Antihaitianismo: an embodied discourse

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Contents

Abstract

This thesis argues that contemporary manifestations of social, political and economic discrimination – *antihaitianismo* – in the Dominican Republic towards their Haitian neighbours have become embodied responses which are reproduced through everyday actions. The thesis component explores *antihaitianismo* as an embodied practice while the film explores perceptions of human rights from the standpoint of the Haitian diaspora living across six *bateyes* in the Dominican Republic.

Antihaitianismo is a form of ideological racism towards Haitians, Haitian migrants and Dominicans of Haitian descent which has been utilised by various Dominican leaders since the inception of the nation (Tavernier, 2008, p. 96). It describes a complex institutionally embedded web of political, economic and social stigma and discrimination (ibid.). *Antihaitianismo* polarises the island of Hispaniola along cultural and racial lines, which are "opposites in *antihaitianismo* ideology; thus, to be Dominican means to be not Haitian, and especially not black" (ibid.). *Antihaitianismo* has become entrenched in the Dominican psyche to the extent that most Dominicans are blind to their own and their government's racism towards Haitians and Dominicans of Haitians descent. Using propaganda, personality cults and misinformation, Dominican leaders have consistently blamed Haitians for any number of social and economic ills that wrack the country, allowing them to distract the populace from their own shortcomings, particularly the endemic corruption of state leaders and the mutually beneficial relationship they enjoy with multinational corporations.

Today, the Dominican Republic is facing a humanitarian crisis of its own making. On September 23, 2013 the Dominican Supreme Court ruled that any person who has no documented parentage of Dominican blood is effectively "in transit" or illegal. They retrospectively denationalised hundreds of thousands of Dominicans of Haitian descent born since 1929. Under international pressure, the Dominican Republic put in place their *Plan Nacional de Regularización de Extranjeros* – National Plan for Regularising Foreigners, that – superficially – allowed Dominicans of Haitian descent to register for re-nationalisation. Due to the relatively high cost and complexity of entering the regularisation plan however, most of this population have been unable to successfully register.

Dominicans of Haitian descent have their perception of human rights entwined in the perceived immediacy of the threat of deportation which undermines their ability to find legitimacy in a sense of identity and belonging. Visas are a focal point that epitomise decades of *antihaitianismo*. The threat and anticipation of mass expulsions, while not yet a reality, are used by the Dominican government to create fear and intimidate Haitians and Dominicans of Haitian descent and are an ever-present cloud hanging over their existence and ongoing survival in the Dominican Republic. Stuck in a liminal no man's land, Dominicans of Haitian descent are the hardest hit in this most recent materialisation of *antihaitianismo*.

Statement of authorship

This is to certify that the following thesis is all my own work, except where acknowledgement has been made to the work or ideas of others. It has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution.

Signed: 

Brendan Patrick Morgan

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Preface

On 23 September 2013 the *Tribunal Constitucional de la Repúnlica Dominicana (TC)*, the Constitutional Court of the Dominican Republic, handed down ruling *Sentencia TC/0168/13* on the case of Juliana Deguis Pierre (Gamboa & Harrington Reddy, 2014, p. 53). They ruled that because Deguis' parents were undocumented, they were effectively "in transit" when she was born, meaning she was considered an illegal immigrant in the eyes of the state and thus ineligible for citizenship and an identity card. This decision utilised "the enactment of Migration Law 285-04 in 2004, which states that foreigners who did not enter the territory of the Dominican Republic legally are considered 'in transit'" (Mejia, 2015, p. 208). This changed the interpretation of what it officially meant for a person to be "in transit" – it had previously been understood legally to mean 10 days or less in the country (Blake, 2014, p. 148). In an extraordinary extension of this legal precedent, the tribunal ordered the *Junta Central Electoral (JCE),* the Central Electoral Board, to examine all birth records to foreigners from 1929, applying the *Sentencia* across the board for any Dominicans that were born of foreign undocumented parents from that date forward. As a consequence, it is estimated that between 200,000 to 300,000 Dominicans of Haitian descent, spanning four generations, were denationalised (Gamboa & Harrington Reddy, 2014, p. 53).

The Dominican State now routinely interprets "in transit" to be equivalent to irregular status, retrospectively stripping citizenship from the children of migrants who are deemed to be illegal, undocumented or irregular from 1929 (ibid:151). From January 26, 2010 the Dominican constitution was changed from previously recognising *jus soli* (right of the soil); anyone born on Dominican soil that was not born to foreign diplomats or in the country for less than 10 days was effectively Dominican, to instead recognise right to citizenship through *jus sanguinis* (right of blood); the child's parents must have citizenship for the child to be eligible (Mejia, 2015, p. 203).

While these events are recent, they should be seen as the latest moves in a long history of oppressive measures deployed by a powerful elite. These political, economic and ideologically motivated moves are steeped in an arguably Dominican institution: *antihaitianismo* (anti-Haitianism) (Sagás, 2000, p. ix).

Antihaitianismo forms part of the ideological discourse underpinning Dominican identity, defining what it is to be Dominican by delineating, degrading and dehumanising exactly what it is not – that is, Haitian and black (Tavernier, 2008, p. 99). As a form of ideological racism towards Haitians, Haitian migrants and Dominicans of Haitian descent, it has been utilised by various Dominican leaders since the inception of the nation (ibid:96). It describes a complex institutionally embedded web of political, economic and social stigma and discrimination (ibid.). *Antihaitianismo* polarises the island of Hispaniola along cultural and racial lines, which are "opposites in *antihaitianismo* ideology; thus, to be Dominican means to be not Haitian, and especially not black" (ibid.). Ernesto Sagás believes the essence of this stigmatising phenomena is to be found in the "legacy of racist Spanish colonial mentality, nineteenth-century racial theories and twentieth-century cultural neoracism into a web of anti-Haitian attitudes, racial stereotypes, and historical distortions" (Sagás, 2000, p. ix). As a political, economic and social tool, this "hegemonic ideology" has been used to ensure the ongoing subjugation of the "black and mulatto" Dominican lower classes to human rights abuses, debilitating poverty and social inequality while maintaining their "political quiescence" (ibid.). This potpourri of politics, race and class hatred is now entrenched in Dominican folklore, history and mythology to the extent that the pro-Dominican nationalistic identity is defined as much by what it is opposed to – *antihaitianismo* – as by what it is in favour of.

Deguis was born in the Dominican Republic to Haitian parents in 1984. She was registered as Dominican (Blake, 2014, p.151). Her parents had been contracted to cut sugar cane and she was born in one of the many *bateyes* (communities) which surround the large plantations in the Dominican Republic (Nolan, 2015, p. 38). Each *bateye* has a name: *Los Jovillos* is where Pierre has lived her entire life (ibid.). In 2008 she made an attempt to apply for an identity card to enter the legal workforce. She also needed the identity card to register the birth of her coming child (Mejia 2015, p.203; Nolan 2015, p.38). When she handed her birth papers to the *Junta Central Electoral,* she was told they were invalid. She was refused an identity card on the grounds that her name appeared too Haitian (Blake 2014, p.151). She demanded a constitutional review of the decision, which culminated in the 2013 decision to deny her right to citizenship along with hundreds of thousands of her fellow citizens (Mejia 2015, p.218).

During the two years since the passing of the *Sentencia,* there have been some important actions of the Dominican State that continue to shape the humanitarian crisis. In May 2014, under international pressure, the Dominican Republic put in place the *Plan Nacional de Regularización de Extranjeros* (the National Plan of Regularisation of Foreigners) – an appeasing move that saw little improvement in the lot of the numerous Dominicans of Haitian descent who continue to be stateless (Blake 2014, p.179). The *Plan Nacional de Regularización de Extranjeros* was based on a new naturalisation law and signed by current Dominican president, Danilo Medina: Law 169-14 (ibid.). Importantly, only approximately 20,000 of the more than 200,000 Dominicans of Haitian descent would be able to enter into this program. The large majority would miss out (ibid, p.180).

While much has been said about the evolving humanitarian crisis, the literature on how this crisis and its ideological backing have shaped bodies and behaviour in the quotidian is scant. In researching this question, I immersed myself whenever possible in the city life of the capital, Santo Domingo, visiting Dominicans in their communities over a two-and-a-half-month period from January to April 2015. Through the lens of ethnographic fieldwork, interviews and film, this thesis provides a snapshot of life in the Dominican Republic for the Haitian diaspora, which I take to include Dominicans of Haitian descent living in Santo Domingo and the impoverished *bateyes*. This snapshot offers a perspective on human rights which focusses on survival, embodiment and citizenship. Through this thesis and the accompanying film, I intend to offer an (albeit partial) insight into the ongoing impact of a violent political history on the lives of the poorest and most disadvantaged population in the Dominican Republic.

Methods

In my fieldwork, I investigated how Dominicans of Haitian descent perceive human rights and how they view the pathways and opportunities to accessing those rights. I also investigated the way their bodies moved differently across various social fields. An ethnographic approach with a focus on qualitative research seemed most appropriate. Ethnography enables direct interaction with the research participants in ways that do not undermine their right to self-determination. It allows a nuanced and in-depth perception of the lifeworlds of the research participants whilst keeping their stories and voices intact, permitting a representation of their values, lives and histories that does not undermine their legitimacy to be in the world (Paulino & García, 2013, p. 115). Ethnography lets the researcher become a part of a community. Over time the values and ways of life of the community are written into the ethnographer's body, even if only partially. The insights that this approach can tease out allows a more nuanced, immersive and perceptive style of research which is much more valuable than strict quantitative studies based on research questionnaires or meta-analysis of data. Ethnography, more than any other type of research, has the capability to "bring to the fore the voices of those who lie outside the centers of power" (Davis, 2003, p. 153). Participant observation, a central premise of ethnography, is integral in developing an in-depth comprehension of how participants "think, believe, and behave under various circumstances" (Simmons, 2010, p. 12).

Throughout this project I made Santo Domingo my main base of operations. As various appointments, connections and meetings I had planned invariably did not eventuate, I spent much more time in the capital than I had planned – almost a month and a half in total. This gave me a thorough grounding in the *Zona Colonial,* where I had rented an apartment on the corner of *Calle Arzobispo Noel* and *Duarte*. I became familiar with some of the locals and over the month and a half, tentatively began to become an accepted face in my most-frequented haunts. Precisely because of this, a large part of this thesis is based on the phenomenological analysis I was able to bring to my time in the *Zona Colonial*.

I employed three key research methods: participant observation, open-ended interviewing and film. Participants who were over 18 and Dominican of Haitian descent

were sought out to collaborate in the project. More senior participants were approached where possible, both for their historical knowledge and experience, and out of respect for their social standing in the *bateyes*. Engaging with older participants proved easier during the day because the young and able bodied were out working, or looking for work. Those who were too young to work were precluded from the research – I chose not to include participants under the age of 18 due to the constraints of the scope of this project and the ethics process at my university.

While conducting research in the small traditional cane cutter *bateyes,* short filmed interviews were conducted with willing participants who were identified by my various guides. Longer, more detailed in-depth filmed interviews were performed with key participants. Where participants wished not be filmed, informal, open-ended interviews were conducted off-camera. Fifteen individuals who lived in the various *bateyes* themselves participated in filmed interviews, while 21 individuals participated in unfilmed interviews.

In order to gain perspectives from local development professionals, interviews were sought out with local staff from key non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that were well-established as grassroots organisations with a lengthy history working with the target population. Three individuals participated in in depth, open-ended interviews – two were filmed.

Two key academics were sought out for their expertise and knowledge of local and international issues pertaining to Dominicans of Haitian descent and more generally for their familiarity with the Americas regarding history, politics, economics, immigration/migration and poverty. Both were interviewed, with the interviews in-depth, open-ended and filmed.

Frequent informal conversations with a number of Dominicans augmented the research to gauge a more general view of the Dominican psyche towards Dominicans of Haitian descent and Haitians. I made sure to informally engage with taxi drivers while going somewhere whenever possible. They were often very willing to talk at length of their opinions and insights into their own and Dominican life. Whenever I had the opportunity, I recorded my observations in field notes.

Interviewing techniques were informed by what Irving Seidman calls “in-depth, phenomenologically based interviewing.” (1998, p. 14). This method involves asking

open-ended questions with a focus on how participants make meaning out of their experiences (ibid, p. 16). For example, a common question was how a participant *understands* their access to human rights. This question was often answered with references to visas and papers, without which participants had no access to basic human rights. By using this approach to interviewing it allowed a focus on the immediacy of the participant's lived experience of human rights (ibid.). This allows an understanding of the participant's experiences of human rights from their own point of view, placing their lived experience at the centre of understanding rather than at the periphery (ibid, p. 17). The participant's "subjective reconstruction of their experience" enabled me to explore the meaning of these experiences while keeping in mind the contextual understanding of the participant's lifeworld (ibid, p. 18). Adopting this approach to interviewing also allowed a certain reflexivity and adaptability to foreground the participant's experiences rather than my own pre-conceived ideas and expectations of perspectives regarding human rights.

The findings of the analyses of the interviews and participant observation was compared to academic literature on statelessness, human rights, identity and development for Dominicans of Haitian descent in the Dominican Republic. Cross-cultural literature was also used to compare conditions in other Haitian Diasporas across the Caribbean and in the United States. Ethics approval for the research methods and provisions was obtained through the Macquarie University Human Research Ethics Committee (ref: 5201401110).

The decision to use film as a research tool is based on several factors. Making a film adds a visual and dramatic layer to the descriptive depth of the ethnography. The filmed interviews and experiences provide a sense of immediacy that adds an additional dimension to the written thesis, allowing it to talk more freely to a wider audience. Film offers both the researcher and audience an inimitable medium through which to analyse "visible cultural forms, the immediacy of individual experience, human relationships with the material world, and social interactions in all their evolving and multivalent complexity" (MacDougall, 2001, p. 15). The anecdotes offered by the research subjects provides insight into human rights from the subjects' perspectives. Rather than seeing film as a mere form of evidence, a proof of fieldwork, it enhances the narrative argument of the thesis, supplementing the line of reasoning and debate (Edwards &

Jones, 2016). “Images are much more than the sum of their material traces” (Stanczak, 2007, p. 11), informing our knowledge of social worlds in a way that transcends the written word.

Most of the participants in this research project do not speak English – or not to the extent that they would be comfortable reading an entire thesis. By choosing film as one of the mediums to communicate my thesis, it is my intention to reach out to the research participants who would otherwise be excluded from reading a written thesis.

The majority of interviews were conducted in Spanish. In the *bateyes,* the guides would translate from Haitian Creole into Spanish when it was necessary. Two interviews were conducted in English. All interviews were conducted with consent. Interviews lasted from between five minutes to two hours. While in the *bateyes,* I relied on the guides to indicate how long it was appropriate to conduct an interview, especially in the case of a translated interview.

All names of people and specific places have been changed unless the research participant was a public figure who was interviewed for the film and thus readily identifiable.

Film as activism

Anthropology as activism has long been a part of the anthropological landscape, as has film as activism. It can provide a channel for the voices of the most powerless and disadvantaged, particularly in the public arena (Davis, 2003, p. 148). In the tradition of anthropology as activism, the accompanying film to this thesis is an attempt to lend a voice to those who have no platform to do so. It is not intended as a “form of liberation” – which would be too bold a claim – rather, it is a wish to “challenge the re- production of structural inequality” in order to “disrupt authoritative discourse and practice” (ibid.).

Ethnographic film or applied visual anthropology is “both a tool of research and a medium for the dissemination of knowledge,” which comes with similar problems to ethnography as the written form (Basu, 2008, p. 94; Pink, 2011, p. 438). Just as in written ethnography, “the power inequalities between those controlling the means of representation and those represented in ethnographic films” is a hotly debated and controversial topic which will not be explored here due to the limitations of this thesis

(Basu, 2008, p. 95). However, an awareness of this controversy informs the representation of the participants in the finished film.

In the film for this thesis, nothing that was not filmed or recorded *in situ* was added. The film was made entirely from audio-visual material gathered in the course of research. The film remains untitled – rather than risking a definition of the content, I preferred to simply allow the content to speak for itself, starting with a minimalist introduction setting the scene as the Dominican Republic circa 2015. My voice, and the voice of my partner, is heard only a handful of times. The aim of the film was to illuminate to a Dominican audience the depth of their socialisation in *antihaitianismo.* I remain reasonable in my expectation of the number of people it will reach, possibly very few (although it will almost certainly reach a much wider audience than the written thesis). Even so, the film is intended to foreground perceptions of racism and *antihaitianismo* in Dominican society and perhaps to contribute towards an adjustment of their views on this topic (Pink, 2011, p. 442).

Just as ethnographic work becomes richer with more time spent in the field, film develops into a more nuanced and perceptive representation of the research participants with an extended immersion (Pink, 2011). Possibilities to develop just such insights with further research using applied visual anthropology or ethnographic film are rich.

Possibilities for further research

Throughout the fieldwork, I fulfilled as much as possible the necessities of phenomenologically based interviewing. Due to limited time, some of the principles of this approach could not be met; for example, three separate interviews with each participant over time and conversing in the local language. My technique was informed by Seidman's approach, with his focus on person-centred, phenomenological interviewing (Seidman, 1998). This was particularly useful whilst inquiring into issues of identity, human rights, development, racism and poverty. Through this approach, several human rights themes were revealed and explored: lack of access to identity papers such as passports and identity cards; the lack of available work, especially for older participants; and the lack of any form of ongoing support such as pensions for those who have worked all their life cutting cane in the *bateyes*. Now that the Dominican Republic's Regularisation Plan has come to an end and expulsion is a threat for up to four generations simultaneously, these insights highlight the immediacy of the current plight of Haitians, Haitian migrants and Dominicans of Haitian descent.

These insights illustrate several limitations of this research project – such as the limited time available to conduct fieldwork – which provide potential for further research. A more nuanced understanding of the various ways that access (or lack thereof) to human rights manifest in quotidian actions – which may or may not seek to re-empower the actors – would give important insights into how participants construct a bricolage of life (or simply survive). This would allow a more exacting phenomenologically-based research with a greater degree of interviewing and participatory rigour, such as conducting fieldwork in the local language. Long-term immersion allows the ethnographer to embody subtle customs and behaviours – becoming (like) a local - achieving "realizations of the importance" of sensorially diverse and specific applications with a "cultural categorization" (context) that otherwise evades a researcher's gaze (Stoller, 1989, p. 10). Long-term immersion in the field permits the ethnographer to grapple with their own cultural baggage; "epistemological biases which produced serious errors of interpretation and representation" can be recognised through the application of new, contextually and culturally-specific knowledge and an analysis and reflection of past experiences (ibid). This "reflexivity" furnishes

ethnography with a depth than can only be gained through the "ethnographic revisit" – by returning to the site of earlier ethnographic work one can explore and compare over time intricate social possibilities (Hull, 2014, p. 233). Long-term field study allows an ethnographic rigour that enables the world of the research participants to be represented in a more intuitive and authentic manner (ibid, p. 11). A world of subtleties which has been, and still is being creatively developed over centuries cannot be found in any survey.

Another limitation was the scope of the research sample. A total of six *bateyes* were visited – one outside Boca Chica, an hour's drive east from Santo Domingo; four in the north of the Dominican Republic in Puerto Plata; and another several hours north of Santo Domingo. The opportunity to visit a larger number of *bateyes,* affording a greater sample size, would increase the applicability of the research outcomes. Conditions across *bateyes* and across different areas of the Dominican Republic vary greatly, for example between the communities where sugar plantations have been closed down compared to those with working plantations. A greater number of Dominican participants would provide a more nuanced understanding of *antihaitianismo* and contemporary perceptions of Dominican history.

The dynamic nature of the status of Dominicans of Haitian descent means that further research is only becoming more important. As of June 17, 2015, the Dominican government has started expelling Dominicans of Haitian descent who have not successfully entered into their *Plan Nacional de Regularización de Extranjeros* (Mahony & Nolan, 2015). An additional 45-day grace period was granted by Dominican President Danilo Medina; however, Amnesty International reported that as of August 14, 2015 the Dominican government had officially resumed deportations (International, 2015; Mahony & Nolan, 2015).

This project does not seek to be representative of the entire Haitian diaspora or Dominico-Haitian population. Rather, in the written portion, it proposes insights into how Dominicans and the Haitian diaspora interact with an embodied *antihaitianismo* constantly mediating their relations. It offers a partial view into their perceptions of human rights and identity while offering a contextual phenomenological analysis of the quotidian actions in which the Dominican social context has been imbued by *antihaitianismo*. The voices of the participants in this project have been somewhat

absent from debates involving analysis by experts. The written component of this thesis engages with a phenomenological perspective of embodied *antihaitianismo.* The creative (film) component offers a platform for the subjects' voices to be heard, acting as activism and education.

The *bateyes* I visited were a ready source of willing labour, they were desperate for work. I did not go into the field with an exact notion of what to expect when I asked respondents about human rights, and I had not expected to get such consistent responses. Two main themes emerged: with the threat of expulsion imminent, the Haitian diaspora focusses their conception of human rights on the lack of access to documentation and lack of a steady income. The first of which, in particular, results in the lack of access to basic human rights such as education, health and a welfare system. This, and a construction of what constitutes *antihaitianismo,* is explored in the film. As such, I will not be delving into this in the written thesis but will focus instead on what I found to be most evident from the time spent doing field work there.

With further research, this project has the potential to offer additional insights into life and human rights for the Haitian diaspora in Dominican cities and on the *bateyes,* potentially playing a modest part in facilitating a movement towards redefining their lives and identities in their own terms.

Introduction

Before arriving in the Dominican Republic, I had quite a different topic and focus – *The efficacy of different forms of human rights advocacy for Haitian refugees in the Dominican Republic.* Upon arrival, I set up a meeting with *El Movimiento de Mujeres Dominico-Haitiana* (MUDHA), The Movement of Dominican-Haitian Women, a grassroots non-governmental organisation that works with disadvantaged Haitian and Dominico-Haitian communities in the Dominican Republic. My meetings with them changed my research focus completely.

After a sweaty hour and a half in a creaky old taxi I had reached their headquarters outside of Santo Domingo. My taxi ride had been very informative and even if I had tried, I do not think the driver would have stopped informing me of his perspective of *el problema de los haitianos* – the Haitian problem. In fact, taxi drivers would end up being integral in helping me form a perspective of a Dominican perspective towards Haitians and Dominicans of Haitian descent. I made a habit of engaging them as much as I could. For the most part they were more than happy tell me exactly what they thought.

On arrival at MUDHA headquarters I was welcomed by a receptionist who led me into the brightly coloured building and offered me a coffee. I welcomed the strong brew and quickly mentioned I did not want sugar. I had already discovered that Dominicans love their coffee incredibly sweet. They were very welcoming and I was able to talk with one of the directors about my research project. They asked to remain anonymous, which is why they remain unnamed in this thesis and the film. I had previously sent an ethics form and project outline so expected to get into the thick of it straight away. They had not read either document (no one I met up with ever did, as it would turn out), preferring me to explain in person. I was told my research direction was misguided. What I should have been researching was the most disadvantaged population in the Dominican Republic – Haitians of Dominican descent.

The 2010 earthquake that rocked Haiti resulted in the deaths of over 200,000 people and approximately two million displaced, although estimates vary significantly across international organisations (Fisher, 2010; Kristensen & Wooding, 2013; Sciba, 2011). The Dominican Republic considered those people who had to cross over the border to be “displaced migrants” rather than refugees; the Dominican Republic has never had

the political drive to acknowledge forced migration (Kristensen & Wooding, 2013, p. 3). Since the earthquake the Dominican state has been deporting thousands of displaced migrants back to Haiti; in 2011 the Dominican Republic deported over 40,000, nearly five times the number of people deported in 2009 (ibid.). With that in mind I met with MUDHA once more before parting ways. They explained what their organisation does, how they do it and why – in their opinion – the most disadvantaged people in the Dominican Republic are Dominicans of Haitian descent.

This discussion took place in their boardroom at a large oblong table with seating for 12. At the opposite end a projector screen was half way up. The smell of coffee filled the room. Two of the women sat opposite me and another to my right at the head of the table. They were passionate women fighting for equal recognition of human rights in the Dominican Republic. There is growing support amongst wider Dominican society that pushes the Dominican State to provide access to fundamental human rights for all Dominicans, regardless of their ethnicity. It is still fledgling, and the women were at the forefront, in the trenches of this movement. I felt young and awkward by comparison. Their presence filled the large room and I found myself shuffling away from them so I felt less intimidated. I sipped on the strong black coffee in front of me, let the bitterness roll over my tongue and calm me down while they chatted about how they would structure the discussion.

For the next hour and a half I would hardly say a word. Their lawyer, opposite, had taken charge early and had evidently decided to give me a lecture on the nuances of MUDHA and their mission to help disadvantaged communities. Their passion was invigorating. As they spoke about human rights abuses and MUDHA's role within the non-governmental organisation and activism landscape they spoke with a fierceness that illustrated their dedication to their cause. One of the key ways MUDHA advocates for human rights is by taking cases to court against the Dominican Republic. The past ten years has been especially decisive with overt, official state-based discrimination through legislation and policy paving the way for an increasingly powerful *Antihaitianismo.*

MUDHA was part of the case *Yean and Bosico v. Dominican Republic* in 2005, which they helped win in the Inter-American Court (Margerin, Varma, & Sarmiento, 2014, p. 11). The court found that the denial of citizenship papers to two Dominicans of Haitian descent based on the Migration Law 285-04 was racial discrimination and a denial of

their right to nationality which would leave them stateless (Margerin et al., 2014, p. 11; Mejia, 2015, p. 209). While the Dominican Constitutional Court sustained the ruling of the Inter-American Court in this particular case, the Dominican Republic ignored the issuing of non-repetition orders and continues to act discriminatorily against Dominicans of Haitian descent (ibid.).

In order to counteract this decision, in March 2007 the Dominican State approved a move by the *Junta Central Electoral* which instructed their registry officials to suspend the issuing of birth certificates to children whose parents, grandparents or great grandparents were foreign or deemed to be issued their own birth certificates under "irregular circumstances" (Mejia, 2015, p. 213). The following month they implemented the "Pink Book of Foreigners" which resulted in the issuing of a "pink certificate" in lieu of an official white birth certificate to any child born to a foreign parent (Mejia, 2015, p. 212). The intent of the pink certificate is to record details so that the parent can proceed to their country's embassy and register the birth there. It is in no way an official legal document – it does not grant access to any of the "rights and benefits provided by the government and the Constitution," which are provided only by an official white birth certificate (ibid.).

In 2010 the new Dominican constitution came into effect, changing the way citizenship was recognised at birth from *jus soli* to *jus sanguinis.* In 2013, MUDHA were also involved in the Deguis case discussed earlier. These four pivotal events have shaped the current humanitarian landscape for the Haitian diaspora in the Dominican Republic: the 2004 Migration Law, the 2005 court case *Yean and Bosico v. Dominican Republic,* the moves of the *Junta Central Electoral* in 2007, and finally the 2013 *Sentencia TC/0168/13.*

The 2013 decision against Deguis had frustrated and saddened the women from MUDHA, but it had not weakened their resolve. They worked across different communities in the Dominican Republic, including the *bateyes*. The *bateyes* were, in their opinion, the most disadvantaged communities of which the Haitian diaspora was the major population. The Haitians and Dominicans of Haitian descent that live in the *bateyes* are socially isolated and incredibly poor. Now, after the *Sentencia*, many of them are stateless without the necessary resources to enter in a Regularisation Plan – a clearly exclusionary move in MUDHA's eyes.

A theory of embodied *antihaitianismo*

Several things are immediately apparent as one moves through the *Zona Colonial* of Santo Domingo. Firstly, the old walls, buildings and plazas make it easy to imagine what life must have been like in the time of the *conquistadores*. Secondly, there is an incredible amount of construction. It seems like every second historical monument and building is getting a facelift, restoring them to their former glory. Finally, it's rather empty for a capital – the buzz in the air is construction or the *bachata* music booming out of the *colmados,* small convenience stalls that turn into congregations of drinking and dancing Dominicans at night. As impossibly loud as it may seem, around mid-afternoon the *bachata* gets even louder as the day gets older. That's not to say there aren't people about. Dominicans are of course everywhere, just not in the numbers or concentration you would expect in the centre of town.

The *Zona Colonial,* the oldest European settlement in the Americas, feels empty. It is fascinating and pretty, even without the usual Latin American bustle. A few street vendors sell morsels of food, but if you pay attention to the flow of bodies as you pass through the old city something peculiar becomes apparent. All the black-skinned men (the kind of skin one may associate with a Haitian stereotype) are doing the construction. The digging, lifting, sweating and swearing that characterises construction sites everywhere comes solely from rangy, muscular black bodies, contrasting sharply with the appearance, sounds and movement of other Dominicans and foreigners. The lighter-skinned Dominican bodies, giving orders or walking by, look soft and pale in comparison.

Sitting on a park bench in *Parque Colón* – Columbus Square – or in the French café midway down *El Conde* sipping a *batado* (milkshake) on a hot, humid day it is easy to lose hours observing those who move through Santo Domingo. Sometimes I would take long walks along throughout the *Zona Colonial* or venture into *Gascue,* an affluent neighborhood adjacent to the Colonial Zone. Walking was an ideal way of engaging with the social landscape. I attempted to walk and not get lost in my rhythm. It was difficult at first but it became a way to interact with the new society I had entered, providing a "multisensory everyday life practice" I could share with my Dominican counterparts in an attempt to better "understand their practices, perspective, experiences and places"

(Pink, 2010, p. 332). Countless Haitian and Dominican bodies passed me by while I was out wandering or attentively resting on one of my various perches.

I asked myself, why did I feel I could discern that they were Haitian or of Haitian descent when they were simply walking by? Why were their ways of moving conspicuously different? In the *bateyes,* the research participants moved differently to their counterparts I observed moving through Santo Domingo. Even though their communities were mired in poverty, they moved with a fluidity and comfort I didn't see in the same population in the city. Isolated in the *bateyes,* they were segregated from contemporary Dominican society. These communities are stark proof of the structural violence endemic to the Dominican Republic – unlike the Haitians in Santo Domingo, their movements were not affected by *antihaitianismo* perpetrated unknowingly by their Dominican counterparts. In the *bateyes,* their Haitian bodies were out of view from the stigmatizing gaze which is characteristic of Dominican conceptions of blackness and Haitianess.

In March 2015 I conducted an in-depth interview with Pablo Mella, a Jesuit Priest, philosophy teacher and political philosopher himself. He is a prominent figure in Dominican society and is relatively well-known both as an academic and as a priest. His views on *antihaitianismo* were nuanced and complex, and I must say I learned a great deal in relation to the intricacies binding together Dominican society, racism, discrimination and xenophobia in one brief interview.

Mella describes *antihaitianismo* as a negative image of their Haitian neighbors used to legitimate racism and a non-recognition of human rights:

> I think that this repulse of the Haitian population in the discourse, because in practice it is a different thing, is due to colonial roots which have certain nationalistic characteristics, like the language, with a certain intensity, or a certain way of positioning oneself socially in regards to the past. That's one side. I will explain the other side. It is more important. There are political processes which have been too conflictive and have brought, have created a whole patriotic narrative of hate that activates and deactivates, depending on the moment. One can hear a Dominican speaking wonderfully about a Haitian or a Dominican of Haitian descent. In the next sentence they'll use phrases that are racist etc. So,

> it's very difficult. It's a terrain that I explore in my practice and my reflection, very ambiguous. It activates and de-activates with ease. – Pablo Mella, 2015

The political processes that Mella describes have given rise to anti-Haitianism as a social, political and economic institution which has become an embodied response to blackness. *Antihaitianismo* is always deactivating and then activating. It produces itself in moments of tension and stress as a means to place blame upon an external other, but always keeping the focus off the failings of the Dominican elite. In response to Mella's theory of activation and deactivation, it seems prudent to apply the same sense of response to the Haitian diaspora. In the *bateyes* there was no need to activate the self-subordination and self-denigration which they were called to do in the cities. They still embodied *antihaitianismo* – is just wasn't switched on. In the city center, however, in full view of a panoptic Dominican gaze, they moved like they were marked. It was easy to pick the cane cutters and construction labourers, skinny and subservient against the softer Dominicans bodies, more confident in their legitimacy in the city.

Dominicans' lives have been imbued with their superior status embedded in cultural institutions: education, politics, economics and religion. The Haitian diaspora is steeped in the same but opposing exposure which demonises their culture, language, appearance and religion (Tavernier, 2008, p. 98). LaToya Tavernier proposes a multifaceted construction of stigma in response to *antihaitianismo*. She employs Erving Goffman's theory of stigma: "stigma that can be transmitted through lineages and equally contaminate all members of a family" (2006, p. 132); and Link and Phelan's extension of the theory: "stigma is entirely dependent on social, economic, and political power – it takes power to stigmatize" (2001, p. 375).

The historical roots of *antihaitianismo* are to be found in the negrophobia that grew out of the "consciousness of colonial difference" focussing on language differences and a strict colour-based class hierarchy in French Haiti (L. Derby, 1994, p. 495; Torres-Saillant, 2000, p. 1088). Tavernier emphasises the importance of the long history of *antihaitianismo* which has lent a greater legitimacy to this brand of stigma. She proposes that the Dominican elite construct a Dominican identity which defines Dominicans as "white, Catholic, and culturally Hispanic," pitting them against Haitians who are "black, voodoo practitioners, and culturally African" (Tavernier, 2008, p. 98).

Faced with a cross-generational bombardment of negative discourse, the Haitian diaspora cannot help but embody the stigma heaped upon them, reproducing their status as second-class citizens whether they want to or not. They hold the stigma of their blackness and Haitianess within their bodies. It is present in every action and interaction within the city. Dominican elites continue to perpetuate a Dominican identity that is by definition the polar opposite of their Haitian neighbor, thereby stigmatising blackness and Haitianess as inherently dirty and barbaric. The effect of this is a dehumanisation through the belittling of their physical appearance and the erosion of their morality. *Antihaitianismo,* then, as a type of stigma "has allowed Dominican elites, and to an extent the Dominican working class, to label and stereotype Haitians as inferior," which has been carefully constructed in order to directly benefit their political, social and economic agendas by purposely keeping "Haitians in a perpetual subordinate position" (Tavernier, 2008, p. 99).

"You know what their problem is? They just don't want to be Haitian. They aren't proud to be Haitian." These are the words of one of my Dominican acquaintances. To understand how one might deal with the existential crisis of moving from a *bateye* to a panoptic city full of disciplinary gazes, or even how a Dominican may in one sentence praise the work ethic of Haitian migrant labour and in the next degrade them by questioning their morality and self-worth, I draw on Michael Jackson's conception of the "multiplicity of our self-states" (2015, p. 300). Jackson explains that we constantly oscillate between extremes of egocentrism and sociocentrism – human existence is never purely of the self nor purely of the social (Jackson, 2015, p. 294). Jackson alludes to our human capacity to manage and survive the chaos and constant variations in life. A "migrant imaginary" which allows us to foreground "hitherto backgrounded aspects of ourselves" implicates a psychological plasticity (multiplicity) which "is the creative and adaptive expression of sociality itself" (Jackson, 2015, p. 301).

This has multiple implications for Dominican society. As an ideological discourse, a form of structural violence and stigma, *antihaitianismo* has become part of a Dominican existential background that is provoked to appear in situations of heightened tension, stress or discomfort. For the Haitian diaspora, walking through Santo Domingo is a situation of heightened tension. They are tense, fully aware of the irrelevance of their Dominican counterparts to their existence; they never truly belong. Without such a

plasticity of the self it would be impossible to survive: “our ability to shift and adjust our self-state in response to who we are with, to what circumstance demands, and to what our well-being seems to require is not only adaptive; our lives would be impossible without it” (Jackson, 2015, p. 300).

With Jackson’s conception of the self, we can conceive of *antihaitianismo* as an existential discourse which informs the habitus of the Dominican population. As migrants and tourists move into a space which has such a profoundly hegemonic ideology, everyday interactions and modes of being in the city are infected by this discourse. As such, *antihaitianismo* is manifested in the way Dominicans, Haitians and Dominicans of Haitian descent move their bodies. Mauss argues that “there is no technique and no transmission in the absence of tradition.” (Mauss, 1973, p. 75). If their movements through the city are certain “modes of action,” the strong tradition of anti-Haitianism can be seen to have shaped discernable “techniques of the body” (Mauss, 1973, p. 75).

While in Santo Domingo I visited the *La Sirena* supermarket chain which was on the corner of *Avenida Mella* and *Calle Duarte,* a few hundred meters from the hostel and apartment I rented during my stay. On the corner of *Restauración* and *Duarte* there was a *colmado* known for its delicious fried chicken and fried triangles of cheese. Needless to say Dominican food is hearty and I returned from my research well-rounded. The surrounding streets always smell delicious – resisting the urge to walk in and have a snack is almost impossible. Opposite the *colmado* a Haitian fruit vendor would cut a selection of fruit into a takeaway container. On the opposite end of the supermarket’s block several vendors sell anything from pineapples to red onions to pumpkin. On the same street two Haitian vendors have wide black buckets filled with avocados and oranges. They would sit on one bucket and sell fruit from the other. They would congregate in the afternoons when it was slow with their Haitian friends, laughing and conversing in Haitian Kreyòl. Their body language was markedly different within their friends in comparison to how they acted in the wider world.

I purchased avocados from Maria, a Haitian with tight curls of hair tied up underneath a hair net. Maria would sit down and peel her oranges in between customers. A mist of orange fragrance would form an invisible halo around her which reminded me of my mother’s orange harvests back home in rural Sydney, Australia. Maria’s customers

would come and go, never talking to her, just buying. “That one,” they would say perfunctorily, pointing at an avocado. Money would change hands and the transaction would be complete.

It is hard to describe the feeling of watching these transactions as an outsider. They inevitably seemed hierarchical; overtly so. More so just outside of *La Sirena,* with its air-conditioned interior full of brown-to-white skinned Dominicans being served by black employees. With some exceptions, a general social class hierarchy in the Dominican Republic can be discerned simply by a visit to the supermarket. In the Dominican Republic you are only black when you are very black – like a typical Haitian – or when you are Haitian which in the Dominican Republic is synonymous with blackness (Wright, 2015, p. 22).

One particular episode sticks in my mind. I walked out of *La Sirena* to see Maria for an avocado. An elegant Dominican woman who I would guess was in her mid-forties was ahead of me in the queue. Her flowing, straightened brown hair was streaked with blond highlights and she was wearing a light blue business dress suit with a white collared business shirt underneath. Her slim, brown wrist bore a gold watch, high-heels made her four inches taller. A faint whiff of her perfume drifted on the hot air. She handed Maria a hundred pesos, waiting for change. Maria searched her purse and there was a sharp click as the Dominican woman stamped her heel. Surprised, I made eye contact. She rolled her eyes and looked crossly at Maria from her greater height, shaking her hand for the change. Maria smiled timidly and handed her the change, muttering an apology.

While this may seem like a fairly innocuous vignette, similar attitudes are systematically repeated across the Dominican Republic. It is indicative of a habitus of Dominican dominance which permeates life in the Dominican Republic. Like a technique of the body, *antihaitianismo* has become a normalised, everyday act which is largely invisible to its hosts. However, to describe *antihaitianismo* as simply one of many “techniques of the body” would be to undermine the political implications of the ways Dominicans and the Haitian diaspora move and interact. Just like other socially acceptable ways of moving, talking and interacting, the ideological discourse of *antihaitianismo* expresses itself as a learned and “practiced skill” that has been acquired over time with “bodily practice” (Marchand, 2010, p. 104).

This brought to mind an interview I had conducted with Jose, a young Haitian man who had been living in Puerto Plata on the Dominican Republic's north for 15 years. He had posed some rhetorical questions in regards to the government's Regularisation Plan, "There are people [of the Haitian diaspora] who sell avocados in the street. I ask where they are going to have the money for all these documents." (Jose, 2015). However salient they had already been, became all the more evident in this moment.

As I watched the exchange between Maria and the elegant Dominican woman the tropical humidity suddenly seemed oppressive. I was reminded of the reason I started studying development anthropology in the first place. Everybody deserves, at the very least, a life of dignity. The taller woman took her change and walked off, unaware that her casual insolence was a weathervane of state governmentality, class mentality and spatial exclusion – all in the interests of a powerful Dominican elite.

Phenomenology and experience

A phenomenological approach becomes an apparent structure with which to map out a theory of embodied *antihaitianismo*. This approach calls for a synthesis of mind, body, culture and environment as a starting point for any understanding or experience in and of the world. By combining a plasticity of the self with an inseparable bodily grounding in social and physical environments which "have embedded in them the subjective and political intentions of others" we can see the way *antihaitianismo* is experienced by both its unwitting proponents – the Dominican body politic – and its opponents, the Haitian diaspora. This must first and foremost be anchored in a sound phenomenological perspective which highlights the primacy of individual experience (Ram & Houston, 2015, p. 23).

The external environment is usually implied to be our context. Rather than take this as granted, a more comprehensive view of "context" is necessary to bind the phenomenological aspects of this ethnography which forms the basis for the primacy of lived experience in my use of the theories of governmentality, class division and spatial exclusion. Trevor Marchand's definition of context is particularly applicable to the theoretical underpinnings of this thesis. "Therefore the notion of 'context', refers not to external surroundings (as usually implied in anthropology), but rather context is individually possessed as a mind-internal repertoire of existing concepts and representations, acquired, constructed, and modified in an ongoing manner from environmental stimuli." (Marchand, 2010, p. 107)

Marchand explains that the stimuli that we receive from our "total environment is cognitively mediated and meaningfully represented as mind-internal concepts" (ibid.). For example, when we are in conversation, it is the concepts that the words "map onto and the propositional representations they combine to create in what Fodor (1975) coined the 'language of thought' (LOT)" (ibid.). Our environment, or context, is an interaction of our individual, lived history, set in place. Any place which one inhabits has already been given meaning by external forces and interpreted in our own framework, combined with future possibilities which we lend ourselves towards when we come to an intersection of relationary fields which imbue any moment with significance.

The “habitus” is Pierre Bourdieu’s conception of each person’s history, the full sum of our experiences intertwined with the socialisation and structure we are born into – our lived contexts. This is internalised and embodied, reproduced in our actions, thoughts and perceptions (Bourdieu, 1977). We can never be fully conscious of all we have learnt or been informed by in any given moment of living and all we have been shaped by. Rather, our relationship to each conscious experience is shaped by our habitus. *Antihaitianismo*, as a hegemonic ideological discourse in the Dominican Republic, forms a component of the habitus of the Dominican body politic and the Haitian diaspora, shaping their actions towards and perceptions of each other. Both populations are “possessed” by *antihaitianismo* as “a system of schemes of perception and thought” (ibid, p. 18).

Merleau-Ponty conceptualises experience mediated through “the body as a synergic totality” as a fusion of mind, body and context; an inextricable bond between our consciousness and an associated “horizon” of experience in a relationary “field” (Merleau-Ponty, 2012 [1945], p. 369). Experience can be tentatively defined as a complex relational field that involves a context that is necessarily outside the perception of the experiencer but which is nonetheless an integral part of any experience in their lifeworld (Ram & Houston, 2015). One can therefore be unconsciously experiencing *antihaitianismo* as an ideological framework while being unaware it is actively reproduced on and through their body.

With this in mind, the Dominicans, Haitians and Dominico-Haitians that I interacted with were not discreet entities but “node[s] in a field of relationships” which was infused with *antihaitianismo* (Ingold, 2011, p. 4). *Antihaitianismo* as a learned skill is “incorporated into the locus of the modus operandi” of socialisation in the Dominican Republic (ibid, p. 5). While one might feel the immediacy of a present event, the relational field that begets that event with significance is largely outside of the consciousness of the actor who brings all these elements together at the intersection of experience. Allowing for this interpretation of a phenomenological definition of “experience” provides an opportunity to analyse discourses, such as *antihaitianismo*, with a focus on the immediacy of a bodily being in the world while encasing any encounter with a rich cross-section of external domains that are far larger than can be encompassed by the immediate perception of the experiencer. Ultimately this provides

a legitimacy to an actor's subjective bodily experience and to the wider life processes and influences which have led to any experience or way of knowing about the world to be delimited by historicity, context and habitus.

Sites of resistance to *antihaitianismo* are simultaneously real, developed and developing internationally and locally. The Facebook group "We Are All Dominican" is based in New York and represents the Dominican diaspora which has taken an active role in combating discrimination in the Dominican Republic. Organisations such as MUDHA are integral to an ongoing battle to give blackness the dignity it deserves by being equal in society. Social forces create a relational field of tension – a constant give-and-take between competing discourses and knowledges in which individuals emerge as loci "of development within such a field" (Ingold, 2011, p. 3). Tim Ingold imagines each actor as "a singular locus of creative growth within a continually unfolding field of relationships" (ibid, pp. 4-5). Each person and each node in a field of relationships has the opportunity to creatively resist social institutions like *antihaitianismo.* These institutions are "carried forward and transformed through their own actions" hence every interaction carries with it the possibility of positive change.

“Their problem is…”

“I’m glad you’re here. Now you can see for yourself that there’s no racism here. If a Haitian walks down the street nobody cares,” George said. “Nobody is going to hassle him. The press, they lie about it here.”

We were de-hulling a small mountain of dry cocoa beans at the popular tourist attraction *Choco Museo* in the heart of the *Zona Colonial.* I’d met George, our instructor, a few weeks earlier through an American friend who was also researching her master’s degree. George was incredibly friendly, as most Dominicans I would meet invariably were. His English was nearly perfect. He had learnt his trade on the job at *Choco Museo*, in addition to several languages. He had been working for Choco Museo for five years while he studied a Master of Physics at the *Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo*.

“The Haitians, they’re fine. I think the problem is their culture doesn’t prepare them for life like ours. They don’t know how to, you know, be good socially,” he continued.

I avoided the topic of my research, not wanting to get into conflict. George’s opinion would become a general pattern of response of how Dominicans responded to my research. I quickly learnt that disclosing my topic would result in a fast opinion, usually involving several elements: (a) Dominicans aren’t racist; (b) the international press exaggerate and lie; and (c) a racist remark that they would insist was not racist from their perspective. George, for one, seemed oblivious that his commentary contained any racist or discriminatory undertones, although from my Western perspective I disagreed.

Another time, my Dominican acquaintance Sophia and I were talking. She was from a wealthy Dominican family, had been around the world and studied in the United States. I moved the conversation towards my research topic. “You know, I don’t think that it’s as bad as people say here. I’m white and I have a lot of black friends. I don’t treat them differently. I don’t think that black people get treated so badly here.” Her skin was a deep shade of cinnamon – even so she identified as white.

I went on to explain how surprised I was that Dominicans reported to me that there was no racism, while simultaneously saying something apparently racist. Their understanding of racism seemed entirely focused on overt forms. Many Dominicans

seemed not to perceive that the entrenched structural injustices and everyday acts of discrimination and stigmatisation of the Haitian diaspora was a form of racism.

I had heard on the news a few days previously that several Haitians had been lynched. I put to my acquaintance the idea that physical forms of violent racism did not exist in the Dominican Republic were false. She agreed with me wholeheartedly, lamenting that her compatriots were cruel and derogatory towards Haitians, but not towards blackness *per se*. Personally, she insisted that she did not have a problem Haitians, nor did she agree with racism against them.

"I don't mind them at all. You know when I was young we had a maid, Esmerelda, and she was so cool. And here at the hostel, the guard Fred, he's so cool you know. You know what their problem is? Haitians aren't proud to be Haitian. They just don't want to be Haitian."

I didn't know what to say. "Oh… really?"

"Yeah, it's the truth."

She shrugged her shoulders and nodded, her mouth in a thoughtful pout.

There it was again: the same conditioning that I'd become accustomed to hearing from Dominicans on the topic of Haitians. During my stay, I did not witness any overt forms of racism such as physical abuse. I did however experience an astounding amount of structural violence, institutionalised discrimination and race-hierarchy normalisation, not to mention the language of everyday racism – a "denial and perpetrate" strategy of negotiating the Haitian issue.

So, did my acquaintance's memory serve her right – had the Haitians in her life been reluctant to display an overt national pride? Bertin M. Louis, Jr. calls this an act of "ethnic suicide," as the actor denies their past and ethnic identity in order to belong to a new social order that otherwise wouldn't accept them (Louis, 2015, p. 68). The marginalisation the Haitian diaspora experiences leads them to downplay their Haitianess in an attempt to fit in and become less conspicuous (ibid, p. 67) (Louis, 2015 p.67). This could explain her perception of a Haitian lack of patriotism. But why was she apparently unaware of the *antihaitianismo* that I had perceived? Why did she identify as white, when to me as a Westerner she seemed not to be? Was that my own unconscious racial bias or was it symptomatic of an underlying *antihaitianismo*?

She was using a self-regulating mechanism (governing the self) which transferred responsibility of surveillance and care of the self, that is making oneself in the image of a Dominican defined by *antihaitianismo*, away from the state apparatus, away from social institutions and reallocated it the responsibility of the individual (Lemke, 2001, p. 203).

Governmentality

"*A los dominicanos, además, se les achaca una actitud de desprecio racial hacia los haitianos, codificada en el término antihaitianismo como ingrediente integral de su idea de nación. Los dominicanos, según dicho razonamiento, se definen negativamente, el anti-haitianismo aparece como un componente definidor de la dominicanidad.*" (Torres-Saillant, 2012, p. 16)

The Dominican state employs a politics of identity by exclusion – *antihaitianismo* – in order to conceptualise a race-centred essentialism of what *dominicanidad,* (Dominicanness) is (Blake, 2014, p. 140; Taylor, 2009, p. 210; Torres-Saillant, 2012, p. 16). This *dominicanidad* denies the "high level of racial diversity" present in Dominican society by characterising Dominicans as "non-black" in direct opposition to their Haitian neighbours (Blake, 2014, p. 140). Disseminated through the state apparatus as a discourse of patriotism and nationalism, *dominicanidad* becomes an inherent marker of appropriately socialised bodies. It becomes an apparatus of governmentality.

Governmentality described a political process in which the power to discipline another is dispersed by the state throughout the populace, decentralising their gaze by placing the power of surveillance in the hands of the public (Lemke, 2001). In 1937 Rafael Leonidas Trujillo ordered the "parsley massacre" of approximately 30,000 Haitians on the Domincan-Haitain border (Wucker, 1999, p. 44). Anteriorly, anti-Haitian and anti-black sentiment was most certainly present; it was with Trujillo's racist nationalism that *antihaitianismo* really became entrenched (Taylor, 2009, p. 209). His careful cultivation of *antihaitianismo* allowed him to define how a Dominican should look, sound, dance, move and talk. This massacre obviously created an atmosphere of fear and oppression. Throughout the Era of Trujillo (1930 to 1961), a vicious dictatorship, and the years of his protégé Joaquín Balaguer (1966–1978 and 1984–1994), the normalisation of terror allowed their particular brand of *antihaitianismo* and *dominicanidad to* become pervasive. This was enforced through an unceasing fear of being like the "Other" – being like a Haitian – and thus being of interest to state authorities (Green, 1994). Self-surveillance becomes instinctive to a populace whose survival as legitimate citizens rests on their ability to reproduce a racist nationalist discourse; the body politic internalises a self-censoring mechanism of state ideological discourse: "Bentham's panopticon

internalized" (Green, 1994). As a political tool, panopticism aims to discipline bodies into conforming with a prestigious nationalism and thus the creation of a "disciplinary society" which produces "docile bodies" to be manipulated politically, economically and culturally (Foucault, 1977, p. 208).

The fall of the price of sugar in the mid-80s which turned the Dominican economy to tourism presented a new gap for neo-liberal ideology to rise once more (Wucker, 1999, p. 122). The working class was once again disenfranchised; privatisation and foreign investment increased as the Dominican market diversified (Deibert, 2015). Neo-liberalism incites an insipid hyper-individualism which goes hand-in-hand with a care of the self, as the perception of self is altered to "a neoliberal vision of people owning themselves as though they were a business" (Gershon, 2011, p. 539). Special attention is paid to how one presents oneself to enhance one's *dominicanidad.*

Antihaitianismo disciplines the Dominican body politic through a politics of identity which has produced a care of the self – a self-surveillance which is always situated in *place* (Casey, 2003, p. 2245). Our world is "composed primarily of places rather than of fixed and finite stretches of infinite space and time" (ibid.) – we are never just in *space;* we are always in a pre-defined *place* that has its meaning prescribed to us. *Antihaitianismo* can be perceived as an "embodiment of capacities of awareness and response by environmentally situated agents" (Ingold, 2011, p. 5) as it is always in place, never in abstract space. It is a schema which has become "imminent in practice", reproduced by Dominicans and the Haitian diaspora in their quotidian actions and perceptions in their life worlds (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 20). As younger Dominican generations learn anew how to treat their neighbours, their practices are informed by a socialisation in place which has already been given meaning.

Antihaitianismo as a type of governmentality enables a *dominicanidad* that pervades Dominican society and defines who is legitimate through social interactions (Ingold, 2011, p. 3). *Antihaitianismo* is not a given definition of an individual; rather the alterity of being black, of being Haitian is defined by the reduction "of histories of growth and maturation within fields of social relationships" (ibid.).

"The lower classes smell"

"Here you come to the real secret of class distinctions in the West — the real reason why a European of bourgeois upbringing, even when he calls himself a Communist, cannot without a hard effort think of a working man as his equal. It is summed up in four frightful words which people nowadays are chary of uttering, but which were bandied about quite freely in my childhood. The words were: *The lower classes smell*." (Orwell, 1965 [1937], p. 112, italics original)

It was a sweltering day and the humidity was high. I was looking forward to the air-conditioning of *La Sirena*. The scent of oranges wafted over – Maria was on her bucket peeling oranges. A young Dominican in gym gear walked past. He scrunched his nose and pouted as he walked past Maria. When he walked past me he smiled and nodded. I pondered the source of the young man's disgust – I am quite sure that he had discerned no foul smell; my ability to gauge odours that day was as sharp as ever. So what was troubling his olfactory senses – the pleasant smell of Maria's oranges, or Maria's unwelcome Haitianess? Was he trying to indicate through his scrunched nose, "Look, anyone who cares to pass, I have passed a lower class person and *therefore they must smell*?"

I pondered Orwell's words as I wandered through the cool of the supermarket. It is not when the middle class are brought up to believe that the lower classes are drunks, laggards and fools that the damage is done: "It is when he is brought up to believe that they are dirty that the harm is done" (Orwell, 1965 [1937], p. 128).

There were many overt manifestations of *antihaitianismo* while I was in the Dominican Republic. A lynching in a public plaza. Crowds protesting against the Haitian presence and the burning of Haitian flags. Haitian men dying under mysterious circumstances. Those expressions of racism and xenophobia set up an atmosphere of fear but the small gestures, the quotidian remarks and body language were to me the most insidious and pervasive. After all, as they say – the devil is in the details. The locus of socially produced class discrimination is reproduced at the detailed level, without which the grander demonstrations cannot emerge. The disgust of this young man was not based on a real stench, it was a *belief* which carried with it the moral implication that Maria was inherently less (Miller, 1997, p. 241).

The invisible relationship of power and class is no less concrete for its invisibility. Class cruelty is a well-documented phenomena – it becomes discernable on the bodies, behaviors and "tastes" that emerge as sites of social differentiation and "disgust" (Lawler, 2005, p. 430). Class mobility in the Dominican Republic is limited along racial lines – it was obvious to me from my research and personal experience that the currency of authority is directly linked to the colour of one's skin. In my interview with Mella, he professed that there are no less than "eighteen different classification for the colour of one's skin," which more or less correspond to the social classes: black at the bottom with increasing wealth, status and authority as skin colour becomes increasingly lighter. *Antihaitianismo,* which demonises blackness, is therefore entrenched in the invisible separation of classes in the Dominican Republic.

La Sirena and its surrounding streets are a microcosm of the everyday social practices that *antihaitianismo* produces. It creates its own atmosphere of spatial exclusion and inclusion which is overtly displayed – *if one chooses to see it*.

Antihaitianismo in action

As I took my first trip out to MUDHA, the taxi driver gave me an early insight into the structural violence that characterises *antihaitianismo*. Before arriving in the Dominican Republic, I had already come to perceive *antihaitianismo* as a form of structural violence; an avoidable phenomena that has become a normalised social institution that systematically denies Haitian migrants and Dominicans of Haitian descent access to fundamental human rights (Galtung, 1969).

"They work hard and they do the work that Dominicans don't want to do. You won't see a Dominican selling things at the traffic lights. Hardly ever. You'll never see a Dominican in construction. All those men you see there." He nodded his head towards a construction site we were passing, full of black bodies working. "*Todos son haitianos*" – they are all Haitians.

He noted that the Haitian workers did the work that Dominicans did not want to do. It was not until the late 1980s as the sugar industry dramatically declined that an influx of cheap labour from the sugar plantations inundated the construction industry, previously dominated by Dominicans. Almost overnight, the construction industry had an enormous Haitian diaspora with which it could draw cheap, manipulable labour from. As the Dominican labour force vanished from construction, it soon enough became a "Haitian job" which was beneath Dominicans (Wucker, 1999).

So, I asked my driver, how can you tell the construction workers are Haitian?

"You can always tell. They're darker than Dominicans. Sometimes if you can't tell by their skin you can always tell by their hair or their nose. You see him?" He was pointing to a young man selling an assortment of candy from a cart on the side of the busy road. "Maybe I couldn't tell from his skin because he isn't as dark as most Haitians, but I can tell from his nose that he is Haitian."

When I asked him more directly about human rights and told him about my research into the Haitian diaspora in the Dominican Republic, he nodded his head in bemusement. "We, Dominicans, we don't have rights. We don't have clean water, electricity. So the Haitians, you can't expect the Haitians to have those rights either."

Once I had recognised this colour coding to the hierarchy I started to see it everywhere. It became apparent that life in the Dominican Republic was colour-coded. The whiter

you were the higher up the chain you would be. All the supermarkets had whitening cream for the skin. Menial jobs were done by people with dark black skin. Good cars, nice houses, security, good education, running water, electricity; these were all possessed by those of lighter skin.

First impressions last

On the plane to Santo Domingo to start my research, I felt a familiar nervous excitement at venturing into the unknown. I couldn't see much from my aisle seat so I closed my eyes, letting my mind wander over the possibilities and opportunities my fieldwork might offer. When I arrived, I discovered the small Santo Domingo airport itself to be quite unremarkable. As soon as I walked out the single exit a horde of locals and taxi operators descended on myself and the other foreigners, insisting in broken English that we take their taxi. I quickly discovered if I held out for a while and spoke a bit of Spanish I could dramatically reduce the price from approximately US$30 to US$15. In compensation I suppose, the driver threw another traveler in with me just as we were leaving.

The drive from the airport into Santo Domingo took us along the coast, picturesque but clearly polluted. My fellow passenger must have been in his late 70s or early 80s. He was sweating profusely as he regaled me of stories about his Dominican ex-girlfriend cum “almost” ex-wife. He’d had many Dominican women, he assured me. Occasionally his bottom row of dentures would click outwards slightly, giving him a temporary under-bite until he jutted his chin out and brought them back into position with another click. “You can’t trust them of course. Not a one. I learnt that the hard way. I trusted her because I loved her, you see. That was my mistake.” He clicked his dentures back into place. “Now I know I’ve told you that you can’t trust them but everyone learns the hard way. A young man like yourself, you stay single. You make sure you stay single. You are not going to have a problem, I can assure you of that. You stay single and you’ll stay happy. What’s more, your back pocket will stay even happier.” We both chuckled. Him to his joke, and I partly out of politeness and partly because I had gotten straight off the plane and jumped into a cab with a stereotype whose narrative consisted nearly entirely of how untrustworthy Dominican women were. I told him that I was going to do research into human rights with Dominicans of Haitian descent. He nodded his head sagely and warned that “the Haitian women, you have to watch them even more.” As untrustworthy as Dominican women were, Haitian women, it seemed, you could trust even less.

As I listened to his stories of the women he had been with – the journey from the airport takes nearly an hour – I reflected on his apparent ignorance of the literature into the sex trade of the Dominican Republic. I had recently finished reading Steven Gregory's "The Devil Behind the Mirror: Globalization and Politics in the Dominican Republic", a gripping ethnographic exploration of the impact of globalisation on the livelihoods of Dominicans (Gregory, 2007). It was if one of the many sex tourists he had described had jumped from the pages of this book and into the taxi next to me. The mostly white Western male sex tourists that animate Gregory's vignettes come to the Dominican Republic to fulfill their dreams of sexual domination over an exoticised and hyper-feminised "other" which they cannot achieve at home (ibid, p. 137). Having contained the deviant sexuality of this exotic "other", sex tourists successfully follow the global flow of colonial discourse which continues to ensure the ideological, political and economic hegemony of the United States in the Americas.

Gregory writes of a common dream among Dominican sex workers. The rich Western savior sweeps the beautiful Dominican off his or her feet, whisking them away to a better life for them and their family (ibid.) While Gregory shows how female Dominican sex workers routinely challenge this stereotype, it is still a trope that carries enormous gravity for many of the sex workers. Not to mention the failure of the International Monetary Fund (IMF)'s "structural adjustment" of the 1990s which saw to it that neo-liberalism was the flavour of the day throughout the Caribbean (R. Derby, 2007, p. 144). "Structural adjustment" meant "free trade, privatization of state-owned industries, tax reduction, currency devaluation and reduced social spending" and led to the exponential growth of the informal sector (ibid.). Through a manipulation of this dream and a clear economic advantage, Western sex tourists can exploit their position of power in sex tourism. The inequalities of power between sex tourists and workers are made all the more insidious by the subtle but no less pervasive global discourse which places Westerners at the top of a hierarchical politics of identity.

The man opposite me seemed to embody all that and more. He had a sadness, a sense of loss to his stories. Yes, he was posturing, showing off how successful of a womaniser he was, but there was also a melancholy in his assertions of bravado. It seemed he truly had loved his ex-girlfriend. Gregory explains that this is a common juxtaposition to the normalised male dominated ideology of women as objects (Gregory, 2007, p. 163). A

relationship will blossom between a person engaged in sex work and the sex tourist, both will have unrealistic expectations of the other and in many cases the one engaged in sex work will undermine the classic male-centred hierarchy and refuse to fit mould expected of them (ibid.). Of course, in many cases they do that as well. The man sitting across from me had assured me his ex-girlfriend was not engaged in sex worker. I remained skeptical. He also told me she was 30 years his junior and had met him in a nightclub. Perhaps they had both shared in a fantasied and unattainable future. There are exceptions of course – good partnerships can be forged out of the turbulence of the sex tourism industry. Those unique partnerships are, however, the rare exceptions to the rule.

We finally arrived at my destination. With a final click of his dentures and a firm handshake the character that shared my taxi and I parted ways forever. I hopped out of the taxi and met the mother of the owner of the hostel I was going to be staying at. It turned out to be fortunate because I had no idea where I was and as it turned out, the driver had dropped me off at least a 10 minute walk away instead of "around the corner" as he had assured me. I mused that over my ride into the Santo Domingo. It reminded me that Gregory strove to empower his collaborators, presenting the myriad of ways that sex workers resist the status quo. The man's stories in the taxi also gave away small clues into the ways in which women in the sex trade resist "structures and discourses of male power" (Gregory, 2007, p. 9). The story of his ex-girlfriend in particular had fascinated me. It seemed he had been sending her remittances every month and they had been talking about getting her a visa for the United States. He had increased the sum of money over the course of six months to a sizable sum. When he pushed the subject of the visa further, it turned out that she had a son. She refused to come to the United States without her son. Irate, the man had broken up with her. She was a "money pit" anyway, he had said. Yet here he was, once again looking for "tropical love". His ex-girlfriend had upset the normative power structures of male dominance that characterise relationships between Western sex tourists and Dominican sex workers. By asserting their own modes of self-sufficiency and agency which disrupt the "male heteronormative" landscape of sex tourism, female sex workers are able to resist and undermine discursive and structural support of male power and identity (ibid, p. 9).

Concluding remarks

The body, as the source and beginning of every action and interaction of an actor in their lifeworld, is the primary foundation which enables any sort of experience of producing, reproducing or receiving an act of *antihaitianismo.* As such, *antihaitianismo* is not only an external ideological, structural or discursive force, it is living in the body; not only acting upon a person, but rendering quotidian actions manifestations of *antihaitianismo.* Dominicans and the Haitian diaspora have both become simultaneous victims and reproducers of *antihaitianismo*. Most Dominicans I met and interacted with were good people who were, just like their counterparts in the Haitian diaspora, trying to better their lives. The Haitian diaspora will continue its struggle to find a foothold in Dominican society as long as *antihaitianismo* remains a hegemonic ideological discourse that inhabits Dominican and Haitian bodies. *Antihaitianismo* has become a normalised social mediator which permeates life in the Dominican Republic.

As an ideological discourse *antihaitianismo* construes *dominicanidad* and Haitianess as pre-given, suggesting that it is a social reality that already exists (Lemke, 2001, p. 203). Through the panoptic function of governmentality, Dominicans and the Haitian diaspora take up this ideology and reproduce it through quotidian practices which reproduce social asymmetries apropos an ideological obfuscating of the social structures that allow a "re-coding of social mechanisms of exploitation and domination" (ibid.).

In turn, governmentality allows for a justification of the neoliberalisation of society (ibid.). The formation of neoliberalism as a political-economic reality constructs social welfare as a barrier to social improvement, only allowing room for a morality which defines the social domain as economic, and allows a cost-utility calculation to pervade the social sphere (Lemke, 2001). In the Dominican Republic – with a public sphere that is repulsed by blackness and Haitianess – neo-liberal frameworks of morality allow a demoralizing of society which begets a lack of empathy for one's neighbour.

It is hoped that this research will add to the body of meaningful literature in order to eventuate (hopefully) in social recognition and change.

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Appendix 1: Ethics Approval

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MACQUARIE University
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27 April 2015

Dr Jakob Timmer
Department of Anthropology
Faculty of Arts
MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY NSW 2109

Dear Dr Timmer

Reference No: 5201401110

Title: *The efficacy of different forms of human rights advocacy for Haitian refugees in the Dominican Republic*

Thank you for submitting the above application for ethical and scientific review. Your application was considered by the Macquarie University Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC (Human Sciences & Humanities)) at its meeting on 28 November 2014 at which further information was requested to be reviewed by the HREC (Human Sciences and Humanities) Executive.

The requested information was received with correspondence on 21 February 2015.

The HREC (Human Sciences and Humanities) Executive considered your responses at its meeting held on 17 March 2015.

I am pleased to advise that ethical and scientific approval has been granted for this project to be conducted at:

- Macquarie University

This research meets the requirements set out in the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (2007 – Updated March 2014) (the *National Statement*).

This letter constitutes ethical and scientific approval only.

Standard Conditions of Approval:

1. Continuing compliance with the requirements of the *National Statement*, which is available at the following website:

http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/book/national-statement-ethical-conduct-human-research

2. This approval is valid for five (5) years, subject to the submission of annual reports. Please submit your reports on the anniversary of the approval for this protocol.

3. All adverse events, including events which might affect the continued ethical and scientific acceptability of the project, must be reported to the HREC within 72 hours.

4. Proposed changes to the protocol must be submitted to the Committee for approval before implementation.

It is the responsibility of the Chief investigator to retain a copy of all documentation related to this project and to forward a copy of this approval letter to all personnel listed on the project.

Should you have any queries regarding your project, please contact the Ethics Secretariat on 9850 4194 or by email ethics.secretariat@mq.edu.au

The HREC (Human Sciences and Humanities) Terms of Reference and Standard Operating Procedures are available from the Research Office website at:

http://www.research.mq.edu.au/for/researchers/how_to_obtain_ethics_approval/human_research_ethics

The HREC (Human Sciences and Humanities) wishes you every success in your research.

Yours sincerely

Dr Karolyn White
Director, Research Ethics & Integrity,
Chair, Human Research Ethics Committee (Human Sciences and Humanities)

This HREC is constituted and operates in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council's (NHMRC) *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (2007) and the *CPMP/ICH Note for Guidance on Good Clinical Practice*.

Details of this approval are as follows:

Approval Date: 15 April 2015

The following documentation has been reviewed and approved by the HREC (Human Sciences & Humanities):

Documents reviewed	Version no.	Date
Macquarie University Ethics Application Form	2.3	July 2013
Appendix B: Research to be Undertaken Outside Australia		
Correspondence from Mr Brendan Morgan responding to the issues raised by the HREC (Human Sciences and Humanities)		Received 21/02/2015 & 27/03/2015
MQ Participant Information and Consent Form (PICF) entitled *"Haitian refugees and human rights advocacy in the Dominican Republic"* – English Version	1	13/01/2015
MQ Participant Information and Consent Form (PICF) – Spanish Version	1	13/01/2015
Interview Questions		
Overseas Travel Risk Assessment		
Correspondence with Michael Carley regarding travel to the Dominican Republic		31/12/2014
Correspondence with Pablo Lozano confirming his role as representative contact with Haitian refugee and Dominican populations		