

**Tentative Title of Dissertation:**

Imperial Occupation and Liberation in Santo Domingo, 1818 – 1844

**Abstract:**

At the outbreak of the Haitian Revolution in 1791, two colonies, one controlled by France known as Saint-Domingue and one controlled by Spain called Santo Domingo, divided the Caribbean island of Hispaniola. Over the next 30 years, the island of Hispaniola would witness the rise and fall of the French Revolution in the Caribbean, the emergence of the Haitian Republic, and desperate attempts by Spain to hold onto one of its last colonies in the New World. In 1822 the Haitian government led by President Jean-Pierre Boyer invaded, colonized, and ruled Spanish Santo Domingo from 1822 until 1844. My dissertation examines the intellectual and ideological responses to Haitian imperial expansion in Santo Domingo from 1818 to 1844. My larger research question asks: how did struggles of sovereignty between Spain and Haiti in mid-nineteenth-century Santo Domingo contribute to the independence of the Dominican Republic in 1844?

My project examines the imperial relations in the Caribbean and Atlantic world that left Santo Domingo vulnerable to a Haitian invasion and the larger cultural and ideological struggles that took place. It also considers how European powers understood these events and in their own manner made them possible. I will combine my analysis of imperial relations in the Caribbean with an examination of the local conditions in Santo Domingo under Haitian rule. It considers how Dominican historical actors understood, accepted, rejected, and used competing cultural discourses to show varying degrees of support and rejection for Haitian rule. These top-down and bottom-up approaches will enable me to contribute to multiple historiographies on race and nation in Latin America; Haiti and the Atlantic World; and the origins of nationalism in the Dominican Republic.