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American Food Aid: Development and Disruption in Haiti

By Kaitlyn Vitez

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for graduation with honors in
the Department of Anthropology and the Honors College at the
University of Vermont, April 2015

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Introduction

Americans see themselves as a force for good in the world; many believe that richer nations like our own should help spread our material wealth with those in need, and provide stability to those whose lives are in turmoil. On the fiftieth anniversary of the Food for Peace program, a branch of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and a key American foreign aid presence in the developing world, President George W. Bush noted that “America has a special calling to come to [poor countries’] aid and we will do so with the compassion and generosity that have always defined the United States.” (USAID 2004: 2) Crossing political party lines, bureaucratic missions, and program designs, a “combination of American compassion together with the unmatched efficiency of our nation’s farmers” makes USAID one of the largest and most well-respected foreign aid providers in the world. (USAID 2004: 3) Shipments of surplus grain sent from the Midwest to the refugee camps and slums of Asia, Latin America, and Africa fill bellies but do little to address the root causes of why people need food aid in the first place. Food deliveries and aid programs can continue for months, even years, before interest wanes and shipments are cut. Food aid, as part of a larger system of development projects, is meant to improve the lives of people in the Third World, but ends up creating as many problems as it was supposed to solve.

The issue of American foreign aid as a means to help impoverished people across the world seems like a Band-Aid on a bullet wound of systemic insecurity, not a temporary situation. My thesis is conceptually and methodologically situated at this critical intersection, asking “Why does American food and development aid fail to meet the critical needs of the people it is designed to serve, and why are the impacts abroad

so damaging?” From this central point of inquiry, my research investigates the delicate balance and debate of dependency and assistance, using Haiti as a case study to illustrate these problems: who in the United States decides what approach would be best to solve the crisis of food insecurity in developing areas? What factors affect who receives food aid and how it is delivered? How do the realities and activities of social life change in response to an influx of foreign food aid? Are local economies supplemented and bolstered up by an influx of food staples, or are they undermined by the loss of an active and productive market? In this thesis, my goal is to show how food aid from the United States and its citizens changes vulnerable communities worldwide and in particular modifies Haitian politics, agriculture, and social relations. By exploring these themes, I aim to bring light to the inefficiencies of our current system of foreign aid, particularly in terms of delivery modes, domestic policies, and program structures, and offer suggestions that can better serve developing communities to enable them to take back control of their own subsistence, agricultural economies, and national security issues.

When it comes to international food aid, the United States government and associated development agencies have had mixed reception, and indeed mixed results, in their quest to alleviate suffering and starvation in the Third World. American food aid is part of an intense domestic debate that takes place in a country that both prides itself on its humanitarian spirit and is also one of the most active militaries in foreign interventions. When that aid finally reaches underdeveloped regions, its efficiency is highly dependent on local political stability, NGO involvement, and social structures to reach its stated goals. Even then, the long-term success of the program relies on

continued US and international support, not just local and national acceptance. On multiple levels, larger and more impersonal actors were, and still are, at work, making policy decisions and designing relief programs that were based more on personal needs and visions than actual, effective food aid delivery systems.

For the United States, as one of the largest, richest, and most influential countries in the world, the creation and continued good reputation of aid and development is extremely important. However, the effectiveness of USAID to address disaster, famine, and chronic conditions is a complicated issue. The inefficiencies on the international stage can be caused in part by problems within American-lead programs. Based on which disasters are given airtime and positive coverage during the news cycle, the public voices their support for certain humanitarian and food aid missions; when interest wanes, so too does the necessary national, legislative, and monetary support. One of the greatest predictors of whether a country in crisis receives food aid or not is its system of government: aid is more readily given to those with whom the US has democratic ideals in common, geopolitical importance, or older colonial-era ties. American lawmakers have considerable influence over where and how much food aid is given, and the agricultural sector, as the beating heart of one of the world's greatest breadbaskets, holds enormous sway over the exact types of aid the agency supports. In some situations, aid goes not to the communities that are suffering the worst, but have suffered less and have the potential to become economically productive again or have strategic importance to the United States. While this approach can alleviate nationwide food insecurity, it fails to address the root of the problem. Those who claim that food aid does not affect local production fail to acknowledge the power of political instability, both

structural and newly created, on the food sovereignty equation.

Perhaps the clearest example of this failure of American food aid and development policy is in Haiti. Ignored by the international community for nearly a century after independence and cut off from full participation in the global economy except to enforce debt collection, Haiti was left to develop its own systems of subsistence. Centered around sharecropping and community farming, Haitian horticulturalists made the country self-sufficient in rice, plantains, beans, coffee, and many other crops when they left sugar plantations after their emancipation. (Dubois 2012: 121) Many agricultural sectors were more than productive enough to support the entire nation's population, including a healthy surplus for sale to their urban neighbors. While cash crops like sugar and coffee were unquestionably an important part of Haitian agricultural system, the produce was far more diverse and sustainable than it is currently. (Mintz 1973: 99) As a result of American occupation and authoritarian regimes over several decades, the Haitian labor market was opened to factories, from which the export of clothing now supplies more than half the national GDP. Despite the fact that sixty percent of the country works in agriculture, the agricultural sector only contributes twenty-five percent of Haiti's GDP. (FTF 2011: 5) This discrepancy can be explained in part by the free trade agreements of the 1990s, where Haitian produce could not survive the competition with cheap American imports. In the wake of the 2010 earthquake, deliveries of American rice and other staples undermined the domestic market further; Haiti now imports more than half of its food. At this intersection of exploitative trade policies and poorly executed food aid shortly after the turn of a new century, I have detailed the collapse of Haitian food systems has affected the rest of society.

To shift the current paradigm of food aid, in-depth analysis of the impacts of programs like those administered in Haiti is necessary beyond the work I have provided here; it is clear that programs must address the root causes of the problem, rather than superficial suffering or global business interests. In order to develop more equitable, effective response programs, world leaders must take into account a balance of history, geography, and political security, and move beyond their own personal and national agendas. Acknowledgement of the transcolonial experiences of Haiti, in which true independence has never really existed, and the continued power of American entities must be offered, and efforts made to return decision-making power to the Haitian people. USAID and other international groups must take the initiative to work in tandem with the Haitian government to feed, educate, and support developing communities, and not just bypass it entirely. In an age of increasing interconnectedness, the ability of all corners of the world to experience equitable qualities of life is of paramount importance. This, in essence, should be the goal of our food aid programs: to give people in developing countries enough assistance to enable them to improve their own well-being, and then to fully support transition to local governance and program management.

The recent debates on budget cuts worldwide, alongside the question of American relevance in the twenty-first century, put us in a unique position to analyze a new phase in development programs. Furthermore, two of USAID's signature programs in Haiti are up for review, and the end of 2015 is a critical turning point in the move to give Haitians back control of their country. By putting Haiti in a global context, I show that, no matter where American programs are applied, the harmful effects on local and

national politics, economies, and people are the same; these problems with program design and implementation need to be resolved quickly in order to allow more equitable and sustainable programs to be implemented. .

To answer my research questions and evaluate the current state of Haitian agriculture with respect to American intervention, I began with a literature review of American involvement in Haitian economic and political development. Haiti was chosen among other valuable cases because of the severity of the structural and emergency food crises that proceeded and were exacerbated by American intervention, as well as the airtime that the island nation has received in recent years in the US media. The second part of my thesis research draws from the work of the USAID and select NGOs and international organizations involved in the implementation of American food aid policies and programs in Haiti. I conducted interviews in April 2015 with representatives of the World Food Program and the USAID offices for Feed the Future and Food for Peace; reports provided by members of the Inter-American Development Bank and USAID's Feed the Future further illustrated themes and programs touched upon in these interviews. From this research, I detail the decision making processes in food aid distribution, and gain insight into the government's own evaluations into the work it has done to alleviate global food insecurity. These interviews do not constitute the base of my research, but rather complement the statistics and field work of anthropologists and aid workers in Haiti an in my greater literature review. Official documentation by USAID and its partners often was in agreement with stated goals by their respective organizations, but the programs implemented often were counterproductive in improving Haitian bureaucratic capacity as well as food sovereignty and security. Specific case

studies, including but not limited to the collapse of the Haitian rice sector in response to neoliberal reforms, will be used to illustrate these findings. I aim to show here how the effects of food aid and related development programs, however well intentioned by their designers in USAID and beyond, have had disastrous effects on Haitian governance, agriculture, markets, and social systems.

Haiti may have gained its independence and established the first black republic in the world, but the fact remains that Haiti never got to appreciate the fruits of democracy the same way that its former colonizers did. Haiti definitely fits the category of the postcolony, a social and political space that develops in the retreat from foreign control. "It is clear that the obscenity of power in the postcolony is a desire for majesty on the part of the people;" this drive for greatness inspired the corrupt practices of Haitian dictator Francois Duvalier, and in turn convinced outsiders that Haiti's government was beyond repair. (Mbembe 2001: 131) The postcolonial era for developing countries, both as a result of decolonization in the 1960s and in older waves dating to the 1800s, is marked by the transfer of power to local citizens but the continuation of colonial-era bureaucratic and economic structure. Imbalances of power between individuals or groups may have existed before outside control was applied, but the disenfranchisement of large sections of the population is a much more recent development. Opposition and "violence against individuals is usually embedded in entrenched 'structural violence,'" where the systems of governance and social relations dating from colonial administrations are unwittingly aiding the perpetrating of human rights abuses; "social inequalities... are the motive force behind most human rights violations." (Farmer 1999: 1488) More than just a postcolony, Haiti's experience with

domestic instability and foreign control is transcolonial, in that Haiti's control by outside forces never really ended after it declared independence. These experiences are shared by many former colonies, who find that their special relationship with the developed world opens them up to economic exploitation and indirect political influence. The American occupation of Haiti in the early twentieth century is predicated on the belief that the local people were morally and socially inferior, and that they needed help to "develop" on the path forged by Euro-American civilization. Like other colonial powers, the United States saw itself as a rightful, justified mastery of both land and people when it invaded Haiti: "By definition, it does not require the consent of the defeated... occupying [the land] involves, in theory, no alienation." (Mbembe 2001: 183)

The benevolent food aid missions of the present, while better designed and more equitable, operate in the same mindset of richer nations relieving the burden of governance and management from their poorer, developing neighbors; "indeed, their neglect of the politics of representation results in ethnocentrism." (Kapoor 2008: 10) If the story of Haiti's agricultural and political history is examined in this light, the continued dismissal of the concerns of the smallholder in favor of export-oriented agriculture and integration with a global market takes on darker tones. "The end of the first millennium has brought us to a liminal moment which authorizes, even demands, the emergence of new paradigms, and this is what I am grappling with here." (Lionnet 2000: 31)

Through this thesis-writing experience, I kept in mind the role that I as an American outsider have in this conversation, and the role of anthropologists in evaluating the history and present state of international intervention in Haiti. I am

extremely fortunate to be able to objectively examine these tense issues of class, race, and power without putting myself in danger, threatening my livelihood, or putting others in potentially explosive situations. My status as a student in the dominant country in this scenario allows me easy access to countless articles, documents, and reports produced by American aid agencies and academics, but less access to Haitian's impressions and experiences. For issues of local history, agricultural intensification program details, and public impacts of aid programs, I defer to experts who have worked in or on Haitian projects. Shaping my approach to the issue of continued Haitian food insecurity despite American intervention was a belief that anthropologists, in their probing of the social impacts of cross-cultural interaction, are "circumstantial activists" who translate and share the experiences of Haitian people and aid workers. (James 2010: 19)

Anthropology has been used in the past both as an agent of the oppressor and the oppressed, and objectivity can be lost in the pursuit and analysis of people's experiences. More effective and tailored programs cannot develop without an analysis of their side effects; "if conversation is a precondition for mutual security, then this includes a role for listening." (Albro 2011: 44) For me, anthropology engenders a level of activism and a duty to raise awareness about local and global issues by sharing others' experiences; "this commitment is rooted in an insistence on the significance of from-below and partial perspectives for the understanding of an issue as well as for the construction of theory." (Gille 2001: 321) I hope that readers will read this thesis, think critically about our relationship with developing countries, and leave with a more nuanced view of our role in the world today.

Chapter 1 will detail how, in the aftermath of the Haitian Revolution, former

slaves developed innovative horticultural systems to meet their needs, and rejected the plantation model upon which the early state was founded. Chapter 2 talks about the 1825 indemnity as a catalyst that shaped Haitian tax systems, led to American occupation, and directed agricultural policy for years to come. Chapter 3 departs Haiti for the United States, in order to describe how public opinion and policy considerations shape the delivery models of emergency and development aid. Chapter 4 explores the nature of NGO involvement in Haiti, and how despite its good intentions it inadvertently stymies the development of a competent national bureaucracy. Chapter 5 takes the example of Haitian rice production to explain how neoliberal policies and food aid have undermined the local food system, and how possible solutions also exacerbate the existing problems within Haitian agriculture. In the conclusion, I wrap up the discussion by discussing common global problems, possible solutions to the problems of addressing food insecurity, and how the lessons learned from Haiti can be applied worldwide.

Chapter 1: An Agricultural History of Haiti

This chapter opens with the state of Haitian agriculture in the years before independence, and how slaves adapted pre-independence forms of land use to new community farming structures. The *metayage* and *lakou* systems are compared, and their inherent stability, sustainability, and importance to the Haitian food system analyzed. The unyielding focus of the tax base on plantation-based crops for export, instead of the *lakou*, created the economic instability that would cripple the new state.

At the crossroads of Europe, Africa, and the Americas, Haitians as we know them today draw from a diverse range of material cultures and agricultural traditions that enriched their lives in unique ways. The food, language, and social organizations of everyday life are unique, but also reflective of the shared experiences and origins of modern Haitians. The Haitian food system today is no exception: up until the recent application of neoliberal trade agreements that opened up Haiti's markets to outside influence unlike anything seen before, farming practices remained more or less unchanged for the first hundred years of its independence from the first communities developed by freed slaves. Despite the oppressive control by French masters and the extremely high mortality rate of imported slaves, there existed two separate yet symbiotic halves of the agricultural sector that date to the colonial era, though the importance that they have had to the economy in relation to one another has changed.. On one hand, large scale, export-driven agriculture has always been a driving force in the local economy. At the same time, the drive for self-sufficiency has subverted plans for development since the country's founding on a grand scale.

Looking back, many people today cannot see past the barbarity of the early Atlantic slave economies to appreciate their diversity and sophisticated organization. At the far edge of the world from the European continent, it would be an easy mistake to make; This view grossly oversimplifies centuries of development to and for that point of peak plantation production in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Despite its reputation as a backwater province of the French Empire, Haiti and its neighboring islands had every bit a complex socioeconomic structure as the places their sugar went to. Cutting the sugar cane itself was backbreaking, dangerous work that required enormous manpower, but that was not the only activity that took place on the countryside plantations. The flexibility to adapt to new people, environments, and forms of exchange created a more dynamic Caribbean social structure than anywhere else on Earth: particularly in the years shortly preceding independence movements, “these reborn enterprises achieved in mobilizing resources, adapting to stolen labor, producing capitalism’s first real commodities, feeding the first proletarians, and changing the outlooks of so many people on both sides of the Atlantic that embodied a dawning modernity.” (Mintz 1996: 296) Beyond social adaptability and innovation, slaves also operated some of the first steam engines specifically designed to quickly boil and purify the cane juice into its crystalline form for export; in the time before steam power, the precision and speed with which the fields of cane were cut by slaves rival the coordination and complexity of any urban workforce. (Ortiz 1995: 50) They also gained skills in metalworking, carpentry, and accounting while helping to manage the daily operations of the plantation. Sugar was produced cheaply and efficiently, but only because of the sacrifices of millions of slaves and a vast support structure to

supplement physical labor. The “twinning” of slave and free labor, of rural cultivation and urban shipping, of production and use established the dynamics of cross-national trade that rules our global and personal interactions to this day, and set the stage for unrest between opposing viewpoints on development. (Mintz 1996: 295)

For a long time before liberation, plantation owners allowed their slaves plots of land upon which to plant kitchen gardens. These plots were more than just simple gardening projects: using a combination of native and African farming practices, slaves were able to grow enormous amounts of produce efficiently and sustainably. In addition to the staple starches, like rice and corn, that formed the basis of the Haitian diet, slaves supplemented their own vegetables, like tomatoes and cabbage, and tropical roots and tree crops that took well to intercropped horticulture. Melons, cowpeas, peanuts, and other typically West Africa crops were also quite popular, and established continuity of indigenous farming knowledge among Haitian peasants in their new homeland. (Twitty 2012: 26) The benefits to this system of private cultivation alongside intensive cash cropping was twofold: plantation owners could save money on food rations by passing the responsibility on to their slaves, and slaves had near complete control over their own small sliver of property, even if in name it was owned by another. The arrangement had more progressive overtones too: this meant that if a slave garden was particularly productive, they could sell the remainder at the local market and work towards buying their manumission. In Haiti, the population of free black and mixed race Haitians in urban areas was large, vocal, and increasingly rich and well-connected. Many free blacks had familiar connections to their own plantations, and mixed race Haitians may very well have been the progeny of the plantation owner himself. While no longer bound

to the land, the freemen and women of Haiti found their niche acting as middlemen and managers for plantation business, and by expanding trade networks to market the plantation's produce in the cities and beyond.

By the time of the Haitian Revolution, slaves were well-versed in property management on the scale of subsistence. However, the dream of the self-sufficiency did not meet the desires of outsiders and elites. Dependent upon the stream of cheap sugar and its handsome profit margin, the French were desperate to continue the practice of plantation-style sugar cultivation. Ending slavery was not a huge sacrifice to them; they would be able to maintain a high level of profits even if they had to pay their workers. The low standards for labor conditions, combined with the high productivity of sugar, made plantation owners think that a modified system based on low-wage farm labor could replace the older slave-based model. The greater danger was the abandonment of the plantation system entirely. Emancipation had been granted on the premise that Haiti could only exist under an export-driven economy. Without sugar to sell, how would the state survive? This push to force free blacks to stay on plantations as wage laborers was a primary concern for revolutionary leaders like Toussaint L'Ouverture, who had to balance his desire to end slavery with the realities of Haiti's place in the global export-based economy. (Dubois 2012: 31) In opposition to the push by elites and outsiders to remain on the plantation as wage laborers, a "counter-plantation" force gained traction among newly-freed slaves. Their demands were simple: end the exploitative practices of absent or abusive owners in the colonial period by redistributing their lands and allowing true independence of action and ownership. To do this, Haitian elites would have to ensure a degree of freedom for "cultivators," while maintaining some form to

elite management to enforce tax collection. In the wake of the Revolution, former slaves still employed as wage laborers on the plantations of their bondage gained new rights as sharecroppers. Driven by falling sugar productivity and unrest among their workers, landowners gave tenants parcels of land to farm more or less independently of the owner. Some fifty percent of produce had to be sent to the owner as rent and services payments, but it still left a sizable income for those who had previously lived off of nothing. This *metayage* system reorganized the tax system around export goods, primarily sugar and coffee, and was acceptable to both elites and farmers. For the price of some coffee or other cash crops, Haitians could plant a small plot that would provide most of the food for their families. While seemingly a boon to the smallholder, the laws that framed this organizational development actually included clauses banning the sale of parcels under thirty acres that would concentrate property in the hands of the few in the long run. (Dubois 2012: 59)

The secondary cash crop, coffee, is grown in ways that counter the intensive agriculture of sugar, and open up opportunities for smallholders to maintain their independence. While coffee can and is grown on sprawling plantations, it doesn't need to be. Sugar was inexorably tied to slavery because of its high labor needs: "the alliance was not between the canefield and the Negro, but between the canefield and the slave."(Ortiz 1995: 60) Other crops, like coffee, that could be grown sustainably on a small scale spelled freedom for poor farmers across the Caribbean. As any environmentally-conscious individual knows today, the gold standard for coffee is of organic, shade-grown, and fair-trade origins. Because it can be grown in forests, mixed with other kinds of plants, it can be intercropped with other nutritious or profitable plants.

In the colonial period, this method of production was the norm. Before and after their liberation, many Haitians found that a small crop of coffee trees to sell to an export cooperative for cash was the perfect solution to supplement their garden produce. Under the *metayage* system, Haitian smallholders “produced some part of their subsistence, while also producing one or more items for sale, destined for the same European markets as the plantation products.” (Mintz 1973: 99) In the nineteenth century, the Haitian cooperative brand Saint-Marc Coffee was seen as the cream of the crop and the gold standard for European elites; it was by all reports shade-grown, high quality, and fairly traded. (Dubois 2012: 117) Across many slave societies, similar matchups between competing crops existed, like with cotton and tobacco in the southern United States or for tobacco and sugar in Cuba; the push by outsiders for sugar to be Haiti’s signature export was unmatched in its ferocity and its devastating affects on the path of history.

Barred from actual land ownership by the Haitian Parliament in 1809, white foreigners nevertheless found ways to hold the government in a chokehold for much of the nineteenth century and beyond. Even though white Frenchmen had solicited the support of the mixed race population for centuries during the colonial period, the collapse of plantation infrastructure kept multiracial and black elites from taking control in the same way. Many free black and mixed race Haitians had made their fortunes in coffee cultivation in the highlands, and invested their profits in urban businesses and shipping, “ perfectly positioned to become successful merchants in the port town” when the French left after the Revolution. (Dubois 2012: 24) Instead of rebuilding grand estates and attempting to contain the newly freed slaves, they joined the swelling ranks

of government and military that were needed to collect export taxes for the ballooning national debt, and to rule the provinces in the absence of a cohesive centralized democracy. (Dubois 2012: 118) The rich, mostly white planter class of older days had disappeared and been replaced with a growing but exclusive merchant elite, whose disconnect from the lifestyles and experiences of the rural poor would further cripple the economy. “A diffuse and uncertain notion of blackness” as rich, free men of color combined with European connections through trade and blood undermined relations with the darker, rural poor. (Yelvington 2001: 242)

The 1825 Code Rural and previous land codes dating from 1811 are a prime example of the disconnect between bureaucratic decisions and the lived realities of rural citizens. Later deemed by many as unenforceable, it still shaped official tax legislation and the application of regional land management. President Boyer, the successor to Petion and the first ruler of a united Haiti, determined that agriculture was the “principal source of prosperity for the state,” and restricted the cooperatives that supplied and managed smallholders in an effort to support the struggling plantation owners. (Dubois 2012: 105) Under the framework put in place, all Haitians not already professionally involved in cities were obligated to work on a rural plantation or larger farm. The Code put in place stricter policies for rural Haitians than it did for urban Haitians, and moved towards a kind of state-sponsored slavery through a system of corvee labor. This serf-like legal status was only temporary: men could be conscripted into public works and infrastructure projects for the community and province. However, it maintained the difference between urban and rural life through a system of “different, highly restrictive set of rules” that facilitated the “exploitation of rural residents by local official and

landowners.” (Dubois 2012: 105-6) More or less compulsory paid farm labor at the plantation of one’s birth was extremely difficult to change, and only official documents approving a transfer to a similar operation could formally announce a citizen as a worker on another farm. While ultimately unsuccessful in achieving its goal of a well-regulated, plantation-based export economy, it laid important expectations for the future of Haitian agriculture.

With the 1820’s wave of romanticism and proto-socialism in Europe came a new generation of plantations based on communalism and collective labor. These arrangements had a twofold mission: restore plantation agriculture and provide social structure in remoter rural regions. Inspired by the work of progressive reformers like Charles Fourier, white leaders came to Haiti from France and the Haitian elite to reorganize Haitian land and labor and promote “sugar for export in an egalitarian arrangement”. (Dubois 2012: 121) They planned to combine individual plots of land into larger estates to be worked together, with whites as managerial and blacks as support staff. The provision of services, particularly for medical care and education, as mandated by the early Haitian government were of particular concern for these reformers; plantation owners were responsible for providing these services for their tenants, but “it is difficult to know to what extent they were actually enforced.” (Dubois 20012: 67) Under the arrangement proposed by the collectivists, official tenant farmers became the effective owners of their plots within certain guidelines. Sugar was the main crop targeted by this plantation expansion, with coffee as a secondary focus. But, like many of the other collectivist movements of that period, Haiti’s experiments with the practice eventually died out in favor of other smallholder arrangements.

What proto-socialist organizers failed to realize and capitalize upon was the existence of an organic, self-regulating social structure already in place within Haitian culture. Released from their former plantations, slaves designed *lakou*, where the community regulated both agricultural and social activities. *Lakou* fulfilled many roles in any given moment; at their most basic framing, *lakou* are a series of households centered around a commons, with outlying fields and forest divided among them. Like the collectivist farms, “farmers would form associations and cooperatives, gathering around a central common with buildings and factories that could be used collectively.” (Dubois 2012: 121) Bordered by unregulated, living fences of plants, it was not uncommon for community members to cross onto other property to take bananas, plantain, mango, and other tree crops from their neighbors as needed. Families often settled near each other in sprawling complexes, with “the cultivation of basic crops in large quantities... conducted on fields which lie some variable distance from the house.” (Mintz 1962: 101) In addition to rice in the lowlands, root crops like cassava, corn, and sweet potato provided most of rural Haitians’ starches; cabbage, tomatoes, and eggplant were the most common vegetables. (FTF 2011: 6; Mintz 1962: 101) The intersection of familial obligations and economic activities meant that the majority of the extended family worked the land held in common between them, a stark contrast to earlier plantation-based agriculture. “A peasant-like adaptation outside of the plantation system” like the *lakou* “involved... a total escape from the system itself by self-imposed isolation” in insular, family-based agriculture. (Mintz 1973: 100) Production of food and other commodities was key to this system, but capitalist production was overshadowed by the communal nature of the *lakou* system. “Commodity exchange and barter are

formally completely distinct, though they may coexist on some societies” like the Haitian *lakou*, where subsistence crops for communal use were grown alongside coffee and fiber crops for sale on national and international markets. (Appadurai 1988: 80; Mintz 1962: 101) This system had many benefits for the people who participated in them: economic and food insecurity became less of an issue in these villages, as family members and longtime neighbors were more apt to enter reciprocal aid networks in times of need and redistribute extra food in times of plenty. The produce they grew on their farms was geared towards local, immediate consumption, mostly by the farmer’s family. Intensive plow agriculture was rare; the swidden horticulture used by many highland Haitians was done “with a hoe or a dibble... and seed sown broadcast.” (Mintz 1962: 104) Older, exhausted land was rotated in and out of use with sisal to provide ground cover and root through the topsoil, and which granted higher yields in later harvests. (Mintz 1962: 104) Cereal and vegetable crops dominated the countryside, and whatever the family unit did not consume was sold at a nearby market town or traded with neighbors. From the central markets and cooperatives, food could be transported to the cities by Madam Saras, women who acted as intermediaries between urban buyers and rural markets and as distributors of information and credit. (FTF 2011: 18) For those in areas with some remaining tree cover, a few coffee trees provided beans to sell to a larger company or cooperative, giving the cash to buy any material needs that the *lakou* itself could not produce.

The *lakou* system was enormously efficient in improving food security for thousands of Haitian citizens, but it failed to meet the expectations of the government’s development plans. Both of the early Haitian states, as well as their successors, were

founded on the premise of an export economy; the circulation within *lakou* and outside the cash-based economy disrupted this capitalist national plan. (Appadurai 1988: 81)

Each president or emperor made sugar and coffee development on a large scale their priority. Tax collection, accordingly, was tied to export taxes. If this tax structure had been applied on a plantations economy more similar to that under slavery, the state would have had more than enough to pay back its loans. However, the meager production of the recovering sugar plantations and modest coffee exports from small farmers across the island was not enough to meet government budget requirements. The *lakou* system may have kept rural Haitians fed and employed, but it did little for the state. With all produce eaten or sold within miles of the field, the Haitian state could not earn any revenue off of it. Individuals survived and thrived in this period of relative independence, but the state itself became mired in debt due to the separation of public and official opinion. Outside observers tried to present the poor countryside in a good light, but the simple lifestyles of poor rural Haitians mirrored pro-slavery activists who wanted to paint the free slaves as “descending into a mire of laziness and poverty when deprived of the benefits of white tutelage and mastery.” (Dubois 2012: 113)

Top-down reform on a grand scale, then, had to be facilitated by state leaders to redirect the economy towards greater productivity. In the 1810's, King Henri Christophe, the second emperor of northern Haiti, and his southern competitor President Alexandre Petion both considered public services to former slaves to be the primary goal of their administrations. In the absence of the basic food rations and health care offered by paternalistic white planters to their human property, the state took up the cause of improving the lot of its citizens. Christophe, himself a former slave, was particularly

dedicated to ensuring an elementary classical education to his citizens. The legal code he applied gave rights to his citizens, despite their restricted labor on former plantations, and founded hospitals and social services across the territory he controlled. (Dubois 2012: 72) Petion instead favored land redistribution as a surer way of guaranteeing equal rights and reducing income inequality. When Christophe committed suicide in face of a looming coup, Petion's successor Boyer united the two states into one and had to reconcile the two different visions. Christophe's plan, while bordering on despotic, was successful in bringing in enough taxed sugar profits to fund construction and infrastructure projects; Petion's rural redistributive policies were popular but left the rapidly expanding urban bureaucracy operating on a shoestring.

The indemnity Boyer signed with France was the beginning of the end for an independent, self-sufficient Haitian peasant citizenry. Signed in 1825 with more than a dozen French warships occupying the harbor of Port-au-Prince, Boyer had independently agreed to compensate the white planters displaced by the Revolution for their land and human property loss. Why he decided to agree to such a heavy-handed deal, especially without the advice or approval of any counselors or senators, is still under debate today. The importance of the event itself is unquestionable: at this point, Haiti contracted its economic independence out to French banks, and allowed strong foreign influence to continue to determine the path of Haitian politics despite the formal end of colonial relations. It seems that Boyer's need for foreign recognition of the legitimacy of the state of Haiti trumped all other considerations. He believed that with recognition by France, the United States, Great Britain, and other regional powers, new trade routes would assure the success of the fledgling state. He planned to use

European banks to give loans both for export-oriented agricultural development and to allow a longer time frame to slowly and reasonably pay back the indemnity. Boyer ultimately hoped “that with a little discipline and control the population could be made to go back to cultivating sugar, further boosting exports” and inviting a more active foreign merchant class to invest in the Haitian venture for economic independence. (Dubois 2012: 101) The resulting coffee and sugar export taxes would meet and exceed the state budgets, and allow him to fulfill the social missions of the early revolutionaries. Had Boyer’s plan succeeded, he would have united all of Hispaniola into the richest state per capita in the Americas; instead, high interest charged by French banks doomed Haiti to become the poorest country in the world today, and opened the door to continued foreign influence on Haitian affairs.

Chapter 2: US Occupation & the Transcolonial Experience

The 1825 indemnity effectively ended any chances for economic independence in Haiti, and set the stage for spiraling foreign debt, outside control of finances, and occupation by the United States in defense of its business interests. The occupation period, from 1915-1929, led to a shift towards exports over domestic consumption in an effort to raise state revenues; the educational and political restructuring by American advisors set the stage for agricultural decline. The development of vocational schools and the killing of Haiti's pigs are examined as failures of the post-occupation regimes with American support.

In the initial treaty that negotiated French recognition of the independent Republic of Haiti in 1825, President Boyer agreed to pay an indemnity to the departed white planter class of the former colony of Sainte-Domingue. Had it occurred in the modern era, Boyer's deal would likely not have been accepted by the international community. Made under the intimidating presence of the French navy, the Haitian president took the French proposal at face value and failed to consult his parliament or economic advisors. He promised that the state would pay the full price of manumission for all former slaves, now inflated to about 12.7 billion dollars today, to France over the course of thirty years. The amount was later reduced to 90 million francs from the initial total of 150 million, but the sum was still astronomical, regardless of the currency or time period. French officials who presented the deal to him assured Boyer that European banks would be able to make longer-term loans at low interest rates so that the overall budget of the young republic would not feel such a heavy burden. These plans, of course, depended on the conversion on a massive scale of the Haitian

peasantry from subsistence horticulture to an expanded intensive export agriculture that had dominated the island's economy in the colonial period.

Early efforts to restore the sugar industry to its former glory fell flat. Slaves were disinterested in pursuing poor wages performing backbreaking labor on their former plantations, and the 1826 Code Rural did little to change the situation. The previously mentioned efforts by white collectivist reformers at introducing a more socially responsible sugar production model had a higher degree of success, but only in isolated pockets, and certainly not on the scale that Boyer needed. The government tried a different tactic: they encouraged white farmers from England to temporarily move to Haiti and teach their new neighbors. Unlike their socialist, highborn contemporaries, these men were middle-class farmers familiar with the plow rather than with the pen. They attempted to showcase their fields of wheat to Haitians and teach them new farming techniques, but were unable to adapt and thrive in an environment so different from the breadbaskets of Europe and North America. (Dubois 2012: 73) The poor soil, stripped of its mineral wealth by centuries of sugar cultivation, was not enough to sustain the English experiment; extensive deforestation and logging had left little virgin land to convert to new farms. For the average Haitian farmer, the high startup costs associated with a switch from mixed horticulture to single-crop plow agriculture were too high; the new system did not sustain a household's growing needs the way that the fine-tuned Haitian plots could. The *metayage* and *lakou* systems of local production and consumption continued despite attempts at foreign and government reform.

While all these attempts at change were failing, the rulers of Haiti were being attacked on all sides. A second revolution in 1844 against Boyer and repeated military

coups against later presidents left a rotating cast of men at the helm and in parliament. One constant remained: the indemnity. The affordable loans promised to Boyer never materialized, forcing him to go to French banks with exorbitant interest rates. The original indemnity itself was paid off quickly with loaned money, but the mounting interest payments would continue well into the twentieth century. Presidents and parliamentarians scrambled to meet budget shortfalls while appeasing foreign actors. At one point, thirty percent of the state budget went to debt payments, and another fifty percent to military expansion in an effort to control the competing factions that were dissatisfied with the government's handling of the debt problem. (Dubois 2012: 103) In stark contrast to the early days of the State of Haiti, where education and social support for former slaves was deemed a priority, earmarks for education fell to less than one percent of the state budget. Public goods like hospitals and roads fell into disrepair; even today, most Haitians pay out of pocket for their medical bills, and infrastructure upgrades have been undertaken by NGOs, not the government. (FTF 2011: 8)

Despite the fact that France, the former colonial power, had granted recognition of Haiti's independence, few other states had. For many years, official documents and correspondence recognized the region as "the French part of Sainte-Domingue," not the new name of Haiti. The United States, in particular, was an opponent from the start, despite its own birth from democratic revolution and the inspiration it had served to the French and Haitians. The ghost of slave rebellion haunted American lawmakers and slaveowners, who thought that the example put forth by L'Ouverture would inspire their own slaves to violently overthrow their masters. In their view, any measure of legitimacy granted would only embolden abolitionists, revolutionaries, and enslaved

African-Americans. (Dubois 2012: 134) For many years, this mean that official trade with Haiti was extremely restricted, and what little sugar they did produce had to be sold at prices with a low profit margin or under high tariffs. Communication between urban black communities in the United States and Haiti helped share news of a nation that was otherwise off the radar of the Euro-American world, and early abolitionists who favored resettlement to integration found a solution in Haiti. Despite the language barrier, free African-Americans were attracted by the promise of a black republic's chance at meaningful citizenship, unlike in the United States, and the support offered to start their own farms and businesses. The resettlement schemes that encouraged free black migration to Haiti created stronger business contacts with the northern mainland, but real trade opportunities only materialized after the collapse of the Confederacy and the domestic abolition of slavery. (Dubois 2012: 136)

American businesses, however, were more than happy to extend a helping hand to Haiti where they could skirt trade restrictions. Inspired in part by the imperialist dreams of filibusters traveling through Central America and enterprising emigrants on their way to California, fruit companies began eyeing Haiti as a potential boon for American business. (Dubois 2012: 147) The domestic successes of mango and banana farming by smallholders for provision to the cities, at such a small scale, was encouraging to those who wished to expand production beyond these small businesses. Railroad developers eyed the rudimentary infrastructure, seeing an opportunity for government contracts and the opening of the remote interior to cash crops destined for American markets. The only thing standing in their way was a ban on white foreign land ownership; put in place shortly after the Revolution, it was considered the "Holy Grail of

sovereignty” and protected the small but meaningful market shares of small producers, wholesalers, and cooperatives. (Dubois 2012: 244) This clause of the Haitian Constitution had long protected the smallholders from buyout by larger farming operations, but had failed to stimulate Haitians to fully adopt intensive sugar and coffee production. For decades, Haitian representatives resisted any attempts to allow white ownership of land, preferring instead to leave paler-skinned Haitians and expatriates to manage shipping, tax collection, and banking from urban areas. Fearful of the reapplication of the racial power dynamics of the colonial era, Haitian leaders would rather have seen lagging production than the reintroduction of unrestricted white land use. While well-intentioned for the poor and the territorial integrity of the highlands, this system gave enormous influence and control to a very small, elite sliver of Haitian residents, who had more in common with the outside world than with their neighbors. The structure of the government and military became more top-heavy, as military spending continued to grow as its responsibility for provincial management grew in response to coups that destabilized the governing capacities of the bureaucracy.

Over time, this made Haiti more dependent on outside financial management as white Haitians made alliances with European and American corporations. Haitian elites took greater control of customs and tax management, but a significant number of French, American, and German professionals settled in Haiti and worked with the lighter-skinned elite to secure contracts and business connections. Intermarriage with the Port-au-Prince elite was a means to enter the upper levels of Haitian society, but banking in particular was a highly profitable and essential task lead by European residents. The Bank of Haiti, founded in the 1880’s to manage debt payments to French

financial backers, was seen as a troubled asset by its French and Haitian owners. Even though it functioned as the central bank of the country, it managed outside financial affairs more than it did internal ones. More than anything else, the coordination of loan repayments and the tracking of interest were its main concerns. At the turn of the century, the bank was sold by its creditors to the National City Bank of New York (now Citibank), and managed on United States soil, staffed by white Americans and Haitian expatriates under the supervision of white magnates. Now nearly entirely an American-owned enterprise, the shift in bank ownership gave white foreigners a foothold on the island on a level not seen since the Revolution. Not only did this give American advisors unprecedented access to the upper levels of Haitian government, but it also gave the institutional means to physically enter and control the Haitian economy, even for private enterprises like City Bank. At one point in 1914 shortly before the American invasion, City Bank decided to withhold salaries of Haitian government workers until fifty thousand dollars in gold was transported, by Marine escort, to its vault in New York. This breach of territorial and financial sovereignty underlined an important understanding among American and European elites about “primitive” peoples worldwide: the average Haitian was incapable of democratic thought and the Haitian state unable to manage its own economy and finances. (Dubois 2012: 205)

As benefited their positions within the “national” bank of Haiti, American advisors became part of the Haitian elite who granted funding and contracts to infrastructure projects within the island nation. New investment opportunities seemed to materialize overnight for Americans and Europeans. These new ventures and trade contracts were touted as a means to help poorer nations and develop them into future trade partners, a

stance that the United States has taken from its early experiments with imperialism through the modern era. (Uvin 1992: 297) Even today, American presidents and high-ranking officials see trade development and the opening of markets to be the mutually beneficial end product of foreign aid. (James 2010: 116) A contract to develop a new rail line also granted a ten-mile wide strip of land to the American railroad company, which they used for exclusive development rights for one of Haiti's first commercial exports banana plantation. (Dubois 2012: 207) French banks extended more loans to private citizens and the Haitian government alike. German financiers partnered with white and mixed-race Haitians to expand tax collection operations, and to gain a foothold in the Caribbean in competition with older colonial powers. The expanding opportunities in Port-au-Prince managing government-backed projects, along with loosening but still restrictive policies on foreign land ownership, mean that the capital's influence grew exponentially at the expense of regional ports and cities. Funding for secondary ports, highways, and railroads fell as the country reoriented to its southern capital, while export tax revenue stagnated with the disruption of regional trade.

The occupation by American troops in 1915 would continue for fourteen years, one of the longest Central American occupations by the United States in its entire military history. At first, the stated goal of deterring German expansion in the Caribbean in the face of its European acts of aggression made sense; after all, the German merchants of Port-au-Prince had a sizeable stake in foreign trade there. The well-publicized wartime shortages and rising demand for fruits, sugar, and other tropical food crops could indeed have opened up enormously enriching trade opportunities for Haitians. The inability of the great European powers to trade with their own colonies,

whose trade was restricted by wartime transportation disruption and blockades, meant that Haiti could make a fortune furnishing the United States and other larger countries with food and raw materials. The issues in developing these supply chains lay with that most pressing of problems to underdeveloped peoples at the turn of the century: institutionalized and nationalistic racism in whiter, richer states meant that self-determination and independent economic development would become all but impossible for Haiti. Despite its nominal independence, Haiti found itself under the control of former colonial powers who continued the same patterns of underpaid, imbalanced resource extraction that was the hallmark of the colonial era. Instead of independent Haitian development, the wartime market for Haitian goods was opened and operated by invading Marines under the approval of the United States government and people. The American occupation was more than a wartime necessity: war gave the United States the perfect opportunity to bypass the few protections that Haitians had managed to erect, and to use the rationale of “war powers” to quiet the weak protests from the international community. (James 2010: 53) After all, in their eyes, the Haitian government and private individuals had proved time and time again that they could not be trusted to manage their own land, people, and finances.

President Monroe, whose infamous Doctrine had set up a legal precedent for warranted intervention in Central and South America, had exempted Haiti from this category of “new democracies.” Haiti, born outside of the wave of independence movements that grew out of the Napoleonic Wars, was specifically left out because of its earlier founding than other former colonial territories. Furthermore, the white creole elite of Latin America had led the recent revolts on the basis of representation and self-

determination; the Haitians, meanwhile, declared their independence from revolutionary France through armed slave revolt and, in some areas, the killing of white plantation owners by slave militias. Beyond the question of slavery, Monroe and other early American leaders were concerned over the greater degree of miscegenation, social mobility, and relative power of the peasantry. (Dubois 2012: 140) Across many facets of the occupation, from its takeover of government bureaucracy for its own ends, to the violence perpetrated by Marines across the highlands to citizens and rebels alike, Haiti seemed to exist outside of the rules and boundaries set by the Euro-American community on what a state should be and look like. The disconnect between state tax policies, geared toward exports, and the actual activity of rural subsistence farmers helped confirm the impression that Haitians were backwards, and needed intervention from a more developed neighbor to provide a push in the right direction. It was not colonial in words or in action, but played upon the weaknesses created by colonialism to enter a new phase of foreign-directed economic development. For white outsiders, the occupation was benevolent; for Haitian subsistence farmers, it was the imposition of older power dynamics through a new, transcolonial regime that saw their work as less meaningful and primitive than their own. "Colonial occupation, in general, is not simply marked by the vice of violence; it is marked by the vice of spoliation" to traditional ways of life and long-term sustainability. (Mbembe 2001: 183) The negative attitude towards the relative independence and low productivity of farmers, particularly those who participated in communal or sharecropping systems like the *lakou* and *metayage*, spelled their destruction through coercive policy and the threat of violence. Reforms and

redevelopment directed by the American-directed administration are for the benefit of all Haitians, who must accept the tide of modernization and constant shifts in state stability.

A hundred years of independent, small-scale sufficiency were swept away overnight in the wake of the occupation. With the ban on foreign ownership lifted, American companies raced to get contracts and land grants to develop the countryside, whose export capacities had been mostly untapped for a hundred years. The Standard Fruit Company secured a monopoly on banana exports, thanks to a deal brokered by President Vincent and his American advisors. (Dubois 2012: 295) Sugar had, despite the collapse of the great plantations, been grown in small amounts for a low level of local consumption as small-batch rum. Enormous new sugar mills under the national sugar company HASCO displaced the small rum distilleries that had once dotted rural Haiti and paid small farmers less, forcing them to ramp up sugar acreage, work on the new fruit plantations, or move on to other jobs in urban centers. (Dubois 2012: 268) The *metayage* sharecropper system and *lakou* networks fell apart as American managers took the reins in the agricultural ministry and beyond. Greater foreign oversight translated into greater concern for the bottom line and improved tax collection efficiency.

Revenue rose and allowed the state to increase the size of loan payments, but at what social cost? As in other countries subject to imperialist and colonial takeover, trade liberalization and foreign economic management failed to create new political or socioeconomic opportunities for the average Haitian, and the democratic process that had once been the founding principle of the state was in even graver danger than before. Stronger tax codes aimed at stimulating exports forced smallholders into low-paid wage labor on the large farms. Small farms faded in importance, and Haitians

migrated to the Dominican Republic and Cuba in search of better prospects on sugar plantations and as servants in private homes. In both Haiti and in the rest of the Caribbean, work conditions for wage laborers were little better than the slavery they had abolished at independence. Indeed, they faced outright discrimination in other areas of the Caribbean, and at one point massacres and acts of genocide were an unspoken reality of life along the border with the Dominican Republic. Like the social toll of American control and the end of agricultural independence, the period of occupation “remains a disturbing specter... largely unacknowledged and un memorialized.” (Dubois 2012: 305) In the wake of large-scale displacement, individuals or entire families in search of jobs went to Port-au-Prince in search of factory or shipping work, where low wages in the food processing industry, the main urban site of unskilled labor at the time, contributed to the sprawl of slums and unregulated housing that define the urban landscape there today. The legacy of broken families, single mothers, and entrenched poverty haunts Haiti to the present day. (James 2010: 53)

Few alternatives existed to the pattern of agricultural monopolies set up after 1915. A proposal in 1918 creating microcredit lending banks to stimulate small-scale export operations fell flat, and the desire to set up local agricultural development councils was dismissed by American advisors. Today, these measures would have been meaningful and likely successful steps towards sustainable development, as they gave far greater stock to the experiences and input of everyday Haitians, but in a time geared single-mindedly towards generating cash, the long-term adaptability of small-scale farming was not a priority. Most new ventures set up by Americans in the 1920s ended up failing within a few short years, creating cyclical bouts of unemployment that

disrupted the already fragile economy. Despite development projects and job growth, coffee exports did not increase until after the official end of the occupation, where they constituted seventy four percent of exports yet employed fewer Haitians. (James 2010: 53) By many economic measures, the American occupation had failed to provide any true structural improvements on the existing Haitian model, but had merely substituted its own version of an already outdated production model, at least in the eyes of Haitians.

To respond to these failures to thrive in Haiti, the Service Technique d'Agriculture school was founded outside Port-au-Prince to educate the next generation of middle-class farm owners. It was part of a larger treaty to reform Haitian civil society, where it was tasked with "a program of agricultural development and began to build up an ambitious system of farm schools for peasant children and vocational and professional schools in the cities." (Munro 1969: 4) Beyond its educational mission, the instructors would also be advisors to upcoming agricultural reforms or projects. It was applauded as the perfect union of the latest American agricultural technologies and philanthropic educational institutions. However, its founding principles and structure raise several important and ideologically revealing points on the nature of American intervention in Haiti. The Service Technique was designed to replace, not complement, a traditional education in the humanities. Underlying this mission statement is the idea that Haitians were only suited for vocational training, and that those on small family farms were lazy and unproductive. (Dubois 2012: 282) The farms themselves were understood to be poorly managed, and the farmers primitive: "owing to the backward condition of the population, the type of cultivation is exceedingly primitive and the methods of marketing are defective... the actual production is small as compared with what might be secured

with the proper application of improved methods.” (Weatherly 1926: 360-1) The teaching staff was almost entirely imported from the United States, whose views would almost unquestionably be slanted towards an export-oriented economy and cash crop production. The instructors and administrators believed that Haitians were “deficient in habits of efficiency,” but with time and the corrective influence of vocational training, “there is reason to believe that a generation of education may at least render the Haitian people capable of receiving and applying much higher standards than they had in the pre-occupation period” to “perpetuat[e] the best results of advanced civilization.” (Weatherby 1926: 364) Had the Service Technique existed alongside, instead in competition with, traditionally structured universities and secondary schools in a more meaningful way, the impact would have been much different. The educational pipelines put in place by American-directed reform were designed to perpetuate the structure that had been created during the early years of occupation, where elites and foreigners held undue control over the social and work lives of poor Haitians, who received only rudimentary education. The monopoly on education and financial stability further divided the people, and would fuel the violent swings of political power and public dissent that would define the coming decades. (Schuller 2007: 70) A nation of trained farmers would serve as an excellent labor force for a country owned by fruit and coffee plantations, but would never be a fully independent state. (Dubois 2012: 282)

Towards the end of the occupation, as Americans tired of the expense and effort of managing a dependent foreign state, leaders looked to find a way to make the structural changes that had been instituted more permanent. Regional stability, at that time and today, was the priority. Despite the official assurance that the changes they

had instituted under the United States' supervision would remain in place for decades, Haitian elites faced the evidence that a century of coups and revolutions had already undermined the dreams of the Haitian Revolution. To subvert this narrative, state leaders bought into the restructuring plans built up by American advisors in the years before their departure. In many respects, they never left; foreign loans, government support for new plantations, and American-financed ventures became the defining economic activity in Haiti. Official American control of state finances ended in 1929 with the end of the occupation, but the timing could not have been worse. The Great Depression sharply cut demand and profit margins for the cash crops that the Haitian economy had been rebuilt around. This time, the consolidation of Haitian workers into factories and plantations was unencumbered by nationalist rebellion, accelerated instead by extreme need.

In the late 1930s, as funds opened up in the buildup to the Second World War, Haiti's presidents used their expanding powers to secure loans for agricultural development. President Lescot oversaw what was perhaps the largest and, eventually, most destructive development program of the era. In the early Forties, he secured funding from the United States to found the SHADA rubber corporation. Initially, the proposal took advantage of a huge growth in demand for rubber, both to supply an exploding American demand as they manufactured vehicles for the Allied Forces, as well as in anticipation of disrupted trade routes in Africa and the Pacific. However, Lescot and his backers failed to anticipate the social costs of creating a competitive rubber industry from scratch. Undoing decades of investment in small family farms and newer sugar and fruit plantations, Lescot took over more than fifty thousand acres alone

from smaller agricultural operations. From the loss of the produce of the mixed family plots alone, Haiti nearly entered a famine as rice production dropped and prices across the agricultural spectrum rose dramatically. (Dubois 2012: 314-5)

Other projects under Lescot's successor, President Estime, aimed to gain enough tax revenue to fund social security and environmental protection efforts, but loan repayments toward the United States made these social programs impossible to reliably fund. Essential infrastructure upgrades, like irrigation improvements and expansions necessary to keeping export-oriented plantations running, went unfunded for decades and lowered the country's agricultural potential. Even Estime's signature development project, banana nationalization, failed in the face of the extreme pressures placed on the government by its continued international debts. (Dubois 2012: 316) The original indemnity negotiated by Boyer was finally paid to City Bank in 1947, but new debts from financing agricultural and infrastructure projects still remained. Even with the departure of occupational forces and customs management, the shadow of foreign control of the economy after the end of the colonial period in the form of loans and failed business ventures spearheaded by Americans. Relief came only with the Cold War; the tensions between communist and capitalist forces opened up huge sums of money to Third World sympathizers to help them compete in the global economy. The early years of this new wave of development came mostly from American anti-communist investment through USAID and the State Department, with a significant minority investment share coming from missionary and church groups. At first, incredibly low prices and production of coffee and cocoa, the cash crops of the 1950s, stymied

economic growth, and hurricane damage in 1954 affected all sectors of the economy.
(Dubois 2012: 319)

Anti-communist Haitian dictator Duvalier, elected with the support of the United States government, took advantage of development funds to fully integrate Haiti into the global economy. Dictators and autocrats like Duvalier profited handsomely off of the imbalance of aid money and program support that went to reliably non-communist states; the United States and its allies unequivocally preferred a charismatic, heavy-handed leader who skimmed from donations to the frequent shifts of leadership in a truly democratic state. In Haiti and in other parts of Latin America, “the allocation of bilateral aid across recipient countries provides evidence as to why it is not more effective at promoting growth and poverty reduction... Most striking here is the a non-democratic former colony gets about twice as much aid as a democratic non-colony.” (Alesina and Dollar 2000: 22) Millions of dollars each year rounded out the state budget and allowed for robust programs that, legal or not, succeeded in creating an export-driven agricultural sector. In the Duvalierist period, the administration taught the common people to “live without money and eat without food.” (Dubois 2012: 346) The focus on streamlining production and transportation for cash crops solved many of the problems that had challenged previous agricultural development plans, at the expense of the country’s domestic food production. Rice and vegetable production, once the cornerstone of the *metayage* system, fell slowly over the course of his rule through the 1960s and 70s. The goal of Duvalierist development was to produce goods for export and support the bottom line, not to create a sustainable and self-sufficient economy. Like the neoliberal reforms that would follow after the fall of his son, Duvalier pursued a

course of action that showed that industrial production, not agricultural, would make Haiti richest and able to negotiate for their needs better on the international stage. The postcolonial dictator, as the embodiment of the state, must be able to identify with increased production and improved welfare of his country; partnering with the United States as his sponsor, Duvalier was able to grow Haiti's economy and claim both credit and profits as his own. With his high visibility as a job creator, country doctor, and charismatic politician, Duvalier "[was] everything at the same time... 'the all-purpose man.'" (Mbembe 2001: 155) However, Duvalier's son and successor himself admitted that the new factories that his family had created across the country were poorly integrated into the greater economy. (Dubois 2012: 351) While Haitian earned a wage from processing facilities and textiles, the industries failed to spur further development. The clothes stitched in Port-au-Prince did not use Haitian raw materials and did not further supply other Haitian business; the United States and other contracted partners supplied materials and purchased finished products, closing the circle of trade before it could really begin. Poverty relief, the billed goal of anti-communist development, was practically nonexistent, as Haiti steadily got poorer each year under authoritarian rule. In 1984 alone, there were at least 400 NGOs in charge of distributing services, material aid, and money to the poor of Port-au-Prince, and even then most were suspected of funneling money some of their funds to state and organizational executives. (Dubois 2012: 351)

Aid money was not the only way that aid was delivered in the Duvalierist era; USAID and its NGO recipients of aid money served as unofficial advisors to the ministry of agriculture. While only infrequently the implementers of development projects, they

helped formulate the policies that designed and funded agricultural reform throughout the 1970s and 80s. The classic example of development gone wrong under Duvalier and USAID is the 1983 culling of Haiti's pig population. Agricultural techniques were not the only things honed by years of experience by former slaves; the development of unique plant crops and animal breeds were also part of the *metayage* and *lakou* experience. The creole pig, unlike its pale, mass-produced American cousin, is a local breed native to the island of Hispaniola. Its popularity among rural Haitian households is tied to its adaptability to both farm and forest environments, flexibility of diet, and sound investment opportunity. Farmers themselves needed to put very little money, time, or effort into raising a creole pig, and many Haitians used them as a "bank account" to mature over a long timeframe, and then slaughter or sell in times of need. While this had been a sound strategy in the past, integration into global markets under disconnected advisors failed to fully appreciate each element of a working, sustainable farm. When reports came in that swine flu had been found in Haiti, Duvalier's administration and USAID advisors moved to kill all the country's pigs in an effort to stop the deadly disease before it spread. Farmers balked at killing off their most reliable source of income, so USAID arranged for each farmer to receive an imported pig in exchange for two million culled creole pigs, and provided a minimum of health care to ensure their survival. These pigs were touted as faster-growing, larger versions of their creole brothers, but failed to thrive in their new environment. They differed in several crucial ways from the creole pigs they replaced: the imported hogs were poorly suited to the tropical landscape, and needed to be penned in at all times, taking up valuable real estate on the compact farms of the highlands. They also preferred expensive feed to the

kitchen scraps and compost that farmers were used to providing their pigs. As a result of the loss of the pigs and the debts incurred buying their food, rural Haitians ended up even poorer than they were before the intervention, and chastised the Duvalier administration for taking better care of the pigs than their own fellow citizens. (Dubois 2012: 352) The importance of the creole pig to the family farm is summed up by former farmers living in the slums of Port-au-Prince as poorly paid factory workers, who accurately call the pig culling “the stock market crash.” (Schuller 2012: 53)

The damage done to the Haitian government by imperialist outside forces through economic and agricultural restructuring is deep and will continue to affect the state for decades to come. Haitians thought that their troubles had ended with independence; instead, they found that outside forces would return again and again to reassert the vulnerability and underproductivity of an old colony. Economic displacement and ingrained, structural violence are still powerful forces in Haiti today. Even though democracy is the rule of the land at present, the frameworks for political action, international relations, and business negotiations are largely the same. Instead of aid directly from foreign governments, particularly the United States, aid is now delivered by subsidiaries to NGOs, who distribute money and programming as they see fit. The bypass of the Haitian state in this model of development, while well-intentioned, ends up disenfranchising the common people by ignoring the sovereign power of their elected representatives over the future of their own country. (MacLachlan et al. 2010: 25) In a larger scope, international organizations like the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, along with smaller regional and national development banks, offer loans or grants to the Haitian government to rebuild industries or even to restructure

entire government departments. The failure to pay back these loans can lead to, as happened in 1998, government bank account freezes and the redirect of funds to NGOs at the expense of existing underfunded government programs. (Schuller 2007: 73) This indirect, external rearrangement of a sovereign state's bureaucracy may be described as more efficient, but it tends to remove constitutional safeguards and domestic accountability, as well as fostering an environment vulnerable to corruption. (Knack 2001: 313) While working with an international body rather than the bilateral loan programs of the past offers greater equity and accountability, they carry criteria that a state must meet before receiving a loan. Oftentimes, this means lowering environmental standards or pledging to work with a certain company, which may not hold the same values and goals as the developing country. (Kapoor 2008: 17) The process by which this restructuring of cash and commodity flows may be new, but it operates on the same principles and patterns as the disenfranchising systems of the American occupation.

Chapter 3: US Interests and Aid Policy Debates

This chapter explores the forms that food aid can take, its history, and the reasons why Type II (commodity) food aid remains popular. Food for Peace and USAID are not just aid agencies, but the result of American popular, government, and media ideas of who and how to help. The differences in implementation between disaster and chronic food insecurity are explored in a global context. Questions the effectiveness of American aid to Haiti are raised in response to this apparent mismatch of aid given and aid needed for effective relief.

Food insecurity, on both a personal level and across entire countries, is both a source and a result of economic stress in the modern world. In developing countries, environmental or human disasters can trigger a drop in crop yields or the loss of a harvest and create famine conditions. In times of need, disaster-stricken countries can appeal to their neighbors or the international community to help fill their basic nutrition needs. A number of organizations exist for this purpose, most notably the United Nations' World Food Program and the United States' Food for Peace initiative within USAID. Both operate on the distribution of available commodity surpluses or, as is sometimes the case in the United States, commodity buyouts from farmers. While a subsidiary of the United Nations, the World Food Program's member contributions are structured very differently. The United States, a key founding member and permanent seat on the Security Council, contributes some twenty-two percent of the United Nations' annual budget; it contributes an enormous sixty percent of the commodity contributions to the World Food Program through Food for Peace. The breadbaskets of the Great Plains, California's Central Valley, and other agricultural regions provide our

country and world with many of the staple cereal crops that are the cornerstone of the modern diet; American corn, wheat, soybeans, and rice can be found in urban marketplaces and emergency feeding stations worldwide. While the largest organizations work together, to a degree, to deliver food aid, the policy area as a whole is fragmented by the diverse, specific focus of government agencies. In the United States, USAID takes the lead in foreign aid delivery, but many voices can influence how, where, and when that aid is delivered; the role of developed nations in promoting equitable development will be fulfilled “only if the development partners share a common view of the malnutrition problem and broad strategies to address it and speak with a common voice.” (Shekar et al. 2006: 115)

Commodity surplus delivery historically was the largest source of food aid to poor or troubled countries in the past. Modern efforts to combat food insecurity through international redistributive policies dates to the United States’ Marshall Plan, which in addition to financial support to redevelop war-torn Western Europe also provided shipments of American grain to feed the hungry. Out of Public Law 480, the modern Food for Peace program developed to distribute Type II food aid in the form of commodities. As the Cold War and decolonization accelerated, “foreign aid was seen as a tool to reduce discontent generated by poverty and the consequent temptations of communism by spurring economic progress in these regions and addressing the social and political tensions created by rapid economic change.” (Lancaster and Van Dusen 2005: 10) In the same wave of reforms and government program expansion that created the Peace Corps and expanded the State Department, the US Agency for International Development was created out of several smaller offices across agencies to

better coordinate aid delivery and implementation. It became a leader both within the American government, where it coordinated the activity of other offices outside its structure, and internationally, where it increased American participation and funding for multinational institutions like the World Bank. In the 1970's, "US aid also became an instrument of peacemaking, especially in the Middle East where economic assistance to Egypt and Israel served as an incentive to maintain a ceasefire and work toward peace." (Lancaster and Van Dusen 2005: 11)

Food for Peace, while at heart a program with a humanitarian mission, also offers significant financial benefits to farmers, whose surpluses were purchased by the USDA, and to the populations on the receiving end. "Food aid played an important role in increasing US agricultural trade, as countries which were once food aid recipients went on to become commercial partners," or to become major agricultural producers themselves. (Christensen 2000: 256) The recipients of this early food aid eventually recovered to become the World Food Program's biggest contributors, such as the United Kingdom and Germany; food aid of this kind is still seen today as a way to stimulate local markets and make these countries economically productive again. "On a year-to-year basis, food aid is, to a large extent, determined by US production. The USDA accumulates wheat in high production years to stabilize prices for American farmers. This accumulated wheat is stored and then shipped as food aid to poor countries." (Nunn and Qian 2012: 9) The benefits to the United States cannot be denied under this aid plan: beyond outright purchase, companies get subsidies from the federal government to boost production, and other crops beyond wheat receive the same price supports and buy up programs to stabilize prices. Commodity surplus distribution

remains the cornerstone of food aid today, having fed people in infamous crises around the world in many different emergency situations. Iraqis and Afghans under American occupation, Somalis escaping from drought, and Indians in poverty have all benefited from these programs. The Food for Peace program under the auspices of USAID is today the main distributor of commodity aid, which it pairs with other forms of financial and technical assistance to create more comprehensive foreign aid packages.

An alternative to commodity surpluses imported from the United States to far-flung emergencies is choosing to buy food regionally. In an effort to reform their food aid policies in recent years, Food for Peace has shifted to this regional model whenever possible and cost-effective in response to food crises. (Padron et al. 2015) Members of the aid community prefer this model for a number of reasons: it is cheaper, more sustainable, and benefits far more people than just those with food insecurity. While Food for Peace program has a huge budget with which to buy cheap American surpluses, it takes an even larger monetary and personnel investment to collect, transport, repackage, and distribute that food to the people. For example, by shifting commodity buying from the Midwest to West Africa, administrators can radically cut the transport costs associated with the transfer of millions of tons of grain to East Africa. Not only does this save money, but it also keeps carbon emissions to a minimum by reducing the miles flown or sailed by the commodity donations. Local business and agriculture is also stimulated by the influx of new cash into the marketplace, and can get farmers a better price for their produce than was previously offered to them by their neighbors. (Jury 2015) This in turn pushes for an expansion of farming operations through larger acreage and better technological support, and will give regional farmers

greater buying power to further stimulate their local economies. A third commodity surplus distribution scheme, one of direct grants to international or local charitable organizations, operates on the same principle as the regional buying model, although it greatly complicates funding and fragments the international response, to the detriment of clarity and accountability. Increasing the number of development partners for purchasing “creates coordination problems and high overhead costs for both donors and recipients. These issues have been chronic complaints of agencies, recipients, and academic researchers ever since the aid business began.” (Easterly and Pfutze 2008: 30) In either case, the benefits to impoverished areas and targeted aid recipients are greater and more nuanced than those offered by traditional commodity surplus delivery.

The key to making these programs work is finding the right public and private support that will enable organizations to reach their goals. For the United States, as one of the largest, richest, and most influential countries in the world, the creation and continued good reputation of aid and development projects is extremely important. The largest international food aid agencies, USAID not excepted, are operated by food producing states, not recipient states; relief programs follow the desires of richer countries’ for foreign aid, rather than what would be best or most effective in the developing world. International mechanisms to govern and direct food aid “are dysfunctional and outdated, in large measure due to the profound differences in the food aid policies of major donor countries.” (Barrett and Maxwell 2006: 106) Food aid, predictably, follows the cycles of American political events and world news. One need look no further than Haiti in recent news to see this theory in action. In 2010, Port-au-Prince was rocked by a 7.0 magnitude earthquake that leveled many informal housing

blocks, and left thousands of Haitians across the country homeless or injured. Almost immediately, cash donations came flooding in from all corners of the world, followed quickly by medical units to treat the wounded. The initial quick response to the earthquake was thanks to the air time given to the emergency by American news stations and support from media figures like Wyclef Jean and Presidents Bush and Clinton. Images, too, were a major factor in the early response: aerial views of the leveled capital city and views from the ground of the collapsed Presidential Palace were a shocking yet effective means to draw attention to the suffering of Haitians. Compare this situation to the drought that devastated East Africa, in particular Somalia, in 2011 and into 2012. On the surface, the two regions share some important characteristics: both have a history of long-simmering political instability, military rule, and crushing poverty. Both Somalia and Haiti were areas in which socioeconomic conditions greatly exacerbated the conditions created by the natural environment; only one got the airtime so necessary to raising awareness and aid. Haiti, in that regard, fared much better than Somalia, where the only responders were the World Food Program and the largest religious organizations with a presence in the area. Even that aid was cut off with the declaration of the “official” end of drought and famine conditions; food insecurity and regional differences remained a problem for at least a year.

Why were developed countries, in particular the everyday citizens and leaders of developed countries, uninvolved in the response to the East Africa famine? Some critics point to the fatigue of Americans toward the political instability of the region, while others saw the famine as one event in a string of connected events; regardless, aid programs there were short-lived and limited because the East Africa famine was just

one moment in a history of chronic instability, in the eyes of the international media. Based on which disasters are given airtime and positive coverage during the news cycle, the public voices their support for certain humanitarian and food aid missions; disasters in the developing world must be far, far greater in magnitude than an emergency in Europe to warrant the same international response. Research indicates that “for every person killed in a volcano disaster, forty thousand people must die in a drought to reach the same probability of media coverage. Similarly, it requires forty times as many killed in an African disaster to achieve the same expected media coverage for a disaster in Eastern Europe of similar type and magnitude.” (Eisenee and Stromberg 2007: 694-5) Due to the civil war still simmering in Somalia, theft of aid deliveries was a real concern for the effectiveness of food aid there; aid workers or aid recipients can sometimes be “taxed” by militias who control movement of people and materials. (Nunn and Qian 2012: 7) The response to the Haitian earthquake was more effective simply because there were concrete, acute needs that a team of volunteers could fix, at least on the surface. Houses were rebuilt, utilities restored, and the dead buried, but greater problems remained.

While Haiti did get an initial influx of aid and attention to prevent a similar disaster, it faces an uncertain future: many of the programs put in place were designed to be temporary, but millions of Haitians depended on outside aid for their most basic needs, and the availability of funds to reform the underlying problems remains spotty at best. The physical damage of the earthquake was mostly fixed, but the underlying instability of the national infrastructure and economy was slower to heal. Haiti has its own hidden disaster in the form of its unaddressed issues of urban poverty, political

weakness, and damaged economy. Some of these problems of urban unrest and unemployment date to the 1915 occupation, which set the stage for the structural violence and brief but bloody coups of the post-Duvalier era. The actors may be different, but the violence perpetrated and instability maintained shares an atmosphere of disinterest in the international community where disasters over the long term go “unrecognized, unnamed, and, of course, unpunished” and unsolved. (James 2010: 54) International recognition and aid to reduce economic problems can go a long way to help make up for the weakness of the Haitian state: “economic inequality may reflect a society or a political system that is ill-equipped to make a collective effort to limit the consequences of natural hazards.” (Stromberg 2007) This is, in part, why development banks and other organizations are still involved in Haiti, despite the end of the official post-earthquake recovery efforts: greater economic and political instability necessitate continued involvement to make sure programs do not disintegrate.

Another key factor in the decision to send food aid and other assistance is the relationship that the United States has with the country of concern. One of the greatest predictors of whether a country in crisis receives food aid or not is its system of government: aid is more readily given to those with whom the US has democratic ideals in common, geopolitical importance, or older colonial-era ties. “Changes in aid flows tend to reward ‘good’ policies, notably democratization and openness,” sometimes up to a fifty percent increase over past years. (Alesina and Dollar 2000: 2) Language and colonial history is stronger in some areas than others: not only is Lebanon “close to the large European donors and ha[ve] colonial ties to France,” but it also has French and English speakers; Pacific island groups, who receive relatively little aid, “generally lack

language ties to the major donors and, as mentioned, their colonial ties are less valuable,” (Stromberg 2007: 220) Haiti gained traction in the international aid community in the communist era as a staunch anti-communist ally, but its greatest attraction is its official embrace of French and history of American involvement. Autocrats across the developing world, particularly in Central America, were offered generous deals for American allegiance in exchange for a renunciation of Communism. Geopolitical stability and military support were the tip of the iceberg: development loans, food aid, and exclusive trading opportunities were all attractive offerings to America’s Third World allies. These funds were distributed directly to foreign governments as a show of support and self-determination, but opened fertile ground for corruption. Since many rulers during the post-colonial period came into power thanks to their connections from earlier regimes, the same power imbalances that created chronic instability can continue into the modern era. (James 2010: 293) The key issue here is the lack of control over cash or loan use within a state budget; many rulers use funds earmarked for development to free up money to use in less reputable divisions of their government. “The actual impact of the aid,” within an autocratic ally of the United States, “ is therefore to increase military rather than health expenditure. No diversion of funds is involved, but funding an activity that would have happened in the absence of aid frees up resources to be used elsewhere. It is this marginal expenditure which is effectively related with the impact of aid.” (Hjertholm et al. 2000: 354)

In Haiti, this pattern was no exception. Francois Duvalier, the president of Haiti for much of the 1960s and 70s, courted the United States for military support and USAID loans to maintain order and promote an export-based economy in line with

capitalist dreams of a globalized economy. “The unprecedented military and economic resources available to American policy makers in the decades after World War Two freed them from specific strategic and economic concerns. These resources freed American policy makers to pursue objectives that did not have to be justified in terms of close calculation or strategic or economic advantage” to the United States, but furthered the common sentiment of anti-communist fervor that gripped Americans during the early years of the Cold War. (Rutton 1996: 7) Duvalier managed to gain the favor and aid of the American government, but at a terrible cost for Haitians. Duvalier and his son were able to embezzle millions of dollars from the Haitian government at the expense of necessary infrastructure improvements essential to modernization. (Dubois 2012: 351) Indeed, the very existence and success of the Duvalier regime depended on the American support, both political and monetary, of the government’s programs and initiative. Aid money allowed Duvalier to expand military and civil service positions to gain the support of the Haitian elite; unsurprisingly, Haiti followed the trend that “larger public sectors create more opportunities for corruption.” (Knack 2001: 313) The continued expansion of plantations growing fruits for export displaced more Haitians from their rural households, sending whole families or a few members off to the cities in search of work. Out of these “reforms,” generations of young Haitians were born into families centered around a single mother. Women became even more prominent within their neighborhoods as the *potomitan*, or central pillar, of the household, but became poorer and less secure with the loss of a present second parent. (James 2010: 235) The economic situation was further complicated by the roving pro-Duvalier militia known as the *tonton makou*, after the Haitian creature of children’s nighttime stories. Their acts

as informal police and supporters of the authoritarian regime kept the people in line and reduced the complications to development projects that would have arisen in a truly democratic society. (James 2010: 54; Knack 2001: 312) Through rape, murder, and intimidation, Duvalier was able to institute the changes necessary to implement his vision for a productive and globally integrated Haiti.

In Haiti and in many other places, USAID and the United States government has unwillingly been complicit in the degradation of democratic civil society and the entrenchment of poverty in the twentieth and the twenty-first centuries. Unsurprisingly, the historical effectiveness of USAID's programs to address disaster, famine, and chronic conditions is a complicated issue, and has been reevaluated in recent years by members and outsiders of the international aid community. Part of this problem is the misunderstanding on a grand scale the differences between disaster- and poverty-based foreign aid. For emergencies happening in much of the developing world, the problems are twofold: the natural or human disaster that draws attention in, and the larger socioeconomic context of the emergency area. One is short term, and the other long term, but without time spent on the ground, few people can appreciate the complicating nature of the larger context. Time allows the background factors to undermine the effectiveness of the initial relief efforts, and foreign aid itself can even backfire and make the situation worse. In some cases, aid is put under additional scrutiny or reduced in an effort to stop dependency on foreign aid in poor areas, despite the reality that food aid delivery is unreliable in its timing and size. In poor or disaster-struck areas, in fact, "food aid recipients actually pursue a greater number of livelihood activities than non-recipients" in other areas of the country (Little 2008: 861) The nature

of disaster response at present is, by some characterizations, “fleeting, temporary, and myopic,” and can lead to unsustainable patterns of consumption and competition.

(James 2010: 291) Take the case of the 2010 Haitian earthquake: after the emergency repairs to infrastructure were completed, volunteers turned to feeding and caring for the thousands of homeless people across the country. With national transportation lines cut and many hurt or dying, the easiest way to meet the needs of the moment was to import the majority of the nation’s food. Rice and other important staples were brought over by the shipload from the United States, and fed millions of Haitians through the months after the earthquake. However, this had the unintended effect of destabilizing the domestic rice market. The enormous deliveries and new feeding centers serviced many urban residents, who had previously bought all their own food from national producers. As urban Haitians regained their homes and jobs, their local markets were still being stocked with American grain. This set up a dangerous situation which allowed the Haitian government “to continue to neglect the needs of [its] agricultural sectors for adequate rural infrastructure, agricultural research and extension, as well as price and trade policies that are not biased against” domestic agriculture. (Abdulai et al. 2005: 1690) The sharp cuts to demand in the aftermath of the earthquake forced many Haitian rice growers into the red as they struggled to sell their grain, which was more expensive than the American import. The market shift after the earthquake’s food aid distribution was so large that the domestic rice markets, already struggling essentially collapsed; today, eighty percent of Haiti’s rice is imported, with American companies taking the lion’s share of the new rice market. (Schuller 2012: 162) Despite the best efforts of USAID and other important aid organizations, Haiti became weaker after humanitarian

intervention, not stronger, in this regard.

American lawmakers have considerable influence over where and how much food aid is given, using emergency funding bills in Congress to create new funding opportunities through USAID to bring help to foreign countries. Since the start of Food for Peace programs, the allocation model has changed significantly: “the large physical supply of grain, which had provided the initial underpinning for food aid, declined. Food aid became more budget-driven and less surplus-driven.” (Christensen 2000: 257) Furthermore, despite the seemingly efficient direction of foreign aid activities under the umbrella of USAID, its funding and supply lines are highly fragmented: within the administrative side of food aid policy alone, “the Department of Agriculture determines what commodities and quantities are available, the Treasury Department sets the terms of the loans, the Office of Management and Budget determines whether funding is available, the Department of State assesses the political ramifications, and the Agency for International Development implements the programs in the field.” (Rutton 1996: 149) This fragmentation may allow each specific department to become specialists in their given foreign aid task, but reduces the overall effectiveness of the American aid machine; “the professionalism and realism of aid policies and programs are likely to be greater and the effectiveness of the aid higher” if operations were tighter and more streamlined. (Lancaster and Van Dussen 2005: 23-4) Lobbyists can use this opportunity to appeal to bill sponsors, other agencies, and USAID in a race to gain valuable contracts for their businesses or organizations. The agricultural sector, as one of the largest employers in the United States as well as one of its richest, holds enormous sway over the exact types of aid the agency supports through its contacts in USAID.

(Nunn and Qian 2012: 2) This agriculture lobby has influence in other areas too, especially as corn-based biofuels become more reliable and easily produced. The practice of commodity buy-ups by the USDA for Food for Peace and domestic food shelves provides further incentives farmers to expand their acreage dedicated to cereals, even as actual prices themselves drop from a greater supply than demand. The dumping of cheap American grain through aid programs in ecologically marginalized regions, like in Africa, or in areas with small-scale but competent supply chains, like Haiti, collapses their local economies and disrupts the farming practices and lifestyles that have directed people for generations; “food aid is seldom a long-run solution to chronic hunger, and perhaps with higher commodity prices, there will be greater incentives to invest in agricultural development in poor countries.” (Naylor et al. 2007: 41) The ability of Haitians to survive another day is met by international food aid providers, but their ability to provide for themselves in the future is undermined by ineffective and rushed aid strategies.

Chapter 4: NGOs and the Reorientation of Haitian Food Aid

This chapter explores the fallout of the Duvalier era on international aid to Haiti, and the impacts that neoliberalism and crises in the 1990s affected food aid management. Kore Lavi, a nutrition program funded and run by an international coalition, is analyzed for the work that it has done to decrease malnutrition and stimulate production within the local food system, but also how it exposes long-held fears about the future of the Haitian state.

The fall of Jean-Claude Duvalier and the rise of Jean-Bertrand Aristide coincided with a huge shift in American foreign policy: the end of the Cold War. With Russia taking a less prominent role on the international stage, the role of Third World countries as proxies for the greater world powers changed as well. A combination of economic and political factors lead the United States to change the form and implementation of foreign aid, particularly food aid, in the post-communist world. The changes implemented in Haiti were by no means unique to that corner of the Caribbean; integration into the global market in the age of Reaganomics also forced American domestic aid workers to expand and reevaluate their own operations. (Poppendieck 1998: 82) But the Haitian state of affairs today remains the prime example of the latest stage of development for the aid community, a moment in time where the daily activities of life and necessary services for basic community functions are fragmented across multiple sites in both the public and private sector.

In the second half of the 1980s, USAID began to reevaluate the work that it had done in Haiti and in other troubled areas around the world. For decades, the agency had operated on a simple premise: USAID and American foreign policy at large

operated on a system of direct interaction with foreign governments to enable them to create and implement their own plans. Official allocation and actual use, however, could differ significantly. Loans and direct aid were described in American circles as destined for a specific sector of the recipient's economy, but the funds could be spent on any related project in practice. Furthermore, the availability of Type II food aid to poorer nations freed up budget resources to better serve the military, which was already being supplemented by the training and supply support from the United States. In many areas in the 1960s and 70s, "recipient governments usually sold the food on the open market and used the proceeds for activities other than distributing food to hungry people... the ineffective use of food aid to pursue donor self-interests not only sparked controversy, it also caused food aid to under-perform its potential to provide food" to ensure basic nutrition and market needs. (Barrett & Maxwell 2006; 107) USAID and other major humanitarian organizations also sent advisors, many with business connections to relevant American corporations, to work closely with the recipient government to find ways to shift domestic practices to better work with the foreign aid delivered to them. From these partnerships, light industry centered on textiles grew in the cities and American companies gained valuable export contracts with Haiti. (Jury 2015) Their importance to the state was clear, as the Duvaliers and their successors as president spent much time developing urban manufacturing districts. Domestic industries were key to the Haitian economy, but not so great a stake as their American-owned partners had in the Haitian marketplace: when coups during the second Aristide administration lead to regime change, the only companies exempted from the reactionary embargo were the Americans operating out of these central business districts. (Dubois 2015:

351) However, this growth has stagnated: in the past fifty years, agriculture has declined fifteen percent as a share of GDP, despite a two percent increase in population growth, and industrial production has flatlined. (FTF 2011: 5)

USAID administrators and American lawmakers began to see the direct government-to-government funding of the Cold War period as increasingly unsustainable in a globalized economy. Maintaining the strong, bilateral aid networks that characterized anti-communist development work were expensive, economically restrictive, and ultimately damaging to developing countries. Democracy was weak in areas with an American aid presence, despite Cold War claims to the contrary: Haitians from the poor majority felt that the “power to define and measure” the conditions of their own existence “remained in the hands of the international, national and local actors,” whose own preferences differed greatly from those of the general population. (James 2010: 2) Programs designed to help spur rural development and increase rural income had the opposite effect: one need look no further than the previously discussed pig culling of the early 1980s to see the most disastrous outcome of well-intentioned aid programs. Urban poverty and unemployment had increased, not decreased, during the years of the Duvalier regimes: the displacement of rural Haitians over decades of land reform put continuous strain on the infrastructure of Port-au-Prince and other smaller cities, and factories could never hope to employ all of the people seeking to find work. American aid had not solved, and perhaps exacerbated, these problems.

Global economic reforms that began during the 1980s, and which continue to the present, replaced the government-to-government aid model with policies that were geared more toward neoliberal economics. These shifts reflected changes in American

and the international community more broadly by emphasizing open trade policies and reduced government management in both the United States' role as an aid provider and recipient's responsibilities for regulating their own economies. The impacts of these policies are as diverse as the countries that have adopted them, either domestically or through international agreements: proliferation of export-oriented *maquiladora* factories in Mexico, restriction of union activity in the United States and United Kingdom, and explosive economic growth in China and other parts of Asia can all be traced back to free trade agreements and domestic reforms that reduced business restrictions. This redefinition of the tie between government and business may have created huge jumps in global and national GDP per capita in many countries, but only because it greatly increased the incomes of the elites at the expense of the poor workers who drove the economic boom. In the United States, neoliberalism on a national scale implied an "end to entitlement;" in order to shrink government size and expenditure, the social safety net had to be dismantled bit by bit. Reductions in food stamps in the United States and in food aid abroad "that characterized the early 1980's were rooted in large-scale global changes that were poorly understood at best." (Poppendieck 1998: 84)

Once a robust program capable of feeding millions through welfare and food stamp programs, nutrition assistance under Food for Peace was recast as an "emergency" need, not a chronic one. Foreign aid experts agree that "as long as... conflicts give rise to the displacement of peoples, there will be need for direct transfer of food and other resources" to troubled areas, but the remolding of food aid and technology transfer to only suit emergencies denies wider "opportunities for the poor to make productive contributions to the development of their societies." (Rutton 1996: 202)

Marshalled for emergencies only, budgetary outlays to aid recipients were reduced significantly, while community nonprofits and food shelves exploded to meet rising need with the sharp decrease in government aid. In Haiti specifically, the instability of the Haitian presidency in the 1990s, combined with American budget cuts, created a gap between budgeted needs and actual needs. As a condition for continued American aid support and cooperation from multinational banking institutions on Haiti's increasing loan burden, President Aristide and other leaders had to cut essential programs and economic supports that would have created a stable, functioning economy; the lowering of tariffs, reduced worker rights, and other neoliberal reforms actually reduced the capacity of the Haitian government to rule effectively, and made the security situation even more dire. Between the retraction of aid and reforms to Haiti's market protections, the government's authority and legitimacy was undermined significantly in an especially crucial moment for Haitian democracy. Despite initial restrictions at the end of the second Duvalier regime and the cuts instituted by American Republicans in the Clinton and Bush administrations, there was a clear willingness to increase aid on the condition that it would not go to the transitioning Haitian government. (Schuller 2007: 158) This turn to NGOs over the Haitian government also failed to account for more sociocultural elements by focusing on "basic" needs: with a simple turn of phrase, USAID and its global partners put nutrition on a pedestal, and categorized more complicated issues of social interaction "such as politics, culture, and spirituality... as 'luxurious' pursuits. The result is a simplistic and ahistorical narrative that occludes the multidimensionality of people's lives." (Kapoor 2008: 23)

To meet the humanitarian demands left wanting by American aid reduction, the

importance of food security NGOs, the development-focused mission of the World Food Program, and American non-profits became even greater. Food insecurity became a humanitarian issue, as well as an economic one. A new economy developed in Haiti: an economy of trauma and insecurity. It may seem to be a simplification of a complicated, emotional issue, but the increase in NGOs in Haiti as service providers shows that humanitarian aid is a business of its own: “the suffering of another person, when extracted, transformed, and commodified through maleficent or benevolent interventions, can become a source of profit for the intervener.” (James 2010: 26) 1994 was a pivotal year for Haitian democracy, as it was the year that its first elected President, Jean-Bertrande Aristide, took power, but was also marked by an invasion of aid workers to manage the transition from authoritarianism, promote democracy, and provide social services. The lack of a strong push to provide a social safety net can be blamed on the continued control of elites and the lighter-skinned middle class, despite a more open and democratic society, but also on the absence of a true need to develop those key programs. Haitians were able to report physical and emotional damage of violence, receive obstetrical care, and feed their families through NGOs, so the Haitian government itself had little incentive to take back control of those services. Furthermore, reduced direct aid also de incentivized the maintenance of government branches that dealt with census, surveying, and disaster damage reporting. For lesser and regional emergencies, “the underreporting would... make the total number of reported disaster-related deaths in low-income countries smaller,” reducing the state’s ability to respond to disaster-related property damage; the smaller reported scale of the disaster would also generate less support and aid money from the rest of the world. (Stromberg 2007:

211). It may have reduced the socioeconomic burden on governments worldwide, but neoliberal NGO expansion in many ways retarded the growth of a health and active civil society in Haiti that took an active role in providing for its most vulnerable citizens.

The Nineties also brought about new diplomatic crises that had been pushed aside in the fight against communism, and further challenged the effectiveness of direct funding and programming. The genocides in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia were different problems than those in the developing world, problems based on racial prejudice and armed conflict. United States and United Nations interventions there, once operations finally got underway, were focused on the trials of leaders responsible for ethnic cleansing and community rehabilitation. Compared to the inconsistent reporting of human rights violations in Haiti by coup supporters, State Department officials thought that the threat to international security and American interests was stronger in the new conflict areas. (James 2010: 46) Additionally, the rise of stateless terrorism in recent decades has also opened up new methods for aid abuse beyond the misappropriation of earlier periods: “warring parties also cyclically exploit their vulnerability [as victims]. Displaced en masse, civilians become tools of regional destabilization as well as providing bait to attract humanitarian assistance.” (Duffield 2002: 1051) In the aftermath of these interventions and trends, a new model developed through indirect funding and support, which took advantage of frameworks from previous programs and enabled locals to engage full-time with their communities. There was a growing feeling that, despite the best efforts of aid workers and administrators in the past few decades, the push to end global poverty and chronic instability had failed to

meet its goals. A new framework needed to be created in Haiti, one where concrete results had to be produced in order to continue operations.

The loan and direct aid based model of the past seemed inadequate for Haiti in light of these humanitarian developments and the country's own history of financial troubles. Over the Duvalier administrations and in the years since, Haiti has continuously taken out loans to pay for various projects, the results of which were far less than had been anticipated. Part of the problem comes from the practice of using humanitarian groups to funnel money into the Duvalier's bank accounts; loans were heavily relied upon to fill gaps in the budget created by the Duvalier's greed. (Farmer 2005: 249) Like the indemnity that had suppressed Haitian development in its first hundred years of independence, modern loan programs were suffocating the Haitian economy as it struggled to take advantage of greater trade opportunities in the new age of globalization. Combined with the reduction in direct aid from the United States under the neoliberal turn, the Haitian government was in dire financial straits. Debt relief was able to relieve much of this pressure: the International Monetary Fund reclassified Haiti as a severely indebted country eligible for special support and cancelled its debts in 2009, while the World Bank did the same in 2010. Individual countries and agencies, like the United States government and the Inter-American Development Bank, greatly reduced the loan burden of the Haitian government, and structural adjustment programs aimed to reform internal budgeting and loan practices to be more sustainable. However, the direction of aid had already been shifted to the private sector instead of the state of Haiti. International organizations, like Care, the United Nations, and smaller NGOs, had

already established themselves as a viable alternative to top-down reform and grew in influence and importance in this period.

Today's aid landscape in Haiti is one of hundreds of unique, specialized organizations that have adapted to the new world of indirect funding. NGOs, both Haitian and foreign, work in sync to provide help to their communities but also in competition to find funding from domestic, international, and private sources. While it still leads the largest programs in Haiti to combat malnutrition, USAID "has become a wholesaler to wholesalers: letting large contracts for aid work, usually to consulting firms, which then subcontract much of the work to other firms or NGOs. These shifts in the way that the agency does business have caused it to reexamine its mission structure, functions, and professional personnel requirements." (Lancaster & Van Dusen 2005: 33) Many of these NGOs that USAID supports offer specialized services once thought to be the responsibility of the state. Reporting networks for sexual assaults, job training programs, homelessness solutions, emergency food distribution points, and microcredit operations are all more or less exclusively the domain of Haitian NGOs, which complement the longer-standing work of nonprofits for women's' and human rights. These NGOs do not supplement official government victim support programs, but replace them entirely: "foreign aid can also weaken the state bureaucracies of recipient governments... by siphoning away scarce talent from the civil service, as donor organizations offer salaries many times greater than those offered by the recipient nations government. Particularly when donors implement projects that local governments would have undertaken anyway, foreign aid can prevent local bureaucracies from building administrative capacity." (Knack 2001: 313) The situation

has gotten so bad that some have characterized the control of social service administration and funding by USAID, instead of the Haitian government, as a state within a state. (James 2010: 284) “More attention needs to be paid to ways in which donors currently help to sustain political underdevelopment in the [Global] South, by perpetuating situations,” like the funding of NGO activity separate and unsupervised by the Haitian government, “where state elites in the South can remain too independent of their own citizens... In doing so, they can, in fact undermine the fundamental nature of good governance.” (MacLachlan et al. 2010: 38)

Haiti’s social support networks are dominated by NGOs, both domestic and foreign. They can be large, national organizations that create and fund programming in a wider geographical area, but many operate in individual neighborhoods with specific missions to offer specialized case management, especially in the areas of sexual violence and worker rights. These smaller NGOs are almost exclusively Haitian, and can take advantage of local networking opportunities in order to better serve their communities. Groups of local NGOs will cluster in certain aid areas, such as food security or political organization, and collaborate with larger NGOs with more international muscle power to meet their common goals. Under the current school feeding program Kore Lavi, which targets pregnant mothers and young children for nutrition counseling and assistance, NGOs do much of the day-to-day management. Internationally active organizations such as the World Food Program, World Vision, and Care serve as intermediaries with the Haitian government, and join government agencies such as USAID’s Food for Peace and the French foreign aid ministry provide the cash and commodities that ground the work of Kore Lavi. Oversight by larger

organizations helps to bring together the differing backgrounds and capacities of local NGOs in order to create a common methodology and ensure that each NGO is aiming for common, achievable targets. Now in its fourth year, Kore Lavi's end goal is for improved nutrition in the most vulnerable members of Haitian society, and the cultivation of better social service provision under the guidance of the Haitian state. (Jury 2015)

Under the model currently implemented by the World Food Program and USAID's Food for Peace, the Kore Lavi feeding program is a split between old and new approaches to food aid. The first half of Kore Lavi is based on food vouchers, which now constitute forty-five percent of the program's food aid dollars. (Jury 2015) Food vouchers are seen as the future of food aid in the developing world, as they allow aid recipients more flexibility and variety than a diet of Type II cereal donations. The vouchers allow Haitians to go to their local market or neighborhood store and buy food, particularly fresh fruits and vegetables, to supplement their family's meals. Benefits are twofold: NGOs save significant manpower, and recipients gain more independence and purchasing power. Additionally, local markets are stimulated by the larger number of customers and encourage entrepreneurs to open more grocery stores. However, this program model has flaws, particularly on the impact it has on the Haitian food system. Reports indicate that despite the business boom created by the voucher program under Kore Lavi, storeowners have a difficult time sourcing food to meet the increased demand. (Jury 2015) Even when they are able to find produce and other foods from within the country, prices have risen because of Haiti's reduced agricultural capacity in the wake of the earthquake, and continue to remain high because of the high urban demand. The development of agricultural capacity to meet the population's needs, while

an important factor in the ability of NGOs and the state to fulfill the goal of reducing childhood malnutrition, unfortunately falls outside of Kore Lavi's mission.

The second half of the program's funding goes towards traditional Type II commodity food delivery; enriched "supercereals" and other grains are key to meeting the basic needs of Haitian families. With further technological improvements to important crops coming in the near future from genetic engineering and food processing developments, food aid experts believe that it will become easier to meet basic nutritional needs, if not dietary variety. (July 2015) Commodity donations come from both USAID and the World Food Program, who distribute it to their Haitian partners. The amount of Type II aid has been reduced sharply from the post-earthquake disaster response in 2010; although foreign involvement increased significantly in that time, the 2011 collaboration to form Kore Lavi is strictly designed to increase local and government capacity to serve the poorest of Haitians. When originally proposed, the Haitian government was a consulting member on par with USAID and the World Food Program, but lacked the personnel and monetary power to make the program successful. The end goal of the program is to put in place the structure for the Haitian government to take on and carry out the task of improving nutrition: school meals are seen as an important point of intervention to improve nutrition for the rest of a child's life. (July 2015) While now an almost entirely foreign-administered project, it is designed to transfer to government administration soon; a review later this year of Kore Lavi by its international supporters will determine a timeline for its transfer and transition.

However, the ability of the Haitian government to take full control of a school feeding scheme is severely in question. Even in USAID reports predating the

earthquake, the emphasis on jobs created for Americans through commodity transport and processing is a point of concern when reductions in aid are discussed, as is the case with Kore Lavi. (USAID 2004: 5) More pressingly, however, the specter of corruption hangs heavy over the Haitian food aid landscape: international observers find it hard to shake off the decades of mismanagement by the Haitian government in many facets of statecraft. Most concerning to food aid providers is the history of siphoning funds meant for basic welfare programs to meet budget shortfalls in other, less essential projects or, worse, to enrich bureaucrats' own lifestyles. At this observation's simplest reduction, global and American partners feel that true independence, the end goal of these aid programs, is a long way off for Haiti. At least in terms of providing basic social services and a competent safety net for its citizens, the Haitian government is too weak, too poor, and too limited to meet this key requirement of sovereignty. While far more carefully crafted than the public calls for an American protectorate and management of Haiti in the wake of the 2010 earthquake, this belief within the food aid community hints at larger problems in the global relationship with Haiti. (Dubois 2012: 3) Having programs that create collaborations with NGOs, who build up their own networks of supervision and support, is a double-edged sword. The design of Kore Lavi greatly reduces the institutional stress and high startup costs of creating a national school feeding program, but also keeps the size of the education and agriculture ministries small; this may make it harder for them to manage the last phases of transition from the Kore Lavi collaboration to create an effective, permanent national nutrition assistance program.

Chapter 5: Case Study: Haitian Rice Production

This chapter explores rice cultivation in Haiti, which was historically self-sufficient but now imports most of the rice it consumes. This reduced productivity is tied to structural and physical violence, neoliberal free trade policies, and to the strong international support for continued high-volume Type II commodity delivery. SRI rice farming techniques and export fruit cultivation are evaluated as the best hopes for Haiti's struggling farmers. USAID's Feed the Future is detailed as both hope for the coming years and as a continuation of many of the same problems that shape Haitian food insecurity.

Rice is one of the cornerstones of the Haitian diet, as it is in many other parts of the Caribbean. Whether cooked into a stew, topped with beans, or served in dozens other permutations, rice is the staple starch of most Haitian households. Particularly important for the inhabitants of the poorest areas of the country, rice fills bellies with cheap calories and is easy to store for long periods of time. In the early days of the Haitian republic, native alternative crops like cassava and corn competed with rice to provide carbohydrates, but today rice stands as the favorite grain in the Haitian kitchen. Before the turn of the century, Haiti was fully self-sufficient in rice, root crops, fresh produce, and luxuries like sugar and coffee; before the fall of the Duvaliers and the protectionists measures they put in place, the country was self-sufficient in rice, and only imported nineteen percent of other foods. (Gros 2008: 980) In a time of intense political upheaval, the ability of the rural areas to continue to produce enough food was critically important to the survival of the Haitian state. Today, about fifty percent of Haiti's food is imported, with some staples like rice being imported at rates closer to

eighty percent and wheat at a full one hundred percent. (Feed the Future 2011: Annex A; Jury 2015) Further underlying this underproductivity of Haitian agriculture is the number of people working in it: the sector employs sixty percent of Haitians, and seventy-five percent of the poorest. (Cohen 2013: 59) How did such a staggering collapse of the local food system come about?

In the aftermath of the Haitian Revolution, infrastructure was damaged and underdeveloped, and the smaller markets within the economy had been severely depressed and restricted by the war for independence. Left to fend for themselves, newly freed Haitians continued the small plot horticulture that they had used to supplement their rations under slavery. Despite the stresses on the land from intensive sugar cultivation, Haitian smallholders were able to be enormously productive with the little resources they commanded. From the deforestation, erosion, and degradation of the old plantation system, Haitians were left with small, marginal plots with which they were able to feed their families, which could produce a surplus to sell in the common marketplace. Within the previously discussed *metayage* sharecropper system and the *lakou* smallholder communities, nearly all of the food available on the domestic market was grown in Haiti. Closest to the house within a *lakou*, tropical fruits and vegetables flourished under the watchful eyes of the smallholders; other cereal production met population demand, if not export desires. (FTF 2011: 6) The smallholders' *lakou* system was never designed to meet the demands of the global capitalist marketplace; if anything, it is the epitome of the "counter-plantation" movement to free Haitians from the grueling labor and production restrictions of the colonial period. Under this model, Haitians succeeded not by getting rich, but by supporting their friends and families to

meet their own needs; for many, autonomy trumped the prospect of global integration and economic takeover that had shaped the colonial period. (Dubois 2012: 11) This marked focus away from capitalist production became a problem when faced with the desires of the ruling elite to return to export-oriented plantation agriculture, which was the designated base of the new state's tax system.

Rice stands in a unique position between the *lakou* and the plantation. It can be grown in a variety of labor organization structures: around the world, rice is grown on family plots, communal farms, and large commercial operations, all of which can be highly productive under the right conditions. Within Haiti during the nineteenth century, rice was never marked for the same trade purposes as luxury goods like sugar and coffee. It became the domain of the smallholder, despite the high startup costs of developing the irrigation and terracing needed for successful rice cultivation. Despite these challenges, the drive for self-sufficiency helped independently create a thriving Haitian rice agriculture. With adequate space and water, rice in Haiti could be grown in the spring, and a second crop of sweet potatoes could follow after the June or July harvest on the same plot of land. (Mintz 1962: 105) Yields may have been lower than those found in other areas of the world, but the smallholders were able to meet the needs of their families, nearby communities, and the nation. Regional variation in crop production based on landscape and climatic factors, such as coffee in the highlands and rice in the lowlands, helped assure that Haitians were able to meet their basic household needs even if they did not grow that one crop themselves. (Dubois 2012: 170) State management also ensured equal access in low yield years: food prices were set by the government, who also held rice and other commodities in storage facilities to

be released in times of need to wholesalers. (Gros 2008: 978) The small surpluses of thousands of smallholders, once combined across the whole country, were able to meet the demands of rural neighbors and urban residents.

Self-sufficiency and food sovereignty in earlier times was possible in Haiti because of a balance of imports and exports at both the local and national levels, and not by declining to engage in wider international trade. Even the smallholders of the *lakou* and *metayage* systems understood this basic concept: each family usually kept a stand of coffee trees and sisal or jute, both for personal household consumption and for sale to a cooperative to fund other household expenses. (Mintz 1962: 101) The counter-plantation mentality that created the *lakou* was flexible, and did not restrict farmers to an insular, purely barter-based system of acquisition and exchange. Economic and subsistence diversity, with a productive Haitian society comprised of sharecroppers, migrants, smallholders, and larger owners and urban workers, gave the economy more dynamism and power than other Caribbean countries in its first hundred years of existence. (Mintz 1973: 104) The insulating effects of the national ban on foreign ownership helped protect the lands of smallholders from purchase and redevelopment by foreign companies into larger plantations. While the Haitian government would have preferred an expanding export-based economy to the small, locally centered one it had for much of the eighteenth century, it was also far more adaptable to environmental and economic stressors than a monocultures: despite hurricanes, earthquakes, and crushing foreign debt, Haitian individuals were able to meet the agricultural needs of the entire country. With independence essentially unrecognized by much of the developed world until the 1860's, the freedom and relative reliability of the agricultural sector gave

Haiti the stability, if not the profits, it so desperately needed to provide for the urban and rural poor who made up most of Haiti's population.

Haitian sovereignty was restored in 1929 with the end of the American occupation, but foreign influence over Haitian markets and agriculture was still strong. Despite a hundred years of "independence," the transcolonial effects of influence and ownership by outside forces would reshape the economy and tilt it out of balance towards more urban and export-driven endeavors. Corporations from the United States had a foothold in both light industry and export agriculture under the Duvaliers, and smallholders found themselves more economically and geographically marginalized than ever. To account for this gap in income between the suburban elite and the rural and urban poor, USAID began operations in Haiti shortly after its founding in 1960 under the Kennedy administration. While its stated mission is to provide aid to impoverished regions, foreign food aid is inherently a move to improve the security of the United States and its allies. Even Madeline Albright, the American Secretary of State during the Clinton administration, "state[d] that US domestic security, economic and political, is the key issue in overseas interventions. Peacekeeping, humanitarian relief, and economic development are expressly interdependent: these efforts target refugees or internally displaced persons for assistance, relief, and management in order to promote economic productivity not only within the nations receiving assistance but also as potential new partners for American commerce." (James 2010: 116)

While Francois Duvalier may have been a clearly authoritarian ruler, he shared many of the same goals as the United States in terms of his vision for an economically and agriculturally productive Haiti. Within the new postwar economy, he understood

exports to be the source of Haiti's future wealth, drawing on her poor millions for labor. USAID helped facilitate this by supporting existing American corporations already operating in Haiti, and by facilitating loans with the Treasury Department, World Bank, and International Monetary Fund to improve infrastructure development towards expanded industrial districts and fruit plantations. Duvalier's militia, the *tonton makou*, engaged in active intimidation and violence toward the Haitian people to suppress dissent and keep workers in line. The indiscriminate destruction of fields and agricultural aids, burning of homes, and rape or murder of Haitians became commonplace, and went hand in hand with the political disenfranchisement of citizens by the military government. (James 2010: 71) Fleeing the dangers of the countryside, Haitians went to the cities in search of stability and work. At the same time, loosened restrictions on foreign landownership and the sudden availability of cleared land provided an excellent opportunity for fruit export expansion. While the financial situation of the Haitian government improved significantly, it came at the expense of the personal financial security and public agricultural stability.

The end of Jean-Claude Duvalier's rule in 1986 opened up a new phase in Haiti's economic history, and a change in its trade relations with Europe, the United States, and Latin America. The neoliberal free trade agreements that shifted the national economy toward manufacturing and reduced direct aid also affected agricultural policy within Haiti. In order to gain World Bank and International Monetary Fund loans to expand new industries and fund political reform, structural adjustments had to be made to taxation and exports. Haiti became a party of free-trade agreements that opened new markets for Haitian goods, but also exposed its smaller domestic food system to

competition from the United States through measures that “kept wages low, dismantled all obstacles to free trade, removed tariffs and quantitative restrictions on imports, offered tax incentives to the manufacturing industries on their profits and exports, privatized public enterprises, reduced public-sector employment, and curbed social spending to reduce fiscal deficits.” (Dupuy 2010: 15) The shifts in the Nineties toward free trade “fundamentally change the nature of the global agricultural regime;” developing agricultural countries may find that free trade “allow[s] for improved price transmission and supply response across countries,” but also that it could dramatically “increase price variability, especially if price signals are effectively transmitted to farmers who are able to respond to them.” (Christiansen 2000: 261) Early in his first term, President Aristide was able to secure a raise of the minimum wage to seventy goud per day, but was forced to compromise and drop the tariff on imported rice from fifty percent to three percent. (Dupuy 2010: 16) Nowhere else was this structural adjustment in tariff rates so extreme: for comparison, the Dominican Republic, Haiti’s neighbor, stands at twenty percent, with much of the rest of the Caribbean at twenty-five. (Cohen 2013: 601) Poor Haitians were hit particularly hard by free trade agreements and the loosening tariffs: given the choice between fifty-goud American rice or seventy-five-goud Haitian rice, poor customers went with the former, more affordable option. (Schuller 2008:198) The price difference came from differing policies towards agricultural supports. Haitian agencies were directed to cut subsidies across the board, restoring a high baseline price for Haitian rice, while American companies were subsidized by the American government and lower production costs. The combination of subsidies, tariffs, and pure economic power tilt the scales heavily in favor of American

producers: it was “not the invisible hand of the free market working its magic; it [was] the heavy hand of one state applying pressure on another through the velvet glove of proxies, international financial institutions.” (Gros 2008: 981) Exports increased during this time of trade liberalization, flooding the market with cheap imports and slowing forcing out smaller domestic operations. Economists noted that of all the industries that expanded during this liberalizing period, the profit margins for rice were highest. (Dupuy 2010: 17) The enormous shift in the food system displaced many farmers, and impoverished even more. President Clinton later acknowledged the failure of the agricultural reforms and expressed regret for how spectacularly the venture had failed Haitian farmers: “Since 1981, the United States has followed a policy, until the last year or so when we started rethinking it [in 2010], that we rich countries that produce a lot of food should sell it to poor countries and relieve them of the burden of producing their own food, so, thank goodness, they can leap directly into the industrial era. It has not worked. It may have been good for some of my farmers in Arkansas, but it has not worked. It was a mistake.” (Farmer 2012: 150) The neoliberal push to spur industrial production at the expense of agricultural production “undermines a lot of the culture, the fabric of life, the sense of self-determination” that holds together Haitian society. (Dupuy 2010: 19)

On a more intimate and personal level than the great neoliberal reforms of the Nineties, USAID provided services to smallholders and urban residents that temporarily reduced food insecurity, but failed to address the larger problems that caused the weakening of the Haitian food system. Despite the best intentions of international organizations and agencies to offer relief to victims of the 2010 earthquake, the

programs that they put in place destabilized the already stressed capacities of Haitian agriculture to meet demand. In the first days after the earthquake, transportation of any food, donated or purchased, within the country was nearly impossible. Blocked roadways and canals, collapsed store buildings, closed Ministry of Agriculture collection points, and lack of basic utilities disrupted the regular regional trade of food between cities, and especially around and within Port-au-Prince. (FTF 2011: 7) In those first key days, the American military was the key aid distributor: nutritional biscuits and ready to eat meals formed the backbone of initial food aid. (Jury 2015) Within a few days, feeding centers were put up around Port-au-Prince and in other affected cities to offer prepared meals and rations of Type II commodity aid to victims. Alongside these feeding and distribution points, emergency clinics and cleanup services were organized by international aid groups to coordinate services. Between the largest agencies, such as USAID and the World Food Program, and the smaller NGOs and religious aid groups working in Haiti, clusters of common programs and services developed to streamline aid delivery and coordinate activities; food insecurity relief, logistical delivery methods, and inter-organization communication were key areas that post-earthquake aid workers identified as points of major concern and difficulty for their joint operations. It was out of this joint concern that the feeding program Kore Lavi evolved.

Agricultural rehabilitation, however, did not elicit the same early attention that food insecurity did. USAID supplied nearly all of the Type II aid through a combination of purchases and corporate donations that continue, through changes in program names, to the present. Cross-national tests reveal that “there is no evidence that U.S. wheat aid crowds out recipient countries’ domestic food production,” but donated rice,

supplemented by corn, has fundamentally changed the balance of food imports for Haiti. (Nunn and Qian 2012: 25) Though the ratio of Type II commodities to other food delivery models has changed, millions still rely on imported, donated food for part of their nutritional needs, particularly as children. While the continued use of imported rice in relief operations was extremely necessary to meeting the needs of displaced Haitians, it still had terrible and unintended effects on the ability of Haitian farmers to compete in the post-earthquake economy. As time passed, farm output rose, and aid needs gradually declined, donated food still remained important in the Haitian food system. Rice farmers found in the months and years following the earthquake that despite the rise in demand, foreign companies had made a presence in key urban markets during the relief period. Imported rice from the United States, while nutritionally the same as Haitian rice, has a much lower price point; Haitian rice companies and cooperatives found themselves forced out of their own market. “In the absence of counterpart funds from food aid, the government will have to rely on domestic resources for funding such programs;” at present, the necessary rice production simply does not exist, and cannot support any transition to a Haitian-operated model. (Gupta et al. 2004: 388)

The ways that USAID, and by extension Food for Peace and the World Food Program, works to reform its buying practices are not as effective in problems of long-term sustainability, as seen in Haiti. Regional buying of commodities for redistribution in other areas, a favored food aid purchasing system in parts of Africa and Latin America, is less effective in the Caribbean. With such small countries with limited agricultural surpluses populating most of the region, production is often less than is

needed to meet both domestic and foreign aid needs. Furthermore, the proximity of the United States itself makes regional buying for Haiti's needs pointless; cereals from American farmers are the cheapest in the region, and have the added bonus of traveling fewer miles than South American competitors. (Jury 2015) The food voucher system instituted in an effort to include more local foods in needy Haitians' diets, while well-intentioned and certainly an area for further expansion, requires a robust agricultural sector in order to provide the necessary goods for sale. At present, this requisite strength is lacking. In Haiti, the greatest complaint by grocers is that despite the heightened interest in locally grown foods due to the voucher system, there simply isn't enough grain and vegetables at that price point to meet current needs. (Jury 2015)

This inability to meet the basic needs of urban populations, or even to sustain the farming tradition of rural Haitians, is a core concern for aid workers and international observers in Haiti; "USAID programming under both Food for Peace and Feed the Future aims to help create the conditions where our assistance is no longer needed," (Padron et al. 2015) Feed the Future, a recent initiative by USAID in Haiti to fix this problem, is making headway into farmer training and support programs to rehabilitate the damage done to the domestic rice farms. Feed the Future was created by executive order in 2011, and created a coalition of different government agencies involved in various aspects of food security, productivity, technology transfer, and international development. (Padron et al. 2015) While active internationally in several areas where USAID has a presence or history of intervention, the Haiti branch is among the largest and most diversified. Rice has been singled out as a specific point of concern and area for intensification, but crops like mango and cocoa have also been eyed for their export

values. Regional specialization, like cocoa in the north and rice in the central lowlands, would help farmers better coordinate transportation and technology transfer.

Furthermore, the concentration of crops for intensification in special corridors helps contain any environmental concerns, particularly for problems associated with irrigation, terracing, and forest cover. (FTF 2011: Annex C) The program is diverse and encompasses many smaller efforts by both American agencies and Haitian NGOs: Type II commodity deliveries and technical assistance will continue under supervision of the United States Department of Agriculture, community nutrition programs will be administered by local NGOs mentored by USAID, and market and government structures will be rehabilitated. (Padron et al. 2015)

Alongside these efforts by Feed the Future are those undertaken by development banks. The Inter-American Development Bank, the largest in the Western Hemisphere after the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, follows the lead set by American agencies by directing its funding towards ministries that aim to develop Haiti's export capacities. In part to repair the damage done by "chronic public underinvestment in key services to improve the [agricultural] sector's competitiveness," the Inter-American Development Bank is offering fifteen million dollars over the course of a decade to expand the capacities and size of the Ministry of Agriculture. (IDB 2012a: 4) The loan program, distributed in three installments to date, looks to rebuilt underfunded research centers, create national farmer education programs, and increase irrigation and other water system monitoring. Additional loans extended within the past four years aim towards promoting coffee and mango cultivation, funding technology transfer between Haitian farmers, and improving regional infrastructure and irrigation in special

agricultural corridors. Major rice-producing areas were singled out for help, as degraded irrigation systems and dams had greatly increased risks for rice production and human life. (IDB 2003: 2-3) Land tenure reform is particularly important, as many of the mid- and long- term programs piloted by NGOs require smallholders to hold actual title or long-term leases on their land in order to make the required structural changes. (IDB 2012b: 2) “Agricultural innovation will not be able to overcome the low quality of scarce public resources allocated to this purpose;” the extensions provisioned by the Inter-American Development Bank will provide the extension services necessary for USAID and NGO programs to later be transitioned to the Haitian government. (IDB 2012a: 6) These loans both complement and extend the work done by USAID under Feed the Future, as well as creating a policy environment where the models put in place by foreign NGOs and agencies will thrive.

In part, the collaboration will address some of the problems with reporting and transparency, particularly in funding, where “the data situation among aid agencies, such as... the nonreporting of essential items like aid tying and sectoral shares of aid spending would be unacceptable in most areas of economics in rich country democracies.” (Easterly and Pfutze 2008: 51) The updated strategic objectives for American foreign aid in the twenty-first century cited a continued concern for macroeconomic concerns and democratic transition, but also a marked focus on long-term public security and increased bureaucratic capacity. (James 2010: 187-8) The shift to this model mirrors reforms within USAID in the past twenty years, where “management for results” and “results-oriented assistance” have replaced more general direct aid programs with cultivated relationships with development partners. More

closely monitored, specialized programs reflect an American corporate demand for results and stronger, scientific documentation for efficient, strategic outputs. (James 2010: 184) More tellingly, it is “not wishing to entrench old fault lines or repeat past mistake; this...is not a linear exercise in institutional restoration.” (Duffield 2002: 1050) The new wave of reforms in the neoliberal era, in Haiti and other developing nations, follow the belief that the old methods of unconditional, government-directed aid distribution is flawed; aid delivery mechanisms should bypass the government entirely, and not to give it the authority and legitimization that would come with the successful application of a new food aid regime.

These efforts raise a very important question on the future of the Haitian food system: will the country’s farmers be able to aim for food sovereignty centered on common local food crops, or will they ramp up production on the high-value crops favored in the global market and import their food? Should centuries of smallholder horticulture be replaced by a larger, more globally-oriented export economy? In the leadership and stated visions of NGOs and agencies in the United States, the sentiment and vision is split. World leaders acknowledge the damage done by neoliberal free trade agreements, but continue to support the expansion of these programs. (DuPuy 2011: 15) Advisors widely acknowledge that the best way to reduce poverty worldwide is to encourage household productivity and entrepreneurship; the rising visibility of microcredit institutions in Africa and ecotourism development in Latin America are important private sector efforts to reduce poverty in those areas. (Jury 2015) For Haiti, a program reflecting these values might resemble a technology education program or government-sponsored farmers cooperative, in order to complement and feed into the

work of a future Kore Lavi under the Haitian government. In Feed the Future, the overall initiative is not so much a program in its own right, but a collaboration towards a common goal between separate models and organizations that have each shown to be effective in their own way, and that will play off the successes of other partners to further their own goals. The real concern for policy makers and aid workers in the coming years is not to provide services for Haitians, but to make sure that these programs can be transitioned to Haitian management without threatening local autonomy. The measures outlined by the members of Feed the Future need to make sure that their program is both transferable and sustainable over the long term.

The expansion of feeding programs like Kore Lavi and the smaller local NGOs that are part of Feed the Future aim to include more local products in their work, but the additional surge of American grain through the Department of Agriculture looks to be a preservation of export ratios for several years to come. The competing program goals and methods of American agencies need to be streamlined; the success of Feed the Future will be determined by its abilities in “designing and implementing programs and mobilizing expertise needed to oversee them.” (Lancaster and Van Dusen 2005: 51) The United States supports the continuation of free trade policies that “undercut its agricultural assistance by maintaining a neo-mercantilist trade policy” by restricting the export of Haitian-produced textiles, and by “maintain[ing] free access to the Haitian market for US food exports, particularly rice;” Brazil and other nations follow the United States lead by increasing their own domestic rice subsidies and expanding exports. (Cohen 2013: 598) If Kore Lavi and the subsidiarity NGO programs of Feed the Future are to be turned over to the Haitian government as designed, the nurturing of a more

robust agricultural sector is essential. Textile factories and light industry will continue to control much of Haiti's economy for years to come, but enormous growth could be possible if Haiti's land returned to the mixed agriculture that had previously defined it.

Sustainability for farmers is another concern. Beyond the assistance to NGOs and farmers aiming to enter the global trade in fruit and cocoa, the resources available to smallholders are limited and not well-defined in official USAID documentation. Without question, the pesticides and other technology that make American rice farmers so productive are out of reach to many Haitian rice farmers; the system of rice intensification techniques pushed by USAID are far more ecologically and economically viable (Cohen 2013: 603) The system of rice intensification now favored in Haiti has higher labor costs in the early phases of planting. Frequent weeding, shallow and intermittent flooding, and two rounds of replanting raise labor needs, but "no new seed varieties or external outputs are required; in fact, it uses lower levels of seeds, fertilizers, and water." (Lybbert and Tesca 2013: 3) The Artibonite Valley, already home to most of Haiti's successful rice producers, has been singled out as an area with immense potential for rice intensification in central Haiti. The region has been a center of rice production since before independence, when it was inhabited by Senegambian slaves who were experts in rice cultivation and who helped establish the valley as the prime rice growing region of Haiti during the colonial period. (Twitty 2012: 24) In one modern trial study, yield increased by more than sixty percent, and profits by a hundred thirty-two percent. (Lybbert and Tesca 2013: 4) With increased attention from organizations under Feed the Future such as Oxfam and agronomists from American universities, the likelihood that necessary irrigation system upgrades and technology

transfer will be successful is very high; a regional regime to monitor and coordinate farmers who use the system of rice intensification will allow them to address chronic issues with public goods and market their produce. (Lybbert and Tescar 2013: 8) The Cul-de-Sac and Saint-Marc plains near Port-au-Prince have, thanks to their proximity to the capital, been singled out for intensification not only in rice but for corn, beans, and plantains. These other staples have also shown improvement under USAID supervision and new techniques, with corn showing an incredible increase in yields of more than three hundred percent. (USAID 2014: v) Feed the Future leaders point to “off-focus” NGO involvement to work with smallholders to make their farms more productive, but the funds and time involved are clearly secondary to the larger export-directed agricultural expansion of mangoes and cocoa. Cocoa’s demand is expected to rise exponentially in the coming years, and the Francisque mango preferred by Haitian farmers is favored by exporters; both crops offer erosion stabilization to eroded hillsides and household income increases of one hundred to five hundred dollars each year. (FTF 2011: 9-10)

Given the cultural importance of self-sufficiency and the economic considerations of supporting the growers of half of Haiti’s food, more investment needs to go to smaller farms. The widest areas for involvement with smallholders is in terms of environmental concerns: with a history of working on marginal plots in the highlands, *lakou* farmers can benefit greatly from additional government, professional, and NGO support from help to improve soil fertility and productivity. The traditional ecological knowledge of local smallholders can be used to better adapt the system of rice intensification to the Haitian climate and agricultural landscape, and to check against heavy-handed oversight by

NGOs. NGOs can offer significant assistance to women and new farmers to help stimulate their own newer business ventures, as well as to offer scientific assistance to correct the environmental impacts of intensive farming practices, but should leave leadership and community management to Haitians. Allowing greater control by Haitians in their own food production and use can restore the sense of sovereignty lost in the past few decades. The rebirth of the Haitian rice sector must emphasize that food is a right, not just a simple commodity to be bought and sold on a whim: “adopting these values of food sovereignty would allow US activists to go beyond the framework of ‘cultural appropriateness’ to really consider the cultural importance of food in sustaining social relationships and how food can be implicitly used to erode social relationships, cultural meanings, connections to place, and the exercising of rights.” (Mares and Alkon 2011: 80) Anthropologists and aid workers have a responsibility to make sure that food aid and agricultural supports help the vulnerable, and not just continue implementation of already established programs. Sustainably improving the food sovereignty and security of Haitians is an important point of intervention to attempt to fix the problems created by the transcolonial experience.

Conclusion

In 2015, four years after the earthquake that devastated the Haitian economy and captured the attention of the entire world, the global community stands at a crossroads. The emergency food aid programs of 2010 transitioned within months to longer-term programs focusing on capacity building and technology transfer. Within the next few months, USAID and its partners in development, both in the United States and abroad, will evaluate these programs for their effectiveness. The larger problem looming over Kore Lavi and Feed the Future is not on the ability of supplying aid; the international participants in these larger aid operations have had little trouble supplying the Type II commodity aid or cash outlays to fund these programs. The confidence of USAID in the Haitian government is another matter; despite the bureaucratic management training and support staff increases in recent years, Haiti's international overseers have little confidence in its ability to manage its own agriculture, let alone its economy.

This attitude has persisted since independence, regardless of the people's own productive capacities and the government's lack of international support. A hundred years of self-sufficient subsistence farming lead to a relatively well-fed Haitian populace; the heavy debt burden that depressed efforts to develop the countryside and provide essential social services was applied by outside forces, not domestic mismanagement. Efforts to reshape agricultural production towards exports through elite- and foreign-managed tax collection failed because of their disconnect from this strongly individualistic horticultural tradition. The indemnity that created this debt and pushed rulers to pursue more export-oriented ventures also forced them to take out more loans

to finance the essentials of statecraft, and opened the door to American intervention and occupation. Mandated by an obligation to reform the state's finances and shift the Haitian economy towards global integration, American companies supported the expansion of fruit plantations, which displaced rural residents, impoverished their workers, and expanded urban slums. The changes to land use and ownership were mirrored in the shifts to the state educational system: instead of a classical education to better control their government and finances, Haitians were to pursue vocational training to better prepare them for work in the fields.

In the years after their departure from Haiti, the United States expanded its foreign aid in an attempt to secure its position as a global superpower. Type II commodities such as American wheat and corn were distributed to poor countries around the world according to a straightforward set of rules: the country had to be in an emergency situation, be staunchly anti-communist, or have a strategic importance to the security of the United States. Beyond the security needs of the American government, the opinion of the American people counts as well. Disaster response to Haiti was highly dependent on the news cycle, whereas the chronic problems of systemic violence and insecurity go mostly unrecognized. In the past twenty years, a shift to indirect aid funneled through subsidiary NGOs has moved management of social services away from the government. While still operating with and under the approval of the Haitian government, there is a tacit understanding among American and foreign actors that the Haitian state does not have the bureaucratic capacity to manage the necessary programs; the decades of corruption under the Duvaliers has erased much of the international community's faith in Haiti, despite its turn to democracy. Kore Lavi, the

signature food aid program in Haiti by USAID, is threatened by its core tenant: the delivery of emergency food aid. Without the locally-sourced food to distribute and the bureaucratic personnel to manage it, Kore Lavi will remain in the hands of foreign aid workers.

Haiti has a long way to go to recover its former agricultural capacity, especially for rice. Violence against and by Haitians destabilized the countryside, and forced thousands to the rapidly growing cities. The country's most important crop was enormously productive up until the end of the 1980s, when liberalizing trade policies opened the Haitian market to the wider global trade. Mirroring the effects of neoliberalism across many sectors, Haitians were unable to compete on such unequal footing. While Haiti agreed to dramatically lower tariffs in order to gain access to loans, American farmers benefited greatly thanks to an imbalance in government subsidies, more accessible technology upgrades, and higher yields. The system of rice intensification, addresses some of the problems that farmers have with water use, irrigation problems, and low yields; its success in other countries inspired USAID to include it in the inter-agency food security program Feed the Future. The efforts by Feed the Future agencies and subsidiary NGOs go a long way to fix the underlying problems that plague the Haitian food system, particularly with market supports and poor infrastructure management. However, like Kore Lavi and other service-providing programs, the limited nature of Haitian government oversight and the use of NGOs, rather than official structures, to meet program goals in Feed the Future is concerning. How long can American money and public interest sustain these programs? Additionally, the focus on intensifying mango and cocoa cultivation for export raises

larger questions for the future of the Haitian food system. Under the Feed the Future model, food security will be improved, but food sovereignty and the ability of the Haitian agricultural economy to provide for the entire population will be less of a concern in project implementation. The continued application of free trade agreements to Haiti may open new markets for its products, but also continues the dependency on clothing manufacturing as its core GDP contributor and leaves food markets vulnerable to supply and price changes in the United States. Under the current guidelines, production for local consumption will increase, but so will fruit and other cash crops for export; the history of self-sufficiency in Haiti has been replaced by a loss of sovereignty, integration with global markets, and cross-national movement of staple crops. The food sovereignty of Haitians under outside supervision remains as much in doubt as it was in the 1980s.

Underlying these case studies and more than two hundred years of history is a common theme: distrust by outsiders, both outright and unspoken, in the capacities of the Haitian people to govern themselves. In earlier years, this took on prejudiced overtones in like with an age of imperialism and scientific racism; today, the lack of trust is due to decades of evidence of corruption, state-sponsored violence, and unmanageable debt. The failure of American food aid is that it solves problems temporarily, but creates new ones that the transition government is unable to solve them, necessitating foreign involvement and aid for years to come. By sidestepping the problem of government accountability and working with NGOs on both the international and local scales, American aid workers and policy makers avoid making reforms in the areas that they are most needed. When Feed the Future and Food for Peace's Kore Lavi programs end, they should be handled over to a government entity, and not an

NGO. Especially in regards to the maintenance of irrigation systems and transportation lines that the country's farmers depend on, the ability of the government to review, contract, and apply relief programs and infrastructure upgrades is of utmost importance. Creating a meaningful collaboration with the Haitian government for co-management, and not just a rubber stamp, will go a long way to rebuild the capacities of the Ministry of Agriculture to meet the needs of its citizens.

The question still remains on the nature of the Haitian food system in the twenty-first century: will it aim for self-sufficiency, or wholeheartedly integrate into global trade networks to meet its needs? Historically, this has been possible, but with the population of Port-au-Prince itself more than tripling in the past thirty years, this question becomes even more difficult to answer. The high number of Haitians already involved in agriculture gives hope that technological changes and new planting methods, like the system of rice intensification and other methods tailored to beans and corn, can address the underproduction of staple crops. However, the continued importance of light manufacturing to Haiti's GDP and the increased competition from export-oriented tree crops for land threaten the requisite expansion of higher-yield cereal crops to achieve food sovereignty. Talking about the issue of self-sufficiency, for individuals and the nation, and what it would look like in Haiti should continue on multiple levels, and especially among Haitians themselves.

Other countries face many of the same challenges: in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and Latin America, communities are struggling to adapt to the changing global economic landscape. Cheap imports from industrialized countries threaten the livelihoods of small manufacturers and farmers, and the technological gap between the

rich and poor drives prices of locally-produced goods higher than their competition. The imbalances exacerbated by neoliberal reforms have opened markets while also displacing and impoverishing farmers in places as far-flung as central India, the Philippines, southern Mexico, Lesotho, Guatemala, and Haiti, among others. In each situation, despite the differences in local farming practices and institutions applying reform, the liberalizing push piloted by American enterprise and leaders has created domestic unrest and displacement. Organized protests, farmer suicides, malnutrition, bankruptcies, land loss, and urban slum expansion are just some of the ways that rural residents have been affected by development gone wrong. The global problem of farmer displacement under neoliberalism, and especially in Haiti today, speaks volumes about the impacts of the colonial experience and its fallout. The open-ended influence of the United States and international institutions on Haitian politics goes beyond humanitarian assistance: it is in many respects a continuation of transcolonial foreign control over decades and centuries that threatens the agency and authority of local governments worldwide.

When asked by anthropologists what they needed most, they responded with services, both economic and social; given the history of structural and physical violence in Haiti, this response is unsurprising and explains why Haitian NGOs are so numerous. (Farmer 1999: 1489-90) The greatest problem in provisioning people with necessary services is access: access of the state to money, and of the people to NGOs and government agencies that could change their situation. The same structural violence that hurts individuals also restricts their options for action, employment, and social interaction. As USAID and the US government reevaluate their programs in Haiti in the

coming months and years, they need to “hedge [their] moral bets with programs designed to remediate inequalities of access.” (Farmer 1999: 1492) Cooperation to develop new program models needs to go beyond a collaboration between big actors like the American and Haitian governments and NGOs: it needs to include community input, especially with direct feedback from farmers and workers on how programs affect them personally. Greater faith needs to be put into the government as well, especially now that democracy is alive and well in Haiti: a vicious cycle exists where “aid bypasses the government because it is weak, and then further weakens the government. An accompaniment approach,” where popular participation and input is embraced, “starts with partnerships with the government... it prioritizes job creation and local procurement and the transferring of resources to the poor.” (Schuller 2012: xii) This ignorance of the state as an aid provider opens up new opportunities for anthropologists to better inform the design and implementation of agricultural support programs, in particular by “offering insights on the relationship between individual, market-drive, and collective policy-oriented strategies.” (Mares and Alkon 2011: 81) “If the state has no institutional or geographical fixity,” as it does in its current state in Haiti, “we need to theorize the state beyond the empirically obvious... this removal of empirical boundaries also means that the state becomes more open to ethnographic strategies that take its fluidity into account.” (Trouillot 2001: 126) This model implies more faith in Haiti than international forces have previously allowed, and means that the close contact of ethnographic research can have greater effects on creating progressive government programming than by working outside the paradigm and program models championed by NGOs. It is high time that we abandoned our reservations on the ability of Haitians and other

developing peoples of color to think and act for themselves: “Human rights and economic development go hand in hand, and need to be tailored to the specific communities in which they work: as aid workers and researchers worldwide can attest, “we didn’t argue that it was cost-effective, nor did we promise that such efforts would be replicable. We argued that it was the right thing to do. It was the human rights thing to do.” (Farmer 1999: 1493)

To recover the lost productivity of Haitian agriculture, new institutional supports need to be developed to better serve the smallholders, and not just those in the highly-productive corridors that are the focus of USAID. The “one size fits all” approach of developing a few key crops leaves the Haitian economy vulnerable to shocks, and continues to ignore the history of diverse horticulture that is the country’s agricultural legacy. Like the counter-plantation movement of the past, a counter-neoliberal push that emphasizes high-quality local production and consumption could inspire a renaissance in Haiti. The loans and grants to expand the staffs of the Ministry of Agriculture and other related departments will help spread the infrastructure improvements beyond rural production centers. For Haiti, the best way to apply the same principles of small-scale manufacture would be in creating support and marketing networks for small farmers according to their produce. Like the small sugar mills and distilleries that once dotted the highlands, small processing operations have enormous potential to capitalize on this gap in the current market, and have the opportunity to compete with larger operations for a domestic market share. Smaller enterprises, like drying mangoes and other tropical fruits, require little startup capital, and coffeehouses worldwide are eagerly working with smaller producers in an effort to appeal to more socially-aware patrons. In

order to capitalize on this desire in the developed world for more ethically-sourced products, NGOs or the Haitian government need to help Haitians develop new cooperatives to help farmers market their products to a wider global audience. This arrangement can help reduce the pressure for farmers to work with larger, less flexible corporations, and allow farmers to continue diversifying their produce on their land, just as they would in a *lakou*. Government support of this agricultural revitalization is important both ideologically and practically; the system of rice intensification that is the future of Haitian rice farming is dependent on the government's ability to maintain and further improve the country's irrigation networks. More income, or better financial management, is needed to give Haiti independence from foreign loan dependency and prevent further debt accumulation. Although it flies in the face of recent liberalizing adjustments, raising the rice tariff to match that of other Caribbean nations will give the state much-needed income to fund its own expansion and development projects. Regardless, USAID and the United States need to take a hard look at how our actions on the world stage affect developing nations, and how our aid programs can be superficial, emergency solutions to chronic problems. More decision-making power needs to be given to the Haitian people and their elected government, and not the NGOs favored by the aid community, to make the decisions regarding their country's agricultural and economic future.

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