Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdes,<sup>11</sup> who authored amongst other things *La General y Natural Historia de Las Indias* and *Las Quinquagenas de la Nobleza de España* (*The General and Natural History of the Indies and The Anecdotes of the History of the Nobility of Spain*).<sup>12</sup> He was appointed supervisor of gold-smelting in Santo Domingo in 1514; he was also the official chronicler of the Indies in 1523, as well as *Adelantado* (conqueror/Commander) and Governor of Cartagena de Indias (two mandates), *Regidor* (Councilman) in perpetuity and *Procurador* (Town Representative) of Santo Domingo.<sup>13</sup> He obtained these high ranking commissions through his privileged position at the Spanish Royal Court. To be exact, he was a nephew of King Ferdinand of Aragón, husband of Queen Isabella of Castile, and for a certain period he was appointed as the royal aide to their son, the *infante* (male heir to the throne), Juan, and later to the *infanta* (female heir to the throne), Juana. His high ranking commission and favoured position at the Spanish court placed him squarely within the elite class in his new colonial surroundings. Gonzalo married twice. His first wife, Margarita de Vergara, a Spaniard by all accounts, died while giving birth. He then remarried a Spanish Dominican by the name of

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<sup>11</sup> Daymond Turner, "Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo's *Historia General y Natural* - First American Encyclopedia," *Journal of Inter-American Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (April, 1964), 267-274, indicates that Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés (1478-1557) lived in Spain's royal household during Columbus's voyages. After 1514 he held various offices in the New World, and began his *Historia general y natural de las Indias* in 1521. This included an account of the Grijalva expedition based on a pilot's log (probably that of Anton Alaminos), given to him in 1523 by Diego Velásquez, Governor of Cuba. Appointed Chronicler of the Indies by Charles V in 1532, 19 of the 20 volumes of Oviedo's *Historia* were published in 1535. The 20th appeared in 1557, after having been initially suppressed by Las Casas.

<sup>12</sup> Guitar, *Cultural Genesis*, 7.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

Catalina Riva-Flecha y Burquillos.<sup>14</sup> Only one child resulted from the second union: Juana. She married Rodrigo II de Bastidas (or Lavastidas), also known as Rodrigo de Hoyos,<sup>15</sup> whose grandfather was a direct descendant of don Rodrigo Díaz de Asturias, the Count of Oviedo and Asturias and the Lord of Nava.<sup>16</sup> He was also the celebrated discoverer of Santa Marta, now known as Colombia.<sup>17</sup> In fact, he was conferred the title of Adelantado de Santa Marta. Carlos Larrazábal Blanco asserts that this marriage had been arranged by the fathers to preserve in posterity the two great family names of Fernández de Oviedo and Bastidas, as well as their extensive fortunes. Furthermore, it was also agreed that the Hoyos line would henceforth bear the Bastidas name and the children of the arranged marriage would hold the Fernández de Oviedo name.<sup>18</sup> This agreement made it possible for both families to establish dynastic successions through the maternal line. The scheme was successful. Both illustrious names had managed to survive and were still very much a part of elite Spanish Dominican society in the eighteenth century.

For the Fernández de Oviedo's genealogy, the most prominent family line was the Pérez Caro y Fernández de Oviedo's one, established through the marriage of don Juan Pérez Caro to Ana Teresa Fernández de Oviedo Bastidas. Don Juan was himself the Lieutenant Colonel and Sergeant Major of the fixed battalion, which was none too surprising given that he was the son of

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<sup>14</sup> Larrazábal Blanco, "*Origen Hispano-Dominicano de Algunas Familias Caraqueñas*," 8-42, 14 and Daymond Turner, "Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo's *Historia General y Natural* - First American Encyclopedia," 267-274, both indicate that there is no information available on Catalina Riva Flecha y Burquillos, except that she was purported to have been from Santo Domingo. The claim is somewhat dubious given that the three names, or the combination thereof that compose her last name are not of Spanish Dominican origin and do not resurface as one of the elites of Santo Domingo. Also, other encyclopedic volumes suggest the second wife was also of Spanish descent. The reason for the confusion could just be an omission in the sacramental record as to Catalina's origin.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 14. Larrazábal Blanco asserts that Rodrigo de Hoyos was the son of the only heir of Rodrigo de Bastidas, Isabel Bastidas y Rodríguez de Romera.

<sup>16</sup> Daymond Turner, "Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo's *Historia General y Natural*," 267-274.

<sup>17</sup> Larrazábal Blanco, "*Origen Hispano-Dominicano de Algunas Familias Caraqueñas*," 14.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

don Ignacio Pérez Caro, who was Admiral of the Royal Armada de Barlovento, twice Captain-General, Governor and President of Santo Domingo. He was also the grandson of Antonio Pérez Caro, a Spanish lawyer at the Royal Court in Seville. Doña Ana was the great-great-great-grand daughter of Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdes the royal Spanish chronicler and her brother Gonzalo IV was a lawyer, Visitor General of Puerto Rico, Treasurer of the Royal Court and Auditor General of the Interior Provinces of Puerto Rico.<sup>19</sup> Consent to the marriage was given on November 12<sup>th</sup>, 1707, and the benediction followed much later on February 27<sup>th</sup>, 1713.<sup>20</sup> In any case, the marriage joined the Pérez Caro to the Fernández de Oviedo line at the outset of the eighteenth century, a period during which Hispaniola passed from a socio-politically tense situation to complete upheaval. The analysis of marital patterns in this region should therefore take into account that particularly unstable period since it was at the root of major changes in marital strategies, as will be discussed further on in this chapter.

### **Immigrants and the Elite Marital Pool**

As discussed earlier in this chapter, the Catholic Church recognized the lack of quality suitors of the same socio-economic standing in Spanish Americas for the elite groups, and quite particularly for the *doncellas* (unmarried elite women).<sup>21</sup> The limited nature of the marital pool was the whole reason that dispensations of consanguinity and affinity were granted so freely. However, was this in fact the truth or had ecclesiastical officials come to this conclusion in view of the innumerable letters sent by elite Spanish Americans declaring it to be the case?

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> AAMSD, 636858, 636859.

<sup>21</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 278, 54-6-33- Minutas de Consultas y Despachos: Y Algunos papeles de Secretaría años 1753-1759.

In the period under study, there were a total of 2,069 marriages performed in the cathedral, and 71 of these legitimate local marriages<sup>22</sup> involved elite foreigners.<sup>23</sup> Caucasian foreigners were of European<sup>24</sup> and circum-Caribbean extraction.<sup>25</sup> The Europeans were generally Spanish, Italian, French or from the Canary Islands, while the circum-Caribbean immigrants were mainly from the other Spanish colonies, such as Cuba, Puerto Rico and Venezuela. There are two overriding reasons for immigration: forcible resettlement and military appointments to the fixed battalion of Santo Domingo.<sup>26</sup> As stated earlier, the fixed battalion's officers' corps was composed of veteran officers and Spanish Dominicans, the ratio of which stood at about 1:1 for the entire eighteenth century.<sup>27</sup> Possible additional reasons included emigration to find work due to a lack of employment opportunities in the particular region from which the immigrants hailed. Still others were lured by the promise of easy riches and adventure in the Americas. Lastly, it is possible that the circum-Caribbean men immigrated to Santo Domingo in order to cement or

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<sup>22</sup> The marriage registers for the Archbishopric of Santo Domingo are incomplete for the period in question and in an appalling state of preservation due mostly to a lack of funding and to the tropical climate in which they are stored. As a result these documents are currently stored in metal file cabinets in a controlled access room in the Archbishopric's Headquarters in Santo Domingo. In order to preserve the collection, his Eminence the Cardinal Pitini allowed the Genealogical Society of Utah to microfilm the ecclesiastical collection. Although the documents are in poor condition and the microfilms are difficult to read, they are of the best quality possible given the condition of the material.

<sup>23</sup> The term legitimate marriages should be construed as religious unions conducted in the presence of an ordained priest in the cathedral of Santo Domingo,<sup>23</sup> of which the entries were duly recorded in the marriage registers. The paper does not take into consideration any illicit unions between foreigners and Dominicans for the period between 1700-1810. It is limited to the entries in the marriage registers of the Archbishopric of Santo Domingo. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that they were not separated into books for the whites, coloured and slaves, as was often the case in Latin America. The entries were simply entered in chronological order.

<sup>24</sup> I have chosen to include the families that were forcibly relocated from the Canary Islands to Santo Domingo by the Spanish Crown because, although Dominicans continuously petitioned the Council of the Indies for more Canarian families, once they had arrived they were probably still perceived as foreigners.

<sup>25</sup> AAMSD 636858, 636859.

<sup>26</sup> Moya Pons, *The Dominican Republic*, 78, states that Canarian officers were also included in this category of foreigners, because Spanish Dominicans had requested in 1728 that "soldiers from the Canary Islands (be sent) to repopulate and fortify the ports of Montecristi and Samaná that the French were trying to settle." Most of the men were seasoned veteran officers, who received significant promotions in rank to transfer from their European regiments into an American one. For some, this was part of a strategic move which would allow the individual to accede to a higher rank given that the European officers' corps was for the most part stagnant.

<sup>27</sup> Rivas, "The Spanish Dominican Military in Santo Domingo 1701-1777," 249-272.

reaffirm familial ties with the Spanish Dominican elite. Whatever the reason, the elite marital pool was not limited to Spanish Dominicans but included a small group of European and circum-Caribbean foreigners who, although sometimes transient in nature, immigrated to the island to fill commissions in royal service. However, the question of whether these officers felt a legitimate interest in contracting marriage while stationed in Santo Domingo is quite relevant. There are two factors at play to consider here.

There was a military hierarchy in regard to the prestige of the region and unit in which one served. Salaries were determined in accordance with this pecking order. Whereas the Royal Guards in Madrid was the most prestigious unit, the fixed battalion in Santo Domingo was somewhere near the bottom of the list.<sup>28</sup> It was certainly not a desirable place to be stationed either from a health or from an economic stand point. First, the region lacked economic and trade opportunities and salaries were frequently in arrears. Second, the island itself was not the exotic vacationers' paradise it is today. Antonio Gutiérrez Escudero asserts that the island's tropical climate, with its torrid heat and high humidity due to its many streams, rivers and lagoons, created a perfect environment for the proliferation of an endless series of pests, ailments and scourges, resulting in raging epidemics and devastating tropical fevers.<sup>29</sup> Although vital statistics are not available for the Spanish Caribbean, nearly one third of Europe's population perished from natural, accidental and criminal causes before the age of twenty-eight in the eighteenth century.<sup>30</sup> If one managed not to catch influenza, some type of pulmonary infection, malaria, typhoid, typhus, smallpox, salmonella poisoning, the plague or a nasty case of dysentery and

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<sup>28</sup> For more on the military structure and ranks, please see: Miller, *Status and Loyalty in Colonial Spanish America*, ch. 1.

<sup>29</sup> Gutiérrez Escudero, *Población y Economía en Santo Domingo*, 19-20.

<sup>30</sup> John McManners, *Death and the Enlightenment: Changing Attitudes to Death among Christians and Unbelievers in Eighteenth Century France* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), 10.

make it to adulthood, hunger and debt were everyday realities for over two thirds of the population in Europe.<sup>31</sup> The same situation applied to the territory of Santo Domingo, except that in addition to the diseases already mentioned, yellow fever, endemic syphilis and rickettsial fevers were also present and it is likely that there were higher rates of poverty.<sup>32</sup> In Europe, forty was considered the best age, while those who held on into their sixties could expect social death as they never grew old well and were a drain on meagre family resources.<sup>33</sup> This was probably also true in the Americas. The seventy-five year old Lieutenant-Colonel's military review indicated that he had a puerile mind and was, in his superior's opinion, incapable of commanding officers.<sup>34</sup> What could one expect from a man who lived well past any normal life span and who had probably been physically and mentally injured as a result of his military career that included many battles in Europe and Africa?<sup>35</sup> Thus, if life was nasty, brutish and short enough for the average European, it was even more so in low lying tropical regions such as Veracruz or Santo Domingo, which were veritable breeding grounds for pestilences and diseases, the worst of which was yellow fever.<sup>36</sup> Christopher P. Albi states that don Francisco Javier de Gamboa, a high ranking judge in the Mexican Audiencia, considered that his appointment to the Audiencia of Santo Domingo was a death sentence.<sup>37</sup> Gamboa realised that his new commission was a second attempt to exile him for having yet again opposed the Visitor-General of New Spain, don

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., ch. 1.

<sup>32</sup> Cook, *Born to Die*, 17, writes that epidemics continued to sweep across the Americas well into the late seventeenth century.

<sup>33</sup> McManners, *Death and the Enlightenment*, 10.

<sup>34</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 1093. Don Pedro Lousel Osorio's military service review of 1763.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Cook, *Born to Die*, 17.

<sup>37</sup> Christopher P. Albi, "Challenging Spanish Imperialism: Francisco Javier de Gamboa's Economic Ideas in Eighteenth Century Mexico," (Unpublished paper at the University of Texas at Austin, 2004), 12, explains the length Gamboa went to in order to avoid being stationed in Santo Domingo. Apparently, Gamboa was quite certain that he was going to die there.

José de Gálvez,<sup>38</sup> but he also recognized that at his advanced age, he was likely to succumb to the endemic illnesses of that region.<sup>39</sup> Adding to the problem of disease was the fact that Santo Domingo is located in the Caribbean, a region subject to tropical storms and hurricanes during six months of the year.<sup>40</sup> It also lies on a tectonic plate along the septentrional fault, making it prone to earthquakes.<sup>41</sup>

An appointment to the area was even less attractive given that military commissions seemed to have been anything but temporary. The table below indicates the number of years each foreigner stationed in Santo Domingo had served as per his most recent military review. In this and the two related tables, I have chosen to include the individuals serving as sergeants, a non-commissioned position, alongside those composing the regular officers' corps, because it was common practice to add them in the military reviews of the officers' corps as of 1749.<sup>42</sup> The reason for doing so was probably that the position was not terminal as it is today and that some of the men went on to occupy commissioned positions such as Lieutenants, Captains or higher. Also, in an area of the Spanish empire for which there are very few remaining archival sources, it seemed like a poor use of the information available not to include them. Those men, who did not

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<sup>38</sup> José de Gálvez was Visitor-General of New Spain from 1765 to 1771 and later became the Secretary of the Indies from 1776 to 1787. From this position he exiled Gamboa first to Barcelona and then to Santo Domingo.

<sup>39</sup> Albi, *Challenging Spanish Imperialism*, 4.

<sup>40</sup> The hurricane season usually lasts from June 1<sup>st</sup> to November 30<sup>th</sup>.

<sup>41</sup> Uri Ten Brink and Jian Lin, "Stress Interaction between Subduction Earthquakes and Forearc Strike-Slip Faults; Modeling and Application to the Northern Caribbean Plate Boundary," *Journal of Geophysical Research*, V. 109, (December 24, 2004), 1-15. Uri Ten Brink of the U.S. Geological Survey in Woods Hole and Jian Lin of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI) state that Puerto Rico, Haiti, Dominican Republic and the US Virgin Islands all lay along the septentrional fault zone. Earthquakes are not a possibility but a probability. Science Daily reports that: "The Puerto Rico Trench, roughly parallel to and about 75 miles off the northern coast of Puerto Rico, is about 900 kilometres (560 miles) long and 100 kilometres (60 miles) wide. At the deepest point in the Atlantic Ocean, the trench is 8,340 meters (27,362 feet) below the sea surface. The Hispaniola Trench parallels the north coast of the Dominican Republic and Haiti, and is 550 kilometres (344 miles) long and only 4,500 meters (14,764 feet) deep."

<sup>42</sup> AGI Santo Domingo, leg. 1092, 1093 and 1095. Miller, "Status and Loyalty of Regular Army Officers in Late Colonial Venezuela," 667-696, states that the positions of cadet, corporal and sergeant were not commissioned posts.

rise beyond the rank of sergeant, are easily identifiable while serving in that capacity in the table as the deferential title of “don” was not extended to them. If promotion occurred, the appropriate pre-nominal letters<sup>43</sup> were added accordingly.

**Table 4- Length of Military Service for Each Member of the Officers’ Corps in the Eighteenth Century in Santo Domingo**

<b>Name of Officer</b>	<b>Birth Place</b>	<b>Year of service in SD</b>
Acuna, José	Braga, Portugal	19 years
Álvarez, don Ignacio	Spain	unknown (29 years between Spain and SD)
Angulo, don Lorenzo	Alfaro, Spain	9 years
Aranda, don Juan	Málaga, Spain	35 years
Arata, don José	Génova, Italy	19 years
Araujo, Juan de	Maracaíbo, Venezuela	26 years
Arias, don Manuel	Águeda, Spain	2 years
Arostegui y Argair, Don Celedonio	Spain	unknown (served 40 years, some in Spain)
Arriaga, don Bernardo	Fuenterrabía, Spain	20 years
Arroyo, don Laureano	San Juan, Puerto Rico	1 year
Ayala, don Diego	Spain	10 years
Balcarce, don Francisco	Galicia, Spain	32 years
Barez, Antonio	Cádiz, Spain	1 year
Belilla, don Francisco	Morón, Spain	17 years
Bernal, José	Huelva, Spain	1 year
Blanco, Antonio	León, Spain	28 years
Bonilla, Andrés	San Germán, Puerto Rico	17 years
Bordonase, don Juan	Oleron, France	15 years
Borrero, don Alejandro	Extremadura, Spain	6 years
Burgos, don Agustín de	Madrid, Spain	6 years
Cabrera, Antonio	Plasencia, Spain	17 years
Cabrera, don Aurelio	Veniza, Spain	28 years
Cabrera, don Domingo	Canary Islands	24 years
Cabrera, don Joaquín	Escalona, Spain	24 years
Cabrera, don Pedro	Canary Islands	8 years
Cáceres, don Manuel de	Spain	Unknown (33 years between Spain and SD)
Camaro, don Juan	Ayora, Spain	6 years
Cantos, Alonzo de	Santiago, Spain	7 years

<sup>43</sup> Pre-nominal letters are a title which is placed before the name of a person as opposed to post nominal titles indicated after the name.

Canzi, don Antonio	Cádiz, Spain	2 years
Carabajal, don Diego	México	5-6 years
Carrillo, don Miguel	Castilla, Spain	7 years
Casáosla, don Luis Antonio de	Lebrija, Spain	7 years
Castellanos, don Matías	Ávila, Spain	12 years
Castillo, don Juan	Morón de la Frontera, Spain	4 years
Castro, Juan de	San Miguel de Coruña, Spain	24 years
Castro, Ramón de	Castilla, Spain	9 years
Caballero, don Francisco	Parrás, Spain	29 years
Cayetano, Miguel	Galicia, Spain	32 years
Cerezano, Ángel	Castilla, Spain	6 years
Corrales, don Salvador	Tenerife, Canary Islands	4 years
Corrochano, Tomas	San Bartolomé, Spain	30 years
Díaz, (José) Vicente	Castilla, Spain	24 years
Díos Molina, don Juan de	Habana, Cuba	1 year
Echavarría, don Manuel	Bilbao, Spain	17 years
Elizondo, Antonio	Navarra, Elizondo	2 years
Escobar, don Juan	Spain	unknown (36 years between Spain and SD)
Esterlín, don Nicolás	San Marcos, Haiti	6 years
Evora, don José	Tenerife, Canary Islands	26 years
Fasalla, Miguel	Montalbán, Spain	less than a year
Fernández, Antonio	Sacedon, Spain	27 years
Ferrer, don Miguel	Cuba	10 years
Freyre, don José	San Roque, Spain	2 years
Galán, don José	Sevilla, Spain	24 years
Galliot, don Cristóbal	Artenac, France	26 years
Galván, Juan	Spain	11 years
García Román, don José	Ocaña, Spain	39 years
García, don Diego	Spain	Unknown (33 years between Spain and SD)
García, don Joaquín	Castilla, Spain	6 years
García, don Leonardo	Aranda (Sotillo), Spain	6 years
García, Manuel	Alcántara, Spain	12 years
Gascón, don Matías	Villanueva de la Zara, Spain	20 years
Gascue, don Martín	Vera, Spain	19 years
Gazet, don Peregrino	Barcelona, Spain	Unknown (35 years in all)
Girón, don Agustín	Puerto Rico	37 years
Girón, don Nicolás	Puerto Rico	11 years
Girón, don Pedro Judas	Ronda, Spain	12 years
Girón, don Pedro Judas	Ronda, Spain	12 years

Gómez, don Manuel	Galicia, Spain	31 years
Gómez, don Manuel	Sepúlveda, Spain	8 years
Gómez, don Francisco	Lisboa, Portugal	31 years
González, Francisco	Isabel del Puente, Spain	10 years
Guimarte, don José	Orence, Spain	15 years
Heredia y Melgar, don Andrés de	Provencio, Spain	49 years
Heredia, don Felipe	Zaragoza, Spain	5 years
Hernández, don José Damián	Salamanca, Spain	28 years
Hernández, Francisco	Aremiz, Spain	7 years
Herrera, don Pedro	Alvenga, Spain	21 years
Hordones, don José	Torre Quemada, Spain	26 years
Hoya, don Diego de	Galicia, Spain	6 years
Hoyos, don Antonio	Antequera, Spain	24 years
Larramendi, Pedro Ruiz	Pamplona, Spain	8 years
Larrazábal (Arizabalo), don Juan Josef	Vizcaya, Spain	Unknown (19 years in all)
Lebrun, don José Luis	San Juan, Puerto Rico	23 years
Logroño, don José	Pedrola, Spain	28 years
Logroño, don José	Jerez de la Frontera, Spain	25 years
López Osorio, don Bernardino	Ceuta, Africa	6 years
López Osorio, don Esteban de	Ceuta, Africa	4 years
López Osorio, don Pedro	Toledo, Spain	10 years
López, don Matías	Medina de Rió Seco, Spain	30 years
López, Josef Antonio	San Germán, Puerto Rico	18 years
Lorensis, don Juan	Morón de la Frontera, Spain	36 years
Lousel, don Francisco	Canary Islands	7 years
Lousel, don Lorenzo	Canary Islands	less than a year
Luna Fernández, don Felipe de	Extremadura, Spain	15 years
Martín, José	Morón, Spain	14 years
Martínez, don Francisco (Carlos)	Murcia, Spain	10 years
Mediavilla, don Francisco	León, Spain	26 years
Mesas, Vicente	Málaga, Spain	23 years
Montenegro, don Nicolás	Jerez de la Frontera, Spain	23 years
Montero, don Josef	Granada, Spain	26 years
Montero, don Pedro	Granada, Spain	34 years
Montoro, Silvestre	Castilla la Nueva, Spain	17 years
Moralez, don José Ramón	Spain	Unknown (18 years in total)
Nivra, don Martín	Pamplona, Spain	6 years
Núñez Lousel, don Francisco	Canary Islands	21 years

Núñez, don Francisco	Canary Islands	18 years
Núñez, don Lorenzo	Canary Islands	21 years
Ochoa, Miguel de	Bilbao, Spain	6 years
Ontillera, don Tomas	Castilla, Spain	22 years
Palmero, Miguel	Zanabria, Spain	7 years
Palomares, don Esteban	Oran, Africa	22 years
Pardo, don Manuel	Medina de Rió Seco, Spain	10 years
Pepín González, don Francisco	Cádiz, Spain	20 years
Pepín, don Joseph	Cádiz, Spain	37 years
Pepín, don Luis	Cádiz, Spain	40 years
Peralta, don Manuel	Granada, Spain	12 years
Pérez de la Paz, don Blas	Margarita Islands	39 years
Pérez -Guerra, don Luis	Burgos, Spain	16 years
Perón, Cayetano	Lugo, Spain	3 years
Piccaluga, don Santiago	Laguna, Canary Islands	15 years
Ramírez, don Antonio	Andalucía, Spain	6 years
Real, don Pedro del	Ronda, Spain	10 years
Rey, José María del	Valencia, Spain	2 years
Reyes-Valenzuela, don Baltasar de los	Spain	31 years
Rica, Eusebio	San Juan de la Mancha, Spain	14 years
Riche, Francisco	Madrid, Spain	10 years
Risco, don Manuel	Montalbán, Spain	26 years
Rivas, Antonio	Venecia, Italy	15 years
Rodríguez, don Antonio	Galicia, Spain	7 years
Rodríguez, José	Torresillas, Spain	6 years
Rodríguez, Manuel	Riód de Janeiro, Argentina	4 years
Rojo, don Manuel	San Pedro de Cangas, Spain	9 years
Rozón, don Cayetano	Dongos, Spain	22 years
Rubio, Pedro	Alpines, Spain	9 years
Sánchez, Salvador	Sevilla, Spain	5 years
Santiago, don José	Galicia, Spain	9 years
Saviñon, don Alejandro	Canary Islands	19 years
Saviñon, don Nicolás	Canary Islands	32 years
Sengue, Rafael	Monzón, Spain	13 years
Soto, don Nicolás de	Toro, Spain	6 years
Tamarit y Celda, don José	Valencia, Spain	27 years
Trujillo, don José	Castilla, Spain	11 years
Tudela, Vicente	Olivas, Spain	23 years
Valdivieso, don Miguel	Campillo, Spain	26 years
Varón, don Juan Esteban	Génova, Italy	1 year

Varquez, don Gines	Jerez de los Caballeros, Spain	26 years
Vázquez, don Francisco	León, Spain	28 years
Vázquez, Silvestre	Sain, Spain	25 years
Vega, don José de la	Plasencia, Spain	30 years
Videz, Pedro	Caracas, Venezuela	36 years
Villa, don Manuel	Castilla, Spain	5 years
Villasante, don Francisco	Florida, New Spain	31 years
Villasante, don Manuel	Valladolid, Spain	10 years
Zurita, Alonso	Ubina, Spain	33 years

Source: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 1092, 1093 and 1095.

The appointments vary in length from just under one year to over fifty years and this is due to the fact that the number of years has been determined from fixed dates: 1725, 1749, 1763, 1777, 1789 and 1795.<sup>44</sup> Thus, time already served in a position is connected to the rank the individual had achieved by the last date it appears in the military reviews. For example, some of the men, who had over forty or fifty years of service, were generally of a more advanced rank, such as captain, than those having served one to three years; the latter were more likely to be cadets. Nevertheless, these snap shots provide a good indication of the length of appointments for officers in Santo Domingo and it would seem that it was not uncommon for these foreigners to be stationed on the Spanish half of the island between 10 and 30 years.<sup>45</sup> To be more specific, 13 officers served less than 3 years, 27 between 4 and 7 years, 8 between 8 and 9 years, 38 between 10 and 19 years, 39 between 20 and 29 years, 24 between 30 and 39 years; 3 between 40 and 49 years and 2 over 50 years. The lengthy tours of service were probably due to the difficulty of rotating troops in and out of the Caribbean zone in wartime. Given that throughout the eighteenth century European conflicts had important repercussions in the Americas, it is therefore not

<sup>44</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 1092, 1093, 1095 and Emilio Rodríguez Demorizi, *Las Milicias de Santo Domingo 1786-1821* (Santo Domingo: Editora del Caribe, 1978).

<sup>45</sup> Miller, "Status and Loyalty of Regular Army Officers in Late Colonial Venezuela," 667-696, indicates very long service terms. The essential problem, as indicated in the paragraphs above, was the same everywhere in the Spanish empire. The military orders had reached a saturation point, which caused a bottleneck in terms of receiving new appointments.

surprising that the problem persisted throughout the period. In some cases, it is necessary to consider two other factors. First, it appears that some of these men started their military service when they arrived in Santo Domingo and therefore they had never served in any other battalion.<sup>46</sup> Thus, they should not be considered to be part of the hand picked peninsulars appointed to a commission in this Spanish colony. They were obviously never transferred from their initial position (whether they had requested it or not), neither were they called up to a more prestigious regiment. Second, it is also possible that some of the men were sent to the island as a punishment for poor behaviour in a previous posting and they were either unable to receive a subsequent transfer or had simply been forgotten in Santo Domingo.<sup>47</sup>

Whatever the case may have been, the lengthy number of years of service probably encouraged the officers to marry Spanish Dominican women in order to make the best of their situation—and that is exactly what happened.<sup>48</sup> The table below is based on the officers listed in the fixed cavalry and volunteer regiments in the 1725, 1749, 1768 and 1777 military reviews.<sup>49</sup> I cross-referenced the officers to both the sacramental marital records and Carlos Larrazábal Blanco's master work, *Familias Dominicanas*.<sup>50</sup> The officers, who could not be found in either of these two sources, are listed as N/F for "Not Found." They may or may not have married in

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid. Miller also has officers that served their entire military careers in their home town, although this pattern seemed stronger in the militia than in the regular orders.

<sup>47</sup> Miller, *Status and Loyalty in Colonial Spanish America*, 96, states that service in the province of Venezuela was career damaging. Given that Venezuela was a much more important colony than the territory of Santo Domingo in the eighteenth century, it stands to reason that military service on the Spanish half of the island was even worse for one's resume, if not a career ender.

<sup>48</sup> Miller, "Status and Loyalty of Regular Army Officers in Late Colonial Venezuela," 670, explains that the lengthy service periods led half of the officers stationed in Venezuela to marry locally—more often than not in contravention of the military regulations. Allan J. Kuethe, *Cuba, 1753-1815: Crown, Military, and Society*, also notices a connection of military officers to the local planter and commercial aristocracy.

<sup>49</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 1092, 1093, 1095 and Rodríguez Demorizi, *Las Milicias de Santo Domingo 1786-1821*, passim.

<sup>50</sup> AAMSD 636213, 636214, 636215, 636798, 636216, 636217, 636218, 366799, 636800, 636801, 636802, 636858, 636859 and Larrazábal Blanco, *Familias Dominicanas*, Vol. 1-9.

Santo Domingo; the mishandling, loss, destruction and decay of the ecclesiastical records merely make it impossible to account for every marriage that took place.

**Table 5- Marriages of Foreign Officers Stationed in Santo Domingo throughout the Eighteenth Century**

<b>Name of Officer</b>	<b>Birth Place</b>	<b>Bride</b>	<b>Birth Place</b>
Acuna, José	Braga, Portugal	Juana de Saavedra (widow)	Santo Domingo
Álvarez, don Ignacio	Spain	Ana Maquibar	Santo Domingo
Angulo, don Lorenzo	Alfaro, Spain	doña Josefa de Coca	Santo Domingo
Aranda, don Juan	Málaga, Spain	N/F	
Arata, don José	Génova, Italy	N/F	
Araujo, Juan de	Maracaibo, Venezuela	Juana Jacinta Gando	Santo Domingo
Arias, don Manuel	Águeda, Spain	N/F	
Arostegui y Argair, don Celedonio	Spain	N/F	
Arriaga, don Bernardo	Fuenterrabía, Spain	doña María Dolores Bustamante	Santo Domingo
Arroyo, don Laureano	San Juan, Puerto Rico	doña Antonia de Quevedo	Santo Domingo
Ayala, don Diego	Spain	N/F	
Balcarce <sup>51</sup> , don Francisco	Galicia, Spain	doña Josefa de Figueroa	Santo Domingo
Barez, Antonio	Cádiz, Spain	N/F	
Belilla <sup>52</sup> , don Francisco	Morón, Spain	doña Francisca Javier de Aponte	Santo Domingo
Bernal, José	Huelva, Spain	N/F	
Blanco, Antonio	León, Spain	Agustina Vasconzuelos y Saavedra	Santo Domingo
Bonilla, Andrés	San Germán, Puerto Rico	N/F	
Bordonase, don Juan	Oleron, France	doña María Concepción Logroño	Santo Domingo
Borrero, don Alejandro	Extremadura, Spain	N/F	
Burgos, don Agustín de	Madrid, Spain	N/F	
Cabrera, Antonio	Plasencia, Spain	N/F	
Cabrera, don Aurelio	Veniza, Spain	N/F	

<sup>51</sup> Also appears as Balcarcel, Valcarce, Valcarcel.

<sup>52</sup> Also appears as Velilla.

Cabrera, don Domingo	Canary Islands	N/F	
Cabrera, don Joaquín	Escalona, Spain	doña María de Paredes (1st)	Santo Domingo
		doña María de la Concepción Angulo (2nd)	Santo Domingo
Cabrera, don Pedro	Canary Islands	N/F	
Cáceres, don Manuel de	Spain	doña Jerónima Mojica	Santo Domingo
Camaro, don Juan	Ayora, Spain	doña María de Mota	Santo Domingo
Cantos, Alonzo de	Santiago, Spain	N/F	
Canzi, don Antonio	Cádiz, Spain	N/F	
Carabajal, don Diego	México	doña Catalina Rojas y Sanz	Santo Domingo
Carrillo, don Miguel	Castilla, Spain	N/F	
Casasola, don Luis Antonio de	Lebrija, Spain	<i>Soltero (single)</i>	
Castellanos, don Matías	Ávila, Spain	N/F	
Castillo, don Juan	Morón de la Frontera, Spain	doña María de Torresquemada	Santo Domingo
Castro, Juan de	San Miguel de Coruña, Spain	Juana Bautista del Castillo	Santo Domingo
Castro, Ramón de	Castilla, Spain	María del Pilar Fragoso	Santo Domingo
Caballero, don Francisco	Parras, Spain	María Navarro	Santo Domingo
Cayetano, Miguel	Galicia, Spain	Catalina Francisca	Canary Islands
Cerezano, Ángel	Castilla, Spain	doña Catalina Camarena	Santo Domingo
Corrales, don Salvador	Tenerife, Canary Islands	N/F	
Corrochano, Tomas	San Bartolomé, Spain	N/F	
Díaz, (José) Vicente	Castilla, Spain	Lorenza Viaje (1st)	Santo Domingo
		María del Carmen (2nd)	Santo Domingo
Díos Molina, don Juan de	Habana, Cuba	N/F	
Echevarría, don Manuel	Bilbao, Spain	doña Petrona (Petronila) de Heredia	Santo Domingo
Elizondo, Antonio	Navarra, Elizondo	N/F	
Escobar, don Juan	Spain	doña Ana de Rivera (del Águila, de aguilera, de la Grita)	

Esterlín <sup>53</sup> , don Nicolás	San Marcos, Haiti	doña Bernarda de Almonte (Delmonte) y Luna	Santo Domingo
Evora, don José	Tenerife, Canary Islands	doña Manuela Pardio y Zorrillas	Santo Domingo
Fasalla, Miguel	Montalbán, Spain	N/F	
Fernández, Antonio	Sacedon, Spain	N/F	
Ferrer, don Miguel	Cuba	doña María de Belén Castro	Santo Domingo
Freyre, don José	San Roque, Spain	doña Teresa Fernández de Castro	Santo Domingo
Galán, don José	Sevilla, Spain	Petronila López	Santo Domingo
Galliot, don Cristóbal	Artenac, France	N/F	
Galván, Juan	Spain	María Manuela Rodríguez	Santo Domingo
García Román, don José	Ocaña, Spain	doña Sebastián Lebron Aguirre (viuda)	Puerto Rico <sup>54</sup>
García, don Diego	Spain	doña Isabel Onsjera (o Pérez)	Santo Domingo
García, don Joaquín	Castilla, Spain	doña Eulalia Jacinta Cadrecha y Amat	Spain
García, don Leonardo	Aranda (Sotillo), Spain	N/F	
García, Manuel	Alcántara, Spain	Antonia Álvarez	Santo Domingo
Gascón, don Matías	Villanueva de la Zara, Spain	N/F	
Gascue, don Martín	Vera, Spain	no reference to marriage	
Gazet, don Peregrino	Barcelona, Spain	doña Josefa Llovet de la Torre	Barcelona, Spain
Girón, don Agustín	Puerto Rico	doña Inés Rodríguez Fromesta	Santo Domingo
Girón, don Nicolás	Puerto Rico	doña Francisca de Fromesta	Santo Domingo
Girón, don Pedro Judas	Ronda, Spain	doña Rosa Arroyo (1 <sup>st</sup> marriage)	Santo Domingo
Girón, don Pedro Judas	Ronda, Spain	doña Manuela Álvarez (2 <sup>nd</sup> marriage)	Santo Domingo
Gómez, don Manuel	Galicia, Spain	doña Clara de Peña	Santo Domingo
Gómez, don Manuel	Sepúlveda, Spain	N/F	
Gómez, don Francisco	Lisboa, Portugal	Dominga Marquez	Santo Domingo

<sup>53</sup> Also appears as Sterlin.

<sup>54</sup> It is unclear whether the bride is herself from Puerto Rico or her ex-husband.

González, Francisco	Isabel del Puente, Spain	N/F	
Guimarte <sup>55</sup> , don José	Órense, Spain	no reference to marriage	
Heredia y Melgar, don Andrés de	Provencio, Spain	doña Francisca de Aponte	Santo Domingo
Heredia, don Felipe	Zaragoza, Spain	doña Francisca Javier López del Pulgar	Santo Domingo
Hernández, don José Damián	Salamanca, Spain	doña Josefa María Gutiérrez Galán de Vargas	Spain
Hernández, Francisco	Aremiz, Spain	N/F	
Herrera, don Pedro	Alvenga, Spain	Isabel de Salado	Santo Domingo
Hordoñes <sup>56</sup> , don José	Torre Quemada, Spain	Escolástica González	Santo Domingo
Hoya, don Diego de	Galicia, Spain	no reference to marriage	
Hoyos, don Antonio	Antequera, Spain	N/F	
Larramendi, Pedro Ruiz	Pamplona, Spain	N/F	
Larrazábal <sup>57</sup> don Juan Josef	Vizcaya, Spain	doña Josefa de Urioste	Santo Domingo
Lebrun, don José Luis	San Juan, Puerto Rico	no reference to marriage	
Logroño, don José	Pedrola, Spain	doña Isabel Jordán (1st)	Azuara, Spain
		doña María Antonia de Mieses Ponce de León <sup>58</sup> (2nd)	Santo Domingo
Logroño, don José	Jerez de la Frontera, Spain	N/F	
López Osorio, don Bernardino	Ceuta, Africa	doña Águeda Pérez Caro	Santo Domingo
López Osorio, don Esteban de	Ceuta, Africa	doña Micaela Bernal	
López Osorio, don Pedro	Toledo, Spain	doña Estefanía de Vargas	Santo Domingo
López, don Matías	Medina de Río Seco, Spain	doña María Dolores Isidoro Padilla	Santo Domingo
López, Josef Antonio	San Germán, Puerto Rico	N/F	
Lorensis, don Juan	Morón de la Frontera, Spain	doña María García y Castro	
Lousel, don Francisco	Canary Islands	N/F	
Lousel, don Lorenzo	Canary Islands	N/F	

<sup>55</sup> Also appears as Guimarte.

<sup>56</sup> Also appears as Ordoñes.

<sup>57</sup> Also appears as Arizabalo and Irrazábal.

<sup>58</sup> This lady was also known as Antonia Abad.

Luna Fernández, don Felipe de	Extremadura, Spain	doña Josefa Manuela Guery Luna	Ceuta, Africa
Martín, José	Morón, Spain	N/F	
Martínez, don Francisco (Carlos)	Murcia, Spain	Clemencia Núñez	Santo Domingo
Mediavilla, don Francisco	León, Spain	N/F	
Mesas, Vicente	Málaga, Spain	Juana de Mata	Santo Domingo
Montenegro, don Nicolás	Jerez de la Frontera, Spain	doña María de la Luz Logroño	Santo Domingo
Montero, don Josef	Granada, Spain	N/F	
Montero, don Pedro	Granada, Spain	Antonia Calderón	Santo Domingo
Montoro, Silvestre	Castilla la Nueva, Spain	N/F	
Morales, don José Ramón	Spain	N/F	
Nivra, don Martín	Pamplona, Spain	N/F	
Núñez Lousel <sup>59</sup> , don Francisco	Canary Islands	doña María de los Dolores Núñez Lisle	Santo Domingo
Núñez, don Francisco	Canary Islands	doña Juana de Mata Lauzel	Santo Domingo
Núñez, don Lorenzo	Canary Islands	doña Eulalia (Olalla) de Lisle	Puerto Rico
Ochoa, Miguel de	Bilbao, Spain	N/F	
Ontillera, don Tomas	Castilla, Spain	N/F	
Palmero, Miguel	Sanabria, Spain	Catalina Ramos	Santo Domingo
Palomares, don Esteban	Oran, Africa	N/F	
Pardo, don Manuel	Medina de Río Seco, Spain	N/F	
Pepín González, don Francisco	Cádiz, Spain	doña Petronila de Coca	Santo Domingo
Pepín, don Josef	Cádiz, Spain	N/F	
Pepín, don Luis	Cádiz, Spain	N/F	
Peralta, don Manuel	Granada, Spain	María de la Concepción Mañon	Santo Domingo
Pérez de la Paz, don Blas	Margarita Islands	Olalla (Eulalia) Godínez	Santo Domingo
Pérez-Guerra, don Luis	Burgos, Spain	Rosa Filpo (1st)	Santo Domingo
		Catalina Portes (2nd)	Santo

<sup>59</sup> Also appears as Lausel, Loizel, Loisel, Louzel. This officer is the son of the individual listed below him.

			Domingo
Perón, Cayetano	Lugo, Spain	N/F	
Piccaluga, don Santiago	Laguna, Canary Islands	N/F	
Ramírez, don Antonio	Andalucía, Spain	N/F	
Real, don Pedro del	Ronda, Spain	Unknown	Santo Domingo
Rey, José María del	Valencia, Spain	Rita Hernández	Venezuela
Reyes-Valenzuela, don Baltasar de los	Spain	doña Gregoria Hinojosa	Santo Domingo
Rica, Eusebio	San Juan de la Mancha, Spain	N/F	
Riche, Francisco	Madrid, Spain	N/F	
Risco, don Manuel	Montalbán, Spain	no reference to marriage	
Rivas, Antonio	Venecia, Italy	Isabel del Villar	Santo Domingo
Rodríguez , don Antonio	Galicia, Spain	María Bernardina de Figueroa	Santo Domingo
Rodríguez , José	Torresillas, Spain	Francisca Valerio	Santo Domingo
Rodríguez , Manuel	Riód de Janeiro, Argentina	N/F	Santo Domingo
Rojo, don Manuel	San Pedro de Cangas, Spain	Manuela Trejo	Santo Domingo
Rozón, don Cayetano	Dongos, Spain	N/F	
Sánchez, Salvador	Sevilla, Spain	N/F	
Rubio, Pedro	Alpines, Spain	N/F	
Santiago, don José	Galicia, Spain	N/F	
Saviñon, don Alejandro	Canary Islands	doña Mónica Lauzel	Santo Domingo
Saviñon, don Nicolás	Canary Islands	doña Teresa Jacinta Lauzel	Santo Domingo
Sengue, Rafael	Monzón, Spain	N/F	
Soto, don Nicolás de	Toro, Spain	Isabel María Hernández	Santo Domingo
Tamarit y Celda, don José	Valencia, Spain	doña María de la Encarnación Herrera y Castro	Santo Domingo
Trujillo, don José	Castilla, Spain	Mercedes Soler	Santo Domingo
Tudela, Vicente	Olivas, Spain	Petronila Ramírez	Santo Domingo
Valdivieso, don Miguel	Campillo, Spain	N/F	
Varón, don Juan Esteban	Genova, Italy	N/F	

Varquez, don Gines	Jerez de los Caballeros, Spain	doña Ángela Galán de Vargas	Málaga, Spain
Vázquez, don Francisco	León, Spain	Isidora de las Mercedes	Santo Domingo
Vázquez, Silvestre	Saín, Spain	N/F	
Vega, don José de la	Plasencia, Spain	doña Antonia Glandier y Carrión	Puerto Rico
Videz, Pedro	Caracas, Venezuela	María Merced Ramírez	Santo Domingo
Villa, don Manuel	Castilla, Spain	doña María Antigua Orbe	Santo Domingo
Villasante, don Francisco	Florida, New Spain	doña Manuela de Castro	Santo Domingo
Villasante, don Manuel	Valladolid, Spain	doña Agustina del Pueyo	Santo Domingo
Zurita, Alonso	Ubina, Spain	Justa de la Concepción Pérez	Santo Domingo

Source: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 1092, 1093, 1095 and Rodríguez Demorizi, *Las Milicias de Santo Domingo 1786- 1821*, passim.

Out of 155 officers, 63 were not found in either the sacramental records or Familias Dominicanas. Out of the remaining 92 officers, fully 78 of them married Spanish Dominican women. In addition, four of them contracted a second marriage to another Spanish Dominican woman. Only 11 of these men married foreign women. Finally, according to Carlos Larrazábal Blanco, five of the men appear to have remained single, although one was said to have been married by his commanding officer. Clearly, this particular matrimonial record has not survived and therefore it is impossible to know if his wife was a foreigner or a Spanish Dominican. Aside from the five men mentioned above, Larrazábal Blanco indicates specifically that one other officer remained single.<sup>60</sup> This status is confirmed on his military records. Obviously, the majority of the officers married while stationed in Santo Domingo and were therefore an integral part of the marital pool.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Larrazábal Blanco, *Familias Dominicanas*, Vol. 1-9.

<sup>61</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 1092, 1093 & 1095. Rodrigo Demorizi, *Las Milicias de Santo Domingo*, passim.

The high rate of marriages between these military officials and elite Spanish Dominicans is proof that Charles III's desire to limit the formation of officials' power networks in the jurisdiction in which they served was ineffective.<sup>62</sup> The failure can be attributed to the lengthy terms of service meant that limitations on junior officers' marriages were almost unenforceable as they might have to wait until well into their forties just to reach a rank when marriage was possible according to the military regulations.<sup>63</sup> Moreover, the officers married despite the fact that doing so should have resulted in the loss of employment and the *fuero militar* (military privilege), as well as their spouses' ineligibility to receive the military pension in due time.<sup>64</sup> They probably did so in the knowledge that repercussions for marrying clandestinely would probably not lead to a loss of employment but hopefully to a lesser punishment of time served without pay or being kept on active duty beyond the desired retirement date, both of which were stipulated penalties in the regulations for marrying without the Crown's consent.<sup>65</sup> For Santo

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<sup>62</sup> AGI, Indiferente, General, leg. 654, 140-4-20, reales cédulas, decretos y circulares 1739-1749; Ordenanza de Su Majestad sobre prohibición de Casamientos de oficiales sin su real permiso, Buen Retiro, 30/10/1760. For more on the military regulations please see: Fernando de Salas López, *Ordenanzas Militares en España e Hispanoamérica* (MAPFRE: Madrid, 1992) and Juan Madera Fernández, *Ejército y Milicias en el Mundo Colonial Americano* (MAPFRE; Madrid, 1992).

<sup>63</sup> Miller, *Status and Loyalty in Colonial Spanish America*, 128, states that the military regulations sought to curb subalterns' marriages as "Commanders believed that soldiers, who had few ties to ordinary citizens, were more likely to participate in a distant battle enthusiastically than those with familial and agricultural obligations."

<sup>64</sup> AGI, Indiferente, General, leg. 654, 140-4-20, reales cédulas, decretos y circulares 1739-1749; Ordenanza de Su Majestad sobre prohibición de Casamientos de oficiales sin su real permiso, Buen Retiro, 30/10/1760: The edict reads as follows: "1) Todo oficial militar, sin distinción de grado, que se case sin mi real permiso, quedara de el punto que se justifique esta inobservancia, depuesto de su empleo, privado de fuero, y sin derecho su mujer a la pretensión de viudedad, ni limosna de Tocas." The spousal partner was ineligible for the widow's pension, unless her husband died in the line of duty or reached the rank of captain or higher by the time of his death.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid*: "Todo Sargento, que se case sin licencia por escrito, firmada de su capitán, y aprobada de su Coronel, o comandante, sufrirá la pena de quedar depuesto de su empleo, y obligado a servir sin tiempo en calidad de Soldado de la misma compañía. 9) Todo cabo, o Soldado, que sin igual permiso de sus respectivos jefes, se casare, perderá su antigüedad, y quedara obligado a servir seis años mas después de cumplido el tiempo de su empeño, sin derecho a Inválidos, a menos que en este termino se inutilice en función de mi servicio, o que continué después en el voluntariamente mientras pueda; pues entonces será acreedor a dicha gracia." Also, according to military regulations, officers were told by the Spanish Crown to uphold the strict quality of the marital partners or risk losing their positions "6) Los Coroneles, o Jefes Militares, en que se justifique condescendencia, tolerancia, o disimulo en mantener en los cuerpos, plazas, o destinos dependientes de su mando, oficiales casados, sin mi real permiso,

Domingo, at least, there is only one case of a clandestine marriage that provoked discussions regarding sanctions. Also, as mentioned previously, the military attempted to take care of their own, even in the case of women theoretically ineligible for pensions or alms.<sup>66</sup>

Marriage gave veteran officials access to Spanish Dominican networks of power and by extension to a slice of the economic pie.<sup>67</sup> As mentioned earlier, the military postings were lengthy in Santo Domingo in the eighteenth century. Thus, in order to make the best of their time on the island, foreign officers sought to bind themselves to those who held power. Although officers, who did not marry a Spanish Dominican woman, would continue to receive their salary whenever the Mexican *situado* arrived, “good” connections gave them the opportunity to have access to additional financial aid over and above their salaries, as well as positions or promotions in the royal administration for their offspring either in their current posting or elsewhere and perhaps even share in the revenues available through the illicit cattle trade. After all, Spanish Dominicans controlled entry level military positions and most if not all of the illegal activities. Acceptance into the fold of this exclusive network instantantly created powerful allies, who could protect individuals from rival factions. Friends in high places could also mean help through the lean times and faster promotions or employment for future offspring. Thus, marriage was a very attractive and sensible *modus operandi*.

As discussed in chapter four, the daughters of royal officials were placed in a different marital category than other women. The main advantage of marrying a royal servant’s daughter

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sufrirán la misma pena de privación de empleo, que el súbdito suyo inobediente, y tolerado; pues no debe diferenciarse la del que comete el delito, de la que merece el que le abriga.”

<sup>66</sup> Miller, *Status and Loyalty in Colonial Spanish America*, 134.

<sup>67</sup> Levi-Strauss, *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*, 61, explains the value of women as “the most precious category of goods.” He places women on the same level as land in terms of exchange value. Undoubtedly, this was true of elite daughters. Also, Levi-Strauss discusses the principle of reciprocity; the notion that the rules prohibiting incest led men to “give up” their sisters or daughters to other men, knowing that they would do the same, is the basic premise of a marital pool. However, sometimes the elite did not abide by those rules, requesting dispensations to marry their own sisters and daughters.

was that, in the eyes of the Spanish Crown, she was pre-approved as a spousal partner. In effect, the daughter's quality was directly connected to her father's rank, thereby making her a suitable match as officers were, according to the military ordinances to be of noble or hidalgo birth.<sup>68</sup> Royal officials probably encouraged their daughters to marry men of the same rank or above.<sup>69</sup> In an impoverished region such as Santo Domingo, the benefits were clear. There was no need for the grooms to document the worthiness of their brides and the families of these future wives did not need to prove that they had a dowry.

Finally, the licensing process itself was flawed. Although royal licenses were supposed to be denied to royal officials wanting to marry persons from the district in which they served, the decision rested on whether the official had family in that area. Given that the military was the main employer in Santo Domingo, it only makes sense to consider this corporation more closely. The fixed regiment's officers' corps was composed throughout the period in equal parts of creoles and peninsulars; therefore, this particular objection had a limited application.<sup>70</sup> Moreover, marriage licenses, such as the one petitioned by Dr. don Antonio de Villaurrutia, a Creole judge of the Royal Supreme Court transferred from Mexico to Santo Domingo, to marry doña María Antonia López de Osorio, daughter of don Pedro López de Osorio, Lieutenant Colonel, Cabo Subalterno, Commander of the battalion, President and Captain-General of the island, continued to be granted even after the Spanish Crown asserted that these kinds of marriages were not permitted anymore.<sup>71</sup> The granting of the license hinged on the fact that Osorio was born in the Spanish controlled city of Ceuta in Africa and since Villaurrutia was also born outside of Santo

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> The officers' daughters, who married men below the rank of captain, had to prove that their families could provide the 3,000 peso dowry.

<sup>70</sup> Rivas, "The Spanish Colonial Military," 249-272.

<sup>71</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 277, 54-5-92- Minutas de consultas y despachos: y Algunos papeles de secretaría años 1745-1752; real orden Consejo de Indias al gobernador de Santo Domingo, 14/01/1749.

Domingo, they were both, therefore, deemed not to have extensive interpersonal networks in that area. It is apparent, however, that this reasoning was ludicrous. Osorio's father was the most important official on the island; Villaurrutia was one of the highest ranking judges in that administrative jurisdiction. The union was undoubtedly significant in terms of power alliances as it created ties between the office of the President, Captain-General and Governor and that of the Royal Supreme Court. The basis of the granting and refusal of royal marriage licenses was flawed and continued to produce marriages that were counter to the Spanish Crown's interests. In Santo Domingo, in any case, every petitioned royal license was granted.<sup>72</sup> The reality was that these unions were exceedingly advantageous for elite Spanish Dominicans as they continued to connect them to royal officials in the territory of Santo Domingo. Powerful relatives were effective allies in their quest to achieve control of their own affairs.

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<sup>72</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 277, 54-5-92- Minutas de consultas y despachos: y Algunos papeles de secretaría años 1745-1752; Consulta del rey al presidente de la audiencia 18/06/1749; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 968, 78-5-19, Cartas y Expedientes del Presidente, Fiscales y oidores de Santo Domingo, 1769-1790; Testimonio de los autos entre don Miguel Palacios sobre el matrimonio que estos pretenden contraer a que ha hecho oposición el doctor don Gregorio de Palacios su tío 23/02/1785; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 975., 78-5-26, Cartas y Expedientes 1764-1765; expediente sobre haberse casado sin precedente real licencia en, Santo Domingo, un hijo de don Andrés de Pueyo y Urries, oidor de aquella Audiencia a Consejo de Indias del Gobernador y capitán General de Santo Domingo, 16/09/1765; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 1002, 78-6-26, Inventario de Expedientes diarios de Santo Domingo, 1690-1800; don Vicente Ruperto de Luyando, oidor de Santo Domingo, de lo resuelto en la instancia que había introducido, solicitando licencia para contraer matrimonio 1769, f.149n.3; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 1003, 78-6-27, Expedientes Diarios de Santo Domingo; Certificación de Matrimonio de don Thomas Miguel de Equino, don Pablo de Arizaga y don Miguel Antonio de Irala N/D; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 1013, 79-1-1, Expedientes e Instancias 1789-1791: Expediente a SM sobre las quejas de doña Francisca Valcárcel, 25/11/1787; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 1008, 78-6-32, Expedientes Diarios de Santo Domingo, 1787-1799; Carta a SM de Antonio Ventura de Taranco, Madrid 18/06/1795; Indiferente, Nueva España, leg. 13, 136-4-13, Consultas, Reales Decretos y Ordenes 1788-1791; Carta de Ignacio de Marcoleta a don Antonio Ventura de Tranco 09/10/1790; Santo Domingo 1089, 79-9-6; Secretaría de los Ministerios-Expedientes Militares 1789-1794; Memorial que ha presentado el teniente del Batallón Fijo de Santo Domingo, solicitando real licencia para casarse 05/08/1794; Santo Domingo 1090, 79-3,7; Secretaría de los Ministerios-Expedientes Militares 1789-1794; Carta de Joaquín García al consejo de Indias 20/09/1795; Santo Domingo 1091,79-3-8, Expedientes militares, 1796-1811; Carta al consejo de Indias de Joaquín García 17/03/1798; Santo Domingo 1091,79-3-8, Expedientes militares, 1796-1811; Índice de las consultas y contestaciones que dirige a SM por mano del Excelentísimo Señor don Juan Manuel Álvarez, el gobernador de Santo Domingo, 1798; Indiferente, General 653, 140-4-22, reales cédulas, decretos y circulares, 1739-1749; Real Cedula, Aranjuez, 24/05/1740.

A closer examination of the table below on officers' marriages indicates into which Spanish Dominican families the immigrants married. The newcomer sergeants, who married in Santo Domingo, produced more uneven results in terms of status marriages than other officers. The outcome was not unexpected given their lower status. However, over all, it can be surmised that the sergeants generally married well for their positions. Eighteen of them married women, not considered doñas, as compared to only one who did. Their marital opportunities were probably limited and this might be why I was not able to find their names in either the sacramental records or in Carlos Larrazábal's work. After all, they accounted for twenty-four out of the sixty three NF notations in the previous table. The remainder of the officers were readily absorbed into the elite. The table below indicates the officers and into which elite family they married.

**Table 6- Marriages of Military Officers into Elite Spanish Dominican Families**

<b>Name of Officer</b>	<b>Elite Spanish Dominican Family</b>
don Nicolás Esterlín	Almonte (Delmonte)
don Pedro Judas Girón	Álvarez
don Francisco Velilla	Aponte
don Andrés de Heredia y Melgar	Aponte
don Bernardo Arriaga	Bustamante
Ángel Cerezazo	Camarena
don Miguel Ferrer	Castro
don Francisco Villasante	Castro
don Juan Lorensis	Castro
<b>don José Tamarit y Celda</b> <sup>73</sup>	Castro
don Lorenzo Angulo	Coca (Landeche)
don Francisco Pepín González	Coca (Landeche)
don José Freyre	Fernández de Castro
don Francisco Valcárcel	Figueroa
don Antonio Rodríguez	Figueroa
don Agustín Girón	Fromesta (Balmaceda)
don Nicolás Girón	Fromesta (Balmaceda)

<sup>73</sup> This officer married twice. His first bride was a member of the Castro family and his second was a member of the Herrera line.

don Manuel Echevarria	Heredia
<b>don José Tamarit y Celda</b>	Herrera
don Baltasar de los Reyes-Valenzuela	Hinojosa
don Francisco Núñez	Lausel
don Alejandro Saviñon	Lausel
don Nicolás Saviñon	Lausel
don Lorenzo Núñez	Lisle
don Francisco Núñez Lousel	Lisle
don Manuel de Peralta	Mañon
don José Logroño	Mieses Ponce de León
don Manuel de Cáceres	Mojíca
don Joaquín Cabrera	Paredes
don Manuel Gómez	Peña
don Bernardino López Osorio	Pérez Caro (Fernández de Oviedo)
don Laureano Arroyo	Quevedo
don Diego Carabral	Rojas y Sáenz
don Juan Castillo	Torresquemada
don José Damián Hernández	Vargas
don Esteban de López Osorio	Vargas
don Gines Varquez	Vargas

Source: AAMSD 636858, 636859 and Larrazábal Blanco, *Familias Dominicanas*, Vol. 1-9.

The Pérez Caros made an especially noticeable effort to forge ties with these veteran officials through marriage. No less than four Pérez Caro daughters out of nine, in the second generation, were married to veteran officers.<sup>74</sup> Five out of twelve daughters in the third generation did the same. The daughters in the fourth generation did not in fact follow this pattern, but this is understandable given that most of them were born after 1777 and were not yet of marrying age in 1795.<sup>75</sup> Over the eighteenth century, the Fernández de Fuenmayors, Páez Maldonados, Heredias and Coca Landeches daughters contracted respectively twenty-two, nine, eight and seven marriages to veteran officials respectively, while the Fromesta Balmacedas, Fernández de Castro,

<sup>74</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo leg. 1093, 1095, and 1092. The names of the families are cross referenced by review and then linked to familial connections in the genealogical work of Larrazábal Blanco, *Familias Dominicanas*, Vol. 1-9.

<sup>75</sup> The date 1777 marks the first time the Spanish Crown seriously begins discussions with the French Crown regarding trade along the frontier between Saint-Domingue and Santo Domingo. The date 1795 signals the signing of the Treaty of Basel, in which the Spanish Crown ceded the territory of Santo Domingo to the French. It also represents the start of slave uprisings, which would eventually culminate in a declaration of Independence in 1804, under the leadership of Toussaint L'Ouverture.

and Mañon (Lara) families managed five each, and the Leos y Échallas and Caballero Bazán only three.<sup>76</sup> Moreover, quality newcomers were incorporated into the Spanish Dominican elite group. Although I have argued thus far that the foreigners sought these marriages, the willingness of the elite to integrate them into their families indicates that it was in their best interest as well.

The question then becomes why were Spanish Dominicans interested in contracting marriages to these newcomers who benefited from their established networks? The answer again is simple. The foreigners offered three things: the influence of their position as royal officials, the prestige of the quality of their blood lines and the security of a military pension for their wives and children after their death.<sup>77</sup> The table hereunder represents the quality<sup>78</sup> of the officers in the fixed, cavalry and volunteer regiments from 1725 to 1795.<sup>79</sup> Like in the previous table on the years of service, the quality associated to each officer is taken from the most recent military review. The reason for doing so is that an officer's quality was always in flux as the notation in the records of "*no lo ha hecho Constar*" indicates, which literally means: has not been ascertained as of the time of the military review.<sup>80</sup> The expression was mostly used for new recruits but in some cases it persisted and the only explanation that can be offered is that the individual did not have the money to buy a title or have the purity of his blood ascertained by the

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<sup>76</sup> AAMSD, 636858, 636859. Larrazábal Blanco, *Familias Dominicanas*, Vol. 1-9.

<sup>77</sup> Boyer, *The Lives of the Bigamists*, 77, writes that in colonial Mexico, the daughters' marriages served a different function than those of the sons. The daughters brought men into the family economy.

<sup>78</sup> McCaa, "Calidad, Clase, and Marriage in colonial Mexico," 477-591, defines *calidad* in the following terms: "Calidad", typically expressed in racial terms (e.g. indio, mestizo, español), in many instances was an inclusive impression reflecting one's reputation as a whole. Color, occupation and wealth might influence one's *calidad*, as did purity of blood, honour, integrity and even place of origin." He goes on to write: "Clase, on the other hand, in its classical sense referred to occupational standing but included dimensions of wealth and race." I accept and have adopted both of his definitions in this thesis.

<sup>79</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 1092, 1093 & 1095 and Rodríguez Demorizi, *Las Milicias de Santo Domingo*.

<sup>80</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 1092, 1093 & 1095 and Miller, *Status and Loyalty in Colonial Spanish America*, 69, states that although quality generally tended to either remain the same overtime or improve within the Spanish Dominican fixed regiment, this was a result of the commanding officer. There is a strong likelihood that these designations would have changed drastically when the men transferred to another unit. As Miller remarks, there was a volatility of designations of quality in military reviews for individuals transferred from one battalion to another. For example, in one battalion the officer was described as noble and in another as just noticeable.

Spanish administration. However, he was important enough in Dominican society that the commanding officer held off on labelling him with a designation normally reserved for someone of lower social status, such as: *labrador* (labourer).<sup>81</sup> This term denotes a lower class occupation that requires manual labour. I find it unusual in nature for a Spanish Dominican record since officials tended to fudge meanings and categories rather than make them crystal clear as in this case. The labels of *pobre* (poor) and labourer were amongst the lowest identifications of quality and affected the individual's ability to contract marriage. The reality was that these labels reduced these individuals' odds on the marital market because they connected them to lower class standings and occupations. However, there is no question that the Spanish Crown recognized that *calidad* (quality) was a life long process, which tended to rise proportionally to rank as in the case of don Domingo Cabrera, don Aurelio Cabrera, Juan de Castro and so on. Of course, this was most true for sons of military officers as their quality was always listed as "hijo de" (son of). Moreover, as the father rose in the military ranks, so did the importance of the son's quality. However, the other designations also changed such as from labourer to pure of blood, noble to hidalgo, known to notorious.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> The term could also be replaced with renowned but it seemed too pedagogically close to known.

**Table 7- Quality of Officers in the Fixed, Cavalry and Volunteer Regiment in 1725, 1749, 1763 and 1777**

Name of Officer	Birth Place	Quality (Last review)	Quality (Previous Reviews)
Acuña, José	Braga, Portugal	Labourer	
Álvarez, don Ignacio	Spain	N/A	
Angulo, don Lorenzo	Alfaro, Spain	Well-known	
Aranda, don Juan	Málaga, Spain	Hidalgo	Noble
Arata, don José	Génova, Italy	Hidalgo	
Araujo, Juan de	Maracaibo, Venezuela	N/A	
Arias, don Manuel	Águeda, Spain	Known	
Arostegui y Argair, don Celedonio	Spain	Noble	
Arriaga, don Bernardo	Fuenterrabía, Spain	Hidalgo	
Arroyo, don Laureano	San Juan, Puerto Rico	Known	
Ayala, don Diego	Spain	Distinguished	
Balcarce, don Francisco	Galicia, Spain	Noble	Known
Barez, Antonio	Cádiz, Spain	N/A	
Belilla, don Francisco	Morón, Spain	Infanzon	
Bernal, José	Huelva, Spain	Limpieza de sangre	
Blanco, Antonio	León, Spain	N/A	
Bonilla, Andrés	San Germán, Puerto Rico	N/A	
Bordonase, don Juan	Oleron, France	Distinguished	
Borrero, don Alejandro	Extremadura, Spain	Labourer	
Burgos, don Agustín de	Madrid, Spain	Labourer	
Cabrera, Antonio	Plasencia, Spain	N/A	
Cabrera, don Aurelio	Veniza, Spain	Limpieza de sangre	Labourer
Cabrera, don Domingo	Canary Islands	Limpieza de sangre	Labourer
Cabrera, don Joaquín	Escalona, Spain	Hidalgo	Known
Cabrera, don Pedro	Canary Islands	Honourable	
Cáceres, don Manuel de	Spain	Distinguished	
Camaro, don Juan	Ayora, Spain	Labourer	
Cantos, Alonso de	Santiago, Spain	Limpieza de sangre	
Canzi, don Antonio	Cádiz, Spain	Noble	
Carabajal, don Diego	México	Cristiano Viejo (Old Christian)	
Carrillo, don Miguel	Castilla, Spain	Labourer	
Casasola, don Luis	Lebrija, Spain	Caballero del orden	

Antonio de Castellanos, don Matías	Ávila, Spain	de Santiago Honourable	
Castillo, don Juan	Morón de la Frontera, Spain	Known	N/A
Castro, Juan de	San Miguel de Coruña, Spain	Limpieza de sangre	Labourer
Castro, Ramón de	Castilla, Spain	Hijo de título	
Caballero, don Francisco	Parras, Spain	Hidalgo	
Cayetano, Miguel	Galicia, Spain	Good	
Cerezano, Ángel	Castilla, Spain	Limpieza de sangre	
Corrales, don Salvador	Tenerife, Canary Islands	Honourable	
Corrochano, Tomas	San Bartolomé, Spain	N/A	
Díaz, (José) Vicente	Castilla, Spain	Limpieza de sangre	Labourer
Díos Molina, don Juan de	Habana, Cuba	Hidalgo	
Echevarria, don Manuel	Bilbao, Spain	Hidalgo	
Elizondo, Antonio	Navarra, Elizondo	Well-known	
Escobar, don Juan	Spain	N/A	
Esterlín, don Nicolás	San Marcos, Haiti	Noble	
Evora, don José	Tenerife, Canary Islands	N/A	
Fasalla, Miguel	Montalbán, Spain	Good	
Fernández, Antonio	Sacedon, Spain	N/A	
Ferrer, don Miguel	Cuba	Well-known	
Freyre, don José	San Roque, Spain	Hijo de capitán	
Galán, don José	Sevilla, Spain	Honourable	N/A
Galliot, don Cristóbal	Artenac, France	Limpieza de sangre	
Galván, Juan	Spain	N/A	
García Román, don José	Ocaña, Spain	Limpieza de sangre	Honourable/Good/Well- known
García, don Diego	Spain	N/A	
García, don Joaquín	Castilla, Spain	Hidalgo	
García, don Leonardo	Aranda (sotillo), Spain	Hidalgo	
García, Manuel	Alcántara, Spain	Honourable	
Gascón, don Matías	Villanueva de la Zara, Spain	N/A	
Gascue, don Martín	Vera, Spain	Hidalgo	
Gazet, don Peregrino	Barcelona, Spain	Noble	
Girón, don Agustín	Puerto Rico	Hijo de teniente coronel	

Girón, don Nicolás	Puerto Rico	Known	
Girón, don Pedro Judas	Ronda, Spain	Known	
Girón, don Pedro Judas	Ronda, Spain	Known	
Gómez, don Manuel	Galicia, Spain	Limpieza de sangre	Labourer, Honourable
Gómez, don Manuel	Sepúlveda, Spain	Limpieza de sangre	
Gómez, don Francisco	Lisboa, Portugal	Honourable	
González, Francisco	Isabel del Puente, Spain	Limpieza de sangre	
Guimarte, don José	Orence, Spain	Limpieza de sangre	
Heredia y Melgar, don Andrés de	Provencio, Spain	Limpieza de sangre	Known
Heredia, don Felipe	Zaragoza, Spain	Hijo de capitán	
Hernández, don José Damián	Salamanca, Spain	Limpieza de sangre	Labourer
Hernández, Francisco	Aremiz, Spain	Labourer	
Herrera, don Pedro	Alvenga, Spain	Noble	Known/Honourable
Hordones, don José	Torre Quemada, Spain	Limpieza de sangre	Labourer
Hoya, don Diego de	Galicia, Spain	N/A	
Hoyos, don Antonio	Antequera, Spain	N/A	
Larramendi, Pedro Ruiz	Pamplona, Spain	N/A	
Larrazábal (Arizabalo), don Juan Josef	Vizcaya, Spain	Noble	
Lebrun, don José Luis	San Juan, Puerto Rico	Honourable	
Logroño, don José	Pedrola, Spain	Hidalgo	Known
Logroño, don José	Jerez de la Frontera, Spain	Hijo de coronel	Hijo de teniente
López Osorio, don Bernardino	Ceuta, Africa	Known	
López Osorio, don Esteban de	Ceuta, Africa	Hidalgo	
López Osorio, don Pedro	Toledo, Spain	Known	
López, don Matías	Medina de Rió Seco, Spain	N/A	
López, Josef Antonio	San Germán, PR	N/A	
Lorensis, don Juan	Morón de la Frontera, Spain	Hidalgo	
Lousel, don Francisco	Canary Islands	Known	
Lousel, don Lorenzo	Canary Islands	Known	
Luna Fernández, don Felipe de	Extremadura, Spain	Hidalgo	
Martín, José	Morón, Spain	Honourable	

Martínez, don Francisco (Carlos)	Murcia, Spain	Honourable	
Mediavilla, don Francisco	León, Spain	Labourer	
Mesas, Vicente	Málaga, Spain	Honourable	
Montenegro, don Nicolás	Jerez de la Frontera, Spain	Hidalgo	
Montero, don Josef	Granada, Spain	Honourable	
Montero, don Pedro	Canary Islands	Known	
Montoro, Silvestre	Castilla la Nueva, Spain	Limpieza de sangre	
Morales, don José Ramón	Spain	N/A	
Nivra, don Martín	Pamplona, Spain	Hidalgo	
Núñez Lousel, don Francisco	Canary Islands	Hidalgo	
Núñez, don Francisco	Canary Islands	Hidalgo	
Núñez, don Lorenzo	Canary Islands	Hidalgo	
Ochoa, Miguel de	Bilbao, Spain	N/A	
Ontillera, don Tomas	Castilla, Spain	Limpieza de sangre	
Palmero, Miguel	Sanabria, Spain	Limpieza de sangre	
Palomares, don Esteban	Oran, Africa	Noble	
Pardo, don Manuel	Medina de Río Seco, Spain	N/A	
Pepín González, don Francisco	Cádiz, Spain	Limpieza de sangre	Known
Pepín, don Josef	Cádiz, Spain	N/A	
Pepín, don Luis	Cádiz, Spain	N/A	
Peralta, don Manuel	Granada, Spain	Noble	
Pérez de la Paz, don Blas	Margarita Islands	Limpieza de sangre	Good
Pérez-Guerra, don Luis	Burgos, Spain	Hidalgo	Noble
Perón, Cayetano	Lugo, Spain	Honourable	
Piccaluga, don Santiago	Laguna, Canary Islands	Labourer	
Ramírez, don Antonio	Andalucía, Spain	Labourer	
Real, don Pedro del	Ronda, Spain	Hidalgo	
Rey, José María del	Valencia, Spain	Honourable	
Reyes-Valenzuela, Baltasar de los	Spain	N/A	
Rica, Eusebio	San Juan de la Mancha, Spain	Limpieza de sangre	
Riche, Francisco	Madrid, Spain	Honourable	
Risco, don Manuel	Montalbán, Spain	Limpieza de sangre	Labourer

Rivas, Antonio	Venecia, Italy	N/A	
Rodríguez , don Antonio	Galicia, Spain	Labourer	
Rodríguez , José	Torresillas, Spain	Labourer	
Rodríguez , Manuel	Riío de Janeiro, Argentina	Labourer	
Rojo, don Manuel	San Pedro de Cangas, Spain	Limpieza de sangre	N/A
Rozón, don Cayetano	Dongos, Spain	Honourable	
Rubio, Pedro	Alpines, Spain	Limpieza de sangre	
Sánchez, Salvador	Sevilla, Spain	Limpieza de Sangre	
Santiago, don José	Galicia, Spain	Labourer	
Saviñon, don Alejandro	Canary Islands	Well-known	
Saviñon, don Nicolás	Canary Islands	Hidalgo	Good, Known
Sengue, Rafael	Monzón, Spain	Limpieza de sangre	
Soto, don Nicolás de	Toro, Spain	Known	Labourer
Tamarit y Celda, don José	Valencia, Spain	Limpieza de sangre	Well-known
Trujillo, don José	Castilla, Spain	Labourer	
Tudela, Vicente	Olivas, Spain	Limpieza de sangre	N/A
Valdivieso, don Miguel	Campillo, Spain	Hidalgo	
Varón, don Juan Esteban	Génova, Italy	Hidalgo	
Varquez, don Gines	Jerez de los Caballeros, Spain	Limpieza de sangre	Known
Vázquez, don Francisco	León, Spain	Limpieza de sangre	Labourer, Notorious
Vázquez, Silvestre	Zain, Spain	Limpieza de sangre	
Vega, don José de la	Plasencia, Spain	Limpieza de sangre	Well-known
Videz, Pedro	Caracas, Venezuela	N/A	
Villa, don Manuel	Castilla, Spain	Limpieza de sangre	Labourer
Villasante, don Francisco	Florida, New Spain	Hijo de capitán	
Villasante, don Manuel	Valladolid, Spain	Known	
Zurita, Alonso	Ubina, Spain	Good	

Source: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 1092, 1093 & 1095 and Rodríguez Demorizi, *Las Milicias de Santo Domingo*, passim.

Finally, as discussed in chapter two, it is important to remember that royal officials, of which the officers were a part, and their families were by their very nature not only of a certain class but

also quality.<sup>83</sup> The table above demonstrates the quality that commanding officers assigned to their men. Out of 154 officers, the quality of 27 of them had not been ascertained as of yet, 14 were labelled as labourers, 3 as good, 13 as known, 4 as well-known,<sup>84</sup> 1 as *infanzon* (noblemen with limited privileges), 15 as honourable, 9 as noble, 24 as hidalgo, 34 as *limpieza*, 1 as an Old Christian and 1 with the awesome quality of Caballero del Orden de Santiago. All but one of these designations indicated the superior's approval of the quality of his men: that of the labourer. Obviously, the 14 men identified as labourers were deemed by their superiors to be of substandard quality. The *montepíos* favoured the intermarriage of royal cadres and as such eased the burden of proof of the bride's quality required by officials petitioning for a marriage license.<sup>85</sup> The exclusiveness conferred by the assumption of quality of these brides cannot be over-emphasized. The Captain of the Volunteers Regiment, don Josef de la Vega, justified the quality of his bride, doña María Teresa Jover y Aznar, by simply stating that she was the daughter of a judge and that this should suffice as proof of her quality.<sup>86</sup> The Crown only required a certified copy of doña María Teresa Jover y Aznar's baptismal record and an authenticated copy of the last posting of her father as documentary proof of her status. In instances where the women were not daughters of officers or high ranking royal officials, the future grooms' direct superior were responsible for ascertaining that the brides to be were of the

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<sup>83</sup> McCaa, "Calidad, Clase and Marriage in Colonial Mexico," 480, argues that marital patterns in Parral were "strongly influenced by considerations of calidad, clase, and to a lesser extent, birthplace." In the Dominican case, birthplace mattered as much as the other two variables but there is no question that his conclusions on race and class are as true in Santo Domingo as in Parral.

<sup>84</sup> Commanding officers differentiated between *conocida* (known) and *notoria* (well-known).

<sup>85</sup> AGI, Indiferente, Nueva España, leg. 45, 136-5-10, Inventario Secretaría de Nueva España 1610-1815.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.* The text itself reads: "creyendo no necesitaba otra que la de ser hija de oidor así como a las hijas de los militares no se la exige mas calificación que fe de bautismo y una copia autentica de la patente del ultimo empleo de sus padres, para poder contraer matrimonio, y gozar del monte pío militar." AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 1013, 79-1-1, Expedientes e Instancias 1789-1791: Carta a SM de doña Joaquína Aznar, viuda de don Ramón Jover oidor, 25/01/1789.

same quality as the men who intended to marry them.<sup>87</sup> The penalty for sanctioning an unequal marriage was a loss of employment for the groom and the commanding officer. Were there specific criteria established to help superiors take a decision and what were they?

Unfortunately, the archival material is silent on the matter. However, I have come to two conclusions. First, the standards by which superiors judged spousal quality were different from the ones used by other higher ranking officials in the Spanish administration. In the military records of Santo Domingo, there are several instances of complaints relating to the quality of brides, many of which are referred to as *pardas*; however the military service records contain very few notations to the effect that the wives were of mixed race.<sup>88</sup> Second, there can be no doubt that many of the officers married mixed race women but the commanding officer judged the quality of each woman by her reputation. In effect, if the woman, like many of the Spanish Dominican elite, was of mixed race but from a known family, no such mention on race appeared in the marital records, whereas, if the woman was of mixed race and of a less reputable socio-economic background, a notation pertaining to her lack of quality was made in the “*costumbres*” (habits) section of the military reviews.<sup>89</sup> Moreover, “unequal” marriages occurred and many of them were probably approved by either an unscrupulous, defiant or merely realistic commanding officer or, alternatively, performed by “delinquent priests.”<sup>90</sup> There were many Spanish Dominican priests who reportedly performed the sacrament of marriage without following due procedure, particularly in regard to the royal regulations on obtaining consent of the

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 983, 7-6-7, Cartas y Expedientes de Santo Domingo 1773; Expediente a SM del Fiscal Madrid 22/04/1773 and AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 1092, 1093, 1095 and Rodrigo Demorizi, *Las Milicias de Santo Domingo*.

<sup>89</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 1092, 1093, 1095- Military Review of Alonso Zurita of September 1763 was identified as having married a mulata.

<sup>90</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 284, 54-6-99, Cartas y Expedientes del Gobernador de la Isla Española 1662-1758; Carta a SM de don Nuño Pimentel de Sandoval y don Francisco Franco de Torresquemada 25/04/1714.

commanding officer and royal marriage licenses. These priests were regularly accused of “incompetence” by military and civil administrators for overlooking the Royal Pragmatic on Marriage and the military regulations for marrying couples without proper parental and military consent.<sup>91</sup> The President, Governor and Captain-General blamed the priests’ lack of discipline for the growing number of officers’ marriages to women of colour.<sup>92</sup> It appears that the only requirement the Spanish Dominican priests truly observed was that the foreigners wishing to get married either be Catholics or purchase dispensations for their heretical selves in order to proceed with the sacrament of marriage. Although it can be argued that this concern was the result of a general fear that the island was falling under Protestant influence due to the sustained contact with non-Catholic powers, it was also a question of economics. Dispensations were costly and the moneys received through their sale went directly into the Catholic Church’s coffers. Thus, priests carefully scrutinized the documentation presented, such as baptismal certificates and double checked “assertions” of baptisms with the issuing parish, whether it was on the island or back in Europe.<sup>93</sup> If the evidence provided was unsatisfactory, there were only two options: dispensation or conversion and baptism. Those who chose the latter option confessed their past sins and publicly recanted their heretical ways. After which, the candidate professed his/her allegiance to the most sacred Catholic faith to no less than the Archbishop of the diocese and his religious dignitaries. Thus, some foreigners were not only willing to marry outside of their race and class but also outside of their religion.

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<sup>91</sup> Santiago Gerardo Suárez, *Jurisdicción eclesiástica y capellanía castrenses: El matrimonio militar* (Caracas: Italgáfica, 1976), part II.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>93</sup> AAMSD 636858, 636859. The priests carefully recorded conversions and notations in the margin of the sacramental records. I infer that this information indicates that priests were meticulous in verifying the information the bride and groom submitted.

Finally, although the Spanish Crown threatened all royal officials with the loss of employment if they married without due royal and parental consent, the actual measures were only implemented if a superior reported the problem. Obviously, this situation is akin to internal policing within a corporation and it seemed as though the task was not taken very seriously.<sup>94</sup> In Santo Domingo, it would appear that the only time that an officer was deprived of employment or suspended for specified periods of time was when a civil official reported a problem directly to the royal administration. It was certainly the case for don Francisco de Aguilar, Lieutenant of the militia in Santo Domingo, who married Beatriz Álvarez without proper approval of his Commanding Officer.<sup>95</sup> However, he did so under some mitigating circumstances, which hardly seemed to represent a clear-cut case. In fact, he had made a promise of marriage to Beatriz Álvarez but had not followed through quickly enough for her taste. It was common knowledge that Aguilar was seeing another woman by the name of Beatriz Bello.<sup>96</sup> Moreover, Álvarez sued him for breach of promise in the ecclesiastical court.<sup>97</sup> Given that they had signed documents pertaining to the promise of marriage and that Aguilar officially recognized his own signature on the paperwork, a marriage licence was issued and he complied. Aguilar probably married in

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<sup>94</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 983, 7-6-7, Cartas y Expedientes de Santo Domingo 1773; Expediente a SM del Fiscal Madrid 22/04/1773. The letter suggests that many officials were married in this illegal manner without suffering the said consequences and that the lack of enforcement of royal directives tarnished the reputation of the military service in general.

<sup>95</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 983, 7-6-7, Cartas y Expedientes de Santo Domingo 1773; Expediente a SM del Fiscal Madrid 22/04/1773.

<sup>96</sup> Anthony McFarlane, "Las reglas religiosas en una sociedad colonial: el concubinato en la Nueva Granada, siglo XVIII," In *Iglesia religión y sociedad en la historia Latinoamericana*, ed. Adam Anderle (Albuquerque: Duke University Press, 1989) Vol. 2, 93-107, writes that although concubinage was unlawful it was an accepted part of the social fabric. Couples in this situation were rarely denounced to the authorities. In fact, accusations of concubinage were generally a vehicle for an expression of disagreement with scandalous public behaviour. For example, at the root of one of the denunciations under study, was the fact that a married man had brought into his home a barragana and that she was also his brother's barragana. As well, Miller, *Status and Loyalty in Colonial Spanish America*, 168-169, states that scandal was also the impetus for the military to force its members to marry women in order to avoid "embarrassment to the service."

<sup>97</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 983, 7-6-7, Papeles del Consejo 1729-1779; Carta a SM de Señor Duque de Alba, 07/12/1772.

response to incredible pressure from the military hierarchy to do so. It is likely that Aguilar was forced by the military to marry because his situation was bringing disrepute on all men in arms, a result the military abhorred.<sup>98</sup> The military establishment protected their own, much like Dominicans did, by regulating their members' behaviours, underreporting "unequal" marriages and fudging the records so that outsiders would only see the truth Dominicans were projecting: that Dominicans were white and that there were very few instances of interracial marriages. Moreover, the military enhanced the external façade of "whiteness" exhibited by Spanish Dominicans within the dialogue of empire. The underreporting of interracial marriages also prevented the men from receiving suspensions or terminations of employment, which, given the economic climate, could be a fatal blow for sons of the elite in Santo Domingo.

Employment was another reason that Spanish Dominicans were willing to marry their daughters to foreigners. Although I suspect that upper class Spanish Dominican women, despite being part of the elite, may not, in comparative terms, have exhibited the same quality as richer or more prestigious elite Spanish American families, they were just as shrewd in their marital selection as other women elsewhere in the Spanish empire. Parents sought to marry their daughters to the suitors of the highest quality. In the case of Spanish Dominicans, legitimacy of birth and employment were key variables in determining whether to acquiesce to a suitor's demands. The foreigner's ability to generate income in a salaried position was paramount in this economically depressed area. Employed foreigners received a salary. Moreover, their aptitude to immediately contribute financially to their new matrimonial union bound the future of their brides' families' future to their own.

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<sup>98</sup> Miller, *Status and Loyalty in Colonial Spanish America*, 168-169, states that the military policed its own by regulating its members' behaviours. It would even search out and reassign wayward husbands to postings closer to their wives, as well as enforce alimony or child support payments.

Finally, the immigrant men occupied royal commissions and were therefore legitimate authority figures. As such, they had the power to effect policy direction and impede or denounce Spanish Dominican practices contrary to royal policy. Both were of primary interest to the elite, as poor politico-economic decisions detrimental to their interests could ruin them. Non-compliance with established practices might also have caused a rapid deterioration in their relations with Spain and, as a result, would have affected their fortunes. Thus, from the Spanish Dominican perspective, it was of primary importance that these newcomers understood the validity of the elite's position vis-à-vis the economic, political and social situation. In order to do so, control of a lasting and meaningful quality had to be established over these foreigners. Marriage was the answer.

White foreigners agreed to these terms because the benefits were clear. Newcomers were given immediate access to local trade networks and, if they were not employed, the men could expect to be granted a position in the military and last, but not least, were assured a wife. The latter was no small gain given the skewed gender ratio, discussed below.

### **Dynamics of the Marital Pool**

Although there is no census that officially recorded the ratio of men to women, it is apparent that Santo Domingo must have suffered from a gender imbalance throughout the period. After all, only five foreign women were recorded to have married in the Archbishopric of Santo Domingo. I am not suggesting that this was the only female immigration but I am confirming the fact that male immigration outpaced the female one.<sup>99</sup> All in all, the marriage market was highly competitive and men (foreigners and locals), who could not display the desired credentials,

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<sup>99</sup> The calculation is quite basic. There were 417 marriages in the Archbishopric of Santo Domingo involving foreigners, 412 of them pertained to foreign men, while only five to foreign women. Thus, I divided the former number by the latter. 82.4:1 is the exact outcome.

carried on in royal service in the hopes that their marital fortunes would change once they reached a higher ranking position or that they would receive a transfer to a different posting where the marriage market would be more favourable to them.<sup>100</sup> Sons could, of course, play no role in cementing these ties, as royal employment was a male preserve and therefore royal officials were always men. In any case, the vast majority of the newcomers were men.

This situation was an advantage for women and, as such, may have translated into a more elevated social standing for them than for women in other Spanish American colonies.<sup>101</sup> Certainly the sacramental records suggest that foreign women were less likely to contract interracial marriages than foreign men and never compromised their class in order to marry. Unlike in the case of their male counterparts, none of the marriages were interracial ones.<sup>102</sup> Also, over half of the foreign women, who immigrated to Santo Domingo, married foreign men. The reason for doing so probably came down to personal racial preference given that the foreign and Spanish Dominican men occupied similar royal positions. Thus, it seems evident that the women preferred European men. Furthermore, due to the gender imbalance, women encountered less resistance from the local community than foreign men. It is probable that white Dominican

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<sup>100</sup> First, there were several corrections by the Lieutenant priest of the Cathedral in the marriage register regarding foreigners' identities. Clearly, the ability to falsify one's identity that was thought to have existed in the early colonial period was an increasingly dangerous gamble that some men lost. Second, very few of the men resorted to interracial legal marriages. Only five such marriages were recorded for the entire period under study. This is not to say that in the long term interracial unions did not exist in Santo Domingo but merely that these couples' unions were not officialized through the sacrament of marriage.

<sup>101</sup> Kellogg, *Weaving the Past*, 3-11, writes that "women's perception of their statuses often play a vital role in influencing them to become active in a variety of political contexts." I believe that elite Spanish Dominican women did recognize their status but more importantly so did the men. If perception of their role in society gives women agency, I think that general recognition of it gives them power and therefore increased status. This is particularly salient if one accepts Kellogg's two part definition of agency as being on the one hand agency as "forms of power people have at their disposal, their ability to act on their own behalf, influence other people and events, and maintain some kind of control on their own lives" and on the other hand, agency as "intentions, projects, purposes, desires, actions that infuse life with meaning end purpose. It is clear that the gender imbalance created a form of power for women and the marriages they accepted to make within the context of family strategies was an action that infused their society with meaning and purpose."

<sup>102</sup> Five of the 309 marriages between white foreign men and Spanish Dominicans were interracial marriages.

females did not view foreign women as competition because of their overwhelming preference for foreign men. Moreover, foreign women were probably integrated more readily into Spanish Dominican society because of the shortage of females on the island.

Their foreign male counterparts, on the other hand, experienced resistance from the local Spanish Dominican males, who were attempting to protect their marital pool from the immigrant men in royal positions with whom they were in competition. Also, given that over eighty percent of the officers married Spanish Dominican daughters, it appears that the men were considered acceptable suitors for the Spanish Dominican elite. Moreover, the early differentiation observed by Jacques Barbier in the Chilean case was not true in Santo Domingo. The old families had a high degree of cohesion with the administrative cadres sent to the island in specific leadership positions.

Thus, a gender driven marital pattern emerged. Elite Spanish Dominican daughters provided the vital link between their prestigious families and the high ranking foreigners, who arrived on the island. To illustrate this phenomenon, a select number of elite Spanish Dominican families were chosen and their offspring's marriages to foreigners identified by gender. As per William Strauss and Neil Howe's definition of a generation, the information has been organized in periods, whose approximate value is of about twenty years each.<sup>103</sup> The periods reflect approximate generational cohorts from the family genealogies that I rebuilt; however, they are not rooted in particular historical events or experiences. Although it would have been much more interesting and telling to be able to determine generational cohorts based on peer personalities derived from particular events and experiences proper to their lives, such as those identified by

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<sup>103</sup> William Strauss and Neil Howe, *Generations: The History of America's Future 1584 to 2069* (New York: William Morrow and Co, 1991), 34, define a generation as: "a special cohort-group whose length approximately matches that of a basic phase of life, or about twenty-two years over the last century."

William Strauss and Neil Howe for the United States from the colonial period to a projected future date of 2069, it was simply beyond the scope of this study.<sup>104</sup> However, I hope that, in the near future, Latin American historians will undertake such research, as it will homogenize at least the criteria of studies such as this one, thereby enabling comparative histories.

**Table 8- Gender Separated Elite Spanish Dominican Marriages to Foreigners**

Family	Gen 1 (1688- 1708)	Gen 2 (1709- 1730)	Gen 3 (1731- 1751)	Gen 4 (1752- 1772)	Gen 5 (1773- 1795)	Gen 6 (1796- 1816)
Acevedo Cid (men mg)			Cuba		Cuba	
Acevedo Cid (women mg)	Canary Islands, Spain, Italy,	Spain(2)			Spain(3)	
Alarcón Coronado Carvajal (men mg)				Spain, Puerto Rico		
Alarcón Coronado Carvajal (women mg)		Puerto Rico	Puerto Rico(2)	Puerto Rico, Venezuela, Spain(2)	Spain	Venezuela
Almonte Pichardo (men mg)		Spain		Ceuta		
Almonte Pichardo (women mg)		Haiti		Italy		
Bastidas (men mg)			Venezuela	Spain		Spain
Bastidas (women mg)	Spain(3), Peru		Spain(2)	Peru, Spain(2), Africa	Cuba, Venezuela (2)	
Caballero Bazán (men mg)						
Caballero Bazán (women mg)				Spain		
Coca Landeche (men mg)						

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

Coca Landeche (women mg)	Spain(2)		Spain	Spain (2)		Spain
Fernández de Castro (men mg)				Cuba	Puerto Rico	Spain
Fernández de Castro (women mg)				Spain		
Fernández de Castro Meléndez (men mg)				Puerto Rico	Cuba	
Fernández de Castro Meléndez (women mg)		Puerto Rico	Puerto Rico(2)	Puerto Rico, Venezuela	Spain (3,)	Venezuela
Fernández de Fuenmayor (men mg)				Peru, Spain		Spain
Fernández de Fuenmayor (women mg)	Peru, Spain (2)		Spain	Spain (4), Oran,	Cuba, Venezuela (2)	
Fromesta Balmaceda (men mg)				Spain		
Fromesta Balmaceda (women mg)			Puerto Rico, Venezuela	Spain		
Heredia y Avendaño (men mg)				Puerto Rico		
Heredia y Avendaño (women mg)		Puerto Rico	Puerto Rico(2)	Spain (2)	Spain, Canary Islands	
Hinojosa Jobel (men mg)						
Hinojosa Jobel (women mg)	Spain		Canary Islands	Spain	Spain, Canary Islands	
Laucel Cid (men mg)				Puerto Rico(2)		
Laucel Cid (women mg)			Cuba, Canary Islands (3)			Puerto Rico, Cuba
Leos Échalas (men mg)						
Leos Échalas (women mg)	Mexico			Puerto Rico, Venezuela		Venezuela
Mañon Lara (men mg)				Spain		
Mañon Lara (women mg)				Oran, Spain	Cuba (2)	
Míses Ponce de León				ESP		

(men mg)						
Mieses Ponce de León (women mg)	Spain(3), Peru,		Venezuela, Spain (2), Peru	Africa, Spain (2)	Cuba, Venezuela (2)	
Páez Maldonado (men mg)				Puerto Rico		Spain
Páez Maldonado (women mg)		Puerto Rico	Puerto Rico(2)	Spain (2)	Spain	
Paredes Maldonado (men mg)						
Paredes Maldonado (women mg)			Puerto Rico(2)	Spain (2)	Spain	
Pérez Caro Fernández de Oviedo (men mg)				Spain, Cuba	Puerto Rico, Venezuela	
Pérez Caro Fernández de Oviedo (women mg)		Peru	Canary Islands, Africa, Spain	Perú, Spain(2), Africa, Venezuela (2), Cuba(1)	Venezuela (3), Spain, Cuba	

Source: AAMSD 636858, 636859 and Larrazábal Blanco, *Familias Dominicanas*, Vol. 1-9.

Abbreviation: mg= marriage

The table above shows clearly that women married foreigners more often than their male counterparts did. The preceding table pertaining to officers' marriages lends further proof of this overall pattern given that all the officers were male and all the females were Spanish Dominicans. This was to be expected, since it mirrored the immigration trend. In fact, it is quite easy to imagine that the Caucasian women, who immigrated to Santo Domingo, were born in the region where their fathers had been posted previously. This certainly was the case for doña Antonia Fernández de Lara. She, like some of the other women, immigrated to the island by way of a royal transfer.<sup>105</sup> The Pérez-Caro y Fernández de Oviedo's family also mirrored this pattern, although it is most evident for those born in the second cohort.<sup>106</sup> It is not reflected in the first

<sup>105</sup> Larrazábal Blanco, *Familias Dominicanas*, Vol. 3.

<sup>106</sup> AAMSD 636858, 636859 and Larrazábal Blanco, *Familias Dominicanas*, Vol. 3.

generation given that don Ignacio Pérez Caro was himself a Spanish foreigner, who married into the Guerrero family. Also, according to the sacramental records, the couple only had one son, who married doña Ana Teresa Fernández de Oviedo y Bardecí, also known as doña Ana Teresa Fernández de Oviedo y Castillo Torresquemada, descendent of don García Torresquemada, Senior Chaplain of Saint Nicolás Hospital and founder, by testament or deed, of his own chaplaincy.<sup>107</sup> Don Juan married his sons, Ignacio Francisco, Juan, Francisco and Antonio, respectively, to Ana María Fernández de Oviedo y Bardecí (Castillo Torresquemada), Juana de la Rocha y Landeche, María Manuela Fernández de Lara and Gregoria de Heredia y Avendaño. Ana María Fernández de Oviedo y Bardecí had become the heir to the Torresquemada line, while Juana and Gregoria were the daughters of Dominican captains. Only María Manuela was a foreigner. She was the daughter of doña Catalina de Lara, wife of *Oidor* (judge) don Julian Fernández Pérez of Lima. Thus, most of the sons married the daughters of the local elite. The results are similar in this generation for the Pérez Caros two daughters. Ana married Captain don Pedro Granados and Francisca was the wife of Lieutenant Colonel Francisco Mieses Ponce de León y Rodríguez Francisco de Quero. The gender divergence at this stage of the lineage may not be visible for two reasons. First, there were only two daughters and perhaps connections to the judge don Pedro Granados and the future Lieutenant Colonel don Francisco Mieses Ponce de León were of more immediate use to don Juan than other choices but this is speculation. The gender divergence occurred with don Juan's grandchildren.<sup>108</sup> Three out of four sons married local women while only four daughters out of nine married Spanish Dominican men. Four of the other daughters, as mentioned earlier, were married to veteran Spanish officers and one was

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<sup>107</sup> Larrazábal Blanco, *Familias Dominicanas*, Vol. 6, 150-3, provides the starting point for the genealogical reconstruction.

<sup>108</sup> AAMSD 0636214, 0636215, 0636216, 0636217, 0636218, 0636798, 0636799, 0636800, 0636801, 0636802, 636858, 636859 and Larrazábal Blanco, *Familias Dominicanas*, Vol. 1-9

married to Mateo Franco Guridi, nephew of the Governor, President and Captain General of Puerto Rico. The most notable marriage in this generation is that of doña Agueda Pérez Caro y Fernández de Oviedo. She married don Bernardino López de Osorio y Vargas born in Ceuta, Africa, and son of Lieutenant Colonel Pedro López de Osorio.<sup>109</sup> He was the brother of María Antonia, who married into what was arguably the most prestigious family in Latin America: the Villaurutia y Salcedos. The gender gap would continue to grow in the next generation, when five out of eight sons married locals. The other three married Cuban, Venezuelan and Spanish women. The latter was a very rare prize indeed for a Dominican male. The unions of the daughters of this generation were as follows: five to veteran officers, six to circum-Caribbean families and five to Dominicans. Thus, the Pérez Caro sons felt the burden of marrying women from the local elite most heavily, while the daughters were responsible for unions to foreigners. The divergence is not unexpected given the high percentage of male immigration and the subsequent privileged positions these men came to occupy.

Obviously, women had more marital opportunities and therefore choice of suitors than their male counterparts. Daughters also shouldered the responsibility of binding the newcomers to the elite Spanish Dominican families, while the sons maintained the tightly knit character of the exclusive group. Advancing the family's social, economic and political status through marriage was, by its nature, a delicate balancing act that required the creation of new ties to royal officials while maintaining fickle local family alliances at the same time.

The daughters' marriages can be further analysed by the foreigners' place of origin. In the table below, I have disaggregated the data from the previous table by the foreigners' place of birth by generation. Thus, the number indicated under each generational cohort represents the

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<sup>109</sup> Larrazábal Blanco, *Familias Dominicanas*, Vol. 4, 231-2.

total number of marriages contracted to individuals from Europe or the Caribbean, as the case may be. The steady increase in foreigners transferred to Santo Domingo corresponds to the gradual expansion of the military units under both Philip V and Charles III.<sup>110</sup> The drastic drop in immigration in generation six was due to the instability of the region during the Haitian Revolution and the secession of the Spanish half of the island to the French in the treaty of Basel in 1795, not completed until 1801.

**Table 9- Birth Place of Foreigners by Generational Cohort**

<b>Place of Origin</b>	<b>Gen 1 (1688-1708)</b>	<b>Gen 2 (1709-1730)</b>	<b>Gen 3 (1731-1751)</b>	<b>Gen 4 (1752-1772)</b>	<b>Gen 5 (1773-1795)</b>	<b>Gen 6 (1796-1816)</b>
<b>Europe<sup>111</sup></b>	13	3	11	33	14	5
<b>Caribbean</b>	0	4	16	17	18	5

Source: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 1092, 1093 and 1095.

Although the quality of officers had a base value, it is probable that the Caucasian Europeans better reflected the racial ideal of the elite image produced by the metropole than their Caribbean counterparts. This supposition is based on the fact that miscegenation was much more advanced in the Americas than in Europe in this period and that blood lines were probably perceived as purer or at least more reliable. Moreover, Spanish Dominicans wanted the Spanish Crown to think about them as a region and a society worthy of its attention. Thus, it is not difficult to understand the reasons why Spanish Dominicans were eager to create ties to this group and why the daughters had the best opportunities to achieve this goal.

The table above certainly indicates that Spanish Dominicans contracted marriages to Europeans, throughout the period.<sup>112</sup> However, there was a visible increase in the number of

<sup>110</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 1092, 1093 and 1095.

<sup>111</sup> Europe includes: Spain, Italy, Portugal and the Canary Islands.

unions involving individuals hailing from the circum-Caribbean region. This phenomenon is mirrored in the Pérez Caro y Fernández de Oviedo marital patterns. The family continued to marry their daughters to both the European born foreigners and the local Spanish Dominican elite but in the mid eighteenth century they clearly started to incorporate immigrants from the circum-Caribbean zone as well.<sup>113</sup> The most prominent marriages were contracted with the powerful Machado, Orenes Brito and Aristiguieta Blanco families of Venezuela, and the Saviñon and Del Monte Cabral families of Cuba. The officers occupied the neighbouring islands and many of the troops from Santo Domingo were stationed for a short period in these locations, such as during the pacification of the “natives” in Cartagena in 1739 and in Cuba in 1762.<sup>114</sup> Also, as discussed in chapters one and two, the Spanish Dominicans often ran their own illicit trade ships between the islands. Contacts on those islands were probably necessary in order to continue to effectuate fruitful trading missions. Were the officers from the circum-Caribbean incorporated into the Spanish Dominican fold in order to maintain good relations with the surrounding islands? And if so, did those ties help the Spanish Dominican elite to relocate when Santo Domingo was ceded to the French? Unfortunately there is no definitive way of answering either of these questions.

All that I can say for certain is that, on a case by case basis, the correlation between marriages to foreigners and emigration destination is more tightly connected. In effect, if Spanish Dominican families relocated at the end of the eighteenth century, they tended to go to the birth

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<sup>112</sup> The tendency to correlate the poverty of the island to its isolation is inaccurate. The lack of connection between the two is exposed in Thorald M. Burnham, *Immigration and Marriage in the Making of Post-Independence Haiti* (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, York University, 2006), ch. 4. His research indicates that Haitians engineered marital ties to foreigners from Africa, Europe, the Caribbean, Latin American and the United States in the second half of the nineteenth century. Moreover, the traditional thesis that holds that an economic revival was delayed by the country's isolation after its revolution needs to be revised.

<sup>113</sup> Larrazábal Blanco, *Familias Dominicanas*, Vol. 1-9.

<sup>114</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 1092, 1093 and 1095.

place of the foreign husband.<sup>115</sup> The results for the Pérez Caro y Fernández de Oviedo family tend to point to a strong correlation between marriages with the circum-Caribbean elite and the immigration destination. The marriages of Micaela Brito y Pérez Caro to Miguel Machado; Ana Manuela de Africa Blasina Isabel Francisco de Paula López Osorio y Pérez Caro to Manuel Fernando Del Monte Cabral; José Remigio Freyre Fernández de Castro to doña María Altagracia Gros created ties between this Spanish Dominican family and the Machados of Venezuela, the Del Monte Cabrals of Cuba and the Gros of Puerto Rico.<sup>116</sup> The immigration of these couples and several of their brothers and sisters back to their spouses' home country suggested that the marital ties helped the Pérez Caro y Fernández de Oviedos to relocate at the end of the eighteenth century. The marital and immigration pattern of the Fernández de Castro, Mañón Lara, Fernández de Fuenmayor y Mieses Ponce de León and Bastida families also seem evident, even though destination information for some of the couples is missing.<sup>117</sup>

The connection is also present but not as clear in the cases of the following families: Lausel Montero, Castro Rivera, Alarcón Coronado, Paredes and Leos y Échalas, Campuzano Blanco Polanco and Fromesta Balmaceda.<sup>118</sup> The connection does not appear as a direct cause and effect relationship. The couples did not return to the home islands of the spouses but younger family members opted for that destination. For example, the initial marriage of Francisco Campuzano Polanco to María Francisca Morillo de Ayala probably led other family members to choose Venezuela as their destination.<sup>119</sup> Similarly, the union of Francisca Fromesta Balmaceda

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<sup>115</sup> AAMSD 636858, 636859 and Larrazábal Blanco, *Familias Dominicanas*, Vol. 1-9.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

Leos Échalas (second marriage) to Andrés Ibarra, native of Venezuela, was the impetus for their children's decision to move to that Spanish colony.<sup>120</sup>

Finally, the connection is altogether unclear for the Coca Landeches, Heredias, Páez Maldonado, Caballero Bazán, Hinojosa Jobel and Acevedo Cid families.<sup>121</sup> Marital ties, if there were any, did not result in a return to the spouses' home island, nor to a coherent selection of an immigration destination. Perhaps, however, the connection was simply more archaic, as in the case of the Almonte Del Montes, who Larrazábal Blanco singled out as having very close ties to Cuba.<sup>122</sup> Given that Larrazábal Blanco prefaced his anthology of Dominican genealogies with a list of sources but never footnoted his references in his work, the basis for his assertion is inaccessible.

All in all, however, I believe that those marital ties did help elite Spanish Dominicans to relocate, possibly easing their transition from Santo Domingo to their new destinations. Certainly the marital patterns of those Spanish Dominicans, who contracted unions in Cuba, Puerto Rico and Venezuela, do not appear to differ from their established practices. The table below regroups these types of marriages based on my reconstructed elite Spanish Dominican genealogies.

**Table 10- Marriages of Foreigners to Spanish Dominicans who Also Emigrated**

Name of Individual	Spouse	Married	Immigrated
Andrés Angulo Cabrera	doña Francisca Guridi	in Puerto Rico	to Puerto Rico
Antonio Del Monte Tejada	Francisca Antonia de las Cuevas	1808 in Cuba	to Cuba
Domingo Del Monte Aponte	Rosa Aldama Alfonso	1834 in Cuba	to Cuba
Felipe Benicio Dávila Fernández de Castro Guridi	Anastasia Real	in Puerto Rico	to Puerto Rico
Francisca Antonia Del	Antonio Gómez Becerril	in Venezuela	to

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Larrazábal Blanco, *Familias Dominicanas*, Vol. 3.

Monte Aponte			Venezuela
Guadalupe Heredia Ferrer de Castro	Dr. José María Caminero Ferrer	in Cuba	to Cuba
José (Vicente) Heredia Campuzano Pimentel	María Josefa Ferrer de Castro	1802 in Cuba	to Cuba
José Del Monte Aponte	Magdalena Garay Heredia	1826 in Cuba	to Cuba
José Francisco Heredia Serrano Pimentel y Mieses Guridi	María Merced de Heredia y Campuzano	1800 in Venezuela	to Coro Venezuela with his 5 brothers and 14 slaves
Josefa Ferrer Castro Rivera Leos Échalas	José Vicente de Heredia Campuzano Polanco	1802 in Santiago de Cuba	1802 to Santiago de Cuba
Miguel Ferrer Castro Rivera	María Columna Leos-Échalas	1802 in Santiago de Cuba	1802 to Santiago de Cuba

Source: AAMSD 636858, 636859 and Larrazábal Blanco, *Familias Dominicanas*, Vol. 1-9.

There is a one hundred percent correlation between the place of marriage and the emigration destination. However, the most interesting part of this table is the fact that many of the spouses appear to be from immigrant Spanish Dominican families, such as María Josefa Ferrer de Castro, Magdalena Garay Heredia, María Merced de Heredia y Campuzano, José de Heredia y Campuzano Polanco and María Columna Leos-Échalas, as well as possibly José María Álvarez and Francisca Antonia de las Cuevas. Furthermore, the Guridi and Girón families were originally from Puerto Rico and therefore probably just returned to their place of origin. Thus, based on knowledge of Spanish Dominican names, only Rosa Aldama Alfonso, Anastasia Real and Antonio Gómez Becerril appear to be foreigners.<sup>123</sup> The data can be explained in one of two ways. First, these Spanish Dominican unions were performed in Cuba, Puerto Rico and Venezuela because there was no clergy of distinction left in Santo Domingo in the final stages of the French take-over of the Spanish side of the island. Second, these elite families had already

<sup>123</sup> The family names are not of Spanish Dominican origin.

emigrated to the three islands and probably found themselves recreating their society and lives in their new surroundings. The continuation of the pattern may have been an act of self-reassurance of their social status in the face of competition with the local elite. It would be interesting to know how successfully elite Spanish Dominicans integrated into Cuban, Puerto Rican and Venezuelan society but the matter is outside this study's scope. I will, however, point out that Carlos Larrazábal Blanco reported that a few sons of elite Spanish Dominicans became illustrious leaders of the Venezuelan Wars of Independence, which leads one to wonder if the secession of the island did not further aggravate the negative feelings of Spanish colonial subjects caused by the Bourbon Reforms towards the Spanish Crown for treating them like second class citizens of the empire.<sup>124</sup> It does, however, seem like an excellent new avenue for research.

### **Foreigners, Promises of Marriage and Dowries**

Although these marital ties may have helped Spanish Dominicans relocate, courtships and marriages to foreigners had their pitfalls. For instance, in Santo Domingo as elsewhere in Latin America, cases in which men defaulted on their promises to marry could be taken to the ecclesiastical court.<sup>125</sup> The betrothal was, after all, legally binding and the only acceptable reason for a marriage not to take place was if it was discovered that the woman was not a virgin.<sup>126</sup> Suing locals in ecclesiastical courts for breach of promise was relatively easier than bringing foreigners before the courts. The matter was more complicated because these men might only be temporarily stationed on the island. The transient nature of their posting posed a problem in jurisdictional and practical terms. A foreigner could be sued for breach of promise and convicted

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<sup>124</sup> Larrazábal Blanco, *Familias Dominicanas*, Vol. 1-9.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, 62.

<sup>126</sup> Twinam, *Public Lives, Private Secrets*, 38-40.

in Santo Domingo but the enforcement of the judicial decision was contingent on the jurisdiction where he emigrated complying to return the individual to Santo Domingo. For example, doña Francisca de Fromesta (Balmaceda) y Leos (Échalas) sued don Andrés de Ibarra for breach of promise.<sup>127</sup> He was incarcerated in Santo Domingo, but someone intentionally freed him and he escaped all the way back to his homeland of Venezuela. The legal proceedings, however, persisted for more than a decade, after which he was finally declared not guilty, even though the union had produced two children.

The disadvantages of unions to foreigners were particularly apparent in 1795, when the Spanish Crown ceded its half of the island to France. Foreign officials were notified of their evacuation. The Spanish royal administration had negotiated a year's grace period in order to be able to undertake the massive project of relocating not only the civil, military and ecclesiastical units composing the royal administration on the island but also its citizens. It was inevitable that problems would arise. As discussed in chapter one, the Spanish Crown offered to compensate the islanders, who relocated before the aforementioned year was up; however, no provisions were made to do the same for those in its employ.<sup>128</sup> However, many of these foreign men had married Spanish Dominicans. The brides had received dowries, which were placed in the care of the administrators of the military pension before the wedding took place in compliance with the regulation. The real crux of the problem was that the dowry was regulated by the administrators

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<sup>127</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 1025, 79-1-13, Causa matrimonial entre Francisca de Fromesta y Andrés de Ibarra, 1780-1785; Informe del fiscal desestimado las pretensiones de Francisca y José Fromesta y dictaminando la expulsión de este 23/04/1783 and AGI, Indiferente, Nueva España, leg. 16, 136-4-16, Cédulas e Informes: Carta de Legitimación para María de las Angustias Ibarra y Fromesta (a SM) 25/10/1803.

<sup>128</sup> Although I have encountered no regulations as to how the compensation was to be allotted, I would assume that to obtain said favour from the royal administration, individuals had to present titles of land ownership. As discussed in chapter two, this must have been problematic given the land holding disarray that existed in that regard.

of the military pension and therefore the men were not free to dispose of it as they saw fit.<sup>129</sup> Also, no instructions had been issued to the officers and I suspect to the administrators of the military pension in regard to what should be done about these properties before they moved back to Europe.<sup>130</sup> Furthermore, the immediate recall made it impossible to make plans for the remainder of the dowries, which included items that were too heavy to move, such as furniture to be disposed of or shipped. The situation touched off a veritable letter writing campaign to try to force the Crown to protect the officers and their brides from being fleeced. The petitions resembled the requests for entry level commissions and the payment of salaries in arrears discussed in chapter one. Merit was established through services rendered. The reason for the request was stated, providing the context for the claim that was laid out with supporting documentation. Don Joaquín García's letter began by establishing that while stationed on the island he was legally married, with the appropriate licenses and consent.<sup>131</sup> He then goes on to write that he, like many others in his regiment, had to vacate the farms that were given to his wife as part of her dowry because the Regiment of Cantabria, to which he belonged, had been recalled to Spain.<sup>132</sup> Since, García was a foreigner stationed on the island, he was not eligible for compensation from the Spanish Crown. García explained and pleaded with the Spanish Crown to give this problem its full attention explaining that "so many distinguished and honourable families [would] find themselves wrapped in shameful obscurity" if no solution was found.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 1090, 79-9-7, Secretarías de los Ministerios-expedientes Militares 1795; Carta al Consejo de Indias de Joaquín García, 23/01/1795 According to this document, dowries pertaining to marriages of military officers were to be turned over to the military pension before the marriage took place. Thus, the administration and control of the dowry was never in the hands of the officers.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

<sup>131</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 1091, 79-3-8, Expedientes militares, 1796-1811; Expediente No 765- Carta de Joaquín García y don Miguel José de Azansa al Consejo de Indias 09/04/1796.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 1091, 79-3-8, Expedientes militares, 1796-1811; Expediente No 765- Carta de Joaquín García y don Miguel José de Azansa a el Consejo de Indias 09/04/1796.

Obviously, Garcia and the men in his situation felt that they did not deserve being aggrieved in this manner given that they were currently following the evacuation orders to the letter by going with their unit to its next posting so that they might continue to serve the King of Spain in the most effective and loyal manner as they had done until then.

Although García's letter illustrates the problems foreigners encountered at the advent of the relocation, elite Spanish Dominicans were probably also left in the lurch as the Spanish Crown was offering to compensate them for their lands but not for any of their other assets, including their personal effects and cattle herds that would have to be left behind. The relocation occasioned by the Treaty of Basel represented a significant problem for the elite as they most certainly could not take their material possessions with them and therefore were forced to purchase replacement items in their new surroundings. Given that money was not in circulation in Santo Domingo, one can easily imagine what a blow that situation must have been to elite Spanish Dominican families.

### **Fictive Kin Ties**

As discussed in the previous chapter, elite Spanish Dominican families maintained ties to each other through godparentage. They employed the same strategy to forge bonds to foreigners. There was a clear preference for male godparents and as such, the burden of creating these horizontal ties fell squarely on the men. An analysis of godparentage regarding children with at least one godparent reveals the same gendered preferences as those observed within the local Spanish Dominican elite: a little over one third chose godmothers, while the other two-thirds chose godfathers. Rare were the children, who had both a godmother and a godfather. A little less than half the children from unions with one foreign born spouse had a family member as a godparent, while the other half chose outside of their immediate family. Moreover, the Spanish

Dominican elite also sought to strengthen their ties to the foreigners, not only through marriage but through the institution of *compadrazgo*.

### **Conclusions**

In conclusion, elite Spanish Dominican families utilized complex strategies to acquire and maintain social, political and economic power. First, the families sought to control entry-level military commissions, thereby dictating access to the only dignified source of revenue on the island. They achieved this goal by exerting their influence as officers in sending letters to the Council of the Indies. In their military postings, many were able to take part in the revenues from the illegal cattle trade, and some even attempted to develop cash crops. From these highly sought after positions, they controlled the total available island revenues. However, these machinations were not sufficient to ensure that policy would continue to be favourable to them and by extension secure their position within Spanish Dominican society. Thus they put into action an effective marital strategy that was instrumental in influencing and bonding the veteran officials. The marital ties ensured that some measure of control was placed over these newcomers. In return, elite Spanish Dominicans gave them access to their established networks of power, thereby including them in the opportunities to generate income on the island. The bonds with the European officers helped the Dominican elite to continue to project to the Spanish Crown the image of a population that was “white” and of an elite that was truly worthy of its attention. The ties to the circum-Caribbean veterans made it possible for the Dominicans to relocate in 1795. Simultaneous to the creation of these new ties to the elite European and circum-Caribbean foreigners, Spanish Dominicans maintained their tightly knit character through intermarriages. The reaffirmation of the exclusiveness of the group led these elite families to contract multiple generational marriages, designed to rejuvenate the blood lines. Spanish Dominican daughters

were at the heart of these marital strategies as the immigration was mostly male. Thus, the women bonded the veteran officials to the Spanish Dominican elite. It is through their marriages that the family lines were continuously infused with renewed prestige from the quality of the royal officials. These marriages also brought in badly needed “new blood” to the small elite pool, thereby avoiding the terrible ramifications resulting from repeated incestuous relationships. Finally, it was also the daughters who maintained the ties to the Spanish Dominican elite, although in this case, their male counterparts also figured prominently as it takes two to make a couple! Thus, the sons and daughters shared the burden of upholding the exclusivity of the elite group. Moreover, marriage was not just about gender and family but power: women played a pivotal role in Spanish Dominican family strategies to maintain and advance the family’s social, political and economic standing, as well as the shaping of the elite identity both on the island, as well as in the image projected outwardly.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> Scott, “Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis,” 1053-1075.

## **Chapter Six- Elites, the Lower Class and Marriage**

Thus far, my dissertation focused on the elite group and their power relations with the Spanish Crown. Essentially, the authority and legitimacy of the Spanish Dominican elite's right to rule rested on a negotiated dialogue with the metropole. The elite group bartered their loyalty in return for certain privileges from the Crown. However, confirmation of their status by the colonial power is not an adequate explanation for how the elite maintained their pre-eminent position in island society. Although the Spanish Crown did favour the elite, it could not protect them from being ousted from power by a levée en masse, such as the one that took place in Haiti. An important aspect of their status was embedded in island power relations, particularly with the lower class.

As discussed earlier, the lower class formed the largest population group in the territory of Santo Domingo. Their financial and material conditions were of course no better but rather consistently worse than the elite's. The demographic size and economic straits that defined the lower class, taken together with the general collapse of the social classes on the island, marked the members of this group as a significant threat to elite power in a direct and indirect way. There is no doubt that a successful rebellion, as was the case in Haiti, would have removed the ruling group. However, unrest need not be successful to cause a change in leadership. Sustained social unrest could be just as damaging because it indicated to the Spanish Crown the elite's inability to control the masses, and by extension, enforce the royal will. If the elite could not provide effective authority, or at the very least, a semblance of it, they would have to be replaced. After all, members of the Spanish Dominican elite were the king's representatives in the territory of Santo Domingo. Poor performance was not only a reflection on the entire Spanish administration but could be devastating. An inability to establish control could, in effect, lead to

a loss of territory, as was the case in 1762 with the humiliating fall of Havana. In the territory of Santo Domingo, the pattern of removal of incompetent royal officials was established early when the Spanish Crown sent Francisco Bobadilla to replace the inept administrator, Christopher Columbus, in 1499. Moreover, although the elite had to confirm their position from the metropole, they also recognized the need to do so from those they governed.

In effect, plebeian culture established limits to elite domination.<sup>1</sup> The lower class tolerated and recognized the Spanish Dominican elite's right to rule as long as the ruling group behaved within the acceptable norms and standards of island society. Individual behaviour, class interaction and good governance kept the elite in power whereas weak leadership resulted in unrest.

The fact that all islanders faced the same financial problems meant that solutions that were good for one group turned out to be beneficial to the other groups as well. Moreover, the island's poor economic situation made the elite's job somewhat easier given that the financial concessions the elite extracted from the Spanish Crown, mainly the ability to pursue illicit trade whether with the French colony or within the circum-Caribbean, were also good for the remainder of the population. Although the elite monopolized the most lucrative aspects of these illicit activities, the lower class carved out their own niches, which permitted them to obtain basic necessities. The elite's understanding of the importance of the lower orders' participation in the illicit trade led them to protect the plebeians' right to partake in it. Their actions acted to avert social unrest, thereby earning the approval of the lower class.

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<sup>1</sup> Douglas Cope, *The Limits of Racial Domination: Plebeian Society in Colonial Mexico City, 1660-1720* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994), passim.

The elite recognized and responded to lower class expectations, by manipulating the official records not just for themselves but for the remainder of the population. The whitening and legitimization of the lower class through serial omissions of racial labelling and clear fudging regarding the legitimacy of birth provided the lower class with opportunities for social mobility, which were perhaps the impetus behind the rise of the Dominican Trickster. I argue that the blurring of racial lines made slippage a regular reality in Santo Domingo and that the men and women, who appropriated the image of the Dominican Trickster, could achieve upward mobility. The Spanish Dominican elite further enabled the process by allowing a certain number of persons to rise in the ranks to occupy low ranking rural positions in the Spanish colonial bureaucracy. Obviously, the elite understood that the social equilibrium could not be maintained through constant repression and denial of the lower class's ambition. The latter, however, grasped that access to these opportunities was contingent on them meeting and exhibiting a certain socio-cultural behaviour.

Social stability reigned as long as the elite recognized and responded to lower class expectations. Classic discontent with the daily state of affairs was probably limited to what James C. Scott has termed the weapons of the weak: foot dragging, dissimulation, desertion, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance, slander, arson, sabotage and so on.<sup>2</sup> Open confrontation was therefore reserved for instances in which the lower class perceived the elite to have breached the social contract. After all, the two groups were dependent on the continuation of the status quo. A change in the hierarchical order represented uncertainty and was threatening. This notion was never truer than in 1795 when the eastern side of the island was ceded to the French.

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<sup>2</sup> Scott, *Weapons of the Weak*, xvi.

Finally, the elite sought to neutralize dissent by building vertical fictive kinship ties with the lower class. Although, as can be expected, the proportion of the elite becoming godparents to plebeian children or standing as witnesses at their marriages was not high, these bonds reduced the likelihood of a general uprising.<sup>3</sup> Members of the lower class with kinship connections or with a patron-client relationship with the elite were reluctant to jeopardize their privileged position by joining their peers in open rebellion. The fictive kinship ties were beneficial to both groups. For the elite, the bonds represented an extension of their networks of influence and therefore their prestige. As for the lower class, the ties provided them with certain privileges and access to a limited number of low ranking rural positions in the royal bureaucracy. The social contract therefore, was based on a negotiated exchange between the elite and the lower class. Holding and maintaining power required finesse and balance and could certainly not be achieved through a perpetual state of oppression. Before embarking on this discussion two explanations are necessary. First, I will define who the lower class was and secondly, I will explain the sources and methodology used in analyzing the marital patterns for this group.

### **The Lower class**

The word "lower class" is not really an adequate descriptor for the very large group of people of varying economic prosperity constituting this class. As discussed in chapter two, there are really only three distinct groups of persons on the island: the elite, the slaves and those who belonged to neither one nor the other. Unfortunately, for the purposes of this study, the latter group accounts for nearly half to two-thirds of the population.<sup>4</sup> The reason this group is so large

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<sup>3</sup> There are no studies of godparental ties in the Dominican Republic, but there are many on Mexico, such as John M. Ingham, "The Asymmetrical Implications of Godparenthood in Tlayacapan, Morelos" in *Man*, New Series, Vol. 5, No. 2 (June, 1970), 281-289.

<sup>4</sup> Sevilla Soler, *Santo Domingo*, ch. 2.

is that there are no sources that can point to even the slightest difference in occupation, wealth, land, cultivation or other meaningful comparative criteria.

Sevilla Soler and Lauren Derby believe that the bulk of the lower class were “*negros y pardos libres*”<sup>5</sup> and “mulattos and free blacks,”<sup>6</sup> respectively. Both indicate that the lower class contained persons of mixed race as well as free blacks. There is no denying the fact that the territory of Santo Domingo was heavily miscegenated.<sup>7</sup> This is not surprising given the early importation of African slaves, the disappearance of ethnically pure Native Americans within the first sixty years of conquest and the lack of strong immigration to the island as a whole for all socio-economic classes. The low population density produced ideal conditions for continued inter-racial breeding in the territory of Santo Domingo.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, the lower class included freed slaves, which, although they were mostly locally born and of mixed race, tended to be phenotypically darker. Also, legal and illicit immigration from Saint-Domingue, which in comparison to the territory of Santo Domingo, had a very large percentage of African born slaves, also swelled the ranks of this group.<sup>9</sup> However, white immigration through the repopulation policy also occurred. Moreover, this group also contained a number of poor whites.<sup>10</sup> The lower class was, therefore, not racially homogenous but probably darker in skin tone overall than members of the elite.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 63.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., ch. 2, describes the group as “negros y pardos libres.” For her part, Derby, “The Dictator’s Seduction”, 231, uses the phrase “mulattos and free blacks” to describe the lower class. Although Sevilla Soler uses pardos instead of mulattos, she and Derby are indicating persons of mixed race and blacks.

<sup>7</sup> Derby, “The Dictator’s Seduction,” 231 and Gutiérrez Escudero, *Población y Economía en Santo*, 45-57.

<sup>8</sup> Guitar, *Cultural Genesis*, ch.7 and Derby, “The Dictator’s Seduction,” 231.

<sup>9</sup> AAMSD 636858, 636859. Lauren Derby, “National Identity and the Idea of Value on the Island of Hispaniola,” 20, explains that whether they slipped into Spanish territory or were illicitly acquired through piracy or trade with enemy European powers, there is no doubt that freed and runaway slaves (*esclavos franceses* or *criollos*)<sup>9</sup> from Saint-Domingue swelled the ranks of the Spanish Dominican lower class.

<sup>10</sup> According to the Archbishopric of Santo Domingo’s sacramental records, there were only twenty-one lower class Canary Islanders, who married in that archdiocese during the entire eighteenth century. As for foreigners, whether

### Sources:

Not surprisingly, the archival sources on the lower class are not as rich as those pertaining to the elite. Aside from the colonial correspondence, from which little can be gleaned, there are the sacramental records.<sup>12</sup> In the subsequent analysis of marital patterns, the records selected included all free persons with no racial label, as well as those described as *indio* (Indian), mulatto, mestizo, moreno, pardo, and negro, who were not identified with the titles of don or doña or as slaves.<sup>13</sup> Except in exceptional cases, the officiating priest was the lieutenant priest of the Cathedral of Santo Domingo and the witnesses were the assigned sacristans for that archdiocese. In order to preserve the image of a diversified lower class, I have tried to analyze the marital patterns by separating the following groups: persons who have no apparent connection to slavery, foreigners and freed slaves. When the information was available the data was further disaggregated along racial lines.

### The Economics of the Lower Class

As discussed in chapter two, anyone could own land because the territory of Santo Domingo had a low population density rate.<sup>14</sup> Ownership of land, of course, could be obtained through legal sale, however the lower class probably acquired their small plots of land through

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from Europe, the Spanish, French and English Caribbean or the Latin American mainland, 186 of them arrived during the same period.

<sup>11</sup> John K. Chance and William B. Taylor, "Estate and Class in a Colonial City: Oaxaca in 1792," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 19, No. 4 (October, 1977), 454-487, state that persons identified as European or Creole were more likely to be members of the elite while those identified as mixed race were more likely to be lower class. However, the identification and particularly self-identification is problematic in the territory of Santo Domingo given the obvious manipulation of the official record. Chance and Taylor's findings for the city of Oaxaca probably paralleled those present in the territory of Santo Domingo.

<sup>12</sup> AAMSD, 636858, 636859.

<sup>13</sup> Although there are some English language equivalents for the multitude of racial labels devised by the Spanish from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, they are few and far between. The labels all refer to specific racial mixtures. Please see: Ilona Katzew, *Casta Paintings: Images of Race in Eighteenth-Century Mexico* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004).

<sup>14</sup> Gutiérrez Escudero, *Población y Economía en Santo Domingo*, 86-99.

squatting.<sup>15</sup> The lower class likely kept a small number of farm animals, such as cows, horses, pigs, sheep, chickens and goats.<sup>16</sup> Their small livestock surpluses, as well as animals poached from the elite or during organized intermittent raids in the mountainous countryside to round up whatever feral animals they could find, such as horses, pigs, sheep and cattle, could be sold across the border with little difficulty.<sup>17</sup>

The main agricultural pursuit of the lower class was therefore growing subsistence foods, supplemented by cash crops whenever possible.<sup>18</sup> There is some evidence that the lower class grew tobacco, as well as fruits and vegetables.<sup>19</sup> The sale of tobacco yielded concrete economic returns in income or kind, however small they may have been. Access to the border trade also provided plebeians with the ability to conduct slave raids in Saint-Domingue and possibly in their own countryside to round up runaway slaves. Those they caught yielded profits when they were resold illicitly.<sup>20</sup> The revenues from their illicit sale allowed individuals to purchase or barter their earnings in return for basic staples from the French, the English and the Dutch. Moreover, the availability of land and the lower classes' ability to partake in the illicit trade through the sale of the produce grown or raised on their lands was probably the main source of

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<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 23. Small plots of land have erroneously been called *conucos* in much of the Spanish Dominican literature. However, Ortwin Sauer defines the conuco as a style of planting utilized by Native Americans to plant their crops in the Caribbean area. The mounding of dirt prevented the roots of the plant from being constantly immersed in water, which would have rotted them.

<sup>16</sup> Dávila Mendoza, *Un Concierto de Voces*, 1-62.

<sup>17</sup> Carl Ortwin, *The Early Spanish Main* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), *passim*, describes the importation of European farm animals to the Americas and the ecological ramifications in the early Spanish Main. For a more contemporary study of the environmental impact of the importation of non-native livestock to the Americas by Europeans, please see: Elinor Melville, *A Plague of Sheep, Environmental Consequences of the Conquest of the Valley of Mexico* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

<sup>18</sup> Gutiérrez Escudero, *Población y Economía en Santo Domingo*, 23-26.

<sup>19</sup> Derby, "National Identity and the Idea of Value on the Island of Hispaniola," 22, explains that there are no surviving records for these communities and therefore no way of ascertaining for certain the ethnic origins of the maroons. However, Derby proposes that Haitian maroons, numbering about 3,000 at mid century, grew tobacco in the borderlands between Saint-Domingue and Santo Domingo. Her assumption is based on an assessment of the oppressive system of slavery in the French colony, as well as the connection between the maroons' ability to grow tobacco, a skill they may have learned as slaves.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

revenue for this group. However, Sevilla Soler proposes that the persons at the upper end of this group were small business men in the manual trades or artisans, the middle rungs were vendors of basic necessities such as bread and fruit (pulperos) and the persons on the lowest end of the hierarchy were day labourers, followed closely by the indigent poor.<sup>21</sup> The lower class might also have made a living by supplying the military,<sup>22</sup> as well as obtaining transient work by loading and unloading cargo from ships passing through the port city of Santo Domingo.<sup>23</sup> Others might have been fishermen or hired help on ranches and plantations. As mentioned previously, some members of the lower class participated in the illicit trade on the north-western coast of the island and with the French colony.

Elite's understanding of the importance of lower class tobacco cultivation and participation in illicit trading was probably the reason behind the Spanish Crown's decision not to prohibit, for extended periods of time, the cultivation of tobacco in the territory of Santo Domingo. On the occasion of its first attempt in 1606, the Spanish Dominican cabildo responded by clearly outlining the consequences of the Crown's action should they implement the royal decree.<sup>24</sup> They made it abundantly clear that tobacco cultivation was the primary way through which Spanish Dominicans of all socio-economic groups supported themselves financially. The

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<sup>21</sup> Sevilla Soler, *Santo Domingo*, 66-67, states that the Laws of the Indies, in practice, set ceilings for social mobility for the freed coloured population, which were neatly divided into: libres (free black, mulatto or pardo persons), slaves or *primerizos* (first generation or offspring of a union between whites and blacks), *tercerones* (second generation or offspring of a union between mulattos and whites), *quartertiones* (third generation or son of the *terceron*) and *mestizos* (seventh generation or mixed race persons born of unions in which one person was white).<sup>21</sup> These individuals were therefore supposed to be restricted to lower class occupations, mostly involving manual labour.

<sup>22</sup> Juan Manuel de la Serna Herrera, "Indios, Pardos, Mulatos y Negros Esclavos. Lo Cotidiano en el Puerto de Veracruz a Fines del Siglo XVIII," in *Pautas de Convivencia Étnica en la América Latina Colonial; Indios, Negros, Mulatos, Pardos y Esclavos*, ed. Juan Manuel de la Serna Herrera (México: Universidad Autónoma de México, Centro Coordinador y Difusor de Estudios Latinoamericanos and Gobierno del Estado de Guanajuato, 2005), 91-110, explains that the region did not have a large slave population, much like that of the city of Santo Domingo. However, the port of Veracruz was a major hub for trade throughout the colonial period, unlike that of Santo Domingo.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> Baud, "El Surgimiento de un Campesino Criollo," 18.

message was that the prohibition would cause unrest throughout the island and possibly provoke a rebellion. The Spanish Crown relented, sacrificing economic policy for stability in its colony. After all, the actual people who defended the colony against invaders on a daily basis were the members of the lower class. The officers gave orders to the troops but it was the soldiers who were on the front lines.

Aside from land based employment, members of the lower class could also serve in the military. Taking up arms in the name of the King was poorly remunerated, difficult and dangerous. Depending on what racial identity members of the lower class adopted, they could serve in the “white,” coloured or black battalions.<sup>25</sup> Carlos Larrazábal indicates that the Spanish Dominican had a black and mixed race officers’ corps, like the coloured and black battalions studied by Ben Vinson.<sup>26</sup> However, the records for these battalions no longer exist and therefore no further information can be provided beyond the fact that they were few in number, limiting the number of positions in the officers’ corps.<sup>27</sup> Whether members of the lower class served in the black, coloured or white battalions, it is likely that members of the lower class occupied non-commissioned ranks, such as sergeant, corporal or soldier. As stated in chapter one, the military to civilian ratio was extremely high, despite lacklustre soldier recruitment.<sup>28</sup> Enlistment into

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<sup>25</sup> Vinson III and Matthew Restall, “Black Soldiers, Native Soldiers: Meanings of Military Service in the Spanish American Colonies,” in *Beyond Black and Red: African-Native Relations in Colonial Latin America*, ed. Matthew Restall (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), 15-52, explain that the creation of black battalions was approved in Santo Domingo as early as 1583. Vinson remarks that Santo Domingo could post an average of 500 white militiamen, which was considerably better than Campeche (Yucatan), San Juan, Puerto Rico, Honduras, Havana and Cartagena (Colombia), who could only muster, respectively, 20 to 50, 80, 50 to 100, 100 and 200 men.

<sup>26</sup> Larrazábal Blanco, *Los negros y la esclavitud en Santo Domingo*, 171-174 and Vinson III, *Bearing Arms For His Majesty*, passim.

<sup>27</sup> AAMSD, 636858, 636859.

<sup>28</sup> Poor military recruitment was not particular to Hispaniola but to all of Spanish America. For more on military recruitment, please see: Lyle N. McAlister, *The Fuero Militar in New Spain, 1764-1800* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1957); Christon I. Archer, *The Army in Bourbon Mexico 1760-1810* (Albuquerque University of New Mexico Press, 1977); Leon G. Campbell, *Military and Society in Colonial Peru 1750-1820* (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1978); Allan J. Kuethe, *Cuba, 1753-1815* and Allan J. Kuethe, *Military Reform and Society in New Granada, 1753-1808* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1978).

colonial defence was, in fact, obligatory for members of the lower class living in towns on the north-western frontier as they were supposed to serve as buffers from French expansion and English invasions.<sup>29</sup> As discussed in chapter three, the new towns created through the repopulation policy were part of the overall defensive island strategy and were wholly dependent on persons living in those areas, as the cavalry units patrolled them irregularly. In view of the mutual reliance of the Spanish Crown on the Spanish Dominican lower class, did a special relationship like the one observed by Vinson with the free-coloured militia in colonial Mexico develop between them?

### **Identity Construction and Racial Perceptions**

In his pioneering work, Vinson observes that coloured and black units in sparsely populated areas enjoyed a privileged relationship with the Spanish Crown due to its very reliance on them to defend its territories.<sup>30</sup> In fact, in Mexico, free coloureds and blacks came to expect concessions such as tribute and head tax exemptions, the right to own property and the right to create their own self-governed community, as well as more flexible work schedules in return for “military service, which they provided voluntarily, free of charge, and with enthusiasm for the

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<sup>29</sup> Vinson III, *Bearing Arm for His Majesty*, ch. 1-2 argues that the Spanish Crown had to rely on the local population for defence in isolated areas of the empire. In any case, Spanish colonial defence was notoriously concentrated into castle like structures and in key defensive zones.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid. Vinson states that the military permitted a certain racial identity to flourish through the medium of the corporate military structure. The concept is not unfamiliar as it is still present today at the micro and macro level in the competing identities of the navy, air force and army, as well as Special Forces regiments classified under each branch, such as the Navy Seals or the bomb squad. Identities are a key element to achieve cohesion and cooperation amongst a wide variety of individuals. The belief in the uniqueness, importance and exclusivity of a specific branch of the armed forces keeps troops focused on delivering their best effort in relation to the other competing unit identities. Moreover, it is not surprising that Vinson uncovered the existence of a military exclusivity cult in the free black and coloured militias, but the identity construction is certainly not limited to that group as I would assume that it was a widespread practice. The more interesting question Vinson researched was what statement individuals made when they enlisted in a coloured or black battalion. Vinson argued that the very act of joining black or coloured battalions enabled a racial consciousness to develop because it recognized a similar bond between members in that grouping. Thus, the admission of feeling black or coloured was a starting point for the construction of a common identity. Persons of colour or blacks joining a race specific battalion, such as black or coloured one, were making a statement as to which racial group they belonged to.

Crown.”<sup>31</sup> The letters addressed to the Crown also highlighted the long standing tradition of military service, which they connected back to the conquest period and the fact that they furnished their own weapons and uniforms, which translated into substantial savings for the Crown.<sup>32</sup> Furthermore, the petitions made it quite clear that “If they departed, the province would be left defenceless and exposed to attack and insurrection.”<sup>33</sup> Given that the free black and coloured population in Santo Domingo mostly occupied lands over which the Spanish Crown held tenuous control, it would be logical to assume that they also enjoyed a special relationship. The arguments made were identical to the ones found in elite letters. The only difference in the relationship established between the Crown and the free coloureds and blacks, on the one side, and the elite on the other side was the importance of the concessions. The latter were granted positions in the royal administration, while the former were rewarded with practical financial breaks. For the nineteenth century at least, Lauren Derby indicates that “a special relationship to the Crown [existed], one which provided the charter for the free black militia’s sense of themselves as a special and separate group of bondsmen.”<sup>34</sup>

### **The Lower Class and Racial Politics**

Furthermore, the elite understood and recognized the need to provide the lower class with social mobility. They did so by manipulating the colonial record in order to reflect the racialized ideal of the metropole. Racial slippage caused by a lack of visible racial markers for the elite, lower class and slaves was encoded in the official records. That is to say that the diversity and

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<sup>31</sup> Vinson III and Restall, “Black Soldiers, Native Soldiers,” 26.

<sup>32</sup> Blacks, either as slaves or mercenaries, were part of the conquest of the Americas. The slaves fighting for the Spaniards were often manumitted in return for their services.

<sup>33</sup> Vinson III and Restall, “Black Soldiers, Native Soldiers,” 27, point out that “black soldiers in Puebla were aware of the privileges negotiated by other black militias in New Spain.” Thus, they were not bargaining from a position of ignorance.

<sup>34</sup> Derby, *Tigueraje*, 22.

extent of the miscegenation only barely registered in the colonial documentation. The extent of the manipulation in the sacramental record is quite striking, especially in regard to the lower class. The marriage records indicate that 1,307 lower class couples received the sacrament of marriage. The baptismal registry reveals that a staggering seventy-six percent of children were born of legitimate unions throughout the eighteenth century.<sup>35</sup> Racial labels were only used in roughly one third of the entries in the marital registry. They were sporadically indicated in reference to the mothers of children receiving the baptismal sacrament and almost never on the child's records. The omissions are significant, particularly the ones relating to the lack of racial designations for the children as their racial identity and status could vary greatly from that of their mothers. In effect, the Spanish Dominican tendency to shy away from racial labels gave the appearance of homogeneity in the face of a different reality. The effect was that racial slippage became an everyday reality. I am not suggesting that the elite fudged the record for the lower class and slaves out of some grand gesture. The simple reality was that this measure was necessary for two reasons. First, an exclusive approach to altering the records would have stood out like the proverbial sore thumb in comparison to the other entries. This targeted approach might also have created friction between the socio-economic groups as the elite would have been perceived as profiting from an unfair advantage. Second and most important, the general manipulation allowed the elite to reflect the racialized image of the metropole, thereby placing themselves and the Spanish side of the island as worthy of the Spanish Crown's attention. Moreover, the decision to alter the records was a question of a means to an end.

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<sup>35</sup> AAMSD 0636214, 0636215, 0636216, 0636217, 0636218, 0636798, 0636799, 0636800, 0636801, 0636802, 636858, 636859. Of course these rates are based solely on the data available in the sacramental records and not the marital and baptismal patterns of the population at large. In other words, it is hard to ascertain the exact rate of lower class individuals, who received the sacrament of marriage and, by extension, the legitimacy rates.

### Agency and the Lower Class

The “whitening” of the lower class made them socially mobile. Although the lower class may not have identified with a white identity, they certainly recognized the value in adopting the racialized ideal proposed by the metropole. Given that the location of race resided in the individuals’ surrounding environment, behaviour and appearance, racial slippage was common and instrumental in breaching the thin divide between elite and lower class. This reality was at the heart of the origins of the Dominican Trickster, as gaining fraudulent access to the networks of power was not a matter of skin colour but overall comportment.

### The Dominican Tiger and Identity Construction

Tigueraje is best defined as a type of behaviour, which is referred to in the English language press as the Dominican Tiger or Dominican Trickster.<sup>36</sup> The overall use of this behaviour is termed in the Spanish language as *tigueraje*. It is characterized by a composite of social attributes and its ultimate goal is deception. The qualities of the personae include a hyper masculinity, virility, fertility; he is a womanizer. He has mass appeal across the vertical and horizontal male and female hierarchy. The tiger’s fits of violence make him both the object of admiration and fear. This reaction is particularly true of the *tigre-gallo* (tiger-cock), a sub-style of *tigueraje* whose identifying characteristic is violence to the point of ruthlessness.<sup>37</sup> The outburst of violence, called *descarga* (spontaneous fits of violent masculine rage), inspire fear but also loyalty from persons of both genders.<sup>38</sup> The tiger uses these reactions to physically and psychologically control those around him. Although the Dominican tiger is mostly thought of in

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<sup>36</sup> Krohn Hansen, *Masculinity and the Political Among ‘The Dominican Tiger,’* 108-129.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 231.

<sup>38</sup> Steve Stern, *The Secret History of Gender*, ch. 7, explains that explosive male violence was common in colonial Mexico. I assume that the situation was the same in the territory of Santo Domingo.

terms of a male persona defined as being at once a “man’s man” and a womanizer; women can also exhibit some of these characteristics.<sup>39</sup>

In his role as seducer, he possessed women by “conquering” them and proved his fertility by fathering many heirs. The womanizing ways of the trickster also serve another important goal of creating ties to the elite.<sup>40</sup> Marriage was, after all, the most concrete way of entering the exclusive tightly knit community of individuals holding power. Lauren Derby highlights the importance of women as displays of an “economy of the male personal status in the Dominican Republic.”<sup>41</sup> Moreover, the romantic conquests are to be construed as legitimating a man’s reputation, in the same manner as the accumulation of material things, such as land and wealth.

The Dominican Tiger, at his most basic level, is a manipulator, who deceives in order to “gain access to a station above his own through dressing the part, through the appropriate style and women, but also by being bold, daring and a smooth talker (who fashions himself as) a self-conscious object of the gaze, a position appropriate only to women.”<sup>42</sup> These characteristics are not unlike those attributed to nineteenth century *caudillos* (dictators). Derby identifies the behaviour as proper to Dominican creoles.<sup>43</sup>

Derby is not using creole in the colonial sense, as Spaniards born in the Americas, but in the more modern sense of the word that designates persons of mixed racial heritage born in the Americas, clearly identifying the Dominican tiger as a character belonging to the lower class. This is further confirmed in her discussion of the evolution of the character from the mulatto

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<sup>39</sup> Derby, “The Dictator’s Seduction: Gender and State Spectacle during the Trujillo Regime,” in *Latin American Popular Culture*, eds. William H. Beezley and Linda A. Curcio-Nagy (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources Inc., 2000), 213-239.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 221-230.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 218.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 230, 232.

<sup>43</sup> Derby, “National Identity and the Idea of Value on the Island of Hispaniola,” 5-37.

trickster of the pre-nineteenth century period to that of the Dominican tiger. She explains that the danger of the mulatto is the fact that his mixed racial heritage allows him to construct his identity differently according to the requirements of various contexts, such as private or public, vertical or horizontal.<sup>44</sup> The ability to transform himself between different selves is what allows the Dominican trickster to deceive those around him with style. The *tigre* is then also a shape shifter. His ability to morph in relation to his constantly changing entourage is what gains him popularity. His capacity to emulate male and female ideals along the vertical (within one's social class) and horizontal (across social classes) hierarchy gives him cross-class and gender appeal.<sup>45</sup> Derby comments that "The danger of the mulatto lay precisely in his ability to move throughout the social hierarchy, and particularly his ability to pass for white."<sup>46</sup> Thus, the tiger's goal was to access and integrate into the elite group without alienating support for himself within his own class. The Dominican Tiger seized on the practical reality that appearances were important in the territory of Santo Domingo and that those who successfully managed to capitalize on their image could in fact create opportunities for themselves. This approach was as well adjusted to the lower class as other classic forms of resistance such as foot dragging, false compliance, desertion, feigned ignorance and so on because it did not require collective action.<sup>47</sup> This does not mean that the lower class never resorted to riots and rebellions to make their voices heard. As discussed in chapter one, there are instances of armed resistance to royal authorities in the archival records. Although these particularly apply to the maroon communities, I would assume

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 11. Silvio Torres-Saillant, *El Tigueraje Intelectual*, (Santo Domingo: Editora Manatí, 2002), passim, comments on the use of tigueraje for intellectual purposes and the ability of Trujillo and Balaguer to co-opt the deracialized nature of Dominicanidad to create a national identity for the country, which involved anti-Haitianism. The real finesse lay not in the creation, however, but in the broad acceptance of this new identity and then the subsequent propaganda effort that followed it.

<sup>45</sup> Stern, *The Secret History of Gender*, ch. 7.

<sup>46</sup> Derby, "The Dictator's Seduction," 232.

<sup>47</sup> Scott, *Weapons of the Weak*, ch. 2.

that plebeians did not hesitate to use force whenever it was necessary. Individual acts necessitated no organizing and planning and were equally effective in the long run. Collective action, however, was more threatening to the elite particularly given their minority position.

### **Social Mobility**

The elite responded to lower class expectations by opening positions within the royal bureaucracy and the Church. Although these were always of low status and mostly in rural zones, the positions could be used as a spring board for future promotions. They were also remunerated, which provided members of the lower class with a certain fiscal security. Members of the lower class were appointed to serve on town councils as judges and mayors but also as priests.<sup>48</sup>

In a letter to the Council of the Indies, the Archbishop of the Cathedral of Santo Domingo wrote that mulattos and blacks were being ordained into the priesthood.<sup>49</sup> He justified the practice to the Spanish Crown by stating that there were not enough noble families to occupy all the positions on the island. He also reassured the metropole that these individuals would not rise above the rank of curate. I believe that the letter's intent was to give the Spanish Crown a plausible justification as to why the Spanish Dominican elite were providing some social mobility to the lower class.

The letter informed the metropole that individuals, not deemed to be "respectable" enough for public employment by the Spanish Crown, were being put into office. The practice of placing lower class persons in rural royal positions was justified by the elite in terms of a lack of noble persons. Finally, the letter also reassured the Spanish Crown that social disorder would not

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<sup>48</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 973, 78-5-24, Inventario de la Sección de Santo Domingo 1648-1798 and AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 983, 78-6-7, Cartas y Expedientes; 1771-1773.

<sup>49</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 319, Cabildo Eclesiástico to Santo Domingo and AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 316, Letter from the Archbishop of Santo Domingo to the King.

result from these appointments as these individuals would not be permitted to rise beyond this preliminary advancement in society. As in the case of the elite's letters petitioning the Crown for entry-level commissions, financial assistance or other favours, the Archbishop's correspondence was couched in the mutually accessible language of empire.

For example, the racial designations found in the letter were part and parcel of the racialized language of empire. As discussed in the preceding chapters, racial labelling had no clear visual connection to a person's actual skin tone. Rather, it had to do with identity politics and the language of empire. The Spanish Dominican elite adopted an identity, which represented "whiteness," legitimacy and purity of blood. Thus, the Spanish administration understood that persons below the elite were being employed by His Majesty because of the racial designations used but it provided a rational justification for this decision and a guarantee that it was of a limited nature.<sup>50</sup> The only way, however, to get the Crown to understand the fine distinction between the two socio-economic classes was to couch it in the language of empire. Moreover, elite Spanish Dominicans phrased their letters in terms the Crown could understand and in a way in which they would obtain what they desired: maintaining their elite status and social order.

The same can be said for the justification the elite provided to the Spanish Crown for granting employment to members of the lower class. They stated that there were few opportunities for employment on the island yet many members of the elite held double commissions. Thus, the dubious explanation was either a really clever move on the part of the elite to open up these positions to the lower orders or an expression of disinterest in these rural employment opportunities. I suspect the answer is a mixture of both.

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<sup>50</sup> Duany, "Ethnicity in the Spanish Caribbean," 102.

In effect, opening up rural positions in the royal administration to the lower orders was a way of getting plebeians to accept and participate in the colonial system, instead of working on the outside.<sup>51</sup> Opportunities for social mobility were therefore a safety valve that kept this very large group of people from revolting and replacing the elite. Spanish Dominicans needed look no further than across the island to witness the results that an oppressive regime yielded. I do not, however, want to paint a picture, in which all chances for advancement were consciously created by the elite for the lower class in a clever master plan to maintain social equilibrium. I strongly suspect that many of these opportunities opened up not because there were not enough respectable families on the island, but because no member of the elite was interested in these positions of low status. First, the positions were unappealing because they were located in small *lugares* (places),<sup>52</sup> which could not even properly be called towns. To accept the commission in question, individuals had to move to areas that cut them off from their own social circle. The displacement also placed them at an even greater demographic disadvantage, as the countryside was mostly composed of plebeians. The cities of Santo Domingo and Santiago de los Caballeros were home to the powerful elite and there was safety in numbers. Second, these small coastal and border towns were not fortified. As such, they were periodically subjected to French and pirate raids. For these reasons, I believe that the elite were simply not interested in these positions. Instead of leaving the posts vacant, they opened them up to the lower class, providing them with just enough opportunities to maintain the balance of power.

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<sup>51</sup> Steve J. Stern, *Peru's Indian Peoples and the Challenge of Spanish Conquest: Huamanga to 1640* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1982), 80-113.

<sup>52</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 1092, 1093 & 1095. Often the very small towns were designated in the reviews as *lugares*. The term highlights the insignificance of the reputation of the place in question in the Spanish consciousness.

Finally, although the elite presented the Crown with a guarantee that members of the lower class chosen for these positions would not rise above a certain station, in reality there was no way to deliver on that promise. The fine socio-economic line between the elite and the lower class was too fragile to be able to discourage individuals who appropriated the persona of the Dominican *tigre* from rising in the ranks.<sup>53</sup> Although luck certainly helped, the lower class created their own opportunities for advancement within Spanish Dominican society. For example, some men who were employed as sergeants and soldiers rose in the military ranks to become officers.<sup>54</sup>

There is no doubt in my mind that the Spanish Crown understood Spanish Dominicans loud and clear, but it was not prepared to object to the practice of employing select members of the lower class to staff the vacant positions for two reasons. First, there was no real basis for intervention because there were no alternative elite individuals interested in being appointed to these positions. Although the Spanish Crown could have tried to assign persons to serve in these towns, it was probably not worth their while to do so because the positions in question were of no significant value. If the Spanish Dominican elite would not even fill them, it would prove hard to convince foreigners to accept these jobs. Obviously, the power and control inherent to the appointments awarded to upper level plebeians were deemed to be limited in nature and of low rank to the Spanish Crown. Notwithstanding it was enough to satiate the lower class' demands for upward mobility because, at the island level, the positions did represent access to power. Moreover, the excuse presented by the Archbishop for ordaining select persons of the lower class

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<sup>53</sup> Derby, "National Identity and the Idea of Value on the Island of Hispaniola," 5-37.

<sup>54</sup> AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 1092, 1093, 1095. One recalls that although the sergeants were included in the officers' corps they were in fact non-commissioned officers. In chapter three, I made explicit reference to this fact but I listed their marital status, quality and place of origin in the same table as the rest of the officers because the goal of the table was to demonstrate whether foreigners married in the Spanish territory and for what reasons. However, these sergeants were not part of the elite and should be properly placed in the upper echelons of the lower class.

group gave the Spanish Crown a way out. Although it recognized that the justification was probably questionable, it was convenient for the Crown to accept it because it did not have to act on it. Second, the Crown itself may have recognized that some social mobility had to exist in order for the balance of power to be maintained.

Thus far, I have discussed class relations in terms of the lower class's connection to the colonial structure and the elite. However, the patron-client relationship established through the elite's mediation was strengthened through the creation of personal ties to members of the lower class. The Spanish Dominican elite recognized that personal relationships were the most effective way to ensure the loyalty of their plebeians.

### **Marriage, the Elite and the Lower Class**

The ties between the two groups, however, were not limited to the patron-client relationship. As discussed in chapter five, there was a very small percentage of lower class women who married or entered into illicit unions with elite men.<sup>55</sup> The elite marital market was affected by high male immigration. The gender imbalance created by this situation advantaged women on the marital market as they had access to greater spousal selection than their male counterparts. Also, elites daughters played a central role in family marital strategies, as they were the only ones able to forge ties with newly arrived royal officials. Moreover, the women bore the double responsibility of bonding the veteran foreigners to their families as well as maintaining the bonds to the Spanish Dominican elite. The sons, however, were faced with a limited marital pool within their own group as they had to compete with the foreigners for a bride. Thus, a very small number of elite men simply selected brides from the lower class. Although the sacramental records can only account for legal marriages performed in the Archbishopric, it is almost certain

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<sup>55</sup> AAMSD 636858, 636859. There were only sixteen such cases in the sacramental marital records.

that many elite men entered into short or long term illicit unions with plebeian women, thereby encroaching on the women available in the lower classes marital pool.

### **Social Control and Fictive Kinship Ties**

Both the marital and baptismal records reveal that members of the elite stood as witnesses for lower class marriages and as godparents for baptisms.<sup>56</sup> In order to ascertain the fact that fictive kinship ties were being forged between the lower class and the elite, I utilized the same methodology for identifying members of the elite as discussed in chapter three and then filtered out those employed as clerics, sacristans, lieutenant-priests, parish priests or other lower-level ecclesiastical employees. The logic behind the disaggregate of the data in this manner is that it was the duty of persons serving in the above mentioned positions to stand in as both witnesses and godparents to the lower class and the slaves if no adequate godparent or witnesses from their own group could be selected. Given that this was not the case for higher ranking ecclesiastical employees, they were not omitted from the data pool. First, I will discuss my observations of the elite as witnesses to marriages and then godparental ties.

Not so surprisingly, the most consistent connection between the two groups in the marital registers involved military affiliations. Commanding officers, who were not always full fledged members of the elite, such as Captains or Sergeant-Majors, would stand in as witnesses to the nuptials of their underlings.<sup>57</sup> Although all military personnel were required to obtain signed permission from their commanding officers to marry, the presence of the signatory at the

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<sup>56</sup> Helen Rose Ebaugh and Mary Curry, "Fictive Kin as Social Capital in New Immigrant Communities," *Sociological Perspectives*, Vol. 43, No. 2 (Summer, 2000), 189-209, 189, define fictive kin as: "a relationship, based not on blood or marriage but rather on religious rituals or close friendship ties, that replicates many of the rights and obligations usually associated with family ties." Ebaugh and Curry propose that these fictive kinship bonds created affective ties where no genetic precedent existed, thereby extending family networks. In effect, these new bonds, whether they were horizontal or vertical, integrated persons of the same or different social class.

<sup>57</sup> AAMSD, 636858, 636859.

actual celebration of the marriage was not necessary. Nonetheless, they were present in thirty-eight percent of lower ranking military officials' unions found in the Archbishopric of Santo Domingo's marital registers.<sup>58</sup> There are not enough weddings in the sacramental records involving higher ranking officers for a statistical comparison to establish a correlation between the rank occupied by an officer and the presence of commanding officers. However, it is my opinion that there is a direct correlation. For instance, it is likely that the members of the military elite would be more assiduous in their attendance at a corporal's wedding than at a mere soldier's union. Members of the officers' corps also commonly stood as witnesses for non-military weddings. For example, Captain don Francisco de Mieses and his wife doña Francisca Caro served as witnesses for Juan Bautista and Margarita Josepha's marriage.<sup>59</sup>

However, ties to the lower class were not limited to the military or to the members of the lower class born in the territory of Santo Domingo. The elite forged ties with the newcomers, as well as with free morenos, pardos, blacks and those with no racial label.<sup>60</sup> Interestingly, the non-military marriages had a gender driven difference in elite witnesses. At this juncture, it is prudent to remember that Christian men and women were deemed to be valid witnesses by the Catholic Church. In general, however, proportionally speaking, there were fewer women witnesses as opposed to men in the eighteenth century. Elite women, as well as women of the lower class appeared in the sacramental records as witnesses. Elite women were witnesses not only to elite and lower class marriages but to slave ones as well.

In the entries pertaining to non-commissioned members of the military, only men served as witnesses. Naturally, employment at all levels was a male preserve. Generally, there was one,

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid. There were 34 marriages in which the occupation of the groom was indicated as soldier. In thirteen of these, a member of the elite was present.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

and in rare cases two, commanding officers present out of a possible three. However, there was no rule indicating that witnesses to these marriages had to be male officers and therefore it did not preclude elite female participation as witnesses at military marriages. Nonetheless, elite women did not appear as witnesses at military weddings. They were, however, present, although not in every case, for non-military unions. Elite women appeared as witnesses most often in marriages involving free coloured women. One of the reasons for this pattern may have been that these free women were or had been in the employ of elite families as repeat day labourers. Lauren Derby indicates that the bonds between the lower class and the elite, as well as between the elite and the slaves, were quite close.<sup>61</sup> In the cases where there was an elite man and women serving as witness, the women were not explicitly indicated as having been the wives or daughters of the male witnesses. There are, of course, exceptions to this case. For example, Lieutenant don Joseph de la Vega's wife, doña Antonia, was present at the wedding of Juan Baptista Fulgencio, a free moreno, to Petrona de Belen, a widowed free morena.<sup>62</sup> Given that there seemed to be two sacristans permanently assigned as witnesses for both marriages and baptisms throughout the eighteenth century, we can rule out the fact that elites filled this role due to a lack of manpower or out of a sense of duty to the Church.

The willingness of the elite to forge bonds to members of the lower class is less clear in the case of godparentage to orphans and foundlings. It is evident in the sacramental records that a caregiver was assigned to look after the health and welfare of these unfortunate children. As discussed in chapter three, the women acting as guardians came from all socio-economic classes including the elite. Godparents for these wards were equally diverse.<sup>63</sup> A significant percentage

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<sup>61</sup> Lauren, *Tigueraje*, 15-20.

<sup>62</sup> AAMSD, 0636214, 0636215, 0636216, 0636217, 0636218, 0636798, 0636799, 0636800, 0636801, 0636802.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

of them were ecclesiastical employees, such as sacristans or lieutenant priests. Of the smaller number of elite members who served, a notation was sometimes affixed to the sacramental entry: “saco de la pila.”<sup>64</sup> Although this generally means to stand as godparent, it is specific to cases in which no clear family member was selected to fill the role.<sup>65</sup> In these instances, the King acted as godparent. His Majesty was to be represented by a respectable member of society. Thus, it may be possible that in these specific cases the elite acted as godparents out of duty to the King and the Church. For all other cases, I believe that they willingly established fictive kinship ties to the individuals to whom they chose to become godparents.

This assumption is supported by the sheer number of instances in which members of the elite chose to become godparents to members of the lower class. Out of 24,508 baptisms performed in the eighteenth century, 13,721 pertained to plebeians and of this number 2,209 or sixteen percent had elite godparents as defined by my search parameters.<sup>66</sup> These vertical ties connected the elite to the lower class. As expected, the majority of godparents (11,450) ran along horizontal lines (within the same class) and corresponded to the lower class.<sup>67</sup> These ties were probably designed to reaffirm lower class bonds and were reciprocal, unlike those with the elite that were more like patron-client relations. Finally, not surprisingly, only sixty-two godparents were slaves. Although there may not have been a significant difference in wealth or racial mixture, the lower class and slaves' status were worlds apart. A member of the lower class selecting a slave godparent was a distinct disadvantage to the lower class family, lowering its status rather than the contrary. The mere fact, however, that some members of the lower class selected slave godparents indicates that ties between the lower class and slave groups existed.

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> *Diccionario de Autoridades*, (Madrid: Real Academia Española, 1726-1739).

<sup>66</sup> AAMSD, 0636214, 0636215, 0636216, 0636217, 0636218, 0636798, 0636799, 0636800, 0636801, 0636802

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

As in the case of elite marital witnesses, the most obvious and consistent connection between the elite and the lower class was through the military. Commanding officers and other high ranking military officials acted as godparents to their underlings. In one very specific case, the Lieutenant-Colonel was said to have been a godparent to the entire regiment.<sup>68</sup> Again, not surprisingly, all of the godparents were men. Indeed, like in the case of elite marital witnesses, members of the officers' corps and other high ranking royal and ecclesiastical officials acted as godparents to non-military persons, such as immigrants, free persons of all racial mixtures, as well as those without racial labels.<sup>69</sup> Furthermore, elite women also acted as godparents to non-military members of the lower class.

Acting as a godparent actually created fictive kinship ties (bonds to non-family members), thereby extending networks and influence.<sup>70</sup> It achieved these ties on two different relationship levels. First godparentage created a bond between the godmother or godfather and the child, but also with the parents.<sup>71</sup> The godparental tie still remains strongly in the Catholic Church's concept of the dual nature of man: natural and spiritual. In order for parents to raise Christian children "they must give away or entrust to others certain rights over him [or her]; in return the recipients perform and promise to undertake various duties."<sup>72</sup> Although the Catholic Church is only referring to spiritual matters, material and financial obligations were also part and parcel of being selected as a godfather or godmother.<sup>73</sup> For example, a baptismal or marriage sponsor might be expected to provide the clothing for the ecclesiastical occasion, throw a small

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Gwendoline van Den Berghe and Pierre L. van Der Berghe, "Compradazgo and Class in Southeastern Mexico," *American Anthropologist*, New Series, Vol. 68, No. 5 (October, 1966), 1236-1244, differentiate between godparental ties that extend family networks rather than those that reaffirm existing ones.

<sup>71</sup> Stephen Gudeman, "The Compradazgo as a Reflection of the Natural and Spiritual Person," *Proceedings of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* (1971), 45-71.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 47.

<sup>73</sup> van Den Berghe and van Der Berghe, "Compradazgo and Class in Southeastern Mexico," 1237.

party at which the godmother or godfather would give the child or bride or groom expensive gifts. Also, the bride and groom or the godchild and his or her parents could expect protection from third parties and various financial benefits, whether in terms of legal employment or a share of the illicit commerce, as well as loans or help in times of need. The expense and hassle of accepting to be a witness or godparent were worthwhile for the elite because in return they expected loyalty, respect and deference.<sup>74</sup> There was also an additional tangible benefit to the elite; it reaffirmed their status with regard to the lower class in a personal and public manner. Everyone understood that members of the lower class chose members of the elite as witnesses or godparents because they provided them with the economic support they needed.<sup>75</sup> Also, being selected as a witness, but more importantly a godparent was honorific and the accumulation of honours translated into a concrete demonstration of the individual's power.<sup>76</sup> Moreover, these vertical ties were willingly accepted by both the elite and the lower class because they reinforced patron-client networks.<sup>77</sup> Thus, the social equilibrium was maintained through a social contract between the lower class and the elite, which required loyalty in return for social advancement but also through personal networks established through godparentage.

### **Conclusion**

Social stability depended on good governance. The elite achieved and maintained their status through the approval of the Spanish Crown but the minority group was allowed to remain in power by those it governed: the lower class. In effect, the two socio-economic groups entered into a social contract in which the elite provided the lower class with good governance in

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<sup>74</sup> Ingham, "The Asymmetrical Implications of Godparenthood in Tlayacapan Mexico, Morelos," 283.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 285.

<sup>76</sup> van Den Berghe and van Der Berghe, "Compradazgo and Class in Shoutheastern Mexico," 1240.

<sup>77</sup> Ingham, "The Asymmetrical Implications of Godparenthood in Tlayacapan Mexico, Morelos," 281-289, differentiates between vertical and horizontal ties. Vertical ties run across socio-economic class and caste, while horizontal ones remain within the particular population grouping.

return for their loyalty. In terms of island economics, this was not difficult, as both groups were affected by the underperforming economy. Moreover, concessions the elite negotiated with the metropole for the lower class, such as turning a blind eye or allowing outright illicit trade with Saint-Domingue or the circum-Caribbean, established a patron-client relationship, which provided the basis for social control. Although I recognize that the elite chose to manipulate the racial identity of the lower class alongside its own, in view to project a certain idealized racial image to the metropole, it did, in fact, provide the basis for social mobility. The elite itself recognized the expectations and frustrations of the lower class in the same manner as the Spanish Crown met their own goals: they offered concessions in return for plebeian loyalty. The social contract between the two socio-economic groups was advanced through fictive kinship ties, establishing personal relationships between them. The lower class sought and the elite accepted to be marriage witnesses and godparents because it reaffirmed their respective status toward each other and created personal cross class patron-client networks. The loyalty and respect of the lower class were for sale and the elite bought them off by acting as their protectors, economic providers and by enabling social mobility, whether by omitting to write racial designations in the official records or through employment opportunities. The stability of island politics and economics lay in the ability of both groups to hold up their end of the social contract.

## Chapter Seven- The Elite and the Slaves

The social contract is a notion that is not just central for understanding the power relationship between the elite and the lower class but also the one between the ruling Spanish Dominican group and the slaves. There were very few slaves<sup>1</sup> in the territory of Santo Domingo due to procurement problems, as well as to a lack of purchasing capital.<sup>2</sup> Slave labour was, therefore, very valuable.

The majority of slaves in the Archbishopric of Santo Domingo were locally born and of mixed race. Their familiarity with the colony's social, economic and political situation, particularly the weakness of royal control and the colonists' desperate need for labour was empowering. The slaves used their knowledge as leverage in negotiating the acceptable limits to domination inherent in the master-slave relationship.<sup>3</sup> For their part, the elite recognized that

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<sup>1</sup> The term slave in this chapter does not refer to Native Americans. Although the Native Americans were enslaved for a very short period of time after conquest, this did not last. Already in 1512, the condition of the indigenous people was being regulated under the encomienda system. The Laws of Burgos declared the natives to be "vassals of the King" and shortly after Pope Paul III issued the papal bull *Sublimis Deus* declaring natives to be complete and true humans. About thirty years later, the debate over the innocence of the natives had been resolved with the proclamation of the New Laws of 1542, abolishing the enslavement of indigenous people. I am not referring to Native American slaves in this dissertation because I do not believe that any of the original Tainos living on Hispaniola managed to survive without heavy miscegenation into the eighteenth century. I do, like I suspect most Dominican historians, however, accept Lynn Guitar's argument that some natives survived the 1518-1519 epidemics and that African and Native American slaves were working alongside one another into the 1530-40s. There is no question that the Native Americans were one of the founding racial pools of the Dominican people and that the members of the elite, as well as the peasants in the eighteenth century, were the product of multiethnic mixture of Native American, African and Spanish blood. It is also clear that the Africans did not outnumber the Tainos overnight but in a more gradual way as the importation of African slaves did not occur all at once.

<sup>2</sup> Larrazábal Blanco, *Los Negros y la esclavitud en Santo Domingo*, 54, claims that the slaves cost 300 pesos each, however, Guitar, *Cultural Genesis*, 324, indicates that the maximum price established by the Spanish Crown in 1519 was 45 castellanos and it rose in the 1530-40s to between 80 to 90 castellanos and her table on page 324 of her unpublished dissertation demonstrating a sampling of African slave prices is as follows: "1536- female, 17,375 maravedís (38.6 pesos); 1539- 24 yr old female, 26, 250 maravedís (58.3 pesos), 1545- crown bought 20 bozales for 1,250 castellanos (62.5 pesos each, then sold 18 of them for 1,703 (average of 94.6 pesos each); 1572- 28 yr old female (sold in Peru), Catalina 120 ducados (100 pesos); 1574- male 125 ducados (104.2 pesos); 1580- 29 yr old female, María, age 29,77 ducados (64.2 pesos); 1580,- 24 yr old male, Pedro, 72 ducados (60 pesos); 1580- female Catalina, 130 ducados (108.3 pesos); 1580- 25 yr old female, Inés, 1,250 ducados (156.25 pesos); 1580- 28 yr old female, Juliana, 90 ducados (75 pesos); 1580- 20 yr old female, Isabel de Gracia, 66 ducados (55 pesos) and 1580- 18 yr old male, Bernardo, 82 ducados (28.3 pesos)."

<sup>3</sup> Christine Hunefeldt, *Paying the Price of Freedom: Family and Labor among Lima's Slaves, 1800-1854* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), ch. 4-5.

excessive force resulted in resistance, which could prove economically devastating. As such, it was in the elite's interest to reach out to the slave group by both making good political, economic and social decisions regarding the treatment of slaves in the territory of Santo Domingo, as well as forging stabilizing personal relationships. As in the case of the lower class, members of the elite extended concessions to slaves in return for their loyalty of service. The system was designed to make employment more attractive than running away or worse, rioting. The result was a social environment in which the master-slave relationship was really more like a patron-client connection.

These bonds were strengthened through carefully engineered personal relationships. Similar to the elite-lower class interactions, members of the elite also sought to build ties to their labour force by acting as godparents or as witnesses to their marriages and baptisms. Given that the kinship ties were non-reciprocal, meaning that the slaves were not asked to be godparents to the elite's children, the personal relationship duplicated the characteristics of the master-slave one. In both cases, elite protection and support were traded for slave loyalty and trust. Fictive kinship bonds, although reaffirming both groups' respective social status, recognized blood ties were the strongest and most effective way of connecting families together, whether within or across socio-economic classes. Therefore, these vertical ties acted as a means of social control.

### **Sources**

Unlike the previous chapter, the archival sources on this topic are much more varied than those pertaining to the lower classes in general. However, they are mostly judicial, civil or ecclesiastical in nature and therefore reflect the ideal proposed by either the metropole or Spanish Dominican authorities. Documents that do not fall in the latter category generally highlight abnormal situations or cases such as slaves who rose to prominence or those who

resorted to disturbing levels of violence. The extremes are thus highlighted, while the mundane is erased. Secondary sources are also more varied than for the lower orders. Unquestionably, Carlos Esteban Deive produced the definitive work on slaves in Santo Domingo.<sup>4</sup> The only source Deive fails to use is the Archivo del Arzobispado Metropolitano de Santo Domingo (AAMSD) records. Thus, vital statistics and trends derived from sacramental records are not included in his work. The information pertaining to slaves was disaggregated from the baptismal and marital databases compiled on the basis of the AAMSD sources. The selected records had to contain a designation that a particular individual was a slave in order to be included in the data pool for this chapter. This should not be taken to mean that racial labelling and ethnic origin, which sometimes but not always accompanied the designation of slaves, was not taken into account in the data analysis. When possible, the specific assigned racial and ethnic categorizations were factored in. As in the case of the elite and lower class, there were, however, a significant percentage of entries that had no racial designation. The same can be said for ethnic origin. The individual was simply identified as a slave. Generally, only the individual's given name was indicated. The lack of a family name is in keeping with the authorities' recognition of their low status. For those whose family name was recorded, the last name could be associated to one of the elite families but not necessarily the owners. None of these entries carried pre nominal letters because of their low status. Naturally, the name of the slave master was almost always recorded. A distinction between adult and child was made. Adults were identified as such and it appears that the dividing line between child and adult was the age of two. Slaves acting as godparents were designated in the same way as above and therefore easily differentiated from both the elite and the lower class.

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<sup>4</sup> Deive, *La Esclavitud Del Negro En Santo Domingo*, Vol. I and II.

## Slave Trading in the Spanish Empire

As discussed in chapter one, slave trafficking in Spanish America was conducted through the *asiento*. Although the exclusive commerce was sometimes carried out by the Spanish Crown itself, it was usually awarded to various individuals of different nationalities, such as the Portuguese (1601-1640),<sup>5</sup> the Dutch (1685-1687),<sup>6</sup> and the French and English (1702-1750).<sup>7</sup> The monopoly contract was established because the Spanish Crown relinquished the right to trade directly with west-central African kingdoms under the terms of the Treaty of Alcaçovas.<sup>8</sup> The practice of awarding monopoly contracts persisted until 1790 when the Spanish Crown abandoned it in favour of *comercio libre* (free trade).<sup>9</sup> The shift was made in an attempt to reduce their reliance on foreigners<sup>10</sup> as part of Charles III's master plan to place the Spanish empire on a competitive commercial footing.

<sup>5</sup> Larrazábal Blanco, *Los Negros y la Esclavitud en Santo Domingo*, 45-46, states that the licenses for this period were granted in the following manner: 1601 to 1603 to Juan Rodríguez Coutinho (brother of Gonzalo Vaéz Coutinho); 1604-1609 to Gonzalo Vaéz Coutinho; 1609 to Agustin Coelho (Cuello); 1609-1615 the Spanish Crown administered the monopoly directly; 1615-1621 to Antonio Rodríguez Fernández Delvas; 1617 to Diego de Pereira; 1623 to 1631 to Manuel Rodríguez Lamego; 1631 (partial license) to Nicolás Salvago; 1631-1640 to Melchor Gómez Ángel and Cristóbal Méndez de Sosa. Most of them were representing the Compañía de Cacheo.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 47. The two years were given to Baltasar Coymans.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 48. La Compagnie Royale de la Guinée de France held the license from 1702 to 1713 and then the English South Seas Company held it from 1713 to 1744. In between the Portuguese, Dutch and shared French/English periods, there were interruptions in the granting of licenses from 1640 to 1651 and during two transitional periods from 1662 to 1684 and again from 1687-1701, respectively. There were two more episodes during which the Spanish Crown itself tried to take charge of the administration of the trade directly from 1651 to 1662 and again between 1687 and 1689.

<sup>8</sup> Stuart B. Schwartz, "The Iberian Mediterranean and Atlantic Traditions in the Formation of Columbus as a Colonizer," presented at a meeting of the Associates of the James Ford Bell Library on (January 21, 1986) (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), indicates that the treaty established Portuguese and Spanish spheres of influence for the first time. It was ratified by Papal Bull in 1481. In effect, the Catholic Kings officially abandoned all current and future claims on territories discovered by the Portuguese from the Canary Islands to Guinea. In return Portugal relinquished all claims on the Canary Islands. The lack of jurisdictional clarity led the Spanish Crown to petition Pope Alexander VI for rights over the lands discovered in the Americas to their "heirs and successors the Monarchs of Castile and Leon." Jurisdictional clarity was eventually established through the bilateral Treaty of Tordesillas of 1494. It stipulated a meridian and anti-meridian line of demarcation between the Spanish and Portuguese sphere of influence. It was set at 370 leagues west of the Cape Verdes Islands. Eventually the line was pushed forward by some 300 leagues, which gave Portugal control of Brazil.

<sup>9</sup> The last year of the *asiento* was 1789 and the deregulation became effective in 1790.

<sup>10</sup> D.R. Murray, "Statistics on the Slave Trade to Cuba," *Journal of Latin American Studies*, Vol. 3. No. 2 (November, 1971), 131-149 and María Guevara Sanginés, "El Proceso de Liberación de los Esclavos en La América

## The Slave Trade in Santo Domingo

Notwithstanding the seemingly continuous treaties designed to procure slaves to the colonies, the system did not function efficiently, at least not in the territory of Santo Domingo. Guitar states that it took nearly seven years (1519-1526) for one royal license holder to bring all 4,000 African slaves of the contract to Santo Domingo.<sup>11</sup> The irregular and segmented arrival of slaves meant that the number of Africans increased only gradually in this early period. Although slaves did come to outnumber the native indigenous population by the late sixteenth century, their demographic increase was due more to the rapidly declining native population than to increased African importation.<sup>12</sup> In any case, the time frame for slave procurement to the island was protracted. By the early seventeenth century, the economy had faltered and colonists did not have the income to pay for large shipments of African slaves.<sup>13</sup> Individual ones were likely purchased illicitly from Portuguese, Dutch, French or English traders, as well as in other Spanish colonial ports, as they were probably cheaper than through the Spanish monopoly trade system.<sup>14</sup> Spanish Dominicans also might have either raided the French plantations on the western half of the island to obtain the additional slaves or, in good Spanish Dominican tradition, refused to

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Virreinal," in *Pautas de Convivencia Étnica en la América Latina Colonial*, ed. Juan Manuel de la Serna (México: Universidad Autónoma de México, Centro Coordinador y Difusor de Estudios Latinoamericanos and Gobierno del Estado de Guanajuato, 2005), 111-159, both discuss the asiento. Guevara Sanginés writes that the last monopoly contract period, during which the English held the monopoly rights on slave trading, was fraught with tension as the Spanish Crown tried to undermine the value of the contract by slowly moving towards free trade. The response was born from the seemingly endless abuses by the English of their trading rights in the Americas.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Guitar, *Cultural Genesis*, ch. 5, asserts that it took time for the Africans to outnumber the indigenous population because they arrived gradually and therefore demonstrated a slow demographic increase. Although the peace meal importation is important, so was the concurrent decimation of the indigenous population due to disease, overwork and abuse. It is unlikely that slave procurement would have been so efficient as to deliver more slaves than there were indigenous peoples living on the island at the time of conquest. The decline of the native population is therefore a central consideration in discussing demographic ethnic ratios.

<sup>13</sup> Deive, *Los Guerrilleros Negros*, 103-104, indicates that in 1699 a shipment of 400 slaves arrived in the territory of Santo Domingo but that only 150 of these were bought by colonists after five months of sitting at port. Deive also indicates the decimation of the African slave population during the 1666 and 1671 smallpox epidemics.

<sup>14</sup> Larrazábal Blanco, *Los Negros y la Esclavitud en Santo Domingo*, 57, asserts that many slaves were obtained second or third hand.

return the runaway slaves they had captured. The ramification of the extensive illegal commerce conducted on the island was one of the central reasons why it is impossible to accurately calculate or even estimate slave populations in the territory at any given time in the colonial period. Finally, it is difficult to assess whether the legal procurement rate improved after the Spanish Crown abandoned the *asiento*, in 1790, in favour of free trade because the colony was theoretically ceded to France only five years later, which would hardly have provided enough time to come to any definitive conclusion.<sup>15</sup> However, it is unlikely that the number of slaves increased because by the late eighteenth century the Spanish Dominican economy was once again dysfunctional due to the socio-economic and political disturbances created by the French Revolution, and the treaty of Basel.

The late development of the island's economy is important because it explains the many racial and socio-cultural differences between it and the other French, English and Dutch Caribbean colonies. The corporate model, which established itself in Santo Domingo, was in no way comparable to the ones seen in the French and English Caribbean in the same period. The commercialization and incorporation of the Spanish Caribbean colonies were laid out by the Bourbon Reforms, but they did not yield their fruits until the late eighteenth century for Cuba and early to mid nineteenth century for Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. The Bourbon Reforms' economic concessions to Cuba ushered in a wave of capital influx and African slave labour transformed medium to small plot agricultural farming into successful large scale plantations.<sup>16</sup> The same incentives, although with a greater percentage of white rather than black

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<sup>15</sup> Practically, of course, the colony was not turned over to the French until 1801. However, the Spanish connections to the eastern side of the island were dismantled in the six intermittent years between the signing of the treaty and the actual implementation. When the territory was officially ceded, the remaining Spanish royal officials departed.

<sup>16</sup> Guevara Sanginés, "El Proceso de Liberación de los Esclavos en La América Virreinal," 111-159, states that Cuba and Puerto Rico were also the beneficiaries of an exemption to the treaty signed between Spain and Britain in 1817

slave labour, developed the coffee industry in Puerto Rico. By the time Santo Domingo experienced the same incorporation into the market economy, the territory had been ceded to the French in 1795 and ruled by Haitians from 1822 to 1844. It had also declared independence for the first time in 1844, only to lapse back into Spanish colonialism from 1861-1864; it declared anew its independence in 1865 and entered into the first of two American occupations, the first from 1916 to 1924 and the second during 1965.<sup>17</sup> Thus, by the early twentieth century the Dominican Republic finally began to shake off the poverty and isolation that plagued it for nearly four centuries. The development of sugar cane plantations brought with it a change in the ethnic demographic landscape. The need for labourers was filled by Haitian immigrants. This employment situation increased the number of blacks in the territory. However, these workers were not slaves and certainly not African born.

### **The Slave Group**

The island's economic situation affected the composition of the slave group. Most obviously, the cessation of slave imports in the early seventeenth century and the colonists' lack of purchasing power meant that few African slaves entered the territory of Santo Domingo after the seventeenth century. Larrazábal Blanco originally determined that those who came from the Congo, Guinea, Angola, the Cape Verdes, Sao Tomé and Biafra (Biáfara, Brafara) regions and he encountered the following ethnic groups in his research: Amboi, Anero, Ardá (Aradá or Arará), Arle, Bamba, Bambará, Bañol, Barba, Bervisi, Bodó, Bolumbí (Molumbí), Bosán, Bran, Brisón (only appeared once), Calaun, Canquey, Carabalí, Casanga (Casarga), Cazabi, Combelú,

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prohibiting the trade of slaves between Africa and Spain's transatlantic colonies. According to Spanish law the trade remained legal in Puerto Rico and Cuba until 1820. Cuba finally abolished slavery in 1887. Spain itself had abolished slavery in the metropole and its colonies in 1811.

<sup>17</sup> Moya Pons, *The Dominican Republic*, ch. 16, explains that it was the influx of US capital that led to the development of the sugar industry.

Cones, Cozin, Chambá, Chonvo, Fala (Faula, Fula), Guimba, Gambú, Itimine, Leme, Locunú, Luango (Longo, Luarme, Luerme), Lubumí, Luquemie, Malembá, Mambó, Mandinga, Manga (Mangó), Manicongo (Maricongo, Monicongo), Matamba, Melón, Miga, Mihi, Mina, Mingola, Molembo, Mondongo, Motemá, Motembo, Muleque, Mutema, Popó, Sambú, Tabi, Tenguerengue, Terranova, Yolofe (Gelofe, Jologo, Wolof) and Zape.<sup>18</sup> The above list was devised on the basis of the Spanish naming convention for recently arrived slaves, who either Hispanicized their original given name or quite blatantly gave themselves a Spanish one. The last name was supposed to identify the region or ethnic group of origin of the individual. Thus, names appear as Mana Mandinga or Juan Biafra. Although Larrazábal Blanco attempted to trace the Hispanicized labels observed in the documents, Guitar was certainly more thorough in her examination of the Santiago de la Paz inventory of 1547.<sup>19</sup> She agreed with Larrazábal Blanco that the slaves were mostly taken from the Cape Verdes and the Upper Guinea region, which included the following ethnic groups: Mani, a sub grouping of the Mande People; Sapi or Zape including the Nalu, Kokoli, Landuma, Baga, Limga, Bullom, Teme, Loko, Susu and Djalonké; Bram, as well as other Guinea-Bissau peoples, including Kassanga, Banyun, and Biafada, Djola, (or Feloupe), Papel, Banhun, Casanga and Balanta (from along the banks of the Cacheu River); ethnic groups from the middle Gambia River, such as the Fula, Bassarel, Coniagui and Badjaranke peoples,<sup>20</sup> as well as the Mandingas whose subgroups included the Wolof (Jolof),

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<sup>18</sup> Larrazábal Blanco, *Los Negros y la esclavitud en Santo Domingo*, 74-91, does not indicate what sources he used for the following discussion of ethnic groups and regional provenance. However, I suspect that at least one of them was the Santiago de la Paz inventory of 1547. Also, he mentions a few other designations but subsequently discounts them in the explanation of the groups that follows the list he provides. In the list of ethnic groups, he also included regions, such as Congo, Angola and more peculiarly, Lemba (province of Barahona) and Quisama (province of Angola).

<sup>19</sup> Guitar, *Cultural Genesis*, 325-328.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 326.

Serer, Fula, Fulbe, Tukolor and Malinke.<sup>21</sup> There is no question that Guitar was much more successful in retracing the Hispanicized names of ethnic groups back to the original African peoples. Her progress can be attributed to the evolution of African Diaspora studies in the twenty-two years separating the two studies. However, Larrazábal Blanco's conclusion that the term Boruco was used to designate all recently arrived African slaves and that "muleque or mulecón" identified young blacks still stands.<sup>22</sup> In the eighteenth century, the variety of African ethnic groups identified in the earlier period disappeared. This may be due to a general streamlining of the administrative process that reduced the available identifiers for this category to more common or generic ones. In the baptismal and marital registers the most utilized ones were definitely regional in nature, such as Congo, Angola, and Guinea. Identification by ethnic grouping was recorded less often but the most recurrent ones were Carabali (Hispanicized of Calabar), Mandinga and Mina.<sup>23</sup>

As expected, there were very few ethnic groups or regional designations present in the marital and baptismal registers. Only 87 of the 613 marriages, about fourteen percent, contained either a female or male slave identified as being African born.<sup>24</sup> Similarly, the baptismal registries indicate that only 462 out of the 3,133 (around fourteen percent) adults baptized were African slaves.<sup>25</sup> An analysis of parents of baptized children's place of origin revealed that

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 326-327.

<sup>22</sup> Larrazábal Blanco, *Los Negros y la esclavitud en Santo Domingo*, 74-91.

<sup>23</sup> AAMSD, 0636214, 0636215, 0636216, 0636217, 0636218, 0636798, 0636799, 0636800, 0636801, 0636802, 636858, 636859. I would like to thank Professor Jane Landers for her help and guidance in deciphering the Hispanicize versions of the African ethnic groups in the sacramental records. Other ethnic groups mentioned were the Pope and Nago. Two other designations remain elusive: Grita (Grifa) and Anaga.

<sup>24</sup> AAMSD, 636858, 636859. The exact distribution is as follows: Boruco (24), Congo (20), Mina (9), Guinea (9), Bram (7), Mina (7), Calabar (4), Mandinga (4), Arara (1), Bosal (1), Bebunga (1) and Nago (1). There were also two entries under the name Espansa, which are not traceable to any African ethnic group.

<sup>25</sup> AAMSD, 0636214, 0636215, 0636216, 0636217, 0636218, 0636798, 0636799, 0636800, 0636801, 0636802. The exact distribution is as follows: Guinea (124), Congo (77), Angola (74), Boruco (46), Carabar (42), Mandinga (31),

African born men accounted for just below two percent of slave fathers.<sup>26</sup> The percentage is even lower for African slave mothers, at just under one percent.<sup>27</sup> Although one would expect all of these African born individuals to be identified as negro, almost half were also labelled as moreno and a small number had no racial label.

Even taking into account a generous error rate, due to omissions, communication problems with newcomers or administrators' lack of knowledge of African ethnic groupings, it is clear that the majority of slaves were born in the territory of Santo Domingo. The number of slave fathers and mothers locally born were generally labelled, in almost equal proportion to each other, as either negro or moreno, although the terms pardo and mulatto were also used. Moreover, there were almost as many racially mixed persons as those considered black in the entries for which racial labels were recorded. However, racial labels, as in the case of all the other data in this dissertation, were only available in twenty to thirty percent of the cases. More often than not, none was assigned. The pattern of eschewing racial labels is in keeping with the data analyzed and presented to date in this doctoral dissertation. Spanish Dominican manipulations of the official records erased difference in an effort to "whiten" its citizenry. When racial labels were indicated, they present a picture of orderly racial- economic unions. All in all, island economics produced a slave group that was mostly racially mixed and of Spanish

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Mina (24), Luanda (14), Bram (10), Popo (7), Bamba (5), Bambara (4), Anago (2), Mondongo (2), Nago (2), Chamba (2) and Bosal (1).

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. There were 2,680 entries in the database that corresponded to children of slave fathers of which only 46 pertained to men born in Africa. The exact distribution is as follows: Angola (34), Mondongo (1), Mina (1), Congo (1), Carabar (1) and Guinea (12).

<sup>27</sup> Ibid. There were 5,915 entries in the database that corresponded to children born to slave mothers, of which only 48 pertained to women born in Africa. The exact distribution is as follows: Angola (24), Mina (1), Congo (1), Carabar (4), Chamba (1), Boruco (1) and Guinea (16).

Dominican origin. Given this reality, slippage occurred as it was difficult to differentiate slaves from free peoples.<sup>28</sup>

Slaves' familiarity with not only the topography of the island but Spanish Dominican political, economic and social system also represented an advantage to members of this group.<sup>29</sup> They were aware that Spanish Dominican authorities were not able to establish and maintain royal control over the entire territory. Although it was probably fairly efficient in the capital city of Santo Domingo and the other areas where military units were stationed, it was lax at best in the remainder of the territory.<sup>30</sup>

### **Maroonage**

The slaves in the archbishopric of Santo Domingo were aware that the lack of social control had led to the continued existence of maroon communities. From early on in the colonial period in Santo Domingo, African slaves resisted the colonial regime and fled into the hinterland. Carlos Larrazábal Blanco reports that runaway slaves could already be found in the countryside of the island by 1517.<sup>31</sup> Although the island's geographical area is only 18,792 square miles, it has a very varied geographical topography that includes the San Juan Valley's savannah, the

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<sup>28</sup> Even the branding mark, a practice that was abolished in the territory of Santo Domingo in 1784, could not be used as a clear marker of slave status as many free peoples still bore their mark. Also, depending on the brand's emplacement, it could be concealed and therefore only local knowledge was likely used to identify slaves from peasants.

<sup>29</sup> Johnson, Lyman L., "Manumission in Colonial Buenos Aires 1776-1810," *HAHR*, Vol.59, No.2 (1979), 258-279, proposes that mulatto slaves "were more creole, more experienced and knowledgeable about local culture, and more aware of opportunities for manumission." He believes that this consciousness of their society led them to develop different strategies from African born slaves with regard to obtaining manumissions from their owners. Whereas Africans would emphasize their work ethic and value, the mulattos exploited the owners' paternalistic interest in slaves born in their households. Although Johnson's study pertains to Buenos Aires in the last thirty five years of the colonial period, its findings, in regard to mulatto slaves, are applicable to the territory of Santo Domingo because of the similarity of characteristics.

<sup>30</sup> As discussed, *cinquenteños* were responsible for patrolling these areas and these small units performed their tour of duties infrequently.

<sup>31</sup> Larrazábal Blanco, *Los Negros y la Esclavitud en Santo Domingo*, 281, states that the early history of maroonage (cimarronage) in Hispaniola is due to the fact that conquerors brought African slaves with them to the Indies. Some Africans also took part in the conquests.

fertile plains of the Llanos Del Este and the mountain ranges of the Cordillera Central and of the Baoruco.<sup>32</sup> The mountainous terrain was an ideal location to establish runaway communities known as *manieles* because it was a difficult area to patrol, it had many fertile valleys where subsistence agriculture could be developed and it was an ideal home to many herds of wild cattle, horses, pigs, sheep, goats and other livestock. Maroons were known to grow tobacco and fruit, which they traded illicitly with enemy ships or through piracy in order to derive income for their community.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, the *manieles* were self-sustaining. They were also highly organized with, as of the eighteenth century, an elected king, presidents, governors, military leaders, two or three judges and appointed community leaders.<sup>34</sup> The social organization's most basic building block was the nuclear family, with on average two children, for a total of approximately 600 units or 2,000 people.<sup>35</sup> The largest community was that of Neiba, followed closely by the ones in Higüey, Cabuyas and Ocoa (Puerto Plata).<sup>36</sup> They only grew over time, particularly in the last century of colonial rule due to illegal immigration of runaway French slaves from Saint-Domingue. These settlements were difficult to uproot, first because of their demographic size and second, because of effective organized and armed military defence within their own communities.<sup>37</sup> Maroon communities represented not only the Spanish Dominican

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<sup>32</sup> Moya Pons, *The Dominican Republic*, 13-16.

<sup>33</sup> Deive, *Los Guerrilleros Negro*, 71 and Larrazábal Blanco, *Los Negros y la esclavitud en Santo Domingo*, 47-49.

<sup>34</sup> Deive, *Los Guerrilleros Negros*, 272-279.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 272-273.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 70, 272-273. Not all *manieles* were large. For example, one particular community that managed to survive untouched for centuries in the Baoruco region was the Bienbienes (Vien-Vien or Bien-bien) led by an individual that was known only as Santiago.<sup>36</sup> This group was named after the only word hispanophones understood of their language. Clearly they were not speaking Castilian but rather one of the many African languages or dialects. Their members were said to have been exceedingly good climbers and runners. This made it difficult to pursue them in the mountainous ranges. Although little is known of their society, Larrazábal Blanco indicates that within the Bienbienes, there was a small group of individuals called Mondongo, who were phenotypically different. Their hair was red-yellow (strawberry blonde?).

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 71. Larrazábal Blanco, *Los Negros y la esclavitud en Santo Domingo*, 47-49, indicates that the slaves defended themselves with arrows and swords. Also, the regions in which many of these *manieles* were located had

administration's inability to establish royal control throughout the whole territory but a real alternative for slaves, who for one reason or another chose that course of action.<sup>38</sup>

Although it is tempting to surmise that maroon communities were enclaves of African culture, reproducing the particular ethnic groups' societies, Carlos Esteban Deive warns against using this hypothesis.<sup>39</sup> The diversity of experiences of each individual slave from their different original ethnic groups to their level of assimilation of Christian doctrine and local culture likely produced communities that took on a more syncretic nature.<sup>40</sup> After all, the majority of slaves in the territory of Santo Domingo were locally born and of mixed race.

### Employment

Finally, consciousness of their surroundings and social situation were empowering as it gave members of the slave group opportunities for social mobility and freedom. As discussed,

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fertile lands, which permitted ranching and agriculture, in particular fruit production. He also asserts that they recovered gold tomíns from the riverbeds with which they were able to purchase clothes.

<sup>38</sup> It is not my intention in the above paragraphs to make it seem as though running away was an obvious choice and that it was easy. In fact, it was neither one nor the other. The decision to flee often entailed a painful split from loved ones and the subsequent inability to protect them from reprisals. In fact, Guevara Sanginés, "El Proceso de Liberación de los Esclavos en La América Virreinal," 111-159, writes that there were relatively few female slave runaways in Mexico and that their decision to flee was driven by a desire to provide for the safe keeping of their children by leaving them in the care of nearby natives, so that they would grow up free. She also explains that some slaves resorted to magical-religious practices to give them the strength and courage to escape their master's control, in effect subverting the "natural" social order. Belief in agreements with supernatural beings, such as pacts with the devil, empowered the slaves to be their own masters and take control of their own destiny. However true it may have been that slaves resorted to magical-religious practices to help them regain control of their lives, I have serious doubts that these had anything to do with a pact with the Catholic Church's version of the devil. Sources other than inquisitorial proceedings are needed to verify these claims. Although most slaves, like the Bienbienes, ran away to reclaim control over their own destinies, the reasons for fleeing were as varied as there were individuals. The diversity of reaction to enslavement was not only conditional upon the actions of the slave owners but upon the slaves' own individual histories. Age, gender, ethnic background and social status shaped each individual's response to slavery. Likewise, a safer but yet effective alternative to running away was to exercise the "weapons of the weak": passive resistance. Slaves are said to have practiced fertility control and infanticide until freedom could be acquired or forcibly gained. Some were also known to use passive resistance by boycotting production or more actively by breaking machinery, small but wilful destruction of property on the haciendas, the sugar cane plantations, or ranches and even resorted to petty thefts.

<sup>39</sup> Deive, *Los Guerrilleros Negros*, 271-281. Larrazábal Blanco, *Los Negros y la esclavitud en Santo Domingo*, 147, points out that some members of these communities were Catholics, who could recite the Our Father and the Ave María. He also suggests that there were crucifixes in some of the houses.

<sup>40</sup> Deive, *Los Guerrilleros Negros*, 271-281, states that some communities were even known to have included members of the Catholic clergy, while others did not.

the underperforming economy and irregular payment of salaries left the Spanish Dominican elite with little income to purchase slaves. In turn, the chronic shortage of labour meant that no significant commercial agriculture was undertaken. The vicious cycle that connected an insufficiency of funds to a lack of labour perpetuated itself from the mid to late sixteenth century onwards. In this situation, Spanish Dominicans, who had slaves, were at an economic advantage over their brethren as the slaves' labour represented an additional source of income for the family, which could make the difference between living comfortably or in poverty.

Although most elite Spanish Dominicans owned no more than a small number of slaves, there were of course a select few who possessed more.<sup>41</sup> A small percentage of the slaves in the territory of Santo Domingo were employed in agricultural labour. However, as mentioned previously the cash crop sector was not significant, if not completely absent at times. When successful, planting and harvesting did occur, the crops planted were generally not labour intensive. If the harvest was sold in a timely manner, it was profitable. Any disruptions in the workforce in this sector were devastating. The majority of slaves in the territory of Santo Domingo were mostly employed in urban settings.<sup>42</sup> As domestic servants, the slaves could be sent out to work or run errands for the family.<sup>43</sup> This was, of course, most beneficial to upper class women as norms of behaviour and codes of honour in Spanish America greatly restricted their movements.<sup>44</sup> Slaves sent out to work occupied as varied employment positions as those of

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<sup>41</sup> Deive, *La Esclavitud Del Negro En Santo Domingo*, 53.

<sup>42</sup> Sevilla Soler, *Santo Domingo*, 98-99 and Deive, *La Esclavitud Del Negro En Santo Domingo*, 53, both indicate that there were 600 slaves working on the sugar plantations and in the mills. Although they developed at times other types of plantations, none would have required as many slaves. Moreover, the remainder of the 7,692 slaves in the territory worked in those other agricultural industries but also as domestic servants.

Larrazábal Blanco, *Los Negros y la esclavitud en Santo Domingo*, 101-102, states that the practice of *trabajo a jornal* (day labouring) was present in the early colonial period but that over time, it disappeared.

<sup>44</sup> Socolow, *The Women of Colonial Latin America*, 132, states that: "Women slaves were rented out by their owners to suckle children, peddle trinkets, or work as seamstresses." As well, she explains that: "Black female servants, both slave and free, also worked as cooks, laundresses, and prostitutes."

the members of the lower class. In fact, the two groups probably competed against each other in many of the trades as there were limited opportunities for paid labour. The slaves' work income was remitted to their masters at the end of the work day. Obviously, the slaves running errands for their masters also returned any moneys left over from their shopping trip. This employment situation presented slaves with freedom of movement and opportunities for self-enrichment, which they could have used to escape their owners' control.<sup>45</sup>

### **The Elite, the Spanish Crown and the Slaves**

The Spanish Dominican elite realized and valued the importance of their slaves. Although there was, of course, the legendary first slave rebellion on American soil on December 24, 1521, which started on the hacienda of Diego Colón, Christopher Columbus's firstborn son and second Viceroy of the Indies, located on the banks of the Isabella River, only a small number of similar occurrences were recorded in the territory of Santo Domingo between the early period of colonial rule and the end of Spanish occupation.<sup>46</sup> The answer lay not in oppression but in the very same construction that underlay the elite-peasant relationship: the social contract. As discussed in the previous chapter, the elite's right to rule hinged on their ability to maintain social stability by providing good governance. In their capacity as politicians, the elite acted as mediators between the Spanish Crown and the slaves.

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Guitar, *Cultural Genesis*, 361-362, explains that this first rebellion of 1521 was premeditated by Wolofs (Africans from the Cape Verde Islands in today's Senegambia region). The slaves, which included Moors, Canary Islanders and Africans, chose Christmas as the first day of their rebellion because they figured that their masters would be "recovering" from their celebrations of the night before. The forty slaves started their path of destruction and murder in Azua and hoped to end up joining Cacique Enriquillo's indigenous rebellion (1519-1533) in the Baoruco Mountains. Enriquillo's rebellion had started only two years prior to their own, was well planned and gaining strength. With this goal in mind, they gathered supplies and burnt what they did not take. Those who resisted were taken hostage. All of the rebels had been caught and killed within a week. As well, Larrazábal Blanco, *Los Negros y la esclavitud en Santo Domingo*, 145-149 and Deive, "La herencia Africana en la cultura Dominicana actual," 105-142, state that there were other small scale riots and uprisings in 1544, 1545, 1602, 1606, 1793, and finally the rebellion of Boca Nigua of 1796.

## Master-Slave Relations

The proof of this negotiated relationship is found in the changing character of the local royal ordinances that amended the laws governing Spanish America, including the master-slave relationship: the *Leyes de Indias* (Laws of the Indies).<sup>47</sup> The amendments reflect the changing

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<sup>47</sup> Herbert S. Klein, *Slavery in the Americas: A Comparative Study of Virginia and Cuba* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1967), 57-85, discusses the Laws of the Indies and their application to slaves. He explains that the laws of the Indies were heavily influenced by both Roman law and medieval Spanish Law, known as the *Siete Partidas*, namely articles 21 and 22 of the fourth volume. The former dealt with servants, specifically the obligations and duties of the slave to the master and his family and vice versa. It also defined the rights of the male head of household over his family and servants. Article 22 delineated what constituted *justas causas* (just causes) for granting a slave freedom or being released from bondage. Although the Laws of the Indies were mostly concerned with establishing and limiting the place of slaves in Spanish American colonial society as being inherently tied to agriculture, they also attempted to regulate the employment conditions, such as the length of workdays, holidays and Sundays off, size of land granted for personal use, hours to work in their gardens, allowable value of personal effects, the age at which slaves began and ended to work for their masters and gender appropriate work. The latter was particularly significant as it implied that families were indivisible, thus partitioning of nuclear family units for sale was illegal. The impetus for the basic defence of slave rights to personal security, ownership of property and full participation in religious life were also derived from a medieval Spanish thought that believed that slavery was a transitory condition. The *Siete Partidas* recognized that slavery was of custom immemorial that would have to be continued, but it also recognized it as a practice that did more harm than good. As such, "...the slave was to be guaranteed every possible right which he held as a member of the human community, with modification of these rights only where absolutely necessary." Thus, although the *Leyes de Indias* were compiled almost three centuries later than the *Siete Partidas* and for an entirely different type of society, it recognized the humanity of the slaves and the need to treat them as individuals regardless of the fact that it was also mainly geared towards deriving the most use and profit from their labour. The Laws of the Indies contained the "*derecho de vientres*" (foetal rights) through which children born to enslaved women legally became the property of the owner. Moreover, the laws perpetuated slavery, a condition that the Spanish Crown believed to be transitory. Finally, article 28, chapter five of book seven of the Law of the Indies stipulated the appropriate dress for slaves. The Laws of the Indies are quite unique in terms of blanket legislation as there was only one other colonizing European power, who ventured to create such a body of legislation on such a broad scale: France. *Le Règlement pour le Gouvernement et l'Administration de la Justice et de la Police des Isles Françaises de l'Amérique et le Commerce des Nègres et Esclaves dans le dit Pays*, better known as *Le Code Noir* (Black Code) was issued in March of 1685 by Louis XIV at Versailles. In the eighteenth century, French influence exerted through the family compacts signed between Spain and France spurred the Spanish Crown to compile a black code of its own. The task was given to the President of the Real Audiencia of Santo Domingo, don Agustín Emparan y Orbe. Although the *Código Carolino Negro* (Carolingian Black Code) was supposed to be drafted with the entire colonial empire in mind, Emparan y Orbe consulted only ten members of the elite in the territory of Santo Domingo: Colonel don Joaquín García, don Andrés de Heredia, Lieutenant-Colonel don Ignacio Pérez Caro, the dean of the Cathedral don José Núñez de Cáceres, don Antonio Dávila Coca, don Antonio Mañón, don José Ponte, don Miguel Ferrer, don Francisco de Tapia and don Francisco Cabral. The code, entitled "*Código de Legislación para el Gobierno Moral, Político y Económico de los negros de la Isla Española*", commonly known as the *Código Carolino Negro*, was divided into three parts for a total of thirty-seven chapters. Emparan y Orbe's code was completed on December 14, 1784, but was never implemented in the Spanish colonies because it did nothing to avoid the abuses perpetrated by slave owners. Also, given that the project had been drafted based on consultations within a particular locality, it was responding to a specific set of problems, such as the lack of export agriculture and slave labour, as well as the very large amount of free blacks. For these reasons, the Spanish Crown deemed the code impractical for other Spanish colonial territories. Charles III opted to have the Audiencia and cabildo revise and edit Emparan y Orbe's code in 1786 and the resulting document, a mere fourteen chapters in length, became the Black

nature of the economic and demographic reality of the island. It therefore comes as no surprise that the first ordinance, dated January 6, 1522, focused on preventing slave rebellions by severely curtailing their mobility and interaction, as well as increasing physical controls through the use of military patrols.<sup>48</sup> The legislation was, of course, a knee jerk reaction to the first major

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Code. It was issued on March 31 of 1789, in Aranjuez and entitled the “*Real Cédula de su Majestad sobre la educación, trato, y ocupación de los esclavos, en todos los dominios de Indias e Islas Filipinas, bajo las reglas que se expresan.*” The code reiterated the need to provide slaves with religious education but made no mention of access to public education.<sup>47</sup> It stipulated that the clothing and nourishment given to slaves should be suitable to the climate and other peculiarities of the region. Owners were to keep in mind the age and gender of their slaves and that these should be commensurate to what day labourers and free workers experienced. The code reiterated that the primary occupation for slaves was to be in agriculture but also reminded slave owners that the tasks assigned to slaves had to be in accordance with their gender, age, strength and stamina. The workday was to be scheduled from sun up to sun down with a two hour break. Whatever entertainment took place on the hacienda, it had to be carefully supervised by the master and majordomos. It had to be sensible and simple, gender segregated and limited to the slaves on a single hacienda. Living quarters were to be divided along gender lines and include an infirmary. Should a slave need to be relocated to the hospital for further care the owner was to pay a daily fee for his maintenance. Slave owners were also responsible for supporting the ageing slaves and those with chronic illnesses. Furthermore, they were to promote marriage amongst the slaves and try to avoid illicit unions. Slaves were required to obey, respect and venerate their masters as if they were their own father. In their role as *paters familias*, the owners could administer corrective punishments such as jail time, put them in shackles, chains, stocks or tie them to a wheel, as well as whip them. However the latter was limited to 25 lashes. For major crimes, the slaves had to be referred to the justice system. Owners who neglected or mistreated their slaves were to be brought before the courts as the code specifically stated that no person was allowed to injure, punish, wound or mistreat slaves without facing the legal consequences of their actions. During their visits to indoctrinate the slaves, members of the clergy were charged with the task of investigating excesses committed by slave owners or majordomos. Given the latter, the city government and the courts with the assistance of the attorney general were to appoint responsible persons to the conduct of these inquiries. Furthermore, lists of slaves were to be presented to the local city authorities and moneys resulting from the payment of fines regarding infractions to the Black Code were to be placed in a fund earmarked specifically for that purpose. Guevara Sanginés “El Proceso de Liberación de los Esclavos en La América Virreinal,” 111-159, notes that although copies of the Código Carolino can be found in many colonial archives, such as in Veracruz, there is no evidence that it was implemented, except in Cuba and Puerto Rico. On the latter two islands, the violent reactions by slave masters can be found in the colonial correspondence. In the territory of Santo Domingo, it is unlikely that the Black Code was ever put into practice in any effective manner since bureaucracies tended to move slowly and the island was ceded to the French only six years after it was promulgated.

<sup>48</sup> Guitar, *Cultural Genesis*, 365-367, specifies that the ordinance applied to both the territory of Santo Domingo and Puerto Rico because the Colón family had property and slaves on both islands. She states that the ordinance sought to eliminate the causes of any slave rebellion, regardless of origin (African, Moor or Canarian) in order to avoid similar problems in the future. Effectively, the ordinance sought to curtail inter-slave communication, as well as mobility, whether with or without the master’s consent, so as to limit their ability to associate and plan another uprising. It also reaffirmed the prohibition of slaves to bear arms enshrined in the Leyes de Indias and introduced a tax on all newly imported slaves, which was to be paid annually by the owners. The tax was an attempt to reap enough moneys to pay for the “policing” of the colony, which the Spanish Crown had declared was the responsibility of the settlers. The laws ensured that weapons were kept out of the hands of the oppressed in order to protect owners, but it also required owners to establish tighter controls over their workforce. Furthermore, given that the leaders of the rebellion were thought to have been of Wolof origin, a ban on the importation of members of this ethnic group was enforced. Finally, the ordinance, like the Leyes de Indias reiterated the need to render their workforce more complacent by finding suitable marital partners for them. Marriage allowed the slaves to create

African slave rebellion in the Americas that occurred on December 24, 1521. For their part the second and third ordinances, issued in 1528 and 1535 reflected new anxieties created by the demographic shift occasioned by the massive emigration of settlers to the mainland after the conquest of the Aztec empire and the increasing social upheaval caused by Cacique Enriquillo's rebellion.<sup>49</sup> Given that there were only roughly 300 to 400 settlers in the early period, the out migration could only have resulted in the Iberian settlers being outnumbered by the slaves.<sup>50</sup> Fear drove Spanish Dominicans to try to increase their control, if only on paper, over the slaves.<sup>51</sup> By the 1540s, however, Guitar argues that they began to understand that a power

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kinship ties in the Americas but the ties between the spouses also made it harder to escape and therefore bound the slaves to the hacienda. Marriage was used as a tool to settle the workforce.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 373, 476. The second ordinance was entitled: "*Capítulos de Ordenanzas dirigidos a establecer las más proporcionadas providencias así para ocurrir de deserción de Negros esclavos, como para la sujeción y asistencia de éstos.*" There seems to be some confusion over the date at which the ordinance was originally issued. Guitar claims it was October 9, 1528 and Larrazábal Blanco puts it only three days later on October 12, 1528. The ordinance was mostly concerned with the mobility of slaves. It required owners and majordomos to continue to keep accurate records of their slaves and to notify the authorities if any ran away, the authorities were also to denounce owners whose slaves had run away due to gross maltreatment. Spanish Dominican authorities recognized that African slaves were sometimes compelled to run away due to excessive abuse, whether physical or due to insufficient nourishment and clothing. However, once the slave had run away, the ordinance resorted to the unimaginative remedy of repression through drastic consequences. The consequences were less severe for newly arrived African slaves, whom the authorities understood required a period of adjustment. The ordinance provided for a fifteen day period of grace in which slaves could return without fear of punishment. After this period had elapsed, the slave was officially declared as a runaway. The period was prolonged to fifty days if the runaway slave was a bozal and he did not join up with other rebel slaves. If the slave returned within the specified time, he/she still had to pay to his master a fine of one tomín per day he had been away from the hacienda. Also, failure to return by noon, on the day following the end of the grace period, resulted the first time in 100 lashes and the punishment of wearing a twenty-pound collar for a year. Letters of permission were required from owners for slave vendors. Everyone, including the freedmen and slaves, were warned not to help fugitives in any manner, whether by giving them food or employing them without first obtaining permission from the city council. The ordinance declared it illegal to send slaves out further afield than was possible for them to return home for the night. Finally, the ordinance repeated the prohibition of blacks from bearing arms. The ordinance still required owners to pay a half a peso in gold for each slave imported into the territory. The 1535 ordinance created *cuadrillas* (posses) that included one captain, six men and two dogs each to search for runaways. The third ordinance in 1535 modified the ordinances of 1528 only in terms of regulating slave vendors in the city. Control of slave mobility was the most pressing concern, particularly since Spanish Dominican authorities had negotiated a peace with cacique Enriquillo in 1532, bringing to an end the native chieftains rebellion.

<sup>50</sup> Cook, "Sickness, Starvation, and Death in Early Hispaniola," 349-386.

<sup>51</sup> Spanish Dominicans were also reacting to fugitive slaves seeking to exact revenge for their mistreatment. Runaway African slaves were greatly feared in comparison to indigenous ones because some possessed skilled trade knowledge in forging weaponry. Therefore, they stole not only foodstuffs but also iron and steel in the raids they carried out, generally in the Baoruco mountain ranges. In the early period, fugitives also seized women probably because the island's gender ratio was badly skewed in the men's favour. Although some slaves were driven to

relationship predicated on coercion attracted greater resistance than efforts to establish a more reasonable one.<sup>52</sup> Although the ordinance of 1544 provided for an adjustment period upon arrival, the main objective rested on rooting slaves to the island. Moreover, the ordinance, on the recommendation of both civil and ecclesiastical authorities, called for a rectification of the gender import ratio for women from one third to one half.<sup>53</sup> Although this provision was probably never implemented, it was suggested in view to carry out some social engineering. Married slaves with families were less likely to run away because they had established ties in these new lands. Marriage was thought to settle the African slaves and make them more compliant. Spanish Dominican authorities also requested a papal dispensation allowing their slaves to eat meat during Lent, however, this move was also primarily self serving as there was a scarcity of fish and cassava bread was not very filling.<sup>54</sup> Fear of sparking a riot, rebellion or act

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commit crimes due to a lack of food and clothing, a few clearly fell in the class of people, who were carrying out vigilante type justice. Spaniards and representatives of the regime's authority and power were the object of these punitive expeditions. The earliest example was said to have been a retaliatory response to Cacique Enriquillo's pact with the Spanish Crown to send back runaway African slaves to their owners in return for a full pardon for his rebellion. Sebastian Lemba, Diego de Guzmán and Diego de Ocampo, like Enriquillo fled to the mountain range. They became captains of a punitive movement that lasted almost fifteen years. The most famous example in Spanish Dominican history of fugitives exacting revenge is that of Francisco Macandal, who terrorized the entire colony by poisoning foods and drinks. Originally from Guinea, he is thought to have run away from his French Dominican master to Santo Domingo. Larrazábal Blanco believes there was a parallel between Francisco Macandal and Sein Jule Faine Macandal, the leader of the first slave uprising in the eighteenth century. The ruthless manner in which Macandal carried out his felonies has led to the word macanda being associated with *brujo* (warlock). The second example is that of Juan Angola, who committed a series of murders, particularly that of Juan López Cavallo. Finally in 1790-92, an individual by the name of *el Comegente* unleashed a storm of depraved crimes, which are thought to have stemmed from a sexual perversion. He attacked some 70 individuals and killed an estimated 30 of them.

<sup>52</sup> Guitar, *Cultural Genesis*, 403-404 and Larrazábal Blanco, *Los Negros y la esclavitud en Santo Domingo*, 109-111 and Deive, *Los Guerilleros Negros*, 239, disagree on the date of these laws. Deive indicates that the ordinance was actually issued in 1545 whereas Larrazábal Blanco and Guitar place it in 1544. Deive also notes that there was an ordinance proclaimed in 1542, which Guitar and Larrazábal Blanco do not mention.

<sup>53</sup> Guitar, *Cultural Genesis*, 109-111, 404, writes: "although this did not necessarily mean that slavers were able to comply—and, of course, illegal shipments obeyed no ratio restrictions." The apparent change in the attitude of the settlers towards slaves is also reflected in their relationship to free blacks as the ordinance also loosened regulations on allowable occupations for blacks to include the ability to sell surplus from their field, if only in limited quantities, as well as permitting them to sell wool, fruits, charcoal, beef, mutton, pork and water. These changes were also self-serving as free blacks were becoming a vital connection to the survival of the colony, whose economy was beginning to falter. Although they were largely ignored, the only real prohibitions were that slaves were forbidden to sell clothing and to bear arms.

<sup>54</sup> Guitar, *Cultural Genesis*, 405.

of reprisal was very prevalent in the early reports of Spanish Dominican slave owners and it is therefore unsurprising that they granted slaves concessions rather than use coercive force.

Over the next two centuries, slave importations ground to a halt and the free mixed race population started to increase dramatically, becoming the largest population group on the island by the eighteenth century. The island sank into economic despair, operating mostly on moneys from Mexico but also on revenues generated from the illegal trade. The transition also signalled a shift from the fledgling attempts to develop labour intensive agriculture to ranching. The primary purpose for slave labour was no longer in cash crop farming but in domestic servitude, which in and of itself, encouraged more personal relationships between members of the elite and the slaves. This second population ratio change, as well as the economic reversal probably redirected elite anxieties regarding social control towards the lower class, which were after all not that inferior to them in many ways. The narrow gap between the population groups created a competitive atmosphere for resources, such as slaves.

The 1768 ordinance reflected this shift. It focused as much on control, as on impeding social mobility.<sup>55</sup> In fact, it boiled down the master-slave relationship to its essential components: the master's fundamental rights over their slaves and the ingrained belief and desire to perpetuate the socio-economic racial hierarchy which relegated slaves to the permanent condition of inferiority and servitude.<sup>56</sup> Gone, however, was the severe totalitarianism of the early ordinances. Signs of an imminent fear of rebellions and loss of control of the slave group

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<sup>55</sup> Deive, *Los Guerilleros Negros*, 239-240, 252-253 and Larrazábal Blanco, *Los Negros y la esclavitud en Santo Domingo*, 111-112.

<sup>56</sup> Deive, "La herencia Africana en la cultura Dominicana actual," 105-142, notes, that there is a tendency in the Dominican historiography to create an idealized version of master-slave relationships in an attempt to differentiate Dominican slavery from the labour intensive corporate models that existed in the surrounding Caribbean islands surrounding them. Although there is no denying that there were major differences, the power relationship was the same.

had faded and were replaced by what appeared to be a set of rules that were already in practice in the territory. Moreover, the shift in master-slave relations that Guitar observes between the 1520s and 1540s was even more striking between the last date and the late colonial period. It is clear that, over time, the Spanish Dominican elite came to recognize that control of this potentially disruptive population group was best pursued through concessions rather than coercion. The negotiated approach was designed to retain the enslaved labour force. Good relations between the two groups increased the likelihood that slaves continued to work for their masters in good faith rather than either using passive resistance through acts of sabotage, costly in an economically strapped society, or running away into the all too well established maroon communities, depriving the owners of their labour altogether.

This is not to say that the changes in the legislation were not effected by the slaves themselves. The Spanish Crown's inability to enforce royal control over the entire island, the colonists' desperate need for labour and the personal nature of the overwhelming employment of slaves as domestic servants empowered the slaves. Their work and loyalty were exceedingly valuable and it is likely that they used this knowledge as leverage to influence changes in the master-slave relationship.<sup>57</sup> Rather than resort to active forms of resistance, which breached the fragile trust between the two groups, slaves chose to challenge the limits of captivity within the system.<sup>58</sup> They likely did so by using passive resistance but probably also through the legal

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<sup>57</sup> Lauderdale Graham, *Caetana Says No*, ch. 4-5. Michael Craton, *Testing the Chains: Resistance to Slavery in the British West Indies* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982), *passim*, also illustrates slave agency in negotiating the master-slave relationship, however, his construction does not depend on slaves working within the system.

<sup>58</sup> Lauderdale Graham, *Caetana Says No*, 40 and Hundefeldt, *Paying the Price of Freedom*, ch. 4-5.

system.<sup>59</sup> The legislation governing the master-slave relation was, therefore, shaped not just by the elite but by the slaves themselves.

### **Spanish Dominicans, the Crown and Foreign policy**

The need for labour was such that it affected the way Spanish Dominicans dealt with runaway slaves found in their territory. The Spanish Crown clearly declared that royal officials in the territory of Santo Domingo were to return the French and English runaway slaves found by the *buscadores* or *cuadrillas* (search units).<sup>60</sup> The instructions were re-issued several times throughout the colonial period, an indication that Spanish Dominicans were less than diligent in their compliance. In fact, the common practice in Santo Domingo was to avoid returning runaway slaves from Saint-Domingue or from elsewhere to their rightful owners.<sup>61</sup> The illegal immigration represented an opportunity to generate revenues,<sup>62</sup> but more importantly, an increase in the local population and the labour pool.<sup>63</sup>

In order to keep the newcomers in their territory, Spanish Dominican officials resorted to the same policy as the one developed to retain the labour of their own slaves: concessions. The illegal immigrants received incentives to persuade them to live in towns, such as San Lorenzo de las Minas.<sup>64</sup> In many cases, the slaves were given land, as well as their freedom, but loyalty and

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<sup>59</sup> Díaz, *The Slaves of El Cobre*, 286, discusses how the slaves used the judicial system, while, Lauderdale Graham, *Caetana Says No*, 37, and Susan Socolow, *The Women of Colonial Latin America*, 133, explain that slaves were able to have a private life, even renting rooms away from the master's house. Interestingly, there is an edict issued in Santo Domingo prohibiting citizens from renting rooms to slaves, which can only indicate that the practice existed.

<sup>60</sup> Larrazábal Blanco, *Los Negros y la esclavitud en Santo Domingo*, 152-160, 172, states that the search units had 30 men each and patrolled the hinterland of the island. There were 2 companies of free blacks and criollos and one of black and coloured slaves.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 152-160. One particular royal decree stated that Spanish Dominicans had a fifteen day grace period in which to return any fugitive slaves or they would face a fine of 500 *piastras*.

<sup>62</sup> As discussed earlier, Spanish Dominicans sometimes resold fugitive slaves in other Spanish ports.

<sup>63</sup> Pedro Henríquez Ureña, *Obra crítica* (Mexico: Biblioteca Americana, 1960), 358-359 and Torres-Saillant, "The Tribulations of Blackness: Stages in Dominican Racial Identity," 1093.

<sup>64</sup> Larrazábal Blanco, *Los Negros y la esclavitud en Santo Domingo*, 161-164, indicates that the town was founded on a royal grant of land in 1678 and from that day forward Spanish Dominican officials continued to try to regroup all of the fugitives into this town so that they would fall under royal control. The difficulty was that the original

service were expected in return. Larrazábal Blanco indicates that all of the inhabitants of the town of San Lorenzo de las Minas were impressed into the military as soldiers in either the black or coloured battalions, commanded by black or coloured commanding officers. Several new free coloured and black militia companies totalling 1,000 men were created in the towns of La Vega, Cotuí and Neiba.<sup>65</sup> These units were often assigned the task of searching for runaway slaves, a job they were reported to have done with great diligence and loyalty.<sup>66</sup> The unwritten agreement emanated from the conquest period during which slaves were manumitted in return for services rendered to the conquerors. Although in this early conquest period the slaves were not serving in organized military battalions, those employed in the formal military organization in this later period came to expect the same concessions to be granted to them.<sup>67</sup> It is interesting to note that in the royal manumission case, Spanish officials were advancing the concession (manumission) in view of the services it expected the slaves to provide.

In the event that the French would come to personally reclaim their slaves, Spanish Dominicans would often arm them so that they could defend themselves from being dragged back into slavery.<sup>68</sup> The act of arming slaves was in direct contravention with the Laws of the Indies, which absolutely forbade them to carry any type of arms. The intention of Spanish Dominicans was clear enough: to present themselves as the defenders of the weak in the hopes of gaining their loyalty and service.

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grant gave seven caballerias to each of the original individuals settling in the area, however, these were not sufficient for all the newcomers and therefore some of them ended up living in the neighbourhood of Santa Barbara, Pajarito (villa Duarte) and Mendoza in the capital city.

<sup>65</sup> Deive, *Los Guerrilleros Negros*, 148-149.

<sup>66</sup> Larrazábal Blanco, *Los Negros y la esclavitud en Santo Domingo*, 159, 171-172.

<sup>67</sup> Vinson III and Restall, "Black Soldiers, Native Soldiers: Meanings of Military Service in the Spanish American Colonies," 15-52.

<sup>68</sup> Larrazábal Blanco, *Los Negros y la esclavitud en Santo Domingo*, 152-160.

The deliberate refusal of Spanish Dominicans to cooperate in returning runaway slaves irritated the French to the point that they declared that Santo Domingo, the colony closest to them, was the only American enemy colony whose inhabitants systematically refused to return fugitives.<sup>69</sup> Larrazábal Blanco claims that the French were so frustrated that some started to spy on Spanish Dominican slave owners and wrote down the names of slaves they knew to be deserters.<sup>70</sup> These names were then tendered to the governor of Saint-Domingue, who forwarded them to the governor of Santo Domingo with a demand for their express return.

The Spanish Crown, particularly during the years of the family compacts, continued to attempt to enforce the restitution of French Dominican slaves. However, it was never to be done free of charge. A levy equivalent to the time, manpower and expenses incurred in rounding up each runaway slave was collected when he or she was returned.<sup>71</sup> The moneys collected upon restitution were supposed to be placed in a fund for the maintenance of the Spanish Dominican *cuadrillos* (posse). The inherent problem with the Spanish Crown's plan was that all the income went into the *cajas reales* (royal coffers). Thus, there was no incentive for Spanish Dominicans to comply with the royal orders, because it was more profitable to resell the fugitive slaves or to use their labour.<sup>72</sup> The collusion of the colonists against the royal administration was so intense

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<sup>69</sup> Deive, *Los Guerrilleros Negros*, 148, explains in the most minute of details the continuing saga over the return of French Dominican slaves. He writes: "en tono agrio y, a ratos, amenazador Nolivos (governador of Saint-Domingue) expuso a Fernández de Oviedo el problema de los negros fugitivos, cuya restitución venia solicitándose desde hacia 30 años sin que se esperase nada de los españoles y su política. Esta solo perseguía la ruina y destrucción de la colonia francesa. Los negros les pertenecían por derecho inalienable y, al recibirlos complacidamente en sus dominios, los españoles solo alimentaban "víbora", de suerte que cualquier día los propios franceses tendrían que tomar las armas para luchar por la libertad de sus vecinos o para hacer cumplir las órdenes del rey católico. La situación, por tanto, había llegado a tales extremos que solo quedaba un alternativa: o los franceses renunciaban a sus esclavos, cosa imposible, o se decidían a recuperarlos vivos o muertos por los medios que fueran, pues "a grandes males es necesario grandes remedios."

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 156.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 143-191.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

that many Spanish Dominicans were caught harbouring fugitive slaves in their homes.<sup>73</sup> Thus, in the desperate economic climate of the island, master-slave relations had taken on a very different face than the one commonly described in the French and English Caribbean in the same period.

### Spanish Dominicans, Slaves and the Church

Masters also had to contend with the Church's authority in religious, ethical and moral matters given that it was enshrined in the *Leyes de Indias*.<sup>74</sup> The law code called for the mandatory Christianization through religious education and/or conversion of African slaves; their ability to partake in the religious life by attending masses at the church or monastery was codified.<sup>75</sup> Moreover, throughout the colonial period the Church influenced royal policy. For

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<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 148-149.

<sup>74</sup> The Catholic Church was the official church of Spain. Through the gift of Patronato Real, the Spanish Crown was bound to spread the Catholic faith in its newly conquered territories. The agreement between the Pope and the Catholic Kings also provided the primary justification for the conquest of the Americas: religious conversion. The Spanish Crown acted on the guarantee of conversion from the outset of conquest. Members of the regular clergy were present as of Columbus's second voyage. Its premier role in the administration and organization of Spanish America only grew from there as it could count on the unquestioned support of the Crown right up until the second half of the eighteenth century.

<sup>75</sup> Klein, "Anglicanism, Catholicism and the Negro Slave," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol.8, No.3 (April, 1966), 295-327, 300, gives the following translation of the section (*libro, titulo I, ley 13*) in question: "We order and command to all those persons who have Slaves, Negroes, and Mulattoes, that they send them to the Church or Monastery at the hour which the Prelate has designated, and there the Christian Doctrine be taught to them; and the Archbishops and Bishops of our Indies have very particular care for their conversion and indoctrination in order that they live Christianity, and they give to it the same order and care that is prepared and entrusted by the laws of this Book for the Conversion and Indoctrination of the Indians; so that they be instructed in our Holy Roman Catholic Faith, living in the service of God our Master." As well, Deive, *Los Guerrilleros Negros*, ch. 2, indicates that the slaves were forced to accept the Catholic religion. Upon their arrival in Santo Domingo, the slaves received religious instruction and those who continued to refuse to be converted after seven months were baptized without their consent. From that point on, the slaves were not only subject to the jurisdiction of the Spanish Crown but also to that of the Catholic Church. Those who failed to renounce their native beliefs and religions could now be charged with heresy and brought before the Spanish Inquisition. Quiros, "El Contenido Laboral en los Código Negros Americanos," 504 and Larrazábal Blanco, *Los Negros y la esclavitud en Santo Domingo*, 134-135, and Klein, also point out that, although it is true that after the first slave rebellion in Santo Domingo in the early sixteenth century, there was a very short period in which Africans were prohibited from assembling in a clandestine manner or at night, especially to prevent them from celebrating *bancos* (parties), Mina and Caravali traditions, in honour of fallen members but these restrictions did not last.<sup>75</sup> As discussed earlier in this chapter, local ordinances softened with time which gave Spanish Dominican society a certain elasticity. Islanders came to respect the rights granted to slaves under the *Leyes de Indias*, which permitted them to form *cofradías* (confraternities). This right was granted by the Spanish Crown because it deemed it the natural inclination of men to form associations with legitimate meeting houses (*cabildo* houses). The mandates of these confraternities were not limited to raising funds for the local church with regard to its maintenance, religious festivals, saints' days, marriages, baptisms, burials and

example, it was in favour of raising the female to male African slave importation ratio, as well as the May 11, 1527 call that “each African slave sent to the Indies be accompanied by his wife.”<sup>76</sup> The goal of the decree was to improve the condition of the African slaves and it was endorsed by the Spanish Crown because it also combatted social unrest caused by the destabilization of African slaves’ relocation. A relative, particularly a spouse, provided slaves with a socio-cultural point of reference and companionship, which was believed to bring stability and, by extension, compliance and obedience. The thinking behind couples’ immigration emanated from a very old line of thinking, which is still prevalent today, that marriage settles individuals down, particularly men. However, there is always a discrepancy between theory and practice. For this decree to have been successfully implemented, cooperation from African and European slavers would have been necessary. Given the overwhelming preference for male slaves and the known ratios of two-thirds male to one third female aboard slave traders’ ships, it is unlikely that this very lofty goal was ever either implemented. Notwithstanding the decree was the result of Church pressure to improve the slaves’ situation.

The Church also held Holy Synods on the question of the treatment of African slaves, the first of which was held in Santo Domingo in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>77</sup> The result of this particular

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interments, but were also used for the mutual relief of their members in order to pay for burials, free old and invalid slaves and maintain their meeting houses. In Santo Domingo, Larrazábal Blanco states that the following confraternities were known to exist: Cofradías del Espíritu Santo (to help sick slaves on sugar plantations); Cofradía de San Cosme y San Damián (established by Ararás blacks for parties); Cofradía de Santa María Magdalena (established by Zape blacks for celebration of saints’ birthdays and conversions); Cofradía de Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria (established by Mandinga Blacks and those of the Biafara region for funerary celebrations); Cofradía de Juan Bautista (established by morenos criollos for masses, sermons, processions, dances, and (juego de toros con beta y de cañas). These associations represented much more than mere financial supports for its members as many worked in tandem with the city councils. At least in Cuba, S. Klein indicates that the cofradías were recognized as legitimate political institutions recognized by local authorities.

<sup>76</sup> Guitart, *Cultural Genesis*, 371-372.

<sup>77</sup> Klein, “Anglicanism, Catholicism and the Negro Slave,” 300 and Larrazábal Blanco, *Los Negros y la esclavitud en Santo Domingo*, 132-133, both discuss the nature of ecclesiastical regulations enforced by the Laws of the Indies. For his part, Larrazábal Blanco places the first Synod in 1576. It declared that all blacks should be baptized after receiving 30 days of indoctrination, regardless of the quality of said instruction. He also writes that there was a

meeting of high ranking church officials was a series of laws and ordinances known as *sanciones* (*Sanctiones Concilii Dominicani*).<sup>78</sup> The goal of the Dominican Synod of 1622 was to ensure that blacks were properly admitted into the Catholic Church through baptism and that they received enough religious education to understand the meaning of the sacraments before receiving them. In order for this Christianization effort to take place, slave masters were reminded of their duties to promote religiosity amongst their slaves and threatened them with legal penalties for non-compliance. The Synod also reiterated the order that slaves were not to be asked to work on Sundays and festive days.

The Cuban Synod of 1680, known as the *Constitución IV*, restated the instructions of the Dominican Synod, as well as stipulated that slaves had to be baptized within one year of their arrival in the Indies.<sup>79</sup> Priests were also to ensure that slaves were properly baptized before performing the sacrament of marriage. In the case where the couple was already married in the custom of their region upon arrival to the Americas, clergymen were required to remarry them in the Catholic Church. Finally, in an effort to stamp out the “abhorrent” practice of polygamy, priests were to marry the man to his first wife and if that could not be easily determined, to the one of his choosing. *Constitución V* and *VI* attempted to put an end to objections to slaves’

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Synod in 1610, which declared that owners were responsible for the Christianization of the slaves, including hearing mass in a parish or church that was no further than one league from the plantation or ranch on Sundays (or at the very least every 15 days) and festive days. Owners were also required to bury baptized slaves, who died within two leagues of the church or parish, under penalty of a fine of 100 ducados for not complying, the sum of which would be evenly divided between the church and the person who denounced the illegal activity. Also parish priests were to charge fifteen pesos de plata for “un entierro de cruz alta, a los moreno, y otros tanto por la vigilia misa de cuerpo presente o misa votiva.” If the burial was not held at the church an extra levy was imposed. Granary owners were also supposed to ensure slaves paid the diezmo (tithe) and finally, it prohibited the baptism of adult blacks without proper indoctrination and the conferring of any religious office on mulattos and mestizos.

<sup>78</sup> For a copy of the original Synod, please see: Fray Cipriano de Utrera, “El Concilio Dominicano de 1622, cor. una introducción histórica,” 23-81.

<sup>79</sup> Klein, “Anglicanism, Catholicism and the Negro Slave,” 302.

marriages and to the destruction of families by way of sale by imposing legal penalties on recalcitrant slave owners.<sup>80</sup>

It is clear that the Church's primary concern was for all slaves to be given the right to full Christian communion. The only way to ensure that this would occur was to put pressure on the slave owners. The prevalence of slave marriages in Spanish America has led to some cross-class comparisons, such as Herbert Klein's study of Cuban marital and baptismal registers.<sup>81</sup> According to Klein, the Church was successful in encouraging masters to baptize those in their care and to encourage them to arrange slave marriages.<sup>82</sup> He asserts that in Cuba, between 1752 and 1755, one out of every 105 slaves was married—a number only slightly lower than that for the free whites.<sup>83</sup> Furthermore, Klein asserts that the number of slave baptisms was the same as the one for the white population.<sup>84</sup> It is impossible to determine if this was also true in the territory of Santo Domingo because there is no accurate breakdown of the population by race. However, out of 24,508 baptisms found in the archbishopric's records for the entire eighteenth century, there were 5,926 children and 3,132 adult slaves' baptisms.<sup>85</sup> About forty-eight percent of children were legitimate, the rest being born of illicit unions of one type or another. This data indicates that the rate of slave baptisms was twice as high as the rate of slave marriages, thereby

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 303.

<sup>81</sup> Lauderdale Graham, *Caetana Says No*, 30 and Klein, "Anglicanism, Catholicism and the Negro Slave," 302.

<sup>82</sup> Klein, "Anglicanism, Catholicism and the Negro Slave," 302.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., and James Patrick Kiernan, "Baptism and Manumission in Brazil: Paraty, 1789-1822," *Social Science History*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (Autumn, 1978), 56-7, both discuss baptism and marriage rates amongst slaves. Kiernan agrees with Klein that there was a connection between baptisms and manumissions.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> AAMSD 636213, 636214, 636215, 636798, 636216, 636217, 636218, 366799, 636800, 636801, 636802. There were twelve baptismal entries that had to be subtracted from the total of 5,926 because the data for that field was not available either because the record was too deteriorated or there was a hole.

placing their legitimacy rate at around fifty percent.<sup>86</sup> Although the data seems to suggest that formal marriage was not as important to this group, a more accurate statement would be that it was simply not as accessible given the Church's necessary proofs of identity and eligibility, which in and of themselves required a certain level of literacy, as well as the cost of the ceremony. Sandra Lauderdale Graham and Hunefeldt emphasize the importance of marriage and family to slaves, not only in terms of their identity, but of the depth of their resource networks.<sup>87</sup> Moreover, Klein's statement that the rate of baptism for slaves was similar to the elite was probably also true in the territory of Santo Domingo.

Although there is no clear evidence that slave owners were pressured to engineer unions amongst their slaves, just over half (243 out of 463) of the marriages performed between slave men and women of Spanish Dominican origin had the same master.<sup>88</sup> These results suggest that owners did take an active role in pairing their slaves together for marriage. It cannot be argued that distance between plantations created small marital pools, as the data in this doctoral thesis covers specifically the archbishopric of Santo Domingo, the largest city on the island. However, it is no surprise that the slaves in the remaining 220 unions did not have the same owner, as there were very few Spanish Dominicans who owned more than a small number of slaves.<sup>89</sup> In colonial Mexico, there is evidence that female slaves resisted these arranged marriages by using the courts.<sup>90</sup> There is no doubt that in the Archbishopric of Santo Domingo, the situation definitely left room for love matches. Nonetheless, stability was the cornerstone to maintain the

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<sup>86</sup> AAMSD, 636858, 636859. Slave marriages accounted for 742 out of the 2,069 marriages recorded by the archbishopric. Although the percentage of slaves who married in Spanish America varies by region and period, the data for the Archbishopric of Santo Domingo is not aberrant in any ways.

<sup>87</sup> Hunefeldt, *Paying the Price of Freedom*, ch. 4 and Lauderdale Graham, *Caetana Says No*, 26-48, states that the Church was more likely to intervene and protect slaves who were legally married.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>90</sup> Socolow, *The Women of Colonial Latin America*, 136.

social equilibrium and more directly ground the slaves by tying them to a beloved spouse. Thus, Spanish Dominican slave owners heeded the Church's authority in regard to allowing slaves access to the sacrament of baptism and marriage but did not seem to have used coercive force to ensure that all slaves participate fully in religious life.<sup>91</sup>

Denying slaves access to the sacrament of baptism and marriage in particular was neither useful nor wise as it only served to embitter the master-slave relationship and attracted the clergy's ire. For the sacrament of marriage, as discussed earlier, spousal unions were believed to provide mental and physical stability, particularly for men. Men and women's ability to share experiences and care for each other and their offspring created strong bonds between the spousal pair. The companionship of marriage was thought to make slaves more obedient and compliant. Children resulting from these unions were of importance for two reasons. First, parent-child blood ties are predicated on one generation's obligations to the next. The welfare of the offspring therefore became the parents' central consideration. The actions of one affected the whole family unit, thereby increasing the difficulty of escape or resistance. Restricted mobility rooted individuals to their owners. Second, slaves' children were born into slavery themselves, thereby representing an added asset or generational replacement to the slave owner. The only difficulty with this line of argument was that the colony was impoverished; therefore, Spanish Dominican slave owners might not have been able or willing to spend moneys on direct sponsorship of slave marriages. The lack of income could very well be the main reason why the percentage of slave marriages was not higher. Moreover, masters do not seem to have limited the slaves' access to

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<sup>91</sup> It is impossible to tell from the ecclesiastical records whether slaves had access to the other sacraments such as communion or confession, as well as to Sunday mass.

the sacrament of marriage but their lack of enthusiasm for shouldering the cost involved, resulted in its own limitations.

The master's munificence was not a factor for baptisms. The papal gift of Patronato Real to the Spanish Crown was contingent on conversion of the peoples in the Americas. Entrance into the Catholic faith was accomplished through baptism, therefore, this sacrament was mandatory. However, it also served the master's own purposes. Baptisms officially recorded the birth of new members of the community, including slaves. The act of baptizing a child therefore confirmed its existence and status.<sup>92</sup> Although the sacrament itself held deep religious meaning, the registration of the child was also of significant interest to owners and to the royal bureaucracy as it provided proof of the individual's existence and his/her affiliations. Moreover, baptismal records provided concrete proof of the newborn child's status as a slave in a particular household should any legal challenges or disputes arise.

Klein argues that the religious orientation of the colony translated into increased manumissions at certain key periods in the masters' or slaves' life cycle.<sup>93</sup> The basis for his assertion rested on the fact that manumissions were more common in Latin American than in the North American colonies, as well as on his understanding of the Church's perspective on the subject. He believed that the Church encouraged slave owners to manumit their slaves on a Saint's day, birthday, marriage or after a recovery from a severe illness in thanks to God.<sup>94</sup> The

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<sup>92</sup> Baptismal registers acted as a census of the number of members in a given religious community. Receipt of the sacrament not only signified the entrance of an individual into that community. Baptisms were always performed within the 21 days after the child's birth. The reason behind this quick initiation into the religious community was that the first months of a child's life were always precarious and death rates were high. The sacrament ensured that if the child died, it would do so as a Catholic and therefore enter Heaven.

<sup>93</sup> Klein, "Anglicanism, Catholicism and the Negro Slave", 305.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 305.

manumissions were thus presented as “meritorious acts in the eyes of God.”<sup>95</sup> In the Catholic religion, these actions contributed towards one’s salvation and by extension lessened one’s time in Purgatory. The blackmail of parishioners’ souls was nothing new to the Catholic Church, which had employed similar methods in regard to the indigenous situation in the Americas.<sup>96</sup> However, Lyman L. Johnson raised doubts about Klein’s thesis.<sup>97</sup> He felt that, although the Laws of the Indies stipulated legal ways for slaves to obtain their freedom, which were facilitated to a certain extent by the ecclesiastical structure, that the Crown and the Church had not actively encouraged manumissions. Johnson came to this conclusion on the basis of quantitative research which proved that “there was only one manumission of a child at baptism and there were no cases where the slave owner identified himself as the godfather of the freedman.”<sup>98</sup>

My conclusion based on the example of Santo Domingo is that the Church’s position with regard to manumissions was one of ambivalence. The desire to improve the slaves’ lives was tempered against the Church’s need for labour. In many areas, the Church was the richest and most powerful entity in colonial Spanish America. Convents and monasteries acted as banking establishments for the community.<sup>99</sup> They were also the premier landowners in Spanish America. As such they required slaves to labour their extensive fields and maintain their properties. In the territory of Santo Domingo, the nuns of Regina Angelorum sent out their slaves during the day to sell items they had made. Given the economic problems the entire population on the island of Santo Domingo faced, this could very well have been a sign that the order was

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Guitar, *Cultural Genesis*, ch. 2, explains that a group of priests in the territory of Santo Domingo had refused to hear confessions, and by extension give absolution to individuals owning slaves. Although they were reprimanded by higher ranking clergy officials, the group only grudgingly consented to stop blackmailing the soul of the elite in order to achieve a higher rate of manumissions.

<sup>97</sup> Johnson, “Manumission in Colonial Buenos Aires,” 258-279.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., 261.

<sup>99</sup> Kathryn Burns, *Colonial Habits*, ch. 2.

poor, as Larrazábal believed, but it is also likely that nuns, like the ones studied by Kathryn Burns, were just being resourceful in the face of extremely restrictive regulations imposed on them by the Church hierarchy. Thus, they sent their slaves out to sell manufactured items in their stead because the sisters themselves were not allowed to do so, and at the same time, it provided them with an income. These revenues were crucial to maintain the existence of the convent, as well as ensure the nuns' independence. In fact, the same ambiguity presented itself in relation to the sisters' care of orphaned and foundling children. Although it may well have found its origins in the order's mandate to help the less fortunate, it also definitely contributed to its financial situation. In any case, the orders of Santa Clara, Regina Angelorum, Nuestra Señora de los Remedios (private chapel of the Avila family) and Nuestra Señora de las Mercedes,<sup>100</sup> as well as the Dominican fathers and those of the *Orden de Predicadores* (Convent of the Order of Preachers) all owned and employed slaves according to the sacramental records. The two male orders were the most visible in the baptismal and marital registers as slave owners, followed by the sisters of Regina Angelorum, Santa Clara and Nuestra Señora de las Mercedes. Although some of the slaves were probably purchased, the majority were likely bequeathed to them in wills or were received as part of dowries or gifts to the church. It is unlikely that, in a colony with so many financial difficulties, the religious orders would actively encourage the manumission of slaves because they understood the value of the labour. It would seem obvious that they would have to lead by example, thereby losing these precious resources.

Whether the Church actively encouraged manumission or not, the Dominican archbishopric's records indicate that Spanish Dominican slave owners did give their slaves their

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<sup>100</sup> The sacramental records indicate that sisters and nuns were attached to the Church of Santa Clara, Regina Angelorum, Nuestra Señora de los Remedios (private chapel of the Avila family) and Nuestra Señora de las Mercedes. This contrasts sharply with the paucity of information that is currently being given out on these churches, which are advertised as nothing more than churches.

freedom but only rarely. In fact, there were no manumissions at time of marriage for the entire eighteenth century and only 421 of the 2,850 entries indicated that the child was free at the time of baptism.<sup>101</sup> However, the designation of free beside the name of the child did not necessarily entail that he/she had been manumitted by his/her owner. What is clear is that out of 5,926 children born to slave mothers, only 109, or less than two percent of them, were free at the time of baptism. Many of these baptismal entries only indicate that the child was born free or was freed before receiving the sacrament. In only three cases is a firm date given in reference as to when the manumission took place. In two other cases, the priest noted that the child was given its freedom while it was *en el vientro de la madre* (in the mother's womb). One, and only one, other entry stated that the child was freed by the slave owner. However, beside the name of another 38 children, the priest indicated that the child's status as a free person was confirmed by way of a letter or direct conversation with the owner or a leading member of society. It is unclear whether the manumission was granted free of charge or if it was purchased. In addition, two children's freedom was purchased by their father, one even specifying the amount of forty pesos. Three other children were freed by their godfather or godmother.<sup>102</sup> Finally, girls and boys were manumitted equally.<sup>103</sup> Clearly, although Spanish Dominicans were generally loath to manumit their slaves, they did do so from time to time. Although rare these manumission cases could be construed as acts of patronage. The gesture of good will was not without its cost to the master and was likely priceless to the parents. The act of granting the manumission was a concession the master made in return for the slave's loyalty, thereby strengthening the bond between the two of them.

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<sup>101</sup> AAMSD, 0636214, 0636215, 0636216, 0636217, 0636218, 0636798, 0636799, 0636800, 0636801, 0636802.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid. There were a total of 49 girls and 60 boys, who were manumitted.

According to Dávila Mendoza, manumissions through testamentary clauses did occur in the territory of Santo Domingo.<sup>104</sup> Although she connects these acts to religious beliefs in the need for atoning for past misdeeds, she also believes that manumissions, particularly when they pertained to domestic slaves, demonstrated an owner's concern for their future. Slaves were an integral part of the family unit and owners recognized that fact in their testaments. Thus, the manumission became not only a possible act of repentance but a gesture of genuine affection. The qualitative study, however, does not indicate the prevalence of testamentary manumissions and therefore does not allow me to come to any conclusion with regard to the Church's influence on the matter and how Spanish Dominicans reacted to it. This is also true of her second major focal point with regard to slaves: testamentary designations. However, she indicates that Spanish Dominicans hand picked the people to whom they would will their slaves. She believes that the owners did so, not only out of concern for the future of the members of their family, but to protect the slaves after their passing from family infighting. The gift of a domestic slave was more than just that of the labour of a servant but a vehicle for the perpetuation of a family's memory. Given that slaves had been witnesses to the traditions, customs and perhaps their masters' secrets, they acted as a reference regarding the state of the family's situation, financial or other, material and psychological reality and daily routine. Thus, the slave acted as the repository of family memory—an invaluable gift that bridged the past with the present. On the basis of her analysis, it is apparent that Spanish Dominicans valued their slaves and understood all too well the economic benefits of their labour. Moreover, it would seem safe to assume that testamentary manumissions were not the norm but that these too should be construed as acts of

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<sup>104</sup> Dávila Mendoza, *Un Concierto de Voces*, Appendix, does not mention how many of her 81 testaments contained manumissions, which makes it difficult to come to any conclusion with regard to the prevalence of the practice in Spanish Dominican society.

good will, expected to be repaid in kind. Also, the rarity with which these manumissions took place demonstrate that religious concerns over the purity of the slave masters' souls were not strong enough to motivate them to manumit their slaves, thereby weakening the claim that the Church played a central role in pressuring parishioners into "doing the right thing."

### **Personal Relations**

As in the case of the peasantry, the elite sought to establish personal relationships with the slave group in order to strengthen the master-slave bond. Fictive kinship ties expanded the elite's socio-political networks and provided protection and assistance to the slaves. The elite did so by acting as witnesses to slave marriages and becoming godparents to slaves' children. Not unexpectedly, the elite-slave ties were not related to the military structure like those created between the elite and the peasants. An analysis of the baptismal and marriage data reveals that fictive kinship ties between the elite and the slaves were much weaker than those forged with the lower classes. Members of the elite acted as godparents to slightly less than one percent of slave children.<sup>105</sup> Not surprisingly, the children, who were manumitted, were more likely to be the elite's godchildren.<sup>106</sup> Finally, the presence of elite members as witnesses to slave child baptisms as well as slave marriages was also low: less than one percent in both cases.

Although the numbers are less than overwhelming, it is striking that they existed at all. Members of the elite were under no obligation to stand as godparents to slave children. They may have felt a certain responsibility for providing the newborn with a suitable godmother or godfather, such as one of their other slaves or perhaps one from another elite family. The archbishopric's records indicate that a number of less than a third of godparents were slaves

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<sup>105</sup> AAMSD, 0636214, 0636215, 0636216, 0636217, 0636218, 0636798, 0636799, 0636800, 0636801, 0636802.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

owned by the same master as the parents of the child.<sup>107</sup> The other two-thirds were from different owners. However, these results may also be due to personal selection by the parents. Members of the elite were actually not required to act as witnesses to either the baptisms or marriages of slaves, as there were sacristans or other lower clergy members whose duty it was to stand as witnesses. Whatever the case may have been, a few members of the elite accepted to stand as godparents for slave children, stood as witnesses for their baptisms and marriages, thereby establishing personal relationships with the parents and their godchild. Although the bond was vertical and therefore non-reciprocal, the exchange of elite protection for slave loyalty was clear and only served to strengthen an already close master-slave relationship.

### **Conclusions**

Santo Domingo's economic situation produced a very distinctive corporate model, which, in turn affected the elite-slave relations. Although in the early colonial period the slave population did come to outnumber both the natives and the elite, this demographic ratio shifted drastically with the impoverishment of the territory of Santo Domingo. As the economy began to deteriorate, so too did the colonists' purchasing power. The unique climate created in the territory of Santo Domingo can be entirely attributed to the Spanish Crown's decision to stop the mass importation of African slaves and more pointedly to the island's economic problems. The lack of capital crippled the colonists' ability to purchase slaves to work on the haciendas, ranches and sugar ingenios. The inability to produce cash crops due to the lack of manpower left them with nothing to sell at market and therefore with no income. Spanish Dominicans were thus trapped in a self-perpetuating vicious circle of poverty.

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<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

The poverty of the island meant that an insignificant number of African slaves were brought to the colony in the mature colonial period. Therefore, the slave group was largely of mixed race and locally born. The racial origins of the group represented a real advantage as they were for the most part completely acculturated to Spanish Dominican society. Knowledge of the social, political and economic milieu empowered the slaves because they could exploit its weaknesses, particularly its dire need for labour. Both the elite and the slaves understood the acute need of colonists' for labour and that royal control was not well established over the whole territory; the proof was the continued existence of the maroon communities. Moreover, loyalty was bartered for concessions.

The Spanish Dominican elite acknowledged the power of the slave group and understood the need to govern them judiciously. Good leadership resulted in the retention of the labour force and ensured a certain economic advantage to Spanish Dominicans. In the delicate economic climate of the territory of Santo Domingo, work stoppages or destruction of agricultural production or livestock were deadly, as they impoverished the territory as a whole. The lasting nature of maroon communities may well have been the result not of an inability to end them, but an unwillingness to stir up trouble. The relaxation of legislation regarding slaves throughout the colonial period in Santo Domingo, coupled with the increased miscegenation of the population, led to the creation of a very fluid society, in which it was easy for some of the former black and mulatto slaves to reach the same socio-economic level as those of their previous masters. Flexibility was key to good governance and social stability, even with regard to a minority population group.

As for the Church's authority, members of the elite complied with the *Leyes de Indias* in baptising their slaves. As for the sacrament of marriage, masters saw no reason to deny slaves

this sacrament but were probably not actively sponsoring them. In obeying the law and following the dictates of the Catholic Church, in regard to baptisms and marriages, they also served their own needs. Baptisms and marriages were recorded in the ecclesiastical registers. In the case of baptisms, the entry stood as proof that a new member was born into the slave community while also indicating its owner. In effect, the registers also served as notarial records, confirming a newborn's status and ownership. Members of the elite also acted as matchmakers and allowed their slaves access to marriage because it established spousal bonds. These interpersonal ties were believed to root these individuals in Spanish Dominican society as they were predicated on spousal obligations to one another. As well, marriages often led to pregnancies, which only served to bond the slaves further together and to replenish the workforce. Manumissions at birth or through testamentary clauses, although rare, served as a valve to relieve social pressure. The act of manumitting a slave's child was born of genuine good will but repayment in kind was expected, thereby strengthening the master-slave bond.

In the same spirit, elite members also sought to establish personal ties to the slave group. In some cases, members of the elite stood as godmothers and godfathers to slave children, as well as witnesses to their baptisms and weddings. Although few of these bonds were forged, it is striking that any existed at all. Their presence signalled the elite's understanding of the strength of personal relationships, which they forged in the hopes of trading their protection and assistance for the slaves' loyalty. Moreover, personal bonds acted as a tool of social control.

## **Chapter Eight-The Lower Class and Slaves**

The last two chapters focused on vertical power relationships. The interactions between the elite and the lower class or slave group rested on the central ideology of the social contract. Good governance earned the loyalty of the two groups they governed. The elite's mandate to rule was therefore approved from above by the Spanish Crown but also by the people they ruled. Maintaining lower class and slave acceptance of elite rule was central in preventing social upheaval, which would inevitably have negatively affected the already precarious economy. Therefore, retention of labour and social control was inextricably tied to the members of the elite's fortunes. In recognition of this situation, the elite sought to strengthen their existing patron-client ties with the two groups through personal relationships. The goal of these ties was to bond with certain members of the lower class and slave group, decreasing the likelihood of rebellions against their benefactors. Moreover, the discussion thus far dealt with the lower class and slave groups separately and only discussed their power relationship to the elite. However, the social, political and economic situation of the lower class and slave groups, as well as their interconnectivity through personal ties, are central in understanding colonial Spanish Dominican society as a whole.

Like the elite, the two groups were affected by higher male than female immigration. The male influx, however, was not the result of military staffing, but rather of the situation in Saint-Domingue. French planters' preference for male slaves created a society that suffered from a gender imbalance amongst its largest population group. The notorious brutality of that regime, produced a steady stream of legal and illicit immigration of free persons, as well as of runaway

slaves. Also, more slave men ran away than women.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, as most of the runaways were likely men, the movement across the border also affected the Spanish side of the island. Like the elite, the lower class and slave group were affected by higher male than female immigration. The result was that women were therefore placed at an advantage on the marital market in their respective groups, as there were more suitors than there were brides.

Also, like the elite, members of both the lower class and slave group predominantly married within their own group, but there were a small minority of marriages that were contracted with members of the group above or below their own. Thus, some members of the lower class and slave group improved their fortunes, while others clearly declined in status. Given that most marriages were conducted within their own group, the majority of their personal ties were horizontal, thereby bonding the members of each of these groups together.

This was also true of lower class godparental selection but not for the slaves. The discrepancy, however, is easily understood in the context of both micro-differentiation and island demographics. In a society in which minute differences in wealth or connections to the networks of power made enormous differences in social standing, it is clear why the lower class avoided selecting godparents from the slave class and why members of the slave group sought to choose godparents from the lower class.

The dynamics of fictive kinship formation forged strong vertical ties between the lower class and the slave group. Moreover, slaves were integrated not only into vertical networks of the elite but into those of the lower class as well. Members of the lower class were therefore connected not only to the elite but to the slave group. The interconnectivity of the three socio-

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<sup>1</sup> Guevara Sanginés, "El Proceso de Liberación de los Esclavos en La América Virreinal," 111-159. Jean Fouchard, *The Haitian Maroons: Liberty of Death*, translated by A. Faulkner Watts (New York: Edward W. Blyden Press, 1981), 180, states that Haitian maroon communities were composed of more men than women.

economic groups on the island was a natural response to the economic situation as vertical and horizontal bonds extended each family's networks of mutual assistance and support, thereby allowing them to draw on a greater community of resources in times of dearth. The vertical ties were as much a tool of social control for the elite as they were a form of resistance to the superordinate group. The cross-group alliance of the lower class and slave group represented the most powerful weapon of the weak: a united front. A union of even just a small percentage of the lower and slave group prevented the elite from using a "divide and conquer" strategy. The cross-group relationship also probably acted as a pressure tactic to keep the elite accountable for their actions.

#### **Lower Class Immigration and the Marital Pool**

Similar to the elite group, the lower class experienced higher rates of male than female immigration. The cause was most certainly due to the legal, as well as illicit, immigration from the island's French colony, which itself suffered from a gender imbalance. Although there were variations over the colonial period, the gender ratio of French slave traders was generally two-thirds male to one third female.<sup>2</sup> Given that Saint-Domingue was the main destination for more than one-third of all French slaving voyages, it is reasonable to assume that transatlantic slaving practices affected the French colony's demography. Moreover, Saint-Domingue had twice as many African males as it did females. Legal immigrants, free blacks or coloured individuals may have selected the territory of Santo Domingo as their place of destination, because of land

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<sup>2</sup> David Geggus, "The French Slave Trade: An Overview," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, third Series, Vol. 58, No. 1 (January, 2001), 119-138, asserts that "Of the Africans transported, two-thirds were males, perhaps 27 percent were children and an estimated 13 percent died in transit." See also: David Eltis and Stanley L. Engerman, "Fluctuations in Sex Ratios in the Transatlantic Slave Trade, 1663-1864," *The Economic History Review*, New Series, Vol. 46, No.2 (May, 1993), 308-323 and David Geggus, "Sex Ratio, Age and Ethnicity in the Atlantic Slave Trade: Data from French Shipping and Plantation Records," *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (1989), 23-44.

availability or perhaps of the more fluid social structure of the Spanish regime. Runaway slaves, who were more likely to be men, frequently escaped and fled into the territory of Santo Domingo. As discussed in the last chapter, Spanish Dominicans generally resisted following royal policy and refused to return the runaways discovered in their territory. In fact, in an attempt to bolster the Spanish side's population numbers, the slaves were freed by royal edict and settled in designated areas. Finally, Spanish Dominican authorities were loath to persecute the maroon communities for fear of severe negative repercussions. The relative security and longevity of these runaway slave communities, their proximity to the French colony, as well as the more relaxed Spanish Dominican attitudes, most likely held a strong attraction for French Dominican slaves. This reasoning was probably also true of the few slaves, coming from the English and Dutch Caribbean colonies.

The second group, who may also have contributed to the gender imbalance, was the coloured and black militia regiments, periodically stationed on the island to maintain and reinforce the defensive structures.<sup>3</sup> The troops were merely complying with the Spanish Crown's military deployments. Although there is no indication in the marriage registers that any of the foreign grooms came from these battalions, this should not be taken as a sign that none of them married in the territory of Santo Domingo. The archbishopric's lieutenant priests appear never to have recorded lower class employment, for men or women, whether in the military or elsewhere. Moreover, the presence of these black and coloured units could have skewed the gender ratios slightly if, as was usually the case, some of the men had deserted and remained in the territory of Santo Domingo.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Rivas, "The Spanish Colonial Military in Santo Domingo 1701-1779," 255.

<sup>4</sup> AAMSD, 636858, 636859.

The last three immigrant groups, the Canary Islanders, Europeans and Spanish Caribbean or Spanish American mainland people, likely did not exacerbate the gender imbalance issue. Forced immigration of Canary Islanders was part of the Spanish Crown's repopulation scheme in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. As discussed in chapter one, although Canarian immigration did take place on a family basis, single individuals were also relocated. The archival sources, however, do not indicate the gender of the islanders, who arrived in the territory of Santo Domingo. Given the small number of single immigrants, it is unlikely that these individuals actually skewed the gender ratio; however, they did exacerbate the existing problem. As for the other immigrants from Europe and the Spanish Caribbean or Spanish American mainland, there were so few of them that they too could not have affected the gender ratios. The reasons for this group's immigration were probably varied but personal choice was probably the most important one.

#### **Foreigners in the Lower Class Marital Pool**

As stated above, the ecclesiastical records do not permit an analysis of how the black and coloured militia soldiers affected the marital pool because there is no mention of them. However, this limitation only affects this particular group of immigrants. The Archdiocese of Santo Domingo's marital registers indicate that 30 men and 19 women from the Canary Islands married in the Cathedral.<sup>5</sup> Five of these marriages were Canary Islanders marrying immigrants of the same origin. No racial designation was affixed to any of the newcomers of either sex and only four of the immigrant men's occupations were specified; all of them were soldiers.<sup>6</sup> A gender driven marital pattern difference emerges from these records. All of the other women, whom the

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<sup>5</sup> AAMSD, 636858, 636859.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

newcomers married, were Spanish Dominican in origin, three of whom had been assigned a racial label: one mulatta and two *pardas*. The mulatta woman was the slave of *señor canonigo* (senior clergymen) don Tomás de Aguilera.<sup>7</sup> One of the *parda* women was a slave working at the Hospital of San Nicolás de Bari, while the last one was a freed slave (*liberta*).<sup>8</sup> Moreover, the marital pool for native Spanish Dominican lower class women included men from the Canary Islands, as well as their local counterparts. Aside from the five Canarian women married to men coming from the same island, another three wedded men of Spanish origin and one chose a Belgian.<sup>9</sup> The remaining ten brides married Spanish Dominican grooms. No racial label was specified for any of those nineteen males chosen by the Canary Island wives. Thus, some women from the Canary Islands were available in the male native Spanish Dominican marital pool, but not in as great a number as Canarian men among their female counterparts' spousal selection. Canarian women seemed to still prefer foreign born grooms to whom no racial label had been affixed. Their ability to choose between newcomers from the same ethnic origin and local men suggests that they had more marital choice. It also indicates that their integration into Spanish Dominican society was smoother than that of their male counterparts, who, except for the five who married Canarian women, were limited to choosing native Spanish Dominican wives. In effect, the gender marital pattern difference is similar in function to the Spanish Dominican elite marital pool. Was this also true of individuals immigrating to Santo Domingo from the French, English and Dutch Caribbean colonies?

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

**Table 11- Legal Lower Class Immigration from the French, English and Dutch Caribbean Islands to Santo Domingo**

Caribbean Island	Men	Women
Antigua	2	
Curaçao	9	3
English (Unspecified)	3	
Guadeloupe	1	
Saint Thomas	3	
Saint-Domingue	26	2
Trinidad	2	

Source: AAMSD 636858, 636859

In actual fact, the pattern that emerges from the table above is almost identical to that of the elite. The immigration from the British Caribbean colonies<sup>10</sup> was a one hundred percent male, while the one from the French colonies<sup>11</sup> and the lone Dutch island of Curaçao was ninety percent and eighty-one percent male, respectively. Two women arrived legally from Saint-Domingue and three from Curaçao. Two of the French Dominican women, Isabel Lorenza, a *negra libre* (free black), and Lucia, a *negra esclava* (black slave), in the employ of doña Leónor de Figueroa Solano married French Dominican men, respectively, Juan Joseph Santiago, a *negro libre*, and Miguel a racially unlabelled individual.<sup>12</sup> Thus, none of these women married native Spanish Dominicans. The same was true of the women hailing from Curaçao: two married immigrant men from Curaçao and one married a Spanish newcomer. Only one of the women was

<sup>10</sup> These colonies include: Antigua, Saint-Thomas and Trinidad.

<sup>11</sup> Although ninety-eight percent of the immigration from the French colonies came from Saint-Domingue, one male did arrive from the colony of Guadeloupe.

<sup>12</sup> AAMSD, 636858, 636859.

identified as a slave in the employ of Alonzo Martín.<sup>13</sup> Was this a prejudice against Spanish Dominican men or simply a default position that allowed these women to reconstruct the same communities they had in their native colonies?

Aside from the two women of Dutch origin and the two French Dominicans, the twenty-five men from Saint-Domingue, one from Guadeloupe, nine from the English Caribbean and seven Dutchmen all married Spanish Dominican women. The table below illustrates the marriages by immigrant men's place of origin and indicates their marriages regarding the status and racial type of the spousal partner they selected. Only the racial categories that appeared in the data pool were retained for this table: *negra*<sup>14</sup> (black woman), *negra libre* (free black woman), *negra esclava* (black slave woman), *morena esclava* (morena slave woman), *mulata esclava* (mulatta slave woman), *esclava* (female slave) and no racial label. The category "esclava" and "no racial label" themselves illustrate a point that I have made previously about a distinct reluctance to racially label Spanish Dominican individuals. Thus, although it was necessary to indicate whether the person was a slave or previously freed,<sup>15</sup> information on race was commonly omitted. There is, however, an interesting correlation between the use of the label "negro" and French Dominicans, as well as the corresponding marital choice. Should this be construed as the beginnings of feelings of antipathy towards Saint-Domingue, whether born of sour grapes over the success of the French colony or a proto-nationalist feeling of not being black or slaves?

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> By their nature, Latin languages include designations to indicate the feminine and masculine. In this case, the "a" at the end of *negra*, *esclava*, *mulatta*, *morena* denotes a female.

<sup>15</sup> If the slave had been freed, their *amo* (master) was generally indicated in the sacramental records.

**Table 12- Marriages of French, English and Dutch Immigrant Men in Santo Domingo by Place of Origin**

Men	Women						
	Negra	Negra Libre	Negra Esclava	Morena Esclava	Mulata Esclava	Esclava	No Racial Label
<b><i>Saint-Domingue</i></b>							
Negro: 12	1		7			4	
Negro Libre: 10		1 from Saint-Domingue)	6			2	1
No Racial Label: 3			1				2 (1 from Saint-Domingue)
<b><i>Guadeloupe</i></b>							
No racial Label: 1							1
<b><i>Antigua</i></b>							
No racial Label: 2							2
<b><i>Saint-Thomas</i></b>							
Negro Libre: 2		1	1				
No Racial Label: 1						1	
<b><i>Trinidad</i></b>							
Pardo Libre: 1		1					
No Racial Label: 1							1
<b><i>English (No Provenance)</i></b>							
Moreno Libre: 1						1	
No Racial Label:			1	1			

2							
<i>Curaçao</i>							
Moreno Libre: 1			1				
Negro Libre: 2			1				1
No Racial Label: 4						1	2 from Curaçao and 1 unknown

Source: AAMSD 636858, 636859.

The above table indicates that an overwhelming percentage of immigrant men from the French, English and Dutch colonies married female slaves. Thus, generally speaking, the French, English and Dutch men mostly married persons of inferior status to their own, which leads me to believe that these men found integration into Spanish Dominican society more difficult than their female counterparts. The immigrant men were not competitive in their socio-economic group, thus they were forced to look for a bride in the rungs below theirs, which in turn had repercussions for the second group under study in this chapter: the slaves. Was this gender driven marital pattern difference, as well as the racial and status disparity in marriage facing immigrant men of the lower class, also true of immigrants from the Spanish Caribbean, mainland Latin America or Europe?

The two tables below demonstrate that the gender driven marital pattern difference continued for all three groups mainly because male immigration went on to outpace female immigration. In the period under study, only one Cuban and five Puerto Rican lower class women arrived in Santo Domingo.<sup>16</sup> The Cuban wed a Puerto Rican and the Puerto Ricans

<sup>16</sup> AAMSD, 636858, 636859.

married a Spaniard, a Puerto Rican and three Spanish Dominicans. The same pattern can be seen for Europeans and Spanish American mainland immigrant women in the table hereunder.

**Table 13- European and Mainland Immigrant Women who Married in the Archbishopric of Santo Domingo**

	<b>The Men They Married</b>
<b>Immigrant Women</b>	No Racial Label
Foreign	
No Racial Label: 5	1 from Italy and 2 from Spain and 3 from Santo Domingo
Germany	
No Racial Label: 1	1 Montserrat
Ireland	
No Racial Label: 2	1 from France and 1 from Ireland
Spain	
No racial Label: 2	1 Italian and 1 Spaniard
New Granada	
No Racial Label: 1	1 New Spain
New Spain	
No Racial Label: 2	1 from Venezuela and 1 from Santo Domingo

Source: AAMSD 636858, 636859.

As demonstrated in table fourteen and fifteen below, the men overwhelmingly married Spanish Dominican women. Given that none of the immigrant brides' grooms had a racial designation; it would seem that these women's marriages were on a more equal footing in terms of race and status. All in all, the men from the Spanish Caribbean, Europe and the Spanish American mainland also contracted more socio-racially even unions than their French, English and Dutch counterparts.

Like in the previous table, the data categories were limited to those indicated in the marital sacramental records, namely: *negra libre* (free black woman), *negra esclava* (black slave woman) and no racial label for the first table and *negra libre*, *negra esclava*, *morena libre* (free morena woman), *morena esclava* (slave morena woman), *mulatta*, *mulatta libre* (free), *esclava* (slave), *negra liberta* (freed black woman), *india* (Indian) and no racial label for the second table. What is striking about the first table in comparison to the following one is that it includes fewer categories and, in fact, the columns “*negra libre*” and “*negra esclava*” have only one marriage indicated for the three Spanish Caribbean islands. Moreover, only two marriages out of 67 involved a person of no racial label, one with a free and the other with a black slave woman. The remainder of the marriages were all between men and women with no racial label, which belonged presumably to their own socio-economic status.

**Table 14- Marriages of Men who Immigrated to Santo Domingo from the Spanish Caribbean Islands**

Men	Women		
	Negra Libre	Negra Esclava	No Racial Label
<b>Puerto Rico:</b>			
No Racial Label: 28			1 from the Canary Islands, 1 from Cuba, 2 from Puerto Rico and 24 from Santo Domingo
<b>Cuba</b>			
No Racial Label: 14			1 from the Canary Islands and 13 from Santo Domingo
<b>Venezuela</b>			
No Racial Label: 25	1	1	1 from New Spain and 22 from Santo Domingo

Source: AAMSD, 636858, 636859.

The following table has almost as many racial categories as the one on English, French and Dutch Caribbean foreigners marrying in the Archbishopric of Santo Domingo. However, this is to be expected given the greater number of regions recorded in the table. Despite this fact, the numbers of entries in the columns with racial designations are as inconsequential as those shown in the table above in comparison to the total marriages indicated in the present table.

**Table 15- European and Mainland Spanish American Men's Marriages in the Archbishopric of Santo Domingo by Place of Origin and Racial Selection of Bride**

	<b>Women</b>									
<b>Men</b>	No Racial Label	Mulata	Mulata Libre	Morena Libre	Morena Esclava	Negra Libre	Negra Esclava	Esclava	India	Negra Liberta
Europe										
Belgium										
No Racial Label: 1	1 Canary Islands									
Cyprus										
No Racial Label: 1	1									
Netherlands										
No Racial Label: 1	1									
Foreign										
No Racial Label: 12	9			1	1			1		
France										
No Racial Label: 10	1 Irish and 9 from Santo Domingo									
Pardo: 1							1			
Germany										
No Racial	1 Irish		1							

Label: 2									
Ireland									
No Racial Label: 1	1 Irish								
Italy									
No Racial Label: 10	1 Foreign and 9 from Santo Domingo								1
Montserrat									
No Racial Label: 1	1 German								
Portuguese									
No Racial Label: 1	1								
Spain									
No Racial Label: 66	3 Foreign, 3 Canary Islands, 1 Curaçao, 1 Puerto Rico, 58 from Santo Domingo	1		1					1
Moreno: 1	1								
Switzerland									
No Racial Label: 1	1								
Latin America									
Mexico									
No Racial Label: 7	7								
Moreno Libre: 1	1								
Negro						1			

Libre: 1										
New Granada										
No Racial Label: 2	2									
New Spain										
No Racial Label: 4	4									
Indio: 1									1	

Source: AAMSD 636858, 636859

Out of the 129 marriages itemized above of European and mainland Spanish American men, only two married *negro libertados* (freed black), one wedded a free black and one married a black slave. Furthermore, two wedded free morenas, as well as one morena slave, a mulatta, a free mulatta, a slave and an indigenous woman. The rate of miscegenation indicated in the marital records is only ten percent, which is almost inconceivable given the phenotypical description of Spanish Dominicans in this period. Obviously, the records were fudged, but I would tentatively advance the notion that the difference between the more consistent racial labelling of the French, English and Dutch Caribbean men with regard to those originating from the Spanish colonies stems from a nativist reaction. On a psychological level, Spanish Dominican officials felt solidarity of culture and tradition with the Puerto Ricans, the Cubans and the Venezuelans, not only because they were all governed by the same European power but because of their continuous trading connections.<sup>17</sup> The shared socio-cultural baggage may have played a role in the way Spanish Americans were treated in comparison to other foreigners.

<sup>17</sup> Duany, "Ethnicity in the Spanish Caribbean," 99-123, establishes the similarity of culture and socio-economic situation on the three Spanish Caribbean islands.

Knowledge of the French, English and Dutch systems, however, may also have led them to label the immigrants more accurately, to reflect how they would have described them in their more rigid racial class structures. It could also be that the immigrants identified themselves with more specific racial phenotypes given the more pronounced sense of identity with blackness and Africa.<sup>18</sup> When prompted by the religious officials for a response to the racial question, the lieutenant priests may well have faithfully recopied the answer given to them by the foreigners whether they agreed with them or not. After all, the concept of racial and class rigidity found in English and French Caribbean societies was not foreign to Spanish Dominicans even though it was not part of the corporate models of Puerto Rico, Cuba, Venezuela and Santo Domingo in the colonial period.<sup>19</sup>

What is absolutely certain is that the Spanish Caribbean female immigration was almost identical to that of the French, English and Dutch models. According to the sacramental records, six Puerto Rican women arrived in Santo Domingo and three of them married foreigners: two wedded Puerto Ricans and one a Spaniard.<sup>20</sup> The lone Cuban woman, who immigrated, married a Puerto Rican. Therefore, again more than half the immigrant women married foreigners instead of Spanish Dominicans. Obviously, the gender driven marital pattern difference could not be only particular to the immigrants, but it affected the lower class as a whole given that male immigration outpaced the female one. Of the few women, who did arrive in Santo Domingo, more than two-thirds collectively chose to marry foreigners instead of Spanish Dominicans of the lower class.<sup>21</sup> However, what other patterns can be discerned?

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<sup>18</sup> Torres-Saillant, "Creoleness or Blackness: A Dominican Dilemma," *Plantation Society in the Americas*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (Spring, 1998), 29-40.

<sup>19</sup> Torres-Saillant, "The Tribulations of Blackness: Stages in Dominican Racial Identity," 1094-1096.

<sup>20</sup> AAMSD, 636858, 636859.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

### **Lower Class as a Whole**

The following table indicates marital trends between men and women, whose place of origin was indicated as the territory of Santo Domingo. There is, however, one exception for freed slaves born in Africa. Although these individuals were immigrants, they did not travel to the Spanish half of the island by choice but rather were imported against their will as slaves. After having been granted their freedom they were forced to face the daunting task of making a living in the Archbishopric of Santo Domingo. Unlike the majority of the other tables, this one was devised from the point of view of Spanish Dominican women's spousal preferences.

Women's race and status appears in the left hand margin, while their marital preference is indicated in the right hand columns. It should not be surprising to note that some of the grooms were from the slave class, as has been the case in the previous tables in this chapter. This is not unusual because family ties ran across the precarious line that divided free members of the lower class from slaves. Therefore, it was not uncommon for slaves to marry free or freed persons and vice versa. Although this table has the most categories of any that have so far appeared in the text, only the relevant racial and status columns have been retained.

**Table 16** Spanish Dominican Lower Class Women's Marriages to Spanish Dominican Men

Women	Men												No Racial Label
	Negro libre	Negro Esclavo	Negro Liberto	Mulato Libre	Mulato Esclavo	Moreno Libre	Moreno Esclavo	Criollo	Pardo Libre	Pardo Esclavo	Esclavo	No Racial Label	
Libre: 2		1									1		
Morena Libre: 60		4				11	11	1	1	1	26		5
Mulata Libre: 2	1										1		
Negra Libre: 48	15	13					1		1	1	14		3
Negra Libertas: 13		4	1								4		3
Parda Libre: 20		1			1		1		14	1	1		1
No Racial Label: 714	7	10			3	5	2		3		20		664

The most striking item in this table is the number of entries in the marital registers for which there was no racial label. Out of 959 marriages for the lower class population in the Archbishopric of Santo Domingo, there were 714 women and 675 men for whom no racial label was entered at the time of the sacrament.<sup>22</sup> The lack of proper record keeping in that category highlights the overall problem that was raised at the outset of this dissertation. It is too explicit and blatant to be anything other than conscious manipulation of the ecclesiastical registers. Poor record keeping just does not account for the consistency and volume of these omissions. Moreover, the sacramental records were amended to suit Dominican purposes. In this case, the lack of racial labelling involved only Spanish Dominicans— not the foreigners. In fact, I strongly believe that the omissions were intentional not only in view of placating a very large socio-economic group, but mainly to project a certain racialized ideal to the metropole.

The women's marriages indicated in this table are also very interesting in light of the information already presented in previous tables. Given the immigration rates in the Archbishopric of Santo Domingo, the lower class women's marital pool was more diversified than that of their male counterparts. In fact, in all of the cases presented so far, the immigrant men overwhelmingly selected Spanish Dominican women as their brides, while the few female newcomers preferred foreign men to Spanish Dominican ones. The impression thus far has been that lower class women, like their elite counterparts, had more marital opportunities to find a spouse than the men. The numbers certainly lay bare this reality as 207 out of 959 of the lower class women married foreigners, which represented over twenty percent.<sup>23</sup> The logical

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

conclusion, therefore, is that women married more easily and were able to maintain their socio-economic status or improve it within this type of competitive situation. On the whole, however, the lower class's preference for marrying members of their own group created horizontal ties, which bonded the members of this group together into networks of mutual aid and protection.

### **Lower Class and Slave Marital Ties**

Certainly, there were exceptions to the above findings. As the last table indicates, there were very few instances of women seemingly marrying down. In the case of the women in the category of libre, mulata libre, parda libre and negra liberta, the results are derived from too small a sample size and therefore should be rejected altogether. However, the atypical data for the women in the no racial label, negra libre and morena libre categories are indicative of a secondary pattern that although weak, should not be ignored. The data indicates that women in the negra libre category were twice as likely to marry slave men as free or freed persons, while the morena libre were three times as likely and freed women with no racial label were even four times more likely to do the same.<sup>24</sup> Although on the face of it, it certainly seems that these women were marrying down; I would suggest that the marital pattern had more to do with network ties between the free or freed persons and the slave group. The free black and morena women had probably been granted their free status more recently than those with no racial label and therefore held stronger ties through kin networks to the slave group. It is also possible that this was the case for the women with no racial label, if one allows for an error rate in the data gathering. However, it is far more likely that these connections are the result of the island's labour market, which saw slave and free persons working in the same trades. After all, the number of these cases only accounts for five percent of the marriages for that category.

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

Marriages between persons of the lower class and the slave group are, of course, also present in the data collected on slave marriages. In table seventeen the mirror image of the cross-group marriages is reflected in the categories of male slaves with no racial label, as well as men in the category of *moreno esclavo* and *negro esclavo*. Obviously, they married the free women of the lower class mentioned above. At this point in time, the only clear statement that can be made is that although there were very few of these atypical marriages, they confirmed that vertical ties existed between the lower class and the slave community.



## Slave Mariages

The gender driven marital pattern difference observed in the two previous socio-economic classes cannot be conclusively discerned for the slave group but was likely present. Although it is true that no Spanish Dominican male slave married a foreigner, only a total of 37 Spanish Dominican female slaves did.<sup>25</sup> Of those women 21 of them married French Dominicans. Although no data is available on illicit migrants, let alone their gender, the ecclesiastical records do point to a stronger male than female immigration. As discussed at the outset of this chapter, Saint-Domingue also suffered from a gender imbalance. The root cause was, of course, French slave importation practices, which favoured men. Stronger male immigration would therefore be a normal result of the demographic situation in the French colony. Runaways caught by Spanish Dominican authorities or individuals, as well as French slaves acquired through raids by Spanish Dominicans on French plantations, probably accounted for a very small percentage of the overall movement across the border. The majority of runaway French Dominican slaves joined maroon communities or, when the opportunity presented itself, accepted royal amnesties and settled in free communities, thereby changing their status. In either case, it is likely that the French Dominican immigration skewed the sex ratio, but it is difficult to ascertain to what degree. What is clear is that the movement from the French to the Spanish side of the island increased the marital pool for Spanish Dominican female slaves. According to the ecclesiastical records, immigration from other areas of the Caribbean was also male. The remainder of the marriages mentioned at the beginning of this paragraph were as follows: three Canary Islanders, two Cubans and one Venezuelan. Another four came from Curaçao, five were English (mostly from Saint-Thomas) and one was from an unspecified French colonial

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

possession. The small number of marriages to these other foreigners is not strong enough to conclusively indicate that these immigrants skewed the gender ratio. However, the stronger male immigration, when combined with the already discussed movement of French Dominicans fleeing across the border, probably contributed to a gender imbalance. The information on slave marriages derived from the ecclesiastical records, however, needs to be placed in the context of a slave group that was likely gender balanced. The prevalence of mixed race and locally born slaves leads to the inevitable conclusion that the group had achieved demographic stability. Although no clear conclusion can be reached for lack of official data on the slave group itself and on legal and illicit immigration, it is likely that the gender imbalance also affected this socio-economic group.

### **Slave Marital Patterns**

Slave marriages were mostly conducted within their own group, thereby reinforcing the groups' solidarity through these horizontal ties. As in the case of the elite and the lower class, racial classifications were avoided, but when they were used in the marital registers they were made to reflect the racial marital ideal of the metropole. In table seventeen, it is clear that there is a correlation between the racial designation of the bride and that of the groom at least in the "esclavo", "moreno esclavo" and "negro esclavo" categories. It is evident that moreno and black slave men preferred to marry morena and black slave women. Individuals designated as only "slave" with no accompanying racial label seemed to also prefer to marry individuals of similar status. Even though the sample is small, the mulatto and pardo slaves and negro liberto categories exhibit this same pattern of marrying like individuals. Thus, the majority of people labelled as blacks married blacks and so on. The manipulation of the records was essential to project the ideal of the overall racial order encompassed in the language of empire. The

contention of this thesis is that Spanish Dominican administrators systematically altered official records, particularly the sacramental ones, in order to be able to support their claims to the metropole. If it was customary to omit racial designations, even in the case of the slaves, might it not also be logical to create homogeneity of racial marriages for those with racial labels to demonstrate the orderly marital patterns of the colony? Tampering of the official records had specific goals and thus it would be reasonable to assume that the marital registers were arranged so as to appear that Spanish Dominicans, of all stripes, were marrying along racial lines as per the ideal laid out by the metropole.

It is interesting to note that the place of birth may have influenced spousal selection for African born slaves in the territory of Santo Domingo. No concrete conclusions can be reached however because the sample of records that contained an identification of ethnic grouping was limited. The information was only available for 13 of the 613 male slave marriages in the territory of Santo Domingo.<sup>26</sup> Only two of these thirteen marriages featured a bride and groom, who were not of the same ethnic group. Interestingly the two aberrant entries involved more precise ethnic groupings than the broad geographical categories of Congo and Guinea, as well as the commonly identified ethnic grouping of Mandinga. Thus, the result could be the fruit of a zealous priest, who recorded more specific information than was usually available or had more knowledge of African ethnic groups allowing him to record the data more accurately.

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid. Ana Maria Lugão Rios, "The Politics of Kinship: Compadrio Among Slaves in Nineteenth-Century Brazil," *The History of the Family*, Vol. 5, No. 3 (November, 2000), 287-298, 293 and Stuart Schwartz, *Slaves, Peasants and Rebels* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), ch.5, both determine that African ethnic or regional origin was an important factor in spousal and godparental selection. My findings seem to support theirs.

### Lower Class and Slave Godparentage

As for fictive kinship ties, the lower class overwhelmingly chose godparents from within their own ranks. Like the elite, slaves usually only had one godparent. In two-thirds of the cases, the members of the lower class selected men, therefore, godfathers, rather than godmothers. As discussed in chapter six, the lower class was connected to the elite through these fictive kinship ties. For the elite, godparentage was a tool of social control. By acting as a godfather or godmother to slave children, members of the elite created interpersonal bonds to the parents and the child. For slaves, the ties represented an inclusion into the elite's social, political and economic networks that could translate into protection and assistance. Advancing or at least maintaining the family's status was not limited to marital strategies but extended into godparentage. Given this reality, it comes as no surprise that the lower class chose slave godparents less than one percent of the time.<sup>27</sup> The selection of individuals below their rank, particularly persons who were stained by the status of slavery was not desirable. Does this information invalidate Derby's assertion that the two groups were really quite intertwined?

I believe that Derby's thesis still holds. Like the lower class, slaves also sought to improve their social, economic and political networks. Moreover, they were eager to engineer ties to the elite and the lower class. As discussed in chapter seven, although their connections to the elite were not strong, it is surprising that there were any interpersonal ties at all between these two groups. They were, of course, much weaker than those established with the lower class. In fact, slaves overwhelmingly selected members of the lower class as godparents, to the exclusion

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<sup>27</sup> AAMSD, 0636214, 0636215, 0636216, 0636217, 0636218, 0636798, 0636799, 0636800, 0636801, 0636802. Out of 13,721 baptisms pertaining to the lower class, only 124 children had slave godparents. There were 54 slave godmothers and 70 slave godfathers.

of members of their own group.<sup>28</sup> The ecclesiastical records suggest that the explanation for these ties does not lie in the manumission process. That is to say that the number of godparents, who were themselves, freed slaves was infinitesimal. This result is in keeping with the fact that few manumissions were granted by slave owners in the territory of Santo Domingo. There are two alternative explanations for the formation of strong fictive kinship ties between the lower class and the slave group: island demographics, economics and politics. First, the lower class was of course the largest population group on the island, while the slaves only accounted for one quarter to one eighth of the inhabitants. This situation could have resulted in the relative difficulty in finding godparents for slave children. Second, both socio-economic groups worked in the same employment sectors and therefore came into contact with each other daily. The selection of a lower class member may have been an expression of collegiality. What is clear is that the cross-class bonds extended family networks, particularly slave ones.<sup>29</sup> In effect, the godparental ties between the two groups could have been an expression of mutual support that acted as the cornerstone for holding the elite accountable for their actions by making the consequences of the misuse of power real and palpable.

Similar to the elite and lower class, slave children usually did not have both a godmother and godfather. However, unlike the elite and the lower class, the gender driven godparental selection difference was not present for the slave group. Slave children were as likely to have a

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<sup>28</sup> Lugão Rios, "The Politics of Kinship: Compadrio Among Slaves in Nineteenth-Century Brazil," 287-298, explains that slaves working on small plantations sought to extend their family network by selecting free persons, as well as slaves as godparents, whereas slaves working on large plantations did not. She defines small plantations as those estates being worked by less than ten slaves. Her findings for Cabo Frio, therefore, are highly applicable to Santo Domingo. Schwartz, *Slaves, Peasants and Rebels*, 149-154, states that there were many slaves who chose free people as godparents, and they did so despite the fact that, unlike in Santo Domingo, the slave group was the majority one.

<sup>29</sup> Lauderdale Graham, *Caetana Says No*, 47-49.

godmother (2,188) as they were of having a godfather (2,838).<sup>30</sup> The results indicate that lower class women, acting as godmothers, played a much larger role in cementing interclass relationships between these two groups than for any other socio-economic group on the island.

### **Conclusion**

Similar to the elite, the gender imbalance created by stronger male than female immigration likely affected the lower class and slave group. The result was that lower class and slave women enjoyed an advantage on the marital market because there were more suitors than there were brides. As was expected, the two groups mostly married within their own group. The intra-class unions created horizontal ties of mutual aid and protection between the members of their respective groups.

The two groups, however, shared strong vertical ties to each other. The fictive kinship ties created networks of mutual assistance and protection between the lower class and slave group. This cross-group alliance may have been engineered in an effort to counter present a united front to hold the elite accountable for their actions. Therefore, godparental selection was not just about affirming ties but exercising power.

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<sup>30</sup> AAMSD, 0636214, 0636215, 0636216, 0636217, 0636218, 0636798, 0636799, 0636800, 0636801, 0636802.

## Conclusion

Santo Domingo did not have a successful history of cash crop agriculture during the colonial period. The declining native population due to disease, the mass emigration of settlers to the Spanish American lands combined with inadequate financing and slave procurement further impaired the colony's ability to transition from a labour to a land based economy, eventually creating a financial depression. In reaction to Dutch, French and English attempts to break its monopoly trade with the Americas, the Spanish Crown implemented a convoy system for its ships, which connected the Spanish port of Cadiz to the ports of Cartagena, Portobello and Veracruz. Santo Domingo was, therefore, left isolated from the Spanish trade routes. The inability to sell the limited surplus of sugar and tobacco harvested in certain regions brought trade to a standstill. Finally, the depopulation policy of 1605 devastated what was left of the Dominican economy. In response to the plight of the colony, the Spanish Crown assigned moneys from the Mexican funds to cover only the island's basic administrative and operational expenses, but no more. By the eighteenth century, the most lucrative source of revenues on the island was the illicit border trade with Saint-Domingue, which was finally legalized in the late eighteenth century.

The underperforming economy collapsed the social classes. The lack of wealth differentiation between the classes was compounded by racial slippage, which was the result of centuries of miscegenation. The Spanish Dominican elite acquired and maintained power through a racially constructed dialogue with the Spanish Crown, in which they took advantage of island demographics to position themselves as the only spokespersons for the population as a whole. They achieved this status by adopting the peninsular ideal of racial purity, whiteness and legitimacy for both the island and themselves. By projecting this racialized image back to the

metropole, the elite marked itself as members of the ruling class, thus opening and maintaining a dialogue regarding their rights and functions. The Spanish Dominican elite bartered their loyalty and lengthy terms of service on this island in exchange for continued control of half the high-ranking positions in the royal administration and all of the entry-level military commissions. This arrangement gave them exclusive access to all of the legal, as well as illicit income generating opportunities. The Crown agreed to elite Spanish Dominican demands because of the island's economic situation and of the elite's service and loyalty.

Thus, it is no surprise that marriage was of great importance to this group. However, Church and State regulations on the Catholic sacrament presented theoretical restrictions to the elite's desired marital pool. Impediments against consanguine or affinal spousal marriages were simply expunged through the purchase of dispensations. The Catholic Church's concerns over the consensual nature of the unions proved not to be an impediment, particularly after the Royal Pragmatic on Marriage was adopted, which prioritized parental consent over free will. However, Charles III's attempts at imposing an orderly society based on marriages of persons of like race and status can only be conceived as successful for the elite, which was already pursuing the same agenda. The Spanish Crown's legislation regarding the marriage of its royal officials, however, was a failure due to its many loopholes and contradictions. Its central goal was to inhibit royal officials from developing power network in the jurisdictions in which they served. The Spanish Crown felt that local influence corrupted loyalty and dedication of its administrators. The main problem with the legislation was the creation of two types of brides: those who had to be approved and those who were pre-approved. The daughters of civil and military officials fell in this second category, thereby, encouraging male royal officials to marry within their own ranks, and as a result reinforcing the formation of power networks.

In the territory of Santo Domingo, this was never truer. The core group of elite Spanish Dominican families intermarried amongst themselves. They did so generation after generation in order to reaffirm their status to each other and concentrate power into the same families' hands. The result was a tightly knit upper class. Although there was a core group of families that did not change, the composition of the elite was not static. The Spanish Dominican elite contracted marriages to foreigners in order to establish a measure of control over them. These ties increased the prestige of the family lines through the quality and status of the newcomers and may have built the bonds that allowed Spanish Dominicans to relocate painlessly to other Spanish possessions in the Caribbean after the island was ceded to France in 1795. The presence of these immigrant men also ensured genetic diversity in the marital pool, thereby avoiding the stagnation resulting from excessive inbreeding. Daughters played a central role in these constructions, as it was mostly men, who immigrated to Santo Domingo. The gender imbalance created by this situation advantaged families with daughters and may have elevated women's status in Spanish Dominican society above that of their counterparts in other Spanish controlled territories.

Although the elite obtained their privileged position from the Spanish Crown and they did their best to concentrate power into their own hands through intermarriage, they maintained their positions through an elaborate series of negotiations with the lower class and the slaves. Given that the lower class was the largest population group on the island and, therefore, presented the most immediate and serious threat to the continued status of the elite group, it was only wise for the latter to secure a mandate to rule from the lower class. Although the slave group was certainly not as large, labour disruptions in the sectors in which they worked would have been detrimental to the colony. Moreover, it was also important for the elite to seek recognition from the slave group as well. Underlying the relationship between the elite and the

lower orders was the notion of the social contract, in which some rights were given up to a legitimate authority in return for social order.

For the lower class, the elite's manipulation of the official records paved the way, not only to comply with the construction of the identity projected to the metropole but also for the peasantry to occupy vacant low ranking positions in the royal administration. The systematic omission of racial labels gave the impression that there were many more "whites" than there were in reality. Although the lower class may not have personally identified with the metropole's racial ideal, it certainly understood the value of the construction. The proof was of course in the rise of the character of the Dominican tiger. Underlying the trickster was the lower class comprehension of the lack of wealth differentiation and racial slippage in the territory which itself allowed for the rise and fall of certain individuals. Tigueraje therefore was about shifting one's identity in order to be mistaken for a member of the supra-ordinate class, with the intention of eventually being accepted into that group. The lower class's adoption and collusion in the white identity made them socially mobile. Their appointment to low ranking positions in the royal and ecclesiastical administration was therefore the result of lower class agency and elite understanding of plebeian expectations. Although there were few positions, they indicated that rising in the ranks was possible, thereby acting as a pressure valve through which the frustration of the peasantry's difficult socio-economic situation was alleviated. In return, the elite received respect and loyalty. The social contract was further reinforced through personal ties forged between the elite and the peasantry. Vertical bonds were established by involving members of the elite as witnesses to marriages or through godparentage. Godparenting created relationships not only between the elite and the godchild but also with the parents. The fictive kinship ties acted as a tool of social control by bonding members of the lower class to the elite.

As for the slaves, although there were few, the colony's economic situation empowered them. Given that they were largely of mixed race and locally born they had intimate knowledge of Santo Domingo's political, economic and social dynamics. The slaves fully understood the value of their labour and the lack of royal control in all but the two largest cities in the colony. They used their familiarity with the island's circumstances as leverage to negotiate the limits of acceptable domination. The social contract therefore also held for this group, as they remained loyal to their masters as long as the elite did not act outside of the acceptable norms and behaviours that governed the master-slave relationship in the territory. By the end of the eighteenth century, there was in fact a noticeable shift from early slave regulations, aimed at achieving social control through coercion to a more reasonable approach, albeit without sacrificing a master's right over his slaves. Spanish Dominican slave masters also had no reason to deny the enslaved their rights to full Christian communion. Marriage created lasting ties between slaves, making it more difficult for one to leave the other in flight. Also, unions tended to yield children which ensured a generational replacement. As for baptism, by giving slaves access to the sacrament owners were complying with royal law, which explains the higher rate of slave baptism than marriage. It was therefore likely that slave owners promoted Christianity amongst their slaves, but only in so far as it suited their needs and complied with royal law. Clearly, the low rate of manumission indicates that they did not respond to the clergy's call to free their slaves in order to save their souls. Like with the lower class, the elite also sought to forge personal relationships to the slaves through godparentage or acting as witnesses to marriages. Again, the goal of these ties was to bond members of the slave group to the elite in the hopes of averting a generalized uprising.

Finally, the lower class and slave group also preferred to marry persons within their own social status, or, in the few instances when the opportunity presented itself to individuals of the class above their own. Spanish Dominican women had more opportunities for social mobility given that there were more male suitors than brides. The formation of horizontal ties created bonds of loyalty within a given group, which could be activated to oppose the supra-ordinate class. Although the lower class chose godparents from their own group, the slaves overwhelmingly chose members of the lower class. The fictive kinship ties forged between these two groups represented cross-class alliances— a powerful weapon in the face of oppressive rule.

My dissertation considers both the external and internal factors that affected the formation of power relations and alliances through marriage and fictive kinship ties in the Archbishopric of Santo Domingo in order to reveal the underlying fabric of colonial Spanish Dominican society. First, I clearly place Spanish Dominican history within the context of empire. The politics of empire provide the context for the dynamics of the colonial milieu. The metropole's racialized ideal of the social hierarchy played a significant role in the creation of elite identity. The elite ruling group recognized the importance of representing themselves to the Spanish Crown in terms it understood. Moreover, it adopted the characteristic traits the Spanish Crown associated with a ruling group: whiteness, legitimacy and purity of blood. Despite obvious practical discrepancies between the ideal and the accepted practices in Spanish Dominican society, the elite sought to reflect the metropole's idealized image through a generalized manipulation of the official record. The shared socio-cultural language formed the basis for the opening and maintenance of a dialogue between Spanish Dominicans and the Spanish Crown. Thus, my dissertation builds on the existing literature on colonial identity formation within the context of empire, such as Vinson and Díaz's research.

External factors, such as the Spanish Crown's influence on the development of the colony, however, only focuses on one aspect of society. Therefore, I felt it necessary to consider the dynamics of class interaction, as in the example of Scott and Cope's works. After all, the elite, lower class, and slaves were active participants in creating their own society. Intra and cross-class relations shaped the formation of family networks through marriage and fictive kinship networks. Horizontal ties created class solidarity, not just for the elite but for the subordinate groups as well, while vertical ones forged cross-class alliances. In essence, the two types of ties acted as natural checks and balances, which determined the limits of racial domination.

Finally, I also sought to employ gender analysis in order to determine the different meaning and value of men and women's roles in the formation of family networks within each socio-economic group. In doing so, my dissertation addresses the lack of recognition of women's contributions in shaping colonial Spanish Dominican society. My dissertation stands as a unique example of a comprehensive societal study of a peripheral zone over the *longue durée*, of which there are few in the colonial Latin American field.



## List of Abbreviations

### Archives

AGI	Archivo General de Indias, Seville, Spain
AGN	Archivo General de la Nación, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
ARB	Archivo Real de San Bautista de Bayaguana
ARH	Archivo Real de Higüey
AAMSD	Archivo del Arzobispado Metropolitano de Santo Domingo, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

### Footnotes

HAHR	Hispanic American Historical Review
SM	Su Majestad (Your Majesty)
VM	Vuestra Majestad (Your Majesty)
leg.	Legajo (archival bundle)

## Bibliography

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Archivo General de Indias, Seville, Spain (AGI)

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