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Dominican-Haitian Racial and Ethnic Perceptions and Sentiments:

Mutual adaptations, mutual tensions, mutual anxieties

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Executive Summary

The current report was commissioned to investigate mutual perceptions and attitudes that exist between Dominicans and Haitians, with a particular focus on the border area. The context for the assignment was the concern among development professionals, created not only by negative media coverage, but also various human rights reports and academic studies, that a situation of such conflict exists between Haitians and Dominicans in the border area that bilateral collaboration will be difficult. A companion report to the current one deals with the specific conflicts. This report will deal with the opinions that Dominicans and Haitians expressed about each other during six weeks of interviewing in the months.

The first part of the report deals heavily with the topic of race. A comparison and contrast is given of Dominican and Haitian racial classification systems. The guiding conclusion is that there is more concern with racial differences in the Dominican Republic than in Haiti, but that these strictly racial concerns (which affect black Dominicans as well) are not a major driving force in the perceptions and sentiments which Dominicans have of Haitians.

The next two parts of the report deal with Dominican perceptions of Haitians and then with Haitian perceptions of Dominicans. In each of these sections I report on what members of each group had to say about the other group. A major pattern emerged by which Dominicans in general are much more aware of and concerned about Haitians than vice versa. Except for the Haitian migrant sector for Haitians living along the border and participating in cross-border market activities, most Haitians may never see a Dominican. Because of the Haitian presence in the Dominican Republic, however, virtually every Dominican sees Haitians, usually engaged in lower status economic activities. Dominican generalizations about Haitians are consequently much more abundant than Haitian generalizations about Dominicans. Quite tellingly, however, the comments made by Haitians actually living in the Dominican Republic, who are receiving free medical care at Dominican facilities, and whose undocumented children are nonetheless attending Dominican schools for free, tend to be more balanced than the statements made by Haitians in Haiti, who may have never heard a Dominican, but whose highly negative opinions of Dominicans are shaped by radio reports which intentionally try to dissuade Haitians from going to the Dominican Republic by depicting life there as a long string of unmitigated abuses against Haitians by Dominicans.

The final section of the report deals with the currently delicate question of the refusal of the Dominican government to grant citizenship rights to individuals with Haitian parentage. A particularly difficult case is that of the *arrayanos*, children with a Dominican father and a Haitian mother, raised totally bilingual by both parents, who are generally denied citizenship. If the mother is Dominican and the father Haitian, the child is given a Dominican birth certificate. If the mother is Haitian, however, the child remains stateless under current practice, unless the Dominican father recruits a Dominican female relative or friend to declare herself to be the mother of the child.

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Background

The author of the present report is a cultural anthropologist who has been working in Haiti and the Dominican Republic since the 1970's. The original objective of the research that underlies the present report was to "...identify the positive and negative preconceptions that Dominicans and Haitians have of each other that complicate binational relations and partnerships." The research was undertaken with a goal to facilitating cross-border collaboration and was founded on the following assumptions, stated in the contract.

Bad news is frequently reported more than good news. The International media, when reporting about interactions between and among Haitians and Dominicans, tend to focus on examples of "bad news". In recent years there has been a particularly strong tendency by the media to focus on expressions of hostility by Dominicans toward Haitians.

The situation of Haitians living in the Dominican Republic has for some time been an object of attention on the part of international human rights organizations. The institutional mission of human rights organizations is to discover and document abuses. This is a valid institutional mission. A hypothetical situation where there are 100 occasions on which Dominicans and Haitians interact, and there is hostility and abuse in five of those interactions, human rights reporters will focus on those five negative instances. This is their job. They are carrying out their mission.

However the result of this mission, when picked up by the media, will lead to exclusive or exaggerated reporting on negative interactions. This type of built in skewing has in fact been happening with respect to relations between Dominicans and Haitians, and has created a generalized image of hostile interactions between the two peoples the largely ignores the even more frequent occurrences of friendly interactions and positive attitudes that are easily visible whenever members of these two nations interact.

What is needed is a balanced study that documents the entire gamut of interactions and associated attitudes between Haitians and Dominicans. The media report bad news; human rights reports focus on abuses. A balanced study will certainly unearth bad news and abusive behaviors, but it would also place these phenomena in the broader context of the entire gamut of interactions and attitudes to be found among Haitians and Dominicans with respect to each other.

It is in this sense that the research was undertaken. A companion report to the present one focused on conflicts. The current report will organize the information that emerged concerning Dominican and Haitian perceptions of and attitudes toward "the Other". Images that a person or group has of others, however, are often constructed as a comparison and contrast to the image that one has of oneself. To give anthropological balance to the research, the report will therefore deal with the perceptions and attitudes that Dominicans and Haitians have not only toward each other, but also toward themselves.

The issue of “race” plays a prominent role in the published academic and human-rights discourse about Haitian / Dominican relations.

Methods

The methodology for this research was qualitative in character. I spent some six weeks travelling on the Haitian / Dominican border carrying out electronically recorded interviews in both Spanish and Creole. Some of the interviews were one-on-one interviews with “key informants”. Others were focus group interviews with socially homogeneous participants – e.g. Dominican market women, Haitian market women, Dominican fishermen, Haitian fishermen, etc. But again the course of events forces adaptations of methodology. Some of the most productive interviews were spontaneous roadside interviews or marketplace interviews. These were brief in duration and demanded a radical shortening and focusing in of the questions to be posed.

Before launching the research, I developed a work plan that included two separate interview schedules – one of them to study conflicts, and the other to probe group and intergroup perceptions, attitudes and sentiments. These were originally conceived of as two separate studies, but in the course of events they eventually merged into a single research project that would have as its “deliverable” two separate reports, one on conflicts and the present one on perceptions and attitudes.

It was generally possible to interview a particular group only once. I could not have two separate interviews – one on conflict, the other on perceptions. Nor was it practical to divide each interview into two airtight components. In the end an interview procedure was developed in which I made sure to pose questions that would on the one hand elicit information on Haitian/ Dominican intergroup relations (including but emphatically not restricted to conflicts) but on the other hand also elicit comments that would reveal attitudinal and perceptual patterns that each group held toward itself and to the other group.

Itinerary

The information in this report is based on two separate periods of fieldwork some six weeks of fieldwork in both the Dominican Republic and Haiti before the earthquake, and 9 days of fieldwork in the border area of Haiti after the earthquake.

The bulk of the fieldwork was carried out between Oct. 13 to Nov. 28 of 2009. The research began with initial interviewing in Santo Domingo, between Oct. 14th and Oct. 19th, with the staff of the Pan American Development Foundation, with Dominican officials, and with persons in the construction industry employing Haitians, and in Port-au-Prince in the offices of the Inter-American Development Bank and the Pan American Development Foundation. I was able to interview Haitians as well who had studied in Dominican Republic.

The remainder of the research was carried out in towns and villages on both sides of the border. To give the reader an idea of the broad geographical scope and qualitative nature of my research for this report, I will go into detail about the itinerary in an appendix. All interviews with Dominicans were conducted in Spanish. Interviews with Haitians were done in Creole.

Structure of the report

As so often happens, the research yielded enough information to produce a book rather than a report. I have tried to cover in this report certain core topics. Because it is a report based on field research, and has to be readable in a short period of time, in the name of space I have had to eliminate two elements that would be required in an academic publication. In the first place I will not include the “raw data” – i.e. the large number of direct quotes from informants, though many of them were colorful. In the second place I will forego a literature review or citations of the abundant literature that now exists about the Dominican / Haitian border.

The report will begin with a discussion of the racial dynamics that receive so much international attention and that are often presented as a determining factor in Haitian/Dominican relations. Racial factors emerged in this research as a totally secondary element in Haitian/Dominican relations. But the exaggerated attention often given to them in human rights reports and in several academic studies, and misuse of the epithets “racist” and “racism”, not as carefully defined analytic terms, but as loosely defined negative labels, creates the need for a balanced treatment of the topic.

Perceptions about race

Background

The prevalent theory about Haitian / Dominican relationships circulating in the international human rights community focuses on the issue of race. In the dominant narrative the tensions between Haitians and Dominicans derive from racial factors, namely, that Haitians are on the whole black skinned, Dominicans are mostly brown skinned, and Dominicans reject black skin and consequently reject Haitians. The tensions between Haitians and Dominicans are often analyzed within this racial-prejudice template. Dominican society is accused of racism, and Haitian migrants in the Dominican Republic are viewed as victims of this racism.

This racial interpretation of intergroup tensions conflicts with the evidence that emerged during the course of this research, I have interviewed Dominicans and Haitians on both sides of the border about the sources of the antagonisms that exist. Dominicans in certain communities had serious criticisms about Haitians. In not a single case was the issue of their color raised. Haitians also complained about mistreatment by Dominicans, particularly in the border marketplaces. With the exception of one Haitian male in the park of Dajabon, abusive behavior on the part of Dominicans was attributed by Haitians themselves to factors that had nothing to do with Haitian skin color. In other words, racial phenotype did not emerge as a major source of conflict between the two groups.

But because racial dynamics have been so important in both countries, and because there is a growing body of literature that makes race the central element in Haitian-Dominican relations, I explored the question of racial perceptions within both groups during the course of this research. I prepared a preliminary statement on the issue before the initiation of fieldwork¹ and verified the major

¹ Gerald Murray, “Lenguaje y raza en la frontera dominico-haitiana:

propositions of that piece in the course of this fieldwork. Several propositions were refined and occasionally corrected on the basis of the interviews during this research.

The fictitious character of racial boundaries.

Any discussion of race in Hispaniola has to begin with a clear statement as to the artificial, and to some degree fictitious, character of racial boundaries. In terms of the human species, earlier attempts to classify humans into the White Race, the Black Race, and the Yellow Race have long been debunked by anthropologists and other social scientists.² The phenotypical traits of skin color, hair type, and facial features that are commonly associated with different “races” vary independently. If one examines 100 persons in a French village, 100 persons in a Nigerian village, and 100 persons in a Chinese village, it seems obvious that there are three different races. But if one draws lines between the three villages and examines 100 people equally spaced along each line, the three clearly defined “races” will disappear as an optical illusion. There are no clear boundary lines. The distinct traits of skin, hair, and facial structure vary gradually along what are referred to as “clines”. The concept of clearly bounded races is a cultural fiction, an optical illusion that was created by the sudden contact of Europe with phenotypically different peoples in other parts of the world.

We will see below that in the Dominican Republic there are three “racial groups” recognized both popularly and officially (on a person’s *cédula*). We will also see that the divisions between the three groups are vague and can shift. They are culturally determined categories with only a loose connection to actual skin color.

To avoid misinterpretation, it must be emphasized that there is no denial here of the existence of physical differences between humans on different parts of the planet or between different subgroups of Haitians and Dominicans. Chinese differ physically from Nigerians and Europeans. To a lesser degree, Haitians differ physically from Dominicans. Differences in skin color, hair, and facial structure are clear. Phenotypical differences are real.

What is a fiction, however, is the existence of “races”, and of clearly defined racial boundaries. There are objective gradients of skin color and hair type; *but there are no races from a biological point of view*. Physical differences between individuals are real. Race in contrast is a social construct, a cultural invention, not a biological reality. And because race is a cultural fiction, racial boundaries will differ from one society to another.

I will nonetheless use the adjective “racial” in this report because it is used both inside and outside the island. I will use it as a less cumbersome synonym for the adjective “phenotypical”. But when I talk about “racial groups” or “racial composition” or “racial classification”, I am referring to culturally created groups that merge into one another on the basis of fluctuating social judgments, not to subgroups that are distinct in any objective biological sense.

Apuntes antropológicos”. En Haroldo Dilla, ed. “La Frontera Dominico-Haitiana”. Santo Domingo: La Fundación Panamericana para el Desarrollo y Fondo Multilateral de Inversiones. 2010. Pp. 241-282,

² Other analysts later created a fourth race, the “Red Race” to accommodate Native Americans of the Western Hemisphere.

Racial composition on Hispaniola: racially distinct populations

The racial evolution of the Dominican population

We can now apply these concepts to the island of Hispaniola. The aboriginal cultures and languages of Hispaniola were quickly wiped out in the wake of the European conquest that began in the late 15th century. Because of miscegenation between Spanish men and indigenous women, however, some residues of aboriginal phenotype still remain in the Dominican Republic. Recent genetic analysis has lent strength to the proposition that residues of the aboriginal gene pool can still be found in certain pockets within the Dominican Republic. However, the bulk of the Dominican population is correctly classified in international data sources as mulatto – a mixture of European and African.

What is rarely pointed out in the literature is that the Dominican Republic has the highest percentage of people of mixed African / European origin in the Americas and perhaps the world. In one often-used online source³ we learn that many countries in the Western hemisphere have whites, blacks, and mulattoes (in addition of course to the extant indigenous populations in many countries). Looking at other Caribbean islands, we see that the percentage of mulattoes in Cuba is 25%, in Puerto Rico 4%, in Jamaica 6%, in Barbados 6%, and in Haiti 5%. *The percentage of mixed Afro-European phenotype for the Dominican Republic is 73%*. It has a higher level of Afro-Caucasian racial integration even than “racially democratic” Brazil, which has 39% classified as mulattoes.

If one is skeptical of arbitrary racial classification, one need only go out onto the street and observe. Much more than Puerto Rico or Cuba, whose populations are predominantly white, or Jamaica and Barbados whose populations are predominantly black, the Dominican population is brown. And unlike many brown-skinned indigenous groups in other parts of the Americas, the brown skin of the Dominican population comes from a mixture of European and African.⁴ If objective racial mixture and racial intermarriage, rather than social or attitudinal criteria, are used as an indicator of racial integration, the Dominican Republic should receive an international prize. (As we shall see, however, this most highly integrated of all New World populations is currently being categorized as “racist” because of the conditions in which Haitian migrants live. We simply report this accusation here. We will call it into question it in a later section of the paper.)

What has produced this uniquely high percentage of Afro-Caucasian phenotypes? *Racially selective emigration* explains part of the answer. Even in the 16th century there was miscegenation, not only between white Spaniards and the few remaining aborigines, but also between Spaniard and African slave. The same happened, however, in Cuba and Puerto Rico as well, and even in Haiti, where a mulatto landowning class arose even in the colonial period. And yet the mixed group in these other territories is today a small minority. The high percentage of persons with brown skin in the Dominican Republic is therefore only partially attributable to intermarriage.

³ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>

⁴ The common use of the term “indian” to designate the majority brown-skin population has led many writers to claim that Dominicans are unaware of or in denial of the African element, that “they are pretending to be descendants of aborigines, not of Africans.” I will show below that this is incorrect, at least today.

Other factors were operative. In the colony of Santo Domingo a special process occurred when the focus of Spanish interest shifted to the silver and gold mines of Central and South America and when Havana, Cuba, became the administrative and commercial center of Spain's Caribbean colonies. The whites began leaving Hispaniola en masse, leaving behind any racially mixed descendants. But the major incidence of white flight from eastern Hispaniola came in the late 1700's, when Spain ceded its colony to France, whose slave system in Saint Domingue had recently been destroyed. This provoked a massive panic-driven exodus of the wealthier white sector of the population to Cuba and Venezuela, who took as many of their black slaves with them as they could. Those that stayed behind were the brown skinned, who quickly became the statistically dominant racial group on Eastern Hispaniola.⁵

This pattern has continued to the present day and has produced, as indicated above, the population whose percentage of mixed Afro-Caucasian genotype exceeds that of any other country in the Americas and perhaps in the world.⁶ The racial intermixture has not eliminated the anti-African racial biases which Dominicans inherited (along with Cubans and Puerto Ricans) from the colonial past. But it has produced in most social classes a dethronement of the esthetic norm that places the highest value on Caucasian phenotype. As will be shown below, it is the brown-skinned "india sabrosa" who is now the popular esthetic ideal of feminine beauty.

Racial evolution of the Haitian population.

The evolution of the Creole-speaking population on Western Hispaniola was quite different from what occurred in the Spanish colony. French buccaneers and, later, French colonists and administrators, entered a section of the island that had been purposefully depopulated by a Spanish governor, who forcibly removed all the Spanish colonists on Western Hispaniola to newly established townships in the east to put a halt to their contraband trade with non-Spaniards. This population remained predominantly white during a brief period when tobacco was the principal export crop. But the advent of sugar cane triggered off a massive importation of African slaves. By the time of the famous slave revolt in 1791, it is estimated that there were half a million slaves serving some 50,000 owners, most of them white, some of them mulatto (principally in the Southern Peninsula). The whites fled the island. Those that remained were killed by Dessalines. The politically strong but numerically weak mulatto sector always remained a small demographic minority. The result was a population in which the African phenotypical component dominated, with little European admixture.

As we shall see, this African population was not physically homogeneous. There was a slight mixture with Europeans. But there were also skin color differences even within the African group, some being slightly lighter skinned than others, differences which can still be seen in rural Haiti today. But whereas

⁵ Moya Pons, Frank (2008) *La Otra Historia Dominicana*. Santo Domingo: La Trinitaria

⁶ Frank Moya Pons (personal communication) has made the interesting observation that the population of Egypt and other North African Arab speaking countries may also be principally of mixed Afro-European origin.

the population of the Dominican Republic is predominantly mixed, the population of Haiti has been and remains predominantly African in phenotype.⁷

There has unquestionably been a history of conflict between these two racially distinct populations. The evidence from the six weeks of interviewing on which this study is based, however, indicates that the racial differences have little if anything to do with the historical antagonism of the past or the tensions of the present. To avoid misunderstanding, it should be noted that comments made during many interviews made it clear that members of each group perceive themselves as racially different from most members of the other group. Each population knows that in the aggregate it is racially different from the other. Furthermore there is a pattern of esthetic prejudices in the Dominican Republic by which African racial features are considered ugly and inferior. What is being stated here is simply that *these racial perceptions are not at the basis of the conflicts between Dominicans and Haitians*. There are perceptions and attitudes concerning non-racial factors which have provoked conflict. These findings, which run counter to much current conventional wisdom about the alleged racial factors which generate intergroup conflict, particularly on the part of Dominicans, will be discussed in more detail in a later section of the report.

A framework for analyzing racial perception

But because the question of race now looms so large, even in (or particularly in) the international community's judgments concerning Haitian / Dominican conflicts, the issue of race was one of the foci of this research. The preceding paragraphs dealt with objective racial composition. I will return now to the domain of perceptions. Perceptions depend on the categories of classification used by a culture. Racial perceptions and racial classifications often have little to do with color. In the bipartite American classification scheme, a light-skinned person with African antecedents will still be called Black – and be viewed spontaneously as black – despite his or her lighter complexion. In similar fashion both the Dominican Republic and Haiti have their own culturally specific racial classification schemes – quite different from each other – which exert a powerful impact on the way in which race is viewed.

I interviewed extensively on this matter during my fieldwork on both sides of the border. I will begin with the Dominican system of classification. There are three basic racial categories into which Dominicans place themselves and each other corresponding roughly to white, brown, and black sectors of the racial spectrum. In contrast, the Haitians interviewed in the course of this study, and in earlier research which I carried out, classify themselves into two skin-color groups. And these groups are not the mulatto / black distinction so frequently alluded to in the literature.

Before delving into the Haitian system, however, I will discuss the more complex Dominican system.

A thorough anthropological analysis of a racial system would entail five steps.

- (1) In studying a racial system, we first examine the local categories which a given culture recognizes, including the labels that are used.

⁷ The phrase "African in phenotype" is important. Culturally Haiti is very westernized in many of its core anthropological components, though African cultural survivals can be seen in the domain of popular religion.

- (2) We then analyze the attitudes and feelings that exist toward each of the categories. What do people in a given category feel about those in their own category and in the other categories.
- (3) We then examine the criteria by which people are placed in a category.
- (4) We then analyze differential behaviors – particularly discriminatory behaviors – which govern the interrelation between the different groups.
- (5) We then examine to see if the classifications themselves or the discriminatory behaviors are informal or are actually built into law.

A report of this size will not be able to dwell exhaustively on each domain. But I will apply this schema in its broad outlines first to the Dominican system and then to the Haitian system.

Dominican and Haitian racial categories and labels

The Dominican classification system.

Let us begin with the first element in any racial classification system, the labels that have evolved in each setting to categorize the different subgroups. The Dominicans interviewed recognize three categories, as stated above. Each of the categories has several different labels. The dominant categories, with their most common labels, are *blanco*, *indio*, and *negro*. (I will discuss below why Dominican mulattos call themselves “Indians”.)

Synonyms for white and black. The white and black categories have alternative labels that are used in different situations. In the Dominican Republic outsiders are often surprised that the color terms are used not only in describing people, but also in talking directly to them. In technical language, terms of reference can also be used as terms of address. This dual function, however, applies only to the black and white groups, but not to the intermediate brown-skin group. In addressing a stranger of the white or black category, it is permitted to use a modified racial term.

Rubio as synonym for blanco. A Dominican calling out to a white stranger may use the term *rubio*. Though a dictionary might define it as “blond”, in Dominican speech *rubio* by itself is a synonym for white skin. A person who calls out “Rubio, hágame el favor” is saying in effect, “Whitey, come here please. I have something to ask you.” This use of a racial term to address a stranger would be taboo in the United States, and viewed as an insult. In the Dominican Republic, in contrast, it is acceptable in more popular social classes. At any rate a Dominican would not generally address a white stranger as *blanco*, but would use the alternative term *rubio*.

Moreno and prieto as synonyms for negro. The equivalent term of address when referring to a black person is *moreno*. In other Spanish speaking countries the term refers either to brown hair or brown skin. But in the Dominican Republic it is a polite synonym for *negro*. As I will discuss below the term *negro* has denigrating social implications and will not be used in polite company, particularly if a black skinned person is present. Unlike *rubio*, which when used as a synonym of *blanco* is generally used as a term of address, the term *negro* is so offensive that the substitute *moreno* will be used even as a term of 3rd person reference. To say that a light skinned woman married a black man, one would usually say “se casó con un hombre moreno”. To say “Se casó

con un negro” would imply a criticism. There is a third term for black, which is *prieto*. This term is also a synonym for *negro*, less offensive than *negro* but less polite than *moreno*.

Terminology for the brown skinned. Unlike the white and black categories, there are no commonly used synonyms for the intermediate color term *indio*. There is, however, common recognition of two gradations of brown skin that are labeled respectively *indio claro* and *indio oscuro*, referring to lighter or darker skin. There are other terms for brown skinned which Dominicans recognize but would rarely use in speech. The term *mulato*, which is the technically correct term for a person of mixed Caucasian – African ancestry, and whose meaning Dominicans recognize, is rarely if ever used in common Dominican speech. . There used to be another common term for brown skinned, *pardo*. As we will see it is Trujillo who eliminated the terms *pardo* and *mulato* and instead imposed the term *indio*, via the I.D. card (cédula) which he made mandatory, as the official term for brown skinned people.⁸

Unlike the terms “*rubio*” and “*moreno*”, which are also used as terms of address, I have no recorded instances of anybody addressing somebody with the term “*indio*”.⁹ Furthermore the term *indio*, at least in the masculine form, is rarely used as a noun, but most frequently as an adjective modifying the noun *color*. To say “She married a brown skinned man”, one would not normally say “se casó con un indio.” That would imply that she married an Indian, an aborigine. The more common expression would be “Se casó con un hombre de color indio.”¹⁰

Abandonment of Spanish colonial classificatory system. A final comment is in order on Dominican racial labels: they have totally abandoned the system which the Spaniards introduced in the colonial period. In their obsession with *pureza de sangre* -- the purity of one’s “blood line” -- the Spaniards introduced a complex system of racial labels to determine the precise degree of contamination with impure blood (originally Jewish blood, but eventually African and Amerindian blood). This system has completely disappeared from the racial terminology of the Dominican Republic.

The Haitian classification system.

Mulatto obsession with gradations. A similar comment can be made about Haitian racial terms. The mulatto elite of Port-au-Prince, also concerned with racial purity, developed a parallel system of complex labels (*marabou*, *griffon*, and others) to distinguish among Haitians of slightly different skin colors and hair types. These terms have not disappeared as completely as the above-mentioned Spanish terms; one still hears Creole songs about the beautiful female *marabou*. But I found absolutely no

⁸ In Cuba *mulato* is the most common designator of the intermediate group even in popular speech, but is somewhat taboo in ordinary Dominican speech. In Puerto Rico the most commonly used designator of the intermediate group which I have heard is *trigueño*, “wheat colored”. As with the terms *mulato* and *pardo*, it is understood but rarely used by Dominicans.

⁹ These generalizations do not hold in the case of nicknames. If a woman’s nickname is *India*, then she will be addressed as *india*. Likewise a man whose nickname is *Negro* or *Negrito* will be addressed with that term, though it would be an insult to address a stranger that way.

¹⁰ In the feminine, *india* can be used as a noun. There are subtle rules of acceptable use of color terms which Dominicans master as part of their socialization, but which are difficult for an outsider to grasp in their details.

evidence in my interviews, either the present research or research carried out in the past, that these terms are part of the active racial classification system functioning in rural Haiti.

Milat (“mulatto”) is not a color term in Haitian Creole. I was furthermore surprised to learn during this research that several longstanding assumptions even about the Creole world *milat* (mulatto) are anthropologically incorrect. It is generally assumed that *milat*, just as the Spanish term *mulato*, refers to Haitians of brown skin, rather than black or white. In Creole, however, the term *milat* has a different meaning. The slave-owning *gens de couleur* (“colored people”) who appear in books about the colonial period were of mixed parentage, with a French father and an African or Afro-Caucasian mother. As for later generations, in which both parents are Haitians of lighter skin, offspring who also have lighter skin will be called mulattoes by non-Haitians. Mulatto is used outside of Haiti as a designation for people whose brown skin is known to be a combination of African and European ancestry. This may be the meaning of the term “mulatto” in the outside world and even in the vocabulary of educated French-speaking Haitians.

It is emphatically not the meaning of the term as used in the many villages that I visited during this research project. For the villagers whom I interviewed on the matter, a *milat* is a Haitian who has one known non-Haitian parent (or perhaps grandparent as well). Even a person with Caucasian complexion known to have one Haitian and one foreign parent will be called a *milat*. In popular speech the term refers not to skin color, but to mixed parentage.

Skin color is dichotomized in Haiti: black vs. red. So what then is the label for Haitians of lighter complexion – and there are many? In terms of their classification of skin color, Haitian villagers interviewed distinguished between two major categories (not three, as in the Dominican Republic). Dark skinned Haitians are said to have *po nwa* (black skin).¹¹ But the many brown-skinned Haitians that are found throughout Haiti are said to have *po wouj* (red skin). The operative distinction for classifying people of different colors is not black / mulatto but rather black / red. And *wouj* is *not* a synonym for *milat*. As stated above, *milat* has another meaning.

Merging of Caucasians and the mixed group. What is anthropologically fascinating is that persons who would be called “white” in American or Dominican terminology are classified by Haitians in the same category as brown-skinned persons that are the category of “red skin”. They are not, however, “mulattoes” in the rural Creole sense of the term. In short Haitian popular classifications divide skin color simply into black and non-black, the latter being called red. Any skin that is not black will be called “red” – even the skin of Caucasian foreigners. (The commonly heard word *blan* does not refer to a foreigner’s skin color, but to his or her status as a non-Haitian. This will be discussed below.)

The opposite of the American classification system. This is a reversed mirror image of the Afro-Caucasian classification system that still prevails in the U.S. – a de-facto distinction between white skin and non-white skin. In the U.S. people of Afro-European descent with brown skin are classified in the same group as those with black skin; i.e. they are Blacks. (In the U.S. a mulatto is a sub-category of

¹¹ I have heard the term *nwè* used as well to refer to extremely black skin. It is best understood, however, not as a separate category, but as a subtype of *nwa*.

Black.) In Haiti, in contrast, people of brown skin are classified in the same category as people of white skin. Both have “red” skin.

Comparing three systems of color classification. We can compare three different systems. The American system takes a brown skinned person and merges him into the black category. The Haitian system would also merge, but the brown skinned person would be classified in the same “red skin” category as whites. In the Dominican Republic he would be in the intermediate category which is different from both blacks and whites. Thus the same person – President Obama, for example, with an African father and a white American mother -- is black in the U.S., is red-colored in Haiti and lumped with whites, and would turn into an Indian in the Dominican Republic. His wife Michelle would be black in all three settings. This is a dramatic example of the proposition that race is not an objective biological category but a series of culture specific conventions, that differ from culture to culture, and that are only loosely related to skin color.

Labels determine perception. These color labels used by both Haitians and Dominicans exert impressive power over perception itself. People really see the world in terms of the labels with their language and culture provide. Some languages divide the light spectrum into only two or three colors. People socialized into those languages have a difficult time in perceiving the difference, say, between red and orange, because their language does not provide them with the labels. They are both minor variants of the “same color”. So also with skin color. Brown-skinned Americans of Afro-European descent truly perceive themselves to be “black”. Haitians in contrast genuinely perceive that the skin color of Haitians with “red” skin is “the same” as that of Caucasians, who also have “red” skin. I questioned an elderly village woman, who had lived for many years in the Dominican Republic, about the skin color of most Dominicans. She answered: *pi fò panyol yo genyen mem koulè wouj avè-ou, Jeral.* (Most Dominicans have the same red skin color as you do, Gerald.) My own phenotype is Caucasian. Most Dominicans, however, have brown skin and in times past were classified with American blacks when they migrated to the U.S. But in the Haitian classification system the brown skinned are merged, not with blacks, but with whites. Both systems dichotomize and merge. But whereas in the U.S. the distinction is between white and non-white, in Haiti it is between black and non-black. The Dominican color scheme in contrast distinguishes three points on the spectrum. In the Dominican scheme a person in the intermediate brown skinned group is merged with neither whites nor blacks but is kept together in a different group.

Special labels that Haitians have for Dominicans and Dominicans have for Haitians

Certain color terms used for ethnicity rather than race. I found during my interviewing that, perhaps as a result of their special historical interrelationships, each of the two countries has developed special labels for citizens of the other country. On both sides of the border I encountered an anthropologically interesting pattern by which certain color terms lose their color component and instead take on a purely ethnic meaning.

Dominicans placed in a special category. I will begin with the Haitian linguistic treatment of foreigners in general and of Dominicans in particular. Foreigners in general are lumped together by Haitians into one label. Dominicans, however, are placed by Haitians in a separate category that applies to no other group of humans. This lumping is quite different from the above-discussed lumping by skin color. The

distinction to be discussed here is not between black and non-black, but between Haitian and non-Haitian.

Blan as foreigner not white. It is well known in Haitianist circles that the French word *blanc* has been imported into Haitian Creole (where it is now spelled *blan*) but has taken on a meaning that no longer refers to a color. In Haitian Creole a *blan* is a “foreigner” or “non-Haitian” of whatever color. Americans, Canadians, French, and most other foreigners are lumped by Haitians under the term *blan*. It is true that most of the countries whose citizens work in Haiti are Caucasian in phenotype. However I have heard American Blacks being referred to by villagers as *blan nwa*. Though one is at first surprised at hearing reference to “black-skinned whites”, that is a mistranslation. In actually the villagers were saying “black-skinned foreigners”. As pointed out above, when talking about the skin color of Caucasians, Haitians do not say “po blan”. They say *po wouj*, red skin. A speaker who wishes to indicate the unusual whiteness of the skin may say *po blanch*. That is, the feminine form of the French word, *blanche*, has been adopted into Creole as the color term for “white”.

The word *neg*. But the French masculine form of the word *blanc* now means foreigner in Creole. It has shifted from being a reference to skin color and has morphed into a reference for group membership, to distinguish between Haitian and non-Haitian. In a similar semantic shift the French word *negre*, which derives from the Latin word for black but which during the French colonial period came to take on the meaning of “African slave”, has been incorporated into Haitian Creole as *neg*. But it now is a synonym for “Haitian”. “Se pa blan ou ye; se neg ou ye” would be mistranslated as “You are not white; you are black”. The actual meaning in ordinary Creole is “You’re not a foreigner; you’re a Haitian.”¹²

Historical background. To summarize: the ambiguous and often conflictive relationship between Haiti and the outside world – including the post-emancipation fear that Europeans would re-invade and re-enslave – has led to a strong perceptual emphasis among Haitians on “us” versus “them”, the non-Haitian outside world. This dichotomy is expressed through the words *blan* and *neg*, which, though originally color terms in French, have lost their strict color component and have now come instead to be ethnic / national designators.

The Dominican exception: *panyol*. There is one exception to this dichotomized classification: Dominicans and the Dominican Republic. The Haitians have a special category for Dominicans: *panyol*, from the French word *espagnol*, meaning Spaniard or Spanish. The term has been incorporated into Haitian Creole as a synonym for *dominiken*, Dominican. Both terms are heard in spoken Creole to refer to Dominicans, but the term *panyol* is more common and less formal. It is also semantically polyvalent. It can refer to the entire country: *m tal nan panyol* (I went to the Dominican Republic). It can refer to the language: *m pa konn pale panyol* (I don’t speak Spanish). But it also refers to Dominicans: *youn panyol ban-m djòb nan jaden-ni* (A Dominican hired me to work in his field). If a Haitian did labor for an American or Canadian or Frenchman, he worked for a *blan*. But if he worked for a Dominican, he worked for a *panyol*.

¹² The Creole word *neg* can also simply mean “guy” or “fellow”. A *gwo neg* is a “big guy” – i.e. a big shot with money or other types of power.

To summarize the preceding and to relate it to the dominant theme of the report, interethnic perceptions, it is interesting to note that Haitians place Dominicans in a somewhat unique category. They do not fall into the above-mentioned category of *blan*, “foreigner” the term that encapsulates most non-Haitians. This special linguistic treatment of Dominicans by Haitians is indicative of a special perceptual and attitudinal complex. Dominicans are technically “foreigners”, but a special subcategory of foreigners that in Haitian perceptions differ in effect from the rest of the world. How this works out in sentiments and behavior will be dealt with in later sections.

Dominican labels for Haitians. The standard Dominican term for Haitian is the Spanish word *haitiano*. In the southern border area of the Dominican Republic where part of this research was carried out, I encountered an unexpected linguistic maneuver among Dominicans with regard to Haitians which parallels the special Haitian linguistic treatment of Dominicans. A color term has been transformed into an ethnic term. In the border area from Puerto Escondido down to Pedernales, Dominicans redefine the two major terms for “black” (*negro*, *moreno*) and *make them refer to Haitians of any shade of color*. In those areas *negro*, and *moreno* have ceased being color terms and now designate an ethnic / national group. *Moreno* and *negro* have become synonyms for *haitiano*. Just as the term *blan* has been transformed in Haiti from designation a color to designating a group (“foreigner”), so also the term *moreno* in the southern border area of the Dominican Republic has ceased referring to black skin and now refers to Haitians. Most Haitians, of course, have black skin. But even brown skinned Haitians (who would be *indio* in the Dominican color scheme) are called *morenos* or even *negros*.

Disappearance of the “black” Dominican. Since this semantic shift has taken place, since the color term has been kidnapped for use as an ethnic term, it means that no Dominican in that part of the country, even those with black skin, will be called *negro* or *moreno*. The result is that they are by default automatically classified on their *cédula* as *indio*.

Regional differences. This association of the term *black* with Haitians occurs elsewhere in the Dominican Republic. But it does not have the exclusivity which I found in the Pedernales and Baoruco areas. That is, throughout most of the Dominican Republic there are Dominicans who are classified by fellow Dominicans as *negros*, or (more politely) *morenos*. But in the southern border area no Dominican, no matter what his or her color, would be called *negro* or *moreno*. To use these terms in those areas would be tantamount to classifying the person as Haitian.

The Pedernales *cédula* office. I interviewed the official in charge of issuing *cédulas* in Pedernales. He was open and emphatic on the point that no Dominican who comes into his office for a *cédula* gets classified as black. It would (in this area) imply that the person is a foreigner – i.e. a Haitian. In such an office in this part of the border there has been a shift from the tripartite color scheme that characterizes most of the Spanish Caribbean (white, brown, black) into a dichotomized scheme that distinguishes only between white and brown. Black skinned Dominicans are therefore lumped, along with brown skinned Dominicans, into the category of “Indian”. In common speech a black skinned person in this area would be called “*indio oscuro*” – a dark skinned Indian.

Ethnicity, not race. This pattern is often misinterpreted by outside observers as “proof” that Dominicans are denying their black skin and their African heritage. The accusation is misplaced. What has occurred has been the cooption of a color term for an ethnic term. Since Dominicans know quite well that they are not Haitians, they are simply resisting a label which incorrectly places them into the wrong ethnic category, in this case into an ethnic group that performs demeaning labor and has no official standing in the country. The black-skinned Dominican in this region who gets angry at being classified as *negro* or *moreno* is not rejecting his black skin, his “African roots”. *He is rejecting the ethnic misclassification, the implication that he is not Dominican, that he is Haitian.* He is saying in effect, quite correctly: “My skin may be black. But I am *not* a Haitian.”

Misinterpretation by outsiders. The outside world incorrectly imposes on this rejection a racial interpretative template. The rejection is actually driven by ethnic, national factors. Since *moreno* now is a synonym for *haitiano*, at least in this region, what is being hotly denied by black Dominicans is not that their skin color is black but that their origins and nationality are Haitian. . They are Dominicans. Their dark skin color does *not* make them Haitian. They are perfectly correct in their denial and justified in their objection. They should not be condescendingly labeled by outside observers as “racist”. It is the outside observer, untrained and unaware of local semantic dynamics, whose understanding in this matter is flawed.

Dominican / Haitian racial sentiments

In an earlier section I provided an analytic framework that listed five categories of phenomena to be discussed in any treatment of race. The preceding dealt only with the first, the system of classificatory labels. Let me now turn briefly to the second phenomenon, namely, the sentiments and value judgments that are attached to each of the labels. I will compare the patterns Dominican and Haitian sentiments to different racial groups that emerged during the interviews.

Internal Dominican racial attitudes

Negative valuation of blackness in post-colonial societies. Wherever Africans were slaves, the most visible features of African phenotype – black skin color, tightly coiled hair, broad noses, mandibular prognathism -- tend to be given negative social and esthetic value. The phenotype of the Caucasian masters, in contrast, is usually established as the esthetic norm. As we shall see, the negative esthetic evaluation of African phenotype persists even after the elimination of slavery and even when Caucasian skin, hair, and facial features cease to be the sole esthetic norm. The gradual weakening of Caucasophilia in no way guarantees the disappearance of Afrophobia.

Anti-African esthetic judgments in the Dominican Republic. The above pattern took hold in the Dominican Republic, just as it took hold in Cuba and Puerto Rico. Black skin in all three settings considered a stigma. As we have seen above, a euphemism has arisen by which blacks are courteously and commonly labeled as *morenos*, a term which in Spain refers to people with brown skin. But in the Dominican Republic and Cuba the term *moreno* has been sequestered, so to speak, from its original meaning and in common speech is now used exclusively as a polite way of saying *negro*. The fact that a euphemism is needed constitutes in itself evidence of the negative judgment accorded to black skin and its associated capillary and facial features.

The question of “bad hair”. The tightly coiled hair of Africans is referred to as “bad hair” *pelo malo*, whereas the straight hair of Caucasians is called good hair. The term “bad hair” is also found in the English speaking world; it is heard among American blacks to refer to their natural hair. The “badness” of African hair is remedied, in the Dominican Republic as well as in the U.S.A., by a variety of hair straightening techniques. Earlier mechanical techniques involving heat and iron tools have been replaced by chemical techniques.

“Bad” as in “hard to manage”. We must exercise linguistic caution before jumping to offended conclusions about racism in the use of this phrase. When hair is called *pelo malo*, it obviously does not mean “bad” in any moral sense. The prime reference of the judgment may not even be the esthetic appearance of the hair, but rather its ease of manageability. Some of my interviews indicate that it may simply refer to hair that is “bad” to manage, hard to deal with. The amount of time that an Afro-Dominican woman has to spend fixing her hair, or that of her children or grandchildren, is objectively much greater than that of a Caucasian woman. It is customary to decry the racism underlying the phrase “bad hair”. A Caucasian woman with tight curly hair, however, is also said to have “bad hair”. Though the term is indeed inherently offensive and one should not pretend that it is neutral or objective, it is not clear that it is always racist. At any rate most Dominicans, with their high level of racial intermixture, have racially hybrid hair that does not qualify as “good hair”. They joke about their own “bad hair” and Dominican women deal with it in their weekly visits to the hair salon.

Male vs. female hair norms. African hair, if it is cut short, is accepted in Dominican men; the percentage of Dominican men that straighten their hair is minimal.¹³ But straight hair has become the esthetic norm among Dominican women. It is one of the major services performed by the tens of thousands of hair salons that have arisen around the Dominican Republic. Earlier research which I have carried out indicates that the statistical norm, even among poorer social classes, is for Dominican women to go at least once a week to the hair salon. Many go twice a week. They do not, of course, apply hair straightening chemicals every week. But they do pay the salon to wash and blow-dry and comb out their hair. These patterns were found to hold even in most of the distant border communities visited during this research on the Dominican side of the border.

Evolution of Dominican pigmentation norms. Interviews which I carried out during this research indicate that there has been an evolution of Dominican perceptions of beauty in two senses. In the first place Caucasian skin pigmentation is no longer required. A new feminine esthetic ideal has arisen in the Dominican Republic in which an attractive brown skinned woman can become, and has on more than one occasion become, Miss Dominican Republic. This would never have happened in the past. The use of skin whitening chemicals, so common in the recent past (e.g. 1950’s), has now virtually disappeared, as has the use of parasols to protect white female skin from the sun. Brown skin has become esthetically acceptable. Women do not, of course, “push their luck”. A vendor of suntan lotions would go bankrupt

¹³ It was common in times past for men with African hair to cover their heads at night with tight fitting female nylon stockings as a vehicle for softening and partially straightening the hair. This custom appears less common today.

in the Dominican Republic. Brown skin is acceptable, but not superior to the white skin of Europeans. But no longer is it viewed as inherently inferior.

Evolution of the “pelocracia”. A second element in the evolution of esthetic norms is the manner in which one’s hair texture has become more important than one’s skin color as the basic criterion of beauty. As one person put it, the Dominican Republic has gone from a *pigmentocracia* to a *pelocracia* – from the rule of skin color to the rule of hair texture. Interviews on the matter suggest that the major prayer a pregnant woman prays for her child is for the child to be born, not with light skin, but with “good hair”. If off-the-cuff esthetic judgments comparing two siblings are made in Dominican homes, the sibling with soft straight hair will be praised for his beauty, even if his skin is slightly darker than that of his sibling with tight curly hair.

Evolution of more benign esthetic norms. Once again, we must exert caution in decrying the supposed racism underlying this valuation of straight hair. By creating an emphasis on straight hair rather than white skin as the major criterion of female beauty, Dominican society has in effect transitioned into a more benign and “democratic” esthetic system in which even women of darker complexion can make themselves “beautiful” by manipulating their hair in weekly visits to the hair salon. One’s judgment on this matter depends on whether the glass is perceived as half full or half empty. The full cup would be a society in which a well kept Afro would be socially as acceptable as straightened hair. But since Michelle Obama, Condoleeza Rice, and Oprah Wintry continue to straighten their hair with few apparent guilt feelings about succumbing to “racist norms”, Dominican women should be allowed to straighten their hair in the corner hair salon without being accused of perpetuating racist norms. Recognizing that all cultures can change and that negative racial judgments can be discouraged, we must take for the moment as a historically generated given the region-wide antipathy to African phenotype. Dominican society has not eliminated that historically tenacious prejudice. But it has “opened up” an escape hatch, an esthetic option for women of all skin colors. The dark-skinned woman cannot lighten her skin, except by dangerous chemical means. But she can straighten her hair. Though usually critiqued as a symbol of racism, the emergence of a powerful straight-hair norm among Dominicans could just as well be seen, on the contrary, as a move toward esthetic democratization in a multi racial society. This is, of course, the half-filled cup. The currently strong Dominican “straight hair” beauty norm opens esthetic doors to women of all pigmentations in a way that the vanishing “white skin” ideal never did.

Somatic preferences. With respect to females, the brown skin of the *india* is now valued for its beauty if it is accompanied by straight (or straightened) hair, attractive facial features, and an abundant pelvic structure. Female obesity is emphatically not valued, but neither is the anorexic slimness that is the ideal in certain Euro-American circles. Listening to comments by Dominicans, an outside observer gets the impression (and I report it merely as an impression) that the obsession with female breast size that has engendered a breast implant industry in the U.S. is replaced in the Dominican Republic by greater interest on the part of males in the size of a woman’s sub-dorsal pelvic mass, at least in the non-elite social classes that constitute the majority of the Dominican population. The *piropos* (compliments directed to a woman) of the Dominican *tígueres* (lower class males whose behavior is not constrained by conventional social rules) on the street corner focus less on the woman’s pectoral endowment than on

her pelvic mass. Women of that social class will often wear tight jeans to display any advantages which they enjoy in that domain.

Sexual stereotypes. There are stereotypes in the Dominican Republic (which are found elsewhere as well) about the superior sexual performance of blacks, both male and female, over Caucasians or brown-skinned. Black women are viewed as more “caliente” – hot, sexually responsive – than non-blacks. And black men are viewed analogously not only as endowed with larger sex organs but also as more capable of prolonged satisfying sexual performance in bed. The negative esthetic judgment that attaches to African skin, hair, and facial features is counterbalanced by this positive valuation of the (imagined or real) superior sexual capacities of their bearers.

Improving the race. In terms of choosing a spouse, however, there is a collective preference among Dominicans to *mejorar la raza* (“to improve the race”) by marrying someone of lighter skin color, or at least not to damage the race by marrying someone of darker skin color. The academic accusation that this universally stated ideal indicates universal racism among Dominicans is ridiculous, since there could be no “improvement of the race” unless half of the race was willing to violate the norm by marrying someone of darker complexion.

Hair texture rather than skin color. The Dominicans whom I have interviewed on the matter express greater esthetic focus on the texture of a person’s hair than on precise pigmentation. Other things being equal (particularly economic status), a young woman with *pelo bueno*, naturally straight hair that needs no chemical intervention, will be seen as a more desirable potential spouse than a woman with *pelo malo*. I was told by a Dominican male: *No te cases con tu novia sin primero llevarla a la playa*. Don’t marry your girl friend until you’ve first taken her to the beach. The advice (made jokingly) indicates awareness that the majority of Dominican women do not have naturally straight hair but that the majority also artificially straighten their hair in the hair salons. A woman’s true hair texture becomes obvious under the impact of water. I also heard on several occasions the joking refrain that a mother will warn a son or daughter with “good hair” not to marry someone with “bad hair”. *Que no quiero jalar pelo malo en las nietas*. I don’t want to be yanking nappy tufts of hair in my granddaughters. Girls with African hair have to have it combed by their mother or grandmother with great exertions. These expressions of concern with the hair texture of offspring are much more frequent, at least today, than concerns with their precise pigmentation, which appears to have been more important in the past. The disappearance of skin-whitening procedures, and their replacement by improved hair-straightening technologies, is an indicator of this shift.

Economics as a determining factor. The rule to “improve the race” by strategic attention to the skin or hair of one’s potential mate is a fragile rule, a mere social guideline, that is frequently violated. Most violations are driven by economic calculations. The imperative to *mejorar la cuenta bancaria* – to improve one’s bank account – is much stronger than the imperative to improve the *raza*.

Gender asymmetry in racially mixed marriages. When I questioned several groups independently on the matter, I was told that it is much more common for a lighter skinned woman to marry a darker skinned man than vice versa. Though Dominican women are now occupationally active in all social

classes except perhaps the elite, where at least a minority may still stay at home, males typically earn more than females. There are many Dominican women who will not object to marriage with a darker skinned spouse who has a socially prestigious or at least acceptable profession. If the racial difference is very strong there may be parental caveats. But there is a great deal of “interracial marriage” in the Dominican Republic, if by that we mean marriage between individuals even of slightly different skin color.

Do Dominicans perceive themselves as Indian?

Origins of the term “Indian” as a substitute for mulato. A great deal of superficial nonsense is written in criticism of the Dominican custom of labeling mulattos as Indians. In discussing terminology I have already alluded to the facts that (1) the majority of the Dominican population is brown-skinned; (2) the brown skin is largely a result of the mixture of Africans and Europeans; and (3) the term for that intermediate racial group is “Indian”. Rafael Trujillo was the first Dominican president to make I.D. cards obligatory. The I.D. card to this day continues the custom of identifying the color of the person. Though Trujillo’s maternal grandmother was half Haitian and in the earliest years of his reign Trujillo was friendly toward Haiti, after his massacre of Haitians in 1937 a governmentally sponsored anti-Haitian campaign was launched. Part of that was the imposition of the word “indio” as a color designation on the official government *cédula* for the brown skinned group instead of *mulato*, which implied African descent. Prior to that time documents seem to indicate that the terms *mulato* and *pardo* were used.

The myth of racist anti-Haitian denial of African roots. It is the dominant position in the academic literature on race in the Dominican Republic that the continued use of the term “Indian” up until the present is a racist attempt on the part of Dominicans to distance themselves from Haitians by denying the African component of their origins under the pretense that they are descendants of the aboriginal Taino rather than of African slaves. I made a special point of testing this hypothesis during the present research by asking dozens of people about why they called themselves “indio”.

All but one person rejected the proposition of heavy indigenous ancestry. There was virtually total recognition by all Dominicans interviewed that their brown skin comes principally from a mixture of white and black, not from the aboriginal population. The one exception was a resident of San Juan de la Maguana who claimed that many Dominicans descended from the aboriginal Taino. But he made this claim as we were standing in a park at the entrance to the city dominated by a statue of a Taino Indian chief.

It is quite possible that during the life of Trujillo and shortly thereafter many Dominicans accepted the official government rhetoric that their brown skin derived from Taino ancestors.¹⁴ If that was the case then, it has long ago ceased being true. Trujillo and his intellectual camp followers, including his eventual successor Joaquin Balaguer, did not invest their energy in eulogizing indigenous culture. Their obsession was to elevate the Spanish, not the indigenous, component of Dominican culture.

¹⁴ The prolific Dominican historian Frank Moya Pons (personal communication) assured me that that is the case.

Ordinary Dominicans interviewed in villages and towns in different parts of the country, including the border areas and the capital, have been unanimous in debunking the concept of indigenous ancestry free of African elements. Some say that “We’re mixed; we have a little bit of this and a little bit of that (including African).” But the vast majority recognizes the Afro-Caucasian origin of their brown skin. I have found no Dominican at any level of society totally denying the majority African element in their brown-skinned population. The academic convention is to point out the use of the term *indio* and to accuse Dominicans of being racist adherents to a myth of indigenous ancestry. The opposite is the case. It is they who are the promoters of the “myth of Dominican denial”, which is simply part of the currently fashionable template that interprets (or rather misinterprets) Haitian / Dominican relations in a racial framework. The academics who make that claim are simply repeating what they have read. The virtually unanimous countervailing comments heard during this research lead one to wonder if those who accuse Dominicans of being make-believe Indians have ever interviewed ordinary Dominicans on the matter.

The question of racism

Epithetical character of the term “racism”. The preceding comments on my part can easily be misconstrued as a denial of the existence of racism in the Dominican Republic. That is not the case; there is racial prejudice in the Dominican Republic, and much of what I have written above gives evidence of that. An inherent problem with the term “racism”, however, is that it has ceased (in the academic or popular literature) to be a scientifically defined term. It is now used as a free-floating epithet to be tossed at individuals or groups for matters that have nothing to do with phenotypical judgments per se. A Dominican who says “Haitians are taking jobs away from Dominicans” will be accused of “racism” by some observers who are tolerant of imprecise language and have a penchant to substitute epithets for analysis. The above accusation about Haitians and jobs *is not a racial statement*. It is therefore not a direct indicator of racism. Haitians are being criticized for their behavior, not for their skin color or their genes.

Is there racism in the Dominican Republic against darker skinned Dominicans? If by racism we mean preference for a certain phenotype and / or prejudice against another phenotype, we can legitimately talk about racism in the Dominican Republic and, for that matter, in the entire Western Hemisphere. Dominican race-based esthetic preferences have been dealt with above. Black Dominicans live under the shadow of negative judgments about the beauty of their skin, hair, and facial features. The matter goes beyond perceptions and feelings into actual behavior. Though no racially based discriminatory policies were ever codified into Dominican law (as they were in the U.S. under “Jim Crow” laws and still are, at least locally, under racial quota-based affirmative action policies), there are de-facto race-based occupational and even recreational barriers that bar Dominicans of heavy African phenotype from access to certain venues, such as certain jobs that entail contact with the public and certain Santo Domingo discotheques. When Dominicans quite seriously and sincerely affirm that “there is no racism in our country”, they may be alluding to the absence of public laws that legally discriminate against dark skinned Dominicans. In this matter they are correct. But they are adopting a narrow definition of racism that looks only at racially based laws. In the realm of popular perceptions and sentiments, Dominicans have inherited and have maintained the same racial prejudices that characterize other sectors of the post-colonial world.

These esthetic prejudices, of course, and the behavioral barriers which they engender, apply as well to Haitians living in the Dominican Republic. But all of the special intergroup tensions between Dominicans and Haitians that emerged in the course of this research were generated by economic, ethnic, and / or other behavioral variables, *not by racial perceptions, racial differences or racial prejudice as correctly defined*. This complex matter of intergroup perceptions will be discussed in later sections of the report.

Internal Haitian racial attitudes.

The preceding has focused on Dominican racial sentiments and attitudes for two reasons. In the first place it is the racial attitudes of Dominicans toward Haitians that provoke most comment in human rights circles. Secondly much more research has been done on Dominican than on Haitian racial perceptions and sentiments. But as we have already seen, Haitians have their own classification system based on a popular dichotomization between black skin and red skin. I will now discuss the sentiments (or rather the relative weakness of the sentiments) that attach to these differences.

Slight esthetic preference for lighter skin. Even in rural Haiti one encounters a slight esthetic preference for lighter skin of the “wouj” variety than darker skin of the “nwa” dichotomy. Indeed when someone is described as being *nwè*, the sub-category of *nwa* that means exceptionally black, the description is not complimentary. I have heard expressions in rural Haiti that praise the *bel po wouj* (the beautiful red skin) of this or that individual.

Marginal importance of lighter skin. Though there is a slight esthetic preference for lighter skin, the preference does not appear to carry the social weight that it carries among Dominicans. The Haitian skin preference appears analogous to the traditional American preference for blond hair. It will not be a major criterion, for example, in choosing a spouse.

Importance of explicit economic criteria. In rural Haiti, as the saying goes, red skin and ten cents will get you a cup of coffee. Rural Haitian women are quite blunt about the economic criteria that they use, not racial criteria, in determining who would be a good husband.¹⁵ *Fò ou kalkile sa lap fè pou ou*. Figure out what he will do for you (economically). In times past the economic calculation was based largely on how much land the man’s family owned. Today it is just as likely to be based on whether the young man has family overseas and is likely to be able to emigrate. In rural Haiti a young man’s employment and emigration potential are much more important factors in his desirability as a potential mate than his pigmentation. Similar criteria apply in the evaluation of the attractiveness of young women. A dark skinned girl who has proven her skill as a successful market woman and manager of money will be a much more desirable partner than a lighter skinned girl who sits at home.

Dominican Republic and Haiti contrasted. Economics is of course an important factor in Dominican mate selection as well. But whereas economic calculations are stated openly and bluntly in rural Haiti, the Western romantic love ideal dominates Dominican discourse about marriage. The underlying economic calculations that occur are not supposed to be stated openly. One is not supposed to `marry

¹⁵ I use the terms marriage, spouse, husband, and wife in an anthropological sense. Most conjugal unions in rural Haiti are consensual, without legal or ecclesiastical validation. From an anthropological perspective, the union is a marriage and the partners are husband and wife even though they have not formalized the union legally.

for money`. Haitian popular strata, in contrast, particularly in the rural areas, are less bashful about that. They follow mate-selection norms that are closer to those societies, in Africa as in other places, where pre-marital economic calculations and expectations can be made openly and explicitly and where romantic love and affection plays a secondary role, or rather, are supposed to emerge eventually after marriage. In most societies marriage entails an economic exchange. In Haiti I have found the expectations in that regard to be stated much more explicitly than in the Dominican Republic.

Elite and diaspora exceptions. To avoid exaggeration, though it is assumed within the urban elite of Haiti that offspring, if they marry a Haitian, will marry someone of their social class, the Western romantic love ideal dominates discourse about marriage. Economic calculations may be hidden and silent as is true in Western society. The same may be increasingly true of Haitians in the diaspora, who are much more under the impact of westernized social norms than their rural counterparts back home. But even in Haitian elite strata and Haitians in the diaspora, there appears to be less of a concern with the pigmentation or hair texture of one`s potential spouse than in the Dominican Republic. Haitians do dichotomize between “silk hair” and “hard hair”. But the former is not called “good hair” and the latter is not called “bad hair”. It is in no way the object of the concern that it provokes across the border.

Dominican racial attitudes toward Haitians

Perception of African physical origins. I have focused up till now on internal racial dynamics within each group. I will now discuss the racial perceptions and sentiments that each have of the other group. Interviews with both Dominicans and Haitians indicate full awareness on the part of both groups of the differences between their average Dominican phenotype, which is brown skinned, and that of the average Haitians, which is largely black. The racial difference is quite correctly attributed by members of both groups to the higher prevalence of unmixed African-derived elements in the Haitian gene pool.

Mutual interethnic recriminations are not racial in character. The bulk of the negative comments made about Haitians, however, in the course of this research have absolutely nothing to do with their skin color and do not apply to black Dominicans. Hundreds of Dominicans and Haitians were interviewed in the course of this research during six weeks. In not one instance of the many criticisms which some Dominicans leveled at Haitians was the race of the Haitians mentioned their skin color, hair, or facial features. And conversely in only one conversation with a Haitian (a male idling in the park of Dajabón) did Haitian blackness emerge as a cause for abusive behavior on the part of Dominicans. Race was simply not an issue between the two groups, and in my explorations of intergroup dynamics I had to explicitly probe on the matter even to elicit comments on race. The common discourse about “anti-Haitian racial prejudice” among Dominicans was not found in a single community which I visited. Negative perceptions and behavioral intergroup tensions between Haitians and Dominicans -- and they are indeed many -- are ethnic and national, not racial, in character.

Sources of in-group and intergroup perceptions and sentiments

I will now present a summary of the non-racial factors which intervene to shape intergroup perceptions and sentiments. I will first make comments on the perceptions which I have found among Dominicans

concerning themselves and Haitians. I will then do the converse with Haitian perceptions of themselves and of Dominicans.

In discussing ethnic / national perceptions between Dominicans and Haitians, it is useful to elicit not only how members of each group perceive the other group but also how they perceive themselves as a national group in contrast with the other group. To study perceptions, however, we must exercise critical caution. We have no direct access to the content of people's brains. The study of "perceptions" depends in the final analysis on analyzing what people say. For insights into perceptions the analyst is almost entirely dependent on the elicitation and analysis of verbal responses.

I have found that among Haitians and Dominicans views of themselves and perceptions of and sentiments toward the "other" has been nurtured by several quite different sources. Among them are the following:

1. Informal oral traditions learned from elders.
2. History textbooks and other elements of formal education.
3. Media accounts of current events.
4. Accounts by relatives or friends of interactions with the other group.
5. Direct observation of the other group without interaction.
6. Direct interactions with the other group.

With regard to (1) throughout most of human history, much of people's knowledge of the world, including societies different from their own, was gleaned from oral traditions. Pre-literate tribal cultures transmit mythological and legendary histories via oral transmission from elders to youth. Such "origin accounts" deal not only with the general origins of humans, but with the special origins of the ancestors of the local population. But in contemporary nation states – including Haiti and the Dominican Republic - official histories that glorify the past are generally transmitted more by textbooks and schoolteachers than by family elders. The textbook version of national history will also be fortified by the occasional references thereto that appear in the media. In such a setting the oral history transmitted by elders gradually declines in importance. The dwindling occurs gradually, not instantaneously.

In my early research in the 1970s I found that intergenerational oral history traditions, independent of formally taught textbook traditions, remained stronger in rural Haiti than in the Dominican Republic. This was and is to be expected, since the number of schools, both public and private, in the Dominican Republic was already larger than in Haiti. Trujillo, who came into power in the early 1930's, made it a punishable offense not to send one's children to schools. The percentage of Dominicans who learned their history in schools rather than from local elders was therefore much larger than in Haiti, where until recently school attendance was the exception.

With regard to (1), in previous research among both Dominican and Haitian villagers, I heard oral traditions about their own past and about the other group from older people who had never been to school. In recent times, as schooling has become more prevalent (2) has tended to override (1) as the source of the content of beliefs and attitudes about one's own nation and about the nation across the

border. Transmission of oral traditions from elders to the younger generation has ceased being a major independent source of beliefs, either about one's own country or about the other.

With regard to (3) I have found media accounts) of current events to be more powerful than either (1) or (2) in shaping mutual attitudes. Since few Haitians read newspapers or have access to television, their exposure to media is largely restricted to Creole language radio programs. There are large numbers of Haitians who have never seen a Dominican. Yet I have heard them express negative opinions about Dominicans from the radio broadcasts which they now hear of treatment of Haitians in the Dominican Republic. The following is a snippet from a conversation with several villagers. *Panyol renmen koupe tet ayisyen.* (Dominicans like to cut off Haitian heads.) How do you know that? *Nou tande sa nan radio.* (We heard it on the radio.)

Likewise Dominican attitudes to Haitians, particularly Dominicans who have little or no firsthand contact with Haitians, are heavily influenced by Dominican media accounts. Dominicans have greater access than Haitians to a broader variety of media outlets – newspapers, television, and radio.

In terms of sources (5) and (6), observations and direct contact between the two peoples, matters have changed. During the post-massacre (1937) Trujillo era, when contact with Haitians was forbidden and punished, most Dominicans never had occasion to see a Haitian. I have interviewed older Dominicans living in border regions who assured me that they had never seen a Haitian until later in life. I have no reason to doubt that. I had been in a Dominican village near the border as a Peace Corps Volunteer in the mid 1960's, long before the beginning of the uncontrolled immigration of Haitians into the Dominican Republic, I never encountered a Haitian, though Haiti was less than 25 miles from my village. Now one cannot go anywhere in the Dominican Republic without seeing large groups of Haitians. Whereas most Haitians in Haiti may never have actually seen a Dominican, there are few Dominicans today who have never seen a Haitian.

Even though they may never have interacted with a Haitian, most Dominicans by now have seen Haitian laborers in Dominican fields, Haitian workers on Dominican construction sites, Haitian vendors on Dominican streets, and/or Haitian beggars at Dominican traffic lights. In such cases Haitians are almost inevitably in economically and socially marginal positions. Such observations create unfavorable perceptions and attitudes and generate an underclass image of Haitians even when the Dominican has no direct interactions with the Haitians. These observations of different occupational groups of Haitian migrants serve to create among Dominicans a view of Haitians as an economic underclass, many performing hard labor that Dominicans are unwilling to carry out. Educated upper and middle class Haitians have told me that, when they meet Dominicans on an equal footing, a frequent reaction is that "you can't really be Haitian". The public image of Haitians, created by observations of Haitians by Dominicans who may never have interacted with a Haitian, implies both poverty and a low level of education, features that weigh more heavily in Dominican evaluation of Haitians than the much touted racial differences.

Dominican perceptions: positive and negative

Greater concern among Dominicans with Haitians than vice versa

To state the obvious: Dominicans have much more salient images of Haitians, and Haitians of Dominicans, than either group has, for example, about Ecuadorians or Moroccans. The historical interaction between these two countries has placed each in a prominent position on the radar screen of the other.

What emerged in this research, however, and what may not be so well known, is that the mutual perceptions and feelings of Haitians and Dominicans toward each other is asymmetrical in terms of its prominence or strength. *Haiti and Haitians occupy a much more prominent position on the mental landscape of Dominicans than is the case vice-versa.* Stated more empirically in behavioral rather than mental terms, Dominicans talk much more about Haiti and Haitians than Haitians talk about Dominicans or the Dominican Republic. I will exclude from this generalization Haitians who are living or who have lived in the Dominican Republic, or who carry out market activities in Dominican border towns; migrants and itinerant traders develop precise perceptions of the host country people with whom they interact. But if we compare the mutual perceptions and sentiments of a Haitian who has never been to the Dominican Republic and of a Dominican (the vast majority) who have never been to Haiti, the Dominican will express much stronger feelings about Haitians than vice versa.

There is nothing surprising about this intergroup difference in the strength of mutual sentiments. Several factors have conspired to make Haiti more important to Dominicans than the converse.

1. **19th century Haitian occupation** The Haitian military occupied the Spanish colony of Santo Domingo (which was not yet the “Dominican Republic”) for 22 years; Dominicans in contrast have never occupied Western Hispaniola after the founding of the Republic of Haiti in 1804. The less powerful occupied tend to have stronger feelings about the more powerful occupiers than vice-versa.
2. **Dominican independence from Haiti.** The Dominican Republic is the only Spanish speaking country in the Americas that does not celebrate independence from Spain. Dominicans celebrate their independence from Haiti. The expulsion of Haitian occupiers is central to the collective memory of Dominicans and the major theme of national Independence Day. Haiti, in contrast, celebrates its independence from France. There is no Haitian feast day in which the Dominican Republic plays a prominent role.
3. **Negative discourse about Haitians in Dominican textbooks.** Though scholars still debate why Trujillo switched from his early friendliness toward Haiti to the order of their massacre in 1937, what is known is that subsequent to that event Trujillo engaged in an anti-Haitian ideological campaign that came to play a prominent role in the Dominican educational system. This has had a major impact on the development of an officially supported hostile mindset toward Haiti among generations of Dominicans. The anti-Haitian sentiments transmitted in the Dominican public schools has softened in recent times, as contemporary historians provide an alternative

view of the Haitian occupation. But I still hear older Dominicans talk with anger of the bayoneting of Dominican babies by the soldiers of Dessalines in the early 1800s as though it happened last week. In sharp, dramatic contrast, there is no strong Dominican component – either hostile or friendly – in the curriculum of Haitian schools. And even if there had been, fewer Haitians have had access to schools than Dominicans.

4. **Haitian immigration to the Dominican Republic.** In the past decade Dominicans have experienced sudden and massive unregulated immigration from Haiti. This has created among Dominicans a new level of preoccupation and has given an increased prominence to the Haitian question. Few dispute that the number of undocumented Haitians working in the Dominican Republic is now over a million. One out of every ten persons in the Dominican Republic may now be Haitian. The street corners of major cities now have Haiti women and children begging at the traffic lights (in a manner that was never done in the Dominican Republic and with a volume that to this very day is not seen even in Port-au-Prince or other Haitian cities). The Dominican employers of Haitians benefit from a labor force that in some sectors (but not all) charges less than Dominicans for equivalent work. Employers of Haitians, of course, will have strong opinions about Haitians. But a heavy percentage of my Dominican interviewees who have never hired Haitians and who rarely interact with them feel overwhelmed and threatened with this growing presence. The terms *invasión pacífica* (peaceful invasion) and *inundación* (flood) are commonly heard.

The Haitian invasion of 1822

Dominican discourse about the “Haitian problem” more often than not contains allusions to the Haitian occupation of 1822-1844 -- as though it happened yesterday. There is a part of history that is omitted in this particular type of discourse: the help which the Haitian government gave to the Dominicans in their second war of independence, the “Restoration” of Dominican sovereignty after Dominican leaders had once again annexed their country to Spain after having won independence from Haiti. The Haitian government was instrumental in assisting Dominican patriots to expel the Spaniards and once again establish Dominican independence. What remains in Dominican discourse is the memory of the earlier Haitian invasion. At any rate these are nationalist, not racial, memories. But because they focus on a historical invasion, these memories lend themselves to a popular definition of the current Haitian presence in the Dominican Republic, not as a “migration”, but as a new “invasion”, albeit a peaceful invasion.

The Haitian as dangerous sorcerer: the stereotype of Vodou

Haitians are viewed as having different customs and lifestyles from Dominicans. In particular, as a frequent point of comment by Dominicans, they are also viewed as practicing a religion that is a throwback to African beliefs and rituals, in contrast to the Western Catholicism that most Dominicans practice. In point of empirical fact, I have found a much greater tendency of Haitians in the Dominican Republic to attend Protestant evangelical churches than Vodou ceremonies. Nonetheless the popular stereotype exists (not only among Dominicans but also among many Americans and Europeans) of Haitians as practitioners of Vodou. In the course of this research I encountered many Dominicans –

including educated capital dwellers – who talk about a collective nervousness about Haitians – particular Haitian women – as practitioners of *brujería*, witchcraft.

Though the majority opinion among Dominicans is that Vodou is a negative phenomenon, there is a minority of Dominicans among whom this is not the case. Among the Dominicans in the border area who practice Afro-Dominican rituals, that entail drumming, dancing, and spirit possession similar to that which occurs across the border in Haiti, Haitians are admired, not feared, for their perceived ritual skills. A Dominican adept who, when possessed by a spirit, speaks Haitian Creole, is enhancing, not diminishing, his or her prestige. Nonetheless the perceived religious differences between Haitians and Dominicans are a major object of comment, particularly among Dominicans.

Creole as a low priority language

Most Haitians in the Dominican Republic acquire some fluency in Spanish. But most also continue to speak it with a Haitian accent, except for those born and raised in the Dominican Republic. Though the language is officially called Creole, Most Haitians with little schooling with whom I have spoken will say that they speak, not *kreyol*, but *ayisyen*. “We speak Haitian”. Some appear even confused if I ask about “Creole”. Educated Dominicans now refer to the Haitian language as “creol”. But popular references to the Haitian language still usually label it as “patuá” (patois, a pejorative term) or simply “haitiano”. At any rate there are totally non-racial linguistic factors that also separate the two peoples. And though bilingualism and even trilingualism is becoming increasingly common among Dominicans, and though now Haitians are to be found everywhere in the Dominican Republic, the second language of choice for Dominicans is English, not Creole.

I encountered many Dominicans in the border area who were totally fluent in both languages. Particularly impressive in this regard were the “arrayanos” of the southern border area – children with Dominican fathers and Haitian mothers. They are the product of conjugal unions between Haitians and Dominicans, not of casual sexual encounters. They are raised by their Dominican father and their Haitian mother. They are totally bilingual. But I have also encountered many Dominican adults in the border area who have acquired fluency in Creole, though they speak it with a Spanish accent. These are the exceptions. In certain urban Dominican intellectual or activist circles there is a growing interest in Creole. Throughout most of the Dominican Republic, however, Dominicans are interested in learning English as a second language, not Creole. I did not encounter, in any interviews, negative statements about Creole as a barbaric “non-language” or anything of the sort. It is simply not a language that most Dominicans are interested in learning. English and French open up new worlds of interest to many Dominicans. Creole emphatically does not.

Evolving demography: the “invasion” and “inundation” of Haitian migrants

Though figures are usually guesswork, current guesses place the number of Haitians in the Dominican Republic at minimally a million and maximally two million. It is this massive presence that provokes the above-mentioned labels of “inundation” and “invasion”. Haitians long ago left the bateyes. It is not essentially a racial anxiety. Black Dominicans are as nervous about the presence as are the brown-skinned majority. Were the Haitian migrants phenotypically indistinguishable from Dominicans – i.e. mostly brown-skinned – but speaking a different language, practicing a religion viewed as “barbaric”,

occupying the lower economic niches of Dominican society, living in temporary crowded conditions, and constituting a demographic majority in many communities or neighborhoods, the Dominican concern would be just as great. There are historical precedents by which black migrants have been fully integrated into Dominican society. The *cocolos* of the British speaking islands are a case to the point. They are so integrated that their descendants no longer speak English (unless they learn it in school as do other Dominicans) and they are in danger of being lost as a distinct ethnic group. (To protect their distinct ethnicity, UNESCO has given a grant for the protection of *cocolo* musical and cultural traditions.) The descendants of the black American slaves that were sent to Sosua are also fully integrated now into Dominican society.

From the point of view of the local Dominicans the Haitian presence, particularly in its initial stages, is a valued source of field labor that will work for lower wages. But in the eyes of the national media this demographic replacement is construed in the military idiom of invasion. It is called a “peaceful invasion”, but it is viewed as an invasion nonetheless. Pro-Haitian activists inside and outside the Dominican Republic tend to mock the phrase “peaceful invasion” as an indication of xenophobia or even of racism. Because the term invasion does have a connotation of aggression or even of violence, the phrase “peaceful insertion” might be a more appropriate label to describe the economic and social situation of Haitians in the Dominican Republic.

But the major analytic point here is that the integration problems faced by Haitians derive not from Dominican hostility to black skins, but from other ethnic, demographic, and economic factors being discussed here.

Dominican fears of the “international plot”.

I have heard among Dominicans of all social strata allusions to a presumed international plot to solve the “Haitian problem” by unifying the island under one government. More frequently, however, the accusation is that the outside world is expecting the Dominicans to solve the problems of Haiti. Outside statesmen and visitors have often made allusions to the “special role” that the Dominican Republic can play in helping Haiti, they may think that they are praising the Dominican Republic. In Dominican ears, however, they appear to be saying that Haiti is not “our” (American, French, or Canadian) problem but a Dominican problem. Dominicans reject any perceived imposition by the outside world of a special moral responsibility on Dominicans for solving economic and social problems that Dominicans did not create.

Fear of economic penetration

Perhaps the most frequently mentioned fear of Dominicans concerns the increasing “takeover” of many economic niches, including lower level urban niches, by Haitians. They now dominate rural agricultural field labor and urban construction sites all over the country. In the latter they are even beginning to displace Dominicans from the technically more sophisticated niches in construction. Dominicans who hire the Haitians are grateful for their presence. Ordinary Dominicans, in contrast, speak with anxiety about this presence. *The anxiety is not racial in character.* Nonetheless it is real.

Delinquency among young unemployed males

The behavior of Haitian migrants in the Dominican Republic has evolved through the decades. There was little crime or other forms of delinquency among Haitians on the Trujillo bateyes. Nor are there high rates of crime among Haitians who are employed on Dominican farms or construction sites. There has been a recent influx, however, of unemployed Haitians and an increase in the incidence of robbery and violent crimes committed by Haitians. This delinquency, particularly of thievery, was a matter of frequent comment by Dominicans. In most cases, however, the observation of increasing Haitian delinquency was followed by an exculpatory comment that “we have Dominican delinquents as well”.

Aggressive, highly visible street begging

One highly visible and problematic aspect of the Haitian presence in major urban centers now takes the form of street begging by women and children. There has always been a socially acceptable mode of begging for elderly or crippled people, but it was usually confined to church doors. In recent decades it has spread out into traffic lights at major street intersections, principally by Dominican males with one or another type of easily demonstrable pity-generating physical handicap, such as a missing arm or leg. However, just as Haitian migrants long ago displaced Dominican sugar cane workers and, more recently, lower level Dominican construction workers, so also they have also begun to displace Dominicans in the economic niche of traffic-light street corner begging. But whereas most Dominican traffic-light beggars are males, most Haitian street corner beggars are women and children. In many instances the women carry young children in their arms to enhance the pity-generating power of their economic strategy.

There are three rumors circulating about this sector. First, many of the children are “rented” by adult females from other females. Secondly, the woman and children beggars are organized into networks; they are dropped off and picked up each day. Thirdly, there may be coercive trafficking in this trade, particular with children forced to beg. There is solid anecdotal evidence for the second rumor, but to my knowledge the first and third have not been (though they could easily be) documented via case studies. It is quite possible that the rumors have some truth to them.

The issue of sanitary practices

The one issue that reoccurred in conversations with Dominicans is the question of sanitation and personal hygiene. Several people mentioned critically how Haitian women urinate freely in semi-public places on market days. Dominican and Haitian men are culturally permitted to urinate in sight of others as long as (a) there is a minimum distance between them and strangers, (b) their backs are turned and (c) they are not urinating against somebody’s house, motor vehicle, or other private property.

In Haiti women may urinate in sight of others as long as there is a decent distance and their private parts are hidden by a skirt. Dominican cultural norms in that regard do not give the same leeway to women. Haitian women in the market towns follow Haitian rules with regard to this practice and are targets of Dominican criticism with regard to that issue. But though Dominicans mentioned with distaste this practice of Haitian women on market day, the criticisms heard were muted and not vitriolic.

Haitians are used to relieving themselves in the bushes and have a higher tolerance for such hygienic compromises than Dominicans, who would be classified anthropologically as a culture that is highly

concerned with personal hygiene. The differences between Haitians and Dominicans in hygienic habits are strong. Haitians in the colony of Mencia were reported not only to refuse to contribute to the latrine building project but also to relieve themselves in the patio of the houses where they live. The Haitian refusal to contribute financially to build latrines in houses from which they could be evicted is perfectly rational. But Dominicans may perceive this as indifference on the part of Haitians to the sanitary rules that Dominicans follow.

The most virulent criticism of Haitian sanitary practices emerged in interviews with Haitians who were living in the Dominican Republic, who had adapted to Dominican norms in terms of hygiene and sanitation, and who were angry at and embarrassed by the practices of many fellow Haitians in this regard. One Haitian who owns a business in Dajabón and who has recently built a house there was staying in the same hotel as the researcher. He was furious at fellow Haitians who, he claimed, regularly defecated in the patio of his house. A Haitian whose college degree had been obtained at the Dominican State-run Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo was eloquent in his complaint about some of the behavior of Dominican students toward Haitian students. Nonetheless he told us that on several occasions he had felt constrained to urge his fellow Haitians to bathe daily and to use deodorant.

Apologists for Haitians and critics of Dominicans will inevitably attribute these differences in hygienic practices to different levels of economic well-being or to the substandard conditions in which Haitians in the Dominican Republic are forced to live. They will further be inclined to view such hygienic accusations as one more example of “Dominican racism”.

The fact of the matter is that several Haitians themselves living in the Dominican Republic and who have adapted to the unusually stringent hygienic norms generally followed by Dominican – daily or twice daily bathing, use of deodorant, weekly or twice weekly visits to the hair salon by Dominican women, and others -- have expressed embarrassment to us during interviews at the failure of many of their fellow Haitians to follow these norms, particularly the norm of using deodorants.

I encountered no stereotypes that black Dominicans are characterized by unpleasant odors. There are no statements to the effect that “blacks smell bad”. The odors attributed to Haitians are attributed to behavior, not to “African blood” or other genetic factors.

On this sensitive issue it should finally be pointed out that in elite Haitian urban circles hygienic and sanitary rules are as strict as among Dominicans. In a famous Haitian Creole song about Haitian women, one of the distinguishing features of the beautiful Haitian women being praised is their *bel odè*, their beautiful scent.

Dominican perceptions of the need for Haitian labor

Much more important than cross-cultural stereotypes about hygiene are views of field labor. On the basis of what one reads in certain human rights reports, one goes to the border expecting to hear local Dominicans fulminate against the “Haitian invasion.” The contrary is the case. The presence Haitians inserted into the rural patron system was in fact hotly praised by many rural Dominicans interviewed on the matter. We could not live without them, was a common response. We would all have to emigrate to the cities. Advocates of this point of view repeatedly stated as well that the majority of Haitians are hard

working and that the delinquents are the exception. “Just as there are Dominican delinquents, there are also Haitian delinquents.” The behavior of delinquents is not attributed to Haitian national character traits. This local acceptance of a Haitian presence, even a majority presence, differs from the panic-ridden concern expressed in national Dominican media reports about the haitianization of the borderland.

Rarity of complaints by Dominicans against Haitians in the border markets

Dominican complaints against Haitians are eloquent in some domains and in some communities. But it was surprisingly unusual to hear hostile Dominican comments concerning the presence or behavior of Haitians in the border markets. To put it bluntly: *Haitians in the border towns were substantially more hostile to Dominicans, and more articulate in their complaints, than vice versa, at least with regard to interactions in the border markets.* This is not surprising, given the abusive treatment to which Haitians are subjected at the hands of Dominican authorities.

Most Dominicans opposed to mistreatment of Haitians in markets

Violent scenes such as those in the Elias Piña market place are easily converted into raw materials for documentaries of “Dominican abuse of Haitians.” This version is misconstrued. The initiators of the abusive interactions that take place in the Elias Piña market are a small group of male thugs, the businessman that hires them as collectors and confiscators, and the municipal authorities – the mayor and the councilmen -- who have instituted the privatization arrangement and who, according to several people interviewed, are suspected of being personal beneficiaries of the arrangement as well. Haitian market women are most clearly the principal targeted victims. And they are targeted precisely because they are Haitians who can be mistreated with political and social impunity in a way that Dominicans could not. But the victimizers are a small group.

On the basis of interviews on both sides of the border, it would appear that the population of both towns, Elias Piña and Belladere, are aware of the privatization of the Elias Piña market. The Dominican population of Elias Piña, however, is unaware both of the price paid to the mayor by the winner of the auction, or of the prices he charges to Haitians in the marketplace. Some persons with whom I spoke in Elias Piña were unaware, and seemed at first incredulous, when I told them of the RD\$1,000 that many Haitian women were charged in the marketplace. There is, in short, a clandestine dimension to the auction of the Elias Piña marketplace. The high market taxes are of course well known to the entire population of Belladere.

Dominican perceptions of dangers in Haiti

Dominicans whom I interviewed on the possibility of having truly binational markets – one on Dominican territory where Dominicans would sell and one on Haitian territory where Haitians would sell -- were distinctly and understandably unenthusiastic about this alternative binational system. One would expect, of course, that officials and State employees benefitting from predatory practices would resist change to a modified system that would reduce their income. But even ordinary Dominicans expressed fear of what would happen to them in markets on the Haitian side of the border. The most frequently expressed concern is fear of being assaulted by thieves. Dominicans are fully and rationally aware of the absence of effective State authority on the Haitian side of the border. They also have a collective image

of Haitians as being *mañosos*, a semantically elusive popular term that refers to trickiness, slyness, inclination to thievery. These images combine to generate reluctance among many, perhaps most Dominicans to cross over into Haiti – a country that has no local functioning government, and a population whose “many thieves” could therefore operate with impunity against Dominicans who cross over into the market. Fear of the Haitian thief continues to be a prominent theme in Dominican narratives about Haiti. Yet it must be repeated that virtually every Dominican who expressed this theme followed up with a rapid disclaimer that Dominican delinquents are found in the Dominican Republic as well.

Perceptions of the quality of Haitian and Dominican field labor

I found strong regional differences in attitudes among Dominicans as to the relative quality of Haitian and Dominican field labor. In the area near Jimaní I was told that local farmers have trouble with Dominican farm hands. There were three complaints: they demand partial payment in advance, they drink away the advance money, and they fail to show up for work. Haitians, according to this same source, never demand payment until after the task is done, and they perform the task on time. This account of the Dominican drunkard field hand is of course a stereotyped generalization that has to be taken with a heavy grain of salt. But the stereotype comes from Dominicans themselves and it may well reflect a real difference in that region between the work performed by Dominicans and the work done by Haitians.

In Constanza the story was quite different. There are farms of thousands of hectares that regularly recruit hundreds of Haitian workers. But there are still local Dominicans who are willing to perform field labor, and who reportedly do it skillfully and conscientiously. According to one farmer interviewed, you can give Dominican laborers instructions and they will carry out the task without supervision. In contrast you have to be constantly on top of the Haitian worker, supervising every step of the process. Constanza farmers regularly pay RD\$400 per day to Dominican field hands, in contrast to the standard RD\$300 that are paid to Haitians. In this particular region, in short, we do find the pattern for different pay rates of Haitians and Dominicans performing the same task. The justification, however, is that the Constanza field hand does the work more skillfully.

One is inclined to dismiss as simple ideological bias these statements concerning regional differences in the quality of Dominican labor. However I heard identical statements from a Dominican professional who built a house in Constanza and was astounded at the superior quality of the work done by contractors and laborers in Constanza as contrasted with the lower quality of the work done by their counterparts in Santo Domingo. Within the Dominican Republic there are strong regional differences in all domains of culture, including not only the frequently commented areas of phenotype, language, and religion, but also in the domain of work habits, that should engender analytic caution in making national generalizations.

Though we lack the information required to comment on the matter, we can assume that the same regional differences exist in Haiti as well as in the Dominican Republic, and that any generalization about the “quality of Haitian field labor” would be equally suspect.

In the southern border area, where Dominicans have in effect withdrawn from paid agrarian labor, leaving the field open to Haitians, I heard no complaints from Dominicans that “Haitians forced us out of field labor” by virtue of the low salaries for which they are willing to work.

Intimidating behavior on the part of unemployed Haitian young men

The unemployed and unattached, usually young men with drinking habits and with aggressive interactional styles, will often dress and behave in ways that would not be socially permitted in Haiti and that are intimidating to Dominican women and children. A female Dominican schoolteacher in La Altagracia told me anxiously that Haitian young men there, who had no known employment or employer, would walk around the street in groups, some of them bare-chested and carrying machetes, and yelling in loud voices, often under the influence of alcohol. In a community where there is a strong Dominican military presence, Puerto Escondido, I observed the military commander telling Haitians to leave the town park after a certain hour in the evening. Haitians were not allowed to carry machetes or other farm tools into the park. The Haitians obeyed armed authorities. In places such as Mencia or La Altagracia, where there is virtually no military or police presence, the Haitian young men can behave in intimidating ways with impunity. Dominicans, who may now be a demographic minority in the area, are afraid to confront them. Haitians in such settings, who would obey Dominican soldiers or police, will respond aggressively to Dominican civilians who criticize them. The Dominicans feel invaded, intimidated, and helpless to do anything about it.

Haitians living in substandard gutted houses

The Dominicans who vacated the houses often took with them not only the porcelain toilets but also the wooden shutters and doors. Haitians may be living in gutted houses that Dominicans would not tolerate. This strengthens perceptions among Dominicans about Haitian substandard lifestyles.

Haitians with no known Dominican patron

Dominicans are totally comfortable with a heavy presence of Haitian neighbors as long as every Haitian family has a known Dominican patron who gives them work, and allows them to establish a hut on his farmland or actually lends them his house in a colony or village in the absence of the owner. I found no collective reluctance among borderland Dominicans to have Haitian neighbors. What provokes anxiety is the increasing presence of unemployed Haitians who do not come to do local field labor and who have no known Dominican patron. In the agricultural colony of Mencia Dominican neighbors were unsure about the identity of several Haitian families that had moved in and were unsure that they had moved in with the permission of the owner. This situation creates anxiety among Dominicans.

Crowded living conditions among Haitians in the diaspora

Even Haitians that are known to have been placed in the house as custodians by departing Dominican owners will often invite relatives to cross the border and join them in the house. This creates conditions of crowding. Haitian field laborers in other parts of the country may rent houses or rooms in towns. Six or seven Haitian males may share a room. Dominicans may inaccurately perceive that the crowded housing of Haitians in the Dominican Republic is the normal way of Haitian life. The contrary is the case. In Haiti there is a strong rule that says: *gran moun pa ret a gran moun*. Grownups don't live with each

other. People have their own houses in Haiti, and the average household size varies between 5 and 6 persons, an internationally standard figure. The crowded living conditions of Haitian migrants in the Dominican Republic are a temporary exception. Dominicans may not be aware of this and assume that the substandard lifestyle that Haitians tolerate as migrant laborers represent life in Haiti. It does not.

Dominican fears of expropriation from National Park Land

This section heretofore has focused on Dominican attitudes toward Haitians. But throughout the research on the Dominican side of the border comments were heard from Dominicans about their negative views of their own State. The land tenure situation in the Bahoruco border area is complicated by the fact that much of the land has been declared as National Park, a territorial designation which henceforth excludes human habitation within its borders. While I was interviewing a school teacher in the community of Los Arroyos, a pickup truck from Pedernales belonging to a Dominican government agency filled with civilians and armed soldiers pulled up, stopped, and conversed with the school teacher (who is also an important community figure on other matters). Though most soldiers in the area are friendly to outsiders, this particular group silently glowered at me as I unsuccessfully tried to engage them in conversation concerning their destination. I was told afterward that they were about to deliver eviction orders to Dominican families living within the boundaries of the National Park. We can see from a cluster of incidents and rumors such as this that at least some sectors of borderland Dominicans are in a tense relationship with their own government concerning their access to land in the region. The agrarian settlers on IAD government farmland hear rumors of their impending eviction in favor of agrarian corporations. The Dominicans farming inside what are now the boundaries of the National Park are also being visited by armed agents of the State issuing eviction orders. Even among Dominicans themselves there appears to be widespread land tenure insecurity in at least some border areas.

Dominican fears of government expropriation of Agrarian Reform land

The land tenure situation in the southern communities visited is in a state of legal limbo. Though some Dominican families told me that they have legal title to land inherited from ancestors, many or perhaps most settlers on government land (the I.A.D. – Instituto Agrario Dominicano – was reported as the landowning institution) do not have legal title to their land. This generates a potential conflict, not between Dominicans and Haitians, but between the Dominican government and the local Dominican population. Rumors were circulating at the time of this research concerning the intent of the Dominican government to dislodge many of the Dominican farmers and to turn their land over to corporations.

Dominican perceptions of binational delinquency networks

I received repeated spontaneous assertions that even Haitians who make charcoal from trees cut on the Dominican side of the border do not do so autonomously. They act instead in coordination with Dominicans involved in the charcoal trade. In the Jimani area we were told of sharecropping arrangements for charcoal making, analogous to the sharecropping arrangements that are common for crop production. Note: in the urban areas Haitians are viewed as destroying the forests.

Haitian farm laborers and petty garden thievery

Whereas cross-border cattle and motorcycle thievery by Haitians are considered crimes that deserve police intervention, it is widely recognized by Dominican farmers who hire Haitians that thievery of fruit and other garden produce is part of the cost of hiring Haitian laborers. Most Dominican farmers in the border area now appear to look the other way when this happens. This is particularly the case because the landowner may not even know the men who are working on his land. He will have contracted with a known Haitian to bring in laborers whose identity or names he, the landowner, does not know. Dominicans comment cynically in interviews that the Haitian laborers arrive in the morning with empty sacks and they leave in the afternoon with the sacks mysteriously full.

Haitian sorcery fears and Dominican garden thievery

Dominicans told me that Haitians are much more willing to steal from Dominican gardens than from the gardens of fellow Haitians. This is less a matter of nationalistic loyalties, one person insightfully told me, than knowledge that Haitians may have erected ritual protections in their gardens which could cause problems for thieves. Dominicans do not have such protections.

Haitian perceptions about themselves and about Dominicans

The preceding has focused on Dominican perceptions. As stated earlier, Dominicans have more “generic opinions” about Haitians than vice-versa.

Low presence of slavery or revolution in rural Haitian oral tradition

In rural Haiti at least in the village of the Cul de Sac Plain where I carried out extended research in the 1970s, people still learned oral traditions from the older generation concerning the origins of their communities. But the content of these oral accounts was to me unexpected. There were three striking aspects. (1) In the first place I was surprised to learn that there was no strong collective memory of either the slave period or of the war of Haitian independence which ended in 1804. People’s oral history began with the founding of the village by a now legendary ancestor. (2) This ancestor was reported to be a blan, a term which today means “foreigner.” He may well have been a French colonist who owned slaves. But the element of slave ownership was emphatically not part of the oral tradition concerning the founding ancestor. (3) The oral tradition focused, rather, on the land which he left to his descendants. In short, the “origin account” in this particular village was an account that focused on the founding of the village, not the founding of Haiti as a nation of ex-slaves that revolted from their masters.

Slavery and liberation as central themes of Haitian identity

This of course has now changed with the spread of schooling and with the exposure of an increasing number of Haitians to Haitian history. Memories of slavery and the revolution are now a central element in Haiti’s national self definition and the self-image of many Haitians. Slavery and the slave revolt are now also central themes (along with contemporary poverty, political chaos, and now the earthquake) of outside images of Haiti. The glories of the revolutionary past are in fact often contrasted by non-Haitian commentators with the poverty of the present. When I jokingly suggested to a fellow anthropologist

that, if we compare Martinique and Guadeloupe to Haiti today, the Haitian revolution could perhaps be seen as a historical catastrophe for the Haitian people, a disastrous historical mistake, he jokingly wanted to expel me from the seminar room and tie me to a stake surrounded by firewood for promoting heresy. For Haitians themselves as well as for the outside world, the historical demolition of a slave system from below is a matter of national pride and a central element in Haiti's international image.

Schools, not oral tradition, as the source of historical knowledge

I apologized for my heresy. The point that I am making here, however, is that these revolutionary traditions have been preserved and promulgated in schools and in media, not in the oral traditions which I encountered several decades ago among villagers who had received little or no schooling. These villagers then had little access to radios and at any rate did not understand the French language programs which at that time (with the exception of certain missionary stations such as Radio Soleil and Radio Lumière) still dominated the airwaves. (Creole is now the dominant language of the Haitian airwaves.) This particular group of villagers learned their history from local traditions transmitted by local elders, not from schools or radios. And to my great surprise these local oral traditions did not entail explicit information on either slavery or the Haitian revolution.

Dominican Republic largely absent from village oral traditions

In line with what was pointed out earlier, the Dominican Republic was absent from most oral histories which I elicited in the 1970's. The low importance of the Dominican Republic in popular Haitian discourse of these earlier periods was comparable perhaps to the low prominence of Canada and Canadians in the mental landscape of most Americans today. (The exceptions were villagers who had lived in the Dominican Republic on the sugar cane bateyes.) Village oral traditions discussed neither the 22 year occupation of the Dominican Republic by Haiti which began in 1822, nor even the more recent massacre of Haitians by Trujillo in 1937.

Why the Trujillo massacre is given low priority

This latter absence, though it at first surprises, is on second thought understandable. This particular community was far from the border and did not receive refugees from that bloody event. The Haitian government at the time was pointedly silent and inactive in the wake of the massacre. There was no national media campaign to denounce the event. Though it strikes an outsider as strange that a community of Haitian villagers should be unaware of, or at least unconcerned with, a massacre that is so prominent in historical accounts of the relations between the two countries, the fact of the matter is that the 1937 massacre entered neither into the oral traditions of the village in question nor the media accounts that were spread at the time. Collective images are formed by publicly circulated messages. In the absence of repeated messages concerning the 1937 massacres, the incident did not enter into village tradition. Paradoxically Dominicans spoke more frequently about the Haitian atrocities of the 1820's and 1830's than Haitians alluded to the massacre of Haitians by Trujillo in the 1930's.

Positive experiences in the Dominican Republic of older returned migrants. By that time in the 1970's, however, several villagers from the communities had emigrated, under the bilateral agreements that were then in force, to the Dominican Republic to labor in the cane fields. Some village women had also

gone. It is interesting to contrast the accounts of these older villagers (which I still hear today) about the positive character of life in the Dominican Republic at that time. As one elderly woman, who had spent decades in the Dominican Republic, put it to me: panyol yo byen trete nou. M pat gen oken pwoblem. (Dominicans treated us well. I didn't have any problems.)

Separation between Dominicans and Haitians under Trujillo

These benign accounts of positive experiences in the Dominican Republic which I heard from older villagers contrast sharply with the angry denunciations that are heard today, both popularly and in official Haitian circles, about the treatment of Haitian migrants by Dominicans. This difference in attitudes is somewhat paradoxical, as the objective situation of Haitians in the bateyes under Trujillo was more restricted than the situation today. Under the agreements prevailing between the two governments, Haitians who came to work in the cane fields could not leave the bateyes. They were de facto wage-earning prisoners on the bateyes until the end of the harvest, at which time trucks would transport them back to Haiti. Those who chose to stay were still restricted to their batey. Contact between Haitians and Dominicans outside of the bateyes was a criminal offense, both for the Haitian and the Dominican caught in the act. A Dominican farmer near Jimaní told me of his arrest by Dominican authorities under Trujillo. His crime: he was caught with a bottle containing a tiny bit of kleren (Haitian cane alcohol) which he had purchased for medicinal purposes. Any contact or traffic with Haitians was strictly forbidden during decades. On the other hand, Haitians on the bateyes in 1937 were protected from the massacre that occurred principally on the border. But their movement was severely restricted.

More employment opportunities for Haitians in the Dominican Republic today

Today Haitians can freely leave the cane fields and seek employment in the construction industry or in other sectors. If they lack a passport and visa (as most do) they are subject to military roadside shakedowns or arrest and to sudden deportation. This notwithstanding there has been a geometric increase in the employment opportunities for Haitians in the Dominican Republic, in contrast with the occupational and mobility restrictions that prevailed under Trujillo and Balaguer. Yet conversations with older villagers inside Haiti elicit favorable images of life in the Dominican Republic, and of relationships with Dominicans, when immigration was governmentally regulated.

More negative perceptions against Dominicans today

These positive comments differ radically in tone from the angry complaints about abusive treatment that today dominate Haitian (and international) discourse about the treatment of Haitians in the Dominican Republic. There has been a radical shift in popular discourse, both about the Haitian past itself and about relations with the Dominican Republic. Contemporary narratives of Haitians in the Dominican Republic, in contrast, adhere to a repeated template in which Haitians are depicted as victims and Dominicans as abusive villains.

Images of Dominicans as abusers of Haitians

Throughout this research, particularly among Haitians in Haiti itself, I encountered angry denunciations of Dominicans by Haitians who themselves had never been to Haiti. In one village of the Cul de Sac Plain the men being interviewed were eloquent about Dominican mistreatment of Haitian migrants. I asked

how they knew. “We hear it all the time on the radio.” Haitians with no firsthand contact with Dominicans depend for their information on the radio. Some of the radio emissions have been prepared by pro-Haitian activists protesting abuses against Haitians across the border. One of the positive goals of these groups is to try to reduce the flow of Haitians to the Dominican Republic. One of the tools they use is the creation of radio messages that vividly depict the abuses to which Haitians are subjected in the Dominican Republic. Haitians, who actually live in the Dominican Republic and have access to free Dominican health care and whose undocumented children nonetheless are received in Dominican primary schools, have a more nuanced vision. For Haitians back in Haiti, however, radio messages create very negative stereotypes of life in the Dominican Republic.

Smuggler messages: Dominican streets are paved with gold

The messages from Haitians who make a living assisting others to sneak over into the Dominican Republic are quite different of course. They paint a glowing picture of life in the Dominican Republic for Haitians.

“Dominicans look down on Haitians”

Though Haitians in the Dominican Republic have more nuanced views of life there, and more ambivalent or balanced views of Dominicans, one hears nonetheless with regularity statements from Haitian migrants to the effect that Dominicans look down upon Haitians. Though they do not use the term, there is a general awareness among Haitians in the Dominican Republic that they are an underclass. There are two frequent reasons that Haitians cite as the cause of unfavorable Dominican attitudes. The major cause is the fact that *nou pa gen dokiman*, we have no documents. Most Haitian migrants are illegally present in the Dominican Republic. This opens them to abusive shakedowns by Dominican soldiers and police. Another perceived reason for Dominican disdain is the nature of the work that Haitians do.

Low perceived importance of strictly racial issues

What is interesting is that very few Haitians mentioned that Dominicans look down on us because we are black. Haitians are fully aware that black skin is considered unattractive in the Dominican esthetic system. Haitians also repeat the epithets that they receive from some Dominicans. But of the two most commonly heard epithets (“haitiano del diablo” and “negro del diablo”), the former is much more frequent than the latter. As has been stated in the first part of this report, Dominicans have a generalized disrespect for African phenotype, a negative sentiment that affects Dominican blacks as well as Haitians. But the special disdain expressed for Haitians by many Dominicans derives from the factors mentioned above, not from their black skin.

Absence of threatening foreigner presence in Haiti

Inside Haiti there is of course no equivalent presence of Dominicans that would provoke parallel fears among Haitians of a Dominican invasion or inundation. Though Haitians have emigrated, both seasonally and permanently, to numerous other countries, neither Dominicans nor members of any other nation are emigrating to Haiti. Even tourists have largely ceased their visits to Haiti, the notable exception being the tours of a Miami based cruise company to Labadee in northern Haiti. (I traveled as a

consultant on one of these cruises. Passengers on the ship were not even told they were going to Haiti. Their destination was publicized on shipboard as the island of Hispaniola, which was technically correct but which hid from geographically less knowledgeable tourists the fact that they were going to Haiti.) For decades the major foreign non-military presence has been missionaries, diplomatic personnel, developmental contractors, and the increasing foreign NGO presence. A small number of Haitians, principally in the diaspora but also in Haiti, lament the presence of missionaries, non-profit development companies, and foreign NGOs in Haiti. It is often critically stated (or angrily shouted) that there may be more NGOs per-capita in Haiti than anywhere else in the world. In the course of post-earthquake research certain Haitian voices have accused the NGOs of responsibility for Haiti's poverty. The argument in general reads: "The NGOs are siphoning development money away from the Haitian government and preventing it from serving the Haitian people."

Those reasonably familiar with recent Haitian history know the spurious nature of these accusations. The shift of development agencies toward NGO channeling of funds since the 1980's was a direct response of the predatory behavior of the Haitian State. The millions of dollars that were given to the Haitian State after the recent flooding in Fonds Verrettes have disappeared. Outside agencies, whether public or private, who wish to channel resources to ordinary Haitians have been obliged to seek non-governmental channels. Objections to the NGO presence in Haiti are made by a small number of intellectuals or interested government officials. The dominant perception in the villages and towns of Haiti – a rational perception based on actual history – is that the major source of help comes from the outside world via NGOs. Thus, whereas Dominicans are concerned with the "flood" of Haitians in the Dominican Republic, ordinary Haitians are not concerned with the "flood" of foreign missionaries and NGO personnel in Haiti. On the contrary, those interviewed perceive that that the NGO presence is essential if any aid is to reach them and they request that this presence be increased and made permanent.

Foreign military presence in Haiti. The major recent foreign presence in Haiti at the moment are the U.S. troops whose numbers reached 22,000 after earthquake, more than double the number of U.N. troops that have been in the country since 2004. The U.S. military presence is now (May 2010) down to some 2,000 and is slated to end in June of 2010. Though certain Haitian bloggers in the U.S. were screaming for a cessation of this "foreign invasion" and "military occupation", the Haitians whom I interviewed in post-earthquake Haiti saw this presence of U.S. troops neither as an invasion or occupation. On the contrary, they hoped for an extended presence of even more American troops. Their perceptions of the U.N. troops are less favorable. The services that the U.N. troops have provide in training a new corps of Haitian policeman have been invisible to most Haitians. The U.N. troops with whom I conversed in different parts of the border explained to me that they were forbidden to intervene in matters of local conflict. They have little interaction with local populations. People wondered during interviews what precisely their role was. One skeptic said that their name should be changed from MINUSTAH to TOURISTAH. Nobody was crying for their expulsion. But there was more popular confidence expressed in the potential significance of an extended U.S. military presence in post-earthquake Haiti. The expectations regarding them were less in the domain of security than in their potential role of bringing food aid and other types of aid from the U.S.

Haitian views of the State

Dominicans and Haitians share a vision of their States in which both populations assume corruption on the part of State officials. On both sides of the border I consistently posed the question: if development funds materialize, should the donors entrust the funds to the State to manage them. The answer on both sides of the border was a resounding and unanimous no.

Apart from shared views concerning State corruption on both sides of the border, Dominicans interviewed in the course of this research often complained about the oppressive acts that its government agents do. A dramatic case that emerged in this research was the arbitrary destruction by the Dominican MARENA (Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources) of the agricultural system of Rio Limpio, a matter discussed in another companion report.

In contrast Haitian complaints about their government that surfaced during the interviews focused on what its government fails to do. Under Duvalier the Haitian State was perceived as dangerous and repressive. It is now simply absent. It is taken for granted by every Haitian queried on the matter not only that the Haitian State has never provided services to the border population but that it will not do so in the future. In the Haitian border communities which I visited this absence of the Haitian State was felt with particular poignancy for two reasons. In the first place, Haitians of the border area can see more clearly than any other Haitians visible evidence of the services that the Dominican State provides its citizens. Electrical systems function, water systems work, roads are paved, hospitals and schools are constructed and maintained functioning, and Dominican police and soldiers protect Dominican citizens, often to the detriment, it is complained, of Haitians. Secondly Haitians who depend on the Dominican border markets for their income complain regularly of verbal and economic and occasional physical abuse by Dominican soldiers and officials.

Haitians were heard to complain not only about the market-related behavior of Dominican State authorities but also about that of Haitian authorities. There is a functioning customs operation in Ouanaminthe. Persons interviewed complained not only of the amounts charged on market days but also of the fact that the proceeds are shuttled to Port-au-Prince, with little local benefit to the town of Ouanaminthe. Ouanaminthe today appears to be a bustling city in contrast to the Ouanaminthe of the pre-market period. But all of the constructions are private. Even the new road which links Ouanaminthe to Cap-Haitien is known by the local population to have been funded and built by the European Union, not by the Government of Haiti.

It was perhaps no coincidence that it was in Ouanaminthe that I heard the most articulate Haitian demands for the reestablishment of the Haitian army. The Haitians do not, of course, want an army to go to war with the Dominican Republic. They want an army to counterbalance the current humiliating imbalance which they feel in the presence of Dominican soldiers. I encountered absolutely no expectation among Haitians that their government would ever build the roads, electrical systems, water systems, hospitals, and schools that are found on the Dominican side of the border. Haitians in this sense have a much more rational understanding of what is likely or even possible than the Pollyannaish visions of outsiders who assume that an infusion of enough money and consultants will convert a predatory Haitian ruling system into a club of responsible civil servants. But many Haitians in the border

areas seem to assume that at least the presence of a Haitian army on the Haitian side of the border would somehow soften the abuse that Haitians claim to suffer on the Dominican side of the border.

Haitians are aware, with anger at their own State, of the stark contrast between the two governments. Despite their anger at the treatment which they receive at the hands of Dominican authorities, they see the roads, electrical systems, and water systems installed and maintained by the State on the Dominican side of the border. The economic upswing generated by the recent opening of the Dominican border and by access to Dominican markets has led to a construction boom. But the improvements are all private. Any public improvement, such as the improved road to Cap-Haitien, have all been financed by international donors. In contrast the principal behavior of the few Haitian authorities that are present in Ouanaminthe is to collect taxes. Haitians from north to south, in short, expressed negative perceptions and sentiments about their own government.

Haitian fears of house and land expropriation

Because Haitians lack documentation, and because their access to homes and gardens is contingent upon Dominican permission, I encountered widespread anxiety among them as to the danger of sudden expropriation or expulsion from their homes. In the agricultural colony of Mencia this fear has created local social conflict which became evident during my visit to the community and which erupted during two of my interviews. Several problems were mentioned

The matter erupted in the wake of a series of newspaper articles published by the *Listin Diario*. Some community members noted for their hostility to Haitians took advantage of the public furor created by the media and contacted authorities. Local immigration authorities in Pedernales were given orders from Santo Domingo to initiate eviction proceedings against Haitians living in the colony houses of Mencia. A day or two prior to my visit to the community, a delegation from Migration came and issued eviction orders to three Haitian families living in the colony, who were told to vacate within 8 days. They were not told to leave the country but simply to vacate the houses in the colony and to construct huts on local farmland as is the general practice in the Haitian community in that area.

This incident sparked off fears in the local Haitian community that there was a plot by Dominican farmers to expel their Haitian laborers and to confiscate their gardens. Haitians in this area and in many other regions are permitted by Dominican landowners to plant gardens on the owner's land. Sometimes the Haitian has to turn over part of the produce in a de-facto sharecropping arrangement. Sometimes the landowner waives rights to any part of the Haitian's harvest. But in Mencia there was anxiety among the Haitians that the expulsion orders were the first step in a plot to deprive Haitians of access to the farm plots which they had planted with the owner's permission. This is the rural counterpart to the urban fear of Haitian construction workers that bosses will call in the army before payday so that workers will be rounded up and deported before they are paid.

Haitian hopelessness with respect to better treatment in Dominican markets

Haitians who make biweekly trips to Dominican border markets were unanimous in their rage at the treatment which they receive at the hands of Dominican authorities. It is strongly believed by Haitians that the presence of a truly binational market system, in which each locality would have two markets,

one on Dominican territory where Dominicans would sell, and one on Haitian territory where Haitians would sell, would not only reduce the economic losses that they currently suffer because of the predatory practices to which they are subject. It would also, in their view, reduce the level of abuse itself. If Dominicans are going each week into Haitian territory to purchase, the Dominican authorities would be reluctant to continue in abusive practices that could trigger retaliation against Dominicans who cross the border to purchase in the Haitian markets. Though not formulated by people in such abstract terms, it is believed that an equality of market infrastructure would defuse the current asymmetric structures that place Haitians in a position of radical subordination to Dominican authorities and to Dominican civilians who receive a defacto green light from Dominican authorities – as in the case of the Elias Piña market – to subject Haitians to predatory practices.

Changing images of Dominicans among Haitians

As for the Dominican Republic, the active initiatives taken by the Dominican government in the post-earthquake era has provoked what for me are unprecedented positive comments by Haitians whom I interviewed in the border area concerning Dominicans and their government. This will be discussed in the end of the report. That notwithstanding, there continues to be asymmetry in Haitian / Dominican mutual perceptions. Among Haitians in most parts of Haiti there is no obsessive or even prominent concern with Dominicans that corresponds to the anxiety provoked by the increasing Haitian presence in the Dominican Republic.

For these and other reasons there has arisen an asymmetric situation in which Dominican perceptions of and sentiments toward Haitians are much stronger than the converse. This generalization emphatically does not hold for Haitians who live in the Dominican Republic or for the Haitian women of border towns who suffer various sorts of indignities during their biweekly trips into Dominican market places. Among these groups of Haitians there are strong opinions about and sentiments toward Dominicans, generally negative in the case of itinerant market women. But if we take a deeper historical perspective and a broader geographical scope, on the whole ordinary Dominicans are more concerned with Haitians than vice-versa.

Who is Dominican and who is Haitian?

The special problem of Haitians born in the Dominican Republic

In this concluding section I will deal with the currently sensitive issue of the refusal of the Dominican government to give birth certificates and de jure citizenship to Haitians born to undocumented alien parents on Dominican soil. Human beings need an identity. In the modern world part of one's identity is citizenship in a nation state. An important touched on in this report is the currently controversial topic of the birth certificates and *cédulas* that are necessary to have citizenship rights in the Dominican Republic. It is not an issue on which in-country NGOs are invited even to opine by Dominican authorities, but on which international opinion is frequently expressed. It must be mentioned here because it arose as an issue of tension and even anger, particularly during the field research in the southern part of the border.

The anger to be discussed here was anger expressed, not by Haitians, but by Dominicans. And despite stereotypes to the contrary, the Dominican anger that emerged on the border was not against Haitians trying to claim Dominican citizenship, but against a Dominican governmental policy that denies citizenship to a certain subgroup of children of Haitian origin. As in so many other issues, the conflict is not one between Haitians and Dominicans, but between a citizenry and its own government.

I encountered numerous cases in the border areas of Dominican men with Haitian wives. The frequency of such unions in the rural areas derives less from the stereotype about the sexual energy of black females, particularly Haitian females, than from the perception on the part of Dominicans that Haitian women do more agricultural and domestic labor than Dominican women, are less demanding of amenities, and are less prone to try to leave the farm and migrate to the city. For these perceptual reasons, and for simple demographic reasons related to the emigration of available Dominican women, there are many cases of Dominican / Haitian marriages. These are, anthropologically speaking, bona fide co-residential marriages with procreation as a goal and a shared domestic economy. They are not transient sexual escapades on the part of Dominican men.

The identity problem arises: are the children Haitian or Dominican? The current practice is for the civil registry office to deny a Dominican birth certificate to these children, who are called *arrayanos* in the southern border area (*aladjan* in Creole).

Constitutional rejection of jus soli

The recently approved Dominican constitution reiterates the refusal of the Dominican government to follow the *jus soli* principal of citizenship reckoning, which would endow anybody born in the Dominican Republic with automatic Dominican citizenship. The child of a non-citizen born in the Dominican Republic is Dominican only if the person is legally resident in the country. Undocumented Haitians do not fall into this category. Their children are therefore not Dominicans. After their birth in a Dominican hospital they receive a document affirming the place and time of birth, but not the official Dominican birth certificate that will eventually be required for the I.D. (*cédula*). Without this I.D. a person is barred from higher levels of education and eventual employment in the country.

Haitians born in Haiti and travelling in the Dominican Republic with Haitian passports and the required visa are treated as respectfully as any other foreigner. But third and fourth generation Haitians have never been to Haiti. They cannot obtain a Haitian passport. They thus remain “illegals” in a country where they and their parents may have been born. If they stay put in their community of birth they may never clash with the authorities. But if they try to travel between cities, they are likely to be pulled out of the vehicle at one of the many military checkpoints on the main roads. Several Dominicans complained that these checkpoints serve as illegal toll booths in which military exact gratuities for one reason or another. Probably the major targets of these demands are Haitians caught travelling without an official Dominican or foreign I.D. A third generation Haitian whose native language is Spanish, who has never been to Haiti, but who lacks a Dominican *cédula*, could be dragged off a bus the same as a Haitian who had just crossed the border the previous week. But the bothersome travel restrictions for undocumented Haitians pale in importance to the restrictions which their statelessness places on their educational and occupational mobility.

The arrayanos of the southern border

The anger which this situation provoked during fieldwork among Dominicans concern a special subgroup of Haitians: those that have a Dominican father and a Haitian mother. Widespread patterns of intermarriage (usually consensual and informal, rather than legal) among Dominican men and Haitian women have produced mixed offspring which, in the southern border, are identified with a specific label: *arrayano* (*aladjan* in Creole). As pointed out, these offspring are on the whole emphatically not children of casual extramarital encounters. I came across many cases of Dominican men whose principal or sole spouse was a Haitian woman, almost always undocumented.

The Dominican fathers of these children perceive them, of course, as Dominicans and want them to be given birth certificates and full citizenship rights. However the local officials of the Junta Central Electoral -- the office where births are reported and birth certificates issued -- generally refuse to recognize these children as Dominicans. Though I was unable to determine the legal basis of this, the actual procedure that is usually followed is to ask the mother of the child to show her Dominican *cédula*. If the mother can show a *cédula*, her child is registered as Dominican, *whether or not she has a husband*. I doubt that this de-facto system of matrilineal descent, identical in some ways with the Jewish system of descent reckoning, was either introduced by rabbis or enjoys a basis in Dominican law. Several people in the capital assured me that the children of a Dominican father would be given citizenship. I can assure them in return that they are wrong, at least in the southern border region where I explicitly examined this phenomenon in some detail, including visits to the JCE office and interviews with officials. Whatever the law says, the actual behavioral custom has been to deny a birth certificate when the mother cannot present a Dominican *cédula*.

This means that in those rarer cases in which the father is Haitian and the mother Dominican, the child gets registered as Dominican with no questions. The mother may not tell the official that the father is Haitian, may pretend that she had the child out of wedlock. But as long as the mother can show her *cédula*, the child is Dominican. The gender of the child is irrelevant, as is the status of the father. As in Jewish law, only the mother counts.

To deal with this dilemma a system of informal pretense has arisen. The father of the child may ask a female relative or friend to declare the child as hers. (This is done as a favor, not as a business.) The child thus is declared as Dominican. But he or she will have no legal bond to the biological mother, to the Haitian woman. The woman who declares the child, but who will not raise it, could have inheritance issues later. It is a short term solution, but one that is to nobody's advantage.

The evolving Constitution

The new Constitution maintains the restriction against citizenship to children whose parents are both illegal immigrants, however, it reads: "son dominicanos los hijos e hijas de padres o madres dominicanos, quienes ya gocen de la nacionalidad antes de la entrada en vigor de la presente Constitución". (Persons are Dominicans if they are sons or daughters of Dominican fathers or mothers, who were already Dominicans before the present Constitution comes into effect.) The important phrase

stipulates “Dominican fathers or mothers”, not “Dominican fathers and mothers”. That wording, if applied, will finally give the fathers of the *arrayanos*, the children of mixed Haitian / Dominican descent, a constitutional basis for demanding that their children be given a Dominican birth certificate. The current de facto practice observed in the southern border area is to consider as Dominican anybody who has a Dominican mother. It discriminates against Dominican fathers. The proposed constitutional wording cited above would, if applied, eliminate this discriminatory practice. Several wording changes, however, were negotiated between the political parties from that formulation in May of 2009 and the approval of the new Constitution in late 2009. The final version of the Constitution retreats into a partial ambiguity on the citizenship issue that would still leave the *arrayanos* in legal limbo.

The earthquake and Dominican citizenship

The earthquake elicited a spontaneous, compassionate response from Dominicans of all social classes and all political persuasions. The Dominican president, Leonel Fernandez, himself flew to Haiti the day after the earthquake and met with President Preval, whose palace and personal residence had both been destroyed and who was in effect homeless in a room in the airport. The Dominican Republic sent food, water, mobile kitchens, medical personnel, technicians to restore electricity. Dominican hospitals along the border had long ago opened their doors to Haitian patients. The border was thrown wide open and Haitians injured in the quake were quickly escorted, not only to border hospitals, but also to hospitals in the interior of the country. Dominican airports were thrown open to relief supplies, which could enter unimpeded in transit to Haiti. When I debarked from a plane in the Areopuerto de las Americas, on the way to Haiti the following day, I stood in line to buy the required \$10 tourist ticket. The man at the counter somehow guessed that I might be only in transit to Haiti. “Are you going to Haiti?” “Yes, tomorrow.” He then waved me by. “Go right in. You don’t need a tourist card.” Further on there were other officials checking tourist cards. I told them I was going to Haiti. They sent me to a special expedited line.

The Dominican woman who nursed several Haitian children with her own milk was given a presidential award. Her response was simply an extreme variant of the spontaneous compassion that was seen all over the country. This collective, instantaneous, and totally spontaneous outburst of the highest sentiments in human nature has to be documented in more detail than can be done here. It’s the reverse of Eisenhower’s command to take pictures and document the genocide of the Nazi death camps. “Someday some S.O.B. is going to deny this happened.” Likewise we can predict with high probability that those who have made their careers and livelihood caricaturing and smearing Dominicans as anti-Haitian racists, and who have momentarily been silenced by the outpouring of a Dominican compassion for Haiti and Haitians much stronger than their own, will once again spring into poison-pen action against the Dominican Republic.

The identity issue will be one of the foci of continued criticism. The immediate, short term response of the Dominican Republic to the earthquake – the response both of the Dominican government and of the Dominican people – should be an object of careful documentation and a matter of national pride. A very practical, rational, and non-threatening follow up gesture to Haiti and Haitians would be (1) to identify certain clearly defined subgroups or residents of Haitian origin who are currently classified as aliens and (2) endow these specific subgroups with the citizenship which they deserve. First among these are the

arrayanos, the children with Dominican fathers and Haitian mothers. Second would be those second or third generation descendants of *batey* dwellers who came to the country decades ago and whose children were born in the Dominican Republic and have never been to Haiti. The locally born children of these Haitians, whose native language is Spanish and whose only country is the Dominican Republic, are currently being cast in the same legal limbo as a Haitian from Port-au-Prince who sneaked across the border one month ago. They should not be in the same legal category.

There is no reason, in this writer's opinion, for Dominicans to capitulate to outside pressures – many of them unreasonable -- with respect to the unregulated cross border movements. The current crisis of Mexican migrants in Arizona is an American replay of the Dominican dilemma with the influx of Haitian migrants. This process has made Dominicans a demographic minority in many rural areas of the border. Furthermore, post-earthquake forces are clearly triggering off more clandestine migration. The nationwide situation could soon come to be one in which one out of every five or six persons in eastern Hispaniola would be a Haitian. No other country has this dilemma with regard to Haiti. Dominicans must find their own solution.

The first simple step would be to regularize the situation of, and endow with citizenship, the *arrayanos* and descendants of the first generation of *batey* dwellers. This should be done, not in response to outside pressures, but in response to the same internal impulses of wisdom and compassion which led the Dominican Republic to lead the way and take the first steps in the worldwide international response to the tragic Haitian earthquake.

Summary and main conclusions

With the exception of the Haitian border area and the Haitian community living in the Dominican Republic, ordinary Dominicans are much more aware of and concerned about Haitians than ordinary Haitians are concerned about Dominicans. The multiple reasons for this were discussed in the report.

The perception in the academic and human rights communities that Haitian / Dominican tensions are a product of "Dominican racism" were not borne out at all by the current research. Race did not emerge in any of the lengthy electronically recorded unless I explicitly brought it up.

Comparative international statistics indicate that the Dominican Republic has achieved the highest level of Afro-Caucasian biological integration in the Americas.

Dominican racial classification places the brown skinned majority in a separate category from whites or blacks. Haitian racial classification in contrasts merges brown skin and white skin into a single category labeled *wouj*, "red".

Dominican esthetic norms look down upon African phenotype. Haitians in contrast assume African phenotype as the norm, though Haitians with slightly lighter "red" skin enjoy an esthetic advantage.

The accusation that the Dominican use of the word "Indian" for brown skin entails a fictitious belief that Dominican ancestors are aboriginals and not Africans was shown to be totally false.

The conflicts that have existed between Dominicans and Haitians are attributed by members of both groups to economic, demographic, or political factors, *not to racial prejudice on the part of Dominicans*. There is racial prejudice in the country from which Dominican blacks as well as Haitians suffer. But the special problems that have existed between Haitians and Dominicans are the product of non-racial factors.

The major area in which Haitian black skin is a distinct disadvantage in the Dominican Republic is the practice of racial profiling used by Dominican soldiers along the roads leading from the border to the capital and to Santiago. Vehicles and buses will be stopped and persons with black skin will be asked to show their identity, with a view to detecting undocumented Haitians. Many black Dominicans are subject to this racial profiling. When their identity is established they are allowed to proceed. Those who are stopped and arrested (if they make no payment) receive this treatment *not because they are black but because they are Haitian*. It is not a racial issue. It is a national, ethnic issue.

The report discussed various fears that are felt by both Dominicans in communities that are now largely Haitians and by Haitians who have no legal rights in the country. The report also discussed the multiple domains of cordial interaction between Dominicans and Haitians.

The earthquake which changed forever the history of Haiti may drastically alter the mutual perceptions and relationships between Haitians and Dominicans. In response to compassionate and immediate Dominican response to the earthquake, extremely favorable post-earthquake comments were heard from Haitians about Dominicans in communities that, in earlier research, had lambasted Dominicans for their alleged mistreatment of Haitians. This is a fragile change that could easily be nullified if the post-earthquake increase in clandestine Haitian migration to the Dominican Republic provokes inappropriate behavior on the part of Dominican authorities. What is an appropriate response is, of course, a complicated value judgment on which there is strong disagreement, as witnessed by the controversies that are currently (May 2010) raging in Arizona and dividing U.S. legislators and citizens on what is the proper response to uncontrolled migration.

Annex 1: Detailed itinerary

From Oct. 19th to Oct. 21 I spent several days in La Hatte Cadette (a village outside of Thomazeau) and in Fond Parisien, where I learned about the killing that had just occurred of several Haitian charcoal extractors in the mountains above Jimaní. Though a group of angry Haitian human rights protestors was blocking access to the border on the Haitian side, we were eventually permitted to pass by and to cross into Jimaní. I spent Oct. 22 and Oct. 23 in Jimani interviewing Dominicans – both farmers in the rural community of Boca Cachón and Dominican police and judicial officials in Jimaní – about the incident. I also interviewed colmado owners and a Haitian businessman who had also studied in Santo Domingo. The interviews on matters such as these provided qualitative data for both reports, the report on Haitian / Dominican conflicts, and this current report on general perceptions and attitudes.

On the afternoon of Oct. 23 I arrived in the community of Puerto Escondido, in the hills south of Duverge, several kilometers from the mountain border post of El Aguacate. Puerto Escondido is not only a major destination of Haitians from nearby communities of Chapotin, Fonds Verrettes, and Foret des Pins seeking wage labor. It is also a traditional transit point for the “*congos*”, the local designation used by both Dominicans and Haitians for those Haitians from more distant parts of Haiti who contract with smugglers to bring them into the cane fields throughout the southern region of the Dominican Republic. The first group of Haitians, the local farm laborers, makes monthly or even biweekly journeys back to their own farms in Haiti with their wages. The latter group stays for several months or even years before returning home, or before finding a niche in the Dominican construction industry or some other economic niche. In Puerto Escondido I had several interviews with the local Dominican military commander, with Dominican store owners, and with Dominican managers of two large foreign owned farms in the area which employ hundreds of Haitians. I conversed with dozens of Haitians performing agricultural wage labor in the area.

There were also numerous conversations with members of a special social category that is used as a label in the southern region of the frontier but not in Dajabón and other northern communities – the *arrayanos*. These are descendants of Dominican fathers and Haitian mothers. The *arrayano* children with whom I spoke are totally bilingual and bicultural. As we shall see in the report, both they and their parents are living proof of the integration that can occur and has occurred between Haitians and Dominicans. Though the population merges linguistically and culturally, the Dominican State refuses birth certificates to these bilingual and bicultural children of undocumented Haitian mothers. (If the father is Haitian and the mother is Dominican, a birth certificate will be issued)

On Oct. 27th I left Puerto Escondido and headed via the border road to Pedernales. I was in the Pedernales / Anse-a-Pitre area from Oct. 27th to Nov. 2. I carried out interviews on the little traveled border leading southward from El Aguacate to Pedernales. I interviewed Dominican park rangers in Zapoten, and numerous Dominicans and Haitians in the border communities of Los Arroyos, Las Maniguas and other hamlets on the road to Pedernales, where I had an intensive evening interview with a Dominican hotel manager about racial issues. I tried to interview Dominican government officials in

Pedernales about the withholding of birth certificates from the *arrayanos*, but I was told that they were not authorized to speak on the issue.

In Pedernales and across the border in Anse-a-Pitre I utilized PADF's multiple partnerships -- FUNDASIPE, COTRALCOA, COOPERATIVA TRES HERMANAS, AGUINAPE, Asociación de Pescadores Agustín Muñoz -- to converse with farmers, fishermen, schoolteachers and other institutional personnel. I also made independent contact with Catholic priests and nuns on both sides of the border involved in social activities. I observed scenes in the binational market and interviewed both Dominicans and Haitians who were selling side-by-side in the market.

I had interviews with Haitian fishermen in Anse-a-Pitre who still remembered the murder over a decade ago of several Haitians by Dominican fishermen as though it had happened yesterday. But the anger of the fishermen was more directed at their own local leaders who had converted a motorboat given to their association into quasi-private property. I interviewed the leaders of a new breakaway association that had been founded in response to this abuse. During this trip to Pedernales and Anse-a-Pitre I was accompanied by a project manager from the PADF office in Santo Domingo and by a visitor from OAS Washington.

While in the Pedernales region I visited two agricultural colonies – Mencia and Altagracia – where media reports had stated that Haitians had replaced the Dominicans who had left. My guide was a Pedernales resident who had been born in Altagracia but who had emigrated to Pedernales to become a fisherman. In Mencia I found myself in the middle of a fierce argument between two residents – one a bilingual *arrayana* woman and the other a colonist who had come from the Cibao and who expressed pleasure at the rumored forthcoming eviction of Haitians from the houses of the colony. The bulk of my research in the border goes against certain writings that demonize and paint an exaggeratedly sinister picture of relations between Dominicans and Haitian migrants. These interactions in Mencia and in other communities, however, were a dramatic antidote against going in the other dimension and romanticizing those relations.

On Nov. 2 I left Pedernales. On the way back to Santo Domingo I stopped off in Polo, a mountain community in the Bahoruco mountain range where there continues to be a strong Haitian presence and whose residents spontaneously talked of the positive relations between Dominicans and Haitians in the town.

From Nov. 2 to Nov. 6 I was in Santo Domingo writing a draft of a preliminary report. From Nov. 7th to Nov. 9th I traveled to Costanza. I was able to interview both Haitians and Dominicans about the role of Haitian field laborers. Salaries for Haitians in this region are more than triple what I found in the border area.

On Nov. 10th I departed for another lengthy field trip to the central and northern border areas initially accompanied by the director of the PADF office in Santo Domingo. I met in San Juan de la Maguana with a Dominican lawyer who conversed with us about Haitians in that area and who accompanied us on a trip through neighborhoods with a Haitian presence. We passed through the border station in the town of Elias Piña (Comendador), where I conversed with various Dominicans and Haitians while our travel

documents were being examined and approved. We immediately crossed over into Belladere where I carried out interviews between the afternoon of Nov. 10th and the morning of Nov. 13th.

The Belladere experience was the venue where the angriest comments were heard about Dominican mistreatment of Haitians. The mistreatment was reported to occur principally in the Elias Piña market place. The details have been described in another report. In Belladere I conversed with farmers, market women, businessmen, school teachers and directors, medical personnel, customs personnel, civil leaders, human rights activists and religious leaders. In addition to interviewing the Catholic priest and a protestant Pastor, I spent several hours at a Vodou ceremony observing not only the rituals but also the manner in which Dominicans cross the border to attend these rites and to consult with the houngan (Vodou priest).

On the morning of Nov. 13th I was accompanied by three Haitians who wanted to show me firsthand the problems that Haitians encounter in the Friday market in Elias Piña. We joined the crowd in the border village of Corosol waiting for the gates to open into the Dominican Republic. I spent the morning observing and photographing market scenes. I photographed several private Dominican tax collectors (the market has been leased to a private entrepreneur) shouting at Haitians, demanding taxes that were more than ten times higher than those demanded of Dominicans, and confiscating merchandise when the Haitian women could not pay. The collectors demanded that I stop photographing, claiming that the public market was now their private property. After some mutually harsh words between the collectors and myself, my Haitian companions discreetly disappeared and I followed their lead.

In Elias Piña I subsequently interviewed the Dominican directors of two foundations. One of them Amarilys Castillo, arranged for me to interview other local persons knowledgeable about Dominican / Haitian relations. In Elias Piña I was also able to interview a French-national who heads Oxfam / Canada's office in Elias Piña.

On Nov. 15th I departed Elias Piña and headed north on the International Highway toward Dajabón. On the way I stopped and interviewed Haitian residents of the communities of Los Cacaos, El Corte, La Finca, and Santa Maria. I stopped in the Dominican agricultural colony of Guayajayuco, where I had a lengthy interview with a member of the founding family who told me of a newly installed drip irrigation system that may transform the economy of the region. We also made a stop off in the community of Rio Limpio, where I was surprised to learn, in my rapid interviews of local farmers and community leaders, of serious problems, not between the Dominicans and the many Haitians who live there, but between the Dominican farmers and their own government. They had been given the land in an agrarian reform of the 1980's but were now forbidden to practice their traditional farming by a sudden decree of their own government. This has also been dealt with in another report. We arrived in Dajabón in the evening of Nov. 15th.

I carried out interviews in the Dajabón / Ouanaminthe area between Nov. 16th and Nov. 20th. I observed the Monday market in the company of the local director of Centro Puente, a human rights group which operates on both sides of the border. I interviewed members of a livestock association, of a bee keeper group, a fruit growing group, the President of the Hotel Association of Dajabón, and Dominican market

women who do business in Ouanaminthe and who gave examples of collegial interactions with Haitian counterparts. At sunset I visited the border crossing at a newly constructed bridge where I viewed CESFRON (Dominican border soldiers) preventing Haitians from using the new but not-yet-inaugurated bridge leading over into Haiti. I had interviews with two major Catholic figures in Dajabón, both Dominican Jesuits: the director of Solidaridad Fronteriza and the director of the local radio station Radio Marien.

In Ouanaminthe I interviewed a member of the Association des Commerçants de Ouanaminthe. In the village of Tet Kole, I interviewed the president of a local woman's group and the head of a farmer organization in another village Koujoul. In Ouanaminthe I was also able to observe a ceremony for the celebration of the battle of Vertieres. Demobilized Haitian army personnel donned their uniforms and marched for the first time since their demobilization by Aristide. During these events I also conducted two lengthy group interviews with large groups of men attending the ceremony. I then visited the small town of Capotille, several miles south of Dajabón, directly across from the Dominican town of Loma de Cabrera. I interviewed a group of Haitian market women who were furious with the treatment that they received when they went to the weekly market across the border in Loma de Cabrera. Back in Dajabón I interviewed the Haitian priest who is in charge of the Haitian chapter of Solidaridad Fronteriza and from there returned to Dajabón.

On Nov. 19th I returned to Rio Limpio for a second visit and for preparation for a longer visit which I intended to make. On the road to Río Limpio I conversed with two schoolteachers and with a student at CREAR, the environmental school in Rio Limpio. I interviewed as well the director of CREAR, a group of Haitian migrants and the Dominicans for whom they worked, the Director and forest rangers of Medio Ambiente (the Dominican Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources), a woman in the Centro Ecologico, and two Park Project program managers. I visited the local primary school as well.

Back in Dajabón on Friday Nov 20, I observed Dominicans selling vegetables to Haitian women in the Friday market. I crossed over again into Ouanaminthe, where I interviewed the Haitian consul to Dajabón, a businessman with a large cement importation business, a Haitian who had owned an ice factory in Dajabón but who had returned to Haiti. That afternoon I returned to Santo Domingo

I remained in Santo Domingo until Nov. 24th, when I departed for my final trip, back to Rio Limpio, where I spent five days interviewing both Dominicans and Haitians on the special situation that affects everyone in Rio Limpio as a result of the paralysis of the local agricultural system by a decree of the Dominican government. My fieldwork terminated on Nov. 28th.

Annex 2: List of contacts.

Santo Domingo

Pan American Development Foundation

- Daniel O’Neil, Director, Pan American Development Foundation, Santo Domingo
- Sebastian Molina, Program Coordinator, Pan American Development Foundation, Santo Domingo
- César Guillermo, Director for Dominican Borderlands and Disaster Management, Pan American Development Foundation

FLACSO: Observatorio de los migrantes del Caribe

- Bridget Wooding
- Alicia Sangro
- Manoucheka D’Orneau

Other

- FONDO MICRO : Lic. Marina Ortiz .
- Pelegrín Castillo S., Diputado, Distrito Nacional.
- Jose Ricardo Taveras B., Diputado, Stgo. de los Caballeros
- Carlos Michelin, Consultor de la Cancillería
- Cathy Feingold. Centro de Solidaridad. afl cio.
- Dr. Frank Moya Pons, historian
- Kate Wallace.
- Eulogia Familia, Vice President . Confederación nacional de unidad syndical.
- Ing. Altagracia Espaillat.
- Julio Mir, maestro constructor.

Jimani

- Rafael Lorenzo .
- Tony Pina, CDN channel 37 News Reporter
- Major Luis Nidio José, Inspector, Policía Nacional.
- Rudy Pérez Medrano, Procurador Fiscal Prov. Independencia
- Virgilio Encarnación, farmer Boca Cachón.
- Angel Volquez and Delsi Volquez (Colmado Volquez)

San Juan de la Maguana

- Victor Vargas – abogado y maestro constructor

Puerto Escondido

- Teniente Juan Pablo Segura Perez, commanding officer, military post Puerto Escondido
- Sordo, agricultor
- Cándida Morales and Elena, Two market women
- Alfonso Almonte Perez, Alcalde Pedáneo
- Felipe Confesor Ledespa , 90 year old farmer.
- Jose Doleres Jimenez, Administrador del Parque Nacional Sierra del Bahuco

- Ramona Ledesma and her husband Bernardo Ledesma, colmado owners
- Altagracia Ledesma Segura (Sojo), custodian of the Catholic church.
- Sr. Alberto Lopez, manager, farm La Rejanal, company Abocaribe
- Juancito Madrano (farmer and colmado owner
- Sainswa Egzasen
- Sr. Jose Altagracia Bello, empleado Medioambiente

Dominican farmers:

- Colodomirol Alberto Segura Perez
- Fernando Ledesma
- Jorge Manuel Reyes
- Nenén Segura

Escuela Puerto Escondido

- Lcda. Wermian Perdomo, Orientadora. 809-965-2431
- Prof. Leontines Medrano, pre-escolar

Clinic in Puerto Escondido

- Dra. Marcela Riva
- Dra. Zoraida Sanchez
- Lda. Ana Digna Perdomo, enfermera

Road from El Aguacate to Pedernales

- Melanio Vargas, park ranger Zapoten
- Las Maniguas: Manuel Antonio Felix Benites, alcalde

Los Arroyos

- Juan Oscar Ramirez Martes farmer from Constanza
- Alisme Senswa and Romere Louijuste (Haitian fieldhands)
- Lcdo. Elvido Emiliio de Leon, school teacher
- Ernesto Novas Soler, vecino
- Rafael Rosario Valdez, 2nd alcalde

Port-au-Prince

- Jempsy Fils-Aime, director IDB Haiti jempsyf@iadb.org
- Kamel Maina, Country Director, PADF Haiti
- Herve Rakoto Razafimbahiny, the Pan American Development Foundation , Chief of Party, Protecting Human Rights

Fond Parisien

- Mme. Suzette Balñan, Coodonatrice droits humains haitiens.
- M. Bertin, delegue, 3 7M21 8217
- Michelle Jean Pierre, Secretaire, doits humains 8 17 6 19

La Hatte Cadette

- Mme. Edouard Decembre
- Dieudonne Decembre
- Djemenn Decembre
- Mme. Edner Bleus
- M. Edner Bleus

- Jo Bleus
- Franjel Michel
- Ronald Diveno
- Dumas Lucien
- Belwi Tilisma
- Rok Dezino
- Kempás Odena 36 66 16 01 (Son of Egzimon, grandson of Do Tilis Odena)
- Wilbert Premil 38 15 91 29
- Rafael Auguste (pt Micho)
- Dezino Simeon
- Anous Delwi
- Erev Delwi
- Fano Emmanuel (pt Mejenn)
- Armando Lorisme
- Wilbert Premil, school director
- Jilya Premil (pt. Mejenn)
- Odet Jean
- Vyejela Simeon
- Milod Meralis
- Louianne Michel (Pt. Mme. Pozan)
- Gladis Danteal
- Gertrid Emmanuel (Pt. Micho)
- Sidaliz Delwi
- Migelit Paul
- Charre Leon Erodna (pt. Bienaime Jean)
- Paula Anayise
- Linda Delwi
- Rosette Sine

Pedernales

- Yadira Soto, Asesora, Oficina del Secretario General, Organización de los Estados Americanos.
- Luis Enrique Perez, Vicepresidente, Fundación Integral para el Desarrollo de Pedernales. FUNDASIPE
- Padre Antonio Fernandez, Pedernales. Parroquia Altagracia de Pedernales.
- Angel Jimenez, Presidente, COOTRALCOA Cooperativa de Trabajadores de la Alcoa.
- Carlos Torres, contable, Cooperativa cafetelera Tres Hermanas.
- Amauris Felix, presidente AGUINAPE Asociación de Guías Naturales de Pedernales
- Jose Vetilio Adames, agroforestry teacher
- Jacobo Acosta Urbaez, head of fishing cooperative
- Cesar Augusto Perez Perez, teacher
- Camilo Avendraño, PADF volunteer
- Sister Paula and Sister Tati, Altagraciana nuns
- Dr. Jose Serulle Ramia, Dominican Ambassador to Trinidad, Former Ambassador to Haiti
- Dr. Jacqueline Boinne, Economist
- Arq. Jorge Serulle Jimenez, construction contractor
- Rufino Medina, fishing entrepreneur

- A dozen members of the fishing cooperative.
- Sr. Rafael E. Corniel, customs inspector

Managers of Tres Hermanas Organic Coffee Cooperative

- Ariel Moreta Gomez, Manager of the cooperative
- Jose Ramon Pula Diaz, President of the Association
- Carlos Torres, Treasurer / Cashier

Polo

- Jose Rafael Felix, local resident
- Eddy Cury, farmer and warehouse owner.

Anse a Pitre

- Bertrand Corneus, regional coordinator, CROSE (Coordination Regional des Organisations du Sudest)

Asosyason Peche Deside Anse a Pit

- Ricardo Claude, President
- Johnny Antoine
- Jethro Pierre
- Pere Affricot A. Helvetius , Catholic priest

Various fishers in Anse a Pitre

- Martineau Pordijou
- Audissa Jean-Baptiste
- Oswald Beaudouis
- Milior Pierre
- Herven Pierre
- Maxim Bounis

Men and women in market place

- Solange Pierre
- Viviana Silde
- Marcelin Sanoz
- Justin Jean Mary

Mencia

- Julio Brito
- Dra. Adolfina Nin, resident physician
- Sra. Cristina Rosario, community organizer
- Sra. Alicia Espinal, community organizer
- Sra. Ana Belquis Felix
- Rafael Elpidio Brito, farmer, community organizer
- Dionisio Rosario
- Fausto Perache Asconci
- Merciades Sena
- Francisca Rodriguez

La Altagracia

- Luis Martinez Pimentel,
- Dominga Valenzuela
- Prof. Eufemia Erasia Gonzales, pre-school teacher
- Francisco Creciano Almonte
- Amauris Ramirez and Justa Degni Martes, comerciante couple

Dajabon

- Pamela Schreier Peace Corps Volunteer, apicultores 809-467-5205.
- Arcadio Sosa , Centro Puente.
- Padre Guillermo Perdomo, Radio Marien
- Juan Tomás Susa, Pres. Asociación Hoteleros de Dajabón. Delegado, Comité Seguimiento del Mercado.
- Andrés Pimentel Cabrera, Asociación de Productores de Frutas Orgánicas del Noroeste APRORGANOR, Dajabón, Inc.
- Isidro Gomez, CREAM and Consejo Cuenca Chacuey Maguaja
- Padre Regino, Solidaridad Fronteriza
- Dr. Miguel Rodriguez, Medio Ambiente
- Santiago de la Rosa (Chago), Asociación de Apicultores

ASOMUNEDA, Asociación de Mujeres de la Nueva Esperanza, Dajabón.

- Marisela Elena, Presidente.
- Quisqueya Jiménez, Secretaria General,
- Ninoska Camilo, miembro.

Asociación de Ganaderos

- Ramón Cordero
- Pedro Rodriguez
- Anibal Cruz

Belladere

- Edward Luly Jasmin, Garr member
- Dr. Eustache Richard Nixon, physician at Belladere Hospital
- Mme. Gladys Jean Baptiste
- M. Paul Gabriel
- M. Basin Claudy, Manager, COOPDEA, Belladere credit coop
- Arsen, Etien, Director Licey Belladere
- Montas Richlieu, businessman
- Francois Stenio, Businessman
- Henry Deneau, Azek of Cachiman, director of ODSBC,
- Pere Michener Duportal, Catholic priest in Belladere.

Guayajayuco

- Sirindo Rodriguez (Marino) – earliest family in G.

- Felix Mura Alcantara, Director of School

Rio Limpio

- Ana Gertrudis Almonte
- Biovenenido Antonio Rodriguez , colmado owner
- Doña Margot Castillo Velo , manager of Centro Eco-Turístico
- Paulino Santana, farmer
- Milciades Beltie, Coordinador Zona Artibonito, PROMAREN
- Michel Lalanne, Coordinador Fundacion Frontera Futuro
- Obispo de la Rosa (Juanito), Administrador, Medio Ambiente
- Patricio Sanchez Sereno, Centro Ecoturistico
- Juan de Jesús Ventura , JACARAFE, coffee Project
- León Alcántara and wife Amparo, farm family affected by prohibition
- Fátima Franco, employee GTZ.
- Ricardo Fernández, CAJIR
- Maximo Aquino
- Lies De Sutter , Belgian physican volunteer
- Kobe Van Pottelbergh , Belgian physican volunteer
- Hilario Alcántara, CREAM
- Prof. Ramón Emilio Valenzuela, CREAM
- Rivera Mora Guzman, artista
- Ana Dolores Mercedes Popa , GTZ: Manejo Gestión y Protección de los Recursos Naturales
- Jesús Alcántara, Alcalde Pedáneo
- Juan Carlos Aquino Contreras

Haitian migrants:

- Arnav Lavwazenn
- Breno Prencio
- Diogene Edga

Haitian women

- Filomene, wi. of Elia, leader of Haitian Protestant church
- Lourdes
- Ana

Rio Limpio school:

- Juana María Arias Pérez , teacher.
- Alejandro Familia, teacher
- Ana Mercedes Guzmán

Farmers:

- Romulo Aquino Alcántara hortensio

- Leon Alcántara (Blanquito)-
- Juan de Dios Popa Octavio
- Linares de los Santos Contrera el amarillo
- Julio de los santos Peña
- Patricio Miguel Sanchez

Farmers

- Pascual Mercedes Olivo
- Bandilio Peres (Fellito)
- Ana Celsa Popa

Ouanaminthe and surroundings

- Jean Baptiste Bienaime, Haitian Consul in Dajabon.
- Ivro Barmarciss, cement businessman
- Guy Benjamin, Industrialist
- Boselin Joazard, Association des Commerçants de Ouanaminthe
- Huguette Charles, Tet Kole Fanm Dile.
- Claudin Pierre, Tet Kole Koujol.
- F. Louis Lazar, Solidarité Frontaliere
- Joazard Boselin, Ass. de Comercantes de Ouanaminthe
- Lucien Xavier, Medical student Santiago
- Joseph Bedel, Sec. general CSCO Compromis Social Citoyen Ouanaminthe
- Anette Saintillert, animatrice Oxfam Grande Bretagne

Cercle de Reflection, Ouanaminthe

- Eloi Dukon
- Gerard Desamours
- Daniel Geffrard
- Chrisjin Michel
- Guensly Eloi
- Chavanne Etienne
- Jerome Bienaime
- Kevolus Jonas
- Samuel Elie
- Lemutin Baptiste
- Francoeur Genard

Capotille : Rezo Fanm Kapoti

- Mari Terez Meril
- Bensi Mase
- Juliette Petion
- Amari Flo Nikol

- Wozet Petion
- Kameis Widlin