

**Fortified horizontal residential enclaves and the new urban segregation  
in cities in the interior of the state of São Paulo<sup>1</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> This article, an expanded and modified version of a paper presented at the X Congreso de Geografía de América Latina-AGEAL, presents partial results of a master's research developed at PPGARQ/UNESP, with funding from the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES) – Code de Financiamento 001, institution to which the authors would like to thank the support.

**ABSTRACT**

The Brazilian urbanization was marked by the center-periphery cleavage; however, changed from end the 20<sup>th</sup> century XX due to the spread of gated communities. These are closed spaces for housing, work, leisure, consumption and business, which are characterized by a defensive architecture, are walled and turned inwards, with sophisticated security systems that separate two social universes: the internal, restricted to the richest, and the external, associated with the violence and the poor population. This paper analyzes the gated communities in countryside cities of São Paulo, addressing the reasons that led to their diffusion – from the effects of the fear narrative to the dynamics of the real estate market – and their harmful urban and social consequences. The gated communities contradict the ideals of modern urban life, marked by diversity, anonymous encounters and the appreciation of public space as a sphere of exercise of citizenship rights. The analysis demonstrates that in the selected cities (Ribeirão Preto, Jundiaí and Bauru) the spread of closed urbanizations for residential use increased socio-spatial segregation, delimiting fragmented territories that obstruct free movement and increase social inequalities, in open contradiction with the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda (New Urban Agenda) of the United Nations (UN).

**KEYWORDS:** Gated Communities. Closed Spaces. Urban Segregation. Brazil.

**1. INTRODUCTION: URBANIZATION AND FORTIFIED ENCLAVES**

Brazilian urbanization is closely related to the consolidation of the developmentalist model in the country from 1930 onwards, that is, the pattern of import substitution, heavy industrialization and the intense migratory flows resulting imposed changes of all kinds in the national territory: both in the economic and demographic concentration in the center-south of the country, as in state and private investments in basic industries and the energy matrix, or even in the unequal forms of access to the supply of urban infrastructure that resulted in deep socio-spatial disparities.

As the social and spatial dimensions are intertwined and inseparable, "the Brazilian process of urbanization reveals a growing association with poverty, whose locus becomes, more and more, the city, especially the big city" (SANTOS, 1993, p. 11). The evolution of urban poverty and the treatment of this theme gained expression in varied spatial forms in different periods (VALLADARES, 1994): first with the tenement (turn of the century.XIX for the century. XX), then with the slums (in the 1950s-1960s) and finally with the periphery (from the 1970s-1980s).

Under these conditions, from an agrarian-exporting country at the beginning of the century. XX with a predominantly rural population, Brazil reached the end of this century as an urban-industrial nation that reached the position of 8th world economy. Throughout this period the demographic distribution was reversed: if before the urban population was only 15%, at the end of the century. XX reached the mark of 85%.

There is a broad consensus in the literature that this is how the center-periphery pattern of urban development was consummated. In this fragmented model, the central urban areas, endowed with better urban infrastructure, goods and services ("legal city"), were reserved for the strata of greater purchasing power. On the other hand, the peripheral territories ("illegal city") were occupied by the low-income population through self-construction in precarious, irregular settlements and devoid of infrastructure (housing, sanitation, transportation etc.). Thus, urban dispossession was consolidated and gained visibility (KOWARICK, 1979), sealing the deprivation of rights of the poorest, the deep inequalities of Brazilian society and the contradictions of its status as a periphery of capitalism in its urban configuration (MARICATO, 2000).

This model - paradigmatic of the urban development of large urban centers, but also identified in other urban contexts - was changed from the last two decades of the century. XX – in the midst of the political redemocratization of the country, the collapse of the

developmentalist model that further aggravated urban poverty, the restructuring of the economic base with expansion of the tertiary sector as well as the increase in indicators of urban violence (CALDEIRA, 2000) –, in the face of the diffusion of fortified enclaves, also installed on the fringes of cities.

The urban violence and fear that this phenomenon provoked were combined with processes of social change in cities, generating new contemporary dynamics of spatial segregation and social discrimination. Since the end of the century. XX, the original element reactive to these changes was the emergence and diffusion of fortified enclaves, private, enclosed spaces, monitored by security systems, for residential use, consumption, leisure or work (CALDEIRA, 2000). In this typology that includes modalities of multiple specific uses or eventually combined, stand out the vertical or horizontal "gated communities" (enclaves for residential use), disseminated as "a new type of housing" that have assumed the status of preferential format of the higher income strata. This new concept of housing combines five basic elements: security, isolation, social homogeneity, equipment and services.

The resulting processes of spatial segregation are visible as barriers are erected around these buildings, separated by high walls, electric fences and electronic surveillance equipment. Such barriers are inscribed in cities as a new security aesthetic that shapes various types of construction and strengthens the 'defensive architecture' (facing inward), imposing its logic of surveillance and distance, changing the character of life and public interactions (CALDEIRA, 2000).

Paradoxically, in the case the city of São Paulo – due to the scarcity of available land and the dynamics of the real estate market – most of these developments were installed in territories more distant from the central areas, approaching precarious settlements of poor populations, emblematic case of the Penthouse Building, a high-luxury condominium in the south zone built next to the Paraisópolis slum, one of the largest in the city (Figure 1). This physical contiguity, however, does not promote rapprochement and dialogue between different social groups, on the contrary, it seals separations as the resident public seeks isolation and social homogeneity.

Figure 1 - Penthouse Building and Paraisópolis slum, São Paulo (SP)



Source: Available at: <<https://live.apto.vc/edificio-penthouse-que-predio-e-esse/>>. Access: Oct 4. 2022.

The diffusion of this phenomenon altered the traditional forms of socio-spatial reading of Brazilian cities, once marked by the center-periphery cleavage, i.e., if before the urban fringes and the most peripheral areas were reserved for the low-income strata, the installation of fortified enclaves in these territories provoked changes whose physical proximity, however, did not mean social approximation between rich and poor.

The diffusion of these enclosed residential spaces also in cities in the interior of São Paulo "rests, to a large extent, on the idea that there is a generalized increase in urban violence and danger" (SPOSITO; GÓES, 2013, p. 7), and its rigid security systems do not only provide protection against crime, with this justification they are responsible for creating spaces that reaffirm spatial segregation and social inequality, strengthening hierarchies, privileges and exclusive spaces. Thus, "living in gated communities has as a decisive reason the search for security. Not by chance, this constitutes the main element exploited by the real estate sector, which thus created a "demand convinced by fear" (GOULART; BENTO, 2011, p. 184).

The image that confers status and a seductive idealization of the segregated experience is that of the enclosed residence, fortified, insulated, in short, isolated. The marketing of these developments presents the image of an island to which one can return at the end of the day escaping the city, in an exclusive world, among people with the same values, styles and standards of life. The enclaves are opposite to the city, represented as a deteriorated world in which there is not only pollution and noise, but, more importantly, confusion and mixing, that is, social heterogeneity.

When borders are crossed in the cities of walls, there is aggression, fear and a sense of unprotection. Inhabitants of all social groups have a sense of exclusion and restriction. For most, the exclusion is obvious, with access denied to basic social and civil rights and various areas, but even the wealthy inhabitants of the enclaves feel restricted. The city of walls imposes rigid borders, social differences are perceived with greater rigidity and the proximity of strangers is always perceived and potentiated in its dimension of dangerousness (CALDEIRA, 2000).

The choice for walled housing controlled by security systems causes a redefinition of the relations of its residents with the rest of the city, from different angles and social places. These points of view can be perceived as new forms of social, symbolic and territorial separation that present a city substantially transformed in its essence, with hierarchical redefinition of the social division of space, composition of a new periphery and the very redefinition of centrality (SPOSITO; Goes, 2013).

Gated communities create spaces that contradict the ideals of heterogeneity, accessibility and equality that have led to the organization of both modern public space and modern democracies, forged through social struggles and the principles of inclusion and equity. Using appropriations of public areas, fencing, border policing and distancing techniques, they create another type of public space, fragmented, with rigid separations and sophisticated security, in which inequality is a structuring value (CALDEIRA, 2000).

This urban composition strengthens and values inequalities and separations, composing an undemocratic and anti-modern public space. This type of urban organization and way of experiencing the public space that proliferates throughout the world – at a time when many societies that adopt it have undergone transformations of political democratization, overcoming racist regimes and struggle for heterogeneization resulting from migratory flows - it reveals the complex link between urban and political forms. In addition, "it indicates that

urban space can be the arena in which democratization, social equalization and the expansion of citizenship rights have been challenged in contemporary cities" (CALDEIRA, 2000, p. 12).

Such transformations make it possible to foresee the degree of complexity of the articulations between different dimensions of urban life, since in cities of different scales and location are underway these processes of spatial restructuring that potentiate segregation, towards socio-spatial fragmentation (SPOSITO y GÓES, 2013). The new established standard of spatial security constitutes the basis for a new type of public sphere, which accentuates class differences and separation strategies (CALDEIRA, 2000). In these conditions of narrowing the relations between spatial morphology and spatial morphology:

The choice to reside in these new residential developments expresses and reproduces the radicalization of differences (cultural, ethnic and political...) and, above all, of socioeconomic inequalities, guiding practices that produce not only a segregated city, which has been happening for decades, but a city in the process of socio-spatial fragmentation, in which the right of all to the city is not recognized, even as a promise or perspective of the future, in a context in which the role of the State in maintaining unity, through the promotion of integration, is also minimized (SPOSITO; GÓES, 2013, 289).

The anthropological approach of Caldeira (2000) associates the analysis of urban changes with the ways in which crime, fear of violence and the systematic denial of citizenship rights have produced a new format of segregation. In turn, Sposito and Góes (2013) privilege the geographical aspect and the territorial dimension of socio-spatial fragmentation. The theoretical and methodological differences in the emphasis of these distinct approaches – predominantly social in the first case (the fortified enclaves) and territorial in the second (the enclosed spaces) - they are not antithetical, on the contrary, they are complementary in that they refer to the connections between the urban, social and political dimensions and concern the same phenomenon: the contemporary forms of urban segregation that characterize Brazilian cities, both on the metropolitan scale (emblematic case of São Paulo) and in medium-sized municipalities in the interior of the state of São Paulo. In common, these analyses focus on fortified enclaves/enclosed spaces, complement each other theoretically and analytically, and emphasize their deleterious effects.

Finally, it should be noted that this phenomenon is closely in tune with the urban changes engendered globally regarding the protagonism of the real estate market in association with the financial market, a trend from which not even the countries on the periphery of capitalism escape. Harvey (2005) observes that these contemporary changes and crises derive from the difficulties of absorbing surplus capital, that is, it would be a problem of 'overaccumulation', whose unfolding would be a profoundly unequal territorial distribution of real estate investments, paradoxically culminating in the appreciation of some areas and the deterioration of others. And this 'solution' has only been possible thanks to the integration of the real estate market with the financial market, so that land rent and the corresponding developments have become very attractive for the accumulation of capital, a characteristic that obviously adds to the existence of a solvable market to consume the corresponding enterprises.

## **2. METHODOLOGICAL OBJECTIVES AND PROCEDURES**

This work had as general objective to formulate a comparative analysis of three municipalities in the interior of the state of São Paulo (Ribeirão Preto, Jundiá and Bauru)

regarding the diffusion of horizontal gated communities, examining the context in which they are inserted and their motivations, dimensioning their urbanistic, social and environmental consequences and, moreover, interpreting the original ways through which urban segregation in these cities is redefined in the contemporary period.

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The scope compared is limited to the analysis of horizontal gated residential condominiums because they are developments that consume extensive territorial dimensions and tend to expand the urban perimeter. Therefore, other types of fortified enclaves (vertical enclaves, commercial and service enterprises such as shopping malls, private educational institutions, etc.) are not considered.

The sprawl of the urban fabric profoundly alters the trends of residential location, commercial activities and services, which implies profound changes in urban structures (CALDEIRA, 2000). To this end, the starting point consisted of a systematic review of the interdisciplinary theoretical bibliography (Anthropology, Urbanism, Geography and other areas of knowledge) and studies that were dedicated to the urban analysis and the particular characteristics of the selected cities.

The methodological criteria included, firstly, the urban and socioeconomic characterization of these municipalities and, later, an urban and territorial analysis of the distribution of gated residential condominiums, in order to establish comparative criteria based on common variables, in the same way that one can identify particular and/or common aspects in the three selected cities in terms of urban normative, urbanization patterns and expression of various forms of socio-spatial segregation.

### **3. THE PROTAGONISM OF THE MEDIUM CITIES AND THE INTERIOR OF SP**

The accelerated Brazilian urbanization of the second half of the century. XX produced large cities and metropolitan regions, which began to concentrate most of the population attracted by employment and income opportunities, notably in the southeast region of the country and in the state of São Paulo. The intense migratory flows, the demographic expansion, the adoption of the highway model, the reluctant housing crisis and the urban contradictions soon signaled serious problems of infrastructure and territorial planning, contributing to the perception of exhaustion of this urbanizing paradigm.

Two emblematic actions indicated attempts to address such problems. The first occurred with the formulation of the II National Development Plan – considered the high point of the developmentalist project of the dictatorship, in the government of General Ernesto Geisel, in 1974 –, which tried to absorb the urban problem by including a specific chapter dedicated to the National Policy for Urban Development, but this movement was unsuccessful due to the triumph of an industrialist perspective concentrated in the center-south of the country.

The second, more complex attempt, predominantly in the 1970s, included actions and programs of the federal and state governments aimed at industrial deconcentration and the internalization of development, having focused on some regions of the country and more

incisively in the interior of the state of São Paulo (SP), not by chance the most developed and industrialized federative unit in the country.

What is conventionally called 'industrial deconcentration' did not mean the physical transfer of industrial or economic facilities in general, because of deconcentration (in the literal sense of plant relocations) there was very little. In fact, it was new investments that decentralized from a more general strategic logic, a moment that coincides with the heyday of the authoritarian regime. In this context, there was also the industrial deconcentration of the Metropolitan Region of São Paulo (RMSP), whose share in the Value of Industrial Transformation of the basic industry (VTI) decreased from 43.4% in 1970 to 29.4% in 1985 (NEGRI, 1988).

In contrast, the participation of the interior of the state of São Paulo in the VTI jumped from 14.7% in 1970 to 23% in 1990 (equivalent to 46.7% of the VTI in São Paulo), thus becoming the second industrial agglomeration in the country. That is, due to the restrictions on the densification of the RMSP, the attraction operated by the municipalities (the explosion of industrial districts and tax incentive policies dates from this period), the union pressures and the expansion of road infrastructure (especially road), the protagonism and attractiveness of the interior of SP grew significantly.

This was possible due to some complementary reasons: expansion of industries originally installed in the MRSP, including the automobile industry; installation of the two largest oil refineries in the country; extraordinary increases in the National Alcohol Program, both in agricultural production, industrial processing and capital goods industries, reflecting the new energy strategy due to the oil crises direct and indirect benefits of policies to encourage exports of industrial and agro-industrial products (coffee, soy, orange juice, meats, etc.); installation of technological and research centers that stimulated the establishment of companies in the electronics, computer and aeronautical sectors; consolidation of industrial centers and clusters; heavy investment in infrastructure, especially in expansion and modernization of the road network; and legal-environmental restrictions on densification in the MRSP (NEGRI, 1988).

This set of actions increased the importance of some cities in the interior of São Paulo, which, in addition to receiving new private investments, also had state support to expand their offerings of goods, services and infrastructure. These changes were not merely quantitative, in the restricted sense of increasing the number of new industrial plants and economic dynamization, but above all qualitative, in the sense of modernizing the agro-industrial sector and investments in cutting-edge segments, such as metalworking, petrochemical and electronics, with great urban impact.

Considering this evolution from a historical perspective, we arrive at a picture, in 2020, in which the state of São Paulo represented 31.2% of the Brazilian Gross Domestic Product (GDP), of which the wealth produced in the interior of the state accounted for almost half (47%) of the São Paulo GDP. In isolation, the GDP of SP would correspond to the 21st world economy.

However, if it is true that this process of economic boosting of the interior of the state of São Paulo effectively promoted modernization to some extent and industrial expansion, it also deconcentrated recurrent problems typical of large urban centers, namely: environmental compromise, extreme social inequalities, increased violence, in addition to demanding integrated solutions in metropolitan regions and significant conurbation.

As the country progressively urbanized, many cities in the interior of São Paulo (notably medium and large) began to live with problems similar to those of the metropolitan regions, since the physical-territorial expansion contributed decisively to stimulate real estate

speculation and land concentration, promoting socio-spatial segregation, in short, aggravating the problems of urban infrastructure and the marginalization of the poorest populations.

Moreover, with the intensification of the economic crisis of the 1980s – the 'lost decade', a cycle in which the Brazilian economy remained stagnant, as it did with other underdeveloped countries in Latin America – a growing restrained demand for services and public policies (housing, health, education, transport, sanitation, security) came to light that was directed at local governments. Thus, the urban reform agenda – originally associated with metropolitan regions, capitals and large cities – also became relevant to medium and large cities in the interior of São Paulo.

Data from the 2010<sup>2</sup> IBGE Census indicate that the median growth rate of average cities adjusted for GDP reached the mark of 153% from 2004 to 2010, a period in which the growth of the national GDP was 94%, that is, they are economically strong municipalities with growth higher than the national average and that concentrate approximately 25.8% of the Brazilian population (IBGE Agency, 2019).

In conceptual, methodological or operational definitions for the purposes of formulating public policies, the most common notion of 'average city' is that adopted by the IBGE based on demographic criteria, that is, they would be cities with a population between 100,000 and 500,000 inhabitants. However, this definition is analytically insufficient because it does not apprehend the influence and insertion of these municipalities in the network of cities the regional level.

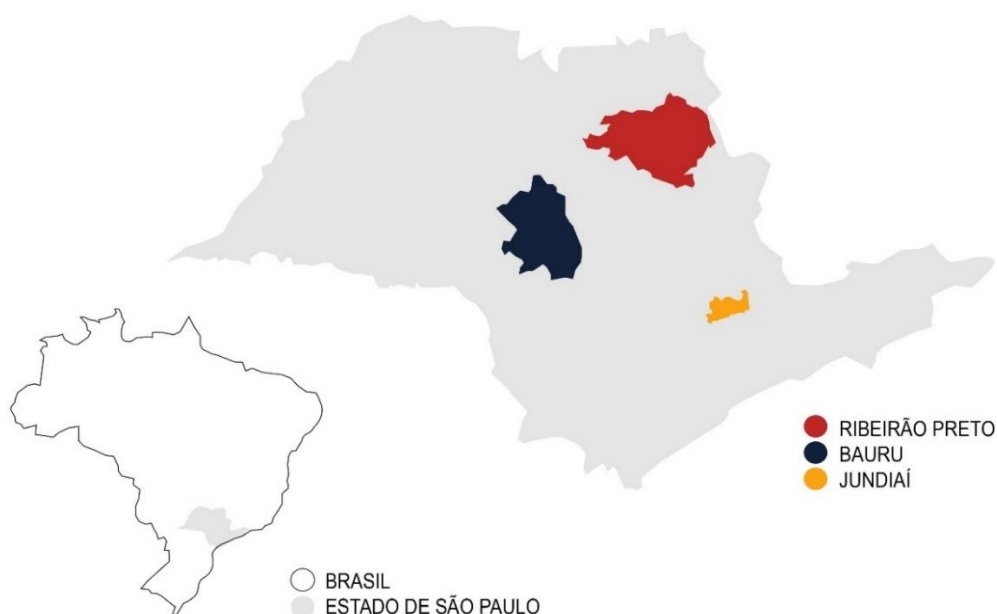
In these terms, it is methodologically recommended to adopt broad meanings that transcend strictly population criteria, such as those that value their importance in the regional urban structure, the capacity for polarization in smaller cities and leadership in the articulation of flows on an extra-municipal scale (consumption, services, etc.) and that, finally, value the relations of interdependence and hierarchy between cities (GOULART; TERCI; OTERO, 2017). The three cities analyzed here have relatively similar socioeconomic profiles (economic dynamism, some degree of regional polarization in their surroundings, high rates of urbanization, economic prevalence of the service sector, high Human Development Index) and have different locations (Figure 2). And, as will be seen below, the diffusion of horizontal residential enclaves in the recent period was remarkable in these three municipalities.

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<sup>2</sup> This is the census database available, since, due to health restrictions resulting from the covid-19 pandemic, the 2020 Census was suspended and data collection is ongoing and its conclusive results have not yet been released by May 2023.



Figure 2 – Territorial location of the municipalities of Ribeirão Preto, Bauru and Jundiáí in the state of São Paulo



Source: own elaboration, 2022.

The case of Ribeirão Preto, by institutional standards, is peculiar, because strictly speaking it cannot be characterized as a "middle city". It is a city headquarters of a metropolitan region in the northern region of the state that brings together 71 municipalities and has an estimated population of more than 711 thousand inhabitants, degree of urbanization of 99.72% and high HDI of 0.8. The city is a hub of the sugarcane agro-industry – in a region known as 'Brazilian California' for its sugar and alcohol production and high indicators of per capita income and quality of life –, but its economy is rooted in the tertiary sector, so that 83% of the employed population is grouped in the segments of services, public administration and commerce (GOULART; GONCALVES, 2019).

However, Jundiáí is located in the Administrative Region of Campinas, has an estimated population of 423 thousand inhabitants, with an urbanization rate of 93.96% and a very high HDI of 0.857 (GOULART; BENTO, 2011). In economic terms, in the composition of local GDP, the service sector accounts for 57% of wealth and the industrial segment for 19.3%. Finally, Bauru is a municipality with an estimated population of 380 thousand inhabitants (the most populous in the central-western region of the state), urbanization rate of 98.33 and high HDI of 8.01. The basis of the local economy is also the service sector (81.92%), followed by industry (17.82%) and agriculture (0.26%).

#### 4. THE DIFFUSION OF HORIZONTAL RESIDENTIAL FORTIFIED ENCLAVES

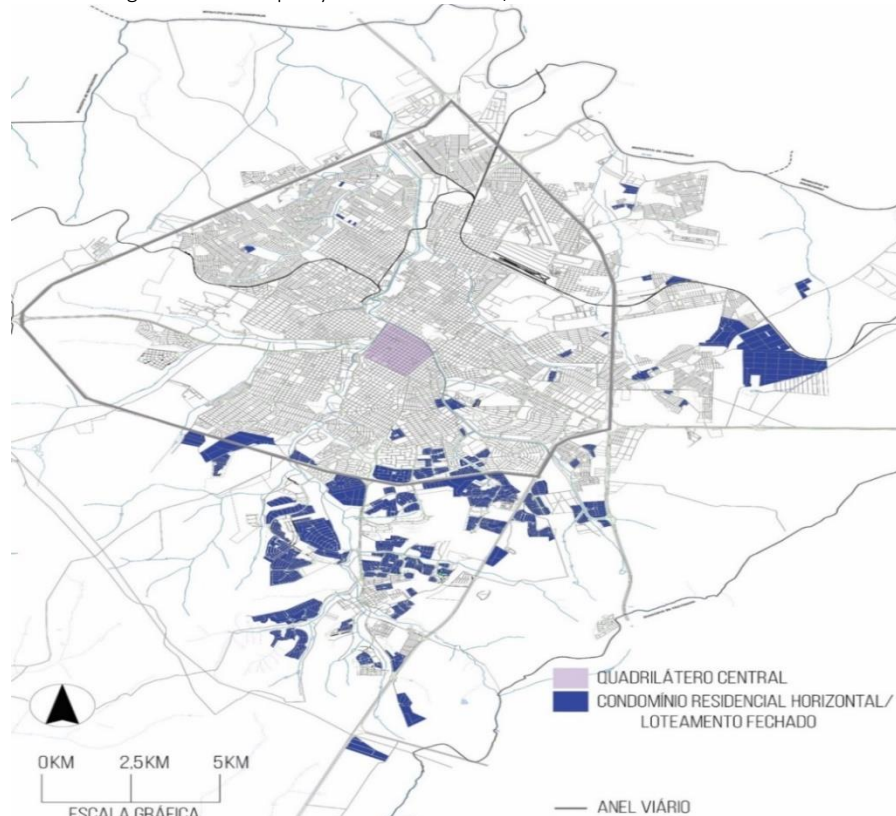
If originally the phenomenon of fortified enclaves was characteristic of large cities and metropolitan centers, from the last two decades of the 20th century onwards, XX – whose emblematic case is that of São Paulo (CALDEIRA, 2000) –, these enclosed spaces have been spreading in the cities of the interior of SP in recent decades, especially in richer regions and municipalities of the state, such as Marília, Presidente Prudente and São Carlos (SPOSITO; GÓES,

2013), Ribeirão Preto (GOULART; GONÇALVES, 2019), Jundiá (GOULART; BENTO, 2011) and Bauru (KRAUSE; GOULART, 2022).

This movement occurred for complementary reasons. Firstly, it is a highly profitable product for the real estate market, for which there is a significant high-income public<sup>3</sup>. Secondly, they are cities that have a logistics structure of excellent level (proximity to airports, modern road network etc.), which allows establishing intra-urban connections and those with the main urban centers, including the state capital. Thirdly, in these cities there was also the diffusion of the narrative of fear, stimulating closed housing formats, in addition to the search for status.

In the case of Ribeirão Preto, production began in the 1990s and was intensified in the first two decades of this century. Most of these projects (80%) are located in the southern region of the city (mostly in the portion outside the ring road) and also in the western region (Figure 3). As the city is served by good road structure in the urbanization territories of the highest social strata, the displacements are made by automobile in the western region (Figure 3). As the city is served by a good road structure in the urbanization territories of the higher social strata, intra-urban journeys are made by car.

Figure 3 – Municipality of Ribeirão Preto / Location of residential fortified enclaves



Source: Goulart; Oliveira, 2019, p. 51.

<sup>3</sup> Knowingly, Brazil registers an enormous concentration of income. A 2020 IBGE survey revealed that 1% of the population with the highest income held almost 35 times more than 50% of the poorest. The high-income segments are proportionally small, but numerically significant. In the cities analyzed here, based on the 2010 IBGE Census – taking as a criterion a high standard of income above 15 minimum wages –, Ribeirão Preto accounted for 14,973 people (2.1% of the city's population), Jundiá had 9,209 (2.1%) and Bauru registered 5,838 people (1.5%) In summary, in these cities there is a significant public of high income available for the real estate market and able to consume horizontal residential fortified enclaves.

The southern region also houses a greater amount of service supply and other types of fortified enclaves aimed at serving the high-income population, notably shopping malls and private schools. This trend of densification ratifies what is contained in the local urban legislation, whose Master Plan defines it as a "vector of growth of urbanized area".

And because the fringes of the peripheries of the southern and eastern regions have urban discontinuities and residential enclaves and interspersed urban voids, there are notable changes in the forms of perception and uses of urban space:

The presence of these enterprises generates situations of profound disorientation, creating a system of streets interconnected by generic roundabouts that eventually reach some highway. This problem, added to the scenario of public roads bordered by walls, left the southern sector without reference points, monofunctional and lifeless, since the two large complexes formed by Ribeirão Shopping and Shopping Iguatemi centralize commerce, leisure and consumption services (GOULART; GONCALVES, 2019, p. 56-57).

The regularization of residential fortified enclaves is controversial in Urban Law, since the rules of land parceling date back to Federal Law No. 6,766/1979. The legislation does not provide for the figure of "gated communities" (so called by the real estate market) as they imply restricting public areas for private use. The legal norm that regulates condominiums is Federal Law No. 4,591/1964, on which the local legislation on land use and occupation is based. The municipal executive tried to give legality to these projects through Municipal Law No. 2,505/2012, but this was declared unconstitutional by the Court of Justice of the State of São Paulo. Therefore, the legality of these ventures is still disputed.

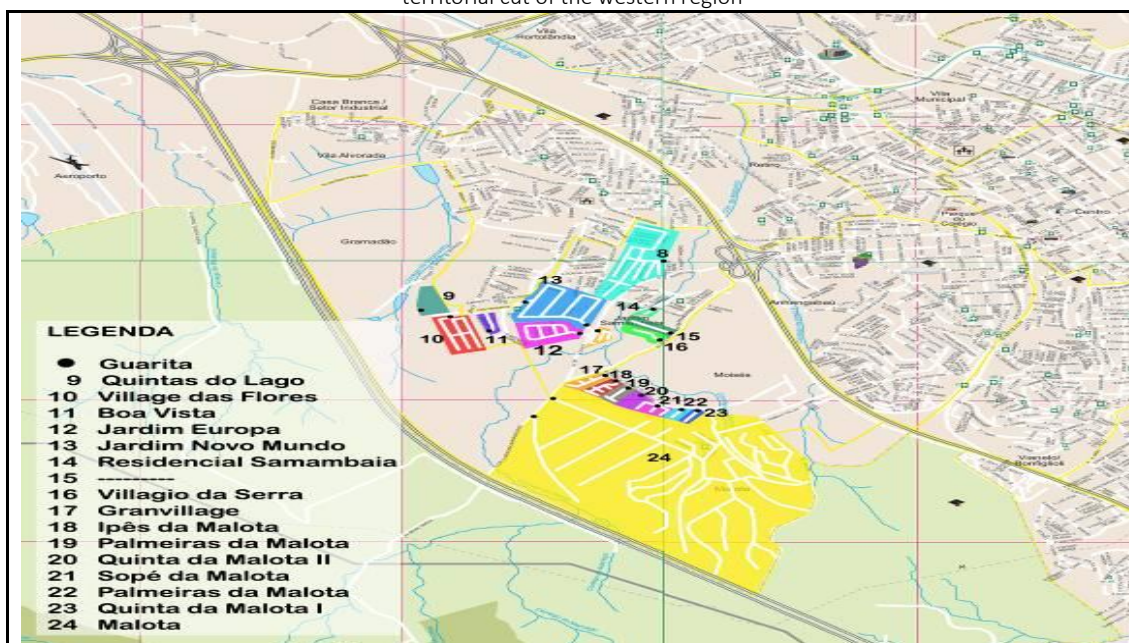
In the case of Jundiaí, urban expansion in recent decades has been directed to the territories near the Serra do Japi and in the rural area through new land parcels beyond the urban perimeter. This trend was motivated by the limits of densification imposed on the urban territory and by the demand for cheaper land, both by the low-income population and by the richer social strata.

According to local urban legislation, closed subdivisions are regulated by Municipal Law No.416/2004 and the Master Plan of the same year provides for the obligation to carry out a Neighborhood Impact Study for this type of enterprise. Still in the normative sphere, the municipality has a particularity because it is located in an Environmental Protection Area (APA), regulated by State Law No. 4,095/84 and State Decree No. 43,284/84, so that the city is considered an "environmental conservation unit", aiming at the protection of the Serra do Japi and the contiguous springs.

The spread of horizontal fortified enclaves dates back to the 1990s, and the highest concentration of these high-end enterprises occurred especially in the western region of the municipality (Figure 4), where the neighborhoods of Jardim Samambaia, Malota, Vila Alvorada, Casa Branca-Setor Industrial, Gramadão and Moisés are located. Thus, "the [territorial] cut has been shown to be an important magnet for investments, because its residents have high purchasing power, in addition to having complete urban infrastructure and privileged location" (GOULART; BENTO, 2011, p. 191).

This spatial movement is explained by its logistically privileged location between the Anhanguera and Bandeirantes highways (the main axes of connection between the city of São Paulo and the interior) and by the proximity to the Serra do Japi, an environmentally unique area conducive to the isolation of the urban network through its natural physical barriers.

Figure 4. Municipality of Jundiá / Location and delimitation of condominiums and closed subdivisions in the territorial cut of the western region



Source: Goulart; Bento, 2011, p. 189.

The search for social homogeneity and distancing from other social groups occupy a prominent place among the motivations of their residents, however, the contradiction is that "the enclaves also attract the poor population, which, to avoid displacement, settles in adjacent areas. This population demand – providing services to condominiums in functions such as cleaning, security, gardening, etc. – is directed to environmentally fragile areas" (GOULART; BENTO, 2011, p. 192).

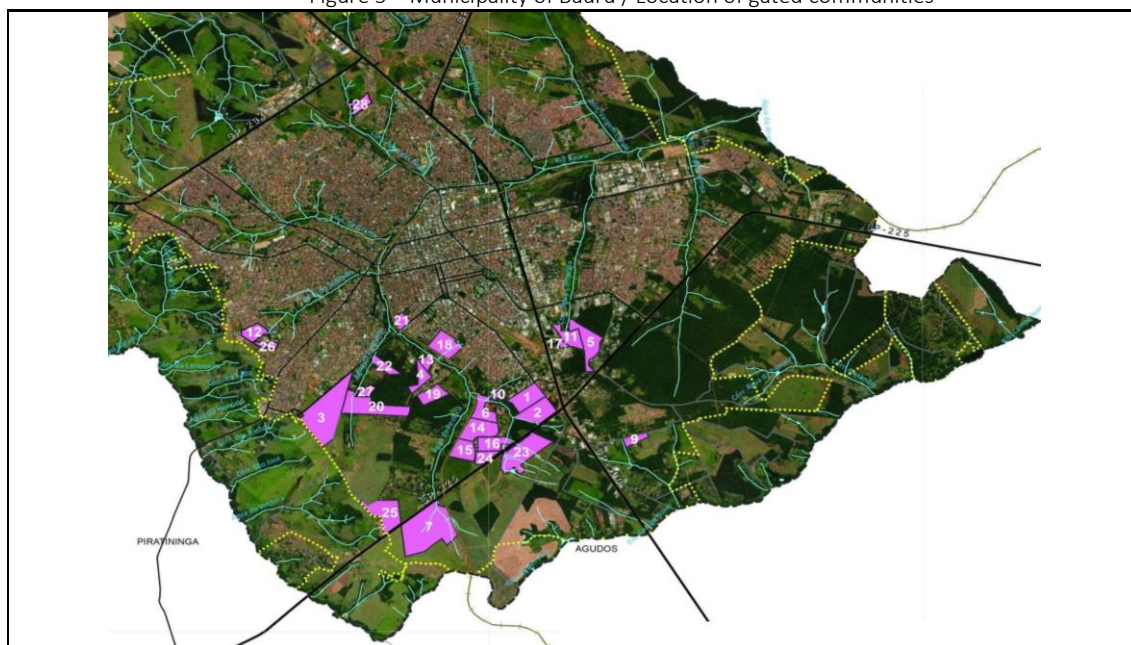
In the case of Bauru, the bet of the local elites to transform the city into a major industrial pole at the height of developmentalism was never consummated (LOSNAK, 2004), so that the municipality asserted itself as an important regional pole in the service sector. To this economic profile are added the effects of the decline of the railway modal in Brazil, which marked the development of the city making it the largest railway junction in South America from the 1930s by integrating three important railroads: the Northwest Railroad of Brazil, the Sorocabana Railroad and the Paulista de Estradas de Ferro Company.

However, these changes did not limit the intense expansion of the urban territory through land parceling and real estate developments, producing deep inequalities "of the infrastructure that make up the paving and rainwater drainage networks, as well as equipment such as leisure areas, health centers and daycare centers, and urban services such as cleaning of public areas, health services, of education" (CATELAN, 2008, p. 74).

In recent decades, the "real estate activity has consisted, above all, in the production of closed allotments, implemented mainly in the southern sector of the city, but also by a verticalized production for the traditional market along important road axes located in the same region" (DAMASCENO, 2021, p. 101).

Intensified in the last two decades, these 'closed urbanizations' are predominantly concentrated in the southern region of the city (Figure 5), a territory in which the population with the highest income was already grouped, endowed with better infrastructure, abundant in land supply and very well served by services in its vicinity (shopping centers, universities, leisure equipment, health services).

Figure 5 – Municipality of Bauru / Location of gated communities



Source: Krause; Goulart, 2022, p. 143.

The socio-spatial contradictions here are also repeated, since the location of these enterprises on the fringes of the city coincides with many precarious settlements and favelas in its surroundings, as is the emblematic case of the Jardim Nicéia favela, contiguous to three high-end gated communities (Residencial Sauípe, Residencial Odete Tavano and Jardim Colonial), institutionally characterized as "irregular occupation" (KRAUSE; GOULART, 2022).

Regarding urban regulations, Municipal Law No. 7,028/2017, which provides for the licensing of works and buildings, does not address or discipline allotments or gated communities, and Municipal Law No. 5,631/2008 (Master Plan) also does not directly address this modality, although it has instituted the Special Zones of Social Interest to promote differentiated patterns of urbanization and production of social housing. In summary, municipal legislation tolerates the spread of horizontal fortified enclaves without restrictions.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

Contemporary cities face dramatic and growing urban problems, and urban violence and fear combine with social changes toward new forms of socio-spatial segregation. In these terms, the historical center-periphery cleavage, while persisting, is no longer sufficient to explain the patterns of expansion and production of urban space as the spread of fortified enclaves, ironically, produces physical rapprochement between rich and poor while imposing even higher barriers on them.

The discourse of fear and the expansion of self-segregation practices – even in urban spaces where crime indicators are within conventional standards – is intertwined with processes of social transformation marked by social avoidance. Living, consuming and working in socially homogeneous spaces brings to light the contradictions of the fragile Brazilian democracy and its disjunctive character (CALDEIRA, 2000), that is, the exercise of rights – especially social and civil rights. The consequences of this configuration are latent in Ribeirão Preto, Jundiaí and Bauru.

Real estate production under this new logic has been significantly affecting the cities the interior of São Paulo, because the rules that organize the urban space are basically patterns of social differentiation and separation. This creates a security aesthetic that guides transformations in all types of housing and determines what gives more prestige to solvable strata. With the use of ostensible means of separation, isolation, restriction and surveillance are ratified through symbols of social status.

Thus the narrative of fear imposes itself and obstructs the possibilities of coexistence: streets, squares and other public spaces are abandoned and refer to insecurity precisely because they are socially plural. The enclosed spaces constitute a pattern that characterizes residential dispersion, fundamental elements in the process of urban restructuring. These developments impact the consolidated urban structures, changing the relations and flows, constituting new centralities and abandoning the old center. Urban restructuring deepens, imposing profound transformations in the intra-urban space (OTERO, 2016).

The local government offers a decisive support for this new form of urban restructuring, as it shapes the legal framework of its urban policies in order to enable and encourage this real estate production, ensuring the necessary infrastructure, access roads and public facilities fundamental to its feasibility. Not by chance, the urban laws of Ribeirão Preto, Jundiaí and Bauru have been strictly permissive with these real estate developments. In this new urban configuration, enclosure and ostensible security instruments offer means not only to suppress public space, but to create a new fragmented (semi)public sphere. It happens, however, that, among the necessary conditions for democracy, lies the requirement that everyone, indistinctly, recognize themselves as citizens, with the same rights to the city despite the differences (CALDEIRA, 2000).

It is also noteworthy that these ongoing changes directly contradict all urban protocols, notably the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda, after all, not only do not promote equality but also ratify and expand inequalities. Cities segregated by walls strengthen the feeling that different social groups belong to separate universes. Cities of walls, in addition to not being a democratic space, contribute to the corrosion of citizenship (CARVALHO, 2001).

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