POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Reflections on Haitian Democracy: Zooming in on a Megaproject in the Hinterland

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Twenty-five years have passed since Haiti's first free and fair elections. In that time, democratization has been slow and there have been many setbacks. This article offers some observations regarding Haiti's democratization journey by examining how the government introduced a massive industrial park that required the displacement of a large number of farmers. In a departure from historical practice, when faced with opposition, the government deployed its security forces sparingly. Also, the levels of transparency and civil society engagement were not terrible. Although it is insufficient and superficial, movement is in the right direction. In contrast, local government officials may have lost status and legitimacy during the process, which could hinder future democratization. Finally, the footprint of outsiders in this project was massive, confirming how profoundly Haiti's democratization is transnationalized. This makes tracking its democratic development extremely challenging and yet necessary given the country is not alone in this predicament.

Han pasado veinticinco años desde las primeras elecciones libres y justas en Haití. Desde entonces, la democratización ha sido lenta y ha sufrido muchos contratiempos. Este artículo ofrece algunas observaciones con respecto al proceso de democratización en este momento. Al hacerlo, examina cómo el gobierno ha introducido un extenso parque industrial en el noreste del país, el que requirió el desplazamiento de un gran número de campesinos. Los resultados son mixtos. En una divergencia de la historia, cuando se enfrentó con la oposición, el gobierno envió sus fuerzas de seguridad con moderación. Por otra parte, los niveles de transparencia y el compromiso de la sociedad civil no eran pasables. Aunque puede resultar insuficiente y superficial, el proceso democrático parece ir avanzando en la dirección correcta. Por otro lado, puede ser que los oficiales del gobierno local hayan perdido posición y legitimidad durante el proceso, lo que puede impedir la democratización. Finalmente, el involucramiento de extranjeros en este proyecto era masivo, lo que confirma que la democratización de Haití es transnacional. Así, seguir el desarrollo democrático es algo extremadamente desafiante pero necesario ya que este país no está solo en esta situación.

Since the early 1990s, the pattern of democratic development in Haiti has not been encouraging. Numerous setbacks and failures have led observers to pen some pessimistic assessments of Haitian democracy, the quality of which has been judged to be very low. Gloominess is not unjustified: a twice-exiled president; numerous contested and fraudulent elections; a high-enough quotient of political instability to invite an eighteen-year-long UN Stabilization Mission (MINUSTAH); and most recently, the rule by decree of President Michel Martelly during 2014–2015 and the need to repeat the 2015 presidential elections as a result of allegations of "systematic, massive fraud" (Charles 2015a).

These institutional faults and weaknesses are easy to perceive; however, they do not provide a full picture. Although difficult to detect, let alone track systematically, various subtler, more discreet shifts in the democratization landscape can occur across a country's territory. This article works to enhance knowledge and understanding of Haiti's democracy by stepping away from the institutional elements (e.g., political parties, elections, institutional reform) to spotlight interaction between the state and civil society. Key to the development of democracy is transforming how the state makes and implements decisions, and the role it

assigns to citizens in this process. Simply put, the more opportunities citizens have to participate in public policies and the more control they exert over government, the higher is the quality of democracy. Indeed, Grugel and Bishop (2014, 38) have suggested using participation as a test for emerging democracies like Haiti; degree of participation, where it happens, who participates, how diverse representation is—all these serve, more or less, to indicate democracy.

To reflect on this participatory dimension of democracy, this article examines how in the wake of the 2010 earthquake, the Martelly government (2011–2016) displaced a large number of farmers to make way for the country's biggest post-earthquake economic development project, the Caracol Industrial Park (CIP).[1] I describe how the government engaged with citizens over the course of the megaproject (2011–2012), exploring how it was conceived, how the site was chosen (who had input), whether the government consulted with locals affected, how local state officials performed vis-à-vis their constituents, and the role of international actors in what would typically be a domestic policy process.

The article makes three contributions. First, the qualitative nature of this study complements the extensive empirical cross-national as well as regional quantitative research on democratic transitions. Moreover, Haiti receives little sustained attention from democracy scholars, and there is even less research on the quality of democracy or how democracy is evolving far from the capital, Port-au-Prince. Second, there are few accounts of citizen engagement in deeply deficient democracies like Haiti (Gaventa and Barrett 2010; Development Research Centre 2011; Schattan, Coelho, and Lieres 2010). And yet, examining how a weak or fragile state engages with subaltern or marginalized groups can provide a better understanding of how democracy is progressing or retreating, and where it might be stronger or weaker across a territory. Finally, the transnational influences are robust in Haiti; thus, the case can contribute to understanding the international dimensions of democratization at a time when policy debates in the area are still lively (Abrahamsen 2000; Beetham 2009; Carothers 2004, 2015; Diamond 1999; Elkink 2011; Huntington 1991; Levitsky and Way 2006; Pridham 1991; Robinson 2000; Whitehead 2001, 2009).

The article yields some noteworthy observations. First, Haiti's democracy is improving, but the *predatory* qualifier cannot be discarded just yet. Contestation is critical to the practice of democracy. It is still risky in Haiti, particularly when it encroaches on business and elite interests. Still, this case study indicates that it is achievable. Second, on the specific matter of state-society interaction (quality of participation), the government's strategy was flawed in important ways but constituted a passable attempt at engagement. It employed methods of rule that most states employ, such as information sharing, mollification, and co-optation. Third, the role of local officials (mayors and municipal elected representatives) seems to have been eclipsed, even undermined, in this project. Officials had little input into project development, received the brunt of resident frustration and discontent, and had no resources to address or resolve constituents' complaints. The product of this strategy—citizen cynicism and disillusionment—could hinder future democratization in the zone. Finally, acknowledging and putting aside Western political hegemony and all this entails for a country like Haiti, the international footprint around CIP was still huge. International donors devised and funded the project. Indeed, without outside financial resources, it is doubtful the government could have met its obligations regarding compensation for lost harvests, land, and housing. Still, despite Haiti's profound dependence on external actors and its peripheral status in the global order, this case indicates that the Haitian state retains the capacity to maneuver, particularly with respect to how it engages with its own population.

The fieldwork for this article was conducted in communities adjacent to Caracol Industrial Park in February 2013 and supplemented with additional interviews in Port-au-Prince in April 2015. The 2013 interviews were conducted with four focus groups: eight displaced farmers, fourteen representatives from local nongovernmental organizations and community groups, thirteen workers from the industrial park, and fifteen elected local officials and bureaucrats. Interviews were also conducted with local mayors and religious representatives from the region.

Theoretical Insights into Haiti's Democratic Journey

Much of the democratization literature has been concerned with two issues: how to determine whether democracy has been consolidated (Huber and Stephens 1997; Linz and Stepan 1996; Mainwaring, O'Donnell, and Valenzuela 1992; Schmitter 1992) and the nature and quality of democracy in a given country. This article seeks to contribute to the latter by shedding light on the quality of democracy in Haiti. In other words, I am concerned not with how Haiti has arrived at its spot on the democratic

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[1] When I refer to the government, I am referring to the central government, not local, municipal, or regional governments.

spectrum but with what democracy looks like after the earthquake, and at a particular juncture between 2012 and 2016.

The literature on democratic quality is extensive (Abrahamsen 2000; Della Porta 2013; Diamond and Morlino 2005; Duffy 2015; Dominguez and Jones 2007; Fishman 2016; Heller 2000; Gaventa 2006; Grugel and Bishop 2014; Munck 2009; O'Donnell, Iazzetta, and Cullell 2004; Smith 2012). Smith (2012) has suggested basing our judgment of democratic quality on three principles: participation, competition, and accountability. Diamond and Morlino (2004) recommend considering eight dimensions: rule of law, participation, competition, vertical accountability, horizontal accountability, freedom, equality, and responsiveness. Others have suggested that popular sovereignty and broader standards of good governance should also form part of assessment. Francis Fukuyama (2015, 15) makes the case for the latter, noting that "the legitimacy of many democracies around the world depends less on the deepening of their democratic institutions than on their ability to provide high-quality governance."

I start from the perspective that achieving those aspects of democracy associated with liberal democratic institutions and civil liberties, though essential, will be insufficient to achieve political inclusion for Haiti's marginalized majority. That is, it will not be enough for the regime to be democratic; the state will also need to be democratized. Jorge Vargas Cullell makes the distinction, noting that a regime is democratic when the government is chosen through democratic procedures (free and fair elections) and in a democratic context (where freedoms and political and civil rights are guaranteed under conditions of universal citizen enfranchisement). The state is democratic when it guarantees and enforces citizens' rights, state authorities are not above the law, and citizens can participate directly in policy making (Vargas Cullell 2012, 11). Here, I wish to explore Cullell's last point, which relates to the participation dimension of democracy. I do so by investigating how an industrial park was incorporated into the Northeast and whether community members were able to influence the rollout of this economic project. The study offers us a window into how the ideal of democracy—individuals participating meaningfully in their own governance—is developing in Haiti.

Following the 2010 earthquake, the government of Haiti embarked on numerous economic development projects, but three factors make CIP particularly worthy of study. First, it was the biggest (in terms of financial investment) post-earthquake economic development project, promising gains on a number of fronts, including employment, local infrastructure investment, and regional development. We can therefore expect government engagement to have been extensive and sustained rather than partial or fleeting. Second, the project entailed removing peasant farmers from state land and provoked objections from environmental groups because of its location. This factor allows for investigation of how the state managed protests and resistance—through dialogue and consultation or through violence and deception. Finally, CIP is part of a broader post-earthquake economic decentralization objective advanced by both the Haitian government and international donors. Hence, the manufacturing megaproject was expressly introduced into the Northeast rather than the capital, where manufacturing has been historically located. Its location allows for observation of how the participation dimension of democracy is evolving in the hinterland—an understudied part of the country.

Before I explore state–civil society engagement near Caracol, two factors that have affected Haiti's democratic journey deserve consideration: the Haitian state's authoritarian legacy, which has greatly limited citizen engagement in the past, and the profound impact of international actors. As Grugel and Bishop (2014) have effectively argued: "Legacies from the past—whether cultural, political or social—condition, shape and constrain how (and whether) democratization happens and the perceptions of key actors about what is, and is not, possible." In Haiti's case, authoritarian practices and political habits—political exclusion of the majority, the state's repressive dimension and its propensity for corruption—originated from its colonial experience and early independence years (Dupuy 2007; Farmer 2005; Fatton 2002, 2007b; Maguire 1995; Trouillot 1990). For this first factor, then, inequality, deep class divisions, and violent class conflict have been defining features of Haitian politics since independence (Trouillot 1994). The distinguished anthropologist Michel-Rolph Trouillot (1994, 126) describes the historical relationship between the poor majority and the ruling class as follows: "Simply put, the Haitian elites made a choice early on that the maintenance of their lifestyle was more important than the survival of the majority. That choice, in turn, meant using the state both to suck up the economic output of the majority and to stop the majority from crying out too loudly. Seen from that perspective, the Haitian state has never represented governance for the people, let alone by the people. It is inherently predatory: it has always operated against the nation it claims to represent." Examining how the government engaged with local communities adjacent to Caracol Industrial Park, particularly its strategies for managing protest, allows for a reflection on whether and how the *predatory* qualifier of Haitian democracy is evolving.

The second factor—the impact of influential outside actors—must also figure prominently in any study seeking to understand Haiti's democratic development. It is uncontroversial to assert that external structures and actors have always constrained Haiti's policy choices (Farmer 2011; Hallward 2007; Katz 2013; Renda 2001; Podur 2013; Dupuy 2010; Schuller 2012; Sprague 2012; Fatton 2014). For instance, Robert Fatton (2007a, 4) reminds us that even as far back as the independence period, leaders' "choices were thoroughly constrained by the dominant white supremacist order and world capitalist economy." More recent examples of powerful outside involvement and interference in Haitian politics with implications for democratization include the 1915 invasion by US marines that lasted nineteen years (Castor 1988; LaGuerre 1993; Renda 2001; Schmidt 1995);[2] the financial and diplomatic support of Washington and international financial institutions to the Duvalier dictatorships between 1957 and 1985; three decades of liberal economic and political reforms imposed by major donors as a condition for receiving aid (Dupuy 1994); the presence of a ten-thousand-strong force for multinational stabilization (MINUSTAH) since 2004; and Haiti's agreement after the 2010 earthquake to cede authority over its rebuilding process to an interim commission that, though headed by Bill Clinton and Prime Minster Jean-Max Bellerive, was in fact controlled by the commission's international members (Ives 2010).

The literature on democratic quality devotes little attention to the influence of outsiders, but in the Haitian case, attention to this factor is justified, as powerful Western states and nonstate actors have promoted a particular variant of democracy. Since the 1980s, donors, through their extensive aid programs, peace-building operations, and diplomatic interventions, have sought to advance what Gills, Rocamora, and Wilson (1993) label "low intensity democracy" (Burron and Silvius 2013) and what William Robinson (1996) calls "polyarchy." These are essentially procedural forms of democracy that emphasize respect for individual freedoms, allow for political competition, and often establish a reduced institutional role of the armed forces. Essentially, democracy promoters have been engaged in building and reinforcing visible, formal structures of government (e.g., political parties, elections, courts).[3] Also important to note is the great importance they have accorded to fostering and maintaining order and stability in Haiti. Indeed, for the powerful coalitions of forces that promote democratization, democracy is not always an end in itself, but rather the means to political stability. This helps explain why the prevailing economic and social order tends to be preserved in low-intensity democracies.

Finally, promoters of low-intensity democracy often view economic liberalization as coinciding with democratization. They assume that integration with the global economy and the adoption of pro-market policies will ultimately improve democratic prospects. Hence, to the foreign architects of CIP, the megaproject is not only an economic development initiative but also one that will advance democracy and stability.

The second international dimension of Haiti's democratization process relates to its position on the fringes of the global order, or what Fatton (2014) calls the "outer-periphery." As for many countries in the global South, broad global processes such as the internationalization of authority and of the state constrict Haiti's political and economic choices. The former refers to economic globalization's expansion of the management roles of the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) from the global and regional levels to the country level, allowing these agencies to dictate national policy. The internationalization of the state, as conceptualized by Robert Cox (1992, 30–31), refers to the process by which individual states like Haiti adjust their "economic practices and policies to the perceived exigencies of the global economy." The Bretton Woods institutions' insistence that Haiti adopt structural adjustment policies during the 1980s and 1990s was a concrete example of this trend. More recently, Jeremy Gould (2005) has explored such modes of control by examining the role of external actors in the development of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). Haiti has elaborated two PRSPs (Government of Haiti 2006, 2013). Gould (2005, 9) argues that, unlike the conditionality associated with structural adjustment policies, control is exercised more subtly through the PRSP process "via a rhetoric of mutual gain and through the decay of mechanisms of democratic accountability. The result is deepening control exercised by a delocalized class of transnational functionaries over the political space where public resource allocation decisions are made." The key point is that outside forces are exercising powerful leverage over Haitian politics regularly and in a variety of ways.

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[2] This invasion was the last of eight earlier US marine landings with the alleged purpose of protecting American lives and property.

[3] This is why in countries like Haiti the procedural elements of democracy can exist alongside violence, exclusion, and repression (Grugel and Bishop 2014, 35).

The Caracol Megaproject

Although I am presenting an account of how a megaproject came to be established in a rural zone, it is citizen engagement that is of interest here. How was the industrial park project conceived and implemented, and its existence and success ensured, by the Haitian state? How were farmers displaced? What do interactions between local residents and the government reveal about Haiti's evolving democracy?

The idea to build CIP and the assumptions that inform the project reveal the extent to which authority has been internationalized in Haiti and the very direct ways that outsiders—through aid and policy guidance—influence and shape policy. This story begins soon after the 2008 international economic crisis, when the United Nations commissioned a report on Haiti's economic prospects. The report, authored by former World Bank economist and scholar Paul Collier (2009), generated renewed interest in industrial parks as an economic development strategy. Collier's rationale was that, despite the country's poor governance record, persistent political instability, and deficient infrastructure, the country's two comparative advantages would attract foreign investors: the lowest-cost labor in the hemisphere and proximity and preferential access to the US market. Following the report's release, the United Nations (Relief Web 2009) officially endorsed the model, with Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon commenting that the US Haitian Hemispheric Opportunity through Partnership Encouragement Act of 2008 (HOPE II) trade agreement constituted a "golden opportunity to bring in investors and create hundreds of thousands of jobs." It is noteworthy that, rather than seeking the views of Haitian civil society, the UN asked Collier, a former World Bank official, to recommend an economic way forward.

Following the 2010 earthquake, when international aid was pouring into the country, international donors adopted Collier's recommendation. In fact, the country's single biggest post-earthquake project was a new industrial park. Caracol Industrial Park—a joint venture between the Korean textile giant Sae-A Trading Co., the Haitian government, and international donors (the US State Department and IDB)—opened its gates in the northeast of the country in 2012. The anchor tenant, Sae-A Trading, which supplies Wal-Mart, Target, Gap, and Levi's, pledged to create twenty thousand jobs and contribute US$78 million in machinery and equipment. Neither target has been met as of January 2018. According to the latest report, there are now 10,214 workers (D'Sa 2017).

International donors have financed the entire CIP project. In fact, the Center for Economic and Policy Research noted in 2015 that the IDB and United States had devoted at least $482.9 million to it (Johnston 2015). The main backer, the IDB, has contributed US$200.5 million for infrastructure (e.g., buildings, internal roads, water treatment plant) and for social, environmental, and fiscal studies to minimize negative impacts.[4] It also provided compensation to displaced farmers and funded the salary of a consultant based in the prime minister's office, who served as liaison between affected communities and the central government.[5]

The United States has invested more than $150 million, which includes a $98 million power plant (Zuckerman, Young, and Vitale 2010, 6). The plant's power facility supplies electricity to approximately nine thousand residents in the nearby communities of Caracol, Trou-du-Nord, Terrier Rouge, and Limonade (Charles 2015b; Haiti Libre 2015) and, according to a 2016 report, to the homes of 6,417 of the industrial park's employees (D'Sa 2016b). It is quite telling that when neighboring communities protested, demanding to benefit from the CIP power plant, they directed their appeals to the external donor US Agency for International Development (USAID), not to the Haitian government—revealing, palpably, the degree to which democratization is transnationalized. USAID also built some housing for workers near CIP.[6] The World Bank contributed to the project funding studies related to export assembly development (Lauterbach 2013), and the European Union supported the venture through extensive road building in the area.

The Haitian Government's Piece

The government housed responsibility for CIP in the Ministry of Finance's Technical and Execution Unit (Unité Technique d'Exécution, UTE).[7] This agency, created in 2004 to execute large national infrastructure projects, includes foreign advisers who work closely with Haitian bureaucrats. Although this is not unusual, as foreign experts are present in a number of Haiti's key ministries (Baranyi 2012, 728), it further confirms the weight of outsiders in domestic governance. UTE oversight also signifies CIP's strategic importance and intense donor involvement.

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[4] Following the 2010 earthquake, the agency forgave Haiti's US$484 million debt and pledged to provide all future aid in the form of grants rather than loans, at the rate of $200 million a year from 2010 through 2020.

[5] Interview by the author with Gilles Damais, chief operating officer of IDB in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, April 21, 2015.

[6] For an account of the problems associated with the housing project, see Luke (2015).

[7] The UTE's operating budget is US$1 million, provided by the IDB. Interview by the author with Gilles Damais.

Notwithstanding, the fact that Haiti's position on the outer periphery of the global system has backed it into an export-manufacturing corner, the government still has a degree of autonomy regarding how it engages with this export model (e.g., labor legislation) and how it engages with its own citizens regarding the project's rollout. For instance, the government chose the location for the industrial park. This decision was far from immaterial, and indeed controversial.

The Caracol site was one of a few suggested by a US firm charged with scouting locations. It was chosen because the land was owned by the state, making displacement of farmers less complicated; the nearby Trou-du-Nord River could be used to absorb a substantial amount of treated water; and there existed an abundant subterranean supply of water (Haiti Grassroots Watch 2011; Sontag 2012). It is important to note that community members and local state officials were not consulted.[8] The mayor of Caracol, members of the municipal district governing boards (Conseil d'Administration de Section Communale, CASEC) and the municipal district assembly (Assemblés des Sections Communales, ASEC) were never contacted.[9] Indeed, one mayor found out about the megadevelopment by accident. Once informed, he stated: "I didn't have a real voice in decision-making. They just use you to pass their ideas." He requested a meeting with the government, which led to a meeting with the Ministry of the Interior in 2011. He raised objections to the location, noting that it was the most fertile parcel of land in the region and was being used to produce for the local market. "I tried to change things and the higher-ups didn't listen," he stated. The mayor subsequently met with local government representatives to CASEC and ASEC to inform them of the project.[10]

Some of the 366 displaced families were given five days' notice before bulldozers arrived (Action Aid USA 2015). Local residents and farmers were last to learn of the megadevelopment. As one farmer, who later became a member of the Association for the Defense of Caracol Workers (or ADTC, in French) stated: "It's only when we went there that we learned that we were losing our land. They didn't sit with anyone or tell anyone anything. It was only when we asked for an explanation that they (local government officials) met with us. We asked how they allowed this to happen—they said even they didn't know what was happening. So we made them block it."[11]

Although residents and local officials were unable to "block" the development, they raised two serious objections. Both were flagged by the mayor of Caracol early on: the loss of fertile land—indeed, the most fertile state land in the region—and the site's proximity to an ecologically significant and very fragile coastal zone, home to one of Haiti's last mangrove forests as well as extensive coral reefs.[12]

The first concern—land usage—is not new or unexpected. The administration of Jean-Bertrand Aristide also displaced a large group of peasants, forcing them off fertile farmland to build the CODEVI industrial park in Ouanaminthe in 2001–2002 (Fatton 2007a, 209; Bracken 2003). So, this was not the first time that industrial objectives trumped rural needs and broader food-security concerns. Still, the context in which fertile land is being sacrificed is vital to understanding the significance of the decision to locate CIP on that site. In 2008, when global commodity prices rose sharply, Haitians suffered greatly because of the country's acute dependence on imported foodstuffs. Thereafter, food security became a top priority for both the government and donors (Government of Haiti 2010; Shamsie 2012). Choosing the Caracol site seems to contradict the primacy accorded to food security. Selecting a different site would have confirmed the government's stated commitment to food production and small farmers.

The second concern—potential environmental impact—was best expressed by the head of Haiti's Audubon Society: "The fact of having chosen this site, I'd call it heresy" (Sontag 2012). Two points are worth noting: first, no environmental study was conducted before the government's decision; second, it appears that Haiti's Ministry of the Environment was not consulted regarding the suitability of the site. Indeed, after Caracol was chosen, the ministry expressed its disapproval. Eventually, an environmental assessment was carried out, judging the project to have "significant adverse environmental impacts" (Haiti Grassroots Watch 2011).

These two points do not speak directly to relations between the government and local residents; however, they do show how the government dealt with environmental activists, and they shed light on how democratic

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[8] Focus-group discussion on February 3, 2013, with fifteen members from the Glaudine CASEC, Chanpen and Glaudine ASECs, and delegates from the region.
[9] The ASEC is an elected committee that serves as a form of rural parliament providing checks and balances to CASEC. CASEC is the public administrator at the local level, maintaining infrastructure and participating in local development activities. It is an elected three-member council that represents a rural section. CASEC carries out the ASEC's decisions (Verner and Egset 2007, 49).
[10] Interview with local mayor, Caracol, February 3, 2013.
[11] Focus-group discussion, quote from ADTC member, February 4, 2013.
[12] For a thorough account of the studies conducted regarding the Caracol Industrial Park and concerns regarding its location, see Haiti Grassroots Watch/Haiti Liberté, "Martelly Government Betting on Sweatshops: Haiti Open for Business." http://www.haiti-liberte.com/archives/volume5-22/Martelly%20government.asp.

institutions are working. In summary, there was most definitely poor transparency and a failure to consult regarding the site selection. This lack of consultation indicates that access to the policy-making arena for rural-based citizens remains extremely limited at best.

Some Voice, No Influence

On January 6, 2011, 366 families were informed that CIP would be built on the land they were farming.[13] According to several accounts by both local officials and residents, Prime Minister Jean-Max Bellerive's special envoy arrived soon after a fence was erected around the site to meet with local farmers, community groups, and residents. Farmers, fishers, and residents initially reacted with anger and disbelief: "We were all mad and we said that can't happen! We're the people who should be in charge of development in the area! On this land peasants have been there for thirty to sixty years! That is how they feed their kids, support their families."[14]

Despite the opposition expressed during this first informational meeting, the envoy was able to gain the grudging acceptance of residents by making a series of assurances. Recognizing the inevitable loss of livelihoods, the government promised displaced farmers three forms of compensation: (1) short-term for lost harvests, ensuing food insecurity, and the land itself; (2) transitional, in the form of training for jobs in the industrial park; and (3) and long-term compensation to reestablish livelihoods for those affected. The long-term compensation was in the form of either a land-for-land option or financial support to start or upgrade a small business. There was also a commitment to provide housing to the most vulnerable among the displaced (UTE and BID 2011). To develop these compensation options, consultants met with residents numerous times. Government documents refer to the encounters as "consultation," but closer inspection reveals that many of the meetings were related to determining compensation packages: verifying the size of farmers' holdings, number of family members affected, and types of crops being farmed.

The government also promised residents from surrounding communities—Caracol in particular—that they would be first to benefit from the project. For instance, according to a local church representative, residents were told they would be hired to help build the industrial park and would be the first to receive jobs inside the park upon its completion.[15] This was confirmed by local municipal representatives. For example: "They had promised that for every fifty people that would work in the park, thirty would be from Caracol."[16] Another said: "They promised they would support the fishers, the people who make salt, the peasants, the people who depend on raising animals, they said they would invest in those areas. They have never done that…. When they were describing the number of people who would find work, we asked what about people who don't have training. They said any people could work inside, they would learn."[17]

Although locals were slow to receive jobs, this has since changed. As of 2016, half of CIP's workforce comes from the towns of Trou-du-Nord, Limonade, and Cap-Haïtien (D'Sa 2016a). The rest are from smaller nearby towns: Caracol, Terrier-Rouge, Quartier-Morin, and Ti Koulin (known also as EKAM).

During the initial phase of construction, the government also created several commissions or coordination mechanisms related to various aspects of CIP's development: environment, land management, food and transport of workers, and broader regional development (Haiti Libre 2012). This departs from past conduct, as commissions were not established when President Aristide expropriated the land in 2002 for the CODEVI industrial park near the border with the Dominican Republic.

Given that my focus is democratic development, it important to highlight the level of civil society activism around the Caracol zone. During the first informational meeting, the government envoy suggested that local residents form an association to facilitate communication among the government, park authorities, workers, and residents. This led to the establishment of the Association for the Defense of Caracol Workers (Asosyasyon pou la défense travaye Karakol, or ADTC by its French name). Although the government expected ADTC to serve as a strict informational conduit, it began to advocate on behalf of surrounding communities and industrial park workers. Indeed, some informants suggested that ADTC's strong advocacy role led to the creation of a second parallel group, Lidé Natirel, which was instigated by CIP authorities.

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[13] Others who were negatively affected include 720 agricultural laborers and twenty-four agricultural seasonal cooperatives. It was also expected that local merchants and service providers (e.g., tractor operators, owner-operators of irrigation pumps, truck drivers) would experience a significant drop in business (UTE and BID 2011, 30).

[14] Focus-group discussion, quote from participant, February 3, 2013.

[15] Interview with church minister and a member of the Movement to Rebuild Caracol (Mouvman pou Rebati yon Karakol, MOREKA), Caracol, February 5, 2013. MOREKA is a mediator between local citizens and the factory owners in the industrial park.

[16] Focus-group discussion, quote from delegate, Chanpen, February 3, 2013.

[17] Focus-group discussion, quote from ASEC member, Chanpen, February 3, 2013.

Informants noted that authorities used Lidé Natirel to bypass the more antagonistic ADTC. One resident said that both organizations "were meant to represent peasant interests, it's just that Lidé Natirel was formed by the industrial park leaders. If I'm going to resist the leaders of the Park, I would be in the ADTC."[18]

The emergence of a strong advocacy group in ADTC is noteworthy because the Haitian state has traditionally discouraged the organization of rural and urban lower classes—often through violent suppression. Hence, the very existence of activism around the Caracol zone—an area designated as critical to economic development— is a noteworthy development on the democratic front and certainly worth further study. At the same time, I do not want to be overly optimistic. Charles Hale's (2011) research on Central America, which explores the spatial dimensions of governance, has shown that in zones where people are engaged in globally articulated sectors (e.g., industrial parks, tourist enclaves), the state may be thicker, more vigilant, act differently than expected, and even be more effective. In other words, how the government engaged with subaltern groups in the Caracol zone may be atypical rather than indicative of its methods of rule across the territory.

Gauging Citizen Engagement

Cornwall and Gaventa (2001) have suggested that we can begin assessing citizen engagement by asking whether local residents were called on to shape policy, choose between predetermined policy options, or simply treated as "beneficiaries" of the megaproject. Sherry Arnstein's ([1969] 2007) foundational ladder of citizen participation is another tool scholars have used to assess consultation efforts. Her model identifies eight levels of citizen influence—manipulation and therapy (levels of nonparticipation); informing, consultation, and placation (levels of tokenism); and partnership, delegated power, and citizen control— distinguishing a process intended to legitimize a decision from one that empowers citizens.

Because the Haitian government never asked concerned communities whether they wanted the project or how it should be developed, Cornwall and Gaventa would view residents as beneficiaries rather than as "shapers" of the project. Drawing on Arnstein's model, government efforts fall on the rungs of nonparticipation and tokenism. The government's primary way of engaging with adjacent communities was through a campaign to "inform people about the existence of the industrial park, creating a connection between the residents and the stakeholders, and persuading the population of the possible benefits to building such an industrial park" (BRESI 2012, 4). The goal was to foster "greater acceptance of the project by the residents in the Caracol area" (BRESI 2012, 4). The campaign included radio spots, informational kiosks in local communities, and a number of meetings with locals. Between January and September 2011, ten meetings were held with various stakeholders (e.g., local authorities, farmers, chambers of commerce, affected individuals). Because these encounters were intended to "obtain" participation and shape expectations about the project (Government of Haiti 2011), they rank low on Arnstein's ladder.

At the same time, government documents suggest that residents did have input into certain aspects of the project. For instance, the name of the industrial park was changed from Parc industriel du nord (Industrial Park of the North) to Parc industriel de la region du nord (Industrial Park of the Northern Region). According to the government, residents also obtained a guarantee that jobs and training would go to them and their dependents before individuals from outside the zone. Finally, the government notes that residents helped determine levels of government compensation (UTE and BID 2011, 124). However, this entailed, for the most part, providing information about the size of their fields and the composition of their households, as noted earlier.

To be sure, the government's strategies fall within a very broad matrix of "participation," which constitutes a promising development (Creighton 2005; Arnstein [1969] 2007). At the same time, they do not indicate that the affected population exerted real influence. Residents were invited to the table only after the agenda had been framed. There was no deliberation, dialogue, or opportunity to alter the government's plans in any significant way. The "participatory" tools were deployed to advance predetermined policy preferences (Ramanzini and de Souza Farias 2016), which suggests an information campaign rather than consultation.

Technologies of Rule?

The government encountered resistance and frustration from residents, such as protests at the gates of the industrial park. Residents became angry when promises regarding compensation and jobs were slow to materialize. The government's poor capacity to deliver public goods and carry out complex functions has been well documented, so slow implementation of compensation was not surprising (Verner and Egset 2007; Baranyi 2012; Fund for Peace 2016). At the same time, despite weak capacity, the state's ability

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[18] Focus-group discussion, quote from MOPAK member, Chanpen, February 4, 2013.

to extend its coercive power into the hinterland appeared quite solid.[19] In focus-group interviews, one member of the Peasant Movement for the Advancement of Caracol (Mouvman Peyizan pou Avansman Karakol, MOPAK), stated, "Whether or not you accept, they're going to take your land, if you resist you could die."[20] In line with this statement was the view expressed by an ADTC member: "The Haitian state is dangerous, if you stand in its way anything can happen to you."[21]

On the one hand, it can be considered a positive development that the state's security forces are not only concentrated in the capital and that coverage across the territory seems to be increasing. On the other hand, these forces inspire fear in local residents. To be sure, preventing political repression and the arbitrary use of force by state security agencies is a familiar and persistent problem in emerging democracies, which is why successful reform of the police serves as an indicator of genuine democratization. Assessments of Haiti's security forces are mixed. Reports in 2015 and 2016 documented police use of excessive force against groups protesting large economic development projects (Baranyi and Sainsiné 2015, 2016). A 2017 report also indicate police use of repressive tactics against workers protesting an increased production quota at Fairway Apparel textile factory in Port-au-Prince. Some workers were injured, and a union representative was beaten (Rapid Response Network 2017).

Still, it seems significant that in the Caracol zone, security forces seldom resorted to violent force when dealing with protesters, particularly because, as noted earlier, the Haitian state has typically preferred repression to dialogue when faced with resistance from civil society. This is not to say that there were no disturbing instances of police repression: police fired on and injured Fort Liberté protestors who demanded that their town be supplied with electricity from the industrial park's power plant (Associated Press 2014). This alarming incident was not typical, however. Instead, the government used technologies of rule—informing local communities, engaging with unhappy residents in face-to-face meetings to appease them, encouraging the ADTC's formation and later that of Lidé Natirel, and offering compensation packages.

The frustration of residents was managed in one other way. It seems that the mayors and municipal officials had garnered enough legitimacy to prevent peaceful protests from turning violent. According to one CASEC official, they were able to curb discontent: "The population trusts us, they listen to us. We were trying to accompany development, we were promising change."[22] It was a challenging and delicate task for local politicians, who began supporting the project only after the government promised jobs, housing, infrastructure, and support to local fishing and agriculture. When these were slow to appear, they were torn between their obligations to residents and their pledge to defend the central government's plan. According to one official: "Until now we keep calming the people down, because we don't want violence in the area. They [residents] always stand in front of the gate, [of the industrial park] every Monday, all the time, protesting for work. Sometimes they stop if we can calm them…. Their first ideas were to burn tires, but we intervened to help them protest in peace."[23]

The dual role of resident advocate and CIP defender has not served local politicians well, with possible implications for democracy at the local level. As a CASEC member from Glaudine noted: "As authorities it is on our backs! They [the central government] stepped on us so that they could put the park up. They have destroyed us as leaders too! Because people, our constituents, who believe in us, voted for us, they have hope in us, they sent us to represent them. For us, CASEC/ASEC, we've had to sit with the population to convince them not to be violent. We were convinced that they would get work, we said don't be violent because they'll give you work. But they never did, so now they're shooting at us!"[24]

An ASEC member from Chanpen agreed with this sentiment: "We used to have power, peasants would listen to us…. That's why they listened to us when we asked them not to protest against the park. Now, we're finished, for the population we don't represent anything anymore."[25]

It has been suggested that because municipal governments are "closest to the people," they are crucial sites of democratic development. As Jonathan Fox (1994, 106) noted in his study of rural Mexico, "It is at the local level 'where most citizens either gain access to or find themselves excluded from the state.'" John Cameron (2010, 3), who has studied municipal politics in the Andean region, adds that where "highly unequal servile relations that characterized neo-feudal systems of agriculture remain strong, local governments

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[19] Currently, the Haitian National Police—with assistance from MINUSTAH—is charged with national and public security.
[20] Focus-group discussion, quote from MOPAK member, February 4, 2013.
[21] Focus-group discussion, quote from ADTC member, February 4, 2013.
[22] Focus-group discussion, quote from CASEC member, Glaudine, February 3, 2013.
[23] Focus-group discussion, quote from ASEC member, Chanpen, February 3, 2013.
[24] Focus-group discussion, quote from CASEC member, Glaudine, February 3, 2013.
[25] Focus-group discussion, quote from ASEC member, Chanpen, February 3, 2013.

have a particularly important role to play in fostering political cultures of democratic citizenship." In this case, municipal politicians were residents' first contact points for information about CIP and the first to receive complaints regarding its implementation. Hence, they were most useful in diffusing resident anger and discontent. Given that it is unclear whether this was a conscious plan by the central government or a convenient occurrence, I hesitate to consider it a technology of rule. Still, a crucial space for partnering with citizens may have been sacrificed in the process.

Conclusion

This article has provided an account of state–civil society engagement to shed some light on the state of Haiti's democracy. It examined how the government, in the face of significant opposition, established an economic development megaproject—Caracol Industrial Park—in the rural hinterland. The state engaged with the farmers it displaced and communities adjacent to the park. Of particular interest is how the government gained compliance and quelled discontent, as this affords us a window into how the predatory nature of the state may be evolving.

Some residents living near the CIP expressed their fear of what the government might do if they resisted the megaproject. It is disturbing and disappointing, but not unexpected, that Haitians remain fearful of their government. As Guillermo O'Donnell (1994) has noted, past state practices and authoritarian traditions are very slow to dissolve. In Haiti, relations between rulers and the ruled have historically been repressive. The dominant class used the state to repress and exploit Haitian society since the earliest moments of independence (Mintz 1995). Indeed, as Haiti moved toward procedural democracy in the 1990s, a primary objective of popular sectors was to limit the state's repressive tendencies and abilities. Aristide's dissolution of the army constituted a pivotal first step in that direction.[26]

It is therefore significant that between the time CIP was announced and its inauguration, there were few instances of repression by state security forces. Given the economic significance of the project, one might have expected a return to blunt, retrograde practices (e.g., violent police tactics, crackdown on CIP opponents). However, when faced with protestors, the dreaded rural police were deployed sparingly. The reliance on co-optation rather than violence is worth noting, as the degree and frequency with which a state deploys force against its citizens is a key measure of democratic advancement (Grugel and Bishop 2014). Finally, and no less significant, the emergence of a strong advocacy group (ADTC) and the existence of activism around the Caracol zone is a notable development on this front.

A second observation relates to how the state partnered with residents in the CIP zone. The judgment is mixed here. As Fishman (2016, 304) has noted in his insightful examination of democratic quality and depth, improving the quality of democracy involves supplementing elections with other forms of political participation and establishing processes that allow the more socially and economically disadvantaged to influence the political process. On the one hand, attempts were made to engage with local residents and displaced farmers. However, involvement was low, and there was no indication the state had internalized an obligation to listen to local citizens. As noted earlier, the depth of consultation, based on Arnstein's ladder of participation, fell at the lowest rungs. Finally, there were hardly any women among the local state representatives (mayors, CASEC and ASEC members), and gender issues were absent from discussions related to the project. Given the large number of women workers at CIP, this has unsettling implications for the advancement of democracy in the region.

In addition, it is important to note that engagement with civil society took place after the critical decisions had already been taken. For instance, there was no consultation regarding the CIP site. Instead, residents and their local representatives could have partnered with the central government on the location decision, leading to negotiations and trade-offs among all involved. If the government had consulted with and incorporated the concerns of those affected by the project, two positive democracy effects might have occurred: first, the state could have extended political equality beyond the ballot box to people whose daily reality is exclusion, and second, meaningful engagement with displaced and local residents could have boosted the legitimacy of both the government and its policy decision.

A third observation relates to local governance. Although the central government met with local representatives on a few occasions, mayors and CASEC members were not consulted regarding the location. This lack of input by local authorities regarding the development of their region is problematic. In addition,

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[26] At the same time, former president Michel Martelly (2011–2015) had pledged to restore the army while he was a candidate in the 2011 election. Although he did not press the matter once in office, discussions regarding the reconstitution of army continue to swirl.

the loss of legitimacy that local officials appear to have experienced could pose a serious problem if, as some research suggests, important segments of the population rely on experiences with local government when evaluating democracy and democratic institutions. Moreover, greater public distrust of local officials may lead (historically disenfranchised) rural residents to continue regarding the state with suspicion. In summary, the increasingly ragged bonds between CASECs and ASECs and their constituents could have significant implications for the broader project of democratic development, particularly if local government is not just about service delivery but a primary way to build trust in democratic institutions and support for democratic norms (Zechmeister 2014).

Interestingly, while local officials were sidelined, the design and implementation of the megaproject was carried out with substantial input from powerful international actors, which brings me to a final observation. As Haggard and Kaufman (2016) have argued, more research is needed to better understand the material and ideational effects of global forces on democratic outcomes. The impact of external forces in this case study was substantial. The plan to reinvigorate the export-assembly sector and build a new industrial park did not emerge from a broad consultation between the Haitian state and civil society. It was the idea of foreign donors, spurred by the Collier report and supported by international donors, including MINUSTAH. Moreover, foreign donors provided the funds to compensate displaced farmers, satisfy angry residents, and build infrastructure in the vicinity of CIP. At the same time, this high degree of external intervention and financial dependence did not dictate whether and how the central government engaged with local citizens and officials. This shows that the Haitian state has some room to maneuver in its relationship with its citizens, despite its profound dependence on external actors and its peripheral status in the global order.

What was difficult to untangle, and merits further study, was the extent to which the IDB's governance norms influenced how the state engaged with civil society. Funders like the IDB are expected to adhere to a series of governance norms, some of which are related to consultation and transparency. Did these norms influence the government's stance and strategy vis-à-vis civil society? If so, to what extent and how? If they did influence the government's strategy in a positive way—by encouraging transparency and consultation—will they "stick" once the project is complete, serving as a model for future projects? Leaving aside this important piece of the puzzle for future research, this study confirms that international actors are not supplementary but deeply implicated in Haiti's democratization, possibly even the country's intimate state–civil society relationship.

Acknowledgements

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