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Twists and turns of land reform in Latin America: From predatory to intermediate states?

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Abstract

Land reform has significantly evolved over time in Latin America. In the early decades of the 20th century, the 'agrarian question' involved different national paths of agrarian capitalism and their contributions to industrialization. Later in the century, agriculture played a secondary role, while market-led reforms were implemented from the early 1990s in the region. The agrarian question is now related to a new range of global and national inequalities, whereas the land problem remains unresolved. This paper deals with the role of the state and social dynamics in understanding the twists and turns of Latin America's land reforms from the 1900s to the Global Era.

KEYWORDS
agrarian question, globalization, land reform, Latin America, peasant movements and state

1 | INTRODUCTION

> *There is no general formula for starting and effectively implementing significant agrarian reforms; rather, they must evolve and adapt according to the political and social dynamics that characterise a country at a given time. (Barraclough, 2007).*

Land reforms have significantly evolved and adapted over time to Latin America's changing political and economic conditions. In the early decades of the 20th century, the 'agrarian question' involved different national paths of agrarian capitalism and their contributions to industrialization. Later in the century, both the state and agriculture played a secondary role, while market-led reforms were implemented from the early 1990s in the region. In the Global Era, the agrarian question is related to a new range of global and national inequalities where the land problem remains unresolved. Despite the fact that agrarian reform has had to be adapted to the historical context, it has not disappeared as a demand from subaltern rural classes. Access to land has never been solved for them in the different periods of recent history. This is particularly significant in Latin America, the most unequal region worldwide, both in

terms of income and of land distribution, where access to power and wealth has been historically attached to access to land (Ezquerro-Cañete & Fogel, 2017).[1]

In concert with earlier special issues of this journal, edited by Byres (2004) and Vergara-Camus and Kay (2017), this paper analyses class and power relations in order to understand why Latin America's land reforms twisted and turned without solving the land problem that is still alive in the region.[2] By taking the long view, this article explores which types of state and correlations of forces have favoured redistributive agrarian reforms during the periods analysed. This is our fundamental explanatory category to determine whether there will be an agrarian reform or not, and its form of radicalism from developmentalist states to 'Pink Tide' Governments in Latin America. Section 2 discusses the changing context and global agrarian political economy around land and agrarian reforms (defined as different processes) and the types of states that can be found within and around these processes. Following a modified Neo-Weberian perspective,[3] the following sections chronologically explore how 'state capture' by landed elites (rather than autonomy or embedded autonomy) was a crucial factor in the failure of agrarian reform over the periods of developmentalism, market-led agrarian reforms (MLARs) and Pink Tide governments. On the other hand, autonomy and alliance with peasant movements were also crucial in more successful cases like Cuba, which is presented as an outlier within developmentalist and Pink Tide reforms. The paper ends with a more nuanced view on dynamics and constraints facing redistributive land reforms implemented by different types of state that complements previous literature on land reforms and state–society dynamics.

2 | THE OLD AND NEW AGRARIAN QUESTIONS, LAND/AGRARIAN REFORMS AND THE STATE

For Byres (1991, 1996) and Bernstein (2010), 'agrarian' reform requires changing the role of various agrarian classes in their struggles for progress and democratization, on the road to equitable land ownership and social relations of production. This process also entails developing the forces of agricultural production to promote food security, livelihoods and capital accumulation. Griffin et al. (2002, p. 280) defined 'land' reform as a programme to redistribute land ownership, from large private *latifundistas* to small peasant farmers and landless rural workers. This process involves the centrality of the state in redistributing wealth and is therefore called redistributive land reform.[4] For Lipton (1973, 1977), land reform has different meanings in different circumstances, and it may be based on two simultaneous processes where the state has a fundamental role: (a) obligatory takeover of land by the state with partial compensation to large landowners and (b) cultivation of redistributed land to increase pre-acquisition benefits. The state may give, sell or lease this land for private cultivation in smaller production units (redistributive reform), or the land may be jointly cultivated, and its usufruct shared through cooperatives, collective or state farms (collectivist reform) (Lipton, 1977, 2009).[5]

We do not use the terms land reform and agrarian reform indiscriminately. As in Bernstein (2010) and Byres (1991, 1996), this research defines agrarian reform as a more comprehensive programme that goes beyond mere land redistribution, including state support, credits, seeds or supplies. Therefore, when using the term agrarian reform, we refer to a more holistic strategy that requires the centrality of the state to facilitate land redistribution, enhance the productive and social capabilities of small producers and support agro-industrial growth and diversification (Evans, 2009). Land reform is consequently understood as a key dimension of agrarian reform and a necessary but insufficient condition for national development (Moyo & Yeros, 2005). As the East Asian experience demonstrated, agrarian reform remains a cornerstone of agricultural and social transformation (Chang, 2009). Given the lack of complementary measures that accompanied Latin America's programmes, we generally refer to them as land reforms. By contrast, the term agrarian reform will be used to describe post-war East Asian experiences. In Latin America, the classic definitions of land reform belong to the era of developmentalist states, those who belonged to the import-substitution industrialization (ISI) period, when modernization theory functioned widely and powerfully as a 'perceptual and cognitive framework' (Latham, 2000, p. 70). The 'agrarian question' involved different national

paths of development of capitalism in the countryside and their contributions to industrialization. On the policy side, certain scholars argued for the need for land reform to accelerate industrialization in the 1950s and 1960s, when the ISI model began to show signs of exhaustion. The ISI model, based on strong state intervention, was widely questioned by neoliberal scholars and certain international institutions. Strong state interventionism prioritized industrialization while disregarding agricultural development (*urban bias*) and rural areas. After the reforms, peasant demands were increasingly forgotten and Latin American agriculture was massively incorporated into the activities of transnational agribusiness companies (De Janvry, 1981). Since the early 1990s, the new agrarian question became relegated to a new variety of colonialism and extractive imperialism (Veltmeyer & Delgado Wise, 2018). The new agrarian question went hand in hand with the emergence of an important contradiction: '*In a world of unparalleled rural production and productivity, the numbers of those living in varying degrees of food insecurity and chronic hunger in the world's towns and countryside is historically unprecedented*' (Akram-Lodhi & Kay, 2009, p. 4; see also IFAD, 2001; IFPRI, 2007; Patel, 2007; Weis, 2007). Within the new agrarian question, land reforms in Latin America changed significantly, as the role of the state and social dynamics within these processes also shifted. National and transnational rural social movements emerged 'from below', driving a new kind of demand for land, territory and a 21st century concept of agrarian reform. These movements transcend state spheres and have the capacity to influence social policy, restoring reform to political and economic agendas. Within and around these processes, where substantial progress in land redistribution has been achieved, both the state and a structured and powerful peasant movement have been able to undertake a nationwide reform process for decades (Rosset, 2016). According to Fox (1992, pp. 39–40), reforms from above that change society are difficult to explain with society-centred approaches. Similarly, societal responses to such initiatives, that in turn change the state, do not fit easily with state-centred frameworks. The challenge is to develop an explanation of state action that can effectively balance both state and societal factors. Borras (2007, p. 64) points out that 'a rigorous analysis of land reform requires an understanding of the dynamics of state-society relations'. Looking at the land reform process in the Philippines, Borras et al. (2007) shows how the successful implementation of redistributive policies did not basically focus on measures imposed 'from above' on passive social actors. Rather, it was based on the implementation of distributive land reform policies in which the state interacted with a broad amalgam of social actors with different interests, often in competition and conflict.

Despite the fact that the state maintained a central role within a context of social interaction in these processes, few studies have re-scrutinized the ways in which we understand the state or have examined the underlying assumptions about the nature and autonomy of the state that agrarian scholars accept. According to Vergara-Camus and Kay (2017), even fewer studies are dedicated to theorizing the current nature of the state within the countryside.[6] Although a great deal of the scholarship explored Latin America's rural movements, most studies were centred on state policies or the strategies of rural movements towards the state. Very few specialists work explicitly with a specific concept of the state or refer to the theoretical discussions about state theory. Only a few scholars (Wolford et al., 2013) have attempted to describe what is particular or unique about the role of the state in the countryside or in social conflict over resources. There have been even fewer attempts to describe and define what exactly the state is and how it interacts with different social actors taking the long view. Vergara-Camus and Kay (2017) addressed this important gap and brought the nature and role of the state back into the process of neoliberal globalization of the countryside and the possible emergence of alternative development models.

In particular, Vergara-Camus and Kay (2017, pp. 242–243) discuss five approaches to the state in the literature on agrarian studies and natural resources.[7] This paper builds on the Neo-Weberian perspective to explore the character of the state, the nature of its bureaucracy and the interactions between society (mainly capital, but also labour) and the state in land reform processes. According to this approach, the state is characterized as having relative autonomy and as being developmental, intermediate or predatory (Evans, 1995).[8] Evans (1989) defines predatory states as those whose captured nature (i.e., the lack of autonomy and rent-seeking behaviour of incumbents in power) impede economic transformation (the former Zaire could be considered an archetype of predatory states). Developmental states, although not immune to rent-seeking, manage through their joint actions to promote, rather than impede, transformation. The most paradigmatic example is that of the newly industrialized economies of East

Asia after World War II. For Evans (1989), Brazil was an example of an 'intermediate' state where the balance between predatory and developmental activities is unclear, varies over time and depends on the type of activity. The differential effectiveness of states in developing countries as agents of transformation (this literature referring fundamentally to the process of industrial transformation) may be related to differences in their internal structures, as well as external links. Most effective states are characterized by what Evans (1995) calls '*Embedded autonomy*', understood as a set of connections that intimately and determinately unite the state with particular social groups with which it shares a joint project of transformation (Evans, 1995, pp. 50–59). This autonomy is the cornerstone of the developmental state and marks the efficacy of any economic policy. Intermediate states occasionally approach this idea but not enough to give them the transformative capacity of developmental states.

The concept of the state used here is a modified Neo-Weberian one based on Evan's ideas of the developmental state, Kay's (2002) use of it in his comparison of Latin America and East Asia, Baumeister's (1999) reformulation for Central America, Enríquez and Newman's (2016) Poulantzasian conception for Venezuela, Ezquerro-Cañete and Fogel's (2017) use for Paraguay and Fox (2001) ideas on the pressures on the state in the Global Era.[9] This approach allows us to determine how the type of state and the correlation of forces conditioned the success and effectiveness of Latin America's land reforms, from developmentalist to Pink Tide Governments (with partial or global embedded autonomy).

3 | EARLY LAND REFORMS

In Latin America, land reforms entered into the region's debate and the political agenda in the period 1930–1970, under very heterogeneous conditions and with many of them having important antecedents in the peasant struggles of the 1900s (Martín Cano et al., 2007).[10] Early revolutions in Mexico and Bolivia, the overthrow of Batista in Cuba and Somoza in Nicaragua and the civil war in El Salvador all have their roots in oligarchic land tenure institutions favouring a small group of wealthy families at the expense of millions of poor rural inhabitants (Dorner, 1992). But it was mainly in the early 1960s, in response to the political shock of the Cuban Revolution, when land reforms were really put on the map (De Janvry, 1981). A variety of strategic, economic and political motivations, as set out below, promoted a great array of programmes where the state had a central role.[11] In the first half of the 1960s, the Land Tenure Project of the Inter-American Committee for Agricultural Development (known by its Spanish acronym CIDA, *Comité Interamericano de Desarrollo Agrícola*), established by the Organisation of American States (OAS) and other international organizations (IDB, FAO and IICA), conducted the most comprehensive study of the agrarian structure in Latin America. The report showed the high degree of land concentration in the region: whereas large farms with approximately 5% of production units owned four fifths of the cultivated land, small farms with four fifths of production units owned only 5% of the land (Barraclough, 1973).[12] In this context, the policy-maker 'developmentalist' argument based on growth, income redistribution and poverty reduction drove the reforms. Although agricultural efficiency was not a priority for large landowners (who combined the search of revenues while seeking social prestige and political power), the perception of inefficiency of the traditional *hacienda* spread considerably in the region.[13] Data on the extremely poor living conditions in rural areas and the social and political instability that this poverty and social marginalization created further strengthened these developmentalist arguments (Kay, 2006b).

The political context under the Alliance of Progress declaration of Punta del Este, in 1961, encouraged states to create land reform legislation in nineteen Latin American and Caribbean countries (Dorner, 1992, p. 33). The alliance (which reflected an anti-communist identity for the United States) was a development aid and cooperation programme largely driven by the newly elected Kennedy administration. During the Cold War, the Alliance aimed to regain the initiative in hemispheric relations after the triumph of the Cuban Revolution of 1959 and the implementation of the first two land reforms in Cuba (Kay, 2006b; Latham, 2000). Within this cultural, strategic and economic frontline against the spread of Communism, land reforms acquired a much clearer political role, trying to diminish the

influence of the landowning elite in those countries where it was possible, while committing to adoption of a free market capitalist model to access the programme's resources.

Furthermore, for the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Alliance for Progress, and external advisors, land redistribution was the road to modernization under the ISI model.[14] By implementing land reforms during this period, states tried, on the one hand, to bring down food prices through an expected increase in agricultural productivity and, on the other hand, to increase the internal (domestic) demand for industrial commodities due to expected increases in income of the land reform beneficiaries.

A wide range of reforms was implemented in Latin America.[15] Extensive redistribution programmes were part of the outcomes of revolutions in Mexico (1910–1917),[16] Guatemala (1952), Bolivia (1953), Cuba (1959) and Nicaragua (1979). Authoritarian governments enforced land reforms in Peru and Ecuador (1964), while other left-wing governments (e.g., Chile) undertook more radical programmes.[17] The rest of the countries implemented less extensive reforms. Despite the centrality of the state in these processes, the Alliance-inspired legislations sought to capture resources specifically for less far-reaching settlement and colonization projects on (low-quality) public lands (Kay, 1997; Thiesenhusen, 1995a). In many cases, reform essentially took place on marginal (often state) lands that did not affect agro-exports and were not controlled by agrarian elites.[18] Smallholders, the landless, indigenous populations and female heads of household remained as the main reservoirs of extreme poverty, food insecurity and long-term social exclusion (De Janvry et al., 1998; Deere & Leon, 1997).

3.1 | From predatory to developmental states

As Borras and McKinley (2006) show, post-war reforms brought about substantial achievements in land redistribution. One third or more of total farmland was redistributed in East Asia (e.g., Japan, South Korea and Taiwan, benefiting 50% or more of farm households). The large-scale initiatives in Bolivia, Cuba and Mexico, promoted by social revolutions, were also significant. The rest simply implemented land reforms and colonization programmes to fall in line with the expectations of western developmentalism and get the Alliance's funds, without alleviating other serious difficulties (rural poverty and food insecurity).[19] Here lies the difference between Latin American and East Asian programmes and the type of states and social dynamics within these processes.

Although Latin America began to industrialize long before the economies of East Asia, the region was overtaken by the latter in the 1960s and 1970s. It has been pointed out that '*land reform was one of the keys - arguably the key - of the East Asian Miracle*' (Rodrik, 1995, p. 93). The East Asian governments implemented 'agrarian' reforms that promoted a more equal land distribution and were complemented by other state policies to create surpluses and stimulate demand for agricultural production (Griffin et al., 2002; Kay, 2002; Sobhan, 1993). Whereas the political will to put land reform on the map during the 20th century was provided by internal governments, with close ties to the landed classes in Latin America, East Asian reforms were driven by outside powers (in particular thanks to US pressure in Japan, Taiwan and South Korea), with virtually no ties to the landed classes (Dorner, 1992, pp. 56–57). Kay (2002) explains that in South Korea and Taiwan, the state played a far more decisive role in transforming agriculture and developing the industrial sector, compared with Latin America. Furthermore, the state in South Korea and Taiwan had a substantially stronger hold over the agricultural sector than did the Latin American state. This difference is explained by the superior degree of autonomy from society of the South Korean and Taiwanese state (Anglade & Fortin, 1990). The greater competence of the state bureaucracies in South Korea and Taiwan contrasted to that of many Latin American states, which were hampered by patronage, clientelism and inertia (Evans, 1998). All these elements suggest that the state in Latin America was captured by vested interests, and that it lacked the autonomy of the East Asian developmental state.

Kay (2002) has further discussed this capacity of the (developmental) state and its ability (what Chan, 1988, refers to as *statecraft*) to create and apply strategies and policies conducive to development in East Asia, compared to Latin America. Kay (2002) places particular emphasis on the state's ability to transform the land tenure system

and agrarian social relations, as well as on its capacity to foster entrepreneurship and a positive interaction between agriculture and industry.[20] Latin America's deficient statecraft, compared to South Korea and Taiwan, is partially the result of its more differentiated and deep-rooted class structure and, paradoxically, its better natural resource endowment. South Korea and Taiwan had to rely on superior statecraft for their development if they were to overcome their natural resource constraints. In East Asia, the existence of '*autonomy*' was the cornerstone of the developmental state and its effectiveness.

In every Latin American country where significant land redistribution took place, the state played a decisive role (Barraclough, 1999, p. 33). But, unfortunately, in each case where reforms failed, the state also played a key role (Rosset, 2005, p. 8). In Latin America, the state was captured by diverse and vested interests. Despite the decisive role of developmentalist states in Latin America, they were neither the only nor the most powerful actor. As stressed by Evans (1989, p. 571), under predatory states, it is not bureaucracy what impedes development so much as the lack of capacity to behave like a bureaucracy. Baumeister (1999) further points to a *double autonomy* of the state in the case of Central America, where political-state coalitions that drove the reform processes had very heterogeneous objectives. The level of autonomy achieved by the state bureaucracies was not only mobilized against the affected landowning classes but also vis-à-vis the popular classes who had been mobilized and benefited from the agrarian reform initiatives (Baumeister, 1999). In all cases, workers' and peasants' initiatives were subordinated to other social factions (Baumeister, 1999). Apart from the Nicaraguan case, Latin America's states were generally incapable of implementing land reforms. Because decisions were eminently in the hands of private elites, the state lacked autonomy and behaved as predatory when fulfilling the particular goal of land reform. The Cuban experience after the Revolution implied a different path around developmentalist reforms.

3.2 | Cuba's revolutionary land reforms

Galbraith (1951, pp. 695–696) described land reform as revolutionary, because it passes power, property and status from one group in the community to another. According to Dorner (1992, p. 4), 'any reform worthy of the name is a very difficult political undertaking. It involves a rearrangement of economic and political power.' This concept was politically revolutionary, rather than the merely reformist approach adopted by most developmentalist governments. Kay (2002) further discusses that, although the Latin American state during the ISI period was developmentalist, promoting industrialization several decades before South Korea and Taiwan, it was also populist and largely democratic. This limited the room for manoeuvre of Latin American states as they were under a double pressure: from the dominant classes and from the lower classes who, although less powerful, formed the majority of the electorate (Kay, 2002, pp. 1085–1088).

As the Cuban case demonstrates, socialist projects aim to radically address inequality by redistributing political and economic power, one of the cornerstones of any real attempt at redistributive reforms. After the Revolution, on 1 January 1959, Cuba became a socialist state with capacity to transform the rural conditions of the island, handing over the land to the peasants through two consecutive agrarian reform laws that would combine both collective and redistributive patterns. The first agrarian reform law was implemented in May 1959, eliminating private plantations larger than 402 hectares and certain precarious forms of exploitation such as sharecropping. The new law dispossessed large owners and guaranteed land ownership to those who worked the land with more efficient forms of production, such as cooperatives (with the creation in the 1960s of Cooperatives of Credit and Services, CCSs) (Álvarez, 2004). A new agrarian reform law was implemented in October 1963. The new law expropriated the rest of the large estates, those with an area surpassing 66.4 hectares, but did not redistribute the expropriated land (Blutstein et al., 1971). Although the state farm sector (highly based on intensive practices) became dominant, the peasant sector still provided over 40% of the agricultural and livestock product in 1964. They had better quality land, owning about 43% of the arable land (Aranda, 1968, from Kay, 1988; Rodriguez, 1965). In the second half of the 1970s, the creation of Cooperatives of Agricultural Production (CPAs) was a real road to the collectivization of the

peasantry. CPAs were socialist economic entities, conceived to promote collective production and cooperation at the height of the Cuban peasant movement (Kay, 1988; Nova, 2013).

On the eve of the fall of the Soviet Union, 78% of the cultivated area was in state hands, 10% belonged to the CPAs, and the remaining 12% to the CCSs and individual farmers. These transformations not only ended up shaping a new and more equal agrarian structure in Cuba, they also eliminated predatory patterns guided by US interests and large landowners before 1959. The pre-revolutionary predatory state that acted to protect the interests of the elite disappeared with the implementation of the first two land reforms. Large state-owned enterprises and CPAs were considered the fundamental pillars of (conventional and export-led) agriculture.[21] Small farmers (the main producers prior to 1900) and CCSs retained traditional peasant knowledge, which included key sustainability elements for the paradigm shift during the Special Period (1990–2006) (Machín et al., 2010).

4 | MLAR'S NEW CONTEXT: THE DEMISE OF LAND REFORM?

In the neoliberal scenario, the era of land reform would seem to have come to an end, though the land issue (rural poverty and food insecurity) had never been resolved.[22] Land reform no longer had the political support and concern that it had had in the 1960s, related to the Cold War scenario and the Cuban Revolution, and it was only readmitted as an issue for debate and social action (Borras, 2003; FAO, 2000; Jacobs, 2013). In this context, the mainstream policy circle advocated for market-led agricultural reforms (MLAR) that offered access to land through voluntary transactions between 'willing sellers' and 'willing buyers', and related policies (e.g., land registration and titling) to secure and formalize private property rights (Borras et al., 2008; Lahiff et al., 2007). MLAR further encompassed post-land purchase plans that emphasize diversified, 'commercial farming' and a financing mechanism to those farmers who wished to purchase land (Deininger, 1999, p. 666; Borras, 2003). The results of these strategies were mixed, facing more problems than originally anticipated, with delayed and often inconclusive results. In some cases, getting access to land through registration allowed peasants to obtain legal titles, while in others, it led to the 'modernization of insecurity', promoting migration from rural to urban areas (Jansen & Roquas, 1998; Petras & Veltmeyer, 2007).[23]

The limited success of MLAR and its restricted acceptance among the landless and peasants led international institutions to a more pragmatic approach, known as 'national control' of territorial policies in which the state could choose the most appropriate strategy (Childress & Deininger, 2006). Since the mid-1990s, the coexistence of market and state-driven programmes has generated rent-seeking behaviours, while multilateral funding was mainly channelled to market-driven programmes (Borras & McKinley, 2006).[24] Pro-market models implemented in Latin America, through the *Projeto Cédula da Terra* (PCT) in Brazil, since 1998, and in Colombia through the *Agrarian Law 160 of 1994*, since 1995, were generally decentralized to local governments (supposedly to avoid the problems of centralized bureaucracy). Rather than the promised transparency and accountability, more decentralized schemes ended up showing, once again, predatory patterns: they responded to the particular interests of local elites (e.g., selecting beneficiaries, lands to be purchased and prices) in the face of little pressure and influence exerted by the landless and poor peasants (Borras, 2003; Buainain et al., 1999, pp. 83–84, 35, 93). Ultimately, these market-led initiatives became local and underfunded assistance programmes, run by a patchwork of 'local authoritarian enclaves' (Fox, 1990). Moreover, they disregarded the nature and dynamics of political power relations in Latin America's rural areas, assuming that peasants were a homogeneous mass (Borras, 2003). There was some capacity to 'alleviate poverty' in certain regions, but poverty was never eliminated in most rural areas. These failures not only imply predatory patterns when implementing the reforms but also show the need for new partnerships between progressive political forces with autonomy and peasant movements that go beyond market confines, to redistribute land and create sustainable livelihoods for the rural poor and the landless (Borras et al., 2008).[25] On the margins of the new agrarian capitalism, spaces of relative noncapitalist autonomy were maintained, such as indigenous communities, farmer economies, diverse cooperative forms, NGOs and Grassroots organizations. These subaltern classes ultimately played a crucial role when MLARs were introduced and before the left took power. Rural movements responded by

elaborating completely different proposals, revealing that the land problem was still alive and unresolved in Latin America (De Janvry et al., 1998; Kay, 1998; Martín Cano et al., 2007).

5 | ALTERNATIVE PROPOSALS: THE REVIVAL OF LAND REFORM?

Far from being anachronistic, landless and peasant movements in Latin America have emerged as 'modern and dynamic' social actors that in many contexts play a central role in opposition to the dominant development agenda. Petras and Veltmeyer (2001) show how these movements are immersed in a modern form of struggle that implies a strategic understanding of the 'levers of power' in the national and international system. In this scenario, the state faces a triple pressure. From above, through 'globalization', governments have gradually ceded certain powers to international institutions (such as the World Trade Organisation, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank).[26] From below, central states have ceded powers to their local equivalents via partial political, fiscal, and administrative decentralisation; and laterally, several state functions have been privatised (Fox, 2001). This triple process has profoundly affected Latin America's rural sector, as it has boosted national and rural social movements. These (apparently) contradictory directions of globalization and decentralization are being internalized by the political-organizational advances of the rising transnational and rural social movements (Borras, 2004).[27] The most important example is *Vía Campesina* (González-Esteban, 2014; Martínez-Torres & Rosset, 2014; Rosset, 2013, 2016), a transnational social counter-movement that directly challenges Neoliberalism as a strategic threat to 'the lives and livelihoods of landless peasants, wage workers, and small farmers in the countries of the South and the North' (Borras, 2004, p. 3). With more than two decades of agrarian struggle, *Vía Campesina* presents important lessons (Borras, 2004; Desmarais, 2007) and encourages social-actor engagements to promote the 21st century agrarian reform, based on the defence of land and territory (MST, 2014; Declaration of Marabá, 2016).

5.1 | Pink tide reforms: Intermediate states?

When left-wing parties won elections, supported by rural or peasant movements, they brought back the promise of land reform in Latin America.[28] However, Vergara-Camus and Kay (2017) have shown that none of these Pink Tide governments actually implemented a radical land redistribution able to modify the persistent and grossly unequal land distribution. Most of the reforms were already on the agenda, even during neoliberal governments, and before the leftist parties won the elections.[29] Whereas Brazil, Bolivia and Venezuela significantly redistributed land, a renewed process of land reconcentration and agribusiness significantly advanced in Brazil, Argentina, Ecuador, Uruguay and Paraguay (Berry et al., 2014; Gómez, 2014).

Sauer and Mészáros (2017) explain the magnitude of Brazil's land distribution during the four administrations of the *Partido dos Trabalhadores*, *PT*, delivering approximately 51 million hectares to 721,442 families. In absolute terms, this example probably represents the largest amount of land recently distributed. But many of these transfers were merely regularized or legalized, as most of the families involved had previously had effective control over the land. Most of the land delivered was public, located in the Amazon basin and not very productive. The bases of any land redistribution process, where expropriations from private landowners are generally part of the definition, were not fulfilled (see Lipton, 2009). After more than a decade of progressive administrations that enhanced land reform supported by a strong peasant movement, the MST, the Brazilian state was captured by electoral and political alliances with agribusiness (Sauer & Mészáros, 2017).

In Bolivia, by 2014, the Morales government had distributed 28.2 million hectares to 369,507 beneficiaries (a little more than half of the land redistributed by the PT in Brazil). However, these were merely land-titling schemes, because approximately 14% of the land was distributed to medium and large landowners (including 56 titles to properties over 5,000 hectares) (Colque et al., 2016; Kay & Urioste, 2007; Webber, 2017). The government

created the Indigenous Aboriginal Peasant Territory, TIOC, a renovated institution that took charge of the titling programmes and granted property rights and autonomous power to indigenous communities (close to 15 million hectares). Although the Morales government initially broke with its predecessors, the lack of state autonomy eventually resulted in more conciliatory positions. The period of 'insurgent contestation' (2006–2009) surely gave way to a period of agro-capital–state alliance (Webber, 2017).

Venezuela is probably the most tragic example of a failed land reform under a leftist government. In 2013, the state had redistributed 6.3 million hectares, regularizing 10.2 million hectares, distributing 117,224 agrarian letters (which gave a provisional right of usufruct to their recipients) and benefiting more than one million people (Enríquez & Newman, 2016; Purcell, 2017). This process was accompanied by the creation of new institutions and investments in rural development of approximately $2 billion and the implementation of a real food sovereignty framework. However, the economic and political crises, the lack of adequate state capacity and the depreciation of the national currency, as well as the widespread practices of '*bachaqueo*' (illegal sales of commodities), ended the promised reform (Vergara-Camus & Kay, 2017). Enríquez and Newman (2016) in particular examined the Venezuelan state's capacity to attain national food sovereignty, bargained away by the lack of agency-level capacity, inter-agency conflict and the persistence of the old agrarian structure (see also Page, 2010).

In Ecuador, the government began a modest land reform programme, in 2009, called *Plan Tierras*. Subsequent titling programmes on communal land of *campesino* and indigenous organizations were implemented. However, the inconsistencies of reconciling a *Vía Campesina* approach (based on food sovereignty and *buen vivir*[30] at the heart of the 2008 constitution) to actual rural development and agricultural policies, soon became clear under Correa's government (2007–2017) (Clark, 2017). The uneven nature of land reform resulted in a broad heterogeneity of Ecuadorian producers (from poor peasants in the highlands to middle farmers and large export-led producers). Martínez (2014, pp. 55–56) further points to the lack of pressure from below by rural social movements. The state was captured by the expansion of domestic agribusiness and conventional agriculture, and small-scale producers were increasingly integrated into domestic agribusiness commodity chains (Clark, 2017). Indeed, the state lacked embedded autonomy, because rural social movements were divided, and no joint project of transformation existed.

In only one of the Pink Tide states, Nicaragua, land distribution is relatively more egalitarian. The effects of a revolutionary reform carried out by the Sandinista regime (1979–1989) persisted, with subsequent land privatization and export-led agriculture. Nicaragua is the only example among these left-turn governments where small and medium producers control more than 50% of the land. However, Martí i Puig and Baumeister (2017) show that just medium-sized capitalist farmers (from 35 to 141 hectares), with the capacity to engage in agribusiness and export agriculture, have been the real beneficiaries of the process. State capacity under the Ortega government was also limited by alliances with traditional economic sectors. The state lacked autonomy to create further opportunities for small workers and landless and assistentialist policies were never oriented towards greater peasant autonomy.

Explored through the lenses of the lack of state autonomy, the achievements of land reform under the Pink Tide seemed limited. Although social movements were unable to maintain their social demands over time, new proposals for land reform put pressure on states committed to trade liberalization and to attracting foreign direct investment, which again (and despite being one of the main criticisms of the ISI) relegated the rural and agrarian sector to a secondary role (Barraclough, 1999). Moreover, as described by Fox (2001), Pink Tide governments seemed seized by different pressures. First, from above, through globalization and economic orthodoxy in Brazil, Bolivia and Ecuador. Vergara-Camus and Kay (2017, p. 415) explain why these governments did not change the agricultural model in the direction of food sovereignty and redistributive agrarian reform. They continued to strongly support agribusiness while redirecting some resources to peasant, family producers and the rural poor. However, such populist anti-poverty and social programmes show again state capture by agribusiness and the commodity boom benefits. Second, these governments were also gripped from below by specific agrarian oligarchies, in Bolivia, Brazil and Ecuador. These governments did not reduce the power of the dominant rural classes because they were strongly interconnected with capital, making them part of a coalesced bourgeoisie that captured state autonomy, occupying key public positions in the state and in its decentralized powers. In most cases, Pink Tides demonstrate Poulantzas' (1978,

p. 134) 'contradictions between, and within, the various state branches and apparatuses' to determine 'the current policy of the state'. Even the best-case scenario, Venezuela's electoral-socialist state, shows the lack of capacity to comprehensively reconfigure state structures to foster radical development goals, such as redistributive reforms or food sovereignty. The state may need to remove old elites while strengthening institutions devoted to the sectors essential to the new goals.

This section completes the abovementioned literature by offering a more nuanced view. First, it considers Fox's (1992, pp. 39–40) interactive approach to distributive reform, which may be useful to recasting conventional notions of state power, carefully distinguishing between the autonomy and the capacity of state actors. This approach could complete the explanation of the lack of autonomy by Pink Tide governments, on how shifts in the balance of power within these states recursively interact with shifts in the correlation of social forces. The successful implementation of distributive policies depends on the nature of the political interaction between the pro-reform forces in state and society. If their actions had been mutually reinforcing, then the reform effort would have internalized social conflict within the Pink Tide. Second, we stress that Latin American states during the Pink Tide period did not display sufficient embedded autonomy to give them the transformative capacity to implement radical agrarian reforms. They became a type of 'intermediate' states, where the balance between predatory and developmental activities was unclear, varied over time and depended on the type of activity.[31] Although these intermediary states did not control their societies as genuinely predatory state did, they were unable to enhance common projects of accumulation and redistribution as developmental states do. They were structurally uneven, sometimes capable of fostering transformative change as in the early years and agendas of the Pink Tides (e.g., Bolivia, Brazil and Ecuador) but often threatened to slip back into predatory patrimonialism (Evans, 1989). Therefore, the autonomy of the Pink Tides as intermediate states has been partial and temporary. Their bureaucracy has lesser ability to construct global embedded autonomy due to the lack of internal organizational capacity and the superior challenge posed by their complex elite structure. The task of land reform is particularly complicated by the persisting social power of agrarian elites and agribusiness.

5.2 | Cuba's ongoing land reform (1990–2018): An outlier state?

Although it is not common in the literature on the Pink Tide, the examples of Nicaragua (a mixed process of land reform with clearly revolutionary roots that shifted the agrarian structure) and Venezuela (an electoral-socialist state that attempted radical development goals) encourage efforts to tie such reforms to the Cuban case.[32] The persistence of Cuba's land reform, implemented by a socialist state that combines revolutionary roots with radical development goals, allows it to be presented, to a certain extent, as a 'circumstantial experiment' that can be aligned with leftist movements.

The Special Period (1990–2006) in Cuba forced a paradigm shift towards an alternative and more sustainable vision of agriculture as a way to sustain the population, without the strategic imports from the Soviet Bloc.[33] The main changes arose in production patterns that, encouraged by researchers and Academia (and their prior research into alternative agricultural technology since the early 1980s, as well as traditional peasant knowledge), turned to alternative agriculture. The state further promoted changes in the agrarian structure, towards cooperativism and small farming. One of the main measures taken to stimulate domestic food production was the conversion in 1993 (with Decree-Law No. 142, known to many as the 'silent land reform') of state farms into new agricultural production cooperatives called Basic Units of Cooperative Production (UBPCs). Together with a series of additional measures to liberalize the internal food market (e.g., Decree-Law No. 191/94 for the creation of free, supply and demand markets in 1994) and the free delivery of fertile lands to small producers, cooperatives opened spaces for peasants and increased their capacity to produce food for national consumption.[34] From 1992 to 2008, the essential change in Cuba's agrarian structure was the gradual and significant

expansion of land into the hands of individual smallholders (CCSs and other lands in usufruct) (Botella-Rodríguez, 2020).

After the arrival of Raúl Castro to power, and especially after the global food crisis (2007–2008), land reform and food sovereignty entered more decisively into the agenda. Land delivery in usufruct, approved by Decree-Law 259 in 2008 (which benefited more than 170,000 peasants), enhanced the process of re-peasantization (MINAGRI, 2011). Following the 'Guidelines for the Economic and Social Policy of the Party and the Revolution', Decree-Law No. 259 was amended by No. 300 in 2012, with the aim of putting into operation (under free usufruct) a volume of unproductive land that reached, in a first approximation, 18.6% of the agricultural area of the country. The measure was connected to a favourable credit and fiscal policy to increase national food production. Although land transfers have been subject to a wide variety of conditions, the massive amount of idle state lands handed over in usufruct, mainly to small and individual producers, represents a very radical movement by the Cuban state. According to the last *Land Use Panorama* (ONEI, 2018), individual small farmers now account for 40.1% of the total cultivated area, surpassing the rest of the agricultural structures in Cuba (Nova, 2013). This process, in addition to the recognition of food sovereignty as state policy, constitutes the government's acknowledgement of the greater efficiency of small-scale food production in Cuba's 'special conditions'. In this context, the new government of Díaz Canel proclaimed Decree-Law No. 358 on 7 August 2018, 'On the delivery of idle State lands in usufruct', as an instrument to increase agricultural yields. Both the time and the amount of land were doubled with Decree-Law 358, which replaced Decree-Law 300.

Nova and González-Corzo (2015) stress different problems in increasing production and productivity in contemporary Cuba, and Thiemann and Spoor (2019) further point out the limits of Cuba's peasant-led production.[35] However, isolation from neoliberal policies on the one hand, and the pressure to feed the population since the Special Period, with greater importance since the ascent to power of Raúl Castro in 2008 on the other, progressively reinforced in Cuba a kind of political interaction between the peasant movement, in particular the National Association of Small Farmers (in its Spanish Acronym, ANAP), and the state, that internalized the food problem to enhance land reforms through various decrees of land deliveries in usufruct (e.g., 259, 300 and 358).[36] This allows us to reflect on the type of state autonomy and capacity found in Cuba during and after the Special Period. We do not find a state captured by the interests of the landowning elite nor by agribusiness nor a state faced with the triple pressures of globalization theorised by Fox (2001). We may have an 'outlier' state that, in the process of land reform and food sovereignty, and especially since the Special Period, has approached 'embedded autonomy' (in this particular period and forced by the food crisis) that gradually connected the state to the interests of different social groups in feeding the population.[37] In particular, the relative success of the Cuban Peasant Movement rested on its effective alliances with the state and the ways in which it has influenced the policies and programmes promoted 'from above'. ANAP has also worked with diverse external actors, placing the peasantry as an alternative force at the height of Cuba's land reform.

6 | CONCLUSION: IS LAND REFORM STILL ALIVE IN LATIN AMERICA?

According to Bernstein (2014, p. 1054), the state is 'the elephant in the room' in the programmatic goal of food sovereignty. But as stressed by Vergara-Camus and Kay (2017), the state is also the 'elephant in the room' of the recent wave of agrarian studies. Although the literature on agrarian transitions and questions have all emphasized the central role of the state in these processes, very few (e.g., Enríquez & Newman, 2016; Vergara-Camus & Kay, 2017) have attempted to re-explore the ways in which we comprehend the state or the nature of the state within and around agrarian change. Within this gap in the literature, this paper has explored the role of the state and social dynamics in understanding the twists and turns of Latin America's land reforms from the 1900s to the Global Era. Building on Vergara-Camus and Kay (2017), the article has advanced that 'state capture' by landed elites (rather than autonomy or embedded autonomy) was a crucial factor in the failure of agrarian reform of the 20th century. However,

autonomy and alliance with peasant movements were also crucial in more successful cases, like Cuba during the developmental era and the Pink Tide wave. The inability of rural movements to radicalize the Pink Tide's agrarian reform also impeded any real process to change Latin America's agrarian structure in the Global era.

Vergara-Camus and Kay (2017) conclude that the landed elite was able to mobilize their control of parts of the (decentralized) state to their advantage under the Pink Tide wave. Kay (2019) further points out that governments, even of the progressive sort, generally support large, capitalist farms as being more productive in terms of satisfying domestic food demands (e.g., Ecuador). Besides, agro-export-boom governments have turned out to be increasingly dependent on export profits derived from agribusiness. Drawing on this literature, we further stress that, in terms of autonomy, both developmentalist and Pink Tide states have been seized upon by different interests that shifted from the political power of rural oligarchies to export revenues from agribusiness.[38]

The agrarian roots of the economic model of East Asia after the Second World War, and the autonomy of developmental states, clearly differ from Latin America's developmentalist states. Political and economic actors and their interactions never shared a true process of transformation in Latin America. In the past, predatory states with vested interests lacked self-governance, while in the early 2000s the lack of fully embedded autonomy—and the capacity of Pink Tide governments and limited peasant movements—were both unable to maintain land demands as part of the agenda over time. The process of land reform under Latin American intermediate states contrasts with that of the developmental states of East Asia and Cuba. The East Asian states had a high degree of autonomy from society, which partially derived from their alignment with a transformative project guided by the United States. In the case of Cuba, the predatory patterns of the state under the Batista regime ended with the Cuban Revolution. From the Special Period onwards, the regained state autonomy can be considered to be 'embedded', because the state and the peasants shared a common project of agrarian transformation.

Vergara-Camus and Kay's (2017) arguments on Pink Tide reforms further point to the lack of a real agenda of social transformation or of a strategy to tackle the rentier state that weakened the previous alliance with rural subaltern classes that put reforms on the map. Did Pink Tide reforms manage to provide rural livelihoods? Did they manage to reform their insertion into the global food regime? Did they offer food alternatives and sustainable practices for small producers? In today's globalized world, for millions of people in developing countries, becoming peasants is not an anachronism but the only viable way out of poverty and hunger (van der Ploeg, 2010). With the rise of the alter-globalization movement, and the World Social Forum of Porto Alegre (since 2001), scholars and activists moved from talking about 'resistance to neoliberalism' to peasant 'alternatives to neoliberalism' (Vergara-Camus, 2017, p. 426), because the peasant strategy can improve the resource base, expand autonomy and reduce dependency.[39] While acknowledging this diversity, this paper looks beyond and point that Pink Tide reforms could have placed peasant alternatives at the forefront to promote radical programmes and defend conditions for the survival of the landless as peasants. Just as McKay et al. (2014) show how Venezuela, Ecuador and Bolivia (all Pink Tide regimes) established complex state/society relationships to put food sovereignty into practice, this paper presents the Cuban case as an alternative, where the symbiotic interaction between the state and societal actors enhanced radical development goals (land redistribution and food sovereignty).

Finally, this paper complements previous literature and concludes that none of the Pink Tides really considered that today's agrarian question has added to the historical problem of land access the notion of sustainable management. Latin America's land reforms did evolve and adapt over time, but states never understood peasants as an alternative to the dominant agriculture. Despite the fact that the current model of industrial agriculture and agribusiness found in most of these leftist countries puts the future viability of agriculture and food at risk, Pink Tides never acknowledged the diversity and fragmented nature of peasants as 'alternatives' to neoliberalism.[40] As the Cuban exceptionality demonstrates, sustainable, small-scale production is more resistant to external shocks, in part because it is based on peasant knowledge and local ecological conditions accumulated over centuries (Altieri, 2008; Dewalt, 1994; Netting, 1993).[41] In this scenario, any holistic reform of structures should be linked to a *green agrarian reform* that combines the environmental sustainability of our agro-ecosystems, with the economic viability of the farms. Social equity resides in the fair distribution of income, as well as access to other essential resources (water,

education, health …), domestic markets and local circuits of production and consumption (Guzmán Casado, 2014). Any coherent approach to 'agrarian' reform must be based on a profound change in the current configuration of the agri-food system and the defence of a sustainable way (considering a global context marked by the depression of the middle classes) of nurturing and feeding multitudes.[42] It remains to be seen how Latin American democratic states can achieve the degree of global embedded autonomy necessary to carry out this challenging project of transformation.

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DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Data sharing is not applicable—no new data were generated.

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ENDNOTES

[1] Gini above 0.75 corresponds to very high inequality. Latin America's Gini coefficient for land is 0.79, 0.85 in South America and 0.75 in Central America (ranging from 0.67 in Costa Rica to 0.91 in Paraguay) with very similar data since the 1980s (OXFAM, 2016, p. 22).

[2] From Kay (2019, p. 747). Also, Thiesenhusen (1995a, 1995b): is land reform still relevant? and Land reform lives!

[3] An approach based on the nature of state bureaucracy and the linkages between capital, labour and the state (Evans, 1995).

[4] See Griffin et al. (2002) and Griffin et al. (2004) replica at the *Journal of Agrarian Change* (July 2004). See also Thiesenhusen (1995a).

[5] See Boyce et al. (2005) on the varieties and dimensions of agrarian reforms.

[6] Contributions to the new agrarian question (from Byres to Bernstein, from Akram-Lodhi & Kay, 2009, to McMichael) analyse the state in many ways but they never theorized the state.

[7] A vast scholarship exists on theories of the state: see Abrams' seminal article (1988) 'Notes on the difficulty of studying the state'; there are more anthropological views for problematizing the relationship between state and society by Gupta and Sharma (2006), Das and Poole (2004) and Nugent (1994). However, this paper aims to provide a political economy perspective on agrarian studies as extensively discussed by Vergara-Camus and Kay (2017: 242–243) on Foucaultian, Marxist, Neo-Weberian, Schumpeterian and Eclectic approaches. The Foucaultian perspective is based on governmentality (Foucault, 1982) in which state power functions through the expansion of state (Escobar, 1995; Watts, 2004; Zibechi, 2010). The Marxist approach notably draws on Marx, Lenin, Trotsky, Gramsci, Poulantzas and Miliband. The Schumpeterian perspective concentrates on the source of revenue to define the nature of the state (see Moore, 2004; Weyland, 2009). The Eclectic approach combines several of the previous perceptions (including the Neo-Weberian one) in which the state is characterized as a puzzling space of conflicts of interests where actors adopt their strategies at multiple levels (Wolford et al., 2013, following Jessop, 1990, 2007; Vergara-Camus & Kay, 2017, pp. 242–243).

[8] This view is also taken by Grugel and Riggirozzi (2012), Enríquez and Newman (2016) and Clark (2017) who identify the return of the state as one of the key features of the Pink Tide.

[9] Most promising approaches focus on the interaction between state and society, the institutions that mediate such interaction, and the factors that account for how those institutions are in turn transformed (Fox, 1992, pp. 39–40).

[10] Land reforms, land market intervention programmes and land settlement and colonization projects (Stringer, 1989). US assistance provided some financial support for many of these undertakings (Dorner, 1992). See also Jacobs (2013).

[11] On economic and political impacts of land reforms, see De Janvry's (1981, pp. 211–221) observations: market expansion, development of capitalism in the non-reform sector, political stabilization through land reform and functional dualism.

[12] CIDA was established following a resolution by the Punta del Este Conference of 1961. Extensive CIDA reports (for nine countries) remain as the most comprehensive analysis ever undertaken of Latin America's agrarian structure. Based on CIDA reports, Barraclough and Domike's (1966) seminal article had a major influence on subsequent Latin American agrarian studies (Kay, 2006b).

[13] Whereas average production per agricultural worker was about 5 to 10 times higher on latifundios than on *minifundios*, production per hectare of agricultural land was roughly 3 to 5 times higher on *minifundios* relative to *latifundios* (Barraclough, 1973). See also Escalante (1992) for the Mexican case.

[14] Modernization ideas aimed to guide developing regions from 'tradition' into 'modernity' before social revolution could interrupt that idealized process. However, modernization faced criticism as the Alliance was incapable of attaining its proclaimed goals (Latham, 2000).

[15] For an in-depth analysis, see Thiesenhusen (1995a) and Dorner (1992).

[16] Mexico's land reform was the first in Latin America to tackle significant land inequality. Approximately half of the country's arable land was distributed to peasants and rural workers organised in *ejidos* (Kay, 2019). The Cardenas administration implemented the most important reform in the 1930s, with credits, marketing and technical assistance, and a significant increase in peasant food production and incomes (Barraclough, 1999).

[17] General Velasco Alvarado 1969–1975 implemented a significant reform in Peru that resulted in 45% of agricultural land being redistributed. Chile implemented substantial reforms under Frei (1964–1969) and (mainly) Allende (1970–1973) (Kay, 1998). The United States timidly supported the agrarian reform initiated by Alessandri and continued by the Frei administration. However, opposition to Allende's government and Pinochet's military coup in 1973 ended the reforms (Barraclough, 1999).

[18] For example, Costa Rica's Land and Settlement Law of 1961 (Grau, 1990). Mexico (in the later 1930s), Cuba (from 1959 to 1963), Peru (late 1960s and early 1970s) and El Salvador (in the early 1980s) expropriated export-led commercial properties. See Dorner (1992) and Thiesenhusen (1995a).

[19] See Kay (2006a, 2006b) on development strategies to tackle inequalities and achieve competitiveness within the global system.

[20] 'The Asian unimodal farm system remained in sharp contrast to Latin America's dualistic farm-size structure.' Dorner (1992, p. 7).

[21] Cuba's inclusion in the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA or COMECON) in 1972 provided new trade relations and associated subsidies from the Soviet Bloc that further deepened state farms reliance on sugar monocrop and imported inputs. Following Green Revolution principles, the government engaged in an ambitious plan to develop large, capital-intensive ('gigantism') industrial state farms specializing in sugar and livestock production. In just three decades (1959–1989), pesticide utilization increased fourfold, tractor use ninefold, and the application of chemical fertilizers was 10 times greater (Sáez, 1997).

[22] A significant proportion of farms lacked clear and secure land titles in the region, while socio-economic differentiation of rural populations increased so much that it would have been impossible to redistribute legal rights to benefit the poor rural majority (Barraclough, 1999).

[23] Neither land titling nor market-based approaches involve expropriation of private property, according to the GKI definition. Titling has been implemented for a very long time by governments of different political colours and involves legalizing existing claims to (usually public) land.

[24] For example, in the Philippines (Borras et al., 2007), South Africa (Lahiff, 2006) and Brazil (Deere & Servolo de Medeiros, 2006).

[25] See Moyo (2011) on Zimbabwe's land reform.

[26] See Pritchard (2009).

[27] Although transnational social movements are nothing new, the transnationalization of peasant networks in developing countries is unique (Borras, 2004).

[28] Venezuela (1998), Brazil (2003), Argentina (2003), Uruguay (2004), Bolivia (2005), Ecuador (2006), Nicaragua (2006), Paraguay (2008) and El Salvador (2009).

[29] Brazilian reform was first implemented by F.H. Cardoso in the mid-1990s, settling peasants on public lands and in less productive regions.

[30] Walsh (2010) defines *buen vivir* (Sumak kawsay in Quichua) as an alternative based on the knowledge systems of Andean indigenous peoples.

[31] For the case of predatory mining investments, see Pérez-Castañeda (2014).

[32] Page (2010) partially contrasts re-peasantization processes in Venezuela and Cuba.

[33] For Orlando Lugo Fonte, president of the National Association of Small Farmers (ANAP) until 2013: 'necessity made us aware' (in Machín et al., 2010).

[34] This land delivery was not entirely efficient as many UBPCs inherited the characteristics, indebtedness, size and workers of former state farms (especially in the livestock sector with very inefficient results).

[35] The need to better define the ownership of usufructuaries (partially dealt with by the new Decree-Law 358); the acceptance of the market as a complementary mechanism of economic coordination; and the absence of a systematic approach to complete agricultural production cycles successfully.
Isolation and constrained access to appropriate technologies, land-tenure insecurity, deficient markets and competition from import-based supermarket chains (Thiemann & Spoor, 2019).

[36] It should be noted the particularities of ANAP established on 17 May 1961 to support the peasantry but also to disseminate the revolutionary achievements.

[37] 'Embedded autonomy' only applies to Cuba's interaction between the state, farmers and Academia, to put redistributive land reform on the map. We understand that the Cuban state is approaching, in general terms, an intermediate status, given the failure of its economic/industrial model.

[38] See Wolfe (2017), Clark (2017) and Webber (2017).

[39] See Berdegué and Fuentealba (2011).

[40] See Altieri (2008) and Hazell et al. (2007).
The underlying vulnerabilities of food supply chains exposed by the Covid-19 pandemic point to an ever-more-urgent paradigm shift from industrial agriculture to agroecology (IPES-food, 2020).

[41] See Holt-Gimenez (2006).
Among leading scholars and global policy makers, there is an increasing acknowledgement of 'the kernels of ecological wisdom found among the so-called "backward people" and "historical residues" of modernity—the peasants, indigenous communities, forest gatherers, artisanal fisher-folk and nomadic pastoralists' (Carter, 2015, p. 425; in Kay, 2019).

[42] On the general decline of the middle classes, see Temin (2017) and Piketty (2020).

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