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# Urban restructuring, shopping malls and public spaces. Intermediary cities in Brazil

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## Abstract

Several authors have dedicated themselves to the debate about the decline and recent setback for the public spaces in contemporary society (SENNETT, 1988 [1977]; SMITH and LOW [2006]; MITCHELL [2006]; HARVEY [2006]; LOW [2006a, 2000 1996, 2005, 2005a, 2006]; Gomes, [2001] 2006; Arendt, [1993] 2002). This is a deep appreciation of the city produced for private purposes and a progressive disposal of its portion intended for "public"; he that hath no *a priori* set access rules; residency management or any kind of selectivity implemented.

With the advent of capitalist city, the transfiguration of the city as work (of art) for the city as a product (Lefebvre, 1968); allowed his abrupt reduction of contemplation and experience for the consumer; for private property; for merchandise. This profound change in the design of the production of cities has not stopped the public spaces were no longer produced or no longer be used. Cities, especially those that already have large spaces and produced a consolidated urban life, with citizenship in great complexity; They perpetuated the production and reproduction of public spaces as a way of structuring of cities.

Apparently, therefore, it seems a nonsense point, because debate is the regression of public spaces while the bureaucratic logic established of the production cities reinforces the importance of their productions. But the contemporary cities go this complex contradiction, obviously in some places more, some less; however, there is a deepening of social inequality and a growing trend towards greater design of residential segregation processes and urban fragmentation. Lose the possibility of producing the monocentric city and passes to a stage where the prevailing logic carries the potential of polycentric city.

More than a greater complexity in terms of technical division of labor, it is a new stage of social and territorial division of the urban labor; with new segregation elements, fragmentation and expansion of content the alienation of urban life, in which it strongly shows a decrease in collective understanding of spaces - including the public. Such questions presented as spatial logics were widespread in world cities; consolidating itself as spatial paradigms. However, the diversity of situations and geographical sites; socio-economic and political contexts devices, mitigates a myriad of spatial possibilities of accommodation of these issues; making contemporary urban geography much more diverse and complex. Despite other possibilities of analytical and territorial cut; interests us in this project, an analysis of the appearance of the shopping mall as an element that spatially consolidates the new demands capitalists and rebuilds new urban structuring in intermediary cities. We start, therefore, the fundamental

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assumption that there are different structuring of the spatial production of shopping malls in metropolitan areas and intermediary cities, in particular the scale, the scope, the geographic position.

In Brazil, many studies have addressed the work on shopping malls in several areas. In Geography, the pioneering study was doctoral thesis of Pintaudi (1989); which attracted a lot of attention to the subject and allowed other authors to develop research and reflections. In this sense, there are the works of Bienenstein (1993, 1997 and 2000); GAETA (1992); Pintaudi & Frúgoli (1992) and Silva (2013 and 2015).

Shopping malls arrive in Brazilian cities within a new political and economic context and after the 1990s, but especially after the 2000s, become more widespread throughout the country, with a strong presence in metropolitan areas and in medium-sized cities. Carry with them a set of spatial practices that decisively influence the change of urban structuring, decisively influencing the production of polycentric cities, along the lines of American cities, although subject to the historical issues, areas previously built, preterit sites and geographical situations. In our point of view, these are among the most important elements of the recent Brazilian urban transformations of the past 30 years, since the change cities morphologically and generate profound changes in the patterns of urban social life.

In this direction, we have to think of the differences of the metropolitan spatial realities and intermediary cities, because the latter have territories with dimensions that allow commuting facilitated between its geometric extremes apparel including new elements to the expressions of centralities, acquiring issues not they are consolidated only by distances, but mainly by accentuating social distinctions do not necessarily consolidated by dwelling places. Thus, the logic of the centrality of expressions do not follow the same patterns found in metropolitan areas, and it is worth mentioning that this is not only scales, but above all, scope.

As soon, we propose to reflect on the production of Brazilian cities, especially for this project - the average, about which influences the implementation of the shopping malls in urban daily life. To what extent these devices play roles in the public sphere? How is urban life - public - in private spaces controlled? How to advance the reflection of urban space fragmentation? What are the correlations between US urbanization and Brazilian urbanization, with regard to shopping malls and public spaces? Considering the pace of shopping malls deployment in Brazil, we need to think of new paradigm of Brazilian urbanization? What implications for urban planning in the production guarantee of effectively public spaces?

**Keywords:** Shopping Malls, Intermediary cities, public spaces, Brazilian cities