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RESEARCH ARTICLE

On the unequal coexistence of agrifood systems in Brazil

Yannick Sencébé[1] · Florence Pinton[1] · Ademir Antonio Cazella[1]

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Abstract

This article examines the coexistence in Brazil of two projects: a project for food sovereignty based on family farming and a project for food security based on agribusiness. Drawing on a series of field investigations focused on family farming, questions of land tenure, and policies to promote food security in Brazil, our analysis seeks to place the competition between family farming and agribusiness in historical context, examining the "unequal coexistence" of these two projects within the state apparatus from 1985 to 2015. We show how the project for food sovereignty brought together multiple social movements, including a core movement advocating agroecology, and how family farming was recognized as a key pillar within Brazil's national food security policy. Over the same period, however, agribusiness became more organized and was strengthened by considerable state support, securing Brazil's position of leadership within international commodity markets even as it "greened" its image. Faced with the economic and political crisis that has shaken the country since 2015, the project for food sovereignty has declined, while agribusiness and its high-technology, global agrifood system have continued to expand, opening a path for an agricultural scenario in which the right to coexistence is nothing more than a utopian idea.

Keywords Coexistence · Agrifood systems · Food sovereignty · Food security · Family farming · Agroecology · Agribusiness · Brazil

Introduction

The question of the coexistence of contrasting agricultural models has emerged in the academic literature within the context of mounting critiques of the green revolution, increasingly viable technical alternatives to the green revolution and the globalization

✉ Yannick Sencébé
yannick.sencebe@inrae.fr

[1] AgroSup Dijon, Dijon, France

of food regimes overall (van der Ploeg 2008). Today, the food riots of 2008 have passed into memory, relegitimizing productivism (Bricas and Daviron 2008) as a solution to global food security. At the same time, the environmental and climate crises have prompted the agrifood industries to "green" their rhetoric and to invest in systems that combine technological innovations with large-scale production, further threatening access to resources by the peasantries of the world. Far from remaining passive, however, peasant groups have organized themselves into social movements such as Via Campesina (Delcourt 2013). This combination of factors suggests the different levels at which the impacts of agricultural coexistence may be understood. Without pretending to be exhaustive, this article will examine three such levels. The first relates to the "social worlds" associated with each agricultural model, since these worlds reflect both the capacity to produce and the means of existence of those who work within them. The second level relates to the social movements and organizations that structure these agricultural models, including the claims they make and the projects they engage in within the public and political spheres. The third level relates to the public policies that interact with these worlds and that govern their insertion within agrifood systems. The coexistence of agricultural worlds is thus considered as a series of diverse relationships: class relationships across social worlds; economic exchanges between actors within agrifood systems; the cohabitation of various government offices and agencies in charge of public policy; influence campaigns waged by organizations engaged in lobbying, outreach, or recruitment; and other forms of conflict and competition among different projects and ideological viewpoints.

Brazil, which will be our focus here, provides a useful case study for considering the underlying realities of agricultural coexistence. Brazil is characterized by a marked duality of corporate farming and family farming – a duality that corresponds, as we shall see, to a duality of social worlds and of representations made by social organizations and public policies. This duality has its roots in Brazil's colonial history, which followed the latifundia model. Since the postcolonial period, these two agricultural worlds have been organized by social movements and unions around opposing claims – claims that are based in the first instance on competition for land. Following the country's return to democracy in the 1980s, these two agricultural worlds became associated with two divergent projects advanced by their respective social movements within a "divided" state apparatus, resulting in a period of "institutional cohabitation." On the one hand, advocates of family farming advanced a project of food sovereignty based on a regionalized, agroecological agrifood system; on the other, advocates of corporate agriculture promoted a vision of global food security based on the standardized mass production of commodities by a high-performance agro-industrial complex. The work undertaken by these two groups was markedly asymmetrical. Proponents of family farming sought to build a more autonomous, independent agricultural sector while at the same time organizing the diverse communities of family farming into "coalitions of interests." Proponents of agribusiness sought to unite their sector while at the same time modernizing it and extending its range to encompass all of Brazilian agriculture. The institutional cohabitation of these two programs has declined radically since 2015, when the country entered a period of economic and political crisis. Budgetary support for family farming has been cut, and the food security policies established under President Lula (2003–2011) have been called into question. While the coexistence of family farming and corporate agriculture has not disappeared, it

seems to be persisting within a context of social, economic, and political domination. Supported by a powerful agribusiness sector that has been gaining ground throughout Latin America (Sauer and Leite 2012), the recently elected government is seeking to reinforce Brazil's dominance in global commodity markets, notably through the continued expansion of the area planted to transgenic soybeans (a trend that began in the early 2000s) (Lapegna 2016). Policies for agrarian reform have given way to further concentrations in landownership. Perhaps most significantly, the leading participatory body in charge of food security policy, the National Council on Food Security (CONSEA), has been eliminated by President Bolsonaro.

This rather stark picture raises troubling questions as to the current government's capacity to reverse several decades of agricultural and environmental policy achievements in the name of jumpstarting the Brazilian economy. But it also invites us to revisit the origins of these two agricultural systems and their associated projects. Their coexistence was based on an institutional compromise amounting to a redistribution of resources and subsidies to fight poverty without posing a fundamental challenge to the dominant position of the agro-industrial complex. Family farming and public purchasing were the foundation of the National Policy on Food Security and Nutrition (PNSAN), which gradually adopted the principles of agroecology (Altieri 1992). Meanwhile, the agribusiness sector continued to enjoy extensive state support in the form of public subsidies, justified by Brazil's ambition as an emerging country to become a leading global exporter of agricultural commodities while at the same time "greening" its agricultural image. These projects were supported by contrasting social worlds: on the one hand, the world of agribusiness, highly organized and politically influential; on the other hand, the heterogeneous world of family farming, supported by an array of social movements that had made addressing the problem of hunger a question of citizens' rights. The failure of this institutional compromise makes the future of the food sovereignty project look doubtful given the reality of these relationships of domination. The unequal coexistence of family farming and corporate farming may persist, however, if family farming is able to maintain its social reproduction by adapting to specific territorial contexts (Bonnal 2013), including the increasingly narrow spaces left outside the domain of agribusiness (Purseigle and Chouquer 2013).

To support our analysis, we draw here on material gathered over the course of a series of research projects focusing (i) on policies to support family farming and agrarian reform[1] and (ii) on the emergence and consolidation of Brazil's food security policy.[2] In addition to our analytical data on the duality of Brazil's agricultural models and agricultural worlds, we will use the sociology of public action and social movements to assess processes of opposition, resistance, and/or compromise between these two projects.

[1] Research conducted as part of a cooperative program between the Federal University of Santa Catarina and the Ministry for Agrarian Development, examining the question of land governance (2012–2014)

[2] Research conducted as part of the ANR-funded project SAGE (ANR-13-JSH1–0008; *Sécurité Alimentaire: la Globalization d'un problème public* [Food Security: Globalization of a Public Problem). Between 2014 and 2017, we conducted approximately 50 interviews with leading figures in the fields of agrarian policy and food security in Brazil, including policymakers, administrators, civil servants, and representatives of social movements. In addition, we attended and observed a variety of events in the governmental, scientific, and activist spheres (national conferences, meetings, sit-ins, other demonstrations, etc.).

Should this period of coexistence be seen as a missed opportunity, a moment when social movements succeeded in breaching the barricades surrounding access to land and to other social rights, but then failed to make the most of their gains? Or should it be regarded as a strategy of power, a governmental technique (Pestre 2014) intended, ultimately, to strengthen the agribusiness sector?

To answer these questions, we will begin by making a historical review of the idea of a Brazilian "Third Way," in which family farming as a pillar of food sovereignty could coexist with agribusiness in one of the world's leading countries for commodity exports. We will then examine the dual process by which a movement was built and a governmental project took shape around the idea of food sovereignty based on family farming, while at the same time, agribusiness was expanding and consolidating its position as Brazil's preeminent political, economic, and ideological force. Finally, we will consider the current situation, in which the illusion of institutional coexistence has dissolved in a context of political and economic crisis, revealing the fundamental inequality of the "duality" of these two agricultural worlds.

Parallel paths: Brazil's third way?

Brazil's agro-industrial sector has made the country a leading exporter of agricultural commodities. Simultaneously, Brazil succeeded in making a spectacular exit from the FAO World Hunger Map[3] in 2014 (FAO 2014), thanks to its *Programa Fome Zero* (Zero Hunger Program, launched in 2003) and other innovative policies in favor of family farming and food security. The combination of these two achievements, known as the Brazilian Third Way, emerged over a long period following two decades of military dictatorship (1964–1985). The "redemocratization" of Brazil seemed to go hand in hand with an apparent complementarity between commodity exports and food sovereignty and with the cohabitation of two ministries institutionalizing the dual nature of Brazilian agriculture.

The redemocratization of Brazil

The colonization of Brazil relied on the latifundia model, with vast private estates largely worked by slaves. But this system also had a need for free but dependent laborers to clear land, capture indigenous peoples to work as slaves, and otherwise advance the frontier (Eloy et al., 2009). From the beginning of the colonial period, smallholdings survived on the margins of large plantations while at the same time serving those plantations' needs.

In the nineteenth century, with the arrival of European immigrants to the southern states of Brazil, a form of family farming took hold based on the model of the countries from which these immigrants came (Wanderley, 1999). Nevertheless, the overall structure of land tenure remained largely unchanged. Large estates survived the abolition of slavery (1888), thanks to the *Lei de Terras*, or Landed Property Act of 1850, which allowed the agrarian elite to regularize their vast holdings through purchase (Martins, 2000). Resistance took shape in the 1950s with the creation of the

[3] Achieving the FAO target of less than 5% of the population suffering from undernourishment

Ligas Camponesas (Peasant Leagues),[4] and in the 1960s, agrarian reform appeared on the national political agenda. It was during this same period that Josué de Castro[5] would make a connection between the underdevelopment of the northeast region, subject to recurrent periods of drought, and the famines suffered by rural populations. The fight against hunger would thus become a major theme associated with inequalities in development and access to resources. The military coup in 1964 put an end to these movements, however. Under the dictatorship, with civil rights eroding and poverty on the rise, the subject of hunger became taboo (Leão and Maluf 2012).

Major programs for the colonization and integration of Amazonia, introduced under the dictatorship to stimulate economic development and to respond to geopolitical security concerns, pushed the agricultural frontier further west. The National Institute for Colonization and Agrarian Reform (INCRA) was created to organize this effort. The occupation of Amazonia was a substitute for agrarian reform, intended to dampen social unrest provoked by the highly unequal distribution of land (Aubertin and Léna 1986). Millions of peasants risked their lives to claim land in this vast forested area, promoted by the military government as "land without people for people without land."

In parallel with these efforts to further colonize Amazonia, the military government advanced a policy agenda of "conservative modernization" that sought to transform the technological basis of agriculture without altering its land tenure structure. The underlying goal was to legitimize the inefficient, technically backward latifundia system (Delgado, 1985). EMBRAPA, the state-owned Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation, was created in 1972 to bring about the great leap forward of the green revolution (Nehring 2016). Large-scale and corporate farms, successors to the latifundia plantations, were able to dramatically modernize their operations with the help of subsidies from the all-powerful Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Supply (MAPA). The spread of green revolution agricultural technologies and the vertical integration of the most modernized segments of family farming would give rise to the birth of the MST (*Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Terra*, or Landless Workers' Movement) in 1979, a reaction to the unequal nature of this modernization, with smaller-scale farmers excluded from subsidies (Martine, 1991). As anger in the countryside grew, the dictatorship was confronted at the end of the 1970s with massive national debt and an inability to continue its programs of support. In 1985, a constituent assembly was created to establish a new democratic republic (Monclaire and De Barros Filho 1988). But competing projects seem to be a recurring feature in Brazil, as Celso Furtado recalls (1989), p. 3–4): "The coexistence of the National Constituent Assembly alongside the ordinary congress which gave rise to it… was symbolic of the ambiguity of the situation, in which the repudiated legislative order was charged with creating a new order….", Civil society was represented within the constituent assembly by multiple officially recognized pressure groups. Although the question of agrarian reform still occupied a central place in the claims made by groups on the left and by the Church, a counteroffensive rapidly took shape. The Ruralist Democratic Union (UDR), organized to defend the interests of large-scale property owners, stressed the importance of export

[4] This movement led to the creation in 1963 of the National Confederation of Agricultural Workers, currently one of the leading union voices supporting family farming.

[5] Born in 1908, Josué de Castro was a physician, geographer, and figure of world renown in the fight against hunger. His advocacy of agrarian reform earned him exile to France in 1964. He served as chairman of the FAO Council from 1951 to 1955.

markets, while the newly formed Broad Front for Agriculture and Livestock Farming (FAAB) brought together the modernizing sectors of Brazilian agriculture to continue pushing for a green revolution (Mendonça 2010). The 1988 Constitution was the result of a power struggle between disparate claims and their translation by constituent assembly members engaged in the future elections (Monclaire and De Barros Filho 1988). The new, democratic, and participatory framework would have to coexist with the old structures of the colonial plantations, which continued to be strengthened and modernized.

The slow recognition of family farming and its continued weakness

Family farming can be considered as both a multiform reality and as a constructed category. The diverse social worlds (small producers, peasants, landless workers, etc.) included under this heading have long remained in the shadow of plantation agriculture, which received all the agricultural subsidies, and were likewise neglected by a development agenda primarily oriented toward industry and urban areas (Sencébé and Cazella 2014). The institutional recognition of "family farming" began in the 1990s, eventually leading to the 2006 law[6] that would define this large, heterogeneous group as a single category, giving it both statistical visibility and the right to benefit from specific agricultural policies and programs. A number of factors contributed to this shift, notably "the growing recognition of new social actors linked to family farming" (Schneider and Casol 2014, p. 232). A variety of studies have sought to describe the nature of Brazilian family farming, including academic work and, from 1996 onward, reviews conducted by INCRA and the FAO (Schneider, Casol, ibid.). The same year saw the creation of the National Program to Strengthen Family Farming (PRONAF),[7] which quickly became the most important policy instrument for this agricultural sector (Schneider et al., 2004). Under pressure from the social movement groups,[8] a Ministry of Agrarian Development (MDA) was created in 1999 specifically to represent and support family farming. The existence of this new ministry, in turn, encouraged social movement representatives to join the ad hoc public policy management bodies that were being created (Abers et al. 2011), such as the National Council for Sustainable Rural Development and Family Farming (CONDRAF), formed in 2003. These new entities would serve to embody the dual nature of Brazilian agriculture within policies and institutions: on the one hand, large-scale agriculture, highly capitalized and strongly oriented toward export markets; on the other, family farming, relying primarily on family labor and focused on domestic markets (Sabourin 2007). These two composite entities

[6] Law 11.326 (2006) defined family farming according to four criteria: (i) area of land owned less than four "tax modules" (the size of which depends on production conditions in different parts of the country); (ii) predominant reliance on family labor; (iii) family income predominantly reliant on the farming enterprise; and (iv) farm management provided by the family.

[7] PRONAF provided state-supported, low-interest loans to family farmers to assist with operating expenses or capital investment.

[8] For example, land occupation demonstrations calling for agrarian reform; demands for new policies regarding agricultural credit and the provision of agricultural extension information; and proposals to introduce universal rural social security

were further structured by the organizations supporting them. Large-scale agriculture is economically, politically, and socially[9] connected within the agro-industrial complex, an intersecting collection of networks of influence that together make up agribusiness. Family farming would be associated by the social movement groups with the project of food sovereignty, effectively uniting a diverse collection of communities and causes (access to land, adequate food, the defense of minorities, agroecology, etc.), around a multifaceted but coherent project.

In 2006, Brazil's first agricultural census to include family farming revealed both the numerical importance of this category and its limited access to land: 4,551,000 of the country's 5,175,000 farms could be considered family farms, but they occupied just 24.3% of total agricultural land area (Bonnal, op.cit., p. 145). The internal diversity of this category suggested several further characteristics. Status with respect to land tenure varied. Although the majority of family farmers did own their own land (3,946,276), very small farms of less than 2 ha accounted for nearly 2 million farmers, who were thus obliged to work as laborers on larger farms in order to survive (Cazella and Burigo 2011). Finally, more than 1 million farmers led an even more precarious existence (landless workers, tenant farmers, sharecroppers) (Cazella and Sencébé 2013). Strong regional differences within the family farming category reflected the legacies of the colonial period (Bonnal, op. cit.) and underscore the sociocultural diversity that characterizes this sphere (Roux 2012). In terms of farming methods, family farming included everything from high-input commodity crop production to organic agriculture. Research has also highlighted a diversity of business types, marketing strategies (Schneider, 2014), and size and sources of revenue (Schneider, Casol, op.cit.) within the family farming category.

This internal diversity presented a barrier to developing effective public policies to benefit the family farming sector. Technical assistance remained weakly structured and primarily oriented toward the diffusion of green revolution ideas. Only a minority of family farmers (1.4 million) benefited from the policy (via PRONAF) to enroll family farmers in the project of food sovereignty through direct assistance to farmers and public purchasing of food for distribution to the poor. The modernized segment of the family farming category already participated in agribusiness value chains via intensive livestock production (pork, poultry) or the production of export crops (soybeans, coffee). At the same time, more than 1.3 million family farmers were dependent on social welfare payments, while another large segment (1.5 million) remained entirely below the radar of public support (Cazella et al. 2016). Efforts to extend subsidies to help more family farmers were derailed by the economic and political crisis.

According to the MDA employees we met with in 2013,[10] dividing up ministerial responsibilities was the only viable means of legitimizing family farming in a country in which agribusiness possessed so much economic and political power. But this view was far from being universally held across the scientific and political spheres. A researcher with EMBRAPA[11] we spoke to voiced the opposite perspective: "The ministerial division was

[9] Here we can note an important difference from the "modernized" family farmers who sell what they produce into agro-industrial supply chains. The tobacco farmers we interviewed in the state of Santa Catarina are an example: The tobacco companies sell the farmers their seed and other inputs and set prices with each grower for his or her harvest. These farmers are not organized as a group; they are low-cost producers within the tobacco value chain but do not belong to agribusiness social networks or other loci for decision-making.

[10] Brasília, 4/16/2013, Interview with the Secretary for Land Reorganization, MDA

[11] Brasília, 4/13/2015, Interview with N., researcher in socioeconomics at EMBRAPA

not justified…. What do we mean by family farming? There is commercial farming, from small to large, with family farming integrated into productive value chains." According to this individual and many other EMBRAPA employees (Alves and Rocha 2010; Navarro 2010), family farming did not need its own ministry because its competitive, market-integrated segments could rely on MAPA for access to public programs, while other segments – who should not really be regarded as farmers – could rely on social assistance measures and/or follow the rural exodus into the cities in search of work.

Given this context, the creation of the MDA would not lead to a significant rebalancing of public support: the MDA's budget remained at around one-tenth the size of MAPA's budget.[12] The ministerial architecture reveals the mechanisms of inequality underlying institutional coexistence: some redistribution of resources and the recognition of a development model more oriented toward self-sufficiency – combined with a continuation of the primacy and priorities of agribusiness.

The three agencies within the MDA indicate the political lines that were defended. The Secretariat for Family Farming (SAF) managed PRONAF, the largest program in terms of personnel and other resources, charged with strengthening family farming economically and in terms of its technical capacity. The Secretariat for Territorial Development managed PRONAT, which sought to counterbalance the assumption that all rural areas should be reserved for agribusiness. Between the combined effects of the "empty areas directly resulting from the dominance of large estates" (Wanderley, 2001, p. 50) and the new "agri-cities" created by agribusiness with major public subsidies (Leite 2015), the countryside as a place to live barely existed. Finally, the Secretariat for Agrarian Reorganization (SRA) managed the Program for National Land Credit (PNCF), which gave family farmers lines of credit for land purchases. Its scope remained limited, however, due to the weakness of existing technical assistance programs. Among other problems, the program did not enjoy the support of the MST, which viewed it as a market-oriented substitute for true agrarian reform (Cazella, Sencébé, op. cit.) based on the concept of "the social function of land."[13] In 2003, INCRA was placed within the MDA, sending a positive signal in this regard. Under the Rousseff presidency (2011–2015), however, the granting of property titles became more common than the redistribution of land by expropriation. According to INCRA data,[14] the Rousseff administration awarded land to 133,600 families between 2011 and 2015 under the framework of agrarian reform, whereas 381,400 and then 232,660 families received land under the two terms of the Lula administration.

Meanwhile, MAPA oversaw the largest lines of credit and the most strategic programs. Its budget allocations[15] covered sectors specific to agribusiness (soybeans, coffee, sugar, ethanol) and the international relationships those sectors depended on. But its responsibilities also included broader programs relating to agricultural policy, food safety regulations, technological research through EMBRAPA, quality control and other certifications (including for organic farming), cooperatives, agricultural technical

[12] In 2012–2013, support payments allocated to family farming by the MDA amounted to 18 billion *reais*; support allocated to plantation and corporate agriculture by MAPA totaled 107 billion *reais* (Cazella, Sencébé, op.cit.).

[13] A provision in Brazil's 1988 Constitution allowed the expropriation of land in cases where its "social function" was not being fulfilled: e.g., underutilized areas, wastelands, absentee landowners, etc.

[14] See https://www.socioambiental.org/en/node/5263; consulted 7/23/2019.

[15] Under Decree n°8.492 (2015)

assistance and outreach, as well as price support programs via stored food reserves and a portion of public purchasing under Brazil's food security policy. Given its authority over this whole ensemble of agricultural programs and services, MAPA could retain effective oversight of small-scale family farming as well, for instance, by enforcing food safety and health regulations governing access to key agricultural markets.

Arriving in office in 2003, President Lula sought to provide additional support to the MDA. Family farming was placed at the forefront of the Zero Hunger program (Fome Zero), instituted as a national priority even as the larger economy remained dependent on exports. The MDA worked to publicize family farming's essential role in feeding the nation as a way of justifying the policies devoted to this sector: Data from the 2006 census were used to argue that 75% of foods making up of the basic diet of Brazilians came from family agriculture. In this way, the MDA sought to make this dominated agricultural segment into the central pillar of food sovereignty.

Institutional cohabitation and unequal coexistence

The period beginning with Lula's ascent to power was marked by an uneasy compromise. On the one hand, in response to the demands of the social movement groups, the project of food sovereignty gained ground, with the implementation of key measures and the widespread promotion of the food sovereignty model, including overseas – with Brazil seeking to assume a leadership position in this regard vis-à-vis other countries of the Global South. On the other hand, the production of agricultural commodities for export continued to govern the overall economy, generating the necessary funds to finance the nation's social policies.

Lula, who had first-hand experience with social movements and citizen participation,[16] relied in part on these forces from the beginning of his mandate. But the ascendancy of Lula's Workers' Party (the PT) did not fundamentally change Brazil's institutional and political architecture. That architecture has been based on an ultraconservative congress since its creation in 1824 (Delcourt 2010) and on a parliamentary system in which political parties are often fragmented by corporatism and alliances are formed and reformed based on sectoral interests (Monclaire and De Barros Filho 1988). Moreover, the decision of Lula's predecessor, F.H. Cardoso, to pay down the country's debt through an expansion in commodity exports made the agribusiness sector indispensable. The result, in the 2000s, was "a power bargain between the agro-industrial corporations, large property owners, and the State"[17] (Delgado 2017, p. 18). Lula secured the presidency by means of a broad coalition that involved bringing together conflicting interests, with representatives from the social movements, from agribusiness, and from the financial sector cohabiting within the ministries of his own government. The fuzziness maintained with regard to "sectors with more or less to lose from structural change [gave rise to] the illusion of the possibility of a sustainable or even complementary coexistence" of the two models, family farming and corporate farming, within Brazilian agriculture (Favareto 2017, p. 18).

[16] During the interim period under Itamar Franco (following the dictatorship), Lula participated in the "parallel government," where policy proposals were developed in collaboration with diverse social movements.
[17] Translation by the authors

Participation and the consolidation of food sovereignty as an objective

The idea of food security as a national objective was confirmed in the drafting of the 1988 Constitution. The concept was based on the "Movement for Ethics in Politics" pioneered by the activist Betinho,[18] according to which access to food and to land was a fundamental human right. Major social demonstrations led, in 1998, to the creation of the Brazilian Forum on Food and Nutritional Sovereignty and Security (FBSSAN). This was the activist melting pot that would help shape CONSEA[19] and that would orient PNSAN around the concept of food sovereignty. The makeup of this Forum, in which multiple entities were able to express their ideas, meant that it could effectively communicate the claims of civil society (Carvailhera de Nascimento, 2012).

The "Zero Hunger" campaign, launched by the government in 2003, made Food and Nutritional Security (SAN) its top priority, with the *Bolsa Família* one of the primary measures within the national policy framework.[20] CONSEA[21] was the flagship agency for this policy agenda, receiving increased budgets and an organization in which civil society representatives were given the directorship and two-thirds of the seats, with ministerial representatives holding the remaining one-third. Food security was recognized as a multidimensional issue, aligned with the fight against poverty. The creation of the Ministry for Social Development and Combatting Hunger (MDS) was intended to coordinate the 19 ministries and 49 programs involved in this effort (Marques Muruzzi et al, 2014).[22] Along with the MDA, the MDS would become the leading advocate for this policy within the state apparatus, further reinforcing the principle of duality. In 2006, passage of the Organic Law on Food and Nutritional Security (LOSAN) articulated a citizen's "right to an adequate diet" and provided for the creation of national system of SAN (Leão and Maluf 2012, p. 19). The definition of "an adequate diet" provided by LOSAN was clearly aligned with the food sovereignty perspective (LOSAN, art. 5°, 2006). Further work jointly undertaken by civil servants, university researchers, and activists culminated in the inclusion of a "Human Right to Adequate Food" (DHAA) in the 2010 Constitution. In 2014 – despite the opposition of agrifood companies – researchers succeeded in convincing the Ministry of Health to publish a "dietary guide for the Brazilian population" (2014) that described the negative effects of industrial food on human health.[23]

This policy framework contributed to the institutionalization of the food sovereignty model and strengthened the direct participation of the social movements within the

[18] Born in 1935, Betinho was a sociologist and campaigner for human rights. He founded the NGO "Citizen Action Against Hunger and Misery and for Life", and later, in 1981, the Brazilian Institute for Social and Economic Analysis (IBASE).

[19] The presidency of CONSEA was held by a representative from one of the two founding NGOs behind FBSSAN: IBASE or the FASE (Federation of Groups for Social and Educational Assistance), founded in 1961. An exponent of liberation theology, FASE, played a role in Brazil's return to democracy.

[20] Decree 4.582 (2003) is the primary legal instrument of this national policy. The *Bolsa Família* is the most significant program for the direct transfer of national revenue.

[21] CONSEA was initially formed in 1993 and then dissolved amid the political instability of the following year. It was reconstituted with the introduction of the Fome Zero campaign.

[22] Among these, we can cite the two signal programs giving priority to purchasing from family agriculture: the Food Acquisition Program (PAA) and the National School Food Program (PNAE).

[23] Ministério da Saúde, 2014, Guia alimentar para a população brasileira, [online] http://bvsms.saude.gov.br/bvs/publicacoes/guia_alimentar_populacao_brasileira_2ed.pdf

practices of the state. Catherine Neveu (2011) has argued that the institutional integration of social movements in Brazil – to a degree rarely achieved elsewhere – can be explained by the commonalities between the personal and professional trajectories of the activists and civil servants[24] who came to power under Lula. They shared similar ideas and frames of reference. A coalition of institutional actors (NGOs, unions, organizations, networks) thus seized the opportunity to put forward alternatives to the dominant system within the political sphere. Not all the social movement groups were in agreement with this strategy of participation in government. Rather, the coexistence of diverse attitudes produced "a dynamic social framework… the priority for institutional action did not mean there were no conflicts" (Galvão, 2014, p. 35). CONSEA was thus a site for the organization of critique and for participation in public policymaking (Pinton and Sencébé 2019). The convergence of social movements within CONSEA functioned by bringing together claims from a range of social groups seeking to assert their rights (the landless, small family farmers, blacks, young people, women, Amerindians, etc.). Hunger provided the necessary common ground; access to land was a central but contentious issue. In this regard, the attachment of agroecology to this group of causes and the integration of its claims into the core of CONSEA's efforts were a key development.

Agroecology developed into a large-scale, powerful movement throughout Latin America (Altieri and Toledo 2011). In Brazil, it was rooted in activists' demonstrations for land for alternative agriculture, including members of FASE as well as the Pastoral Land Commission (CPT),[25] which as early as 1983 put forward an agenda for family agriculture and rural development as an alternative to the standard green revolution model. It gained additional force with the creation in 2002 of the National Agroecology Link (ANA). The ANA worked on many of the same ideas and with the same organizations as CONSEA.[26] Its goal was to forge an alliance of movements in opposition to the industrial agriculture model and to build capacity to negotiate directly with the federal government for the creation of a National Policy on Agroecology and Organic Production (PNAPO). The convergence of these two movements was facilitated by the circulation of activists among the different councils. Their collaboration crystallized around radical opposition to the agribusiness project, which hardened its position from 2015 onward. The 5th National SAN Conference was a good illustration of this. Held every few years beginning in 2004, these conferences provide a view of how the fight against hunger and the concept of agroecology became increasingly important within the food sovereignty project (Pinton, Sencébé, op. cit.). The conferences contributed to the participatory development of public policies, feeding into a National Plan adopted for 5 years. The theme for the 5th SAN Conference was "Real Food for the Country and the City." It sought to denounce "the damage caused by an agriculture based on increased concentration of land tenure, intensive monocultures, and the risks of GMOs."[27] The key themes of the conference were agroecology, "a

[24] They shared the formative experience of life under the dictatorship and with the resistance, followed by exile for some (the president of CONSEA from 2011 to 2017 was among those granted amnesty after Brazil's return to democracy), and engagement in the social movements.

[25] The CPT is a branch of Brazil's Conference of Bishops; it works for agrarian justice, the defense of peasant peoples, and the protection of the environment.

[26] Considerable overlap exists between the ANA, CONSEA, and CONDRAF.

[27] Preparatory documents for the fifth CNSAN

program to reduce the use of toxic agricultural inputs," and the defense of indigenous peoples and communities. The latter were recognized as managers and stewards of biodiversity whose territorial rights were being further threatened by a proposed constitutional amendment (PEC215).

If SAN's initial role was to gather support around the issue of citizens' rights, a dynamic of "coalition-building" (Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith 1999) around agroecology later came into focus. Now including 23 regional and local networks and hundreds of organizations, ANA defines itself as a site for coordination and convergence among civil society organizations engaged in the field (Kalil 2016). The broadening of the debates convinced some indigenous groups to rejoin the coordination effort and defend their agricultural system as an exemplar of agroecological principles. ANA gained visibility by means of its national conferences and through its support for research via the Brazilian Association for Agroecology (ABA), which has likewise organized national and international congresses since 2003. Two management bodies – an Inter-ministerial Chamber and a National Commission – were created within the MDA to help define the PNAPO. Their role was to facilitate participation and inter-sectoral communication by means of working groups to include representatives from the relevant ministries, CONSEA, the social movements, and the research community. In 2013, a working group was charged with developing a national program for reducing the use of chemical inputs, but the results were never published due to the subsequent political crisis.

The strengthening of agribusiness

The socioeconomic elements that currently constitute Brazilian agribusiness are heterogeneous and geographically dispersed; nevertheless, they have been effectively organized into interest groups and lobbies. Key organizations include the Association of Brazilian Agribusiness (ABAG), created in 1993, a union (the National Confederation of Agriculture, CAN)[28], and a training network (the National Society of Agriculture, SNA), as well as study groups with strong ties to the universities. A process of decentralization and organization of the producer base, notably by means of the Organization of Brazilian Cooperatives (OCB),[29] has fostered the regional implantation of the agribusiness sector and the sectoral integration of the more modernized family farmers. Added to this are the ports, the transport sector, and the energy sector, the activities of all three of which are tightly integrated with the agro-industrial value chain and, finally, certain media companies. The ideological unity and the coherence of strategic action to extend the power of agribusiness are the result of decades of political effort and considerable means invested by the government in the modernization of the sector, from the 1970s on. The political construction of FAAB reflects a desire to position agribusiness at the heart of the New Republic (Bruno 2002) and to move beyond the old rural elite, symbol of the country's colonial past. The drive to integrate agriculture into agro-industrial value chains and financial markets is reflected in the

[28] The CNA includes large landowners and represents the "traditional" face of large-scale agriculture in Brazil.
[29] Founded in 1969, the "OCB system" includes all economic sectors organized as cooperatives, but it is the directors of the agricultural cooperatives who control most of its political power. The OCB coexists with UNICAFES (the Union of Cooperatives for Family Farming and a Fair Trade Economy), which is more aligned with agroecology and small producers.

entities behind FAAB, including commodity organizations but also banking unions, the agricultural equipment industry, and the like.

This technical and economic modernization required an ideological rationale, however. The job of providing one was undertaken on behalf of the rural landowning class by ABAG, not least through the organization of congresses. The idea of food security became a key rationale for agribusiness early on in its development, as testified by ABAG's inaugural publication in 1993, *Food Security: An Agribusiness Approach*. At a National Congress in the 1990s, one of the founders of ABAG declared, "food security is the foundation of the Brazil's development as a just society, and food security depends on the efficiency of agribusiness" (Lacerda 2011, p.189). Over time, agribusiness would refine its arguments and expand the causes it sought to defend, including – beginning with its 7th congress in 2008, "Agribusiness and Sustainability" – the cause of the environment (Lacerda, op. cit.). What was at stake, from a hegemonic perspective, was to extend the project for a high-performance, green, globally competitive agriculture to include all farmers.[30] From the 2000s on, agribusiness would begin to position its story on the world stage. The need to boost commodity production to help "feed the world" was increasingly referenced as a rationale; at the same time, the banner of sustainability and the "ecologization" of agriculture would merge with the theme of food security, particularly in the run-up to the Rio + 20 Conference. The 2015 Congress, held just a few months before the COP21 talks in Paris, shows the result (Abag, 2015): sustainable technological intensification in combination with ecological engineering[31] is the conceptual tool for the promotion of a highly productive model capable of feeding the world while simultaneously protecting the climate, thanks to Low Carbon Agriculture (ABC), a national plan for which was introduced in 2012. This "climatizing of agriculture" (Aykut et al. 2017) was the project taken up by the Brazilian delegation, which included substantial representation of the agribusiness community (Aubertin and Kalil 2017). "The agribusiness of the future" image advanced by the Ministry of Agriculture and presented in person by the delegation effectively effaced Brazil's dual agricultural reality.

The idea of food security, now enlarged to embrace a vision for high-technology "green" agriculture, was used to bolster demands for public support for a sector the state has always treated with largesse. In addition to the considerable budget amounts channeled to the sector via its ministry, a vast range of other forms of intervention are available and have likewise been incorporated into the agribusiness strategy (Leite 2015), including policies for infrastructure development (highways, dams, etc.), financial credit, labor regulations, environmental regulations, and forest policy. One indication of the proximity of agribusiness power to state power is the fact that the head of MAPA has frequently been a top agribusiness representative,[32] regardless of the political party in power.

[30] This line of argument has been in evidence from the 6th ABAG Congress in 2007, "One Agribusiness," to the campaign launched in 2016 by the mass media group Globo: "Agribusiness is tech, is pop, is everything."

[31] Strategies include the rehabilitation of degraded pasturelands, no-till agriculture, integrated farming, and reforestation.

[32] For example, Katia Abreu, head of a large livestock operation, under Rousseff; Blairo Maggi, the largest producer of soybeans in the world, under Temer; and Tereza Cristina, president of the Parliamentary Agricultural Front, under Bolsonaro

Finally, this work of ideological legitimation was rounded out by training programs and by a significant editorial effort. Roberto Rodrigues, a major agribusiness figure[33] and minister of agriculture under Lula (2003–2006), was among the instigators of this. A graduate of the School of Agronomy at the University of São Paulo, a traditional channel for future thinkers and administrators[34] for the sector, Rodrigues later directed the Center for Agribusiness within the Economics Faculty at the Getúlio Vargas Foundation. As this suggests, ABAG is connected to an extensive network of agencies and think tanks, enabling it to multiply its influence and further reinforce its legitimacy. Publicity campaigns complemented this arsenal of tools and strategies, reaching a broad public with slogans promoting Brazil's agricultural output and highlighting the chain of interdependence linking every citizen-consumer to the world of agribusiness.

Out of this ensemble of activities, a veritable political project emerged. Its goal has been to reform the state to support the country's position as a global exporter and, ultimately, to "construct the national family of Brazil… in which citizens are able to produce and to consume for the benefit of the country's global competitiveness" (Lacerda, op.cit., p. 193). This project has both fed and justified an unquenchable thirst for land to expand the sector's production capacity. In one particularly egregious example, for a time the CNA promoted data on its "Lands of Brazil" website[35] to support the slogan "Amazonia: A lot of land for a few Indians."[36]

The path of confrontation

The parallel advance of these two antagonistic projects was made possible by a series of compromises within the Brazilian political apparatus, resulting in the coexistence of two essentially incompatible ministries. The fragility of these compromises was evident from the first term of the Rousseff administration, which took economic steps in favor of the further expansion of agribusiness and, as noted above, brought the project of agrarian reform almost to a halt. Nevertheless, the situation of ambivalence was maintained by the parallel structures within the state. Thus, in 2015, Katia Abreu and Patrus Ananias[37] were named to head MAPA and the MDA, respectively. While Katia Abreu was announcing that "the latifundia no longer exist" and that conflicts between farmers and indigenous peoples were taking place because "the Indians have left the forest and begun to move into production areas" (*Folha de São Paulo*, 5 January 2016), Patrus Ananias was defending the constitutional principle of the social function of land and calling for agrarian reform on that basis.

[33] Among other positions, Rodrigues has been at the head of the OCB, ABAG, and the International Cooperative Alliance.

[34] We can note too that strong ties exist between the School of Agronomy at the University of São Paulo and Harvard Business School, where the concept of agribusiness was developed.

[35] The site sought to counter arguments about land concentration by depicting the unequal distribution of land between Amerindians and rural producers. It was taken down in 2016 following its exposure and denunciation by the research community.

[36] The phrase was repeated by Katia Abreu, Minister of Agriculture under President Rousseff.

[37] Patrus Ananias, a member of the Workers' Party (PT), was an activist and union member before serving as Minister of the MDS from 2004 to 2010.

These two social worlds thus existed for a period of time side by side at the heart of the state, thanks to the narrow support provided by the alliance of the leftist parties within the government with other, more conservative forces.[38] This key institutional compromise gave way when Rousseff stepped down and the Temer administration forged a new alliance of parties more closely linked to agribusiness, followed by the arrival in power of a president from the extreme right (Mattei 2018; Sabourin 2018; Castilho 2018). Before reviewing the measures taken since the beginning of the Bolsonaro presidency, we will first consider the interim period, which in many ways foreshadowed the extreme measures referred to at the beginning of this article.

Agribusiness hegemony and the new frontier of land conquest

With agribusiness enjoying a new position of power in parliament, the land tenure question has returned to center stage. The agribusiness sector has called for a "new rural order,"[39] one more amenable to the deployment of high-technology, productivist agriculture, and one that takes for granted the need for more land to achieve its mission. The leading actor within these proposals is the *bancada ruralista*, the conservative rural legislative caucus that commands a strong majority in congress. It includes the Parliamentary Agropastoral Front (FPA), which for the 2015–2020 electoral term has commanded 40% of congressional seats (Delcourt 2017) in addition to the support of other members of parliament with convergent interests. Its overall objectives are to defend the interests of the largest property owners and to facilitate the large-scale exploitation of the country's resources. It is thankful to the FPA that Brazil passed a law – under Lula, in 2003 – permitting the cultivation of GM crops, followed by a reform of forestry regulations in 2012 (Aubertin 2016). Additional FPA-backed legislation has further weakened environmental policies and undermined the land rights of the most vulnerable Brazilians.

A series of measures taken under the Temer presidency likewise sought to open new areas of land to the private property market. Under the new policy agenda, objectives like agrarian reform, the consolidation of land rights, and the fight against deforestation (Pinton and Aubertin 2010) were not only no longer a priority, they were actively reversed. In December 2016, the government introduced a provisional measure allowing peasants (the *sem terra*) to sell land attributed to them under agrarian reform programs, thus opening these lands to speculation. A proposed constitutional amendment known as PEC215, also advanced by the FPA, sought to freeze existing procedures for defining indigenous land areas, establishing new protected areas and regularizing land titles for *quilombos*[40] while at the same time facilitating the permissions process for high-environmental impact projects like mines, roads, and dams. Under the Bolsonaro presidency, the transfer of this authority to MAPA further accelerated the process of dispossession, again to the benefit of agro-industry. Institutions charged with defending the environment, the rainforest, and the rights of small peasants and

[38] The Brazilian political regime is characterized by coalition governments: extreme divisions among the parties in the Assembly have typically obliged the party holding a relative majority to pursue alliances in order to govern (Hudson de Abranches 1998).

[39] The slogan of MAPA Minister Katia Abreu, promoting a model of rural development based on agro-industry as an engine for job growth and wealth creation for the whole country

[40] Areas occupied by the descendants of fugitive black slaves (*quilombolas*)

"traditional" peoples were dramatically weakened from 2016 onward. To cite just a few examples of these trends, the new head of the Ministry of Justice was a former leader of the ruralist front and a leading advocate for PEC215; the Ministry of the Environment saw its budget for 2017 cut by 53% (Delcourt 2017); the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI)[41] was dismantled and placed under the control of MAPA. The suppression of the Agrarian Agreement, a coordination body established under Lula to help resolve land disputes, has opened the door to violent aggression against vulnerable populations, with incidents now affecting the indigenous territories (Carneiro da Cunha 2017).

While the idea of participation remains, it now has to take place through the Agro+ Plan, introduced by MAPA under Temer and maintained under Bolsonaro with the declared intention of "simplifying export and import procedures in order to expand Brazil's participation in the international market."[42] This massive program is directed entirely toward the agro-industries and commodities producers, including the modernized segment of family farming. The new government's neoliberal ideology thus opens the way to a future agricultural scenario in which the right of coexistence is nothing more than a utopian ideal. The interim government likewise introduced reforms weakening the redistributive programs (agrarian reform, social assistance, support for family farming, etc.) under the guise of austerity, albeit applied in a highly selective fashion. One of its earliest measures was to reorganize the two key ministries for social policies and family farming, the MDA and the MDS, reducing them to secretariats under the direction of the president. With the arrival of Bolsonaro, the regressive political and social policies became even more drastic. Responsibility for family farming was given to MAPA, which now oversees the "secretariat for family farming and the cooperative sector." All of the participatory councils (CONSEA, CONDRAF, the National Commission for Agroecology, the National Council for Traditional Peoples and Communities) were eliminated by means of a provisional measure introduced on January 1, 2019, the first day of the Bolsonaro presidency, sending the clear signal that the participation of civil society in public policy development would have no place in this government. Another provisional measure introduced the same day placed INCRA under the authority of MAPA and froze all processes for agrarian reform and the delineation of lands belonging to the *quilombolas*. The new organigram for MAPA (decree no. 9.667/2019) depicts a super-ministry in which the former MDA has been placed within the secretariat for property and land affairs. At the head of the latter is the president of the UDR, who campaigned on a promise to eliminate the "rural slums" of the MST (O Globo, 11/22/2018). In short, the very idea of agrarian reform has given way to a deliberate reopening of the frontier, transforming Amazonia into a vast territory for the future production of agro-exports.

Resilience and resistance: a return to the margins?

After Rousseff was forced out, despite the installation of a "hostile" interim government, CONSEA's work continued: no fewer than 4 reports and 29 recommendations

[41] A governmental body created in 1967 and charged with protecting Brazil's Amerindian populations, defending their rights and defining their territorial boundaries

[42] As described on the MAPA website, http://www.agricultura.gov.br/agromais/, created in 2016 and maintained under President Bolsonaro (consulted 10/15/2019)

were submitted to the relevant ministries and to the president.[43] CONSEA also produced a report assessing food security policies and the impacts of cuts made to its various programs.[44] A review of the funding allocated by sector from 2016 to 2017 clearly indicates the political decisions that were taken. Comparing these figures to those for MAPA (the principal avenue of support for agribusiness production),[45] the contrasts are striking: a reduction of 8.4% for MAPA; a reduction of 35.8% for agrarian reform programs; a reduction of 48% for policies to support traditional peoples and communities. Under Temer, the strategy with regard to food security programs was to take away their budgetary and technical resources without formally eliminating them; under Bolsonaro, these programs have simply been eliminated. Still, the decentralization of SISAN offers some measure of support for local managers, municipal councils, and the federated Brazilian states to maintain programs in favor of SAN. The "Real Food for Rural and Urban Schools" campaign, launched in October 2019[46] in several states at the initiative of civil society organizations, including FASE and the agroecology groups, made a clear reference to the 5th CNSAN and shows the link of solidarity that still exists between family farming, agroecology, and food sovereignty. The widespread support for agroecology among the social movement groups gives them a high level of visibility and, undoubtedly, some capacity for resistance on the ground. In the current situation, saving SAN has become paramount, while agroecology has become the key reference point for thinking about rural development. Former leaders and members of CONSEA who lived through the dictatorship are at the forefront of this resistance. They have sought to protect opportunities for civic participation (until Bolsonaro's election), defend venues for public organization and expression, and inform international NGOs and other networks with regard to the impacts of the measures that have been put in place.[47] Activists linked to agroecology continue to work via these networks and in the field. ANA, supported by 70 social movement groups, published a note[48] in April 2017 denouncing the revision of the Agricultural Census to suppress data on family farming and the diversity of agricultural practices: "The proposed exclusions and changes threaten the quality of statistical information on the realities of Brazilian agriculture, with negative repercussions for the development of proposals for the National Policy for Food Security and Nutrition and for the National Policy on Agroecology and Organic Production." In May 2017,[49] a resistance movement was announced against the Temer government, including organizations involved in land tenure issues and agrarian reform, movements linked to traditional

[43] "Quadro de Exposições Motivos e Recomendações – 2016." This internal document was provided to us in March 2017 by a member of CONSEA.

[44] "Public Policies for SAN: Analysis of the current context. Assessment conducted by CONSEA." Nov. 2016, Brasilia, 35 pp. This internal document was provided to us by a member of CONSEA.

[45] For the MAPA figures, see: http://www.agricultura.gov.br/assuntos/sustentabilidade/plano-agricola-e-pecuario-1/plano-agricola-e-pecuario.

[46] A description of the campaign can be found on the ANA site: https://agroecologia.org.br/2019/10/10/lancamento-acao-comida-de-verdade-nas-escolas-do-campo-e-da-cidade-sera-lancada-em-diversos-estados/.

[47] At the time of our interview (4/25/17), the president of IBASE and former president of CONSEA (2004–2007), Francisco Menezes, in collaboration with various social movement groups, were completing a report assessing SAN's policies and the losses that had been suffered since the end of the Rousseff presidency.

[48] Note sent April 6, 2017, to the IBGE (Brazilian Institute for Geography and Statistics)

[49] http://www.agroecologia.org.br/2017/05/09/resista-sociedade-civil-se-une-em-movimento-contra-temer-e-ruralistas/ Accessed on 10/15/2019

communities, representatives of the environmental sector, and members of the leading bodies within CONSEA.

In the wake of Bolsonaro's ascent to power, after an initial period of disorganization and disbelief, two broad fronts of resistance have coalesced, distinct but with striking similarities in terms of participatory structures and unifying themes. The first took shape around a seminar titled "Land and Territory: Diversity and Struggle," held in June 2019 and organized by the MST, the Brazilian Association for Agrarian Reform, and the agricultural unions (including CONTAG and Via Campesina). The agenda called for all civil society organizations to come together to construct a political agenda for resistance and a broad agrarian front uniting "researchers, civil servants, members of parliament, environmentalists, indigenous peoples, *quilombolas*, agricultural workers, family farmers, peasant women, and the landless."[50] The outcome was the Charter for Land and Territory,[51] which reaffirmed as a single struggle the defense of agrarian and socio-environmental policies, conservation organizations, groups defending traditional peoples and communities, and mechanisms for achieving food sovereignty. Among the 50 signatory organizations can be found the leading participants in CONSEA (including FASE), the family farming sector (CONTAG), and the agrarian and agroecology movements (MST, ANA). In September 2019, a seminar on agroecology was held with a similar title, "Land and Territory: Healthy Food and Fewer Pesticides."[52] This seminar was organized by members of parliament and the social movement groups, including the ANA, and resulted in the formation of a parliamentary group for agroecology uniting members of the parliamentary commissions still allied with the social movements (participatory legislation; environment, agriculture, and sustainable development; human and minority rights, etc.). At stake is the need not only to restart the campaign for reducing pesticide use and to denounce the new threats to healthy food production and the protection of the environment but also to preserve what has been gained, such as the national policy on real food for schools. The ideas and practices of agroecology and "real food" are being upheld on the front lines, in people's everyday lives, as a political act of resistance to the agribusiness model.

This resistance is spreading as if by capillary action into Brazil's regions, multiplying its forms of intervention and its spheres for action: in congress, in the courts, in the streets, in the fields. Its capacity to expand its audience and above all to persist should be understood as the product of the many branches and networks that organize civil society and that the social movements have contributed to growing and building over time.

Conclusion

The singularity of the Brazilian case, particularly with regard to the duality of its agrifood systems, is that it exhibits in extreme form the same kinds of oppositions and

[50] https://www.brasildefato.com.br/2019/06/04/ampla-articulacao-agraria-promete-construir-agenda-e-projeto-unitarios/ Accessed on 10/15/2019

[51] http://www.mst.org.br/2019/06/08/carta-terra-e-territorio-propoe-barrar-retrocessos-e-unir-pauta-agraria-e-ambiental.html. Accessed on 10/15/2019

[52] https://agroecologia.org.br/2019/09/04/parlamentares-e-sociedade-civil-lancam-frente-parlamentar-da-agroecologia-em-brasilia/ Accessed on 10/15/2019

development dilemmas that are found elsewhere. We can observe in Brazil's recent history a landscape in which the component elements have developed in opposition to one another, nurturing two divergent projects. The end of the institutional cohabitation of these two agricultural worlds raises the question as to whether any two agrifood systems so dissimilar can possibly coexist over the long term. At the level of Latin America, the spread of the agro-exporter model based on concentrated land ownership and the increased capitalization of agricultural production (Sauer, Leite, op. cit) is a key causal factor, albeit not one we have considered in detail here. But how do we determine what to consider and how should we identify a deflection point toward a reversible or irreversible outcome? At what scale should these processes be observed and analyzed? How do we connect the different levels of analysis so as to identify the actors and the transformations to come?

The ministerial adoption of family farming came at a key point in its process of segmentation, with the most modernized segment of farms integrated into agribusiness value chains. This segmentation corresponds to a range of socioeconomic positions, which in turn explains the varying positions of those who seek to speak for family farmers. As a broad category, family farming is caught between the resistance efforts of the social movements and the unions and Bolsonaro's promises of economic protectionism, which could allow some family farmers to escape the pressures of competition from imports.

This brings us back to the question of the coexistence of the two opposing projects of corporate farming and family faming. The ambition of Brazilian agribusiness to unite the corporate agriculture sector and to extend its hold over farmers in general, including family farmers, on the condition that they modernize and integrate their operations into agro-industrial value chains, has been partially realized. From the perspective of this project, coexistence is neither possible nor desirable, since the concentration of resources in the hands of a modernized, low-carbon, high-performance sector should in theory benefit the whole country. The vertical integration of modernized family farming, its transformation into a link in the agribusiness value chain, sidesteps the question of multiple coexisting models. As we have seen, however, this integration is not total: "resistant peasants" remain, in Brazil as elsewhere (Perez-Victoria 2005). In addition, the experience of having a dedicated ministry and both federal and decentralized policies to support family farming has created a reference point that will be difficult to forget for the activists and farmers who benefited from them. We can note, in this regard, that in June 2019, FBSSAN organized a workshop on "Mobilizing in Defense of Food Sovereignty and Food Security," which in turn led to planning for a 2020 Independent National Peoples' Conference on Rights, Democracy, and SSAN.[53] The terminology reflects a willingness to maintain – outside of a state apparatus that is now inimical to the social movements – the conferences that were constitutive of the participatory politics underlying SAN. The list of organizers for this event suggests that local networks of resistance linked to the decentralization of SISAN are on board, in company with the presidents of the SAN state councils. It also shows the broad alliance of the social movement groups around these issues, including the family farming unions (CONTAG, FETRAF, Via Campesina), the agroecology movements, the organizations of indigenous and traditional communities, and the ex-presidents of CONSEA.

[53] https://fbssan.org.br/2019/07/carta-convocatoria/

The goal of making family farming independent of corporate farming thus ran up against two obstacles: (i) access to land both as a means of production and as a place to live is monopolized by corporate agriculture and (ii) access to government subsidies is conditional on a form of development with specific norms and requirements (technical, food safety, marketing, etc.). Limited subsidies were available for a time through the MDA, before again being controlled by MAPA. Organizing the internal diversity of family farming into cause coalitions – notably around food sovereignty and agroecology – took place in several stages and seems to be holding fast across various lines of resistance, born under the interim government and surviving under the Bolsonaro presidency, at least for now. Coexistence thus seems to have been displaced and to have changed its nature. It is no longer a case of the institutional cohabitation of two agricultural worlds and two ministries within the state. Instead, we are now witnessing a form of coexistence outside of the state and in opposition to its policies: resistance as a way to stay alive, multiform and decentralized, on the part of the social movements engaged in the defense of food sovereignty and agroecology. This resistance also takes shape in the practical and quotidian experiences that make up our collective grip on the world, a deployment of microworlds linked to global patterns and forces. In the *assentamentos* of the MST, in the agroecological fields of family farming, in the indigenous areas and the traditional communities, "a common pathway is emerging beyond the extreme diversity of causes" (Chateauraynaud and Debaz 2017, p. 534).

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