

**IMAGES OF INVASIONS AND RESISTANCE IN THE LITERATURE OF
THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**

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ABSTRACT

From 1492, when the first European invaders set foot on the island known today as Hispaniola, until 1965, the year of the April Revolution, the multi-faceted repercussions of invasion have been a prevalent theme within the Dominican Republic's literature. This thesis examines how the country has amalgamated a roller-coaster past to reflect this in its writing. It starts by evaluating the Spanish invaders' extermination of the Tainos, its generational influence and the continued impact of Trujillo's legacy, highlighting the issue of gender within the Resistance movement. It presents a rigorous analysis of writers' opinions, as transmitters of peoples' views – from the pirate attack by Francis Drake, to the use of theatre by Independence fighters as a weapon of propaganda against the Haitian invasion; the resilience of peasant-culture represented in the guerrilla movement against the first U.S. invasion of the 20th century; to the exposition of novels to depict a dictator as an 'invader from within' and the use of poetry to face the bullets of the U.S. invasion of 1965. By analysing the literary images, expressions, statements and social commitment of the writers throughout their work, this study shows how the various invasions which occurred in the Dominican Republic have been rooted in Dominican discourse. It emphasises that these very struggles against invasion are at the core of its vibrant literature, providing its silent themes and serving to illuminate both the nation as a whole and the individuals within it.

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Chapter I:

INTRODUCTION

The history of Dominican literature begins with the name of an invader, Christopher Columbus, whose maritime journal and letters offered the first poetic, exceedingly metaphorical descriptions of Hispaniola, saturated in the literary models of saints, prophets and romantic heroes.¹ Later, during the colonial era, Cristóbal de Llerena wrote the short farce *Octava de Corpus Christi*, alluding to the invader Francis Drake. In general, poems, novels, plays, short stories, essays and historical texts that reflect a critical discourse against invasions, and that highlight the resistance mounted by local inhabitants against the invading forces from 1492 onwards, have been produced, providing a recurring theme within Dominican literature.

This introductory chapter aims to clarify the object of this study: in the Dominican Republic, upon each of the various invasions, from the Spanish encounter of 1492 to the April Revolution in 1965, symbolically from the Taino Queen Anacaona to the Dominican-Haitian poet Jacques Viau Renaud, literature became a weapon of struggle and, as such, literary discourse played a role to raise awareness of sovereignty and report the invaders' abuses. Moreover, the image of invasions and the overall resistance to them is often interwoven with the theme of unity. Thus, the purpose of this thesis is to highpoint the literary images of resistance in times of invasion and proceed with the investigation of its meaning within Dominican literary discourse; how literature has reflected foreign interventions and what they meant to people; what is the role of literary works in helping to understand how the inhabitants of first, Hispaniola, and then of the Dominican Republic, have faced the invasions throughout history; what means and strategies have been used to express their reaction and support of the liberation cause; and, especially, how invaders have been portrayed, from the

¹ “*Metáforas tan precisas como deslumbradoras*,” is what Joaquín Balaguer, another ‘invader’, would say about Columbus’s style (2001, p. 9).

first Europeans to the Pirates, Haitians and U.S. Officials until the dictatorship of Trujillo, who is commonly considered as an invader from within.

For a full understanding of the literary process it is necessary to outline the historical background that led to these events, though without subjecting the historical process to deep scrutiny. This thesis aims to cover a substantial period – some 500 years – though it is not a historical study and considers only five invasions (Spanish, Pirates, Haitian and two from the United States of America), following a historical chronological order, (limited to the duration of the invasion) with the addition of an examination at the images of the dictator Trujillo as an internal aggressor, whose regime is framed between the two U.S. invasions of the 20th century.

Within each of the 2-7 chapters, the study will commence with an outline of aspects of the political history that led to the corresponding invasion, and subsequent analysis of the selected literary works, carefully chosen for their relationship with the topic – although some deliberation of literary value could be mentioned in passing. In this introductory chapter, the concept of *invasion* will be discussed, taking into consideration its meaning and clarifying the position of the thesis on this term and the reasons for the current research.

I.1 Invasion, intervention or occupation: a matter of discussion

In Biology, invasion of alien species is considered as the second most important threat to biodiversity after habitat destruction. Taking that scenario into a human context, when foreign forces that are stronger than local communities occupy a new territory, they become an agent of change or destruction. Nothing remains the same, either a small change occurs or a dramatic one that could really impact the direction of where that society was heading. With the arrival of the Spanish Conquistadors, three cases of developments occurred in Hispaniola: Exploitation of one group of human beings by another; indoctrination, or invasion of thought by the imposition of a

different worldview; and subjugation and enslavement of a whole group with their ultimate extermination.

The main issue with the first invaders was that they destroyed as they discovered. Of the Tainos, the local inhabitants of the island, no literary text exists that could describe their reaction. “They were exterminated as a result of the European invasion, between epidemics and abuse” (Roorda, 2014). However, Tainos did have a word for *invaders*, whom they called *Arijunas*, to refer to foreigners or outsiders (Hernández Díaz, 2003). The Admiral himself described them as:

“Gentle people, who do not know the meaning of evil, nor killing, nor taking prisoners. They have no weapons and are so timid that one of our men can frighten away a hundred of them... they acknowledge that there is a God in Heaven, and are convinced that that is where we have come from” (Columbus, 2010, p. 142).

Indeed, upon the arrival of the Spaniards, the Tainos were just in the Neolithic period (Dobal, 1983, p. 65). The Spanish Conquistadors occupied their land by force and their language became extinct within a hundred years (Payne, 1991, p. 447). Most scholars today have a different view of that event and they prefer to call it anything but ‘discovery’, a term that has lost support with the new political currents that run through most of the Latin American countries. Some American nations have officially adopted the 12th of October as the Day of Indigenous Resistance in order to highlight the struggle of indigenous peoples. In Venezuela, for instance, in 2002 Hugo Chavez issued the presidential Decree No. 2028, published in the Official Gazette extraordinary No. 5615, of 10th October of that year, which would thereafter commemorate the Day of Indigenous Resistance.² Likewise, in Bolivia, with the Supreme Decree No. 1005, of 12th October 2011, the 12th of October of each year was declared as ‘*Día de la Descolonización*.’³ In Chile, where 12th October was declared as a non-labour day in commemoration of the “Discovery of America,”

² Published in the official website of the Venezuelan *Ministerio del Poder Popular para la Comunicación y la Información*: <http://www.minci.gob.ve/2014/10/dia-de-la-resistencia-indigena-la-reivindicacion-de-los-pueblos-originales/> (13/11/2014)

³ In *Portal Jurídico*: <http://www.lexivox.org/norms/BO-DS-N1005.xhtml> (13/11/2014)

through the Act No. 3810⁴ of 14th November 1921, which nowadays is known as the ‘Meeting of Two Worlds.’ In Spain it is known as *Día de la hispanidad*, although it is officially designated as the ‘*Día Nacional de España*’, through the Act No. 18/1987,⁵ thus commemorating the formation of the national state.

The difference between the military senses of invasion and occupation is quite clear. Whenever a foreign army steps into another country, an invasion is happening. Then, of course, an occupation is a matter of time and of arranging the internal affairs of the invaded land by the invaders. Therefore, it can be concluded that both Christopher Columbus and Francis Drake invaded Hispaniola, although the Spaniards stayed longer (over 300 years) than Drake, who just occupied the city of Santo Domingo for 30 days. One of the main features of invasions is that they tend to be so unexpected that they might shake the administrative structure of any society. As such, the Tainos were not remotely prepared for the arrival of those ‘heavenly beings.’ In 1585, for example, the inhabitants of Hispaniola, although they had heard news of the famous *Draco*’s incursions into Spanish territories, were busy with the preparations for the marriage of the President’s niece to a local gentleman and, upon hearing news of the pirates’ approach to the city of Santo Domingo, the Governor had difficulty in mustering three companies of soldiers. The wedding feast was suspended, but anyway Francis Drake was nevertheless victorious with his invasion and glorified with “the New Year’s gift that the Spaniards gave us” (Thomson, 1973, p. 176).

There was almost one hundred years in between the infamous sea explorers Francis Drake and Christopher Columbus from the time they invaded Hispaniola, and yet they unknowingly made the same mistake: believing it to be ‘Treasure Island’. However, Columbus, who led one of the most deplorable actions in the history of the world, was so convinced that he was going to arrive in Asia

⁴ Data of the Congress National Library of Chile: <http://www.leychile.cl/Navegar?idNorma=24262> (14/11/2014)

⁵ In *Agencia Estatal Boletín Oficial del Estado*: https://www.boe.es/diario_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-1987-22831 (14/11/2014).

that he carried a *Latin passport* and royal credentials to present to the Grand Khan, a gift considered suitable for royalty, as well as bringing along an Arabic scholar (Morison, 1955, p. 55). Drake, on the other hand, had enough experience and most certainly resources to find out that Santo Domingo was not a rich colony any longer. Still, his estimates of vast mountains of gold plunder were hopelessly optimistic, (Ronald, 2007, p. 283), as depicted by Emilia Pereyra: “*Supone que la tierra por someter es una enorme cantera... 'Arrebataremos oro, ¡mucho oro!'*” (Pereyra, 2012, pp. 9-10). Drake announced to a council of war that he meant to attack Santo Domingo, allured by the stories and fame of this, the most ancient and chief inhabited place in the Indies, the capital of Hispaniola, now somewhat in decline. His captains heartily approved (Thomson, 1973, p. 174).

Nonetheless, the first action Columbus executed after arriving on shore was to take possession of the new land in the name of the Spanish throne, imposing an European bureaucratic order and intellectual structure over a region that did not practise these particular customs, thus subjugating individuals:

“Estas dificultades iban unidas a las campañas militares que Colón desató en el interior de la isla durante el verano de 1494 y la primavera y el verano de 1495 para obligar a los indios a someterse al vasallaje de los Reyes Católicos y al servicio de los españoles. Esas campañas enajenaron a la población indígena de La Vega Real e hicieron que los indios huyeran hacia los montes” (Moya Pons, 2002, p. 22).

Drake did the same: He was acting in the name of the Queen, imposing an European order (collection of money) and practising bizarre customs (housing in the Cathedral):

“El miedo cundió en la ciudad, que fue abandonada de inmediato por todas las mujeres. Al rato las siguieron Ovalle, los oidores y demás autoridades y los vecinos principales... Monjas y frailes también huyeron, unos a pie y otros en carretas” (Deive, 1996, p. 138).

The personalities of these two figures represent the European mariners of the time, as Morison points out in describing Columbus: “He had firm religious faith, a-priori reasoning and close communion with the unseen typical of the early Christian centuries” (Morison, 1955, p. 4).

However, in those days, plunder was interpreted by soldiers and mariners as reward for the risks they took (Ronald, 2007, p. XVI), and it is important to take into consideration that the two explorers moved equally towards the same goal: capturing magnificent treasures. Drake's personality was partially a sum product of his experiences. According to Turner, he had uniquely risen from the lowest strata of Elizabethan society to the very top. Therefore, some of the aristocracy never accepted him as a social equal, which must have made him always feel insecure (Turner, 2012, p. 18). In a similar way, Columbus also had to fight, especially at the end of his life, against critics and detractors, to safeguard his rights, and in the end, it was a poor enough deathbed for the Admiral of the Ocean Sea, Viceroy and Governor of the Islands and Mainlands in the Indies, and a deplorable funeral followed (Morison, 1955, p. 198).

Columbus's first voyage was made, for the most part, at the expense of Queen Isabel, so that virtually any gain would be reserved for the Queen, except one eighth of the net, which would correspond to the Admiral (Deive, 1996, p. 11). On his voyage of 1585, Drake's first task was to raise money for the joint stock company that would fund his deed, and ensure that the stockholders would understand that the mission had more than the purpose of plunder. Queen Elizabeth I needed money to finance the war in the Netherlands against Spain, and Drake had undertaken to provide it with his proceeding (Ronald, 2007, p. 279). The scenario both invaders found in Hispaniola was similar and different at the same time. In the early days of Columbus's arrival, he believed there were rich gold mines in the central part of the island called Cibao, which suggested Cipangu, Japan. Fate decreed otherwise (Morison, 1955, p. 62).

Drake, for his part, had devised a calculated, ambitious plan that, if successful, could rip apart the Spanish Empire. However, Santo Domingo was no longer on the bullion route. Its elegant whitewashed buildings spoke of its ancient pride, though a closer glimpse revealed that it was merely faded glory (Ronald, 2007, p. 282). The English overran the once great city, plundering and pillaging at will. The cash they found was so insignificant that it was not even quantified. Their

only alternative was to “ransom” the city itself (ibid, p. 283). There was hardly any opposition to the invaders by the inhabitants of Santo Domingo in 1586, as the local authorities claimed that the Spanish were very few, but the damage caused by Drake's men was directed against buildings, not people:

Los ingleses pillaron cuanto encontraron en ella. Lo demás lo quemaron y destruyeron. Sólo se salvó la catedral, aun cuando hicieron de ella “lonja, bodega y despensa.” Derribaron las campanas de su torre, que cayeron sobre la bóveda de la sacristía, rompiendo una parte de ella. Muchos de los vecinos presos tuvieron por cárcel dos de las capillas de la catedral, cuyos retablos, imágenes, crucifijos, órgano, coro y demás objetos engrosaron el botín inglés” (Deive, 1996, pp. 139-140).

However, in 1492, the opposition to the invaders was so fierce, as that described by the poem *Anacaona* by Salomé Ureña (first published in 1880) that many indigenous died. Caonabo was the symbol of that fierce struggle. The Indians of Hispaniola were not traders, and, after their curiosity was satisfied, cared little or nothing for European goods (Morison, 1955, p. 110). Domínguez supports this idea: “*El intercambio funcionó mientras los nativos estuvieron deseosos de conocer y tener los mencionados artículos extranjeros. Pero una vez satisfecha su curiosidad se negaron a seguir buscando oro*” (Domínguez, 2001, p. 29). By failing to satisfy their demands for gold, the measures taken by the two European invaders were very different. Drake ordered the burning of the city until the authorities completed a decent reward, while Columbus would eventually exploit the *Indians* in order to obtain the desired gold. Nevertheless, the perception of Drake in Dominican discourse seems to be unanimous, except perhaps for some romantic idea, as that of Andrés L. Mateo (1996), that he was the devil himself and impoverished the poor colony by burning the main buildings and stealing the scarce treasures. However, opinions about the ‘Discoverer’ are varied and range from the common idea of ‘fukú’ (bad luck) that his name carries, through various versions of his behaviour towards the *Indians*, sometimes of extreme wickedness and other of simple naïveté, to the unbounded admiration culminating in an extravagant lighthouse in his honour.

Just like Drake, Columbus did not have a formal education, but as a child he learned how to read and write. He also learned arithmetic, drawing and painting and studied sciences useful for sea life, especially astrology and geography. At fourteen he began to navigate. The sailor boy suffered the harsh life of the trade, learning all they could teach, experiencing without doubt dangers and shipwrecks. Humility and misfortunes, a tough time for all youth, he wanted to forget, and he was only content when already an adult, arriving at Portugal in 1470. He sailed the route of Guinea and drew maps, for which he was renowned (Armiñan, 1951, p. 247).

Drake was the son of a Protestant preacher who had to move with his family during the Catholic revolt against Protestant oppression (Gautier, 2013, p. 69), a very important fact which explains the voracity with which the English sailor defended the Protestant faith in his adult life. This could be compared to the same ferocity with which Columbus carried out the designs of Queen Isabel to impose the Catholic faith on the inhabitants of the New World. Gautier relates that at age 13 Drake left his family to become a sailor. With his cousin John Hawkins he went on several expeditions whose mission was the slave trade. He remained in these manoeuvres, learning the trade, until in 1577 Queen Elizabeth I commissioned him to organize an expedition against Spanish interests in the American Pacific coast. By chance, Drake traversed the Strait of Magellan to circumnavigate the world (Gautier, 2013). At that time, according to Gautier, the myth of Drake begins, as it was that achievement that made him stand out among all the English navigators of the epoch and brought him the favour of the Queen, who knighted him in 1581. After that his partnership with Elizabeth I was well known (*ibid*).

On the other hand, Isabel the Catholic placed her trust in the Columbus project while it was only a dream. From the anonymous mass of many men who came to the Court, Queen Isabel caught sight of Columbus. She supported his plans, which seemed unusual to other monarchs. Armiñan asks: What was the reason for Isabel to place her confidence in the humble dreamer? And he answers: In the sailor she saw the Admiral, and that was enough (Armiñan, 1951, p. 248).

Consequently, Columbus and Drake, the ‘Discoverer’ and the ‘Knight,’ both received the full support of their Queens for the invasion of Hispaniola and other territories. In one respect the English invader was fortunate, as the Spaniards, inhabitants of the island in 1586, were taken by surprise. However, so were the Tainos, and yet they defended themselves the best they could but ultimately were annihilated. On the contrary, upon hearing about Drake’s arrival, many of the male inhabitants fled to the woods, ‘to the dishonour of their Spanish blood’, as Fray Pedro Simon alleged (quoted by Thomson, 1973, pp. 175-176).

Nolasco's description of the Admiral (using the words of Las Casas) could pass for being that of the ‘Pirate’: *“Era un hombre de agradable presencia...y semblante lleno de autoridad. La cabellera, antes rubia, se volvió prematuramente blanca. Vestía y comía con suma sencillez; era elocuente sin afectación, y se distinguía por su devoción religiosa”* (Nolasco, 2008, p. 28).

The main difference lies in the contemporary inhabitants of the two invasions, and the obvious consequence of the first one was the establishment of the future nation. What the two European intruders have in common is that they both remain in history as some of the greatest seamen of all time. Columbus was first and foremost a sailor (Morison, 1955); Drake was ‘*un gran marino*’ (Bosch, 2007) and ‘*un genio militar*’ (Balaguer, 2000) and yet they both carried out the task of enriching the coffers of their Majesties. Everything they did was in the name of their monarchs. “Many things might perhaps have been declared more exactly, but a diligent thinker will be able to clear up the rest for himself,” said Paolo Toscanelli in his first letter to Christopher Columbus (Columbus, 2010, p. 9). “Let posterity judge,” wrote Francis Drake in his journal (Drake, 1628, p. 6).

In the 19th century the island of Hispaniola had already been divided. The Republic of Haiti was born in 1804 and would seek to annex the eastern part, which was still an European colony. Having that target in plan, Haitians invaded it several times without success until, in 1822, they finally succeeded and occupied it for 22 years. While sporadic resistance existed throughout the

occupation, it only began to define itself in 1838 under the leadership of Juan Pablo Duarte and in 1844 the Dominican Republic was proclaimed. However, it would be annexed to Spain again in 1861, after which a national war was generated, culminating with the restoration of the Republic in 1865. In the 20th century the United States of America invaded the Dominican Republic twice. In 1916, the USA sent troops into the country and formally wrested control by force. The troops remained until 1924. Then in 1965, a civil revolt ushered in another invasion by the U.S. military, who awarded themselves the right to intervene for a few months in the internal affairs of the country until peace was ‘restored’.

Illi venerunt, viderunt, vicerunt... but the amount of time they actually *occupied* the land is not relevant in this study; it is the act of aggression that counts. For instance, Columbus launched three long military campaigns between 1494 and 1495 to subdue the local population to Spanish vassalage (Moya Pons, 2008, p. 230) and Ovando completed the conquest of the island by the killing of hundreds of indigenous in the chieftainship of Jaragua, including Queen Anacaona (Domínguez, 2001, p. 42). The Spanish army invaded and occupied the island with no other means than that of force and only under the scheme to take possession of the land for their benefit, just as Drake and Boyer did. They did not ‘kindly’ ask the local inhabitants to ‘gladly’ hand over what they wanted but seized it violently and stayed for as long as was necessary to achieve their objectives. Some of the invaders would withdraw on their own account, once they had taken what they could, and others would be forced to leave, but their actions would have changed the structures of the society forever, for better or for worse. For instance, the Tainos were exterminated; Drake’s invasion impoverished the already ruined colony even more; the Haitian invasion determined the fate of the colony becoming a Republic; the U.S. invasion of 1916 gave way to the dictatorship of Trujillo and had not the U.S. army invaded Santo Domingo in 1965 the Constitutionals might have won the civil war.

In a seminar held in Santo Domingo,⁶ where the causes and consequences of the April Revolution were examined by its surviving protagonists, one of the concerns raised was that the term ‘intervention’ was not an appropriate name for the U.S. action of 1965, since intervention implies the concept of mediation, to which Juttin Cury answered:

El término correcto es intervención. Intervinieron para presentarse como parte predominante en las negociaciones que habrían de resultar una vez finalizada la contienda (Cury, 2007, p. 253).

However, before the effects of these *interventions* or *occupations* emerged, the concept of *invasion* became more relevant. It also appears to mean more than just a military operation, as the first step into changing a course of actions in any event. That is the sense this study will take into consideration when seeking images of those processes in the literary works which approach all sorts of foreign meddling in local affairs as ‘invasions,’ i.e.: entry into a place by force and occupation thereof.

II.2 Intellectuals and their role before invasions

Once an invasion takes place no citizen can remain indifferent, whether an invasion of the body, home or country. To the intellectual class of a nation, a foreign invasion has a particular significance and poignancy, due to the responsibility that weighs heavily on their shoulders. Although in these times in the field of postmodernism, as Vargas Llosa (2012) so brilliantly states in his *La civilización del espectáculo*, surrounded by a stoic pessimism where culture has been alienated by the dominant power, which is the ‘entertainment’, the role of the intellectual has disappeared and it is now occupied by ‘celebrities.’ Nonetheless, there are times when intellectuals are responsible for expressing the discontent of the people, speaking out for the underdog,

⁶ The *Seminario sobre la Revolución y Guerra Patria de 1965*, was held from 22 to 24 May, 2000, in the city of Santo Domingo under the auspices of the Ministry of the Armed Forces, with the participation of historians, military, political scientists, sociologists, politicians, lawyers, artists, poets, journalists and other scholars.

protesting against the atrocities of power and fighting against any type of invasions. According to Chomsky (2004), intellectuals are in a position to expose the lies of governments, to analyse actions according to their causes and motives and often hidden intentions. However, there are numerous stages on which intellectuals do not have that political liberty. This is most definitely not a given, in fact the opposite is often the case, when thinking about the dictatorship of Trujillo, for instance. Freedom of expression is not always the case for intellectuals. Nonetheless, as Calvino (2004) states, society demands that writers raise their voice if they want to be heard, propose ideas that will have impact on the public, and push all their instinctive reactions to extreme. In Latin America especially, writers have always had many different social functions, either in collusion with the powers of the state or against them. According to Pedro Henríquez Ureña (1979), Hispanic American literature has generally complied with the duty to serve political independence. “*Nuestros hombres de letras fueron, pues, por regla general, también hombres de acción,*” claims Henríquez Ureña, referring to the 19th century (Henríquez Ureña, 1979, p. 159). Matos Moquete also finds how often there have been writers who are or were presidents, ministers or parliamentarians. For most writers, he states, their works are an instrument of change in society (Matos Moquete, 1994, p. 81).

In a country such as the Dominican Republic, which has been constantly invaded from the moment of its first encounter with Europeans, intellectuals could not dissociate from this decisive event. In fact, invasions have been a serious preoccupation in the literature of the Dominican Republic and, although writers have different approaches in their way of reflecting these events either from the private or public perspective, they show a common interest in the matter. The study of the concept of invasion in Dominican literature provides, among many other factors, an insight on human reaction, hence its importance. This is a theme that is present in Dominican literature from *Enriquillo* (1882), perhaps the most representative work of the indigenous subject, onwards.

Invasions happen regularly, states Leupp (2004) when arguing that invasions are a staple in history and that it is historically normal that countries invade one another, frequently. Moreover, he insists that the fact they do so says nothing at all about the virtues of the people in the invading or invaded country and that invasions can be good, or at least sympathetically depicted. However, the local voices disagree with him. Invasions can never be good. The poetry of Aída Cartagena Portalatín, for instance, contradicts him when she exclaims that, since the time of the Conquest, peace is dying of shame (*Yania Tierra*, 1981, p. 6).

Undoubtedly, invasion is a disruption of the usual flow of events and, as Higman wisely puts it, in spite of the terrifying, immense scouring force of hurricanes and tsunamis, it was this seemingly puny human intervention that was to prove most catastrophic (Higman, 2011, p. 51). Or as Cassá states: “*La frontera es el principal accidente provocado por el ser humano a la geografía insular de Santo Domingo*” (Cassá, 2006, p. 14). In the 16th century, in Hispaniola there existed the pure ethnic component of the original inhabitants and then the indigenous disappeared in the first half of this century, due to the Spanish invasion (Maríñez, 2009, p. 2). This historical fact is reflected in the National Anthem of the Dominican Republic, which is not addressed to *Dominicans* but to *Quisqueyans*, from the first line of the first stanza.⁷ The nation that had just been freed from the Spanish colonial annexation attempt (1861-1865) thus expressed its pride by taking local ethnic identity as the symbol of the struggle for freedom from foreign domination, colonialism, and imperialism. Therefore, it could be said that the national anthem, written in 1883, was a precursor literary voice of the struggle ahead, and serves as a warning to future invaders of people's attitude when it says that:

Mas Quisqueya la indómita y brava/ Siempre altiva la frente alzará; / Que si fuere mil veces esclava/ Otras tantas ser libre sabrá (De Camps Jiménez, 2010).

⁷ Emilio Prud'homme (who wrote the lyrics) commented that his great ambition was to compose a hymn which reaches peoples' heart so they would love their land, sky, mountains, rivers, and their native home, their national heroes, their liberties, their independence, their integrity and national honour (De Camps Jiménez, 2010, p. 19).

The first stanza of the anthem guarantees glory to the people who are willing to break the chains of slavery, thus becoming a strong cry of the people to reject any kind of invasion. A vivid reproach to those who violate this freedom is also present in the hymn complaining to Pedro Santana (who is called ‘*inconsulto caudillo*’) for surrendering the homeland to Spain after independence from Haiti. The fifth stanza emphasises this to remind any invading nation that Quisqueya can be destroyed, but will never be a slave, because in each Dominican there is a sanctuary where the homeland country lives on a shield of justice and a motto: be free or die (De Camps Jiménez, 2010, p. 46).

I.3 Chronology of the invasions

The history of invasions of the Dominican Republic could be summarised in the following poem, a vignette of the vicissitudes of the Dominicans in the search for identity, written by Fray Juan Vásquez in the 17th century, which is repeatedly cited by local historians:

*Ayer español nací
A la tarde fui francés
A la noche etíope fui
Hoy dicen que soy inglés
No sé qué será de mí*
(Mateo, 2010).

The uncertainty expressed by this verse has also become a recurring theme of the historical interpretations about the struggles of the Dominican people against the invading powers. The constant political changes necessarily exerted a strong dramatic influence on the cultural structures of society, perhaps, as Cassá points out “*la diversidad constituye una de las claves*” (Cassá, 2006, p. 14). However, the fact is that the *West Indies* (as called by the British), especially Santo Domingo as the first settlement, operated as a laboratory in the conformation of the Spanish empire in America. The Dominican Republic was a victim, first of an invasion and then of neglect, when the King of Spain ordered the devastations of 1605, which provoked the division of the island, i.e. the

fate of the island was decided thousands of miles away, when the first invaders (Columbus and the Catholic King and Catholic Queen) agreed to found a settlement that would recreate Spanish society (Cassá, 2006, p. 106).

The critic Pura Emeterio Rondón complains that in Dominican literature there is usually a lack of black or mulatto culture. Hence, she states, Dominican literature is a colourless literature, partly due to the first invasions and the phenomenon of *acculturation*, a mechanism by which an individual is led to adopt the culture that the invaders want to impose (Emeterio Rondón, 2005). To oppose this statement, Kamen indicates that “all empires are in some measure a process of *acculturation*, creating bonds that permeate the entire network of relations and establish the rudiments of a common identity” (Kamen, 2002, p. 331). The fact is that the Dominican nation was formed in a long historical process of constant invasions and, in one way or another, local literature has expressed its views from the standpoint to which it had access.

Indeed, ‘power’ does not necessarily mean just the capacity to apply force, as Kamen states. More exactly, it can be applied to the underlying structures that made empire possible, factors such as the ability to supply finance and services (Kamen, 2002, p. xxiii). The invasive power came from afar, even when France and Spain fought their wars in Europe and as a result ceded, surrendered, won or lost their ultramarine territories. What is the Treaty of Basle, if not another form of invasion? For Cassá the aforementioned Treaty, through which France won Santo Domingo from Spain in 1795, was an absolutely unexpected and unwelcome event for its inhabitants. However, the most interesting aspect was its impact on their identity:

El sentimiento de identidad local entre la generalidad de la población libre había fortalecido la certeza de que su suerte se hallaba vinculada a la ocupación del espacio de la isla, lo que se elevó a uno de los referentes claves de los procesos tempranos de la identidad del pueblo dominicano. Pero, al mismo tiempo, gran parte de la población libre seguía considerándose perteneciente a la familia española. Coexistían, así, mecanismos dobles de identidad, racionalizados por los hombres cultos de los sectores dirigentes... [] (Cassá, 2006, pp 284-285).

In 1795 it was just three centuries and three years that the Spanish part of the island of Santo Domingo had lived under the political, social, economic and cultural domination of Spain: “*suficiente tiempo para que una colectividad humana adquiriera configuración histórica y sentido cultural propio*” (Peña Batlle, 1989, p. 49). The power of the invaders also meant the capacity to impose their acceptance, as can be seen in the work of some scholars, like that reflected by Nolasco: “*Eran eclesiásticos, pero no culparé a la Iglesia de Cristo; eran españoles, pero no culparé a España...No desamamos a España. ¿No son hijos suyos los heroicos defensores de la raza oprimida?*” (Nolasco, 2008, p. 47). Thus Nolasco finds words justifying the actions of the first invaders: “*Sin duda eran dos Españas: una conquistadora y arrogante, muchas veces, con los subyugados, impiadosa; la otra evangelizadora, olvidada de los halagos del mundo...y santa, muy santa en sus hijos*” (ibid, p. 134). Contrary to Nolasco’s views on that subject, authors such as Cartagena Portalatín (1981) see the country as a constant victim of exploitation and abuses from the Conquest to modern times. However, Salomé Ureña, the great woman poet of the 19th century, does not use strong words when she refers to Columbus. In her poem *Anacaona* (1989), Columbus is praised as if he were not an invader but a saviour. She distinguishes the actions done later by the invader Ovando, as the true exterminator of the indigenous people. Obviously, the time when those two women poets lived had a great influence on the way they perceived the invading forces.

On the other hand, the Dominican Republic not only suffered invasions from another country but from pirates of the most diverse kinds. Attacks on villages, kidnappings, burning cities, buying and selling of slaves, were aspects that symbolise what pirates of the 16th and 17th centuries meant in Hispaniola, among which Francis Drake takes prominence. On Friday, 11th of January, 1586, Drake invaded the city of Santo Domingo and with very little effort occupied it for a whole month. This episode has often been described in Dominican textbooks. However, just as official history does not identify all the pain, hunger and loneliness of Juan Pablo Duarte and his companions in exile after their fight for Independence (1844), equally it does not reflect the anger or the

displeasure that people experienced at the invasion of Drake. As Bosch states, what mattered was not what people wore, or how they talked or acted, but how they felt (cited by Alcántara Almánzar, 2010, p. 20). It is only in 2012 that Emilia Pereyra publishes her novel *El Grito del Tambor*, which relates Drake's invasion of the city of Santo Domingo (2012).

Bosch (2007) presents Drake within the panorama of the 16th century and states that it was a time of crisis in the Western world, because it was a century of transformation in all spheres of social life. Bosch insists that Drake was merely a servant of a political plan of his country. Hence instead of focusing on deconstructing Drake's personality and understanding why he chose to invade Santo Domingo in 1586, Bosch focuses on analysing Phillip II and Elizabeth I's strategies, implying that the Caribbean was taken into account by those two rulers only as one of the many scenarios where they were fighting their wars for power at that time. Nevertheless, there could be noted a sense of sympathy towards pirates, especially towards Drake, or even some sort of Stockholm syndrome, as there is also the side of those who make a myth of him in both negative and positive aspects. Mateo (1996), for instance, has a different treatment for Drake, more romantic and poetic, sustaining that at the bottom we are all pirates, and all without exception, have our favourite pirate. For him, the English explorer is not only Francis Drake, but *Sir Francis Drake*. In his *Balada a Sir Francis Drake*, Mateo reflects the romantic perception that maybe prevails in some Dominican minds on pirates, who, aided by time and distance, appear as legendary heroes and protagonists of great adventures in distant lands. In this sense, the pirate does not act as an invader, but as a crusader against authoritarian rulers. On the other hand, Drake is treated as a diabolical figure by Pereyra (2012).

Pirate invasions had a very special meaning in the country, as they are considered the immediate cause of the devastations of the north of the country, which in Nolasco's words were a "*brutalidad irremediable de la que, todavía hoy, somos víctimas con la división de la isla*" (Nolasco, 2008, p.

148). What Europeans were doing was experiments, or as wisely stated by Hoetink: “*Un mundo nuevo, nuevas ideas, experimentos sociales: lo que ya no podía realizarse en Europa, tenía que ser posible allí*” (Hoetink, 2011, p. 16). This is supported by Peña Batlle when he claims: “*Santo Domingo fue, sin duda, el país en que se experimentaron y se pusieron a prueba las esencias del régimen indiano*” (Peña Batlle, 1989, p. 56). The worst part is that the measure of the devastations backfired, because nothing could stop smuggling. Hoetink cannot help highlighting what would have happened had the colony been allowed to continue its commerce with the heretics:

“*El contrabando hubiera contribuido a la creación de un capital local, hubiera alentado la formación de una clase comercial autóctona –aunque fuera pequeña- y de haber continuado el comercio con la República Neerlandesa, la isla hubiera alcanzado un más rápido desarrollo económico*” (Hoetink, 2011).

However, invasions do interrupt the natural current of events and invaders become an abhorred reference, as Hazard would say about one of the cruellest invaders of Hispaniola: “*Continuó con la conquista total de la isla... no sin haber perpetrado hechos de traiciones, matanzas y crueldades que representan una mancha que empañará siempre el nombre de Ovando*” (Hazard, 2002, p. 33). Interestingly, the invader Nicolás de Ovando had a different attitude to their fellow Spanish than that shown to the invaded people: “*Gobernó a los españoles con una cordura y justicia muy diferente a la crueldad que ejerció sobre los vencidos nativos*” (ibid, p. 39). Just as Drake also targeted his fury against Santo Domingo and burned its main buildings, the profile of the European invader was the same: search for treasure no matter who was in their way.

In that sense, perhaps the characteristics of the Haitian invaders were different; but for the mark that it left on the country’s fate, the Haitian occupation that began in Santo Domingo on the 9th of February, 1822, led by Jean-Pierre Boyer, and which was extended for 22 years until the 27th of February, 1844, was the most significant of all. Boyer's occupation was the third invasion of Haiti of the territory of the eastern part of the island. According to Hoetink this and other events were key to the realization of an emerging national identity:

“La declaración de independencia del ‘Haití Español’ (1821), la declaración de independencia contra Haití (1844), la lucha contra las fuerzas armadas haitianas invasoras de las décadas de 1840 y 1850, la Guerra de Restauración contra España (1863-1865), todas fueron signos de un lento e intermitente proceso conducente, en la década de los 80 del siglo pasado [Siglo 19], a una situación en la que una ideología nacionalista se estaba formulando lentamente, en un Estado aun débil” (Hoetink, 2011, p. 119).

During that occupation cultural and artistic activities were significantly reduced throughout the country. Nevertheless, one of the means used by the independence fighters, called *Trinitarios*, to propagate the ideas of freedom and sovereignty was theatre, which they used to show patriotic dramas. The plays were camouflaged and criticised the French, but the Dominicans by analogy interpreted them as criticism against Haitians. In the 20th century, however, plays did not consolidate an idea of union against the aggressor, a task that was fulfilled by poetry. In fact, as in the case of Drake, Dominican literature has not really ‘narrated’ the Haitian invasion. Nonetheless, Lantigua (2012), when talking about Pereyra’s novel, insisted that the search for a great novel is not what matters to Dominican literature, but the design of novels that explore reality from any angle to build a far-reaching narrative, reputable, enjoyable, transcending the boundaries of the national spectrum; or which transcends, it could also be added, the nationalist ideology imposed by invading forces of the past. This nationalist ideology, as depicted by Hoetink (2011), emphasised the durability and value of specific attributes: the Spanish language, the Catholic religion and the notion of a population of predominantly mixed and Spanish origin.

If Tainos are to be considered the legitimate first inhabitants of Hispaniola, then the first invaders were the Caribs, who occupied the Lesser Antilles and attacked their neighbours of Borinquen and Haiti (Moya Pons, 2008, p. 23). Following the arrival of the Spaniards, invasions occurred one after another, leaving a trail of significant consequences. The population decline began with the very first appearance of the first European invader on its shores: Columbus (Mira Caballos, 2009). Figures vary among scholars of how many Tainos inhabited the island (from 100,000 to one million), but the fact is that by 1570 there were none remaining, a dramatic scenario

that should also be included among the 'firsts' of Hispaniola, where so many things happened 'first' in the New World⁸. Hispaniola was not the first island encountered by Columbus (that 'privilege' belongs to Guanahani or San Salvador, in the Bahamas, today called Watling Island), but it was the first one colonised and from there the Spanish Conquistadors began to rule their great empire. As stated by Hoetink (2011), apart from the fact that the first hospital and the first university were established there, and the first war fought with natives, it is important to note that, basing the economy on mining, cultivation and processing of sugar cane, led to the importation of the first slaves from Spain and then from Africa, hence the first rebellion of the black slaves in the New World in 1522 (Hoetink, 2011, p. 163), or the first act of resistance against invasion.

By the end of the 16th century the island was not a vital centre of Caribbean business, therefore when Drake invaded it, mistakenly believing he would find great treasures, the colony was left more ruined than it was already. Over the course of several generations, the descendants of Amerindians, African slaves and Spanish settlers formed a relatively homogeneous rural population, whose main problem was the absence of a trade that would obtain the goods that could not be manufactured locally, since the economic policy of the Metropolis prohibited trade with foreigners. This led to the northern and western coasts of the island developing an important smuggling activity, used by French, English and Dutch merchants. Nevertheless, rather than change its policy in response to the problem, the Spanish Crown adopted a scorched-earth strategy with the famous devastations of 1605-06 (Hoetink, 2011, p. 165). England knew about the neglect of the northern and western coasts of Hispaniola, which would be used by the Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell as an excuse to prepare another invasion (Gimbernard, 1972, p. 12). As described by Elliott (2006), that proved to be the typical mentality of the European invader of that time: "The Spanish and the English alike accepted the Roman Law principle of *res nullius*, whereby

⁸ "En muy pocos lugares de América llegó la colonización a los extremos de rigor y de ferocidad con que se produjo en esta isla; en ninguna parte fue tan rápido el exterminio de la población" Peña Batlle (1989, p. 29).

unoccupied land remained the common property of mankind, until being put to use” (Elliott, 2006, p. 30). However, they also had in common the ability to change their principles according to the circumstances, as upon finding lands inhabited, “their principal preoccupation would be to justify their lordship over peoples rather than land” (Elliott, 2006, p. 30).

Bosch's description of the English mentality of the moment designates the mentality of the European invader:

“Toda revolución produce un estado de ánimo exultante y expansivo, y en el caso concreto de la inglesa del siglo XVII, los vencedores creían que Dios les había señalado para cumplir un papel ejemplar en el mundo. Así se explica que las vagas ideas de 1647... se expandieran en la cabeza de Oliverio Cromwell y de sus colaboradores más cercanos hasta llevarles a concebir la idea de arrebatarse a España todo el Caribe...” (Bosch, 2007, p. 210).

The invading fleet sent by Cromwell arrived in Santo Domingo in mid-April 1655. After being detained some time in Barbados, where they supplemented infantry troops with 3,000 men, needed to reach the six thousand that were required for the attack, they landed in Nizao, too far from Santo Domingo to take the city by surprise, one of the many mistakes they made (Moya Pons, 2002, p. 84). The two supreme commanders of the expedition were Admiral William Penn and General Robert Venables, so the event was known as the invasion of Penn and Venables. In a move reminiscent of the one taken during the invasion of Drake, the population of Santo Domingo fled, leaving everything they could that was valuable, from slaves to the ornaments of the churches (Bosch, 2007, p. 212). Bosch justifies the reaction of the people: *“Hay que tomar en cuenta que Santo Domingo había sido tomada en 1586 por Francis Drake y que entre esos pobladores que huían debía haber algunos con edad suficiente para recordar el ataque de Drake”* (ibid). Nevertheless, the invasion of Penn and Venables was unsuccessful; defenders fought bravely, and that, coupled with the disorganisation of the attackers and the lack of cooperation between the navy and ground troops of the English, determined the failure of the invasion.

Then, in 1697, the western part of the island became a French colony, under the name of Saint-Domingue; it developed rapidly as a sugar colony of great prosperity, based on the labour of black slaves, while on the Spanish side of the island, the economy was predominantly self-sufficient, even though there was a cattle market with its western neighbour (Hoetink, 2011, p. 166). During the long revolutionary process that culminated in the proclamation of the independent Republic of Haiti in 1804, both blacks (free and slave) and mulatos (poor and elite) took an active part. Whites were eliminated or expelled. Although of a greater area, the eastern part of the island (Santo Domingo) remained weaker than Haiti, both in population and in organisation, during most of the 19th century. Between 1822 and 1844 it was occupied by Haiti.

During this period, the Trinitarian Secret Society was founded in 1838, and given its clandestine nature, its members had to seek legal formulas for their political propaganda. Accordingly they created The Philanthropic Art Society to disseminate separatist and patriotic ideas during the period of Haitian rule. Their purpose was not only to eradicate the Haitian government, but to turn Santo Domingo into a free state, independent of any foreign country. The slogan used was "Peace, Union and Friendship", their sessions were public, and its members delivered strong speeches which moved people to listen and sometimes applaud enthusiastically. Theatre was the means to keep alive in the public mind the idea of separatism. Juan Pablo Duarte, the ideologue of Independence, knew the effectiveness of drama to spread revolutionary ideals from his stay in Catalonia, and the use made of theatre in Spain to raise nationalist sentiments of the people against French domination. So he, together with other members, founded what was called *La Dramática*, in which almost all *Trinitarios* played the role of actors. 'Fighters/Actors'. Which other Independence combatants in the New World could be so called? The independence process had a very peculiar tone in the Dominican Republic:

La nacionalidad dominicana se integró en un inconfundible ambiente de recelo y desconfianza que nos obligaba a vivir sobre el escudo en función constante de combate y vigilancia. La colectividad dominicana no tuvo reposo ni espacio moral para darse a la tarea de su propia formación. Vivió como le permitieron los otros que viviera; en la agonía de no perderse para siempre. Perdernos era dejar de ser españoles. Ninguna agrupación hispanoamericana corrió como nosotros este riesgo (Peña Batlle, 1989, p. 58).

This is a unique and very interesting phenomenon, described by Peña Batlle as a social movement of introspection:

Continuamente nos hemos visto obligados a volver hacia atrás –por vías de conservación- para no perder nuestras características permanentemente amenazadas por el imperialismo calvinista, por el materialismo y por el africanismo básico de la formación social haitiana... Cuando ya entrado el siglo XIX los pueblos hispanoamericanos comenzaron la lucha por la independencia sus esencias sociales tenían moldes definidos. Se independizaron de España cuando se les maduró la conciencia. En cambio, los dominicanos maduramos la nuestra luchando por no dejar de ser españoles (Peña Batlle, 1989, p. 61).

No sooner had collective national consciousness settled when Dominicans suffered a new invasion in the early 20th century. The first U.S. occupation of the Dominican Republic occurred from 1916 to 1924. U.S. Marines landed and took control of the country within two months and imposed a military government (Cassá, 2006). As a result a professional military organisation, the Dominican Constabulary Guard, replaced the partisan forces that had waged a seemingly endless struggle for power. Most Dominicans, however, greatly resented the loss of their sovereignty to foreigners. A guerrilla peasant movement, called *Gavilleros*, enjoyed considerable support in the Eastern provinces against the U.S. occupation from 1917 to 1922, but were crushed due to the superior firepower and counterinsurgency methods of the foreign military. The main consequence of that intervention is reflected in the book *Los Inventores del Monstruo* (2004), by Efraim Castillo, as the birth of the dictator Rafael Trujillo and witnesses the genesis of a figure that would dominate all national areas for over three decades.

The second U.S. intervention in the Dominican Republic was the result of a series of events. The first of these occurred on the 30th May 1961, with the assassination of the dictator Trujillo. After this and upon democratic elections in 1962, seven months later, on the 25th September, 1963,

President Juan Bosch was the victim of a coup and went into exile. His government was succeeded by a *Triunvirato civil* imposed by the Armed Forces and Police. On the 24th April, 1965 two garrisons of the armed forces who wanted to restore the constitutional government of Bosch, rebelled. There were confrontations between the military faction that favoured Bosch, called the constitutionalist rebellious side, and the military side which led the coup-side called "loyal". On the 28th April, the United States invaded the country, summarising their arguments to justify this intervention on the basis of three principles: the restoration of law and order, protection of the lives of Americans and avoidance of the possible triumph of the communists.

During the U.S. invasion of 1965, there were artistic and cultural events of various kinds, where posters and murals were the main means of expression, in which they identified people's objectives and poets wrote and read their new poems to the crowd. The art produced was basically committed to the revolution and, therefore, opposed to the U.S. occupation. Also, Constitutionalist artists formed the Cultural Front, an organisation that published a booklet of poems called *Pueblo, Sangre y Canto*, and also contained a "Declaration of the artists", which expressed support for the Constitutional Government. They also published *Permanencia del llanto*, a book of poems written by Jacques Viau Renaud, a Haitian poet and constitutionalist fighter who died in war.⁹ History tends to be ironic. Over one hundred years later, after the Dominican Republic fought for its independence against Haiti, a young Haitian poet died in the fight against the U.S. intervention for that same nation that his country invaded and ruled for 22 years. This event might reflect the thought that, against an invading force, man is universal, as Viau Renaud wrote himself:

*Hombre,
No te derrumbes,
Es preciso estar con los demás,
Duele el aunarse
Golpea el amar.
Sé cómplice del amor,
Es el único medio de salvar la vida
(Viau Renaud, 1985, p. 44).*

⁹ It was reedited in 1985 as *Permanencia del llanto*, Santo Domingo: Editora Universitaria

Morrison (1985), another poet opposing the U.S. invasion in 1965, said of Viau Renaud that he rose to the condition of Quisqueyan. All pages written by the colonialists and neo colonialists trying to justify the hatred between Dominican and Haitian people resounded at the beautiful expression of *an island poet*, who with poetry and guns, even to the limit of losing his life, defended the people's right to self-determination (Morrison, 1985). Literary groups emerged in the 1960s as the result of political and cultural divergence that shook the revolutionary camp. The most important event resulting from the 1965 invasion was the April War or April Revolution, which generated reactions in all areas of Dominican life. Alcántara Almánzar (1990) called the literature produced during that invasion *Literatura del estallido*, whose characteristics are: aggressiveness, commitment to the political circumstances, spontaneity and the ability to witness bloody events.

In the years after the April War, much was written about the invasion, giving rise to a post-war literature. In this respect, Conde (1971) states that the young generation of authors is a direct product, potential and emotional, resulting from the April Revolution. Thus the Dominican literary activity is and will be influenced for a long time and almost determined by the events of April, even though its subject matter does not necessarily have to be war-mongering. As well as the 1965 invasion leading to the revolution, the revolution in turn marks the division between traditional and modern Dominican literature, if not different in qualitative terms, at least in a different way of presenting the literary event (Conde, 1971). It could be said that the situation caused by the 1965 U.S. invasion gave the Dominican writer opportunities for catharsis and for an explosion.

In 1965 circumstances were different in the Dominican Republic from those of 1844, but once again the nation found itself invaded by a foreign army. As depicted by Morrison (2011), the civil war and the participation of writers opened the door to theoretical and practical definitions, which

brought poetry to a level of everyday commitments in combination with their political and ideological interests. The organisational means to meet these aims were the literary groups, and competition among them the common reflection of the time along party lines. Their poetry was socially committed. Their slogan was "Unity" and they had the same interest as the Independents of the 19th century, which was not necessarily to spread the ideas of freedom, but to raise awareness among the people of being an invaded nation. They clearly had in mind the formation of consciousness of literature as a profession.

Lastly, it could be said that the top historical 'invader' evoked in Dominican literature is undoubtedly the dictator Trujillo (1930-1961), who established one of the most tyrannical states in the history of Latin America. The second half of the 20th century saw a real boom of novels about that period. For instance, just to name a few, *Sólo cenizas hallarás (bolero)* (1980) by Pedro Vergés, the many writings of Marcio Veloz Maggiolo, or *Musiquito. Anales de un déspota y un bolerista* (1993) by Enriquillo Sánchez. However, maybe the most famous Trujillo novels in international arenas were published outside the island by foreigners, like Vargas Llosa's *La Fiesta del Chivo* (2000); Vásquez Montalbán's *Galíndez* (1990) and by two Dominican-Americans: Julia Alvarez's *En el Tiempo de las Mariposas* (1995) and Junot Díaz's *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (2007). What these works have in common are the characters' struggle against the suffocating control of the word and people manipulated by the dictator, for whom invasion of privacy was the norm. The basis of those works is perhaps Prestol Castillo's *El Masacre se pasa a pie* (1973), which could be considered as the most intense novelistic treatment of the murder of thousands of Haitians in 1937 by Trujillo. The novels might differ in their approach of the 'invader', but they all collectively show the writer's concern about how those events have been connected with different aspects of the Dominican society (i.e. history, national identity, migration, diaspora, gender, sexuality and family) and hence the interest of the present study in exploring how invasions have been represented and contested in Dominican literature.

I.4 A note on methodology

The thesis has been organised chronologically so as to follow an evolving path. Therefore, as announced by modern tourist brochures, which claim that the Dominican Republic is the country “where it all began,” this study starts with a retrospective from Christopher Columbus, as the first invader, seen from a female perspective in the highly acclaimed poems *Anacaona*, by Ureña, first published in 1880, and *Yania Tierra*, by Cartagena Portalatín, written one hundred years later, in 1981. These two poems represent the essence of feminist thought of two different generations who share the indignation of being 'invaded' in body and soul.

Then come the pirates in the third chapter, symbolised in the character of Francis Drake, *El Dragón*, who burned the city of Santo Domingo in 1586 and ruined the colony. There are not many options in the local literary spectrum, as only one novel about this character has been published in the Dominican Republic, although Drake is a very well-known name in Dominican discourse. *El Grito del Tambor*, by Emilia Pereyra, published in 2012, reveals the myth that has been created around this character and leads to an appropriate analogy between him and Christopher Columbus, the other European invader.

Dominican independence has a strong ideological content and is the clearest expression of the whole struggle of ideas and feelings that gave rise to Latin American civilization (Peña Batlle, 1989, p. 61). However, Independence fighters needed to spread their ideas and, in those years of 1838-1844, the most accurate means of reaching the public was theatre, the only so called ‘mass medium’. Due to the censorship by the Haitian invaders, Dominican plays were not abundant, therefore Duarte used imported works for the cause, so it seems appropriate to consider in chapter four the works *Un día del año 23* (1835), by Eugenio Ochoa, and *La viuda de Padilla* (1812), by

Francisco Martínez De la Rosa, among others used by the *Trinitarios*, in order to highpoint the ideas of the time that woke the sleeping consciences of the Dominicans and how they reacted to the Haitian invasion.

In Chapter V, different forms of resilience against the U.S. invasion of 1916 are analysed: those of the intellectuals, through the different works they produced, and those of the peasants, embodied in the *Gavilleros*, with a special focus on how the peasantry lived in that pre-dictatorship period. These are very well described by Bosch in his novel *La Mañosa*, first published in 1935, and by Veloz Maggiolo in *La vida no tiene nombre*, published in 1965. Chapter VI will illustrate the utilisation of novels by modern authors to expose the invader from within that Trujillo's dictatorship represented, starting with the emergence of the figure of the dictator, created by the invaders, as Castillo states in his play *Los Inventores del Monstruo* (2004). To finalise, it will be shown how in 1965 poetry evolved as a dangerous weapon and was used against the bullets of U.S. invaders, with a large sample of the poems written at that time in order to shed light on the poets' commitment to their social reality.

Chapter II:

ANACAONA AND YANIA TIERRA LITERARY IMAGES OF INVASIONS AND RESISTANCE FROM A FEMALE PERSPECTIVE

Invasions are the key to understanding the development of Caribbean society, considering it is among the regions that have been destined to be the border of two or more empires and whose fate has made it the object of the greed of the greatest Western powers, as well as theatre of violence between them; an imperial frontier, as Bosch describes it (2007). Therefore, not surprisingly, given that the Dominican Republic is “*en el mismo trayecto del sol*” (Mir, 2013), this country had an uncharacteristic history. Unlike most Spanish colonised countries in the Americas during the 19th century, the Dominican Republic took up arms to gain its independence not once but twice, first from Haiti, then from Spain. It could be said that there was a clash of invasions, which, in one way or another, would have an impact on the formation of the Dominican people’s character. Consequently, the basis of what would later become the essence of the Dominican nation is to be found perhaps in the intentions of the first invaders, as there is no denying that this region –and the Dominican Republic within– saw some of the harshest systems of exploitation and some of the most savage genocides while at the same time witnessing wonderful examples of the resilience of the human spirit (Higman 2011, p. 8).

For instance, in citing Columbus’ objectives, Henríquez Ureña (1965) reflects that the longing for spiritual conquest favoured the development of culture in the New World. However, as a result of its first invasion at the hands of Spaniards in 1492, Hispaniola island, whose eastern portion was to become the Dominican Republic from 1844, suffered the extermination of its indigenous population and the western part was depopulated at the beginning of the 16th century to prevent smuggling. It is in the latter area that the French settled a colony and the slaves would later form the

Republic of Haiti, a fundamental fact in Dominican history. It was clear that “only by pushing aside, removing, enslaving, or killing those people could European colonisation make space to succeed” (Higman, 2011, p. 53).

Without an understanding of this phenomenon it is impossible for Dominican society to understand its past or its present and so, the aim of this chapter is to explore how the invasions (from Columbus and pirate attacks, through the Haitian occupation and the brutal invasion of privacy of the Trujillo’s dictatorship and to the U.S. invasions of 1916 and 1965) contributed to the germination of a fighting spirit in the Dominican inhabitants as described in two major poetic works from different times, and from a female perspective: the epic poem *Anacaona* (1989) by Salomé Ureña, and the book-length poem *Yania Tierra* (1981) by Aída Cartagena Portalatín. Both represent the attitudes of the intellectuals, especially women, towards the overwhelming force of power that comes with an invasion, which subjugates people and at the same time awakens their courage.

II.1 Anacaona: symbol of female resilience

Invasions throughout their more than 500 years of history have made an enduring impression on the way in which Dominicans see themselves, with the issue of gender being one of the most controversial, for so much has been written about the male struggle to break free from the foreign yoke, and so little about the valuable help of the women in the various processes. Moreover, the perspective seems to be different, as, unlike men, who have been seen as divided by class, nation, or historical era, women have traditionally been viewed first as women, a separate category of being (Anderson and Zinsser, 1988, Introduction).

Ryan (2001) states that through literature, Dominican intellectuals and leaders sought to define their nation's identity, and to specify the differences between their nation and the nations that had ruled over them. She gives a remarkable account of the time, relating that in the late 19th century, the Dominican Republic fought to separate itself from Spain politically, while continuing to embrace Spanish cultural heritage. The Catholic religion and the Spanish language were cherished as traits that differentiated Dominicans from Haitians. Dominican antipathy toward Spain was grounded, not in cultural divergence, but in political and economic differences that had festered since the 17th century (Ryan, 2001, p. 7). Spanish rule over the inhabitants of the Hispaniola colony had left them impoverished and marginalised, as Spain turned its interest to more lucrative mainland colonies and forbade its subjects from trading with other European powers. The young Dominican Republic, established in 1844, might have remained free of the Spanish yoke forever, had President Pedro Santana not reunited it with the metropolis in 1861. Being under Spanish rule during the annexation, this period proved unbearable for most Dominicans. The Spaniards imposed disruptive economic policies and strict religious standards, and they despised the darker skin and distinct customs of the Dominicans (*ibid*).

Those were the circumstances into which Ureña stormed with her poetry. She was born in Santo Domingo in 1850:

“The story of my life starts with the story of my country, as I was born six years after independence, a sickly child, not expected to live. But by the time I was six, I was in better health than my country, for *la patria* had already suffered eleven changes of government. I, on the other hand, had only endured one major change: my mother had left my father” (Álvarez, 2000, p. 13).

Ureña was the daughter of writer Nicolás Ureña de Mendoza and Gregoria Díaz, who taught her daughter her first lessons. At an early age she was deeply influenced by literature, as her father taught her the classic works of Spanish and French writers that helped her develop her own career. She began publishing her first works at the age of seventeen and soon became known for her spontaneity and tenderness. Later, her poetry became more tragic or very patriotic. She married Dr.

Francisco Henríquez y Carvajal, himself a writer, and an important figure in politics. She had four children, who would later become highly respected figures of the mid and late 20th century as writers, philosophers, poets, and critics of the arts. Around 1881, Salomé opened the first centre of higher education for young women in the Dominican Republic, *Instituto de Señoritas*, something uncommon at the time. She died in 1897, of tuberculosis. Although she is considered the national poet in the Dominican Republic, it seems strange that her work is not really well known in Latin America:

Y aunque la obra de los hijos haya podido opacar la de la madre por ser más extensa o estar más directamente ligada a la crítica literaria, aún no puede justificarse la oscuridad casi total de la poeta...hasta el punto de que gran parte de los estudiantes y críticos de literatura hispanoamericana ignoran la existencia de esta poeta (Izquierdo, 1991, p. 252).

Beneath the apparently sensitive spirit of a female character who recites to nature and family, lies a more complex personality who is aware of the state of inferiority of Dominican women in relation to men and became a champion of feminism in the young country, which was reflected in her continuous effort of twelve years in the *Instituto de Señoritas* in favour of women's education.

Balaguer (1956) points out that it was the great woman poet who embodied the hopes and aspirations of the already consolidated republic. However, for the so called 'National Poetess,' the Dominican Republic was born as fragile as a premature baby, which she calls 'hapless homeland' in the poem *Ruinas*, in which she says:

Traza [...] el cuadro melancólico de los palacios que sintetizaron el esplendor de la colonia, para levantarse después a la contemplación del destino de la República, simbolizado en la grandeza extinguida de aquellas masas arquitectónicas semidestrozadas (Balaguer, 1956, p. 120).

The critic Contín Aybar says that issues addressed by Ureña confined her poetry to national boundaries, although her Hispanic traditionalism placed her among peninsular poets of the 800s,

without any attempt at Dominicanisation (cited by Céspedes, 2002, p. 12). Alcántara Almánzar on the other hand assures that Contín Aybar is exaggerating and somehow distorting reality. Ureña sang to her country not with the aim of taking as a benchmark an abstract model, but taking into account the social formation of the then nation, although it contained many elements of an idealized vision (cited by Céspedes, *ibid*).

In *Anacaona*, a long poem composed of 39 stanzas, Ureña portrays Quisqueya, a quiet, free and beautiful island, inhabited by peaceful people and favoured by nature. Suddenly, into this heaven of peace burst strangers who come to upset the order of things, invaders in search of gold, who want to seize the land and its people. The poem describes the capture of Caonabo, one of the most powerful *caciques* (chiefs) and the sacrifice and death of his wife, Anacaona, lamenting that the generous Indians make a blind oath of faith to the tyrant who will entrap them with an infamous net:

*¡Ay del indio que en su seno
generoso, sin doblez,
a la víbora da abrigo,
y promete ciega fe
al tirano que le halaga,
que le tiende infame red!*
(*Anacaona*, p. 187).

According to Céspedes (1989) the ideological strategy of these indigenous texts in a country without Indians, occurs at a time when intellectuals and liberal parties were wondering what was and is the Dominican nation. So they seek their identity at a time when the key concept of politics is that of the emerging bourgeoisie of the 19th century, whose purpose was to give birth to a Dominican nation-state. Ryan (2001) supports this idea by mentioning that some critics agree that Ureña and other poets composed their highly polished cultured poetry about the conquest in order to stir up nationalist and patriotic feelings, and to oppose invasion and annexations. Furthermore, she indicates that this poetry also connected Dominicans to a distant past and provided historical roots for the nation. As Céspedes (1989) posits, these texts of the epoch, which deal with such issues,

demonstrate a nostalgia for lost origins. For instance, these poems call on readers to have a mournful respect for the sufferings of the *Indians*, who struggled to maintain their lives and their sovereignty.

*Pero las hordas crueles
Invaden las vecinas
Comarcas, devastando
La tierra del indígena,
Y luchan por doquiera
Las tribus decididas
Que en múltiples contiendas
Sus fuerzas aniquilan
(Anacaona, p. 196).*

Hoetink rejects the belief of some critics that the Dominican interest in an indigenous population, which as a group had died long ago, must be understood, in the best case, as an example of elitist escapism, and at worst as anti-black racism (Hoetink, 2011, p. 121). He believes in the need to establish a continuity between past inhabitants and the present population and, in doing so, legitimise the historical claim of the latter to the land they inhabit, a statement that can only be partially supported, as it lacks the establishing of responsibility that weighs on the first invaders' shoulders for the annihilation of the indigenous population.

Although the history of Dominican literature begins with the proclamation of independence in 1844, as Henríquez Ureña (1965) maintains, the fact is that at the beginning there was not a clear idea of where the roots of the nation lay. Henríquez Ureña recounts that just after a few hours after the birth of the Republic, Félix María Del Monte wrote an anthem with the following stanza: "*Al arma, españoles*", calling upon the inhabitants of the new country to take up their weapons and fight against the Haitian invaders. They were not Spaniards anymore but not yet Dominicans. Thus they were caught up in the confusion of an abstract transition once again caused by the invading forces. Although the word '*españoles*' was later replaced by the word '*patriotas*', Del Monte stated that '*españoles*' referred to the island of Hispaniola (*Española*), whose inhabitants were heirs of a

tradition, an origin, a culture and a language other than those of the domineering forces (Henríquez Ureña, 1965, p. 177).

Ureña, however, is persistent in her nomination of Quisqueya, Mother of All Lands, (Higman, 2011, p. 33), as a sign of distance towards the Spanish invaders, when she claims that: “*Quisqueya, que a las nubes / encumbra sus montañas,*” or when she points out that “*La indígena familia / la raza de Quisqueya*” (Anacaona, 1989). Here she converges with her peer Cartagena Portolatín (1981), who chooses to name the nation *Yania Tierra* or *Yania López*. Thus, Yania and Quisqueya are the same land, invaded, possessed and torn, and simultaneously magnificent and beautiful:

*Yania López vestida
Yania López desnuda
En medio de los cumplimientos reconocen
Su vergüenza y la degradación a que es sometida
(Yania Tierra, p. 277)*

*Todo es vida y frescura y luz y aroma
de Quisqueya en los mágicos pensiles;
todo matices de la aurora toma
y aliento de los céfiros sutiles.
(Anacaona, p. 184)*

Ryan (2001) also stresses that, by building on the anti-imperialist spirit of long-dead indigenous, these poems about the Conquest kept alive the rancour of confrontations with a national ‘other’ in order to foster an identification with the nation (Ryan, 2001, p. 10). It is therefore interesting to point out that, soon after the emergence of politically-charged Indianist poetry in the 1870s and 1880s, the popular imagination latched on to a metaphor that equated Dominicans with *Indians* (ibid). Not surprisingly, the Dominican scenario is full of indigenous names, perhaps as an attempt to detach themselves from the Spaniards, an idea supported by Rodríguez Demorizi, who is quoted by Ryan confirming that Dominicans began naming their children after the indigenous heroes (ibid, p. 37). Céspedes admits that *Anacaona* possesses a definition of time, i.e. follows the lines of the 19th century that saw in the indigenous past an identification symbol, the only possibility of structuring a valid concept of nationality (Céspedes, 1989, p. 67), as shown in this verse:

*Tendida en las espumas
Del piélago sonoro,
Nacida al rayo de oro*

*Del éter tropical;
De vida palpitante,
Bellísima y lozana,
Quisqueya eleva ufana
La frente virginal.
(Anacaona, p. 176)*

In relation to Africans, Ryan (2001) maintains that it is more difficult to argue that the major Indianist poetic works were written to exclude blacks from the national identity. *Anacaona* and the other works do not mention dates, but in general, they describe events that occurred before 1503. Africans were not introduced to Hispaniola en masse until about 1518, with the first sugar plantations (Moya Pons, 2002, p. 32). The truth is that, as Henríquez Ureña (1965, p. 88) indicates, those were times of incessant anguish and each day new mutations of sovereignty were predicted: “Yesterday Spain, then France... and the bloody incursions of Haitians. Tomorrow, perhaps, England...according to the circulating rumor.” Under this scenario, Henríquez Ureña (1965) relates the story [repeated incessantly by historians and writers] of Juan Vásquez’s famous stanza.

Why did Salomé Ureña not write about slaves, instead of *Indians*? Why not praise the struggles of the black people and their descendants, the mulattos? These are difficult questions, which some scholars, like Izquierdo, attempt to answer by indicating that: “*Sólo reafirmando las raíces del pueblo dominicano en su propia y verdadera historia, podía Ureña tratar de estimular el surgimiento de la naciente nacionalidad de su país*” (Izquierdo, 1991, p. 60). Henríquez Ureña (1965) supports this, as he explains that in the first half of the century, while Dominicans were fighting Haitians, writers did not want to depict current population. However the re-annexation of the Republic to the Spanish crown in 1861 caused serious political resentment in the people, following which, the writers began to cultivate the theme of aboriginal cruelty at the hands of Spain at the time of the Conquest, as a means of demonizing the Motherland (Henríquez Ureña, 1965, pp. 198-208). For him, through the legendary fights that the ancient inhabitants of Quisqueya had undertaken unsuccessfully against the Spanish Conquistadors, Ureña reflected, as in a clear mirror,

the recent struggles of the Restoration that the Dominican people of her day had just fought against Spain, the same nation which had previously subjugated the indigenous people. Seen from another perspective, the poem must be located within the parameters of the birth of the Dominican nation and the Romantic movement, and one of the most important facets of romanticism is the appreciation of each country's inhabitant and own historical past (Henríquez Ureña, 1965).

According to Henríquez Ureña, the best of Indian literature has been written in Santo Domingo and Uruguay, which is paradoxical, since currently there are no Indians in the two countries (cited by Cometta Manzoni, 1939, p. 185). In the meantime, for Izquierdo, the future of the *Indian* issue in Dominican literature is uncertain, because besides having disappeared from the island, it is unlikely that there will appear a political motive to revive it (Izquierdo, 1991, p. 67). However, this proclamation might seem premature, as, although it has been over 400 years since the invasion of Francis Drake, the novel *El Grito del Tambor* was published in 2012, portraying that event, which could inspire further work on this topic. Perhaps the central role of the indigenous is symbolic, as it is the character of *el Cojito* mentioned by Cartagena Portalatín in *Yania Tierra*, or Sadá, the black slave who faced Francis Drake and is praised by Pereyra in her novel. All of them are heroes or symbols in Dominican literature, reflecting the hatred of the inhabitants towards invaders of all ages and Anacaona becomes essentially the symbol of female resilience.

Anacaona fought in the Battle of Jánico, the Battle of Guaco and was the only one among the *caciques* that preferred dialogue with the *Arijunas* in order to keep peace and their land. At the death of her husband Caonabo and her brother Bohechio she became the Great *Cacica* of Jaragua and Maguana. Anacaona was the only indigenous woman chief that the Conquistadors encountered in the New World (Hernández Díaz, 2003, p. 4). In his novel *Anacaona: La Reina del Nuevo Mundo*, Hernández Díaz unfolds the events from the arrival of Christopher Columbus to the island in 1492 until the death of Anacaona at the hands of Ovando in the city of Vera Cruz in 1503.

However, it is not clear whether the text is fiction or fact, as at times it seems to recreate the same archetypes of fantastic imagination of some writers. Such is the case of Juan Vila y Blanco's poem *Anacaona, leyenda histórica en cuatro cantos* (1856), in which the character is mythologized to an angelic point of supernatural and bewitching beauty. Most historical texts coincide in that Anacaona was particularly attractive, but to assume that she had 'bewitched' the Spanish soldiers, many of whom tried to win her love (from Bartholomew Columbus to the mighty and immovable Ovando), in order to inherit her vast territories, may seem an exaggeration like the description of her enormous physical strength that led her to challenge to a duel both Roland and Ovando. In the end, Ovando did not require Anacaona's surrender to carry out his plans. Amid the festivities that the Taino Queen offered the Spanish Governor in her main village, Ovando ordered an attack and near eighty chiefs that were present were burned alive. Anacaona was taken prisoner and then hanged in Santo Domingo, under the unfounded charge of conspiracy (Cassá, 2006, p.125). The murder of Anacaona serves as a metaphor of the annihilation of a group of people and the irreversible abolition of a whole culture due to an invasion. The image that Ureña leaves in the final lines of her historical poem is of defeat and resignation, when Anacaona, as a female Quijote, casts a last sad look at the fields, once green and pristine, and now bloodstained:

La pobre Indiana, sobre sus campos
 Vuelve la vista llena de horror,
 Y a esos lugares do el alma deja
 Envía un amargo supremo adiós.
 (*Anacaona*, p. 244)

II.2 *Yania Tierra*: a tribute to the women of the Dominican Republic

Williams (2011) states that Cartagena Portalatín opens up a space for rethinking the study of gender and race in Caribbean and Latin American literary history, in this statement in the introductory words of her book length poem *Yania Tierra* (1981):

*CON ESTE POEMA DOCUMENTO rendimos HOMENAJE a las mujeres de
Nuestra tierra que a través de un lapso de Cinco Siglos han sido ultimadas o se
Han sacrificado por su pueblo.*

Indeed, in five centuries of struggle, many Dominican women were killed or sacrificed themselves for the cause, but these struggles were different for women and men. Caribbean people are not exempt from the tensions suffered by other races as a result of gender. One may see a contradiction in that tensions should exist between males and females who historically have had to endure together the weight of class and race oppression imposed by the colonial order (Torres-Saillant, 1997) The equality of their shared subjugation did not automatically translate into equality of shared liberation in postcolonial society, which has tended to be dominated by patriarchal nationalism. As a consequence, history, race, religion, language, and other unifying paradigms have become associated with the identity of the dominant male. The dominant perception conceives the Caribbean experience as a sequence of actions performed by men (ibid). Cartagena Portalatín seals it in her poem:

*Rosa Montás se indigna al paso
de invasores
(Yania Tierra, p. 321)*

*En Santiago / se indigna por
la audaz ocupación
Ercilia Pepín
Levanta su voz en la Campaña
contra los invasores
(Yania Tierra, p. 331)*

A woman has to perform the labours of Hercules in order to be recognised (Martínez Hoyos, 2012). This was stated about Leona Vicario, the first journalist to exist in Mexico (1789-1842), who was a supporter of the Mexican War of Independence and was able to provide intelligence and money to the rebel movement. Williams (2011) argues that the formal elements that Cartagena Portalatín employs, pictures, and linguistic and typographical modes, give rise to contradictory positions by working to counter conventional portrayals of racial and gender differences, and

simultaneously reproducing paradigms formulated by previous Dominican authors, notably Galván and Ureña. However, it would be problematic to condemn this ambiguity as ‘contradictory’, since history itself places women in conflicting positions, Ureña being a notable example of this. In this sense, Chiqui Vicioso (n.d.), a Dominican writer and critic, declares that Dominican women writers have a glorious history of struggle against patriarchal power in all areas.

This patriarchal power, continues Vicioso (n.d.), in all its forms had another manifestation not only then but always, which was even more detrimental to women's literature, and had been expressed in the field of literary criticism. In order to rethink the study of gender and race there must be a special analysis of the circumstances that women had to confront, namely a foreign invasion, dictatorship or drastic changes of government, for, as seen throughout history, women had been playthings to be used and cast aside (Fuller and Leslie-Melville, 1935, p. 72). Klausmann and Meinzerin agree and state that the pirate attitude towards women was also no different from that of other invaders. For the buccaneers, women were simply goods to be robbed, traded, or shared in ‘brotherly’ fashion (cited in Kuhn, 2010).

Vicioso gives an account of her own circumstances from a geographical and linguistic perspective, in her poem *Eva/Sion/Es* (2007), published simultaneously in the three languages that represent the essence of the Caribbean (Spanish, English and French). She makes an attempt to retrieve a certain tradition of struggle regarding the issue of gender, which was just warmly outlined by Ureña and decidedly began with Cartagena Portolatín (Mena, 2007).

*Eva mulata
de la violenta salvaguarda de mis ancestros
sólo heredo el silencio
de las víctimas....
(Eva/Sion/Es, 2007)*

In that poem it can be seen how Vicioso assumes the origin of the Caribbean mulatto woman. Vicioso recounts that Ureña, for instance, in her short life (47 years) underwent 31 changes of

government, many of the same person (as the five of Buenaventura Baez, all three of General Santana, and the four of Ulises Heureaux, or Lilís), without counting fifty uprisings and revolts (Vicioso, n.d.). One might wonder how a woman stands in the political turmoil around her and then reflects it in her writing. Cartagena Portalatín mentions in her poem how Ureña, after being disappointed with her surrounding world, uses poetry to break the silence that was imposed upon her:

*Salomé Ureña / Más tarde / defraudada
Quiebra el silencio impuesto
(Yania Tierra, p. 327)*

Thus, Ureña speaks of the unfortunate nation as if it were her own inner circle, her family. She wonders what sort of dangers have fallen upon her and demands that the nation stand up to extreme indolence:

*¿Qué anatema cayó sobre tu frente?
Levanta ya de tu indolencia extrema:
la hora sonó de redención suprema
y ¡ay si desmayas en la lid presente!
(Ruinas, in Contín Aybar, 1943, p. 17)*

Ureña's circumstances in 1861 were not very different from those of Minerva Mirabal, the heroine killed by the dictator Trujillo in 1960. They were women fighters, they were victims of an extremely patriarchal and arbitrary society. On a personal level they experienced similar incidents. The first big change that Ureña experienced as a child was when her mother left her father [truly amazing and unusual event at that time], who was a lawyer, politician and poet, due to his infidelities. Ureña later suffered from the same 'blight' of infidelity from her husband, but she would not abandon him, perhaps due to the awareness of her own fragility because she was so ill (she would die young). Like her family, the brand new nation was also broken, divided by internal wars and eventually annexed by Spain to return to being a colony. Ureña seems to be more concerned about the fate of her homeland than her own family, as described in *In the Name of Salomé*:

“I think of Cuba and Puerto Rico about to fight for their independence, and of the United States just beginning to fight for the independence of its black people, and then I think of my own *patria*

willingly giving up its independence to become a colony again, and I ask myself again, ‘What is *la patria*?’ What is this notion of a country that will make so many people die for its freedom only to have a whole other set of its people put it back in a ball and chain again?” (Alvarez, 2000, p. 25).

From Cartagena Portalatín’s standpoint, ‘woman’ is a term in an ongoing dialogue of representations. The poet appears to re-enact the ethnographic gesture of the colonial moment, as viewed by Williams (2011), when 16th-century Spaniards attempted to erase the differences between European and Amerindian cultures by being biased towards their own symbolic order as the unmarked frame of reference. However, perhaps the term involves more participation than the historical facts can ever transmit, as behind the heroes that took part in the different events there were always the silent hands of wives, mothers and sisters, or as Cartagena Portalatín depicts them: they were also *Trinitarias*, meaning fighters:

Todas fabrican balas
Trajes y vendajes
Todas esas mujeres febreristas
Dios/Patria y Libertad sus cuerpos
A la inmortalidad
También son Trinitarias
(*Yania Tierra*, p. 318)

Hernández (2007) indicates that, for convenience, because of intellectual sovereignty or conviction, Cartagena Portalatín did not wish to be referred to as a ‘feminist.’ Perhaps her attitude was due to the halo, too transgressive or aggressive for many, surrounding the term. However, the call for justice in Cartagena Portalatín is shown throughout her work (Hernández, 2007). The author herself confirmed that she felt great respect, both for men as for women who stay ‘present’ in the dark moments of our country (ibid). To the question of whether she considered *Yania Tierra* to be feminist, she replied:

“Una persona sin prejuicios pensaría que es un libro en el cual se hace justicia, es decir, un justificado reconocimiento. No se me ocurre pensar en ‘machismo literario’ cuando tantos y tantos escritores investigan o exaltan los grandes hombres de la patria. Tengo para mí que el ‘feminismo’ revela una lucha de discriminaciones, prejuicios y de injusticias entre géneros. En ningún momento se produce esa lucha a lo largo del contexto de *Yania*. Particularmente sólo veo la lucha de alcanzar su meta por medio de la superación y el respeto” (Hernández, 2007).

Hernández believes that this response suggests a notion of women's rights, coinciding with that of Ureña and other forerunners of feminism in the Dominican Republic, where education was the best means for women to gain a change of position in society (Hernández, 2007). In 1942 (at the height of Trujillo's dictatorship), Dominican women acquired civil rights. However, this is not, from Hernández's point of view, the most relevant achievement. The irreversible change begins to occur in the written word, in looking over things, in the perception of a spirit overflowing with promises and powers. From the beginning, Cartagena Portalatín will be one of the major figures of the movement of *La Poesía Sorprendida* (which existed between 1943 and 1953 and published a magazine of the same name with 128 signatures of 27 different countries). Her presence in that movement was surprising, as she was not from the capital city and was the only woman in the group, the first woman to form part of a literary movement (Hernández, 2007). It should be noted that in the poems of Cartagena Portalatín, loneliness and pain remain recurring themes, although they do not dominate her, but the writer will submit them to the purposes of beauty, strength and depth in her poetry (Hernández, 2007).

In keeping with the generic markers of an epic, *Yania Tierra* chronicles the most significant moments in the country's development from 5th December 1492, the date of Columbus's arrival, to the present. However, unlike other contemporary Spanish-American poems of comparable structure, such as Neruda's *Canto General* (1950) and Mir's *Contracanto a Walt Whitman* (1952), Williams (2011) says that Cartagena Portalatín assigns a heroic role to (Dominican) women. Thus, an attempt is made to have the nation's social features retain a conceptual link to the feminine grammatical status encoded in the word *patria*. The nation, as a woman's body, always fragile and vulnerable, is represented by Cartagena Portalatín in its different meanings with a denunciatory demand about the dangers that threaten her:

*Desean secuestrar la libertad de la palabra
que traspasa tu cuerpo Yania Tierra
(Yania Tierra, p. 271)*

This reaffirms her condition as a woman/nation made a victim by the competing forces that try to possess her:

*Toda Yania marcada y poseída
por colosos rivales posesivos
(Yania Tierra, p. 273)*

Cartagena Portalatín coincides with Mir (1978), who at the beginning of his novel *Cuando amaban las tierras comuneras* describes the Land as always maternal, thus identifying it with a woman's body. For him, a woman is a nation and both are usually loved for what they are inside as much as for what they show to the world:

*Toda mujer es una patria en el mismo sentido en que una patria es una mujer
y ambas suelen ser amadas por lo que llevan por dentro tanto por lo que lucen
por fuera y así sucede que no pocas veces el amor hacia la tierra que nos ha
visto nacer es objetiva topográficamente y dirige nuestra atención hacia sus
colinas y sus bosques o hacia sus llanuras y hondonadas o sus cavernas y
vallejuelos...como el cutis de nuestra patria (Mir, 1978, p. 61).*

Nevertheless, Yania –the woman and the nation– does not remain immobile, she fights back, and this attitude was inherited from its first inhabitants. As Mejía-Ricart (1984) points out, the Tainos did not stand still against the Spanish invaders, but fought with what they had (arrows, sticks or stones) against the firearms of the Spaniards. According to Vicioso (n.d.), the political resistance in the literary world, inaugurated by Ureña, also resulted in a resistance to the prevailing educational system that excluded women, and the dictates of the Catholic Church, and led her to battle on multiple fronts, including love, a war which she also loses eventually, affecting her health. Ureña's failure, proclaims Vicioso, gives way to the silence and solitude that characterise Dominican thinking women, writers and poets. Vicioso refers to that clash, solitude, silence, and founding of new educational and literary trends as the weapons with which Ureña and Cartagena Portalatín fought their conflicts (Vicioso, n.d.). Each was trying to open possible spaces allowed by the small, provincial town of Santo Domingo, the gigantic concentration camp into which the

various dictatorships had converted the island, the poor body of Yania Tierra, as Cartagena Portalatín lamented:

*La deja así / desnuda
La sábana rasgada...
...Todas las afrentas con que quieren
destruir a Yania López
(Yania Tierra, 274)*

As Morris (2006) sees it, in her journey through history, Cartagena Portalatín does not exclude these women, exalted in the previous century. However, women are presented not as an ideal but as women among many others who lost their lives because of the invasions suffered by the country. The fact is that women and fiction are a recurrent topic among women themselves.

Why have women always been so poor, Virginia Wolf (1995) wonders, thinking about how different things would have been "if only Mrs. Seton and her mother and her mother before her had learnt the great art of making money and had left their money for the education of their daughters...However, a great sacrifice would have been required: There would have been no Mary" (Woolf, 1995, p. 30). Plus, law and custom conspired to prevent those women from having any legal property rights at all; they were themselves considered property. Cartagena Portalatín so understood it and always sought economic independence. She was the first in her village to learn how to drive. She liked to manage her money and not be beholden to anyone. She was always conducting business, apart from her literature. The travelling poet went hand in hand with the practical woman who knew how to earn money (Hernández, 2007, p. 4). Apparently, the major challenge that Cartagena Portalatín had to face was that of identity. Néstor E. Rodríguez (2005) maintains that, during Cartagena Portalatín's work produced after the dictatorship, the various themes were not race or ethnic origin, but the consolidation of a female subjectivity discordant with the patriarchal order that challenged her. It is apparent that *Yania Tierra* combines many of her concerns, both historical and literary. Cartagena Portalatín was a short story writer, poet, novelist,

literary critic, feminist scholar, and educator. During her lifetime, which spanned the entire 20th century, she published more than twenty books, among them the relevant novel *Escalera para Electra* (1969). She also earned numerous acknowledgments within the literary world, including the Medal of Recognition from the *Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo*, and the Medal of Merit for Women granted by the President of the Republic.

Yania Tierra's eighty-two pages narrate the history of the nation and fuse historical dates, heroic events, and popular figures in a vivid energetic language. Women, in particular, are validated in their heroic roles as revolutionaries, teachers, widows, mothers and wives.

*Dice Rosa en el exilio / Yo entregué la bandera/
 María Trinidad en el patíbulo: yo llevé la pólvora/
 En la prisión junto a Socorro Sánchez/
 Grita Balbina Peña: Yo cuido su honra
 (Yania Tierra, p. 301)*

Morris maintains that Cartagena Portalatín in her life and work challenged the idea of what was considered appropriate for a woman (Morris, 2006, pp. 181-196). This makes one wonder what is appropriate for a woman and, especially, a woman who is a writer. Cartagena Portalatín was a tireless traveller, always eager for new cultures, a student of the arts, and a dynamic cultural promoter, who ran the magazine Dominican Brigades Collection and Baluarte publications and came to shake the national literary scene after the fall of Trujillo with the testimonial character and political denunciation of her texts. She never married, which according to Hernández (2007) apparently attracts attention, as many notable female writers did not marry or have children (Carmen Natalia Martínez, Hilma Contreras), seeing this fact associated with the difficulty of finding a stable partner for women with strong personalities, intellect and very definite decisions. The loneliness that appears so often in Cartagena Portalatín's poems is not physical, but that of someone who perceives herself as being different (Hernández, 2007).

Cartagena Portalatín, as Ureña in her time, was different. In fact, a careful reading of *Yania Tierra* reveals what Torres-Saillant (1997) indicates: that women write under compulsions connected with their voicelessness and marginalization, which sets them apart from their male counterparts. Citing Davies and Fido, the Dominican scholar reaffirms that, since women's voices have been historically silenced in the various master discourses of the region, it follows that female writers should assume an existential stance that may differ from that of their male colleagues. Their social condition associated strictly with their sex makes it uncertain whether one should place "race before gender" or "gender before race" when forging strategies of liberation or when charting Caribbean literature. However, regarding the situation of women in society, the times when Ureña and Cartagena Portalatín lived could not be more different and one cannot contradict Torres-Saillant (1997) when he says that the oppression of women in the Caribbean exhibits more layers of complexity than the oppression endured by men, and female writers cannot help but reflect it in their particular kind of utterance.

This is exactly what Cartagena Portalatín reflects in her poem:

*Yania toma de la mano al combatiente
La gloria levanta al compañero
que no traiciona amigos ni ideales
...pero que no sepan cuántas veces
han ocupado a Yania/
(Yania Tierra, p. 313)*

Nonetheless, the above statement of Torres-Saillant suffers from being too limited, as it should include other places beyond the Caribbean scenario and can be extended to the ends of humanity. In a thought-provoking study about the history of women, for instance, Anderson and Zinsser (1999) declare that sex has been the most important factor that has shaped the lives of European women. Unlike men, who have been divided by class, nations or historical times, women have traditionally been considered primarily women, as a different category of human beings.

Accordingly, Morris (2006) emphasises that the weight of the male literary tradition of the Dominican Republic is evident in the first lines of *Yania Tierra*, in which the speaker of the poem begins her questioning of previous versions of Dominican history. Citing Ben Heller, Morris (2006) states that the feminisation of the environment, a predominant feature of Caribbean discourse, presents a challenge for Caribbean women writers:

“What does it mean to write as a Caribbean woman when national and regional cultural identities are founded upon a feminized social space? How does one write from a female subject position when that locus has been the object of nationalistic discourse of identity? How are these images of feminine space negotiated? And how does one insert oneself in that discourse of communal identity as author and agent when up to that point one has been a subsidiary object within it?” (Morris, 2006, p. 392).

Mirroring her male writer colleagues, Cartagena Portalatín had to wait for the end of the dictatorship in 1961 to express her opposition, thus giving reason for Gallego Cuiñas (2005) to postulate about the fact that it was only in the 1990s that Dominican writers were freed from Trujillo's ghost and could finally "kill" him. This also supports the hypothesis that the writer's attitude against any aggression has much to do with the era in which they live. One of the ways to do it [to kill the father] is replacing the 'male epic' with 'female genealogy', calling upon women who suffered under the patriarchal system, its main victims, who fought for freedoms against dictatorial oppression. This feeling is described in a harrowing way:

*En su incómoda posición
Ella isla por la mitad un día...*
(*Yania Tierra*, p. 289)

*Alguien que jure que un invasor
ha hecho cosa honesta.*
(*Yania Tierra*, p. 291)

Supporting Torres-Saillant's statement, Williams (2011) insists that Cartagena Portalatín's text suggests what her prefatory remarks already imply: namely, that male heroism is often achieved at female expense.

*El amor de las mujeres por su patria
se da como el río que se suicida*

confundido en el mar
(Yania Tierra, p. 318)

Cartagena Portalatín and Mir see the history of their country from different perspectives. For instance, while Mir (1984) argues that Dominican history begins not with Columbus but with the *devastaciones* of 1605, Cartagena Portalatín insists that Dominican tragedy started in Marién, with the Spanish invasion and the extermination of the Tainos.

Sabe que la Historia comienza en Marién...
con la palabra manifiesto del gran Almirante
(Yania Tierra, p. 279)

En Marién se inicia la Conquista
al nativo le sorprende el forastero / Se apodera del oro
de otros bienes y riquezas
(Yania Tierra, p. 280)

When speaking of the Spanish invasion, Cartagena Portalatín's accusations are persistent:

La gaveta de informes coloniales cruje cuando se habla
de soberanía total
(Yania Tierra, p. 282)

Donde albergan (claro) depredadores de
Aragón y Castilla
En resumen / de toda la Ibérica Península
(Yania Tierra, p. 284)

Lamenta la aventura
la caída en manos de colonos
desde aquella mañana
Diciembre 25 / Año 92 del 400
(Yania Tierra, p. 285)

In this sense, she clarifies that Dominican history begins with an invasion and, as if it were the result of a rape, it will have an uneven development, full of obstacles. The word *lamentar* serves as reflection of her attitude towards an imposed condition of life that starts within obscure circumstances. The birth of the nation, as she placed it on 25th December 1492, is a “lamentable adventure” at the hands of the invaders; or, as Díaz expresses it: “...it is believed that the arrival of Europeans on Hispaniola unleashed the *fukú* on the world, and we’ve been in the shit ever since”

(Díaz, 2008, p. 1). A subsequent line in *Yania Tierra* confirms Cartagena Portalatín's vision of the Spanish invaders' responsibility in the extermination of the first inhabitants of the island:

*Ovando ordena el exterminio
Cae la reina
Los caciques
Las vírgenes
La gente de Jaragua
Cae.....
(Yania Tierra, p. 288)*

According to Williams (2011), in placing events during the governorship of Nicolás de Ovando (1502-1509), Cartagena Portalatín tacitly establishes a cause for the *Cacique* Enriquillo's insurrection from 1519 to 1533 more compatible with Dominican history than the pivotal defence of his wife's *virtue* imagined by Galván in his novel.

In pointing out the various invasions, the whole poem creates a comparatively rich source of original suggestions about how these events influenced the Dominican character. For instance, an interesting aspect when referring to the Haitian years of invasion, as seen by Williams (2011), is when Cartagena Portalatín circulates prevalent notions of Haitian brutality:

*Años de Boyer / Herard / Borgella y Carrier
Desechos de desechos
Horizonte negado a la esperanza
Tam-Tam tambores de Occidente*

*EN Galindo
Agueda
Anita y
Marcelina Andújar
Vírgenes profanadas
Violadas por la insania
Asesinadas
Oh / Repudio total
(Yania Tierra, pp. 299-300)*

The Dominican Republic has a history of defining its national identity in relation to Haiti, which

Cartagena Portalatín, as a woman and as a writer of the 20th century, cannot ignore. The border, of course, has a “privileged” role therein, as the site where power relations on the island have been measured throughout the centuries (Derby, 1994). Official anti-Haitianism in the Dominican Republic, the reigning national dogma since the massacre in 1937 by the dictator Trujillo, sharpened the meaning of the border, seeking to render what was previously a porous frontier into an immutable scar. As James (2013) states, “the border is also a zone of merging and emergence and this perhaps is one of the major keys to understanding the political problematics of cultural relations between Haiti and the Dominican Republic” (James, 2013).

On the other hand, the accusation expressed by Cartagena Portalatín when referring to the years of Boyer and Haitian invasion as *Desechos de desechos* could be seen as a denunciation of facts. Or, as Morris (2006) describes it, in her approach to history Cartagena Portalatín's work enters into a dialogue with an important trend in Caribbean literature: to represent the traumatic encounter with the past of the nation as recovery of the island/mother. Anti-Haitianism also must be understood as anti-invasion. During the 19th century, the idea of Haiti derived from its status as an occupying force and thus as the traditional enemy of the Dominican Republic. The Haitian invaders represent the invaders of all time. It is unfortunate that, in this clearing of legacy, as James reminds us, “danger and fear permeate the border and a discourse of separation between us/them frustrates any possibility of communication or solidarity” (James, 2013), unless the panic of invasion is definitely put aside.

Nevertheless, what Cartagena Portalatín expresses in her poem of denunciation is her desire to proclaim aloud what her eyes can see. A writer should not be an instrument of opinions, says Sontag (2008) categorically: “The first task of a writer is not to have opinions, but to tell the truth ... and refuse to be an accomplice of lies and misinformation” (Sontag, 2008, p. 158). This is what *Yania Tierra* represents, an exorcism of the multiple invasions suffered along the nation's history.

As Cartagena Portalatín depicts it, Napoleon also attempted to capture the whole island. Thus, Dominican history is a constant attempt by foreign nations to occupy this land and the constant struggle of its inhabitants to break free: five centuries of rains and moons/ hate / looting / winds and suns:

*Cinco siglos de lluvias y de lunas
De odio / de saqueo / de vientos y de soles
(Yania Tierra, p. 294)*

Amidst all this looting, pirate invasions could not be omitted, which are denounced with a special mention of Francis Drake:

*Aquí Sir Francis Drake
Despoja / daña la Ciudad Colonial
Condiciona su marcha
a cambio de millonaria suma
(Yania Tierra, p. 295)*

However, it could be argued that the exorcism is not complete, as Cartagena Portalatín only points a finger at the invader and not at the local forces who were supposed to defend the nation. Thirty years later, another Dominican woman writer, Emilia Pereyra, with the publication in 2012 of her novel about Drake's invasion, wonders what would be the historical lesson about that episode and concludes that the Dominican people have not learnt sufficiently from the lessons of the past. One aspect that history has taught women writers is that they need to be "free" in order for them to express their feelings. That freedom, according to Wolf (1995), would only be secured with money. Pereyra answers the question of what writing means to her with the following statement: "*La plena libertad. Es el único territorio en que puedo ser libre, y para mí la libertad está muy asociada a la plenitud*" (Pereyra, 2012). It is the same for Cartagena Portalatín when she let *Yania Tierra* speak for her:

*Transmiten a los espectadores
el fervor inminente
para ganar la tierra
soñada libre.
(Yania Tierra, p. 302)*

In another aspect, by illustrating the fight of the *Trinitarios* (independence fighters) by means of theatre, Cartagena Portalatín uses literature within literature:

*Entre pánico y sombras
rechazan con obras de teatro
Se exponen por su patria al martirio
(Yania Tierra, p. 303)*

According to Williams (2011), the pluralistic form of Cartagena Portalatín's text is also evident in the patriotic materials it contains, which range from the aphorisms of political leaders, such as Duarte, the Independence's apostle (1813-1876), to Prud'Homme's verses that provide the lyrics for the Dominican National Anthem, and fragments from the poetry of Josefa Antonia Perdomo (1834-1896), Trinidad Moya Vásquez (1863-1941), and Carmen Natalia Martínez Bonilla (1917-1976). By bringing together snippets of ready-made images, Cartagena Portalatín's poem at once signals its ties to a broader cultural domain and undermines its own stability as a self-contained text (Williams, 2011, p. 208).

Although the presence of the 'invader-dictator' is a constant throughout the whole poem, Cartagena Portalatín understands that sometimes the mere mention of a significant date is sufficient to bring to mind a complete chapter of a nation's history:

*Luperón, Julio 14 del 49
Constanza/Maimón/Estero Hondo – Junio 14 del 59
La Manacla – Diciembre 23 año 63
Revolución de Abril – 24 del 65
Caracoles – Febrero 6 del 73.
(Yania Tierra, p. 335)*

Thus, Cartagena Portalatín implies that another way of fighting against an invasion is with another invasion. In this case, she refers to the first time that a group of enemies of the dictatorship "invaded" the Dominican Republic to bravely defy the beast in its own lair. However, what *Yania Tierra* stresses above all is women's participation in the independence struggle, which incidentally

has been “forgotten” in traditional accounts. By establishing a rhetorical equivalence among a series of dissimilar symbolic acts, Cartagena Portalatín’s text emphasizes the importance of the women’s supportive role, as stated by Williams (2011).

*Amor carnal de Manuela
Que engendra la casta de los Duarte
Amor carnal de Olaya
Que engendra la casta de los Sánchez
Amor Carnal de Ana Josefa Brea
Que engendra la casta de los Mella
Ni Manuela ni Olaya / ni Ana Josefa /
Han recibido cantos
Manuela / Olaya / Ana Josefa /
Yania ofrece su canto
Por los héroes nacidos de sus vientres.
(Yania Tierra, p. 310)*

In the same way, Cartagena Portalatín uses the literal meaning of her subject, the woman / earth, to emphasize the particular suffering of women in the context of historical silences (Morris, 2006). However, it is Morris herself who refers to the way in which the identification of the country with a woman can limit models of female subjectivity to a virgin or helpless mother.

Unlike *Anaconda*, *Yania Tierra* reflects the pain and the confusion suffered by the blacks:

*ARDE LA TIERRA La Colonia
Llegan de Africa
Las naves de España
Portugal
Holanda
Inglaterra
Llegan de Africa las naves
EN la Plaza Mayor
Subastan a los esclavos negros
Los negociadores de vidas
¡Puñetero negocio!
(Yania Tierra, p. 292)*

Both Ureña and Cartagena Portalatín reflect in their poems an attitude of defence of the indigenous against the Spanish invaders and seem to take their fight as a symbol of the struggle of the Dominican people against the constant invasions through history. In this context, what Ryan says about the Indianist texts can also be suggested for Cartagena Portalatín:

“These poems portray Spain as a cruel and powerful invader, the Indians as patriotic defenders and the political forebears of the Dominicans. The immorality of the conquistadors is contrasted with the innocence of the natives. The military and political might of the Spaniards increases the courage and selflessness of the indigenous people who resisted them. Of course, the Indians perished trying to defend themselves against Spain. But as Perez suggested in the poem ‘El último cacique’, the Dominican people inherited the fighting spirit of the disappeared aborigines and avenged the crimes of the Conquest (153). By defeating Spain in 1865, the Dominican Republic won glory as well as independence” (Ryan, 2001, P.17).

In this respect, *Anacaona* seems to express an aspiration to compensate the *Indians* for their fate, when Ureña proclaims that Caonabo, the great *Cacique*, as representative of his race, transforms into a gigantic champion, a hero whose courage doubles because he has to face the Spanish invasion:

*Ya toca el baluarte que guarda altanera
La hueste arrogante del rudo invasor,
Y el firme aparato, la fuerza guerrera
Duplican del héroe tenaz el valor.*
(*Anacaona*, p. 194)

*Combate el hispano que fiero pretende
Al yugo una raza benéfica uncir;
Mas ¡ay! que el indígena altivo defiende
Su choza, sus selvas, su libre existir.*
(*Anacaona*, p. 195)

Meanwhile, Cartagena Portalatín blames the civilization for the extermination of the natives (*Base de la Tragedia Humana / Llamada Civilización*), highlighting with capital letters the misfortune caused by the invasion. *Yania Tierra* goes so far as to lament the adventure of the invaders, although without this element the Dominican nation would have not been formed. The land is Yania López, cries the poem. Thus, both writers agree that the history of the nation begins with oppression and this peculiarity is rooted in the people forever.

A topic that attracts attention is the portrait of the first invader, Christopher Columbus, in *Anacaona*. Ryan (2011) remarks that, according to the epic poem, Columbus seems almost cowardly when coming face to face with Caonabo. The Navigator is left speechless while Caonabo

proclaims himself “the fiercest enemy of your race” and threatens to erase Spanish civilization from his soil:

*La firmeza del cacique
Colón admira en silencio,
Tanta altivez respetando,
Tanto valor y denuedo.
Pero a tan fuerte enemigo
Aunque cautivo teniendo
Medita a solas y ordena
Vigilar al prisionero.*
(*Anacaona*, p. 209)

Cartagena Portalatín only mentions Columbus once, thus detracting from his role and just linking him to the hapless Spanish invasion that marked the encounter: *La historia nace en Marién / Con la palabra manifiesto del gran Almirante* (*Yania Tierra*, p. 279).

A common point of these two poems is the exaltation of women as protagonists more than just helpers, when it comes to fighting against foreign invasion. *Anacaona* is centred in Anacaona rather than in Caonabo, and she is presented as a warrior, leader, a bold negotiator and defender of her people and willing to make the ultimate sacrifice for freedom: *Es ella la que avanza, la que a morir camina / del sanguinario ibero para saciar la sed; / es ella a quien aguarda de aquel suplicio bárbaro / la ignominiosa red* (*Anacaona*, p. 246). In tracing events throughout the history of the nation, Cartagena Portalatín also establishes the burden women endured on their shoulders. *Yania Tierra* links women’s fate to that of the nation as a consequence of brutal invasions, when it describes how sad Yania is after the U.S. invasion of 1916, because the land has been trampled and the land is Yania López:

*Oh Yania tristeza tuya triste
Las cárceles están llenas
Ahogan / no ahogan / no triunfarán
La tierra es Yania López
Abandera los símbolos.*
(*Yania Tierra*, 331)

Although *Anacaona* is limited to the Tainos' story, it also echoes, as *Yania Tierra* does, the tragic indignities of brutal invasion and, at the same time, highlights people's courage and their iron opposition to the invasion forces. Both poems reflect women's bravery as a symbol of Mother Earth that protests against a vicious violation. These two great writers could not choose better exponents for the exposition of women's sacrifice than *Anacaona*, who could be taken as 'the initiator' of resistance, and then the graphic image of the Mirabal sisters, that is outlined in *Yania Tierra*:

¿Estaba Minerva? Estaba
¿Estaba Patria? Estaba
¿Estaba María Teresa? Estaba
Estaban Las Mirabal
Encendido en cada pecho
El dolor / la cruz
Chorro de sangre los ojos
Lágrimas de tantos huesos
Cenizas de tantos muertos bajaban
Por sus tres caras
Las tres amaban la Patria
El tambor / la libertad
Las tres rodaron / cada una
Era bandera
Una bandera muy grande
Que aprisionaba sus cuerpos
Con la carne destrozada.
(Yania Tierra, pp. 333-334)

The Mirabal sisters were victims in 1960 of the tyrant-invader, just as *Anacaona* was a victim of the Spanish invader in the beginning. Five centuries after the first invasion, the women gathered in their struggle, and it seems that Cartagena Portalatín also asked: *¿Estaba Anacaona? Estaba.*

The difference between the two perspectives lies in the fact that *Anacaona* dies alone and miserable and the indigenous people are cruelly exterminated. Thus, Ureña ends her text with the mixed picture of the sad blue sky that covers with its veils the light of the new sun, while the invader celebrates his feast of death. However, this should not be interpreted as pure fatalism, but as a reflection of the social and political status of women in times of Ureña, the few possibilities they had, different from the progress seen by Cartagena Portalatín, which make her reflect the struggle in

her poem differently. Cartagena Portalatín, for instance, let the birds of hope fly and calls on the women of the nation to come and release the doves:

¡Ea! ¡Mujeres!
 ¡Ea! ¡Mujeres!
 ¡Soltad los pájaros de la esperanza!
 ¡Ea! Mujeres!
 ¡Soltad las palomas!
 (Yania Tierra, p. 343)

No doubt Cartagena Portalatín is referring to the memory, the example that should remain despite the death of many women-symbols after invasions, such as Manuela, Olaya, Josefa or Yolanda Guzmán, representative of the people who fought in the April Revolution against the U.S. invasion; Florinda Soriano, “*Mamá Tingó acribillada / por las botas del amo*; Hilda Gautreaux / *luchadora / La bomba uniformada la destroza*; Amelia Ricart Calventi / *Escolar que aprende y enseña / el deber de luchar / cae / muere*; Doña Chucha, *mujer del pueblo*” (Yania Tierra, pp. 338-339).

They are all Anacaona and, in placing Ureña within her text and quoting one of her poems, (*Mi ofrenda a la patria*, 1887) Cartagena Portalatín recognises that Ureña represents the measure by which Dominican identity is defined, as Williams argues: “Like the women in the battle scenes of the 1840s, Ureña is depicted without distinctive racial properties, because she is held up as an example of shared norms... Cartagena’s selective version of Ureña’s works places Ureña in a position to stand metonymically for all Dominicans who would defy Hearaux’s (the tyrant) command of conformity” (Williams, 2011, p. 207).

*Hace ya tanto tiempo. Silenciosa
 Si indiferente no, Patria Bendita,
 Yo he seguido la lucha fatigosa
 Con que llevas de bien tu alma infinita.
 Ha tiempo que no llena
 Tus confines la voz de mi esperanza,
 Ni el alma que contigo se enajena
 A señalarte el porvenir se lanza*
 (Ureña’s poem quoted by Cartagena Portalatín in Yania Tierra, p. 327)

This position, of protest and confrontation, whether through poetry or weapons, reflects the thinking of Bosch, who points out the following:

La violencia con que han luchado los pueblos del Caribe contra los imperios que los han gobernado da la medida de la fiereza de su odio a los opresores. Los pueblos del Caribe han llegado en el pasado, y sin duda están dispuestos a llegar en el porvenir, a todos los límites, con tal de verse libres del sometimiento a que los han sujetado y los sujetan los imperios (Bosch, 2007, P. 12).

Likewise, the two poems can be read as vehicles for the construction of certain national characteristics. In other words, as Ryan establishes, the tumultuous events of the 19th century (Haitian invasion and Spanish annexation) profoundly shaped the ways in which the Dominican Republic was discursively constructed as a nation (Ryan, 2001, p. 35). These texts, suggests Ryan, inscribe vulnerability and weakness into their definition of the Dominican nation; they transform the inhabitants of the land into heroic patriots who never tire of defending it.

One could conclude that, according to these two celebrated poems, the most unique part of the Dominican identity is the awareness of being constantly under threat of military invasion or cultural influence and therefore they must unite, especially the women, to release the birds of hope, as Yania Tierra's ending lines claim: all together, Indians, blacks, whites, *mestizos* and *mulatos*:

GRITA EL COJITO CON ALEGRIA Y PENA
INDIAS / NEGRAS / BLANCAS / MESTIZAS /
MULATAS / LAS AMAN LA JUSTICIA Y EL
AMOR CON RESPETO ¡VENID!

Chapter III:

THE DRAMATISATION OF FRANCIS DRAKE AS A MYTHOLOGICAL CHARACTER

While most of the major works on Francis Drake in Britain set out to glorify him as a great hero and all praise his brilliance in sailing the seas, this is in marked contrast to the discourse of the inhabitants of those territories plundered by him. Moreover, Drake is negatively portrayed in tourist brochures, journal articles, historical documents and in general discourse. In 1586 Francis Drake chose Hispaniola in his search for treasure to swell the coffers of her Majesty Elizabeth I for whom piracy and plunder became a vital tool to achieve her goals of security (Ronald, 2007). Drake seized the city of Santo Domingo and demanded a sum of one million ducats for its release, having to be content with just 25,000 Ducats:

Un mes completo pasaron los ingleses en Santo Domingo alojados en la Catedral, saqueando todo lo que pudieron y no fue sino después de largas negociaciones que Drake aceptó desalojar la plaza, recibiendo como compensación la suma de 25,000 ducados, que fue a lo que alcanzaban las joyas, la plata y el oro sacado por el Presidente y el resto de los vecinos. Además del rescate pagado, Drake consiguió llevarse las campanas de las iglesias, la artillería de la Fortaleza y los cueros, azúcares y cañafístolas que encontró en los depósitos del puerto de Santo Domingo y en otros almacenes (Moya Pons, 2002, p. 47).

Until 1937, one of these bells could be seen in St George Church, Esher, a small town 14 miles South-West of London:

Finally, as a legacy from the Drakes, there was the bell which Sir Francis is reputed to have taken at the sack of San Domingo and to have given to Esher church; though its whereabouts is now unknown, it was apparently in its place in the mid-nineteenth century, and certainly when Aubrey was writing his history, in 1718, it was there. He states: "In the steeple is a bell, brought from San Domingo by Sir Francis Drake, whose diameter is about 2 foot and some inches; it has no inscription in it, though ancient, and sounds well" (Stevens, 1977, p. 22).

Stevens maintains that the three bells were later sold, and the proceeds devoted to a new peal for Christ Church (Stevens, 1977, pp. 31-32), although today there exists such a bell in the Esher

church that has the same characteristics. However, the fate of the bells of Santo Domingo is not the main attraction surrounding the name of Francis Drake. Regardless of the nature of his personality, it seems that the results of his deeds, the invasion and pillaging of the city that so weakened the colony, contributed to form a perception of Drake as a bandit who destroyed the main buildings and was enriched by its treasure, and as a consequence people have developed some sort of abhorrence against him without substantive arguments. On the other hand, a lighthouse stands in Santo Domingo as a tribute to Christopher Columbus for his ‘discoveries’, not taking into account that the ‘great’ admiral did the same as the ‘pirate’ Drake: invaded the island and mistreated its inhabitants. Moreover, just as Drake was acting on behalf of Queen Elizabeth I, Columbus was acting on behalf of the Spanish monarchy. Columbus enslaved the natives and even forced them to convert to Christianity. In comparison, Drake plays the evil role, although Columbus was the first invader and destroyer of Hispaniola. Why are these two great sea explorers judged so differently? According to Turner, “we should judge Drake within the social context of the 16th century, if not we condemn him for just being an Elizabethan” (Turner, 2012, p. 18). These are some of the topics to be discussed in this chapter, along with the perception of ‘Drake the Pirate’ that has reigned within Dominican discourse.

Obviously Drake had to be a remarkable man to achieve what he did, yet he receives a wide range of character descriptions. Kelsey (2002) is perhaps the author who puts Drake in his rightful place, calling him from the very title of the book *The Queen’s Pirate*. For Kelsey, the problem is to find the true story about this complex and remarkable character, as everyone, starting with the same Drake, exaggerated his exploits and even invented fantastic episodes that never happened but that became part of the confusing biography of this famous explorer. The English government made up several episodes of his trip around the world; the English chroniclers and others added to the confusion by providing biographical details which were speculations [usually Dominican chroniclers base their own assumptions on these works], and family members contributed with

notes on his legendary character, turning Francis Drake into a myth: a heroic, courageous and fair figure, perhaps slightly pedantic, but extremely generous (Kelsey, 2002, p. 17).

According to the Drake Exploration Society, the world's only generic Drake society, there are more than 500 books written about their hero. One of its founders, secondary school history teacher Susan Jackson is the world's best read Drake scholar, with 556 books to her credit, but none by them is of a Dominican author. Surprisingly, although Drake is mentioned in every Dominican history text, it was not until 2012 that a novel about this subject appeared, Emilia Pereyra's *El Grito del Tambor* (Alfaguara). In spite of that, everybody has heard of Drake in the Dominican Republic and knows him not just as the infamous pirate who sacked the city and plundered its treasure, but also as the personification of evil. It could be said that Francis Drake has ascended from reality to the mythical level, seen, on the one hand, as a legendary pirate and, on the other hand, as a ruthless invader who plundered the city of Santo Domingo and damaged many of its most important buildings for personal gain.

On the other hand, Bosch defines Drake not as a pirate, but as “a great servant of his country's political plan” (2007, p. 163), e.g. a privateer. Meanwhile, Mateo relates in his *Balada a Sir Francis Drake* (1996) his frustration at not being able to write the appropriate tribute to ‘his hero.’ “*Es por eso que los piratas, a pesar de las atrocidades que los acompañaban, son figuras benévolas...el hombre del Caribe lleva un pirata agazapado. Y todos, sin excepción, tenemos nuestro pirata favorito*” (Mateo, 1996, p. 378). Moreover, Pereyra portrays him as a super being out of this world, possessed by evil forces. In one way or another, the figure of Francis Drake had progressed from a historical character to the eternal symbol of the invading forces within the context of Dominican discourse and has become a mythological being, whose very essence is distorted, perhaps by historical prejudice.

III.1 The myth behind the man: the infamous pirate

Bosch (2007) affirms that it is necessary to see the history of the Caribbean in the light of the European wars of Spain because otherwise we could hardly understand why the Caribbean was not made, in the 16th century, a Spanish bastion. If the Caribbean culminated in being a mid-17th century royal asset for several European powers, hence a land of conquest for English, French and Dutch, this was due to the wars that Spain conducted in Europe (Bosch, 2007, p. 147). Within that context, Mejía-Ricart identifies the most relevant result of pirate invasions of that time in the Dominican Republic:

Las incursiones de piratas como Drake...el contrabando generalizado y la introducción clandestina de biblias protestantes, crearon el ambiente para que el gobierno español tratara de detener ese proceso mediante la más brutal de las medidas: la devastación y despoblación total de las bandas norte y oeste de la isla entre los años 1605 y 1606 (Mejía Ricart, 1984, p. 11).

At the end of the 16th century, England was becoming a rising power, while Spain was in decline. England was considered the champion of Protestantism, which was in its opinion, the only true Christian religion. A clash between England and Spain was thus inevitable. Drake attacks on Spanish ports were considered as the English declaration of war and carried an unmistakable mark of defiance, according to Bosch. The English continued his attacks in the Caribbean, more important from a military point of view but not as acts of international politics (Bosch, 2007, p. 162). There exists a kind of myth around the figure of the pirates of the Caribbean, especially around Drake himself. His presence is usually erroneously located within the ‘golden age of piracy’, which, according to Kuhn (2010) goes roughly from 1690 to 1725. Although Drake is recognised in the Spanish Caribbean (Dominican Republic, Cuba and Puerto Rico) as a pirate, he will be placed here as a privateer, “a sea robber who acts under the license of a legal authority” (Kuhn, 2010, p. 9).

One crucial, noteworthy aspect is that there are three sides in the story of Drake: the Spanish, the English and that of the inhabitants of the territories where he executed his deeds. The facts are that Francis Drake was knighted by the Queen, so he was ‘Sir’; he was an English explorer, privateer in

the service of England, mayor of Plymouth, member of the Royal Parliament for a time and a naval officer (he was an Admiral, who helped the English defeat the Spanish Armada as he was second in command). Although Drake did not belong to the same band of golden age pirates, he probably possessed some of their characteristics and reflected, as them, “their deep alienation from most aspects of European society”, according to Rediker (cited by Kuhn, 2010, p. 23). That is, Drake could be distinguished as a product of the Elizabethan Era, as Turner (2012) remarks, when the real growth in society was in the merchant class. Therefore, in order to excel these individuals needed to be successful in their deeds. By 1585, before the invasion of Santo Domingo, Drake was already rich. Why not stay at home and enjoy his treasure? Kuhn explains it this way:

“When a man has for years lived the free life, sailed out from Jamaica a pauper, to return in six weeks or less with, perhaps, a bag of gold worth two, three, or four thousand pounds, which he has prided himself on spending in the taverns and gambling-hells of Port Royal in a week, how can he settle down to humdrum uneventful toil, with its small profits?” (Kuhn, 2010, p. 42).

In 1585-86 there was not a single ‘Indian’ soul in Hispaniola, full of black slaves instead. According to Kuhn, ‘this is particularly shocking in light of their numbers having been estimated at several hundred thousand (in the Caribbean area) at the time of Columbus’ arrival only half a century earlier. It suggests genocide of enormous proportions” (Kuhn, 2010, p. 47). However, this genocide seems to have escaped the spirit of solidarity of Queen Elizabeth, so often touched, as most scholars describe, with the misfortune of the Protestants of the Netherlands. In 2002, just after the tragic event of 11th September, 2001, the BBC Radio 4 broadcast a programme comparing Drake’s capture and ransoming of Santo Domingo in 1586 with the actions of Osama Bin Laden. It could be said that it was sensational journalism, but it also allowed the audience to see that there was more than only ‘hero worship’ in British discourse when it comes to the figure of Sir Francis Drake (Turner, 2012, p. 6).

Practicality, rather than rhetorical sensationalism, is the appropriate category for the possible existence of ‘hero worship’ towards Columbus in the Dominican Republic and anti-hero hatred towards Drake; one representing Spain and Catholicism, and the other the subsequent British Empire and Protestantism. With respect to Drake, it seems that he has been condemned, due to the fact that he left a deep wound in the origins of the Dominican literary culture since his cannons destroyed the young life of the first poet born in Hispaniola, Francisco Tostado de la Peña (Collado, 2013). Apparently, this event symbolises the sentiment of the entire Dominican literary community towards Drake and what he represents: the intromission of a foreign power in their incipient society. Veloz Maggiolo states that Drake spotted us in Elizabethan fury and in 1586 cracked his cannon while looting the oldest cathedral in America (Veloz Maggiolo, 1972, p. 255).

Perhaps the core of that symbol is the voice of Cartagena Portalatín with her documentary poem *Yania Tierra*, which traces the history of the Dominican Republic from the point of view of a female personification of the nation and, as such, the country is seen as a constant victim of exploitation and abuses from the Conquest to modern times, including Drake as one of the many abusers of the island. She claims that nobody wants to see the face of Yania/her face whipped by exploitation (Cartagena Portalatín, 1981, p. 3). This statement represents somehow the feeling of the whole nation, even when the Dominican Republic did not exist then as a country. The land, our mother (*Yania Tierra/Yania López*) was being abused by a foreign force, was being looted and destroyed and what remained was only ruin and desolation. On the other hand, Cartagena Portalatín only refers to Columbus as the ‘Discoverer’ and calls him ‘the Great Admiral’.

However, the issue of Drake has also a more romantic and poetic treatment within Dominican literature. Mateo (1996) reflects the romantic perception that maybe prevails in some Dominican minds about pirates and about this particular one:

“Cerrando los ojos, bajando del mástil corsario en la imaginación...yo hice compañía muchas veces a mi pirata favorito: Sir Francis Drake. Partíamos por el puerto de Haina, y entrábamos sigilosos

en la ciudad atemorizada y abandonada. Acampábamos a la intemperie, y la piel curtida brillaba por las noches bajo los leves resplandores de la luna...Yo era, literalmente un personaje, y aún en el papel de superficie que asignaba a mi vida, amaba a mi héroe: Sir Francis Drake. Creo que a su lado, destrozando la ciudad de Santo Domingo, fui levemente cruel. Pero la crueldad es para nosotros los piratas como un ligero pañuelo que amarramos al cuello, y flota lírico en la algarabía inigualable de la aventura. ¡No hay nada como ser pirata, Dios! Nadie puede remontarse más allá de este deleite. Es lo que agradezco a las cabalgaduras de mis sueños junto a Sir Francis Drake.” (Mateo, 1996, p. 379).

To further the debate, it is worth mentioning the views on this subject from two key figures in Dominican literature and history, who undoubtedly helped a great deal to forge modern Dominican thought. Bosch (2007) presents Drake objectively within the panorama of the 16th century and states that it was a time of crisis in the Western world, because it was a century of transformation in all spheres of social life. Drake was merely a server of a political plan of his country. So instead of focusing on deconstructing Drake’s personality and understanding why Drake chose to invade Santo Domingo in 1586, he focuses on analysing Phillip II and Elizabeth I’s strategies, implying that the Caribbean was considered by those two rulers only as one of the many scenarios, where they were fighting their wars for power at that time. At this point, it would be more accurate to determine Drake’s invasion not as an incursion into the ‘Dominican’ territory, but an assault on one of many Spanish regions, one that has been neglected and abandoned by the Metropolis. Therefore, the perspective of *El Draque* as ‘The Devil’ takes on another dimension, almost as if it were included within Dominican mythology, together with imaginary creatures, like the *Ciguapa*, a mythological creature of local folklore, commonly described as having human female form with brown skin, backward facing feet, and very long mane of smooth, glossy hair that covers her otherwise naked body.¹⁰

For Balaguer (2000), the greatness of England has been not the work of their kings, but of its sailors and all the living forces of the nation. Drake is an example. Balaguer states that Drake was a

¹⁰ *Diccionario del Español Dominicano*. (2013) Santo Domingo: Academia Dominicana de la Lengua. P. 187

pirate, but he was primarily a military genius who has had few equals in the world. He agrees with Turner, when he says that:

Para juzgar a Drake con verdadera honradez histórica, es preciso conocer el ambiente bajo en el cual se llevaron a cabo sus hazañas. (p. 70)...[Drake] había jurado odio a los españoles y para cumplir ese juramento dedicó a él todas sus energías y toda la fortuna que había adquirido en sus aventuras como pirata (Balaguer, 2000, pp. 73-74).

Balaguer does not seem interested in describing the sack of the city, and only limits himself in transcribing the words of José Gabriel García: *Para satisfacer la exigencia de Drake toda la población se impuso un enorme sacrificio porque su riqueza había mermado con la decadencia de la colonia (Balaguer, 2000, p. 72).* Instead, he seems pleased to highlight Drake's values as an explorer, pairing him with Columbus: *Drake despertó el genio de la navegación en su patria. Hizo pocos descubrimientos, pero prestó a Europa un servicio notable con la importación de las papas, desconocidas hasta entonces en Europa (ibid, p. 79).*

In regard to Dominican textbooks, historians do not stop to analyse Drake in great depth. For instance, in his textbook of Dominican History, Domínguez barely mentions the name of Drake as he relates how the scarcity of slave labour in the sugar industry was exacerbated by two facts. One of them consisted of a smallpox epidemic that killed thousands of slaves. It took place after Drake's invasion in January 1586 (Domínguez, 2001, p. 68). Domínguez does not mention Drake again, but he does state that in order to economically weaken the Spanish Empire, France and England encouraged privateering during the 16th century. On his side, Moya Pons also only briefly mentions Drake, relating the events of January 1586 and Drake capturing Santo Domingo (Moya Pons, 2002, p. 47).

Santo Domingo was officially the headquarters for the exploration and conquest of the New World. Spanish courts and bureaucratic offices were set up, and thousands of colonists passed through on their way to Spain's newly discovered lands. However, it soon fell on hard times. With

the conquest of the Aztecs and Incas completed, many of the new settlers preferred to go to Mexico or South America and the city stagnated enabling Drake to easily capture it. The *Basílica Menor de Santa María* was the first cathedral to be founded on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean. Its first stone was laid by Columbus' son Diego in 1514. The construction was completed in 1540. For a very Catholic nation, it obviously represented a priceless symbol. Why Drake had used it as his headquarters, is something that has puzzled his biographers, when he could have lived in a fine house as he did in Cartagena (Turner, 2012). Perhaps that choice had to do with his desire to insult the core of the Catholic faith and be seen by his men as the true bearer of the Christian religion, since it is known that Drake enjoyed preaching. According to Kelsey, Drake blamed the Catholic Church for despoiling his father, who was a Protestant priest, of his earthly rights, and, quoting the testimony of Morgan Tillert, the famous explorer was a devoted Protestant who converted his subordinates to the new faith (Kelsey, 2000, p. 49).

Turner (2012) remarks that Drake, in a vainglorious approach portrayed himself for publication in the best possible light for his intended book, published in 1626 with the title *Sir Francis Drake Revived*, which narrates his 1572-73 successful voyage to Panama and Colombia, thus contributing to promoting the myth of his own person. Drake is guilty of straying from the truth. For instance, he writes that when he was wounded and fainted from being shot in the leg, his men loved him so much that they chose to abort the raid on the treasure house and carried him back to the boat. However, Drake had attacked the treasure terminus three months after the flotilla would have conveyed the bullion to Spain. Therefore there would have been very little or no silver at *Nombre de Dios*, when its transient population was at its fewest. For Drake this glaring error based upon poor intelligence would have been too embarrassing to admit (Turner, 2012, p. 7).

Nonetheless, what one author sees as greedy, another sees as toughness, for Turner describes Drake as being "extremely 'tenacious' when, despite the expedition having suffered serial

operational disasters and a great loss of men over eight months, including two of his own brothers, Drake did not leave Panama until he was rich” (Turner, 2012, *ibid*). Whereas for Pereyra, greed alone was his goal in all his actions: “*No se agita el indómito corazón del inglés a causa del miedo, sino de la expectación y la codicia. Infla sus delirios la presunción de que pronto tendrá más riquezas para sí y para la reina; mayor grandeza para el imperio y nuevas medallas para su pecho...*” (Pereyra, 2012, p. 9).

Indeed, greed alone was the main goal of all the European invaders, or as Kamen states: “If we were to judge Spain’s actions simply by the exploits of its conquistadors it would be easy to conclude, as American chroniclers like Guaman Poma did, that greed was the overriding inspiration of the newcomers” (Kamen, 2002, p. 239).

With the first novel of a Dominican writer on Drake, the author seeks the deconstruction of the myth of the English pirate, presenting different facets of his personality (Gautier, 2013, p. 68). However, rather than proving Drake to be an ambitious, perverse, bloodthirsty and prevaricating human being, Pereyra is contributing to the ‘counter myth’ of him as a diabolical force instead of an instrument of the English monarch. Gautier quotes his own essay *Mitos y héroes* to clarify the definition of myth:

“El mito no existe sin la inclusión de uno o varios individuos excepcionales, reales o imaginados, que, de alguna manera, se divinizan y se convierten en dioses y diosas, en héroes y heroínas, protagonizando ocurrencias reales o inventadas que sirven a los pueblos para asumir una actitud educativa, moral o transcendental, frente a una situación colectiva” (Gautier, 2013, p. 69).

That seems to be the position adopted by the defenders of the myth around Drake, but apparently the perspective remains the same for those who seek to deconstruct that notion. Pereyra makes a postmodern deconstruction of that myth, insists Gautier, not because she relates the invasion of the city of Santo Domingo in 1586 from the viewpoint of the besieged, but because she provides accurate details about the character that leads that invasion, and even invents facts to show

who he really was (Gautier, 2013). However, Gautier contradicts himself, inadvertently supporting the theory that this character has been profoundly dramatised in Dominican discourse and that what mystifies him is precisely the academic interpretations of the causes of his invasion. Seemingly the first Dominican novel on Drake also adds in something the list of works that promote these views, i.e. to create a myth of Francis Drake.

Another Dominican work of fiction, *El Pirata del Caribe*, by Luis Lizardo (2005), although a minor work that deliberately ridicules and mocks Drake, portrays him as the prototype pirate, who was enrolled by Queen Elizabeth I for the specific purpose of looting, killings and theft. However, what draws attention to this work is its bold proposal to link Drake and Trujillo, as if the two evil beings have been the result of the same fate. According to this work, the pirate of the 16th century, called Franstruj (a comical combination of the two names, Francis and Trujillo) is chosen by Elizabeth I because he has proved to be a man without a soul, and ready for anything (Lizardo, 2005, p. 12). Over three hundred years later, Franstruj reincarnates in Truj, the other ‘Pirate of the Caribbean’ and, in the same manner, is chosen by the new invaders, the U.S. Officials (“*soldados esbirros contratados para matar a los Gavilleros*”), to rule on their behalf, because this new Franstruj is also a pirate to conquer, kill and steal (ibid, p. 74). The analogy is also based in duration, as Franstruj’s invasion lasts almost 31 days and Truj’s invasion lasts 31 years. Lizardo ends with a question, a concern: Will the new Pirate return? This was answered within the same work, as Hans, one of Franstruj’s aides, as cruel and evil as him, also reincarnates in the 20th century in no other than the figure of Balaguer, who had waited, calm and quiet, for his turn to ‘invade’.

III.3 *El Grito del Tambor*: perpetuating the myth of the Evil Drake

It was just after Drake’s invasion that the first literary work related to the English invader was written: a short farce by Fray Cristóbal de Llerena, for which he was expelled from the colony

(Pereyra, 2012, p. 196). The farce, inserted in one of the intervals of a play, was performed in the year of 1588, in the Cathedral and was recorded in history as a literary sequel to that fateful moment, and as a prelude to theatrical activity on the island (Lantigua, 2012). Llerena, who had a classical education, built his work around one of Horace's epistles in which there appears a monster with a woman's face, horse's neck, a body made of feathers and a fish tail. The account is narrated in Izquierdo's essay (n.d.) on Llerena's work, where he relates that Horace uses the monster to warn of the danger of imagination when it does not comply with the rules of art. Llerena, in contrast, uses the figure of the monster as a symbol of the clumsiness of the colonial government in the conduct of Hispaniola's economic and social affairs. Several mythological characters gather to interpret the meaning of the monster that appeared on the island. One sees it as a symbol of women; another as emblematic of the elements of the Earth. Proteus, who becomes the voice of the author, considers all the above explanations extravagant and suggests that if the monster appeared in that city, its meaning must be closely linked to it. For Proteus, this disgusting monster is nothing but a symbol of the deplorable economic and social status of the colony. According to Izquierdo, Calcas, another mythological character, complements the above explanation to predict that the monster is a forecast of more wars and looting, a direct reference to the invasion of Drake and the helplessness of the city that remained still so two years after the attack. The play ends when the mayors, before retiring, propose postponing the issue of the defence of the city until the next meeting of the council, a fact that reiterates the indolence of the colonial authorities in the affairs of the city (Izquierdo, n/d).

That story could be considered remarkable, but, although Francis Drake is a 'fabulous character to fictionalise', as Gautier (2013) indicates, Dominican literature has ignored him, with his only being mentioned in school history texts (Lantigua, 2012, p. 5). Perhaps it is not an exaggeration to say that Drake meets the characteristics needed to be the central character of the great Dominican novel as the perfect villain who embodies the invaders of all ages. However, many say that the great Dominican novel does not exist, and even Christopher Columbus has not inspired writers in

Dominican narrative, as De Maeseneer indicates (De Maeseneer, 2006, p. 23). The Belgian scholar states that Dominican Republic has always been considered a land of poets; therefore, the narrative has not received the same attention as poetry (ibid). For Alcántara Almánzar also the novel is the Achilles heel of Dominican literature (Alcántara Almánzar, 1990, p. 155). Lantigua, himself an essayist and poet and former Minister of Culture of the Dominican Republic, laments that:

Por años, tal vez por décadas, se ha planteado en los medios literarios dominicanos, con insistencia inaudita, la supuesta necesidad de construir la llamada gran novela dominicana...la verdad es que no hemos tenido necesidad de diseñar esa novela, porque la novela es parte del desarrollo de la sociedad misma, y sus constructores van fraguando su impronta y su destino en la medida en que la sociedad provee las herramientas para su construcción, o sea cuando los niveles de la imaginación creadora se van surtiendo del estudio, la investigación, la apreciación y el conocimiento para poder ensartar el entramado ficcional de la realidad (Lantigua, 2012, p. 2).

Nonetheless, Lantigua insists that the search for a great novel is not what matters to Dominican literature, but the design of novels, in the plural, that dig into reality from any angle to build a far-reaching narrative, estimable, enjoyable, transcending the boundaries of the national spectrum. On this basis, he states that *El Grito del Tambor* (2012) is one of the best Dominican novels of the last decades. Núñez (2013) concurs and continues by suggesting that Pereyra's novel is superior to Galván's *Enriquillo* (which discusses the resistance of the Indians to the Spanish invasion) and Deive's *Las Devastaciones*, about Governor Osorio's devastations of the Western cities of the island in his alleged fight against Protestant invasions:

"El refinamiento narrativo de los hechos retrata las pasiones del alma en la taxonomía cartesiana, así como los manejos turbios de la competencia imperial por apropiarse sanguinariamente de las tierras americanas. Drake, Isabel I, la sensual negra Sadá, el cobarde gobernador Ovalle, son tipos humanos sempiternos. Sólo la mezquindad se resistiría a reconocer la grandeza de esta novela" (Núñez, 2013).

El Grito del Tambor is a fictitious recreation of Drake's invasion, his stay of 30 days in Santo Domingo and an account of the almost total destruction of the city by his men. A work of great thematic and structural importance, Pereyra chose to use a 16th-century voice, perhaps as a device to fully immerse herself in the period, Drake's psychology and actions; a difficult task but one solidly imagined. The staging of the text tells the story from various angles: on one side, there is the

governor Cristóbal de Ovalle, who escapes as an act of self-preservation and leaves the city to its fate; the locals, who present a timid yet brave resistance guided by Garcí Fernández de Torquemada, involuntary mediator who took on the mantle of negotiating with the invader; the Spanish ambassador Bernardino de Mendoza, based in Paris, who *watches* from afar the imperial confrontations between the crowns of Spain and England. On the other side, there is the relentless and evil Francis Drake, who makes impossible demands in exchange for *not* destroying everything if his orders are not met whilst his soldiers devastate everything in their path; the first pilot of the *Francis*, who records in his diary all the atrocities committed in the taken city and marks down his master's deeds of the past; and the black slaves, who turn temporary allies of the invaders in order to avenge their white masters. In the middle is Sadá, the freed slave who dares to confront Drake, tormenting him with black magic. In the background, the city of Santo Domingo is slowly dying amidst the struggles.

This novel presents Drake as an unscrupulous privateer, a religious fanatic, possessed by evil forces, thereby contributing to the mythological pirate image. By attributing the brutal invasion and looting of the city to the work of a madman, the problem is that Pereyra moves away from the Bosch vision of this event as a political plan of the English empire. Pereyra prepares the legitimate scenario for the populist rhetoric, perpetuating the evil pirate interpretation established in Dominican discourse, and at the same time relating him to the legendary character of romantic stories, when she puts it into the voice of one of his servants: "*Sois el más grande de los mares. El de grandiosa vida...Aventuras...tesoros...¡mujeres!*" (*El Grito del Tambor*, p. 12); and in Drake's own voice: "*Sé lo que soy: incansable coloso de las aguas, el que no se duerme en sus lauros. ¡Merecedor de todos los homenajes reales!...No me puedo fiar ni del capellán, si bien nadie ha podido derrotarme. Venzo a pecho y espada, con la horca y el cuchillo, el fuego y el veneno, la fidelidad y la traición* (*El Grito del Tambor*, pp. 13-14).

Pereyra's consideration of how Drake was regarded by the inhabitants of the colony he was about to attack (*'Se llevará nuestras almas', 'ese malvado', 'Drake es sedicioso', '¡Pirata, ladrón endemoniado! Es el Diablo de mis pesadillas'...* *'El invasor es precavido; es un especialista sembrando el terror y esparciendo los efluvios de la muerte'; 'Drake está poseído y quiere destruirlo todo'*) opposes that described by Turner as being uttered by voices of authority at that time, such as Lope de Vega: "In 1598 the lengthy, musical poem by Lope de Vega, *La Dragontea*, describes Drake's 'rigour was always tempered with mercy', which was thematic in his dealings with Spanish captives. The Spanish knew Drake to be ruthless yet courteous and refined in manners'" (Turner, 2012, p. 8). Turner quotes the transcription of the Spanish documents from the world voyage made by Zelia Nuttall:

"Drake inspired men of all nationalities and degrees, who came into personal contact with him, with respect and admiration, which is amply proved by the reports of his prisoners, who can certainly not be accused of being prejudiced in his favour. Their depositions abound with gratuitous records of small acts of kindness or generosity performed by him, and quotations of the words he uttered" (Turner, 2012, p. 8).

Ronald supports Turner's assumption, when she describes what García Fernández de Torrequemada, the king's factor, wrote to King Philip:

"Drake is a man of medium stature, blond, rather heavy than slender, merry, and careful. He commands and governs imperiously. He is feared and obeyed by his men. He punishes resolutely. Sharp, restless, well-spoken, inclined to liberality and to ambition vainglorious, boastful, not very cruel. Considering that Drake had ordered the destruction of a third of Santo Domingo, this was high praise indeed" (Ronald, 2007, pp. 283-284).

Turner (2012) affirms that Drake was the first white man to work on equal terms with black people, an assumption far overlooked by Pereyra's novel at the moment of narrating the tragic death of two friars who Drake hanged during the invasion of Santo Domingo. Pereyra relates only briefly the reason why the two friars, Juan de Garavia (Sarabia appears in the historical texts, Deive, 1996, p. 140) and Juan de Llanes, were executed by Drake's order. "*Pagaréis vuestro atrevimiento. Habéis abochornado al mensajero enviado por sir Francis al monasterio –truená Peter el Sanguinario*" (Pereyra, 2012, p. 61). The text fails to refer to the fact that such a messenger was

actually a black servant, a fact that is not mentioned throughout the novel, although Deive doubts that the connection between these two facts was real:

“También enjuició a varios oficiales que pelearon entre sí y ordenó ahorcar a dos frailes dominicos, Juan de Sarabia y Juan de Llanes, en venganza por el asesinato por un español de uno de sus negros esclavos, según se señala en el Summarie and True Discourse of Sir Francis Drake’s West Indian Voyage, pero la conexión entre los dos hechos es dudosa” (Deive, 1996, p. 140).

According to Thomson, what happened was as follows: A Spanish officer from the royal galley which lay in the harbour rode up to the English outpost with a flag of truce. Drake sent out his black servant to receive the message but the Spaniard, regarding this as an insult, ran the boy through. Drake at once demanded that the Spaniard be executed. When no action followed, he strung up two friars on the scene of the murder and informed the Governor that two more would be executed every day at the same time until the murderer was surrendered. Next morning, the Spanish officer was duly brought to the lines. But Drake’s indignation was not appeased until the Spaniards themselves had executed him (Thomson, 1973, p. 177).

On the other hand, the other main character of Pereyra’s novel, Sadá, is a fictitious black woman, a liberated slave, with supposedly magic powers, who embodies the anger of the subjugated people. However, the novel limits such anger to the Spanish descendants, as if Sadá were somehow part of them, and is unable to transmit the years of horror and torment suffered by the slaves transported from West Africa. It is undeniably the same ordeal experienced by the indigenous people, whose paradise was destroyed and their land ruined by the Spanish invader, as was described by Ureña in *Anacaona*:

*¡Todo es pavor, desolación y ruinas,
Hacinados cadáveres sin cuento!
El indio perseguido hasta en las selvas
Rinde asediado el postrimer aliento
(Anacaona, p. 244)*

It seems that in the island of Hispaniola, history repeats itself. After an invasion, ruin again. This fact is well expressed by Pereyra’s cry:

La colonia queda sumida en una pavorosa indigencia. Sus principales templos y edificaciones han sido asolados por los incendios, los objetos más valiosos fueron saqueados o destruidos. Una cantidad imprecisa de esclavos y mujeres han sido capturados... Los corsarios se llevan muchas joyas y ricos ornamentos de los altares. También las lámparas y las campanas de la catedral fueron robadas... Todo lo útil y valioso ha sido hurtado o destruido por los imbatibles invasores con desmedida voracidad (El Grito del Tambor, p. 178).

No one in Santo Domingo was ready for Drake. The authorities did not believe it was possible for him to attack the city, but the famous seaman was very well known and feared for his infamous activities, which according to the description of Pereyra's novel, were destined to destroy the land stone by stone: *"-Señor gobernador, habrá un infierno. La ciudad será saqueada. Drake robará nuestros tesoros. Se llevará nuestras almas. No nos dejará ni un mendrugo de pan. La miseria se avecina"* (El Grito del Tambor, p. 17). Undoubtedly, the Tainos could have said the same of the Spanish invaders, had they known what was coming, for most of the features that Pereyra attributed to Drake in her novel, equate him to the European invaders who came before, namely, that Drake was seditious, a villain and wherever he went he obliterated everything; he was worse than a hurricane (Pereyra, 2012, p. 18).

However, according to Turner (2012), (citing Drake's own book), Francis Drake's name was known to the Spanish settlers in the region [Bastimentos Island, Panama, 1572]. Nonetheless none of the Spanish sources mention him by name but only refer to the enemy as the English (Turner, 2012, p. 7). Another possibility is that the Spanish colonial authorities had not taken seriously the news about the presence of the English in Cape Verde that reached the island shortly before, and there was not any warning from the Crown announcing his plans, perhaps because they did not know about Drake attacking the city (Deive, 1996, p. 137). What Pereyra masterly captures is the desperation of the people on hearing the news of the invader's approach:

-¡Drake es insaciable! ¡Arruinará la colonia!
-¿Qué pide? –inquiére doña Beatriz.
-Todo, Drake quiere hasta lo que no poseemos. El truhán reclama un millón de ducados y todo el oro. Se irá con las monedas contantes y sonantes.
-¡Estamos perdidos, señor mío! –grita la señora y abraza a su esposo.
(El Grito del Tambor, p. 56).

Notwithstanding, perhaps it is a contradictory picture that the author reflects throughout the novel, about the invader turning the colony into ruins when the facts relate that it was already in ruins, as the majority of historians point out (Moya Pons, 2002; Bosch, 2007; Domínguez, 2001). Meanwhile, Deive (1996) recreates the true extent of Drake's invasion, its actual meaning for the future generations. This was the cutback of the already low commercial activity on the island, which led to the smuggling of the Northern part, which in turn led to the Spanish authorities taking measures of the so-called Osorio devastations with its infamous consequences. As one of Drake's loyal servants in *El Grito del Tambor* says: "*Hemos de ser conscientes y considerar que durante siglos esta aldeucha de Santo Domingo recordará la invasión arrasadora de mi señor*" (*El Grito del Tambor*, p. 157).

To summarise, with Drake's invasion of Santo Domingo in 1586, the most illustrious city in the West Indies had fallen –God's punishment, as Fray Pedro wrote, on the Spaniards for their atrocious cruelty to the natives (Thomson, 1973, p. 177). They had totalled 1,600,000 [according to the friar quoted by Thomson] on the island when the Spaniards arrived yet forty years had passed since one of them had been seen alive [by 1586]. Whether the friar's figures are correct or not, the ghastly fact of genocide is as he described it. One wonders, will the new pirate return? "*El mal se reproduce muchas veces y el pirata también, porque él es el mal*" (Lizardo, 2005, p. 102). From the perspective of the Caribbean, Francis Drake has been condemned mostly for being an Elizabethan and is forever rooted in Dominican discourse as an evil pirate.

Chapter IV:

THE USE OF THEATRE BY *TRINITARIOS* AS A WEAPON OF PROPAGANDA AGAINST HAITIAN INVASION

In the years of the foundation of the Dominican nation (1844), when radio, cinema, television and newspapers were non-existent, the most accurate means of reaching the public was theatre, the only so called ‘mass medium’, which helped stir the conscience of the Dominican people against the Haitian invaders. The 19th century was a time of change in Europe. There was a political revolution, social and economic upheaval, as well as the industrial revolution. These changes resulted in a wide variety of social strata. Ideas that flowed in Europe were logically exported to overseas territories.¹¹ In the period of the Haitian invasion of the Western part of Hispaniola (which lasted from 1822 to 1844) one of the positive aspects that came with that stormy event was the abolition of slavery, on the 9th of February, 1822, from which about nine thousand slaves benefited (Domínguez, 2001, p. 107). On the other hand, one of the negative aspects was the imposition of French as an official language, as it was intended to facilitate the ‘Haitianisation’ of the Dominican people (ibid, p. 108). Not surprisingly, the framers of the fight against the Haitian invaders made use of theatre in order to communicate to the masses the idea of emancipation, since “Western theatre has always been a means of collective expression to correct the excesses and change antisocial attitudes from the time of the Greeks” (Quackenbush, 2004, p. 13). Other instances of such cases indicate that this was not a unique scenario.

In the Elizabethan era, for example, nothing equalled the power of the commercial theatre to reach and communicate with the public, as Goldstein points out (2004). He further argues that the newly born commercial theatre was the only mass medium during the reign of Elizabeth I (1558-1603) capable of addressing the broader spectrum of private and public issues outside religious

¹¹ Robespierre, in a speech he made, declared: 'Perish the last of our colonies rather than sacrifice one of our principles' (Gimbernard, 1972, p. 147).

ritual and rhetoric (Goldstein, 2004). Besides, theatre has always been a barometer of public opinion in times of war (Holdsworth, 2010). Thus, the aim of this chapter is to highlight the use of theatre as a weapon of propaganda by the Dominican revolutionaries, *Los Trinitarios*, who intended to spread their ideas of liberation and stimulating patriotism among their fellows. These revolutionary activities of Juan Pablo Duarte, the undisputed ideologue, and his comrades, culminated with the expulsion of the invaders and the proclamation of independence (Lebrón Saviñón, 2009).

There had been nine Haitian invasions into the Dominican territory in the 19th century: 1801-, led by Toussaint L'Overture; 1805, led by Jean Jacques Dessalines and Henri; 1822, led by Jean Pierre Boyer; June 12, 1843, led by Charles Herard Riviere; 1844, also led by Riviere; 1845, led by President Pierrot; 1849, 1855 and 1856, led by Faustino Soulouque, President and later proclaimed Emperor (Lebrón de Anico, 2000, pp 16-18). For obvious reasons, the 1822 invasion was the most significant.

In the same way that during Drake's invasion over two hundred years earlier, the state of the colony was miserable. "*La patria gemía bajo la coyunda haitiana desde 1822*" (Lebrón Saviñón, 2009, p. 9). In 1809 the overall situation of the Spanish part only reflected desolation and misery (Moya Pons, 2002, p. 211). Livestock, which had been the economic base of Santo Domingo for more than three centuries, had been reduced, and the economy was undercapitalised due to money leakage. Agriculture was in decline, exports were limited to tobacco, some leather and, after a few years, to wood, honey and liquor. Production of coffee and cocoa was very low and no mine was exploited. Imports were limited to what was necessary for a sparse and poor population, which could be estimated at 80,000 souls (ibid). Under those circumstances, the political and military elite of the time led a movement for Dominican emancipation and proclaimed the 'Independent State of Spanish Haiti' in December, 1821 with the aim of joining the *Gran Colombia*. However, Haitian

neighbours, who had recently ceased to be a colony, did not see that proclamation favourably. The idea of self-determination was planted, as seen in this quotation:

“Se estaba en presencia de manifestaciones embrionarias de conciencia nacional, por cuanto el desarrollo de patrones de identidad colectiva se proyectaba hacia la formulación de reivindicaciones que apuntaban hacia la autodeterminación” (Cassá, 2006, p. 306).

Other voices differed:

“A la altura de 1822 existía indudablemente un inconsciente colectivo dominicano; pero no propiamente una conciencia nacional. Ello tal vez determinó la actitud tolerante con que los dominicanos recibieron a los haitianos en esos días aciagos” (Balcácer and García, 1992, p. 56).

Nevertheless, they reiterated what had been said insistently: that if by 1844 the Dominicans had not been linked to Haiti, the idea of a free and independent Republic would have manifested itself within the people anyway, as the foundational ideological bases would have to be sought in the revolutions of United States (1776) and France (1789), which had a decisive impact on the middle classes of the Spanish colonies in the New World (Balcácer and García, 1992, pp. 69-70).

In 1838 the social situation of Dominicans was in a critical condition. Among other calamities, wealthy families migrated, victims of the state of demoralisation; trade was reduced to almost nothing; cultural and educational activity almost completely disappeared, and even America's first university was closed by the invaders. Under those very depressing circumstances, it was logical that the idea arose to promote breaking the ties that bound the two communities by organising a separatist party (Balcácer and García 1992, p. 62). The noble mission of waking up the Dominican people from their slumber was spontaneously self-imposed by Juan Pablo Duarte, a gifted young man from a distinguished family, who had just arrived from Europe, steeped in ideas of freedom and independence. He soon tried to instill these concepts in the minds of his fellow citizens, using all lawful and affordable means (García, J. G., quoted by Balcácer, 1992, p. 63). Separatist ideas appeared in the Spanish part of the island on the same day as the Haitian invasion, based primarily on the anti-Haitian attitudes of some people and the inclination towards the Spanish monarchy of

others, but mainly by the desire to be independent. However, in the 1830s these ideas did not spread through the country and there was no leader who would encourage them or dedicate himself to promoting them among all citizens who opposed the invasion (Zabala, 2005, p. 30). It was Duarte who, after returning from abroad, played that role of promoter and developer of libertarian ideas. Hostos¹² said:

“Aunque el gobernador haitiano de Santo Domingo sabía que todos los dominicanos eran desafectos, hasta entonces no se habían constituido en un cuerpo tangible y coercible...Harto se supo, desde el regreso de Duarte a su patria... que él era el alma capaz de animar y sostener aquel cuerpo de rebeldes” (Collado, 2013, pp. 22-23).

Duarte did not attend formal higher education because the only education centre of that level on the island, the University of *Santo Tomás de Aquino*, had been closed in 1823 (Inoa, 2008, p. 18), but he had high concern for his intellectual training and a great love of books, as confirmed by his sister Rosa Duarte in her *Apuntes* (1970). He studied with private tutors, joined the Freemasons and at 21, he complied with the military service imposed by the invading authorities. Rosa Duarte (1970) states that her brother entered the National Guard (Corporal in charge of distributing food among the troops), and in 1842 he was appointed Captain of his company, to move in 1843 to the rank of Colonel; he also wrote poetry, but without literary pretensions and never published. By 1843, at 30, he was a trader at his father's business selling pieces of equipment and hardware for ships in the port of Santo Domingo; just before the end of the Haitian occupation he decided to enter another trade, that of surveyance, which he had to abandon when he was forced to go into exile (Inoa, 2008).

As might be expected, in a territory occupied by foreign forces, all the propaganda work of libertarian ideas had to be created secretly, though authorities suspected Duarte's lead and therefore kept him under surveillance. They used all the secret tricks of politics against Duarte, all the wiles

¹² Hostos (1839-1903) born in Puerto Rico, lived in the Dominican Republic and was the undisputable father of the transformation of the educational system (Collado, 2013).

of espionage; and all the criminal zeal deployed by servers of a government immersed in violence. Consequently, he had to live in constant fear trying to outsmart firstly surveillance, then ambush and finally persecution (Collado, 2013, p. 23). Under these circumstances, Duarte and his fellow comrades of *La Trinitaria* used theatre as a weapon of propaganda.

III.1 Presence of the theatre: the power of a literary genre

From colonial times, theatre in the Americas was used to build or implement an ideology consistent with the objectives of conquistadors. In other words, the Latin American theatre in this period served as a mechanism of cultural integration for foreign forces. Taking advantage of the boom in theatrical activities and communication skills of drama, theatre was used in the 19th century to propagate the ideas of independence, and therefore bring about a change in the purpose¹³ of drama (Molinaza, 1984, p. 297). Henríquez Ureña (1979) agrees, when he says that at the end of the colonial era, there was much similar activity in the theatres of Latin America, with many authors and actors. It was not uncommon for the independence movement (1808-1825) to use drama as one of the means to spread the ideas of freedom. His brother, Max Henríquez Ureña (1965) states that in the island of Hispaniola theatre was among the favourite amusements of the inhabitants since colonial times and that plays were not only imported from Spain, but also written by locals. However, nothing has been preserved of these local productions (Henríquez Ureña, 1965, p. 310). During the Haitian invasion, it was necessary to suppress the display of comedies by local authors, given the supervision of everything that was written or spoken in public. It was to circumvent the Haitian authorities' suspicion that young patriots of *La Trinitaria* resolved to take to the stage works written or translated in Spain, choosing those of a historical nature that reflected a protest against foreign oppression (ibid, p. 311). At the time of the invasion, many people emigrated, mostly

¹³ For more detailed discussion of this question, see pages 89-90.

educated people, so intellectual life was precarious. Besides, the schools that existed at the time of the Spanish domination were now gone. The national schools established by the Haitian government could hardly be called such at first, and only with the passage of time were there in Santo Domingo, Haitian teachers endowed with sufficient preparation (ibid, p.143). The British consul in Port-au-Prince, Charles Mackenzie, who visited the old Spanish part of the island in 1827, recalls (quoted by Henríquez Ureña, 1965) that there was a printing press in Santo Domingo, but there were no newspapers, because shortly before his arrival the publication of the only paper that the city had was closed for lack of support. If something was printed, it had to be with the government's blessing. Only *décimas de barrio* could be circulated on the occasion of religious holidays (ibid, p. 145). Moreover, in the 19th century, theatre, as a communication channel, was comparable to the movies today (Peralta Romero, 2011).

Upon his return to his homeland, Duarte said that what impressed him the most throughout his absence was the struggle that raged in Barcelona for winning freedom for Catalonia (Lebrón Saviñón, 2009, p. 10). He knew the effectiveness of a play as an organ for the dissemination of revolutionary ideals because during his stay in Catalonia he heard of the use made of the theatre to raise the people's nationalist sentiments against French domination (Peña Pérez, 1982, p. 52). He was one of the advantaged few that could cultivate his intelligence because he belonged to one of the limited wealthy families of Santo Domingo (ibid). His social and economic privilege led Henríquez Ureña (1979) to state that Duarte was the most enlightened youth of his time, educated in Spain.

The Captain of the ship in which Duarte embarked for Europe the first time asked him whether he did not feel bad, having the word 'Haitian' written in his passport. 'I'm Dominican', was Duarte's answer. That 'accusation', apart from deeply disturbing him, had the virtue of revealing the misfortune that his people were suffering under the invader forces (Troncoso Sánchez, 2011, p. 16). Among those gathered around the figure of Duarte was another impetuous young revolutionary,

José María Serra, who, upon a wrong done to a comrade in the army, expressed his displeasure at the way the invaders kept the locals in squalid conditions amid arbitrary abuses. He set about writing an anonymous paper, entitled *El Dominicano Español*, attacking the intervening power and inciting revolt, and distributed it under the doors of some houses (Troncoso Sánchez, 2011, p. 59). Serra and Duarte spent at least three years (from 1835) agitating the Dominican population with illegally circulating libels. Moya Pons understands that they were moved by a feeling of resentment against the Haitian Governor, who had humiliated their friend Wenceslao de la Concha, rather than the purpose of executing some definite plan and carrying out concrete actions (Moya Pons, 2002, p. 258). It was with the passage of time that Duarte came to grasp the deeper meaning of his work and was able to perceive clearly its propagandistic purpose. It was then when he proposed the formation of a secret revolutionary society, which he called *La Trinitaria*, on the 16th of July, 1838 (ibid, p. 259).¹⁴ Undoubtedly, in order to stir an entire country against the invaders, the single campaign of sliding pamphlets under the door of some houses was not sufficient. Broader and more effective means were needed. Troncoso Sánchez states that: “*ensayaron todos los medios imaginables para levantar el espíritu público, pero ningún recurso fue tan psicológicamente efectivo como el teatro*” (Troncoso Sánchez, 1969, p. 133).

In 1844, the Eastern part of the Hispaniola had about 125,000 inhabitants, but most of the population lived in rural areas. The most populous city was Santo Domingo, with 6,000 people, followed by La Vega, with 3,500, Santiago, with 3,200, and Azua and Puerto Plata, with 2,000 each (Domínguez, 2001, p. 113). The *Trinitarios* felt compelled to disseminate their ideas and encourage more and more people to join in the cause (Grimaldi Silié, 2002, p. 25). They began their secret proceedings by asking people to commit to a fight against the invaders. It was laborious work that consisted of individual meetings and forming revolutionary cells. After a while it was deemed

¹⁴The revolution was given the name of Revolution of the Boys, because the leader was so young and everyone else was just as young, according to his sister, Rosa Duarte (1970, p. 153).

necessary to complement this work with public preaching in cultural sessions of the Philanthropic¹⁵ society, where they tried to raise awareness. However, these meetings did not attract many people (Troncoso Sánchez, 2011, p. 93). Félix María Del Monte in his *Reflexiones Históricas* (1852, quoted by Troncoso Sánchez, 2011) states that they understood the need to communicate to the masses some encouragement and preparatory enthusiasm, both of which are necessary for the idea to be received by the crowd. They chose theatre because it was available to both scholars and the illiterate.

According to Domínguez (2001), the arrival from Puerto Rico in 1839 of the Peruvian priest Gaspar Hernández was crucial, as he served as a master for the *Trinitarios* in the same place where Duarte met with his peers (in a shop owned by his father, in La Atarazana, now *Ciudad Colonial*). During these classes they decided to found the Philanthropic society in order to celebrate cultural events with the slogan 'Peace, Unity and Friendship.' In 1840 they founded the Dramatic Society, in which almost all of them participated in the presentation of works as actors, except Duarte because he was a poor actor, so he acted as prompter (Troncoso Sánchez, 2011, p. 95). People learned and had fun with the representations, which were mostly about people's struggles for freedom from an oppressive government (ibid, pp. 26-27). The plays were selected by Duarte, who had brought them from Europe. The first of these was *Roma Libre*, by the Italian Vittorio Alfieri, which was performed with the permission of the Haitian authorities in a private home (Lebrón Saviñón, 2009, p. 21). The play was attended by Governor Carrié and artillery colonel Santillana, a Haitian of Hispanic descent. It was a success and Carrié transmitted a favourable report of the spectacle. The message of the play had succeeded and exclamations were heard: "Haiti like Rome" (Lebrón Saviñón, 2009, p. 23). It was the first step in a well-planned propaganda campaign against the invasion.

¹⁵ *La Trinitaria* was a conspiratorial organisation which sought the independence of the country from Haitian domination, while *la Filantrópica* was a cultural organisation that intended to promote through art the ideas of independence. The latter could be defined as the propaganda arm of *La Trinitaria* (Zabala, 2005, p. 49).

In order to establish their theatre in a more suitable location, the Independence fighters, camouflaged under the guise of The Philanthropic, requested the ruins of the old jail, which the invading Government rushed to grant (Lebrón Saviñón, 2009, p. 23). The theatre of the *Trinitarios* was then located in the building next to the House of Borgella, in front of the *Plaza de Armas*, which is Columbus Park today. It used to serve as a barracks in the times of the invader Boyer (Rodríguez Demorizi, 1969, p. 61). The Philanthropic society sometimes presented comedies in French. In one of them, Pedro Antonio Bobea repeated several times the phrase ‘*liberté, liberté, liberté n'est pas sans vif.*’ The Haitian commissioner interrupted the representation. He was shown the script and made sure that the phrase was actually there. The commissioner allowed the continuation of the play, but warned that it should not happen again, which caused alarm and alertness (ibid). Nevertheless, most plays were, logically, in Spanish. Rodríguez Demorizi relates about an interesting episode which occurred in one of the representations. In the last scene of *Un día del año 23*, the aide to the captain general reports by higher order to the director of the society and demands the presentation of the written piece, in order to ascertain whether it included a tendentious concept applauded by the Dominican public: “*¡Me quiere llevar el diablo cuando me piden pan y me lo piden en francés!*” Rodríguez Demorizi states that attacking the French was a way of attacking the Haitian, since the two languages were in battle: the one of the invader, symbol of the dark and hated dominance; and that of the *Trinitarios*, a distinctive sign of freedom. Patriotism thus awakened the dormant spirit of the Dominicans (Rodríguez Demorizi, 1969, p. 61-62).

In accordance with the times, which demanded sacrifices, the revolutionaries acted not only as actors, but also as props, stagehands, promoters and vendors in the box office (Troncoso Sánchez, 2011, p. 95). Thus, apart from Francisco del Rosario Sánchez and Ramón Matías Mella, the other two pillars of Independence together with Duarte, due to their continuous absence, the fighters against the invasion carried upon their shoulders the power of theatre to spread libertarian ideas.

According to Troncoso Sánchez (2009), in those theatrical performances the following Independence fighters took part: Juan Isidro Pérez, forced into Exile upon the war of Independence, who was called *el ilustre loco* due to illness, and imprisoned several times, and died in Santo Domingo in 1868 of cholera; Pedro Alejandrino Pina, forced into exile, returned in 1848 and became Minister of War and Navy, then fought against the annexation to Spain, and was exiled again. He had occupied several government jobs, fought against the annexation, this time to the United States, and died in Las Matas de Farfán in 1870; Félix María Del Monte, lawyer, playwright and poet, who participated in the direct actions of *Gesta de la Puerta del Conde* on Independence Day, February 27, 1844. He wrote the lyrics of the first Dominican national anthem, was considered one of the framers of Dominican literature and an initiator of the local theatre, and died in 1899; Jacinto de la Concha, forced into exile, having fought in favour of the Annexation to Spain but then for the Republic, and died in Santo Domingo in 1886; José María Serra, worked in journalism and education, and wrote a chronicle of the Trinitarians, was forced into exile and died in Puerto Rico; also Pedro Antonio Bobea, Remigio del Castillo and Luis Betances, among others (Troncoso Sánchez, 2009).

III.2 Foreign plays that represented *Trinitarios*' vision

As mentioned above, the first work selected to be performed was the tragedy in five acts *Roma Libre* by Vittorio Alfieri, translated by Antonio Saviñón, which was chosen by Duarte because it demonstrated dramatic force: love for the homeland, hatred against tyrants (invaders), the sublime vocation of sacrifice, inflexibility of justice and punishment of the traitors. This first representation, as stated by Troncoso Sánchez (2009, p. 102), produced such an impact on the people of Santo Domingo that it almost can be said that it determined a change of mood in them. Rosa Duarte (1970) also agrees in her notes: the plays that were represented enlightened the people, so more and

more they comprehended their duty to the homeland. Duarte could not have chosen a better playwright than Alfieri for his purpose to stimulate in the minds of the Dominican people a sentiment of intolerance against the invaders and an unrestrained passion for freedom. The Dominican people were unhappy with the situation, but felt powerless. They had to transform that passive load into active force (Troncoso Sánchez, 1969, p. 134). Thus, those theatre performances were the most remarkable, most exciting and most crowded events in many years in the quiet town of Santo Domingo in 1842. They produced the same calculated commotion in the public mind as the tragedies of Alfieri at the time they were released and disseminated in Italian environments in the late 18th century and early 19th century. They contributed to the triumph of the cause of independence (Troncoso Sánchez, 1969, p. 136).

While Duarte served as prompter, Juan Isidro Pérez and Pedro Alejandrino Pina were disguised as Junio Brutus and Colatino, the latter racked with grief because Lucrecia, his wife, took her own life after being raped by Sexto, son of the tyrant Tarquino. He also wanted to commit suicide, but Brutus convinced him that he should live to avenge the offence and save Rome from tyranny (Troncoso Sánchez, 2011, p. 71). The following verse was uttered by Pérez during the representation: “*Patria, sí, que fundar contigo hoy quiero / O en tanta empresa perecer contigo / Víctimas ambos en la lid cayendo (Roma Libre)*.”

The excitement in the audience could be imagined when the actors cried:

“*Todo nos grita: ¡libertad o muerte!
 ¡No nos queda otra elección!
 ¡Libres o muertos
 Todos seremos! ¡Todos!*”
 (Troncoso Sánchez, 2011, p. 72)

A popular uprising against King Tarquino occurs in the following act, led by Brutus and Colatino, and after their victory, they are acclaimed consuls. Then Mamilius appears, admitted in

Rome as an emissary of the deposed king to reach a peace agreement, when he convinces the sons of Brutus to join the king in order to save their father, but they are discovered and exposed as traitors. The angry people ask the names of the traitors and the same Brutus is adamant, though his heart is faint with pain. The verdict is executed at the time the curtain falls (Troncoso Sánchez, 2011, p. 72). The *Trinitarios* were so pleased with the moral effect of this play that they repeated it, no doubt seeking to reflect the terrifying judgment that the traitors of liberty would be exterminated, whoever they were.

Molinaza distinguishes three major characteristics of the theatre of *Trinitarios*: they were mainly political, propagandistic and consciousness-raising (Molinaza, 1984, p.299). In essence, he argues, the Trinitarian theatre embodied the manifestation of a group that was aware of *Dominicanidad*, of an independent nation, an urban bourgeois group of traders with whom the invading Government was moderately permissive (ibid, p. 304). He disagrees with Veloz Maggiolo, who stated the following: Theatre served the same pedagogical and didactic function as among the Greeks: streamlining the minds of the people and serving as an incentive so that a change of mind was transformed into a material change (Veloz Maggiolo, 1972, p. 183). For Molinaza, however, the function of the theatre of the *Trinitarios* was basically to accelerate the political and economic process. In the Greek theatre its function is given as a totality, as the manifestation in which they returned to the people their deeds, their myths, their religion, their concerns as a people. There was an identity between what was represented and what the community was at that time. For *Trinitarios*, politics constituted their purpose, whereas for the Greeks it was part of the same theatre structure (Molinaza, 1984, p. 305). Essentially, the *Trinitarios* used Spanish theatre and, according to Francisco Ruiz Ramón in his *History of Spanish Theatre* (1967), this was not about quality neither intensity nor richness or dramatic depth, but points to the essence of the human spirit of that category that is called *dramatic* and that is a way of thinking about what exists:

*El teatro español... abre nuevos cauces para la conversión del mundo en drama. O mejor aún: del drama del mundo en mundo del drama, ya que, como escribe Henry Gouhier en su libro *Le théâtre et l'existence*, París, Aubier, 1952, "el drama está en el mundo antes de estar en la escena"* (Ruiz Ramón, 1967, p. 156).

In Spain [as in the Dominican Republic, at that time an invaded territory under Haitian rules] the choice of a national historical theme also obeyed in addition to aesthetic reasons and national education, a cause rooted purely with a liberal ideology, in connection with ideas that came from the French Revolution, especially those tragedies whose subject was the struggle of freedom against tyranny (Ruiz Ramón, 1967, p. 389). According to Heredia de Guerrero (2005), the *Trinitarios* chose those specific works because they depicted scenes similar to the ones under which the Dominican people were living in Haitian rule. Moreover, there were no Dominican dramas at that time. The first Dominican theatrical text as such was written after the Independence by Félix María del Monte, called *El General Duvergé o Las víctimas del 11 de abril* (Heredia de Guerrero, *ibid*).

Nonetheless, after the 16th century there were theatrical representations in Hispaniola, as has been shown in the previous chapter in respect of Cristóbal de Llerena's *Entremés*, entitled 'Octave of Corpus Christ'. The satirical content of the play clearly addressed the Spanish authorities, established in Santo Domingo, and the bad treatment of the indigenous people, which led to the expulsion of Llerena from the country. Therefore, it could be said that that was the first time theatre was used as a weapon to protest against an invasion in Hispaniola. It demonstrates that the staging of national consciousness can be powerful, especially if theatre, as propounded by Rousseau in France and Schiller in Germany, could not only represent the nation but be a vital tool of nation-building (Holdsworth, 2010, p. 29). Furthermore, Holdsworth states that for many countries theatre became a site for exploring and representing a burgeoning cultural nationalism and a means of contributing to and legitimising broader political campaigns (*ibid*, p. 30). At the Abbey Theatre in Dublin, for instance, which opened in 1904, W. B. Yeats and Lady Gregory dedicated themselves to disseminating Celtic mythology, folklore and legend, and to romanticising rural life in the west of

Ireland as a way of asserting a distinct cultural, linguistic and political identity as part of a wider campaign for autonomy from a dominant foreign culture (ibid, p. 33).

Now it is essential to determine to what extent the work of Llerena represented local perceptions, the national spirit. Molinaza indicates that it is important to note that, although the *Entremés* can capture features of an advanced class, it was characterised as an eminently popular product. However, it did not really embody the nature of the exploited class at that time. Rather, it was the product of an economic malaise (Molinaza, 2004, p. 24). Llerena's case, continues Molinaza, is the most representative of its time, but not the only one, because there were other cases where people were sued for writing texts opposite to the interests of the ruling class. Nevertheless, if it had as much relevance [to the point of expelling the author from the colony] which was due to his relationship with the Church, although at the time it represented the most advanced section, it was still an instrument of colonialism (ibid, pp. 24-25).

There is no evidence that Duarte knew of the existence of the *Entremés* and its meaning, therefore both circumstances where theatre was used in Santo Domingo as a means to express the discontent of the people have been isolated. However, as Henríquez Ureña claimed: "*Ese entremés, de suyo breve, envuelve una sátira contra la administración pública*" (Henríquez Ureña, 1965, p. 54). The analogy is appropriate: the central idea of the *Entremés* is a satire on the colonial society of the late 16th century, as noted by Abelardo Vicioso (1979, p. 167). Similarly, the works selected by Duarte to be represented by *Trinitarios* also evoke the discontent of the people, invaded by a foreign country. Interestingly, both Llerena and Duarte were exiled as a result of their actions.

The fact that, right after Independence, one of the *Trinitarios* (Félix Maria Del Monte) dedicated himself to continue writing dramatic works, and that in 1845, a year after Independence and expulsion of the invaders, there appeared *El Dominicano*, a literary newspaper founded by Pedro Antonio Bobea, along with Manuel Maria Valencia, Del Monte and José María Serra, shows that

the propagandistic device used by the *Trinitarios* was quite successful. According to one of its protagonists, the plays thrilled the audience, who used to roar with frantic enthusiasm (cited by Troncoso Sánchez, 2011, p. 114). Also, Hostos claimed that, not many months after Duarte was forced into exile, on the 27th of February, 1844, “*como ya estaba hecho todo lo que había que hacerse*”, two disciples of the first Quisqueyan (Duarte), the second man of the Independence (Sánchez), and the third man of that revolution (Mella) occupied the positions to which they had been appointed (Collado, 2013, p. 23).

Among the most acclaimed plays was *Un día del año 23*,¹⁶ an original drama in two acts written in 1835 by Eugenio de Ochoa, a Spanish writer, critic, bibliographer, editor and translator who belonged to the Romantic Movement. According to Ochoa himself, 31st August 1823 was recorded in the annals of the history of Spain and Cádiz as the year of a serious breach of civil and political liberties of the nation as the city of Cádiz (Southern Spain) was besieged by the French army. The city refused to capitulate, while the rest of Spain "accepted" the domination of the French invaders and the internal absolutist power after a poor resistance in the south. The *Cortes*, residing in Seville, had the King moved to Cadiz, relying on the impregnability of the city due to its formidable fortress and the strength of its neighbours in the defence of freedom. However, people were less credulous than their politicians and demanded guarantees that the monarch would not exercise any repression on those so called liberals who fought against both the French and the absolutists. On 1st October 1823, the King cancelled all signed agreements and thanked France for all their efforts to achieve victory over the liberal rebels. Thus, the ambitious work of the short Liberal governments was suppressed by the King. Many liberal fighters left for exile. One in particular, the Duke of Rivas, Clerk of Courts, was sentenced to death, managing to flee to England through Gibraltar. Others, also sentenced to death, managed to escape by any possible strategy into exile. Admiral Cayetano Valdés, President of the Regency during the French invasion, who helped to move the King to the

¹⁶ The text published by Emilio Rodríguez Demorizi in *Boletín del Instituto Duartiano*, (1969), No. 2, pp 64-107 will be used here.

city of Guadalete, was sentenced with imprisonment and death by the same monarch, escaping, thanks to the generous intervention of the French general who commanded the garrison of Cadiz. Rafael de Riego, commander in chief of the Army, was taken prisoner and delivered by the French army to the furious absolutist winners. He was accompanied in the sad time of his arrest only by a handful of loyal survivors of the struggle against the invader. Accused of treason, he was hanged on 7th November.

These scenes were recreated in the drama by Ochoa and it is perfectly understandable why Duarte chose it to represent it in Santo Domingo in 1843, after more than 20 years of the Haitian invasion. The work of fiction recounts the events of a day in the life of Ricardo and his two children, Carlos, a soldier who is enrolled in the ranks of the French regiment, but later changes his mind and joins the Spanish liberals, and Leonor, who is in love with Eduardo, another liberal. Don Ricardo, who is an absolutist, starts looking at the liberal ideas with a sense of tolerance and admiration.

Rodríguez Demorizi argues that Ochoa's work, despite its literary poverty, helped to stimulate the patriotism of Dominicans in the glory days of activities of *Trinitarios*, culminating with the proclamation of the Republic. That is sufficient reason to justify its representation (Rodríguez Demorizi, 1969, p. 62). Apparently, Haitian authorities did not measure the extent these representations could have on the public mood, and rather encouraged a group of young Haitians to follow this example and represent tragedies of Racine (Henríquez Ureña, 1965, p. 164).

What the invasion of foreign forces often brings is the lack of freedom, so dear to the citizens when they are in such a situation, as well as fear and censorship. Leonor claims so in the play, when she says: '*No están los tiempos para decir verdades*' (Rodríguez Demorizi, 1969, p. 67). On the other hand, Spain, the nation, home, is present from the beginning within the family, but viewed from different perspectives: for Don Ricardo, the older generation, a good Spanish citizen should be

a lover of his king and his religion. However, one can see how the king himself betrays the loyalty of his subjects. The daughter, on the other hand, observes how the poor country is full of sores, and wonders if forbearance and forgiveness will be the currency of the new government. Eduardo, a brave generous young man, represents the individual that is willing to renounce to personal happiness for an ultimate ideal, for the country. Nevertheless, the French invasion is the main theme in this drama. For some people, like Don Ricardo, they are “liberators”, as they fought the liberals, whom Don Eduardo does not trust, even when he clearly does not understand what they do. However, for others, like Leonor, who represents a younger and more open generation, they are “defeaters”, as “in order to “liberate” us, they had to defeat us” (ibid, 1969).

The other popular play, *La viuda de Padilla*, was a neoclassical tragedy in five acts, written by Martínez de la Rosa (1789-1862)¹⁷. He was a patriot in the War of Independence and he travelled to London between 1810 and 1811 and was familiar with the works of Shakespeare. In 1812 he then wrote his drama, which is about the failure of the commoners against Charles V. According to the preliminary notes of the work published by Espasa-Calpe (1933), and narrated by the author himself, on the 23rd of April, 1521 the army of Emperor Charles V defeats the commoners’ Castilian troops led by Juan de Padilla, Juan Bravo and Francisco Maldonado. All three are executed without mercy on the scaffold the next morning. Maria Pacheco, widow of Juan de Padilla, a fighter and a rebel, did not resign herself to the defeat of her ideals and resisted, entrenched in the city of Toledo. She prefers to be killed, even by her own hands, rather than surrender, the solution followed by other characters. However, that was a modification made by the author, as the real fact states that the widow managed to flee to Portugal (Martínez de la Rosa, 1933).

¹⁷ The subject of this work, as with his other plays, is always the same: struggle for liberty (Ruiz Ramón, Francisco (1967, p. 416).

Freedom, homeland and patriotism are the three elements combined in the internal forum of citizens and are clearly the ingredients that *Trinitarios* wanted to enhance in the public of Santo Domingo occupied by Haitians, especially using the words of the widow, who claims: *No el fuerte aliento nos falte, amigo / Cuando más lo exigen la patria y el honor* (*La Viuda de Padilla*, 1933), and the words of her friend Mendoza: *La esperanza de llegar a vencer alzó / A los pueblos contra el yugo de Carlos, Que insufrible hicieran codiciosos extranjeros* (*ibid*), to which the widow repeats: *Nos queda un pueblo resuelto a perecer* (*ibid*).

This work is evidently intended to awaken feelings of patriotism in the Dominican public and remind them that it was better to die than live under the rule of the invader. For instance, during the play several phrases are repeated emphatically, such as this one stated by the character of Avalos: *Dichosos, pues, murieron por la patria! / Libres vivieron, libres expiraron / Ni la ruina de la vencida patria presenciaron / Ni su vil servidumbre, ni el orgullo de su fiero opresor* (*La Viuda de Padilla*, 1933). Some years later, in 1883 this sentiment will be forever reflected in the lyrics of the national anthem: *Ningún pueblo ser libre merece / Si es esclavo indolente y servil / Si en su pecho la llama no crece / Que templó el heroísmo viril* (De Camps, 2010).

The symbolism that it was better to die than live as slaves of a foreign power is reflected in the words of the character of the widow, which is the focus of Martínez de la Rosa's work. While many voices urge her to surrender in order to save her life and that of her son, she insists that she could not live in shame: *Juramos ser libres o morir, y el cielo mismo, / Que dio el injusto triunfo a los tiranos, / Nuestro voto aceptó: pues que nos veda / El ser libres, nos manda que muramos* (*La Viuda de Padilla*, 1933). Very appropriate for the intention of the *Trinitarios* is the intervention of the character of the people, who cry out loud, as a response to the widow's claims: *O muerte o libertad! / A vencer o morir!* (*ibid*). Charles V represents the invader in this work; he is a monarch who was not born in Spain and knows little or nothing of their customs and culture in general, particularities that reflect the hurtful presence of Haitian invaders.

In an era when women played a secondary role in society, it is interesting that the *Trinitarios* chose precisely this work with the central character of a woman, with the characteristics of rebellion and courage necessary to fuel that flame in the audience. The widow was not only a sad woman who had lost her husband, but also represented the very soul of the country that had lost one of its best sons and called the people not to remain indifferent, but to fight or die. Apparently, they chose the presence of a woman for it was easier to move the audience, not only as an individual, but as a female character that could represent a mother, spouse, daughter or sister. The author says it all in the warning of his play:

“Más triste es sin duda la ruina de una ciudad que la de un solo individuo; y, sin embargo, más lágrimas arranca en el teatro la desgracia de una persona...que la destrucción de un pueblo heróico” (Martínez de la Rosa, 1933, pp. 40-41).

When talking about Manuel Rueda's play *La Trinitaria Blanca* (1957), the Dominican critic Alcántara Almánzar believes that he, as his most universal models, Federico Garcia Lorca and Tennessee Williams, finds in the woman the ideal figure to embody all the personal failures of human beings and the imposition of the provincial and biased social environment (Alcántara Almánzar, 2010, p. 166). As to whether there were actresses in the theatre of the *Trinitarios*, indeed it is known that some women acted in the representations, but only the names of two actresses are known: Cecilia Baranis, first actress of Italian nationality, and Antonia Valdez, Dominican (Lebrón de Anico, 2000, p. 74).

Troncoso Sánchez (2011) relates that these said plays were not the only ones represented by the *Trinitarios*. There are indications that they also represented *Segundo Bruto*, by Alfieri; other works of Martínez de la Rosa; Spanish farces and comedies written by Pedro Alejandrino Pina and Pedro Antonio Bobea. From one of the "reprises" of *Roma Libre* there has been preserved in the archives a printed flyer, which refers to 'freedom of the motherland', among others, but a passage also shows how the entrepreneurs had to adapt to the bitter reality to avoid arousing suspicion and obtain official approval, without which there was no theatre and therefore they could not achieve the

pursued moral effect (Troncoso Sánchez, 2011, p. 74). It was most important that the people of Santo Domingo corresponded to the propaganda campaign that the *Trinitarios* used via the theatre, together with direct and persuasive speeches, as it would be seen later when, at the moment of action, not a few but all the people joined the struggle for independence.

When considering the development of Dominican literature there are evident advances in poetry, short stories, novels and artistic essays, but not so much in theatre. In fact, it is poetry that would become the means of propaganda during the turbulent U.S. invasion of 1965, and then the novel will be the genre that would denounce the atrocities committed by Trujillo, the dictator who was the harshest invader of all. Publication of dramas has not been one of the editorial priorities of the country in any era (Quackenbush, 2004, p. 10). The fact is that each literary genre has its time and place to act as the perfect means of propaganda in the struggle against abuse of power, be it a foreign invasion or a brutal dictatorship. During the pre-Independence years the theatre successfully fulfilled its role. The independence fervour of dramatic expressions of the mid-19th century, stimulated by the thinkers of Independence, inflamed people's convictions about freedom. The Dominican theatre adopted, in large part, a historical position during that time that is reminiscent in the current theatrical production (ibid, p. 12).

Nevertheless, economic constraints did not stop the *Trinitarios* in their quest to spread libertarian ideas; if anything, they used theatre to bring together resources to purchase ammunition and pay emissaries, among other tasks (Rodríguez Demorizi, 2013, p. 151). The roles were distributed to everyone authoritatively and they were told in advance what costumes were needed for each performance so they could pay for them themselves. If there were extra newsletters, those were distributed among associates, who had to pay for them if they wanted to take members of their families; if not then they had to settle for not taking anyone. Duarte participated as a prompt to save the eight pesos that it would have cost the group (Rodríguez Demorizi, 2013, ibid).

To sum up, the fighters of Independence were clever enough to use the most accessible means of reaching the public, which helped stir the conscience of the Dominican people against the Haitian invaders. It served their purposes well, as cultural activities were almost non-existent and people were hungry for entertainment. Besides, theatre was available to scholars and the illiterate. Mostly they performed Spanish dramas about people's struggles for freedom from an oppressive government, selected by Duarte, who had brought them from Europe. The revolutionaries acted not only as actors, but also as stagehands, promoters and vendors in the box office, as the circumstances demanded great sacrifices and they were motivated by high ideals. Undoubtedly, this strategy of using theatre as a means of propaganda helped to stimulate the patriotism of Dominicans and, combined with other activities of the *Trinitarios*, culminated with the expulsion of the invaders and the proclamation of the Republic, on the 27th of February, 1844. Although Duarte, the ideologue and strongest supporter was in exile, as Hostos said, to get to that point, there was already done everything that had to be done.

Chapter V:

***GAVILLEROS*, NOVELS AND OTHER REPRESENTATIONS OF RESISTANCE AGAINST THE INVASION OF 1916**

The role of official and popular culture in the politics of resistance against invasions in the Dominican Republic is most clear during the first invasion of the 20th century by the United States of America (1916-1924). Contrary to the period of independence (1844), where *Trinitarios* felt compelled to raise awareness among ordinary people of the urgency of fighting against the Haitian invaders, the Dominican people resisted the new invasion from broader political and social sectors with the highest creativity: guerrilla warfare, civic mass actions in the streets, congresses, sessions headed by women, mayors and young people, cultural and artistic events as the Patriotic Week and Tribute to the Flag, public statements signed by citizens of towns and villages, internationalist work of patriotic activists, diplomatic lobbying, manifestos and intense work of intellectuals served as a means of expression of their discontent. Resistance was rich and diverse in all fields, but perhaps the struggle of the revolutionary peasants, other known as *Gavilleros*, was the most unique, due to the abuses suffered by the rural community, dispossessed by the invaders. They formed a rebel movement – which became known as *Gavillerismo* – that protested against the invasion. The term *Gavillerismo*, given by the invaders and their accomplices, carries a negative connotation, implying banditry, and was used to tarnish the movement's actions.

Under these circumstances, it could be said that *Gavillerismo* was responsible for awakening the national consciousness in much the same way as the theatre helped the *Trinitarios*. The peasant rebel resistance against that great power provides a key insight into the idiosyncrasies of the Dominican people in the early 20th century, as in 1916 the Dominican Republic was still very rural. Therefore, *Gavillerismo* symbolised the real grievance of the masses against the brutal force of a

very powerful invader, although for some, the *Gavilleros* were not really patriots but rather social bandits, as discussed further below. The interest of this thesis in the *Gavillerismo* lies in the analysis of this movement as an interpretive medium of popular resistance to the phenomenon of invasion, at a time when most of the population was rural and therefore was using popular resources to express their reaction. Its historical development will not be explained, but its significance within the social context of the Dominican Republic of that time, when other sectors raised their voices against invasion using different methods.

The term *Gavillero* has multiple possible meanings: were they patriots or criminals? Originally, *Gavillero* referred to a bunch of *gavilla*, which in its first meaning¹⁸ is a set of branches, reeds, harvest, grass, etc..., larger than the bunch and smaller than the sheaf. It also refers to the gathering of many people usually of dubious reputation and hence the association with 'bandits'. In Chile, *Gavillero* is the labourer who throws *gavillas* in the carts, but in other Latin American countries *Gavillero* is a thug and a robber and in the Dominican Republic *gavilla* came to mean a gathering of wrongdoers, i.e. *gavilla de ladrones* (González Canalda, 2008, pp. 17-18). Within Dominican discourse, however, it had been associated with the meaning of 'rebel' and it is related to the peasant's revolt against the U.S. occupation of 1916-1924, but also as robber, thief or criminal. Therefore, depending on the actions of the peasants themselves, whether they were fighting or robbing, the term could be used from different perspectives. In official documents after the years of the Restoration (1865-1868) the term applied to rebel groups that roamed rural areas in that period and it was generally employed by the authorities with a derogatory sense (González Canalda, 2008, p. 18). In 1871 the official gazette, referring to the burning of Puerto Plata, uses the term *gavillas tenebrosas* as synonymous with communism and thieves (Domínguez, 1984, p. 31). Also, Sang highlights two cases of accused *Gavilleros*, in 1876 and in 1877 (cited by González Canalda, 2008, p. 19). These references imply that the term was normally used in the period pre-invasion to point at

¹⁸ www.rae.es

common criminals. Before the end of the 19th century the authorities used the term 'bandit' to refer to such criminals, but from 1905 to 1916 official documents began to use the term *gavilleros* more frequently (ibid, p. 21). United States officials were to come across those documents from 1916, and then apply the same name to the rebellious peasants. It can be seen that the peasant movement that opposed the invasion was therefore confused with the bandits that continued to operate in those areas.

Ducoudray (1976), a Marxist journalist who wrote several articles with the objective of unmasking the real actions of these rebels, considers that stealing was not the reason for the peasants' revolt against the invader. The writer regrets this situation and accuses the invading forces and their accomplices (local authorities) of putting the patriot rebels and common bandits in the same category. However, it is clear to him, after researching official documents of local authorities of that time, that the names of Vicente Evangelista and Ramón Nateras, two of the most famous rebel leaders, were venerated by the people as heroes, representatives of their cause and not as criminals. He notes, for instance, that the achievements of Nateras were lauded by the inhabitants of El Seibo in couplets even in 1948 and that he heard, while jailed there under the Trujillo regime, an old man singing one of these couplets (Ducoudray, 1976, p. 17).

In the meantime, while most analyses of *Gavillerismo* focus on their actions during the period of 1917-1922, González Canalda (2008) frames the development and characteristics of *Gavillerismo* from 1904 to 1916 and divides the movement into three facets. The author places the beginning of the movement between 1904 and 1907, where the groups arose from the civil strife after the separation of the two national *caudillos* of the time: Juan Isidro Jimenes and Horacio Vásquez. The second period covered the years 1908 to 1911, and corresponded to the peacemaking by Ramón Cáceres. The third period comprised the years between 1912 and 1916, before the U.S. invasion, where *Gavilleros'* activities depended on the times of peace or fighting of the warlords.

The present study will concentrate on their activities from 1917 until they were broken up by the invading Government in 1922. It is important to understand that the country that the United States invaded in 1916 was poor and underdeveloped, with fewer than a million people,¹⁹ of whom 85% lived in rural areas and were engaged in agriculture. The cities were small. The capital had an estimated 21,000 residents and Santiago, the second city, 14,000. On top of that, the differences in the way of life were vast, as urban rich and well-educated residents enjoyed the technological advances of the 20th century, but the rural poor seemed to be stuck in the 16th century (Calder, 1998). Another serious problem was the high rate of illiteracy, maternal/child mortality and constant outbreaks of diseases; the situation worsened by the lack of health checks and other essential public services that would improve living conditions, such as electricity, clean water, adequate housing, etc. (Alvarez, 2012, p. 23). Hence the importance of the resistance of a section of the population that was the majority and that directly suffered the cruelties of the invading forces. These cruelties included the torture and execution of prisoners, indiscriminant firing on civilians by patrols, arbitrary seizure of peasants' food and livestock, and off-duty crimes and acts of violence and discourtesy toward ordinary citizens (Cosmas, 1991).

The invaders imposed disarmament of the population to try to pacify the country, which succeeded in many parts, except in the East, where peasants faced the occupation with a guerrilla war that lasted more than four years and forced the military to keep its troops operating all the time (Moya Pons, 2002). That struggle had its causes in the development of the sugar industry in the Eastern region of the country where foreign companies for years had bought their land at low prices from farmers or had stripped them by force. After three decades of expansion of plantations, many families were left with just a patch on which to live or had been forced to move to less fertile lands of the Eastern Mountains. The most important guerrilla leaders were persecuted continuously

¹⁹ The invaders ordered the completion of the first national census in 1920 and concluded that the population of the country was, as of 24 December of that year, 894,665 inhabitants, of which 448,281 were women, equivalent to 50.1% (*Primer Censo Nacional de República Dominicana*, 1920. Santo Domingo: Editora Alfa y Omega. 1996. Cited by Alvarez, 2012, p. 23)

between 1917 and 1922 by U.S. soldiers. These guerrillas relied on collaboration of most of the population of the region and even the tolerance of plantation managers, who in their efforts to prevent their *Bateyes*, cane fields and warehouses being burned or assaulted by the guerrilla leaders, reached the point of sending them money and providing food in order to keep them away from their plantations (ibid, pp. 476-477). In this case, perhaps from the perspective of the *Bateyes*' owners, these men acted as bandits.

The fact is that the National Guard was created in 1917 to contribute to the fight against the guerrillas, and the Marines "deliberately labeled their opponents 'bandits'" (Cosmas, 1991, p. 137). They presented their actions to the national and international public opinion as criminals, as history is written by those in power. Gimbernard is also of the impression that the *Gavilleros* acted more like bandits than patriots, and that they provided an excuse for the invaders to exercise their sadism, killing, torturing or beating those who they believed to be *Gavilleros* or their accomplices (Gimbernard, 1972, p. 457). In this sense, Gimbernard seems to blame the peasants for rebelling against the invading forces, while others will claim that they were really defending themselves against a too formidable power that stripped their land and committed barbaric atrocities²⁰. Ducoudray insists that the East region remained in a fiercely patriotic war against the invader from 1917 to 1922, and not merely in an open banditry. According to the account of the same invaders, there were more than 300 combats between Marines and rebels, who were backed by the entire population (Ducoudray, 1976, p. 26).

In this sense, one of the prominent guerrilla fighters, Juan Batías, claims that the *Americans* were the real bandits, because after they left, "we, those who faced them, were called patriots" (Alvarez,

²⁰ María de Sosa's testimony, as one of the witnesses, stated that the most murderous of all troops were sent to HMR (Hato Mayor del Rey): the damned patrol 44 of Captain Melker (known to all as Mekle) was formed by men sentenced to death and life imprisonment in their own country. They were removed from prison under an agreement that stated that if they returned alive they would be recognised as national heroes and paid with heritable annuities and pensions; and if they perished these benefits would be passed on to their families (Leonardo, 1997, p. 182).

2012, p. 54). Calder (1998) does not use the word *Gavillero* or *Gavillerismo*, always referring to them as guerrilla fighters or guerrilla wars. He does quote Dominicans who referred to the rebels as *Gavilleros*, as is the case of Julio Peynado, who said that *Gavillerismo* increased with the occupation or was created by it, for example, or when someone was killed, their brothers joined *Gavilleros* to get back at the Marines (Calder, 1998, p. 188). However, after analysing the origins of the guerrilla war in the East, Calder concludes that, undoubtedly, those who opposed the marines were no bandits, that the Military Government tried to discredit with its propaganda, but peasant guerrillas who fought for principles and for the preservation of a way of life (ibid, p. 195). For McPherson, the rebels were caudillo followers, belonging to small semi-political bands, who “formed a continuum that ranged from *gavilleros*, or pure bandits, to revolutionaries who fully demobilized after war” (McPherson, 2014, p. 37). McPherson does not relate poverty to the insurrection; for him, the Dominican rebels of that time could be considered “social bandits”, but their social qualities were fraught with political self-interest. Not for Bosch (2007), though, for whom, the *Gavillerismo* was part of the state of rebellion in the region (Nicaragua, Haiti, Panama), due to the U.S. invasion in those territories. The situation of peasants in those countries was very similar. In 1915 in Haiti there were the *cacos*, landless peasants or owners of very small properties and inhabitants of the slums of the cities, especially in the North, who followed minor chiefs, self named ‘generals.’ The marines had to fight them with the result of many lost lives of Haitians, until the *cacos* signed a peace agreement with the invaders (Bosch, 2007, p. 617). As can be seen, this is a symptomatic situation of the particular U.S. invasion of the time, that logically encountered opposing armed struggles. Bosch recounts that in the Dominican Republic that struggle was coordinated by more or less large groups, led by an independent leader, mostly peasants, who were restricted to killing marines wherever they could find them, robbing stores of the sugar plantations or to punish those Dominicans who collaborated with the foreign invading forces. Bosch also remarks that it was the Government of Military Occupation who named the rebels *gavilleros*, i.e.

bandits, just as they did with the *cacos* of Haiti, and as they would do with Sandino and his followers in Nicaragua (Bosch, 2007, p. 623).

However, the portrait that González Canalda draws of the early *Gavilleros* before the invasion of 1916 reflects them as caudillo followers, linked to either the political leaders of the moment or the wardlords of specific regions. Apparently, that situation changed during the invasion, when they just represented the silent masses of peasants that felt unprotected and attacked in their own home. The author distinguishes two types of *gavillas* or *gavilleros* in that period: one, the most common, might correspond to the basic concept of criminals, as their main activity was prowling an area with a group of armed men, robbing stores, attacking and disarming representatives of the order and demanding money, cattle, provisions from wealthy people in the countryside, and sometimes fulfilling a vengeance or exercising justice with their own hands. The other group, less frequently, was distinguished from the first one because their main activity was stealing and selling livestock and only tangentially attacking the authorities (González Canalda, 2008, p. 16). According to González Canalda, the *Gavilleros* kept the same characteristics during the invasion regarding their composition, actions, organisation and ways of struggles, but they acquired a new characteristic before the invasion: the nationalist struggle. This is the aspect that might link them to the concept of ‘social bandit’, depicted by Hobsbawn (1959) in his study about primitive rebels, where he argues that social banditry is a form of expression of social discontent, which appears in underdeveloped agricultural societies where traditional social relations are kept. These are not organised movements of protests, as their members do not clearly express their goals; they are not ambitious and do not want to change society, they are simply disappointed at the unfairness of reality. In this sense, Wolf proposes the hypothesis that certain pressures of society as a whole could trigger resistance by peasant communities (cited by Canalda González, 2008, p. 23). These pressures include: economic, such as payment of tribute or rent; political, such as legislative interference on peasant autonomy; military, recruiting soldiers in peasant communities, or when a hostile state invades the rural area,

killing its people, destroying their cattle, burning their crops. Significantly, when customs control was imposed by the U.S. controllers in 1905, those who rejected it were the *Gavilleros*. The resistance to a hostile army is also clear during the occupation (ibid).

The rebel peasants of the 1916 invasion in the Dominican Republic have been romanticised in popular fiction, on the one hand, and infamously named as *gavilleros*, i.e. criminals, on the other, if taken from the analysis that Hobsbawm does of the social bandit (1959). Slatta explains that with their actions these men made themselves admired by flaunting authority and championing the interests of the folk masses against elite oppression. In exchange, the peasants admired, protected and aided them (Slatta, 1987). The reality is that Hobsbawm, as criticized by Slatta, based his interpretation of the social bandit on fictional literature (often elite lore) and reproduced sources inspired by folklore, but the problem is that elite lore reflects mostly a writer's imagination and popular culture reveals little of the social reality of bandit behaviour (Slatta, 1987). This statement seems to be too extreme, but perhaps it does not imply that both elite and popular sources have no understanding of social reality, simply that they might suffer some subjectivity. However, all texts, either literary or historical, do present the author's subjective views, that is unavoidable. Slatta's argument could be transformed into a debate on reliability, but not on understanding. If literary sources are rendered as 'subjective', then so official sources are, most of the times, too biased to benefit those in power, which is where such sources are produced. In the present case of the rebel peasants' movement during the invasion of 1916, one can see a quite rational approach from literary sources to the life of the peasantry and the causes that led to these peasants taking up arms against the invaders.

In his statement that the Dominican rebel peasants of 1916 have been slandered and labelled unjustly as 'bandits', Ducoudray (1976) based his conclusions on official documents issued by local authorities and reports that they had to send to the invading forces who tried to control the country; therefore, his commentaries and interpretations can be qualified as factual, not 'romanticised'. Also,

Calder (1998) based his conclusions that the said rebels were not mere bandits but fighters against the U.S. invasion on the records of the U.S. military government. It is therefore clear that literary or popular cultural sources are as reliable as official sources and that historical facts do not necessarily have more authority than ‘imagined’ truth.

In another account, García Muñiz rightly argues that the *Gavilleros* were not a homogenous force: some were bandits; others claimed to be political revolutionaries (García Muñiz, 2000, p. 26). The likes of Ramón Nateras and Vicente Evangelista perhaps were pure representatives of the ‘social bandits’ depicted by Hobsbawn (1959), but other rebels were even very well educated, as is the case of Fidel Ferrer, who before joining the guerrillas was a teacher and a civil servant; and the case of Gregorio Urbano Gilbert can be seen as the prototype of popular resistance against the U.S. invasion. Taken from Gilbert’s own account (before dying in 1970 he delivered his autobiography to the University of Santo Domingo, who published it in 1975) we learnt that he was among the first who offered their services to the Nationalist Board created to protest against foreign occupation, but who did not yet have concrete plans of resistance.

The invaders arrived in San Pedro on the 10th of January, 1917 and the 17 year old Gilbert, who was a shop assistant at a groceries store, took the historic decision to offer individual resistance to the landing of foreign troops, armed with a revolver and a knife. He walked to the pier where he observed the invaders as they landed and wrote on a piece of paper, which he hid in his pocket, that he might die satisfied because “it is a protest against the invasion of my country by foreign forces”. Minutes later, at the cry of “*Viva la República Dominicana*,” Gilbert discharged his gun against a group of officials who were disembarking and killed one of them. He managed to escape and then joined the guerrilla forces led by Vicente Evangelista, participating in several battles against foreign troops, but after that group was disbanded, he moved to the town of Monte Cristi, where he worked in a print shop, until he was betrayed and arrested by the invaders, subjected to cruel interrogations and locked in a deep hole. Then they drove him to Santo Domingo, where he was sentenced to be

hanged, but repeated requests on his behalf, made by national figures, succeeded in having the death sentence commuted to life imprisonment. On the 2nd of October, 1922 Gilbert was released and he left the country and visited several Latin American countries, until in 1928, he joined the Nicaraguan guerrillas who fought against U.S. troops led by Augusto César Sandino. Gilbert returned to the Dominican Republic after spending a year in the Sandinista army. In 1956 he received his Doctorate in Philosophy at the Autonomous University of Santo Domingo. Another U.S. invasion came to the country in 1965, and as expected, Gilbert joined the resistance movement, even while sick. He died on the 29th of November, 1970. Gilbert confirms in his memoirs that most of the peasant rebels were not bandits and protests at their being called 'gavilleros' (Gilbert, 1975).

Surprisingly, the name of Gregorio Urbano Gilbert does not transcend the borders of the local bibliography, but undoubtedly it is a clear instance of social expression of local discontent against foreign invasion. The truth is that Gilbert, like Ferrer and the other rebel peasants, had been rooted in Dominican discourse as part of the movement of the *Gavilleros*, who represented the fight against the U.S. invasion of 1916-1924, and they stand for the mass of peasants who rose against the invaders, regardless of their motivations. Therefore, in this chapter, where the ways of expressing their feelings toward the foreign invasion of 1916 are examined, *Gavillerismo* is included as a unique way of cultural resistance. As McPherson states, “culture was another manifestation of the political struggle at the heart of the resistance to occupations” (2014, p. 114) and this work argues that the peasants’ rebellion of 1916 is presented in Dominican literature as a movement of spontaneous resistance of rural citizens, who wanted to protect their interests and preserve their way of life. There are different creative genres which engage with the said invasion (poetry, novels, articles, speeches), which will be analysed as representation of the popular feeling against invasion.

V.1 The country of the *Gavilleros*: historical background

At the beginning of the 20th century, the first interest of the United States in Latin American countries was clearly commercial, but they also had an interest in establishing naval bases in the Caribbean (Tejada, 1980). Domínguez also notes that the United States occupied Haiti and the Dominican Republic in 1916 with the primary goal of bringing order to the rear before going to fight in Europe, and thus ensure that they continue to produce sugar, cocoa and other products that would serve to feed American soldiers (Domínguez, 2001, p. 222). Furthermore, the United States needed to completely displace the positions of German imperialism in the Caribbean area, ensuring the strengthening of political and economic dependence of Latin America and the domination of a number of vulnerable countries to make them serve their war needs (Cassá, 2004, p. 213). Given their need for expansion, U.S. imperialism not only imposed its political, economic and social control with military force, as in the armed invasions of Cuba, Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua, but also invented a republic (Panama), annexed another one (Puerto Rico) and even bought several islands: Saint Thomas, Saint John, Santa Cruz and adjacent islets bought from Denmark in 1867 for the sum of \$ 7,500,000 (Alvarez, 2012, p. 31). Being at the centre of the Caribbean made the Dominican Republic a coveted strategic point first for the powers of European monarchies and then for the capital of the USA long before capitalism reached its imperialist phase (ibid, p. 28). Moreover, the marines also protected and promoted U.S. economic interests, and, through its activities, it was demonstrated that the United States intended to expand its economic and financial power in Latin America through interventions (McPherson, 2014, p. 5).

Nevertheless, whatever may have been the causes of the 1916 invasion, what really mattered were the effects and consequences. Bosch argues that on a large scale, albeit indirectly, the occupation governments took steps to encourage the setting up or expansion of sugar mills, as well

as the Land Court, a body intended to legalise the possession of land by the sugar companies (Bosch, 2005, p. 368). As might be expected, this measure will overwhelmingly affect the lives of the peasants, because the more the sugar industry was being protected the more the poorest peasants were becoming poorer. In this sense, the country was gradually losing its sovereignty, as Bonó sees it: “*si sigue ello, no está lejos el día en que todos los pequeños propietarios que hasta hoy han sido ciudadanos vendrán a ser peones o, por mejor decir, siervos, y Santo Domingo, una pequeña Cuba, o Puerto Rico, o Luisiana*” (cited by Rodríguez Demorizi, 1964, p. 251). Earlier, in 1905, the US dollar had been adopted as the national currency, in substitution for the *clavao* of Lilís (Bosch, 2005, p. 357). Only in 1938, during the Trujillo regime, will the Dominican coins be once again installed as the national currency (Gimbernard, 1972, p. 476). However, in 1899 a couplet of Juan Antonio Alix, a very popular poet and true representative of the peasants, claimed that people wanted the circulation of the U.S. currency, because it did not fluctuate, therefore it did not harm them, reflecting with this the differences between existing classes at that time:

*Según la voz soberana
De todo el País, desea
Que circulando se vea
La moneda Americana.
Pues con ella el pueblo gana
Porque no sube ni baja...*
(cited by Bosch, 2005).

That ‘sovereign voice’ that Alix portrays did not imagine that in just a few years they would have the same owners of the U.S. currency on their own soil, but their presence will not bring benefits for them, as politics will stand between them. Taking into consideration the Dominican panorama, from the Restoration of the Republic in 1865 to the 1916 invasion, undoubtedly, what most affected the lives of peasants was politics, which was in chaos. The Restoration War (1863-1865) left the country devastated and disjointed. With the cities of Santiago, Montecristi and Puerto Plata destroyed and most of the peasantry up in arms, the economy was ruined because men

neglected their fields and the few products that were removed from the land ended up in the hands of the guerrillas (Moya Pons, 2002, p. 359). However, the worst was the political fragmentation produced by the war in Dominican life, because as the fight against the Spaniards had been carried out thanks to the guerrilla war, at the end of the conflict, the country was dominated by dozens of leaders with little or no military training that began to dispute power with each other (ibid). As during the war of independence, The Restoration War was made possible because those local and regional leaders could structure a temporary alliance that served to keep them in the fight to expel the Spaniards. As McPherson states: “Latin Americans were at their most effective...when their interests...were most threatened” (McPherson, 2014, p. 2). However, as soon as the Spaniards left the country it was clear how precarious the alliance was.

The country was invaded in 1916 because of external debt, or as Paulino Ramos (2010) states, the resurgence of warlordism, political instability, the penetration of American capital and control of the economy through the Dominican-American Convention of 1907, under the start of the First World War, led to the military invasion of the Dominican Republic by the United States in 1916. In 1907 the said convention was adopted between the Dominican and U.S. governments. An arbitrary interpretation by the U.S. government of the increasing Dominican public debt was the pretext for the invasion of their military forces (Gimbernard, 1972, p. 412). On the brink of the 20th century, political instability was reflected in the historic rivalry between the liberal and conservative political thought. On the 19th of November, 1911, the then president, Ramón Cáceres, was assassinated and with this tragedy the political, economic and administrative orders were deeply disrupted. The country was “caught up in rapid revolutionary cycles” (McPherson, 2014, p. 7). A succession of four governments followed in the next three years amid a state of almost constant warfare and intrigue in a chaotic climate whose driving forces were hatred and personal ambitions. In 1914 general elections were held and Juan Isidro Jimenes was elected President, initiating a period of

prosperity that lasted only one year and a half, until Desiderio Arias,²¹ his Minister of War, began a rebellion that would open the way for the U.S. military invasion (Gimbernard, 1972, p. 422). Then, on the 29th of November, 1916 Navy Captain HS Knapp, Force Commander of the U.S. Cruise Atlantic Fleet from its Flagship launched a Proclamation to the Dominican people, declaring that the Dominican Republic was placed in a state of military occupation by the forces under his command (Gimbernard, 1972, p. 455). National Congress had elected Dr. Francisco Henríquez y Carvajal as President, but the invaders did not allow him to rule and he was forced to leave the country. In the following months Henríquez y Carvajal would lead an arduous campaign in international arenas in search of support for ending the invasion. In a poem written in Havana in 1917 one can sense his deep feelings of sorrow towards the lost homeland and contempt for those who had betrayed it. In the poem *Duarte*, dedicated to his friend Federico García Godoy, he says:

*La gente, bienhallada con la intrusa
i sórdida caterva, calla i come;
i, ayuna de la fe que allana montes,
fustiga el ideal con torpe burla.*
(Henríquez y Carvajal, 1944, p. 184)

Like Henríquez y Carvajal, others also lamented the silence that gripped many citizens, but this was understandable in the sense that the invaders imposed a high degree of censorship on what was said publicly. Especially harsh was the censorship of the press. On the 2nd of December, 1916, the invading troops occupied the National Palace. Education and health services, which, among others were run by local governments, were transferred to the central government (Alvarez, 2012, p. 46). These decisions correspond to the logic of the invasive power, i.e. that they needed control of public policies on the one hand, the population and their movements on the other, and the establishment of an order that would guarantee investment capital and reproduction of the least possible risk. Hence

²¹ Desiderio Arias was a classic caudillo, he represented the poorest, most infertile region called the *Línea Noroeste*. Tall, thin, and of mixed race, Arias was beloved for his humility and generosity...A former cart-driver with little education, he chose the only profession that afforded social mobility –war. He excelled at it...and attracted a following of darker-skinned peasants, soldiers, and urban poor. After the assassination of President Ramón Cáceres in 1911, Arias competed for power against two other caudillos, Horacio Vásquez and Juan Isidrio Jimenes (McPherson, A. 2014, p. 34).

the decision to build roads and railways, because it contributed to the rapid movement of goods arriving and departing to and from U.S. ports.

The construction of roads had a huge impact on Dominican life, because for the first time the most important regions were connected to the capital city, the seat of Government. Also, it contributed to an immediate influx of peasants to the edge of these new routes, as previously they had lived isolated in the fields for fear of the revolutions (Moya Pons, 2002, p. 481). Hostos indicated in 1884 that the Dominican peasant learned from experience to build homes in the woods, where they could not be found by ambitious generals who led them to their wars for years (cited in De la Cruz, 1986). By the time of the invasion of 1916 this situation had not changed, namely that the peasants lived in voluntary isolation, as Hoetink (1972, p. 168) also highlights, since the creation of the Republic, due to forced recruitment where young boys, of fifteen and more, were carried away from their homes against their will. This situation is starkly portrayed by Bosch in *La Mañosa* (first published in 1935) in the years previous to the invasion. During the invasion, we will see how the lack of roads will be a factor that worked to the benefit of the peasants in their struggle of resistance.

Needless to say, violence in all its forms was the foundation for achieving the purposes of the invasion of 1916 and obviously the peasantry was the sector most affected. As Bosch states, during the eight years of the U.S. occupation, no significant changes occurred within the population (Bosch, 2005, p. 369), i.e. the peasants continued being poor and exploited, and the petite bourgeoisie continued as before, but in the political arena they could not behave in the chaotic manner to which they were accustomed. In fact, the representatives of the petite bourgeoisie entered a period of negotiation with the U.S. government in order to end the occupation, in which the peasantry had neither voice nor vote. The occupation ended officially on the 12th of July, 1924, when Horacio Vásquez was declared winner of the elections, which took place under the Agreement of Withdrawal called the Hughes-Peynado Plan.

What happened during those eight years of political negotiation, while *Gavilleros* were fighting in the East region and throughout the country the rest of peasants were struggling to survive? Gimbernard (1972), Domínguez (2001), Bosch (2007) and other historians recount it as follows: The ousted President Henríquez y Carvajal conducted an intense campaign from Cuba against the occupation. The protest was strengthened by the Latin American Republics, which voiced their complaints to President Wilson. In 1919 Dr Henríquez y Carvajal went to Paris, where a Peace Conference was being held. The U.S. delegates whom he contacted told him to go to Washington to express his grievances at the State Department. There he met with members of the Foreign Service, suggesting the restoration of the national courts and the appointment of an Advisory Board made up of Dominicans, responsible for drafting the reorganisation of the Republic based on civil organic laws. On the 3rd of November, 1919 the Advisory Board was appointed, although Dr Henríquez y Carvajal refused to take part in it. It was composed of the Archbishop of Santo Domingo Monsignor Nouel, Jacinto de Castro, Dr. Francisco J. Peynado and Federico Velázquez. Parallel to this Board, there was a citizen movement that demanded unconditional withdrawal and in March 1920 the patriotic association *Unión Nacional Dominicana*, chaired by Emiliano Tejera, was founded.

On the 24th of December, 1920, the U.S. government finally issued a proclamation announcing the appointment of a commission representative of Dominican citizens to prepare amendments to the Constitution and a general revision of the laws. In addition to the four original members of the Advisory Board other citizens were added, plus Mr Ostrand, a U.S. citizen and Land Court Judge of Santo Domingo, as a technical advisor. The *Unión Nacional Dominicana* was against any collaboration with the Americans, keeping its slogan of “pure and simple withdrawal”, making it clear that there was a divergence in the formulas of withdrawal of the invaders. Governor Snowden was removed from office and replaced by Robinson, who on the 14th of June, 1921 issued a new Proclamation providing a detailed evacuation plan, whereby United States would continue to monitor closely the country. This was rejected. The *UND* named as traitors those who tried to find a

possible settlement. However, Horacio Vásquez and Federico Velázquez reached an agreement on behalf of their strong parties, promising free elections, after which Francisco J. Peynado contacted the Secretary of State Hughes to explain his plan. Then, all together, happily and content (Hughes, Peynado, Vásquez and Velázquez) met in the U.S. capital and on the 30th of June, 1922 drew up a Memorandum of withdrawal of the invaders, although this was not entirely straightforward.

The Hughes-Peynado Plan consisted of the following main points: Establishment of a Provisional Government, but a parallel military government would continue to rule, led by a military governor; Dominican National Police would remain under the control of the provisional government; U.S. troops would be concentrated in three different places, but without any interference in domestic politics; the Receiver General of Dominican Customs would continue charging customs taxes, to secure funds to pay the loans of 1908, 1918 and 1922; the Provisional Government would reform the laws regarding provincial and municipal regimes and convene general elections; the representatives elected would receive power, and so would end the occupation, but first they had to sign a treaty, in which the Dominican government would ratify the loans contracted by the military government of occupation and executive orders, resolutions and other acts, many of which benefited U.S. corporations with investments in the country.

V.2 Isolated struggle of the peasants in fiction

In the meantime, peasants did not know about treaties and agreements, and the fact that they were actually ignored by rulers, either local or foreigners, could be added to their motivations for resisting the invasion. In the rural communities they had a very hard life away from all politics and negotiations, into which historical texts do not give such a rigorous insight as the different literary genres that focus on that subject, especially novels. Both are valuable sources, but perhaps novels

can absorb more, from the sociohistorical point of view, of the rawness that was inherent to peasantry, because “literature becomes a document with referential functions,” as LaCapra (2013, p. 14) states. It is interesting how LaCapra cites the analysis of Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* by Olivier Le Cour Grandmaison, for whom Conrad’s novel is “a more reliable history of these empirical processes than were actual histories of the time and even subsequently, histories that were misleading vehicles of ideologies of progress, imperial glory and the ‘civilizing mission’” (LaCapra, 2013, p. 16). In this sense, novels like Juan Bosch’s *La Mañosa* (1995) or Marcio Veloz Maggiolo’s *La vida no tiene nombre* (2013) illustrate much better than historical documents the fragility of the peasantry under the invasion, because they render a literary account of how the ordinary lives of peasants were affected and mixed with the struggle of the *Gavilleros*, and give a stark portrait of the country in the early 20th century, when the Republic was facing the most serious problems of social instability, economic crisis and political fraud.

La vida no tiene nombre (2013), for instance, is an extraordinary report that tells the experience of a guerrilla fighter, Ramón Vieth, alias *El Cuerno*, son of a poor Haitian immigrant named Simián, victim of rape several times, including by her master, a wealthy landowner of El Seibo, who is the father of Ramón. The novel, narrated in the first person by Vieth, is basically a self-analysis, while waiting for his execution, as he is in jail for having fought the invaders and killed his father. Thus the reader feels with him, suffers with him, the same anxiety as any would do, when knowing that death is waiting around the corner. In his memories, as if they were the author’s reflections, the atrocities committed by the troops of the invaders are told in an almost sarcastic tone, as when Ramón says that he was tortured by the invaders (*...me pelaron la espalda a fuerza de tablazos, p. 9*), which he considers to be an act of violence against humanity, and if it was up to him, he would find another way of “breaking someone’s neck.” His entire life has been a torture, and he has been beaten hard by his own father, who used to call him ‘*maldito haitiano*’, as if that were an insult. Ramón Vieth considers himself a man of peace, but circumstances made him choose

the life of the guerrillas. When he was captured, after many years of struggle, he was a ‘retired patriot’, but the unexpected came, and ‘nobody expects the unexpected.’ So now, all he wishes for, while facing the firing squad, is to die as a man of honour, which for him means to die standing, like a man, and not upside down, like a pig dripping blood.

The reader also experiences the sufferings of the guerrillas who were persecuted by foreigners and compatriots, the prevailing racism that can be noticed in all the vicissitudes experienced by Ramón’s mother for not only being black, but Haitian, a different kind of black. It can be seen how the invaders used the same language when referring to the locals. In the case of Simián, she was mistreated by the man for whom she worked, treated like an animal, although he did not hesitate to have sex with her whenever he pleased. However, Simián did not want to leave the hacienda of such a cruel master, because after all she did have hot food secured and a safe place to sleep, whereas the world outside was full of “evil men”, who only wanted women to satisfy their most perverse desires. If life was hard for men during that time, for women it was even harder, but to where could they escape? Ramón calls his mother stupid for not wanting to leave the hacienda sooner; he is unable to understand that she was waiting for him to fully grow up and become a man, so instead of her having to protect him, he would protect her from the world. It was with the help of the Haitian healers of the Batey that Simián failed to get pregnant again, which, in her misery, was lucky for her. The novel shows how the guerrilla fighters tell of their large families, who generally became orphans in the care of hopeless mothers. There is a moment in the novel when Ramón had to take the difficult decision of executing one of the gang’s members, for being a traitor, and who begs to be pardoned because he has twelve children to support.

This novel not only describes the situation of the country at that time, but also a culture of servility (*pronto cayeron en el servilismo que durante tanto tiempo nos ha hecho a los dominicanos unos payasos que bailan para el que más comida ofrece*, p. 37) and especially the circumstances that drove a disappointed peasant, tired of a miserable life, to become rebellious and enter the

Gavillerismo (yo llevaba el deseo profundo de demostrarle a los Vieth que era más dominicano que ellos, p. 26). That life was going to prove to be even harder than his previous one. The first image that Veloz Maggiolo introduces is that of terror and desolation:

“Las tierras del Este...son tierras donde los hombres trabajamos como animales, de sol a sol, por unos cuantos centavos americanos...cada familia tiene miedo de sus vecinos debido al terror que implantan los invasores con la fuerza de sus fusiles...Ellos han establecido sus leyes a fuerza de ahorcamientos y balazos. Todos las respetamos, o mejor dicho, casi todos” (La vida..., p. 5).

Nonetheless, not everybody feared the invaders, as Ramón says; there were the rebels, as they called themselves (*campesinos alzados*), while the invaders called them *Gavilleros*, due to their abilities to surprise and deceive them. As if it were one of Kafka's novels, in *La vida no tiene nombre* the main character lives in an absurd nightmare, born the son of a Haitian maid and the owner of the estate, who in a gesture of rebellion against his 'white' family, decided to give his surname to the bastard, thus entitling him to a probable legal heritage that will become his misfortune. Because of that, when Ramón returns to the hacienda in search of mercy to treat his mother's illness, he is forced by his half-brother to kill their father and eventually will be executed for that reason. It can be seen that Ramón is a victim of circumstances and the absurdity of life, but, according to González-Cruz (1979), Veloz Maggiolo does not have to rely on fantasy to create his novelistic fiction, as absurdity can be found in the existence of each day in the Dominican Republic of that time; the character of Ramón is trapped in the absurdity of the national reality. His skin was fairer than the other peasants, and so his hair, but despite that he does not cease to be one more of the great mass of poor peasants. Many times in the novel the reader can see how he starves, how he has to suffer the bad weather and sleep in the open where he is almost eaten alive by insects, how he has to steal to survive, and how he works as an animal from dawn to dusk for twelve cents and just a few pieces of boiled cassava to eat. At the end, "all will end like me," says Ramón (p. 83), "facing the firing squad of the invaders," and it is as if those invaders represented perhaps life itself, absurd, as González-Cruz (1979) maintains, something that has no name and cannot be understood.

According to Veloz Maggiolo himself, *La vida no tiene nombre* (together with other novels of his creation, like *El buen ladrón* or *El prófugo*) is an existentialist novel, i. e. novels that go into everyday life trying to explain it, not in an unsystematic but in a passionate way, how man acts, how is it that a *Calié* acts, how is it that a man changes his mind tomorrow or the day after, and then has another view on life (Valerio-Holguín, 2013). That is what matters. Ramón Vieth, however, insists that he tried to forget his past and he could not. All he wanted to be was a guerrilla fighter, but circumstances turned him into a criminal; he had to steal and to kill, and even when he wanted to retire and live a normal life as a farmer, they did not leave him alone. The invaders had put a price on his head of five thousand pesos, which was part of a master plan of his half-brother, who ultimately killed two birds with one stone.

What do you have to repeat the real world for, wonders Veloz Maggiolo (Valerio-Holguín, 2013), if there is a world that can be invented? Although his characters scream the opposite, Ramón's story shows otherwise. Veloz Maggiolo, who was born in 1936, is one of the most prolific and versatile Dominican writers. He is a poet, novelist, story teller, playwright, critic, painter, historian, anthropologist and archaeologist, and he has written a novel that has a historical dimension, not a "historical novel," but a story that emerges from history, where every day is essential. Fernández Spencer said that the novel is just a method of understanding reality, not only to explain it, but to make it more palatable to the public (ibid). Veloz Maggiolo, like Fernández Spencer, believes that the novel is a way of philosophy, and although he insists that a novel is always 'an invention', we assume that not in a way of 'lying', but in a way of using the imagination to enrich history. How else could the reader in *La vida no tiene nombre* draw closer to the cruelties suffered by the peasant fighters in their resistance against the invasion, but through the fabulous metaphors used by the author? Metaphors that reflect the helplessness of the peasants:

Tenían la muerte tan cercana que no podían ni abrir los ojos (p. 68)

Las cartas de los pobres nunca llegan a ningún sitio (p. 70)

Tierras desesperadas por la pobreza, las plagas y los marines. (p. 71)

Perhaps what this novel ails is that it is not comprehensive in narrating the depths of the secondary characters' lives, as if the author had been in a hurry. Thus, it is not clear, for example, the fate of the half-sister of Ramón, Santa, who used to play with him when children, as if there were no barriers that prevented that, only the lashes that Ramón will receive on his skinny body. Santa, says Ramón, was an angel, although she was their father's daughter, but she also was a victim, apparently, which can be reflected from her own words: "*todos nos odiamos aquí, es lo que papá nos ha enseñado*" (p. 24). She, and her brother Fremio, represent the social reality of a country (that of 'half siblings') at a time when male promiscuity was the order of the day. The guerrilla fighters had many children by different women; the landowners 'used' their female workers any time they wanted without any consideration whatsoever, as if they were slaves, and most of them had 'bastards.' Invaders also abused their power and had sex with native girls, who were brought to them by the landowners in order to ingratiate themselves. According to Ramón, who heard of the news while rebelling in the fields, when those girls gave birth to 'unwanted' children, the soldiers 'eliminated' them, so not to leave traces of their actions.

The reader is also left wondering how Ramón's father, who was a foreigner (from Holland) just like the invaders, came to these lands and who was his wife, Martha, presumably a Dominican woman 'whiter than Simián', which probably means that she was a *mulato*, since Simián was black. Martha and Simián were both victims of the same sociocultural tendency regarding families, which could have been inspired by an appendix in Frederick Engels' *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1994). This was the reality of anomalous families due to the non-recognition by parents, either because women were used, raped, and children born of these savage acts were 'erased' from the existence of the perpetrators, or because men did not assume any responsibility and these types of settlements became acceptable, but they did not properly represent a family. Therefore, even when the landowner gave Ramón his surname, Ramón did not belong to

the Vieth's family; they all hated him, except for Santa, and the nickname of *El Cuerno* was a symbol of shame and humiliation for him.

Engels calls 'promiscuity' the indications of group marriage in the early stages of humanity, but that stage was a convenience for the social reality of the time. What, then, does promiscuous sexual intercourse really mean? He wonders, and responds that it means the absence of prohibitions and restrictions which are or have been in force (Engels, 1994, p. 20). In *La vida no tiene nombre* this scenario is portrayed in the fact that there were no prohibitions for landowners and invaders, but they used women unrestrictedly without any punishments whatsoever, since men exercised power without control, a practice inherited from the first invaders who arrived with Columbus in 1492. From the chronicles of the Spanish conquistadors, as Las Casas and Oviedo, it can be seen that *Taino* men did not use to rape women and leave children scattered everywhere, as one of the most remarkable features of their society was the high degree of social solidarity among its members, and there were hardly any fights between them (Moya Pons, 2002, p. 6). The image of the *Taino* family, gentle and sweet, is reflected by Ureña (1989) in her poem *Anacaona (La indígena familia/...miraba candorosa/ pasar la vida en calma/ sin pesadumbre el alma/ sin yugo la cerviz/ (Anacaona, pp 177-178)*. It was with the arrival of the Spanish invaders that promiscuity, as defined by Engels, began to be felt in these lands. It is a stigma that can be read between lines in a second reading of *La vida no tiene nombre*.

On the other hand, the stark reality of powerlessness and helplessness experienced by the peasant masses during those fateful years of foreign occupation and meaningless revolutions is starkly portrayed by Bosch in his novel *La Mañosa* (1995), which covers a period of time during which the life of peasants was precarious. While Castillo's work focuses on the character of Rafael/Trujillo and the fight of the rebel peasants, Bosch depicts the common peasants' struggle to survive amidst the apathy that was experienced in the days previous to the invasion of 1916. The novel is the story of the life of a Dominican village in times of disorder, in which neither the time nor the real

protagonists are named, but it describes struggles between revolutionaries and the government. At a time when the only thing that mattered to this mass was “*seguir viviendo*” and “*llevarles comida a los niños*” (*La Mañosa*, p. 211), some will go on the side of the ‘revolution’ while others are on the government side, with no real sense or ideologies, thus demonstrating the indifference of the people about who the rulers were, whether one of the local *caudillos* or a foreign government, because after all they lived isolated and ignored by the powers.

In the novel, the peasants call the group of fighters by the generic name of ‘revolution’, which reflects the concept of instability of their vital structures that affects their daily lives. This intensification was an effect derived from imperialist penetration (Cassá, 1978), but the struggles are hardly as futile as Bosch argues in the 1974 Preface to *La Mañosa* (Sommer, 1983). The struggles were there for a reason, even if it was only to serve as a symbol of discontent and rejection of one class (of the peasants) to the other (of the rulers, petite bourgeoisie). One of the most prominent groups operating in San Pedro de Macorís and Eastern Santo Domingo provinces was the one led by Eustacio ‘Bullito’ Reyes, who called their troop *La Revolución* and they identified themselves as such (Calder, 1978). In *La Mañosa* it feels that the peasants families are seized by a historical reluctance, especially when they announce that there comes the *Revolution* (referring to the war fighters), as if it were a strong landslide that might disrupt their precarious lives, even if they are full of misery and the best thing that can happen to them is if something changes, which is what revolutions usually do.

Within the novel Don Pepe, the child narrator’s father, prepares the family’s favourite mule, *la Mañosa*, to take him on a business trip. While he is away, a civil war breaks out, so the boy’s mother worries and prays, and the peasants who frequent Don Pepe’s house sigh in resignation because their sons have been recruited; it does not matter to them into which army. As the fighting gets closer to home, local peasants drop by to discuss events with Don Pepe, later when he has returned. Even one of the guerrilla’s leaders, Fello Macario, comes to visit. After the war gets so

dangerously near that the family has to flee temporarily, the novel ends in death and despair. *La Mañosa*, the mule, dies of a wound inflicted by those who abused her during the war; and Don Pepe cannot understand how the once generous and now victorious Fello Macario can refuse to pardon Pepe's friends from a scheduled political execution. Thus Don Pepe represents the helplessness of the peasants, who are caught in the midst of struggles. With this open despair, Bosch shows the foundations of the social reasons that led many farmers to join guerrilla groups to fight the invaders, because the invasion stole their peace and turned them into resentful human beings. As Calder states, they resented the changes of their lives due to the loss of their lands; they resented being unemployed and poor; and they resented the fear and insecurity brought into their daily existence by the aggressive and arbitrary acts of the occupying Marines (Calder, 1978).

Focusing on this point, the rise of resentment has been crucial to the creation of resistance:

“Resentment is an emotion that forms from the day-to-day experience of humiliating subordination...and is reinforced by everyday policies that heighten the perception that one's group is located in an unjust position...These policies can intensify resentment and encourage individuals to accept risk and act against the occupier” (Petersen, 2004, p. 297).

This panorama is clear in *La Mañosa*, where the mass of peasants struggle to survive amidst the political conflicts. Although Bosch places the events in a fictional village of the Cibao region (North-Central) it could be related to the proceedings in the East, where the peasants' struggles were the same and where they favoured neither government nor rebels but feared both and their sole goal was to survive.

In the novel, the character of Fello Macario is transformed, starting as a romantic figure but by the end, when he had become ‘Governor’, appeared as cruel as the invaders. Bosch ensures that his book reflects the class struggle and the ascension of the petite bourgeoisie by civil wars. In his prologue to the 1966 edition, the author calls *la Mañosa* an ‘allegorical figure’, and perhaps this meaning can also be associated with another metaphorical identity, such as that of ‘Land-Woman’ alleged in Cartagena Portatatin's *Yania Tierra*, for she (the mule) represents the means for Don

Pepe's livelihood as a businessman, as well as *Yania* (the land) representing the means of livelihood for peasants. *La Mañosa* and *Yania Tierra* have been worshipped, looked after and defended with equal passion by their owners, and then stolen, invaded and abused by strangers. *La Mañosa*, like *Yania Tierra*, becomes a symbolic object of the struggle between the invaded and the invaders.

Sommer (1983) also indicates a metaphorical identity of *la Mañosa* as the object over which legitimate and illegitimate masters struggle, revealed by the covetousness she awakens in everybody (Sommer, 1983, p. 105). However, Don Pepe generously offers the mule to Macario when the latter is desperate and losing the war; Macario leaves her in the care of José Veras, and when she is stolen Veras hunts her down and forces the thief to return the pitiful dying animal to her legitimate owner, but she cannot be saved (ibid, p. 157). This image inevitably reminds the reader of the generosity recreated by Ureña (1989) in her poem *Anaconda* when the natives (as Don Pepe) displayed their courtesy to the invaders, always eager to please, naïve and unaware that soon they would be abused by the same invaders whom they helped:

*¡Ay del indio que en su seno /
Generoso, sin doblez, /
A la víbora da abrigo, /
Y promete ciega fe /
Al tirano que le halaga /
Que le tiende infame red!*
(*Anaconda*, p. 187)

In a sense, the analogy between the natives' naïve generosity and the peasants' courtesy undoubtedly leads to the association of helplessness that is involved in the struggles of the Dominicans during the various invasions they had experienced, suggesting that there is a sort of fatalism when something 'evil' is upon them, although they keep fighting until the end. There is something irrational about the peasants' attitude towards the civil wars, as described by Bosch, which is not more than the rebellion against the invasion, but for the peasants, who fail to understand the scope of the situation, it is only an obstacle in their daily lives. This helplessness can be extracted from Don Pepe's assertion that "*Esta sería una gran tierra si no fuera por esas*

condenadas revoluciones” (*La Mañosa*, p. 62). As Sommer points out, “the recurrent wars had chastened the masses of dispossessed and subsistence farmers by killing large numbers of them to protect privileges that the poor never enjoyed” (Sommer, 1983, p. 112). This statement raises an important issue about class and power, which Bosch addresses in his study about the social composition of the Dominican Republic, underlining that the petit bourgeoisie only cared about their economic stability (Bosch, 2005, p. 357). However, as Cassá indicates, those petite bourgeoisies were unable to obtain economic strengthening via regular means, so they turned to the guerrilla wars, which were of predatory nature, i.e. attacked Customs, assaulted official cashiers and contracted debts, among other factors. (Cassá, 2004, p. 198). It is easy to see how these actions generated a widespread chaos that affected the lives of peasants, as can be seen in *La Mañosa*. *Quisqueya*, *Yania Tierra* or *la Mañosa* are used in these literary texts as references of lands damned for having been invaded; invasions which in turn were always provoking rebellions and, therefore, leaving a sense of helplessness in the peasantry, since, from the peasants’ perspective, neither the government nor the guerrilla fighters really helped to improve their lives.

V. 3 Resistance of intellectuals: strengthening unity against invasion

Accordingly, one may need to ask what the role of the Dominican “intelligentsia” was during those eight years regarding the withdrawal of the invaders, as it may be seen that peasantry was isolated in the resistance movement. According to the 1920 census, only 0.1 percent of the population was listed as professionals – around 750 (McPherson, 2014, p 131). Paulino Ramos (2010) concluded that, although the movement of *Los Gavilleros* was the military response of a sector of peasants to domination of foreign capital, that resistance was concentrated in the areas of sugar and very sporadically in the Eastern sugarcane areas of Barahona. Nevertheless the struggle of *Los Gavilleros* was discredited and isolated from the bulk of the Dominican population. It should

not be forgotten that the military government had imposed total control over the press and all that was said and written publicly. Thus, for undertaking the country's foreign military withdrawal there was also needed the conjugation of different types of political struggles with the economic crisis that began to be felt in the early twenties. The civic movement of resistance against the military government of the invaders was organised by the Dominican National Union (UND), chaired by Emiliano Tejera, and by the Nationalist Boards. The UND was a very important political instrument in the struggle for the withdrawal of the invaders. This movement brought together personalities and politicians of all political tendencies. They were responsible for organising internal resistance, along with other nationalist organisations, while in the international field several institutions participated, but especially the Nationalist Commission directed by Francisco Henríquez y Carvajal and other Dominican intellectuals and journalists. However, unlike the peasantry, which immediately began to protest against the invaders, intellectuals at first seemed asleep. Francisco Pratz-Ramírez, one of the leaders of the organisation called *El Paladión*, justifies this by saying that painful circumstances at the time had prevented their restoration work as it should, which did not allow every citizen to become a giant in the struggle for the supreme ideal, but the time had come, he insisted (Cited by Paulino Ramos, 2010).

The political-intellectual movement was originated among a small group of officials and supporters of the deposed President, although it would appear that the protest movement by that part of society was activated only after 1920, when the relative economic welfare faded and the output of the invaders began to be seen as possible, as the First World War had ended (Calder, 1998, p. 20). In opposition to the activities of armed rebellions and movement of the peasants, intellectuals' activities were mostly called to oppose invasion and claim in print and meetings for the invaders to leave of their own accord. Internationally, the nationalists also worked vigorously in large U.S. cities, Latin America and Europe. According to Paulino Ramos (2010), among the most important activities in the struggle for the withdrawal of the invaders were the local campaign *La Semana*

Patriótica, the international campaign of complaints of the Nationalist Commission, the countless conferences of nationalist intellectuals around the country and written articles that somehow managed to be published, and the so called Congress of the Press, which was the most important forum of denunciation developed in the country. This Congress was established on the 25th of November, 1920, with Horacio Blanco Fombona as president, and Fabio Fiallo, a prominent writer, as vice president. Nearly all media of the country participated (Alvarez, 2012. P. 56), for a total of 35 media (McPherson, 2014, p. 134). There was an attempt by the invading troops to interrupt the Congress by force at the Town Hall of Santo Domingo, on 27th December, but journalists were kept firm (Paulino Ramos, 2007, p. 94.) The courageous attitude of national journalism was repressed by the military government: imprisoning the most prominent journalists, closing several publications, and deporting journalists, as happened with the Venezuelan Blanco Fombona, who on the 7th of November, 1920 published in his magazine *Letras* a photo of the Dominican peasant Cayo Báez revealing his burn wounds and a text emphatically accusing U.S. officers of torture (McPherson, 2014, p. 136). The Congress served as one of the most obvious demonstrations highlighting the struggle of the national press to regain the Republic's sovereignty; also it forced the invaders to restore their policy of repression against the nationalist movement and was forced to stop the persecution of the press. Although only few in numbers, if compared to the great mass of peasants, poets, novelists, and especially journalists, they used every weapon at their disposal. Apparently there had been created an atmosphere of anti-invasion in the country, according to McPherson, who maintains that Dominican papers exposed every detail of U.S. abuses but suppressed news of attacks on occupation forces. They also defended almost anyone arrested by the marines, even common criminals (ibid, p. 134).

As can be seen, the population had turned into one a big family against the foreign force and 'people of letters,' mostly men, were not intimidated at the impact of the invaders. Fabio Fiallo, for instance, who was editor of *Las Noticias*, and co-founder of the Press Congress, received a one-year

sentence and a \$2,500 fine, presumably for his article ‘*Oídme todos*’, where he called the United States a

“most cruel civilization that, bayonet at the ready, invaded our backyard on a dark night of betrayal, surprise, and cowardliness, and that has caused us countless tears, countless homes in ashes and countless starving orphans...The order is RESISTANCE; RESISTANCE until victory or death!” (McPherson, 2014, p. 136).

According to Henríquez Grateaux (2006), an essayist, journalist, linguist and educator, the actions of Fiallo at the time of the intervention of 1916-1924 were very important for the country. Due to his friendship with Rubén Darío, the Nicaraguan poet, who died in 1916, the photograph of Fiallo in a prison outfit appeared in newspapers abroad and that helped to improve the political environment for the Dominican Republic. The United States then imprisoned a well-known poet, a friend of Darío, the person who revolutionized Latin American poetry (Peña, 2006). The defiant tone and nationalistic nature of this article contrasts with the tenderness and musical aesthetic that Fiallo, the Romantic Poet, of whom Balaguer said he was “the greatest of our erotic poets,” (1956, p. 243) had accustomed his readers, as reflected in verses like these:

*Cuando esta frágil copa de mi vida,
que de hermosuras rebosó el destino,
en la revuelta bacanal del mundo
ruede en pedazos, no lloréis, amigos.*
(For Ever, in Contín Aybar, 1943, p. 51)

Fiallo put aside for a moment the passions of the heart and illustrated the fatalistic sense of his fellow citizens against the invasion, when he wrote these other verses:

*A la mujer que abandona el lecho matrimonial
Tal vez la perdonaría si yo la fuera a juzgar: la que
Con yanqui se junta viva la haría quemar.*
(In Herrera, 2006)

Even romantic poets like Fiallo, follower of Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer, did not hesitate to change the tone of their poetry for a nationalistic spirit claiming for sovereignty, using not only their words to combat, but also their actions. Fiallo, like Fombona, proclaimed his satisfaction at being jailed. In the same manner, Américo Lugo declared during his trial that he could not recognize the court’s

jurisdiction over him, as it was composed of foreigners (McPherson, 2014, p. 136). Between 1921 and 1928, Lugo was the Editor of the newspaper *Patria*, which initially served as spokesman for the nationalist movement that advocated the 'Pure and Simple' withdrawal of the US military forces of the country and had the suggestive slogan 'the ideal is more necessary than bread' (Herrera, 2008. P. 11). However, taking into consideration that, between the two existing trends [one that conditioned evacuation "Pure and Simple", and the other that called for a treaty with the invaders] the one that finally prevailed was the latter, the Hughes-Peynado Treaty. It could be concluded that the effort of the patriotic intellectuals at the end was fruitless and, like the struggle of the rebel peasants, was stifled by more powerful interests. Perhaps the case of Lugo reflects the feelings of these intellectuals.

Américo Lugo Herrera (Santo Domingo, 1870-1952), a lawyer, writer, journalist, jurist and historian, used his editorial writings to criticize the Dominican society of the time, especially in terms of the inability of people to organize themselves as a nation, and also on warlordism and old partisanship. Some of Lugo's considerations were that what prevailed in politics was a sort of patronage practices, which were reflected in the excessive increase in civil and military bureaucracy for the sole purpose of favouring their fellows; that politicians preferred the category of personal convenience over the category of supreme reason; and that political activity was bound to an absolute disregard for the general welfare of society (Herrera, 2008. Pp. 12-13). He described the Hughes-Peynado Plan as a validation of the actions of the invading military government and equated it to that obtained by Pedro Santana to annex the Republic to Spain in 1861 (ibid, p. 14):

*¿Qué personalidad internacional puede reconocérsele a un Estado
cuyas rentas aduaneras están retenidas por un Presidente
extranjero cuyo poder gubernativo para conferir empleos
está compartido con otro Presidente extranjero?
¿Qué concepto tienen los dominicanos de lo que es un Estado? ¿Qué
concepto tienen de la soberanía? ¿Qué concepto tienen de
la ciudadanía?*

(Herrera, 2008, p. 15)

In the preceding lines, the disappointment in the voice of an intellectual that cannot conceive the ignorance of the people is obvious. Apparently, the invasion radicalized the liberal ideas of Lugo and drove him to an exalted nationalism, but after the failure of the ‘pure and simple’ campaign and the subsequent isolation of the progressive intellectuals, he felt defeated, as Cassá indicates (quoted by Alvarez, 2010, p. 522), which led him to confine himself and reinforce his critical accounts about the Dominican community. The conversion of Lugo, from a positivist liberal, supporter of the great educator Eugenio María de Hostos, to a Catholic conservative, is another of the many moments of the drama experienced by the Dominican intellectuals of the 20th century (Alvarez, 2010).

The above shows a strict division among politicians and professionals, regarding the invasion, and a notable difference in the means that were necessary to reclaim sovereignty, as a proportion of the citizens were willing to accept whichever conditions were offered by the invading forces. At the same time, it can be appreciated that the discourse used by intellectuals in 1920 was not very different to that used by the separatists in 1844, praising the patriotism of citizens above all things, emphasising their duty to fight, opposing the presence of foreign troops and keeping alive the hope for freedom. What changed was the means used to propagate their ideas, as theatre was replaced by newspapers. Between 1900 to 1915 in the country existed 25 printers, 11 of which were in Santo Domingo and 5 in Santiago, while San Pedro de Macorís had two printers and following the occupation of 1916, printers were multiplied, reaching the number of 55 in 1925, 22 of which were in the capital and 11 in Santiago de los Caballeros (Gómez, 2010). The number of printers is very important, for the more means were available to find a way of expressing their discontent, the better for the intellectuals. From the very first day of the invasion on 29th of November, 1916, there was announced the suspension of publication of any newspaper or periodical which would offend or violate the establishment. Under those circumstances, several newspapers devoted part of their pages to cultural journalism. Others, as *El Independiente*, which was political, had to be moderated

and redirected to literary content (ibid). However, the majority of the media did take on an aggressive role against invasion, as we have seen, even if it was only by expressing their opposition. (Alvarez, 2012, p. 57). Not only the editorial pages, but also the literary segments became the platform from which intellectuals rendered the patriotic cause (ibid).

At the beginning the intellectuals were identified with the work of the UND, but as the U.S. output was expected, the organisation entered in crisis leading to the reappearance of the old caudillo parties (Calder, 1998, p. 20). Nevertheless it is appropriate to ask whether Dominican resistance, though timid, really helped the U.S. invasion to only last eight years and not be extended further. Did it really contribute to its general meaning and help give the particular form it took, taking into account that local reaction ranged from enthusiastic cooperation (from the traditional politicians) to determined resistance, which can be divided into two: that of *Los Gavilleros*, with its guerrillas in the Eastern region, and that of the intellectuals, with their campaign of protests led by nationalists both domestically and internationally? Calder is of the opinion that accusations and protests did soon lead to investigations and eventually to negotiations which were highly significant for retreat (Calder, 1998, Introduction). McPherson also notes emphatically that “resistance was the most important factor in ending occupations precisely as it reflected concrete grievances and also because it spurred transnational resistance movements” (McPherson, 2014, p. 2). As expected, virtually every major U.S. invasion would provoke resistance (especially from political and intellectual elites), and in this sense the Dominican campaign could be rated as successful.

Another question to be asked is why intellectuals did not work together with *Los Gavilleros* in the resistance movement, and it is difficult not to agree with Calder (1998) when he notes that: First, the intelligentsia had no real information, because the news they heard about the guerrilla warfare was limited and regularly reflected the views of the invader. Second, the class orientation of the Dominican society of the time placed them away from the peasantry, whom they considered socially backward and politically insignificant. Finally the elite, at least the most intellectual

stratum was heavily influenced by liberal and positivist ideas of the 19th century, whose basic principles of order and progress led their followers to regard with disdain the popular social forces as the ones represented by *Los Gavilleros*.

The invasion only lasted eight years and Dominican nationalists developed an exceptionally effective campaign against occupation. The main elements, as we have seen, were a protest with broad-base in the Republic, a very powerful lobbying and propaganda inside the USA and an influential international campaign focused on Latin America. In addition, the Eastern peasant war, although developed independently of the nationalist elite, caused severe difficulties to the military government of the invaders. Along with these factors there were also other outcomes, such as the general reluctance of people to legitimise the occupation, the political blunders of the military administration and the economic depression that began in the late 20s (Calder, 1998, p. 368). Several decades later Cartagena Portalatín let the feelings of her fellow men and women speak on the brutal invasion of 1916, when she raised the voice of the land that is *Yania Lopez* and claimed that the boots of the invader will not triumph:

*1916 / SOBRE la Mar Caribe / Aquí está el invasor
 Justo a diez metros del casco colonial
 ...La bota cruel del gringo
 ...Oh Yania tristeza tuya triste
 ...Ahogan / no ahogan / no triunfarán
 La tierra es Yania López
 Abandera los símbolos.
 (Yania Tierra, p. 331)*

It could be remarked that, as the *Trinitarios* did, intellectuals of the beginning of the 20th century took advantage of literary weapons to express their dissatisfaction with the invasion. Government agencies and municipalities turned their halls into stands for opposition to the invasion, and expressed their positions in different ways, from protests to manifestos against the foreign intrusion (Alvarez, 2012, p. 59). In general, intellectuals grouped in the Nationalist Committee led a fervent campaign in search of diplomacy and international solidarity with various

initiatives, including visiting governors, congressmen, authors, conferences and meetings. As mentioned before, *Desocupación pura y simple*, was the position of the progressive and liberal intellectuals, among whom stood out the above mentioned writers and journalists, also brothers Federico and Francisco Henríquez y Carvajal (doctor, lawyer, writer, educator and politician, who was married to the poet Salomé Ureña) and Pedro and Max Henríquez Ureña, sons of Francisco Henríquez y Carvajal and Salomé Ureña.

Most of these protesters were men, but there were also many professional women, who took an active role in the resistance movement. Although it has to be clarified that their struggle cannot be classified as ‘feminist’, for they were fighting alongside the population of an invaded country; they belonged to the same mass of ‘invaded’ and therefore they protested as citizens, regardless of their gender. Thus the spirit of support demonstrated during the war for independence along with the *Trinitarios* was also there, as Alvarez (2012) points out in her study *Mujeres del 16*, whose main protagonists were peasants in the East and educators -teachers- in the urban area (Alvarez, 2012, p. 15). The voices of the female educators can be well linked to those of their counterparts as one voice of the intellectual class.

Alvarez (2012) chronicles that *El Diario*, in Santiago de los Caballeros, on the 19th of July, 1921 published a manifesto signed by 1,500 women, confirming their commitment to the withdrawal of the invading forces. In New York, on the 26th of November, 1919 the *Comité de Damas pro Santo Domingo* was formed, immediately initiating a campaign of support in America and Europe. In the country, the *Junta Patriótica de Damas*, expressed their opposition and fight against the invasion. They also organised the Dominican Week, with the main objective of raising the patriotic consciousness, and raising financial resources to help the Nationalist Commission to easily conduct its work overseas in demand for the invaders’ withdrawal (Alvarez, 2012, p. 63). That initiative encouraged others, and new efforts were made for the rescue of sovereignty and in 1921, referring

to the 77th anniversary of the proclamation of the Republic, the day 'Tribute to the Flag' was announced, requesting that no home should be left without a flag in front of their houses.

There are several reliable accounts of the courageous participation of women at the time against the disgraceful invasion, for instance, Petronila Angélica Gómez, teacher and editor-manager of *Fémína*, magazine of literature, science and art devoted to women. In 1924 (during the national elections) she stressed the importance of solving cordially the complicated problem of emancipation, of refining the different views into a single and unique one, which could lead to the essential purpose: sovereignty of the Republic (Alvarez, 2012, pp. 110-111). Also, Josefa Pérez Andújar, teacher, organised in Baní a protest at school, after the passage of the invading troops en route to the South; students mourned and paraded through the streets as a sign of grief at the invasion (ibid, p. 112). Rosa Smester was a teacher, writer and speaker. She was very poor, as her teacher's salary was not enough to meet her needs and that of her family, so she had to work at night to compensate. Nevertheless, despite that, on the 26th of May, 1920 she wrote to the president of the Nationalist Board, Dr Henríquez y Carvajal, in which she expressed her commitment to the libertarian cause and donated a month's salary, stressing that “whenever necessary, I will give gladly” (ibid, p. 116).

An interesting case was that of Ana Silvia Infante (Silvana), who was the first Dominican woman to go on hunger strike to protest against the death of her father and husband at the hands of the invaders. Her life is narrated in the novel *Silvana o Una Página de la Intervención*, by Juan A. Osorio Gómez (1929), recounting how Silvana was trapped in pain, refused to eat any food, being caught in the darkness of insanity, until one day, while wandering aimlessly, she was killed by a vehicle on a curve.

“Rosendo, dueño de un aserradero, fue apresado...le pedían informes sobre los gavilleros; le sometieron al tormento del fuego...sin que de sus labios saliera una queja. Silvana, su hija

*predilecta, había estado en vela al lado de su padre desde que se informó su prisión funesta hasta verle morir...El dolor consumía a la hija y esposa sin ventura.”*²²

The grieving daughter and the hapless wife, Silvana is the prototype of the victims of the invasion. The above text refers to how a civilian is arrested during inexplicable events, but what draws attention here is that, even when tortured, Silvana's father refused to collaborate with the invaders and give them any report regarding the *Gavilleros*. It was as if the population felt compelled to protect the rebels, even if they did not know them; there was a spontaneous solidarity among the peasants towards the invasion. Although most of the fighters were men, there were also a few female fighters within the *Gavillerismo*. One of them was María Girón Nateras, known for her photography, carrying a revolver in her belt, white skirt and a belt of bullets, in the bush, along with other fighters. She belonged to the group of Ramón Nateras. However that was not the only case. Catalina Cedano had her arm broken by a bullet in June, 1919, when she was with the group of José Amparo. There was also Merí Mota, girlfriend of the guerrilla leader Ramón Batía (Ducoudray, 1976, pp. 85-86).

Returning to the intellectuals, two of the most prominent female voices who opposed the invasion were those of Abigail Mejía and Ercilia Pepín. Mejía was an activist in favour of her fellow women, a writer, educator and literary critic. She produced an important political text on behalf of the withdrawal of the invaders and for the return of institutional normality in the country in that period. She constantly wrote in newspapers, both in the country and abroad, and on the occasion when the peasant Cayo Baez was tortured and burned. She wrote in Puerto Rico, on the newspaper *El Imparcial* the following:

“Francia está cansada de ejecutar traidores y revolucionarios, sin mayores consecuencias; los Estados Unidos de igual modo electrocutan tranquilamente al que pone las bombas...Veamos ahora

²² The first edition was published in 1929, but no more copies are available, and the second edition was published by Imprenta *El Amigo del Hogar* in 1977, also unavailable (Alvarez, 2012).

en qué país del mundo se efectúan mítines y manifestaciones contra el martirio repetido de campesinos dominicanos, a quienes se tortura para obligarles a ser delatores o embusteros."²³

Mejía's novel *Sueña, Pilarín* (first published in 1925) is widely known, as it popularised one of the most used phrases among Dominicans: *Sueña, Pilarín*, [related to someone who is too deluded or has unattainable plans]. Mejía wrote it just one year after the invasion, while living in Barcelona, where she lived for 16 years. It was reprinted in 1992 by the *Instituto del Libro* and *Librería La Trinitaria*. It recounts the story of a girl of Dominican descent, but born and raised in Spain, who lives intensely episodes of a checkered life that begins with being an orphan too soon. She is then adopted by a generous aunt, whose husband turns out to be Pilarín's father, although it was never confirmed by either of them. Pilarín then grows up in a web of misery, being looked after but not really accepted. Having a free soul, she has to experience the severity of a nunnery, face the inappropriate passion of her half-brother, until eventually she finds true love in a young man with whom she shares the same origin and was also a 'dreamer'. However, what were the dreams of Pilarín? It is not really clear in the novel, as sometimes it seems that she was just a spoiled child, for although she lost her mother, she was not suffering terrible ills. If she lacked the love of her father, his acceptance and recognition at least, were not shown by the author properly. Looking at the novel as a metaphorical sign of reality in her home country, her nostalgia could be interpreted as implausible repressed desires, especially if taken from Rosario, her aunt, and her dreams of returning to her homeland where she wishes to die in peace after the loss of her son. Pilarín confesses, while returning by boat to Santo Domingo with her husband, that she lives in a dream and is still dreaming. Perhaps the same happened with the inhabitants of the country during the invasion, who could not believe they were living reality, but a dream. They had hoped for better times to come, but Trujillo's dictatorship was coming, therefore, they would continue 'dreaming.'

²³ Published in Alvarez, Virtudes. 2012. P. 97

Apparently, *Sueña Pilarín* reveals the liveliness of Mejía's ideas and her existential concerns about women, and some ideas of the moment, which at times seem to be too conservative. She adopts her aunt's attitude, for instance, when Rosario indicates that she could tolerate that her husband had a mistress, but to have a Protestant governess, she was not willing to consent to (*Sueña Pilarín*, p. 61). It seems to the author that the situation should be the opposite, as the novel appears to be very autobiographical and Pilarín incarnates Mejía's ideals of a liberated woman. According to Nacidit-Perdomo (2012), Mejía's feminist thought had a great impact at the beginning of the 20th century, causing several controversies in political and intellectual circles of that conservative era. It is not surprising that Mejía, being such an advocate for women's rights, took an active part in the national struggle for liberation, for the country, seen as a woman, had been invaded. In the novel the author also gives her vision of the country, when referring to *those lands* as rich and splendid, where people easily reach the wealth with the same ease with which they scatter it (*Sueña Pilarín*, p. 168). However, the only regret for the past tragedy of the recently concluded invasion she just revealed in a glancing phrase: *Su patria, tan rica en su suelo como en desventuras políticas* (ibid). It feels as if Mejía used to speak out openly in journals against the invasion, but she was silent on the matter in her novel. Perhaps because the invaders had gone, the homeland was free again, and she, as the rest of the citizens, was still dreaming. Something that attracts attention is the language she used. On the one hand she was fighting against the U.S. military invasion in newspaper articles, not realising that, on the other hand, in her literary writing she used a very hispanicised language, which could be considered as an intellectual invasion.

Her other peer, Ercilia Pepín, was a teacher, an advocate for democratic institutionality, also a fighter for women's rights, internationalist and poet. Her work in the classroom was accompanied by permanent visits to various cities and public and private institutions to lecture on women's rights, values and national symbols, and whose efforts she deployed with greater vigour after the invasion. One of her major conferences against the invasion was delivered on the 12th of January, 1917 in the

halls of the *Sociedad Cultural Amantes de la Luz*, in Santiago, which focused on Duarte and Hostos (Alvarez, 2012, p. 100). The invasion was officially declared on the 29th of November, 1916, without any officials opposing it, "only 80 brave *Cibaeños* faced the invader in the place called *La Barranquita* in Santiago and a small group led by Silverio Pepín in Puerto Plata. Yet Ercilia Pepín, 42 days later began her nationalist campaign, pronouncing the said lecture" (Paulino Ramos, 2007, p. 85). On that occasion Pepín called all people to raise their hands, at this time of "cynical intervention" and work with ardour and perseverance for the sake of freedom and harmony of the Dominican people (Collado, 2013, pp 53-54). Among other activities, Pepín organised a tribute on the 30th of July, 1922 to the patriot Santiago Guzmán Espaillat, who opposed the Dominican-American Convention of 1907 and was killed in Santiago on the 1st of January, 1912. In general, her intellectual expression was a reflection of the activities she developed and the topics were the school, the home, the woman and the most impressive historical passages, from Independence 1844 to 1930. Particularly noteworthy is her need to remember the heroes of old times, especially Duarte, and illustrate to the new generations so they too can be filled with glory by serving their country, as she writes in her poem entitled *Duarte*, which she wrote in January, 1929:

*¡Haz que renazca en las gentes ese noble afán de gloria
Que alumbra los sacrificios del patriótico deber!...
Tu Carta de Ciudadano, tu abnegación ejemplar:
Muéstrala a nuestros ojos, como si fuera un espejo,
Para que en ella se miren los estoicos de la hora
Y los niños que hoy se educan quieran tu gloria emular.²⁴*

The works of the above women illustrate that they acted shoulder to shoulder with all professional men in the self-imposed task of resisting the invasion. It seems that the concern about unity was present in the minds of the most progressive citizens, although some of them complained about the lack of organisation. One of the major referents was Federico García Godoy (1857-1924),

²⁴Published by Paulino Ramos, 2007, p. 119.

who arrived from Cuba as a child and for 40 years was engaged in journalistic and literary work; he was director of several national media and wrote in foreign journals. He published philosophical works, commentaries, poems, stories, essays and literary critiques and in the field of the novel he was one of the first intellectuals to develop the historical subject with the purpose of stimulating the national consciousness. According to Bosch (2010), paying due attention to the paragraphs with which García Godoy started each of his historical novels (*Rufinito*, *Alma dominicana* and *Guanuma*) it can be concluded that these books were written with the specific and clear purpose of creating a national consciousness that prevented the one thing that he saw clearly: the inevitable collapse of the country in the hands of U.S. power (*El Derrumbe*, Preface, 2010, p. 24). Thus, Bosch found in García Godoy's work glimpses of a political sociology which was still not dreamed about in the Dominican Republic and that indicated the role of the people in the struggle of the Restoration:

El papel del pueblo en el sostenimiento de la independencia nacional aparece no solamente expresado en acción a través de los personajes que don Federico inventa para representar al pueblo, sino también de una manera racional y consciente en los prólogos que escribe para esas novelas" (El Derrumbe, p. 27).

It is interesting to find in García Godoy the same concern expressed by Petronila Angélica Gómez, editor of the magazine *Fémína*, about the importance of unity in order to keep the sovereignty of the Republic, although the reasons he gives for the lack of unity among the Dominicans of that time are not entirely effective, as they might respond to the unlike economic differences rather than to 'ethnic problems'. García Godoy claimed that the Dominicans lived a very disorganised life because they were mixed people (*El Derrumbe*, p. 26). In 1916, the same year of the invasion, García Godoy wrote *El Derrumbe*, which was a historical and sociological essay around Dominican society and the misadventures that it suffered from the proclamation of the Republic in 1844 until the U.S. invasion. The invaders censored it, of course, and prevented its circulation, as the author himself told in his text *Historia de un libro*, which he wrote some years

later. Fortunately not all copies were burned in 1917, some survived somehow and it was reprinted several times. The edition of 2010 includes a Preface by Bosch.

According to García Godoy, the censorship established by the invaders was more arbitrary, harsh and humiliating than the one imposed by the Spanish censors in the darkest times of colonial life in Cuba and Puerto Rico (*El Derrumbe*, p. 39). García Godoy wrote his book in 1916 and therefore his texts anticipate the arduous campaign of resistance that lay ahead. When he claimed that “there was nowhere a gesture of vigorous and stubborn resistance to the foreign invasion,” (*El Derrumbe*, p. 58) he was referring to the beginning of it. Again he blames for the insignificant resistance the prevailing personalism of that time, not because the Dominican value had degenerated, but because of the lack of convergence of wills, the same reviews and exclusive purpose of redemption or death (*El Derrumbe*, p. 59). García Godoy insists that a solvent individualism marks a rate of permanent drive in the incoherent and tumultuous life of the Dominican people and his remarks on the selfish attitudes of certain sectors fully coincide with the magnificent description that Bosch gives in *La Mañosa* of the leaders of the so called revolutions of that time. Nonetheless, García Godoy justifies the existence of those revolutions, as a supreme need while there were not substantially changing conditions of the inadequate and anachronistic political regimes that existed in many national entities. He indicated that Dominicans lived fatally resigned to their adverse destiny, overthrowing a tyrant today to deify another tomorrow (*El Derrumbe*, p. 88), as a premonition of the cruel dictatorship that was coming and would last from 1930 to 1961.

As can be seen, the concept of strengthening the union and harmony of the Dominican family was still present in the minds of the intellectuals, more than 70 years after the Independence fighters had to face another invasion. Most intellectuals of the time emphasized the significance of the “harmonious Dominican unity”, as the only possibility of defeating the invasion and gaining an unconditional withdrawal of the invaders, but apparently that conception was only theoretical. In practice, the country was divided and these progressive intellectuals felt that it was still necessary to

emphasize that the nation needed the effort of the masses to shake off a foreign invasion and the concept of a free and independent nation, developed by Juan Pablo Duarte in his proclamation of the Republic, was still echoing in the ears of the invaded people. In the draft of the constitution written by Duarte in 1838, in its sixth article, it is stated that the country must always be free and independent: “*Siendo la Independencia Nacional la fuente y garantía de las libertades patrias, la Ley Suprema del Pueblo Dominicano, es y será siempre su existencia política como Nación libre e independiente de toda Dominación, Protectorado, intervención e influencia extranjera...*” (Rodríguez Demorizi, 2013, p. 101). This concept is also present in the lyrics of the National Anthem, when in 1883 a group of young intellectuals, gathered in a house in Santo Domingo, and were asked by the maestro José Reyes to write the verses for a hymn to glorify the homeland. Emilio Prud’homme, a youth of 27 years old, took on the project and wrote verses full of patriotic euphoria such as the following fifth stanza:

*Compatriotas, mostremos erguida
Nuestra frente, orgullosos de hoy más;
Que Quisqueya será destruida,
Pero sierva de nuevo, ¡jamás!*

Prud’homme was a tireless advocate of the country. During the invasion of 1916 he fought alongside President Francisco Henríquez y Carvajal and civilian hero Américo Lugo, demanding the invaders to leave the country without being handed anything in return, i.e. they left without any condition. He was responsible for the slogan of 'pure and simple' hoisted by the patriots who made civic resistance against the invader (De Camps Jiménez, 2005, p. 23). Before that anthem there were others, which also encouraged the people to fight for their sovereignty. The Independence Anthem, for instance, was written in 1844 by Félix María del Monte, one of the *Trinitarios*, just three days after the proclamation of the independence and its verses call to war against Haiti because it was written at the time when Dominicans were fighting against the Haitian invasion. However, what draws attention is that, instead of *Quisqueyans*, it is addressed to ‘Spaniards’ when it said: *Al arma, españoles / No hay piedad! El haitiano insolente / penetrando en los patrios*

hogares / profane nuestros templos y altares / nuestros fueros osó atropellar (De Camps Jiménez, 2005, p. 30). Another important hymn was the Restoration, also called Hymn of Capotillo, written by the poet Manuel Rodríguez Objío which chronicles the historic feat of the Restoration of the Republic in 1863 and was one of many songs against the Spanish domination: *Ayer heroes por Patria lidiando / Patria hubieron los hijos de Haití / y al Francés y al Ibero humillando / Libres fueron después de reñir* (De Camps Jiménez, 2005, p. 31).

From those verses, stanzas and articles it may be inferred that both in 1844 and in 1916 serious concerns about sovereignty were a recurring trend in intellectual minds, something that was part of the political consciousness of broad sectors of Dominican society, as if it were necessary to remind some people about the sacrifices made by the *Trinitarios*. Indeed, to that date, the historical process indicated that there was a marked divergence of interests among intellectuals. On the one hand, small intellectual and commercial bourgeoisie represented by the *Trinitarios* was the most uncompromising sector in the defence of the national interest and the consolidation of the country, while lumbermen of the South and livestock sector of the East, agreed in their *denationalisation* plans, constantly aspiring to find the buyer of autonomy. For example, after the proclamation of independence, the *Trinitarios* were expelled in 1844. The Republic was annexed to Spain in 1861. During the governments of Buenaventura Baez the annexation to the USA was almost signed, then came the revival of despotism in 1887 with the dictatorship of Ulysses Heureaux, during which foreign control over the economy was consolidated. Then the U.S. invasion of 1916 happened and the intellectuals used as many literary means as were useful to raise patriotism and encourage the fight against invaders. At the end it can be noticed that the intellectuals of the time were “united” in a sense of patriotism and used every means at their disposal to shout their indignation at the invasion; they were as authentic as the rebel peasants and had all the right to protest, with words as with weapons. However, their struggle was weak, as they were too few and there were more

powerful interests that allied with the invaders and therefore the trend that prevailed was that of the most conservative stratum of the society, which compromised the future of the country.

To summarise, the invasion of 1916 forced the Dominican people to lay hands on the most creative ways of resisting, either through newspaper articles, poems, novels, speeches, protests, rebel uprisings and diplomatic campaigns. Resistance was an important factor in ending occupations because it spurred transnational resistance movements. All these manifestations were not ignored in the Dominican general discourse and in literature, in its various forms. The press at the time was the main scene of protest against the legal order imposed and complied fully with the role that the Independence fighters awarded the theatre when censorship kept them from using other ways. Novels that narrated the stories of peasants before and during the invasion reflect the helplessness of that sector of the population, an eloquent 95% of it, denouncing the abuses committed by the invaders, but also the stark fight that the *Gavilleros* opposed to them. The resistance movement among intellectuals showed a sense of patriotism, but the influence of conservative politicians was too powerful and their alliance with the invaders reigned at the end, leaving the doors open for the dictatorship that was about to come in the years ahead. Trujillo, the monster born from the womb of the U.S. invaders, momentarily silenced the literary voice, although it awoke after his physical disappearance, to express the horrors of the ‘invader from within,’ and contribute to expose the details of that historical moment.

Chapter VI

LITERARY IMAGES OF THE DICTATOR TRUJILLO AS AN INVADER FROM WITHIN

The dictatorial characteristics of General Rafael Trujillo that are exposed in different fictional works show features that identify him with foreign invaders, in the sense that his was a regime imposed by force, relying on unlimited power to take measures thought to be necessary for his own benefit and used violence to obliterate any rebellious act. Trujillo's rise to power in 1930 could be considered as one of the main consequences of the U.S. invasion of 1916 and his personality a recurring theme within all types of literary genres in Dominican discourse. Despite the disappearance of the so called *Trujillato*, in Dominican novelistic discourse a repetition of this theme has become more persistent over time, and occupies a prominent place in the novel production of the island (Gallego Cuiñas, 2005, p. 11). The aim of this chapter is to follow the most important aspects of these characteristics that have been set by different authors in some emblematic novels of the regime and elucidate how close the dictator came to the image of the invader through the literary pages. However, as De Maeseneer states, to give an account of all the novels related to Trujillo is to write an almost complete history of Dominican narrative of the second half of the 20th century (De Maeseneer, 2006, p. 40), which is beyond the scope of this study. The present chapter will just try to trace the features of 'invader' that are hidden under the skin of the 'dictator' in a sample of novels that have taken true events and characters, evolving a whole plot that has become a source of representations of the dictator as an invader from within.

One of the features to keep in mind about Trujillo is that not only has he been so well identified, defined, characterized and analyzed in every ounce of his actions that he has become an undeniably significant point in the history of Dominican literature. Trujillo has been studied both widely and deeply and has sparked a veritable flood of works in all directions and genres, which has

transcended Dominican borders and has attracted the attention of international writers, who have reflected the dictatorship in a portrait, either exhaustive or superficial, of its characteristics common to other Latin American dictatorships, but also highlighting its original features, as it could be argued that Trujillo was one of a kind. Such is the case of Robert Crassweller's *Trujillo: The Life and Times of a Caribbean Dictator*, published in 1966, which describes in detail the steps taken by the tyrant in order to retain the submissive and obedient state.

The Salesian Antillense Library (BAS), based in Santo Domingo, has 807 titles to date alluding to Trujillo or Ciudad Trujillo. Among them there are about 152 books and 52 booklets, while the Founding Father Juan Pablo Duarte only has 13 books and 8 pamphlets. This massive body of work concerning the Generalissimo Trujillo spreads an awareness of the significance of his despotic rule of 31 years (1930-1961), called the Trujillo Era. From the literature published by Dominican authors between 1939 and 1961, specifically related to Trujillo, there are cataloged 307 titles at the BAS; while published between 2000 and the present, a total of 138. Under the publishing label of "Ciudad Trujillo", a total of 283 books on various issues related to areas of economics, diplomacy, law, history, politics and culture in the era, which were published between 1936 and 1961. In addition, there are 34 books that have the tyrant as an author, but not precisely by his own hand.

Perhaps one of the most titanic tasks of the researchers is grouping these novels in a thematic order, for varieties abound, but it should be noted that this parameter is often subjective. Thus, for instance, Gallego Cuiñas selects three novelistic texts that reproduce the ideological skeleton of Trujillo after his death: *La noche en que Trujillo volvió*, by Aliro Paulino hijo (1982); *Medalaganario*, by Jacinto Gimbernard (1980); and *Relato de un magnicidio*, by Emilio de la Cruz Hermosilla (1980) (Gallego Cuiñas, 2005, p. 12). Then she declares that in the last decade of the 20th century some novels were produced that give an ample vision of private life 'from below', as opposed to political history, such as *La balada de Alfonsina Bairán*, by Andrés L. Mateo (2005), which tells the story of a woman seeking revenge for her husband's murder at the hands of ruthless

Trujillo henchmen; *Retrato de Dinosaurios en la Era de Trujillo*, by Diógenes Valdez (1999); *La Fiesta del Chivo*, Galíndez, and others. Gallego Cuiñas echoes Seymour Menton in highlighting as historical/testimonial novels, titles such as *La biografía difusa de Sombra Castañeda* (1981) and *Uña y Carne*, by Marcio Veloz Maggiolo, and *El Reino de Mandinga*, by Ricardo Rivera Aybar (1985). In the meantime, the Argentinian intellectual Nina Bruni selects in her book *Imagen de Trujillo en la narrativa dominicana contemporánea* (Santo Domingo, 2007), six novels by local authors: *El cumpleaños de Porfirio Chávez*, by René del Risco Bermúdez; *Juro que sabré vengarme*, by Miguel Holguín Veras; *El Personero*, by Efraim Castillo; *Retrato de Dinosaurios de la Era de Trujillo*, by Diógenes Valdez; *Uña y carne* and *Memorias de la virilidad*, by Marcio Veloz Maggiolo and *Mudanza de los sentidos*, by Ángela Hernández, registering them as a new emerging narrative in the Dominican Republic, little known but highly creative and committed to the bloody tyranny of Rafael Trujillo (cited by Peña, 2005).

Trujillo is among the ten most cited dictators in Latin American novels about this topic (Gallego Cuiñas, 2005, p. 47), where the tyrant is the central figure of the novel, and instances of this can be found in novels such as *Domini Canes*, by Bernardo Vega (1988); *Juro que sabré vengarme*, by Miguel Holguín Veras (2004); and those where the dictator appears at a secondary level, such as *Tartufo y las Orquídeas*, by Diógenes Valdez (1998); *Bienvenida y la Noche*, by Manuel Rueda (1995) and *Trujillo, seguiré a caballo*, by José Labourt (1984). Then, after the disappearance of the dictator, novels of denunciation emerge, like *El Escupido*, by Manuel del Cabral (1970); *Chapeo*, by Ramón Alberto Ferreras (1973) and *El masacre se pasa a pie*, by Freddy Prestol Castillo (1973). In the aftermath of the 20th century, there is a flurry of novels that try to relive the anguish experienced over the years of the new *Trujillismo* era, under his direct pupil, Balaguer. The list is long, but it is worth naming titles like *Escalera para Electra*, of Cartagena Portalatín (1980); *Lucinda Palmares*, of Diógenes Valdez (1985); *Cuando amaban las tierras comuneras*, of Pedro Mir (1978); *La ciudad herida*, of Carlos Federico Pérez (1977); *Pisar los dedos de Dios*, of Andrés

L. Mateo (1979); *Los Algarrobos También Sueñan*, of Virgilio Díaz Grullón (1977) and *Papaján* of Francisco Nolasco Cordero (1973). The 1980s also continued producing novels that had to do with the era of Trujillo. Besides the afore mentioned, there are Diógenes Valdez's *La Telaraña* (1980); Pedro Vergés's *Sólo Cenizas Hallarás* (1980); Marcio Veloz Maggiolo's *Materia Prima* (1988). In the 1990s appears another one of Marcio Veloz Maggiolo's, *Ritos de Cabaret*; also, *Fantasma de una Lejana Fantasía*, by Guillermo Piña-Contreras; *Tiempo para Héroes* and *Toda la vida*, by Manuel Salvador Gautier; *Los que falsificaron la firma de Dios*, by Viriato Sención; *Al cruzar el viaducto*, by Artagnan Pérez Méndez; *Los amores de Dios*, by Miguel Aquino García, and *Musiquito*, by Enriquillo Sánchez, among the ones mentioned above.

The 21st century is inaugurated with Mario Vargas Llosa's *La Fiesta del Chivo* (2000), where elements of fiction and historical facts are intertwined, since it deals with the assassination of the dictator at the hands of historical figures, while the family Cabral is entirely fictitious. Thus, the novel weaves real incidents of brutality and oppression, which shed light on the nature of the regime and the reaction it provoked, just as its successor *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*, by Junot Diaz (2007) does.

The work of Hilma Contreras, the first woman awarded the National Award for Literature in 2002, cannot be disregarded. Born in 1913, she excelled not only as an essayist and educator, but as a storyteller, encouraged by Bosch, and refused to sign the letter of support written and promoted by Senator Cabral to grant the name of *Ciudad Trujillo* to the Dominican capital. As early as 1935, Contreras mournfully noted the trend that one individual will 'lead' the way, without opposing resistance. She calls the 'followers' *reptiles*, in her essay *Reptilismo dominicano en el año cinco de la Era*, and laments that the sacrifice of the Tainos be in vain:

Ya no hay hombres. El gran tirano beatificado por la cobardía de los dominicanos barrió con las heroicas herencias que nos legaron los Guarocuyas. La mirada destructora del Soberano momificó hasta los valientes. Sí, ya no hay hombres, solo sobreviven los reptiles.

(Contreras, 2012)

As Maja Horn points out, Contreras's only novel, *La tierra está bramando* (published in 1986), "further explores the question of what strategies of resistance can emerge from the margins of the dictatorship's hegemonic political and cultural logics and outside its masculinist and hypersexualized imaginary" (Horn, 2014, p. 92). Furthermore, throughout the novel, Contreras recreates how, during the Trujillo Era, people lived permanently in a state of repression, in constant fear generated by the continuous violation of human rights on the one hand, and sometimes violent resistance on the other. The scenes described by Contreras inevitably bring to mind the experiences of the *Trinitarios* in times of Haitian occupation, as the following lines:

Toda esta historia reforzará el impedimento de mi salida. ¿Impedimento? Nadie me impide viajar, sólo me niegan el pasaporte. Tampoco me lo niegan. Únicamente "está en trámites". Trámites voluntaria y malévolamente interminables. Es un modo cruel, como otros en los que son maestros, para ahogar el deseo de escapar de esta jaula. Estoy atrapada... Perdóname, Agustín, no puedo renunciar a mi derecho de entrar y salir libremente.

(Contreras, 2002, p. 61)

Nonetheless, as previously stated, the list of works about Trujillo is overwhelming for a single study. Thus, from amongst the prolific narrative production of the Dominican Republic of Rafael Trujillo's dictatorship, this study will centre on the historical insights of Jesús de Galíndez's thesis turned into a book, *La Era de Trujillo* (first published in 1956), which will shed light on the characteristics of Trujillo's regime, seen from the inside, and how the power of the dictatorship was so closed to the invading rulers. Alongside comes Freddy Prestol Castillo's book *El Masacre se pasa a pie* (first published in 1973), which is considered one of the most intense novelistic treatments of the Haitian massacre of 1937, although at times it might seem somehow racist, since between lines it seems that the text justifies the genocide blaming the victims for their own destiny. However, it depicts a scenario where the figure of Trujillo is presented as a feared monster, whose orders nobody dared to refuse. These two works are most relevant to the current study particularly because they show a line of comparison with the Spanish invaders, as the dictator himself embarked

on a campaign of extermination. But first, how that monster came to emerge will be seen in Efraim Castillo's play, *Los Inventores del Monstruo* (2004), a very convincing radiography of how the U.S. invasion of 1916 gave birth to the dictator. On the other hand, in order to reveal the sacrifices, tortures and humiliation suffered by the brave fighters who dared to oppose the regime, among the different novels with a retrospective of how life was in the Dominican Republic during and in the early years after the dictatorship, the chosen works for this analysis are *Sólo cenizas hallarás* (*Bolero*), by Pedro Vergés (1980) and *Currículum* (*El Síndrome de la Visa*), also by Efraim Castillo (1982).

Then the chapter will focus on the most emblematic novels that represent emphatically the image of invasion of the body by the dictator: *Musiquito: Anales de un déspota y un bolerista*, by Enriquillo Sánchez (1993); *El Personero*, by Efraim Castillo (2000), *La Fiesta del Chivo*, by Vargas Llosa (2000) and 2007's Pulitzer Prize-winning *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*, by Díaz. These works have the graphic descriptions of the sexual and depraved acts committed by Trujillo in common, likening them to the acts of savagery perpetrated by the first Conquistadors against defenceless indigenous women. Lastly, a major novel portrays a scenario of terror during the dictatorship, just as other novels describe similar acts of terrorism during foreign invasions. This is *In the Time of the Butterflies* (1994), a fictionalised account by Julia Alvarez of the revolutionary activity and personal lives of the Mirabal sisters under the Trujillo regime. Also, within the same context, Pedro Mir's poem *Amén de mariposas* will be analysed here in order to show the contrast with the way the subject is treated by Alvarez.

VI.1 Invasion plus dictatorship: a time of terror

Without a doubt, the undisputed weight of the National Army on Dominican life in a totally different way as had happened in the past was a fact, as by 1930, six years after the U.S. invasion, and with a totally disarmed population, there was no political group with arms able to face the soldiers and officers trained by the military government between 1917 and 1924 (Moya Pons, 2002). Trujillo was the heir of the body of order created by the U.S. Officers and soon demonstrated that he knew fully how to utilize the methods of control used during the invasion to fight *Gavilleros* in order to suppress any opposition. He used his army to impose his dominion over the rest of the Dominican population through violence, terror, torture and murder (ibid, 2002). Therefore, the local dictator was not very different from the other foreign invaders. Using an extended and effective intelligence service, he knew even the most intimate details of the life and customs of all the inhabitants, as well as the characters of importance throughout the country.

In his play *Los Inventores del Monstruo* (2004), Efraim Castillo reflects on the genesis of that figure that would dominate all national areas for over three decades (1930-1961) and is constructed as a fierce dictator, bloodthirsty and omnipotent. Perhaps the need for dramatic texts on this subject in the national spectrum was fulfilled by Castillo, a playwright, narrator and publicist, with his book, which represents a journey to the "genesis of the monster." The work earned him the *Premio Anual de Teatro Cristóbal de Llerena* in 2004 and, although it is written with simple language it does have a deep message. As a rule, one tends to associate the name of Trujillo with the U.S. invasion of 1965, but rarely with that of 1916, but the rise of the dictatorship could well be added to the list of consequences of the first invasion, as the title of Castillo's book suggests. It depicts an interesting perspective of the invading forces about the Dominican Republic, as the military officers consider it as a utopia rather than a country and it reveals the racism and oblivion reflected by the U.S. officers, which is very clear in some of the dialogues:

TENIENTE 1:

-Señor, perdóneme, pero de verdad será posible sacar algún buen oficial de estos negros dominicanos? (Los Inventores del Monstruo, p. 15)

CAPITAN:

-Señor, pero estos dominicanos no son más que unos miserables bastardos... (Los Inventores...p. 23)

CORONEL:

-Entonces, señores... no nos queda más que buscar en este pedazo de mierda caribeña a algún lugareño que se identifique con nuestra grandeza y nos ayude a aplastar de una vez por todas a esos malandrines que se hacen llamar revolucionarios en la parte Este, y que no son más que unos perfectos bandoleros...(Los Inventores...p. 28)

As can be seen, Castillo establishes that, for the invading officers, black is synonymous with mediocrity, as they do not believe there will be any ‘good’ military men among the applicants to the National Guard. With this attitude, the U.S. officials not only made an invasion of the geographical territory, but also tried to establish a racial superiority. The white invaders made the invaded feel inferior, not only because they were in debt and unarmed and obviously had fewer material resources, but also because they were black. By calling them ‘negroes’ and ‘miserable bastards’ and maintaining an attitude of superior race, the invaders provoked the rejection of the people, especially of the peasants. As this work argues, those peasants, the so-called *Gavilleros*, were not only motivated by material concerns, but primarily because of the abuses from invaders, in which case their rebellion was for a self-protective cause.

As Calder remarks, “most enlisted men of the Marines had little education and, as many North Americans, possessed a patronizing sense of superiority...But more important than ignorance or chauvinistic nationalism was the deeply ingrained, anti-black racism of many Marine officers and men” (Calder, 1978, p. 663). This topic is both extremely important and highly sensitive, as it shows how the invasion of 1916 was motivated by both racial and national prejudice. In the same way, the resistance will be reflected in the literary texts as a response to that prejudice, for the discourse of race is equally significant as the discourse of the sovereign nation and both are

undermined by U.S. imperialist ideology and practice in the region. Nonetheless, Dominican peasants not only had to suffer the invaders' prejudice, but also, as McPherson maintains, "Dominican elites also enlisted a racial discourse, in their case in the service of persuading the invaders" (McPherson, 2014, p. 127). Let us not forget that Trujillo believed himself to be superior and he had the exact attitude as the invaders towards the *Gavilleros*.

Among the measures taken by the Military Government to readjust the Dominican State to their interests was not only the disarmament of the civilian population, but also the administrative control of all state institutions, the fragmentation of the army and the Republican Guard, the creation of a police force organised, trained and commanded by U.S. officers, the reorganisation of the education sector, the creation of a public health code and reorganisation of the sector, creating the Court and Land Registry, as well as the establishment of the Torrens system, enlargement of the national communication network, and permanent censorship of the media (Paulino Ramos, 2010). These measures might seem positive from the outside, but not when they were taken abruptly and, on the way, caused the expropriation of peasants' land, which led them to uprising against such measures. Thus, the movement of the *Gavilleros* joined the other protests that were starting in other parts of the country. Castillo places the beginning of *Los Inventores del Monstruo* on the 7th of April, 1917, when a group of U.S. Marine Officers congregated to deliberate "the steps we will take to permanently remove those damn bandits who call themselves revolutionaries" (*Los Inventores del Monstruo*, p. 11). In the book the character of the Colonel is convinced, and thus transmits his remarks to his subordinates, that if *Los Gavilleros* attack the sugar companies it is as if they were attacking them, that is to say the *American* interests, and the main mission of their invasion is "to defend the *American* interests."

The play includes the names of the supposed guerrilla leaders similar to the real ones, therefore Fidel Ferrer, Cayo Báez and Cristino Sánchez are present within the story, representing the legendary leaders who became Evangelista and Nateras in real life. The latter will also be embodied

in the *Boschian* character of Fello Macario in *La Mañosa*. Fidel Ferrer, for instance, is a particular case mentioned in *Los Inventores del Monstruo* as a character, and he really existed and represented the diversity that conformed the movement of *Los Gavilleros*, as he was not a simple peasant but a teacher, historian, poet, civil servant, politician, editor and media manager. It can be seen how important the use of actual historical figures in imaginative literature is. For instance, Vargas Llosa (2000) and Díaz (2008) use actual names of characters from history in their novels, yet those works cannot be considered historical texts.

Meanwhile, the real rebel Fidel Ferrer first collaborated with the invaders (he was commander of the Port of San Pedro de Macorís and Governor of El Seibo in 1914 and Governor of Azua in 1915) and then opposed them dedicating all his efforts to the *Gavillerismo*, for which he was tortured and eventually killed by the invaders with extreme cruelty, as Peña states (2013). According to the files of the writers Durán Alfau (2008) and González Canalda (2008) Ferrer did not limit his struggles to his native El Seibo. He devoted great efforts to education as he was head teacher of the School of San Francisco de Macorís, in 1912, and the school *La Cruz*, in El Seibo, in 1913. He taught Universal and Dominican history in the private school of San Sebastian and is the author of the ‘Introduction to the History of Santo Domingo’, published in 1912, which is recorded by Balaguer in his *History of Dominican Literature* (1956, p. 307).

Ferrer also collaborated with the magazine *Breviario lírico*, in La Vega; served as editor of *El Federal*, San Pedro de Macorís, and the weekly *Dominical*, which appeared in La Vega. He wrote against the invasion in *La Bandera*, *El Liberal* and *Patria*. It was on the 5th of April, 1916, when he was appointed Governor of the province of Samaná, when he resigned, devoting himself to the nationalist fight, and started his alliance with *Los Gavilleros* (Peña, 2013). Ducoudray maintains that Ferrer was a friend of his fathers and in one occasion, while visiting Higüey collecting money for their cause, he approached the family home and said to Ducoudray’s father: ‘*Qué te parece, Fellé? ¡Hasta los literatos tenemos que meternos en esto!*’ (Ducoudray, 1976, p. 39). When he was

about to be hanged by the invaders, Ferrer claimed: “¡*Qué blancos tan salvajes!*” (Ducoudray, 1976, p. 43), indicating how racial discourse was used from both sides.

It is not surprising to find occasions where the general population sympathised with the rebels and supported them in many ways. The powerful invading army faced not only that obstacle, but also that the local guides they used were working in league with *Los Gavilleros*. For Ducoudray, the popular support for the guerrillas’ patriots was manifested throughout the whole period of struggle, which was a sign of their popularity (1976, p. 22). However, this perspective is contradicted in *La vida no tiene nombre*, where Ramón Vieth indicates that for fear of being punished by the invaders, and because of the slander addressed against them, the peasants were afraid to lend aid to the guerrillas, therefore very often they were hungry and had to sleep without shelter.

In this sense, Castillo’s work has an informed view of the intentions of the invaders, whose boasts reveal the Achilles heel of the invaded, to divulge the place where the wound would hurt more: their pride. With this the author achieves that the readers weigh the uniqueness of the forces, which he also manages when introducing the character of Rafael (otherwise also called Mr Trujillo by the Officers in the book). Rafael is introduced in *Los Inventores del Monstruo* as a man who is around 25 or 30 years old, wearing cheap clothes but very tidy, and who is a ruthless soldier ready to do whatever is demanded by the U.S. Marines to be part of the Dominican National Guard. At the beginning he presented a dilemma to the officers, as they were looking for young men, between 18 and 22 years of age, but soon they were convinced that, despite all his faults (especially his addiction to women) he will become “the best ally you will ever have in the Caribbean region”, as Rafael himself says (*Los Inventores...*p. 39) They test his loyalty by commanding him to torture Sánchez, one of the leaders of *Los Gavilleros*, arrested recently, to which Rafael inquires: “-*Cree usted, señor coronel, que una patada mía ayudaría a calmar los llantos de las esposas y madres de los muchachos de Vermont, Virigina y Oregón, asesinados por este hombre?*” (*Los Inventores...*p. 61).

McCourt, furious, insists: “*¡Maldición, Trujillo, este no es un asunto de dolor físico, sino de intención, de venganza, de ira! ¡Déjese de mierderías y comience a patear!*” (p. 59) While Sánchez, who is about to faint, addresses Rafael and complains: “*¡No me golpees tú! ¡Tú eres dominicano! ¡No me golpees tú que eres igual que yo! ¡Por favor, no me golpees tú!*” (ibid). Sanchez's pleas resound as a symbolism of lamentation as Rafael is Dominican like him and it is as if the future dictator levels himself with the abusers, because it is not about physical pain, but the meaning, the purpose. One of the aspects that an invasion creates is the division of the population between those who collaborate with the invaders for personal conveniences and those who oppose the invaders at any cost. That image is recreated in this scene by Castillo with Sánchez on one side, representing the peasant rebels, and on the other side, Rafael, the member of the National Guard, a Dominican torturing another fellow Dominican, when the invaders themselves boast about their achievements of control. It is the moment when the *Monster* begins to emerge from the struggles of *Los Gavilleros* and due to the support of the invader forces, which in *Los Inventores del Monstruo* the duty Officer patented in his last dialogue:

-¡Adelante, señor Trujillo! Recuerde que le aguarda una carrera venturosa en la Guardia Nacional Dominicana y dentro de la gloriosa Infantería de Marina de los Estados Unidos de América. ¡Adelante, futuro oficial! (Los Inventores... p. 68)

Trujillo, the fictional character and the historical figure, comes to represent the opposition to Sánchez/Ferrer. He is one of them, but he is not *with* them. He places himself on the side of the invaders, thus becoming an ‘invader’, a monster. For that was what *Gavillero* originally meant: *salteador, ladrón, delincuente*, everything that Trujillo was before entering the National Guard and, at the end, the real *Gavillero* would not be other than Rafael Leonidas Molina Trujillo. As the story in *Los Inventores del Monstruo* progresses, the character of Rafael is revealed as a Machiavellian manipulator and cunning schemer, who is backed by the invaders because they need officers like him in order to terminate with the *Gavilleros*. “You should note that if I don’t do it, somebody else

will do it,” says Rafael to one of the many women he stalked and took advantage of, while trying to justify his actions and that of the invaders: *Si no fueran los americanos los que nos hubieran intervenido, hubiesen sido los ingleses, o los franceses. -¡El equilibrio del mundo se rompió con la derrota de los alemanes, Ana!’* (Los Inventores...p. 117). Thus implying that, one way or another, the Dominican Republic was the sort of land that was meant to be ‘invaded’ at that time. So, why not be invaded by Spain again? Rafael might sound sarcastic but he is brutal in his remarks: *España es un espejismo, Ana...un simple espectro del pasado. A España la hundieron los curas y la aristocracia, y lo que pudo ser su esperanza americana, se la robaron los yanquis en el 98...* (Los Inventores...p. 119).

Castillo recreates history within literature, but he also interprets it, thus creating a work of exposure, by putting in the mouth of Rafael the wailing of the people, that all was lost as the *Americans* had stolen the future of the region by imposing their designs in the war of 1898, and therefore, from the perspective of the monster, all that remained was to join them and be like them. However, the author contrasts that vision of the monster with that of hope in the character of Ana, the woman that represents all women under the spell of Rafael/Trujillo and who still believes in her homeland and rejects the invaders: *-¡Ellos son unos intrusos...tú lo sabes!... ¡Antes teníamos montoneras... pero éramos libres!’* (Los Inventores... p.126). With this line Castillo maintains that, whatever the invaders were trying to offer, they are intruders, the land is not free under their boots. However, Rafael, just like many local authorities who supported the invaders, tries to convince Ana, as he is convinced, that before 1916, before the invasion, they were less free than now. Nonetheless, Ana insists that they lost their freedom on April, 1916, when Desiderio Arias rose against President Jimenes, which provoked the U.S. invasion. However, for Rafael, it all started long before, on May, 1869, when Buenaventura Báez’s government signed a loan with the international adventurer Hartmont, compromising the future of the country, *“algo que los presidentes que hemos tenido a partir de ahí... han hecho con nuestro país y que, precisamente, nos ocasionaron la maldita*

intervención gringa...” (Los Inventores, p. 126). It will later become an obsession of the dictator Trujillo, to eradicate debt at all costs. However, despite his rage against the *Americans* in the invasion the character of Rafael sees an opportunity to grow and emerge from the shadows, to become someone important through his actions against the *Gavilleros*. Eventually, it seems that in Castillo’s work it was not that the invaders have invented the monster, but that the monster has taken advantage of them. “*¡Yo necesito auparme en ellos, aprovecharme de ellos, treparme en ellos, para que me esculpan, Ana, para que me formen!*” (Los Inventores...p. 137).

Thus, in his portrait of the monster that emerged from the invasion of 1916, Castillo reflects a moment of frustration experienced by the people at that time, because while the population remained in suspense during that period, a worse disaster was being germinated. The social discontent is revealed in the pages of *Los Inventores del Monstruo* by the torture of the guerrillas, not just by the Marines themselves, but also from Rafael; and also by the complaint of the women and families abused by Rafael and the cruelties perpetrated by the invaders. By highlighting the origin of the monster because of an invasion, Castillo reveals a structure of struggles, with the picture of *Los Gavilleros* behind as a key symbol of a determinant sociopolitical process in the history of the country.

During that time of terror literature had to silence its voice and it was not until the assassination of the dictator in 1961 and the loss of influence of his immediate pupil and follower of his terrorist policies, President Joaquin Balaguer,²⁵ that the literary works denouncing the horrors of that ‘invasion from within’ began to surface. After two years of being in power, all institutions of the country were under the despotic state and the most renowned opponents had to take the road of exile or be imprisoned (Cassá, 2004, p. 253). As Galíndez indicates, in his own person Trujillo embodied the three major occupations that occurred in the country before he invaded the minds and

²⁵ In this sense, it is appropriate to note Junot Díaz’s statement that “although not essential to our tale, per se, Balaguer is essential to the Dominican one, so therefore we must mention him, even though I’d rather piss in his face” (Díaz, 2008, p. 90)

bodies of the Dominican population: by maternal ancestry the Haitian occupation of 1822-1844; by paternal ancestry the Spanish occupation of 1861-1865; and by his own volition the U.S. occupation of 1916-1924 (Galíndez, 2010, p. 130). Jesús de Galíndez, a Basque Loyalist in the Spanish Civil War, came to the Dominican Republic on November, 1939 and lived there for six years. He taught at the Dominican School of Diplomatic Law and was a legal adviser to the Government's Labour Department, but ultimately he became too sympathetic to the workers' cause and so, feeling threatened, he left in 1946 and settled in New York, where he pursued a doctorate in political science and served on the faculty of Columbia University (Hamill, 1992, p. 234). On arrival in the United States, Galíndez began writing against the Trujillo regime and affirmed that Ramfis, the elder and favourite, was not really Trujillo's son. Ramfis complained to his father about the authenticity of that story, and this seemed to have put some distance between father and son, for which Trujillo never forgave Galíndez (Bernaldo de Quirós, 2010, p. 27). A few days after presenting his dissertation, *Trujillo's Dominican Republic*, a deep research based on documented interviews and newspapers of the time with serious allegations of embezzlement, sexual immorality and nepotism, Galíndez disappeared on the streets of New York. While it has never been officially proven, it is a widely held belief that Trujillo had him kidnapped, brought back to the Dominican Republic, and killed (ibid).

Galíndez's *La Era de Trujillo* is a very well researched historical work. Amazingly, the country spent 31 years in "forced" worship of a man as a god. For instance, a full section of the book is dedicated to listing the medals and awards that Trujillo had received, given or created (*La Era*...pp. 246-249). No doubt it is a serious report with a historical summary of Trujillo's rule, which includes voting records, a complete analysis of the constitution and its use,²⁶ a look at the different levels of government, citizenry, foreign politics and cultural life under the regime, focusing on the schools, the church, and the day to day repression of human rights. What makes Galíndez's book

²⁶ Galíndez argues that the Dominican Republic holds until now (1956) the record in this instability (changes to the constitution, which at that time had 25 amendments) (2010, p. 141).

more interesting is that it shores up the novels that have emerged around Trujillo's figure, contributing to make the fiction truthful.

Furthermore, the traces of Trujillo as an invader from within can be found throughout the whole book. When talking about the constitution, which Galíndez refers to as a 'parody', he concludes that the Dominican Republic was "*una gran finca que pertenece a Trujillo; yo le cambiaría también el nombre para rebautizarla Trujillolandia*" (*La Era*...p. 146). Actually, there were no independent powers, but only the individual power of Trujillo, as head of the Dominican Party, whether or not the President of the Republic (*ibid*, p. 147). He kept signed undated resignations of all elected officials. When it pleased him remove one of those officials, it was enough to put the current date and circulate the waiver (*ibid*, p. 148). For Galíndez, the irrefutable proof of liberty or tyranny of a regime lies in the daily press:

Si en un país se puede calificar de arbitrarios los actos de un gobernante, ésta es la mejor prueba de que en conjunto existe libertad. Pero si en un país sólo se leen y se escuchan elogios del gobernante y jamás una crítica, ésta es también la mejor prueba de su tiranía (La Era..., p. 179).

The main weapon on which Trujillo's terror was based was the Army and National Police, against which there could be no resistance, but, according to Galíndez, the most effective was the reigning extensive espionage service. He affirmed emphatically that in the Dominican Republic, under Trujillo there was absolutely no freedom of expression nor of association and assembly (*La Era*...p. 183). Galíndez recounts the murders perpetrated abroad by the regime's long arms, like a gruesome premonition of what would be his own disappearance and death. The first case occurred in New York on the 28th of April, 1935, when someone knocked at the door on 87 Hamilton Place, house of Dr Angel Morales (former Vice Presidential candidate for *Alianza* in 1930, who had fled into exile). He was not at home that night and the murderer mistook Sergio Bencosme for Dr Morales and shot him. U.S. Police had the necessary proof of the assassin, but when they asked Trujillo's government for his extradition, they were informed that such a person did not exist (*ibid*,

p. 192). Another case was of Mauricio Báez, although Galíndez does not call it a ‘murder case’ as the body was never found (coincidence with his own case). Mauricio Báez was the maximum prototype of Dominican unionism. He developed his activities in San Pedro de Macorís in the 1930s and 1940s and was also a journalist specializing in labour issues, and then the leader of People's Socialist Party in 1946-1947. On the 10th of December, 1950, while in exile in La Habana, he was kidnapped by three individuals and he was never seen again, dead or alive (ibid, p. 193). New York was once more the scenario for another murder case, when Andrés Requena (a writer, journalist and diplomat, also exiled after denouncing the abuses and crimes of the regime) was killed on the 2nd of October, 1952 in the hallway of 243 Madison Street. Nevertheless, Galíndez concludes that section of his book by saying that the worst part of the Trujillo regime were not the illegal detentions and not even the killings, but the total destruction of the spirit of the people. What impressed Galíndez the most was the submission of officials, an act that was never seen in strong dictatorships, like those of Stalin, Hitler or Mussolini (ibid, p. 196).

The figure of Galíndez, after his disappearance on the 12th of March, 1956 in New York, has been the subject of several historical researches,²⁷ and a novel by Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, *Galíndez* (1991), called a *historical novel* by Elide Pittarello (n.d.), on which a film based, was released in 2003. Vázquez Montalbán shows with this novel a historical reconstruction applied to a real crime through fiction. The story uncovers Galíndez’s kidnapping through the mishaps of a young student from the United States, a fictional female character called Muriel Colbert, who is incidentally researching on the real life of Jesús Galíndez, only to find herself, apparently during the Balaguer regime, in the same sort of dangers that he was. It is ironic that, as Galíndez had disappeared in Santo Domingo for writing a PhD thesis on the life of Trujillo, Muriel Colbert disappears on the same island preparing a doctoral thesis on the life of Galíndez (Pittarello, n.d.).

²⁷ Among those researches are: *El Verdadero Galíndez* by Alberto Elosegui. (1990) Bilbao: Published by A. Saldaña Ortega, and *Galíndez: La tumba abierta: los vascos y Estados Unidos (América y los vascos)* by Inaki Bernardo Urquijo. (1993) Servicio Central de Publicaciones del Gobierno Vasco.

Thus, the true story of the Basque exiled intermingles with the fictional characters portrayed by the so called novels of the *Trujillato*, more than anything approaching Prestol Castillo's *El Masacre se pasa a pie* (1998), which probably was written during the events of 1937, according to Doris Sommer, who said that the book was "the honest account that he dared not give publicly... Prestol's long silence is complicated by the fact that he may have given other accounts much earlier" (Sommer, 1983, p. 163).

El Masacre tells the story of the slaughter, ordered by the dictator in 1937, of between 15,000 and 20,000 thousand²⁸ Haitians who had allegedly entered the Dominican Republic illegally, had stolen cattle and forced native labourers out of work. The genocidal campaign was known as *El Corte* (The Cutting), due to the fact that the killings were made with machetes and knives. These weapons were used to pretend it was a fight between Dominican and Haitian peasants, and in order to prove that it was just civil quarrels and not a government matter (Domínguez, 2001, p. 250). Prestol Castillo's novel's most important element is the apparent message of the denunciation of what the dictator/invader was capable of, as the book intends to depict a scenario of blood, greed and desperation. However in the text it is unclear why Trujillo, apparently drunk, gave the order to execute the genocide on the 2nd of October, 1937, during a party in Dajabón at the home of Gov. Elizabeth Mayer. Historians often cite reasons of an economic, political or racial nature (De Maeseneer, p. 67). In a similar way, Pereyra describes in *El Grito del Tambor* how Francis Drake gave terrible orders that his subordinates dared not refute: "*Ningún jefe se arriesga a disgustar al iracundo superior, so pena de que surjan consecuencias más gravosas y esta invasión termine del modo que ninguno de nosotros desea*" (Pereyra, 2012, p. 112). So, the authoritarian personality, both of the dictator and of the invader, is reflected in their habits of giving orders to be fulfilled

²⁸ There are different opinions on the amount of Haitians killed. Gimbernard: as we have heard from reliable sources, Trujillo himself estimated a number of 18,000 (1972, p. 475). De Maeseneer: it is generally accepted that it was 15,000 (2006, p. 66). Domínguez: between 4,000 and 20,000 (2001, p. 250). Cassá: between 12,000 and 15,000 (2004, p. 254). Moya Pons: 18,000 of them were killed everywhere in the country (2002, p. 519). Galindez: The latest figures were cited in an official capacity at least 12,000; other sources go up to 20,000 or even 25,000 (2010, p. 271).

immediately and not contradicted, as the dictator/invader has a strong personality with control over others.

The dictatorship was a campaign of extermination, affirms Sommer (1983), in a period when none could compete with Trujillo. In *El Masacre* the narrator explicitly compares the servility of Dominican men, civilians as well as soldiers, and does not hesitate to name the tyrant who reduced sober old gentlemen into drunken fools and heroes to butchers (Sommer, 1983, p. 171). “*I así fue la vendimia roja...Como la quería el amo del Capitán y de todos: el amo de la República Dominicana*” (*El Masacre*, p. 33). Aside from the killing instinct that links the dictator to the most egregious attitudes of mankind, what draws attention here is the servile attitude that characterises individuals around the tyrant, which is also depicted by Vargas Llosa in his novel *La Fiesta del Chivo* (2000) in the character of Agustín Cabral, otherwise *Cerebritito*. It is interesting to note that in the third stanza of the Dominican national anthem, it warns that no people should be free if, being slaves, they remain *indolent and servile*, as one of the dangers that the *Trinitarios* and opponents of the U.S. invasion of 1916 denounced in their manifestos. However, the invaded people are at the mercy of the invader and so is the country under a dictatorship. As Galíndez reported, the power of dictatorship is a fact based on the law of the strongest (Galíndez, 2010, p. 12) and Galíndez himself was a victim of that unlimited power. In *La Fiesta del Chivo* (2000) Galíndez will be mentioned as the character by which Octavio de la Maza (Tavito) is murdered. Vargas Llosa describes in pages 118-125 how Tavito, who was the brother of Antonio de la Maza, one of the men who killed Trujillo, blindly followed the orders of *el Jefe*, because he owed him favours and “*estaba dispuesto a dar mi vida por el Jefe y a hacer cualquier cosa que me ordene*” (*La Fiesta...2000*, p. 119). Under these panorama of control of wills by a tyrant, to tell the history of the Haitian massacre as a history of Dominicans versus Haitians, of one ethnic group or nation versus another, might be misleading. It would probably be more accurate to say that the story of the Haitian massacre was

one of the national invaders against ‘controlled’ Dominicans in the frontier, who were forced to follow the order of killing Haitian migrants.

It could be said that *El Masacre* “tries” to unmask the dictator and show how he remains powerful based on a machinery of repression and ideological and racial persecution, just as U.S. invaders did in 1916. The main theme of this work is precisely the ‘unlimited power’ of the master of the country, who gives an order to execute Haitians at the border and is blindly obeyed. In order to justify their actions, the executors repeat several times throughout the pages that they have received these orders from the high commander, from the General. However, it has to be noted that they mostly carried out the orders under the influence of alcohol, implying that Dominican guards were also victims of the regime as well as the poor Haitians they murdered. For instance, referring to *Capitán Ventarrón*, the narrator says: “*Para asumir su papel de Atila, acudía al alcohol. ¡Matar a millares! Ancianos, niños y mujeres... ¿Por qué?... ¡No lo sabía!... Era una orden...*” (*El Masacre*...p. 28).

El Masacre also shows the nonconformity of the characters at all levels, from the wealthy landowners, who repudiated the presence of the guards because they interrupted their businesses, to reservists (released prisoners in order to undertake the murders) who felt abused by masters. Apparently, nothing is as bad as the tyranny. *El Masacre* mentions several times the danger of the past revolutions, which used to rob much of the livestock; even that was not such an acute problem for the landowners as the exodus or killings of the Haitian workers. They felt “controlled by the State”. Moreover, the book reveals an ‘invaded’ land, in which everyone tries to take advantage, while protecting themselves from the monster that sees it all, the big brother invading their souls. The narrator accuses the whole country, even himself, of being controlled by the tyrant:

“Nuestro país tiene un dogal de hierro afianzado a la garganta y sobre cada cabeza está el hacha del verdugo. ¿Quién es el verdugo?...Cualquiera! Este o aquél. Primero, el delator. Después cualquier mocetón de campo que abandonó las tierras en busca de mejor suerte y que ahora tiene

una nueva misión de carnicero: matar a su hermano, a su padre, a su amigo. I eso es “Ventarrón”: carnicero” (El Masacre...p. 38).

Prestol Castillo's book also serves as a mirror reflector of the same panorama that existed during the invasion of 1916, in a different *milieu*. The Eastern lands that were the scene of the *Gavilleros* is now changed by the border region, and a rare word: Dajabón, which, as El Seibo, was a distant, isolated, unknown land. As in the invasion, during the tyranny, the capital was the centre of the world, the 'civilization'; other towns were unbearable, especially the ones near the border with Haiti. There is also an analogy to the situation experienced by García Godoy in 1916, when his book *El Derrumbe* was seized by the military authorities of the U.S. invaders. García Godoy wrote then a preface narrating the confiscation of his book and his efforts to try to get it back from the censor authorities without success. However, at least García Godoy did not fear for his life, whereas Prestol Castillo knew himself to be a dead man if his book was discovered. The tyranny was one thousand times worse than the invasion. According to the narrator of *El Masacre*, who is presumably the same author, the book was written during the actual killings and countless adventures are told of how he had to conceal the proceeds of his writing. He says that both the writer and the book were repressed characters referred to in the plot, emanating from the very atmosphere of fear created by the dictator/invader. In accordance with Mateo, no other Dominican novel reached such a level of realism, addressing the euphoria of the crime as an inexhaustible spectacle of spiritual degradation (Mateo, 2013). However, Sommer indicates that “critics hardly call Freddy Prestol Castillo's book a novel anymore...and even Prestol himself has come to reconsider that designation” (Sommer, 1983, p. 161). Yet genre is unimportant here, the testimony of a slaughter is, which is presented like the frame of a horror movie, where the main character is not only the massacre itself, as Mateo maintains, but also a whole generation doomed to oppression by the tyrant. The problem with *El Masacre* is that ultimately the text colludes with rather than denounces the acts of Trujillo, as the hidden messages somehow blame the Haitians for their fate.

It is unavoidable to also make a comparison between Trujillo and the invader Ovando regarding the genocide. The Spanish governor Nicolás de Ovando justified the genocide of thousands of Taino Indians in the 16th century on the legal grounds of an alleged rebellion, and imposed himself definitively on the island of Hispaniola in order to found a historical time. In the same manner, Trujillo succeeded in founding his own historical time, the Era of Trujillo and the era of the 'New Fatherland' [by cleansing the race] for all Dominicans (Valerio-Holguín, 2006). Regarding the female characters, the narrator devotes much time and space to the description of Angela Vargas, who was a poor teacher (and eventually his girlfriend), condemned by the Ministry of Education to teach in those forsaken lands, but whose main sentence was her physical beauty. Although there are only brushstrokes of what being a beautiful woman during the Trujillo regime meant [it is stated that she was desired by officials from the Ministry of Education and implied that she could also be most wanted by higher spheres], the character of Angela Vargas anticipates what future novels will reveal: that during the dictatorial regime women were seen as sexual objects.

Nevertheless, the main issue with Prestol Castillo's novel is:

“its obsession with justifying the actions of the “unwilling” Dominican participants, a guilt ridden disengagement from the murdered subjects/victims, its insidious evocation of worse atrocities perpetrated by Haitians in the past and its overall lack of success in transforming anti-Haitian ideology in the disquisitional practice on the massacre and the relationship between the two nations” (James, 2013).

From this position it could be inferred that the fear of the 'black', supersedes or is equated with the fear of invasion, which had been manipulated by the rhetoric of establishment figures such as Balaguer, “one of the the most negrophobic thinkers of the twentieth century” (James, 2013).

VI.2 Invasion of the soul, the body and the spirit

Perhaps the dictator's image as an invader is not revealed entirely in the Dominican literary discourse, but rather transformed into different aspects of a disease that was inherited from previous

invasions and had been impregnated at the root of the internal usurpers, depicted as the urgent need to flee, which is part of the characteristics of conformists described in novels such as *Currículum* (*El Síndrome de la Visa*), by Efraim Castillo (1982), and *Sólo cenizas hallarás* (*Bolero*), by Pedro Vergés (1980). As Freddy, the main character in Vergés's novel, reflects: *Por eso, entre otras cosas, quería Freddy marcharse, porque pensaba que quizás el hecho de viajar disminuyera en él la sensación de apresamiento que siempre había tenido...* (*Sólo cenizas...* 1980, p. 12). That feeling of compression is also experienced by Beto, the main character of *Curriculum*, a leftist militant who fought against the dictatorship, was tortured, and then, after the post-Balaguer events, feels disappointed: "We've been defeated, haven't we?" Beto asks his comrades, and, while walking through the streets of Santo Domingo, like a sleepwalker, thinks: "I'm lost" (*Curriculum*, p. 12) representing a metaphor of the discouragement that permeated the lives of the post-dictatorship generation. Nonetheless, it is through such novels that the new generations learn about the sacrifices, tortures and humiliation suffered by the brave fighters who dared to oppose the regime:

Beto también rememoró los exilios forzados, las deportaciones; repasó en su mente todas las mujeres tiradas sobre suelos sucios, sobre yerbas mojadas (*Curriculum*, p. 40).

...Remonta las noches solitarias de la cárcel, pensando si sería deportado o enviado a prisión en el hotel cinco estrellas de La Victoria (*Curriculum*, p. 42).

...En un estrecho espacio entre dos líneas formadas por policías que le escupirán, golpearán con puños, pies y cachiporras y, al final, explotarán sobre su cabeza bolsos con desperdicios (*Curriculum*, p. 36).

...A mí me quemaron con cigarrillos en las ingles y me metieron los dedos por el culo. / Fíjate en mi frente: está llena de golpes y mordidas, de tajos y martillazos. (*Curriculum*, p. 28).

... Pérez quedó mirando fijamente a los ojos de su amigo y, en un lejano mes de octubre de 1954, y oyó, como si fuera tan sólo ayer, a Otilio decirle, presa del miedo: -¿Estás loco, Pérez? ¡No se puede hablar mal de Trujillo! (*Curriculum*, p. 50).

In the above works the Dominican is appointed as responsible and almost a collaborator of the economic and social problems, as if they were "losers", "non fighters" and "conformists," which were basically formed under a cruel invasion. Apparently, these novels reflect the people as partly

to blame for the pessimism that comes immediately after the dictatorship, but also U.S. imperialism, which is again criticised within Dominican literary pages. -¿Qué, le vas a pegar a la CIA todo? / - ¿A quién, si no, Vicente? / -Deberías buscar los culpables aquí mismo. /-Tenemos culpables aquí, Vicente, pero la CIA aportó mucho, muchísimo, en la debacle...(Castillo, 1982, p. 64).

In the same way, the watchful eye of U.S. invaders emerges in the last lines of the novel *Anónimos contra el jefe* (1987) by Jaime Lucero, for instance, where the author describes the active participation of the USA in Dominican politics. Moreover, the same would be revealed in *La Telaraña* (1980) by Diógenes Valdez, where in the animalised universe it describes the *Americans* standing as an army of ants. Before that, the national poet, Pedro Mir, appeared with his most ambitious narrative project *Cuando amaban las tierras comuneras* (1978), based on the reconstruction of the historical references of the dual U.S. invasion of the 20th century in a circular composition that begins with the first invasion (1916) and ends with the second (1965). The novel relates a series of narrative structures, with different stories and characters whose story is repeated in their descendants. The narrative thread that connects the various episodes consists of land. There was a time when land was not parcelled, until 1916, when the Yankee invader established the estate. Until then lands were common, and everyone loved common lands. Between all the characters in this novel, Florentino is perhaps the most striking for the significance in the fundamental proposition of the novel: the valuation of land as a common good and not parcellable. Florentino died laughing upon hearing and checking that the land was being parcelled out and sold, which to him seemed literally incredible (Emeterio Rondón, 2005, pp 79-80).

These novels of the 1970s and 1980s indicated through the narrative the reasons why the Dominican people in this period were still searching for a personal and a national identity, according to Gallego Cuiñas (2007). This can be taken as a result of having lived “invaded” from without and from within for so many years. Such as in the brutal years of Haitian occupation, during the Trujillo regime the country was definitely immersed in an atmosphere of fear and

control, with the backdrop of violence. Most studies of cultures of fear have focused on genocide, ethnocide, civil war, or bureaucratic/authoritarian contexts where disappearances were a daily reality, brutal repression was commonplace, and entire social groups were crushed. Certainly, the dramatic expansion and deprofessionalisation of the military and police under Trujillo contributed to unprecedented levels of violent, if sporadic, excess, such as the use of arbitrary incarceration and torture as a preemptive strike against the formation of political opposition (Derby, 2003). All these characteristics have been reflected in the literary production of the Dominican spectrum since the beginning, all together, since the Tainos struggles with their arrows until the generation of poets with their verses: “*Todo junto: susto, enfermedades, cobardía. Las flechitas, primero; ciclones, terremotos, después; los piratas, mucho después; Luperón y los otros, el 63, mucho-más-después*” (Castillo, 1982, p. 6). This constant reflection can be taken as a way of telling their story and trying to exorcise it.

Life during the *Trujillato* was characterised by pervasive insecurity and atomization as an ever expanding apparatus of espionage developed, which by the 1950s rivalled the formal political apparatus itself in organizational strength. In 1957, when Johnny Abbes García was placed at the helm of the newly formed Military Intelligence Service (SIM), a body that centralized and coordinated the various intelligence operations that had previously operated in an overlapping honeycomb, the regime sank to new levels of savagery (Derby, 2003). The sense of subordination and a fear of potential arbitrary punishment, -that is clearly reflected by the character of Cabral in *La Fiesta del Chivo*- was generalised throughout society, although it varied in kind from the provincial interior to the urban professional class of the capital city (ibid).

However, Trujillo invented neither repression nor the apparatus of espionage. Both were previously installed by the U.S. invaders of 1916, of which the dictatorship was a direct consequence. They created the National Guard in 1917 to fight the guerrillas, but it soon became a repressor group as any other. Many sergeants and officers of the U.S. Marine Corps were

transferred to the Dominican National Guard with ranks greater than they had, so that they would command the Dominicans enlisted in the Guard. Some, like Charles R. Buckalew, Charles F. Merkel and Thad Taylor, when were promoted to heads of companies in the Guard, without being controlled directly by officers, unleashed, in their fight against the guerrillas, a brutal repression against the civil population in Eastern and North East fields (Domínguez, 2001, p. 222). Trujillo realised that politics was not confined to the exercise of brute force, but also needed the support of a party, so he created the Dominican Party on the 16th of August, 1931, whose membership was mandatory. Those who did not enroll, would face punishments ranging from imprisonment to the physical removal by the regime's henchmen, often presented as a car accident (ibid, p. 249). Above all, he believed in discipline, which he learnt from the invaders: *“A la disciplina debo todo lo que soy”, se le ocurrió. Y la disciplina, norte de su vida, se la debía a los marines*” (Vargas Llosa, 2000, p. 29). Was it not the same with the invaders Columbus and Drake? Moreover, in this sense again, Ovando, the Spanish invader, and Trujillo, the national invader, share similar characteristics, although almost 500 years apart. Some historians consider Ovando as the prototype of the colonizer, as he pacified the island with great “discipline”, made it produce wealth and endowed effective management. However, the economic progress of the island during his administration was based on a policy of indiscriminate killing of the indigenous people and exhausting job submission to those who survived, under the *Encomienda* system (Domínguez, 2001, p. 48). Meanwhile, Trujillo's dictatorship was marked by economic progress together with political repression. The regime adopted various economic measures to bring the country out of the chaos in which it was since the beginning of the global crisis of 1929, but at the same time the dictator/invader began to repress those who opposed him (ibid, p. 245). As can be seen, Ovando killed indigenous peoples, Trujillo killed Haitians, and he was proud of himself for this, as if he had saved the country from another invasion:

Por este país, yo me he manchado de sangre –afirmó deletreando-. Para que los negros no nos colonizaran otra vez. Eran decenas de miles, por todas partes. Hoy

no existiría la República Dominicana. Como en 1840, toda la isla sería Haití. El puñadito de blancos sobrevivientes serviría a los negros. Ésa fue la decisión más difícil en treinta años de gobierno, Simon (Vargas Llosa, 2000, p. 225).

El puñadito de blancos (the handful of whites), i.e. Trujillo considered himself to be almost of fair complexion, as opposed to Haitian, because that is another feature of past invasions: the fear of the black. However, a popular phrase in the Dominican cultural discourse is that 'everyone has the black behind the ear', i.e. that the Dominican 'race' is of African descent, and Trujillo was no exception. Indeed, Trujillo's grandmother, Luisa Erciná Chevalier, was the daughter of Haitians. Coincidentally, Juan Antonio Alix wrote a *décima* about this subject in 1883 that could very well be applied to Trujillo, entitled *El negro detrás de la oreja*, which was a sharp criticism of the dark-skinned Dominicans who show signs of racial prejudice and boast their apparent whiteness and seem to feel shame for the African roots of their identity:

*“El negro que tiene abuela,
tan prieta como el carbón,
nunca de ella hace mención,
aunque le peguen candela,
y a la doña Habichuela,
como que era blanca vieja,
de mentarla nunca deja,
para dar a comprender,
que nunca puede tener,
el negro tras de la oreja...” (Alix, 1961)*

That “promiscuity” of racial prejudice is related to the Muslim harem through the conquerors, the first invaders, as the scarcity of Spanish women allowed the emergence of the sexual double standards that are observed from colonization times to today (Pimentel Paulino, 2009). Ovando ordered the extermination on the *Indians*, as Cartagena Portalatín claims through the voice of *Yania Tierra*: *Ovando ordena el exterminio / Cae la reina / los caciques / las vírgenes / la gente de Jaragua / Cae...* (*Yania Tierra*, p. 288). Later, the Mirabal sisters will also fall into the hands of the invader from within. What these two invaders, Ovando and Trujillo, have in common is that they

were victims of the crudest megalomania, as they intended to be superior beings with a clear vision of progress and the 'right' to kill whoever opposed them. They were also surrounded by sycophants who praised their vices, just as Christopher Columbus awoke ambitions of the Catholic monarchs, Fernando and Isabel, with his tales of infinite treasures in the New World: "*Colón...tocó a un tiempo mismo a las puertas de 'la ambición, de la avaricia y de los sentimientos religiosos' de sus oyentes*" (Peña Batlle, 1989, p. 4).

Above all, one aspect that has been almost obsessive within the literary pages that focus on the Trujillo regime, is that related to the dictator's invasion of the body, as a way of reflecting his invasion of people's soul and spirit. Trujillo not only invaded the country in a public sense, by appropriating public institutions in his megalomaniacal desire, and wanting to leave his mark on every intrinsic aspect of life that belonged to him. So is the fact of changing the name of the capital city to *Ciudad Trujillo*, and other various geographical points, as an affirmation of possession, such as Columbus did when he named the island *Hispaniola*. As seen above, some literary passages depict how the dictator also invaded people's minds; but notwithstanding, in his habit of having sex with young women, especially virgins, Trujillo set the most vivid metaphor for bodily penetration of the poor land [Yania Tierra] slaughtered by the invader. Some emblematic novels represent that image of invasion of the body by the dictator: *Musiquito: Anales de un déspota y un bolerista*, by Enriquillo Sánchez (1993); *El Personero*, by Efraim Castillo (2000), and *La Fiesta del Chivo*, by Mario Vargas Llosa (2000).

The first of the trio is perhaps the most graphic. *Musiquito* tells the story of a fictional reign, whose ruler, Porfirio Funes, nicknamed *El Poblador* (The Settler), is a lascivious dictator whose uncontrollable sexual appetite is the one who actually rules the island country. The tyrant is always accompanied by *Musiquito*, a bolero-composing aide, whose function is to tell through boleros all those "magnanimous" actions of the dictator. Throughout the novel, as noted by Manzari (n.d.), Sánchez

“parodies an authoritative notion of Dominican history and historiography by incorporating carnivalesque elements, sexualizing and desexualizing the characters in the novel...a strategy evident in the ritualistic manner in which Porfirio Funes deflowers Dominican virgins” (Manzari, n.d.).

The dictator does not use his penis to rob the girls of their virginity, but his pinky or index finger, and this image is a clear attempt by the author to parody the excess power that the irrational ruler tries to impose upon the people. In these episodes, states Manzari, women are seen as toys and objects of the dictator, underlining the paternalistic/misogynistic nature of Dominican cultural history. Nonetheless, the protagonist’s attitude with respect to women reflects his own errors in appreciating history (Manzari, n.d.). All this abuse of power also serves the dictator to hide the imperfections of his own body. The author describes him as someone rather short and with not very pleasant features: “*Porfirio Funes no alcanzaba los cinco pies de estatura. Tenía...el pelo canoso...Los cachetes le caían sobre el cuello y exhibía manos quizá de violinista*” (*Musiquito*, 1993, p. 13). The novel is full of virgins to be deflowered by the dictator, as Stanley highlights (2009, p. 121), and the reference to the chastity of these poor women links them to the vulnerability of the country.

This particular novel irremediably recalls the reader of Shakespeare’s *The Rape of Lucrece* (Shakespeare, 2007), or just *Lucrece*, where Sextus Tarquinius, son of Tarquin, the king of Rome, raped Lucrece, wife of Collatinus, one of the king’s aristocratic retainers. This brutal act, which led Lucrece to commit suicide, incited a revolt against Tarquinius and consequently contributed to the banishment of the royal family and the founding of the republic. This passage alludes to the perception that on the basis of a rape lies the birth of a new nation, where there is no room for dictators and invaders. However, as the novel *Musiquito* reinforces the narcissistic qualities characteristic of any dictator, it also reveals the impotence of the people who have to endure the brutal excesses of the Machiavellian rulers for so long, whether national dictators or foreign invaders. In *Musiquito*, as in real life Trujillo, Funes wanted absolute control over all aspects of the country, including its women, and it is as Manzari so brightly states, that:

“just as with any dictator, complete cultural penetration is necessary in order to establish total domination. As Funes figuratively penetrates Dominican society with propaganda and fear, he also sexually penetrates young girls” (Manzari, n.d.).

In the novel, Sánchez refers to the fact that intellectuals called the dictator *Eros de la patria* and after using the girls, he would marry them off to some young officers, as a “compensation” for their families (*Musiquito*, 1993, p. 11). This image only contributes to reinforce the idea of control that the dictator possessed.

In *El Personero* (2000), apart from the main reading that relates the story of the intellectual, however symbolic, that legitimises the despotic power of Trujillo, Castillo also approaches the notion of the body as a repository of abuse of power of the dictator. Within the extensive narrative published on the Dominican dictator, it brings something new, as no one before had dared to touch the possibility that the abuser of women was mocked precisely where it hurts the most: in his male ego. The novel tells the passions, horrors and anxieties of the last seventeen years of the tyranny, with a ‘love story’ in the background, although hard to believe, that faces Trujillo and Alberto Monegal, his closest aide, otherwise *el Personero*, his servile assistant, who falls in love and has an affair with the dictator’s favourite mistress. Servility is again present in this novel, as the cement holding the intellectuals of the dictatorship’s era, the symbol of uncompromising selfishness that brought together the mass of *lambones* (bootlickers) – Balaguer’s image springs to mind again – which supported the tyranny for many years, in the same way that during the invasion of 1916 local mayors collaborated with the invaders for personal convenience. *El Trepador* Martínez, father of Marta, the lover of Trujillo and Monegal, is presented as the metaphorical instrument of that servility, by willingly giving his own daughter to satisfy the lascivious voracity of the dictator and his own pocket. “¡Que vivan los genitales del Jefe!” shouted *El Trepador*. “¡Que vivan!” replicated the driver (*El Personero*, p. 41), as both aides recognised that they owed their fate to the functioning of the male symbol of power of the tyrant.

“Además de personero soy amanuense, mis escritos son los de él, mis discursos son los de él; me estoy convirtiendo, poco a poco, en él” says Monegal (*El Personero*, p. 92), accepting the rendition of his will to the power of the “beloved” tyrant, for having served him so blindly he was slowly becoming him, so why not be him and take one of his many women? Yes, he was becoming him, especially in his taste for women, his wife laments, as probably Trujillo’s wife, María Martínez, lamented all her life. Perhaps it would be necessary to tell the history of the Era from the point of view of the women, so the macho figure of the dictatorship forever would emerge as the real supreme invader of bodies and wills. There is no doubt that the presence in this novel of the sexual power that defines the dictator relates him to authoritarian power. As the girl’s father tells her, once the dictator is tired of ‘using’ her, he would marry her to a young officer who would be “delighted” to have a wife who used to belong to Trujillo (*El Personero*, p. 35). Throughout the novel there are plenty of instances of such images of authoritarian power, represented in the exaggerated lust of Trujillo, of whom it was said that after terror, his favourite sport was deflowering young girls. Of course women, whether wives or mistresses, had more to lose, as Monegal’s widow complains: “Las mujeres de la Era nos habíamos convertido en puras caricaturas paridoras de muchachos” (*El Personero*, p. 91). In this sense, *El Personero*, as the other novels, also denounces the hypocrisy of a society that, in order to save their own skin, did nothing but imitate the behaviour of the tyrant.

Therefore, it is not surprising to find the widow complaining that having a mistress at that time became a liability, as men had to do what The Chief did. The widow Monegal wonders: What could you expect from a society that applauded, blessed and even got mistresses for Trujillo? In the literary imagination of *El Personero* that hypocrisy is shown in the servile figure of the officials of the regime, who offered their wives to Trujillo “por el mero placer de compartir la vagina con el que consideraban el más grande de los mortales” (*El Personero*, p. 106). Nonetheless, where the invasion of the body combines with the invasion of the soul and spirit is in the fact that, as this novel witnesses, sometimes Trujillo did not need to penetrate the body to exert his power, his ‘mere

presence' was sufficient: *Una mujer... no requeriría la pasión, el éxtasis, para experimentar el goce en una cama con Trujillo. Bastaba estar con él y permitirle ejecutar sus inventos, sus atajos para autocomplacerse* (*El Personero*, p. 172). The character of Martinez *El Trepador* also makes it clear when he says that the fear that Trujillo inspired was not easy to fight; it would have been necessary to have an outsider, someone who did not know him, to shoot him.

In fact, it turned out to be possible to shoot him, as in *La Fiesta del Chivo* (2000) Vargas Llosa tells the story of the assassination of the dictator, which within Dominican discourse is called and known as *ajusticiamiento* (just execution). Following the profile of the earlier novels, Vargas Llosa also recreates the magnitude of the dictator's lust by including the story of Urania, who was 'presented' to the dictator by her own father, Senator Cabral. Just as Monegal in *El Personero*, he served the regime all his life, but for some strange reason fell out of Trujillo's favour and became a pariah, unwanted. This situation was typical among many officials, and Senator Cabral was just one of them. In the novel, the Senator tried in every possible way to recover the Chief's confidence without success. He was helpless. It is known that the so called *Benefactor* used to test his aides' loyalty and commitment, and one of his strategies was to let them know that everything they had was owed to him. Trujillo often put his collaborators through tests, as he was suspicious of everyone. Trapped under these circumstances, Senator Cabral, in order to undermine his situation, offers his own daughter to the invader maniac of Dominican lives to save himself. These characteristics can also be found in resemblances of foreign invaders.

La Fiesta del Chivo also deals with the reign of terror the Dominicans lived under Trujillo, and is probably the most internationally known of these novels of the *Trujillato*. While one of the main characters, Urania Cabral, visits her father in Santo Domingo, after being away for 35 years and reveals her traumatic past experience, the readers go back to 1961 when the Dominican Republic was dominated by Trujillo and his personality is shown from his own introspection, so they have a close look at the world of the dictator nicknamed the Goat. On the other hand, there are the

experiences and feelings of a group (mainly military) dissatisfied with the dictatorial regime that decided to take justice into their own hands. Urania (an invented character, but based on many known cases) is the daughter of a former government official of Trujillo. She managed to flee the dictatorship and stays away and distant from her estranged father and country. She remained and kept busy all the time with her work in order to keep her mind occupied and not remember her past, as many exiled people had to do. Throughout the novel it can be seen that sometimes Trujillo calls himself a dictator, which shows that he is aware of the others' view of him. He had ruled the Dominican Republic for 31 years with an iron fist, but all the time he expresses that it had been for the nation's sake, just as the U.S. invaders insisted upon their occupation of 1916.

Trujillo was a man whose gaze could penetrate and intimidate anyone, of strong character and tyrannical leadership, obsessed with personal hygiene. In his last years, he had “serious” problems with the Church and was facing a revolt of two important bishops. However, the main situation was that the Dominican Republic had a number of economic sanctions by the Organisation of American States (OAS). According to *La Fiesta del Chivo*, those who were against the regime were persecuted, tortured, killed or “disappeared” by Johnny Abbes, director of the Military Intelligence Service (SIM) and merciless torturer and persecutor during the Trujillo era. Abbes was a necessary character for the dictator/invader, to cover the evil and execute the orders of his ‘Excellency’, just as characters like Balaguer were necessary for him and fulfilled their roles to perfection:

Usted, Presidente Balaguer, tiene la suerte de ocuparse sólo de aquello que la política tiene de mejor –dijo, glacial-. Leyes, reformas negociaciones diplomáticas, transformaciones sociales. Así lo ha hecho treinta y un años. Le tocó el aspecto grato, amable de gobernar. ¡Lo envidio! Me hubiera gustado ser sólo un estadista, un reformador. Pero gobernar tiene una cara sucia, sin la cual lo que Usted hace resultaría imposible ¿Y el orden? ¿Y la estabilidad? ¿Y la seguridad? He procurado que usted no se ocupara de esas cosas ingratas. Pero, no me diga que no sabe cómo se consigue la paz. Con cuánto sacrificio y cuánta sangre. Agradezca que yo le permitiera mirar al otro lado, dedicarse a lo bueno, mientras Abbes, el teniente Peña Rivera y otros teníamos tranquilo al país para que usted escribiera sus poemas y sus discursos. Estoy seguro de que su aguda inteligencia me entiende de sobra (Vargas Llosa, 2000, p. 318).

All these visions are not just caused by the exaggerated imagination of the authors, they are based on precise facts told by historians. To name just a few, Cassá, for instance, refers to the power of Trujillo becoming so absolute that not only did he award himself all imaginable titles, but also dissolved all political parties and changed the name of the capital of the country. Also the massacre of Haitians in 1937 was driven by his desire to have total power, as he considered that the said population on the border was a partial neutralization of his absolute power (Cassá, 2004, p. 254). The invasion of the dictator on the private lives of the Dominican Republic inhabitants was so encompassing, that it was mandatory to be registered at the Dominican Party and all employees had to pay 10% of their salaries as a share. Trujillo used his army to impose his domain over the rest of the Dominican population through violence, terror, torture and murders (Moya Pons, 2002, p. 513). Historical texts are also plagued with sexual references listed in literary works. Moya Pons, for instance, tells how one of Trujillo's lovers took advantage in the early years of the regime with a laundry business, where part of the monthly salary of soldiers was deducted for washing their clothes (ibid, 2002, p. 514). Moreover, the historical chronicle by Galíndez (2010) is full of descriptions of barbaric acts committed by Trujillo.

In this category, Diaz's novel could also be placed as a work that exposes in the internal invasion suffered by a 'cursed' generation, which is inherited by their descendants as a terrible *fukú*. *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (2008) deals with the author's ancestral homeland's experience under Trujillo. Diaz migrated as a child to the United States and developed his work in English. This novel engages in an accurate, sharp and shared vision on race, how to treat violence as normative in the Dominican history, the double standards in the different orders of daily lives, *insularizarnos* in the conservative and losing the prospects that everything is palm and water (Mena, n.d.).

It tells the story of Oscar de León, an overweight Dominican boy who grew up in Paterson, New Jersey, as so many other second generation children did, feeling nostalgic for the homeland of their

parents, listening to the stories about their past and that horrible man called Trujillo. However, Oscar's obsession was not the past, but the future; he loved science fiction and fantasy novels and dreamed of falling in love, although inadvertently he had inherited the curse (*fukú*) that had plagued his family for generations. Most of the story is told by Junior, the author's alter ego, who expresses his personal opinion about the terror that it meant to have lived under the thumb of a megalomaniacal dictator. The *fukú*²⁹ came to the island with the first invaders, actually, and it is part of the Dominican folklore, of the amalgam of superstitions that the Dominicans have inherited through the centuries and the mixture of races. Here the question arises, as Mena wonders, whether this is part of a perception of themselves, both in history as of fate. Perhaps the author who catapulted the dominicanism '*fucú*' as '*fuku*' was the Russian Yevgeni Yevtushenko in his work of the same title, published in 1985. It is curious how the thread of both works starts with the same characterisation of fear and superstition to pronounce the name of the Admiral Christopher Columbus (Mena, n.d.). In Yevtushenko's work the story starts in Columbus Park: when trying to speak of the Admiral and colliding with the possible curse that could drag one by pronouncing the name. In Díaz's work the same effect occurs, but this time the arrow travels to the historical past, and not towards the dissection of the single moment of now (*ibid*).

Nonetheless, Díaz is not in line with inherited traditions only, in comparing Trujillo with the evil forces of Tolkien characters and linking his story with the fantasy world of Middle-Earth, he seems to offer a refusal to accept the curse, when he relates that

“at the end of *The Return of the King*, Sauron's evil was taken away by ‘a great wind’ and neatly ‘blown away,’ with no lasting consequences to our heroes; but Trujillo was too powerful, too toxic a radiation to be dispelled so easily. Even after his death his evil lingered” (*The Brief...* p. 156).

He continues with the analogy:

²⁹ *Fucú*: person or thing that brings bad luck. (*Diccionario del Español Dominicano*. Santo Domingo: Academia Dominicana de la Lengua. 2013)

“Within hours of *El Jefe* dancing bien *pegao* with those twenty-seven bullets, his minions ran amok-fulfilling, as it were, his last will and vengeance. A great darkness descended on the Island and for the third time since the rise of Fidel people were being rounded up by Trujillo's son, Ramfis, and a good plenty were sacrificed in the most depraved fashion imaginable, an orgy of terror funeral goods for the father from the son” (*The Brief...*ibid).

Though much of Díaz's novel takes place in the recent past and in the USA, the subject matter is the Dominican Republic during the early and mid-twentieth century, a period during which the country suffered through the standard Latin American dictators and police states. The author provides several informative primers on the country's history and adds key references about the role that colonialism and U.S. interventionism played in bringing Dominican society to where it is today. Oscar de León, later called Oscar Wao, is a Dominican boy raised in a 'normal' Dominican family of the so called diaspora. Díaz states that Trujillo's regime was the cause from which such a phenomenon originated, specifically blaming his direct continuer, Balaguer, for it:

The Elders say, *Anything uttered for the first time summons a demon*, and when twentieth-century Dominicans first uttered the word *freedom* en masse the demon they summoned was Balaguer...In the days of the Trujillato, Balaguer was just one of El Jefe's more efficient ringwraiths. After Trujillo's death he would take over Project Domo and rule the country from 1960 to 1962, from 1966 to 1978, and again from 1986 to 1996 (by then dude was blind as a bat, a living mummy)...He unleashed a wave of violence against the Dominican left, death-squading hundreds and driving thousands more out of the country. It was he who oversaw/initiated the thing we call Diaspora (*The Brief...* p. 90).

What pairs Díaz's novel with the above mentioned works before is basically the story of Oscar's mother, Beli:

“a tough, tough-talking woman whose hard-nosed street cred is rooted in a childhood of almost unimaginable pain and loss: her wealthy father, tortured and incarcerated by the Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo's thugs; her mother, run over by a truck after her husband's imprisonment; her two sisters, dead in freak, suspicious accidents” (Kakutani, 2007).

Furthermore, the paroxysm of physical invasion that Trujillo represented is recorded in the circumstances in which Beli is abused and savagely beaten by Trujillo's henchmen in the cane fields.

Also, Díaz's mention of Orlando Martínez's case, a journalist murdered in 1975 on Balaguer's orders,³⁰ is unavoidably interwoven with the other similar case of the already mentioned above Jesús de Galíndez³¹. "What is it with dictators and writers, anyway?," wonders Díaz. Dictators, in his opinion, just know competition when they see it: "Same with writers. *Like, after all, recognizes like*" (*The Brief...* p. 91). Díaz briefly refers to when Balaguer appeared as a *sympathetic* character in Vargas Llosa's *La Fiesta del Chivo* (*The Brief...p. 90*), and it feels painfully like a lament, like a claim due to the literary wastage. Vargas Llosa, one of Latin America's most influential writers did not take the advantage he had in his hands to expose Balaguer and instead offered him another *página en blanco* in his novel so he could wash his hands and come out clean and unpunished; in the "literary court" at least.

Ironically, Balaguer also revealed his characteristics as an invader from within during the era called *Los doce años* (1966-1978), which incidentally has not produced the flood of literary works that the Trujillo Era has. Among other aspects, Balaguer also shared Trujillo's obsession with a monument to commemorate Christopher Columbus's exploit, which was materialized in the Columbus Lighthouse³² in Santo Domingo, a grotesque subject if seen from the perspective that it symbolizes the legitimization of a bloody invasion. Surely Balaguer would have wanted to build a monument to Trujillo –just as he devoted the dictator a whole chapter as a 'writer' in the first edition of his *Historia de la Literatura Dominicana* and perhaps for that reason his book received

³⁰ "Balaguer was a killer of people who wrote better than himself, famously ordering the death of journalist Orlando Martínez. Later when he wrote his memoirs, he claimed he knew who had done the foul deed (not him, of course) and left a blank page in the text to be filled in with the truth upon his death. Balaguer died in 2002. The página is still blanca" (Díaz, 2008, p. 90).

³¹ "Jesús de Galíndez was a Basque supernerd and a Columbia University grad student who had written a rather unsettling doctoral dissertation. The topic? Lamentably, unfortunately, sadly: the era of Rafael Leónidas Trujillo Molina. Galíndez, a loyalist in the Spanish Civil War, had firsthand knowledge of the regime; he had taken refuge in Santo Domingo in 1939, occupied high positions therein, and by his departure in 1946 had developed a lethal allergy to the Failed Cattle Thief, could conceive for himself no higher duty than to expose the blight that was his regime" (Ibid, pp 96-97).

³² Completed in 1992, the Columbus Lighthouse was designed to convey the image of a Christian cross in the night sky and be visible for tens of kilometres. Since its completion, the Lighthouse, which supposedly houses the remains of Columbus, has been a minor tourist attraction. His light is not used very often due to energy costs and blackouts in the country. However, its symbolism and expenditure have been a source of much controversy.

the *Premio Nacional de Didáctica* in 1955 (Collado, 2014)—, but as the society in the 1990s was not going to let him, he had to settle for carrying out the plans of the same *Faro a Colón* that the dictator had begun years ago. It was designed in 1929 by the British architect Joseph Lea Gleave, who for the great cross was inspired by this quote of Columbus: “*Pongan cruces en todos los caminos y senderos, para que Dios los bendiga; esta tierra pertenece a los cristianos*” (Rodríguez Juliá, 1996). The problem is that ‘this land’ belonged to the indigenous, who were not Christians and were exterminated in the name of that cross. Thus the symbolism interferes with the beauty of the architectural work and brings up the crudest genocide in history perpetrated by the early European invaders. The lighthouse project was a “Dominican project” because Trujillo said so, as Rodríguez Juliá states (*ibid*). Trujillo, as the ‘legitimate’ and innate invader, considered himself the supreme interpreter of the feelings of the Dominican people and in a radio address on the 12th of October, 1937 (extreme symbolic detail: during the days of the slaughter of Haitians), he heralded:

“*En nombre del Pueblo Dominicano, cuya representación asumo y de cuyos sentimientos soy intérprete, dirijo un fraternal llamamiento a todos los pueblos de América en favor del Faro conmemorativo...*” (Rodríguez Juliá, 1996).

The most relevant part of *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* connects Oscar with his grandfather, who was an upper-class surgeon and businessman during Trujillo times. Oscar dies in the Dominican Republic in a tragic way, as a symbol of his tragic life, but the interesting fact is that, after his death, his family starts believing in the curse and take measures to keep away the fukú. Although the novel focuses on different themes (Dominican masculinity,³³ feminine power, love and violence, the supernatural, science fiction fanatics, diaspora) the ones that are related to the concept of invasion, although just a few, are very significant and powerful issues and serve as a source for what comes afterwards: dictatorship, individualism and nation.

³³ It could be said that Yunió’s masculinity echoes that of Trujillo, who in his violent actions and lust for women, also embodies Dominican hypermasculinity.

The author states that the situation under Trujillo's dictatorship was beyond all bearing: "The Dictatingest Dictator who ever Dictated" (Sic, *The Brief...* p. 80), against whom Oscar's family ran afoul in the 1940s. Some of the characters' lives operate within Trujillo's regime, parallel with it and usually involved in it, politically, romantically or sexually. Even Oscar becomes involved in the personal life of a police member, and is thus symbolically involved with the state, much in the same way that his mother and his grandfather were involved. Even when Trujillo disappears physically, his *fukú* continues. Oscar and his family are not only immigrants, they become outsiders, not only of their own country but also of the new country. They are no longer in their country, but they do not feel part of the new country; they all seem to be lost, always on a quest to find where they belong, which seems to be the major lament of Díaz.

As in *La Fiesta del Chivo*, Oscar Wao's main theme is political authoritarianism, a common characteristic of the previous invaders. The novels show the form of government in which power is concentrated around the figure of a single individual (dictatorship) and is characterised by an absence of separation of powers, a propensity to arbitrarily exercise control on every aspect of life and the impossibility that, through an institutionalised procedure, opposition comes to power. It can be seen that the dictator's powers are similar to those of an invader. Trujillo was not only a dictator, but an invader in his own country, where the invasion of privacy prevailed more than anything, as the right to privacy is the right of individuals not to be interfered with or molested by any person or entity in the core of the activities that they legitimately decide to keep out of the public. In a dictatorship this right is trampled by the arms of the intelligence apparatus that the dictator needs in order to keep the population controlled. Trujillo knew everything about everybody, their weaknesses and strengths, and usually used all that against them for his own benefit. It can be noticed that, from his perspective, maximum virility corresponded to political dominance.

It makes one wonder: what makes a dictator/invader so powerful over people's will? Sometimes it is not only military superiority, but some sort of superior force of the mind over weaker spirits, as

García Márquez relates in his novel *El Otoño del Patriarca* (1975). Otherwise, how can we explain the subjugation of the elements involved in the tyrannies, their contempt for life, and their ability to give up their human dignity and sacrifice their beloved ones in order to keep a position, which is the case of Senator Cabral from *La Fiesta del Chivo*, and other characters? However, a foreign invader is basically feared only by their superior military power, while Trujillo embodied the two factors.

In her study *Masculinity after Trujillo: The Politics of Gender in Dominican literature* (2014), Maja Horn clearly underlines the undisputable role that the U.S. occupation of the Dominican Republic of 1916 played in shaping Trujillo's personality and how today's hegemonic notions of masculinity were consolidated during his dictatorship. However, she argues that "the overall scholarly, literary and popular tendency has been to focus on the hyperbolic masculinity of the dictator himself, with a particular kind of voyeurism with regard to his sexual appetite, rather than on the larger social and political implications and the lasting effects of his dictatorial discourse on Dominican gender formations" (Horn, 2014, p. 17).

VI.3 In the time of the invader/dictator: the worst of times

In 1994 *In the Time of the Butterflies* was published, a fictionalised account by Julia Alvarez of the revolutionary activity and personal lives of the Mirabal sisters under the Trujillo regime, which portrayed a scenario of terror, as if the country had fallen into the hands of foreign invading forces once again. The Mirabal sisters, known as *Mariposas*, made a political commitment to overthrow the Trujillo regime for which they were harassed, persecuted, and imprisoned. Their family suffered retaliation from the Military Intelligence Service, and they were eventually assassinated for their actions on the 25th of November, 1960. The Mirabal was a family of farmers, of important rank due to the father's prestige and money. As a result of their political activities, Trujillo ordered the sisters

be killed on Puerto Plata Road, with their driver Rufino, while returning from visiting their husbands in jail. The women and driver were beaten to death and later their vehicle and bodies were dumped off a cliff in order to make their deaths look like an accident (Domínguez, 2001). Alvarez' novel (2010) also portrayed that critical moment and other many instances of how the authoritarian state permeated life for the Mirabal sisters and the other characters. Within the novel, even those citizens who were not suspected rebels were afraid to speak openly, since they could not trust their own neighbours. For instance, before the Mirabal family comes under any suspicion, their relaxing evening outdoors was ruined when one of them accidentally said Trujillo's name in a less than flattering way: "Suddenly, the dark fills with spies who are paid to hear things and report them down at Security" (*In the time...* p. 10). The authoritarian regime of Trujillo was linked to other dictatorships by Maria Teresa, when she described the march in which she and the other women must participate before the start of classes and she said that it looked like the newsreels of Hitler and the Italian one with the name that sounds like fettuccine (*In the time...* p. 131).

In the novel, it is implied that Trujillo wanted to "possess" Minerva, the most influential daughter, and for that reason the family is invited to one of his parties, but she responded to his proposal by publicly slapping him in the face, which, obviously, would be like writing one's own death sentence, for any hint of disagreement with the regime resulted in death for its author and even for their families. Historically, that slap comes to symbolize what Valerio-Holguín (n.d.) considers the repetition of the allegorical gesture of resistance in the founding of the Dominican nation: the episode when Mencía, Enriquillo's wife, refuses the advances of Valenzuela, the Spanish conquistador; or the legend of the Dominican woman who slapped a Haitian soldier during the occupation of 1822 to 1844 (ibid, n.d.). Sommer (1983) also notes the use of the female body as an allegory of the Dominican nation against a foreign usurper, especially in Galván's novel *Enriquillo*, which is highlighted by Valerio-Holguín:

La novela de Julia Alvarez remite a un cierto tipo de ideología populista de algunas novelas dominicanas, planteada por Doris Sommer, en la cual la esposa representa la tierra y el usurpador o adúltero al invasor o al dictador... Trujillo vendría a ser el dictador infame que subyuga a la mujer (Valerio-Holguín, n.d.).

Trujillo as an invader is unmasked throughout Alvarez' novel, full of details that describe the invasion of privacy that the characters felt under Trujillo's regime. Life at that time was based on pretensions: "That's how my family got around having to give some sort of patriotic affair to show their support of Trujillo. We pretended the party was in his honour" (*In the time...*p. 24). What is so remarkable to see within the pages of *In the Time of the butterflies* is the fundamental reflection that Trujillo was the strongest force of a farce that had been installed in the country. Even Minerva could not believe her eyes when she first saw him: "He was wearing a fancy white uniform with gold fringe epaulets and a breast of medals like an actor playing a part" (*In the time...*p. 27). Of course some sectors followed the game, as Galíndez (2010) denounces, and in the same way that mayors served the cause of the invaders of 1916, for circumstantial personal convenience: "Every week his [Trujillo's] picture was in the papers next to Monsignor Pittini, overseeing some good deed" (Galíndez, 2010, p. 51). In that sense, Alvarez could not conceal the struggle of the *Gavilleros* and so she let it emerge through Minerva's voice:

"At one point, Minerva suggested we just take off into the mountains like the *gavilleros* had done. We had heard the stories of the bands of *campesinos* who took to the hills to fight the Yanqui invaders. Mamá had been a young woman, eighteen, when the Yanquis came. "Did you sympathize with the *gavilleros*, Mamá?" Minerva wanted to know. "Of course, I sympathized with our patriots. But what could we do against the Yanquis? They killed anyone who stood in their way. They burned our house down and called it a mistake. They weren't in their own country so they didn't have to answer to anyone" (*In the time...*pp. 56-57).

The situation under Trujillo was not very different as the scenario described above, as he was in his own reign and did not have to answer to anyone. As Higman states:

"His companies made massive profits under the protection of government, often paying no taxes, while employing labour at the lowest wages or forcing convicts to work for them. The public sector and Trujillo's business enterprise became hard to tell apart. Large amounts were transferred to his private foreign bank accounts. When he was assassinated, Trujillo was one of the world's two or three most wealthy men" (Higman, 2011, p. 259).

Above all, what prevailed during *the Trujillo Era* was the fear: "...this was El Jefe's favourite car. Directly, Minerva told Papá, "another reason not to buy it." The whole family walked around in fear for a while" (*In the time...*p. 51). "Then there had been the silence that always followed any compromising mention of the regime in public. One could never be sure who in a group might report what to the police" (*In the time...*p. 73).

Terror is also present in the words describing the tragedy of others:

"My family had not been personally hurt by Trujillo...But others had been suffering great losses. There were the Perozos, not a man left in that family. And Martínez Reyna and his wife murdered in their bed, and thousands of Haitians massacred at the border" (*In the time...*p. 53).

It can be said that the whole country was 'invaded' and trapped by the dictatorship's tentacles as Trujillo infiltrated their lives. There were spies everywhere and he, the 'Chief', was always watching and, worst of all, ready to punish. In fact, a portrait of *El Benefactor* must hang in every house, and most families had him next to their worshipped Jesus. Trujillo became a sort of god that was omnipresent, illustrated by Dedé Mirabal (the surviving sister) who heard somebody on the radio saying, "dictatorships are pantheistic. The dictator manages to plant a little piece of himself in every one of us" (*In the time...*p. 311).

From the title, the author refers to the symbol of resistance that the sisters represented, as contrasted to Galíndez' *La Era of Trujillo*. The paraphrase of the famous Dickens' lines, which open *A Tale of Two Cities* (n.d.), becomes almost obligatory, as it hints at the country's duality. On the one hand, invasion and oppression, and resistance and rebellion, on the other. Thus, it could be said that *La Era de Trujillo* was:

"The best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair" (Dickens, n.d.).

While the dictator / invader bent the spirit of the Dominicans, the butterflies transformed them into fighters, as they transformed themselves. As Mejía Hernández (n.d.) states the time of the butterflies is the epoch when three women are transformed to win a fight: “*Sus almas serán otras cuando descubran lo que pueden lograr. Es su tiempo, que se repite literariamente cada vez que los lectores de hoy las recuerdan*”. The same recollection exists when the reader remembers Anacaona, along with the conquest of the first invaders, exudes the resistance of the Taino queen. Through the story of the Mirabal family, Alvarez reveals the Dominican society that was fighting for liberation, and who were willing to use any possible means, as when she quotes María Teresa words: “*Le pregunto a Fela....si tiene algo que yo pueda usar como sortilegio contra cierta mala persona...De manera que ando caminando con un maleficio doble: en un zapato, Rafael Leonidas Trujillo; en el otro, Enrique Mirabal (In the time...p. 184)*”, so alluding at the patriarch infidelity, which came to ruin family peace in a similar way to Trujillo destroying the tranquility of the country.

The novel also reflects that the Mirabal sisters’ actions were not in vain, as they had enormous repercussions, for just a few months later the dictator would be assassinated. In fact, their legacy is as relevant today as, in 1999, the United Nations chose the date of 25th of November as *the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women*, “to commemorate the Mirabal sisters, three political activists the Dominican ruler Rafael Trujillo (1930-1961) ordered brutally assassinated in 1960.”³⁴ The issue of the murder of the three sisters has been included in many books and articles by various historians, cited by Collado, 2010: Pichardo (1992) says that to simulate an accident, the bodies were introduced in the vehicle they were riding in, which was thrown off a cliff. Balcácer (2007) states that that heinous crime perpetrated by the government was another clear demonstration that not only men fought the dictatorship, but also women who, in addition to fulfilling their duties at home and in the educational development of their children,

³⁴Resolution 50-134, dated December 17, 1999, issued by the General Assembly of the United Nations (Collado, 2010)

militantly advocated for the abolition of the dictatorship. Moya Pons (1977) confirms that the murder of the Mirabal sisters filled the minds of sensible and decent people against Trujillo and increased the atmosphere of deep animosity that existed against the Government. As for Gutiérrez Félix (2008) that crime had no political justification or explanation, and touched all sectors of the Dominican family (Collado, 2010). Vargas Llosa also includes it in *La Fiesta del Chivo* (2000), when the character of Antonio Imbert, one of the conspirators against the tyrant, recounts the crimes committed by the regime:

Y, el 25 de noviembre de 1960 -Imbert sintió aquel aguijón en el pecho, inevitable cada vez que recordaba el lúgubre día-, el asesinato de las tres hermanas, Minerva, Patria y María Teresa Mirabal, y del chofer que las conducía, en La Cumbre, en lo alto de la cordillera septentrional, cuando regresaban de visitar a los maridos de Minerva y María Teresa, encarcelados en la fortaleza de Puerto Plata (La Fiesta...p. 190).

In 1969, Pedro Mir, the national poet, wrote the poem *Amén de mariposas*, which expresses the tragedy that was the murder of the three heroines and argues that the established society has died. As with the rest of his poetic works, *Amén* comes to represent the historical experience of the country and of the author himself, as he also was a victim of the regime, persecuted, jailed and eventually forced into exile. With this poem Mir recalls another invasion, as he dedicates it to the U.S. Ambassador to Mexico, in 1914, because, during the occupation of Veracruz by U.S. troops, she exclaims: “¡Esta es la danza de la muerte / y creo que nosotros tocamos el violín!” (1969). As Alcántara Almánzar (1979) indicates, this poem is an open denunciation of the crimes of the dictatorship and the immediate events that eventually undermined the flimsy pedestal on which the regime then stood. Ortega (1991) writes that the infamous murder of the sisters provokes the poet’s reflections about the rupture of human order, about the moral need to break the silence against institutionalized violence in a continent that is the result of a systematic looting:

*Puesto que todo el mundo sabe que somos el silencio
Aun en horas de infortunio.
No era una vez porque no puedo contar la historia
De este viejo país del que brotó la América Latina*

*puesto que todo el mundo sabe que brotó de sus vértebras
 En una noche metálica denominada
 Silencio
 De una vértebra llamada Esclavitud
 De otra vértebra llamada Encomienda
 De otra vértebra llamada Ingenio
 (Mir, 1969)*

Then, the poet invokes the moral responsibility of mankind before that murder that must be taken by men of all conditions (Ortega, 1991, pp. 269-277) when he says in the '*Segundo tiempo*':

*Fue esta universal investidura de la que no está exento
 Nadie nadie
 Ni yo
 Ni tú
 Ni nosotros ni ellos ni nadie
 Podridamente nadie
 Nadie
 Desde el mismo momento que fueron golpeadas
 Ciertamente
 Profesionalmente
 Maquinalmente
 Tres de las hermanas Mirabal.
 (Mir, 1969)*

The poem contrasts with the novel in the agony and the lack of hope, as there is no trace of the surviving sister, who Alvarez utilises to tell the story of the crime. Mir is pessimistic towards the outcome "*cuando la sociedad establecida muere por los cuatro costados,*" although he warns that the great empires of the planet cannot resist the death of certain butterflies, whereas Alvarez releases the pain of the fourth sister as a symbol of a witness of history. However, as Mir, Dedé Mirabal does not express too much faith in the future, and it feels as if she is repeating the poet's words: *porque el asesinato tiene que respetar si quiere ser respetado*. In the novel's epilogue, Dedé relates how, after over a year of Trujillo's disappearance, the murderers of her sisters were brought to trial and they received thirty or twenty years punishment "on paper": "All of them were set free during our spell of revolutions. When we had them regularly, as if to prove we could kill each other even without a dictator to tell us to" (*In the time...* pp. 303-304).

The main difference between Mir's poem and Alvarez's novel can be seen in the demystification that Julia Alvarez achieves. It can be said that there is a male view and a female view here. Mir makes the sisters into figures that are larger than life, something like eternal mothers, saints, alternative deities. The poem becomes a prayer to them. In this sense, it results almost impossible to recognize humanity in them. Whereas Alvarez get them closer to reality, she creates a domestic story which shows the humanity of them as ordinary women, who had dreams and flows, as everybody else. Alvarez's is a feminist text which rescues the Mirabal sisters from mythologizing.

In general, all these different texts expose the dictatorial characteristics of Trujillo which identify him with the same features seen in foreign invaders, although, as Gallego Cuiñas states, the Dominican writer has not been able to take the full advantage and use the infinite possibilities of the Trujillo Era (Gallego Cuiñas, 2005, p. 66). Nonetheless, out of their pages it can be concluded that the dictator came very close to the image of the invaders or even surpassed them, in his despotic personality, control over his subordinates and the existence of an apparatus of repression and espionage that allowed him to exercise power and keep the people under his iron fist control.

Chapter VII:

POETRY AGAINST BULLETS DURING THE U.S. INVASION OF 1965

The poetry that emanated from the U.S. invasion of 1965 in the Dominican Republic was as dangerous a weapon as the bullets used by U.S. soldiers. Thus, the brave poets of the Dominican youth were present in the contest with “*esa arma milagrosa que no mata, pero que hiere profundamente: la del verso; que reaviva el ánimo guerrero; que dice su mensaje de libertad y que lleva a la conciencia del combatiente los sentimientos y las ideas que enriquecen su espiritualidad, que es la más noble de las armas*” (Rodríguez Demorizi, 2009). Poetry has never ceased to be political, says Matos Moquete (1978), as that is its challenge. However, poets were not alone, a whole *army* of artists took part in the fight against the new invaders, grouped in the great *Comando Artístico y Cultural Constitucionalista*³⁵ (with the Cultural Front at the lead), which was the fighting front of the men and women of culture.

The second U.S. invasion of the 20th century in the Dominican Republic was the product of a series of events, the first of which occurred on the 30th of May, 1961 with the assassination of dictator Trujillo. Then came the democratic elections in 1962, and seven months later, on the 25th of September, 1963, President Juan Bosch was the victim of a *coup d'état* and went into exile. Bosch's government was succeeded by a civilian triumvirate imposed by the military and police. On the 24th of April, 1965 two battalions of the Armed Forces, who wanted to restore the constitutional government of Bosch, revolted. There were confrontations between the military side favouring Bosch -called Constitutionalists- and the military side which had led to the coup (Tejada, 1980, p.

³⁵The groups of artists received several names, and sometimes it might be confusing to define who was integrated in what group: *Frente Constitucionalista*, *Comando Artístico Constitucionalista* (Silvano Lora); *Comando Artístico Nacionalista* (Ramón Alberto Ferreras); *Frente de Artistas y Escritores* y *Frente Artístico Constituionalista* (Salvador Pérez Martínez); *Comando de Artistas e Intelectuales*. *Comando de los Artistas* (Oviedo), among others. (2009) *La otra guerra de abril*, p. 27.

1). On the 28th of November, 1963, Manolo Tavárez Justo, leader of the Revolutionary Movement *14 de Junio*, led a guerrilla uprising through six fronts, spread over the four corners of the country. Tavárez Justo was assassinated, together with 18 other comrades, on the 21st of December, 1963 (Despradel, 2007, p. 179).

Throughout 1964 and the first months of 1965, protests of labourers, students, peasants and professionals, both men and women, were continuously developed, in which members of the *14 de Junio* movement participated overwhelmingly in their protests integrating the slogan of the restoration of the 1963 Constitution (Despradel, 2007). This indicates that the slogan used by intellectuals of *Pura y Simple* during the U.S. invasion of 1916 had a phantom appearance under the new circumstances. Intellectuals, along with the general population, demanded the 'pure and simple' adoption of the Constitution of 1963, to bring back Juan Bosch to government. Less than two years were enough for the Dominicans to react violently (Cury, 2009, p. 243).

On the 28th of April, 1965, the United States invaded the country under the argument of restoring law and order, protecting American lives and avoiding the possible triumph of the communists (Bartlow Martin, 1975, p. 617). The U.S. invaders took the side of the military coup. The city of Santo Domingo was divided into two zones occupied by the warring parties. On one side there was a constitutionalist army, who formed a government headed by Colonel Francisco Alberto Caamaño Deñó, who was confined to a small area of the city. The other side formed the National Reconstruction Government led by General Antonio Imbert Barreras (Moya Pons, 2002, p. 534). The Dominicans were divided through a civil war and the whole country was affected by these events.

During the civil war and time of the invasion, culture, in general, and poetry, in particular, played an important role as a faithful expression of the fortunes and misfortunes experienced by the Dominican people during the revolution and stated the views of intellectuals towards a new U.S.

invasion. According to Collado (2007), three types of wars were fought during the Revolution: military war, war of propaganda and political warfare. Initially, the Constitutionalist won the military war, from 24 to 30 April, and gradually lost it because of the U.S. invasion. Since they did not achieved what they desired, which was the respect of the constitution of 1963, they obviously lost the political war. However, they did win the war of propaganda, which covered the entire country, thanks to an intense media campaign on television and radio, and the use of flyers, graffiti, and conversations face to face (Collado, 2007, pp. 355-358). Doubtlessly, within that campaign of propaganda the work of artists and poets was integrated, with their verses clamouring for justice.

Among the poets committed to the cause were: Miguel Alfonseca, Manuel del Cabral, René del Risco Bermúdez, Mateo Morrison, Tony Raful, Abelardo Vicioso, Juan José Ayuso, Rafael Astacio Hernández, Pedro Mir, Máximo Avilés Blonda, Ramón Francisco, and many others who realised how to use their creativity to capture this great event in patriotic verses. Mateo Morrison, one of the main protagonists, stated: “*La Guerra de Abril permeó todos los aspectos de la vida nacional y la poesía no estuvo al margen, registrando, en sus imágenes y metáforas, pinceladas que en muchos casos se escapan a la objetividad científica de la historia*” (2007, p. 365). All poets were shaken, as part of the national community, for this reason that began as a civil war and four days after the invasion of the U.S. Marines, it took a strong international dimension and patriotic connotations that deeply divided the Dominicans. Once more, literary expressions were present to raise awareness of sovereignty and denounce the happening of yet another invasion, as is the argument of this chapter.

The U.S. invasion caused reactions in all aspects of Dominican life, and subsequently there were artistic and cultural events of various kinds. For instance, the artists made posters and murals in which the objectives of the People's War were identified, and poets wrote and read their new poems to the crowd. The art produced was basically committed to the revolution and, consequently, opposed to the U.S. occupation (Alcántara Almánzar, 1990). Constitutionalist artists formed the Cultural Front, an organisation that published in the same year of 1965 a booklet of poems called

Pueblo, Sangre y Canto (compiled by Morrison³⁶) from which could be extracted the artists' support for the Constitutional Government and their disavowal of the invasion. Those poems were filled with repudiation against the invader. For instance, in his *Oda gris por el soldado invasor*, René del Risco Bermúdez denounced the cruelty of the soldier: *Este hombre destruye con sus botas / La rosa y la sonrisa de los niños / Se traga nuestra luz con su saliva, / Destroza las raíces y los frutos / Y esparce las espinas para hacernos / Sangrar hasta los pies de dulce carne...*(*Pueblo...p. 21*). Abelardo Vicioso (*Canto a Santo Domingo vertical*) even encouraged the soldiers to go home: *Pero quiero decirte, guardiana de mis sueños, / Que todos los infiernos y sus hombres se apagan / En el océano inmenso de los pueblos que gritan: / ¡Yanqui, vuelve a tu casa!* (*Pueblo...p. 24*).

Moreover, Juan José Ayuso remembers the Haitian poet, Jacques Viau Renaud, fallen in battle, in his *Canto a Jacques: Pasa Jacques Viau montado en una estrella / Junto a los helicópteros por el cielo invadido.../ Junto a Jacques van también los otros conocidos, / Los otros ignorados* (*Pueblo...p. 27*). Similarly, the powerful voice of Rafael Astacio Hernández demands freedom in his *Jornada de Abril: Pero el pueblo victorioso y alerta, / Viril y puro, fusil en mano, / En pie de redoblada guerra / Dijo y dice, atrás el ejército invasor, / Atrás norteamericanos, / ¡Santo Domingo libre para los dominicanos!* (*Pueblo...p. 31*). No a step back, says Pedro Mir, the national poet: *Ni un paso atrás, soldados y civiles Hermanados de pronto en la verdad. / La vida es una sobre los fusiles, / Que no hay trincheras para los reptiles, / De malos nuestros a extranjeros viles. / Ni un paso atrás* (*Pueblo...p. 33*).

In general, the poetry emanating from the poets of the 1960s complained, demanded, pointed an accusing finger, accused the guilty, and encouraged the fight for freedom. Máximo Avilés Blonda (*Hemos llegado a un punto*) said: *La codicia invadió nuestros predios con su muerte / Amarilla / Y se levantaron tumbas en todos los rincones* (*Pueblo...p. 37*). Ramón Francisco (*Tercera Oda a Walt Whitman*) claimed: *Yo sé cuánto nos cuesta, Viejo amigo Walt Whitman! / Tendida la emboscada en*

³⁶ Reedited by Comisión Permanente de Efemérides Patrias. 2011. Santo Domingo.

el nombre del miedo / Pisotean tu rostro y acuchillan tu pecho: / 42,000 puñales saltan sobre tus ojos /Para que tú no veas la singular bravura (Pueblo...p. 40). Héctor Incháustegui Cabral (*Diario de la Guerra*) stated: *...y la sangre cubre la tierra y humea / Y los árboles se van secando /Y las yerbas pequeñas se van secando /Y el sacrificio es inútil y maldito /Porque olvidamos que matar es simple y hacedero, /Lo difícil es vivir sobre la tierra. /En la ciudad (Pueblo...p. 53).* Miguel Alfonseca (*Coral sombrío para invasores*) also claimed: *Porque son invasores. /Porque no defienden su patria/ Sino que agreden la nuestra. /Patria pequeña de tierra. /Patria inmensa de hombres (Pueblo...p. 67).* Manuel del Cabral (*La isla ofendida*) cried: *Viejo Whitman... /Ellos te contarán que desde tu país/ Nos enviaron fusiles comerciantes, /Fusiles con negocios de difuntos, /Fusiles que vinieron /A cambiar por cadáveres, bananas, /A cotizar con balas los ingenios (Pueblo...p. 101).* Mateo Morrison (*La ciudad post-guerra*): *Este cielo con nubes asombradas /Y huracanes en acecho no son mi ciudad. /Mi ciudad no tiene “This side” /“Stop”, “this way”, /En su vientre enmohecido por el tiempo (Pueblo...p. 184).* Tony Raful (*La luz no muere nunca...A Francis*): */Venimos a preguntarle a la muerte /Si estaba cuerda /Cuando cayó sobre ti como avión derribado /Con el animal del fuego /Y sus pezuñas de águila envejecida (Pueblo...p. 187).*

In their works, observes Alcántara Almánzar, there is a feverish desire to witness and a fierce tone insurgency against an authoritarian and oppressive order that crushed much of the best moral and human reserves of the country for decades (Alcántara Almánzar, 2010, p.48). The critic appeals to the reality of the poetry's function during such events as an invasion, which is of compromise.

VII.1 Literary groups: a response to the needs of the time

Mateo maintains that the 1960s were very turbulent years in Dominican culture because they witnessed the disappearance of Trujillo from the stage of history and almost a violent recomposition of all that constituted the conceptual apparatus, the conception of history and political practice of

the nation, since from the factual point of view and in the realm of ideas, *Trujillismo* was a detachment from the currents of universal thought (in García Cuevas, 1998, p. 5). Moreover in that environment of great social mobility, cultural groups arose and faced the social process with the confrontation between followers and opposers to *Trujillismo*. That is when Bosch [the writer and the politician], appeared, using a terminology on social definition that was unknown and along with it emerged not only a reinterpretation of history, but also a need for a definition of cultural groups for the historical process that was emerging at that moment. According to Silvano Lora, painter and founder of *Arte y Liberación* (a cultural movement that made an exercise of the development of committing public art) *Tujillistas* poets and painters were very few, probably some elderly. The majority of artists, although not fully militant, supported the movement and signed the manifestos (Lora, 2009, p. 50). That indicates that the literature of the time was in the service of social struggle, it was a *literatura ancilar*, in the sense that it was conceived by the Greeks and Latins, that is of service (Mateo, in García Cuevas, 1998, p. 10). Before the generation of the 1960s in the Dominican literary spectrum existed the so called *Postumistas*, (who proclaimed that poetry transcends people), *Los Independientes del 40* (who emphasised the social criticism), and *Poesía Sorprendida*, (who emphasised a symbolic lyric), of which Mateo agreed they exerted great influence (ibid).

Los Postumistas emerged in 1917 around the literary activity that Domingo Moreno Jimenes displayed in the magazine *Letras*. They aspired to create, within the literature, conditions in which humanity could sing a new song and dreamed that what they wrote would be posthumous, based on that poetry transcending men; they proclaimed complete freedom of the poet and poetry, not setting any limit to creation. The only commitment acquired by the poets is with themselves and poetry (Emeterio Rondón, 2005, p. 95). The Dominican on the poetry of *Los Postumistas* was a key element, although not in the way of *criollista* or *indigenista*, or as epic or nationalist fervour, but as ambience; it is the assumption of the Dominican in its essence and in a universal vision (ibid, p. 96).

Mir was certainly welcomed by young people as a leading figure and his greatest work *Hay un país en el mundo* (first published in 1949) was known in the early 1960s as a great success in social poetry. He was a prominent member of a definitive generation in the history of Dominican literature, *Los Independientes del 40*, who understood, lived and expressed with its own and a universal voice not only a historical stage of the country, but a way of being and doing aesthetically of the Dominican people (Emeterio Rondón, 2005, p. 84).

Manuel del Cabral was especially regarded with his poem *Compadre Mon* (first published in 1940), whose core structure is the mythical figure of *Compadre Mon* (personalising the landscape-story, and inevitably evokes other poems, such as *Yania Tierra* and *Anacaona*). Regarding Héctor Incháustegui Cabral, Mateo indicates that his case was more complicated because he met the contradictory duality of being both a great social poet (“perhaps the true social Dominican poet”) and a great figure of *trujillismo*. From the Latin-American perspective, the hegemonic figure was Pablo Neruda. They all were *Nerudianos* (in García Cuevas, 1998). In terms of Marxist philosophy, whose influence was almost impossible to escape at that time, from the intellectual point of view rather than political, it was a Marxist *existencializado* (ibid, p. 17).

Under the concept of invasion and resistance, as has been observed, novels, as well as theatre, literature in general, serve to report abuses perpetrated by dictators and invaders, also to raise consciousness and call people to fight, and keep in mind the burning souls of soldiers in unequal battles. Reality had not escaped poets, who saw themselves divided during the U.S. invasion. According to Morrison (2011), two texts would reflect the contradictions that existed among the poets of 1965: one was the manifesto supporting the Constitutionalist sector (with Pedro Mir, Abelardo Vicioso, Máximo Avilés Blonda, Miguel Alfonseca, René del Risco), who signed the document published within the book *Pueblo, Sangre y Canto*. The other text, was the response of Incháustegui Cabral, who understood that the poets’ role was not to support governments or revolutions, but to link their works to more enduring projects. However, an invasion would

definitely be an ‘enduring project’, as it might change the course of history, therefore it is appropriate to disagree with Incháustegui Cabral, because poetry, like the novel, the theatre, or any other literary genre, is not only an artistic expression, but also a vehicle to report facts and communicate emotions and although the construction of history is not written by poets, they serve as witnesses and have the right to take positions. As Silvano Lora stated:

La Revolución de Abril fue la jornada más hermosa de los grupos artísticos dominicanos. Como fenómeno interdisciplinario, no hay otro episodio en la historia dominicana donde se hayan juntado los pintores, los poetas, los bailarines, los actores. No ha habido un momento de tanto fervor, porque la poesía se convirtió en una fuerza liberadora; estar ahí en ese momento no era solamente un compromiso, sino un gran placer, una gran alegría, una gran felicidad (Lora, 2009, p. 56).

Incháustegui Cabral seems not to see beauty in liberation, as he hid behind fear to justify his adherence to the Trujillo regime. However, Raful, in his paper about society in Dominican poetry from the 1960s, unmasks him: “*Cuando le corresponde escribir en libertad, publica los únicos textos poéticos contrarios a la gesta revolucionaria de abril de 1965, que son reflexiones críticas contra la acción popular*” (Raful, 2008, p. 294).

Meanwhile, Perdomo claims that the poets of the 1960s, although similar to the poets from the generations of 1940 and 1948, who could not adopt any attitude other than of rebellion, committed a crime by assuming a political-literary dogmatism: “*En ese dogmatismo radica el error de muchos escritores de aquel tiempo, al haber subordinado la esencia literaria a la política*” (Perdomo, 2008, p. 19). On the other hand, Soledad Alvarez states that the poetry produced at that time could not transcend because it was not produced to last: “*No fue escrita desde el ‘puro deseo de durar’ que impulsa al escritor, sino desde las urgencias del momento, de la resonancia en la conciencia y en la sensibilidad de la lucha contra la intervención extranjera en el país*” (Alvarez, 2008, p. 267).

Declaración de los Artistas appeared in the booklet *Pueblo, Sangre y Canto*, published by the *Frente Cultural* in Santo Domingo on July, 1965, and among other lines stated:

El arte vive dentro de un compromiso contraído ineludiblemente con la sociedad y el tiempo que lo crean... Los artistas dominicanos hemos padecido con indignación en la sangre el atropello incalificable contra la soberanía nacional que una potencia extranjera, por la razón que fuera, ha perpetrado contra la República... Los artistas dominicanos... no vacilamos en ofrecer al Gobierno Constitucional de la República un amplio voto de apoyo y reconocimiento, tanto por su posición en las horas dramáticas de La Guerra como por su posición en los momentos difíciles de las negociaciones pacíficas (Pueblo...2009, p. 29).

The April War or Revolution lasted five months and at that time the artists and writers expressed their commitment to the Dominican people. “*El pueblo de Abril fue lo mejor del pueblo dominicano*” (Despradel, 2009, p. 30). At the beginning of the revolution, Lora convened a group of artists and poets, including some old members of Art and Liberation, for support with their art the democratic ideas and return to constitutionality. So was born the *Frente* or *Comando de Artistas e Intelectuales*, dedicated to creating posters and other propaganda materials and presentations at union centres, neighbourhoods, theatres and art galleries of cultural activities such as exhibitions, poetry readings and plays, addressed to the people (ibid, p. 33). Just as in the times of the *Trinitarios*, the artists used literary genres and other artistic ways, as a weapon of propaganda to arise awareness and call the masses to fight against the invaders.

In a scenario reminiscent of the plays of the *Trinitarios* during the Haitian invasion, artistic and musical presentations during the revolution of 1965 took place in indoor localities mostly during the time between the second half of July and the first three weeks of August of 1965, the period during which meetings with the Constitutionalist Government and the ad-hoc commission of the *Organización de Estados Americanos* (OAS) became more frequent, and therefore, this contributed to lower the stress levels and the alertness of the population:

“En lo personal, únicamente asistí durante la Guerra de Abril a algunos eventos culturales (consistente en lecturas de poemas) que se celebraron durante horas de la mañana, en razón de que a las seis de la tarde cerraban el cerco o corredor que tenía sitiada a la ciudad capital en armas... El poeta Manuel del Cabral escribió varias piezas literarias exaltando la gesta constitucionalista (de él es la expresión Las balas raticidas de Caamaño); pero no tengo conocimiento si este poeta estuvo en la zona revolucionaria en el 1965 (Hernández Mejía, 2009, p. 41).

It is also necessary to include, among the poetic manifestations of the April War, the poem published in the magazine *¡Ahora!*, issued on the 18th of September, 1965, by lawyer and poet Rubén Suro, entitled *Salutación a Gregorio Urbano Gilbert y a Cayo Báez*³⁷ (the two combatants of the first U.S. invasion):

Urbano:
Aquel disparo de inspiración duartista,
Rememoraba el trabucazo de Mella en el Baluarte;
Gracias a ti,
Todavía lo oigo repercutir en Nicaragua,
Cuando Sandino superaba al David Bíblico
Y América Latina
Burlaba por ratos la tutela humillante...

Cayo:
De stirpe trinitaria,
De sueños trinitarios,
San Sebastián de nuestras rebeldías,
Tus cicatrices se abren nuevamente
Para sangrar en estos versos
Y aleccionar a los jóvenes sin miedo
¡Para purificar con tu sangre la República!

Los dos estáis ahí, ¡erguidos!
Acción y resistencia,
Como torres de faro:
Orientación y luces de esperanza
En esta noche larga de tormentas.

At first glance, these verses appear only to reflect the trajectories of two peasant fighters. Yet each line reveals something more enduring that transcends time and space. Gilbert not only represents the purity of resilience, a local force that would ride beyond the geographical limitations of the island and would carry with him the absolute and unwavering message, inspired by Duarte, of total resistance against invaders, wherever they are. Cayo Báez also symbolises the dreams of the *Trinitarios*, of a free Republic. The fact that Suro evokes these two main characters from a previous

³⁷ Fragment taken from ‘*Rubé Suro, Poemas de una sola intención.*’ Compiled by Conde, P. (1978)

invasion is a sign that their acts of resilience were still needed in the current times, to guide and bring hope among the new ‘invaded’ generation.

In the art gallery Auffant, which was located on El Conde Street, major exhibitions of paintings alluding to the April War were performed. In the opening ceremony of the collective exhibition of paintings by 16th August, 1965, held in commemoration of the Restoration of the Republic, Hernández Mejía distributed among the attendees a copy of his poem *Invasión Ilegal a la Patria*:

Invadieron el suelo de Quisqueya los cañones de aquellos que nos prometieron una alianza para el progreso. Penetraron el cuerpo de la patria los fusiles y los tanques de guerra de los que dijeron que sólo querían venir a salvar vidas; pero nos disparan y destruyen nuestras cosas; nos acusan todos los días de ser rebeldes en nuestro propio país, pero quienes se rebelaron contra la Constitución y contra el orden fueron los que hoy les dan la mano a aquellos que invaden nuestra tierra que es y será soberana y libre, aunque ahora mismo se opaque la luz del sol de su libertad (Hernández Mejía, 2009, p. 45).

According to Lora, at the beginning they were just a few artists integrated to the cause, who used to go to the poor neighbourhoods, led painting displays and wrote poetry. Even the first manifesto was signed in a hovel in Gualey, Guachupita. On El Conde Street they had a permanent reading, usually very crowded, on the patio of the *Palacio Consistorial* (former Town Hall building). On one occasion Manuel del Cabral visited, and they read poems of Pedro Mir. With the *coup d'état* many people had to go underground, but they had a publication of poems, called *Hojas Libres*, with poems by Miguel Alfonseca, Abelardo Vicioso and others. They moved around the university, a free zone, which is why the same artists that were integrated to *Arte y Liberación* were also part of *Frente Constitucionalista* or *Comando de Artistas Constitucionalistas*. “*Los recitales de poesía se hacían a cada momento...donde se podía, donde nos llamaban, donde había un problema, un desorden, una cuestión. Nosotros íbamos a crear un clima de fraternidad entre los combatientes*” (Lora, 2009, p. 51). On the 14th of June, 1965 there was published in the constitutional area a poetic work entitled *Arribo de la luz*, by Miguel Alfonseca, in homage to the martyrs of 1959, which was

read in the streets and armed rallies, and was “*de una belleza lírica y de una presencia social indudable*” (Raful, 2008, p.298).

For Paulino Ramos (2008) literary groups were an ideal way to meet the demands of the moment that society expected of intellectuals. Moreover, citing Enrique Eusebio, Paulino Ramos indicates that the slogan of ‘unity’, which emerged during the war, and the interest in keeping the levels achieved in 1965, were part of the reason for the emergence of groups of poets and their object was the formation of consciousness of literature as a profession (Paulino Ramos, 2008, p. 249). Meanwhile, Diógenes Céspedes suggests that a literary group emerges in a specific moment of history “*en un tiempo presente, para oponerse al pasado y para labrar en el futuro una teoría y una práctica de la escritura acordes. Eso sería lo deseable*” (Céspedes, 2008, p. 313).

The first group to appear was *La Máscara* (1965), integrating poets of the middle class. Other groups appeared in the provinces as a natural reaction to the ones arising in the capital city. In late 1965 appeared *El Puño* (led by Miguel Alfonseca and Ramón Francisco and composed by Iván García, Enriquillo Sánchez, René del Risco and Marcio Veloz Maggiolo); then *La Isla* (1966), whose name was trying to break the isolation of the two peoples occupying the Hispaniola island. It was led by Antonio Lockward Artilles and composed of Fernando Sánchez Martínez, Pedro Caro, Wilfredo Lozano, Jimmy Sierra, Andrés L. Mateo and Rutinel Domínguez. In 1967 emerged *La Antorcha*, composed of Mateo Morrison, Alexis Gómez Rosa, Enrique Eusebio, Fernando Vargas, Rafael Abréu Mejía and Soledad Alvarez. Then *Bloque de Jóvenes Escritores* appeared in 1973, which tried to break the isolation and disintegration of the above groupings (Paulino Ramos, 2008, pp. 249-250).

They all represented a vision, an overview of their time from a generation committed to their people. As Lantigua states, from the context of literary groups, poets made commitments of identification with ideological schemes: “*El oficio poético fue el resultado obvio del gusanillo de*

una vocación que comenzaba a situarse en medio de la vorágine ideológica de aquellos años, signados por la búsqueda de fórmulas que modificaran la realidad social y política” (Lantigua, 2008, p. 15). Undoubtedly, poets were seeking to modify reality with their verses.

All these groups were influenced by socialist ideas of the moment, as expected, but especially by solidarity of the anti-imperialist struggles and the activities of the left movement. No doubt that the members of these groups had in mind what was happening at the international level, but especially what was happening internally: the end of an obscure era with the assassination of the dictator, which should have brought constitutional light but instead derailed the structures of the new democracy; the civil war and the abhorrent foreign invasion. The language used in their poems reflected all these scenes and could not be otherwise:

Revienta su coraje, / cuando a todo lo ancho / y a todo lo largo del país, / era más amplio el festín de los vampiros./ Cuando en cada sorbo de sangre / en pequeños coágulos se nos iba la Patria. (Abréu Mejía, *La luz abre un paréntesis*, 2008, p.49)

Hemos dejado atrás agravios y deslealtades. / Nada recordamos / y los días por venir importan menos / que un puñado de cenizas. / Vivamos. / Esta es la ciudad azul azul / y estos son los fastos de su muerte. (Soledad Alvarez, *Todo incluido*, 2008, p. 91)

Hubo un tiempo en que la Patria / fue el corazón de Duarte y unos libros. / Pero no pudo quedarse la patria en corazones. / Y a trabucazos y amor la conseguimos. (Morrison, *Duarte*. (2008, p. 217)

El cinturón de fuego que tu vientre comprime / puede volver cenizas la vastedad del mapa. / Pero quiero decirte, guardiana de mis sueños, / que todos los infiernos y sus hombres se apagan / en el océano inmenso de los pueblos que gritan: / ¡Yanqui, vuelve a tu casa! (Abelardo Vicioso, June 1965, *Canto a Santo Domingo Vertical*, Morrison, 2011, p. 23).

Ahora quieren imponer el bozal / a mis cantos templados en fuelles de la guerra. / Los que pidieron la muerte, / los que pidieron el degüello de retoños, / los que lloraron en sus camas, junto al whiskey (Miguel Alfonseca, 1965, *A los que tratan de imponer el bozal*, Morrison, 2011. 65).

Un mendigo pedía cañonazos.../ solo había una cosa como él tan desnuda: / la lengua de su perro que lamiendo la sangre / se alimentaba de la revolución. (Manuel del Cabral, 1965, *Mendigo entre las balas*, Morrison, 2011, p. 107)

Si nos atrevemos a salir. / moriremos sobre las aceras mojadas, / sobre un charco de luz azul, rojiza, blanca.../ Nos obligarán a pisar un pedal, / a tragar rápidamente letreros, paredes, alguna voz, / a huír toda la noche / como buscando a nadie. (René del Risco y Bermúdez, 1967, *Si nos atrevemos a salir*, Morrison, 2011, P. 165).

By using the right words or by conjuring the right image, these poets succeeded in reflecting the sentiments that prevailed under the circumstances of the invasion, of hatred and despair. In the words of Abréu Mejía, for instance, the homeland was lost in small clots, where the symbolism is extended to an entire generation. As Raful states, what remains to be noted is that those groups, except *El Puño*, which was composed of already known figures, brought new names to the literary spectrum of the Dominican Republic, and would formulate what would be known as the New Poetry (*Joven Poesía or Poesía de Postguerra*) (Raful, 2008, p. 373).

VII.2 Jacques Viau Renaud: death of a poet during the invasion

In the midst of the war the book *Pueblo, Sangre y Canto* was published, prefaced by a *Declaración de los artistas en lucha*, a collection of poems whose authors were René del Risco, Abelardo Vicioso, Juan José Ayuso, Rafael Astacio Hernández, Pedro Mir, Miguel Alfonseca, Máximo Avilés Blonda, Pedro Caro and Ramón Francisco. Furthermore, and as a posthumous

tribute, they included *Permanencia del llanto*, the poems of Jacques Viau Renaud (1941–1965), the young Haitian writer fallen in defence of Dominican sovereignty in the Command B-3, one of the military bases that the strategy for the defence and the fight had divided its eight neighbourhoods in the constitutional zone (Fernández, 2009). Both publications were the responsibility of the Cultural Front, of the Information and Press Ministry of the Constitutional Government of Colonel Francisco Caamaño, to which the artists belonged, and whose Minister was the playwright Franklin Domínguez. Fanny Santana, wife of Pedro Bonilla, talking about the combatants remembered that she was on duty at Hospital Billini, when her husband and Viau Renaud arrived and were hurt. The Haitian poet, although at the brink of death, requested that they helped his fellow soldier first (Fernández, 2009, p. 139).

Viau Renaud was a teacher of French and Literature and was just beginning to be known as a poet. He was seriously injured and remained in agony several days in that situation. According to Roberto Cassá, his death was quite tragic to Dominican revolutionaries, because Jacques represented a symbolic element of the relationship with Haitians: *A pesar de que había crecido en el país y hablaba perfectamente el español, sin el mínimo acento, se le identificaba como un domínico-haitiano, un haitiano-dominicano*” (Cassá, 2009, p. 157).

Viau Renaud was only 6 years old when he arrived in the Dominican Republic. His father had been a known figure in Haiti, after being in the Supreme Court and a presidential candidate. Mateo Morrison, who was just a few years younger than him, remembers how Viau Renaud talked about literature with the younger students, while he himself was studying Law at the university. The fact that he sacrificed his life fighting for the Dominican liberation had a great influence on the new poets: *Esa acción influyó en mi activismo, en mi militancia política* (Morrison, 2014).

On the 21st of June, 1965 the funeral of the poet was held, with his coffin covered by both flags, Dominican and Haitian. Miguel Fonseca was present and narrated how President Caamaño came to the place:

“Chirrian los frenos de un auto: el Presidente Caamaño ha llegado; busca al padre de Jacques, y ambos se confunden en un abrazo fuerte, como si apretándose desapareciera el dolor. Caamaño musita unas palabras en los oídos del hombre, y la cabeza de Alfred Viau se derrumba sobre el hombro del Presidente, lanzando dos fuertes sollozos” (Fonseca, 2009, p. 142).

At the cemetery, another poet, Antonio Lockward Artilles, wondered in his farewell speech how it was possible for a Haitian writer to fight at the front in the Dominican Republic, and he responded himself that nobody can escape social commitment, social class, and Jacques Viau Renaud fought as a poet (cited by Fonseca, 2009, p. 146). Later, Fonseca would write a poem of anguish dedicated to Jacques: *Para cantarte. / Los brazos potentes del pueblo, / Para alzarle. / Las banderas de las islas / Para ondear tu sonrisa / Donde el amor derrota el tiempo* (*Responso para Jacques Viau Renaud*).

There were other poems dedicated to the fallen poet, which appeared in the newspaper *Patria*³⁸, like that of Pedro Arenas, pseudonym of the later well known literary critic Diógenes Céspedes: *Cayó la rosa, aljofarada. / Cayó el héroe, cuyas divisas: la péndola y la rodela / defendieron siempre la libertad. / El fragor horrísono de las balas / maceró el aire y / tembló en el abismo el tronco de Marte /* (*Homenaje fúnebre para Jacques Viau*).

Ayuso maintains that by the maturity and depth of the poem *Permanencia del llanto* (the same title of the book), Viau Renaud had the average age of the Generation, there could be measured the cultural formation difference between Haitian and Dominican intellectual groups, although both countries had a long path of despotic obscurantism imposed by power (Ayuso, 1996, p. 308).

³⁸*Patria* served as spokesman for the revolutionary groups, to the internal and external zone of the Constitutionalist Zone. It first came out on May 14 and his last version was 5th October, for a total of approximately 116 editions. (Collado, 2007, In *Guerra de Abril: Inevitabilidad de la historia*. P. 362).

Hemos pagado caro nuestro miedo a morir, concluded Viau Renaud in the reiteration of a verse, without intention of reproach to previous generations whose cowardice had determined the “permanence of crying” as history, but with the announcement of the decision that fear of dying was not going to contribute more to the permanence of crying. Lockward Artiles indicates that even in traditional works of Haitian literary history there is noted the inadequacy of the French language to shed the feelings of the people of Haiti (Lockward Artiles, 2000, p. 299). Maurice Lubin and Carlos Saint Louis, in their *Panorama de la Literatura Haitiana*, say that Haitian literature will never be original, as long as it demands French language for its means of expression, but the case of Viau Renaud is more complex because he wrote in Spanish (ibid). As Mena (2007) suggests, the opening lines of *Permanencia del Llanto* form part of the Dominican unfailing poetic imagery:

“¿En qué preciso momento se separó la vida de
nosotros, en qué lugar, en qué recodo del camino?
¿En cuál de nuestras travesías se detuvo el
amor para decirnos adiós?”
(Viau Renaud, 1965)

Jacques Viau Renaud was and is an author who has been misunderstood, ignored and misread, according to Mena, who explains it as follows:

Incomprendido porque no se destaca el aliento existencialista de su poesía, más en la zona de un Albert Camus que en la de Jean-Paul Sartre. Ignorado, porque se le remacha eso de “poeta haitiano”, cuando todas las evidencias demuestran que si bien nació en el hermano país, fue tan dominicano como la bandera, por la cual murió. Mal leído, porque se le incrusta en una poesía de pólvora y de combate de la que su poesía nunca fue esencialmente partícipe (Mena, 2007).

Noting that Viau Renaud’s active life cycle was developed in the Dominican Republic, De la Cruz, cited by Lockward Artiles, posited that he could quite properly be regarded as a Dominican poet, therefore explaining the decision of including him as a Dominican author in the *Poesía Trunca* collection, edited by *Casa de las Américas*, Havana, 1977, with a preface by Mario Benedetti (cited by Lockward Artiles, 2000, p. 300). De la Cruz also considers that Viau Renaud’s poetry gathers the best of the poetic tradition, especially the influences of Incháustegui Cabral, through his work

Versos 1940-1950, many of whose themes the Dominican-Haitian poet uses and continues (ibid), for example: *Ya no es necesario atar al hombre para matarlo. / Basta con apretar un botón / y se disuelve como montaña de sal bajo la lluvia (Nada permanece tanto como el llanto, II).*

Morrison (2014) considers that Viau Renaud, as a poet, had matured a great deal, having mastered the metaphor and image in a meaningful way, being still so young, as expressed in the following stanza:

*Que los hambrientos comprendan que la vida les pertenece
Que el callado plañidor de las calles,
Edifique con lo que nunca sus manos han tocado.
Que el viento socave al armazón del llanto.
Es preciso que el silencio deje de secundar nuestra voz.
Que las sombras depongan su hostil armadura ante la vida.
Precisamos de hombres tristes para hablar del hombre,
De mendigos trotamundos para combatir la bota.
(Permanencia del llanto, p. 17)*

Undoubtedly the U.S. invasion of 1965 brought the poets together, regardless of their differences of any kind, which was sealed by the mere publication of the book by the Cultural Front. Thus, the publication is not only a posthumous tribute to a dead poet, who was one of them, but a reaffirmation of unity of the writers at the injustice of the invaders. They understood the need to act together and that alone was an achievement, because, as Iván García says, the artist tends to be an individual being:

“Generalmente, el artista es un ser encerrado en sí mismo, egoísta, muchas veces, narcisista...; sin embargo, de los seis días de abril y los cuatro meses siguientes, más los tres días de septiembre, que fue el tiempo que estuvimos allá en La Zona, se creó un tipo de artista...se comprendió la necesidad de actuar en comunidad...recuerdo el sentimiento de que estábamos haciendo lo que teníamos que hacer” (García, 2009, p. 326).

Nothing remains as much as crying, claims Viau Renaud, and his friend and partner in the fight, Lockward Artiles, reiterated it in the book that remembers him. Jacques Viau Renaud was born on July, 1941 in Port of Prince and had lived in the Dominican Republic from 1948. As a poet he had

participated in the Art and Liberation movement. Later he shyly visited the Society of Writers. He moved among the Haitian exile groups who walked through the streets of Santo Domingo. He also taught. In the school that dominates the slope of the Jacinto de la Concha Street, in Santo Domingo, Viau Renaud was hit by a grenade fired by the invading troops. No one will ever forget, claimed Lockward Artilles, that with the 15th of June attack the invaders earned the hatred of the whole island.

However, it was not the only case of a poet killed in battle, where bullets were stronger than words. In another invasion, at another time (that of the pirate Francis Drake in 1586), but in the same city of Santo Domingo, the first poet *criollo*, Francisco Tostado de la Peña, was killed. Pereyra describes it emphatically:

El hidalgo se halla detenido ante la puerta del Arzobispado cuando truena un cañonazo y le abre el pecho...El erudito trovador deja de respirar en el acto...Cerca del mediodía se sabe en la ciudad que ha sido víctima de los corsarios el sesudo, docto y parsimonioso Tostado de la Peña, hacedor de rimas nacido en Santo Domingo (Pereyra, 2012, pp. 52-53).

The incident took place on *Calle Las Damas* (opposite the house of Rodrigo de Bastidas), in January 1586, although the exact day is not known. According to Collado (2013), Tostado de la Peña, author of the first sonnet known in American history, was the son of Francisco Tostado, clerk in 1514, who had come to the island in 1502 with Nicolas de Ovando, and was one of the first to own a sugar mill in the New World. Francisco was a lawyer and taught at the University of Santiago de la Paz. His date of birth is unknown, but he wrote a sonnet dedicated to Eugenio de Salazar upon his arrival in the city of Santo Domingo in December 1573. Salazar lived on the island from 1573 to 1580, and in his work *Silva de poesía*, published by fragments by Bartolomé José Gallardo in his *Ensayo de una biblioteca de libros raros y curiosos* (1889), are collected valuable data on the intellectual life of Santo Domingo during the 19th century. Tostado de la Peña's sonnet appears in that compilation of Salazar: *Vuestra venida, tanto deseada, / A todos a causado gran*

contento; / Según es vuestra fama celebrada; / Y esperan que de oy más irá en aumento / Esta famosa isla tan nombrada, / Pues daros mereció silla y asiento (Collado, 2013, pp. 121-123).

Nevertheless, poetry continued its way and became stronger over time, stronger than bullets. The poets of the *Generación del 60* knew it and Jacques Viau Renaud confirmed it; he knew that the fight against the invaders started before them and will not end with them: *Cumplimos una jornada que empezó antes que nosotros / y que no concluirá con nosotros... / Habrá que buscar al fabricante de la muerte. / Habrá que golpear aunque sea sin manos. / Gritar aunque sea sin voz contra los que difunden (el llanto)* (*Permanencia del llanto*, pp. 23-25). They were just a few poets, but as García Cuevas (1998) indicates, so were the *Trinitarios* and they achieved the independence of a whole country, which at that time was also invaded by a foreign force.

Was Jacques Viau Renaud's death in vain? Morrison (2014) insists that it was a conscious decision. For Viau Renaud it was clear that he was a fighter who wrote poetry, not the other way round. He assumed his role as a combatant. Then he was a victim of the evil of war: oblivion. Still, a small group remember and pay tribute to him each year, although increasingly the number is reduced. Nonetheless, *Permanencia del llanto*, insists Morrison, may as well be *Permanencia de la poesía*, because it is a work that achieved the right aesthetic levels to remain in time. It is 50 years since it was written and it maintains its quality, freshness, elements that make it a truly artistic work. Its value not only lies in what it says, but how well it says it (*ibid*).

Regarding Incháustegui Cabral's view, that poets should not support transitional issues, the question is settled since an invasion is not transient, as their consequences would definitely alter the future, and poetry could be a weapon as powerful as a rifle, as was demonstrated, for instance, by the poets who put their verses in the service of the Republican cause in the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). That war is an example of how a non-literary event can affect so directly and strongly the literature and culture of a country, as it generated, on the one hand, an overflowing creation,

especially of poetry, during the nearly three years that it lasted, and on the other, led to the exile of thousands of Spanish intellectuals, many of whom went to Mexico, for example, to continue with their writing or discover themselves as writers (Guzmán Muñoz, 2005). The solidarity of the poets with the Republican army often came to the front, where trucks with loudspeaker recited poems were heard by soldiers. For some, Miguel Hernández was the best and most authentic war poet, who lived every moment of his verses: *Mujer, mujer te quiero cercado por las balas / ansiado por el plomo* (ibid). As Pablo Neruda would claim upon receiving the Nobel Prize for Literature, his duties as a poet not only showed him the fraternity with a rose and symmetry, with exalted love and endless nostalgia, but also with harsh human tasks that he incorporated into his poetry (Neruda, 1971).

Miguel Hernández was adamant about the poet's task during war: fight for justice, for the overcoming of chaos, encouraging action in moments of discouragement, inflame and lift the spirits. This means that all theatre, all poetry, all art, must be, now more than ever, a weapon of war (Guzmán Muñoz, 2005, p. 14). For Mateo also, given the nature of the historical process of the 1960s in the Dominican Republic, it was absolutely impossible for the artistic discourse to not assume a role as a weapon of struggle (in García Cuevas, 1998, p. 9).

There is something blunt about poetry that makes people identify with it at times like this. Many of those poems were composed to be recited in the trenches, on the radio, or to be disclosed in the publications of the front. For Dominican poets, the intensity of motivation was social, political, economic, national and cultural, and it was this tension and force that was projected onto the lyrical creation of most of these poets and, therefore, they were committed poets, protesters, revolutionaries and promoters of structural changes of political, social, economic, cultural and moral aspects (Baeza Flores, 1983, p. 76). In the words of Jorge Semprún, of all forms of literature, poetry is the most suitable in order to capture -and sometimes to push- social changes (cited by Baeza Flores, ibid). In this regard, the poets of 1965 wrote poetry because there was a

psychological, vocational and biological reason, because they could not stop writing, and many of those poets impregnated their poetry with social political content (ibid, p. 79). Poets wrote and read their new poems before the crowds. No doubt war, any war, but especially an invasion, fosters a special bond between people and poets. It may be evoked in the testimony of a soldier of the Spanish Civil War, who recalled in his memoirs that in a spontaneous rally after air raids in a village, in April, 1937:

...alguien pidió que, como final, se recitase una poesía de Garfias, una sola, pues, decía, el auditorio está formado en su mayoría por campesinos que no entienden “mucho de esas cosas” y no hay que cansarlos. Pero fue tal el entusiasmo que levantó la poesía que el público pidió otra, y otra...Nuestra guerra puede atestiguar el enorme poder movilizador de voluntades, esfuerzos y heroísmos que tiene la poesía (Guzmán Muñoz, 2005).

Alcántara Almánzar called the literature produced during the invasion of 1965 *literatura del estallido* (literature of explosion), whose characteristics include aggressiveness, commitment to political circumstance, spontaneity, chronic character and ability to describe bloody events, (Alcántara Almánzar, 1990, p. 138) which are notorious in the following verses:

“Sobre el dolor dominicano pesa / tu bota miserable” (Sócrates Barinas Coiscou)

“Matan nuestras madres / y el mundo gime pateado en los ovarios” (Miguel Alfonseca)

“Yo le pondré en las manos / un ramo de rosas de sangre / y de lágrimas sucias...” (René del Risco)

In the above examples, a word is worth a thousand images, when the shoe does not serve to protect the feet but to step on foreign soil and mistreat the people; and nothing worse than a mother's death at the hands of soldiers, in whose hands blood roses wither. It is clear that Dominican poets faced the conflict provoked by the invasion from their various personal perspectives, but one common aspect was the rejection of the invasion. With the literature of the second U.S. invasion, the political division of the two sides gave the Dominican writers the

opportunity for catharsis, considering the historical moment (Alcántara Almánzar, 1990). However, many did not learn the lesson:

“Los escritores, con mayor razón que los demás ciudadanos, habitan discursos y, si no aprenden a morir y a renacer con ellos, no han aprendido nada. Muchos no aprendieron nada, pese a que toda una generación estaba allí, presa entre los muros ideológicos y el viento frío, que es la más preclara, eficiente y perdurable imagen de la literatura dominicana” (Sánchez, 1993, p. 324).

Nonetheless, everyone was there, it might be concluded, in one way or another, as artists, and the poets with them, who chose to participate in the fight against the invader, had agreed to use their artistic weapons, their words, as a weapon of struggle, as Grey Coiscou, poet and soldier, indicated:

“Hay muchos más, que también dejaban, por momentos, el fusil para inventar cómo distraer la tropa, porque esa era la ideología de toda esa presencia artística...; además, de decir, como dice Iván, presente, para que los americanos, los yanquis, el yanqui invasor, supiera que estábamos allí de pie, y no estábamos dispuestos a abandonar nuestro sitio, como dice un verso de la obra de Casona en Nuestra Natasha: Yo soy como ese soldado que, aun muerto de pie, no abandona su puesto en el combate.” (Coiscou, 2009, pp. 327-328)

The poets of the 1960s wrote from the hotbed of history, argues Alvarez (2008), and wrote and lived with the fury of the present. In the walled city besieged by U.S. troops, the poets took up the rifle in one hand and in the other the pen. Poets, playwrights, storytellers and artists, grouped in the Cultural Front, transformed the barricades and parks into spaces for art and poetry. So it was the poetry of the barricades, dramatic and testimonial, born from the urgencies of war. The fact is that the invasion of 1965 not only changed the course of history, but also the way of Dominican art and literature. Alvarez wonders if the fruits of the first batch of the generation of the 1960s would have been the same, so ill-fated, if there had been no war (Alvarez, 2008, p. 267).

The reality is that intellectuals, like others, are marked by the era in which they live. The poets of the 1960s were preceded by half a century of strong tradition, in which the Dominican lyric approached modernity and accidentally discovered a national identity. Before them, the so called *Postumistas* had explored the Dominican space as a poetic possibility and Moreno Jimenes,

specifically, resolved the poetic conflicts with pantheistic mystical solutions, giving his work an unsuspected depth. The members of the *Poesía Sorprendida* struggled to open up to the universal and independent poets of the 1940s wrote poetry torn over the socioeconomic conditions. Then there were the poets of the 1948, who sought to synthesise the previous poetic currents. Accordingly, the poets of the 1960s assimilated especially social emphasis, which they would bequeath to future promotions. Through them, the social consciousness of some independent poets would rule Dominican poetry for half a century. Under the epochal euphoria and the tragic situation involving a foreign invasion, it is not surprising that a representative of the new writers, poets and artists took part in the war of 1965. They were young, between eighteen and thirty years old, and shared the idea of socially committed art and the idea of freedom and popular justice, opposing Trujillo's tyranny and the foreign invasion. If poets opposed the dictatorship, it is not surprising that they manifested against the U.S. invasion so dramatically and in so large a number, men and women. The representatives of the women of that generation were Grey Coiscou, Jeannette Miller, María Elena Muñoz and Rosita and Rina Suazo (later others will join), although they called themselves and were called poets (not using the feminine word *poetisas*) a voice that was a legacy of *La Poesía Sorprendida*, which in turn was probably inherited from French primitive liberationists and egalitarian ideas, to be applied in honour of Cartagena Portalatín. Some of these poets (like Alfonseca, Del Risco, Conde and Lockward Artiles) were imprisoned during the dictatorship, some were detained and questioned, and others had to leave 'Trujillo City' and take shelter in distant places to avoid detention. However, all were active in the cause of freedom, which was translated into a radical *antitrujillismo*, pure, naive and reckless. The members of that generation, who conceived art as a whole in its integrating branches, were engaged in such diverse areas as never happened before in Dominican history, and so, there can be found among them painters, poets, playwrights, art critics, actors of plays, orators, and musicians. Later they would be dispersed and never again be as close as when they faced the invasion of 1965.

As Morrison states, hundreds of poems were written after that event, but the majority disappeared because they did not have literary consistency, “*se convirtieron en un simple impulso que se concretó en unas simples palabras*” (Morrison, 2007, p. 366). Nonetheless, others poems, of permanent literary value, remained, as that of René del Risco ‘*Oda gris por el soldado invasor*’: *Venido de la noche, / quizás de lo más negro de la noche, / un hombre con pupilas de piedra calcinada / anda por las orillas de la noche.../* A poem that caught the dual meaning of that specific conflict in the image of ‘invader soldier,’ as not only is the ode addressed to a soldier, who represents war, but to an ‘invader’, who represents the most hated by the population.

Morrison recognises that those poems were a weapon to describe the struggle between brothers, but despite the beauty of those texts, he would rather not use poetry as a weapon of fight, but as a source of love: *el amor que debe crecer en nuestra Patria, como un tributo a la verdadera justicia y a la paz* (Morrison, 2007, p. 369). What remains is that, during that extraordinary event, perhaps the most significant in the Dominican literary history of the 20th century, poets, alongside all other artists and intellectuals, definitely made a commitment to fight against the injustice of an invasion, and they left their verses to give testimony of what happened, as Jacques Viau Renaud did:

*Por los que nada vieron ni oyeron.
 Quién ha dicho que puede cruzar el pantano sin enlodarse,
 Que se puede cambiar bajo la lluvia sin mojarse?
 Quién ha dicho que nada se compromete con no ver y no
 (escuchar?)
 Que nadie alegue ignorancia.
 El hombre estuvo a nuestro lado con su grito a cuestas.
 Los que no vieron que padezcan por no haber visto.
 Los que no escucharon que padezcan por no haber
 (escuchado)
 Los que no han padecido que padezcan por no haber
 (padecido).
 Adviene el tiempo de la siembra.
 Es preciso limpiar la tierra de cizaña.
 (Permanencia del llanto. p. 45)*

Ignorantia juris non excusat... or to put it in lighter Aristotelian terms, not knowing the law is not an excuse, yet the law of the obligation to fight for justice, according to Viau Renaud is the

obligation of every poet. That is why he dictates in the above poem that those who did not see should suffer for not seeing, which can be translated as a warning, for indifference before the pain of the invaded people will be punished by posterity. The reading of this poem leaves a stinging feeling that the poets of 1965 were committed individuals and, as an army, took part in the fight against the invaders with their verses as a powerful weapon. Actually what comes with these instances is to unearth the social role of poets, and writers in general, as a fundamental commitment to their work with the reality in which they live. The poets of 1965 used the weapon they had in their hands, metaphors like bullets, perfectly describing the discontent of the people and their rejection of the invasion, in those days when men signed the quatrains with their blood, as José Martí stated in 1893 in the prologue to the book *Los Poetas de la Guerra*, referring to the poems of the combatants of the War of Independence of Cuba. Their real literature was not in what they wrote, but in what they did: “*Rimaban mal, a veces; pero sólo pedantes y bribones se lo echarán en cara; porque morían bien*” (Martí, n.d.).

In conclusion, Viau Renaud added his poetry to the legion of artists who fought against the invasion in 1965 and their struggle played an important role in expressing the opposition of a large part of the population. Although most of the artists used their artistic talent, some of them were also on the front, such as Viau Renaud. Their actions were committed to the cause of justice, expressed either through their writing or in physical combat. The literature that emerged from that event reflects poetry's function of social compromise, as it served to raise consciousness and the necessity of protestation.

Conclusion

Invasions can never be good, as Cartagena Portalatín protests in her poem *Yania Tierra*. These military operations might become a first step to an occupation that can last years and are set, in one way or another, to change the course of natural actions. However, as has been proven, invasions can also serve to awaken a sense of unity in those invaded and create a resistance that can be just as strong. Ever since the first European invasion in 1492, that topic has been a recurring theme in local literature about the struggles of the Dominican people against the invading powers. The key is diversity, since resilience has come in various forms: from the struggles of the indigenous race to the inhabitants of the colony at the time of pirate attacks; from the residents of the Eastern part of the island who fought the Haitians and proclaimed the Republic, and from the peasant rebels, infamously called *Gavilleros* or bandits, who fought against the U.S. invaders at the beginning of the 20th century to the *Mariposas* who opposed the invader/dictator and the poets who offered their verses to fight the bullets of the U.S. officials in 1965.

Anacaona, the Taino Queen, can be considered the symbol of female resilience and *Anacaona*, the poem by Ureña (published in 1880), reflects the brutality of the invasion of the Conquistadors like no other. *Yania Tierra* then takes an air of modernism, but Cartagena Portalatín's poem shows that the land remains vulnerable at the hands of foreign invasions even in current times. These two celebrated poems teach that one of the most particular features of Dominican identity is their awareness of being constantly under threat of military invasion and therefore the people must gather together, especially the women, to release the birds of hope, as *Yania Tierra's* ending lines claim. Both poems reflect women's bravery as a symbol of Mother earth that protests against a vicious violation. Ureña and Cartagena Portalatín could not choose better exponent for the exposition of women's sacrifice than Anacaona, who could be taken as 'the initiator' of resistance, and then the graphic image of the Mirabal sisters, who sacrificed their lives for the cause.

Meanwhile, while the major works on Francis Drake in Great Britain set out to celebrate him as a great hero and most of them praise his brilliance in sailing the seas, this is in marked contrast to the discourse in the Dominican Republic, where he is regarded just as a pirate, who in 1586 invaded the city of Santo Domingo and demanded an important sum for its release. The true extent of Drake's invasion, its actual meaning for the future generations, was not only the ruin of the impoverished colony, but the cutback of the already low commercial activity on the island. This led to the smuggling of the Northern part, which in turn led to the Spanish authorities taking measures of the so called Osorio's devastations with its infamous consequences of the division of the island. Upon its publication in 2012, *El Grito del Tambor* by Pereyra became the first Dominican novel about the character of Francis Drake, and is a fictitious recreation of Drake's invasion, his stay of 30 days in Santo Domingo and the almost total destruction of the city by his men. The work presents Drake as an unscrupulous privateer, a religious fanatic, possessed by evil forces, thereby contributing to the mythological pirate image there is about this enigmatic figure. By accommodating the brutal invasion and looting of the city as the work of a madman, the main issue is that Pereyra moves away from Bosch's vision of this event as a political plan of the English empire, and prepares a legitimate scenario for the populist rhetoric, perpetuating the evil pirate interpretation established in Dominican discourse, and at the same time relating him to the legendary character of romantic stories.

In the years of the foundation of the Dominican nation, the framers of the fight against the Haitian invaders made use of theatre in order to communicate to the masses the ideas of emancipation. Theatre served its purposes well, as cultural activities were almost non-existent and it was available to scholars and the illiterate. Mostly *Trinitarios* represented Spanish dramas about people's struggles for freedom from an oppressive government, like *Un día en el año 23* or *La viuda de Padilla*, selected by Duarte, who had brought them from Europe. The strategy of using theatre as a means of propaganda helped to stimulate the patriotism of Dominicans and, combined

with other activities of *Trinitarios*, culminated in the expulsion of the invaders and the proclamation of the Republic, on the 27th of February, 1844.

The role of official and popular culture in the politics of resistance against invasions in the Dominican Republic is most clear during the first invasion of the 20th century by the United States of America (1916-1924). Contrary to the period of Independence, where *Trinitarios* felt compelled to raise awareness among ordinary people of the urgency of fighting against the Haitian invaders, the Dominican people resisted the new invasion from broader political and social sectors with the highest creativity: guerrilla warfare, civic mass actions in the streets, congresses, sessions headed by women, mayors and youth; cultural and artistic events as the Patriotic Week and Tribute to the Flag; public statements signed by citizens of towns and villages; internationalist work of patriotic activists, diplomatic lobbying, manifestos and an intense work of intellectuals, which served as a means of expression of their discontent. Resistance was rich and diverse in all fields, but perhaps the struggle of the revolutionary peasants, wrongly named as *Gavilleros*, was the most unique, due to the abuses suffered by the rural community, dispossessed by the invaders.

The press at the time was the main scene of protest against the legal order imposed and complied fully with the role that the Independence fighters awarded the theatre when censorship kept them from using other ways. Novels that tell the stories of peasants before and during the invasion reflect the helplessness of that sector of the population (like *La vida no tiene nombre*, by Veloz Maggiolo, or *La Mañosa*, by Bosch) denouncing the abuses committed by the invaders, but also the stark fight that the *Gavilleros* opposed to them. The resistance movement among intellectuals showed a sense of patriotism, but the influence of conservative politicians was too powerful and their alliance with the invaders reigned at the end, leaving the doors open for the dictatorship that was about to come in the years ahead. Trujillo, the monster born from the womb of the U.S. invaders (as described in the play *Los Inventores del Monstruo*, by Castillo), momentarily silenced the literary voice, but it awoke after his physical disappearance, to tell the horrors of the ‘invader from within,’

and contributed to expose the details of that historical moment. Trujillo's rise to power in 1930 could be considered as one of the main consequences of the U.S. invasion of 1916 and his personality a recurring theme within all types of literary genres in Dominican discourse.

The dictatorial characteristics of Rafael Trujillo exposed in different fictional works show features that identify him with foreign invaders. There has been an explosion of novels that expose the dictatorial characteristics of Trujillo (like *El Masacre se pasa a pie*, *Sólo cenizas hallarás*, *Musiquito*, *El Personero*, *La Fiesta del Chivo*, *The Brief and Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*, *In the Time of the Butterflies*, etc.), from whose pages it can be concluded that the dictator came very close to the image of the invaders or even surpassed them, in his despotic personality, control over his subordinates and the existence of an apparatus of repression and espionage that allowed him to exercise power and keep the people under his iron determination.

Lastly, the poetry that emanated from the U.S. invasion of 1965 in the Dominican Republic was committed to struggle. Thus, the poets of Dominican youth were present in the contest with the dangerous weapon of their words, in order to raise awareness. Their actions indicate that poetry has never ceased to be political, because that is its challenge. Together with the poets, there were also other artists, who took part in the fight, grouped in the great *Comando Artístico y Cultural Constitucionalista*. Hundreds of poems were written and some of permanent literary value remained. During that extraordinary event, poets definitely made a commitment to fight against the injustice of an invasion, and they left their verses to give testimony of what happened, as Jacques Viau Renaud, the fallen Dominican-Haitian poet did in 1965 with his *Permanencia del Llanto*, where he warns that the obligation to fight for justice is the obligation of every poet. The image of Viau Renaud, who died at the hands of the invaders, serves as an expression of the collective resilience that has been reflected in Dominican literature from the resistance of Anacaona onwards.

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