“In 2017, 86.31% of Brazil's total population lived in cities.”
São Paulo is the city in Latin America with the highest number of people living in slums [30.0% of the municipality or 3 million people, equivalent to more than a third of all of the favelados in the country]” (França and Barda, 2010) and http://www.planum.net/francesco-chiodelli-sao-paulo-the-challenge-of-the-favelas
Finance bias, exemplified by policies of export-orientation and ethanol prioritization, have led to systematic displacement and depeasantization of sugarcane farmers in northeast Brazil in favor of southeastern states.
WORLD EXPORTS OF SUGAR
[57.9 MILLION TONS]

WORLD PRODUCTION OF SUGAR
[185.9 MILLION TONS]

WORLD PRODUCTION OF ETHANOL
[28.5 BILLION GALLONS]

FROM 641.1 MILLION TONS OF SUGARCANE CULTIVATION
[2017]
Landless Laborers

Large-scale Plantation Farms

Highly Mechanized
Overview of Brazilian Sugar Industry

1. Google Earth
2. Raizen
What factors led Brazil here?
Recombinant Urbanization

“The analytical focus on the ‘recombinant’ moves us ... to instead focus on the precise institutional mechanisms through which differentiated agrarian property regimes combine with liberalization reforms to produce new geographies of uneven development”¹

- Sai Balakrishnan

¹ Reis (2017)
During the colonial period (1500 to 1822), the wealth generated from the trade of sugar was enormous. In relative terms, the value of sugar exports during the entire colonial period is twice the value of all the gold and diamonds mined in Brazil during the same period.
Developmentalism / ISI

“There are no agrarian problems in Brazil: all problems are now urban”

- Economist Francisco de Oliveira (1978)
Recombinant Urbanization

Colonization
Large-scale, Plantation Farming & Landless Laborers

Developmentalism
Industrialization, Mechanization, & Ethanol Prioritization

Liberalization
Export Orientation

Today’s large-scale, machine operated, capital intensive, export-oriented farming
But have transformations been universal?
## Variegated Configurations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SAO PAULO</th>
<th>PERNAMBUCO</th>
<th>BRAZIL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Urbanization</strong></td>
<td>95.9%</td>
<td>80.2%</td>
<td>86.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demographic Density</strong></td>
<td>166.25</td>
<td>89.63</td>
<td>22.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethanol : Sugar Ratio</strong></td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Area Mechanically Harvested</strong></td>
<td>47.6%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>37.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. IBGE: [https://www.ibge.gov.br](https://www.ibge.gov.br); inhabitants per square kilometer
2. Unica; thousand cubed meters of ethanol to thousand tons of sugar
3. Conab (2010): PERFIL DO SETOR DO AçÚCAR E DO ALCOOL NO BRASIL
Variegated Configurations

Sugarcane cultivation hectares per mesorregião
Variegated Configurations

Sugarcane cultivation hectares per mesorregião
Variegated configurations
But what may explain these variegated configurations?
“[T]he current economic formation is not due to ‘urban bias’, ‘rural bias’ or any misallocation of resources among economic sectors. Rather, it can be explained in relation to ‘finance bias’.”

- Nadine Reis
Finance Bias Driving Divergent Configurations

CONFIGURATIONS

TIME

Colonization  Industrialization  Liberalization

Sao Paulo
Finance Bias
Pernambuco
Surplus Capital
Finance Bias → Variegated Configurations
Finance Bias $\rightarrow$ Variegated Configurations $\rightarrow$ Divergent Outcomes:

- Labor migration & displacement
- Changing means of social reproduction
Depeasantization

“...expressed in deruralization (depopulation and decline of the rural areas of the world) and overurbanization (massive concentration of peoples and activities in growing urban centers of the world)...”

- Farshad Araghi

Study by Baptista (2017) from IBGE Brazil Census Data
1. Study by Baptista (2017) from IBGE Brazil Census Data
1. Study by Baptista (2017) from IBGE Brazil Census Data
Surplus Labor
Theoretical Construction
Complex flows of Surplus Capital and Labor