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# THE PRIMACY FOR THE ACCOMMODATION OF THE BRAZILIAN ECONOMY: A THEORETICAL-METHODOLOGICAL ANALYSIS<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This paper was presented at the XXVIII National Meeting of Political Economy, promoted by the Brazilian Society of Political Economy/SEP, and is an accumulation of previous recent works. It revises and adds elements, as part of a continuous process of search for improvement, of a research agenda that is verified in the creation of texts, in the exposition of ideas in academic lectures (and mainly, not), and in the activities in disciplines of the course of Economic Sciences of the State University of Goiás/Brazil, where I teach. That is, much of what is here either exists in writing or speech situations and expresses an important dynamic for the outline of research practice: repetition. The repetition of the encounter with one's limitations, the (in)consistencies, and the improvement. This research is funded by the State University of Goiás-Brazil/Pro-Research Program.

## ABSTRACT

The capitalist economy is immersed in generalized inertia. A movement of slow accumulation, low investment, limited growth rates, but with a high level of profit, and which is due to intense pressure on the levels of existing inequalities, combining worldwide restructuring of the generation of wealth and income to a pattern of reproduction of the labor force at the level of its limited maintenance. This inertia occurs, above all, from the financial-productive crisis of the first decade of the 2000s. Brazil is no stranger to this inertia and its developments. Therefore, this paper intends, from a conceptual reflection, to analyze the national economic conjuncture, from what I call the structure and primacy for the accommodation of the Brazilian economy.

**Keywords** UNDERDEVELOPMENT, BRAZILIAN ECONOMY, ACCOMMODATION.

**JEL Classification** O10, O54, P16

## RESUMO

A economia capitalista está imersa em uma inércia generalizada. Um movimento de lenta acumulação, baixo investimento, limitadas taxas de crescimento, mas com elevado nível de lucro, e que se dá por uma intensa pressão sobre os níveis das desigualdades existentes, combinando reestruturação mundial da geração de riqueza e renda a um padrão de reprodução da força de trabalho ao nível de sua limitada manutenção. Inércia que se verifica, sobretudo, a partir da crise financeiro-produtiva da primeira década dos anos de 2000. O Brasil não está alheio a essa inércia e aos seus desdobramentos. Este artigo pretende, a partir de uma reflexão conceitual, analisar a conjuntura econômica nacional, a partir do que denomino de estrutura e primazia pela acomodação da economia brasileira.

**Palavras-chave** SUBDESENVOLVIMENTO, ECONOMIA BRASILEIRA, ACOMODAÇÃO.

**Classificação JEL** O10, O54, P16

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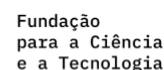
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## Introduction<sup>2</sup>

The concepts are linked to the logic of their time, to the historical context in which they were created, and (ex)posed to verification. To identify whether the concept dialogues with the present-time, therefore, if it remains with relative analytical-explanatory capacity beyond its time, we must verify whether the elements that constitute it remain with this capacity. If its constitutive elements lose, along the movement of the present-time, the capacity for dialogue with the new context, the concept crystallizes in the past-time (in its time) and loses analytical-explanatory capacity in the present time.

On the other hand, if the constitutive elements of the concept remain as dialogically interwoven axes and sustain its analytical-explanatory capacity in the present-time, it (the concept) expands itself in relational density with the contexts (historical between times), asserts itself and, because of its relationship with the present-time, transforms itself. The paradox that is expressed is that of the affirmation of something that is no longer what it was. Consequently, it is no longer the same concept anymore. It is and it is not being.

The constitutive elements of the concept give conditions to its essence and, throughout and to the end of its formatting, adapt its characteristics. They are, therefore, characteristics attributed and acquired along the trajectory of its constitution as a concept.

To the extent that these elements, as formative characteristics of the concept are sustained, assert themselves between times (different historical moments), time itself is subject to evaluation. It is a time proper to the concept and not a time that attributes to the concept analytical-explanatory capacity or not. The ability to attribute to the historical moment the condition of being a moment of its own is transferred to the concept.

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<sup>2</sup> Part of this Introduction is in Moreira (2020).

The concept itself conquers dense analytical-explanatory capacity not only because it relates to the present time (which is another), but because the structural conditions that demarcated its existence in the past time have not changed in essence in this present time. It is, as it were, a concept reaffirmed in the time-essence of its constitution. In addition, it is the original concept, thought, and materialized in the past-time, with characteristics of its time and correlated with the dynamics of the present-time, which presents in its essence the conditioning factors of its creation and materialization.

The identification that the process of capitalist development generates combined inequalities (between peoples, countries, and regions of countries), transforming them into a necessary and structural element of the global economy (SANTOS, 2011) and that this characteristic is expressed (affirmed) in different periods in the last three centuries (MYRDAL, 1972; ARRIGHI, 1997; FIORI, 2000; CHANG, 2003; PIKETTY, 2014), contributes to what has been confirmed previously: the concept remains correlated to its essence-time - to the movements that are established between the cycles of expansion and interaction between real and financial capital and between these and their parasitic speculative extrapolation -, and not to its chronological time - which expresses the economic cycles of conjunctural reorganization, as a recurrent phenomenon of the hegemonic mode of production as a fusion of the contradictions that grow throughout the process of reproduction.

The time-essence of a structural relationship between the degree of accumulation achieved, the degree of productive technique sophistication, and the level of consumption pattern diversification of individuals and the collectivity: the time of industrial civilization (FURTADO, 1978).

The underdevelopment and dependence concepts, created at a given historical moment as a theoretical effort capable of constituting itself as an analytical-explanatory apparatus proper to the countries that were verified as resulting from the process of unequal development, concentrator of wealth and exploitation of labor (characteristic elements and pillars of the expansion of capitalist social relations), are placed in front of a new historical moment of this development, but immersed in the same logic of operation.

They are thought and materialized concepts in a past time, in a moment of the capital accumulation logic different from the current one, in terms of its constitutive appearance, but that carry attributed and acquired characteristics by the time of the development of capitalist social relations. To this end, it is worth emphasizing the concept of underdevelopment,

as a creation of development, that is, as a consequence of the impact, in a large number of societies, of technical processes and forms of labor division radiated from the small number of societies that had inserted themselves in the industrial revolution in its initial phase, in other words, until the end of the twentieth century. (FURTADO, 2003, p. 88).

Therefore, "... a capitalist formation and not simply a historical one" (OLIVEIRA, 2003, p. 33).

The concept of dependence constitutes "a situation in which the economy of certain countries is conditioned by the development and expansion of another economy to which it is subordinate" (SANTOS, 2011, p. 5). Thus, the dependence is

understood as a relationship of subordination between formally independent nations, within which the relations of production of subordinate nations are modified or recreated to ensure the expanded reproduction of dependence. (MARINI, 2000, p. 109).

As a result, systemic capitalist development is verified as

[the] set of transformations in the social structures and forms of behavior that accompany accumulation in the system of production. Thus, a cultural and historical process is described, whose dynamics are based on technical innovation (...), placed at the service of a system of social domination. (FURTADO, 1978, p. 57).

In summary and intertwined, underdevelopment and dependence refer to the "accumulation subordinated to a logic system of material incentives" (FURTADO, 1978, p. 64), they present the economic, political, and social problems that derive from it and refer to "the diffusion process of industrial civilization within the external



dependence framework (...) the indirect access to industrial civilization – the starting point of dependency relations – is significantly reflected in the content of the cumulative process (...)” (FURTADO, 1978, p. 64).

To the notion of underdevelopment, constituted by the Latin American tradition exposed in the previous paragraphs, I consider it: firstly, as a property of the object, that is, as a category. By understanding it as a category, the dependent-underdevelopment becomes a characteristic of the observable whole: capitalist development, in terms of an international division of labor, with the potential to express the grounds of its functioning and the capacity to delineate its trajectory as a real-concrete movement; at the same time that makes it a fundamental characteristic (and it in itself) proper to a part: the Brazilian capitalist development. Second, as a construct of the current social relations, resulting from its analytical capacity, as a forceful concept and not devoid of explanatory capacity. Therefore, a concept-category.

Thus, it conquers here, the concept of dependent-underdevelopment, dense analytical-explanatory capacity not only because it relates to the present-time (which is different from that of its constitution), but because the structural conditions that demarcated its existence in the past-time have not changed in substance (in this present-time). It was constituted and belongs to “the subordination basis of physical force and intellectual, creative capacity, to the wealth accumulation logic.” (FURTADO, 1978, p. 113).

The effort that follows is to insert in the exploratory exercise previously mentioned a conceptual proposal that, although initial and immersed in a reflection of an eminently analytical character, suggests a way of abstracting how the Brazilian dependent-underdevelopment is structured in the present-time: an analysis in an accommodationist perspective<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> The proposition of this analysis arises in the postdoctoral internship that I carried out at the Center for Studies on Africa and Development of ISEG-ULisboa.

## 1. DEVELOPMENTS IN THEORETICAL ELEMENTS AND RECENT SPATIO-TEMPORAL CONTEXTUALIZATION

In this perspective, the characteristics of dependent-underdeveloped economies are, namely: 1. structural heterogeneity, the concentration of income and wealth (PREBISCH, 1949; PINTO, 1970; KALECKI, 1971; FURTADO, 1991, 2003); 2. external technological, financial, economic, and political dependence (PREBISCH 1949; FURTADO, 2003; SANTOS, 2011; MARINI, 2012; OSÓRIO, 2012); and, 3. low absorption capacity, unlimited supply of labor and transfer of value (KALECKI, 1971; AMARAL; CARCANHOLO, 2012) - as fundamental elements to make the overexploitation of the workforce jump to the eye (MARINI, 2000) -; they become accentuated and dynamized properties by the conditions posed by the current process of global accumulation.

Thus, “underdevelopment would become the form of the permanent exception of the capitalist system in its periphery” (OLIVEIRA, 2003, p.131).

This “form of permanent exception” guarantees (and asserts): a- the inevitability of the capital expansion for its reproduction on an interplanetary scale; and b- the “space-time compression” (HARVEY, 2005), which today intensifies, through technological-informational mechanisms that enable the acceleration of the capital rotation time, reducing the time of “supply” and investments flows, in their respective global networks/chains.

Besides, the advance of multiple forms of financial accumulation – via world financialization –, triggering a relative autonomy and a(n) (apparent) detachment of financial capital from the productive one, indicated that the fictional capital would make the process of accumulation closely dependent on its performance, intensifying the process of labor exploitation in dependent economies (COSTA, 2012; MÉSZÁROS, 2009)<sup>4</sup>. The environment of recurrent crises with low growth of economies, which involved underdeveloped and developed countries

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<sup>4</sup> This capital sought accumulation conditions through the acquisition/control of state-owned companies and mechanisms of approximation to the governments of the Latin American States. A reordering of the recurrent aspects of the control and decision-making mechanisms between capital was underway, which is necessary in situations of the accumulation process reorganization.

over the last 20 years of the twentieth century, and the first ten years of the current one, demonstrated that the mechanisms of accumulation pointed to a systemic and structural crisis (MÉSZÁROS, 2009; COSTA, 2012).

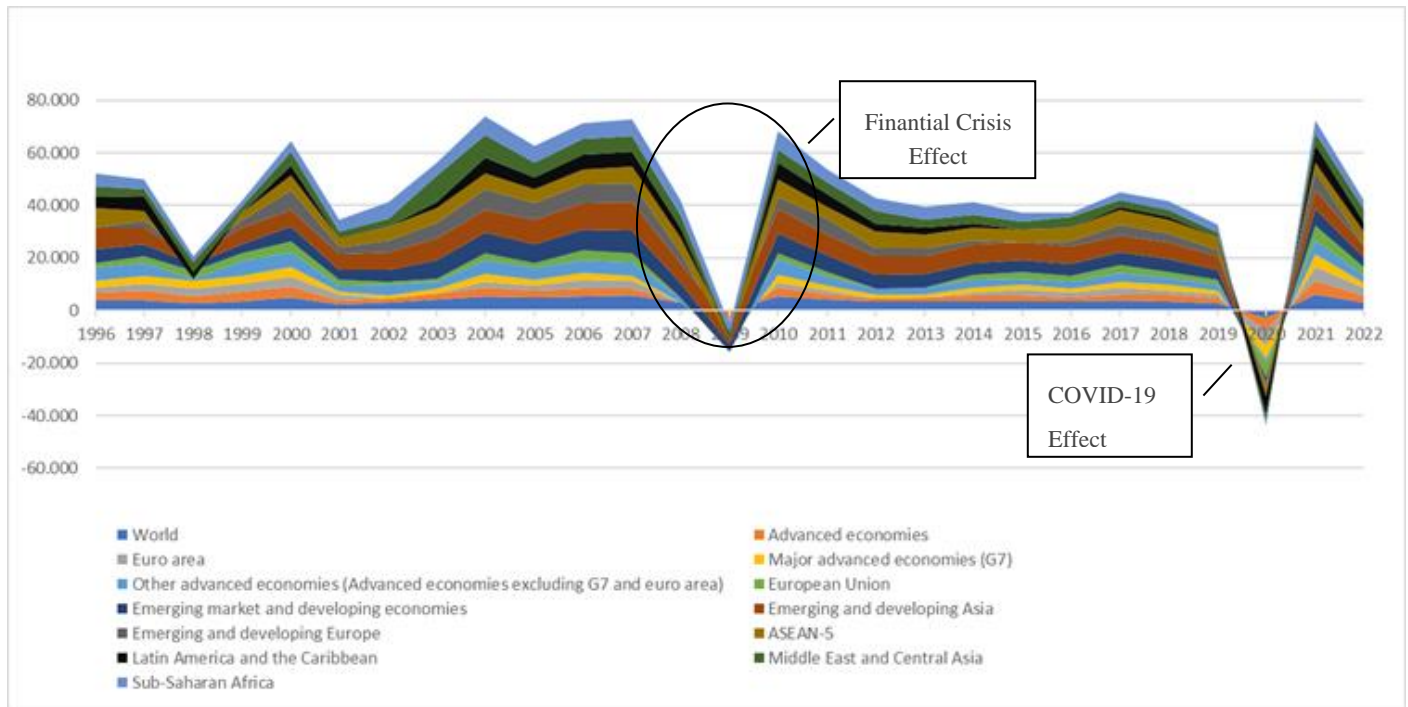
In this process, the shock of the new coronavirus, in general, exposed a sanitary-economic-civilizing crisis, making explicit the bankruptcy of the globalizing process fallacy as an ideology and as a civilizing process, established in the structures of volatile production and consumption and of the globalized financialization of capital (CHESNAIS, 2005), under the designs of the parasitic speculative capital domination over substantive capital (CARCANHOLO; NAKATANI, 2015): a system of gears based on the ephemerality of accumulation itself and that is structured in the process of material life reproduction of the same condition. The COVID-19 pandemic has accentuated the limits that were placed on the dynamics of accumulation centered on global finance, maintaining the conditions for the generation and multiplication of virtual, speculative parasitic wealth<sup>5</sup> and making the socioeconomic conditions of poor populations intensely recrudescant, whether they had work or not.

Two elements contribute to this statement: the first, the dynamic inability of global economies to recover their performance, in terms of GDP and investment rates, to the levels before the 2008 financial crisis (Graph 1).

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<sup>5</sup> Oxfam's report (2021) shows that it took the top 1,000 billionaires 9 months in 2000 to see their fortunes regain the pre-pandemic levels. It also points out that the recovery of the poorest may take more than a decade.

Graph 1 – Change in GDP (at constant prices) in selected regions – evolution in %



Source: International Monetary Fund/IMF – World Economic Outlook/WEO (October 2022). Author's elaboration.

The world economy, which had a GDP growth rate of 4.79% in 2000, on the eve of the 2008 crisis, therefore in 2007, showed signs of attrition, despite a GDP growth rate of 5.56% (in 2008, 3.1%; 2009, -0.08%). The recovery in 2010 (5.44%) was the foreshadowing of a generalized dampening that would remain, throughout the second decade of the twenty-first century, at levels below, on average, the pre-crisis period. As if in a movement to announce what was to come for the year 2020, the variation of global GDP in 2019 firmed at 2.81%. Level well below the average of the second decade and showing signs of wear. The recent losses in the dynamism of the world economy seem to have something in common: they foreshadow structural crises. The first, in 2007,

announced “the violent contradictions that have accumulated within the capitalist system since the 1970s and deepened with monetarist policies in the 1980s and 1990s” (COSTA, 2012, p. 129).

The second one in 2019 announced the effects of the industrial civilization advance with its offensive dynamic of material life reproduction forged in exploiting, to exhaustion, natural resources, in the form of a crisis whose lethality is very significant and very fast, mobilizes the political powers, requires short-term measures that minimize the effects of this crisis in the longer term, that solve (or minimize) its consequences but do not affect its causes (SANTOS, 2020). Because,

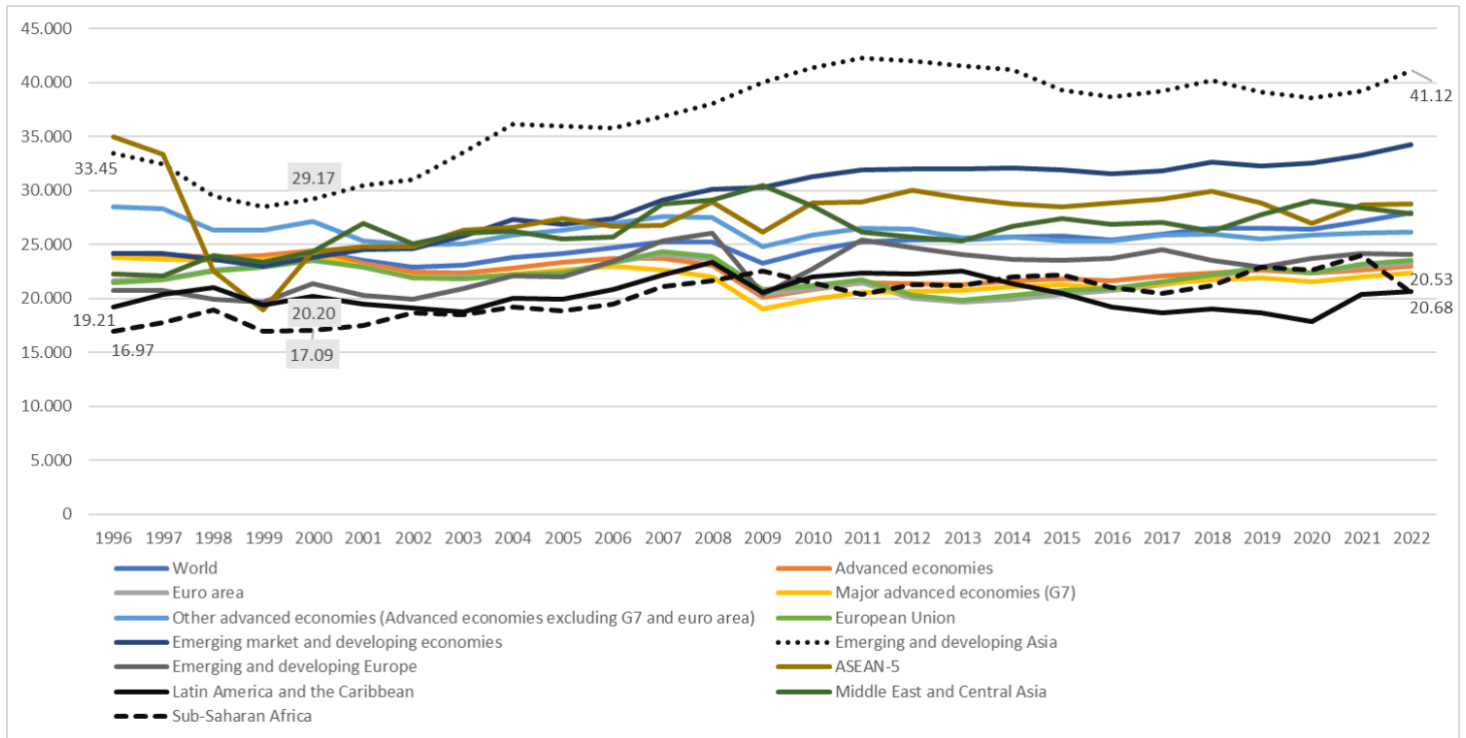
(...) while the pandemic crisis can be somehow reversed or controlled, the ecological crisis is already irreversible and now we can only seek to mitigate it. But even more serious is the fact that both crises are linked. The coronavirus pandemic is one manifestation among many others of the society model that began to impose itself globally from the seventeenth century on and is now reaching its final stage. This is the model that is leading humanity today into a situation of ecological catastrophe. (SANTOS, 2020, p. 23).

The inertia of the post-crisis global reproduction of 2008, however, shows one of the characteristics of the world-economy: the constitution of a hierarchical system distributed in subsystems with distinct functionalities that circumvent a systemic and integrated structure and that express the movements of the interactions between nations that constitute the hegemonic structures, but that does not change significantly (however, as Campolina (2018) reminds us, it is drawn in Arrighi’s argument (2008), that the hegemonic center of the global economy would be moving to the East), the realization of productive investments in this complex system intensely integrated and spatially specialized that, under the shock of the new coronavirus, expressed the contradictions of this specialized spatialization, when the demand for specialized hospital goods increased, as the basic inputs, as for those with production of greater technical-scientific complexity, such as vaccines, for example.

Graph 2 shows that the level of investments (as a share of GDP), on a global scale, does not change significantly post-financial crisis of 2008. Nevertheless, there is a loss of investment capacity in Latin America (which coincides with the accommodation of the structure of the Brazilian economy, from the years 2014/2015) and in the group of economies that make up the G7. On the contrary, there is an increasing dynamic of the investment participation in the economies of Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, expressing the approximations of these structures of economic-political-institutional reproduction. Indeed,

Africa has in recent years become a new frontier coveted by emerging powers such as China, eager for food and raw materials. The volume of foreign investments that have been made in the continent and the new institutions that have emerged after the independence movements and the processes of decolonization indicate that the African continent will have a new position in the world economic and political scenario. (CAMPOLINA, 2018, p. 252)

Graph 2 – Investment change in selected regions – in % of the GDP



Source: International Monetary Fund/IMF – World Economic Outlook/WEO (October 2022). Author's elaboration.

Despite the rise of China, which “increased its share from 4% to 8% in GDP and from 4% to 11% in exports, and India, which went from 1.5% to 2.5% and from 0.8% to 2.0% in the same indicators” (CAMPOLINA, 2018, p. 251), the “triad” the United States, European Union, and Asia remains (Japan moves, adds China). Although there has been a loss of relative position of these centers:

In 1970, central capitalism, represented by the United States, the European Union, and Japan, with only 11% of the world's area and 13% of the world's population, accounted for 70% and 55% of

global exports. Between 2000 and 2011, these shares fell, respectively, to 65% and 45%. (CAMPOLINA, 2018, p. 250)

The second element is the warnings of the International Monetary Fund, regarding a possible new crisis of global order, by showing the main vulnerabilities of the Global Financial System: rising corporate indebtedness; increasing the share of riskier and illiquid assets in the portfolios of institutional investors; and greater dependence on external funding in emerging market and frontier economies. (IMF, 2019).

Still,

(...) Corporate sector vulnerabilities are already elevated in several systemically important economies because of increased indebtedness and reduced ability to service debts. In a scenario of a substantial economic slowdown, which compares to half the severity of the global financial crisis, corporate debt at risk (amounts owed by companies without sufficient revenues to pay their interest expenses) could rise to \$19 trillion – or nearly 40% of the total corporate debt of the largest economies and above crisis levels. (IMF, 2019)

This scenario, which was configured in the wake of the financial crisis effects in 2008, and on the eve of the COVID-19 pandemic, showed that the impact of the crisis at the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century was really “only the beginning of the global systemic crisis” (COSTA, 2012, p. 129) and that, when related to Brazil, would tend to aggravate its dependent-underdevelopment, and to expose, in this particular, an intentional capacity of local political and economic forces to deal with adverse situations - which are strained by the potential fraying of the social fabric and national institutional disintegration, added to the systemic chaos ordered in/by elements yet to be identified in substance, movement, and reaction, together, they remain clothed, in particular, by the shock of the new coronavirus; and, in general, by the re-accommodation of hegemonic political-economic structures.



## 2. THE PRIMACY FOR THE ACCOMMODATION OF THE BRAZILIAN ECONOMY (THE ACCOMMODATION TRAP)

The Brazilian economic dynamics of development that concentrate income and wealth were covered: 1. by a trajectory of industrial activities, without configuring a process of industrialization itself (as stated, for Latin America, by Marini (2000), which deindustrialize (early (RICUPERO, 2007), harmfully (CANO, 2014) or prematurely (BRESSER-PEREIRA; NASSIF; FEIJÓ, 2016) insistently since the 1980s; 2. by a continuous advance of agro-economic activities (metamorphosing the capital generated there and making complex the very notion of agricultural activities), in a process of primarization of the export agenda that expands and asserts itself as a kind of perpetual way; and, 3. for a labor market structured to the precariousness of labor conditions and relations, and the reproduction of inequalities.

Such elements constituted (in) and constitutive (of) a structural external dependence process, functional for the development of the internal productive forces with the intensification of their relationship of dependence with the world economy, which takes place in a frank relationship of interdependence because what is verified is

(...) an intensely complex and contradictory network of “reciprocal dependencies” on a global scale, with multiplier and intensifying problems and demands in each particular area, which are currently far beyond the control of any singular “center”, no matter how powerful and advanced it may be. (MÉSZÁROS, 2009, p. 87).

Immersed in this “intensely complex and contradictory network of ‘reciprocal dependencies’ on a global scale”, this Brazilian structural coating expresses: 1. the intentionality of external dependence for the dynamics of internal accumulation, integrating it and making economic activities interdependent, in such a way that any significant alteration of the productive chain becomes extremely limited since it is established in a dependence historically constituted and intentionally maintained, in terms of an intensely integrated and spatially

specialized systemic economy that, under the shock of the new coronavirus, feels the contradictions of this specialized spatialization; and, 2. Thus, the Brazilian economy's immersion in a type of internal response-mechanism that outlines a trajectory of political-institutional advances (or setbacks), as if in a pendulum movement, does not significantly alter the process of material reproduction that concentrates and generates social inequalities.

This response-mechanism describes the Brazilian dependence on the process of systemic reproduction and presents itself as the *modus operandi* of the national economy: it is established as a historical process that, in appearance, is linked to periods of growth, depression, or recession, such as adjustments of internal cyclical crises. As a foundation, it exposes the external tensions that are imposed as accumulated contradictions of systemic reproduction and establishes itself as a response - from internal economic, political, and institutional tensions -, created to accommodate such contradictions that, by extrapolating the cyclical crises, constitute (constituted) a systemic and structural crisis.

Apparently, this movement of domestic configuration (and it is, although not *per se*) is based as a primacy for accommodation to the complex movement of the capitalist world system, along the lines of productive-financial globalization, outlining its response to the systemic cumulative structure by creating a structure of accommodation of its own and reflective to the unfolding of the movement of the world economy. Indeed, "(...) what develops is not the countries. What develops is only the capitalist world economy (...)" (WALLERSTEIN, 2000, p. 223).

Internal decisions of political, economic, and institutional order are rooted in a primacy for accommodation in the face of the unpredictable possibilities that open when movements are carried out, deviating from the acquired standard along its trajectory in the world capitalist development. The internal structure is established in an accumulation of responses to external stimuli, and in a relationship of internal oppositions and tensions,

it is also established in a relative autonomy in the conduct of its real socioeconomic problems and the construction of correlations of forces with diverse intentions, characterizing a subordinate dependence.

I called this response-mechanism of accommodatism (MOREIRA, 2018), in observation of the of Aristotle's<sup>6</sup> and Feyerabend's works (2011),

Now, how could we examine something that we are using all the time? How can we analyze to reveal their presuppositions the terms in which we habitually express our simplest and most direct observations? (...) We need an external standard of criticism; we need a set of alternative assumptions (...) We must invent a new conceptual system that suspends the most carefully established results of observation or conflicts with them, challenges the most plausible theoretical principles, and introduces perceptions that cannot be part of the existing perceptual world. (FEYERABEND, 2011, p. 46)

This is about a movement of adaptive interaction between the cumulative-reproductive capacity of the Brazilian economy and the incitements of the systemic capitalist dynamics, which raise internal political-economic-institutional manifestations (intense or not), but which does not substantially alter its correlation of forces with nations participating in the "reciprocal dependence" of which it is a part. Therefore, it does not intend to overcome the historical-structural conditions, which condition it as a cumulative-reproductive system<sup>7</sup>, covered by the elements mentioned at the beginning of this section. On the contrary, it intends to maintain itself as such and to make use of the results of its consented subordination in the global capitalist dynamics.

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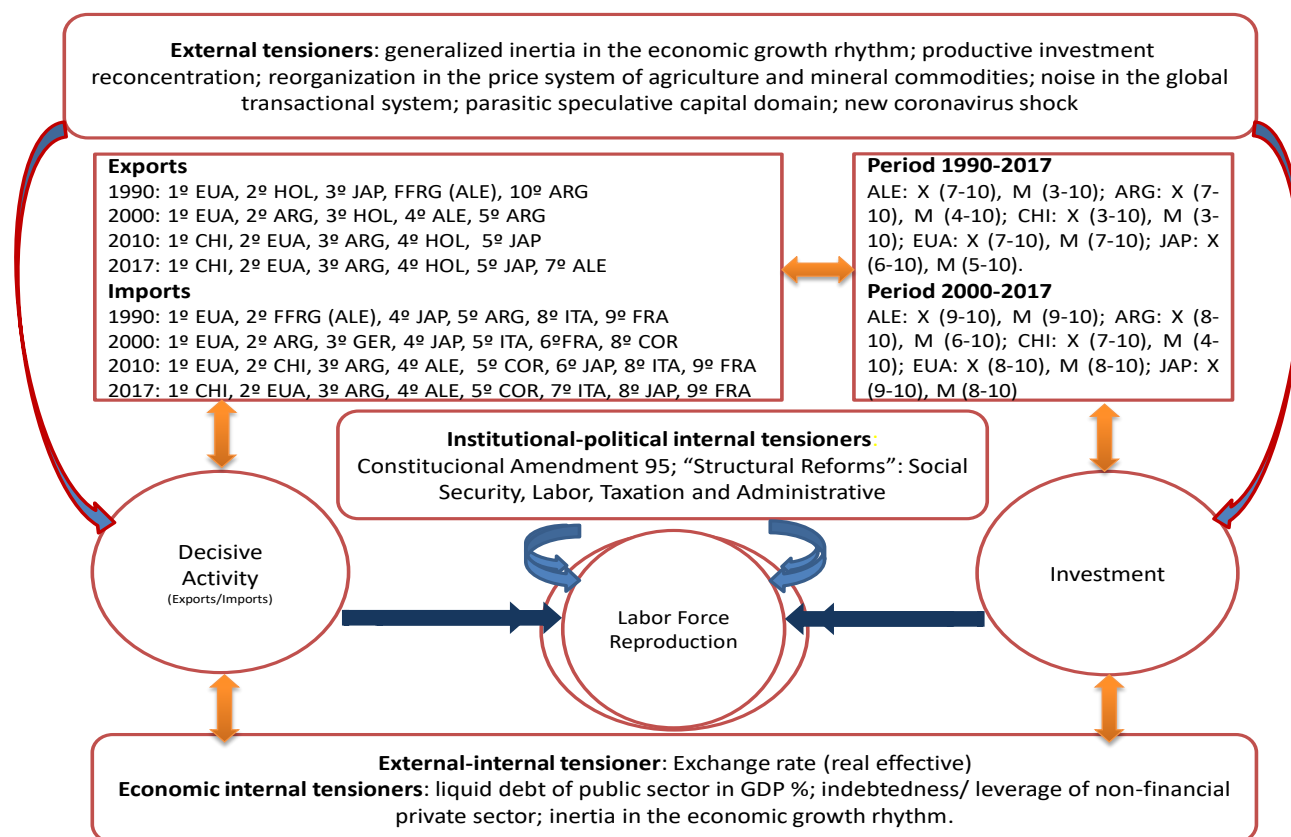
<sup>6</sup> "A thing is said to be 'immobile' (akíneton), a) when it is entirely impossible to be moved (like sound, which is invisible); b) when it is moved with difficulty after a long time or its movement begins slowly, in which case we say that it is difficult to move; c) when for nature it is made to be moved and can be, but is not in motion when, where and how it should be naturally; only this latter kind of immobility I call 'being at rest' (êremeîn), since 'Rest' (êremía) is the opposite of movement, and therefore the deprivation of movement in that which can receive movement." (ARISTOTLE, n/d, p. 178-179). The approach to what I call accommodatism (or the dialectic of primacy for the accommodation of the Brazilian economy) is what is exposed in the letter "c".

<sup>7</sup> By reproductive-accumulative system is meant the space-time of accumulation of capital in expanded reproduction, based on the flows of capital and commodities. In this case, the interrelationship between the Brazilian economy and the world-economy.

This covering condition by the elements that characterize the Brazilian economy in its space-time of accumulation in the time-essence of world capitalist development creates a structure of accommodation that directly and mainly affects the conditions of material reproduction of the Brazilian population.

The Brazilian economy accommodation structure (Figure 1) expresses a primacy for the accommodation, on the part of correlations of internal political and economic forces, in a contradictory process of counter-response and adaptation that entails the intensification of (and the creation of) structural limitations to the movements of the internal economic cycle and its ability to reproduce itself with some internal capacity of dynamism and control through instruments of economic policy, for example, their own, straining and intensifying the very reproduction of labor power.

Figure 1 – The Structure of Brazilian Accommodation



Note 1: The information on Exports and Imports is from the Comtrade-UN/Top-10 exports and imports of goods: <https://comtrade.un.org/> system. The acronyms refer to: USA – United States of America, NET – Netherlands, FFRG – Fm. Federation Republic of Germany, GER – Germany, ARG – Argentina, CHI – China, ITA – Italy, FRA – France, KOR – Republic of Korea. Still, X – Exports, M – Imports. Note 2: The numbers in parentheses mean the amount of goods that remain on the agenda in relation to the 10 most traded goods in the cited period. Thus, the case of China means that while in the period 1990-2017, 3 of the 10 imported goods remained on the Imports tariff (M); In the period 2010-2017, 8 out of 10 remained. The same happened with the export agenda. This indicates that in the last 7 years, China’s impetuous arrival in the group of the main partners of external transactions of goods is reflected in the increase in the degree of reciprocal dependence between the two countries. Note 3: In 2017, the U.S. import tariff differs by only one item from that of 1990. Author’s elaboration.

This structure of accommodation, based on an internal dynamic of value transfer outwards, always needs institutional mechanisms that submit its main source of value to situations of pressure and loss of material and intellectual conditions for the realization of its productive capacity (the internal political-institutional tensioners mentioned in Figure 1). Hence the compression of the “Reproduction of Labor Power” sphere (making it narrower, as illustrated in Figure 1).

The more tense the spheres “Decisive Activity (Exports and Imports)” and “Investment” are stressed by external tensioners, characterized by the recomposition of capital, intensification of imperialist disputes and global institutional rearrangements, and punctuated by the ecological and health-economic-civilization crises, the more the internal tensioners mentioned in Figure 1 intensify. For instance: formed from the data of the Comtrade-UN system, observing the group of the 10 most traded goods in foreign trade, the central quadrilaterals show that the export and import agendas, as well as the trading partners of the Brazilian economy, have been recurrent for almost 3 decades. The quantity of commodities that remains in both lists (broken down in parentheses), throughout the periods mentioned therein, shows a structure of dependence that, by hypothesis, conditions the type (and form) of investments and the reproduction of labor power in its own way. The data regarding exports and imports with the US show that, in addition to its undeniable [active] reciprocal dependence with Brazil, 7 of the 10 exported and imported goods remained on the agenda in the period from 1990 to 2017. With China, it is no different. Its importance for commercial transactions with Brazil is accelerated and intense: it has established itself as the main transactional partner since the 2010s, especially regarding exports of soy and mineral complexes. Although, concerning the import tariff, in the period 2010-2017, out of the 10 most imported goods, 8 were the same.

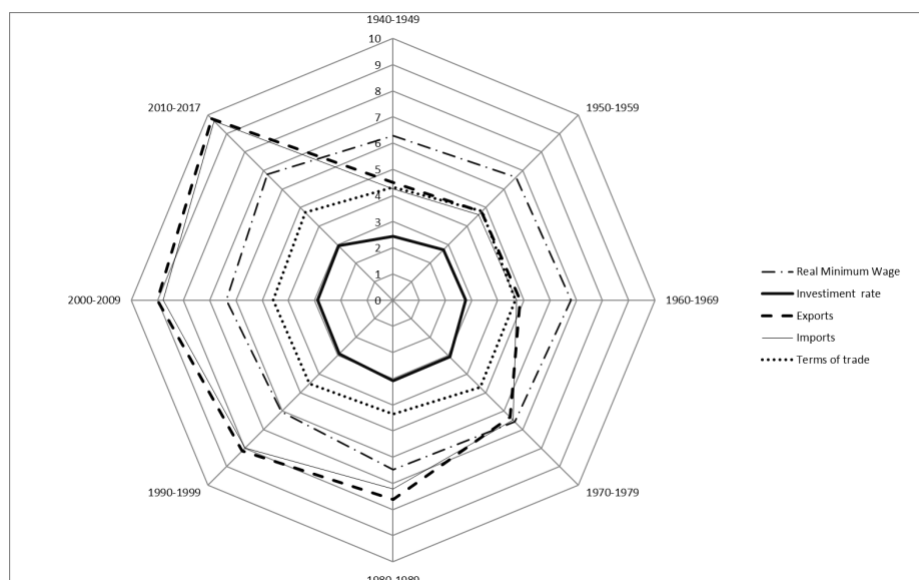
In other words, the external tensioners are directly established in the Decisive Activity (Exports and Imports) and in the Investments; indirectly, they constitute the internal-external and internal<sup>8</sup> economic tensioners, which, from the inside, put pressure on these two spheres that, in order to maintain the contradictory and dense movement of accommodation of tensions as a whole, force the creation of political-institutional tensioners, as elements of support to the changes necessary for the maintenance of this structure in the process of systemic dynamic adjustment. As a result, the recrudescence of the socioeconomic, cultural/intellectual, and political conditions of Brazilian workers (and those to come).

These elements are placed in the time-essence of the Brazilian underdevelopment-dependent and move, as the conjuncture of the global economic cycle moves, however, without changing the central characteristics: the dynamics of an agro-based export economy with intense scientific and technological advances that increase its productivity and capacity to interact with the financial and capital<sup>9</sup> markets, a limited ability to increase the rate of investment relative to GDP and pressure for wage levels that limit the reproduction of labor power to the subsistence level. Graph 3 shows the process of accommodation of the Brazilian economy from this perspective.

<sup>8</sup> The internal-external tensioner refers to the specific elements of the exchange rate and monetary policy in Brazil, which refer to the structure of internal price formation. A recent example is food and fuel inflation, both pressured by the recurrent variations of the dollar, to a large extent, and by the high external demand, in the case of food. Obtusely, recently, the Central Bank of Brazil began an escalation of interest rate increases, seeking to contain a price increase that is adjusted by elements external to the national economy, therefore, to those that constitute themselves as external tensioners.

<sup>9</sup> A study conducted (in 2018) by FIAN International, the Social Network for Justice and Human Rights, and the Pastoral Land Commission (CPT), showed that the appropriation and speculation of land in the MATOPIBA region (an acronym used to denominate a region that occupies parts of the states of Maranhão, Tocantins, Piauí, and Bahia), continued even after the commodity boom and the fall in prices between 2007 and 2008. The increase in land prices stimulated the appropriation and expropriation of peasants, the destruction of the Cerrado and, being more profitable than the agricultural production itself, there was the approximation and involvement with international pension funds. Examples are the TIAA (Teachers' Insurance and Pensions Association), a pension fund that manages accounts for 5 million teachers and social service professionals in the United States; 43% of its land is in Brazil: 36% of it in MATOPIBA and 45% in São Paulo, with agricultural properties in the states of Goiás, Mato Grosso, Mato Grosso do Sul, and Minas Gerais.

Graph 1 - Brazil – Trajectory of selected variables - selected periods



Source: Institute of Applied Economic Research / IPEA – [ipeadata.gov.br](http://ipeadata.gov.br)<sup>10</sup>. Author's elaboration.

The internal conjunctural accommodations maintain the structural adaptive conditions, such as the trajectory of the investment rate observed in Graph 4. This movement suggests that, while there are political-institutional

<sup>10</sup> Observations: (a) The data were smoothed; (b) Real Minimum Wage (in R\$) - Institute of Applied Economic Research (IPEA); (c) Investment Rate - System of Consolidated National Accounts. Reference 2010 are in accordance with the new manual System of National Accounts (SNA) of 2008, of the United Nations (UN), which includes, among other methodological changes, the new classification of products and activities integrated with the National Classification of Economic Activities - CNAE 2.0. For 2010-2013: preliminary results estimated from the Quarterly National Accounts Reference 2000. Sources: For 1990-1994, System of National Accounts Reference 1985. For 1947-1989, System of Consolidated National Accounts; (d) Exports - (FOB) (Former Method. - BPM5) - US\$ (millions) - Central Bank of Brazil, Balance of Payments (BPM5) (BCB / BP (BPM5)) - BPN12\_XTV12 and Trade Balance - Exports (New method. - BPM6) - US\$ (millions) - Central Bank of Brazil, Balance of Payments (BPM6) (BCB / BP (BPM6)) - BPAG\_BCX - Methodology of the IMF Balance of Payments and International Investment Position Manual; (e) Imports - (FOB) (Former method. - BPM5) - US\$ (millions) - Central Bank of Brazil, Balance of Payments (BPM5) (BCB / BP (BPM5)) - BPN MTV - Until December 1958, data from FGV's Conjuntura Econômica Magazine, adjusted by Ipeadata to the Central Bank's annual series, based on Denton's method. Methodology of the IMF Balance of Payments Manual (5th ed., 1993). Trade Balance - Imports (New Method. - BPM6) - US\$ (millions) - Central Bank of Brazil, Balance of Payments (BPM6) (BCB / BP (BPM6)) - BPAG\_BCM - Methodology of the IMF Balance of Payments and International Investment Position Manual; (f) Terms of trade - index (average 2006 = 100) - Foundation Center for Foreign Trade Studies (Funcex) - FUNCEX\_TTR. Until 1973, series chained and converted to base 2006 = 100. Source: For 1879-1973, Historical statistics of Brazil: economic, demographic, and social series from 1550 to 1988. 2. ed. rev. and current. of v. 3 of Retrospective Statistical Series. Rio de Janeiro: IBGE, 1990. Original data from the period 1901-1973 adjusted according to Statistics of the 20th Century. Rio de Janeiro: IBGE, 2003. Since 1974, Funcex Data.

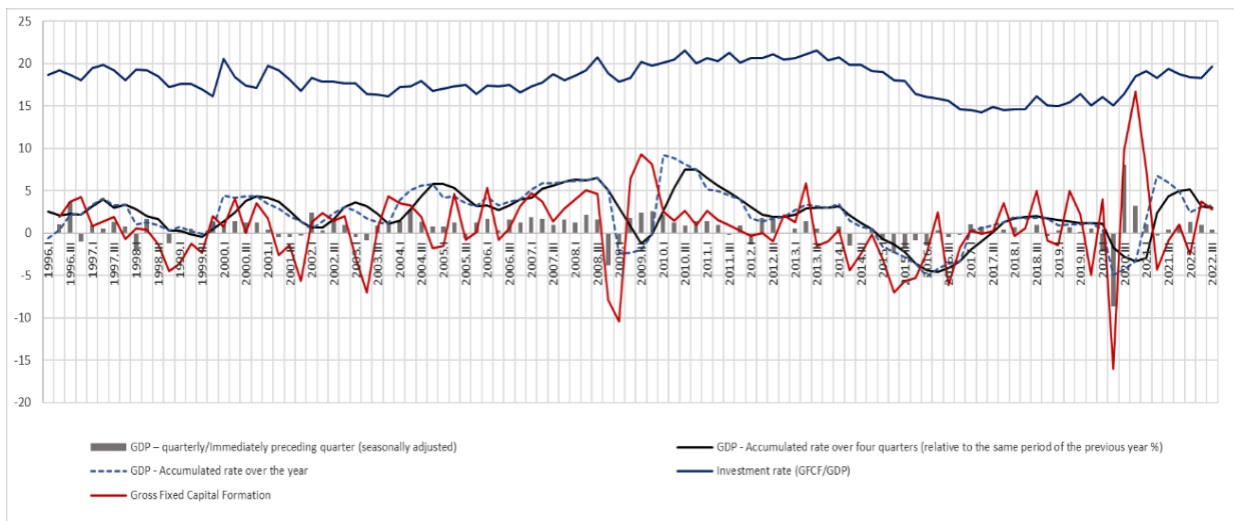


changes, with consequent economic interactions (as shown by the variations in GDP and Gross Fixed Capital Formation), there is a more general movement that enables the correlations of internal forces to drive the adaptive process by tensioning the accommodation structure. The so-called structural reforms (Social Security and Labor, implemented) and the Constitutional Amendment 95<sup>11</sup>, are elements of political-institutional tension for the accommodation of the [diverse] forces that make up the core of internal relations with the external environment and highlight the response-mechanism presented here.

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<sup>11</sup> Also known as the “PEC of Death”, Constitutional Amendment 95/2016 instituted the New Fiscal Regime, called the Public Spending Ceiling. In this Regime, effective for twenty years from 2017, primary expenses are limited to the amount referring to the immediately preceding year, corrected by the variation of the IPCA - National Consumer Price Index, becoming, as a result of this limitation, a political rule, and not only fiscal, which aims to reduce public expenditures in relation to GDP; as well as an economic rule, by not taking into account economic growth and revenue, in addition to the vegetative growth of the Brazilian population (however, such rules do not limit the payment of public debt services). By involving public expenditures on education, health, and social assistance, in addition to those necessary for the maintenance of the structure of the State, limiting such expenditures to those made in the previous year, for a long period of time, forces a staggering of the State's capacity to carry out public policies, including investment. Thus, as a kind of tip of the iceberg, EC 95 presented itself as “making way” for the so-called structural reforms: labor and social security, carried out; and administrative and tax, to be checked. In this way, a political-institutional tension is created to the reproduction of the workforce by the limitation of the Brazilian State in carrying out the conditions of reproduction through the state equipment of maintenance of this force: education, health, investments in security equipment, infrastructure, strengthening, by assumption, the pro-market policies of privatization and attraction of financial capital. It becomes EC 95, an institutional mechanism that subjects the workforce to situations of loss of the material and intellectual conditions of realization, including its productive capacity, adjusting the Structure of Brazilian Accommodation to the detriment of the working class.

Graph 2 – Brazil - Trajectory of selected variables



Source: IBGE – System of Quarterly National Accounts  
Author's elaboration

The primacy for the accommodation of the Brazilian economy is expressed in the dismantling of its state capacity to assert relative autonomy and distribute the collective efforts of dependent reproduction to maintain this primacy in its historical levels of wage accommodation (at levels that do not detach from the minimum wage), investment capacity (with an average trajectory of 18% p.a.) and external transactions from the determining activity (which in the case of exports, are maintained by the meat, soy, and mineral complexes, with partners and permanent guidelines). The coating that covers the dependent-underdevelopment deepening the mechanisms of exploitation (as Marini (2000) reminds us, in a conjuncture of accommodation based on a labor market strained by layoffs and falling real incomes, by stagnation of productive capacity, and by the cooling of the Brazilian external sector<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> This observation is due to the initial results of the research project “Dialectics of Brazilian accommodationism: a study of the deepening of subordination and its effects on the employment of the workforce in the last three decades”, inserted in the Macroproject “Accommodation Structures

## 2.1. The Accommodation Index of the Brazilian Economy/AI-BR: a methodological proposal

The objective of the AI-Br is to analyze the behavior of variables considered important to verify how the Brazilian economy responds to the periodic alternations of expansions and conjunctural contractions. As preliminary results, from the perspective of accommodation (which evidences the responses emitted, by the variables that make up the indicator, to the stimuli/tensions suffered by the Brazilian economy), the AI-Br shows a structure based: on movement determined by the external sector, by marked erratic responses of the productive sector and by rigidity in the response of the labor market.

The AI-Br is a synthesis indicator that aims to reveal the capacity of the Brazilian economy to respond to external/internal tensions, at a given moment in time, from certain variables<sup>13</sup>. These variables were grouped into what we defined as Dimensions (which make up the Brazilian Accommodation Structure (MOREIRA, 2018) and, for each Dimension, a Specific Indicator: For the Decisive Activity Dimension (DAD): the variables Exports and Imports, its indicator: AI-DA; for the Investment Dimension (ID): Net Investment (Net Fixed Capital Formation), Real Revenues and Installed Capacity Utilization, its indicator: AI-I; and for the Work Dimension (WD): Admissions, Dismissals and Real Average Income, and its indicator: AI-W, as expressed in Table 1.

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in Comparative Perspective: a study on the adaptive interactions of countries in times of systemic economic restructuring”, held at the State University of Goiás. At this stage of the research, an indicator (the AI-Br) was created that aims to synthesize the accommodation capacity of the Brazilian economy to the stimuli/impacts of external shocks (and internal, such as tensioners), from certain dimensions, which express the Accommodation Conditions. They are: 1. The dynamics of the determining activity (Decisive Activity Dimension); 2. The investment capacity and its relationship with the determining activity (Investment Dimension); 3. The structure of reproduction of labor power (Labor Dimension). These dimensions make up the Accommodation Structure of the country, as shown in Figure 1.

<sup>13</sup> Ranging from 0 to 1, the closer to the former, the less sensitive (or stimulated/tensioned) the variables were presented in the face of the pressures that occurred in that period; the closer to 1, the more sensitive (or more stimulated/tensioned) the variables were. All this, considering the structure and dynamics of each observed segment. Therefore, the movements of the index show “how” the variables respond to shocks/tensions, given their respective structural conditions. For the calculation of the AI-Br, the following formulas were used:

a. For statistics whose variation causes a positive impact (improvement) (e.g., the share of industrial products in the export tariff) the index is calculated by:  $AI-Br = \frac{VS - Vmin}{Vmax - Vmin}$

b. For statistics whose variation causes a negative impact (worsening) (e.g., shutdowns) the index is calculated by:  $AI-Br = \frac{VS - Vmax}{Vmin - Vmax}$

Where: VS = value of the chosen statistic; Vmax = maximum value of the statistic; Vmin = minimum value of the statistic.

To estimate the AI-Br, it was defined that the analysis period for the exercise of the construction of the AI-Br was from January 2003 to December 2021, for standardization, due to the availability of data from the variables.

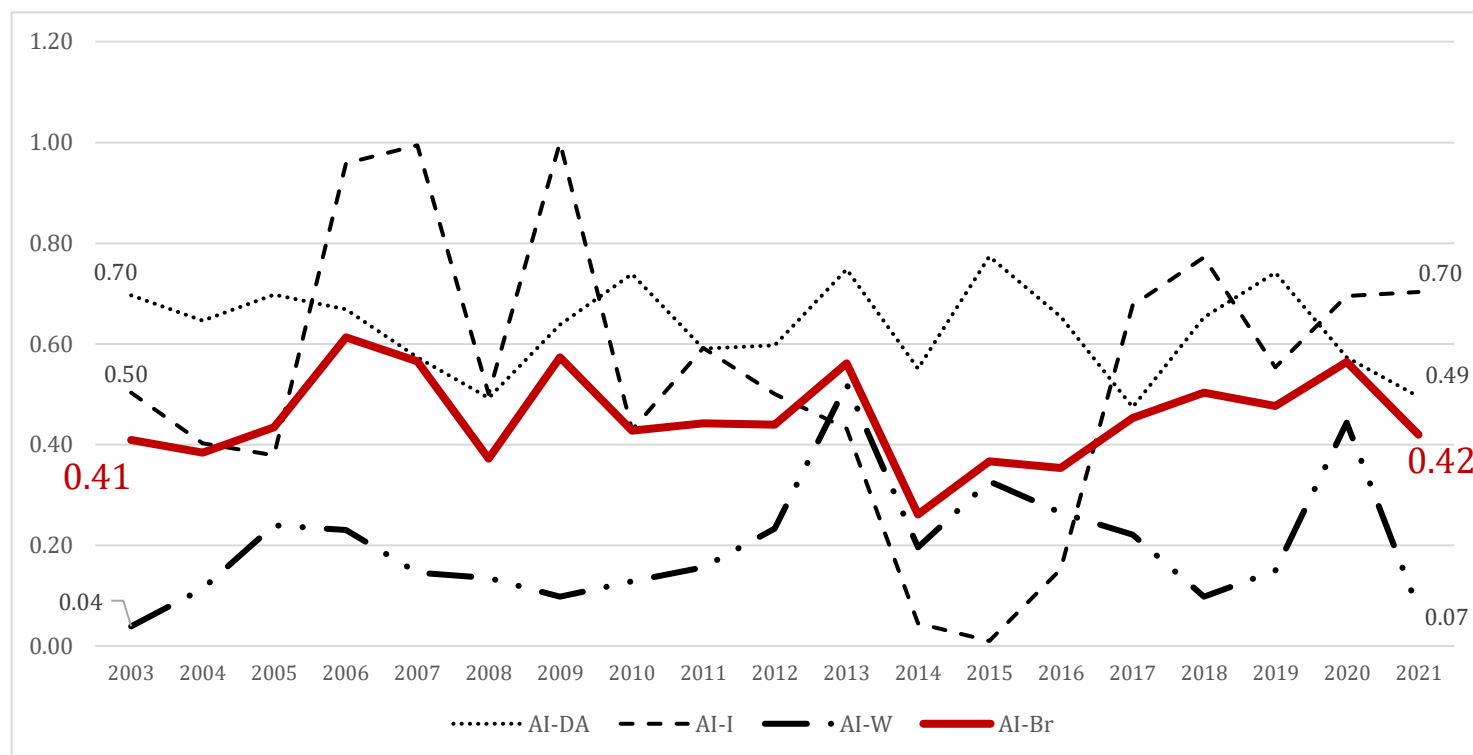
Table 1 – General composition of the AI-Br

Dimensions	Variables	Dimension-Specific Index	Weights	AI-Br
Decisive Activity <sup>1</sup>	Export volume (X). Positive impact Import volume (M). Negative impact	AI-DA $0.60 \cdot X + 0.40 \cdot M$	0,33	
Investment <sup>2</sup>	Installed Capacity Utilization (ICU). Positive impact Actual billing (AB). Positive impact Net Investment (NI). Positive impact	AI-I $0.50 \cdot NI + 0.33 \cdot ICU + 0.17 \cdot AB$	0,33	
Work <sup>3</sup>	Admissions (ADM). Positive impact Shutdowns (SHUT). Negative impact Average real income (ARI). Positive impact	AI-W $0.33 \cdot ADM + 0.33 \cdot SHUT + 0.33 \cdot ARI$	0,33	

Observations: <sup>1</sup>The volumes of X and M, measured in FOB US\$ million; <sup>2</sup>ICU and AB, deflated and deseasonalized indicators fixed basis; NI, in R\$ million; <sup>3</sup>ADM and SHUT, in quantities of workers, ARI, of the employed population, in R\$.

The AI-Br shows that the Brazilian economy presents a relatively constant response pattern throughout the historical series, with a growth rate of 0.45. A very close number to those observed at the beginning and end of the series (0.41 (2003) and 0.42 (2021)). The AI-Br expresses, therefore, that the Brazilian economy presented a regular response capacity (relatively stable cyclical movement) over the analyzed period.

Graph 3 – Evolution of the Accommodation Index of the Brazilian Economy – AI-Br



Author's elaboration.

It is admitted that this pattern tends to follow the general movement of the Dominant Activity Dimension (Exports and Imports), and in specific variations, such as at the beginning of the series during the commodity boom and, later in the pandemic period; but it also reflects the movement of the Investment Dimension, in very specific periods: international financial crisis (2008-2009) and domestic economic crisis (2014-2016), which brings us to the expressive level of dependence of the internal productive capacity to the dynamics of the Brazilian external sector (MOREIRA, 2018; Moreira, 2021). The AI-Br remains higher in periods of pre-turbulence: the financial crisis of 2008-2009, and internal economic crisis (2014-2016), as if the economy were sending

signals for the movements of accommodation to come; in addition to the high in the peak year of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the very short term (2021 compared to 2020), the AI-Br presents a decrease from 0.56 to 0.42. It shows less intense responsiveness from one period to the next. The accommodation of the Brazilian economy was due to a less expressive response from the external sector (0.57 in 2020; 0.49 in 2021), a stable response capacity of the productive sector (0.70 in 2020 and 2021), and a rigidity in the response of the labor market (0.44 in 2020 and 0.07 in 2021), expressing an index close to that of the beginning of the series. A conjuncture of accommodation based on a labor market tensioned by layoffs and falling real incomes, by stagnation of productive capacity, and by the cooling of the Brazilian external sector.

The political-institutional, conjunctural, but traditional forces, participating in this process of dismantling the Brazilian state capacity, initiated it from the political-institutional coup and the Constitutional Amendment 95, both in 2016 and unfold to the present as political-institutional tensioners (some indicated in Figure 1).

Signs of the times. The recent development took place with an ultraliberal government that tensioned towards the fraying of the structural coating, illustrated here, as the external dynamics based on permanent partners (with their permanent agendas) and internal investment (by hypothesis, accommodated in this reciprocal external dependence) on the reproduction of the labor force.

Jair Bolsonaro's government has established itself as a double threat: 1. on the one hand, from the perspective of capital (from Brazil and elsewhere), to the stability of the process of internal accumulation, traced in a historically constituted and intentionally maintained dependence, and which is established in capitalist and democratic political-institutional stability; and, 2. on the other hand, from the perspective of work to workers at the level of material survival, in a frank process of recrudescence of their cultural, intellectual, social, and political living conditions. Both are placed under the recurrent process of systemic economic restructuring that is taking place and that moves in the wake of tensions over global production and supply chains.

The conjunctural tension in the face of the response-mechanism, suggested here, imposes on the current president of Brazil, Luís Inácio Lula da Silva, political-institutional obstacles (in addition to the historical structural elements) to the possibilities of containing the pressures on the social fabric, in which such a structure [of accommodation] is established, in view of the economic and political legacy left by his immediate predecessor and the correlations of forces after the institutional coup of 2016. The possible solutions that your government can present to contain them, and/or minimize them, tend to remain, as a presupposition, the maintenance of the political-economic groups that centralize the command of this recent movement; that is, to reaffirm the primacy of accommodation, of the historical-structural dependence, of the Brazilian economy.

## Conclusion

In this paper, from a brief conceptual reflection, I pointed out the elements that constitute what I consider the dialectical process of internal accommodation of the Brazilian economy to the internal and external movements of the accumulation process. To this process of primacy by accommodation, of these general movements, I called accommodatism, in an approximation to what Aristotle indicates to us “to be at rest”: an economy that develops in the time-essence of its dependent-underdevelopment, expressly subordinated and, therefore, intentionally led to a kind of immobility, since it does not move as it could move.

This historical movement of intentional immobility, which is configured in a structure of accommodation that reflects the process of dependence, and systemic interdependence that is expressed therein, is established in a broad and offensive intensification of the socioeconomic, material, cultural, and intellectual conditions of a significant portion of the Brazilian population. And it expresses, as historical confirmation, that

In fact, we can only understand what is happening in underdeveloped countries when we realize that they develop within the framework of a process of dependent production and reproduction

(...) By reproducing this productive system and these international relations, the development of dependent capitalism reproduces the factors that prevent it from achieving an advantageous situation nationally and internationally and thus reproduces backwardness, misery, and social marginalization in its territory. (SANTOS, 2011, p. 16)

In the critical and threatening moment that the Brazilian reproductive-cumulative structure is going through, to what I refer as the central problem to be faced by its collectivity (and its institutions), the fraying of its social fabric, the effervescence of national density of the socialist forces is urgent, in a clear expression of social cohesion, which: 1. aims to overcome the response-mechanism, pointed out here, and that expresses the real conditions of [systemic] and subordinate (inter)dependence; and, 2. aims for a pattern of reproduction that, in addition to not tearing apart the existing social fabric, in the first instance alters it substantively afterward and sustains it within the framework of a humanly viable society (in the sense of being, and not of the thing to which the being has been subjected to be by this “self-destructive socio-metabolic” process), socially habitable and ecologically responsible-more-than-possible, overcoming capitalist social reproduction.

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