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What Lies in the Market: The Untold Connections Between Dominicans and Haitians

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What Lies in the Market: The Untold Connections Between Dominicans and Haitians

Senior Project Submitted to
The Division of Social Studies
of Bard College

by
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Annandale-on-Hudson, New York
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In honor of my late aunt Matha Kelly who was key to my field research

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Introduction

I remember watching a short documentary in 2017 by Vox Media called “Divided Island: How Haiti and the D.R. Became Two Worlds” and a rush of emotions without answers came to my mind. The documentary was following a man who went to different markets alongside the border between the two nations and explained a little about the history and how the island came to be. The impression of fatigue sweating off the brows from the blazing sun of the merchants that were waiting at the gates to enter the market was telling of the long journey they underwent. People were carrying all types of goods over their head, on their arm, and on their back. Plantains, coconuts, sugarcane were some of the items that were brought to be sold at the market. The heavy traffic of people waiting to be let in were stopped by the market officers, who were wearing military-like clothing. On the other side of the gates were Dominican merchants who were let in hours earlier to set up and find the most advantageous spots. The video showed the discomfort of Haitians as it explained how in most border-markets they have to wait after Dominicans set up, to be later allowed to do the same. The market officers are shown being aggressive towards Haitians as they regulate the space. However, the documentary was not in depth enough to answer the burning question of “why”. Why is the discourse of Dominicans and Haitians always painted in black and white with little talk of the gray areas?

After watching the video my mind was filled with questions of my own identity as a Dominican. I felt the need to investigate and see for myself if this act of transgression and violation of human rights is in fact how Dominicans and Haitians interact with one another in a space. Dominicans and Haitians share one island, so the fact that the dominant narrative of the two groups being at constant opposition or in a dehumanizing relationship appeared to lack

nuance. The border relationship from the short documentary motivated me to find a setting similar to the market space that is near the Haitian and Dominican border.

I was not able to recreate the same expedition from the documentary, but I recalled a market near my aunt's house, known as la reguera, that was filled with hundreds of people, a market which began towards the middle to the end of the week. As soon as I stepped into la reguera, I knew that wherever I went there would be a border. La reguera is located in San Carlos, La Romana far from, the border with Haiti. Nonetheless, when I entered into la reguera in San Carlos, I saw a different kind of border. A border that showcased different mobility strategies, identities, and languages. I began to see that wherever I went there was a border, although not a physical border, but an imaginary border that is constructed from strangeness and curiosity of the other. Even though I did not go to the main border I was able to see the border in the local market. One benefit of the local market as opposed to the ones near the Haitian-Dominican border is that there is not a strong state presence there, so the social interactions are more organic.

The market near my aunt's house is called la reguera. However, "la reguera" is a general term used for any market that has a vast amount of people selling merchandise, mostly clothes, shoes, jewelry, and other tangible items. In addition, there are a lot of regueras around the Dominican Republic that are called another name by the locals that live around them. The market near my aunt's house is both una reguera and locally known as la reguera.

Ever since Haiti gained its independence from France in 1804 it has jumped hurdle after hurdle to retain its freedom. The natural disasters that Haiti has endured like the flood of 1988, Hurricane George in 1988, and the 2010 earthquake, alongside U.S. intervention, and

government corruption have stunted their growth economically in comparison to its neighbor, the Dominican Republic. The Dominican Republic gained its independence from Haiti in 1844, and ever since, the two nations have been in conflict with one another. The west speaking Creole and French, due to being a former French colony, and the east speaking Spanish, from being Spain's first colony in the Americas, is the only difference that I can spot between the two. However, once you go into the market the differences and tensions are blurred.

The prominent discourse that pits Dominican and Haitians against one another is a divisive tactic used by extreme nationalist to discourage unity. The perpetuation of this discourse, while bad, has at least one advantage: it exposes the many human rights violations that are occurring against Haitians in the Dominican Republic. For example, in 2013, hundreds of thousands of Dominicans of Haitian descent were denationalized because the Dominican Tribunal courts amended birthright citizenship. The amendment stipulates that children of Dominican parents are Dominican but children of non-Dominican parents are not. Before the 2013 ruling anyone born into the Dominican Republic was considered to be Dominican. The 1929 clause in the Dominican Constitution excluded people who were “in transit” and diplomats from birthright citizenship. Because the phrase “in transit” did not specify its meaning, it was later reconstructed to exclude those who entered the Dominican Republic illegally since 1929. Although this new law is now part of the Dominican Constitution, it violates the human rights of all that it made stateless. While that is happening in the background in the Dominican Republic, la reguera is a space that creates a buffer zone for Dominicans and Haitians to work together. The benefits of the market is that it is a space to teach, share languages and recognize humanity. Through la reguera I will be analyzing how mobility, identity, and language dismantle

the fatal conflict theory of Haitians and Dominicans being mortal enemies, but most importantly, how markets, like la reguera, facilitate a space for humanity to be recognized.

Methods

To accurately and better understand the relationship between Dominicans and Haitians. I studied at a market called la reguera that is next to my aunt's home. I had originally wanted to follow six people, three Haitians and three Dominicans. However, my access into the market at first was through my family network. My two aunts, Linda and Bella, introduced two vendors that I would later be shadowing. My first aunt, Linda, introduced me to Nancy who is a Dominican vendor and has been selling her goods at la reguera for 13 years. Next my aunt, Bella introduced to Diego who is Haitian and has been selling in la reguera for 12 years. My aunt's house is six minutes away from where la reguera is located, so accessing the market did not present any difficulties.

After three days of observing Nancy and Diego, I decided that the project would be richer if I concentrated on two stories rather than having six different ones. In addition, I met Wendy, Diego's nephew, who recently moved from Haiti and is helping his uncle in la reguera. I started to go to la reguera at 9am on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. However, on Sundays, Nancy and Diego were not at the market anymore because the peak of la reguera is on Fridays and then on Saturdays only half of the vendors are left.

My days with Nancy and Diego consisted of spending 3- 4 hours in each of their tarps. I observed and took notes. When they had free time or were not busy with customers, I would strike conversations with them to get to learn about themselves and the history they have with la reguera. I only spoke Spanish to Nancy and French to Diego. For some questions that I asked

Diego some questions in Spanish and if he couldn't understand I would ask the question again in French or ask Wendy to translate. Overall, my research time was from August 1st, 2020 to September 1st, 2020.

Chapter Summary

In the first chapter, "Mobility," is an introduction to the market, la reguera, and the people I interviewed: Nancy and Diego, who are the subjects of the study. The story highlights the different market strategies that Nancy and Diego use to guide their day-to-day business activity and differentiates Nancy's local mobility strategy from Diego's more international approach. At the same time, I investigate the history of la reguera, and how it became the space that it is today.

The various strategies Nancy and Diego show us on how they, as a local resident and an immigrant, adapt to the circumstances and figure out the best way for them. Nancy utilizes a local mobility strategy to navigate the market space: her approach relies on local networks and family support, which means low mobility or less flexibility, and having access to high-quality merchandise. Meanwhile, Diego's international mobility strategy consists of his network outside la reguera. Diego moves to different markets around the country and does not stay just in one. His international mobility strategy --high flexibility to different markets-- can be attributed to selling more affordable items, and being a single man who has, recently, obtained help from Wendy. Through mobility we can see not only how Nancy and Diego navigate the market, but also how they use their identity.

In chapter two, "Identity," I talk about how identity is part of the Dominican and Haitian discourse. For example, I theorize on the fatal conflict model that Samuel Martinez criticizes,

which pins Dominican and Haitians as mortal enemies of one another. In addition, I take the opportunity to investigate an incident where minors were being arrested without probable cause. The incident is an example to differentiate how power and identity work outside la reguera. This occasion also elaborates on how power is arbitrary to who it affects. I also analyze different ways that Haitians were otherized because of their identity in the Dominican Republic.

Chapter 3, “Language,” is about how language is not only the means for communication, but also a unifying attribute that makes a space sustainable to recognize humanity. The chapter identifies how “strangeness” in the market allows for humanity to be recognized. In addition, the chapter captures how even when two groups speak different languages, they set aside their differences and instead learn and grow from them to thrive in the market. Dominicans and Haitians in this space demonstrate a symbiotic relationship with one another. Language is a tool to understand human rights by first thinking of humanity as a common thread between how each group sees one another. Through everyday commerce the market allows for strangeness also to be a tool that dismantles the fatal conflict theory between Dominicans and Haitians.

Chapter 1: Mobility

It was a Saturday around 5 p.m. when I went to Diego's tarp. I noticed that he was quickly packing his merchandise. The white tarp that covered his merchandise was sagging from one part due to him removing one of the wooden branches that held it up. Next to him was his nephew, Wendy. Wendy and I exchanged greetings in French. "Bonjour, ça va bien (Hello, how are you doing)?" I said. "Ça va bien et-tu (I'm doing well and you)?" he replied. Within that quick exchange he was also busy helping his uncle, Diego, to pack up all the merchandise. Diego then walked outside the tarp. As we were talking, Wendy kept looking back, expecting for something to come. After a few minutes, out from behind came Diego with an old white Nissan mini truck. I saw Diego through the front glass with a smile on his face as he tried to park the mini truck on the sidewalk. Diego always carried a smile on his face even when he was doing business, so I was not surprised that when it came to the labor of cleaning up, he had kept the same energy. Luckily, the tarp that was next to Diego's slot had already been taken down, so he had room to park the truck. The truck could not stay on the middle of the road, because there was ongoing traffic and people packing up as well. Diego got out the truck to help Wendy finish up the work. I asked Wendy, "Approximately how long did it take to pack up everything?" "Around two hours," he replied, as the sun reflected off his face.

As I left Diego's tarp to go see Nancy, I noticed that a lot of people on the left side of the market had finished or were in the process of packing up. I arrived at Nancy's tarp only to see the complete opposite to Diego's situation. Nancy was calmly seated on her chair with all her merchandise still on display. There were some customers still under her tarp looking for things to

buy. I approached Nancy and exchanged greetings in Spanish. “Buenas tarde, como usted está (Good afternoon how are you)?” I asked. “Aquí tranquila como siempre (Here chilling, like always),” she replied with a low voice. Her son was hidden underneath one of the tables as usual to remain out of sight until his mother called for his assistance. Nancy looked more tired than normal. I thought that it may have to do with low sales from the day. I looked at the merchants that were next to her tarp and didn’t see any signs of packing up. Packing up early, a relaxed or a busy attitude, and family members under the table: I soon learned that many of these were symptoms to what I will later unravel as different market strategies that are adapted by Dominicans and Haitians.

Nancy informed me one day that the left side was mostly occupied by Haitian merchants and the right side by Dominicans. She continued to say that the Haitians go to different markets aside from the one in La Romana. Looking back, I realized that when merchants on the left side were packing up early it was in preparation to head out to another reguera. Nancy stayed longer because she was a local resident that lived in La Romana. Unlike her Haitian counterparts, she was not headed to other markets on the same day.

In the city, la reguera is a market where merchandise like, clothing, jewelry, and shoes are sold by vendors. The vendors come from a diverse background, but mostly they are Dominicans or Haitians. One night when we passed by la reguera on the way to a mall called La Sirena, my aunt told me that there are other regueras, for example, in San Pedro de Macoris, which is a municipality next to La Romana where people engage in commerce. Haitians are more likely to sell at other markets outside La Romana than Dominicans.

To hear that la reguera was divided down the middle, which disproportionately placed Dominicans and Haitians on different sides, made me question how the construction of space created a subverted power dynamic. Who oversaw creating a divided structure of the market space? What other markets did Haitian sellers go to? By talking to my aunt and to Nancy, I learned some answers. La Junta was the organization that oversaw the local government of La Romana. They managed businesses, local municipalities, and the rules & regulations. However, la reguera has an internal power structure. In El Tiempo, an online news source, I found an article “Alcadía de La Romana enfrenta pugnas internas por permisos a buhoneros (Municipal of La Romana faces internal struggles for peddlers' permits)” written by Edgar Moreta, and it states that there is an unofficial power structure in la reguera that plays a role in the regulations and benefits from creating fake contracts with merchants. Moreta addresses that these fake contracts are illegal to make and that La Junta has been unable to pinpoint who is the kingpin of the internal reguera network. Because of the lack of information of the internal power structures, la reguera opens itself as a space with different strategies that have an influence on the power dynamics.

Nancy continued to say that every three years La Junta randomizes the slots that are available at la reguera and assigns a new location within la reguera for merchants to set up their tarp. If the slots are randomized, then do the merchants self-impose the division? Questions that lead to more questions started to make light of the social patterns. Perhaps because of the randomization, the division between nationalities was not absolute? In Diego’s case, his tarp was on the right side -- the Dominican side. Nancy told me that 3 years ago she was in a different

spot, but still on the right. Her position was near the beginning of la reguera, but still on the road. From this we can see that there are different power dynamics that affect the structure of la reguera. On one side, we have La Junta who oversees la reguera, and on the other side, we have an internal power structure that imposes its own rules and regulations. These conflicting powers go to show the biases that created the subtle structural divide between Dominicans and Haitians in la reguera.

I made a note of the division with Dominicans and Haitians in la reguera because the rooted historical tension between the two nations could be influencing the space which they are in. For example, the majority of Haitians merchants are on the left side of the market and the Dominicans on the right, and this division is indicative that historical tensions are still present to this day. However, there is a sense of camaraderie in the market space between Dominicans and Haitians. The fact that they are all merchants creates a neutral environment where the only importance is their mutual goal of making a sustainable livelihood by selling their goods. For instance, I noted that the buyers regardless of their nationality went to every tarp to find the best price that worked for them. “Do you change the price of what you sell based on the person’s identity?” I asked Nancy. “No, I treat all my customers equally no matter if they are Haitians, tourists, or Dominicans,” she replied. Nancy based her prices on how much money she had invested into the pacas. Pacas are boxes filled with different types of clothes that are sent from the U.S to Dominican Republic. In addition, the quality, size, gender, brand, also played into her decision. On the one hand, Haitians and Dominicans occupied different places in the market space. Nevertheless, they are brought together by the common principle of capitalism: money.

Social-economic status, transnational identity, and space are factors that play into Diego's and Nancy's mobility strategies. Diego does not sell most of his goods at la reguera in La Romana. Instead, he and Wendy travel each week to sell at many different markets across the Dominican Republic. On the other hand, Nancy's mobility strategy relies on staying within the markets in La Romana to do her business. Diego is from Haiti but moved to Santo-Domingo alone in 2005 and started his business shortly after. Nancy is a Dominican woman from La Romana, and lives with her family. Diego and Nancy incorporate different mobility strategies to how they navigate in the country. In this chapter I will be looking into the history of the space, la reguera and its surrounding, Nancy and Diego's mobility strategies, and how mobility is important when thinking about the relationship between Dominicans and Haitians.

The Construction of the Market Space and La Sirena

On Friday night August 9th, my aunt, cousin and I were walking to La Sirena. La Sirena is the biggest mall in the Romana that has a lot of retail stores, businesses, and activities for people to be a part of. As we walked along the road leading to La Sirena, passing by la reguera, there were a lot of merchants packing up their tarps and putting their merchandise into boxes. The road was completely dark, and it was hard for me to see. The sky had just given up its last seconds of dying light, but people did not pay attention to that and kept on packing up. The time was around 8pm. The only sound I could hear in the street was that of few vehicles passing by but mostly the sound of merchandise being put away.

As my aunt, cousin and I were passing by she revealed to me the history behind la reguera. From the story she told me it became clear why the location was designated to be the

market. It was designated as a place to sell when the place was called La Zona Franca and a small community lived there. The Zonarians got paid on Fridays, thus they went and shopped on Fridays. There was once a huge house where la reguera now operates that was called Iban. Hence the older generations refer to la reguera sometimes as Iban. “Where the people are selling clothes is where the big house used to be, that is why people say they are going to Iban,” said my aunt. My cousin interrupted my aunt to make a small comment: “Eso es porque lo hace sonar fino (It makes it sound fancy)”. Although the House Iban is no longer standing, Fridays have now been implemented as the days for la reguera. Knowing this information gave me a new context for the history of la reguera.

At first glance, la reguera was just another market where people went to buy, sell, and trade merchandise. La reguera is very expansive. It covers the entire street for about two miles, and it continues at an intersection that leads to another open street. La reguera is like an octopus, adapting and fitting into any crevasse that is open.



Friday Market “(VÍDEO) Conozca La Famosa Reguera de La Romana,” *(VÍDEO) Conozca La Famosa reguera de La Romana ~ GardonNews* (blog), May 13, 2018, <http://gardonnews.blogspot.com/2018/05/video-conozca-las-condiciones-en-las.html>.



View of Saturday market across the street (Photo taken by the author)



View of Sunday market across the street (Photo taken by the author)

Originally, I thought this was an unregulated space where people gathered to do business. Now, I know that it was a regulated space with rules and structure. Most importantly, the history of the creation of la reguera, from what my aunt told me, expands on the role it continues to have in the community. La reguera, aside from being a marketplace, has a symbiotic relationship with the community around it. For example, la reguera not only serves as an economic force to the area, but also serves as a communal space for people to gather.

My aunt continued to explain the fact that different cities have their own reguera and that the one in La Romana was the only one in the sector. To have more than one reguera in a single city was not allowed because La Junta did not permit it.

Conversation with Aunt

“En otros pueblos lo hacen en diferentes días, por ejemplo, en San Pedro los hacen los domingo, muchas gentes que tú ves aquí tú vas a San Pedro y tú la encuentras (Each city has a different day to do regueras, for example, in San Pedro they do it on Sundays. If you were to go on Sunday you would see a lot of the same people from here, there)”

“La misma gente (the same people)?” I asked.

“No todas pero algunas se van y alguna se quedan (Not all of them, some go and some stay,” my aunt replied.

As soon as my aunt started to talk about la reguera the conversation of race/identity quickly followed up.

“De donde te dijo diego de donde era (Where did he said he was from)?” my aunt asked about Diego.

“El me dijo que el ere de Santo Domingo (He told me he was from Santo Domingo),” I replied.

“El es capas ese desgraciado, el sabe que el es de allá allá allá de Porte Principes (He would dare to say he is from there, when knowing well that he is from Haiti)” she responded

I chuckled because of that comment¹, and responded, “Yo estaba hablando Frances con su sobrino, y el si me dijo que él era Haitiano, el sobrino (I was talking French to his nephew, and his nephew was clear to say that he, himself, is from Haiti).”

“Diego no dijo nada (Diego didn’t say anything),” I added.

“No Diego solamente se quedo así (Diego only stayed like this)” I said, while showing a serious facial expression in an attempt to mimic Diego’s reaction to the question.

I chuckled even more.

“El es capas de decir que el es Dominicain² (He would be capable of saying he is from Dominican Republic),” my aunt replied

My aunt’s concerns with nationhood and status at la reguera carried over to a very different shopping environment to a mall called La Sirena. I remember my aunt sending my cousin and me to buy some groceries at La Sirena. Before we left my aunt took a good look at us and pointed out that my cousin was wearing open toed sandals. “Are you going with sandals?” asked my aunt. I was confused as to why it mattered what type of footwear we wore to go to La Sirena. My aunt insisted that she go and change into sneakers or closed sandals. This was not the first time that one of my family members criticized the dress attire when going to La Sirena. There seems to be an unspoken dress standard to La Sirena.

La Sirena and la reguera are the two most popular shopping sites in the region. La Sirena is the biggest mall in San Carlos, a city within La Romana. La Sirena consists of a mixture of clothing stores, restaurants, banks, and different entertainment businesses. The people who I saw

¹ I was laughing because I was aware of the undertone of the comment. The comment itself was coded with nationalism, but not in an aggressive way. However, I find myself in a limbo of questions that the comment could have also been an anti-Haitian remark and I perpetuated it because I laughed in agreement. If I didn’t laugh would I be considered less Dominican? Because I laughed, I subconsciously added to the divide between Dominicans and Haitians? These are questions that came to mind right after I laugh, left my body and into society. Was my aunt wrong for saying that? Or was I for knowing what it implied?

² She mixed Spanish and French to allude to his Haitian French pronunciation of “Dominican”

go to La Sirena are always well groomed or dressed more presentable. However, for la reguera there are no social dress standards. For example, in la reguera you could wear shorts, sandals, and a sleeveless top. In La Sirena one is expected to wear closed toe shoes, long pants, and long sleeves shirts. A differentiation between la reguera and La Sirena is the environment. La Sirena is located in an enormous building with sectioned off parking lots, as opposed to la reguera, which is in the middle of the street where constant traffic is ongoing. In addition, going to La Sirena is seen as a form of high social status. If you go to La Sirena with its high-end department stores, you would be considered a person with money and luxury. On the other hand, if you go to the la reguera you would fall under the low-income class. My cousin commented that not all the people who go to La Sirena go to shop, but to be seen by other people in society. This observation relates to how our family members criticize our appearance when going to La Sirena, because of the fear of being judged. Due to the small community in San Carlos, it is highly probable that community members will know who one is related to. Because of that, the family's reputation would be damaged.

Space and social status are highlighted in the two shopping environments in many ways. For instance, la reguera is only open on Friday-Sunday, but La Sirena is open every day from morning to night. Another difference is the quality and price of the merchandise. In La Sirena, the prices are higher because the stores are new and the clothes are designer brands. On the other hand, in la reguera, the clothes are not marketed for being new, but for being affordable. Both Nancy and Diego get "pacas". Nancy informed me that she earns more money because she invests more to buy higher-priced pacas. Higher priced pacas contain more name brand clothes like NIKE, Adidas, Polo, Calvin Klein, etc., which allow Nancy to charge more.

A strong distinction between la reguera and La Sirena is that stores in La Sirena are run by established organizations, while the vendors at la reguera are entrepreneurs. While in La Sirena the stores do not need to be taken down and rebuilt every morning, all the vendors in la reguera require the help of their family members or friends to set up their tarps every cycle. Some merchants, like Diego, may have little to no help. Others, like Nancy, rely on the assistance of her family: the husband, daughter, and son. Diego relies on the help of his nephew Wendy. The benefit of that is that the money they make, aside from the money they pay for the spot, belongs to them. La Sirena has corporate employees that respond to chain of commands and have hourly wages, from which taxes are deducted. Finally, a similarity is that, rain or shine, they will both remain open. I remember a day when rain started pouring. Nancy quickly alerted her son to cover the merchandise with something that had a similar material that the tarp was made of. As soon as the rain stopped, business continued as usual.

In addition, la reguera and La Sirena portray a parallelism to Diego and Nancy's mobility strategy. La Sirena has the advantage of the fact that it is an establishment. It has its parking lots, different chain stores, event space, and other businesses. La Sirena also is known for its high-quality merchandise and customer services. On the other hand, la reguera has a looser structure. It is in the street with ongoing traffic, low quality clothes, and it is only open 3 times a week. The market stalls get packed up each day and set up again each morning. In other words, La Sirena has low mobility, but high status, whereas la reguera has high mobility and low status. This is parallel to Diego's high mobility to traveling to different markets but having low quality clothes and Nancy's low mobility to staying in La Romana and having high quality clothes. The parallelism between the two -- Diego and Nancy, and La Sirena and la reguera -- illustrates a

pattern into how different mobility structures are an important factor not only in the construction of a space, but also in understanding how identity is being navigated.

Nancy and Diego Mobility Strategies

Diego and Nancy's different mobility strategies are reflected on their own identity in the market and how it affects their everyday decisions. Diego's mobility strategy consists of traveling to different markets around Dominican Republic. Diego has been working in la reguera for over 10 years, lives in Santo Domingo, is single, and only recently has been helped by his nephew. In addition, Diego has immigrated from Haiti to live in Santo Domingo. I asked Diego and why he had moved to Dominican Republic. "Not enough opportunities," he replied. Because of the lack of economic opportunities in Haiti, he decided to move in search of better opportunities in the Dominican Republic. For example, Diego and Wendy work five days a week and every different day is a different market. The city of San Pedro de Macoris, Santo Domingo, Azua, La Romana, and Los Alcarrisos are some of the municipalities and provinces that they travel to sell in. By selling at multiple markets, he can sustain himself and now his nephew. Before Wendy came to Dominican Republic in May 2019, Diego did all the work by himself. Now with Wendy's help Diego can be more efficient in his business. Because Diego does not have a family in the Dominican Republic other than Wendy, he also has more flexibility to go to multiple markets. Diego's mobility strategy represents his business strategy because he utilizes both to better his profits. Identity doesn't only include ethnic background, but access to different networks, support or lack of it, and flexibility.

In addition, Diego has multiple networks where he can buy his pacas from and sell them in las regueras. The pacas that the merchants resell are mostly clothes coming from the U.S.

However, Nancy suspects that Diego can obtain pacas for a lower price than she can through his connections in Haiti. This allows him to set his prices lower and attract more customers. Diego and Nancy have never met, but still there is the lurking thought that infiltrates the neutral space, and plants a seed of division, that spreads a false premise of one having an advantage over the other because the unfamiliarity with one another's business practice. Each vendor sells their merchandise at their own price. Nancy's local influence also helps her in la reguera. Nancy buys high quality pacas that carry more name-brand clothing. "I buy higher priced pacas because they have higher quality of clothes and I could charge a higher price for them," said Nancy. Nancy's local influence, family, and higher quality are all incorporated to her mobility strategy. There are no standards to how low and high they can sell the goods. Therefore, la reguera creates a healthy competition between each vendor. In addition, the healthy competition contributes to the different mobility strategies that everyone incorporates.

For example, because of Diego's high mobility and low-quality merchandise, his sales are cheaper and attract a wider audience. On the other hand, Nancy's mobility strategy consists of low mobility and high-quality merchandise. Nancy has the advantage of being a local and being born in the Dominican Republic. In addition, Nancy's strategy is based on her current position. Nancy works two days, Friday and Saturday, in la reguera. Nancy has a family: two daughters, one of them is in med school, and the other is 13 years old, a 19 year old son that's always around the tarp helping, and a husband in La Romana. Nancy's family connection is one reason why she is in La Romana and working at la reguera. Every time I visited Nancy's tarp, she was either helping out customers, talking to the neighboring vendor next to her, or sitting back from the sweat breaking climate. One Saturday, I went and saw all the family helping her

with the day's sales. The husband was a tall, dark-skin, middle aged man. He was wearing a blue polo shirt and making jokes with the merchant that's at the middle entrance of la reguera that sells pants. "Recupera marido a 40 (Recover your husband for 40 pesos)," the pant merchant advertised. I laughed at his selling technique, because he targeted consumers who were all women. The younger daughter was there that day too. She was helping out a customer and relaying the information back to her mother. It was a beautiful sight to see how Nancy was teaching the art of business to her daughter. The son was not under one of the tables as he usually was, but also helping to sort the clothes in the tarp. I noted Nancy's cheerfulness that day because her family was present and helping. Nancy's older daughter was not there that day because she was in medical school. "I don't want my daughter to worry about working when she is studying," said Nancy. Nancy has a family unit in La Romana that are readily available to help her. When it came to pack up at the end of the day, her husband and son came with a truck to clean up. The streets were cleared out by 10pm. Nancy's low mobility, but high quality, is a result of her having access to her family and being around a familiar environment.

Nancy's mobility strategy includes the fact that she does not go outside La Romana to other markets. However, she does go to other selling points within La Romana. As mentioned before, Nancy has family support and is a local resident from La Romana. Because Nancy has family support, she is more inclined to sell within the city. In addition, the benefit of her family supporting her is that all the money that is made from the sale is to benefit the family. If she were to hire people to help her set up and take down, it would become difficult to make a profit.

Moreover, Nancy goes to spots like Caleta³ to sell her merchandise. Because of the heavy density of people around the area it's a perfect place to set up shop.

Nancy's and Diego's different mobility strategies take in a lot of factors that attribute to how they react to space. On one end, because of Diego's lack of family in Dominican Republic he has more mobility to move to different markets; on the other hand, the quality and presentation of his merchandise is different from Nancy. Nancy has her family, is a local, and stays within La Romana but she provides higher quality of clothes and has an organized display of merchandise. Both Diego and Nancy make a profit from their different mobility strategy. In addition, their mobility is also telling of why the left side of the market packs up earlier and the right side stays longer. Because Nancy is local, she wields more influence in the market, which is frequented by locals to La Romana. Diego's international identity gives him less local influence, but more opportunities to move throughout the country to sell.

Local vs. International Networks

When looking into local versus international networks it is important to not only consider Nancy and Diego's strategy, but to also consider how their strategy is part of understanding Dominicans' and Haitians' adeptness and reaction to space. In addition, we should assess how mobility is used to convey their identity. Considering all these factors opens the box to examine the role of citizenship and the relationship with human rights concerns, such as inclusion and exclusion in relation to the different networks. By inclusion I mean that Nancy has the advantage of being a local and therefore is able benefit more by getting higher quality clothes than Diego, because he is not a local and is excluded for his international background. This emphasizes the

³ Caleta is a beach in La Romana

human rights component, because prejudices are not only based on the color of one's skin but can be the lack of accessibility into a network.

From the previous section we saw how Nancy and Diego each utilized their strategy to navigate the market. Factors such as family, merchandise, and location were what impacted Diego and Nancy's strategy. For example, because Nancy had a family in La Romana, she had more of a reason to stay in La Romana, as opposed to Diego, who was more flexible to move around because he only had his nephew, Wendy, to help him out. Diego and Nancy both navigated the space through their own identity. The patterns now reveal themselves, when attaching the different strategy and identity into the observations I made of Haitians, who tend to go to more regueras than Dominicans. We start to see symptoms of two different networks at play. Dominicans have created a deep network. For example, a sunny Saturday afternoon, the market was less cluttered with people and more accessible for traffic through it. Nancy was sitting alongside her friend, Nora, whose tarp is right next to Nancy, watching some train work that was happening across the street. That day Nora had her kids with her, and they were playing around Nancy's tarp as well seeking shelter from the beating sun. Nancy and Nora noticed a man walking around the train tracks collecting metal nails that were removed by the train's service employees. Nora saw this and sent her young son and daughter to find any nails leftovers that the guy hadn't already picked up. The nails are important because they are made out of steel and can be resold to make money. After the kids went out to the train tracks, they came back after 20 minutes with 4 steel nails. Nora decided to split in half between herself and Nancy. From this example we see that Nora has a relationship with Nancy and shares her findings for her, so that she could also make a profit. This is an example of the deep network that Nancy has because she

has leveraged her local advantage to create a relationship with Nora, who is also a local, that has benefited her. Another example of a deep network is that oftentimes Nora gives Nancy some of her own clothes to sell for her in her tarp. If the item is sold, they split the profits in half. A man pulled up on a motorcycle later on the day looking for black socks. Once he found the socks he paid Nancy the amount needed. After he left, Nancy went over and gave her some of the money from the purchase of the socks. Nancy later explained to me that she helps Nora sell her merchandise sometimes. As shown, this deep connection between Nora came from the local advantage of having built a long-term relationship with each other.

On the other hand, Diego doesn't have access to the deep network because of not being a local or being from the Dominican Republic. Since Diego has high mobility, he moves from market to market, not being able to establish a long-term relationship with the market. In the bigger scope, Haitians developed a counter market strategy. The counter strategy is in response for not having access to the deep market, which the Dominican have. This strategy has advantages. Because of Diego's international strategy, he is able to find pacas at lower cost. The difference is that Haitians are limited to the networks they can engage in, because they are in a country that is not native to their own.

Through this we can see that racism does not only exclude people by their color of their skin but also excludes people out of certain networks from their diverse backgrounds. The exclusion to networks raises a human rights concern of the lack of accessibility to local networks. A reason why Haitians don't have a grip on the local network is because they go to a variety of markets around the country. Dominicans tend to stay around their local reguera because they are locals, thus have a strong local network because they limit their regueras to one

within their city. The mobility of Haitians and Dominicans in the international and local network corresponds to the overarching question of citizenship. For example, consider the following statement from an article written by Edgar Moreta on October 7th, 2027, on a local online news outlet called El Tiempo. “This association [Municipals Revenue Inspectors] has tried to reduce the people who come from other localities of the country to sell in this area, so that the sellers who are clearly from the province benefit. Part of the citizens understand that this should be sought for a solution since it drags the entrance to the city”, demonstrates the benefits of the deep network that comes with the local networks. Because many Haitians, like Diego, travel to different regueras, the restriction of only including local merchants participating in la reguera would have a negative effect on them because of the lack of a deep network. To have access to the local network there must be a few criteria to be met, such as living in the nearby vicinity for at least 5 plus years, speaking Spanish, and having strong connections to locals. Because they met the criteria, Nancy and Nora operated in a team to make a profit. In addition, because they had the privilege of being born in Dominican Republic, they don’t have the fear of their citizenship being questioned (Moreta 2017).

Citizenship plays a huge role in the power dynamics in la reguera. For instance, people who have legal status to be in the country do not have to worry about deportation by immigration officers. Dominicans do not worry about this matter because of being in their motherland. However, Haitians may face more difficulties with immigration if they don’t carry around authorized legal documentation to be in the Dominican Republic. Moreover, the market has come with its advantages and disadvantages for both Haitians and Dominicans. One advantage is that the market allows for a space where commerce can happen, which allows for both parties to

engage in mutual trade. As such it provided a temporary fix for Haitians, who lack a local network, to tap into it. What the market does for human rights is that it creates connections based on interest, but not deep connections. Because of Haitians' high mobility they are unable to sustain the relationships. In addition, the space doesn't solve the legal problems, such as immigration disputes. When I mentioned to Wendy that I was studying human rights and have a specialty in immigration, he believed I was the answer he was looking for. Due to my lack of knowledge of Dominican Republic immigration policies I wasn't of much help, but he remained interested in knowing more information on immigration. "Donc, qu'est que tu fais (What do you do)?" he asked me. "Je suis un étudiant qui étudie la droite de l'homme (I'm a student who studies human rights)," I answered. His eyes widened a little bit and his head shifted to listen eagerly to what I would say next as if I had the keys to all his problems. Because I wasn't of much use we continued to talk on another subject.

Diego and Wendy and Nancy reacted differently when my last day of research came about. Wendy and Diego were more bothered to see me leave, while Nancy didn't seem to have a problem. The last day of research I made sure to stop by both Nancy's and Diego's tarp. As I approached Diego's tarp, I saw Wendy as usual attending to the customers. From afar, I was already feeling sad because it was the last day of research. The day was cool with a gentle breeze sweeping the market. The flashbacks of all the moments I shared with Diego and Wendy started to come until I reached their tarp. Diego was attending a customer, and Wendy was standing next to tarp ready to greet me. "Bonjour," I said with a sad tone. Soon after we finished greeting each other, I informed him that today was my last day not only in la reguera, but in the Dominican Republic. "Pourquoi (Why)?" he replied with his eyes wide open, which revealed the window of

the genuine friendship we developed through my research period. I explained to him that I had to return back to the U.S and finish school, but that it wouldn't be the last time we would communicate with one another. We would always be able to reach each other through WhatsApp, for which we had exchanged numbers early in the research stage. Although I had explained this he was still distraught to see me go. In addition, I was his Spanish trainer, because he didn't have anyone for him to be able to practice Spanish with. I also said my thanks and goodbyes to Diego, he was taken aback by it, but nonetheless not as affected as Wendy. I suspect the difference in response was because unlike Diego, Wendy does not have an established network, because he has only been in the Dominican Republic for three months. Diego already has an international network because of his 12 years of living in the country. For Wendy, I was his first connection.

Similar to Diego, Nancy reacted even less affected by my news of leaving. Nancy already has a strong local network, family, and job, so she has already had several attachments in the country other than me. From this, I saw that for Wendy I was part of his emerging international strategy. International and local networks are important because each have their advantages and disadvantages. The limitation of networks that Haitians experience in the Dominican Republic is a form of racism and violates human rights.

Chapter 2: Identity

The vast array of melanin skin that floods the market everyday is my introduction to the market every morning as I cross over the railroad that separates it from the nearby neighborhood.

I hear Spanish from one ear ,and French and Haitian-Creole from the other. “ Pantalón por 30, vendo recupera marido (selling pants that get your husband back),” a vendor advertised from his spot in Spanish. Next to the vendor is an ice cream man advertising the different flavors in Creole, “Vanille, tamarin, lét, coco (vanilla, tamarind, milk and coconut)”. There is not one specific type of vendor or customer, but all everyone is engaging with one another. Identity was not a topic of discussion, but rather the price of goods that they were selling. The market is alive.

Identity is key to unlocking and furthering our understanding of the mechanics of the marketplace. I loosely define identity as an assembly of social constructs, such as social-economic class, race or ethnic identity, and gender, all in which reveal the social hierarchy illusion of power. Power that governs both inside and outside the marketplace. Power is control and strategic use of different systems to achieve means and ends. In addition, power exists in search of more power. Power is unprejudiced to social norms yet does not follow any rules and is not limited by anything. In this chapter, I will analyze the ways in which identity is a form of power, which operates both in and outside the marketplace. At the same time I will ask why identity in relation to power raises human rights concerns, like the policing of minors, in the Dominican Republic.

The first step is to unravel the importance of identity in the Dominican Republic. To do that I will explain a little bit of the historical context. Before there were the states known as Haiti and the Dominican Republic, there was an island called Ayti, meaning the land of mountains, or Quisqueya. Only after Christopher Columbus's settlement in 1492 did the island become known as Hispaniola. The island of Ayti was populated by the indigenous people known as the Tainos. The Tainos were mostly wiped out by diseases and slaughter, by the early 1500s (Poole, Robert M. 2011). In addition, most of the Tainos population committed mass suicide as they would prefer death rather than slavery (Danubio 1987).

Post-Columbus era the island was divided: the French occupying the west side, named Saint Domingue, and the Spaniards occupying the east side named Santo Domingo. It was not until the Haitians revolution (1791 -1804) led by Toussaint Louverture, a great military strategist, that the island became united once again under Haitian control. As such Haiti became the first Black republic of the western world. Jean-Jacque Dessalines officially declared Haiti's independence in 1804. For 20 years the Haitian government ruled over the island. On February 27, 1844, Juan Pablo Duarte established independence from Haiti. From there each state has remained sovereign while fending off foreign power interventions. Now the Dominican Republic and Haiti are two sovereign nations with their own national identity.

Theorizing Identity and Power

Amidst the tension between two nations we witness today, this thesis brings in the “Fatal Conflict model” and Anderson’s theory of imagined community to analyze constructed identities. Nationalism is the first layer of tension that comes into play with identity. Dominicans

and Haitians share many similarities, not only their coexistence on the same island but in culture. A notable difference from each nation is that in Haiti, French is the official language and in the Dominican Republic, it is Spanish. However, nationalism was built off of historical and ongoing events.

I will first provide clarification of Haitian and Dominican relationship through the usage of “Not a Cock Fight: Rethinking Haitian-Dominican Relations,” by Samuel Martinez, who critiques the “Fatal Conflict model” of the misconstrued notion that Dominicans and Haitians are mortal enemies, to provide evidence of false rhetoric. Martinez’s main theme is to demonstrate how historical mis-interpretation has cast a blanket of divisiveness and has perpetuated a notion between the two nations (Martínez 2003). The Fatal Conflict model, as Martinez states, is dictated by two main points: first, citizens of Haiti and Dominican Republic are consumed with animosity towards one another, and second, the nations are in a constant battle over the island of Hispaniola. In addition, he argues that the fatal conflict model is applicable to all social statuses (from the very rich to the very poor) and national identities. The notion of one being subjugated over the other, regardless of social status level and nation state, is what makes it ‘fatal’, he claims. For example he agrees that anti-Haitian sentiments were promoted and amplified through the dictatorship of Rafael Leonidas Trujillo (1930 to 1961). Trujillo led a holocaust against all Haitians living in the D.R., known as the Parsley Massacre (Davis 2012). Between 9,000 and 20,000 Haitians were killed in 1937 (“Dominicans, Haitians Remember Parsley Massacre” 2012). Because of such atrocity, an anti-Haitian sentiment became a prevalent surge throughout

D.R.⁴ However, anti-Haitian sentiments does not begin because of the Parsley Massacre, but the atrocity of the event perpetuated the label of anti-Haitianism.

Martinez later delineates into the historical inaccuracies, which clarifies the tension leading up to Trujillo. For example, he identifies that territorial disputes and the people who were governing at the time, to be what started the tension. Similar to Trujillo's regime, which carried anti-Haitian sentiments because of the purposeful manipulation of history in order to obtain power. One attribute of power is that whenever there is division and tension, people take advantage of it for their own benefits.

The misinterpretation of events, which generated a snowball effect from the Dominican Republic against Haiti, was a factor why the fatal conflict model continued to be prevalent in the Haitian and Dominican-relation discourse. The first misinterpretation of events was that Haitians invaded the east in 1822 and caused mass murders throughout the island. As a Dominican, I can say this narrative is an existing and common myth that prevails in Dominican history discourse and into the modern era. I'm often told this by other Dominicans to be a main reason why Haitians are seen as an "enemy".

However, the truth is something different. On the contrary, Haitians were invited to enter what was then "Haiti Español" to fight off European powers. Martinez highlights the great works of the revisionist generation of Dominican historians like Frank Moya Pons, Roberto Casá, and Franklin Franco (Martínez 2003, 85), who provided historical records between the two

⁴ I remember being asked to pronounce the word *perijir* (Parsely) when I was younger. I was around the age of 13, so I did not know the context on why it was relevant. Now, I have realized it was a colorist attack and flashback to this era, because Haitians were killed because of not being able to pronounce the word *propel*.

nations. They noted that Haitians were invited over to the east to help fend off the European powers and provided governmental support. The tension began to arise not because of hostility or xenophobic sentiments, but because of disagreement on legislation and bureaucracy. For instance Martinez stated, “ Yet widespread discontent with Haitian rules was not immediate but arose primarily after 1836, when a major global economic downturn made the weight of taxes imposed by the Haitian government seem less bearable to the residents of the east ” (Franco, 1193:189-191). From this we can see that economic factors were a reason for tension to rise, which was painted over by the Trujillo era. The fake myths are still around today and blind a lot of people from the facts of history.

I brought Martinez’s analysis of deconstructing the fatal-conflict theory to contextualize how historical facts on identity relation between Dominican Republic and Haiti can be covered up to fabricate an imagined-community, which creates divides between nations and leads to chaos. Unfortunately throughout and after the Trujillo era, the idea of the two nations carrying a “fatal enmity” echoed through the schools, media, and culture (Martínez 2003). In addition, the usage of painting a divide between Dominican Republic and Haiti operates well with power. If a nation is fragmented, the people in charge will exploit that to gain control over them. On top of that, the residuals from events like the Parsley Massacre remain as historical evidence, which surfaces later in the discourse between the two countries. In addition, people from both nations subscribed to an imagined community that perpetuates a form of fatality between the two nations.

As a result, I will connect Martinez's deconstruction of the fatal conflict theory to Anderson's (2006) theory of imagined communities, which helps further my claim of how nationalism creates a subscription to identity and because of such subscription, differences that lead to divides are formed. Anderson states, "In an anthropological spirit, I propose the following definition of nation: it is imagined political community- and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" (5-6). He later points out that within nations most of the members hardly know one another, yet they have subscribed to an imagined community that defines them as whole (7). Just like Dominicans and Haitian subscribed to their nationhood, they all do not know the quasi-oneness that unites them together, beside the claim, "I am Dominican or Haitian." To understand the mechanics that hold such claims true, the question of nationalism needs to be questioned further. Anderson utilizes the words "Imagined, community, and sovereign." Who's imagining? What community? What makes it sovereign? My interpretation of these claims is that he is challenging the reader to think beyond the formal layers of legality. When Haiti gained its independence, the Haitian identity became actualized since they were no longer under European control. The same goes for the Dominican Republic's independence from Haiti in 1844. The Dominican Republic is the only Latin American country that celebrates its independence from a non European power. They celebrate their independence from Haiti. Many Dominican scholars criticize this celebration because it further asserts the fatal conflict theory, because Dominicans want to separate themselves from Haiti. The community is constructed on cultural factors such as language, media, food, school system, etc... I define sovereignty as an autonomous state, which functions in a globalized world (Wigginton * 2005). The fact that the Dominican Republic and Haiti have a shared history blurs the lines of nationalism. Both nations co-exist with one another

on the same island, which complicates each sovereign nation's power, and could cause tension to rise. Because of each country's subscription to their nation state, the difference is that both overlook their similarities and only focus on the differences.

In addition, there are two imagined communities: the Dominican and Haitian model. By default Dominicans are subscribed to the Dominican imagined community, and this creates a bifurcation between Them and the Other-Haitian. When Dominicans define the Dominican-imagined community they disavow the Haitian one. Anderson is critical of the fact that history is subjective and that often time told by the winner, which only includes one perspective. Similar to the fatal-conflict model, historical mis-representation from a subjective point between Dominican and Haitian relationship, reinforces a divide.

Nonetheless there are other factors that speak to the Dominican and Haitian relationship outside of Anderson's and Martinez's theory. For example, the assumption that the people in the market are conscious of fatal conflict theory is a factor that could affect how they navigate in the market. But because national identity persists in the marketplace it reinforces the imagined communities. National identity persists because people want to maintain their ethnic identity because it is something to be proud of. La reguera behaves like a buffer zone between the two nationalities. Economic factors are what la reguera is made from, so people regardless of their nationality go to the market to engage in commerce. In addition, la reguera behaves like a buffer zone because the space does not promote social political rhetoric from either side.

Due to the two nations subscribing to an imagined community, the nations will continue to increase the gap between them to maintain their identity. Due to my Dominican identity, my

analysis of the imagined community is more subscribed to the Dominican Republic. However, I'm conscious of my identity as a form of power when criticizing both communities. The alertness of risking oversimplification or overrepresentation is a line in which I'm treading with caution.

Imagined communities are also a spot where human rights concerns begin to appear. In Dominican Republic in 2003 the state began denationalizing Dominican born people, if they were born of Haitian parents. This anti-Haitian policy was intended to deport Haitians out of Dominican Republic and maintain a Dominican-imagined-community, which meant keeping the Dominican and Haitian identity separate. By denationalizing Dominican-Haitian born people, the Dominican government denies them the right to proper health care, education, and documentation. According to the North American Congress of Latin America (Edmund 2013) approximately 300,000 Dominican of Haitian descent had their citizenship revoked. This action not only feeds the fatal conflict model but widens the Dominican and Haitian divide.

Otherizing through Public Health

The idea of the fatal conflict theory and the imagined community served to contextualize how historical occurrences are twisted to satisfy political agenda; however, the fact that history was utilized as a tool to otherize brings into question how the construction of a nation necessitates a divide. Just like the construction of la reguera required an understanding of how space works in La Romana to incorporate a neutral zone, historical events were used to construct a nation's identity, thus creating an imaginary border between the two groups. Therefore, I will be presenting how the Dominican Republic otherizes Haiti to construct a national identity. Through

“Sinks for the Press: Cholera and the State Performance of Power at the Dominican Border” by Kyrisin Mallon Andrews (2018), which presents how the cholera outbreak in 2010 was used to otherize Haitians vendors that came into the Dominican Republic to trade, thus fueling the identity divide.

The cholera outbreak was used as a tool to otherize Haitian vendors as they came into the Dejabon market space. For example, Andrews draws the point that when there is a public health crisis it conjures up body politics. She quotes Charles Briggs research on the effect of the cholera outbreak and how it was created “sanitary citizenship.”

“Charles Briggs (2003), in research on a Venezuelan cholera epidemic, found that inclusion in the body politic during public health crises depends on notions of ‘sanitary citizenship,’ where racial identities map onto assumptions about hygienic practices, resulting in exclusion from access to state health services (Andrews, 341).”

The point that Andrews is making by including Briggs’ research is that the same was done with Haitian when the cholera outbreak happened. For example, sanitary stations were put on some trading spots along the Haitian and Dominican border, so Haitians that were entering would stop to disinfect themselves. Haitian identity was attached to cholera, which added to the bifurcation between Dominican and Haitian identity.

Otherizing Through Literacy

Similar to the last section where I highlighted how othering through public health widened the division between Haitians and Dominicans even more, I will be analyzing how literacy is also a tool used to disavow one identity from the other. Through the article “State Literacies and Inequalities: Managing Immigrants in the Dominican Republic,” by Lesley

Barlett, Kiran Jayaramand, and Gulin Bonhomme, I will unpack how literacy is another tool to otherize Dominican identity to the Haitians.

Before I tackle the concept of othering by utilizing the tool of literacy, I will address how the creation of an identity by nature excludes and creates the Other. The Other is the opposite to the “Us”. In the *Dominican Imagined Community*, the “Other” due to otherize is conscious of its now form identity. Identity isn’t always inherent or forced, but binding by the natural rules of nature. What binds identity is the adaptation of its surroundings. I define the natural rules of nature as a result of a response to an environment one is in. For example, the Haitian merchants in la reguera created a mobility strategy in response to being otherized and not being in an environment that is attuned to their differences. That said, Barlett, Jayaramand, and Bonhomme identified literacy as being an important component to the differentiation of Haitians in the Dominican Republic and Dominican-Haitians relations that are affected by current anti-Haitian policies which violate their human rights.

The article is effective at highlighting human rights violations such as how the effect of revoking and denial of citizenship from Haitians and Dominicans of Haitian in the Dominican Republic has caused a trickle down effect to basic necessities. The trickle down effect is when one right is not given and all the rights that follow are also affected. For example when denied citizenship the right to education, health, and justice are also affected. In addition, its goal is to illustrate how the lack of documentation is influenced by the social hierarchy of power and the inequalities that are perpetuated by state actors. The impact of denationalizing implies more than proper documentation, but also one's humanity. With hospitals routinely refusing to give

undocumented parents maternity papers needed to secure Dominican citizenship, the state is deliberately shutting down the right to birth. In addition, the language obstacles of an undocumented Haitian migrants in the Dominican republic shows the lack of effectively providing resources that takes into consideration those differences. Because language is the root to literacy, to have resources that address and provide the support needed helps construct a complimentary effect between Spanish, French and French Creole. The complementary effect is how the language compliments one another in the sense of them being tools for communication. The trickle down effect largely affects those who do not fit in the *Dominican Imagined Community*.

On the other hand Barlett, Jayaran, and Bonhomme make a note of the studies that add the factor of how institutions utilize their power to have control. For example they state:

Drawing upon six years of ethnographic research with vulnerable populations in two cities in the United States, Taylored (1996) described the ways in which various bureaucracies, including the welfare, health care, legal, and criminal justice systems, used official forms, questionnaires and reports to deny key services to the most needed. Those with power decide what to write and when to make a document consequential [or not].(Page 589)

The above quotes illustrate the power that institutions have to be enablers of systematic targeting to otherize people from their human rights. “Those with power decide what to write and when to make a document consequential”, which is a true statement that speaks to the reality of the powerful and the powerless. The undocumented Haitians and the Dominicans of Haitian descent are the powerless and the Dominican government and institutions are the powerful. Because the state agents and institutions have power to pass the verdict to keep powerless from gaining power, it is crucial to connect that people who are vulnerable do not have voices to

defend themselves. Literacy has otherized the voices to only give the spotlight to one while obscuring the other one.

The State utilizes literacy to otherize the Other because of the pervasive sentiment of divisiveness applied in and outside the market. For example, in the market what is seen as the powerful is the state which is in charge of the space and surveying its economic profit, but also the powerful are the vendors and the consumers who make the market possible. Nonetheless, a different type of power operates outside of the market, where factors like race and nationality are arbitrary to government agents of the state, such as the police.

The Power of Policing

Not only is identity used as a form of power in la reguera, but it's also used outside to maintain order and reinforce a sense of justice; however, state agents like the police often abuse the system for their own personal benefits, which perpetuates a corrupted system that goes unchecked. I will analyze how power was exercised by the police outside la reguera to create an *imagined community*, which reflects the disconnect between the people who they are sworn to protect and the perception of the affected community. The police are agents of the state in their unchecked assertion of power. This has led to their own perception of their role in the community, so they subscribe to a superior like mindset which is imagined to be the absolute. Through this lens, I will unpack the dynamics of two minors -- Daniel and Santiago -- being detained in San Carlos, where I was doing my research, by the police because of the appearance of being delinquents.

Through inquiries into case studies in La Romana, the idea of hegemonic imagined community is both undermined and established: we see fractions of different imagined communities that create tension and conflicts in search of respect in understanding and treatment for one another, as well as a mutual sensibility for the subject of the revered.

It was a mellow afternoon outside around 2pm; the clouds were covering sun tempered rays of the sun. I was sitting playing Dominoes with Daniel and other neighborhood kids at the corner from the street. The corner was a regular spot to play Dominoes or grab a chair and sit for a while to enjoy the life of the neighborhood. It was around lunch time for me as my stomach was growling after a couple of hands of dominoes. I told Daniel, "I'll be back, I have to grab something to eat." After 45 minutes of eating a well-cooked Dominican dish prepared by my aunt, I decided to go back to playing dominoes to establish my reputation as a fierce Domino player. I stepped out of the house to see America, the older lady that lives next to the street corner talking intensely with several other neighbors outside. I approached the scene to learn what has happened. Daniel alongside more minors that were around the area were picked up by a police truck and taken to the police department. I saw that the domino table at the corner was empty, and Daniel was nowhere to be seen. I talked to America as she stared down the street as if trailing a kidnapper through her eyes. "Que paso America?" I asked with curiosity, but with a gut feeling of what the answer was going to be. "Se llevaron a Daniel y Santiago! [They took Daniel and Santiago], she said with a serious and worried tone. This was a result of " la redadas" [police raids]. La redada have been passing by the neighborhood and arresting people at "random" for the past few days. Although I was knowledgeable of this fact, I never expected for

Daniel to be a victim of la redadas. The atmosphere of the neighbors were just as surprised as I was because he is known to be a well respected person in the community. However, as surprised as the community members were surprised that Daniel was taken, they were not shocked by the police's action.

The event that resulted in the arrest of Daniel, who is a minor, and the reaction of the community to the police arresting him revealed the divide between the community and the police. The neighborhood is not fond of the police because of the arbitrary arrest of community members and the police department's behavior as an agent of the state that exercises power over the neighborhood unjustly. The community's lack of trust in the police is not for no reason. For instance, the U.S. Department of State 2019 human rights report, "2019 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Dominican Republic," documented that more than 3,000 individuals have died during confrontations with the police or security forces between 2007 and March 2019 ("2019 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Dominican Republic" n.d.). Therefore, the eyes of the community will always have a glimmer of doubt and fear when perceiving the police. These exchanges of perception -- the community's perception of the police and the police officers' perception of the community-- motivated me to investigate what exactly are the roots of the divide between the neighborhood and the police officers.

I started by interviewing Daniel, who was released the same day of the arrest by an older member of the community who vouched for him at the police department.

Have you ever had an encounter with the Police before? - Edwar

“Yes, only one afternoon, that day we were sitting together in a group playing [Dominoes], and while we were sitting there una redada turned on the street corner. A redada is a group of police officers who look for people in the street to take them to jail for nothing, only to detain them and take them to prison. That day they were coming and they stopped where the group was and they checked us. After they checked us they asked for our Cedula (Identification) and we passed the cedula.” - Daniel

“Why did they pat you down?”- Edwar

“To check if we had weapon” - Daniel

“ They were going to let us go, but then the chief came in a truck and told the officers to take us. Afterwards the officers told all of us to get in the back of the truck. The four of us were put in the back of the truck. There were three minors and one adult.” - Daniel

“We showed our Cedulas and still it didn't matter” - Daniel

“Did you question them on why they were taking you? “- Edwar

“ Not really because they were doing it to fill out their requirements/ check the box, so that they can say they are doing their job. We are sitting and they came and picked us up, like if we had ordered an Uber.” - Daniel

“After they picked you and the group up, where were you taken to?” -Edwar

“We were taking to the Jail in Villa Verde, it isn't far from here” -Daniel

“How long were you held in custody?” - Edwar

“ Preso (jail)” - Daniel

“You were in jail? ”- Edwarw

“ Yes because they put into the cell with Santiago, I was there for an hour” - Daniel

“ I had to withstand a lot of bad hygiene in the cell” - Daniel

“Did you feel that you were discriminated against when arrested?”- Edwar

“ Eso no es normal aqui (that is not normal here)” -Daniel

“ The color of your skin was a factor in your arrest?” - Edwar

“ Eso no tiene que ver por que agaran a cualquiera asta los blanquitos (that has nothing to do with the fact because they take white people too.)” - Daniel

“ Aqui no se usa eso, el racismo, quisa al gente que no quiera saber de eso, pero por lo meno no es algo que yo aga notado. Nunca me sentido dudado (here racism is not a problem, there are people who do not want to know about that, at least is not something that I have noticed. I have never doubted myself on that)” - Daniel

“Quien se fue a buscar (who went searching for you)”- Edwar

“ How were you released ?” -Edwar

“ I didn’t have to pay, it was much more of someone coming in and saying my name to claim me”- Daniel

“How do you feel after the arrest?” - Edwar

“ I felt dirty, because I came back feeling filthy” - Daniel

“Did you feel at any moment that you were going to be seen as a criminal during or after they detained you by the community ?” -Edwar

“No, because everyone knows that they [police] are ridiculous , and they detain people for no reason, you could be the coolest person and still be picked up” - Daniel

“ People who do chercha (Gossip) about being detained, did it make you feel anything?” -Edwar

“ No, because people do that for the sake of amusement, since they know how things are in the community?”- Daniel

“ What did your mother respond to this,”- Edwar

“ Is there a good relationship between the cops?” -Edwar

“ There’s a bad relationship with the cops, because if there were to treat a serious person seriously and a criminal like a criminal then it would be just” - Daniel

“How can you avoid being arrested again?” -Edwar

“I learned the schedule of when the police come to the neighbor but also try not to be too much outside.” - Daniel

“Don't you think that learning these tactics is a way the police are infringing on your freedom?” - Edwar

“That's the thing, they don't bother the elders, but only the youth” - Daniel

“So there's a bias towards the youth?” - Edwar

“Yes, because they think the youth is stealing and doing a lot of bad stuff”- Daniel

From this conversation we can see that there are two imagined communities from the youth and police. From Daniel's perspective, the police are not respected in the community because they are seen as *strangers*⁵ to the neighborhood. Daniel's experience speaks to the general perception that the youth have towards the police. The youth see the police as not doing their job correctly, so they do not hold them up with much respect. However, the youth see the elders in the community as respected members because they are a valued part of the neighborhood. Therefore, youth associate respect with valued members of the neighborhood, thus creating an *imagined community* that excludes the policemen. Because of exclusion the youth do not treat the policemen with the same respect that they treat their elders.

For the youth, respect needs to come from the police first. For example, Daniel felt that he was unjustly arrested and taken to the police department. Because of that he felt disrespected.

⁵ George Simmel, “The Stranger.”

Moreover, he was put in a cell with convicts. Being placed in a cell with convicts it translates to being lowered to the same level as them. On the other hand, Daniel was not concerned about how the neighborhood would view him for this predicament - both he and the community had an understanding of the police acting in an unjust way- he was more concerned about the odor he was exposed to while being in the jail cell. This shared perception of the police from the community and the youth creates a shared reinforcement of how “respect” is an essential piece in the *imagined community*.

After I interviewed Daniel on his encounter, I was curious to learn the perspective of the police. I took advantage of a night where a policeman was being stationed in front of a church to ask him some questions. The questions revolved on policing of minors and the role of the police in the community. It was around 8pm and there were neighbors outside enjoying the night. As I approached the police officer, I was scared and nervous for many reasons: 1) What if I was to be taken to jail? and 2) I’m not an official reporter, just a college student doing research. I pushed those thoughts to the side and made eye contact with the police officer, Mr.Reyes, and extended my hand to introduce myself.

Police Interview

“ The question is around raids and minors (Who are less than 18 years of age)” -Edwar

“ There’s always been redadas happening. It is nothing new. Because, as you know, crime has no age. It doesn’t have to do with the fact if you are a minor or an adult and most of the cases in La Romana that deal with theft, and attacks are being done by minors. If you do an evaluation in the investigated field, and if there are 20 detainees for theft, 19 of them would be minors. The vast

majority are armed with 38, and pistols, minors. Where do they obtain them? No idea If they can't obtain one then they fabricate them. They make one that is popularly known as Chilena. Mostly that is why we check everyone if they are making "equinas/corners" (Equinas is a term used to describe a group of people that are gathered around in a corner) to check if they have them. As you know the minors nowadays are smoking Hookah and weed. There's no longer a tradition or respect for the age to drink and to smoke, for none of that. If you stop at a corner, what you would frequently see are minors who are drinking. That is the reason why mostly we pick up a lot of people. After we do a background check on the people we detain and they don't have a record for anything bad, we dispatch them back out. But like I said before that crime doesn't have an age, size, or color, and as such we detain them, do a background check and if nothing comes up we let them go. That is why we do large raids. Now if you carry your workers identification (cedula) and don't have any type of marked record, because the police are already keen to people who fit the description of a criminal or have bad intentions, we usually detain them to check them out to verify if it's true or not. There are also a number of people who are doing petty theft and that is called "un desquiditio" and we don't have records of them because people have never filed a complaint, and when we detain those we end up dispatching them back because there haven't been a field complaint against them. (So this officer's logic for the raid is that it is a technique on catching the bad guy while establishing an authoritative stance against lawbreakers. They don't see them being detained as bad because if you do not have anything on your record then there is no need to worry about.) That is why it is important to file a complaint to the person that has wronged you.

“Don't you think it is better for the police to have a good relationship with the community to whom they serve? Because I see that the youth do not respect the police or even fear it, so they decided either to run away from the police or not trust the police rather than being reassured that the police have their best interest at heart.”

“ Let me tell you this, so much as minors and adults don't get close to the police because of fear. Anyone who, for example if you are anything in your neighborhood, you could call the police and we will be aware of that when we do our rounds. However, when I catch the person that was reported, people come out and defend the person, but they don't know that I had received a complaint from him. So most of the time when we detain a person we do it either to recognize the person or because they had a charge against them. We as police officers are not all time in the community, so we don't know the movements of the community. That is why we depend on the community members to report wrongdoing, because they are more attuned to the culture. Because when a good person is detained people go to the station and vouch for that person. The same thing should be done for the bad guys, people should attest to the wrong doing that they were in charge of doing.”

What is the best advice for the youth when a police officer tells them to get on the truck?

“ The best advice I can give to the youth is to comply. The youth is good to approach. If you don't have drugs, weapons or anything that would warrant danger then just get on the truck. The youth these days are lacking decency. If the police sees that you are being *obedient* and not showing any resistance then once you get to the station the policeman himself would pick up on that and dispatch them because of their behavior. Most of the youth start to insult the police

officers and that is no reason for the police to react to them, but the youth have to be smart and use common sense when interacting with a police officer, because they are their superiors. It doesn't matter if you have money or social status, but if you talk to a police officer with respect and like a human being, you will merit an ear. If you were to walk up to me with insults, no matter who you were, I wouldn't have respect for you. Anyone who talks with education will have an ear to listen no matter the social setting. That is what is happening to the youth, because if you know you are innocent then there's no need to run. A lot of time when a minor who goes off runs puts us on alert so that when we go in pursuit. Pedro Reyes. (From this I see that officer Reyes carries out his duties through a lens of respect when it comes to dealing with the youth. In a way officer Reyes is more offended by how the lack of respect of youth has disappeared and no longer is being expected.) -Reyes

From this interview, I saw the police's perspective for la redadas and the role they play to the community. Officer Reyes operates outside a different imagined community which is the police-community. He acknowledges that he is not engaged in the neighborhood like the local community members so he does not have a direct connection with them. Therefore, the police's imagined community is based on tradition and respect. Officer Reyes repeatedly brings up the point that the youth has lost touch with tradition and are not respectful. He argues that the youth are no longer like they were used to be in the past and are now more prone to delinquency. In addition he speaks to the fact the communities view them as "bad guys" because they see them doing redadas, but in fact they are doing their jobs. He continued to explain that la redadas are not as random as people think. Sometimes they receive complaints from community members for certain people and they go out to resolve them, which sometimes results in picking them up and

taking them to the police department. Other times, they have an order for an arrest so wherever the individual(s) is spotted they are arrested. In other words, the community sees one side, but not the little pieces, he explains.

Moreover, the police's imagined community expects the youth to respect them given their status and seniority. This sense of entitlement stems from his portrayal of being a defender of tradition against modernity. They to be held at the same standard as the elders in the community. The elders are respected in youth eyes because of them engaging with them either through simple games of Dominoes or lecturing them about something they did wrong. However, Officer Reyes struggles to close the gap between how they are viewed in a community and how to gain the trust of the people because they don't navigate through the community like the elders, but only surveil it. That connection is the missing link when understanding the relation between the neighborhood and police imagined community.

Overall, the youth are encompassed in the neighborhood-imagined community which excludes the police community. The youth does not only think of officers outside of their community, but also believes that they are not being serious with their jobs. Daniel explains that if only the police officer were able to deduce the good from the bad then they would be respected. However, because the "good" people are victims to arbitrary arrest they are seen as not doing their job properly. Thus, the police's role is further ostracised from being a member in the community. Officer Reyes makes his judgement on the behavior that you showcase to him. If you are not guilty of anything then just comply and behave like an innocent person would.

My analysis of the police perception is that the police verify a person's criminality more than the actual crime. In addition, the police officer comes for the criminal, not the crime. It is much easier to catch the criminal of the crime than vice versa. The police are investigating criminals because criminals can be easily pointed out based on behavior- according to their experiences. It is about who you are not about the acts you do. Police actions align with their perception of tradition and respect. The police's perception relies on good and bad. Similarly, the youth also believe that bad people should be picked up and the good people need to be left alone. The goal of the police is defining the membership of the community. The young people are saying that they are not doing a good job and they are not being serious to them. No one is talking about rights, but about tradition, respect and seriousness. Both groups see through the lense of respect and seriousness; however, the police insert the perception of "tradition," which illustrates a generational gap between them and the minors. Tradition, respect, and seriousness is the law of the land when it comes to the relationship between the community and the police.

The exchange between Daniel and the police officers highlights that sometimes social order is not based on legality nor law, but based on the idea of tradition, respect and seriousness. Similarly, la reguera is composed of different imagined communities: Dominicans and Haitians, whose relationship is not contingent on rules and regulations, but are built off of tradition, respect and seriousness, which helps both groups to make a living. Because the two different imagined communities -- the police and the youth -- do not recognize each other's humanity, they are always at conflict with one another. Each community has their different view. However, la reguera teaches us that although there are two different groups that at the end of the day they can

work together. The relationship between the police and the youth teaches us that the fatal conflict theory does not only put Haitians and Dominicans against one another, but it is a framework for opposition that can be transposed to different circumstances.

Chapter 3: Language

“Bonjour” or “Hola” are the two different greetings that I use for either Nancy or Diego everytime I go to their tarp. The beauty of this is that although both greetings are in different languages they mean the same thing. The vibrant smile that I see from Diego and Wendy every Friday morning generates a warm welcome into his tarp. By the same token, when I arrive at Nancy's tarp, she receives my “hola” with warmth. Language here is embodying a sense of closeness and kindness. Although “Bonjour” is French and “Hola” is Spanish, the meaning conveyed connects to the humanizing attributes attached to these words when spoken to another person or used interchangeably. The humanizing qualities allow for language to be a tool in the market that connects everyone.

The usage of language is a crucial feature for la reguera because it is a platform for communication. Language is intersected with identity, mobility, and power. Nancy and Diego both use language to conduct business. Because of the market diversity, Nancy and Diego adapt to the customer’s needs by transitioning from Spanish to Haitian-Creole or vice versa. In this chapter, I will be analyzing the importance of language and the effect that it has on Diego’s and Nancy’s market life. Nancy and Diego both use each other’s language to benefit their business. Nancy utilizes Haitian Creole for her Haitian customers; however, she is not fluent in Haitian-Creole but knows business phrases specific to the transaction. Similarly, Diego engages in the same business language practice, using Spanish to communicate with Spanish speakers. In addition, they each use nonverbal mannerisms to assure that they are communicating their ideas across.

The languages that I will be touching in this chapter are French, Haitian-Creole and Spanish. In Haiti French and Haitian Creole are the official languages. Due to Haiti being a former colony of France it has retained the French language as part of the country's identity. However, only 42 percent of the population, usually spoken by educated Haitians because it is the medium of instruction in most schools, speaks French (Wolff and Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie 2014). Where Haitian-Creole is spoken by 100 percent of the population (Bentolila and Bentolila 1987, 73). Similarly, the Dominican Republic retained the Spanish language from when it was a former Spanish colony. The official language of the Dominican Republic is Spanish.

Language is a medium that Nancy and Diego use on a daily basis to help with their business. La reguera is situated in a Spanish speaking country, so for Diego, not only had to adjust to the culture but also learn the language in order to survive. Diego has lived in Santo Domingo for 12 years and since then has been able to make a living out of selling merchandise in different regueras. At first, I was introduced to Diego by my aunt as she established my first connection into the market. Diego agreed to my aunt's request to allow me to shadow him for my research. The first day I started my research, I came in and greeted Diego and his nephew Wendy in Spanish and was greeted back. The fast pace of the market does not allow long conversations, so I took a corner under the tarp and tried not to be in the way of his business. In addition, I noticed that a lot of the transactions that Diego was engaging in didn't require a lot of Spanish because most of the requests from the customers were about prices, size, and color of the items. For example, a lady would ask how much for a pair of socks, and Diego would reply with the amount. His response did not require anything other than responding with the price. Sometimes

the conversation may advance to bargaining for a lower price, and once Diego has stated a price slightly lower than the original and sees the customer's agreement, he proceeds with the transaction. However, Diego does not always bargain with the customers and often keeps the original price of the item. If the customer wants a lower price than the reduced price, he ignores them and attend to another person.

Another important aspect of Diego's use of Spanish is his avoidance of speaking Haitian-Creole to Haitian customers. Diego communicates with Spanish-speaking customers using a combination of facial expressions, Spanish business phrases, and market experience he has accumulated throughout the years. Diego is most comfortable speaking Haitian-Creole, but because most of his clients are Spanish speaking he hardly speaks it.. For example, one Friday afternoon a man came asking for change, to break a big bill, in Haitain-Creole. I knew it was Creole because I heard the word "monnaie" meaning change in French. Although Diego knew Creole, he responded to the man in Spanish. This was an interesting observation because their exchange led me to think of how assimilation works. Assimilation is adapting and blending into the environment there are in. Speaking Creole in front of the Spanish-speaking customers would mark him as a stranger. To be seen as a stranger could form a barrier between him and his clients. In order to assimilate completely, erasing parts of your identity may be a step that is taken to progress in the current environment.

On the other hand, Diego's nephew is open about speaking Haitian-Creole and French. It may have to do with the fact that he has only been in the Dominican Republic for four months as opposed to Diego- who's been in the D.R. for 12 years. Wendy is not against speaking Spanish, he just doesn't have enough practice to feel confident of what he knows thus far. Wendy was

surprised by my offer of teaching him Spanish or at least being a person that he could practice with. He was enthusiastic about having someone to talk to and to practice his Spanish with. After a few introductory exchanges in Spanish, I assured him that he had a good grasp of the language and that he would become fluent in no time. In the end, he was curious about how I learned Spanish. “ Je suis Dominicain, [I’m Dominican]” I told him. “ Non c’est pas vrai, [no that’s not true]”, he said with a look of surprise on his face. “Mais tu parle, Francais, [but you speak French]”. I assured him that I learned French through school and that I was born in La Romana, Dominican Republic. He pondered about what I said for a few seconds and then accepted the truth. I assume that he has not met a Dominican person who spoke French.

Language, in this instance, is perceived as an indicator of where you are from. He revealed to me that he was under the impression that I was Haitian because of speaking French. I was intrigued by his presumption of me being Haitian. I see myself as a tall black man that speaks French, so I see why he would assume that. In addition, the common rhetoric in the Dominican Republic is that the darker your skin color is the “more” Haitian you are. In *Coloring the Nation: Race and Ethnicity in the Dominican Republic*, by David Howard states, “Despite the malleable and subjective nature of racial difference, Haitians tend to have a darker phenotype or skin color than Dominicans⁶.” Therefore, Wendy’s assumption of language and color holds true to his view of categorizing my ethnic origins. At the same time, his perception is flawed since I contradict his conception of ethnicity.

As Wendy and I learned more about each other he was confused about my lack of knowledge of Haitian Creole- since Haitian Creole is a French-based creole language. In

⁶ (*Coloring the Nation: Race and Ethnicity in the Dominican Republic* 2001, 18)

disbelief, he switched to speaking Haitian-Creole instead of French to see if it was true. I picked up on some words he was saying like *manger* [to eat], and *je* [I], but could not translate completely the point he was making. After a few attempts, he was convinced that I did not speak Haitian-Creole. What I experienced was an evaluation of my ethnicity: to see if I checked or didn't check the box. For Wendy, I did not fit his perception of a stereotypical Dominican. For him to be Dominican meant speaking Spanish and having lighter skin. Wendy's assumptions about appearance and ethnicity extended beyond his interactions with me. For example, while in *la reguera* Wendy attempted to flirt with women who passed by the tarp. He assumed that the women are Haitian because of their darker skin complexion, so he tries to draw their attention in Haitian-Creole. To no surprise, he was not able to get their attention. His assumption of them being Haitians based on their skin color was wrong because the woman could have been a Dominican who did not understand Creole. What does this say about stereotypes? Wendy's perception of Dominicans speaks to an assumption based on language and skin color. One cannot assume a person's ethnic identity based solely on their skin complexion.

Wendy's desire to learn Spanish is not only due to the process of assimilations but also due to the multi-language demand of the market. So far, Wendy has started to subscribe to the market-Spanish that Diego utilizes. "Camisas, poloche, y blusa a die, a die, a die [shirt, T-shirts and blouses, at 10, at 10, at 10]", is the advertisement I hear Wendy shout every Friday morning as I go to their tarp. "Vendo paleta, caramelo, aguag a 5, 10, y 20 pesos, [I sell lollipop, caramel, and water for the price of 5, 10, and 20 pesos]" I heard different vendors shout as I walked through the parallel market. In addition, this is Wendy developing his *mobility strategy* through

language because he is adapting to an environment and learning new skills that will further his success in the market.

An important delineation between Diego and Wendy is how long each have been in the D.R. and how much they have assimilated into the country. The generational gap includes how well they speak language and how not being in their native country has affected it. Diego is in his mid-40's and Wendy is in his early 20's, that is approximately two decades apart. As I mentioned before Diego has been in the D.R. for 12 years. Throughout those years he has gone through the process of assimilation, which entailed learning market-Spanish and settling down in Santo Domingo. Diego, unlike Wendy, could not understand most of the times when I was speaking to him in French. Sometimes I resorted to asking Wendy to translate from French to Haitian-Creole for him to understand. My impression is that Diego experienced a form of erasure on the hold of the French language in order to assimilate quicker into D.R. On the other hand, Wendy's ability to speak French and Haitain-Creole showcases not only his youth, but also how he has retained both languages because of only being on in D.R for four months. Wendy exists within a state of liminality on the road to assimilation. His native language still remains part of his identity:, however, will he face the same form of erasure as Diego? Per Wendy's perception of categorization, will he continue to identify as Haitian if he loses either or both languages? All these questions point to how language is part of a collective reality as a form of survival and commerce, but also a form of identification.

Nancy's Utilization of Language

Similar to Diego and Wendy, Nancy adapts to Haitian speaking customers by utilizing market-Haitian-Creole. Market-Haitian is the basic usage of frequent trade phrases or terminology common in la reguera for commerce. However, unlike Diego, who has some conversational Spanish skills, Nancy can only engage in transactional conversations. For example, one Saturday afternoon an older black man came to Nancy's tarp. He did not start speaking Spanish, but by pointing at the item (pants) he wanted to inquire about. Seeing his use of non-verbal gestures and dark skin led Nancy to believe that he was Haitian, therefore she approached him by speaking Haitian-Creole. What led her to believe that he was Haitian based on non-verbal communication? Similarly to Diego, Nancy engaged in stereotyping the man by his skin complexion, although she herself appears to be the same skin tone as the man. But still Nancy did not engage in a discriminatory way. Instead, she approached him like she would any other customers- with a smile and eagerness to make money.

The exchange between Nancy and the older black man ended with the customer buying a pair of pants. I was eager to ask Nancy how her exchange went as soon as the man left. I was observing from afar since I try not to be a burden on her business. "What did you say?" I asked "Not much, he was looking for pants and I was helping him find what he wanted," she replied. "I know, but I heard you speaking a language other than Spanish, what was that language?" I pressed on. "Oh, I was speaking Creole" she answered with a little smile. "Where did you learn Creole?" I asked. "A few years ago I was placed next to a Haitian woman who sold clothes like me, and I asked her to teach me some phrases," responded Nancy. I will admit that I was surprised to hear a Dominican speaking Creole. It appears that I myself also engage in some sort

of stereotyping people based on language. It's ironic that language is audible and not visible, but it is treated as if people wore it as clothing. Language serves as a tag of sorts and as soon as it's heard people already have an assumption about your origins.

The utilization of Haitian-Creole and Spanish in the market is a sign of how Dominicans and Haitians are not only coexisting peacefully with one another, but are also learning from one another. Nancy was able to incorporate Haitian-Creole to her business because of the generosity of the Haitian speaker who taught her phrases that would allow her to incorporate them into her business. The Haitian woman was not expecting to gain anything from teaching Nancy some market-Haitian Creole. Although the market is driven by the means to make money and make a livelihood, *la reguera* also is a space for human exchange. This cultural exchange is evidence for how the *Fatal Conflict theory* is false on a local scale. Dominicans and Haitians do not see each other as mortal enemies; in fact, they recognize each other's humanity and would like to see each other succeed. In using each other's language and sharing a space, the two groups show that they are in a symbiotic relationship. Moreover, the example illustrates how historical tensions are not what unites the two, but in fact, it is the reflection of their own moral compass. Competition here balances with cooperation because of the shared goal of maximizing the space to progress.

The symbiotic relationship in *la reguera* through cultural exchange is a signifier of the progress between Dominicans and Haitians. *La reguera* is a space for commerce, but it is transforming to be a cultural hub for everyone. The constant traffic that divides the market in the middle does not stop the Bachata, Merengue, Salsa music that is blasting from tarps that are using the radio to enjoy themselves. The vibrant, melodic and robust pace of traffic is no deterrent to separate the language exchange between Haitians and Dominicans. Moreover,

throughout the island la reguera creates spaces for cultural exchanges. In a way, regueras are spaces through which historical disputes between two nations are being replaced through a communal space. Again, at first glance la reguera is seen as only as a place for commerce but if we look more closely at the stories like those of Nancy and Diego, we can see that through the language exchange la reguera has become a place of mutual respect and prosperity for both Dominicans and Haitians.

The cultural hub that regueras operate underneath the disguise of commerce also exists outside the space. For example, my aunt who introduced me to Diego speaks market-Haitian. My aunt prides herself on getting the cheapest deals from the vendors. My aunt is regular at Diego's tarp-she jokes that he has a crush on her, and she always gets the best price from Diego. I remember on my second day of research when I was tagging along with her and my cousin around the la reguera to learn more about the field site she was also shopping for clothes. She found a blouse that she liked under a pile of clothes. She picked it up and asked the vendor for the price. Knowing that she could get a better price she asked for a lower price. The woman selling the blouse did not want to lower the price. However my aunt conveyed a phrase that somehow connected them to a shared community. "Ayudame, tu y yo somos los mismo (help me, you and I are the same)," said my aunt, looking at the woman in the eyes. Whether the woman was Dominican or Haitian is not the point. The point was that she invoked something beyond nationalism, but a deep connection between two people: one who's selling the clothes for profit and the other who's bargaining for a more economical price. Both women were in the interest of gaining something, so it was up to the selling party to accept a form of kinship and

lower the price. At the end of day both the price and the person's identity were arbitrary to the appeal of humanity that was carried through language.

The connection that Nancy made from learning Haitian-Creole from the neighboring *vendo* is an example of the cracks that mobility strategies have. Mobility strategy as discussed in the Mobility chapter is the advantage and disadvantage of having the power to navigate different spaces based on local and international factors. For instance, Nancy exercises a *local mobility strategy*, which consists of speaking Spanish, having aid from family and selling higher quality clothes in the *la reguera*. Thus, she is able to implement her strategy on the day-to-day business based on locality. On the other hand, Diego exercises an *international mobility strategy* which consists of traveling to different *regueras* in the D.R., speaking Haitian-Creole, selling lower quality clothes but for a cheaper price, and not having family for aid. Therefore Diego utilizes his international strategy because he lacks access to local networks.

The crack in Nancy's mobility strategy was due to the randomization of vendor slots in the *reguera*. As I mentioned in chapter 1, Nancy informed me that every year La Junta, an organization that controls the *reguera*, randomizes the spots, so people are always put in different places. Would Nancy have learned market-Haitian if it wasn't for the accident of the randomization system? Because of the randomization process Nancy was able to access the international strategy of that Haitian woman. I do not know how Diego learned Spanish, but I do know that he started selling items in the *regueras* soon after he arrived in the D.R. 12 years ago. Moreover, for Wendy, I was his "accident" in bettering his Spanish. The randomness of a researcher coming from the U.S. shadowing him and his uncle for a month was an anomaly. However, because I came along Wendy was able to improve his Spanish. He considered me in

his growing international strategy, thus becoming part of his network. Nancy's and Wendy's examples both teach us that each mobility strategy is not perfect. The fact that accidents do not fit in your mobility strategy can become an opportunity to gain linguistic confidence and serve a cultural intersection.

Furthermore, language is not only useful in la reguera but outside of it as well. Haitians that do not speak Spanish face more adversities than those who do. For example, if one is a French or Haitian-Creole speaker, it would not be guaranteed that there will be translators that speak those languages, unless one has friends or acquaintances that can help out. In addition, many of bureaucratic processes are in Spanish. For example, acquiring a birth certificate for your child could be an additional challenge to a Haitian person who does not know Spanish. Not knowing the official language makes it difficult for Haitians to obtain information about the government process, let alone complete paperwork and navigate the system. It also leaves them vulnerable to people who might take advantage of their lack of knowledge. Having a Haitian-Creole speaker at least at a government building is crucial so that Haitians are given the right to be heard if needed. The increase of language exchange like in la regueras can be a blueprint to the government taking action to create more spaces across the country that would foster this camaraderie and implement it into a permanent plan. The implementation of this blueprint would flow perfectly because the only requirement would be a designated space for trade. After that, people start to come into the space because of the attraction of what a market brings. The market organically fosters strangers from all over to come and engage with the space.

The Stranger in the Market

The *stranger* in the market is hard to identify in a crowd of other strangers. The classification of The capital Us is an important connection that links to the idea of Stranger. In the market everyone's a stranger. When thinking about us and them, the stranger is usually categorized as the “them”. However, in la reguera everyone is a them, thus creating an “Us”. The stranger at first glance could be characterized as someone who does not belong, who infiltrates the space and who is different. However, through what eyes can one know the difference between who is who and what is what? In la reguera, strangers are all over the place. Strangers can be from vendor to vendor, consumer to consumer, and product to product. In this section, I will be connecting George Simmel's theory of the *stranger* (Simmel 1950) to the macrocosm, which is the subtlety that exists in the market space, of the nature of the market.

The nature of the market also highlights how identity is arbitrary to the everyday hustle that drives it. For instance, a Dominican vendor may sell an item at a higher price than another Dominican or Haitian vendor but those prices are not correlated to their identity, but in fact, it's contingent on what benefits them at the end of the day. Both Nancy and Diego have stated to me that they base their prices on what will make them the most money regardless of who the customers are. In this analysis correlation of national identity does not equal causation, thus whether one is Dominican or Haitian would not matter to the nature of the market. The nature of the market also introduces Simmel's definition of the *stranger* into the mix.

I will start by unpacking Simmel's definition of *stranger* and then point to the characteristics of the stranger. Simmel theorizes that the stranger is actually the potential wanderer. “The stranger is ... as the wanderer who comes today and stays tomorrow, ” states

Simmel (402) as his first delineation of stranger. From this characterization, the stranger is one with the power of mobility, which they can exercise to enter or leave a space from their own volition. Similarly, vendors and consumers enter la reguera to engage with not only the space, but also with each other. However, Simmel takes it a step further and establishes the stranger position of a trader. He states:

Throughout the history of economics the stranger everywhere appears as the trader, or the trader as a stranger. As long as the economy is essentially self-sufficient, or products are exchanged within a spatially narrow group, it needs no middleman: a trader is only required for products that originate outside the group. Insofar as members do not leave the circle in order to buy these necessities -- in which case they are the "strange" merchants in that outside territory -- the trader must be a stranger, since nobody else has a chance to make a living.- (Simmel 1950, 402)

From this he ascribes the identity of “stranger” to traders in order to convey their role and how they function. A trader is seen as someone who provides products that are not already part of the space, so when a product is introduced to space it is automatically attached to strangeness. In addition, the trader is seen as having more resources than those that don’t have the ability to acquire the same. Thus, the stranger’s role is to bring products into space and the trader is seen as having a more economical advantage. For instance, Diego would be defined as a trader because of his international mobility strategy. Diego is entering la reguera, which exists within a non-native space, and introduces products that others presume he obtains for a cheap price, but he blends in with every other vendor that sets up their tarp. However, as mentioned in the mobility chapter, Nancy assumes that he gets his product for cheaper, so he still is seen as an outsider. Yet Nancy and many other vendors get their products not from the Dominican Republic, but from the U.S., which is mainly where the pacas, which are filled with the products they sell, come from. In this instance Nancy and all the other vendors are traders/strangers because they

get their pacas from a source outside the space, thus nullifying anyone or anything as strange or a stranger. In other words, Nancy is in a constant state of liminality between being a stranger herself and connecting with other strangers to get her pacas.

Moreover, Nancy becomes a stranger to the space because she exhibits and utilizes strangeness in her day to day. The first factor was her learning market-Haitian and utilizing it for her business. The second factor was her obtaining pacas, which are composed of items originating from outside the country, thus making each strange to the Dominican Republic. Although she suspects that Diego gets his pacas for a cheaper price she is proud of her quality of merchandise over his. Her good quality of clothes reinforces her *local mobility strategy* and creates a contrast with Diego's *international mobility strategy*. The intersection between Diego's and Nancy's strategies is that the two vendors are strangers, because they engage othering but are also otherized.

With this, I argue against Simmel's theory of stranger because in la reguera everyone is a stranger, thus being a trader in and out of the space. La reguera creates an illusion of the market because it is situated in Dominican Republic so Haitians who engage in the market would be seen as strangers; however, as Simmel defines it, a stranger brings products and is seen as having an economic advantage. All different types of trades happen in the market: trading of language, products, culture, and money. The question now becomes, how can the identity of a stranger be revealed to one another? What happens after everyone recognizes that they are strangers? The confirmation of that would shatter the paradox of othering one another and reveal that at the end of it all they are the same. Not only the same, but connected through culture, history, humanity, and the market.

Connection to Stranger

The uncertainty of the unknown is the curiosity behind the *strangers*. The constant question of where are they going or coming back from? Who are they? What do they bring and/or what are they going to take? When will they come and leave? These mysteries are what keeps the suspense of the market alive.

These questions are what leads Nancy's skepticism on Diego's mobility strategy. On the other hand, she keeps her skepticism on check when dealing with her customers. In fact, once she realized the person's strangeness, for instance, the customer that communicated at first through gestures but then switched to Creole when Nancy initiated conversation, she illustrates her adaptability to strangeness. Nancy's adaptiveness shows: the environment around her is diverse and her aptitudeness to learn from others is open. This spirit of learning and teaching continues to show that strangers are brought together under the natural laws of human relationships and do not follow the false propaganda of the fatal conflict theory. Nancy's connection to strangers is that although she benefits from her *local mobility* she remains open to being taught Creole.

Diego falls under the category of the stranger because he migrated 12 years ago from Haiti to the Dominican Republic. However, Diego sees himself as part of the Dominican Republic. In other words, because he has been in the D.R. for a long time, he expressed that his home for him is Santo Domingo. When I asked where he was from he would reply, "Santo Domingo." After days of me shadowing him and asking questions on how he manages his business, I discovered that he had migrated from Haiti to D.R.. For Diego home is not a place where one originates from, but it is where one can be happy, work, and feel part of a network. I

asked Diego if he ever had problems with any customer or state officers while in the Dominican Republic. The only problems he faced were the day-to-day bargaining with people who wanted a lower price. It would seem that Diego's perception of himself is not of a stranger who equates one's sense belonging to where one originates from as an absolute, but the opposite: that of a person whose sense of belonging is where you feel at home.

Even though Diego underwent a form of erasures to his identity, he remains part of la reguera, a place that blends both Dominicans' and Haitians' organic relationship, under the cloak of strangeness. Nancy and Diego's connection to the market is the strangeness that everyone that comes to the market has. The strangeness is humanity.

Conclusion: Language and Human Rights

Language continues to play an intricate role in the market because it branches out to the larger idea of human rights. Language is an essential tool for navigating not only the market, but the world around it. Haitian immigrants face the language barrier because they are coming from a country where French and Creole are their official languages. Therefore, when entering the Dominican Republic they have a hard time adapting. In this section, I will discuss how language has a connection to human rights, and how humanity is the underlying factor that makes the market a productive space.

As highlighted in Article Two of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), established in 1948, no one can be discriminated against for any distinction of any kind, which includes language. For instance, the UDHR states:

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory

to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty. (United Nations 2015)

Although stated the UDHR frowns upon any form of prejudice, rules are not always followed all the way through. As mentioned in my Identity chapter, Haitians and Haitian-Dominicans are constantly faced with prejudice based on their language, skin color, and social origins, which already goes against Article Two. Language is also used as a construct to deepen the prejudice and otherize Hatians. For instance, throughout Trujillo's regime (1930-1961, Spanish was used as a tool to hispanicize the country in order to maintain and create the image of Dominican Republic as a white, hispanic and Catholic country by the elites (Celada and Lagares 2012). Because of this propaganda of creating hegemony through the Spanish language was instilled throughout the country's schools, media, and people. Spanish is used as a tool to otherize Haitians in the Dominican Republic. However, since the market is a buffer zone, humanity is what prevails. The sense of community and belonging are no longer defined by the language or social construct but by recognizing each other's right to be in the space. La reguera operates under the jurisdiction of la junta (the municipality), so officials of La Junta keep a record of vendors who occupy a space to sell goods. However, even people who do not pay for a spot and resort to selling through the market by carrying their goods on their hands and back are allowed to do so because it is a place of commerce. Communal interaction and commerce are great factors of diverse space between Dominicans and Haitians to reinforce the humanizing attribute of both. Although outside the la reguera spaces are not guaranteed to have a diversity of languages or face prejudice because of speaking a language other Spanish, la reguera upholds Article Two so that anyone can exercise their humanity.

` This is a place where people start to recognize each other for having rights. In order to recognize others human rights, you first need to see them as human and equal. The fact that language exchange is common speaks to the progressiveness of people, focusing not on nationality, but a relationship and being willing to learn their language. The market is a place where people can recognize each other's humanity beyond the boundary of legality. The assumption of the market is that there is an assumed distance between people, the product, the space, and the language. Such a distance enables people to have that relationship with each other. The market is a place where people go for business, not seeing friends and family.

My aunt's connection to the Haitian vendor is key to how the market is a place to recognize humanity. When my aunt said, "We are the same," this statement is the essence of the market, and what it is conveying to people who engage with it. No matter your nationality or origins we are in the space because we value each other. In addition, it is through commerce that the historicity between the two nations begins to rewrite itself and reflect the truth that has always been hiding in the open, that together we all stand.

Conclusion

As I conclude, I recall the story of my aunt making a joke, one that pertained to Diego's origins, outside la reguera. The joke was made not inside but outside, because la reguera is a place to recognize humanity. La reguera has sustained a space where each person can feel seen. The openness of the la reguera does not paint over the fact that human rights violations are still occurring, but it demonstrates how the fatal conflict theory is dismantled and how markets, like las regueras, facilitate a space for humanity to be recognized.

My ethnographic research tackled the different ways that mobility, identity and language are tools that identify how Dominicans and Haitians interact within the space despite the historicity between the two groups. On the other hand, the idea of Dominicans and Haitians not being as friendly to each other outside la reguera brings attention to blatant anti-Haitian laws that the Dominican government has put out, and also illustrates the more work that needs to be done.

The Dominican government's recent action against Haitians is an example of how some people utilize fatal conflict theory to regain power. However, la reguera is the variable that undermines its resurgence. One instance is the September 2013 ruling that was passed by the Dominican Constitutional Court, which upheld the 2010 constitutional amendment that revoked birthright citizenship to children of migrant workers and other parents defined as "in transit". Through this legislation, the population that was going to be most affected were Haitians and Dominicans of Haitians descent. However, in la reguera the importance of identification is blurred through the strangeness that people exhibit. The strangeness includes products, languages, nationality and relationships. Because of that, la reguera reinforces its agency as a buffer zone and allows for humanizing attributes through commerce.

Although the Dominican Republic's government has set forth laws that specifically target Haitians, it has had its moments of being a helping hand, like being the first to act with aid when Haiti faced the earthquake in 2010 (O'Neil and Domingo n.d.). The critical state that Haiti was in evoked the crack in the Dominican government, which the government fights so hard to hide, to recognize the humanity that the Haitians were facing. Now, events such as the 2010 earthquake should not be the exception to the rule for one country to recognize another's humanity, but should be an indicator that together they stand and together they fall, but most important that together they will rebuild a brighter future for the island.

There's a lot of work to do, however, because spaces like regueras are one of the few cultural hubs where the camaraderie between Dominicans and Haitians can be spotted. Although to the naked eye la reguera is another market clogged with people in traffic from all the directions, if you are critical you can see the seeds that are sprouting and blossoming over what have been historical tensions and violations of human rights, to spring a new beginning.

As of now the new concern that would erase the progress which las regueras have fostered is the public health crisis of Covid-19. Currently the Dominican Republic has put strict restrictions on mobility. The country has closed its borders and has established a mandatory curfew from 5pm to 6am in the morning for everyone ("Extended the Curfew for the Entire Territory of the Dominican Republic" 2020). La reguera, where I did my field research, is closed as confirmed by my aunt. The fear that la reguera would be rewired to a divisive form or that it would trigger the fatal conflict model to appear is a big concern to the sustainability for the recognition of humanity. The next step to my research would be to track the reactions that both groups had throughout the pandemic and see what it means to the future of la regueras as it

relates to public health concerns. As mentioned before, regueras are clusters of spaces where people gather to engage in commerce, so because of social distancing and the setback that has occurred in the economy, figuring how the pieces will form back together will require critical surveillance to reassure that people's humanity hasn't been infringed upon due to the global pandemic.

I came into this research not knowing what to expect or fearing the worst, that the conflict model is in fact true. However, I started to understand as I engaged with the market, Nancy and Diego that my fears were actually a revelation and a map to what can be a key to dismantling a system that still echoes Trujillo's ideal nation. Not only that, but my experience allowed me to acknowledge the harmony that the two people are able to create through spaces like la reguera.

I remember going out with my aunt and helping her pick out clothes with my cousins in la reguera. All of a sudden I heard merengue music playing from a radio across another vendor. My legs and hands, in the spirit of the moment, decided to be one with the space and started to dance. The man who was playing the music started to dance with me too. My aunt and cousins were just staring at me with a look of embarrassment, but curiosity. The man shouted at me, "Dale gringo, dale, dale gringo (go gringo, go gringo)". The market does not cancel your recognition, but absorbs it by recognizing differences and transforming them into something to dance. The market is space to dance with other people despite the differences. We are one with the market.

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