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**Requiem Banana man: Banana farming in the Commonwealth of Dominica.**

Wendy Monaghan

Dr Aneesa Kassam and Professor Paul Sillitoe (supervisors)

University of Durham

M.Phil Anthropology

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30 MAY 2003

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**Plagiarism Statement**

This dissertation is the result of my own work. Material from the published or unpublished work of others, which is referred to in the dissertation, is credited to the author in the text. The dissertation is approximately 58,000 words in length.

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Wendy Monaghan

### Requiem Banana Man

*Present-day concerns of the Commonwealth of Dominica revolve around the limitations of banana cultivation. While these limitations are local in terms of climatic, environmental, and social issues; they are also regional, in terms of smallness of scale, and inter-island competition; and global, with regards to the World Trade Organisation ruling to withdraw preferential rates on African Caribbean and Pacific bananas.*

*Correspondingly, this dissertation will examine the issues surrounding banana cultivation within global, regional, and local contexts. With regards to the interrelatedness of these three issues, the impact of the global on the local is especially crucial. I will discuss local, regional, and global issues, drawing particular attention to two aspects of banana cultivation which affect Dominican ideas of identity, and relationship with the environment. Namely, the historical role of bananas in gaining prestige (reputation), and the Dominican dislike of contaminating the land with agrochemicals.*

## INTRODUCTION

*Modern war is so expensive that we feel trade is a better avenue to plunder...  
William James. The Moral Equivalent of War.*

### **1.1 The Problem**

Dominica has relied heavily on banana production for export since the 1940s. This has affected not only those farmers directly involved in production, but also the economy of the whole island. Traditionally, Dominica has enjoyed a protected market for its bananas. This has entailed the guaranteed sale of all of its bananas that conform to the required standard. For reasons to be discussed later, the production of an adequate volume of quality fruit has in itself proved to be problematic for Dominican farmers. However, problems of production are now being overshadowed by the latest problem faced by Dominica. The World Trade Organisation (W.T.O.) has voted to overrule the right of African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries to export their bananas with preferential rates. The economic ruin this may spell is alarming, as problems such as economies of scale, climatic conditions, limited availability of good farming land and soil, volatile markets and competition from other sources, impinge heavily on Dominican banana production. These factors necessitate the protection of preferential rates, and it would be exceptionally difficult for Dominica to compete without such protection.

The initial problem is therefore one of economics, however this dissertation is concerned only indirectly with this problem. While the economics of banana production are discussed, we are concerned here with the related social problems of the W.T.O. ruling. One related problem is the idea being promoted by the Ministry of Agriculture, that the use of agrochemicals will help to enable Dominican bananas to



compete in a world market. This is contrary to the ethos of the majority of Dominican people, who do not wish to contaminate their land with chemical inputs.

The second problem is one of identity. As we will show, banana farming in Dominica is a matter of pride. Family land, with its associations of dignity; reputation, and social cohesion can all be seen to have roots in the early days of banana production. We will see that the banana is a powerful symbol of personhood in Dominica. If this symbol is negated, by its inability to compete in a world market, it will surely have repercussions which may initiate social unrest. It will at the very least involve some form of social change as has been seen throughout the annals of anthropological research.

The aim of this dissertation is to understand the reasons why bananas are so important to Dominicans. To accommodate this, a historical perspective is used. The historical perspective is focused on the various theories of dependency that have been popularly applied to Dominica. Dominica has a particular history of exploitation and dependency. Using the plantation system of the early 1800s as a reference point, I will consider the reasons for this dependency in terms of why bananas are cultivated for export, and why they have been seen as a viable product for multinational exploitation. I will explain how generations of exploited workers, agricultural practices, and the colonial government were instrumental in the banana dependency of today. The title of this paper, 'Requiem Banana Man', highlights the plight of future generations threatened by the devastation of the banana market.<sup>1</sup>

In discussing a theoretical framework with which to analyse and interpret development since the second world war, Long observes that during the mid 1950s development perspectives were based on modernisation theory. These perspectives were followed in the mid 1960s by work based on dependency theory, which in turn was followed by perspectives based on political economy during the mid 1970s. Finally, Long notes that political economy perspectives were followed in the mid 1980s onwards by 'some kind of ill-defined postmodernism' (Long 2001:9).

This dissertation will trace the development of Imperialism, Modernisation, Dependency, Globalisation, Neopopulist and Neoliberalist theories. It will also consider local resistance to the imposition of Western influence. Dependency theory is to be used as it highlights the inherently exploitative relationship between developed and under-developed countries. More specifically, Dependency theory is employed to analyze the relations that exist between the international banana trade, and the banana farmers of Dominica.

The use of an historical perspective plays a major role in dependency theory which 'goes beyond the notion of 'historical background' to the theoretical comprehension of development and underdevelopment as historical processes' (Furtado 1973:15). Furtado goes on to say that by using an historical perspective, it can be seen that '...the forms of development of one period can become those of 'underdevelopment' of

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<sup>1</sup> In line with the practice of West Indian Calypso singers, of 'answering' the lyrics of one song with those of another, the title of this paper is in reference to Charles Gullick, for his 'Songs of the Banana Man' (1995).

another period' (Furtado 1973:27). According to Sunkel, these 'polarisations' can only be examined by using '...an historical, structural and total approach, which is not arbitrary, but the result of theoretical and empirical reflection ...[of]...historical development' (Sunkel, in O'Brien 1974:5). Frank (1975:21) asserts the need to, '...inquire to see if there is any common historical experience among differing underdeveloped countries, and, if any, what these might be'. Having done so, he maintains that underdevelopment,

... and economic development as well, are the simultaneous and related products of the development on a world-wide scale and over a history of more than four centuries at least of a single integrated economic system: capitalism should be understood to be part not only of a single historical process, the development of capitalism, but of the development of a single, integrated system, the capitalist system, which came to attain world-wide scope (Frank 1975:43).

It is important to study banana production in Dominica at this time, as Dominicans face potentially massive social restructuring with the loss of this crucial economic resource. It is equally important to analyze the threat to a powerful symbol of social identity. Furthermore, Dominicans have a history which cannot be examined without reference to the terrain. It is because of the land, that Dominican culture has emerged in its own particular fashion. It will be shown that Dominicans have always considered their land primarily as an emotional, rather than as an economic investment. They have resisted past attempts to alter existing farming practices by such measures as their system of land tenure. The present attempts to introduce agrochemical inputs are being met with equal resistance because Dominicans will not contaminate land held in such esteem.

## 1.2 Place and People

The Windward Island of Dominica is aptly described as a 'vertical land'...a 'difficult paradise'<sup>2</sup>. Dominica is the most mountainous island in the Caribbean. With volcanic peaks towering almost 5,000 feet above sea level and sheer cliffs to much of its coastline, little wonder Columbus called it 'impenetrable', before sailing past without disembarking. It is indeed a paradise. Only 29 miles long and 16 miles wide, 67 per cent of the land is covered with woodland and primary rainforest of mahogany, cedar and bamboo. The island is well watered with 365 rivers. There is also a freshwater lake, sulphur springs, a boiling lake, and countless waterfalls. Dominica has water in abundance. Its remarkable topography creates its own weather. It is the wettest island in the Caribbean, with 300 inches of rain per year falling mostly between May and October.

Despite the small amount of available arable farming land (numbering 7,000 hectares), 50 per cent is occupied by less than 2 per cent of the farms. These are mainly owned by a traditional plantocracy, and amount to holdings of between 100 to 1,500 acres each. The remaining farming land is occupied by approximately 4,000 small farmers with holdings of between 1 and 5 acres (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:18). Ahmed and Afroz point out that 'although income per head in the Caribbean region is

<sup>2</sup> Booth, R. National Geographic, 'Dominica, Difficult Paradise' pp 100-120. June 1990, Vol. 177, no 6.

high compared with many developing countries, poverty is still widespread. Unequal distribution of wealth and the concentration of land in the hands of a few since plantation days are directly responsible for this economic scenario' (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:109).

Another problem with the unequal distribution of land is soil erosion and subsequent decrease in soil fertility, which causes a disruption of water cycles and a reduction in water volume. This occurs because of sediment being deposited in water sources. Ahmed and Afroz note that this problem arises partly because '...the majority of small farmers are forced on to marginal, shallow and infertile land, and partly because the best farmlands are being occupied by few wealthy farms...' (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:187). Indeed Ahmed and Afroz write that there is at present, an ecological disaster occurring with the agricultural systems in the Caribbean region. As a result of the relentless cultivation of plantation crops, in many cases on marginal soils, the land is becoming increasingly eroded. Soil erosion, soil nutrient depletion and soil and water toxicity are all now commonplace in the area. This is due to the application of insecticides and pesticides. Furthermore, the heavy usage of inorganic fertilizers has damaged the soil structure. Because of this, the productivity, stability and continuity of the land are threatened. Obviously, this has serious repercussions for future food production (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:190-191).

Bourne notes that the best land is occupied by large farmers. This land has the best quality soil and is found in the valleys and coastal areas. It also benefits from the best climatic conditions, and is located in close proximity to all weather roads. On the other hand, small farmers tend to occupy land on slopes. Their land has poorer soil and is more difficult to cultivate than the flatter land of the wealthier farmers. Also, small farmers experience difficulties of access. The number and quality of feeder roads is lacking. Many small farms are accessed by dirt roads, which become impassable during wet weather, and problems are even experienced on all weather roads. Another related problem is that small farms are generally located away from their selling points (Bourne 1980:158-159).

Andreatta notes that 'The economic growth of the West Indies has long been dependent on its natural resources for important development sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, and (very recently) tourism. For several centuries the region has had an active history of international trade for material items, food stuffs, and forced and volunteer migrants' (Andreatta 1998:415). In reference to tourism, Dominica does not rely on this sector as heavily as the other islands. This is because of two factors which together serve to discourage tourists from visiting the island. The first of these factors is the absence of an international airport. One reason for this factor is Dominica's topography and the sparse amount of available flat land on which to construct a runway. Bourne points out that the airport based at Melville Hall has a runway which is '...1,455 metros long and 45 metros wide, while the minimum runway length requirement for a DC-9 or BA-111 aircraft is 2,100 metros. Given the topography of the airport environs, it is unlikely that the runway can be suitably improved' (Bourne 1980:146). Indeed, the fact that Dominica is unusual as a Caribbean island in that it only has one cricket pitch, is a good indicator as to the sparse amount of flat land.



The second factor is the lack of good beaches as found on the other islands in the region. Dominica is for the most part circumnavigated by large cliffs which jut directly out of the sea. In fact, it is reported that when Queen Isabella of Spain asked Columbus to describe Dominica, he crumpled a sheet of parchment and told her 'that is Dominica'. For these two reasons: the lack of both an international airport, and the type of beaches that encourage tourism, Dominica does not have a sizable tourist trade. Dominica then, more than most of the other Caribbean islands is heavily dependent on agriculture and (to a much lesser extent) fisheries. Many of the other islands have relied heavily on the tourist trade since 1985, when it became the 'single most important economic activity and major source of foreign exchange for many Caribbean countries' (Deere 1990:29).

The agricultural system of the Caribbean region has shifted from the original plantation agriculture, to that of contract farming. Contract farming is a system whereby multinational corporations amass large profits from land that they do not own. Instead, the multinational corporation encourages farmers to sign a contract which binds the farmer to use particular inputs and to produce a specified amount of particular produce within a given time period. This produce must be transferred to the multinational corporation at a price stipulated by the corporation. The multinational corporation therefore benefits from being in control of the arrangement, while the capital it invests is minimal. An added benefit for the multinational corporation is that it is the farmer who takes the risks of producing the crop (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:205-206).

The banana trade in the Caribbean is protected at present by the Lome Convention. This is a special trade package designed to give a certain amount of economic security to the African Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP). This amounts to a total of 66 countries, including Dominica. The Lome Convention was first implemented in 1975. The aims of the convention are to encourage the economic development of the ACP countries, and also to supply tropical products which cannot be produced in European countries, to the European market. The intention of the Lome Convention was to provide duty-free access to 99.5 per cent of ACP exports to the European market (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:215).

A special trade agreement between the UK and the banana-producing Caribbean countries was set up within the Lome Convention. This is known as the Banana Protocol. Its aim is to export bananas produced by the Windward Islands (St Lucia, St Vincent, Grenada and Dominica) and also Jamaica and Belize, to the UK. 70 per cent of these bananas are produced in St Lucia, Grenada, St Vincent and Dominica. This amounts to a total of 439,000 tonnes of bananas, 105,000 tonnes from Jamaica, 40,000 tonnes from Belize, 127,000 tonnes from St Lucia, 82,000 tonnes from St Vincent, 14,000 tonnes from Grenada, and 71,000 tonnes from Dominica (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:221). These are exported duty-free to the UK at a higher rate than in the world market. Ahmed and Afroz call this arrangement '...one of the legacies of the colonial past, whereby the UK provides monetary benefit to the islands where banana is a cash crop, and maintains the plantation economy, at the same time retaining a monopoly on the crop...' (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:219).

The history of Dominica is one of alternating French and British occupation (Myers, 1987: xviii). The French were the first settlers to arrive, making their living by shipping lumber and cultivating smallholdings (Honychurch 1995:49). These settlers cleared provision grounds and gradually appropriated much of the best agricultural land. The original inhabitants, the Caribs, who remain there to this day, resisted the French onslaught until 1632. The French pushed the Caribs to the north-east of Dominica, and populated the island with African slaves. The descendants of these slaves now account for 90 per cent<sup>3</sup> of the population. The influence of the French is apparent in the French-Creole language, although three languages or dialects are spoken on this tiny island. These are, Creole, English, which is the 'official' language, and a Creole-Carib dialect spoken in the village of Marigot. This dialect is unintelligible to Dominicans on other parts of the island, and developed because of the island's topography. Until the 1960s when villages were linked by road, the only means of traveling to many other parts of the island was by boat. Marigot was particularly inaccessible, and the dialect developed in its isolation.

In 1763 Dominica was ceded to the British with the Treaty of Paris. The British did not occupy the island until 1805, when they ousted the remaining French planters who believed that Dominica's topography would discourage British settlers. In 1871, Dominica became part of the Leeward Island group until 1940, when it was reclassified as part of the Windward Islands. Later, in 1958 Dominica joined the West Indies federation. In 1967, it became a self-governing British Protectorate, and gained its independence in November 1978.

I may try, yet cannot adequately describe the extent of Dominica's beauty. UNESCO, with their actions, can perhaps convey better that which my words fail to express, as Morne Trois Pitons, a region in Dominica's interior was listed by them as a World Heritage Site in the National Heritage Category. Dominica is the first country since 1972 to be awarded this honour. The environment, and natural produce, are a major source of concern and pride to Dominicans. This is evident to the visitor in conversation within a short time of arrival in the country. Dominicans proudly refer to their country as 'Nature Island', their national motto being, 'Après Bondie C'est La Ter' which translates as, 'After God the Land'.

Dominicans are well aware of the great beauty of their country. This is evident not only in conversation, but also in observation of their interaction with the environment. One manifestation of this interaction is a dislike of agrochemicals, a matter of contention between farmers and officials. Bourne states that 'Chemical and other improved inputs are not widely used in Dominican agriculture...only a very small proportion of farmers apply fertilizers or spray chemicals on their crops' (Bourne 1980:162-163).

Most Dominican farmers employ a sustainable systems approach to agriculture. Ahmed and Afroz define sustainable agriculture as having certain features in common, these are the conservation of land, water and plants. Also, the conservation of animal genetic resources, in other words of keeping traditional breeds true to type. In addition, conservation of environmental genetic resources and 'renewable

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<sup>3</sup> Dominica has a population of 71,000; 9,000 of which are situated in the capital, Roseau.

agricultural production processes; resource; maintenance of an acceptable production level; and technically appropriate production system, which are economically viable and socially acceptable' (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:192). Grossman refers to agricultural practices employed by West Indian small farmers, which are implemented in order to avoid the use of pesticides. He highlights spraying either soapy water, or a mixture of pepper and water onto crops; lighting fires at night to burn any insects that fly into the flames; and burning fallow vegetation before planting to kill insects (Grossman 1998:192).

The vast majority of farmers in Dominica follow ecologically sound farming practices both in relation to cash crops, and to subsistence produce. These practices however, are threatened by the World Trade Organisation (WTO) decision to alter existing arrangements for the importation of bananas into the European Union (EU).

Questions concerning the environment and sustainability include those which ask, how can we achieve economically, technologically, and socially sustainable development? While these issues are normally addressed in terms of finding ways to improve other peoples' relationship with their environment, Dominica presents a special case. Dominica's importance in this area of study lies in its potential to impart knowledge of ecologically sustainable practices to the wider world. In the West, we are beginning to question current farming practices and to explore methods of sound ecological practice. This is especially true in the cultivation of genetically modified crops, which has led to an even greater awareness of natural produce. Ahmed and Afroz note that 'No matter how much effort is made to make the environment friendly, nothing artificial can be integrated or consumed by the earth. All inorganic agricultural inputs are bound to leave their destructive imprints either on the human societies or on nature' (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:191-192).

Consequently one is led to ask, "what lessons concerning good environmental practice can we learn from Dominican farmers?" Andreatta advocates our need to reconsider what we understand by the terms 'health food' or 'healthy food' and include within that understanding 'production practices, local knowledge and technology, the political and economic milieu in which production and distribution are sustained, as well as their impact on humans and the biophysical environment' (Andreatta 1998:414).

By this reasoning then, we should be engaged in acquiring a much wider appreciation of what healthy food actually means. In the recent past, the average health-conscious consumer was interested in the nutritional content of food. Today, the same consumer may also be interested in organically-farmed produce. Increasingly, consumers are becoming more aware of, and more mistrustful of agrochemically assisted produce. It seems a simple matter to suggest that farmers should cultivate organic produce, but in practical terms it may be very difficult to implement a completely new ecologically sustainable agricultural system.

Although various groups have already raised questions concerning ecologically sustainable practices, Dominica offers an example of sound ecological practice already in place. Dominican farmers, with their dislike of agrochemicals, have traditionally cultivated bananas using organic methods. Dominica therefore, presents

an opportunity to underline the ecologically sustainable practices we in the West are beginning to explore. Here I will place particular emphasis on aspects of banana cultivation which affect Dominican ideas of identity, and relationship with the environment. Namely, the Dominican aversion to contaminating land with agrochemicals (Thomas 1988); and the historical role of bananas in gaining reputation (Trouillot 1988).

I will examine human interaction with both the physical and social environment. Peasant life is built around environmental (rainfall patterns, harvesting, etc.), and social (births, marriage, etc.) issues. These issues are 'intimately linked to the concrete material world in which the peasantry lives, and which it perceives according to its own norms and understandings' (Mintz 1974:143). All too often, on-farm research investigates agrarian productivity alone while, 'farmers are concerned with stabilising and increasing their entire welfare, much of which may come from non-farm production' (Low 1992:55). Long writes that 'farm strategies are affected by many factors besides simple market incentives. Strategies vary according to stage of farm development and in rhythm with the family life-cycle' (Long 2001:45). Because of the relative homogeneity<sup>4</sup> of Dominican agriculture, it may well be non-farm activities that 'strongly influence farming practice and the aims and objectives of farm production' (Low 1992:55). Long mentions that one often encountered feature present in poorer societies is the practice of multiple occupations, very often an individual or group will participate in more than one occupation (Long 2001:134).

Low notes that households with restricted access to off-farm activities, invest more time and effort into their farms. This seems a rather teleological point, but emphasizes that within a community of smallholders who are evenly matched in resources, farming practices may vary considerably (see for example, Morlon 1992). Indeed, research compiled in 1975 by Henderson et al '...revealed that only four of the twenty-two practices recommended by WINBAN (Windward Islands Banana Growers Association) were adopted by 90 percent of the banana farmers in all of the Windward Islands' (Grossman 1998:135).

Obviously, an important connection can be drawn with the family development cycle. For these reasons, this paper will not concern itself *exclusively* with the relationship between smallholders and bananas, but will situate this relationship within the wider context of Dominican peasantry. As Hart writes, '...perhaps the central issue in any discussion of third world agriculture, [is] the multiplicity of occupations and tasks within which farming is normally embedded' (Hart 1982:77). However, it must still be emphasized that 'Very few opportunities for off-farm employment exist since there is severe unemployment in the country, and since difficulties of travel prevent frequent journeys to the towns in search of odd jobs. Off-farm employment opportunities are limited to farm labour on nearby banana and citrus plantations which are few in number' (Bourne 1980:167).

Dominica is, according to the United Nations (UN) index that compares national income with the cost of damage caused by environmental disasters, one of the most disaster-prone regions in the world. This is mainly due to the islands susceptibility to hurricanes. However, Dominica is threatened not only with climatic, but also

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<sup>4</sup> I am not by any means suggesting that smallholders are a homogenous group of people.

economic disaster, as the WTO, has ruled to withdraw special arrangements for the importation of bananas, Dominica's major product, into the EU market. As Ahmed and Afroz point out, 'Much of the economic development in the Caribbean still depends on its trade in food and agricultural products' (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:175). Economic development in the Caribbean is therefore strongly intertwined with the involvement of multinational corporations. Ahmed and Afroz argue that it is no accident that multinationals dominate agriculture as well as food processing, as agriculture is such an important sector of the Caribbean economy (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:199).

Bananas are intercropped with subsistence produce on family-run smallholdings and are a valuable agricultural resource, they represent 70 per cent of all exports, and 90 per cent of agricultural exports<sup>5</sup>. Farmers however, receive only 10 per cent of the price paid for bananas in British supermarkets and greengrocers (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:82). Other produce that is, although to a much lesser extent, important for foreign earnings includes limes, coconuts, bay trees, timber and vanilla trees. Dominica produces the majority of the world's supply of bay oil. Some small farmers also export small quantities of coffee, cocoa and nutmeg. In addition, an American company 'International Flavours and Fragrances' exports tropical flavours and fragrances from Dominica (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:18).

However, 80 per cent of Dominica's agricultural workers depend directly on banana export for their livelihoods (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:161). Trouillot notes that people are forced to cultivate bananas for export because of the lack of other available forms of income (Trouillot 1988:157). The loss of this income will have an adverse effect on the family and society at large. Diversification does not appear to be a viable alternative (Grossman 1998:75). Ahmed and Afroz point out that only bananas have a market of any consideration (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:53). Farmers are therefore reluctant to invest in other cash crops because of uncertain markets for these products. Ahmed and Afroz write that Caribbean agriculture is not equipped to compete in a world market if and when the preferences are terminated. This obviously will have serious consequences for employment and lead to social unrest. For example, in St Lucia in 1993, a demonstration was held by small banana farmers who demanded higher prices for bananas. The demonstration culminated in the shooting of two farmers by law enforcement officers. Ahmed and Afroz note that this 'is indicative of the existence of a volatile situation' (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:223).

Caribbean governments are presently trying to reduce further debt incurred with the foreseen loss of earnings from banana exports. They also wish to enlarge upon the economy's export base, by introducing non-traditional exports to the overseas and regional market and also to reduce dependence on imported food supplies (Bourne 1980:172). Andreatta writes that an Agricultural Diversification Programme is being promoted by West Indian governments. This project is being managed by the Central Market Corporations and TroPro, the leading private exporter of Caribbean tropical produce. Ministries of Agriculture on the various islands are attempting to secure

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<sup>5</sup> According to Agricultural Minister Maynard Joseph, 'Two out of every three Dominicans profit from the dollar that comes from bananas because banana farming has such a tremendous spill-over effect on our whole economy' (The Courier no 140, July-August 1993: 29).

markets to support the production and export of non-traditional crops. These Ministries are providing training, and subsidizing inputs. In addition to marketing fresh produce they are also encouraging local processing of fresh produce with the intention of increasing the value of exported produce (Andreatta 1998:419).

Grossman also notes that the Caribbean governments are attempting to encourage farmers to engage in a programme of 'export substitution' (Grossman 1998:7) and cultivate non-traditional crops for export. These crops include produce such as root crops, cucumbers, flowers, hot peppers, tomatoes, and tropical fruits other than bananas (Andreatta 1998:419). One problem is that 'for the Windward Island states there is no structure, no regular market, and no set international or regional standards for crops other than banana' (Andreatta 1998:424). Because of this, the produce marketed is often of poor quality, and stones are sometimes found in boxes of fruit and vegetables to increase the weight of the box. Andreatta explains that traffickers (local exporters who trade regionally), purchase locally produced fruit and vegetables and ship these goods to other islands. She notes that according to the president of the St Vincent Growers Traffickers Association, traffickers transport 80 per cent of fresh produce, other than bananas, to other islands in the region. This, she writes, causes competition among extra-regional exporters in obtaining produce. The problem is that extra-regional exporters use different sets of prices and quality standards. However, exporters, both regional and extra-regional, manage their business transactions 'without guaranteed markets and without contracts with farmers to ensure price, volume, continuity and quality' (Andreatta 1998:424).

The idea of diversification is not however, a recent innovation. Dominica has experimented with diversification programs since the early 1930s. Andreatta notes that at the level of the household, empirical evidence has shown diversification not to be a new survival strategy at all. On the contrary, she writes that farmers insist that they do not plant market crops. This is, she reports, because of the constraint's incumbent in the logistics of locating and gaining access to a reliable export market. In addition to this are added the problems associated with procuring a fair farm gate price, and of being able to raise the finances required to afford hired labour. Farming strategies therefore involve subsistence farming with the view to a marketable surplus. She writes that even commercial farmers would not allocate 100 per cent of their land for the production of cash crops. Normal procedure would be to set aside an area of land for the production of a variety of crops for household consumption. These crops include fruit trees. The idea therefore, currently promoted by the Ministry of Agriculture, of expanding into fruit tree crops is something that farmers already concern themselves with. Andreatta comments, 'Generally, a farm consists of fruit-bearing trees, root crops, livestock, and more recently vegetable crops; thus it is diversified' (Andreatta 1998:422-424).

Grossman too, notes that polyculture has been practiced for many years (Grossman 1998:12). This observation is reinforced by Grossman's comment on peasant producers. He notes that peasants earn more profit for transnational companies than do large-scale landowners. This is partly because they engage in subsistence agriculture growing some of the food that they consume, hence the diversity of the peasant farm (Grossman 1998:6). Meillassoux also notes this point. He argues that workers' gardens returned labourers to a state of semi-self sufficiency, in which their

free time was spent on producing some of their own food. This worked to lower the cost of labour-power, and allowed capitalists to deduct from the cost of labour-power the produce of the labourer's own garden (Meillassoux 1981:108).

To date, bananas prove to be the most expedient cash crop for Dominica. Various environmental, climatic, and social conditions, both exclude other crops from potential cultivation for export, and make bananas the most suitable crop for Dominica's conditions. Therefore, as the only foreseeable recourse to the threat of massive loss of income incurred by the WTO ruling, farmers are under pressure from the Dominican government to use agrochemicals and thereby increase yields of exportable quality fruit, and so ameliorate the effects of the disruption to the local economy (see for example, Grossman 1998:136). Consequently, a small minority of farmers now use agrochemicals selectively on their farms.

Ahmen and Afroz note that research conducted by WINBAN and financed by Geest 'is designed to promote the chemical manufacturers - ICI, Bayer, and May and Baker - to test the commercial effectiveness of new materials. The larger capital-intensive growers dominate the banana growers associations in the various islands and have access to credit benefit from such research' (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:80). And again, 'This research is carried out under the general assumption that increased agricultural productivity is primarily a technological problem. The social, economic and political factors are either ignored or little stressed' (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:156). Despite pressure from WINBAN, the majority of farmers continue to resist the use of agrochemicals on their land.

This aversion to chemical inputs is reinforced by public opinion, as customers in the local market refuse to buy produce cultivated on land that has been contaminated by agrochemicals. I was told by one informant as we passed a roadside fried-chicken vendor, that if I wanted to eat I should choose to buy food cooked at the roadside, rather than eat in a hotel. This was because hotels may have imported their foodstuffs, or may have purchased it from farms where agrochemicals had been used. In contrast, the roadside vendor would not sell food bought from a dubious source because his customers would have access to knowledge about his business transactions, and one could also be certain that the food was fresh. In a small island like Dominica, it would be difficult to acquire produce that was not grown by a reputable farmer and then try to resell it. At least one other person would discover the indiscretion and broadcast the fact. This would result in the vendor losing all future trade.

A related point mentioned by my informant was that the freshness of food bought in hotels was also questionable. Because hotels rely on freezers to store food, one could not be certain of the freshness of that food as it may have been frozen for many months. A roadside vendor however, did not have this option and therefore had to buy fresh food every day. From my informants point of view, buying food cooked by the roadside, from a vendor without washing or refrigeration facilities, was a far more healthy option than the possibility of eating food cultivated with agrochemicals.

It would appear that the ecologically sustainable practices of Dominican farmers are being threatened by the free market. Without the protection of preferential rates for access into the EU market, will Dominican farmers be forced to compromise their

ideals and begin a program of agrochemically-based cultivation? It seems ironic that Europeans' campaign for environmentally friendly agricultural practices, while Dominican farmers, who have traditionally advocated environmentally sustainable practices, are being pressurised to forego these.

Hawkings argues that the Lome Convention '...singles out foreign marketing as one of the key areas of industrial cooperation. In fact, for all its flaws, the Lome Convention goes a long way towards being a model for economic cooperation between a part of the developed world and the Third World countries' (Hawkings 1976:153). We must however, bear in mind that the Lome Convention, with its protectionist measures for ACP bananas is actually a facet of dependency. According to Ahmed and Afroz 'Reliance on preferential trading relationships keeps the Caribbean in a dependency mode and undermines any determination to seek out other opportunities. Relying on preferential trade agreements is of little long-term strategic value' (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:216). Frank argues that '...social, economic, and political linkages between the 'modern' and 'traditional' sectors, rather than their separateness, were responsible for reproducing the traditional sector and slowing the development of the peripheral countries' (Chase-Dunn 1989: 235). Sutton notes that in respect of the Commonwealth Caribbean at least, the Lome Convention seems less to work towards an improved future, and more towards 'preserving the past within a new set of arrangements'. Sutton notes that 'if it is a change it is from one set of arrangements which may be identified as 'neo-colonial', i.e. post-independence relations with Britain, to another set of arrangements which in themselves can attract that label i.e. indirect and subtle domination by political, economic and technical means' Sutton (1984:231).

Appell draws attention to the fact that 'The range of methods whereby the core develops control over the resources of the periphery can vary from the use of overwhelming force to more subtle methods (Appell 1985:6).

Highlighting a rural area in the state of Maine, Appell (1985:6-9) shows how the process of 'dehumanisation' can effect a control of resource by the metropole. The area was dependent on small-scale industries, such as part-time farming and lumbering. The residents underwent social upheaval with the erection of a large skiing resort and a golf club developed in the area by the metropolis. These two large businesses encouraged an influx of workers to the area from the centre, who occupied skilled jobs. Workers from the centre also bought houses and farmland in the area, to the extent that the local residents could not afford property prices and were forced to occupy trailer parks. Difficulties were experienced in trying to persuade local residents to apply for work in the new businesses, a situation which initiated a project entitled 'Project PRIDE'. The project was devised to encourage local people to apply for low-paid jobs in the service sector.

Project PRIDE identified local peoples' 'lack of self-esteem' as a factor deleterious to the economy of the area. The 'PRIDE Task Force' informed the local population that 'Low self esteem impedes achievement in school and on the job. To be successful our students will require the abilities to adapt to change and to learn new skills. The 'PRIDE Task Force' informed the local population that achievement in school and in the workforce are impeded by low self-esteem. The task force committee attempted to persuade the local population that it was necessary to adapt to change and to acquire



new skills. They continued by informing local people that ‘The PRIDE Task Force has identified the skills and attitudes necessary to be a successful person, and a contributing, productive member of the community’ (Appell 1985:7).

However, there had been no actual study conducted to gauge the level of local self-esteem. The survey results were based on the assumptions of the incomers as to the characteristics of the locals. This had the effect of distancing the incomers from the locals, making the incomers feel more sophisticated than their local counterparts. Incomers complained that ‘...the local inhabitants have the highest incest rate in the country, that they have major problems of alcoholism, that they are ill-housed, that they are sexually profligate producing far too many teenage pregnancies, that they are uncultured and need to be taught about good music, good theater, and good books’ (Appell 1985:7). Appell notes that ‘When members of the economic centers contact members of the periphery; they commonly treat such populations in dehumanizing terms, attack their personal worth and self-esteem, and either deny or ignore their social identity by not accepting their cultural and ethnic status’ (Appell 1985:9).

In a similar fashion, V.S. Naipaul discusses the effect that economic dependency has on psychological dependency, in referring to the Caribbean as the ‘third world’s third world’. What he meant by this was,

...the sense of hopelessness and despair which pervaded the intellectual atmosphere and conditioned the political will of those elected to govern and develop their countries. Much of this, of course, could be directly attributed to a past of super-exploitation of labour in slavery and indenture, which left the region economically underdeveloped, racially divided, politically subservient and culturally impoverished. But it also referred to a present of utter dependency, itself the legacy of this past and of contemporary material circumstances which saw these countries as too small and too weak to effect meaningful change, condemned seemingly for ever, to be the periphery’s periphery’ (V.S. Naipaul in Payne and Sutton 1984: preface[unpaginated]).

### **1.3 Theoretical Framework**

Various theories of development are used in this dissertation. These are: Imperialism, modernisation theory, dependency theory, globalisation, and neopopulism. The purpose of the theoretical framework is to trace a path of development and change in Dominica from Imperialism to neopopulism.

The section on Imperialism discusses colonialism and the introduction of slavery to the West Indies. Some of the first attempts at development were conducted in the West Indies. These included the restructuring of both the demographics of the area and of the physical domain. Restructuring the demographics involved dispersing or destroying native populations and replacing them with enslaved persons. The restructuring of the physical domain of the West Indies included replacing indigenous flora with plantation crops. These crops, namely sugar and cotton, were introduced primarily to amass economic gain, but also worked to forward the development of the West. As a result, it was development in the West Indies that instigated the expansion of Imperialism throughout much of the wider world.

Modernisation was therefore founded on the development of the Imperialist machine, as the finances amassed through Imperialism funded the various inventions that were to revolutionize the West. The West developed technologically and economically with the innovations of the colonies. Massive social changes also occurred as a result of changing demographics with the exodus from the countryside to the cities. The increase in wealth in these countries encouraged the belief that its path to development was exemplary. It was advantageous to the West to encourage the implementation of these various innovations in the colonies, as the new technology could result in higher profits for the West. However, it was also considered that the values and beliefs etc., of the West were also responsible for its economic and social 'superiority'. In order to develop, third world countries were encouraged to forgo their own values and customs, and employ those of the West. It was not apparent to the thinkers of the time, that these values etc., were actually a result of the Industrial Revolution, and therefore a result of the economic advantages accumulated through Imperialism.

Dependency theory argued that modernisation was essentially flawed in that designated 'underdeveloped' countries could not become 'developed' as they could not emulate the path taken by the 'developed' countries. This theory focused on the exploitation of one country by another.

Wallerstein, with his World Systems (globalisation) theory, took dependency theory to a further conclusion. While dependency theory examined metropolis (exploiting) and satellite (exploited) areas, Wallerstein's World Systems theory introduced the idea of a third component. This third component included all the areas which were neither metropolis (called by Wallerstein 'core' areas), nor satellite (called by Wallerstein 'peripheral' areas). Wallerstein designated the third block of areas as 'semi-peripheral' areas. These were areas that could be classified as being economically, politically or culturally between the state of core or peripheral. These areas may have been either core or peripheral in the past, or could potentially become one or the other in the future.

Dependency theory examines a discrete, dyadic relationship existing between exploiter and exploited. World Systems theory however, regards exploitation to encompass global economics and so expounds the exploitative relationship existing on a global scale. It argues that individual countries cannot be separated out and examined without reference to the other countries in the World System, as they have a joint history in the expansion of capitalism. The experiences of one country will therefore have an affect on all other countries.

Neopopulist theory is dissatisfied with the top-down application of previous models of development. It analyses individual situations from a grass-roots perspective, and argues that the assumptions made through use of earlier models of development are based on the realities, or knowledge systems, of the researchers. These earlier models have failed because of the disparities between the knowledge systems of the researchers and the researched. Neopopulism is a hands-on approach, that researches people's perceptions of a situation before researching the situation itself. However, it is not concerned with micro-study alone, but attempts to situate the micro relationships within the broader macro relationship of the wider world.

Dominica has always been regarded in a passive light by Western states, yet Dominicans can be seen to have consistently resisted measures of Western development. Even with the enforced slavery of Imperialism, displaced persons forcibly relocated to Dominica worked to ameliorate their situation. By growing their own subsistence foods, slaves in Dominica were to reach a position whereby the surpluses they produced financed the purchase of their own lands after emancipation. Despite various measures set in place to discourage this, ex-slaves resisted the easy option of working on the estates as wage-labourers, and insisted on striving to eke out a living in the mountains in order to appropriate their own lands and sense of freedom.

Later, with the onset of modernisation, Dominicans resisted Western attempts at land reform by refusing to forgo their traditional system of land tenure. Modernisation theory designated this system as an 'obstacle' to development, as land was often left neglected or under-farmed. Dominicans were less interested in immediate economic gratification, and more concerned with the 'immortality' of their land as a resource for future generations, and as a symbol of security after many generations of landless slavery.

At this time, an important feature of Dominican tradition and culture was formed. This was also an aspect of resistance. Banana growers resisted taxes imposed by estate owners, by selling their produce surreptitiously. This afforded great psychological well-being, and elevated the banana as a symbol of Dominican identity and dignity. It also led many estate owners to become disillusioned and sell their estates as they were unable to monitor the clandestine market.

Bananas were therefore directly responsible for an increased number of estate workers to be able to save the funds necessary to purchase their own land, and also were the mechanism whereby land was made available to the open market.

In the mid-twentieth century, bananas became a monocrop, and as such a crucial vehicle of the Dominican economy. Dependency theory helps to shed light on the exploitation of Dominican banana farmers by the transnational 'Geest'. Geest made vast profits by taking resources (bananas) from the satellite to the metropolis, deducting all of its costs from the price paid to the growers. Geest also had processing rights (ripening and dispersal) of the crop. In effect, Dominican farmers were labouring not to amass profit for themselves, but for Geest. Dependency theory shows that Geest were able to amass profit through exploitation of Dominican banana farmers. Furthermore, it shows that Dominica could not accumulate its own profit and emulate the West as this could only have been afforded by Dominica's opportunity to exploit a third country.

Globalisation theory illuminates the involvement of world economics in the banana trade. With this approach we can understand how the logistics of the world banana trade impinge heavily on local practices of banana farming. Latin American banana producing countries, themselves exploited by even bigger multinationals, cultivated a much stronger commodity in world trade. This was primarily due to economies of scale. Their operations impacted on the Dominican economy through the neoliberalist

policy of free trade, which is concerned with the unhindered movement of money across boundaries.

With a neopopulist approach, we can analyse Dominican banana farmers' attitude towards the use of chemical inputs in cultivation. The government is attempting to persuade Dominican farmers that the inclusion of this farming strategy to their routines will increase yields to a much greater extent. This is being met with resistance. A neopopulist approach would examine the symbolic aspect of land, and signify the importance Dominican people place upon it. Land is held in such high esteem that to contaminate it with agrochemical use would be contrary to the ethos of the people. We must instead look at Dominican farmers' insistence that produce must be organic, and consider this in relation to the relatively new Western call for organically produced food. Why is the West demanding such produce, while attempting to cohere Dominica into producing greater yields of fruit through agrochemical usage? The answer lies in the antithesis of neopopulism, neoliberalism - the new Imperialism, this time of finances rather than of physical resources.

#### **1.4 Methodology**

This dissertation is mainly literature based, although fieldwork was conducted during the summers of 1997 and 1998. The importance of literature in this dissertation is that while there is not a great deal of literature concerning Dominica, it is for the most part, in reference to one or another particular theory. This dissertation however, is concerned with the application of a succession of theories to the day to day practices of Dominican farmers. The intention is to examine Dominica's history in conjunction with a history of development theory.

My involvement with Dominica and bananas began accidentally after conducting research on the social sanctions surrounding witchcraft and gossip in two Caribbean islands, Dominica and Martinique. I had expected to encounter a very similar sociopolitical structure because of the geographical location of the two islands, and because of their shared history of agricultural and human exploitation by Europeans. Dominica is situated just north of Martinique and has a history of alternating British and French occupation. This can be seen in the French-Creole language common to the two countries, and by their cross-migration patterns.

I was to find however, that social sanctions in Martinique were applied more rigidly than in Dominica. I concluded that the social sanctions prevalent within the two islands were dependent on the economies of the islands. Social sanctions are the positive, or negative reactions of a society towards the actions of its members. These are the 'unwritten laws' that people must acknowledge in order to participate as integrated members of society. Negative sanctions are displayed as a form of punishment, and include disapproval, ridicule, contempt, etc. Positive sanctions are manifest in some form of reward such as material reward, acceptance, approval, prestige, etc.

The difference between the two islands' treatment of social sanctions was the catalyst for my interest in bananas. I concluded that social sanctions were dependent on the

economy, and the economy of Dominica was dependent on bananas. In Dominica, the failing economy has resulted in a division within the extended family, as insolvent members are regarded as a burden and are excluded from the family. The result is that people are less wary of gossip avoidance because they become unconcerned with sanctions directed towards them by a family that does not offer solidarity. In a scenario reminiscent of Turnbull's *The Mountain People* (1972), people increasingly become more inclined to forward their own interests when finances become crucial to survival.

The negation of gossip avoidance becomes advantageous to a woman who must feed herself and her children, as she would not wish for the added burden of negative social sanctions which would only work to make her economic activities more difficult.

Obtaining cash is crucial to survival, and many women try to accommodate this by advertising their availability, and frequenting the public domain in ways that would create scandal in Martinique. No disrespect is shown towards Dominican women who are drinking in bars or congregating outside of rum shops. For a woman who is experiencing financial problems, feeding oneself and one's children by whatever means one can, negates the application of certain negative sanctions. Because so many women are in this situation, social stigmas are disappearing, and with it, the fierce unity of the family. When family ties break down, other relationships take their place. The family does not guard its members so jealously, and respectability derived from gossip avoidance is weakened. Prostitution, drugs, and crime are increasingly problematic in Dominica. This is a direct result of the breakdown of social sanctions, which in turn is a result of the failing economy. In fact Prime Minister Eugina Charles in a comment concerning the drug trade, was quoted in the British *Times* as saying 'If bananas go down, Haiti will be like apple pie compared to us' (Honychurch 1995:288).

The stable economy of Martinique reinforces ideas of respectability, and allows the matrifocal family to assist each other in times of hardship. This is also perpetuated by gossip avoidance which demands that the prescribed assistance and solidarity be observed. Dominica however, is an independent country. Unlike Martinique, persons unable to find employment are not provided for by the state. This appears to have resulted in the breakdown of family solidarity. People are sometimes unwilling to support members of their extended families if those members are perceived as being unable to reciprocate.

To illustrate the former points I will refer to an ethnographic example. During my first visit to Dominica I lodged with 'Lucy'. During my stay in Lucy's home, I noticed an old woman in the yard. 'Returned migrant' West Indian homes are typically one story, first floor structures. These are built to protect against flooding. The area underneath the house is usually reserved for storage. The old woman I had noticed had apparently been living in the storage area underneath Lucy's house. When I asked Lucy about the identity of the old woman, I was told that it was her cousin (mother's brother's daughter). Apparently the old woman had been living in the (sole) public convenience in Roseau. She had discovered Lucy's address and had moved in underneath the house. Unfortunately for the old woman, my questions had reminded Lucy of her cousin's presence. Lucy immediately telephoned the police to have her cousin removed. Lucy told me that she did not want 'people living under the house'.

I find it to be unimaginable for this situation to occur in Martinique. Social sanctions would dictate that the cousin be taken in by the extended family and given a home. This would be a strategy for gossip avoidance, as the family sought to demonstrate respectability in not shirking their responsibilities. The stable financial security of Martiniquais families would enable them to do this. Sanctions in Martinique are absolutely related to 'respectability', which in turn is related to the economy. According to Burton, 'Social security and medical provisions in the [French overseas departments] have no parallel in the Eastern Caribbean, wages are higher...and housing immeasurably superior' (Burton 1995:1). Also, the stronger economy and strength of sanctions in Martinique, militate against the levels of crime as are found in Dominica. For example, women in Martinique do not have to resort to prostitution and drug-peddling to support their children.

I found that unlike Martinique, a large part of daily conversation, both to myself as a visitor and also between islanders themselves consisted of a discourse on bananas. Gullick (1995) also noted this in St.Vincent as islanders often engaged him in conversation about bananas, usually trying to persuade him and his wife that the local blemished bananas were not inferior to the much more aesthetically pleasing Latin American produce. I was not party to any such conversations in Martinique, which as a French Overseas Department, is a relatively wealthy island and is not dependent on banana export.

The inhabitants of Dominica fall into two broad types: Those who have always lived in Dominica; and returned migrants who left Dominica to find work in England during the 'Windward years' of the 1950s and 1960s. Honychurch notes that 7,915 people, in other words 13.3 per cent of the population migrated during the years 1959-1962 (Honychurch 1995:205). These migrant workers arrived in England to find a local populace of working class British people who tended to rent, rather than buy property. Dominicans, along with other West Indians in Britain, saved their wages in order to buy their own property for two reasons. Firstly, Dominicans and other West Indians were uncomfortable with the idea of renting their homes. They were familiar with owning their own property, and the sense of security, both economic and psychological that this afforded.

Secondly, because the prevailing racism in Britain during those years resulted in great difficulties in finding decent housing as landlords refused to let their property to West Indians. This meant that West Indians often had to make do with inferior housing, something they obviously wished to remedy. As happens so often with incomers, West Indians tended to form enclaves, as unpopular areas of London became home to large numbers of people who could not obtain rented accommodation in the more sought after regions. Also, they actively sought to live among other West Indians for the psychological security this afforded in a racist society. Again, because of British racism, the value of these properties fell, and landlords actively sought to sell. West Indians who had saved enough to lay down a deposit on their rented properties, found that they could obtain a mortgage and purchase property at an affordable price. Later, these properties were to escalate in value as the formerly unpopular areas became desirable with the great increases in property values throughout much of London.

Dominicans found that they could sell their properties in London at vast profits. Many returned home to Dominica and built very desirable properties on the 'family land'

they had left behind in their homeland. They were also encouraged by the Dominican government to return home with their wealth in order to help the sagging Dominican economy. The Government offered them land for housing in return for that help. This resulted in new enclaves in Dominica, as returned migrants were given plots to build on in the same areas. While certainly helping the economy of Dominica with the available finances they brought with them, returned migrants found a great deal of jealousy directed towards them from Dominicans who had not themselves migrated (see Wilson 1969; 1973). Indeed, Dominicans did not even acknowledge returned migrants as Dominican, referring to them instead as 'The English'.

Consequently, to obtain differing perspectives of Dominican inhabitants, my main informants consisted of a member of each category: a returned migrant; and a Dominican who had not left the island to live overseas.

'Albert', was a retired returned migrant who had lived in England for thirty years and who had returned to Canefield in Dominica with his British wife 'Maureen', six years previously. Canefield, as the name suggests was once the site of a plantation and so is an area of relatively flat land. Its desirability as prime building land was utilized by the government who used it as a lure to tempt rich ex-migrants to return home with their wealth. The government agreed to give plots of land to returned migrants, who in turn would bring much needed income to various shops and industries in the country.

Albert and Maureen had sold their property in Notting Hill in London, and built a sizable home, bar, and an apartment in Canefield. Along with my son, I rented Albert and Maureen's apartment and spent many days and evenings talking to (and sometimes serving) customers in their bar. This was a very useful exercise as the bar afforded me access to many people I would not otherwise have met. Not only did I meet many people involved in banana production or trade, I also met people who proved to be useful contacts in other ways. I found that nepotism is quite evident in Dominica. For example, when I needed a visa extension I went to the Government Offices and asked to speak to the Minister for Trade and Tourism (one of Albert's regular customers and a returned migrant). Albert had told me to make sure that I asked to speak to the Minister himself, and that I gave my name to the receptionist. After a short while the Minister came into the reception area and welcomed me into his office. He told me 'Wendy, you should have told me you were coming, I would have sent a car for you'. Needless to say, obtaining my visa extension was a pleasantly untraumatic experience.

Albert later explained that I hadn't experienced any problems extending my visa because, "*Make him [the Minister] feel good, make me feel good, you feel good, everybody feel good*". What I understood of Albert's explanation was that this was a system of favours owed and received. The Minister felt good by extending my visa in such a courteous manner. Not only because of the gratitude from me, but also from Albert. Albert would also feel good as his guest (and therefore himself) had been honoured by the Minister. The Minister of Trade and Tourism was by no means the only important person to frequent Albert's bar. Presumably preferential treatment in the bar would be granted to the Minister in return for his courtesies. This may not sound like adequate reward for his investment, until one reads the literature from the region on 'reputation and respectability', (see Wilson 1969:1973.)

Another advantage to renting Albert's apartment was that it was accessed from the bar. It thus afforded me a certain security that I may not otherwise have felt. Dominica, due to scarcity of beaches and lack of an international airport, does not receive many tourists. White faces are correspondingly few and far between in Dominica, and normally only seen in the capital Roseau. Roseau receives a fortnightly visit by an American cruise ship, the passengers of which come to shore for two hours to shop in the market. While I found many Dominicans to be extremely friendly, I also noted a good deal of racism directed towards my son and I. For example, it was quite common for us to hear words such as 'go home whitey' shouted from passing vehicles. This was something we had never experienced during all of our time in Martinique. In fact I was to learn that Maureen, who had been resident in Dominica for six years, never ventured out alone, even in the morning.

My other main informant was a Dominican who had always lived in Dominica. 'Viper' (it is quite common for non-migrant Dominican men to use pseudonyms) was a Castle Bruce resident who had a haulage firm situated in Canefield. Many of Albert's neighbours and customers, and indeed Albert himself grew bananas on their own land. Viper did not personally grow bananas. He was however a useful informant as he was one of the truck owner-drivers who transported bananas from the holding bay in Portsmouth, to the docks in Roseau. I was therefore able to gain first-hand experience of the process of banana production to delivery.

With the purpose of informing me about the precarious relationship between returned migrants and non-migrants, Albert implored me not to antagonize Viper in any way that would harm his business. He told me that if Viper were upset in any way, then he (Albert) might as well 'pack up the bar and go back to England', because if one Dominican (non-migrant) vetoed a returned-migrant's business, then all non-migrants would do the same.

One other, rather interesting incident highlighted the mutual dislike between return migrants and non-migrants. This involved Viper's business and Canefield residents. Viper's haulage firm was situated in the centre of the exclusively residential Canefield area. It was located on land belonging to an absent migrant who, according to my informants, either had no idea that his land was being used by a third party, or knew about it but did not wish to complain. In the latter event the owner of the land was said not to wish to complain for fear of reprisal should he return to Dominica.

The site of the business was an eyesore. A makeshift office and tool shed surrounded by rusting vehicles, discarded tyres, and several trucks in various stages of disrepair were overlooked by the pristine verandahs and balconies of the Canefield residencies. Albert's bar was frequently the venue for acrimonious complaints about the site by residents. However, complaints were never voiced when non-migrants were present. One such complaint concerned the problem of mosquitoes. Two unused flat-back trucks had accumulated water and had become a breeding ground for mosquitoes. Another, more pressing complaint involved Viper's non-prosecution for an offence which attracted a custodial sentence.

A small child had been rushed to hospital suffering from carbon monoxide poisoning.



This had occurred because one of Viper's trucks had a faulty exhaust mechanism. The noxious emission had been expelled when the engine of the stationary truck had been turned over for a protracted length of time. Viper was contacted by the Environmental Health Department and ordered to terminate operations on the premises. After ignoring this order, Viper was informed that he was in contempt of court. Canefield residents complained anonymously to the press that Viper should be committed to prison since he had refused to obey a Court Order. The press recorded a senior police officer as commenting "I know people have been charged with contempt of court for far less than that. It makes you wonder whether some people in Dominica are really above the law"<sup>6</sup>.

### 1.5 Literature Review

The literature review is not attended to in chronological or alphabetical order. Instead, the main authors are considered in order of their appearance in this dissertation. A correlation can however be seen between the chronological order (the dates of the various cited references), and the sequencing of the main works discussed in this dissertation. My intention in using this method of sequencing to compile a literary review is twofold. First, in this way the literature review can act as a microstudy, enabling the reader to pre-establish the framework of the dissertation. Second, I wish to show the theoretical connection, where relevant between the various authors. The material discussed in the literature review commences with chapter two. The focus of this review is the history of Caribbean culture, land transmission and banana farming. It also offers an overview of development theories. The existing literature, when interpreted through a framework of development theories, shows a historical progression that can be correlated with the experiences, and subsequent resistance of Dominican farmers to Western hegemony.

**Lennox Honychurch** (1995) originally wrote *The Dominica Story* to be broadcast as a radio series. It is a comprehensive account of the history of Dominica, spanning the period of prehistory, with the formation of the island, to the mid 1990s. Honychurch is a historian, ethnologist, and museum curator with a particular interest in the flora, fauna, and material culture of the island. His account of Dominica correspondingly acknowledges the impact of geography, ecology, folklore and social custom on the people of Dominica.

Although Honychurch was born in Dominica, his parents were European immigrants. Their emigration to Dominica was to have tragic consequences which led to the murder of Mr Honychurch senior by a group known as the 'Dreads'. Despite this, Lennox Honychurch bears no hatred towards the country of his birth, on the contrary he celebrates it. He is proud of his country, proud of his West Indian accent and proud of the people who have fought so hard against almost insurmountable adversity, and are fighting still.

I met Lennox Honychurch in Albert and Maureen's bar in 1998. He was introduced to by Albert as '*the man who write the book about Dominica, everyone have Mr's book in their place*'. I promised Lennox that I would get a copy of his book and read it

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<sup>6</sup> The Independent July 8 1998.

myself, little realizing that it was a Macmillan publication that would serve as a major tool in my own dissertation. Lennox is a man of many talents, he is a radio and television broadcaster, journalist, author, artist and conservationist. His book *The Dominica Story* is not only an informative work on the history of Dominica, but also a great insight into Dominican culture.

**Sidney Mintz** (1967; 1974; 1996) is interested in the beginnings of Caribbean culture. Mintz's predecessors had considered Caribbean culture to be directly related to African culture. Mintz however, argues African cultures were too diverse to be ameliorated and followed traditionally by an admixture of people. A child born into slavery often had no idea which of the various African tribes were ancestral to him or her. Something new had to take the place of many different cultures and traditions from Africa, as increasingly, successive generations of dispossessed people were born in the Caribbean. Mintz discusses various possibilities leading to the formation of the culture, then after dismissing them, goes on to suggest that the plantation had more influence on its workers than simply that of a workplace. Mintz places the birth of Caribbean culture firmly on the doorstep of the plantation. This new culture emerged as diverse groups of slaves formed strategies for survival in a plantation environment. Survival skills such as subsistence farming were continued as a peasantry superseded slavery.

In *Capitalism and Slavery* (1964), **Eric Williams** demonstrates that history is of immense importance in the analyses of social data. Williams shows quite clearly, that the Industrial Revolution and development of the West could not have occurred without the forced relocation and labour of slaves transported to the West Indies and America. He argues most convincingly that the economic advancement of the West was not a result of technological progress forwarded by intellectual prowess. Rather, it was the slave trade which was ultimately responsible for the fact. It was the slave trade that financed the industrial revolution in the West, and it was the industrial revolution that heralded the large-scale introduction of the cash nexus. The cash nexus was the catalyst that began the process of underdevelopment for much of the rest of the world.

Williams analyses the rise and fall of the plantocracy, and notes that the abolition of slavery did not pre-date the economic decline of the planter classes. Williams demonstrates that abolition was not the result of some sort of moral indignation. He is outraged to relate that conversely, it was the decline of profits made through slavery that prompted abolition. Like Marx, Williams's shows the economic structure of society to be paramount both to historical and social change.

*Capital and Slavery* was an integral text in the compilation of this dissertation for two main reasons. Firstly, Williams demonstrates the great value in using an historical approach in analyses. Williams shows how slavery, the rise and fall of the plantocracy, the Industrial Revolution, and the globalisation of capitalism are not isolated incidents, but a series of events which can be traced back from one to the other. In effect, he persuades us quite convincingly that the West could never have achieved economic supremacy without the enforced passage of Africans to the West Indies and America.

Secondly, and in relation to the former reason, Williams highlights the emergence of neoliberalism. Neoliberalism is derived from the classical liberalism of the nineteenth century. Here, Britain and other imperialist countries justified colonialism with the ideology of 'free trade'. Classical liberalism was ended with growing discontent and revolt in the 1930s, but was replaced with other forms of liberalism. These have had many nomenclatures, including Thatcherism, Reganomics, new classical economics, structural adjustment, etc. The designers of neoliberalism include powerful institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. These institutions have an immense interest in the management of capital, and the implementation of various strategies to achieve and maintain control of capital and the market. Various methods are employed to implement this including: free trade, ceilings set on wages, privatization, decreasing social expenditure, and appropriation of natural resources.

**Besson** (1979; 1987; 1995; 1997), is very interested in Mintz's theory. She focuses on land transmission and notes that the Caribbean method of transmission can be regarded as a form of passive resistance. As ex-slaves finally began to own the land they worked, they started to develop feelings of permanence and stability. They felt secure in the knowledge that they could not be ousted from the land they owned, and also felt a great sense of relief that finally, there was a place where they could remain as ancestors for future generations.

Besson also notes what she calls 'a paradox in the Caribbean'. Besson's paradox can be described as follows. For the very reason that the land is imbued with permanence and stability, it cannot be sold or divided. There are simply too many owners of the land to allow any one nuclear family to dispose of it. Individuals who happen to be living and working on the land must always be aware that anything they build or plant is not their own private property, but actually belongs to the entire extended family, and to future generations of the family. The paradox therefore is this, the land is of the utmost value and importance, yet is ultimately restrictive.

**Trouillot** (1988), writing from a Marxist perspective, completes the first major ethnographical study of Dominica. Trouillot analyses social and economic life around the cycle of banana production and marketing. He agrees with one of Marx's most valuable lessons, that in order to understand the present, we must first step back and familiarize ourselves with the past. Trouillot understood from Marxist teachings that an analysis of the present can only be attained by understanding that the present is shaped by the past. Consequently, Trouillot begins his study of Dominica by researching its history. Focusing especially on work and alienation, Trouillot's study commences temporally with slavery and the plantation.

There is however, a major misunderstanding between Marx's work, and Trouillot's treatment of the same. Trouillot diverges away from pure Marxism in favour of an early dependency theory approach. While Marxist theory was a major strand of dependency theory, its application differed considerably. Early dependency theorists were concerned with advocating socialism as a mechanism to treat the economic disparities that resulted from capitalism.

Marx however, did not profess to offer a solution to world ills. He simply made an analysis of the economic situation of his time. While he anticipated the inevitability of a revolution, he did not suggest that countries or individuals should opt out of the capitalist system. Rather, he proposed that a revolution would be followed by a new economic order (called here socialism). This would not be a managed event, but the natural outcome of the accumulation of capital by a small minority.

Early dependency theorists misinterpreted Marx with their insistence that communism should be actively sought rather than awaited. They seem to suggest that communism is ideally proactive rather than reactive, that seeking communism in the present will alleviate the greater damage accumulated over a lengthy period of capitalism. The suggestion would follow that the benefits of communism would be available at a faster rate, if capitalism were intentionally axed. Trouillot's leanings towards early dependency theory are revealed when he urges Dominica to opt out of the world capitalist system and to explore communism. However, his work remains an important and fascinating study.

**Wilson** (1969; 1973) discusses the idea of 'reputation and respectability'. Reputation, he writes, is a desired male characteristic. The state of reputation is achieved through the pursuit of male-dominated activities including pride in heavy drinking, and the fathering of many children by different women. Writers such as Trouillot (1988) and **Barrow** (1992), also consider banana farming to have connotations of reputation. For Trouillot, the ability to drive a banana truck through muddy terrain without damaging the bananas, is a mechanism whereby men may gain reputation. For Barrow, banana farming, unlike other forms of agriculture, is considered to be a matter of pride.

Wilson's 'respectability', is a female-dominated attribute. Women strive to gain respectability through sobriety, church attendance, and emulating the social mores of the West. While it is most commonly women who seek to attain respectability, it is not unusual for men to also aspire to respectability. Barrow notes that banana farming is also a method by which respectability can be achieved, as politicians, teachers, and other professionals take great pride in the cultivation of bananas.

According to Wilson, reputation and respectability are the methods by which people can gain social standing within the Caribbean. However, this is countered by a form of social control which Wilson terms 'crab antics'. He argues that people have no desire to see their neighbours become upwardly mobile, either economically or socially. Through means such as gossip, ridicule, and accusations of witchcraft, anyone who appears to be gaining more reputation or respectability than the average person can be brought under control. Wilson uses the analogy of a bucket of crabs to illustrate this. He argues that West Indian society can be likened to a bucket of crabs because only the largest crab if any, will have the ability to climb out of the bucket. Just as the other crabs in the bucket will grasp onto any crab that tries to crawl over them and climb out, so will people try to grasp their neighbours and pull them back to their own level.

The material discussed in chapter three refers to modernisation theory. This theory was predominant during the 1950s and 1960s. Modernisation theorists considered that Third World countries could become developed by emulating the economic and social practices of the West. An example of the work of these theorists is illustrated by

**Lerner** (1958). Lerner drew attention to the economic practices of a grocer in a village in Turkey. Lerner noted that the grocer was unsatisfied with village life and wished to manage a western-type shop. The initial observations of the village were made by a colleague of Lerner's. When Lerner visited the village four years later, he noted many instances of 'modernisation'. Lerner accredited these modernisations to 'mobile personalities', such as the grocer. He argued that these individuals were empathetic personalities, a characteristic of modern societies. For Lerner, those who could empathize with the West, were catalysts for the transition to a modern society.

There is however a considerable overlap between the dates that modernisation theorists and others wrote their analyses. **Brierly** (1974) consistently argued from the modernisation perspective, that small farmers in Grenada were characterised by limited education and lack of enterprise. He added that these farmers consequently had little interest in maximising their gains by adopting good farming practices, but were backward and inefficient.

**Smith** (1966) however, noted that modernisation theory was reductionist. He argued that it was a misconception to believe that 'obstacles' to development (such as those offered by Brierly), were the properties of a common value system. Smith asserts that for the Caribbean region in particular, there is actually a 'plural society'. This consists of 'stratas' of society that are separate in terms of value systems, but connected through economic necessity. Quite unsurprisingly, in Marxist terms, it is the wealthy minority that controls the majority. This control of course is both economic and social, a factor which Smith identifies as negating the validity of any study of common value systems. Hence, the idea of 'obstacles' is an erroneous one.

**Smith** continued with the subject of plural societies in 1974. He commented that politics were generically applied across the differing socioeconomic strata, but that unequal opportunities would result in divergent forms of social organisation. Smith argued that these differing forms of social organisation would entail structural, social, and cultural pluralism. Smith consistently argued against the modernisation theorists preoccupation with 'obstacles to development', arguing instead, that the important area of focus was the logistics of the incorporation of people into society.

**Mead** writing in 1971, presented yet another point of view. While not by any means a modernisation theorist herself, she argues that there are certain instances where societies *must* emulate the West. This she writes, is not for the benefit of those societies, but for the good of the wider world. However Mead also demonstrated a great deal of empathy for small scale societies, noting the many disadvantages that imported technology brought with it to Third World Countries. Indeed in direct contrast to her argument that some societies should emulate the West, she argues that people should have the right to refuse the imposition of Western involvement.

Dependency theory (chapter 4.), began as a reaction against modernisation theory. Initially essentially flawed, this theory suggested that Third World countries would benefit by withdrawing from the global market system. Early dependency theorists such as **Frank** (1969; 1975; 1978), based their work on a misinterpretation of Marx's writings. Here, Marx's theory that capital would eventually become centralised to the extent that it would be held by a small minority, was taken to its literal conclusion.

Marx argued that the process of the centralisation of capital would create dissatisfaction among the majority, and culminate in a social and economic revolution. Frank considered that by bringing forward the aftermath of the revolution, in other words by opting out of the capitalist system in favour of a socialist system, that the Third World countries could gain equality with the West at a much greater speed.

Frank was later to refine his theory to include Marx's insistence that the process of revolution could only occur if certain conditions were met. These conditions were the inevitable centralisation of the economy and its control by an elite few, followed by the uprising of the working classes in the form of a revolution. It was only after these conditions were met, that the restructuring of the economic and social system could commence.

**Long** (2001) is concerned with neopopulist theory. He discusses this theory variously as an actor orientated approach, or as a 'theory from below'. Long argues that it is highly inappropriate for workers from developed countries to presume they have superior knowledge with which they can assist less developed countries. He writes that this is a problem of 'realities'. In other words the realities, or the knowledge of two different peoples are dissimilar. 'One should not assume a shared vision or common negotiating platform' (Long 2001:90).

Long also maintains that it has long been believed by Western theorists that power has always been wielded by the large financial concerns including banks and multinationals. He notes that perception of people's ability to determine their own course of action is extremely undermined by the idea that power comes from above. Long writes that people actually can, and do resist Western hegemony. He attests, '...under certain circumstances, so-called less 'powerful' actors can make their voices heard and dramatically change the course of events...' (Long 2001:12). For example, Long notes that during the 1999 WTO meeting in Seattle, hundreds of protesters marched in the street and managed to block the assembly's acceptance of the notion of 'free trade'.

## **2. Colonialism and Slavery: Imperialism**

'It is estimated that the Caribbean received 47 per cent of the 10 million slaves brought from Africa to the Americas' (Deere 1990:8). These slaves were imported into the Caribbean with the express purpose of creating wealth for Western countries. The majority of the slaves were put to work in the fields of agricultural estates. By the eighteenth century a system of plantation agriculture had been established in the West

Indies<sup>7</sup> that ‘...was designed to produce a limited number of export crops and that structured the production and distribution system for goods and services within the Caribbean, as well as to Europe, North America, Asia, and Africa’ (Andreatta 1998:415).

The plantation system was an amalgamation of forced labour and free enterprise that ‘created a new economic blend’[although] ‘the plantation was a political and social institution, and not merely an economic one’ (Mintz 1967:143). Mintz defines the primary features of Caribbean colonial history as ‘the rapid and thorough elimination of native peoples and their replacement with migrant stocks; the inception of a curiously industrial and - at the time - “modern” system of agricultural capitalism based on forced labor; and the “fit” of these features with the particular physiographic characteristics of the area itself’ (Mintz 1967:144).

Settlement patterns, access to land, ownership of resources, and class relations were all to be influenced by the plantation system long after the decline of slavery. Andreatta notes that in the present day, ‘...plantation economy is characterized by monocrop production, limited intersectorial linkages, low value, export and import orientation, external market dependency, and foreign control’ (Andreatta 1998: 416).

Mintz (1967) draws attention to the impact that the colonization of the Caribbean had on the rest of the world. He notes that the Caribbean islands, and also the mainland colonies, although the latter to a lesser extent, are the locus of the earliest phase of western overseas colonial venture. He comments that one cannot begin a characterisation of the Caribbean region without noticing this. Only after the Caribbean area was colonized did European colonizers begin to look elsewhere. The exploitation of the Caribbean region saw the initiation of both the earliest experiments in overseas capitalism, and the earliest attempts at ‘development’ undertaken by the western powers. Mintz writes that these early experiments involved the almost total extirpation

‘of native populations through war, disease, and maltreatment; within a scant half-century after initial contact, many of the islands had been scourged of their aboriginal peoples. Those who were not killed off, or who had not died off, were assimilated genetically (and in good part culturally) by their conquerors’ (Mintz 1966: 141-142).

Williams discusses the triangular trade which supplied slaves, purchased with British manufactures, to the plantations. The slaves produced cotton, sugar, and other products, creating new industries in Britain to process these products. Goods produced in this way not only provided the resources to purchase slaves in greater numbers, but also financed the Industrial Revolution (Williams 1964:52). Frank notes ‘That England and other countries did not develop by relying on their own efforts has been exhaustively proven’ (Frank 1969:47). For example, James Watt’s steam engine was financed with capital accumulated from the sugar produced in the West Indies (Williams 1964:102). Sugar cane had become one of the major traditional exports for the Caribbean region by the mid-seventeenth century, and continued to be a major production until the late eighteenth century (Andreatta 1998:416).

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<sup>7</sup> The whole region is known as the ‘Caribbean’, while the designation ‘West Indies’ is reserved for those countries which were previously British colonies.

Eventually, the production of sugar in excess of consumption led to its inclusion in the European market. Here, it had to compete with Brazilian and Cuban sugar, which was a much cheaper commodity. West Indian planters were originally subsidized to allow them to continue to market their product, a situation quite intolerable to capitalists. Moreover, the cost to the plantation owner of keeping slaves in food and clothing, not only in their productive periods, but also in time of illness and old age etc., was greater than the cost of paying a wage for work produced. Wallerstein points out that 'The total of the recurrent cost of labour was *higher* if one used slave labour than if one used coerced cash-crop labour' (Wallerstein 1980:174).

It was for these reasons that the financial viability of the plantations declined, and abolition was sought. Williams points out that slavery and monopoly were the means by which the commercial capitalism of the 18th century developed the wealth of Europe. He writes, 'But in so doing it helped to create the industrial capitalism of the 19th century, which turned round and destroyed the power of commercial capitalism, slavery, and all its works. Without a grasp of these economic changes the history of the period is meaningless' (Williams 1964:210).

Hoogvelt points out that abolition did not free the ex-slaves but *proletarianised* them, a distinction with which she questions the degree of their new found 'freedom'. She argues that in retrospect it is not necessary to make any kind of sophisticated Marxist analysis to interpret the colonial viewpoint as clearly being a social consciousness which worked to conceal existing objective relationships already in place by 'standing them 'on their head' in truly Hegelian fashion. We now know that the colony had to 'free them, educate them, care for them' in order to *proletarianise* them rather than the other way round, and that trade was a new way of enslaving rather than liberating Africans' (Hoogvelt 1976:111).

The innovations of the Industrial Revolution during the mercantile period did not initially increase wages in the metropolis. Britain's exports increased to a greater degree than her imports. By keeping her export prices low, Britain initiated a decline in the industrial outputs of Latin America, Africa, and Asia. Once manufacture and industry in these areas were retarded, Britain both raised her prices and began to export increasingly more technologically advanced goods. Frank writes, '...the international division of labour and the world market operated as though metropolitan Britain 'intentionally' lowered her prices in order to destroy local manufacturing competition...' Frank 1978:102). Frank discusses the principle of unequal exchange, and the argument (Emmanuel; Palloix; Amin; Marx; Preobazhensky, in Frank 1978:11) that,

...unequal exchange (of equal values) between the metropolis and the colonies, at least since the 19th century, is determined by unequal wage levels between the same...trade between high wage and low wage countries results in unequal exchange of equal values...and thereby contributes to the capital accumulation and development of the former at the expense of the latter.



Frank notes that Emmanuel's statement 'development thus appears not as the cause but as the consequence of high wage' (Frank 1978:12), does not explain the origins of this discrepancy between wage-rates. To address this discrepancy Frank refers to the origins of capitalist exploitation of the peripheries.

The world capitalist system was considered to be either caused by, or resulting in imperialism. There are various different approaches to the question of imperialism<sup>8</sup>. In 1902 John Hobson argued that imperialism was not a result of world capitalism, but a result of an inadequate home market. For Hobson, imperialism was grounded in economic incentives. He maintained that 'maladjustments in the system - primarily inequitable distribution of income - result in an excess of production over demand and an excess of available capital over investment opportunities. These surpluses lead to a search for new markets and to the establishment of colonial relationships' (in Terpstra and David 1991:195).

Lenin based his perspective on Hobson's analysis concerning the export of capital, but argued that imperialism was not an effect of maladjustments within the system, but was a sequential phase of capitalism. Imperialism was for Lenin, 'the monopoly stage of capitalism' (Lenin [1916]:108, in Fieldhouse 1967).

For Lenin, a complete understanding of the power of monopolies was not possible without an understanding of the role played by the banks. While he acknowledges that imperialism and colonial policy obtained well before the beginning of the 20th century (using imperial Rome as an example), he argues that latter-day imperialism is something different. It is based not on the movement of goods but on the movement of capital. 'Under the old capitalism, when free competition prevailed, the export of *goods* was the most typical feature. Under modern capitalism, when monopolies prevail, the export of *capital* has become the typical feature...' (Lenin 1967 [1916]: 103, in Fieldhouse 1967).

Lenin notes that the power of the banks can be traced to 1897, when significant mergers occurred. 'Thus, the beginning of the 20th century marks the turning point from the old capitalism to the new, from the domination of capital in general to the domination of financial capital...' (Lenin 1967 [1916]:102, in Fieldhouse 1967). And later, 'On the threshold of the 20th century, we see a new type of monopoly coming into existence... An enormous 'super-abundance of capital' has accumulated in the advanced countries' (Lenin 1967 [1916]:103, in Fieldhouse 1967). Lenin explains that this capital is exported with the object of increasing profit, and has the effect of increasing the predominance of capitalism around the world.

According to Marx and Engels (1948 [1848]:13), 'In a word, it [capitalism] creates a world after its own image'. Capital is not used for example to subsidize agriculture, but to encourage industrial concerns, and therefore to increase consumption of marketable goods and hence increase capital. Lenin notes that,

It goes without saying that if capitalism could develop agriculture, which today lags far behind industry everywhere, if it could raise the standard of living of the masses...there could be no talk of a superabundance of capital...if capitalism did

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<sup>8</sup>Wolf (1982: 300) notes that Marx did not use the term *imperialism*, but used the term 'foreign trade'.

these things it would not be capitalism; for uneven development and wretched conditions of the masses are fundamental and inevitable conditions and premises of this mode of production. As long as capitalism remains what it is, surplus capital will never be utilized for the purpose of raising the standard of living of the masses in a given country, for this would mean a decline in profits for the capitalists...(Lenin [1916] In Fieldhouse 1967: pp 103-104).

Hoogvelt discusses the creation of currency zones whereby the colonies were required to employ the currency of the mother country as a reserve currency. This kept a strict control over trading which continues to the present day. '...the trading patterns of underdeveloped countries are not only characterised by a concentration of export commodities but also by a concentration of trading partners. In other words, the mother country continues to be the most important trading partner' (Hoogvelt 1976:72-73). Hoogvelt points out that it was the enforced requirement of using the currency of the mother country as a reserve currency that enabled the mother country to establish a trade deficit with her colonies.

The classical Marxist theory of imperialism has generally been considered by dependency theorists to be Eurocentric. Lenin for example, was concerned with '...analyzing the characteristic stage of capitalism which resulted in imperialism, and its effects on the European class struggle' (O'Brien 1974:11), while having little regard for its effect on the imperialised countries. To be fair, as Albert (1983:17) points out, prior to the 1930s changes associated with the expansion of capitalism were analyzed in the economically advanced countries because those countries *had* advanced economically. It was considered *at that time*, that underdeveloped countries would simply follow the same developmental path.

Bukharin discusses 'conquest policies' of capitalist states. Because overproduction of manufactured products results in a corresponding underproduction of agricultural produce, it becomes necessary to appropriate an agrarian 'economic supplement' (Bukharin [1915], in Fieldhouse 1967:95). Like Lenin, Bukharin discusses the power of the banks and the export of capital. The competition between developed countries to extract raw material and export capital incurs a conscious strengthening of military power. Military power, funded with financial capital, has the express intent of protecting the financial concerns of the state. For Bukharin then, war, or the threat of war, is a mechanism with which to forward the financial interests of the various states.

For this reason, Bukharin defines imperialism as 'a policy of conquest of financial capital' which 'characterizes imperialism as a definite historical entity' (Bukharin [1915], in Fieldhouse 1967:97). The global economy consists of an amalgamation of the competing financial interests of various states, interconnected in a system of exchange. This results in a competitive 'war of exchange', and 'the further existence of capitalism and imperialism becomes nothing more nor less than a question of the interrelation between mutually struggling class forces' (Bukharin [1915], in Fieldhouse 1967:98). For Bukharin, the structure of the global economy created a necessity for the pursuit of an imperialist policy. He predicted that capitalist expansion, because of its ruthlessness and competitive nature, would lead 'sooner or later to a bloody climax...' (ibid.).

Rosa Luxemburg considered that 'Imperialism is the political expression of the accumulation of capital in its competitive struggle for what remains still open of the non-capitalist environment' (Luxemburg [1913], in Fieldhouse 1967:89). And again, 'the imperialist phase of capitalist accumulation, which implies competition, comprises the industrialization and capitalist emancipation of the hinterland (O'Brien 1974:11). Luxemburg, although herself a classical Marxist, disagreed with Marx's treatment of capitalist consumption in that it consisted of only two classes, capitalists and workers. Because capitalist production was in excess of consumption, a third group of people was needed to consume the excess surplus. Luxemburg defines this third group of people as '...a strata of buyers outside capitalist society' (Luxemburg [1913], in Fieldhouse 1967: 86).

Luxemburg notes two transactions of the international capitalist trade. The first transaction involves finding a store of raw materials with which to produce manufactured goods. The second transaction involves finding a market for the surplus product which cannot be utilized by the metropolis itself. Luxemburg states that the international trade is '...a prime necessity for the historical existence of capitalism - an international trade which under actual conditions is essentially an exchange between capitalistic and non-capitalistic modes of production' (Luxemburg [1913], in Fieldhouse 1967:88).

For Luxemburg, capitalist emancipation of the hinterland is concerned with the appropriation of labour. Labour, she argues, is an essential element in the accumulation of capital. For the accumulation of capital to increase, there must be an increase in labour power. The extra labour power must be acquired in those countries from where raw materials are to be extracted. Where the pre-capitalist mode of production was in operation, labour would be emancipated and engulfed by the capitalist wage system. Luxemburg calls this process '...one of the indispensable historical bases of capitalism' (Luxemburg [1913], in Fieldhouse 1967:89).

## **2.1 Colonialism and Slavery: The Emerging Peasantry**

Beriss notes the relatively recent attempts by anthropologists to alter pre-existing notions within the discipline that culture is distinct, and exists or evolves without the influence of the wider world. He writes that these attempts have 'included suggestions that peoples' ideas and activities stand in dialectical relationship to a global capitalist economic system, to a global context of cultural exchanges and/or that people situate themselves across and between many social contexts as transnationals' (Beriss 1993:107). He offers the suggestion that anthropologists should shift emphasis away from producing an account of 'some local, cultural bedrock' (Beriss 1993:ibid) and should focus instead on the methods people use to draw on a variety of local and global resources in order to obtain their individual and collective identities. However, he does maintain the existence of unified, coherent cultures.

Rosaldo (1989) in a similar fashion, suggests that anthropologists should break away from the idea that cultures are distinct holistic entities through which people formulate their world views. Rosaldo argues that anthropologists should focus instead on

cultural border zones, where cultures meet and merge, and where communities and ideas of culture are in constant flux. The Caribbean region is an ideal focus on which to examine the meeting point of multiple cultures. A large influx of people from various cultural backgrounds, both African and European, and also a resident population of Carib Indians were to form the basis of the Caribbean populations of today.

A major argument preoccupying Caribbeanists has been the determination of the genesis of Caribbean culture. Is this concerned with retentions, reinterpretations, and syncretisms of African tradition, imported into the West Indies along with the slaves who perpetuated it? Or is Caribbean culture an example of the invention of tradition *in situ*? If so, was this new cultural form an imposition of European values and beliefs imparted by Western slave-owners, missionaries and European legal systems? Or was it invented by the slaves themselves as a means to cope with slavery? Then again, was it invented with the plantation system, with the peasantry which succeeded it, or with a combination of the two?

The latter argument will be proposed here. Caribbean culture is *sui genesis*, initiated with the plantation system, and moulded with the growth of a peasant workforce. Indeed Mintz described plantations as 'factories in the field' which have 'continuously affected not only the economy of the region, but also the character of its communities and the people in them' (Mintz 1974:257). Smith notes that plantations were among the first industrial organizations in which the workers were separated from the means of production and subjected to something like factory discipline (Smith 1967:231). As Fog Olwig states, it was subsistence farming, which slaves were allowed to perform in areas of little use to the plantations which enabled the emergence of an Afro-Caribbean cultural tradition. This '...led to the development of economic and social relations among the slaves, both on the provision grounds themselves and at the islands markets where slaves could sell their produce' (Fog Olwig 1995:105).

As for the idea that Caribbean culture was originally imported, either from Africa or from the West, Mintz writes it was typical, that neither the masters nor the slaves could manage to impart more than a small percentage of their cultural or social traditions to the new world. As the plantation system evolved in the colonies, it neither created a replica of the European societies that implemented it, nor of the African societies from where the slaves originated. On the contrary, owing to a lack of social and traditional continuity both European and African inhabitants of the plantations had no other recourse but to modify, innovate, and synthesize the two cultural and social forms to enable them to function. Eventually as the European planters came to legitimize their unions with slave women, and began to acknowledge their own alienation from their European backgrounds, Creole culture began to emerge in its true sense. Mintz adds that if both European and African groups had remained separate, with no admixture of the gene pool, 'social groupings intermediate in physical type and with status identities potentially different from those of either the masters or the slaves could not have appeared, and the original bipolar social structures could have been maintained indefinitely, and in relative purity' (Mintz 1967:146-147).

Long discusses culture formation in similar micro terms, while also noting the influence of large scale (macro) structures and trends. He argues that a series of detached individuals and atomised decision makers does not in any way constitute the world of social action. On the contrary, he notes ‘Persons and their environments (of which include individuals and institutional frames) are reciprocally constituted. Moreover, they do not simply respond to the imperatives of cultural norms and values, or to the dictates of dominant discourses’ (Long 2001:4).

From a Marxist perspective, the islands of the Caribbean are an ideal place to study culture as we can actually pinpoint a time in history where the study should begin. I will follow Mintz (1974), and Besson (1997), who argue that Caribbean culture represents a resistance to the imposition of Western hegemony. Beginning with the plantation system<sup>9</sup>, I will explore Dominican peasantry in the historical context of its relationship to the environment. With the abolition of slavery, the topography of Dominica was to prove instrumental in the consequent decline of the plantation and the formation of a peasant (rather than a proletariat) labour force.

Trouillot (1988:68-75), begins his analysis of the peasant labour process in Dominica with a discussion of slaves’ rights to productive property. A well-developed proto-peasantry based on provision gardens was in evidence before emancipation. Colonialist slave-owners found it economically viable to allow slaves to produce food for themselves, rather than to feed them. Pressure from European liberals led to “an act to amend the laws relating to slaves” on 28 June 1831 (Trouillot 1988:74). Planters were required to provide blankets and clothing for the slaves, or to allow them adequate independent labour time in lieu. This act also stated that each slave should be allotted at least half an acre for this purpose. Decline in plantation profits meant that the majority of plantation owners opted to allocate plots rather than to provide food and clothing.

This alternative was especially attractive to Dominican plantation owners. In Dominica, with its rugged landscape, much land was unsuitable for plantation crops. Indeed Ragatz (1963:59) explains that land in Dominica was so difficult to cultivate that ploughing was an impossibility. Slaves were allowed to cultivate small plots of otherwise wasted land, leaving the best land free for plantation crops. The large-scale production of food for and by the slaves would have entailed the loss of land which could otherwise be utilized for plantation crops. The costs of overseeing labour, and the cost in lost production of plantation crops, were also factors which discouraged owners from direct responsibility in domestic food production. Once slaves began to cultivate their own subsistence crops, they could produce a surplus. By allowing the slaves to sell their surplus at market, the slave owners could pass on financial responsibility not only for feeding, but also for clothing the slaves, to the slaves themselves. Mintz notes ‘Created at the insistence of the masters to reduce the cost of feeding slaves, the plots and then the markets were to become training grounds for freedom, a basis for the eventual rise of a free peasantry’ (Mintz 1996:41).

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<sup>9</sup> Thomas (1988: 23-24) argues ‘the plantation did not in itself constitute a separate and historically distinct “mode of production”...[and is described] more accurately as ‘a colonial slave mode of production’ situated in the larger system of global capitalism’.

Similarly, factors leading to the abolition of slavery in 1807 were also driven by the market economy. Williams (1964) has shown that abolition was not primarily founded in morality, but was an effect of economic distress within the sugar plantocracy<sup>10</sup>. He writes that 'The West Indians, pampered and petted for a century and a half, made the mistake of elevating into a law of nature what was actually only a law of mercantilism...The rise and fall of mercantilism is the rise and fall of slavery' (Williams 1964:136). Ward notes that '...anti-slavery was a consequence rather than a cause of developments within the West Indies' (Ward 1965:19).

By the eighteenth century, war with France, and competition from subsidised European beet-sugar exports led to the decline of the sugarcane plantations (Ward 1965:46; Green 1976; Wolf 1982:316-317). Ward notes that the watershed marking the turning point of the fortunes of the British West Indies is located around 1815. This date also marks the fall of price of sugar cane (Ward 1965:18). The fall of sugar cane prices, and the aftermath of the Napoleonic wars forced a review of marketing transactions, and opened up new trade possibilities for Britain. This resulted in major agricultural changes, as Britain focused on plantations and cash cropping in lands other than the Caribbean. The social system of the Caribbean region was again to undergo structural change.

Emancipation in August 1834 did not beneficially alter the existing arrangements in workers' conditions (Green 1976:161). Former slaves were required to observe a four-year 'apprenticeship'<sup>11</sup>, but the Act for the Abolition of Slavery stressed the former owners' responsibility to provide their ex-slaves with either food or "ground adequate, both in quality and quantity, for his or her support, and within a reasonable distance from his or her usual place of abode" (Trouillot 1988:74). In return, the ex-slaves were required to labour for an unpaid forty hours per week and to perform eleven hours paid employment per week for their former masters (Honychurch 1995:123). In other words emancipation, which entailed former slaves being endowed with the status of legal personhood '...abrogated the customary right to medical care, access to free food, cultivating provisions on estate lands, and curtailed rudimentary support for education' (Fog Olwig 1995:4). Green notes that apprenticeship did little to alter existing labour relations as '...most planting attorneys and managers were unable to overcome their habitual reliance on force and intimidation' (Green 1976:131).

When workers had completed the compulsory apprenticeship, they were free either to leave, or to remain on the estate and negotiate labour relations. In other words the option to remain in their homes entailed the ex-slaves working as wage-labourers for their former masters. The ex-slaves had not expected this. They had assumed that their freedom would include a grant of land (Heuman 1995:128), as they had always considered the homes they had built themselves, on land they had cleared themselves, to be their own (Green 1976:296).

<sup>10</sup> The idea that morality, not economics was the driving force behind abolition is criticized by Williams (1964). He argues that had morality alone been the cause of abolition in the British West Indies, then the same morality would have stopped British consumers from purchasing slave-produced Brazilian and Cuban sugar, or slave-produced cotton from the United States.

<sup>11</sup> Originally ex-domestic and skilled slaves were to serve four, and ex-field slaves six years of apprenticeship. Growing discontent among ex-slaves and abolitionists alike brought about a homogenisation of the period of apprenticeship.

Rather than remain on the estates as wage-labourers, the availability of fertile land in the mountains effected a withdrawal of labour from the plantations in favour of subsistence farming. Besson notes that 'this movement however, took place in the face of severe planter resistance to peasant settlement' (Besson 1987:13). Ahmed and Afroz note that the ex-slaves who left the plantations 'formed the beginning of an independent peasantry which pioneered the introduction of new export crops to replace sugar (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:10).

According to Beckford the abolition of slavery was '...followed by a movement of the ex-slaves away from the plantations in an effort to establish an independent existence as far removed as possible from the brutalities of the slave plantation' (Beckford 1972:22). A substantial number of ex-slaves left within the first few days following the end of apprenticeship (Trouillot 1989:82). Cross (1979:113) writes that owners' fears of labour shortage, as manumitted slaves left the plantations, led many to offer small plots of land in exchange for labour. Many estate owners realized that if tenants were able to pay rent with the proceeds obtained from marketing provisions, they would be less likely to engage in wage-labour. To avoid this situation estate owners '...legislated to keep them dependent on the plantation as a landless proletariat' (Besson 1987:13). Ward explains that as a rule, peasantries and plantations are in competition, so that where one is strong the other one is weak (Ward 1965:32). Beckford notes that estate owners, '...made it difficult for the ex-slaves to secure land of their own and introduced measures to force them to continue working on the plantations' (Beckford 1972:92). One such measure was the estate owners insistence that rents be deducted from estate-wages (Green 1976:297). Ward notes that the various tactics employed to keep ex-slaves from leaving plantations in favour of acquiring their own land included laws of contracts and vagrancy, and restrictions on the acquisition of land. Ward adds that the ex-slaves who were successful in acquiring their own land were 'starved of governmental support in the provision of schools, roads, and other infrastructure, while being burdened with discriminatory taxes' (Ward 1965:40).

Trouillot (1988:84-87) notes that in Dominica, the majority of workers remained on, or moved to estates that offered metayer (sharecropping) or labour-rent arrangements, rather than wage labour. They were attracted by the freedom to organise their own workload being augmented with land and tools supplied by the estate owner. However, when estate owners wanted to reappropriate provision gardens, the peasants were made to relocate. Insecurity of property relations as tenants saw their neighbours evicted, eviction itself, and the desire to acquire provision land was more pressing than the desire to engage in wage labour. In view of the uncertainty of eviction, the Dominican peasants were engaging in reasonable behaviour by withdrawing from wage labour, or from labour-rent in favour of acquiring and working on their own land. Fog Olwig (1995:5) suggests that metayer arrangements, squatting, and the purchase of land all led to the establishment of a peasantry in the Caribbean.

Chayanov's model of peasant economy suggests that peasants are more actively interested in maintaining an equilibrium between minimum labour requirements, and adequate subsistence needs, than maximising profit. Chayanov's position being that 'peasants do not operate a business: They manage a household' (Finkler 1980:265).

Chayanov's model has been employed as an explanation of the *stability* of peasant society (Barlett 1980:142; Ellis 1988:51) but is perhaps, rather, a better explanation of the *formation* of a peasantry with regards to the decision of the Dominican proto-peasantry to withdraw from wage-labour. As Barlett (1980:143) points out, it is difficult to apply Chayanov's model to contemporary peasant society due to the 'demonstration effect' (Beckford 1972:205; Brazelton 1968:32; Demas 1975; Hawkings 1976:41; Levitt and Best 1975:53) as peasants increase their consumption of manufactured goods such as televisions etc. This increase would imply a shift in the equilibrium between subsistence and labour, which would invalidate the model.

That the former slaves opted for subsistence land rather than wage labour is not particularly surprising. Marx explains that the human need to labour is not satisfied by wage-labour, "Its alien character emerges clearly in the fact that as soon as no physical or other compulsion exists, labour is shunned like a plague" (Jeffrey 1993:20). Rocha asks why is it that peasants cultivate subsistence plants on part of their land, and in so doing absorb a part of the costs of their social and biological reproduction, when this makes them an attractive focus for capitalist exploitation as a cheap labour force? Rocha offers the reply 'I would argue that the peasant chooses so...in order to adapt to a given social structure which is not "willing" to assume all the costs of his social and biological reproduction' (Rocha 1996:35).

Trouillot (1988:89), notes '...wages act as an incentive for people who have learned to depend on them'. A wage incentive of course did not apply to the former slaves. Similarly, just as the ex-slaves had not learned to depend on wage-labour, the relatively simple agricultural technology that enabled peasants to cultivate mountain slopes had also been unnecessary on the estate lands. This meant that the peasants had not learned to depend on complex technology, and could make the switch to mountain cultivation easily.

Peasants who withdrew from wage-labour and cleared areas of Crown land did not hold legal title to it. The Colonial Office introduced an act to prevent '...persons squatting or establishing themselves upon lands for which they have no title' (Trouillot 1988:105). Those who squatted on 'The Three Chains' (a narrow belt of flat land along the coast) were visible, but those in the interior could live undetected. The lack of Crown land records also confounded attempts to identify squatters. High Public Government officials had, since the mid 1800s, skimmed a personal profit from the sale or rental of Crown land, and had covered their tracks by maintaining inaccurate Crown land records.

The threat of eviction was still very real. Many squatters used the savings accumulated from the sale of provisions to buy their freeholds. Estate owners felt it necessary to discourage a population of peasant landowners, as this would reduce numbers of available wage labourers, but were still willing to sell land for two reasons: firstly they hoped that selling land on the outskirts of their property would encourage workers to labour for cash wages by virtue of convenience of the estate's location; secondly, as their profits depended on a supply of cheap labour, they needed to recuperate some of the losses incurred by the exodus of ex-slaves from the estates (Green 1976:170-171).



However the estate owners did not succeed in maintaining their profit margins. The estates fell into ruin and could be bought for only a fraction of their former worth (Green 1976:235). Missionaries were concerned about the loss of their congregations as former slaves left the estates and village communities dispersed. They bought derelict estates with funds donated by British philanthropists, and distributed lots to their parishioners (Green 1976:171). By 1927 the estates had largely disappeared and the peasant labour process was the dominant mode of production (Trouillot 1988:97). Edwards writes that 'Historically the possession of land by the former slaves more than anything else gave them independence from the former slave-owners, for with their own land the 'small men' were under far less pressure from the planters' (Edwards 1961:95).

To redress the balance in favour of the estate owners, The Colonial Office tried various tactics to force the peasants back into wage labour. Glenelg, Secretary of State for the West Indies, determined that land should be priced within reasonable reach of only the most industrious, and that this price should reflect the necessity to engage in wage labour. Thus peasants would need to work for cash wages in order to save enough money to purchase freeholds (Fog-Olwig 1995:60). Cross notes that the existence of the system of household production involving small land holdings in the Caribbean region was brought into being because of the plantations. He writes, 'to hold [this] labour as a rural proletariat, estates would encourage land settlement on plots sufficiently small and unproductive to ensure that wage labour was the only means of sustaining a household unit'(Cross 1979:36).

When this tactic failed, the Colonial Office imposed taxes and licenses. Licenses were required for any economic activity unconnected to the estates. Furthermore, unpaid land taxes were grounds for repossession, not only forcing peasants back into wage labour, but also absorbing land back into the plantation system. (Trouillot 1988:111).

Along with their own subsistence crops, tenants also cultivated exportable monocrops. Dominica has a history of monocropping. Coffee, sugar, cocoa, and limes have each been cultivated, and eventually proved unsuitable or inadequate for export. The decline of the lime industry, and the economic crisis which started in Wall Street, New York in 1929 (Honychurch 1995:161) brought growing discontent. An alternate crop was sought which would restore the social stability of the region, and which would continue the pattern of dependency on Britain. (Thompson 1987:4). Smith (1965:172), notes that one of the ways in which the colonial elite could maintain control was by 'prolonging dependency on the metropolitan power for economic aid, and therewith the colonial status'. Cross defines the 'colonial context' as a system that forwards externally imposed hegemony or economic domination over a particular group, or as in many cases, the legacy of that control. This legacy may be structural, cultural or both. Cross writes, 'the term is extended to include a situation where the direct political control may have passed as long as the previous structure is still identifiable' (Cross 1979:24).

In the early 1930s, not wishing to relinquish its exploitative position, the British Government began looking for an exportable fruit crop suitable for the topology,

climate, and social conditions of Dominica (Trouillot 1988). Bananas seemed ideal. Andreatta notes 'As sugar and cotton became economically less viable, plantation owners in some areas such as Jamaica and the Windward Islands turned to arrowroot and then bananas...This major commodity shift transformed the islands' settlement and land-use patterns, access to landholdings, markets, class structure, and crop selection (Andreatta 1998:416). The benefits of producing bananas were that they required little capital investment and could be harvested all year round within nine months of planting. Furthermore, they could be cultivated in a wide variety of soils and could be planted on hill sides.

The topography of Dominica limits the type of crop that can be produced for export. The island is predominantly mountainous, only around 30 per cent of land is suitable for cultivation<sup>12</sup>. The mountainous terrain excludes crops which require sophisticated agricultural technology. Tractors, harvesters and the like can neither negotiate steep terrain nor avoid soil damage. It is simply not practical to cultivate crops on mountain sides if those crops must be tended with heavy machinery. Gullick (1995:71) notes that the relatively simple technology involved in Caribbean banana production was a major factor in its success. Is the relatively simple technology used in Dominican agriculture responsible for making Dominican farmers feel less alienated from the land than their contemporaries in more technologically dependent countries, and is this related to the agrochemical aversion and love of natural produce?

In 1931, shipments of bananas first started to arrive in Britain. In 1933 the United Fruit Company and its subsidiary the Canadian Banana Company agreed to transport all of Dominica's 'Gros Michel' bananas to Britain but insisted on the creation of a banana growers association. The Dominican Banana Growers association (DBGA) was formed in 1934 and twice monthly shipments began (Roche 1998:52). Andreatta writes that in the first instance, the production and distribution system required farmers to sell their fruit to the Banana Growers Association (BGA). The BGA sold on the fruit to Geest Industries of the United Kingdom. Geest controlled the distribution and marketing system, and deducted all of its costs from the sale of the fruit. Some of the profits were also commanded by the BGA, who wanted to cover the cost of their own operations. The small amount of profit from overseas banana sales that remained was paid to registered banana growers, but was dependent on the quality and quantity of bananas sold. Andreatta notes that 'Under this production and marketing structure, the islands' economies became highly, some might say overly, dependent on Geest Industries' (Andreatta 1998:418).

Indeed Thomson comments that by the end of the 1980s 'it seemed like the Windward Islands needed Geest more than Geest needed them, even if most of the profits from the bananas found their way to Lincolnshire rather than to the Eastern Caribbean' (Thompson 1987:44).

The massive increase in the consumption of bananas is linked to the regime of 'Fordism'. During the 1940s-1970s, rising wage levels and employment commitments encouraged an increase in the consumption of convenience foods (prepackaged and frozen meats and imported fresh fruit and vegetables). Bananas were one of the

<sup>12</sup> The Courier, 1993, no 140 July-August: 12

products that gained popularity, becoming part of the 'Fordist diet' (Grossman 1998:8-10).

When bananas first became a major export in the late 1940s most cultivated land again belonged to estate owners. Agricultural workers were allowed to grow their own products on estate land, usually on uncultivated areas and sell or otherwise utilize the produce. The estate owner would take a share of the proceeds, usually between one half and one third (Trouillot 1988:85). Bananas became a popular choice for sharecroppers because other produce, such as sugarcane and limes, required post-harvest processing which the sharecroppers could not easily accommodate. Also, these crops were sent to the merchant houses by the estate owners who had exclusive relations with them. This meant that sharecroppers had no choice but to sell their produce through an estate owner. Bananas proved to be a major irritation to the estate owners as the sharecroppers could sell them directly to the transnational, Antilles Products Limited (Davies 1990), who were not interested in where the bananas came from. Dominican bananas, being planted on small rugged plots of land, were not easily accounted for and were harvested too quickly, in too large numbers, by too many sharecroppers for estate owners to be able to calculate their due. For these reasons, estate owners decreased the amount of land available for sharecropping, and rented it out instead.

For the same reasons that bananas proved a major irritation to the estate owners, they became a major source of prestige to the peasants. Small-scale agriculture is not generally considered as a mechanism to acquire prestige (Hawkins 1976:94-95; Rubenstein 1987:75). Rubenstein for example, notes that in the Caribbean region there is 'a widespread aversion towards agricultural work' (Rubenstein 1987:75). However in Dominica, because bananas could be sold independently, without the knowledge of, and against the wishes of the estate owner, they acquired a special psychological significance. Bananas represent an achieved dignity, rather than a given concession. Ellis refers to the subordinate, 'underdog' position of peasant farmers (Ellis 1988). That bananas could be sold in this buccaneer fashion, accounted for a reversal of the idea of the peasant 'underdog', and afforded symbolic capital befitting Wilson's 'reputation'<sup>13</sup>. The symbolic capital of banana cultivation can be seen in more contemporary times, as O'Loughlin notes, 'To a Windward Islander, having perhaps some other occupation such as being a teacher or owning a store, it is more likely to be a matter of pride than shame that he is also a banana grower' (O'Loughlin 1968:117).

According to Trouillot the state of 'manliness' is also obtained through the handling of bananas. Trouillot writes that in Dominica, maleness is '...also measured by the

<sup>13</sup> Wilson (1969, 1973), defines reputation and respectability in terms of male and female. Reputation is the province of 'masculinity' and is obtained through public recognition of sexual prowess, especially by the fathering of many children. It is also obtained through aggressiveness, drinking, the ability to provide for a family and defend family honour, and the participation of any other 'male' activity. Abrahams (1983), adds that the ability to 'talk broad', in other words to speak Creole noisily, in a particular style, also forwards reputation. Reputation, which Abrahams sees as a 'performance', is necessarily a public display, and is the antithesis of female 'respectability'.

efficiency with which one goes [drives] through the muddy terrain without damaging the bananas' (Trouillot 1988:222).

Even without the opportunity to sell their bananas surreptitiously, farmers on the other islands also benefited economically and socially from banana production. O'Loughlin describes the introduction of bananas as the catalyst for 'a social revolution', as cash crop production by independent peasants who were previously estate labourers altered relations with planters and reformed agrarian class structure (O'Loughlin 1968:109). Edwards quotes a banana farmer in Jamaica 'It is easier to take away people born here than to take away their liking of bananas' (Edwards 1961:211). Andreatta quotes an informant who comments "Not only that the Prime Minister in St Lucia cuts his own bananas, the Minister of Health cuts his own bananas and the Minister of Education cuts his own bananas every Wednesday and they work in the soil and drive a pick up" (Andreatta 1998:422). Grossman notes that the income afforded by bananas in the late 1980s and early 1990s encouraged even children to cultivate their own land (Grossman 1998:121). However Andreatta draws attention to the fact that 'the banana industry served as one of the primary generators of capital and foreign exchange, and therefore was given priority over other forms of agriculture. Consequently, there have been shortages of basic foodstuffs and significant dependence on food imports' (Andreatta 1998:417).

According to Barrow banana cultivation was the catalyst for extensive changes in the economic system within the region, particularly in the agricultural sector. However, more than this, it also brought about significant social restructuring. The banana industry enabled the creation of an independent peasantry that was relatively financially comfortable and took great pride in being banana farmers. It reduced considerably the divide between those who were fairly affluent, and those who were dispossessed, and resulted in an homogenization of economic interests. The strike action and union activity that were a facet of the conflict existing between planters and wage labourers were resolved. Instead, a common bond emerged uniting both sides as a unified whole. Barrow writes, 'United as "banana growers" they expressed their interests through their producers association and fought for their rights against the merchants and Geest' (Barrow 1992: 23-24,30).

### **3. Modernisation Theory**

Modernisation theory widely applied in the 1950s and 1960s, is not a single theory. Rather it is a label for an amalgamation of a variety of non-Marxist perspectives. While there are a number of common themes throughout the theory, they are not all held by all modernisation theorists. These theorists took their main focus from the sociological ideology of the time. Perspectives such as evolutionism, diffusion and systems theory were among those which came to be synthesized with disciplines such as anthropology, geography and economics. Increasingly this amalgamation, or 'modernisation theory' was applied to 'Third World' countries. The prevailing idea at the time, was that societies were either 'traditional' or 'modern', and that when one came in contact with the other, some sort of social turbulence would be unavoidable.

Modernisation theory determines development as an advancement towards the technological and more complex institutional and social forms of the West. Albert notes that this diffusionist process involves certain catalytic events such as the transmission of expertise and labour to facilitate the development of transport systems, the import of foreign capital and the growth of exports (Albert 1983:18). Once this process has been initiated, it is sustained through the increasing and continued involvement in commodity markets and through a number of other measures including the transmission of technology, knowledge, resources and institutions to the less developed country from either the West or from more 'developed' parts of the same country. Traditional society is thus encouraged to develop towards 'modern society' and gradually 'its economy and social patterns acquire the accoutrements of 'modernity' (Long 2001:10).

It was considered by exponents of modernisation theory, that traditional societies had subsumed within them certain 'obstacles', i.e. values, traditions etc. which were detrimental to economic growth. Modernisation theorists argued that removing these obstacles, while necessitating an inevitable amount of social disturbance, would in fact remove the barriers to economic growth. Through a process of diffusion, values predominant in developed countries would come to replace tradition values and so the process of modernisation could commence.

Many modernisation theorists focused on local elites or 'mobile personalities' who they regarded as agents of change. These individuals, with their entrepreneurial spirit were considered to be the medium through which modernisation would naturally occur. It was anticipated that new technology and ideas brought in from the metropole would be diffused through these individuals to the wider society, benefiting both the metropole and the elites themselves. Once in place, the changes incurred through diffusion were considered to be universal, that is changes would occur in a similar fashion and at a similar rate to those which had previously occurred in the metropole.

One such modernisation study was undertaken by David Lerner in 1958. Lerner was concerned with modernisation in the Middle East and compared this area with other underdeveloped areas. Lerner concluded that modernisation was a global phenomenon, that traditional society was becoming increasingly obsolete and that Islam could not defend itself against the 'rationalist and positivist spirit' (Lerner 1958:45). Lerner considered that the mass media was in the forefront of the globalisation process and, together with a rise in urbanization, was associated with an increase in literacy levels. Lerner believed that the increase in urbanization and literacy led to an increase in a society's participation within a more widespread economic system. According to Lerner, the transformation from traditional to modern society encompasses not only institutions, but also individuals. He attempts to show this with his account of village life in Balgat, Turkey.

Lerner was aware through the observations of a colleague, that in 1950 Balgat was a small, isolated, rural village which lacked many 'modern amenities'. For example, the village possessed only one radio, which was owned by the chief. The only business in the village belonged to a grocer, who was considered by the villagers to be of questionable character. The grocer was well known to believe that the village life was unsatisfactory, and he made clear his desire to relocate in Ankara and manage an

American- style shop. Lerner visited Balgat in 1954 and noted several changes to the village that were not in place four years earlier when his colleague had made his observations. These included a new road and regular bus service. The village men, all of whom with the exception of the grocer, had been farmers in 1950, now worked in factories in Ankara. The recent non-production of subsistence produce had entailed the necessity to import foodstuff, but this was offset by the much higher wages now commanded by the men. Also, the factory wages earned by the men afforded the purchase of the modern amenities conspicuously absent four years previously. For example, the village now possessed about one hundred radios.

According to Lerner, the process of modernisation in Balgat between 1950 and 1954 illustrates a global process of modernisation. He argues that modernisation is dependent on 'mobile personalities', who are characterized by empathy and rational thought which 'enables newly mobile persons to *operate efficiently* in a changing world. Empathy, to simplify the matter is the capacity to see oneself in the other fellows situation' (Lerner 1958:49-50). Lerner considered that 'empathy' was characteristic of 'modern' societies. For Lerner, empathy, in combination with the mass media, urbanization and literacy led to the transition from traditional to modern society.

According to Hoogvelt, modernisation theorists are primarily interested in diffusion. It was assumed, for the most part, that innovation was a product of the metropolis and that this could be diffused to underdeveloped countries. That is to say modernisation theorists are concerned with 'the transformation of values and social institutions in the colonies so as to bring them into line with those prevailing in the mother country' (Hoogvelt 1976:109). These theorists considered that underdevelopment resulted from the lack of certain factors that were attributes of Western society. To ascertain what these factors were, modernisation theorists would compare a particular underdeveloped country with an ideal type, based on a Western industrialised country<sup>14</sup>. The absence of any factors would thus be highlighted as the cause of underdevelopment (Sing and Denmark 1996:3). Poggie and Lynch note that in using this method,

One simply stipulates the standard against which the recipient is being measured (modernity), determines a baseline from which the client begins its development (the traditional), and keeps track of the inputs to the developing state, all the while measuring the effects of the new elements on the client. After a period of time the comparison is made and the client is rated "developed," "developing," "underdeveloped," or perhaps "backward." (Poggie and Lynch 1971:161).

Succinctly, Furtado states, 'This is expressed in formulations of the type: 'on the basis of indicators a, b, and c, underdeveloped country x in the 1970s approximates to the stage of development of developed country y in the 1850s...'(Furtado 1973:22).

Furtado explains that the fundamental error in this assumption is that the model was based on countries that had experienced very different histories, to those which the model was now being applied. Frank also makes this point, arguing that an understanding of development theory and policy cannot be attained without

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<sup>14</sup>This method was labeled by Frank as the Index or Gap approach (Cohen 1987: 472).

consideration of the economic and social histories of the underdeveloped countries to which it is applied. Because it has been assumed that underdeveloped countries resemble the metropolis at an earlier stage in its history, development theory has been formulated exclusively from the history of capitalist countries (Frank 1969:3).

Rostow, for example, in 1960, was concerned with 'stages' of development. With a focus that can be traced back to the classical evolutionists, Rostow postulated a unilinear five-stage model of economic development which he claimed was universal. Rostow's five stages of economic progression were: 'The traditional society', where economic growth was limited due to the limited availability of technology; 'the preconditions for take-off', whereby education and entrepreneurship lay the foundations for economic advancement; 'take-off', where traditional obstacles to economic advancement are surmounted; 'the drive to maturity', where technology becomes increasingly complex and a percentage of the national income is invested; and finally, 'the age of high mass consumption'. Here the focus is on mass production, high levels of consumption, and the implementation of institutions concerned with social welfare (Cohen 1987:471).

Frank has criticized Rostow's five-stage model of economic development. He notes that this type of approach 'in all its variations, ignores the historical and structural reality of the underdeveloped countries (Frank 1969:47). He argues that the 'developed' world did not assist the underdeveloped world in its modernisation, but that on the contrary, it actually retarded its development.

Sing and Denmark (1996:3) note that while the focus of various modernisation theorists differed, they were in agreement that obstacles to development were internally based, and of temporary duration. Sing and Denmark list several of the various focal points of modernisation theorists:

For Rostow (1960) these necessary factors included levels of financial investment required for "take-off" and the necessary transformation in the socio-political sphere consistent with a Western market-orientated democratic society as derived from a reading of English history. For Parsons (1964) and McClelland (1967), the transformation of values and socio-psychological concepts must be sufficiently advanced. For Pye (1962), Almond and Powell (1966) and especially Huntington (1968), the lack of political institutionalisation leads to serious hindrances to the developmental process. Sing and Denmark (1996:3)

Modernisation theory is a unilinear evolutionary one. Its assumption is that '...Europe had a developmental past, but the underdeveloped regions lacked all but the most rudimentary history typified by the same underdeveloped conditions that existed in the underdeveloped present' (Sing and Denmark 1996:3). Indeed, Poggie and Lynch have called it 'a single general "stage" of cultural evolution (Poggie and Lynch 1971:4), and later, 'the *ongoing* processes of a new *stage* in the general evolution of human culture (Poggie and Lynch 1971:13). Poggie and Lynch have also called modernisation theory 'a continuation of the industrial revolution, which in turn must be looked on as a "stage" in the worldwide progression of evolutionary transformations that mark the course of human culture history' (Poggie and Lynch 1971:14).

The basic premise of modernisation theory is that by emulating the social, political, cultural, and institutional practices of the developed countries, underdeveloped countries will attain the economic growth enjoyed by the developed countries. However, as dos Santos points out, 'Historical time is not uni-linear and future societies will not be able to attain stages reached by other societies at a previous time' (dos Santos 1973:59). This point is also made by Furtado, '...the developed cannot offer any final criterion of development (that is to say, historical futures for other societies) any more than the history of their emergence provides 'models' of necessary, possible or desirable change for underdeveloped countries to emulate' (Furtado 1973:24).

From the modernisation perspective, 'underdeveloped' countries such as Dominica were considered to be incapable of development until modernisation could be effected. The assumption was that by abandoning certain 'obstacles' and emulating the metropolis, development would naturally occur (Frank 1969:24). Within this model, underdevelopment was regarded as a natural state characterised by traditionalism and implicit backwardness. Traditionalism was assumed to be both an 'expression and cause of underdevelopment' (Valenzuela and Valenzuela 1979:35). Factors such as 'trade controls, religion, traditional customs, extended family systems, linguistic barriers, illiteracy, etc.' (Seers 1979:96), were regarded as constraining forces, detrimental to economic growth. Hoben lists 'communal control over natural resources' as another perceived obstacle to economic growth (Hoben 1982:352). Villamil highlights '...low achievement motivation, resistant to innovation and modernisation' as reputed obstacles (Villamil 1979:3). Escobar points to the perceived association of economic stagnation and 'mobility, vagrancy, independence, frugality, promiscuity, ignorance, and the refusal to accept social duties, to work, and to submit to the logic of the expansion of "needs"' (Escobar 1995:22).

The West Indian institution of 'family land' has generally been considered as an example of 'backwardness'. Land is traditionally held in common by all members of an extended family. This factor has often been cited as a reason why family land is underproductive. Many writers have argued that individuals are less likely to put a lot of work into cultivation because other extended family members who have not contributed to the production, may then claim a share of the proceeds.

Undercultivation was seen as a prime reason for the high ratio of imported foodstuffs that is characteristic of the West Indies. Modernisation theorists believed that once traditional 'obstacles' like family land had been removed, underdeveloped countries would progress towards the modernisation and economic growth of the developed countries. In other words, modernisation was seen as a means of advancement towards the attainments of the developed world. Advancement therefore, would initially be achieved by emulating social, political, and cultural practices of the developed world. To initiate this transformation 'the growth of exports, the development of transport systems, and such factors as imports of foreign capital, expertise, technology, labour, and so on, are seen as having a vital catalytic role' (Albert 1983:18).

Lowenthal noted that 'Local authorities condemn "family land" tenure as uneconomic, wasteful, a prime cause of soil exhaustion and erosion, an obstacle to agricultural modernisation' (Lowenthal 1972:104). Finkel has denounced it as having



'discouraged initiative and progress' (Finkel 1971:301). The idea that family land is an obstacle to modernisation has been considered from several standpoints. Some writers claim that the large numbers of people in an extended family cause the land to be subdivided into very small uneconomic plots, see for example Edwards (1961 28-30, 97-98). Mathurin has said 'The major cause of the existence of small farms in St. Lucia is the multiple ownership of land or "family land" as it is called on the island - an old system of land tenure which is a legacy of the former French occupation' (Mathurin 1976:141). Other writers have identified obstacles to modernisation as being the responsibility of the older generation. They claim that older people are more traditional in their ways, not as physically active, and quite often in poor health. Edwards likens the income generated by agriculture with an old age pension (Edwards 1961:94).

Clarke notes that while strong sentiment and high values are attached to land in the Caribbean, this must be weighed against the inevitable wastage and underuse that the transmission system incurs. She maintains that a vast amount of family land is under-used, as it is occupied by old people who are physically unable to develop it. Clarke adds that further holdings only consist of fruit trees planted by the ancestors, and are otherwise completely underproductive. She also draws attention to what she considers as being further negative aspects of the land transmission system including 'Misuse of land in the form of exhaustion or neglect, under-use because of lack of capital, or multiple ownership restricting development' (Clarke 1966:66-67).

Yet another often-cited criticism regarding family land concerns the perceived lack of security afforded by those family members who work on it. Because members of an extended family have rights in common over family land, they may return whenever they wish and stake their claim in it. Critics of family land note that for this reason little effort is expended in improving the land. Wilson for example, notes that in Providencia, once harvested, land is returned to the family pool (Wilson 1973:57).

Related to this is the issue of agricultural produce. Extended family members have the right to harvest produce on family land which they themselves have not planted. The problem that critics of family land have with this is that farmers tend correspondingly to plant quick-growing produce, and to plant for immediate needs only. Edwards notes that because of multiple ownership of family land in Jamaica, there is a 'reluctance to plant long term crops' (Edwards 1966:112). Similarly, Finkel comments on family land in St Lucia as 'a strong deterrent to agricultural development since the more ambitious and enterprising farmers feel it is not worthwhile planting crops' in a situation where those who have not planted, may harvest at their leisure (Finkel 1971:299). Mathurin comments that the peasantry are understandably reluctant to undertake improvement projects over the long term and to cultivate permanent (and sometimes even short term) crops. This is because of the risk that these crops may be harvested by extended family members who have the right to do so according to the system of tenure in place (Mathurin 1967:141-142).

This type of observation has also been made by other workers, see for example Edwards 1961:111-112; O'Loughlin 1968:42; Finkel 1971:299. Also, family land has been regarded as a source of disputes within extended families. Clarke writes

'Disagreements between members of the family over family land are in Jamaica one of the most common causes of litigation' (Clarke 1966:44).

Although modernisation theory was prevalent during the 1950s and 1960s, not all theorists who were writing at this time agreed with its application. As Long rightly points out, it would be incorrect to assume that the various theories of development supersede one another in terms of intellectual superiority. The emergence of each new theory of development does not necessarily denote the emergence of a more sophisticated theory than its predecessor (Long 2001:28).

Correspondingly, there is, quite understandably, an overlap between early writers who disagree with modernisation theory, and later writers who agreed with its application. Brierley for example, writing in 1974 about small farmers in Grenada comments that the farmer who approaches agriculture with traditional methods is characterised by a 'closed mental outlook' (Brierley 1974:164). Brierley argues that this is the result of both a lack of education, and of personal enterprise. He goes on to comment that as a consequence, the farmer shows little regard for the quality of his produce. According to Brierley, once the land is established in tree crops, the farmer is only concerned that his output is produced with the minimum of input. Furthermore, Brierley comments that the farmers trees are of 'dubious quality', and are planted without any thought to systematic arrangement or spacing. He adds 'Insufficient attention is paid to pruning, removal of diseased coca and dying branches, weeding or soil conservation. While lack of knowledge or capital may restrict performance of these practices, he is also hindered by his scepticism of progress and his wariness of changing those practices to which he is accustomed' (Brierley 1974:165). Brierley also adds that 'Small farming as outlined in this study is characterised by a backwardness and inefficiency which are anachronistic in this age of technological and scientific development'(Brierley 1974:288).

In contrast, M.G. Smith, for example, argued almost ten years earlier in 1965 that modernisation theory was a reductionist one. He maintained that it was an error to focus on the values etc., which constituted the modernisation theorists' 'obstacles'. Smith developed the idea of the 'plural society', a concept that he referred to specifically for the Caribbean. It was Smith's view that there was not a value system in common, but that Caribbean society consisted of several 'stratas'. For Smith, these stratas were comprised of disparate groups of people with their own value systems connected by economic necessity. It was a feature of plural society, that the majority were economically and socially controlled by the minority. Smith argued that stratification 'cannot be adequately studied in terms of underlying value orientations; it represents an order independent with the political order based on certain concrete structural principles' (Smith 1966:174).

Smith went on to develop his theory of the plural society and later maintained that while the political arena may be universally applied across the strata (despite differing forms of social and cultural association), unequal opportunities of access to the public domain would create different methods of social organisation. This in turn would lead to structural, social, and cultural pluralism. Smith noted that these three forms of pluralism were interlinked, but 'structural and social pluralism both assume and express cultural pluralism, but in different forms and with differing intensities' (Smith

1974:335). Smith's pluralism was grounded very much in politics. For Smith, what is important is the structural principles behind the incorporation of people into societies, not, as the modernisation theorists' maintained, the focus on values and normative consensus.

Pluralism is evident in Dominica as many of the wealthier farmers are descendants of several 'mulatto' families. Honychurch notes, 'Since the beginning of Dominica's colonization, 'people of colour' or mulattos, had been an important part of society' (Honychurch 1995:127). These families had owned property, including slaves, and had participated in society life. Unlike the social arrangements in other islands in the West Indies, where whites dominated social life, Dominica was presided over in parallel by two elite groups, the whites and the mulattos. Honychurch writes that 'these two divisions...continued to dominate business and government well into the twentieth century' (Honychurch 1995:ibid). The descendants of these elite families still have high social profiles in Dominica.

Poggie and Lynch write that many modernisation theory studies have suggested that 'so-called "modern man" is somehow different from "traditional man" with respect to certain constellations of cognitive and personality attributes and behavioral dispositions' (Poggie and Lynch 1971:235). They go on to say that other modernisation theory studies have considered the reason why "modern man" differs from "traditional man". Poggie and Lynch write that 'Several studies have produced rather impressive arrays of correlations between various indicators of these outlooks, attitudes and dispositions and certain hypothetical determinants - schooling, urban residence experience, industrial work, military service, exposure to mass communications media (often associated with literacy) and a wide scale of extralocal social contacts acquired through travel and migration' (Poggie and Lynch 1971:236). However they highlight one particular feature which was suggested by modernisation theorists as pivotal in the difference between "modern" and "traditional" man. This was 'The tendency to delay gratification', as opposed to "traditional man's" desire for immediate rather than deferred gratification (Poggie and Lynch 1971:236-237).

Poggie and Lynch's treatment of this theory is to explore many case studies of immediate and deferred gratification. They note that there are many problems beleaguering a large percentage of this research and among them, three particular conceptual inadequacies are prominent. These are: firstly, the widespread use of covert standards of reference and injurious comparisons. Secondly, the highly variable, deficient, and frequently biased manner in which the criterion of 'gratification orientations' has been measured. Thirdly, the lack of attention to significant intervening variables and alternative interpretations that are equally plausible' (Poggie and Lynch 1971:243).

Margaret Mead highlighted some of the problems created by modernisation theory prior to World War II in a paper entitled 'Changing Perspectives on Modernisation' (Mead 1971:pp21-36). She discusses various examples of societies who have had their lands and freedom appropriated by the metropole. While she argues for the right of people to distance themselves from any modifications of their society or environment that they consider inappropriate, she also draws attention to, for example, 'the claims by the power companies who must fulfill the energy needs of

millions of people' (Mead 1971:24). Mead writes that it is not possible for any one group of people to live in any way at all without having an effect on the rest of the world. She comments,

If we decide to let every Eskimo have a large number of square miles in which to hunt with a harpoon, this immediately affects decisions made all over the world; it might even affect international oil concordats and the kind of power plant Consolidated Edison builds in New York. Clearly, the fate of each small primitive people has become inextricably intertwined with what is going on in other places (Mead 1971:25).

It was considered that the underdeveloped countries would not take a great length of time to develop, as they would not have to negotiate all of the stages of trial and error that the now developed countries had undertaken. The technology had already been developed that would allow these countries to become modernised. Underdeveloped countries therefore did not have to 'reinvent the wheel', but simply take advantage of the technology developed by the metropolises.

Mead points out that in the 1940s and 1950s, during the Eisenhower era, it was common belief that technology brought only benefits. The more technology a country possessed, the more benefits were accrued. During this period, modernisation policy concerned exporting technology including machines and transportation etc. to underdeveloped countries. On the whole, the only benefits accrued here were for the metropole. The metropole was able to dispose of its old and outdated technology to the underdeveloped countries, and to invest in new technology for itself with the profits obtained through the transactions. The underdeveloped countries were now in possession of outmoded machines etc. that needed both technical expertise to repair, and locally unavailable spare parts to repair them with.

In Dominica for example, a grant of £54,360 was made in 1944 to complete a road that would transverse the island. However, there was an island-wide deficit of tools available that were necessary for the amount of workers needed to complete the project. Furthermore, there were no bulldozers or modern earth-moving equipment so the work progressed very slowly. The British grant ran out within a few months, and the portion of the road already completed was washed away by floods (Honychurch 1995:87).

Mead also notes another aspect of technology exportation. In direct contrast to the exportation of outmoded technology, it was sometimes considered to be a more beneficial option to export advanced technology to underdeveloped countries. In these instances, it was common to discover that the technology was not being used at all, as the necessary technical knowledge to operate the machinery was not imparted with the goods.

Of course, modernisation policy did not only export technology, but also engineered the necessity of its use. In many underdeveloped countries, industrialization brought with it an exodus from the countryside to the cities. This exodus brought with it many economic and social problems. Honychurch notes that in Dominica, the flow of people from the countryside into Roseau 'gave rise to a radical change in the life of the island' (Honychurch 1995:188). There was also the added problem of food production as the exodus to urban centres' effected a great reduction in agricultural

activity in rural areas. To counteract this, cash cropping was introduced as a means to feed the world's population and to amass profit. Cash cropping, and the introduction of the 'Green Revolution' (monocrop culture and irrigation) involved persuading farmers to plant a monocrop, rather than their subsistence produce. The problems of monocrop cultivation of course include, among other factors highlighted in this dissertation, the reliance of only one crop in an uncertain market and the risk of the entire crop being decimated due to disease and adverse climatic conditions.

One other adverse and unforeseen consequence of monocropping is the resultant environmental damage caused by massive use of agrochemicals. Mead noted 'Instead of hailing the Green Revolution we are now recognizing that when we export those beautiful new grains we are exporting with them pesticides and fertilizers and, therefore, exporting pollution' (Mead 1971:33). Poggie and Lynch, for example, point to 'the unidentified dead from contact with new lethal insecticides and herbicides', and the 'incredibly high DDT counts... reported in mothers' milk of rural Guatemalan women unprotected from the heavy doses of insecticides and herbicides used by cotton farmers' (Poggie and Lynch 1971:56).

Ahmed and Afroz also discuss the green revolution and the related environmental damage caused by this policy. They note that in industrialised countries, the crops chosen to be cultivated are input-hungry. In other words they are particularly responsive towards added fertilizers, insecticides, pesticides, irrigation, etc. If these inputs are not applied in adequate dosages, then the yields will not be so great as they otherwise would be. The problem is that these inputs are detrimental to the soil and the environment of developing countries. For this reason many of for example, the rice-growing countries, have opted out of the Green Revolution. Furthermore, the recommended fertilizers and pesticides for hybrids are in many cases, banned in their country of origin. This is because of their often serious detrimental consequences for the long-term fertility of the soil and preservation of the watersheds, as can be see for instance in Jamaica where deposits of harmful input residues have been found in water sources. However, as Ahmed and Afroz go on to point out, there are certain crops which do not require these inputs in order to produce a high yield, but the developed countries do not choose to introduce these varieties in the developing countries (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:119).

The environmental damage caused by agrochemicals has been exacerbated by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). This agency is a division of the U.S government and operates to apportion help to (for the most part) developing countries. However, Ahmed and Afroz note that the interests of USAID and of multinational corporations are complementary. They point out that in 1986, USAID allocated the Dominican banana industry US \$1.7 million in aid. In return Dominica had to purchase all of its farm supplies from U.S firms. The farm supplies, including fertilizers and other chemical inputs were all provided at prevailing market prices. The outcome of this arrangement was that production costs increased while the price of bananas decreased. Another point Ahmed and Afroz make is that 'It is not an accident that often the crop varieties chosen are input-hungry, since this will benefit the multinational companies dealing in such inputs' (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:157). Every island in the Caribbean region is supplied with fertilizers and agro-chemicals by multinational corporations. Ahmed and Afroz note that 'The big MNCs, such as W.R.

Grace, DuPont, Dow Chemicals, Shell, May and Baker and Amoco, manufacture and market fertilizers, insecticides, pesticides, herbicides, fungicides and nematicides. Their business is promoted through heavy media blitzes through TV, newspaper and radio' (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:207-208).

One of the farm supplies obtained from the U.S through USAID was Paraquat, a noxious weed-killer that was actually banned in the US because of its health hazard. Ahmed and Afroz state that 'This is a typical portrait of the so-called benevolence of USAID which is lending a "helping hand" to the poor farmers of Dominica' (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:100). For Dominica in particular, environmental damage due to the application of agrochemicals has already caused 'the loss of soil fertility, erosion of slopes and contamination of watersheds and rivers' (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:100). Ahmed and Afroz go on to state 'The Caribbean is one of the dumping grounds of banned US insecticides' (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:208).

Andreatta notes a reduction in field diversity caused by a reduction in intercropping within the fields, this is ultimately an outcome of an increased dependence on Gramoxone (Paraquat) to eliminate unwanted weeds. Andreatta writes that 'According to a number of farmers...It is less expensive to spray Gramoxone on fields than it is to hire laborers to clear the area of unwanted weeds'(Andreatta 1998:424). In addition she notes that '2-4 D has been available and farmers on St Vincent are mixing both 2-4 D and Gramaxone to rid their fields of unwanted plant growth (Andreatta:ibid).

Environmental damage of course has repercussions for domestic agriculture. The small amount of available agricultural land is mostly planted with bananas. This (in conjunction with environmental damage caused by agrochemicals) has caused a necessary increase in the importation of foodstuffs. Again, USAID has a great deal to do with this. Food aid is one of the prime functions of USAID in the Caribbean. Ahmed and Afroz argue that food aid is a 'direct disincentive to production' (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:102). It undercuts the prices of local producers and encourages local governments to 'postpone confronting inequalities and resulting inefficiencies of their own agricultural economy' (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:102). Generally speaking, food aid consists of produce from temperate zone countries, produce such as wheat and dairy products. The problem here is that these foods can encourage a shift away from the types of food produced locally in tropical climates. Obviously, when this happens then long-term self-reliance on locally produced food becomes problematic.

This is not to mention another result of USAID's involvement in Dominica's banana industry. The restructuring of the industry afforded even more control to Dominica's elite, small farmers now had 'little or no say over the setting of prices, the grading of the fruit, the amount to be purchased, and the use and distribution of the profits' (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:100).

Ahmed and Afroz write, 'The Caribbean's basic economic capital for development, the environment and renewable resources is being consumed or connoted quicker than it can be replaced'(Ahmed and Afroz 1996:186). They note that as resource depletion and degradation drives people to migrate to urban areas and overseas the possible repercussions include increased poverty and hunger, and also social unrest and

conflict. An imminent problem is that no further damage can be absorbed by the small islands of the Caribbean region, there simply is no other available space left. They write, 'The fragile island ecology is reeling under the threat of soil erosion, deforestation, water contamination and toxic chemical action. These need to be addressed before sustainable agriculture can be practised in the region (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:ibid).

Hawkings points to the dissatisfaction felt by Caribbean countries at the involvement of Western nations in their economic and political concerns. He notes that an increasing number of Caribbean countries are growing in their resentment of European and American involvement in all aspects of their lives. They seek to break away from foreign economic domination, but are well aware that '...they cannot undo in a few years all the close ties that centuries of dependency and total orientation towards the needs of a few distant metropolitan markets have developed' (Hawkings 1976:142).

Hawkings also makes note of the fact that aid has been wrongly apportioned in Caribbean countries. He argues that aid has been offered to underdeveloped countries to forward the economic interests of the donor countries, rather than the receivers of the aid. For example aid awarded to finance infrastructure ultimately assists the financial concerns of the donor countries. He notes that in the Caribbean, as in so many other countries, a vast proportion of the aid money has been spent on the infrastructure and little of it has been apportioned to projects which would earn revenue for the country. Because of this, a considerable number of Caribbean countries (and the smaller ones in particular), have been equipped with improved roads or a sizable airport, but with no means to repay the loans that financed them. Hawkins writes 'Like other Third World countries, aid to the Caribbean has often been used to pursue certain political and economic goals. A high percentage of the funds is tied to purchases in donor countries and, on the whole, is only available for the foreign exchange part of a project' (Hawkings 1976:172).

This situation occurred in Dominica. Geest's interest in Dominica began in 1954 with their take-over of Antilles products. By 1956, the Transinsular Road was constructed, the first road to span the island. In fact, British grants for building roads were to increase rapidly from 1955 to the post-banana boom of the early 1970s. Prior to this the main means of travel around the island was on horseback. Many feeder roads from farmlands to the main roads have also been constructed. These however, have largely been due to the efforts of farmers who have donated money and labour to match government contributions and overseas aid. Aid also facilitated the building of a deep water wharf, necessary for the large Geest vessels to dock, and two small inter-island airports.

Electricity was initially installed in 1905 with grants from the Commonwealth Development Corporation (CDC). However, until the mid 1950s it was only the capital, Roseau, that benefited from this service. Gradually, the provision of electricity was extended to cover most of the island by 1982.

Certain other modernisations were also necessary to forward the West's interests in Dominica. Almost every village had at least one public telephone by 1978.

Furthermore, Radio Dominica was introduced in 1971. This was something of great interest to politicians and continues to be of vast importance to government as radio has a powerful influence over people (Honychurch 1995:187-194). However, Honychurch asserts that radio provided a vital method of gleaning information about world events and afforded a 'noticeable contribution to social change over two decades' (Honychurch 1995:194). Also, the provision of satellite and cable television in 1983 have according to Honychurch 'opened a new chapter in local mass communication' (Honychurch:ibid).

#### **4. Dependency Theory**

Dependency theory, and the idea of using an historical perspective is a reaction against the modernisation direction taken by post World War II developmental theorists. According to Valenzuela and Valenzuela 'Modernisation and dependency are two very different perspectives seeking to explain the same reality. They originated in different areas, with different evaluative judgments, different assumptions, different methodologies and different explanations' (Valenzuela and Valenzuela 1979:33).

Rothstein and Blim however, see a similarity between the two approaches. They note that both perspectives regard change 'as a unilineal and unidirectional process away from "traditional" or "precapitalist" to "modern," "dependent capitalist," or "industrializing."' (Rothstein and Blim 1992:35). They write that for modernisation theorists traditional societies can be classified in relation to how far they have progressed along a path of structural differentiation. Underdeveloped societies are seen as not moving along a developmental line in the dependency perspective. In fact, just like modernisation theorists *dependencistas* also make the assumption of a single developmental path. However, the two approaches have different explanations of why traditional societies do not progress along their expected developmental path. According to modernisation theorists, the failure to progress is due to internal obstacles, while for dependency theorists it is external constraints that are responsible for keeping an underdeveloped country from developing. Rothstein and Blim also comment that the two approaches disagree on what the '...crucial characteristics of "development" are and what *the* development path is, but they share a common view that there is a single path on which all societies move (or are kept from moving) at varying rates' (Rothstein and Blim 1992:35).

Rothstein and Blim's criticism of both of these approaches is that neither of them take into account changing class relations. They argue that 'Even the more recent approaches of world-systems theorists or articulationists, which do focus on class, often attribute almost complete power to capitalists and ignore or underestimate working-class efforts' (Rothstein and Blim 1992:36).

Valenzuela and Valenzuela note that it is a 'fundamentally different *'perception of human nature'* which lies at the root of the differences between the two perspectives. Dependency theorists see human behaviour in economic matters as a 'constant'. The behaviour of individuals will be different in different contexts, because the contexts,



not the individuals, are different. Modernisation theorists however consider that cultural beliefs and values '...regardless of opportunity structures' underlie the patterns of economic action' (Valenzuela and Valenzuela 1979:52).

Villamil also discusses the marked contrast of dependency theory to 'modernisation and neo-classical approaches to questions of underdevelopment', including the fact that it 'recognizes that history is not made up of the parallel evolution of different societies, but rather that the history of the 'periphery' was also a part of that of the 'centre'; and that they could not be separated' (Villamil 1979:3). Similarly, Frank draws attention to the erroneous assumption of modernisation theorists, that the history of the underdeveloped countries resembles the history of the now developed countries. He argues that this misconception has resulted in a failure to understand contemporary development and underdevelopment (Frank 1969:3). Modernisation theorists base their analysis on the national society, while dependency theorists consider the global system and the interaction of national societies (Valenzuela and Valenzuela 1979:52). Frank notes that modernisation theory therefore, does not account for economic relations between the metropolis and its peripheries, resulting in an inability to explain the simultaneous development of the capitalist system, and underdevelopment of the peripheries. 'The now developed countries were never *underdeveloped*, though they may have been *undeveloped*' (Frank 1969:4).

Frank (1975:25) also takes issue with Marx's argument that the industrially developed countries would, by a process of diffusion, encourage the development of the underdeveloped countries. Conversely, he argues that diffusion occurs from periphery to core (Frank 1975:80), and that any economic development in the peripheries, can only obtain independently of '...most of these relations of production' (Frank 1969:4). Using Argentina, Mexico, Brazil and Chile as examples, Frank points out that 'marked' autonomous industrialization and growth' (Frank 1969:10), were only evident when metropole involvement was at its lowest during the two world wars. Re-establishment of metropole involvement in the years after the wars again initiated economic decline. This gives weight to Frank's argument that change within the social structure is not produced by diffusionism:

Conceived in its present form, diffusionism is inherently ineffective as a policy of economic development and culture change. For it is not so much diffusion which produces a change in the social structure as it is the transformation of the social structure which permits effective diffusion. Development, underdevelopment and diffusion are all a function of the social structure (Frank 1969:66).

Dependency occurs when a country cannot develop because it is immersed in a total global system in which developed countries are economically and technologically advanced. Dependency arises with the exploitation of one economy by another. The extraction of surplus, and utilization of a country's labour, for the express purpose of forwarding metropolitan finances, leads to a subsequent retardation of the underdeveloped country's own economy. The modes of production of an underdeveloped country are overturned and replaced by the capitalist mode of

production<sup>15</sup>. The capitalist mode of production has tended to override all other modes of production and economic structures, until this one economic system has expanded to become universal, a global system. Frank argues

That metropolitan investment in and control of primary sector production in underdeveloped countries (in, for example, sugar, bananas, minerals, and most spectacularly petroleum) has notably failed to develop the underdeveloped countries, but has instead interposed a whole series of obstacles to their development, has by now surely been sufficiently documented to be obvious even when viewed from the developed countries themselves (Frank 1969:51-52).

Related to the imposition of the capitalist mode of production, is the imposed subservience of one country by another. This results not only in economic disparities, but also in political and social subservience. The outcome of this sort of domination can often be likened to a loss of national-esteem. New values, attitudes, and beliefs are imposed by the metropolis and are often emulated by local elites who align themselves with multinational corporations.

R.T. Smith has analyzed social stratification and cultural pluralism in the West Indies. He writes that after the abolition of slavery, plantation society was replaced by Creole society. He notes however that the difference between the two was a matter of degree rather than of structure. For example, that Creole society developed in the way it did because at its roots were the political and economic dominance of the metropolitan power. Creole society was colour stratified and was based on the concept that English culture and morals were superior. Therefore, the values, morals and standards of the entire society were English. The integration of Creole society was achieved through the employment of English religion, education, law, medicine, journalism, civil service etc. This resulted in the formation of a Creole elite which had come to refer to itself as "the intelligentsia" by the end of the nineteenth century. Smith writes that this group of elites '...owed its position within the society to achievement in the sense that it filled valued occupational roles and commanded and manipulated "English culture", but it is evident that its members came to believe themselves to be *qualitatively* different from the other non-Europeans by virtue of their "refinement" (R.T. Smith 1967:41-42).

Hoogvelt argues 'There now exists a truly international system of social stratification in which societal values of power, wealth and prestige are distributed from the top of the hierarchy...' (Hoogvelt 1976:3). The power of local elites in Third World countries is therefore not afforded internally, but externally. For Hoogvelt it is '...dependent upon their position in the global imperialist system and can be regarded as a reward for their contribution - as deputies of imperialism - towards the maintenance of that imperialist system' (Hoogvelt 1976:4) Like R.T. Smith (above) Hoogvelt notes that for local elites, '...academic excellence, technical skills and competence and religious eminence, also derive from cultural definitions, originating outside the societies in which they have symbolic and aspirational values' (Hoogvelt 1976:4) Indeed Frank writes:

Economic development and cultural change of an underdeveloped country through the promotion of the middle classes (or their pattern variables) has not occurred because, among

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<sup>15</sup>This point is similar to the erroneous recommendations of early, and in some cases contemporary development workers, who advocate that development can be implemented by use of Western technology, work practices etc.

other reasons, it is physically impossible for it to occur given the structure of the system: it only leads to the further underdevelopment of the majority (Frank 1969:39).

Hoogvelt argues that the economic concerns of the wealthy local elites are inextricably tied up with the capitalist interests of the metropolises. For this reason, Hoogvelt maintains, it is unlikely that these elites will ever perform any role other than comprador. Hoogvelt lists four examples to illustrate this argument. The first of these is that elites would be unlikely to invest their surplus in a productive venture that was in direct competition with a productive activity that was dominated by foreign capital. The reason being of course, that their finances are bound up with that foreign capital.

The second of Hoogvelt's examples is that the elites emulate the life-style of the wealthy in the developed countries. This means that wealthy local elites have a massive potential to consume because of the difference in production and consumption levels between the developed and underdeveloped countries. In other words, consumption levels are lower in underdeveloped countries than in developed countries, but because elites emulate the wealthy of developed countries they also emulate the consumption levels of those developed countries. This however, does reduce their savings.

Thirdly, because of the normally less than favourable political and economic climate in the underdeveloped countries, the elites will tend to prefer to invest their money in 'get rich quick schemes' for example, activities such as the construction of residential properties, or in mercantile activities far enough removed from the interests of foreign capital. Generally, the type of profit-yielding venture attractive to elites tends not to be of any benefit to increasing the production capacity of either local industry or the local economy.

Finally, and most importantly, the perceived probability of earning much greater returns on investments in the developed countries, in conjunction with the perceived lower risks accrued by such investments, tends to siphon off their investable surplus overseas. (Hoogvelt 1976:157).

Hoogvelt also notes that 'perfect competition' demands the lack of 'monopolistic or oligarchic enterprises' (Hoogvelt 1976:157). While these conditions existed in the early stages of capitalism in the West, they do not exist in the capitalist world of today. Hoogvelt identifies multinational corporations based inside the economies of developing countries which render it 'economically irrational for native elites to invest in independent productive projects. Therefore, even if the local bourgeoisie were totally dedicated to the independent industrialisation of their country, it would still not make sense for them to invest in it' (Hoogvelt 1976:157).

However, while dependency theorists are often interested in the interaction of social classes as an example of internal structures of dependency, they focus mainly on external structures of dependency. These include capitalism, and the rise of imperialism. While intimately linked with the overall theory of imperialism, dependency theory is in part a reaction against the Eurocentric perspective taken by many imperialist writers such as Lenin and Luxemburg. These writers have

considered development of the capitalist global economy from a Western European, and American perspective only, with little or no regard for peripheral countries. The theory of imperialism however is important because dependency is an historical phenomenon. Like Marxism, dependency theory considers historical dialectics to be the starting point for analysis. Unlike Marxist theory, dependency theory demands the analyses of more concrete, historical examples. Dominica's involvement with banana production provides one such concrete example.

#### **4.1 Dominica's involvement with banana production**

Until the Great Depression of the 1930s, economic theory was centred on the arguments of Adam Smith, who considered that for a nation to develop to its maximum potential, no government intervention should occur in the movement of capital. This 'free trade' would amass huge profits for capitalists, and profits would 'trickle down' to the masses. Indeed, during the plantation era, massive profits were made in the West Indies with 'white gold', as sugar dominated the economy (Green 1976:35). The expected trickle down effect did not however occur. On the contrary, the gap between the rich and the poor expanded, and continued to expand until the 1930s depression initiated economic and political changes. John Maynard Keynes, an economist, suggested that a more equitable programme of development was necessary, and that this could be accommodated with government intervention and regulation.

The Moyne Commission (a Royal Commission under the chairmanship of Lord Moyne); was set up with the purpose of investigating social conditions in the Caribbean region (Thomas 1988:48). The Commission was present in Dominica for several months in 1938 and 1939. The report stated in detail the extent of social and economic deprivation in Dominica. The report was not published in entirety until the end of the second world war as a measure of protection against enemy reactions. When the complete version of the report was finally published, it stated, 'Of all the British West Indian Islands, Dominica presents the most striking contrast between the great poverty of a large proportion of the population, particularly in Roseau, the capital, and the beauty and fertility of the island' (Honychurch 1995:185). The report included several recommendations such as an increase in the number of peasant holdings, an improved infrastructure, and teaching farmers to employ *improved* agricultural methods. This last recommendation is a facet of modernisation theory. 'Improved' agricultural methods actually meant methods that were used in Western agriculture.

The depression of the 1930s, in combination with the decline of Dominican lime production was exceptionally detrimental to local agriculture. This was especially true of the large estates. These lay idle during the 1930s and 1940s and provided little in the way of employment opportunities. The owners of these estates had neither available finances, nor access to any export markets to maintain production. The option to sell the estates was not a viable one as the availability of potential buyers was negligible. This was because of both lack of finances held by any individual, and also because of the absence of any credit facilities. Many estates were abandoned and reverted to bush.

It was during the 1930s that bananas were introduced in Dominica. This was largely as a result of the social unrest and riots prevalent at the time. The government searched for a crop suitable for Dominica to cultivate for export, so that social deprivation could be curtailed. Indeed, Trouillot notes that bananas also fitted patterns of consumption so well that they became a staple foodstuff (Trouillot 1988:133).

The introduction of bananas as a cash crop brought with it a change in Dominica's agriculture and economy. Land was gradually cleared to accommodate the crop, and by the 1950s banana export had a thriving market. Once established, finances began to flow back into the region. Three large estates were bought by the Geest company and other estates were purchased by foreign investors such as L. Rose & Co. Apart from these large concerns, there were several medium sized estates and a large number of smallholdings of fifteen to twenty acres. There were also still sizable areas of crown land available which were suitable for farming.

The Moyne Commission had recommended an increase in the number of peasant holdings. This was to help alleviate social and economic deprivation. Areas of Crown Land were sectioned off by government surveyors in the 1960s, and the number of smallholders trebled. Another recommendation by the Moyne Commission was an improvement in the infrastructure. This helped the banana industry enormously as the 'feeder road' scheme (Honychurch 1995:188) financed with British monetary aid, served to access outlying farms. However, while economically beneficial to Dominica in the short-term, Dominica was becoming increasingly dependent on banana exports. It was Britain that was to gain the most benefit from this arrangement, as in dependency theory terms it was interested in the expansion of capital, and in the creation of consumers. This latter point being achieved through the importation of foodstuffs etc., into Dominica. Thomas notes that by 1970, over fifty per cent of food was being imported into the region (Thomas 1988:127).

While the social and economic changes of the 1960s were being instigated in Dominica, there was also the beginnings of a change in the political climate. Newly graduated students returning from the University of the West Indies and from universities in North America were dissatisfied with existing policies, especially in relation to land. They attempted to sway public opinion with pamphlets and meetings concerning the unfair ownership of ninety percent of Dominica's wealth by an elite few (Honychurch 1995:215).

During this time, a statutory body was put into place by a British act of parliament. This was the Commonwealth Development Corporation (CDC), a commercial organisation which operated with the purpose of increasing the wealth of the Commonwealth countries. This would be achieved by investing its funds in development projects that would promote or expand economic ventures, and also offer a reasonable return on funds invested. The CDC's involvement in Dominica concerned electricity, housing finance, and agriculture. In relation to agriculture, the CDC purchased two large estates that produced bananas, coconuts, cocoa and citrus. One of these estates was Castle Bruce, situated in the North East region of the island.

## 4.2 Castle Bruce

In 1972 the CDC decided to terminate the employment of 53 agricultural workers in Castle Bruce. This was because of financial reasons. The large estates were experiencing increases in the cost of banana production, and were preparing to diversify into other crops, or to sell off the estates. They had reasoned that once the costs of inputs, labour and transportation were taken into account, the profits received from banana farming were not of adequate return. Banana farming was to become the domain of small farmers, as by working together as a unit a small farmer and his family could produce bananas without any overt labour costs.

The newly appointed manager of the Castle Bruce estate however, refused to comply with laying off workers. His objection, that wages earned on the estate were crucial to the economy of the village, was ignored, and the manager himself was fired. A resulting strike ensued, with the workers refusing to return to work until the manager was reinstated. However, at various meetings with workers the manager suggested that with the use of a government loan, they could purchase the estate for themselves and work it collectively. The proposed purchase of the estate caused a mixed response in the region. Caribbean intellectuals and various political groups looked on with interest, while large independent estate owners and businesses in the area were unhappy about the venture, labeling it as indicative of 'the communist threat' (Honychurch 1995:217). Ahmed and Afroz also note that Conservative political and business leaders 'call the co-operatives communist' (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:153).

The Castle Bruce estate was finally purchased in 1974, but it was not sold to the workers of Castle Bruce. The British government had not been prepared to sanction any 'collectives' and had, after twenty months of strikes and protests urged the workers to return to work. Many workers complied as the loss of income proved to be too much of a financial burden. However, a co-operative was formed which gained much support from overseas. This was in part because of the interest shown by overseas journalists and TV documentary teams. It was the government itself, that purchased Castle Bruce from the CDC, and the estate was operated under the Land Management authority. 153 acres of Castle Bruce land was leased to the workers to form their cooperative (Trouillot 1988:43). This was not the outcome desired by the estate manager and the workers who wished to purchase the land for themselves. Honychurch argues it is obvious that the idealism of the original project designed for Castle Bruce was drained by a succession of social, political and economic forces that were too powerful and too institutionally established for those new ideas to become effective. He writes that among these ideas the traditional model of independent farming by individual families (as opposed to the collective system) approved of 'the concept of land ownership which whether for the big landowner or small subsistence crop farmer is dominated by individualism and the treasured 'title deed'' (Honychurch 1995:217).

Predominantly noticeable in the Castle Bruce affair, is the unwillingness of the British Government to allow residents to purchase and manage their own estate. This can be seen as an example of Frank's argument that the maintenance of metropolis development, necessitates the maintenance of peripheral underdevelopment. In Frank's terms, the British Government were against relinquishing control of the large

Castle Bruce estate as it is 'external imposition and control' that accommodates the maintenance of metropolis development (Frank:1975:46).

### 4.3 Geest

In 1952 Geest became exclusively responsible for banana exports from the Windward Islands. Geest did initially cultivate bananas on estates in both Dominica and St. Lucia. However, it was realized that the cost of production could be lowered by contracting out production to small farmers. Grossman notes that transnational corporations prefer to deal with small producers as they are less powerful and much easier to control than large estates (Grossman 1998:6). Contract farming was very advantageous to Geest. By opting out of production and becoming concerned solely with marketing, Geest removed itself from risk of crop failure. As Grossman further points out, small farmers can continue production in situations which would be unprofitable for large producers. This is because small farmers engage in subsistence farming along with cash cropping, and therefore do not rely solely on profit for survival. They also 'exploit' household labour. In other words they can quickly mobilize labour, and continue to work despite declining commodity prices, due to the necessity of maintaining household reproduction (Grossman:ibid).

We have seen thus far that dependency theory is concerned with dependency in relation to historical specificity, and with the interrelation of internal and external structures. Dependency theory is therefore a very broad reaching perspective that attempts to consider problems both spatially and temporally. This approach is seen by dependency theorists as a strength, however, it has also been held up as a criticism of the theory. As O'Brien notes 'in unsophisticated hands, the danger with total viewpoints is that dependency can easily become a pseudo-concept which explains everything in general and hence nothing in particular' (O'Brien 1974:2).

It important therefore to mention at the outset two points central to this dissertation. Firstly it should be noted that dependency theory does not provide a set of testable hypotheses of a rigid theoretical model. Rather, it is '...a conceptual framework, a set of concepts, hypothesised linkages, and an optic that attempts to locate and clarify a wide range of problems... a 'way of framing' many of the issues that relate to development' (Villamil 1979:2). Payne and Sutton note that it is a body of thought which has derived ideas from various sources, constructed by a theoretical amalgamation of the structuralist approach developed most notably by Latin American theorists such as Sunkel and Furtado and the neo-Marxist view of underdevelopment made popular by Andre Gunder Frank. (Payne and Sutton 1984:1).

Payne and Sutton continue by commenting that dependency theory, because of its diverse theoretical background, has never been able to be applied rigorously to any study. Payne and Sutton note this as a disadvantage, as in contrast, advocates of other theories can claim a thorough application of their various theoretical models to their work. On the other hand, they commend dependency theory on the grounds that it has allowed a wide range of workers under the umbrella of the social sciences, to work within a common framework of reference. For this reason, they argue that the theory has 'contributed considerably over recent years to developing and extending understanding of Caribbean political economy' (Payne and Sutton:ibid).

As O'Brien explains dependency theory is a general, or 'higher level' hypothesis, '...whose objective is to define the problem or area of interest and try to show how lower level, more specific *ad hoc* hypotheses fit within this framework' (O'Brien 1974:2). The intention is to demonstrate the coherence at an abstract (higher) level, of low level hypotheses. Thus dependency theorists hold a variety of different perspectives within the overall framework of dependency theory. Some of the theorists mentioned in this paper, including Frank and dos Santos, argue from a Marxist perspective Others, such as Furtado and Sunkel, argue from the structuralist perspective of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA), while theorists such as Cardoso and Fernando, apply aspects of both perspectives to their work. Within this perspective therefore, we can examine the dependency of countries such as Dominica, and understand their particular situations not as unfortunate, isolated examples of underdevelopment, but rather as part of the total global system.

Secondly, dependency theorists regard development itself 'in a broad economic sense' (Furtado 1973:15). Development, 'should not be confused with the realities of the modern world, which are geared, not to development, but rather to the expansion of capitalism' (Amin 1996:75). Indeed, Escobar notes that development is a concern of the post-World war II period. Prior to this time period, it was considered that the eradication of poverty through economic development was 'pointless' as the ability of the 'natives' to understand science and technology was non-existent (Escobar 1995:22). However, this conception was short-lived as it was economically viable for metropolitan countries to create consumers within formerly undeveloped countries (ibid.).

Escobar also draws attention to the creation of poverty. An investigation into annual per capita income, first carried out in 1940, classified two thirds of the world's population as poor (Escobar 1995:23). Poverty was determined in relation to the economic status of the industrial West. This was a Eurocentric calculation, which did not take into account economic strategies such as subsistence agriculture and exchange practices. Development was regarded as a necessary step to eradicate what was essentially a Eurocentric construct. However, the involvement of capitalism in trying to eradicate poverty through development, actually caused poverty as people were dispossessed of land and resources (Escobar 1995:22).

One of the premises of dependency theory is that just like the development of the world system, theory itself is a development of, or a reaction against the ideas of its predecessors. Frank writes that '...we may take...the dialectical historical analysis of Karl Marx as points of departure in an attempt to advance towards a whole world encompassing...theory of development and underdevelopment' (Frank 1978:1). Similarly, Wolf argues 'Even instances of evolutionary advance or transformation must be understood as outcomes of interaction, and not as idiosyncratic breakthrough' (Wolf 1996:89). Correspondingly, while several writers are cited in formulating an analytical theoretical framework for this dissertation, many are only included as they add a peripheral basis for the arguments which form the backbone, either of the development of dependency theory, or an examination of its critique.



Dependency theory is in part based on the work of Baran. Baran offered a historical perspective that examined both the structure of precapitalist countries, and the relationship between pre-capitalist and capitalist countries. Baran considered that it was in the interests of the capitalist world to retain 'the backward world' as an 'indispensable hinterland' (Baran 1973:20). This situation would ensure the provision of raw materials and the ability of the capitalist countries to extract an economic surplus from the hinterland. Baran argued that the beginnings of capitalism had afforded the rapid accumulation of capital for western merchants, a situation which was not effected in the colonies other than Australia, New Zealand and North America. In the remaining colonies, colonizers were 'rapidly determined to extract the largest possible gains from the host countries and to take their loot home' (Baran 1973:274). It was Baran's view therefore, that underdevelopment was a consequence of the imposition of a subordinate role placed on the pre-capitalist countries by the capitalist countries. The intrusion of capitalism upon pre-capitalist societies resulted in the breakdown of the structure of pre-capitalism. This also afforded the acceleration of rapid development. However, would-be development came at great cost. The extraction of the surplus from the economies of pre-capitalist countries resulted in the retardation of their own development, to the further benefit and development of the capitalist countries.

For Baran, the only possible solution to the economic dilemma of the third world countries, was to withdraw from the world capitalist system and implement a programme of socialist planning. Baran called this the 'rational solution' and 'self-evident truth' (Baran 1973:122). Baran's theory was quite radical for its time. While other theorists argued that through diffusion and 'aid', capitalism would encourage economic growth and 'modernisation', Baran contended, 'While it may well be true that the natives' reluctance to perform adequately for starvation wages is due to a 'cultural lag' and to insufficient insight into what is good for them, the chances are that their resistance is caused by the simple fact that they are much better off in their traditional ways of life, by comparison with what foreign capital is pushing and pulling them into' (Baran 1973:330).

An exploration of Baran's theory does uncover some major defects as the utopia he presents has been seen not to work. Also, he writes of diffusion that if Western culture, science and technology had been peacefully transmitted to the less developed countries, it would have acted as a most powerful catalyst of economic advancement. He notes that it was, 'The violent, destructive, and predatory opening up of the weaker countries by Western capitalism [that] immeasurably distorted their development' (Baran 1973:299). Baran refers to a comparison of 'the role played by British science and British technology in the development of the United States with the role played by British opium in the development of China' to illustrate the difference (Baran:ibid)

It would seem by this that Baran is suggesting that it is not capitalism that led to underdevelopment in the third world, but an improper, misguided application of capitalism. However, Baran's work did have an important effect on Marxist and neo-Marxist theories of underdevelopment and development.

Frank developed Baran's argument and states that 'Underdevelopment is not just the lack of development. Before there was development there was no underdevelopment' (Frank 1975:1). Dependency theory, according to Frank, explains that a series of metropolis-satellite relationships links capitalist and third world countries. Within this global relationship, are subsumed a chain of national metropolis-satellite relationships. Each metropolis has provincial capitals (satellites), which themselves have satellites of their own (Frank 1969:6). In this model, both metropolis and satellite (peripheral) countries were originally characterised by undevelopment. Just like development, underdevelopment is a consequence of capitalist exploitation. Therefore, development and underdevelopment are not unconnected processes, but are part of a hierarchical system of exploitation and dependency. Frank writes that an examination of the metropolis-satellite structure reveals that each of the individual satellites,

.... including now underdeveloped Spain and Portugal, serves as an instrument to suck capital or economic surplus out of its own satellites and to channel part of this surplus to the world metropolis of which all are satellites. Moreover, each national and local metropolis serves to impose and maintain the monopolistic structure and exploitative relationship of this system...as long as it serves the interests of the metropolises which take advantage of this global, national and local structure to promote their own development and the enrichment of their ruling classes (Frank 1969:6-7).

Frank argued that underdevelopment is a process, not a natural condition. Economies do not pass through stages of undevelopment, underdevelopment, and development. The peripheral 'underdeveloped' countries cannot become 'developed' by emulating metropolis economies. A polarisation of underdevelopment and development occurred because of capitalist exploitation. Furthermore, the maintenance of peripheral underdevelopment is a necessary condition for the maintenance of metropolis development. In other words, the 'obstacles' to development cited by modernisation theorists were never traditional ones, as was argued, but were created to facilitate the subordination and integration of the third world countries within the global economy. Amin makes a similar statement, 'Modern "underdevelopment" is not "historical backwardness", the result of late and insufficient capitalist development, it is the product of capitalist development, which is polarising by nature' (Amin 1996:60).

Frank asserts that capitalist exploitation is a result of 'external imposition and control' (Frank 1975:46). This external imposition and control are exerted by the metropolis, which extracts land, labour, and surplus from the peripheries to forward its own development. He writes, 'The developing metropolitan powers pillaged the peoples in these political and economic colonies of capital which they used to industrialize their own economies. By incorporating them into what is known euphemistically as the world market, they converted these now *underdeveloping* economies into appendages of their own' (Frank 1969:172). In a similar vein, Hoogvelt notes that if we focus our attention onto recent periods of history, we can see that it has been the expansion and development of

one group of *nations* (Western Europe) which has disturbed and prevented the process of indigenous societal evolution of another group of *nations* - and indeed, continues to do so up to the present time. Expressed differently, one may characterise contemporary developing societies as societies whose internal developments have been disrupted as a result of the impact of the West (Hoogvelt 1976:65-66).

The losses of a country's riches entail not only the retardation of its own development, but also disable that country from competing with the ever increasing advantages of the metropolis. Hoogvelt writes that 'Underdeveloped countries are structurally dependent on the capitalist developed countries, and this, by definition, rules out their own independent capitalist development' (Hoogvelt 1976:157). Frank consistently argues that the now underdeveloped countries cannot become developed because they lack the financial resources (because of their own exploitation), and the opportunity (because exploitation is already a global phenomenon), to themselves exploit other countries. He argues 'If the now underdeveloped countries were really to follow the stages of growth of the now developed ones, they would have to find still other people's to exploit into underdevelopment, as the now developed countries did before them' (Frank 1969:46).

Frank also notes that the 'institutions and mentality' imposed by the Metropolis '...resulted in and still maintain and deepen dependent underdevelopment' (Frank 1975:46). He writes, '...the terrible depersonalizing colonial mentality of the colonized is not an initial or traditional trait at all, but that it certainly is a product of these people's participation in the capitalist system and a critical contribution to the development of underdevelopment' (Frank 1975:25).

Dos Santos has criticized Frank for his determination of underdevelopment as a process of satellisation. He disagrees with the idea of 'satellisation', arguing instead that underdevelopment involves the creation of particular types of '...internal structure conditioned by international relationships of dependence' (Dos Santos 1973:76). For dos Santos, dependence is a *conditioning situation* in which the development of certain countries conditions the economies of others. An interdependent relationship between different economies becomes a dependent one when one country can expand its economy through self-impulsion, while another, dependent economy, can only expand as a result of the dominant country's expansion (ibid.).

Similarly, Cardoso examines the internal structure of dependence. Cardoso's main concern is the social manifestation of the economic process. He argues that the economic aspects of dependency should be considered in conjunction with the social and political aspects, not as separate concerns. Cardoso maintains that dependency arises not from external sources, but is '...part of a system of social relations between different social classes within the same broad ambit of dependency' (Cardoso, in O'Brien 1974:4). This is because the elite minority of a dependent country tends to form economic relationships with metropolitan countries, and then impose values on the wider society, that forward their own economic interests.

The early 1960s brought the question of dependence into vogue in the Commonwealth Caribbean. Dependence was soon considered by economists connected to the University of the West Indies (UWI) to be 'the dominant feature of Caribbean economies' (Payne and Sutton 1984:1). Scholars including Clive Thomas in writing about the fiscal arrangements of the Caribbean, and Alister McIntyre in describing the trade policy of the Caribbean, considered it necessary to begin their analyses by underlining the dependence of the Caribbean economy on the wider world. This included dependence on overseas markets and supplies, transfers of income and

capital, banking and financial services, and business and technical expertise (Payne and Sutton 1984:1). According to Brewster economic dependence can be defined as an incapacity to successfully manipulate the operational components of an economic system. He continues that this type of situation may be characterised by a lack of inter-dependence between the different economic functions of a system. Brewster writes that 'This lack of inter-dependence implies that the system has no internal dynamic which could enable it to function as an independent, autonomous entity' (Brewster 1973:90).

Once the extent of Caribbean dependence was acknowledged, a new theory known as the theory of plantation economy was developed by Levitt and Best. They note that 'plantation economy...from its inception, is an extension of the metropolitan capitalist economy' (Levitt and Best 1975:46). The theory entails an analysis, both historical and structural, of the development of Caribbean plantation economy and spans the period from the seventeenth century to the present day. Levitt and Best stressed that their main concern was with institutional structures and constraints that were a present day legacy of the plantation economy. They considered that present day Caribbean economy developed in three different stages.

The first of these stages was the plantation economy itself beginning in the early seventeenth century and continuing until the abolition of slavery in the British colonies in 1838. This stage was pivotal in the development of Caribbean dependency. Beginning with the enforced transportation of a labour force from Africa, the Caribbean became an overseas economy of an industrial metropole. The metropole supplied all the resources necessary to procure for itself financial gain, and reserved for itself all rights of organisation and decision making. The local economy was dependent on the plantations, but the plantations themselves had no interdependence. Each individual plantation interacted solely with its own metropole agent, which provided supplies and processed and marketed the plantation produce. The metropole amassed vast profits in this early stage, while the Caribbean became entrenched in economic dependence.

The second stage was the modification of the plantation economy, lasting from 1838 until the eve of the second world war. The abolition of slavery in 1838 established a local peasantry, but did not establish economic transformation. Various strategies were put in place to discourage the growth of domestic agriculture, and therefore ensure the continuation of the plantation sector. The depression of the 1930s effected a period of mass unemployment and social unrest. A strategy was sought by the metropole which would restore the social stability of the Caribbean region, and which would implement a continuation of Caribbean economic dependence on the metropole. For Dominica, this entailed the introduction of bananas as a cash-crop.

The third stage was the further modification of the plantation economy, spanning the period from 1938 until the present day. After the second world war the metropole introduced various schemes to attempt to procure economic development in the Caribbean. These schemes included import-substitution, bauxite and petroleum exportation, and tourism. Foreign investment financed all of these schemes, thus continuing Caribbean economic dependence on the metropole. For Dominica, with its particular topography, only the first of these schemes was relevant.

#### 4.4 Import-Substitution

In the 1950s, The ECLA<sup>16</sup> led by Raul Prebisch, advocated import-substitution industrialisation as a means to introduce 'internally directed national policies', over 'externally orientated export-dependent' policies (Albert 1983:19). In other words, unrestricted metropolitan investment would be curtailed, and underdevelopment arrested by isolation (Cohen 1987:475). With the help of foreign investment or aid, capital would be diffused to the underdeveloped countries. Import-substitution and high trade barriers would effect a shift from imported, to locally produced goods. Import-substitution was thought to be a means of protecting the home market. Here, imported goods are prohibited, or the sale of such goods is impeded by the imposition of heavy taxation. It was considered that import-substitution within underdeveloped countries would result in urban development, procuring a 'trickle-down' effect, diffusing capital from urban to rural sectors. This 'would lead to a more equal income distribution, and integrate the rural masses into a modern society...encouraging the emergence of a modern, developmentally-minded State, which would, in turn, further their development'(dos Santos, in O'Brien 1974:2). Dos Santos goes on to say it was considered that this would elicit a change of consciousness, which would 'help to unite society in the pursuit of national independence' (ibid.).

Frank (1978:137) notes that import-substitution obtained as raw material produced by low-wage labour was obstructed in its intended exchange with the high-income market during the imperialist economic crisis. By the 1960s it became apparent that the import-substitution model was severely flawed. Import-substitution resulted in a lack of consumer goods for the high-income market, within predominantly low-wage countries. To counteract this, some countries began to produce high-income goods locally.

O'Brien (1974:3) notes that import-substitution industrialisation had not lessened dependence. Import-substitution and high trade barriers frequently reduced the incentive to market high-quality, competitively priced produce for internal consumption. Correspondingly, this produce was not an attractive commodity for the international market, where it had to compete without the protection it enjoyed in the home market. Also, foreign investment and multinational corporations were largely responsible for industrialisation, widening the gap of income distribution between developed, and undeveloped countries. Import-substitution therefore, neither created new internal markets nor expanded existing ones, but simply curtailed the importation of foreign investment for local industry when the balance of payments became critical. A combination of import-substitution and deterioration of currencies is highlighted by dos Santos (1973:67) as eliciting greater dependence on foreign trade.

Seers (1979:97) points out that import-substitution helped create new forms of dependency on foreign technology, and often of foodstuffs as agriculture was

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<sup>16</sup>Villamil identifies the structuralist thinking of the ECLA as another strand to the emergence of dependency theory. Here, an attempt was made at an integration of class analysis and structuralist thinking, while seeking a shift away from the static tendencies of structuralism, and the inadequacy of the economic thinking of development theories of the period (Villamil 1979: 2).

neglected. Similarly, Ward comments that the taste for imported manufactures and foodstuffs is at the expense of local production (Ward 1965:61). He also notes that the reliance of the regions islands on imported foodstuffs is 'to the detriment of their balance of payments and thus of their potential for economic growth' (Ward 1965:56).

Hoogvelt identifies three reasons for the failure of import substitution. The first of these is that domestic costs are increased with protection. The result of this is that protected industries are discouraged from reaching a position of competitive viability within an unprotected export market. Secondly, because underdeveloped countries tend to be lacking in the technological equipment and expertise necessary to implement the generation and maintenance of consumer industries, the protection of those industries in their infancy, had to be augmented with an even more liberal importation of producer goods. Thirdly, multinationals, encouraged by import-substitution, would find ways to bypass the tariff barriers and set up local subsidiaries. The problem here is that this sometimes resulted in those local operations running at a loss over a sustained period as the multinationals interests lay in the protection of future markets. (Hoogvelt 1976:157-158).

Demas (1967) notes that if an underdeveloped country has reached the stage of import-substitution, industrialisation becomes increasingly difficult. Although he remarks that there are many reasons for this, there are in his opinion two crucial reasons why it is exceptionally difficult for them to achieve industrialisation in any measure. The first reason he highlights is that the developed countries immediately attempt to close their markets the moment simple manufactures from a less developed country begin to make progress in trade. He notes that they invoke the principle of market-disruption, and comments that it is as if it were a crime for the less developed country to export those goods in which it has a competitive advantage. Demas writes that the advanced countries seem to be motivated in their economic relations with less advantaged countries by the principle 'to stagnate deserves aid, but to export deserves retribution' (Demas 1967:80). The second main reason that Demas highlights concerning difficulties in achieving industrialisation, is that in an attempt to protect their own national industries, the developing countries restrict market opportunities for each other in their home markets (Demas 1967:ibid).

Huizer (1996:295) draws attention to the widening gap of income distribution within the underdeveloped countries themselves, due to the contrary effect of 'trickle down' policies. These policies often benefited the wealthy few at the expense of the poor majority, resulting in disharmony and conflict. It became apparent with failure of import-substitution to forward national development that a new perspective was required. Frank's dependency theory emerged to accommodate this. (O'Brien 1974:2; Villamil 1979:2).

Clive Thomas drew extensively on the writings of Frank and was a most able exponent of his work. Thomas argued that the dialectical process of the internationalization of the capitalist system 'has given rise to the reality of the development of underdevelopment in Third World societies' (Thomas 1974:50). According to Thomas, the early development of industrial capitalism in Europe was not the cause of the spread of capitalism throughout the world, as the preconditions for capitalism had already become apparent over large sections of the globe. Thomas

points to the inchoation of slavery, colonialism, and accompanying appropriation of land and resources which characterised the expansion of industrial capitalism into the peripheries. He writes 'European development generated the underdevelopment of the rest of the world by destroying those indigenous social forces which otherwise might have led to the transformation of their precapitalist modes of production'(Thomas 1974:58).

In effect, the Commonwealth Caribbean became a region focused solely on the production of raw materials, and the consumption of manufacturates produced elsewhere. As a consequence, local production became divorced from the domestic market. Thomas (1974:59) insists that the lack of a development of indigenous science and technology, and consequent disparity between domestic production and need is the basic root of dependency in the Caribbean. He explains that this situation, initiated with imperialism, has not been eradicated despite the growth of local manufacturing and new export enterprises. This is largely due to the continuation of overseas financial involvement in the region. Factors such as overseas ownership of resources, the involvement and practices of transnational corporations, inappropriate use of capital-intensive technology, and the difficulties (climatic geographical and topological) posed in the region for agriculture, all contribute to the ongoing dependency of the Commonwealth Caribbean. Demas draws attention in particular to economic factors connected with the reliance on monoproduction. He writes, '...a very small country which possesses a particular mineral or natural resource in large quantities which is developed by foreign capital may find that the enclave sector is so large relatively to the rest of the economy that the enclave can dominate the economy, it may become impossible even to conceive of a separate economy' (Demas 1965:61).

Dependency theory has been criticized on many fronts and Frank himself attacked by other dependency theorists. Cardoso's argument concerns Frank's slogan "the development of underdevelopment". Cardoso contends that 'this phrase ignores the structural dynamism of industrialisation now being carried out by the multinational corporation - it is thus possible to have a "dependent development" - and that this process can lead to important reforms in the old oligarchic structures, e.g. perhaps a reform of land tenure and traditional patterns of underdevelopment" (O'Brien 1974: 13). O'Brien agrees with Cardoso, while acknowledging that Cardoso does not provide enough examples to illustrate his argument.

Cardoso's argument, that multinational involvement may be beneficial in for example, the implementation of land reform seems very suggestive of modernisation theory. It also appears to presuppose passivity in underdeveloped countries. Even where passivity exists, it is not necessarily an expression of compliance. Passive resistance is also a form of active opposition. In a later chapter I will argue (after Mintz 1974, and Besson 1997), that passive resistance against land reform in Dominica, is an active response to the imposition of the capitalist world system. That resistance to land reform is not dependent on 'traditionalism and backwardness', but represents a dynamic mode of identity-formation.

Long's criticism of dependency theory concerns its central idea that the periphery is always affected by the metropolis. He argues that in many cases it is the centre that is affected by the periphery. However, he does not argue this point adequately. The only

evidence he can offer is the fact that 'the constant reverberations of Caribbean, African and Latin American music and artistic forms that shape the pop scenes of London and Paris' (Long 2001:222).

Warren points to the role of multinationals in forwarding manufacturing in underdeveloped regions. He argues that far from creating underdevelopment, capitalism actually encourages development. Accordingly, some Third World regions '...now have features far from typical of underdeveloped economies' (Warren 1980:246).

This diffusionist position is challenged by Hoogvelt (1976:78-85). Hoogvelt takes issue with Warren's empirical data noting that his evidence concerning development in the Third World, and the evidence of bourgeoisie economists' in general is based on figures relating to *absolute* growth rates both of gross domestic product and of manufacturing output. However, these growth rates become completely insignificant when they are calculated *per head of population*. Hoogvelt argues that when the growth of output per head of population is calculated, 'the economic performance of developing countries does *not* compare favourably with that of the advanced capitalist nations...In other words, relative to the developed countries the underdeveloped countries continue to stagnate' (Hoogvelt 1976-81).

Critics of dependency theory have also argued that it cannot be reconciled with the diffusionism of Marx (Albert 1983:18-20). According to Cohen, 'both the dependency and world systems approaches have been narrowly and falsely conflated with a Marxist conception by these theorists themselves'. However, it would be useful to know what form of Marxism Cohen meant by this, as Marx's works have been translated to have many disparate meanings by different theorists. Cohen also objects that dependency and world-system perspectives tend to focus on countries rather than classes. His objection to this is that by focusing on countries, it is the countries that become 'their principal units of analysis'. Cohen argues that it is classes 'and how they are emplaced within a particular mode of production', which is the real issue at stake. Secondly, Cohen takes dependency theorists to task for their concentration 'essentially on the sphere of exchange and circulation (trade, investment, etc.) rather than, as Marxists would insist, the sphere of production'. Finally, Cohen notes the mistaken belief (by certain Marxists) that Marx himself saw capitalist expansion as an entirely negative force (Cohen 1987: 477).

Here, Cohen's objections will not only be addressed in turn, but addressed from a Marxist perspective. Cohen's contention that Marx determined classes not countries as the prime unit of analysis is correct, but only in terms of Western Europe. Cohen was incorrect in his assumption that Marx was writing on class as a global phenomenon, Marx believed that other countries had developed according to their own particular historical circumstances. 'Marx took pains to emphasize that his ideas had their origin in his study of the development of Western Europe and should not be extrapolated beyond without further thought' (McLennan 1971:126). This is demonstrated in *Capital III*, where he wrote that the capitalist mode of production could show 'infinite variations and gradations in appearance' because of 'innumerable different empirical circumstances, natural environment, racial relations, external historical influences, etc.' (Wolf 1982:303). Also, in a letter to Vera Zasulich he wrote



that any analysis of the capitalist mode of production was 'expressly restricted to countries of Western Europe' (ibid.). Indeed, Marx's response to a critic reads:

He has to transform my sketch of the origins of capitalism in Western Europe into a historical-philosophical theory of a universal movement necessarily imposed upon all peoples, no matter what the historical circumstances in which they are placed, and which will lead, in the last resort, to an economic system in which the greatly increased productivity of social labour will make possible the harmonious development of man. But I must protest. He does me too much honour, and at the same time discredits me. Let us consider an example. In *Capital* I have referred on several occasions to the fate which overtook the plebeians in ancient Rome. They were originally independent peasants, cultivating their own plots of land. In the course of Roman history they were expropriated. The same development which separated them from their means of production and subsistence, also gave rise to large landed property and large financial capital. Thus at a certain moment, there were on the one hand free men stripped of everything except their labour power, and on the other hand, the owners of all this accumulated wealth, ready to exploit their labour. But what happened? The Roman proletarians did not become wage earners, but an idle mob...Beside them grew up a system of production which was not capitalist, but was based upon slavery. Thus we see that events of a striking similarity, but occurring in different historical contexts, produced quite different results. The key to these phenomena can be discovered quite easily by studying each one of these development separately, but we shall never succeed in understanding them if we rely on the *passe partout* of a historical-philosophical theory whose chief quality is that of being supra-historical. (Marx's letter to Annenkov, 28th December 1846, in Bottomore and Rubel 1956: pp37-38).

Cohen's second objection is that dependency theorists focus on the circulation of goods (exchange), rather than on the sphere of production. This implies that Cohen considers the sphere of production as having more importance than the circulation of the product. In capitalist societies, it is the circulation of the product which is the objective of its production. The imposition of capitalism in an undeveloped country, has at its base aim, the extraction of surplus and labour, to forward the circulation of products and thus acquire a profit. Dependency theorists are concerned with this aspect of capitalism, precisely because it subsequently incurs the 'development of underdevelopment'. Marx himself emphasized the importance of exchange to the worker, '...this *life activity* [labour power] he sells to another person in order to secure the *means of subsistence*. Thus his life-activity is for him only a means to enable him to exist. He works in order to live. He does not even reckon labour as part of his life...what he produces for himself is *wages*' (*Wage Labour and Capital* [1849] in McLellan 1971:142). In the same text Marx notes that,

Capital consists not only of means of subsistence, instruments of labour, and raw materials, not only of material products: it consists just as much of *exchange values*. All products of which it consists are *commodities*. Capital consequently, is not only a sum of material products, it is a sum of commodities, of exchange values, of social magnitudes (Bottomore and Rubel 1956:156).

Marx also writes 'It also follows that the mass of productive forces accessible to men determines the condition of society, and that the 'history of humanity' must therefore always be studied and treated in relation to the history of industry and exchange' (*German Ideology* [1845-6] in Bottomore and Rubel 1956: 76). Furthermore, in respect to Cohen's remark concerning an absence of dependency theorists' analysis of

the sphere of production, the sphere of production and its homogenisation of people into social classes is considered by Cardoso (O'Brien 1974), and Sunkel (1979).

Cohen's third objection, that Marx did not consider capitalist expansion as an entirely negative force, is quite true. However, this is simply because Marx considered capitalism as the prerequisite necessary for a social revolution, which would eradicate capitalism. Capitalism was therefore a positive force in that it 'contained the seeds of its own destruction'. Marx writes,

For the creation on a mass scale of this communist consciousness, as well as for the success of the cause itself, it is necessary for men themselves be changed on a large scale, and this change can only occur in a practical movement, in a *revolution*. Revolution is necessary not only because the *ruling* class cannot be overthrown in any other way, but also because only in a revolution can *the class which overthrows it* rid itself of the accumulated rubbish of the past and become capable of reconstructing society (*German Ideology* [1845-6] in Bottomore and Rubel 1956: 80).

Wolf also disagrees with Frank's (and Wallerstein's) models of the capitalist system. He writes that these models 'define capitalism as a system of production for the market, propelled by the search for profit realized by nonproducing entrepreneurs who pocket the surplus of the direct producer' (Wolf 1982:297). For Wolf, as well as Cohen, Frank and Wallerstein mistakenly concentrate on the transfer of surplus, rather than on the mode of production in which the surplus is realized. Wolf notes that Wallerstein in particular sees the mode of production as a secondary issue, as (for Wallerstein) only two groups of people are subsumed within the capitalist mode of production. Wolf argues that these models 'collapse the concept of the capitalist mode of production into the concept of the world market' (*ibid.*).

Wolf also objects to Frank and Wallerstein's definition of capitalism as production for market to amass profit. According to Wolf, Frank and Wallerstein identify the expansion of capital from within the fifteenth century. Hence, argues Wolf, Frank and Wallerstein perceive the sixteenth and seventeenth century European pursuit of wealth as pure capitalism, and regard the entire globe as having followed this path. Conversely, Wolf's perception of capitalism as a mode of production, is that it is more than simply an economic concern. For Wolf, an analytical distinction must be made between wealth as a tool with which to amass more wealth, and 'capitalism as a qualitatively different mode of committing social labour to the transformation of nature' (Wolf 1982:298). Wolf reiterates Marx's conception of capital as not just 'a stock of wealth but a strategic financial element combined with other elements: machinery, raw materials and labour power' (*ibid.*). Wolf goes on to explain that Marx considered wealth to become capital only when it is 'able to buy human energy and set it to work with tools to produce more wealth, which can buy more human energy and tools' (*ibid.*).

For this reason Wolf argues that the capitalist mode of production did not develop until the eighteenth century, as prior to this time European expansion obtained a network of mercantile relations operated by noncapitalist modes of production. It was, for Wolf, not until the capitalist mode of production became widespread, that the mercantile market was transformed into a capitalist market. However, it could be argued that Wolf is simply creating a demarcation between one historical period and

another. Marx has always emphasized with his dialectics, that nothing ever occurs in a vacuum, but that:

Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living. And just when they seem engaged in revolutionizing themselves and things, in creating something that has never yet existed, precisely in such periods of revolutionary crisis they anxiously conjure up the spirits of the past to their service and borrow from them names, battle cries and costumes in order to present the new scene of world history in this time-honoured disguise and this borrowed language (*Selected Works* [1962] in McClellan 1971:61).

Nonetheless, dependency theory should not be considered as merely an exploration of the workability of Marxist doctrine. The historical and global linkages common to both Marxist and dependency theory are compatible, thus the two can be reconciled. Globalisation goes hand-in-hand with both Frank's dependency, and the polarisation and homogenisation of Marxist theory. Whether discussed as Marxist or as dependency theory, it is an historical fact that economic growth *has* diverted the world's wealth from, in Frank's terms, the satellites to the metropolis, or in Marxist terms, from free labourers to those who own the means of production.

Frank however, does not agree consistently with Marx. Frank's argument with Marx concerns Marx's belief that the developed countries '...show the not yet developed ones a picture of their future state' (Frank 1975:46). The classical Marxist perspective determines that by the process of diffusion, pre-capitalist structures in underdeveloped countries will break down and be replaced by capitalist ones. Dependency theorists have taken this perspective as a starting point, but have modified it to include the relationship between internal and external structures. They have brought into account a more involved analysis of the interaction between classes, and have introduced a greater number of particular historical examples to the analysis (O'Brien 1974:13). Sunkel (1979:28) maintains that while the classical political economy of Marxism may not be completely satisfactory as an analytical framework, it does approach the necessary direction required to analyze development. For Sunkel, all that is required to analyze a given society using a Marxist framework is historical specificity.

What does and does not constitute an historical fact is an area of contention between dependency theorists and their critics. Albert argues that dependency theorists use history selectively. He maintains that 'most dependency theorists employ dubious historical methodology, consisting of an uncritical reliance on selected secondary sources and a tendency to use 'historical facts' to fill in a rigidly predetermined framework' (Albert 1983:20-21). This argument is flimsy as it could equally well be invoked by dependency theorists against their critics. I hope to show in the following pages that present day problems *must* be shown in an historical context, and that historical facts are not 'used to fill in a rigidly predetermined framework', but that the framework is constructed by those facts. While relying heavily on Frank to formulate the theoretical basis for this dissertation, I will trace the development of present day dependency in Dominica from the plantocracies of colonial Britain during the mercantile period, to the multinationals of today.

Frank asserts that the history of the world has been written from the perspectives of the Western developed countries. That the then underdeveloped countries were assumed to have had similar beginnings and histories, which would lead them to follow similar paths to development as the now developed countries. According to this (modernist) perspective, the present of the now underdeveloped countries is merely a stage corresponding to the past of the now developed countries.

Frank stresses that in order to understand underdevelopment, we must account for the histories of the now underdeveloped countries and learn '...how their past economic and social history gave rise to their present underdevelopment' (Frank 1969:30). Frank's statement makes good anthropological sense today. The majority of anthropologists would agree that nothing occurs in a vacuum, but is anchored in the past.

This also concurs with Frank's assertion that the past practices of economic and social relationships between the developed and underdeveloped countries must be explored to gain an insight into the cause of both development and underdevelopment. Frank argues that the now underdeveloped countries were not always poor, but became impoverished because of their enforced incorporation into a global economy. Again, anthropologists today would agree that no one society is isolated from the rest of the world, as the political and economic policies of one society reverberate beyond its borders.

Frank explains that colonial domination forced underdeveloped countries into a subordinate position in the global division of labour. These countries were made to produce primary products for the developed countries, and to purchase manufactured goods from the developed countries in return. In this way, the economies of the now underdeveloped countries were centred on the needs of the developed countries, rather than on their own domestic needs. This effected a growing polarisation of riches, with the developed countries becoming increasingly wealthy at the expense of the now underdeveloped countries. Consequently, the end of colonisation did not stimulate growth in the economies of the now underdeveloped countries as these countries had no access to the same route to development. The now developed countries had never been colonised, nor had ever been in competition with much richer and powerful economies. We cannot therefore compare contemporary underdeveloped countries with colonialist countries in the early stages of development.

Frank's theory advocates the use of an historical analysis of a given society, in conjunction with an analysis of colonial domination. In this way in this way it is possible to understand its present situation. Although originally formulated to address situations in Latin America, dependency theory is an ideal analytical tool with which to examine events in Dominica. Lloyd Best argues that the Caribbean region,

...is the *locus classicus* of mercantilism. The first three hundred years of its economic life have provided perhaps the purest example of this philosophy in operation. Economic activity in the region was governed not so much by external as by metropolitan demand and the structures of production, consumption and trade simply followed suit (Lloyd Best 1967:58).

Paget discusses Dominica, along with other states in the Eastern Caribbean and points out that despite the fact that they are such small countries, they are nonetheless very suitable platforms on which to examine the theory of peripheral development and underdevelopment. Equally, in Dominica and the other Eastern Caribbean states one can examine international capitalism from the perspective of the periphery. Paget writes, 'In fact, as they are among the oldest of the peripheries, their cases mirror the entire history of capitalism' (Paget 1985:2).

Payne and Sutton, while criticizing the structural strand of dependency theory, emphasize the relevance of the neo-Marxist approach as developed by Frank. Their criticism of the structural tradition is that they have in their view, constantly tended to overstate the extent to which the Caribbean region differs from the social and political characteristics of other societies, whether developed or developing. They write that as a result of this they have, 'virtually ignored the role of class and failed to specify the changing political interests and patterns of collaboration which permitted plantation economy to survive without radical transformation' (Payne and Sutton 1984:4).

Payne and Sutton acknowledge that the neo-Marxist approach has not been a major form of analysis within the Commonwealth Caribbean, but offers a persuasive explanation for this. The University of the West Indies was initially an overseas college of the University of London. Marxism did not have any credence within the tradition of British colonial education, and Marxist political parties have not had a history of success within the Commonwealth Caribbean. When Marxism was introduced, largely through the work of Frank, its translation came too late to have a great impact on the seminal development of the plantation economy school. Payne and Sutton however determine that the neo-Marxist approach to dependency theory, '...has shown an awareness of the major failings of New World [economists of the structural tradition operating within the University of the West Indies] and has displayed that wider vision of the internationalisation of capitalism necessary to move beyond such formations' (Payne and Sutton 1984:5).

While dependency theory is neither new, nor particularly topical, it seems a very worthwhile theory to emphasize. Anthropologists would agree that underdeveloped countries cannot follow the same path to development as the now developed ones, but it appears that many decision makers are still unaware of this. Harrison writes for example that 'In north America, it would appear that modernisation theory has continued as if it had never come under attack' (Harrison 1988:111). According to Payne and Sutton dependency theory, '...stands in urgent need of discovery, revival and renewal if the Commonwealth Caribbean's full development potential is to be realized' (Payne and Sutton 1984:10).

## **5. Globalisation: Wallerstein's World Systems theory**

Just as the subject of this dissertation is bounded spatially within local, regional, and global divisions, it is also bounded temporally, from a period of around 1500 to the present. According to Marxist theory, development is 'an historical process based upon human labour' (Jeffrey 1993:17). In other words development of the world

system<sup>17</sup> cannot be understood without reference to the past. Dependency theorists generally recognize three periods which constitute the history of the world system: the mercantile period of 1500-1845, the liberal or competitive period of 1845-1900, and the monopoly period of 1900-present (Paget 1985:6). Frank (in Sing and Denmark 1996:42), and Gills (1996:227) argue that our present world system came into existence at least five thousand years ago. Chase-Dunn (1996:253) however, states that although commodities existed five thousand years ago, capitalism only began to predominate during the sixteenth century. McNeill (in Sing and Denmark 1996:224), also notes that it is more realistic to place the genesis of a global market after 1500, when regular shipping became the norm. Shipping of course was necessitated by the initiation of European Mercantilism in the 16th century, which developed into a single world capitalist system, predominant over most of the globe.

Frank's theory of dependency laid the groundwork for Wallerstein's World Systems theory. Wallerstein considers that the world capitalist economy is a social system, with the sovereign states being 'one kind of organisational structure among others within this social system' (Wallerstein 1974:7). Here, a system of unequal exchange between core (metropolitan) societies, and underdeveloped countries results in the exploitation of the underdeveloped countries. Wallerstein notes that 'Capitalism is based on the constant absorption of economic loss by political entities, while economic gain is distributed to "private" hands' (Wallerstein 1974:348).

Wallerstein uses the term 'ethno-nations' (Wallerstein 1979:23-24) to denote nations, nationalities, and ethnic groups. He argues that membership of an ethno-nation may have more relevance than membership of a 'class', but there is always competition between classes or groups within an ethno-nation which has an impact on the global market. He writes:

Political struggles of ethno-nations or segments of classes within national boundaries of course are the daily bread and butter of local politics. But their significance or consequence can only be fruitfully analyzed if one spells out the implications of their organizational activity or political demands for the functioning of the world economy (Wallerstein 1979:25).

Wallerstein sees the world connected by an international division of labour that is geographical, as well as occupational, so that occupational tasks tend to be 'clustered' into particular regions. Wallerstein notes that while this is in part related to ecological factors, it has a great deal to do with the exploitation of certain countries by others. The political structure of an empire 'tends to link culture with occupation, in a world-economy the political structure tends to link culture with spatial location' (Wallerstein 1974:349). Wallerstein explains that this is because national groups have political contact with the national state structure. National state policy works towards the cultural homogenisation of groups, with the express purpose of forwarding the political interests of the elite. In this way a cultural-national identity is formed.

The cultural-national identity, in conjunction with a 'strong state machinery', 'serves both as a mechanism to protect disparities that have arisen within the world-system,

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<sup>17</sup>Gills (1996: 236) defines the world system as,.... 'regular trade, which embodies a transfer of surplus and implies a division of labour and brings in its train systemic political, social, ideological, cultural and even religious rhythms as well'.

and as an ideological mask and justification for the maintenance of these disparities' (Wallerstein 1974:349). Wallerstein names these strong states 'core-states', and the objects of their exploitation 'peripheries'. He determines that there is a third group of areas, the 'semiperipheral' areas. These are the regions straddling the economic, cultural and political arenas of the core and peripheral countries. Semiperipheral countries may become, or have been, core or peripheral countries at some other period in time. Here Wallerstein differs from Frank, who considers only the exploited and the exploiters as formulating the structure of the world capitalist economy. However, Wallerstein points out that his classification of the world into core, peripheral and semi-peripheral areas, is an analytical tool rather than a concrete fact. He writes that he is not trying to convince us of the existence of three actual divisions or grades, much as he would not attempt to convince us of the existence of two actual poles. Instead, he argues 'that the class struggle centers politically around the attempt of the dominant classes to create and sustain a third tier, against the attempt of the oppressed classes to polarize both the reality and the perception of reality' (Wallerstein 1979:224).

For Wallerstein (1979), the capitalist semi-peripheral areas will normally include a smaller, but more affluent professional elite than found in the core areas. In conjunction, they will also contain a smaller sector of indigenous bourgeoisie who are likely to be connected to transnational companies operating from the core areas. They will however be primarily composed of a smaller, low-paid proletariat, and a much larger semi-proletariat. This semi-proletariat will also be low-paid, but will only receive part of their income from wage-labour. In the case of the socialist semi-peripheral areas, Wallerstein identifies an even smaller indigenous bourgeoisie. However, Wallerstein notes that this group are influenced by the bourgeoisie (transnationals) of the core countries, so that the development of socialism is problematic.

Rothstein and Blim consider Wallerstein's analysis of the world capitalist economy to be a 'highly useful heuristic tool for social research' (Rothstein and Blim 1992:2). They note that Wallerstein's interpretation of the world capitalist system, in which unequal exchange in an expanding world market is created through relationships of exploitation between core capitalist societies and late-developing countries illustrates, '...the crucial roles of primitive accumulation, colonial plunder, and unfree labour in the rise of European capitalist economies, and argued convincingly that the developmental fates of all the regions and countries were joined historically in the commercial calculus of mercantile capitalism' (Rothstein and Blim:ibid).

It can be seen that Wallerstein's theory has been useful in underlining the role played by slavery and colonial plunder in the rise and expansion of capitalism. On the other hand it has also been criticized on many fronts. Rothstein and Blim's criticism centres on '...its overt determinism, as well as for its theoretical flatness and inability to contenance the capacities of local peoples to amend, blunt, or even change its allegedly lawlike operations' (Rothstein and Blim *ibid.*).

## 5.1 Multinationals

One of the major twentieth century developments in the global economy has been the appearance and growth of multinational companies. Crum and Davies, while acknowledging that the term 'multinational' is open to a variety of definitions, prefer to define a multinational as 'a firm with production capacity located in more than one (and often many more than one) country' (Crum and Davies 1991:1). Two conditions which have lent themselves to the expansion and proliferation of multinationals, are colonization and monocropping.

Frank notes that '...underdevelopment is systematically and everywhere associated with - in fact caused by - colonization' (Frank 1975:2). Another quite fundamental reason why Dominica is ideally suited to a dependency analysis is its reliance on a monocrop for export. Monocropping, is of course a common result of colonialism. Frank (1978:11) points to the mono-production of raw materials as a key to underdevelopment, as reliance on a monocrop results in unequal exchange in favour of the metropolis. The development of an international division of labour between agricultural producers and producers of manufactured goods, is discussed by dos Santos as 'a typical consequence of capitalist development, which necessarily assumes the form of combined inequality among countries' (dos Santos 1973:77).

It had been Sunkel's contention that there were four interconnected aspects to dependency including monoproduction; the retardation of adequate subsistence agriculture (hence the necessary importation of foodstuffs); industrialization policies; and State functions. These aspects led to the necessity of acquiring foreign finance, which is the ultimate vehicle of dependency. However Sunkel has since modified his theory to determine multinational involvement, as the crucial mechanism of dependency (Sunkel, in O'Brien 1974:7).

Along with Sunkel, and his argument that multinational corporations are the new basis to dependency, we can see how Dominica's reliance on *Geest*, has been a major key to her continued underdevelopment. O'Brien (1974:7) notes that 'the multinational corporation (with its basic characteristic of integration of diverse activities within a single firm)', internationalizes dynamic sectors of dependent economies. This is achieved through '...the nature of the structure of production and the system of decision-making, income-distribution and patterns of consumption...' (ibid.).

According to Harrison the transnational companies are the major carriers of capitalism. He writes that they are commonly considered as having the main influence on neo-colonialism because they command a major role in the transfer of surplus from the periphery, or semi-periphery, to the centre. Harrison comments that world-systems theorists consider the transnational companies to be the epitome of capitalism, and that these companies are extremely harmful to the development potential of Third World countries (Harrison 1988:98).

Gaffikin and Nickson argue that multinational or transnational (TNCs) involvement in peripheral countries contributes to underdevelopment in five ways:

- They remove more in profits than they invest.



- In their search for cheap labour they lend support to repressive regimes in developing countries.
- TNCs distort the development strategy of developing countries.
- TNCs promote inappropriate forms of consumption in developing countries.
- TNCs directly interfere in the politics of developing countries. (Gaffikin and Nickson 1987:490)

Gaffikin and Nickson also point out that TNCs involved in exporting cash crops often appropriate the most fertile land, which ideally is needed to cultivate produce for the internal market. 'In this way, they not only exploit the food crisis, but are significantly responsible for it in the first place' (Gaffikin and Nickson 1987:495).

O'Brien (1974:8) discusses the tendency for local capitalists to associate themselves financially with the multinational corporations. This leads to a second flow of capital from the local economy to the multinational corporations, which is replaced by the acquisition of foreign loans from the metropolis. Foreign loans result in further loss of decision-making by and for the local government. It also adds to dependency of the periphery, as donors' have the right to partake in policy-making. Moreover, the interest required to pay off the initial debt further adds to dependency and underdevelopment. Dominica provides an example of this sort of tendency.

Ahmed and Afroz also make note of the multinational corporations' function in perpetuating dependency. They state that the combined effect of the multinational corporations' total control of the food and agriculture sectors commonly results in several highly unfavourably consequences for the host countries. Firstly, they tend to effect the underdevelopment of these sectors. Secondly, they cause scarce foreign exchange to drain from the region. Thirdly, they maximise profits by increasing a monopoly and absolute control of these sectors. Finally, because self-reliance on food, or indeed food security to any extent, is in direct conflict with the multinationals' policies, local food production is not encouraged to the extent that it is actually discouraged. Ahmed and Afroz argue that the result of multinational corporation involvement is 'the perpetuation of the dependency syndrome' (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:209).

## 5.2 Neoliberalism

"Famines do not occur, they are organised by the grain trade".

Bertolt Brecht

Neoliberalism is an economic concept which can be traced back to Adam Smith's 1776 'Wealth of Nations'. It may also be known as neoclassicism, neoconservatism, and pure capitalism. At its base, is the ideology that no government interference should obstruct the flow of capital across national or international boundaries. In other words, neoliberalism advocates 'free trade'. It is considered that restrictions on government intervention in free trade will enable capitalist to amass huge profits. Neoliberalism (known then as economic liberalism), was predominant in the United States and Britain during the eighteen and early nineteen hundreds. These countries were in a position to benefit from free enterprise because of their backgrounds of

imperialism and colonialism as the resources needed to amass huge profits were acquired by the subjugation and colonisation of others.

Liberalism thrived until the coming of the Great Depression in the 1930s. John Maynard Keynes, an economist, suggested that government intervention and regulation would encourage more parity in development. He considered that this intervention would increase both capital growth and employment. This was the birth of the Keynesian model of development and after the Second World War, became the basis for the restructuring of the international economic system. The Marshall plan was implemented with the intention of rebuilding Europe and Europeans did indeed benefit from social provisions such as health, education etc. The United States also benefited from Roosevelt's 'New Deal', as he incorporated social welfare programmes into his government policies. The International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the Bretton Woods Institutions (which established the dollar as the national currency Deere 1990:124) were all created at this time, with the Keynesian model of development as a paradigm. They were developed with the express purpose of lending money for reconstruction and development, and to assist in problems with temporary balance of payments. They did not at that time, have any control over individual government's economic or national policies. It was not envisaged that a time would come when these institutions would have the power to intervene in government policies, nor that the market would come to predominate over the State.

This very situation arose however, with diminishing rates of profit in areas such as Latin America and Africa. As profits dwindled, economists began to encourage a revival in economic liberalism, adding to it the prefix 'neo' to distinguish it from the old economic liberalism. It actually had become apparent even before the Second World War, that individual economies were evolving into a global form, and that the market was becoming all-powerful. The impetus for the majority of wars throughout history, has been the acquisition of territory for purposes of trade and resources. The desire for inexpensive resources has in fact led imperialist countries to justify military action in terms of 'national interest', or 'national security'.

Neoliberalism is not a recent phenomenon other than in name, as the mercantilism that developed during the Middle and Dark ages was founded on the military acquisition of resources. Smith notes that it was the powerful navies, and the treaties with other great powers to control trade, that provided and maintained the wealth of the ancient cities-states of Venice and Genoa. This evolved into mercantilism, or in other words, into nations purposely designing and applying their trade policies with the intention of intercepting the wealth of other nations. Smith comments that on occasion, one powerful country would effect the downfall of another by intercepting its wealth through war, usually, it would be the weaker, less developed countries that would commonly lose in these conflicts. Smith writes, 'It is the military power of the more developed countries that permits them to dictate the terms of trade and maintain unequal relationships' (Smith 1994:120).

The growth of European and American economies necessitated an expansion of colonial holdings. Once a high standard of living had been attained in these countries, it became an unfeasible suggestion to those who enjoyed it, that standards should drop. With colonial expansion, the supply of cheap resources for the creation of yet more wealth was assured. Not only this, but the supply of cheap labour was also

provided by the colonial workforce. Resistance was often counteracted with brute force including military intervention. Because of the desire for cheap resources and commodities, subsistence farmers all over the world were coerced into becoming wage-labourers. These people were also required to purchase commodities for their own consumption from European and American markets as opposed to producing their basic needs for themselves.

The aftermath of the Second World War brought with it the realization that it was counterproductive to fight over resources. Cooperation was now considered to be the path to financial development. However, Russia's communism was considered to be a great threat to the Western Countries. 'The Communist bloc, led by the Soviet Union, was in ideological and economic competition with the US' (Hutton 1995:278). Western governments were worried that their colonies might try to emulate Russia and adopt communism for themselves. Obviously, this would not have been in the best interests of the European and American powers, who needed control of the colonies in order to continue to increase their wealth. Colonised countries had already started to become more independent, as the Second World War had weakened the empires. Colonies that had the potential to introduce more democratic policies and possibly be emulated by their neighbours were a potential threat to the multinational corporations who stood to lose access to cheap resources and power. Communism, therefore became maligned by Western governments who sought to dissuade colonies from withdrawing from the global economic market. Such dissuasion was backed up by threat of military action.

The consequence of this united show of force by Western governments, was the maintenance of the economic status quo. The large corporations and elites of the former imperial countries continued to prosper at the expense of the former colonies. Therefore, even though it appeared that imperialism and colonialism were at an end, with the end of the Second World War and the introduction of 'free trade', mercantilism was still in evidence. Smith notes that 'a belief system was imposed that mercantilism had been abandoned and true free trade was in place. In reality the same wealth confiscation went on, deeply buried within complex systems of monopolies and unequal trade hiding under the cover of free trade' (Smith 2000:126).

Reaganism and Thatcherism were particularly imbued with neoliberalist policies. Thatcher, 'Impressed by the allegedly beneficial impact of individualism on the US economy...wanted to use the same life force to dynamise Britain, slaying the dragon of collectivism wherever she found it...' (Hutton 1996:28). Neoliberalist policies include allowing the market to regulate the economy. Any restrictions on the market are viewed as detrimental to efficiency. Restrictions include price controls, minimum wages, and union involvement. At the heart of Thatcher's government, was the objective of a 'ruthless campaign against trade union power' (Hutton 1996:89). Thatcher's policies also included the privatisation of public services and property. The principle behind privatisation is to establish economic stability by encouraging foreign capital and investment. However, Hutton argues that the directors of, 'The privatised utilities...granted themselves share options at keen prices which have made them millionaires many times over. The rise in profits which has driven up share prices has not been created by risk-taking or by genuine entrepreneurship; it has simply been

achieved by massive lay-offs and exploitation of the companies' position through mechanical price rises (Hutton 1996:7).

Another aspect of neoliberalism is the implementation of structural adjustment policies. These were formulated by the International Monetary Fund to enable large companies from the developed countries to access resources held by the less developed countries by opening up the economies of the less developed countries. In justification of Structural Adjustment policies, the International Monetary Fund argued that exports and investments would increase, and this in turn would increase incomes and savings. Structural Adjustment policies were heavily reliant on the removal of trade barriers, devaluing currencies, and deregulating legal restrictions on foreign investment (Burgess 1997:18). The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank actually admit that Structural Adjustment policies increased poverty in less developed countries, but contend that a filter down effect will eventually benefit the urban poor (Burgess 1997:26).

A further aspect of neoliberalist policies, is the disregard for the environment. In less developed countries pressure is placed on the environment in order to obtain accelerated growth and higher profit margins. The resistance of the Dominican banana farmers can be highlighted here as they strive not to comply with neoliberalist pressure put on them to use agrochemicals.

Dominica is a very good arena in which to view neoliberalist policies in operation. Neoliberalism is a fairly new set of economic and political policies first becoming popular with the US government in the early 1980s. By the late 1980s, multinational giant 'Chiquita' was convinced that neoliberalist policies, already adopted by European countries, would result in a termination of the special provisions allocated to ACP banana producing countries by 1993. To benefit from this, Chiquita increased production of its own bananas believing that it could displace ACP imports to the European market. Overproduction led to huge losses for Chiquita, who were also furious to learn that the EU intended to continue with its protectionist measures in favour of ACP producers. Chiquita persuaded the United States Trade Representative to approach the WTO with the complaint that the EU protective regime went against the principles of 'free trade'. Note here Wallerstein's observations on free trade, '...it seems [more] a cynical ploy on the part of those who hold world economic power, because they wish to apply free-market principles to everyone except themselves...it is a personal road to wealth for those who are streetwise and unscrupulous' (Wallerstein 1996:357).

Dominica was more dependent on the income from bananas than any of the other Windward Islands. In the mid 1980s during the banana boom, prices had been particularly high, reaching a peak in 1988 with a total output of 70,357 tonnes. Farmers were correspondingly justified in their disinclination to diversify into other crops. The devastation of 'Hurricane Hugo' in 1989 however, decimated the expected output to 46,000 tonnes (Honychurch 1995:298). The subsequent 'bust' caused by Hurricane Hugo and Chiquita's overproduction, was compounded by a lack of diversity of other agricultural produce. At the same time the neoliberalist Structural Adjustment policies were also causing a problem for Dominica. Loans taken out with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank were causing rising debt. These

loans had been negotiated to fund projects designed to stimulate productivity and encourage economic growth. It was hoped that the income generated would enable regular repayment to be made over the long term (Honychurch 1995:287).

A further aspect of neoliberalist policies that affected Dominica was the attitude of the US after the fall of communism in Eastern Europe. During the 1980s, Dominica had benefited financially from its supportive role in the US intervention in Granada. In 1987, Prime Minister Eugina Charles was awarded the James Monroe Memorial Award from President Reagan in recognition of her effort in the Grenada affair. Reagan said that the award reflected Munroe's philosophy of 'protecting the New World from the depredations of foreign imperial powers' (Honychurch 1995:287). However, in 1993 Prime Minister Charles announced 'The United States in particular, seems to have withdrawn from its close relationship with our region and aid flows from that country have virtually dried up' (Honychurch 1995:ibid).

Neoliberalist policies then have caused a great deal of damage to Dominica. The adoption of these policies can be seen as the catalyst of Dominica's present day problems. Chiquita of course, were instrumental in this.

### **5.3 The EU Banana Regime and the present crisis: Chiquita and the W.T.O. ruling**

Chiquita, formerly known as the United Fruit Company Limited, and more recently as the United Brands Company (1970-1990), began marketing bananas in 1899. Today, Chiquita, which is controlled by the giant American Finance Group, is the largest banana producer in the world. It has interests in more than forty countries, selling 2.25 million bananas each year, and has amassed capital assets of \$25 billion.

In the late 1980s, Chiquita maximised its production of bananas in the belief that the EU's commitment to adopt a single-market by 1993 would end the special provisions of the banana regime. This, they believed would lay the market open to their own bananas. Consequently, between 1988 and 1992 they increased production by 46 per cent. Because of the subsequent oversupply to the market, prices dropped and Chiquita declared losses of US\$ 284 million.

Along with Dole and Del Monte, Chiquita forms an oligopoly of three banana giants which controls around 64 per cent of the world market. It was Chiquita alone that pressed the US government into action concerning the EU's licensing system. The US government claims that the EU banana regime deprives US multinationals Chiquita and Dole of half of their business in the EU market.

However, Dole and Del Monte, the next largest producers after Chiquita, are keen to point out that they have no wish to undermine the fundamental principles of the EU banana regime. Dole issued a statement to the US government saying, "precipitous change in current trading arrangements would cause a disproportionate amount of harm to ACP and European banana producing regions." Del Monte also *said yes* to the current regime with its statement, "...Del Monte never took any action to lobby

against the Regulation prior to its implementation nor has it taken any action to undermine the provisions in-effect...recognizing the EU's need to provide some form of protection to EU growers and to honour the commitments made under the Lome Convention".

When the EU announced in 1993 that it would continue with its protective regime, complaints were lodged under the GATT (The 1948 General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) provisions by five Latin American countries. The GATT panel concluded that aspects of the new regime were incompatible with GATT, but that a waiver could be secured to meet the social motives of the regime. The waiver was duly granted for the Lome Convention in 1994, and was renewed in 1996.

Chiquita petitioned the United States Trade Representative (USTR), Mickey Kantor, to investigate the EU regime and the Banana Framework Agreement, on the grounds of discrimination against US companies under Section 301 of the US Trade Act.

Chiquita argued that the EU regime discriminated against bananas produced by third countries other than ACP countries, resulting in an unfair advantage being given to ACP countries, EU producers, and European shippers and importers. Chiquita only had a minimal involvement in ACP and EU bananas, and so did not stand to benefit by marketing these bananas to the extent that its competitors did. The multinational objected to what it considered the unfair allocation of licenses to ACP and EU bananas. It also objected to differential treatment of licensing requirements for bananas of third country origins. Finally, it objected to specific country quotas for ACP countries, which were greater than justified by past performance. The plaintiffs argued that the waiver granted by GATT for the Lome Convention was unnecessary and therefore this discrimination was unjustifiable.

The dispute was heard at the WTO in Geneva beginning 10 September 1996. At the insistence of the USTR, a three-man Disputes Panel had been appointed on 9 May of that year. This comprised the WTO Permanent Representative of Hong Kong and two other trade experts from Switzerland and Australia, neither of these men had any experience of the problems faced by less developed countries. The Caribbean, and other ACP governments requested rights of participation in the proceedings. These requests were denied. The Panel then proceeded to expel representatives of the governments of St Lucia, St Vincent, and the Grenadines from the hearing on the grounds that they were not permanent government officials. This placed the ACP countries in a position of distinct disadvantage in comparison to Chiquita and the Latin American countries, who attended the Panel meeting along with their armies of specialist trade lawyers and permanent officials. To add insult to injury, the ACP were not even given the opportunity to view the interim report which was made available for comment to the main parties.

In May 1997 the Panel ruled that the EU banana regime was in breach of WTO rules on several counts, especially in respect of the import licensing arrangements. The Panel took issue with the allocation of B licenses to importers of ACP bananas. They decreased the returns to the ACP growers, and so considerably reduced the incentive of operators to import ACP bananas. They took issue with the duty-free quota allocation to ACP countries in excess of their highest pre-1991 export. They condemned the granting of hurricane licenses to ACP countries that had suffered

major hurricane damage to banana plants. Finally, they deferred to the complainants objections that licensing arrangements of ACP and other third countries should not be differentiated. The Panel's acceptance of the US claim that the regime disadvantaged dollar bananas was surprising because the US had produced no evidence to support their argument. The fact is, the US could not support this claim. While Chiquita made a loss in Europe of nearly \$53 million before the regime in 1992, they made a profit of \$85 million in Europe in 1996.

The EU appealed on 11 June 1997. This was heard by a three-man Appeal Panel, chaired by an American. However, in a report published on 9th September 1997, the Appellate Body agreed with the WTO's ruling. The EU in turn, agreed to comply with the ruling by 1 January 1999. The EU's obligations to the Caribbean and other ACP countries still remain intact, but certain mechanisms which act to fulfill these obligations must be reassessed. The Lome IV Convention expired in the year 2000, and the current regime in the year 2002. This does not give adequate time to formulate and implement a new strategy which would enable the ACP banana trade to survive. Neither does it provide enough time to enable those countries dependent on monocropping to diversify, even if a viable alternative could be found. Andreatta writes 'The Lome IV agreement is subject to review and may well be terminated in the year 2002, which will pose serious difficulties for the West Indies who have grown accustomed to trading in a protected market' (Andreatta 1998:418).

The US government has suggested no viable alternative to the present regime. Clearly, it gives precedence to the unfair advantages of a free market over the welfare of the Windward Islands. Barth (1997) urges anthropologists to confront governmental beliefs that the hardships resulting from free trade are transitory, resulting in growth and prosperity for the many, at the necessary expense of the few. He writes that anthropologists must formulate theoretical models that are accessible to economists and governments. Gullick (1995), also insists that anthropologists must communicate with politicians and powerbrokers to make their voices heard. In the last analysis, it is people who must take precedence over profit margins.

The WTO ruling to withdraw preferential rates on ACP bananas, will alter existing arrangements for the importation of bananas to the EU. The EU imports 3.8 million tonnes of bananas per year. These imports are the produce of ACP, EU (countries such as Martinique and Guadeloupe), and Latin and Central American countries. ACP and EU bananas are much more expensive to produce than Latin and Central American (dollar) bananas, and consequently, more expensive to market. Without some form of protection, ACP and EU countries will not be able to compete with the American multinationals.

The EU has traditionally protected the Caribbean banana trade, giving it preferential access to the market. This entails ACP producers being able to command a higher return than would be possible without preferential access. For example, in comparison to an average of around US\$ 5, paid for dollar bananas, ACP producers have received an average return equivalent to US\$ 8- 10 per 18.4 kilo box free on board. This higher rate does not translate into profit, but is necessary to counteract the increased cost of production. Preferential access to the EU market for bananas of seventy ACP countries was negotiated in 1975 with the first Lome Convention. Subsequent Lome

Conventions have protected ACP bananas for five-year periods, with the current Convention, Lome IV, being due for expiry in the year 2002. These safeguards were protected with the introduction of the 1993 EU trading regime (regulation 404/93). This was to ensure that ACP banana exporters did not suffer deleterious effects due to the implementation of a single market.

The Banana Management Committee of the EU Trading Regime determined a differential licensing system, and awarded 'category A' licenses to dollar, and non-traditional ACP operators. These were allocated an annual tariff quota of 2 million tonnes with duty rates of 100/ECU within quota, and 850/ECU over quota. Traditional ACP countries, were awarded 'category B' licenses. Duty-free quotas were allowed up to a maximum of 857,700 tonnes, with duty rates of 750/ECU over quota. Category C licenses were awarded to new operators who had only begun to market third country bananas in or after 1992. For EU producers, it offered compensation for any loss of income incurred by the common banana regime amounting to a total of 854,000 tonnes of bananas. This was to take effect from 1 July 1993, and is due for expiry in 2002. The Annual Tariff Quota was amended in April 1994 with regulation 144/93/EEC. This increased the tariff quota for third and non-traditional ACP countries to 2.2 million tonnes, and reduced the tariff to 75 ECU. In 1995, following the accession of three new member states, the quota was increased again, this time to 2.533 million tonnes.

Although the present regime expires in the year 2002, no provision has been made to formulate and implement a new strategy that would enable the Dominican banana trade to survive or diversify. Bananas are vital to the economy of the Caribbean islands. Any alteration of present circumstances will have major deleterious implications for this small country in which 30 per cent of people already live below the poverty line.

The US government however, asked the WTO to question the legitimacy of the EU regime on the grounds that it disadvantaged US companies. This was at the request of Ohio-based Chiquita Brands, and four Latin American countries, namely: Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico. The WTO panel concluded that the regime was in breach of the Agreement on Trade in Service because US companies were unfairly discriminated against.

The Category B allocation of licenses was the main area of objection investigated by the WTO. Dollar (Latin American) bananas are bought free on board, at around half the cost of ACP or EU bananas, and are sold on the same market. This makes dollar bananas a very attractive commodity. The B licenses provide the only incentive for operators to import ACP and EU bananas. The EU is the Caribbean's only banana market, and as such is essential to the economic and social development of the region.

Traditionally of course, the Caribbean has always traded in a global market. In view of the threat to the banana trade, Caribbean governments are experimenting with other products that can be marketed extra-regionally. Since the 1990s efforts have been made to increase the export of value-added Caribbean products including West Indian hot sauces and seasonings, fruit preserves and jams, and dried fruits. Andreatta draws attention to the abundance of Caribbean produce one can presently find in both the



USA and the UK, as a consequence of the supermarkets' relatively recent policies of specializing in ethnic food products. She comments that the increasing availability of Caribbean tropical products in European and North American markets 'is a significant part of the globalisation process' (Andreatta 1998:425).

#### **5.4 Regional Issues, Local Impact**

Three of the Caribbean islands: St Lucia, St Vincent, and Dominica are dependent on the EU for more than half their export earnings. When we consider that the Caribbean Banana Exporters Association (CBEA) only account for 3 per cent of the world banana market, we can understand its very precarious position. In comparison with Central and South American Multinationals, this precarious position is compounded by a host of detrimental factors. Andreatta highlights seven particular factors which are detrimental to banana farming and marketing in St Lucia, St Vincent, and Dominica. The first of these factors concerns the terrain. A vast proportion of the land in these countries ranges from hilly, to mountainous. As a consequence, there is a limited availability of farming land and difficulties in cultivation which are not encountered in the farming of level terrain. Andreatta lists the uncertain climatic conditions of the region as a second problem. Regular hurricanes and droughts are examples of weather conditions experienced in the area.

Thirdly, the American Multinational companies, with whom banana farmers in the region are in direct competition, pay their own workers lower wages than those earned by banana farmers in St Lucia, St Vincent and Dominica. This of course is one of the reasons why Latin American bananas are a cheaper commodity than their West Indian counterparts, and are therefore a more attractive product in the marketplace.

Andreatta's fourth factor detrimental to banana farming in St Lucia, St Vincent and Dominica, also concerns relative attractiveness in the marketplace. The smaller cultivated areas of the region, the varying soil conditions (fertility, acidity, top soil) and low yields, contribute to the higher cost of production of local bananas than of Latin American bananas.

The fifth factor is another reason why St Lucian, St Vincentian and Dominican bananas are more expensive to market than Latin American bananas, and concerns economies of scale. The shipping costs are much higher in the region due to smaller volumes of bananas, and the necessity of making more port calls. The sixth factor Andreatta discusses is that of volatile regional and extra-regional markets and fluctuations of exchange rates between the pound sterling and US dollar. Finally, Andreatta notes competition from other world sources (Central and South America, Africa, and the Pacific, as detrimental to banana production and marketing in the area (Andreatta 1998:418).

The US government denies that their action against the EU regime will cause any harm to the Caribbean states. It argues that a system of simple tariff preference, reinforced by aid, would enable some producers to maximize their potential, and allow others to diversify or retire. They do not suggest what form this diversity might

take. If there were a viable alternative to bananas (leaving cannabis<sup>18</sup> aside), then one would imagine that this elusive option would have already been explored. Quality Control Manager at Geest, Dominica told me, *"I have been here since the 1960's, they were talking about diversification then, and they still haven't found a solution"*<sup>19</sup>.

Even if diversification were feasible, the Caribbean banana trade would have collapsed long before any viable alternative could take effect. Any agricultural diversification project would require the cultivation of a crop in sufficient volume as to make shipping cost effective. Again this would seem to imply yet another monocrop, and yet another spiral of dependency. Also, as Powell notes, 'without a special guaranteed quota assurance, there seems little hope of most Caribbean countries having the encouragement necessary to establish competitive agricultural and manufacture export lines on any significant scale' (Powell 1973:57). Under these conditions '...they would be forced to accept substantial reductions in income, an event that might cause considerable distress in the light of increasing populations and few emigration outlets' (O'Loughlin, 1968:11).

As for the simple tariff preference suggested by the US government, this would offer no protection against aggressive marketing policies designed to displace the Caribbean banana market. One of Dominica's many disadvantages in the world market stakes is smallness of scale, a factor which is directly related to resource availability (Brazelton 1968; Demas 1965; Demas 1975; Lowenthal 1974; Payne and Sutton 1984; Powell 1973). A history of monocropping and exploitation has resulted in a high import ratio, and a low ratio of internally generated resources. The Caribbean states simply do not have the resources available to compete with the American multinationals on their own terms.

Ahmed and Afroz discuss the lesser developed countries (LDCs) need to 'improve the quality, quantity, handling of produce, the transport system and the overall marketing strategies to rectify the trade imbalance with the MDCs [more developed countries]. They note that one of the major constraints of the LDC's exports to both the MDC's and the extra-regional markets, is the inadequate supply of produce. Other constraints noted by Ahmed and Afroz include: higher shipping costs, port facilities which are clearly inadequate, high freight rates and other charges, and the low capacity and frequency of service. Indeed, Ahmed and Afroz highlight transport as the single most important constraint on intra-regional trade in agricultural produce. Other barriers to trade between MDC's and LDC's that they draw attention to include fluctuations in the rates of exchange, price competitiveness, and the dumping of subsidised agricultural products in the MDC's (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:176).

For Dominica in particular, the problems associated with smallness of scale are heightened. Demas argues that 'underdevelopment and self-sustained growth cannot be considered in isolation from the size of a particular country' (Demas 1965:3). Demas also explains that 'by size I mean absolute number of persons living in a national economy and its land area' (Demas 1965:29). Although Dominica is by no

<sup>18</sup> According to Thomas, 'To those in control of the regions supply, ganja probably yields more foreign exchange than all other agricultural products combined' (Thomas 1988: 128)

<sup>19</sup> Conversation, Canefield, Dominica, August 1998.

means the smallest of the Caribbean islands, the small population in relation to the land area is problematic in terms of administration. Communities are scattered as a result of the topography. Roads, telephone lines etc. cover areas of sparse or no population, this also has repercussions for lines of communication, education, health etc. Therefore the cost of services per head of population is greater, while revenues per head of population are low (O'Loughlin 1968:41).

Smallness of scale and dependence on foreign revenues render the Caribbean islands particularly vulnerable (Andreatta 1998:426). Deere notes that 'Caribbean economies are particularly open economies- any change in international demand for the region's exports, a change in import prices, or the availability of external finance will have a disproportionate effect on the levels of Caribbean income' (Deere 1990:22). Powell argues this point a little more strongly. He writes that if the Caribbean economies were to collapse, it would obviously result in considerable disruption for those societies. In order to eliminate this possibility, it is of paramount importance that the Caribbean region continues to be assured of outlets at fair prices for all of its agricultural exports produced to international standards. Powell argues, 'The alternative, in the end, would be an enormous cost to developed countries in rescuing the Caribbean from social and economic chaos' (Powell 1973:30).

Deere notes how this dependency 'is a result of many centuries of colonial rule...colonialism imposed a productive structure designed to satisfy the demand of industrialised countries for primary goods such as sugar, bananas...' (Deere 1990:23).

Levitt and Best describe 'hinterlands of exploitation' as 'a direct extension of the economy of the metropole', which works to 'produce a staple required for metropole consumption and for entrepot trade to third world countries' (Levitt and Best 1975: 39). They note that trade in the hinterland is conducted on a basis of imperial preferences. The term *Imperial Preference* entails two provisions. The first of these provisions is that the metropole receives exports at lower tariffs than the hinterland does, and are usually accorded larger quotas. In certain cases, as in the case of bananas, the processing and distribution of produce originating from the hinterland, is conducted entirely in the metropole. This is because the facilities associated with such processing and distribution are located entirely in the metropole. Further to this, metropolitan consumer goods and capital goods are given preferential entry into the hinterland. Levitt and Best write, 'The terms of participation in the various metropolitan-based preferential systems continue to be a major preoccupation of Caribbean economy' (Levitt and Best 1975:42).

Bananas are one such imperial preference. Grossman (1998:8-10) discusses 'Fordism', a regime of accumulation applied during the 1940s to the early 1970s. Here, the rising wage levels of the Fordist economies led to an expansion in the consumption of certain food items including bananas. Bananas were therefore part of the 'Fordist diet' (Grossman 1998:8-10). The mass production of bananas was introduced at the beginning of this period, and corresponded with the beginning of banana export dependency.

In juxtaposition with an export crop dependency and smallness of scale is the problem of food import bills and the drain on foreign exchange which this incurs (Ahmed and Afroz 1996; Barrow 1992:20; Beckford 1972:48; Demas 1975; O'Loughlin 1968).

Barrow, for example, writes 'The corollary of export monocrop dependence is the need to import food. Economies of the Caribbean are increasingly facing the problem of mounting food import bills and the massive drain on scarce foreign exchange that these entail' (Barrow 1992:20). Hawkings draws attention to the loss of income earned through tourism, as Caribbean countries spend monies earned on food imports. He notes '...if the Caribbean does not want to go on losing a large part of its tourist earnings through food imports, it has to grow more food at home' (Hawkings 1976:91). Hawkings goes on to explain that 'There is no doubt that multi-national control of the Caribbean tourism industry has produced a heavily import-orientated tourist industry with a bias against local produce' (Hawkings 1976:139).

Ahmed and Afroz note that raw materials such as meat and meat products, cereal and cereal products, fruits, vegetables and vegetable products, animal feedstuffs and oil seeds constitute the main agricultural products in the Caribbean region. These products are more expensive to produce locally than to import from overseas, hence the adoption of a liberalisation policy by the Caribbean governments in the 1990s. The consequence of this in recent years is an increase in the amount of imports (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:179).

Ahmed and Afroz further point out that the problems associated with importing foodstuffs far outweigh any perceived benefits. They note that the problems of purchasing a single food item, for example, cereal, cannot be overemphasized. It implies not only the direct control of five million Caribbean people's staple foodstuff, but also involves the implicit continued dependency of those people, and furthermore, the draining of a large amount of foreign exchange from the region. In addition to this, monopolistic pricing policies result in escalating buying prices, and any increase in costs are passed on to the local markets (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:201).

Trouillot advocates the socialist model of development as the only viable solution to dependency (Trouillot 1988:295). This model claims '...to combine its strategy of economic development with the retention of basic human values of social justice and equality' (Hoogvelt 1976:154). Hoogvelt comments that the factor which has convinced socialist strategists that independent economic development requires a radical break with the world capitalist system is the *economic* failure of the capitalist model in developing countries.

In discussing the *socialist* strategy, Hoogvelt maintains that this operates to mobilize the existing surplus by means of expropriating the wealth from both foreign and domestic capitalists and landowners, and consequently eliminating the outflow of capital from the region which results from both excess consumption of extra-regional produce and from capital invested overseas. Hoogvelt argues that this strategy results in an immediate increase in the availability of investable economic surplus. However, Hoogvelt warns that this can only ever be a one-off increment, after which the newly formed socialist society must be prepared to act independently without any potential aid from the largely capitalistic outside world. Also, for the reason that the socialist model does not prescribe inequality and class formation, 'the economic surplus has to be mobilized through *full utilization of manpower* coupled with a *ruthless constraint on consumption*' (Hoogvelt 1976:158).

Trouillot argues that Dominica would do well to withdraw from the global market, formulate a program of food sufficiency and find a market solely within the Caribbean islands. This argument, 'the non-capitalist path of development' has been seen to be

flawed. Payne and Sutton write that this theory wrongly '...posits that the construction of socialism is not dependent upon the prior emergence of capitalism: the task can be begun before the material and productive prerequisites for socialist transition are available and the capitalist phase thereby effectively bypassed or interrupted' (Payne and Sutton 1984:9). Similarly, Amin notes that the process whereby a system becomes outgrown and superseded, does not in the first place, occur in the centre, but from its periphery. Amin underlines two examples to illustrate this argument, 'the birth of capitalism in the periphery of the great precapitalist systems, and the present crisis of capitalism' (Amin 1976:10).

Wallerstein argues that the only conceivable way for socialism to work is for the implementation of a single world-wide socialism. This would entail the eradication of capitalism on a global level, a highly unlikely situation given the massive influence that capitalism has. Wallerstein writes:

Production for use and not for profit, and rational decisions on cost benefits (in the widest sense of the term) of alternative uses is a different mode of production, one that can only be established within the single division of labour that is the world economy and one that will require a single government (Wallerstein 1979:91).

In real terms, replacing one unsuitable strategy with another is no solution. 'Dropping out' of the global market would simply lead to a wave of illegal immigrants trying to find work on other islands. This would condemn them to a life of low paid misery as they were forced to take 'low key' jobs to avoid attention from officials. It would also increase drug trafficking, prostitution, and crime around the region.

Furthermore, the attempt to identify a market within the Caribbean alone is no real solution. If one island in the Caribbean successfully markets a product, the other islands follow suit and the market price falls. (Mead 1971:31; Powell 1973:28). Grossman draws attention to '...substantial price fluctuations and unlimited and uncertain demand' (Grossman 1998:186). Deere notes that the typical 'copycat activity' induces inter-island competition in 'offering the most advantageous conditions to foreign capital...[which results] in a strategy based on the "competitive" advantages of misery' (Deere 1990:46).

Throughout the Caribbean region, Ministries of Agriculture are attempting to implement an integrated agricultural program, dealing with non-traditional export crops. This entails collecting information on what crops have been planted by particular farmers, in what quantities, and when harvesting is expected to occur. Information thus collected is used to market produce externally<sup>20</sup>, however it has also increased regional competition for external markets. This is further exacerbated by competition from Mexico, Chile, and Central America for the same markets (Andreatta 1998:423). Mintz draws attention to the difficulties brought about by a combination of the smallness of the Caribbean islands and their distance apart from one another which have '...always militated against any integrated economic or political development, against federated solutions to regional problems, against strong feelings of common identity' (Mintz 1974:43).

Of course there is also the problem of social unrest, obviously caused by financial distress. Hawkings identifies both financial and political difficulties as key reasons for

<sup>20</sup> For example, The Dominican Farmers Union (D.F.U) operates a small farm to market program for the inter-island distribution of local produce (Deere 1990:103).

social unrest. He notes that there is a potentially highly explosive situation within the Caribbean region. The area is subject to problems of government inefficiency and there are also problems of governmental corruption and governmental compulsion to remain in positions of power. Hawkins notes that these problems are very much magnified in this region. He also identifies the limited prospects for economic advancement as another factor leading to social unrest.

As an example of this potentially violent and confrontational prospect for the region, Hawkins refers to Dominica to illustrate his concerns. There is a group of protesters in Dominica known as the 'Dreads'. Their cause lies in the eradication of what they believe to be the exploitative nature of existing social institutions. The opponents of this group claim that the Dreads have some connection with the radical Movement for a New Dominica. In one particular confrontational situation, a white visitor to the island was murdered. An attempt was made by the police to link this murder to the Dreads, however, the murder remains unsolved and it is alleged that the police inquiries included certain 'irregularities' (Hawkins 1976:62).

Honychurch also discusses social unrest in Dominica, pointing to the 1974 murders of a Canadian couple, again the responsibility of the 'Dreads' (Honychurch 1995:247). On a much more personal note, he goes on to relate the details of the murder of his father, Ted Honychurch, who was kidnapped and murdered by the Dreads in 1981. Apparently, Mr Honychurch had passed on information to the police regarding the burglary of a village cooperative shop of which he was manager. This information resulted in an armed clash in which two members of the Dreads were killed. The Dreads retaliated by kidnapping Mr and Mrs. Honychurch and burning down their house. Mrs. Honychurch was later released but Mr Honychurch was shot as he attempted to escape (Honychurch 1995:277-278).

### **5.5 Dominica and Bananas today**

Today, bananas offer many advantages to the farmer. Being a staple food, any unsold excess is not quite so problematic as could be expected with other crops. As bananas are usually intercropped with other produce, the farmer often regards them as a profitable continuation of his subsistence crops. Trouillot (1988) points out that psychological security is more inherent in the cultivation of subsistence crops than in, for example, the cultivation of patchouli.

Also, bananas are harvested and disposed of on the same day to coincide with shipping itineraries, and so problems of storage are avoided, and finding transport is less problematic. Transport owners are precisely aware of when their services are needed. Communications in Dominica are not so well developed as in some of the other islands, which could result in difficulties in contacting transport owners if harvesting was conducted on the basis of individual decision.

Bananas must be refrigerated within hours of harvesting. This is provided 'on ship', reflecting the need for an adequate transport infrastructure. There are however some problems which can affect bananas being delivered and refrigerated on time. Most

roads are edged on one side with a sheer drop, and a cliff face on the other. The majority of roads are very narrow, with u-shaped bends. This presents not only dangers involved in avoiding the road edge, and frequent landslides from the cliffs, but also creates regular road blocks. Road blocks are caused by landslides, and by trucks traveling in opposite directions. Obviously, there is a practical restriction on truck size, due to the narrowness of the roads. Even so, the driver of a truck large by Dominican standards must follow a colleague, who will ask oncoming traffic to leave the road, or if possible take another route.

Driving is adversely affected by various other factors. Vehicle owners do not pay road tax, the roads surfaces are correspondingly dangerous. This is exacerbated by the lack of street lighting, which makes night driving particularly hazardous. Other than within the capital Roseau, and the larger villages, there are no speed restrictions, and driving at speed is a mechanism to enhance male reputation. Men show off their scars acquired during traffic accidents with pride. Furthermore, there are no drink driving laws in Dominica. Dominica has a culture of heavy drinking, and again, drinking vast quantities of alcohol is a source of male reputation.

Finally, Ministry of Transport Tests (M.O.T), are not required in Dominica. This also creates road blocks. In August 1997, I visited the banana depot in Portsmouth and accompanied a convoy of trucks to the docks in Roseau. One of the trucks in the convoy broke down which resulted in the immobilization of six banana trucks which urgently needed to reach the docks, and all of the domestic and commercial traffic traveling in both directions. Finally, after a delay of around four hours, the truck was repaired and the bananas reached the docks without a minute to spare.

Not all areas are accessible by road. This has connections to the Dominican agrochemical debate. When I asked an informant why farmers were unwilling to use agrochemicals he pointed to a smallholding on a mountainside in the distance and said, "*If he use chemicals he have to take two hours and drag them up the hill, he got no road,*"<sup>21</sup>. The informant also told me that many farmers cannot afford agrochemicals. He went on to say that the few who can afford, and are willing to use agrochemicals, are only willing to use them on the lower slopes. These crops will be exported, while those on the higher slopes will be used for subsistence and the internal market. The crops are managed in this way so that domestic crops will not be contaminated by agrochemicals washed downhill by rain. Many consumers in the local market know which farmers use agrochemicals and avoid their produce.

Nevertheless, the Quality Control Manager at Geest (a British ex-patriot) told me, "*if the farmers could get it through their thick skulls that if they used pesticides and fungicides, they would increase their yields<sup>22</sup> and their earnings*". We are reminded of Hart's (1982: 78) comment; 'It is a common fault of analytical reasoning to reduce complexities to a single component. This is especially true of economics, whose mathematical logic cannot deal with all the variables that enter into the everyday lives of [farmers]'.

<sup>21</sup> Grossman notes that the distance between farm and roads is important in minimizing bruising of fruit during transit (Grossman 1998: 119; 180).

<sup>22</sup> Average production is around 5-6 tonnes per acre, which could be improved to around 10 tonnes per acre (The Courier, no 140, July-August 1993).

The unwillingness to use agrochemicals is discussed by Thomas who notes that 'average yields...show a land productivity significantly below other producing regions and the world average' (Thomas 1988:119). Thomas also notes that the pre and post-harvest loss due to pests and disease is estimated to be sixty per cent. However, he continues by making reference to the practice of using pesticides and fungicides, commenting that not only is it feared that their use may lead to resistant species, but also has raised questions about 'their foreign exchange cost, the potential toxicity of locally produced foods as well as the danger they pose of long-run damage to soil nutrients' (Thomas 1988:119).

Andreatta (1998:423) also explains some of the problems associated with the long-term application of fertilizers and agrochemicals. She notes that their use is related to the acidification and salinization of soils. This has implications for growers wishing to diversify to other crops as these conditions are detrimental to a number of crops which cannot germinate or mature in adverse soil conditions. Andreatta goes on to explain that widespread use of agrochemicals throughout the Caribbean region has destroyed or lowered populations of many useful flora and fauna species, including '...birds, iguanas, snakes, lizards and certain insect species - in particular honey bees that are necessary for pollination' (Andreatta 1998:424). Floyd (1973:44) points to overdosing of agrochemicals which can lead to eutrophication (overfertilization) of streams, this would be a particular potential threat in Dominica with its steep terrain and high proportion of streams.

Geest's attempts to forward the use of agrochemicals is impeded by the 'recommendation domain', as Dominican farmers resist the imposition of chemical usage. Low writes that within a society of farmers who share similar resources and problems, 'The group is expected to adopt (or not adopt) the same recommendation, given equal access of information about it' (Low 1992:55).

The recommendation domain is also indirectly referred to by Long. Long notes that we must not believe that it is always 'macro actors' for example, multinational corporations and international financial trading bodies that determines market prices, commodity flows and transactions. '...it is equally important to acknowledge the dynamic of livelihood strategies and how they shape commodity flows and networks' (Long 2001:115).

Providing his crops are of *exportable quality*, the banana farmer can expect to offload his entire yield in one transaction. This is a result of the 1966 'WINBAN Agreement', which resulted when WINBAN negotiated with Geest on behalf of the banana growers of the Windward Islands. However, as Trouillot points out, 'exportable quality' is not defined. Furthermore, only 'exportable quality' fruit that was *accepted* by Geest would be purchased, and this opened a large loophole to Geest's benefit (Trouillot 1988:146). Trouillot also notes that as Dominica is the last port of call for the Geest ships, and depending on the tonnage taken on board from other islands, Dominica's bananas may well be defined as 'unacceptable quality' by default (Trouillot 1988:150).



Part of the WINBAN agreement entailed Fyffes and Geest only buying bananas from the Caribbean countries, unless those countries could not produce an adequate yield of exportable quality fruit (Davies 1990). The problem with WINBAN for the small banana farmer is noted by Ahmed and Afroz who comment that the boards of association on the various islands are comprised of two groups. These are the large growers and government appointees who work in close alliance to ensure that the status quo and the interests of Geest are maintained. The alliance of these two groups is of mutual importance due to the increasing importance of the banana industry to the economies of the different islands (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:79).

Geest alone had interests in Dominica, having taken over from Antilles Products in 1952 (Trouillot 1988). When Geest took over from Antilles Products, its nominal capital was only £75,000. By 1981, it had amassed a profit in excess of one million pounds (Trouillot 1988), and was the largest distributor of fresh fruit and vegetables in the UK (Thomas 1988:131; Ahmed and Afroz 1996:79). Indeed, Ahmed and Afroz argue that 'The main function of Geest's control of the banana industry in the Windward Islands would appear to be acting as an agent for the U.K's colonial policy' (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:79).

In December 1995 Geest sold its concerns in bananas for 147.5 million pounds, forcing the banana industry to restructure. The buyers, Fyffes and The Windward Islands Banana Development and Exporting Company (WIBDECO)<sup>23</sup>, each paid twenty million pounds for the business, and took bank loans to cover the remainder. Geest chief executive David Sugden who masterminded the sale, left the company with a £420,000 handshake (FT Sharefinder).

Geest were in a very good position to make their vast fortune from the fruits of Dominican growers' labours. They held a monopoly on the Dominican banana market. It could be argued in Polanyi's terms that a market did not even exist. Polanyi defines a market as, 'The rates of exchange...[being determined or greatly affected by] the buying and selling decisions of a large number of separate actors trying to maximize their individual returns'(Chase-Dunn 1989:16). Grossman identifies an open market as being one where no predetermined arrangements have been negotiated between buyers and sellers, and where sellers have no guarantees about amounts they can sell or prices they can command (Grossman 1998:3).

Geest however, determined banana prices themselves, and paid for the bananas retrospectively. Shipments were usually crossing the Atlantic before farmers received payment for their crops. This payment was calculated only after Geest had deducted profit and all overheads (Le Franc 1980: 114-116; Trouillot 1988). Through a monopoly of vertical integration (Thompson 1987:21), Geest controlled transport, ripening, and wholesale distribution. They had effective control of the industry without any liability of risk (Thompson 1987:38).

<sup>23</sup> WIBDECO-Fyffes are presently taking legal action against Geest plc, charging them with misrepresentation of the value of assets of the company at the time of sale. (The Independent, Commonwealth of Dominica, August 26 1998, p 11).

WINBAN requested access to the company's ledgers but found them too complex to understand. They did however find that, "The Geest Headquarters Management and Facilities are employing services related to Geest Industries (W.I) Ltd., Geest Industries Estates, Geest Industries Development, St Lucia Distillers and Geest Line" (Trouillot 1988). In other words Geest were buying and taking away a raw product, and then charging the farmers for every stage of Geest's own marketing strategy.

Roche discusses the involvement of multinational corporations with bananas in particular. He notes that for the banana industry, transport, marketing and shipping are the nearest equivalent to processing. The trading companies usually make their profits by purchasing goods in one country, and then selling them in another. Their normal procedure is to charter vessels in order for the transactions to take place. Roche argues that for bananas, this exercise is the equivalent to the processing of produce in other agricultural industries. For Roche, the involvement of the multinational companies is explained by, 'Perishability, fragility and the central importance of shipping, marketing and distribution chain ...especially as 'they are all applied at a very high level of capital investment in order to achieve the necessary economies of scale' (Roche 1998:115-116).

Despite the financial inequalities inherent in this system, Dominica could not export its bananas independently; and had no choice but to continue with this cycle of exploitation and dependency. Because of their highly perishable nature, bananas require an integrated network of dedicated ships, ripening facilities and distribution networks which demands substantial investment (Trouillot 1988). Rocha notes 'Critically important is the reliability of the existing trade routes. Though real demand may be present, the ability to transport products may be prohibitively expensive' (Rocha 1996:369). Ahmed and Afroz point out that the complete control which multinational corporations have over supply, shipping, distribution and marketing places banana producing countries in a "no win" situation (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:78).

Diversification into other crops presents difficulties in comparison. The Banana Growers Association (BGA), 'supports the banana industry by providing inputs for growers at subsidised rates, planting guidance, and a regular market, and serves as a liaison with government, Geest, and other growers. This vertical structure supports banana producers, but growers of other cultivated crops have no such infrastructural support and no guaranteed markets' (Andreatta 1998:424). Furthermore, it is the regularity of income from the transnational which is important in real terms (Thompson 1987:84). A guaranteed, regular income is a more attractive alternative than the risk involved in an open and uncertain market<sup>24</sup>. According to one banana farmer,

*"...Banana is the only thing with a sure market in Dominica. If bananas fail the country fall...If you plant 3 acres of dasheen you will not sell, but if you plant 15 acres of bananas, you are guaranteed of a market every week".<sup>25</sup>*

<sup>24</sup> (Then) Prime Minister Dame Eugenia Charles. (The Courier, no 140, July-August 1993: 18).

<sup>25</sup> The 'Independent', Commonwealth of Dominica, 18 September 1996.

While the huge difference in profit between the transnational and the Dominican producers created inequality, Gellner argues that people are willing to accept inequality as long as it is stable (Gellner 1978:144). According to Cross, '...maintained and legitimized by centuries of colonial rule...plantation dependency is not simply extreme because of the inequalities of power between the metropolis and the satellite, but because such inequalities are perceived as legitimate by those who suffer from them' (Cross 1979:32).

Bananas represent a mixed blessing in Dominica. Reliance on one major export has many disadvantages. The most crucial of these are risks, both of production and the market. Production risks include devastation by pests, disease and hurricanes. Market risks include negative price fluctuations and the possibility of market collapse (Thomas 1989a).

Other problems include environmental damage. Slope agriculture can cause soil erosion. The superficial root system of the banana plant is suited to the lower slopes, where it is planted with tree and root crops. However, on steeper slopes banana roots cannot protect soil cover, which can lead to landslides and soil erosion.

Although bananas are best cultivated in large flat areas to maximize productivity, there is a compensatory advantage to planting on slopes. The root system is superficial, the vast proportion of roots lie within six inches of the surface. This results in adequate watering as the roots can take up water which would be lost for many other crops as it ran downhill. The superficial banana root system therefore offers two advantages over other crops cultivated on slopes: in conjunction with Dominica's rainfall patterns, it renders irrigation or drainage unnecessary, and it prohibits all but the most cursory weeding, which otherwise might damage the roots (Simmonds 1959). 'Slope agriculture', also helps counteract the damaging effects of flash flooding, which is an ever present danger' (Thomas 1988:119).

The steeper slopes are cultivated because of the shortage of productive land. This is due to a combination of the mountainous terrain, and the complex inheritance system as discussed in an earlier chapter. However, while Caribbean land transmission has been identified as a positive strategy (other than its relationship to the cultivation of the steepest slopes), it must be added that complications of land tenure discourage farmers from cultivating slow-maturing crops (Clarke 1966; Edwards 1961; Finkel 1971; Mathurin 1967; O'Loughlin 1968; Trouillot 1988). Clarke points out that '...the claims of individual members are difficult to anticipate by the remaining guardians of the land. This has meant a reluctance on the part of those who have remained on the land to put it to really productive agricultural use' (Clarke 1966:44). Banana cultivation however, gives the advantage of rapid realization of capital, and is therefore a viable option in the face of insecurity of tenureship. Barrow notes that '...bananas, [because of their quick maturation] as a major cash crop are relatively immune from the network of family reciprocity' (Barrow 1992:66).

Another important variable in land management is the organisation of labour, which reflects the importance of kinship relations (Smith 1956:180). Cross writes that, '...characteristic patterns of mating and marriage must be seen within a socio-economic context... 'visiting' or 'common law' relationships are more common with

low or uncertain economic returns' (Cross 1979:82). Similarly, Rodman states that 'a man's role as a worker-earner lies at the centre of an explanation of lower class family relationships' (Rodman 1971:177). And again, that lower class economic conditions may be '...more powerful in shaping behaviour and values than in other social classes, and the lack of resources may lead to the development of cultural patterns that are widely shared among the poor' (Rodman 1971:4). In many societies, the combination of cash cropping and subsistence farming results in a clear division of labour as males tend cash-crops and control the finances generated, while women labour with subsistence crops. This can create a male proletariat/female peasant dichotomy. This point is taken up by Ellis who notes that, '...women have good reason to defend subsistence basis of family survival. While men often stand to make personal gains from activities, however risky, which generate cash over which they have spending power' (Ellis 1988:99).

The combination of Dominica's topography, and the particular nature of bananas, make inter-cropping the most productive agricultural strategy. Inter-cropping negates a division of labour as it is expedient for all cultivates, both export and subsistence crops, to be tended together by the entire family. Furthermore, while it may be men who usually receive cash payment for the bananas after sorting, it is usually women who sell provisions at market. One facet of the relationship between kinship and agriculture is discussed by Blaut, Blaut, Harman, and Moerman (1973:62), who note that women tend to influence garden planning, with a particular preference for locally marketable crops. Their preference for these crops is twofold. Not only do women benefit socially from this produce, as they form social networks with other women at the weekly market, they also benefit from the stability afforded by a cash income in a society where insecurity of common-law relationships is the norm.

Handwerker (1989:15) notes that women's power relations are intimately connected to their ability to gain access to resources. This would indicate that inter-cropping reduces the division between gender and control of resources, as it increases female economic independence, and consequently female equality, and dignity (Mintz 1974: 224). M.G. Smith (1973:89) notes that even though men may demand a share of the proceeds of locally marketed crops, women can still retain most of this income by claiming 'a bad market'.

The benefits of banana cultivation far outweigh the disadvantages in the short term as farmers are assured of a fairly stable income from a low initial investment. Also, banana cultivation is labour intensive, and so has a positive effect on employment. If the Dominican banana trade collapses, it will spell economic, and social ruin for the country. Women in particular, with their traditional childrearing responsibilities will be hardest hit. Deere (1990:52), draws attention to:

- 1) Sharp reduction in wages and rising female unemployment.
- 2) Unequal burden which the rising cost of living imposes on women.
- 3) Reductions in public spending on services on which women rely<sup>26</sup>.

<sup>26</sup> For example, Massiah (1983) notes that the majority of children who attend the predominantly government-run 22 day-care centres for pre-school children in Dominica, are from female headed households.

## **6. Neopopulism and Resistance**

Neopopulist theory is concerned with developing a 'theory from below' (Long 2001:4). This theory can be seen to have arisen from an initial dissatisfaction with the direction taken by development theorists after the Second World War. Long notes that post-Second World War theories of modernisation, dependency, political economy, and post-modernism, show a tendency to be concerned with either macro, or micro studies. Long argues that the two should not be treated as diametrically opposed perspectives, but that 'A more dynamic approach to the understanding of social change is therefore needed which stresses the interplay and mutual determination of 'internal' [micro] and 'external' [macro] factors and relationships, and which recognizes the central role played by human action and consciousness' (Long 2001:13).

To accomplish the latter, neopopulist theory borrows quite heavily from theories such as ethnomethodology, popular in the 1960s and 1970s. The basis premise of ethnomethodology is that one must begin to address a research problem from the perspective of 'the world of our commonplace experience, the social world of daily life' (Sharrock and Anderson 1986:10). This perspective, of commonplace experience does not begin with daily routine, but of something even more taken for granted. In brief, this theory deals with the everyday assumptions people make in for example, believing that the reality they perceive is the only reality, and is the reality that everyone else perceives.

An illustrative example of the neopopulist perspective is given by Long (2001 pp:85-88) with his analysis of research undertaken on Mexican street children. These children lived on the streets and slept rough in parks, or occasionally in charity hostels. They earned their living by begging and doing odd jobs. In the mid-1990s a research project was initiated, that was based on the premise that these children were unfortunate victims of circumstance who would actively respond to offers of help. The prime concern of the research team was to identify organisations that were able to offer resources for food, shelter, and clothing for the children. It was soon discovered however, that there were outlets available that could meet the food, clothing and shelter needs of these children. Perversely, the children accessed these outlets only occasionally. It was apparent that the children preferred life on the streets.

The researchers consequently redressed their basic premise, that the children were unfortunate victims, helpless through lack of resources. They reasoned that the children would actively participate in a programme designed to meet their needs and discover what they wanted from their own point of view. Although the children participated to a certain extent, for example by identifying the services they used, and sketching a plan of an ideal hostel on the pavement, they were still reluctant to have any further involvement with the project. Invitations were made to the children to attend the weekly research meetings and to read the field notes made about them, but the children showed disinterest. Efforts to engage the children in a dialogue concerning their needs were met with resistance and defensiveness.

The researchers once again were obliged to alter the parameters of their research as their initial participatory approach was obviously lacking. Eventually, they came to the conclusion that the problem lay in the power structures that existed between the children and those with whom they came into contact. The children were accustomed to others regarding them as needing guidance, help, and support. In other words the children were persistently perceived and treated as being helpless, and it was this perception and treatment that the children resisted. Subsequently, the researchers adapted the programme so that it became more of joint effort, rather than one seemingly of active donor (researcher) and passive recipient (child).

The actual power structure between the researchers and children was not intentional on the part of the researchers, but simply due to differences in knowledge. Long writes that 'knowledge' is not a set of facts, but is 'constituted by the ways in which people categorise, code, process and impute meaning to their experiences (Long 2001:189). In other words the researchers' knowledge, that is to say their assumptions and perception of reality, led them not to originally question that the children would think and act in a certain manner.

Long argues that reality is perceived differently by different actors. He notes 'knowledge is built upon the accumulated social experience, commitments and culturally-acquired dispositions of the actors involved' (Long 2001:175). He goes on to suggest that the development of an homogenous system of knowledge is an unlikely event, '...it becomes unreal and foolhardy to imagine that one can gently 'nudge' knowledge systems towards better modes of integration and coordination' (Long 2001:183). However, Long believes that a level of synergy can be attained through a joint process of learning, with the goal of arriving at a system that can be compared to the original knowledge systems of both researchers and 'researched'(Long 2001:ibid).

One reason why knowledge systems cannot be easily 'nudged' towards better modes of integration and coordination is that people may attempt to resist actions they consider to be inappropriate or disadvantageous. It was not to the advantage of the Mexican street children to comply with outsiders wishes for them to integrate with wider society, as this would have involved giving up their preferred lifestyle. It was the children's resistance that caused the researchers to question their own perception of reality, and consequently to alter the parameters of their research. Long writes that in certain circumstances, those actors normally considered to be less 'powerful', can dramatically alter the course of events by making their voices heard. Long cites a particular instance to illustrate this, he draws attention to a situation, 'as was witnessed at the recent Seattle meeting of the WTO when hundreds of people took to the streets and successfully blocked the assembly's unequivocal acceptance of the principle of 'free trade' (Long 2001:12).

### **6.1 Dominica and Resistance**

At the present time, the majority of Dominican banana growers are united in the determination not to contaminate their land with agrochemicals. They are united against the idea that organic farming, their traditional mode of production, is not

sustainable in the face of free market competition. The sustainability of peasant forms of production within the dominant capitalist mode of production is a central debate in Marxian theoretical work on peasants (Ellis 1988:50).

The equilibrium between subsistence needs and labour requirements of Chayanov's model show it to be in opposition to the classical Marxist theory of peasant economics. Chayanov's *stability* is the antithesis of the dialectics of Marxism. The Marxist model forecasts the disappearance of the peasant mode of production. Through a dialectical process known as 'social differentiation' (Ellis 1988:50) two social classes, capitalist farmers and rural wage-labourers will predominate in place of a peasantry as a number of individuals accumulate capital and eventually come to control the means of production. It is interesting to note that the many means by which social differentiation may occur, include 'differential adoption of improved cultivation practices by individual farmers' (Ellis 1988:50). This is a central issue, as the majority of farmers remain united in resistance of agrochemical use. Increasingly, as projects from the 'Green Revolution' to 'Genetically Modified Foods' come to preponderate, Mintz's 'factories in the field' become global reality and food cultivation becomes more akin to food processing. In Dominica however, the social revolution triggered by bananas has important implications for agrarian relations.

Bananas were the catalyst which in many cases afforded the purchase of land. Mintz discusses the appropriation of land, and notes that slaves regarded 'liquid capital not only as a means to secure freedom but also as a means to attach their paternity - and hence their identity as persons - to something which even the masters would have to respect' (Mintz 1974:155). Mintz goes on to say 'In these terms, the creation of peasantries was simultaneously an act of Westernisation and an act of resistance' (ibid.). Besson notes that family land '...is rooted in a proto-peasant past. For the post-emancipation peasantries are mainly of proto-peasant origin, and family land perpetuates the proto-peasant attachment to yard, ancestral graves and provision ground' (Besson 1987:38-39 n5).

The purchase of this land was also the beginning of the institution of family land. Family land is a pan-Caribbean institution and concerns the land holdings of corporate kin groups. It is found throughout the Caribbean region in Jamaica, Haiti, and Providencia; the Virgin islands Tortola and St John; the Leeward Islands of Antigua, Nevis, and Monserrat; the Windward Islands of Dominica, Martinique, St Lucia, St Vincent and Grenada; Carriacou and Bequia in the Grenadines; Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbuda, the Bahamas, and in some villages of Surinam and of Guyana (Besson, 1997:224; 1987:17).

Besson offers a definition of family land and instructs 'This institution, whereby minuscule plots of land are regarded as the inalienable property of all descendants of the ancestor who obtained the land, is a strategy maximizing freehold rights among the peasantry in response to plantation hegemony (Besson 1987:14). Claimants of family land include '...all descendants regardless of sex, birth order, legitimacy or residence' (Besson 1995:79). Besson discusses the paradox in Caribbean attitudes to land: She describes the 'perception of land by Afro-Caribbean peasantries as both an extremely scarce, and an unlimited resource (Besson 1987:13). Besson argues that these very small plots of land, which are generally not more than, '... a few square chains in size, are imbued with an unlimited capacity for sustaining ever-increasing generations of descendants forever. They 'serve children's children, till every

generation dead-out.' (Besson 1987:14). Besson goes on to explain that as a kinship system, 'family land is based on a system of unrestricted cognatic descent', in which all descendants through both sexes have inalienable land rights' (Besson 1987:14).

All members of an extended family may claim inheritance rights and so land is rarely sold (Besson 1979, 1987, 1995, 1997; Clarke 1966; Mintz 1974; Smith 1965; Thomas 1989b). Holding onto family land is not only due to complications of selling<sup>27</sup> (Barrow 1992; Besson 1987; Grossman 1998:116), but also because the land symbolizes personhood and freedom (Besson 1995:78; Mintz 1974:155); social prestige and political power (Mathurin, 1967:140); permanence and immortality (Besson 1987); and producing a '...sense of security out of all proportion to the actual economic security, which at best is slight' (Clarke 1971:238). Indeed Clarke attributes family land with 'an almost mystic significance'. She gives three reasons for this mystic significance. Firstly, land appropriated during slavery gave to its owners a social, and a status value. With the abolition of slavery, this land went on to become both a symbol of freedom, and to represent the reality of freedom. Secondly, land is strongly associated with religion. The location at which the ancestors are buried is sacred ground and any land containing their resting places must not be allowed to be sold, or be otherwise acquired by outsiders. Clarke's third reason concerns the connection between security and family. She notes that the only source of security that is believed to be real and permanent is the ownership of land. Clarke goes on to add that land ownership is also the only means of 'satisfying the normal expectations which operate between men and women as prospective parents and between them and their children. And this has no connection, be it stated, with the income which the land can provide' (Clarke 1966:65).

Clarke goes on to emphasize the security symbolized by family land, she notes that 'The word home, as a place one can go back to, may be said to be synonymous with a family holding'(Clarke 1966:64). Because employment is increasingly scarce and irregular, and the wage earner experiences corresponding insecurity, family land becomes a focus of great importance. This is compounded by the fact that there is a great deal of pressure on the land owned or rented by the peasantry owing to the amount of people it must support. Clarke notes that even a very small plot of family land comes to have a great importance to those who have an interest in it. Any proposed division of, or enforced consolidation of the family holdings either by one of its members or by outside agents, would be met with great resistance from the extended family that held an interest in the land. The small monetary compensation received for the sale of the land would be 'no recompense for the satisfaction to be got from the knowledge that there is a place to which a man or woman can go when the worst happens and be permitted 'to build a house and live there' (Clarke 1966:64).

Besson notes that the long-term symbolic role of the land is of much greater importance than the short-term economic aspect. This is due to it functioning in the first instance as symbolising prestige and security for 'descendants of former slaves in the face of plantation-engendered land scarcity'(Besson 1987:14). Besson also comments that this land 'provides a symbol for their family lines...Thus it is the

<sup>27</sup> Many original owners had not received legal title to land, or had not officially recorded their titles. Furthermore, the sheer numbers of owners of each piece of land, many of whom having migrated, means it is difficult to trace and obtain the consent of all owners.



*entitlement* to freehold land which is the crucial aspect to family land, rather than the *activation* of such rights' (Besson 1987:15).

Besson also makes note that the symbolic role of family land is reinforced by the fact that family land is usually undivided. Co-heirs have joint rights to the land rather than individual parcels of it. It is this continuity of the land which is passed down through the generations intact, which Besson discusses in respect of informants perception of 'the permanence of family land as opposed to the impermanence of man; and the immortality of the kinship group corporation in opposition to the mortality of its individual members'(Besson 1987:15). Besson explains that family land is recognized as restricted in its short-term dimension as, for example in its role as a residential site. This however, is in contrast to its unrestricted capacity in a long-term symbolic role among the living extended family for the generations of descendants who will follow them.

From the knowledge, among the living extended family that land is extremely scarce as an economic asset, arise two opposing strategies. Obviously, the first of these strategies is to take full advantage of the land. Although this takes the form of two sub-strategies, the first is to occupy and utilize that land, the second is to live and work elsewhere, while retaining the right to claim that part of the harvest one returns to gather. The second main strategy is to voluntarily not use the land, in order to allow those members of the extended family in most need to activate their land rights (Besson 1987:15).

Family land was also a most important loci for the provision of autonomy in peasant communities, and enabled circulatory migration as migrants could remain secure in the knowledge that they had land to return home to should they wish to do so (Trouillot 1988:113, 252, 281-82; Fog Olwig 1995:116; Honychurch 1995:18-19; Besson 1995:79).

Besson discusses migration as a form of voluntary non-use of land. She also notes other forms of voluntary non-use including the occupation of alternative land. Alternatives to living on family land include, bought land, cash tenancy, 'free land' squatting, rented rooms, and even 'landless farms'. It is this absenteeism of multiple heirs which Besson identifies as responsible for the underproduction that is often associated with family land. Besson emphasizes however, that all non-residential kin and their heirs still retain inalienable land rights. 'Their claims are symbolized by the acknowledgment that they may pick from the ancestral fruit trees rooted in the land, and may come to live there if in dire need' (Besson 1987:15-16). Besson also remarks that 'Such voluntary non-use enables needy members of the corporation to activate their rights to use the land as a short-term economic resource, for example as a residential site' (Besson 1987:27-28). Mathurin discusses St Lucia and stresses that rights to use land are retained 'whether the individual is resident on the holding or not, and whether or not he cultivates his share' (Mathurin 1967:10).

Edwards too, highlights non-use of family land, 'Small pieces of land not occupied by houses were sometimes left in the possession of the neediest owner', but he points out that this does not affect the claim of any descendant to live there (Edwards 1961:111). Edwards also points to the security afforded in old age by the ownership of family land. When contemplating retirement people were likely to reason, 'As long as I have land someone will look after me' (Edwards 1961:94).



Similarly, Wilson notes that family land can be regarded as a kind of 'insurance'. In discussing Providencia he writes that simply by informing the co-owners of the land of his or her intentions, an individual can cultivate that land and once harvested, the land returns to the family pool. That individual must not however, sell or rent out any part of that land without the full consent of all interested parties. A situation which is unlikely to occur given both the significance of family land, and the sheer amount of individuals who would necessarily need to be approached for their consent.

Wilson notes a further problem associated with approaching individuals with a view to gaining those individuals' consent to rent or sell land. A percentage of each extended family live away from the island, either overseas or on one of the neighbouring islands, it would therefore prove to be very difficult to obtain these individuals' consent. The amount of people who actively farm the land at any one time is therefore quite small and, because the terrain is hilly or mountainous much of it is not entirely suitable for cultivation. Therefore, 'family land on Providencia is at best an emergency pool of land where a man, otherwise landless, can affirm his sense of belonging to the island and, if need be, can support himself '(Wilson 1973:57).

Besson argues that the system of land transmission, widespread throughout the Caribbean region, is representative of 'a pronounced case of creolization or 'indiginization' in response and resistance to the capitalist world system (Besson 1997:206). Land transmission, the inheritance of 'family land', along with other newly-acquired institutions such as Creole language, are 'dynamic processes of Caribbean culture-building, community establishment, and identity-formation [that have] emerged in adaptation and resistance to capitalist land engrossment and related styles of life' (Besson 1997:207). Besson goes on to say that the survival strategies of incorporation and of creolization are variations of a wider Caribbean theme throughout the whole area. She continues by noting that peasantries throughout the region who were successful in founding family land, 'have created unrestricted cognatic landholding corporations, maximizing descent lines and scarce land rights within constrained communities, as a mode of adaptive preservation in the face of escalating capitalist land monopoly' (Besson 1997:221).

With this argument, Besson previously highlighted 'Caribbean land tenure and kinship systems as cultural creations in the face of European capitalism' (Besson 1987:37). Besson concurs with Mintz's argument that Caribbean peasantries 'represent a *mode of response* to the plantation system and its connotations, and a *mode of resistance* to the imposed style of life' (Mintz 1974: 132).

Indeed Besson notes that throughout the region, the institution of family land is a response to Caribbean agrarian relations. This situation, Besson explains, arose in the period of abolition. Throughout the Caribbean, ex-slaves acquired freehold land wherever was possible. Once land was obtained they created family land in order to accentuate their freehold rights against the backdrop of a land scarcity that was plantation-engendered. The plantation owners were determined to create a landless proletariat and countered ex-slaves' attempts to buy land wherever possible, as it lay in their interests to establish a landless workforce. The creation of Afro-Caribbean peasantries was therefore severely restricted on a regional scale.

As a result of the difficulties experienced in trying to obtain freehold land, those who did manage to acquire it benefited not only from its obvious economic value in that they gained independence from the plantations, and had a much greater bargaining

position for higher wages when working on them, but it also held a greater significance. The ownership of property to people who had not only been previously landless, but were also once property themselves, had great symbolic significance. Besson writes, 'For such land symbolized their freedom, and provided property rights, prestige and personhood' (Besson 1987:18). Besson also notes that in contrast to the kinlessness of the slaves, family land was also the basis for the creation of family lines and the maximization of kinship ties, furthermore, she adds 'The descendants of such ex-slaves perpetuate the strategy of family land today, in the face of continued plantation hegemony' (Besson 1987:18).

Trouillot, like Mintz and Besson, argues that any study of the emergence of Caribbean peasantries must place great emphasis on the 'initial violence through which the region itself was born' (Trouillot 1988:22). Trouillot maintains that 'The peasantries of the Caribbean might then look less like a naive response to market incentives and more like a strategic barrier against other forms of forced integration in a world dominated by trade and profit' (Trouillot 1988:ibid).

We can see therefore, that the structure of family land in the Caribbean region is a form of resistance against Western hegemony. Besson persuasively counters the argument of modernisation theorists, that family land is a wasted resource; and an obstacle to modernisation. Instead, she identifies the creation and perpetuation of family land as a form of resistance against capitalism. She makes note of the complex reasons lying behind the methods of land use practiced by the peasantries that are often termed 'inefficient'. These reasons involve both the history and structure of Caribbean agrarian relations, and the creative ways devised by the peasantries of coping with the constraints of such relations. The problem therefore, does not lie with peasant land use, but with the external constraints imposed upon it. Besson argues, 'The obstacle to modernisation is the agrarian structure, with its inequitable land distribution, persistence of plantation agriculture, and associated export mentality' (Besson 1987:37).

Elsewhere, Besson argues that creolization and the methods used to counter the externally imposed constraints, both of which are reflected in Caribbean customary tenures, can therefore be viewed as creative strategies. These strategies have two objectives: first of gaining control of and reversing agrarian-legal institutions that were derived by colonial rule. Secondly of giving economic and social stability to peasant communities and protecting their land. Besson writes 'These tenures are therefore not an obstacle to development as some theorists have contended, but are repositories of hidden history and bases of sustainable development in the face of capitalist world-system' (Besson 1997:227).

There is a second strategy of resistance known by the term 'crab antics'. This term was first introduced by Wilson in 1973, but the *concept* was first explored in 1953 (1966) by Edith Clarke. Clarke's study of three small-scale communities in Jamaica, focused on conflict and self-interest, as well as cohesion and solidarity. Clarke explored two systems of land tenure, these being the customary system of family land, and the legal tenure of freehold. She succeeded in demonstrating the symbolic aspect of family land and also demonstrated how individuals could use the legal system to challenge customary family land to their own advantage. Clarke points out that

attempts by individuals to undermine the customary system is a contravention of the ethos of family land.

Wilson's 1973 'crab antics' study was conducted in Providencia. Here, Wilson also argues that individuals may try to seek advantages for themselves with regards to land. He writes that the inheritance of property is one way in which they might seek to do this. For, Wilson argues, in a matter of inheritance, it is a common response to become quite competitive. This might take the form of quarreling or trying to gain a competitive advantage over one's fellow potential beneficiaries. This is especially so in matters of land and property inheritance. Wilson notes that this particular type of behaviour is such a common occurrence, and is so commonly acknowledged that it is given a special name: crab antics.

Crab antics denotes human behaviour that can be likened to the antics of a large number of crabs in a barrel. The immediate instinct for the crabs is to attempt to climb out. However, what generally happens is that as one crab manages to approach the top of the barrel it is pulled back down by those underneath it. Occasionally, one crab may actually manage to scale the top of the barrel and climb out, but only a particularly large or strong crab can successfully escape. The other crabs must remain where they are. In this same way can some people acquire more land than others, despite the ideal or reality of equal inheritance. Just as crabs in a barrel hinder the progress of more successful crabs, people attempt to thwart the progress of those who appear to be acquiring more land than others. Wilson comments that it might be argued that if 'land is a primary basis of social identity and of belonging to the island, then owning more of the island is indicative of a greater sense of belonging and ownership - a sign of wealth, power, status and prestige...' (Wilson 1973:57-58).

We can see how this strategy is also a form of resistance. The 'social differentiation' postulated by the Marxist model of production is discouraged by the practice of crab antics. The two social classes produced through social differentiation are less likely to polarize because of the actions of society, which discourage individual upward social mobility. Individuals are therefore less likely to accumulate a great deal more capital and land than their neighbours and are correspondingly less likely to come to control the means of production.

For Besson, these two strategies: family land and crab antics, show that Caribbean attitudes to land are 'complex and paradoxical' (Besson 1987:35). Besson argues that Caribbean people regard land to be a scarce resource and have created and maintained the institution of family land to keep the land within the extended family. However, within the extended family, family land is regarded to be unlimited in its symbolic role. Through the manipulation of the legal system individuals may try to appropriate family land for themselves, while others in the extended family will employ crab antics to try not to allow this to happen. Besson writes that the people of the Caribbean region regard land as a scarce resource in terms of the wider agrarian structure of the region because the amount of good farming land per head of population is severely restricted. They have developed the institution of family land to deal with this. At the same time however, the kinship group that has an interest in the land regard family land as unlimited in terms of its symbolic role.

Running concurrent with this perception of land as an unlimited symbolic institution, is the paradoxical awareness of land as a short-term economic resource among the living extended family. It is this awareness of land as a short-term asset, that gives rise to the two opposing strategies of voluntary non-use and crab antics. Besson comments on these two strategies that 'The former reinforces the perception of family land as unlimited in its long-term symbolic role. The latter represents attempts to undermine the essential ethos of customary freehold, by trying to establish restriction in the descent system' (Besson 1987:35).

## **7. Conclusion**

I have tried here to highlight the connecting threads that together formulate the present-day problems endured in the Commonwealth of Dominica. Beginning with an explanation of the first problem, that the economic system introduced with the plantation, and maintained with an economic dependency on the West, is about to collapse. This is exacerbated by an apparent inability to cultivate an alternate export crop that is as suitable for the country as bananas. A second problem is that of Dominican identity. The banana symbolizes resistance and national pride. What effect will the negation of this symbol have on national esteem?

Bananas are ideal for Dominica's quite unique terrain conditions for several reasons: their alluvial root system is suited to slope agriculture, as these roots can uptake rainwater and nutrients that would be lost to crops with vertical roots. This is because nutrients are rapidly lost to lower depths of soil in tropical, sloping conditions. The soil itself is also ideal for the cultivation of bananas, being of a desirable mixture of ash, nitrate, and potassium. Bananas are also suited to slope agriculture because they can be cultivated and harvested without the use of machinery. Obviously, attempting to use machinery on slopes would be very difficult. With banana cultivation, not only are machines unnecessary they could also damage the alluvial roots of the plants. Machinery on sloping tropical slopes would also damage the balance of the soil, as the top layers were disturbed. Harvesting can be done quickly and easily without recourse to machinery, as only one cut is required to reap all the fruit borne by one plant. Similarly, after harvesting no processing is necessary as the fruit is immediately sold on to the green market. Furthermore, while slope agriculture generally requires vigilant attention to irrigation, Dominica's weather conditions and frequent rainfall negate the necessity to expend resource including machinery, money, and labour on irrigation.

Dominica is susceptible to hurricanes. There is a great risk that the crops will be lost during the annual storms. Bananas only take nine months to mature and so the risk of losing a slow-maturing crop is lessened. In the event that an entire harvest is lost in a hurricane, the crop can be replanted cheaply, without the need to buy more plants. Any part of the damaged plant can be re-planted, as bananas are not grown from seed but are cloned.

Another reason why bananas are beneficial to Dominica's economy concerns economies of scale. The surrounding islands also cultivate bananas for market. While each individual island does not cultivate enough bananas to supply the market, together the island produce a sufficient amount of the crop to afford transportation of the produce to the EU. Attempting to produce a crop that differed from the other islands would result in unaffordable shipping costs, as it would be difficult to produce that crop in the amounts required to fill the hold.

Land tenure is another issue in Dominican banana farming. Land is held in common by all members of an extended family. Any of these family members may appropriate produce planted on their land, even if they did not participate in its cultivation. In planting a slow-maturing crop, farmers risk their produce being harvested by other members of the family. Bananas with their quick rate of turnover, are a much less risky product.

Despite bananas being an ideal product for Dominica, the threat imposed by the W.T.O. will demand massive restructuring of Dominica's agricultural system. The W.T.O. has ruled that a guaranteed market for Dominica's bananas is unfair to Latin American producers. Traditionally, the EU has imported all of its requirements of bananas from ACP countries, and only imported from Latin American producers to make up a shortfall. The new ruling will almost certainly entail the larger and cheaper Latin American bananas capturing the lion's share of the market.

The problems of West Indian banana farming, according to various bodies including The Banana Marketing Association, could be alleviated with a much greater use of agrochemicals. They argue that agrochemical applications would increase both yields per acre, and the perceived quality of the fruit, thus making it a much more viable product in an open market. Here, the majority of Dominicans disagree. Most Dominicans have an aversion not only towards chemically treated produce, but also towards any food that is not 'fresh' (with the notable exception of the archipelago-wide appreciation for Canadian salt-cod). Some Dominican farmers have begun to chemically treat crops that are earmarked for the export market, but only when those crops are planted on the lower slopes. This is to avoid the risk of contamination to subsistence produce that would otherwise take up chemicals washed off bananas on higher slopes by rainwater.

Export monocropping and subsistence farming for domestic use, characterises the agricultural system of Dominica. Other factors prevalent in Dominican agriculture include a sparsity of heavy machinery and agrochemicals. This system has remained since its implementation by plantation owners in Dominica in the 1800s. The best areas of land were reserved for monocropping, while inferior areas were farmed by the slaves for their own subsistence use.

By the time of emancipation in 1834, Dominican slaves were well-accustomed to this dual agricultural system. They could make the transition to peasantry quite easily, particularly with their familiarity of working the land without the use of machinery. This is an important fact because if the land had been flat, it is likely that more advanced, and expensive technology would have been used in cultivation. Although the ex-slaves would have been accustomed to using machinery on the plantations, it is

doubtful whether they could have afforded to purchase this machinery for their own use after emancipation. In this event, the majority of ex-slaves would have been obliged to remain on the estates as wage-labourers.

In Dominica's case however, the majority of ex-slaves were able to leave the estates and establish their own farms. Well-used to working on the land, the ex-slaves considered that freedom entailed not only legal personhood, but also ownership of their own property. Once the institution of 'family land' had been established, it was regarded as sacrosanct, not to be sold or otherwise disposed of.

After attempting to cultivate a succession of monocrops for export, bananas were chosen as the ideal. Dominican banana farmers enjoyed a guaranteed market for their produce, as all fruit of adequate quality was imported by Geest into the UK. This situation continued until just recently, when the WTO ruled that the guaranteed market for ACP bananas was unfair, and contrary to the neoliberalist ideology of free trade.

In summary, we can see how the global has impacted on local issues beginning with the imposition of slavery, and resulting in a peasantry which evolved as a form of resistance against Western hegemony. The desire for freedom was related to the desire for land. The opportunity to cultivate and sell bananas afforded both the purchase of land, and the attainment of identity and self worth. This land is rarely sold, a condition protected by the social and symbolic significance attached to it. Family land is also protected by its mode of transmission, as complications of selling arise from multiple ownership. Family land then, as a mode of resistance acts as a buffer against 'social differentiation' because the expansion of a few capitalist banana farmers is limited by land availability.

Global impact on local issues can be seen clearly as neoliberalist politics and economics impact very heavily on local banana cultivation and marketing. The high yields of exportable quality fruit required to compete in a free market are more readily obtained through agrochemical usage. However the agrochemical aversion can, along with the Dominican peasantry, be seen as a mode of resistance as farmers are unwilling to compromise their ideals and begin a programme of intensive capitalist cultivation.

In an earlier section the modernisation theorists' idea of "modern man's propensity for delayed gratification" was compared and contrasted with the idea of "traditional man's tendency towards immediate gratification". It could be argued here that Dominican small farmers, with their resistance to the use of agrochemicals are practicing delayed gratification. This can be seen because the use of such inputs would double the present yield of fruit (see footnote no. 22) and therefore presumably double the income afforded by banana farming. A greater income would obviously accentuate the farmers' ability to purchase both utilitarian and luxury goods (immediate gratification). However, Dominican small farmers' preference to avoid the use of agrochemicals and practice organic farming demonstrates their willingness to delay gratification for consumer goods, as the desire for fresh produce and uncontaminated land is more pressing.

Banana farming and change has been discussed through a theoretical framework of development. I have attempted to trace the history of banana farming through a successive application of various theories of development from imperialism to neopopulism.

Imperialism was responsible for the transportation of Africans to Dominica to work as slaves on the plantations. The profits amassed through imperialism were in turn responsible for financing the innovations which heralded the Industrial Revolution. With the use of new technology introduced during this period, even greater profit margins could be attained.

Capitalism expanded rapidly around the globe, opening up new markets and trade routes. Because of this, sugar produced in the colonies had to compete for the first time with cheaper European sugarbeet. The plantations were unsuccessful, profits trickled away and the British government decided to abolish slavery. Emancipation obtained, not through humanitarian reasons, but for economic advantage. Employing wage-labourers was a more viable economic strategy, than providing for the needs of the entire slave population. Slavery of course had necessitated the provision of those slaves who were too young, old, ill or infirm to work. The government reasoned that by employing able bodied ex-slaves, plantation owners could pass on financial responsibility of dependents to the ex-slaves. They could also cut down on expenditure by laying workers off during slack periods.

Emancipation brought huge changes to Dominica. Emancipated slaves, already accustomed to providing for their own subsistence needs, sought to purchase their own land to free themselves from the estates. The government placed many obstacles in their path in the form of taxes etc., but the ex-slaves resisted these pressures and the peasantry became the main mode of production in Dominica.

It was not however, until the introduction of bananas in Dominica, that the peasantry made another huge leap forward in freeing themselves from Western hegemony. All produce had to be marketed through estate owners who took a share of the proceeds. Peasants discovered that bananas could be sold to 'Antilles Products', a transnational company that preferred to overstep the estate owners a pay a cheaper price for bananas direct from source. Estate owners found it impossible to monitor this market as bananas were often grown in secluded areas, where the rapid harvesting could be conducted out of sight. Consequently, many estate owners sold their properties. This resulted in a greater availability of land for sale. Peasants bought up the land with the proceeds obtained through bananas. Bananas were recognized as the tool by which Dominicans resisted, and were victorious against Western hegemony.

Once land had been purchased by Dominican peasants, it was not released again onto the open market. It was held in common for the use of future generations of the extended family. Land is owned by all members of an extended family, and transmitted to all descendants of that family. Correspondingly, each land-holding has a vast amount of claimants who have the right to share in its produce. Modernisation theorists have

highlighted this as an 'obstacle to development', as land is often underused by those members of the family who work it. Crops can be harvested by members of the family



who have not participated in cultivation. Therefore, it is not in the interest of those who work the land to put it to optimum use. The banana is a preferred crop as it is quick to mature and harvest, and so can usually be harvested by those who have cultivated it without fear of losing much of the proceeds to extended family members. This is one of the reasons why bananas came to predominate in Dominican agriculture, and of course the greater its predominance, the less likely that members of the farmers' extended family members would claim part of the crop.

Banana cultivation became even more popular when Geest took over from Antilles Products and announced that they would purchase all bananas of exportable quality. Dominica and the other Windward islands could not produce the volume of bananas required by Geest, and the U.K made up the shortfall by purchasing Latin American bananas. Modernisation theory suggests that development will progress by emulating the practices of the West. Geest attempted to persuade Dominican farmers to adopt Western agricultural policies including the use of agrochemicals which they insisted would produce greater yields. One of their strategies of persuasion was to supply farmers with chemical inputs, then deduct the costs from the price paid to the growers for the produce. Farmers were then forced to by these agrochemicals whether they used them or not.

Dependency theory highlights the economic exploitation of one country by another. It shows that the exploited country cannot develop because its resources and labour are appropriated by the exploiting country. It also demonstrates that the development of the exploiting country is forwarded by its strategies of exploitation. Dependency theory shows how Geest amassed great profits by exploiting Dominican farmers. It also explains why Dominica could not advance its own economic development, as resources and labour were being siphoned off by the metropole.

The situation whereby one country exploits another is an isolated component in a larger system. Globalisation theory considers this larger system, and the ways in which the individual components operate to form the whole. With globalisation theory we can consider the effect of global economics on the Dominican banana market. With the relatively recent emergence of neoliberalism and the drive towards 'free trade', markets are in competition with the large multinationals. Globalisation theory shows how Chiquita's operations in Latin America have impacted on the economy of Dominica, and have threatened Dominican people socially and culturally. The loss of Dominica's banana market will effect the economy. This in turn will affect society, as the drug trade increases to replace monies earned through bananas. The cultural threat concerns the loss of bananas as a symbol of Dominican nationality.

The neopopulist approach is a new approach that seeks to understand situations from the perspectives of the social actors. With this approach, we must begin to understand and respect the resistance of Dominicans as a strategy of development. This entails the idea of self-development. It has been seen that Dominica cannot develop along the same path taken by the West, and that Western models of development have been detrimental to Dominica's economy rather than beneficial. The time has come to abandon efforts to dissuade Dominicans from their strategies of land transmission and organic farming. Instead, we must listen to Dominican farmers and work with them to formulate a path of development that is actor-orientated.

The banana trade in Dominica is not ideal, but it is at present the only safeguard against economic and social collapse. Ahmed and Afroz note that 'At present, banana is scarcely economic as a crop to the farmers of the islands, but it is difficult to locate markets for other crops. Consequently the banana-producing countries are anxious to maintain the UK's present preferential market' (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:219). The WTO ruling has created a very real anxiety in Dominica, reinforcing the need for diversification. While diversification is necessary, it can only be realized in the long term (Levitt and Best 1975:46). Issac writes 'Very often, the extent and severity of hardship resulting from economic structural change are a function of the 'speed' of change, the faster it occurs, the greater the 'dislocations'(i.e. hardship, suffering)' (Issac 1994:7).

Ahmed and Afroz (1996:193-194) stress that any strategy which aims to increase the production of food must not be primarily concerned with production economics, but with ecological stability and sustainability. They maintain that an agricultural system should be low-input and self-sustaining. The system should also be ecologically friendly, and provision should be made to restore the land. Sustainability should entail vegetative cover to minimize soil erosion and a regular supply of organic material to maintain soil integrity. Mechanisms should also be in place to implement nutrient recycling. Ahmed and Afroz identify strategies such as mulch farming, mixed cropping and crop rotation, agro-forestry and mixed farming, as useful packages for sustainable agriculture (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:194). Ahmed and Afroz also suggest various reforms which could be incorporated into Caribbean strategies for sustainable agriculture. They highlight:

1. Selection and breeding of economic crops and livestock which are adaptable and productive under local conditions, and with locally available inputs.
2. Integrated pest management programmes, where pests are controlled mainly through cultural practices and biological means.
3. Conserving the germplasm of indigenous Caribbean crops and useful plants to guard against genetic erosion and extinction.
4. Use of organic fertilizers and mulching to control temperature, water retention and stabilize soil structure.
5. Use of forage legumes in grass ecosystems to increase the protein component and enhancement of nitrogen in the ecosystem. Use of grain legumes for similar purposes following the growth of other crops. Utilization of grass-forage legume combinations as animal feed.
6. Growing deep-rooted plants, preferably leguminous trees, surrounding the crops or between the crop plots to prevent soil erosion and soil degradation.
7. Use of aquatic weeds, such as duckweed (*Lemnaceae*) to treat polluted and toxic effluents, to obtain clean water of at least irrigational quality. Use of duckweed and other aquatic weeds as the principal source of feed for fish and as an ingredient in animal feed. (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:194).

Ahmed and Afroz advise that these reforms should be tested under conditions particular to the Caribbean region. They remark that sustainable agriculture does not have a rigid set of rules but is flexible and can be adapted to suit differing ecological conditions (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:194).

Farmers must be given incentives to invest in new crops without reducing banana agriculture. This could perhaps be achieved with revenue generated by selective import substitution. The government must investigate a variety of alternate crops, and invest in a growers association that deals with all produce. This could be modeled on the Banana Growers Association and would make export more realistic. Ahmed and Afroz note that 'product diversification should be one of the emphasis of agro-industry. For instance, bananas can be used for making rope, paper, baby feed and animal feed. Bananas could also be used to make banana wine, chips, rolls, cakes, biscuits, jam and chutney' (Ahmed and Afroz 1996:169). However, even if viable alternatives can be found, the problem of finding a market for them still remains.

Charles Gullick (1995), in his paper 'Songs of the Banana Man', analyzed economic and political factors instrumental in the changing lyrics of 'banana songs'. Tragically, the aftermath of the present threat may provide yet new lyrics for banana growers.

...Requiem Banana Man.

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