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Crit Sociol 2002 28: 371
DOI: 10.1177/08969205020280030501

The online version of this article can be found at:
http://crs.sagepub.com/content/28/3/371

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Local Actors, Nation States, and Their Global Environment: Conceptualizing Successful Resistance to the Anti-Social Impacts of Globalization

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ABSTRACT

Nation-states are faced with multiple contradictions as they mediate the insertion of their domestic economies into the global economy. Drawing on a case study from the Caribbean country of St. Lucia, this paper explores how local community resources may influence the terms of their integration in the global economy. It is argued that socially embedded economic institutions that are typically neglected in discussions of economic development are in some ways better suited to the task of influencing the terms of globalization than state policy-making.

Introduction

The terms global economy, globalization and global environment are increasingly used to refer to how we understand the dynamic relationships and linkages (social, political, economic and environmental) between the developed and developing worlds. Yet the term "globalization,"

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Critical Sociology, Volume 28, issue 3 *also available online*

much like "ustainability" before it, can be extremely difficult to define. Notwithstanding, from a political economy perspective the discourse on globalization as a fundamental evolution in capitalist development rages on.[1] The role of nation-states in protecting and enhancing the lives of their citizens is weighed against the evidence that nation-states are no longer relevant (Hirst and Thompson 1999; Burbach and Robinson 1999; Weiss 1997; Panitch 1997; Korten 1995). Nation-states indeed are faced with multiple contradictions as they attempt to negotiate between the demands of their domestic economies and the logic of the global economy. When states fall short there is much interest in the potential for social movements and human agency to halt the pernicious consequences of globalization (Hirst and Thompson 1999; Sassen 1998, 1996; Panitch 1997). What spaces, conditions and structures enhance such potential? And when such potential does emerge what conditions encourage its expansion? These questions underlie the basic thrust of this paper.

Drawing on the experience of the small Caribbean state of St. Lucia, this work is a modest attempt conceptualizing successful resistance to the anti-social impacts of globalization. This work is specifically focused on the internal and external circumstances (historical, economic, cultural) which allow national actors in the agricultural community to determine the terms of its integration into the global economy. In so doing, I engage the theoretical debate about the alleged demise of the nation-state through a presentation of empirical evidence that maps out the dynamic relationship between community, nation-state and the logic of economic globalization. In essence the paper argues that: (1) nation-states continue to play a significant role in the direction of their domestic economies; and (2) that role can still be fundamentally affected by the interests of national actors even in the face of strong external/global pressures.

It is undeniable that globalization has heralded many positive gains for people worldwide. The revolution in communication technology through electronic means has facilitated progressive and productive exchanges and collaboration between communities of people that would not have occurred otherwise. There is a growing international community with membership across the industrialized and Third Worlds that advocates for human rights, women's rights and environmental issues. Internationally linked networks have also formed around concern for the adverse economic, social and cultural impacts of globalization. Nation-states, through the

[1] See Andrew McGrew's 1998 article "Globalization: Conceptualizing a Moving Target" for a discussion on contemporary discourse on globalization and Jason W. Moore's 1997 review of G. Arrighi's book "The Long Twentieth Century: Money, Power and the Origins of Our Times" Verso 1994.

national institution of citizenship, have had the responsibility to protect the rights of their citizens. How can these rights continue to be protected and guaranteed with the globalization of economic relations? Are states still up to the task? Is there a need for a new relationship or "social contract" between local, regional, and state governments, on the one hand, and supra-national institutions, on the other?

Reports of the demise of the nation-state and the rising dominance of transnational capital and corporations are extensive (Greider 2001, 1997; Burbach and Robinson 1999; Robinson and Harris 1999; Korten 1995). Others reject this view and argue that the myth of globalization exaggerates the degree of helplessness in the face of contemporary economic forces (Dicken 1998; Sassen 1998; Panitch 1997; Hirst and Thompson 1996). These works argue convincingly that re-organization of state institutions is significantly dominated by capitalist interests. They also present evidence that such re-organization does not necessarily go unchallenged or unaffected by other social actors. States continue to be sites of struggle, and the outcome of this struggle, they argue, is not necessarily predictable.

Panitch's work, which draws on an examination of the role of the state in the context of North American free trade initiatives, captures the overall thrust of this alternative conclusion. He makes a compelling argument that today's globalization is "authored by states and is primarily about re-organizing rather than by-passing them" (1997:85). Sassen arrives at a similar conclusion in her work. She argues that the whole framework of international law depends on the courts of national systems and on systems of arbitration, both national and international, that exist at the will of states and require national institutions for the execution of their decisions (1998). Even in the extreme cases of structural adjustment programs in which austerity programs are imposed upon developing countries, Sassen argues such policies also point up the participation of states in furthering the goals of globalization. These austerity programs have to be run through national governments and reprocessed as national policies. The global is not simply the non-national (Sassen 1996:107).

Much of the evidence marshaled in defense of the nation state comes from industrialized and newly industrialized countries. It is not entirely clear, however, that a similar argument could be made for developing states that have traditionally been forced to rely on dependent models of development-conditions under which a nation's degrees of freedom are constrained by the extent of dependence on external trade and investment (Dicken 1998).

This paper explores one instance where local actors in a developing country successfully contested the terms of integration into the global economy. The evidence comes from St. Lucia, a Caribbean country where the rural sector successfully resisted a land privatization scheme sponsored by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and which had the initial support of the St. Lucian state. Rural communities were able to accomplish this in spite of the weight of neoliberal policy emanating from USAID and internal support from the state of St. Lucia. Like Panitch (1997), I argue that the resulting role of the state in the final outcome was determined by the struggle among social forces located within the particular social formation.

The particular combination of historical, social and political circumstances create a space in which seemingly economically marginal small farmers are able to define a sphere of operation that provides them fundamental social and economic benefits. These conditions also support the ability to resist land privatization advocated by the globally dominant ideology of neoliberalism that has left so many destitute. The small farmers' experience is grounded in land ownership, which is directly linked to the evolution of communal land in the Caribbean region (Dujon 1997; Barrow 1992; Acosta and Casimir 1985; Besson 1979). This experience is the embodiment of the struggle for economic independence in the aftermath of emancipation in 1838. It includes the insertion of small farmers into the export-led sector in the mid 1900s (Dujon 2000) and the challenges of globalization posed by the rather different economic circumstances at the turn of the twenty-first century.

The case of St. Lucia illustrates the potential for a community to use a locally based resource (in this case communal land and its associated institutions) to organize assets and labor allocation in ways that benefit rural people traditionally disenfranchised by economic change. Many small and marginal farmers rely on the social and economic advantages derived from the communal land institution to buffer themselves against adverse economic impacts. In the face of the current declining banana economy impelled by changing global market conditions, the decision to retain communal land rather than converting to private land turns out to be quite justified. It is theoretically critical to note that the ability of the community to resist a potentially disastrous privatization scheme was facilitated by a resource grounded in the informal economy itself. Ownership of the means of production and the strong line of accountability between peasant farmers and either of the two major political parties, the United Workers' Party and the St. Lucia Labor Party, facilitated a successful challenge of the privatization project.

The paper is organized in the following manner: the first section briefly describes the development dilemmas of the St. Lucian economy as it is squeezed out of the global banana market. The second section analyzes the reasons why an attempt to privatize the communal sector failed. Next, the paper describes the fundamental welfare benefits that communal land holdings provide. This is followed by a brief historical account of the economic, social and political conditions, both internal and external, which define the nature of small farmers' integration into the global economy. The paper then outlines a tentative framework for conceptualizing resistance to the anti-social impacts of globalization with an analysis of the relationships between national actors and states and the resources these actors may call upon to negotiate the circumstances of their integration into the global economy.

I. St. Lucia: Background and Crisis

St. Lucia is located near the southern end of the Caribbean chain, between Martinique to the north and St. Vincent to its south. It is 238 square miles in area (616 km^2), and has a population of 150,000 people. The official language is English, but *Patwa*[2] a French creole, is the predominant language in the rural sector. St. Lucia gained independence in 1979 and continues to be part of the British Commonwealth. The country is primarily an agricultural economy based in the export of bananas. In 1989 export agriculture accounted for approximately 18% of GDP, followed by tourism, 11%, and manufacturing, 8% (St. Lucia 1991). On average, banana exports account for at least 95% of total agricultural exports (calculated for the years 1986 to 1994). In 1994, banana exports represented 97% of total agricultural exports.[3]

St. Lucia, unlike many of its neighbors, enjoyed positive growth rates in the mid-1980s (6.0% in 1985 and 5.3% in 1986), and had a debt burden observers considered manageable (St. Lucia 1987). Nevertheless, in 1986 the government of St. Lucia undertook a land registration and titling project (LRTP) as part of an initial phase of a wider agricultural structural adjustment program sponsored by USAID. The LRTP was designed to clarify and privatize land titles, establish a modern land registry, and thereby facilitate the efficient operation of the land market. The long term objective of the registration and titling project was to increase export crop production through the intensification and expansion of banana producing areas and to facilitate crop diversification (USAID 1983).

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[2] Typically this would have been spelt *patois*. However, since the rise of the social and cultural movement of the 1980s to give the unique dialect spoken in former French colonies (and some current French departments: Martinique and Guadeloupe) a clear identity in its own right, the more accepted spelling used is *patwa*.

[3] Statistics received from personal communication with Chief Economist, Marcia Philbert-Jules, St. Lucia Ministry of Planning, June 30, 1995.

At the time of the implementation of the LRTP, the St. Lucian banana industry was vibrant, and the following year, 1987, the British Government reaffirmed preferential trading agreements through Protocol 4 of the Lome Convention that seemingly guaranteed a market for St. Lucian bananas. However, the decision to expand and intensify banana production, in retrospect, was questionable as a sustainable growth strategy. State planners were aware that in 1992 the preferential trading agreements with the United Kingdom, which had assured protected access to British markets, would be in jeopardy with the consolidation of the European Community.

Although the government has been aware of the risks associated with dependence on export of primary commodities, and it has sought to promote alternatives, especially tourism, to date there is no alternative to bananas. In addition, the market has collapsed sooner than anticipated.[4] The U.S. acting on behalf of U.S. companies in Central America, has mounted a successful attack on British preferential trade agreements with former colonies.

II. Land Privatization

The land privatization component of the LRTP project was required on the premise that communal land tenure, also called family land tenure, inhibited increased production (USAID 1983). Although the project ended up registering all holdings, family land was not converted into freehold titles. Planned tenure conversions never materialized. This was due to a combination of administrative problems and resistance to privatization by family landholders. Failure to clarify which body of law should take precedence in adjudicating titles – the Land Registration and the Land Adjudication Acts which were created in 1984 to facilitate the LRTP, or the Civil Code which recognizes family land and existed prior to these acts – led to administrative difficulties. In 1987, fearing popular objection, Parliament re-instated the precedence of the Civil Code.

Of greater significance, however, is the fact that claimants to family land *chose* not to participate in the voluntary process. At the end of the project, a report from the Land Tenure Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison, estimated that 1/3 of all parcels (agricultural and non-agricultural) were adjudicated as family land. Approximately 45% of all agricultural land parcels are held as communal, or "family" land, as it is referred to

[4] Various popular press (The Voice, The Vanguard) reports from St. Lucia 1997.

Table 1

Land Distribution in St. Lucia 1986

Size of Holdings (acres)	% of Total Farmland	% of Total Number of Holdings
under 5	21.3	83.3
5-9.9	13.4	10.3
10-24.9	13.4	4.85
25-49.9	5.6	0.85
50-99.9	4.0	0.30
100+	42.3	0.41
Total	100	100

Calculated from 1986 Census, Gov't of St. Lucia: p. 13, 18.

in the Caribbean.[5] The report concluded that few family land parcels were partitioned or had their ownership individualized through the Land Registration and Titling Project (LTC vol. 5, 1988, 2).

The profile of the agrarian structure has not changed significantly from the decades following the creation of a peasantry in the middle to the end of the nineteenth century. According to the 1986 agricultural census, land distribution continues to be very skewed. Peasants with zero to five acres accounted for about 83% of the total number of holdings but occupied only 21% of total amount of farmland. Farms with 100 acres and more represented 0.4% of farm holdings but held 42% of all acreage (Table 1).

A significant number of these 'large' farms are not in active cultivation. They are, however, owned by landed elites who inherited them from the slave plantation era. The fact that these lands were idle but were never considered to be part of the problem of low productivity is not surprising. Many of these elites are also active politicians.

There are two interesting issues here. First, the puzzle of rational farmers resisting participation in a program that is presumably to their benefit prompts a closer examination, and reconsideration, of the utility of family land and the role that multiple tenure patterns might play within an internationalized economy. It also prompts a reconsideration of some of the tenets underlying structural adjustment policies. Second, what are the specific conditions that made it possible for small farmers to keep their communal land. These issues are dealt with in sections III and IV respectively.

[5] This percentage reflects the proportion of parcels held in family land as opposed to the proportion of holdings. A holding may consist of a single parcel or several parcels held under one or combination of types of tenure.

Communal land tenure in St. Lucia was a target of a registration and titling project in 1986, on the premise that the under capitalization and low productivity of such land inhibited growth. These drawbacks, it was argued, could be corrected by establishing an efficient land market based on freehold. Using empirical evidence from St. Lucia, I have argued elsewhere (Dujon 1997), that the inefficiencies attributed to communal land only are not justified. Many of the inefficiencies attributed to communal lands are, in fact, also shared with freehold tenure. Shortcomings in insurance institutions and reliable markets, the underlying problems that affect all types of tenure, are responsible for low performance (Dujon 1997). To the extent that limitations in these areas can be addressed, the agricultural sector in general will experience improved performance in production.

Most importantly, the evidence suggests that, contrary to being a liability to economic performance in the agricultural sector, the communal land institution does contribute to the vitality and growth experienced in the export-led sector. Family land is as integrated as freehold land into food and export crop production. Indeed, small farmers, who manage a combination of communal and freehold parcels often rely on production strategies that combine banana cultivation on both types of parcels. In addition, many beginning farmers who are capital poor, use commercial cultivation on communal land to accumulate capital. This is then invested in the purchase of private holdings for expanded production (Dujon 1997). Family land claims then, can be understood as resource mechanisms that facilitate integration into the export-led economy.

State economic planners in St. Lucia were driven by the need to generate, specifically, export revenues, and privatization was seen as the way to accomplish this. Little thought was given to the possibility that privatization may have come at the expense of beneficial social institutions. Small and marginal farmers, on the other hand, when given the choice to privatize were ultimately concerned with retaining the benefits of communal land. The evidence paints a complex dynamic in which state planners failed to understand the real limitations to increased production or the social and economic value of the communal land institution.

Family land can sustain a broad range of needs: it can be exploited commercially, serve as a base for capital accumulation, and provides a subsistence safety net when export markets falter (Dujon 1997). In contrast to standard atomistic economic models, the family land institution is based in a system of reciprocity that meets various levels of economic need and serves as a safety net for all members. In an environment where unemployment is high, formal social security is scarce and the economy is highly vulnerable to external shocks, family land seems well adapted to local economic constraints and the needs of its users.

III. The Family Land Institution

Traditional forms of communal land tenure in other developing regions such as Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America evolved prior to contact with capitalist forms of production. Unlike these traditional forms of tenure, communal land in the Caribbean, evolved within the context of market forms of production and an export-led plantation growth model with essential linkages to an international economy. The fact that a communal land institution could take root and flourish within such an unexpected context may be an indication that far from being anachronistic and inappropriate, it is rather well-suited for its economic context. In addition, contrary to expectations that the number of family land holdings was stagnant, there is evidence that contemporary families often convert private holdings into communal holdings through the process of inheritance. This trend suggests that family land will continue to be part of the agrarian landscape for some time to come (Dujon 1997).

Communal forms of land tenure are a long-standing element of the St. Lucian agricultural landscape. In St. Lucia and other islands such as Dominica, Grenada, St. Vincent, Barbados, Jamaica and Guyana, communal ownership is based on lineage to the original purchasers of the land (whence the term family land). This grouping of claimants is different from communal ownership based on membership in a tribe or ethnic group that predates capitalism.

In St. Lucia groups of relatives in the post emancipation period purchased large lots of land. These families granted claim, informally, through inheritance to all succeeding generations whose lineage could be traced to the original purchasers (Besson 1979). Upon the death of a landholder immediate kin inherit the property as a group, and family land is born. Management is shared amongst a number of relatives, or managed by one or a reduced number of them on behalf of the rest. Family land conforms to the definition of common property resources in which access is controlled and outsiders may be excluded. As a peasant form of organization designed to allocate resources, family land embodies within its social and economic structure, a response to the opportunities and constraints of the wider society within which it is located. Resource allocation is constantly negotiated on the grounds of individual relative need. This is balanced against the physical limits of the land. The rules of the institution are maintained by social obligations and sanctions (Dujon 1997).

Five central operating rules of family land tenure form the foundation of the institution. The first is the claim to rights by virtue of proof of family lineage. This claim system guarantees two significant distributive features: first, access to resources irrespective of the extent of the resource, and second, equal access irrespective of gender. In St. Lucian law, based on the Napoleonic Code, multiple inheritance of property is recognized, but only children born within a marriage are allowed to inherit. Under customary law illegitimate children are also included in the inheritance system. The second claim is to perennial crops. This guarantees a subsistence survival or a supplement to other income. The third claim is to an undivided share that permits flexibility and mobility in terms of physical location of plots. This feature can accommodate the cultivation of areas larger than the technically allowed share. The fourth claim is to the sale of land only through consensus of all claimants. In practice, this guarantees that the most marginal of members can veto a sale. The final claim is the right to occupy or cultivate a portion of land irrespective of how long the claimant may have been non-resident (Dujon 1997).

The sale of any portion of the land to non-family members requires the consent of the entire family. This keeps family land off the market. Members within families may, however, sell their rights to other relatives within the group. Thus, although individuals may transfer land internally, communal rights are, for practical purposes, inalienable. This affords the security of a subsistence to both members on the economic margins and those with more permanent employment outside of the agricultural sector (Dujon 1989).

The family land institution is often thought of as an informal tradition, but in fact family land management relies on a clear set of rules, norms, and practices, and its status is safeguarded in the law. The legal standing of family land facilitates and encourages long term decision making by providing tenure security both within the social network and externally in the formal legal system.

The social network that supports family land is made up of a web of complex relations among a group of people related through kinship. The relations/transactions between two individuals of a social network occur in the social context in which these ties are embedded (Granovetter 1985). It is within this network that over time and with repeated interactions, the rules, norms, and expectations that govern transactions are forged, sustained and on occasion altered. Each individual in the network is enabled and constrained in a number of ways.

Resource allocation is mediated by the social obligations and responsibilities of members and is responsive to members' needs within the physical limitations of the resource. These needs range from commercial cultivation of crops for some, subsistence production for others, supplemental income through access to perennial crops for those employed in other sectors, and the sense of security conveyed to all claimants from the knowledge that they can always return to family land when all other employment options fail.

It is common for large numbers of the extended family to receive social and economic benefits from relatively small parcels of land. This is possible because there is an understanding among members that those who find more lucrative employment outside the family land holding will withdraw from full exercise of rights to cultivate the land, although all the claimants' rights remain intact. The withdrawing claimant willingly gives up additional income in the interest of continued access to the social capital (essentially social security) provided by the network.

Resource allocation is constantly re-negotiated. Although technically all claimants are entitled to equal shares according to the number of siblings of the individual bestowing claim, in practice, actual allocations are influenced and adjusted by a number of social and economic factors. For example, older or earlier generation claimants have more authority in making decisions. The decisions of these individuals in turn are affected by the nature of the relationship with members wishing to cultivate the land. Potential claimants who show enthusiasm for farming or a willingness to take care of older relatives when they are no longer able to farm are more likely to be shown favor in the allocation of resources. In the same vein, impoverished relatives with no alternative options for income generation, may be allowed more than the technically determined share of the resource. Thus, although the institution is grounded in a principle of equality of inheritance irrespective of gender or status at birth (legitimate or illegitimate), in reality resource allocation is also mediated by other factors such as the quality of social relationships and the extent of economic need.

Trust and reciprocity nurture the efficiency, or smoothness, with which family land is managed. A breach of trust between two individuals can jeopardize future relations, not just with the immediate party, but potentially with all members of the network. The guilty party cannot be expelled from the property, but life can be made extremely difficult. In this same vein, reciprocity is not only bilateral. Members do favors for each other knowing that the favor may not be returned directly by the benefiting party, or even in the current generation.

In some cases individuals may resort to the external legal system to resolve a dispute. Members who stand to benefit as individuals by invoking rules and regulations that do not conform most often seek such an option to the internal ones. This action signals a dysfunctional social network that may or may not recuperate.

Although communal land tenure systems are not without inequality (Quiggin 1993), family land provides access on the basis of proof of lineage, irrespective of the extent of the resource, and guarantees a minimum safety net of protection against landlessness and hunger for all members of the family. Social sanctions guided by the original tenets guarantee some minimum benefits for all. Family land continues to exist as a dynamic sector of the rural economy in main part because it is a de facto welfare institution in the absence of a welfare state (Dujon 1997).

IV. Small Farmers, Export Crops and the Global Economy

This section briefly discusses the internal and global conditions that frame the nature of the banana industry that has supported economic growth since the 1950s. It examines the participation of the small farming sector in the industry, and the rise in political significance that small farmers will achieve as a result. It also examines the impact of the preferential trading agreements that have sustained a relatively inefficient production system, by neoliberal standards. The vulnerability of the industry to the loss of protected trade is also discussed. Finally, this section identifies the specific conditions that made it possible for small farmers to keep their communal land. It also emphasizes the impact of small farming interests on state policy.

Banana production for export in St. Lucia first assumed significance in the 1950s against the background of a slowly collapsing colonial system and the decline of West Indian sugar production. This transition was a critical factor in determining the future agrarian structure of the banana industry in St. Lucia. By the 1950s the sugar industry was characterized by production inefficiencies and growing labor problems that took the form of strikes for better working conditions. As a result of acute labor shortages coupled with the decline of sugar prices, many large plantations were forced to sell their estates. Some estates had to be subdivided for sale and this marked a period of expansion of the peasantry in St. Lucia. A British/Dutch multinational corporation, Geest Industries Ltd., (henceforth Geest) purchased some of these estates and introduced banana production (Thompson 1987).

Banana cultivation triggered a significant social restructuring in the agricultural sector. A relatively well-off small farming sector was created, supported by a well-organized para-statal producers' association and a market for all produce of certain quality, guaranteed by Geest. The rigid system of social classification based on race and income was modified to a certain extent (Beckford 1972).

However, although there were changes in land distribution it was not significant enough to change the basic bipolar system of few large plantations controlling the majority of agricultural land and numerous small farms. Many plantation owners moved into commercial enterprise, predominantly into the imports of goods, to meet growing consumer demand for goods. These planters, for the most part, abandoned agricultural enterprise but did not sell their idle estates (Dujon 1995).

Bananas provided a viable alternative to sugar because the crop was well adapted to small-scale peasant cultivation. It also displayed potential for the resuscitation of the agricultural sector, creating new opportunities for the emerging peasantry and the remaining large landowners. For the local colonial administration, both small-scale and plantation banana cultivation presented an excellent opportunity to boost the failing sugar economy and counteract the growing labor unrest of the 1930s and 40s (Thompson 1987:28-29).

The growing small farming sector became closely aligned with the then emerging trade unions (Dujon 1995). These trade unions matured into political parties in the anti-colonial struggle for independence. Both parties, the United Workers Party and the St. Lucia Labor Party actively sought, and continue to seek, the support of small farmers. In part, this explains why the privatization agenda of the USAID project was offered as a voluntary program. The director of the Land Registry in 1992 admitted that no one in the administration was surprised that communal landowners had not taken up the offer to convert their land titles.[6]

A major external factor that contributed to the successful establishment of the industry was an active 'banana lobby' in the United Kingdom. This lobby was associated with the West India Committee, established in the eighteenth century to maximize profits and safeguard trade with the West Indian colonies. In 1953 it successfully pressured British Board of Trade into granting a special license for the import of bananas by Geest and other allied trading interests. The offer to purchase all bananas of marketable quality made by Geest in 1954 was crucial to the emergence of an industry largely protected from the vagaries of the market and dependent, for shipping and trading, on the UK/Geest monopoly (Thompson 1987). A protected preferential trading arrangement was developed and it stabilized the banana producing economies until the early 1990s.

In 1973, when the UK became a member of the EEC, the Windward Islands were still among Britain's overseas colonies and continued to receive preferential treatment in the UK market. By 1975, negotiations between the independent African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries and the EEC had led to the formation of the First Lome Convention. Lome I allowed for the entry of 99% of ACP products into the Community market, free of customs duties and equivalent taxes, and in unlimited quantities. This preferential system for bananas in the UK had, up to 1992, served to compensate Caribbean producers for their high production costs and to

[6] Interview conversation with the author December 1992.

protect the lower quality of their bananas from competition (Read 1994; Philbert-Jules 1990).

The strenuous efforts made by US multinational corporations operating in Central America within the Uruguay Round of GATT, directed at ensuring their access to the European banana market after 1992, resulted in significant dismantling of the preferential agreements (Read 1994). The latest challenge from the US-based Chiquita corporation operating in Central America has plunged the St. Lucian economy into turmoil. Without protected stable markets many banana farmers, particularly marginal ones, face serious economic hardship. The challenges of continued growth seem insurmountable. Many farmers have stopped production altogether and this will undoubtedly lead to distress land sales. In the absence of any other alternative, farmers will fall back on family land for survival (and many urban workers may be included in this group).

V. Conceptualizing Successful Resistance to the Anti-Social Impacts of Globalization

In a context where leading capitalist states and firms seem to rule out any principle other than that of "free trade," Caribbean states have been relatively unsuccessful at defending their preferential access to European markets. Although also under attack, paradoxically, the informal communal land institution has turned out be invaluable for small domestic producers. This local capacity to protect itself is of theoretical interest. The St. Lucian experience may be unique in some ways, but the broader challenges faced by countries in the global economy are not unique, and neither is the need for innovative social insurance solutions for small producers exposed to a sea devastating risks. Family land has been that safety net for St. Lucian peasants, and I would like to suggest it is a specific instance of a larger class of social insurance arrangements that urgently need to be theorized.

Social insurance protections against the risks of participating in market economies are typically entitlements that are granted to citizens by nation-states. As entitlements these protections are not guaranteed. They are the outcome of negotiations between states and their citizens. With the onslaught of economic globalization bolstered by neoliberal ideology, these entitlements have been repeatedly undermined or totally eliminated. Market liberalization policies pursued in the Caribbean region are fraught with undesirable social outcomes. Job loss and destitution, cutbacks in health, education and other social services, and increasing cost of living have typically followed (Deere et al. 1990). In countries where liberalization of the agricultural sector has been pursued, the experience with land privatization has not always generated the expected outcomes. The list of failures leading to landlessness and growing poverty is long, among them: Senegal in the 1970s; Malawi in the 1980s; Northern Nigeria in the 1980s (Makandawire 1983/84; Van Der Klei 1978; Watts 1983). Often, states do not have the resources or the political will to provide safety nets.

The evidence from St. Lucia supports the adoption of an alternative framework in which entitlements are not vulnerable to changing political and economic circumstances, but rather are inalienable property rights. As property rights they carry far greater security than entitlements. Let me explain. Family land claimants were able to resist the risk of loss of social protections posed by land privatization because their claims to these protections are embodied in their ownership of communal land that they were able to retain. These social protections are not entitlements that are granted by the state, nor are they negotiable. They are claims that are rooted in inalienable property rights that remain constant irrespective of state policy about social entitlements; short of expropriating peasants and undermining its legitimacy, the state cannot take away these rights.

Within this orientation social movements would make demands for social protections not as mere entitlements but rather as property rights. Given the expansion in the application of the concept of property rights to include property rights in anticipated profits that may never materialize,[7] there is certainly a compelling argument that can be made for the inclusion of social protections as property rights of ordinary citizens in the face of the sea of risks associated with participating in global markets.

VI. Conclusion

There is a three-way dynamic relationship between local actors, states and the international community. Globalization has transformed the role of the state to make it more responsive to the interests of capital, local and global (Sassen 1998; Panitch 1997). Nonetheless, the world is still very much composed of states that are sites of struggle between capitalist and non-capitalist interests (Panitch 1997; Harris and Michie 1998). What sorts of citizen participation can maximize the returns and contain the social risks of living in a globalized economy? Some citizens have rallied for strong welfare states with various degrees of success and with no long term guarantees (Panitch 1997). The experience in St. Lucia suggests that when citizens have inalienable property rights to social protections, even under

[7] Greider argues with compelling evidence that under the NAFTA agreement investor protections in the form of property rights in profits give primacy to capitalist interests to the detriment of society's broader claims. "The Right and US Trade Law: Invalidating the 20th Century" in *The Nation* (October) 15, 2001.

the worst of conditions (loss of the main export market that sustains the economy) they are guaranteed some basic protection against risks.

The new era of market-driven globalization threatens in particular the ability of developing states to execute their expected domestic welfare responsibilities towards their citizens. Innovative ideas for safety nets may come from unexpected sources. In the case of St. Lucia traditional institutions that offer social protection as inalienable property rights offer some unique insights. It is possible to conceptualize a larger category of citizenship to which family land claims belong. In this conceptualization, social protections are inalienable property rights. They are not subject to changes in economic and political environments in the way entitlements are. It remains to be seen whether, with the expansion of the concept of property rights to apply to anticipated profits, non-capitalist social forces can argue successfully for property rights in social protections for working classes.

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