

Ayiti, yon peyi ravaje nou dwe sispann detwi

(Emmanuel W. VÉDRINE)

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Youn nan diferans ant Ayiti ak Sendomeng se nan koulè peyizaj (ekolojik) de repiblik sa yo: Ayiti jòn, Sendomeng ble.

Pwoblèm anviwonman an Ayiti se pa ti zafè. «Èske gen moun ki fè rechèch sou valè espès zwazo nou te genyen ki disparèt?», se yon kesyon Guy Antoine poze nan youn nan deba li yo sou pwoblèm anviwonman Ayiti. Anpil nan zwazo Ayiti yo al Sendomeng. Peyizan ayisyen travèse fwontyè a, zwazo yo fè menm bagay. Poukisa? - Paske peyi a debwaze; pifò pyebwa ki te genyen, yo koupe, met sou sa, agrikilti a pòv.

Nan yon woman mwen ekri ki rele *Sezon sechrès Ayiti* (1994), mwen konsakre yon bon pati pou debat pwoblèm anviwonman an kote peyizaj yo blije koupe pyebwa pou fè chabon pou fè yon ti kòb, akòz latè pa bay. Men se pa pwoblèm lajan sèlman ki fè peyizaj koupe pyebwa. Pifò moun Pòtoprens, se chabon yo boule. Nou deja gen yon lide sou pwoblèm elektrisite nan kapital la depi plizyè dizèn ane. Se yon pwoblèm senp ki pa ka rezoud, epi nou gen enjenyè ak teknisyen Ayiti. Kidonk, chabon an se yon nesosite pou popilasyon an. Moun yo bezwen l, e se pa sèlman nan Pòtoprens, men nan tout rakwen peyi a.

Dtè Gerald Murray, yon gwo entelektyèl / antwopològ ki fè dizan nan Tomazo, kouvri yon bon pati sou pwoblèm anviwonman an nan kèk dokiman li pibliye. Li te patisipe nan yon pwogram rebwazman ki te gen pou objektif plante yon milyon pyebwa. Sa gen prèske ventan. Nan yon konferans li te fè nan University of Massachusetts-Boston (Etazini) nan ane 80 yo, li te pale sou jan gen moun ki koupe nan pyebwa sa yo apre pou fè chabon, menm sa yo ki pote fri. Poukisa yo fè sa? - Paske yo pa ka fè lòt jan. Paske yo pa ka konte ankò sou travay latè. Tè yo pa wouze. Anpil

nan peyizan yo pa gen tè pou travay. Yo pa gen machin pou travay tè a. Se ak menm vye zouti lontan yo, menm vye teknik yo kontinye sèvi.

Èske gwo pwoblèm sa a se jis yon pwoblèm anviwonman oubyen èske li gen pou wè ak politik? M ap atire atansyon nou sou mo «Politik» la. Sa vin fè pati kilti ayisyèn nan pou tandè anpil Ayisyen di «mwen pa nan politik» oubyen pou rann sa pi komik, «mwen pa nan polutuk». Sa se yon enfliyans diktati Divalye a ki te fè kwè politik se yon peche mòtèl, yon fason pou te kite koze sa a entouchab pandan tout rèy trantan li an.

Youn nan koze ki alamòd kounye a, lè y ap pale sou pwoblèm anviwonman se pawòl «resiklaj boutèy plastik». Kounye a an Ayiti, ti po jina, tanmpiko, twopik, bousta, elatriye, se youn nan pi gwo sous fatra nan lari. Lide 'resiklaj' la se ta pran boutèy plastik sa yo pou sèvi ak yo ankò, yon fason ou yon lòt. Mwen te li yon koze sou sa nan yon fowòm ayisyen. Mwen pa di sa pa enpòtan, men m ta ankouraje nenpòt fowòm ayisyen ak lòt fowòm sou Ayiti pou chita sou vrè pwoblèm Ayiti ap travèse tankou pwoblèm ekoloji, ewozyon, agrikilti ak nenpòt bagay ki detwi anviwonman an.

Yon paradi ki sou wout pou tounen lanfè -

Mwen fèt e grandi nan yon ti kanton nan sid. Mwen panse se nan yon paradi mwen t ap viv lè m te jèn. Se vre pa t gen zanj nan zòn lan, men mwen te ka wè diferan espès zwazo, twa larivyè pase twa minit ak lakay mwen, mòn yo te ble epi moun te ka manje. Mwen te kontante m de lanati ak tout sa ki te nan antouraj mwen. Nou te gen chen ki t ap ban nou sekirite 24 sou 24 (24/24), kabrit, kochon, poul ak lòt bèt domestik nan lakou a. Mwen te konsidere yo kòm zanmi m menm lè yo pa t ka pale avè m men yo ta gade m, vin santi m. Yon fason, mwen te santi yon kalite «kominikasyon» ant nou. M ta kriye lè yo vann oubyen tiye kèk ladan yo.

Dènye fwa mwen t al vizite kanton sa a an 1980, li te tou jòn. Pa prèske gen plant ak pyebwa mwen te konn wè yo lè m te piti. Zwazo yo kite zòn nan. Pa gen kote pou yo fè nich oubyen pou yo repoze. Lapli pa tonbe. Larivyè yo prèske seche. Vwazen m yo kite zòn nan, y al rete lòt kote. Kèk al Pòtoprens pou lavi miyò. Anpil moun mwen te konnen, jenn kou

granmoun, mouri. Se tankou yon dezè. Mwen panse gen lòt kote Ayiti ki gen menm pwoblèm sa a.

Si gouvènman ayisyen pa pran sa oserye, nou ka pale, kontinye pale, bay tout bèl lide pou devlopman Ayiti, men si nou kite «agrikilti» ak «anviwonman» dèyè, Ayiti p ap fè yon pa kita yon pa nago. Bèl lide k ap sikile sou touris, investisman, pi bon lekòl, lekòl gratis, alfabetizasyon, wout, elt... pou yon pi bon avni pou peyi a, si yo pa mache ak agrikilti, yo p ap janm pote yon vrè solisyon.

Kle solisyon pwoblèm peyi a -

'Agrikilti' se premye bagay ki pou fè Ayiti mache. Yon moun pa bezwen ekonomis pou l konprann enpòtans agrikilti. Ann kite 'resiklaj' vin apre. Moun Ayiti pa ka manje boutèy lè yo grangou. Peyizan ayisyen bezwen tè pou travay, dlo pou wouze ti moso tè yo genyen; yo bezwen fè jaden pou plante tout sa yo ka pwodui pou manje, pou sipòte fanmi yo, vann ladan yo pou jwenn kòb pou lòt bagay yo bezwen.

Pou fini, devlope agrikilti atravè peyi a ap youn nan repons pou fè peyizan ayisyen sispann janbe fwontyè a (legalman ou ilegalman, ansanm ak tout mache nwa biznis sa a gen ladan). Epitou, sa va youn nan bagay ki pi enpòtan nan batay pou chanje figi Ayiti. Peyizan nou yo p ap bezwen deplase al Pòtoprens pou yon dyòb ki pa menm peye kat dola pa jou. Menm jan tou, yo p ap kontinye riske vi yo nan gwo lanmè pou ateri Baamas ou Miyami pou al cache lavi miyò.

Tout moun dwe met men! -

Pwoblèm peyi a pa konsène Ayisyen k ap viv ladan l sèlman. M ap mande tout moun, chak Ayisyen pou ta pran yon moman pou reflechi sou kanton, vil oubyen kominote yo soti a. Wè kijan ou ka mete ansanm ak moun ki soti menm kote ak ou Ayiti, k ap viv kounye a nan dyaspora a pou fè yon bagay pou kominote ou a. Jwenn ak yo pou diskite pwoblèm moun nan kominote ou soti Ayiti a, epi kisa ou ka fè pou ede yo.

Ou se doktè, pwofesè, enfimyè, komèsan, biznismann, edikatè? Kèlkeswa sa ou ye a, kisa ou ka fè pou ede pwòp kanton, vil ou soti Ayiti a? Èske kanton ou an, vil ou a gen youn nan sa yo: klinik, lopital, bibliyotèk, lekòl, lise, mòg, bank, legliz, boulanje...? Konbyen timoun la ki pa ka al lekòl? Sa k pa ka al lekòl yo, chache konnen poukisa epi kijan ou ta ede kèk ladan yo. Vizite pwòp kanton, vil kote ou soti a lè ou al Ayiti. Pa jis ret pran plezi nan plaj ak nayklib. Montre moun nan kominote ou soti a ou avèk yo, ou atache ak yo, ou konekte ak yo nan lespri. Montre yo ou solidè ak yo. Chache konn sa yo bezwen, sa yo ta renmen genyen nan kominote a, menmsi ou pa ka founi yo li. Pran nòt, ale ak yon tep pou anrejistre sa yo di epi pataje yo ak yon zanmi, ak yon moun ki vle ede kominote ou a.

Mwen gen espwa Ayisyen lòtbò dlo, jwenn ak sa ki lakay, ka sove Ayiti nan venteyinyèm syèk la. Yo dwe jis kwè nan kapasite yo, sa yo ka fè (piti kou l ta ye nan je yo ak nan je zòt, yo dwe fyè de sa yo akonpli) pou chanje Ayiti Cheri.]

vèsyon anglè:

"HAITI AND THE DESTRUCTION OF NATURE"

One of the differences between Haiti and the Dominican Republic lies in the ecological color of the two republics. Haiti is brown, the Dominican Republic is green.

"Has anyone documented the rate of extinction of our bird species?", asks Guy Antoine (webmaster of Windows on Haiti) in one of his discussions on the ecological concerns of Haiti. Most of the birds in Haiti have migrated to the Dominican Republic. The Haitian peasants cross the border; so do the birds. Why? Deforestation, no vegetation, and poor agriculture.

My novel, *Sezon sechrès Ayiti* (Season of drought in Haiti) covers part of the ecological problem where peasants cut down trees to make charcoal (for cash) because of the absence of other cash-crops. Charcoal constitutes 80% of energy use in Port-au-Prince. We have had a lack of

electricity in the capital city for many decades, an example of a problem that has not been solved in spite of the fact that we have engineers and technicians in Haiti. So, people rely on the burning of charcoal for their energy needs, not only in Port-au-Prince, but also throughout the country.

Dr. Gerald Murray, a well-known scholar and anthropologist who lived in Tomazo, Haiti for ten years, has addressed the ecological problems of Haiti in some of his published papers. With some foreign organizations, he participated in the planting of 1 million trees in Haiti almost two decades ago. Yet, in a lecture at the University of Massachusetts-Boston in the early 1980's, he mentioned that it is a sad fact that people later cut down some of those very trees to make charcoal -- even those which were fruit-bearing. Why did they do so? Because they didn't have a choice; they could no longer rely on agriculture; it's so poor, no irrigation, most of them don't have land to work, no machinery.

Is this crucial problem just an ecological one or does it also have something to do with politics? Mentioning the word "politics" has become part of the culture in Haiti. Most Haitians say "Mwen pa nan politik" or to make it funny, "Mwen pa nan polutik" (I am not in politics), part of the legacy of the 30-year Duvalier regime.

I have read about the 'plastic bottle' problem on an on-line Haitian forum. I am not saying that it is not an important issue (recycling is important), but I would urge any forums on Haiti to comment on some of the deeper problems that Haiti has been facing (such as ecology, erosion, agriculture, anything destroying the nature of Haiti).

I was born and grew up in a small village in southern Haiti. I thought I was living in a paradise when I was young. Although there were no angels flying around, I could see many different types of birds, within just a one-minute walk from my house I could see three flowing rivers, the mountains were green and the people had enough food to eat. I could enjoy nature as a part of my surroundings. We had some dogs (giving us security on a 24-hour basis), goats, pigs, chickens and other domestic animals in our back yard. I considered them to be my friends and,

although they could not talk to me; they would look at me, come over to smell me, etc. In a way, I felt a sort of communication between us. And I would cry when they were sold or killed -- some of them.

When I visited my village in 1980 (the last time), it was all brown. No vegetation. Most of the trees I used to see as a boy had been cut down. The birds had left the village. No place to build their nests or for them to rest. No rainfall. The rivers were almost all dried out. My neighbors had moved to other areas. Some had gone to Port-au-Prince for a better life; many people I knew (young and old) had died. My village is like a desert and I believe this same dynamic has occurred in many other places in Haiti.

If the Haitian government does not soon take these problems seriously (ecology and agriculture), it won't matter how many beautiful ideas we suggest for the development of Haiti (such as emphasizing the tourist industry, investment, better schools, free schools, literacy, roads, so on and so forth); it will be too late. In fact, these are all great ideas for the country's future. But if we leave 'agriculture' and 'ecology' behind, "Ayiti pap fè yon pa kita, yon pa nago" (Haiti won't budge a step forward).

Agricultural development should be a #1 priority for advancement of Haiti's prospects. One does not need to be an economist to understand the importance of agriculture. Let 'recycling' come later. People in Haiti can't eat bottles or cans when they are hungry. Haitian peasants need land to work, they need water to irrigate their plots of land, they need to grow whatever they can to eat and to support their family, using money from the sale of their excess produce to purchase other necessities of life.

To conclude, developing agriculture throughout Haiti would be one of the best answers to stop Haitian peasants from crossing the border to the Dominican Republic (illegally or legally; thereby, supporting the black market behind this trade) and would be one of the most important steps in changing Haiti's face. Our peasants would then not need to migrate to the pollution of Port-au-Prince to look for jobs, staying in line for hours

in front of a factory just to kiss someone's boots for a job that does not even pay them \$4 a day. Nor would they need to keep on risking their lives on the high seas to reach the Bahamas or Miami in order to live a better life.

I would urge every single Haitian who reads this essay to take a moment to think about their village, town, city or community in Haiti. Support organizations (like the Pandiassou model we read about on the Bob Corbett Haiti List) which are involved in development projects in Haiti. Think of how you can do something for your community with people from the same place in Haiti who now live in the diaspora. Get together, discuss the problem of the people in your native community in Haiti and what you can do to help.

Are you a doctor, teacher, nurse, engineer, businessman, educator, teacher, whatever...? Who are you? What can you do to help your own town, city, or village in Haiti? Does your village, town, or city have one of the following: a clinic, a hospital, a library, an elementary school, a high school, a library, a funeral home, a bank, a church, a bakery...? What can you name that it does not have? How many kids there go to school? Those who don't go to school, find out why they can't and how you could help some of them. Visit your native city, village, or town when you visit Haiti. Don't just enjoy going to the beach or to the clubs. Show the people of your community that you are with them, that you are part of them, that you are connected with them in spirit, show them a sort of solidarity, ask them what they need, what they would like to have in their community (even if you can't provide all that they need). Take notes, take a tape recorder with you to record whatever they say and share these recordings with friends, people who are willing to help your community. I have hope that Haitians abroad together with those at home can save Haiti in the 21st century. They just have to believe in the potential of what they can do (no matter how little it may be in their eyes or in the eyes of others, but they should be proud of their accomplishment) to change the face of Ayiti Cheri (Haiti my darling).

* Original essay: «Ayiti, yon peyi ravaje nou dwe sispann detwi»

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