



## **Transición nutricional y sistema alimentario (desde 1850 hasta el presente) I**

### **Sesiones simultáneas I.5**

***Lunes, 28 de junio, 12:00h.***

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### ***CAN THERE BE FOOD SOVEREIGNTY INSTITUTIONALISATION? INSIGHTS FROM THE CUBAN EXPERIENCE***

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This paper contributes to the discussion on food sovereignty (FS) and the state by analysing the case of Cuba. Cuba particularly presents Chayanovian pillars of alternative agriculture (‘peasants/small farmers + cooperatives + a supportive state’) and provides an ideal laboratory to analyse the model of FS. The paper presents a theoretical framework and literature review focused on the question of FS, the state and agrarian political economy. The paper explores the case study of Cuba as one of those Latin American countries that has attempted to institutionalise FS and, probably, the only one that has achieved it (Rosset et al., 2011). The political processes and economic problems that led to Cuba’s institutionalisation of food sovereignty were closely related to rural development and agricultural policies during and after the Special Period (1990-2018). The assessment of the Cuban case concludes that public policies reflecting food sovereignty principles have been largely implemented and still continue as one of the

main pillars of the new economic and social strategy to face the Covid-19 pandemic. Although institutional changes and developments at the different levels of the state have occurred, recurrent problems of Cuba's agriculture and inefficiencies still impede the full accomplishment of food sovereignty in practical terms as the state still is trapped between market and socialist forms of production that impede further food import substitution. These problems may show Bernstein's (2014) claim/scepticism of some of the pillars of FS on how small producers who practice agroecology/low input agriculture can feed the world and how to connect the activities of small farmers with the food needs of non-farmers. The elimination of the dual monetary system and the international and national crises that the island currently faces might again push forward new state-society relations to implement more rapidly food sovereignty and face the lack of food imports.

This paper draws on a range of primary and secondary sources on Cuba, as well as the broader academic literature on FS. The paper is also based on extensive field research in Cuba (2006, 2008 and 2019), including interviews with public officials in different levels of government, researchers, leaders of campesino organizations and peasants.

**Keywords:** *food sovereignty, Cuba, state, society, ANAP, peasants.*