

Tourism: A Sustainable Vector of Peace for Hispaniola?

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Abstract

The Republic of Haiti and the Dominican Republic are today two separate independent countries. Hispaniola (La Isla Española) used to be one state before it was colonized by the Spanish in 1492, who ceded the western part (now Haiti) to France in 1697 (Séraphin, 2011b). This separation, as Théodat (2004) highlighted, still has many negative impacts on the relationship between the two countries. On the one hand, the Dominicans do not want to be mistaken for Haitians and on the other hand, Haitians despise the Dominicans as they refuse to recognize the fact they have a common origin. The first step toward the reconciliation of both countries has to be a self-reconstruction and acknowledgement of a common history/background. Tourism is not a remedy to every issue countries are facing. The 'magic' of tourism can only consolidate the relationship between the two countries if more fundamental economic and political interdependence is achieved.

Keywords : Haiti, Dominican Republic, Hispaniola, Peace, Tourism

1. Introduction

The Republic of Haiti and the Dominican Republic are today two separate independent countries. Hispaniola (La Isla Española) used to be one state before it was colonized by the Spanish in 1492, who ceded the western part (now Haiti) to France in 1697 (Séraphin, 2011b). This separation, as Théodat (2004) highlighted, still has many negative impacts on the relationship between the two countries. On the one hand, the Dominicans don't want to be mistaken for Haitians and on the other hand, Haitians despise the Dominicans as they refuse to recognize the fact they have a common origin. More recently, the government of the Dominican Republic decided to strip Dominican-born Haitians of their citizenship. Despite the tensions between the two countries, Séraphin (2011b) claimed that as far as tourism is concerned, Haitians and Dominicans won't have any option but to cooperate as there is a high level of duplication in terms of products offered. Can tourism ease the relationship between the two countries and make this cooperation successful? In terms of internal issues, Broudic (2012) highlighted the low level of trust Haitians have toward the institutions of their country. Sanchez and Senderowitsch (2012) highlighted the same phenomena in the Dominican Republic. Butler and Séraphin (2014), in a comparative study between Haiti and Kenya, claim social enterprises in the tourism sector can help to deliver positive peace via an

increase of trust between locals and visitors if Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) practices are locally embedded, addressing not only environmental, philanthropic and economic aims but particularly citizen diplomacy and transparency aims.

Tourism literature not only clearly highlights the fact that political violence is detrimental to destination image and therefore to tourist flows (Sonmez, 1998; Smith, 1998), but also the fact that tourism has some potential to act as a mechanism for promoting international peace by facilitating better intergovernmental relations (Kim, S.S., Prideaux, B. & Prideaux, J., 2007). For some academics, tourism is even considered as one of the most important vehicles for promoting peace among the peoples of the world (Cho, 2007; Guo, Timothy and Wang, 2006). Based upon the previously mentioned information about the Dominican Republic and Haiti, the purpose of this paper is to evaluate whether or not these theories linking tourism and peace can be applied to Haiti and the Dominican Republic. For Cruse (2012), the tensions between the two countries are deeply rooted in their history. The tensions between the Dominican Republic and Haiti date back the 19th century. In 1804, Toussaint Louverture and his soldiers were occupying the Dominican Republic. The white Dominican elite were stripped of their power by the Haitians. This situation lasted four decades until the white Dominican elite, supported by mixed race and black Dominicans took over.

It is important to place this study in a comparative, global context. Guo et al (2005) explore potential tourism linkages between mainland China and Taiwan; similarly, Cho (2006) and Kim et al (2007) offer similar analysis on the Korean Peninsula. None of these studies, however, discuss the potential of tourism to foster peace within traditionally adversarial communities. Moreover, there is hardly any academic paper (apart from the one written by Théodat in 2004) comparing the Dominican Republic and Haiti through the lens of tourism. In terms of academic contribution, this paper evaluates the following question: Can tourism help to establish a trust-based relationship between the Haitian and Dominican governments and their respective citizens?

Numerous factors challenge the viability of tourism as a stable economic sector, much less one capable of delivering social and political benefits. For example, the tourism industry is particularly susceptible to natural disasters such as hurricanes, earthquakes, bushfires and tsunamis (Huang, Tseng and Petrick, 2008 in Walters and Mairs, 2012), but also ethnic violence and political turmoil (Vitic and Ringer, 2008). These factors impacting negatively on the tourism industry can be put under the umbrella of 'crises,' or disruptions that affects a system as a whole (Selbst, 1978 in Ritchie, Dorrell, Miller and Miller, 2012). In addition to these environmental disruptions, Hispaniola has also recently faced other kinds of crisis. In this paper we are going to focus on political instability. Thus, despite the fact that there is a significant body of literature suggesting that tourism can contribute to peace, there is also a literature indicating that tourism does not automatically bring peace: tourism can even heighten conflict (Centre for Responsible Travel) and may serve as a channel for terrorism, colonialism, invasion of culture and consumption of local resources (Leong, 2008) which can include the locals themselves. Last but not least, there is no evidence that economic integration and transnational person-to-person contacts can contribute to development of peaceful relations (Kim, Prideaux and Prideaux, 2007). Tourism is a double edged sword. Our hypothesis is that tourism will only serve as a vector of positive peace between Haiti and the Dominican Republic if the neighbouring governments and people achieve a genuine sense of shared heritage and collective identity.

2. Profile of Studied Destinations

Because Haiti and the Dominican Republic occupy the same island, Hispaniola (figure 1), it is difficult to talk about the tourism industry in Haiti without referring to the Dominican Republic. Yet, Haiti and the Dominican Republic have two different images in the minds of

tourists. On the one hand, the Dominican Republic is the most visited island of the Caribbean, and on the other hand, Haiti (until 2013, the least visited destination) has been branded as an unsecure destination, a place where the worst is always likely to happen (S raphin, 2011b). **Figure 1 : Haiti and the Dominican Republic**



Source:  Raimond Spekking / CC-BY-SA-3.0 (via Wikimedia Commons)

2.1 Haiti

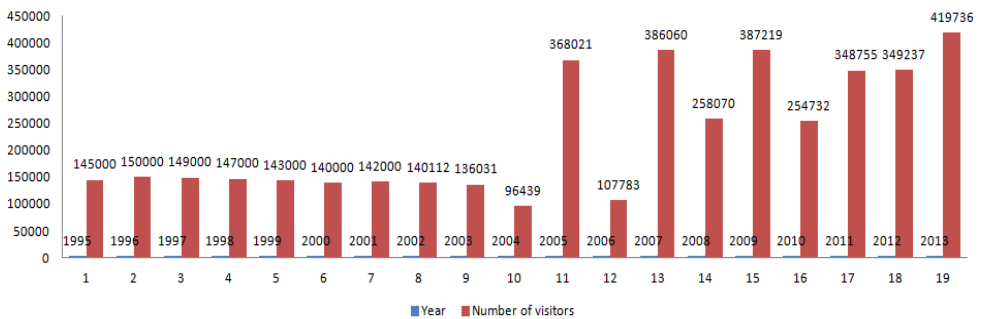
Higate and Henry (2009) highlight the fact Haiti suffers from internal issues, including lack of political stability, violence perpetrated by the leaders toward the local population, and heightened race-based tension between the locals (light-skinned versus dark-skinned). The country also experiences external issues with other countries, such as the United States of America and France. Last but not least, a separation between the local population and the tourists can be noticed as well. There is no sense of unity in and around Haiti.

From a tourism angle, Haiti was one of the most visited islands of the Caribbean during the 1950s and 1960s. At that time Haiti had a very good image due to its reputation as a cultural destination. In fact in 1951 the island received 10,788 visitors and in 1956, 67,700 tourists visited the country. The number of tourists had been multiplied by 6 in 5 years. Haiti used to be called the "Pearl of the Antilles". In 1957, the dictatorship and the reign of terror organized by Francois Duvalier and his Tontons Macoutes crippled the tourism industry. When Jean Claude Duvalier became president in 1972, the situation of the island slightly improved. During this period, the number of visitors to Haiti (mainly from North America) exceeded the number of tourists to the Dominican Republic, which was still known primarily for the production of sugar and rum (S raphin, 2011b). From the late 1970s to the early 1990s, the country went through many political crises that negatively impacted tourism industry (i.e. the presidency of Jean Bertrand Aristide). When Ian Thomson went to Haiti in 1990, to write *Bonjour blanc, a journey through Haiti*, Jean-Bertrand Aristide was about to become the country's first democratically elected president since Jean-Francois Duvalier in 1957 (S raphin, 2012). In contrast, under the presidency of Ren  Pr val (1991 – 2001 and 2006 - 2011) the country experienced increased political stability (despite the fact some issues were persistent) and the number of visitors increased. Despite the fact that the January 12, 2010, earthquake significantly affected the number of tourists visiting Haiti, recent statistics suggest significant recovery. The current government elected in 2011 has given the country some stability, hence the good performance of the tourism sector since then. These more recent trends support Hai and Chick (2011) findings about the fact that political stability is essential for the tourism development of a destination (figure 2).

Two figures played an important role in the development of the tourism sector in Haiti. Dumarsais Estimé who was President between 1946-1950, organized the International Exhibition of Port-au-Prince in 1949. This event contributed to the establishment of Haiti as a tourist destination. Thanks to this event, Haiti became the most visited destination of the Caribbean. As a result of Estimé's efforts the destination was named the 'Pearl of the Antilles'. All this lasted until the election of Jean-Francois Duvalier. The second key figure in stabilizing and enhancing Haiti's profile on the map of tourist destinations is Stephanie-Balmir Villedrouin, the current Minister of Tourism of Haiti. Those two examples also show how important leadership is in the performance of a destination.

Developing entrepreneurship (and more particularly guest houses in the countryside) in the tourism sector is one of the latest initiatives contributing positively to tourism development in Haiti. On the one hand, entrepreneurship can on the one hand help the local government to reduce the pressure on the capital Port-au-Prince and its neighborhood by encouraging people to go back to their 'cradle', meaning that some shanty towns like 'Cite soleil', 'Simbi' etc. can gradually disappear. On the other hand, encouraging and helping the locals to relocate in the countryside and establishing their own tourism enterprise are also a good way to federate the population around a national project: the development of the tourism industry in Haiti (Séraphin, 2013). If the tourism development is handled appropriately, broader social goals can be achieved that contribute to the overall well being of society (Meliou & Maroudas, 2010).

Figure 2: Tourists in Haiti 1995 - 2013



Source: The authors (Data: Ministry of Tourism; World Bank)

2.2 Dominican Republic

Tourism development in the Dominican Republic from the Rafael Trujillo dictatorship (1930-1960) until the current presidency of Danilo Medina (2012-present) can be characterized by two over-riding themes: the need for political stability and geographic decentralization (Ward, 2008). When political stability has been established on the eastern side of Hispaniola (for example, during the Trujillo dictatorship and since the second Balaguer presidency [1970-1980]) tourism development has consistently increased. In contrast to its neighbour, Haiti, intensive international investment beginning in the 1980s fostered exponential growth in the Dominican tourism sector. Nevertheless, questions of public health and the exploitation of Haitian labourers have inextricably linked the two countries to the Dominican tourism industry (Cabezas, 2008).

During the same period (1970 to 1980) that the Dominican government pressed forward with plans for developing Puerto Plata, private resort development initiatives took place at Casa de Campo in La Romana and in Punta Cana, near present-day Higuey. Furthermore, the Dominican government showed little interest in integrating these projects

into the existing transportation infrastructure. This compounded the external orientation of these communities. The pricing bias that targeted affluent international tourists, not to mention the prevailing role of Haitians a primary contributor to the service-industry labour force in the Dominican Republic, further exacerbated the inverse relationship between developmental priorities for promoting external tourism versus bi-national tourism development initiatives between the two countries. These structural factors in Dominican tourism also raise serious questions as to the sustainability of tourism there (Peeters and Eilgelaar, 2014).

Funding for tourism in the Dominican Republic also underwent a transformation in the late twentieth century. Until 1960, the Trujillo regime largely depended on private international investors and the state to fund hotel construction. After Trujillo's death, however, the Dominican government increasingly turned to international aid agencies for technical expertise and low-interest loans for constructing large tourism poles, Puerto Plata being the best example (Ward, 2008). By the end of the second Balaguer administration (1980), political stability set the stage for a shift to private international funding of hotel and resort development in the private and public tourism enclaves on the eastern portion of Hispaniola. Spanish investment in peripheral tourism development during the late 1980s capitalized on the all-inclusive model of tourism and the nearby market of North American (Canadian and United States residents) tourists to promote the vertical structure of the industry, which has transformed the Dominican Republic into the largest tourism destination in the Caribbean. The presence of similar clustering of hotels, large airports that accommodate charter flights from Europe, as well as the US, adaptation of leisure offerings (above all golf courses), and favourable commercial incentives for peripheral placement of resorts in the Caribbean, have also contributed to the Europeanization of the Caribbean tourism industry (Ward, 2008).

Following the uncontrolled rapid expansion of tourism during the late 1980s, a crisis emerged in 1992 with unacceptable levels of illness amongst foreign visitors, resulting from a lack of waste management infrastructure, health and safety training and supply chain management. This led to a one third reduction in 'on sale' capacity in the main European and North American markets during 1993, whilst the government and hotel owners invested in environmental schemes and training. Capacity was restored in 1995, but the reputation of the Dominican Republic as a safe alternative to more established Mediterranean destinations took a few more years to recover, depressing yields for tour operators and hoteliers. The experience did however provide a case study in managed development for other emerging destinations and helped to encourage a more strategic partnership approach for tour operators entering new destinations.

In terms of overall visitor trends, the Dominican Republic, according to UNWTO data since 1995 has generally always ranked within the top two countries for tourism reception on Caribbean islands, yet the exponential acceleration for growth coincided with increased European investment in all-inclusive properties and intensified further in the wake of the September 11 attacks in the US. Residual effects of the global war on terror, as well as the impact of the global economic crisis in 2008, counter intuitively contributed to solidifying the country's place at the top of Caribbean nations involved in the tourism trade.

Table 3: Tourists arrival at the Dominican Republic

Year	Bahamas, The [BHS]	Cuba [CUB]	Dominican Republic [DOM]	Haiti [HTI]	Jamaica [JAM]	Puerto Rico [PRI]
1995	1598000	742000	1776000	145000	1147000	<u>3131000</u>
1996	1633000	999000	1926000	150000	1162000	<u>3065000</u>
1997	1618000	1153000	2211000	149000	1192000	<u>3242000</u>
1998	1528000	1390000	2309000	147000	1225000	<u>3396000</u>
1999	1577000	1561000	2649000	143000	1248000	<u>3024000</u>
2000	1544000	1741000	2978000	140000	1323000	<u>3341000</u>
2001	1538000	1736000	2882000	142000	1277000	<u>3551000</u>
2002	1513000	1656000	2811000	140000	1266000	<u>3087000</u>
2003	1510000	1847000	<u>3282000</u>	136000	1350000	3238000
2004	1561000	2017000	3450000	96000	1415000	<u>3541000</u>
2005	1608000	2261000	<u>3691000</u>	112000	1479000	3686000
2006	1601000	2150000	<u>3965000</u>	108000	1679000	3722000
2007	1528000	2119000	<u>3980000</u>	386000	1701000	3687000
2008	1463000	2316000	<u>3980000</u>	258000	1767000	3716000
2009	1327000	2405000	<u>3992000</u>	387000	1831000	3183000
2010	1370000	2507000	<u>4125000</u>	255000	1922000	3186000
2011	1346000	2688000	<u>4306000</u>	349000	1952000	3048000
2012	1422000	2815000	<u>4563000</u>	295000	1986000	3069000

Source: WDI, World Bank (updated May 6, 2014)

2.3 Haiti and the Dominican Republic: Similarities and differences

As noted at the outset of this paper, Haiti and the Dominican Republic share a geographic space, as well as their own legacies of colonization and independence. Political, legal, and cultural conflicts have also inhibited tourism schemes between the two countries since the late 1930s. Henry Luis Gates argues that regulation of movements at the border town heightened following the Parley Massacre (Gates, 2011). Air travel patterns between the two countries also suggest little interest in bi-national integration, with approximately nine thousand passengers flying to Haiti on regularly scheduled flights in 2013 from airports in the Dominican Republic, as well as the same number arriving in the Dominican Republic from Haiti. This is out of approximately 1.3 million arrivals and 1.3 million departures during the same period (idac.gov.do). Thus, while approximately nine thousand passengers' movements are recorded each way between Dominican and Haitian airports during 2013, only Santiago, near the terrestrial border with Haiti registers a Haitian destination in its top ten international air travel routes. Given the difficulty of crossing territorial borders by land (including curfew periods and stringent checks in border cities like Dajabon, Dominican Republic), as well as an apparent lack of interest in bi-national interaction as reflected in commercial aviation statistics, it is most likely that any initiative linking tourism in the two countries would have to focus on aspects of shared cultural legacies, given that most pleasure seekers realistically only visit one enclave.

Table 4: Comparison Haiti /DR

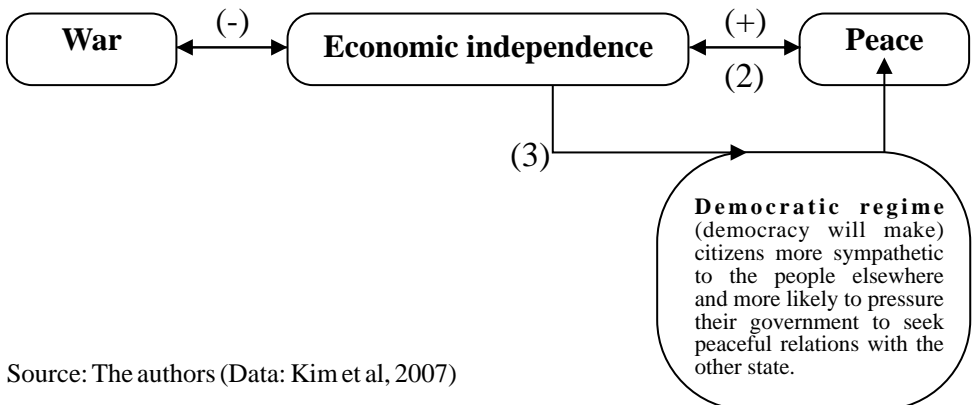
Haiti / DR	Similarities	Differences	Comments
Forest		√	1/3 of the DR territory is forest. In Haiti it is less than 1% of the territory
Informal sector	√		Drug / prostitution
Employment	√		Low-qualified job Low-paid
Topography		√	Haiti is more mountainous therefore less land for agriculture + land less productive in Haiti
Demography	√		The density is higher in Haiti
Life expectancy		√	Haiti (under 55) DR (71)
Tourism		√	DR is a well established destination in the Caribbean Haiti is new to tourism

Source: The authors (Data: Cruse, 2012)

3. Theoretical Framework

Kim et al's research (2007) on North and South Korea supports the view that tourism can facilitate better intergovernmental relations. However, their research highlights the fact that although tourism can contribute to peace, other conditions need to be put together beforehand as figure 4 is going to explain. It is also important to mention the fact that the Korean situation is similar to the Hispaniola situation as South and North Korea share contiguous space and suspicion and fear pervade the relationships between the bordering states (Kim et al, 2007). Creating economic interdependence is the first pre-condition to promoting peace through tourism in Hispaniola. We have adapted the results of Kim et al (2007) research to produce the following model:

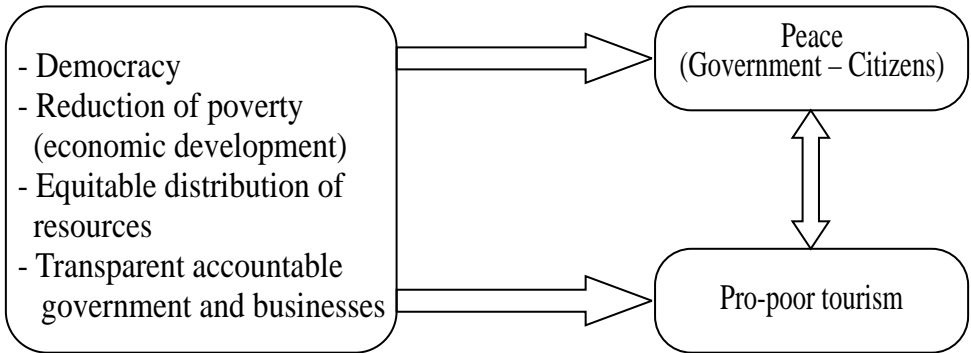
Figure 5: Economic interdependence and peace



Source: The authors (Data: Kim et al, 2007)

Based on this model, it is also very important for each state to achieve a certain level of democracy. This level of democracy is going to lead to some peace in each country and then will naturally improve relations between them. Reduction of poverty (Dupont, 2009); equitable distribution of resources and transparent accountable government (Holden, 2013); Accountable enterprises via a good CSR policy (Butler and Séraphin, 2014) can also contribute to democracy.

Figure 6: Recipe for democracy and peace



Source: The authors (adaptation of different sources)

The authors' own broad experience of cross-border and inter-sectarian tourism initiatives in the Balkans, Caucasus, Middle East and South Asia shows that tourism can be a driver of sustainable social and economic development in regions where political and military or paramilitary efforts have failed to achieve a lasting solution. The consensus amongst tour operators in Israel and Palestine consulted by the authors is that the economic opportunity provided by tourism will ultimately overcome their governments' resistance to economic co-operation, not simply because it makes economic sense, but because all the 'People of the Book' (Jews, Christians and Muslims) share a common heritage in the Holy Land and the modern inhabitants of the region can enrich the interpretation of this region through co-operation. A former (Sunni) tourism minister in Iraq confirmed that the last forty years of sectarian conflict were but a blink in the eye of the past ten thousand years of heritage in Mesopotamia and that a celebration of this common heritage is necessary for any prospect of peace. Israeli and Lebanese tour operators recalled when their common border was open and identified a range of historic mountain trails that in the future could provide the basis of an outstanding year round programme of ecotourism products and cross-border co-operation. The Abraham Path Initiative, which has an ambition to create a path network linking Iraq, Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Israel, Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, is an outstanding example of how tourism can help re-connect groups in contemporary conflict through their shared heritage, with the potential to contribute to a lasting peace through tourism. It is clear however, that whilst there are many worthy government efforts, it is usually local entrepreneurs and community-led initiatives that achieve the best results. Governments can facilitate and support cross-border tourism project, but their leadership can become a hindrance, as it is sometimes viewed with suspicion.

Thus, developing a tourism project on the border between the two states could catalyze economic interdependence between the two countries. This project can take the form of a French model called SEM (Societe Economie Mixte), that is to say a Public Limited Company owned and financed with Public and Private sector capitals. Developing a tourism venture at Ounaminthe for example can be considered as the starting point of cooperation between the two countries. Haiti and Dominican Republic could develop the form of tourism that they want and this Ouanamento venture can be an alternative and offer the visitor an additional option that would be a hybrid destination.

4. Methodology

On 09 May 2014, the Haitian and Dominican Ministers of Tourism signed a cooperation agreement. This agreement is based around responsible and sustainable tourism development between the two countries. This agreement also includes amongst other things, sharing best practices and the opening of a Haitian Tourist Information Centre (TIC) in Dominican Republic. This agreement has generated different types of reactions. We have decided to use Facebook to analyse those reactions.

Facebook is the most used social media on the internet and is among the most popular websites in Europe and Worldwide (Stankov, Lasic and Dragicjevic, 2010). Facebook has more 900 million active users posting 3.2 billion 'likes' and comments each day (Bryan, Crumley, Edwards and Pugsley, 2012). Because Facebook is considered a good business tool (Stankov et al, 2010) and also because social networking has made it simple to develop relations that transcend age, race, culture and geographical differences (Graham, Faix and Hartman, 2008 cited in Stankov et al, 2010), it has been considered as a reliable enough tool to use in order to assess what people (mainly Haitians and Dominicans) think about the new tourism agreement about the two countries. The results will help us to determine whether or not tourism can be used as a vector of peace between Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Because social media users have the ability to influence the outcome of projects (Atout France, 2011) and also because there are some evidences that Facebook can help to improve performance (2011) it is all the more important for us to use this contemporary tool.

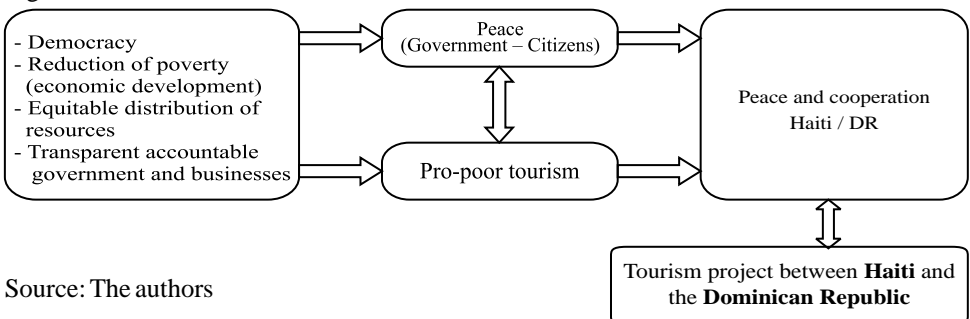
A two stage research approach has been adopted for this study:

Step 1: There is a measurement framework developed for Facebook that includes 6 categories: Social graph, posts, impressions, engagement, sharing and conversion (Bryan et al, 2012). In this paper we are only going to use three categories: posts (number of posts per theme); engagement (any kind of engagement with a post, such as number of likes and comments) and sharing (engagement that generates impressions among follower's followers). The performance of the two pages will be compared and analysed. For the analysis we are going to use two Facebook pages: The Haitian (Ministere du Tourisme Haiti) and Dominican Republic (Republica Dominicana – Turismo) DMO pages.

Step 2: Our analysis (content analysis of the comments made) of the Facebook page is going to focus exclusively on the theme related to the agreement signed between Haiti and Dominican Republic. This analysis will be only for the Facebook page of the Ministry of Tourism of Haiti as (perhaps significantly?) there is no report of this agreement on the Facebook page of the Ministry of Tourism of the Dominican Republic.

Step 3: We have established a scale to evaluate the feeling of the fans regarding the future collaboration of the two countries on this tourism project. We have adapted Silver, Stevens, Wrenn and Loudon (2013) process of measurement hierarchy. A score has been assigned to each answer to measure the phenomenon. Each response is scored on a five-point scale (Silver et al, 2013: 111).

Figure 7: Model of tourism venture Haiti / DR



Source: The authors

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Content analysis can be seen as providing a systematic way of breaking down a text and providing evidence for interpretation (Hammond and Wellington, 2013). In our case, we want to find out what is thought about this agreement. As with any study, our methodology has some limitations. 1) Despite the fact we are going to use all the comments for each post on Facebook, this sample remains a modest sample size and therefore our findings cannot be generalised to all Haitians. 2) Another limitation is that we do not know the nationality of the followers who posted the messages, which mean that we cannot conclude that our findings reflect all Haitians' point of view. 3) Last but not least, we do not have similar data from the Dominican Republic Facebook page. The approach is therefore not directly comparative. However, because the comments made are in French, Spanish, English and Creole, this sample can be considered as representative of the wider Haitian population. Because French and Creole are official languages in Haiti, it can be argued that those comments are most likely to be from Haitian residents and diaspora; comments in English might be from the diaspora (probably living in the US), and comments in Spanish either from expat Haitians living in the Dominican Republic or from Dominicans.

5. Results and Analysis

Stage 1:

Using the 'We like Travel Barometer' (table 8), the analysis provide the following results:

Table 8: Scale to measure Facebook comments

Completely satisfied	Very satisfied	Fairly well satisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
5	4	3	2	1

Source: The authors (adaptation of Silver et al, 2013: 111)

Engagement rate	
More than 2,5 %	Excellent
2 - 2,5 %	Very good
1,5 - 2 %	Good
1 - 1,5 %	Average
0,5 - 1 %	Low
Less than 0,5 %	Very low

Source: *We Like Travel*, 2012

According to the '*We Like Travel*' barometer the engagement of the Facebook of the Haitian's DMO can be considered as being excellent.

Table 10: Haitian DMO (Ministry of Tourism) Facebook page

Talk about this	Like this	Engagement rate
4003	35144	11%

Source: The authors (survey done on 10.05.14)

According to the '*We Like Travel*' barometer the engagement of the Facebook of the Dominican Republic's DMO can be considered as being very good.

Table 11: Dominican Republic DMO (Republica Dominicana – Turismo) Facebook page

Talk about this	Like this	Engagement rate
1905	84982	2%

Source: The authors (survey done on 10.05.14)

The Haitian DMO Facebook page is 5 times more important in terms of 'engagement rate' than the engagement rate the Dominican Republic.

Stage 2: The Haitian DMO put two posts on 10.05.14 about the signature of the agreement with the Dominican Republic. For the first post the DMO put an internet link leading to an article. For the second post (still on 10.05.14), the DMO just put a picture of both tourism ministers (Haitian and Dominican) signing the partnership.

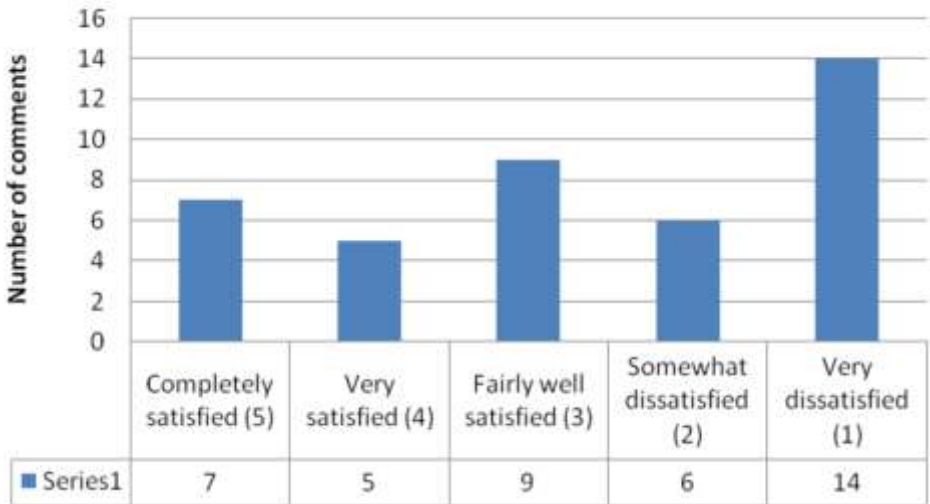
Table 12: Reaction on Facebook regarding the partnership Haiti / DR

	Share	Like	Comments
1 st post	34	74	23
2 nd post	51	72	18

Source: The authors

The content analysis of the comments made (appendix 1 and 2) about this partnership can be summarised as follow:

Figure 13: Tourism partnership Haiti/DR



Source: The authors (data from Facebook)

Out of the 41 comments (figure 12), 21 comments are graded between '*completely satisfied*' and '*fairly satisfied*'; 20 comments are either '*somewhat dissatisfied*' or '*very satisfied*'. There is not a clear position about this partnership. It is difficult to say if tourism in that case is a potential factor of peace or not.

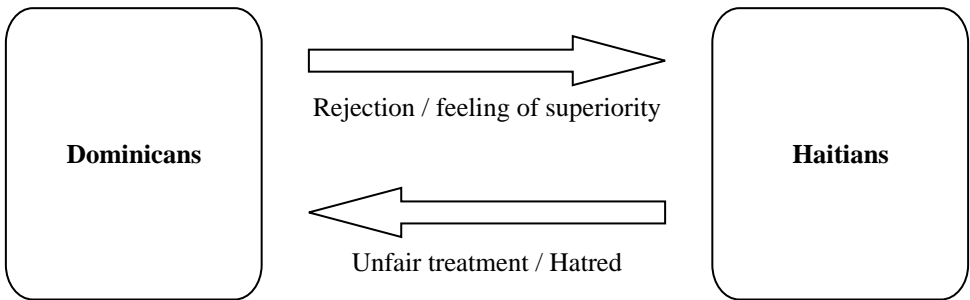
From the content analysis of the verbatim (appendix 1 and 2) the common points between the comments are:

1. Haitians are being abused by Dominicans.
2. Haitians have been stripped of their Dominican citizenship but cooperation is very important.
3. This cooperation is not going to change anything regarding the relationship between the two countries. This should not have happened as the Dominicans are killing our brothers.
4. The real objective of the partnership is not clear. Helping the relationship between Dominicans or Haitians or making businessmen richer.
5. The agreement is the agreement of shame.
6. The partnership is important for the survival of the two countries.
7. The partnership is good for the image of Haiti.
8. Dominicans are not reliable. However, Stephanie Balmir Villedrouin. We should go for it!
9. Diplomatic relations are very important.

6. Discussion

For Cruse (2012), the tensions between the two countries are deeply rooted in their history. Throughout the time, an 'anti Haitianism' grew in the Dominican Republic spearheaded by Trujillo and then Balaguer. The main arguments relied on the fact that Haitians and Dominicans do not have common origins (whereas they do have similar African origins). A feeling of superiority by the Dominicans towards the Haitians gradually appeared during the course of the 20th century. This feeling of superiority and hatred toward the Haitians was reinforced by the fact that the number of Haitians living in the Dominican Republic between 1916-1935 was growing rapidly. In 1935, there were some 35,000. In 1937, under the presidency of Trujillo, 15,000 Haitians were slaughtered. The latest exaction of the Dominican Republic against Haitians dates back to 2013, when the Dominican Republic government decided to strip Haitians of their citizenship.

Figure 14: The relationship Haitians / Dominicans

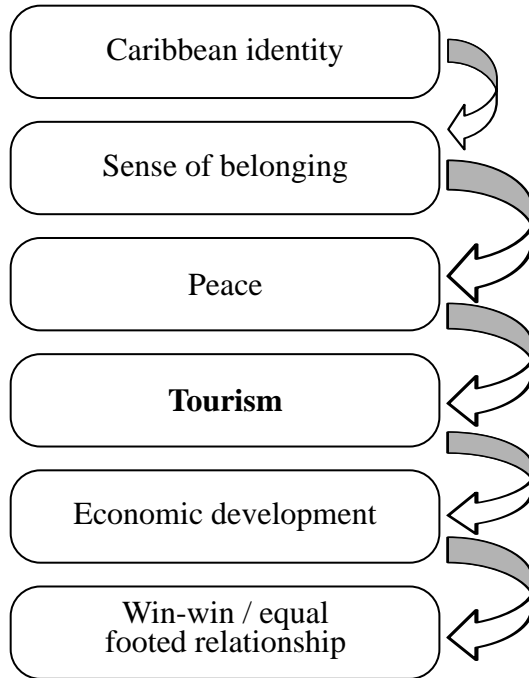


Source: The authors (adapted from Cruse, 2012)

Even if the idea of a Public Limited Company owned and financed with Public and Private sector capitals and the development of a tourism venture at Ounaminthe are good ideas to improve the relationship between the two countries, this suggestion can only be a preliminary step and not the primary path to peace as one can't develop tourism against but with the population (Darling-Carter, 2010). This partnership is going to find some resistance from the Haitian side and it is likely to be the same from the Dominican side (even if we do not have evidence). The first step toward the reconciliation of both countries has to be a self-reconstruction and acknowledgement of a common history/background. As Glissant (2010) mentioned, a nation that is not aware of its history is not going to move ahead. If this process of healing and acknowledgement (quite important for Toni Morrison in 'Beloved') is not fully done, it is going to lead to social issues like the February 2009 riot in Martinique (Séraphin, 2011a). Despite the fact that the past (history) has an impact on the present, culture is an interaction between the past and the present (Davidas, 1997). Identity is not static (Dubesset, 2012). This problem of identity is not unique to Hispaniola but quite common in the Caribbean and other post-Colonial territorial divisions in Southeast Asia, East Africa and the Middle East. In the Caribbean, this is due to the wide variety of cultural, linguistic, social, economic and political conditions such close proximity which prevail in the area. It is also due to the fact each island has developed its own idea of what being 'Caribbean' is, as people do not conceive an area as it is but as they want to see it. As individualism is no longer an option for the Caribbean islands for their economic development and to resolve common issues (Idem), Haiti and the Dominican Republic will have to get over their so called differences. Taking the example of Saint-Martin that presents similar characteristics to Haiti, Audebert (2003, cited in Redon, 2007) explains that immigration contributes also to the economic dynamism of Saint-Martin. Haiti and Dominican Republic also need to see their situation as an asset and not only as a problem. Because immigration between countries sharing frontiers goes toward the country with the best economic condition (Redon, 2007)

the economic development of Haiti can be a twofold bonus for the Dominican Republic: (a) less Haitians will go to Dominican Republic and the exchange between the two countries will be more on a win-win basis and will stop the conception of superiority/inferiority. In that instance, this partnership between the two countries that is supposed to contribute to the tourism development of Haiti can play an important role to peace.

Figure 15: The steps toward peace between Haiti and the Dominican Republic



Source: The authors

7. Conclusion and Directions for Future Research

By reading this paper it is quite obvious that tourism is not a remedy to every issue countries are facing. And yet some developing countries have made the development of the tourism industry their priority despite the fact that some internal and external issues are persistent. Beyond saying that tourism is not the solution to sort out the persistent issues between Haiti and Dominican Republic, this paper also supports the fact that the 'magic' of tourism can only operate if particular circumstances are put together. If those conditions are not obtained, tourism could fuel more conflicts between the two countries. As one does not fit all, the factors will be different according to the destination. However, more investigation is needed to determine whether tourism can contribute to peace between Haiti and the Dominican Republic. The application of the cointegration theory to the results this research could strengthen our final thought. Dupont (2009) claimed that there is a one way link between poverty, "economic and tourism, Namely" it is the reduction of poverty and the development of the economy that is going to contribute the development of tourism and not the other way round. We are going to adapt this cointegration theory, by saying that it is the acceptance of common history between Haitians and Dominicans that is going to contribute to the revival of Hispaniola (not as a single state, but as a concept) and then to common sustainable tourism projects and not the other way round. The general conclusion is that destinations should sort out internal and external issues persistent in their country before considering developing the tourism industry.

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