

Kenscoff, its Development of Tourism from Forts Jacques and Alexandre in a Dynamic of Local Development

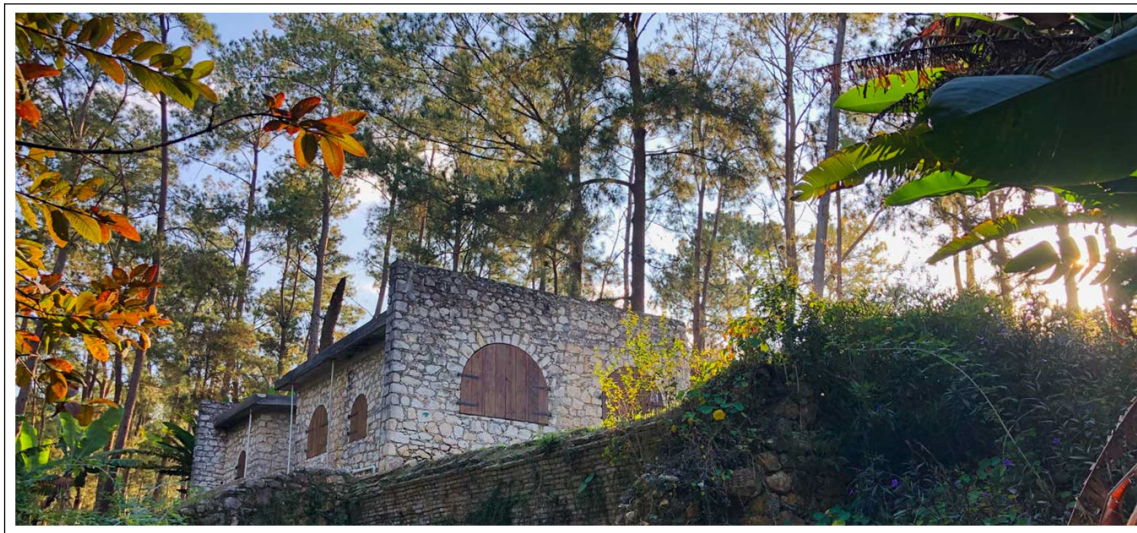
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Across the world, tourism development is a very popular practice in the development process, because it helps strengthen the economy of developed countries by allowing these countries to become internationally attractive [1]. This practice, called touristification, is first of all a process allowing the creation of a tourist place or the transformation of an old place through tourism, resulting in a tourist place. This process has an ideological and political dimension with regard to history, while the development of tourism has only recently been appreciated from a scientific point of view [1,2]. Apart from other criteria, tourism can be achieved through memorial tourism which is a unique facet of tourist activities, in which historical dimensions take precedence over those of entertainment. Because, memory is the form of the past in the present which maintains the identity of social groups, it is therefore the management and administration of the past in the present, according to Pierre, cited by Lavabre [3,4]. This is how wrote “when we return to a city where we have been previously, what we perceive helps us to reconstruct a picture of which many parts were forgotten” [5].

In Haiti there are many elements of memory that can manage and administer the past in the present, particularly in Kenscoff. Because there are sites which have a strong historical and memorial dimension in this town. These are first of all the Jacques and Alexandre forts. They have these dimensions because they were erected in a historical context which particularly attracts the attention of each Haitian and all anti-slavery and anti-colonialism in general. Moreover, Fort Jacques was built immediately after the proclamation of Haiti’s independence, under the instructions of Jean Jacques Dessalines with the aim of sheltering the very young free nation against possible attacks by French colonists [6]. As for Fort Alexandre, it was built with a view to strengthening and consolidating Fort Jacques in its strategic position, which appears very vulnerable on the South-East flank [7].

Today, despite the memorial and tourist value of Forts Jacques and Alexandre conferred by their historical character, they have not been given good treatment since inside the site the unsanitary conditions are not exempt, no maintenance and lack

of adequate controls and measures. Moreover, at Fort Jacques, following comments we can read on social networks, the guides are not identified and attack visitors, no reception of visitors, the internal roads are in poor condition, etc [8].

However, these historic monuments, due to their tourist potential, could represent a real economic opportunity for the town of Kenscoff. Moreover, they represent cultural and social capital for the community. According to Callois “in the literature on social capital, social factors can have an impact on economic phenomena [9]. Thus the existence of a strong local identity, inherited from a distant past, can have positive effects on current economic incentives.

Despite what strong Jacques and Alexandre represent, they seem of little importance to the leaders and therefore underexploited. Thus, it turns out to be interesting to ask this question: how can we really put the commune of Kenscoff into tourism based on these historical heritages (Jacques and Alexandre forts), while concentrating the process on memorial tourism, in order to best exploit them?

Attempting to answer this question, in terms of objectives, ideas and strategies are proposed in the section reserved for analyzes and reflections. The proposed ideas therefore attempt to return Forts Jacques and Alexandre to their dimensions of endogenous resources, on which the process of transformation of the commune of Kenscoff can capitalize.

Methodological Approach

In terms of methodology, a documentary investigation was carried out and a certain empiricism was practiced. That is to say, documents (articles, reports, etc.) were consulted to better educate us on theories relating to memory tourism, tourism development. This form of investigation also allows us to provide information on Forts Jacques and Alexandre and Kenscoff in general. But in reality the existing writings on Fort Jacques and Alexandre are very rare, so little knowledge is available on these heritages. The same goes for the commune of Kenscoff. However, first and foremost, searches on the Google engine were favored. Secondly, social networks (pages of institutions that invest in tourism) were explored. They were explored with the aim of being able to learn the appreciation of those who visited the monuments, through their comments. At the same time practical knowledge was also used (a certain empiricism). Moreover, I have a good knowledge of the commune as well as the interested sites (Forts Jacques and Alexandre), because I worked in the area during 2018 as an agricultural credit agent for a microfinance institution. During this period, I used to frequent the commune of Kenscoff at least three times a week and enter the sites very often. During these moments, sometimes I took time to observe the movements of visitors on the site, the treatment of space, to understand the organization of space, etc. This knowledge serves me in the context of my work in order to provide reflections and analyzes regarding the development of tourism in the commune of Kenscoff from Forts Jacques and Alexandre.

An Idea from Kenscoff

Kenscoff is located at more than 2,000 meters above sea level, it is the most sloping and mountainous commune in the West department. Thanks to its position, in some places, it offers

a wide view of the bay of Port-au-Prince and the Cul-de-Sac plain [10]. Its temperature oscillates between 15 degrees Celsius in February and 18 degrees Celsius in September, with a temperature gradient of 0.75 degrees Celsius per 100 m [11].

The production of coffee and vegetables represent the main traditional economic activities of the commune, while it is renowned for its artistic wealth. However, the town only has one museum and no theater [12]. The artists and craftsmen of Kenscoff come together within the committee of artists and craftsmen of Kenscoff and the Saint-Soleil movement [13]. To facilitate the emergence of artists, a municipal initiative center was created in the commune by the French-speaking environmental action group (GAFE). This center brings together a library, a multimedia center, a tourist office, a craft counter, meeting rooms, etc. It is “a space of democracy and cultural expression” [14].

In Kenscoff there are two very popular patron saint festivals. These are Saint-Jacques in Fermathe on July 26 and Saint Nicolas on December 6 in the city center. Catholicism remains dominant in the commune, but that does not prevent you from encountering dozens of peristyles in the communal sections as well as a few bands of rara [10]. This town, due to its wealth, represents a capital interest in tourism development. Because among the territories which represent interests for the development of ecotourism, ethno-tourism and adventure tourism networks in Haiti, Kenscoff is there for its cultures, its landscapes and its historical monuments [15].

Moreover, the Belle Fontaine municipal section (municipality of Kenscoff) has several caves, not to mention Wynne Farm which is an ecological reserve and which offers ecotourism services in the commune, while the Jacques and Alexandre forts are found in this same municipality [10]. These forts are located at an altitude of 1300 meters [6]. They are defense infrastructures which made it possible to control some areas around Kenscoff. This is the case of Port-au-Prince, the cul-de-sac plain, Croix-des-Bouquets, etc. They also made it possible to establish communications with Fort Drouet in Arcahaie [6]. These forts were built after the independence of Haiti. They are classified as national heritage following a presidential decree of August 23, 1995. And that same year the Haitian State created the National Historical Park of Forts Jacques and Alexandre with an area of approximately 9 hectares [6]. However, these historical sites do not have much significance for the residents of its surroundings. Because according to a survey conducted by Jean Robert Exantus, for residents who live around the forts, 20% believe that this site represents a historical symbol, 37% believe that they are entertainment spaces and 41% affirm that this site means nothing to them [17].

Fort Alexandre, its architecture is described following a square diagram, in this sense it includes four bastions. Certainly this monument was not completed, but it still obeyed the standards of fortified art of the 18th century [6]. Regarding Fort Jacques, it has an irregular shape and respects the same construction standards as Fort Alexandre. In the collection of cannon from this fort, a cast iron cannon from England is noticed. Most likely it was part of a large artillery fleet that the British were forced to abandon after their defeat by the Louvreurian army, and which Haiti benefited

from during its independence [6]. Following the development work carried out by ISPAN, Fort Jacques became the most visited monument in the metropolitan region of Port-au-Prince at that time. It was mainly visited during vacation periods and on the occasion of patriotic holidays, precisely on May 18 and November 18. Nearly 10 thousand young people used to gather at Fort Jacques during these periods [6].

As an area of particular interest for tourism, Kenscoff has quite a bit of adequate tourist infrastructure. These include Le Montcel in Belot, Village in the mountains in Fermathe, Florville in the city center, the Baptiste mission in Fermathe which serves as a meeting place for painters of the Saint-Soleil movement, etc. [10].

Analyzes and Reflections Proposed

According to Dewailly referred to by Boualem et al., tourism development includes three phases. It is first of all the crystallization or concentration of flows in historical space [1]. Then, the dissemination and promotion of other tourist areas other than the central areas and the networking of the different actors. Finally, the thematic offer of places which highlights the population and the territory. Our proposal for the development of tourism in the town of Kenscoff is based on this model by applying the three stages mentioned. This process will be carried out through a set of operations which should make it possible to attract local and foreign visitors to the main site and to other tourist sites in the municipality, with the aim of satisfying them with the tourist offer.

The proposed plan involves different institutions and actors in the process of developing tourism in Kenscoff. These are the town hall, the Ministry of Tourism, hoteliers, restaurateurs, agricultural producers, cultural and artistic producers, residents of the Park, traders, etc. This requires a tourism development committee in the municipality. The committee will be coordinated by the town hall of the said municipality, but under the direction of the Ministry of Tourism, following a partnership.

Revitalize the National Historic Park of Forts Jacques and Alexandre

This operation aims to give a different appearance to the Park in order to revalorize the historic monuments. In the process of revitalizing space, a set of decisions is necessary. Firstly, from an infrastructural point of view, building an administrative block on the Park housing different offices serving visitors is proving interesting. This administrative block will include a safety and security office responsible for the safety of tourists, a secretariat to receive and respond to correspondence, request grievances, etc., an operations office for the management of activities in the Park and an office of management for the coordination of the Park, among others.

Then, redeveloped the road section which leads to the forts; improve internal roads to better allow visitor circulation and make them accessible to people with disabilities. In addition, make repairs to the monuments (the forts) without making them lose their originality, create murals of a memorial nature at the entrance to the forts. At the same time, erect the statues of Jean Jacques Dessalines and Alexandre Pétion at the entrance to the respective forts; set up a tourist reception service; and baptize the forts with the name **“The Guardians of Liberty”**.

These works can attract the attention of more than one person. As for the statuses of these heroes, they are necessary because the monuments (the forts) are their works. These works have a memorial value because they (the forts) represent both an individual memory and a collective memory. Because according to Huys and Denis a work represents individual memory because it recalls those who produced it, while it is collective because it manifests a kind of living memory of cultures that the imprint evokes all its power [18].

However, the space must also be reorganized from a security point of view. For this, it is necessary to put in place a security system which will include the armed forces of Haiti (FAd'H), the Haitian national police (PNH) and park rangers. In this sense, military bases could be established some 300 to 400 meters around the forts in the Park, in strategic locations. This distance is so as not to intimidate visitors. The military will not only be there to protect and safeguard the military infrastructure of the Park, but they will also symbolize the ideal of forts, protecting and defending the territory. To this, add a police station in the Park, particularly from the politour unit, that is to say police officers specialized in the protection and support of tourists. These police officers will be there themselves to guarantee order in the Park, protect and reassure visitors. Finally, in the security dynamic, will there be a need for park guards reporting to the Ministry of Tourism. These guards will not only control the visiting points, monitor the monuments, tools and materials placed in the park so as not to damage them by visitors, but they will also ensure the safety of visitors. In this way, the Park rangers will act as security agents. Still from a security perspective, it is imperative to have a communication system connecting the different points and services to facilitate the circulation of information about the Park. These security, safety, protection and communication devices, in addition to giving the idea that there are some valuable things to keep here, this will give individuals the desire to enter, they will also give confidence to visitors to the site.

From a hygienic and sanitary point of view, sanitary blocks must be built in a reserved space on the site, keeping the environment of the forts clean at all times. Along the same lines, set up an infirmary equipped with an ambulance and which will operate daily from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. This health infrastructure will have a nurse, several first aiders and support staff. These health personnel will provide relief and first aid to needy visitors during visits.

From a psychotherapeutic point of view, establish silvotherapy practices in the Park for the benefit of tourists. When tourists come to visit the monuments, they will have the opportunity to do forest therapy at the site since there are quite a few trees there. For this, coaches must be trained to support tourists in practice. However, it is required that coaches speak Spanish, English and French.

To feed tourists on the site, set up a catering service which serves visitors mainly with local products, that is to say those from the region. This strategy will support local and national agricultural production. The catering service can be offered by a private operator, but under the operating authorization issued by the Park management, followed by a space rental contract. However, regular inspections must be carried out by Park management to ensure that food is prepared and stored following acceptable

standards and conditions, with the aim of guaranteeing the safety of visitors in their consumption.

Finally, set up a tourist transport service in the Park. Driver guides will be registered in this service. The driver guides will transport tourists to other sites and other spaces in Kenscoff, if necessary.

Implementation of Interpretative Tools and Structures for Transmitting the Memorial Values of Forts Jacques and Alexandre

At first glance, it is essential to train a promotion of tourist guides to disseminate historical knowledge to visitors about the monuments, the place and also accompany the visitors well. Indeed, regular training must be carried out for guides, residents of the area and other actors who act on the site, to better understand the historical meaning of the monuments so as not to distort the history of the monuments. Therefore, the guides and other actors acting in the Park will serve as channels for transmitting memory messages. This strategy is modeled on the model of the interpretation plan of the National Historical Park: Citadelle, Sans-Souci, Ramiers developed by Demesvar through his doctoral thesis [19].

In terms of information and communication supports, prepare leaflets with images to illustrate the texts. On which, succinct messages will be written describing the basis and context of the construction of these military infrastructures in the 19th century, explaining the level and efficiency of the engineering of the indigenous army at that time, etc. These leaflets will also contain information on the tools and materials placed in the forts such as their functions, their uses, etc. The leaflets will be available in the reception service, to distribute to visitors upon their arrival. At the same time, visitors will also have access to boards, but in a relaxation room. The boards will describe the context of the construction of the monuments, Dessalines' vision in terms of safeguarding independence and defense of the territory, the importance of these monuments, with more details than the leaflets. These boards will only be owned by the Park. Visitors must be prohibited from photographing or photocopying them and moving with them. And the leaflets and boards must be written in French, English, Spanish and Creole, in a clear, simple and precise style. So, the stories must be captivating and attractive. In this sense, they must be designed and written by communication specialists.

In addition, it is necessary to build a museum called the **“Conservatory of the Indigenous Army”** in the Park. Military tools and materials used and/or similar during the indigenous army's struggle against the settlers will be collected for the museum. Also, paintings describing the different bloody struggles of the indigenous army against foreign settlers, those which express slavery will be placed inside the museum. These images will have a preponderant role, because art has a fundamental function in history, therefore artistic works are the terrains of time, according to Huys and Denis [19]. This space will be available to visitors to learn about these tools and experience the struggles waged for the acquisition of independence and which led to the construction of these forts in order to consolidate and safeguard the freedom of the Haitian nation.

In this same perspective, create a performance hall and train theatrical troupes who perform plays on the site and which translate historical events linked to the context of the creation of the forts. Since the literature shows that traditionally November 18 and May 18 are the times that bring thousands of visitors to the site, these and other dates can be used to offer shows. Indeed, the museum and the theater can strengthen the tourist offer and disseminate memory to appeal to visitors. Because, “it has often been said, furies and passions have taken up residence on the stage. Thus theater becomes anthropology. There are many ways to deal with the past. In the manner of archaeologists and archivists, with the idea of reconstituting it, as far as possible, of freezing it, as a historical trace, testimony to a past that has irremediably disappeared” [20].

Publicize and Associate Central Monuments with other Peripheral Sites

This operation aims to create the desire to visit individuals. In this dynamic, a website could be created as well as various pages on social networks (Tweet, Facebook, Instagram, etc.) all bearing the nickname of the forts **“The Guardians of Liberty”**. These technological tools will have a manager to organize them and stay active. They will make it possible to disseminate information on the routes to reach the Park, information on the tourist offer and attractive images concerning heritage and other tourist areas in Kenscoff and throughout the commune in general. These digital tools should be activated particularly during the period of the patronal festivals of Saint-Jacques in Fermathe and Saint-Nicolas in the city center, in order to encourage pilgrims to visit the heritage sites.

At the same time, on the one hand, choose major roads through the metropolitan region of Port-au-Prince, place panels with views of Forts Jacques and Alexandre with short, very captivating and motivating messages. On the other hand, place upon arrival at Toussaint Louverture International Airport views of these monuments for the benefit of those arriving in the country. Likewise at the Fermathe crossroads, the road leading to the forts, place an illuminated board indicating the presence of these monumental infrastructures inside the area.

In addition to the use of new information and communication technologies, the location of road signs and images at the airport, carrying out official activities of a memorial nature on the site. Kenscoff town hall and/or the Ministry of Tourism can use the space to organize cultural and memorial activities and invite local and international media to cover these activities. For example, every March 25, the international day of commemoration of the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade, carry out activities on the site emphasizing the role of these monuments against the return to slavery. We can also establish the celebration of the birth of Jean Jacques Dessalines at Fort Jacques, as the designer of this monument. In terms of benefits, these activities will promote these historic monuments both nationally and internationally thanks to their memorial reach and the scale of media coverage.

To associate Forts Jacques and Alexandre with other sites in Kenscoff, design brochures which will contain information on the tourist value of Kenscoff based on Forts Jacques and Alexandre as central heritage sites and other heritage sites in the

commune. These brochures will highlight the central monuments and communicate information to visitors on other heritage sites in the municipality, their values, and the routes and means used to reach these sites. This is the case of the caves which are located in the municipal section of Belle Fontaine, the Wynne Farm an ecotourism place, the tourist market mentioned below, the patronal festivals, the rara periods, etc. However, these peripheral sites and other targeted spaces must be accessible, with regard to road infrastructure. Also, the brochures will indicate to visitors the hotel infrastructure, restaurants, etc. In the same vein, we can have screens in a room in which images of other tourist sites, cultural practices of the town of Kenscoff, and others appear. Install a solar system to supply the room with energy, for the operation of the screens. All these measures will make it possible to promote the other monuments and natural sites of Kenscoff and encourage tourists to visit them.

We insist on visual promotion to offer the Jacques and Alexandre forts and other peripheral sites to tourists, this is because it can have an impact on the visitors' psyche. On this subject, Nkoghe et al. show that there is a close relationship between the perception created by the sense organs and tourism [21]. According to the authors, perception must be created through tourism products. It is also they themselves who evoke the involuntary attention that manifests in tourists due to the excitement that advertising creates, and this excitement triggers the desire to visit among individuals.

Construction of a Tourist Market in Kenscoff

Designing and building a market for tourists will have a positive impact for the town. This market must be an infrastructure that meets standard standards and is well maintained. This commercial infrastructure must be located at a reasonable distance from the Park, because the route between the Park and the market will allow tourists to discover and better appreciate the town. Local market garden products will be available for local visitors and artisanal and other products will be displayed for both local and foreign tourists. On product packaging, print photos of Forts Jacques and Alexandre.

To strengthen the market, the Park management may place restrictions on the sale of products similar to those displayed in the market in the Park environment.

Conclusion

The plan developed aims to promote tourism in the town of Kenscoff by focusing on memory tourism from Forts Jacques and Alexandre. Because, alongside the other natural sites and cultural practices of Kenscoff, Forts Jacques and Alexandre represent an opportunity for the town, in terms of tourism. As a result, forts are considered central monuments. Since these are the central monuments which must allow the development of tourism in the municipality and they are located in a Park, therefore the park is taken for a temporary human establishment, that is to say which must take into account some of the needs of man after having established momentarily, even before promoting the values to visitors. Moreover, for Charles-Edouard Jeanneret, known as Le Corbusier, man is defined "by the sum of psycho-physiological constants recognized and inventoried by competent people" [22]. This representation of the ideal man takes into account the universal needs of man such as those of

living, moving around, cultivating the body and mind. It is this very basis, according to Gropius' perspective, which makes it possible to determine the prototype of human settlement [22]. Taken as such, the Park must be an environment for social life. It is in this sense that to truly promote tourism in the town of Kenscoff by taking Forts Jacques and Alexandre as the strategic axis, the space must be developed in order to arouse the desire to visit there. And, those who are attracted by the tourist offer and who visit the monuments must first satisfy the offer. Then, take advantage of the presence of tourists on the site to instill in them memorial values concerning the forts in order to create proximity between them and the monuments, and also offer them other tourist sites and cultural practices in the commune while involving the different actors of the municipality in the process.

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