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Fashion Luxury Retail and How it Shapes a City – The Case of São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Brasília, Brazil

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ABSTRACT

In this article, the luxury market for clothes and leather goods will be presented as an active agent in the making of urban structures in three major cities in Brazil: São Paulo, Brasília and Rio de Janeiro. São Paulo is the biggest luxury hub in the country, known for having the greater connection to the Global Cities Network, and therefore, to being the key city for analysing luxury retail structures in the whole country. Rio de Janeiro is known as the second biggest market for luxury items, and must be analysed not only for this, but also because it is the cultural hub in Brazil. Brasília is the capital of the country, and because of that, it attracts an elite group, but its market is smaller than the other two. It will be discussed how particularities in Brazilian cities and society shape up the luxury retailing areas, how these structures adapt themselves to the Brazilian cities, how is the typical luxury client in this three cities and the conflicts that occurs in the whole urban dynamics with the instalment of those commercial spots.

Keywords: Urban Geography; Luxury; Brazil; São Paulo; Rio de Janeiro

O artigo estudará como o mercado de luxo para roupas e marroquinaria será apresentado como um agente ativo na construção de estruturas urbanas em três grandes cidades do país: São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro e Brasília. São Paulo possui o maior mercado do segmento no país e é onde se encontra maior dinamismo econômico, graças a uma maior conexão com a Rede de Cidades Globais, sendo assim um ponto chave para estudar as estruturas do comércio de luxo em âmbito nacional. O Rio de Janeiro possui o segundo maior mercado de consumo de luxo no país, e deve ser analisado também por ser o pólo cultural nacional. Brasília vem em terceiro lugar pois

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é o terceiro maior mercado consumidor de produtos de luxo no país, é a capital do Brasil e possui uma forte ligação com as duas cidades. Serão debatidas as particularidades das cidades brasileiras e como a nossa sociedade moldou os espaços de consumo de luxo, como essas estruturas se adaptaram às nossas cidades, como é o consumidor de luxo típico de cada uma das três cidades e os conflitos que ocorrem na dinâmica urbana com a instalação desses pontos comerciais.

Keywords: Geografia Urbana; Luxo; Brasil; São Paulo; Rio de Janeiro

Introduction

The luxury market is known for its dynamism and for being spread all over the world. Its items are manufactured in selected countries and are sold for consumers from very different cultural backgrounds. A purse handmade in Italy can be desired and purchased by a South African, a British or a Chinese consumer, and the symbolism it carries would be recognisable in any upper-scale group that shares those values with a worldwide network of information and symbols. (Castells, 2010; Santos, 2006; Sassen, 1991)

This worldwide network is spread by the mass media and its symbols are usually defined by a small group of countries that spread those patterns to another parts of the world using the mass culture (Santos, 2001), which is controlled by the market and its most powerful players. In the Brazilian upper classes, the tendencies and products imposed by this global network dictates consumption patterns and social behaviours that are used by the members of the elite to consolidate their position in this social group, and the trends they buy are followed up by lower classes, trying to emulate this behaviour and therefore, gain acceptance in this exclusive global elite group, that circulates in a network of global cities (Castells, 2010; Sassen, 1991, 2002) and get access for coveted spaces in the whole world, that got this status because they are spaces of interest for the reproduction of the capital and the consumers behaviours stimulated by it.

The hypothesis of this research was objective: does the luxury market modify the spatial configuration of the three major luxury markets in Brazil? If yes, how it adapts itself to the cultural particularities of each place and where does it create its structures?

Giving a short answer, the luxury market does modifies it, it adapted itself to the cultural particularities by shaping itself through the social habits of the locals, creating centralities for their target public to not only shop for its products, but also hosting a crafted space for their social activities, becoming centres for this group and associating itself to their coveted status. It created its structures near these high-income neighbourhoods, whilst also being near impoverished areas, which originated a steep contrast in some of the presented cities. This will be further developed in the article.

The premise of this paper is to understand how does this type of consumption manifests itself in the Brazilian scenario, the spatial structures that the luxury consumption builds, how does they impact the urban configuration of the areas they are installed, and the conflicts derived by the proximity and the use of them by different social groups in the three cities mentioned.

The aim of this paper was to bring notions and concepts from diverse areas, such as Sociology and Marketing and surpass them to the geographical analysis, generating a spatial analysis comprising a more complex facet, by bringing the phenomena of consumption and luxury from its core to the geographical standpoint. This was achieved by the creation of ethnographic profiles and the conceptualisation of luxury, and the joint connection between them and the geographical structures and dynamics presented in the detailed analysis of the three cities.

This upper class group definition was firstly based by the stratification used by the Secretaria de Assuntos Estratégicos, of the National Government of Brazil. It is used as the official governmental reference to create and implement public policies. As stated in its official report, the upper class earns at least R\$ 11.262,00 (€2550, approximately, in the 2018 exchange rate) monthly in the year 2014, however the economical criteria was not suffice to provide a definition for the analysed group, as this limit was too low for the cities studied and did not reflected the true consumers' habits of the luxury customer, which was the focal point of the research. (Secretaria de Assuntos Estratégicos, 2014).

Even though it did not provide the whole basis of the concept, the economical stratum was the starting point for the creation of the definition of the "upper class group". As the cultural component was added, it started to clarify this image, and with the adoption of the consumers' behaviours and geographical locations, this profile was defined as a member of the Brazilian's elite, with an income of more than R\$ 30.000 (which, in 2015, was lower than the maximum public service income, that at the time was R\$ 33.763), but frequently going upwards of R\$ 50.000 or R\$ 100.000, as those numbers were suggested in interviews with salespeople, when trying to measure an average spending of the members of that elite group in their stores. (A data that was not included because it was highly subjective and did not provide a reliable number to create an average per location). All the income presented in this paragraph was in a monthly basis, as it is the common form of discussing incomes in Brazil.

It was noted that in each city, the luxury market adapted to the cultural and urban dynamics of the city. In Rio de Janeiro, famous for its natural beauty, the retailing spaces did not aim to be the major cultural centres, as the *carioca* culture does not cherish these as much as the *paulistano* culture, but in all three cities, they offered entertainment options, such as restaurants, cinemas, book shops and, in a few malls, even theatres. The key difference was in which scale the population embraced them as social centres. In Brasília, it has been a mixture between the Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo culture, as the shopping centres are frequented by luxury and non-luxury

consumers and also competing with natural scenarios as centres of social activities in the city.

The selection of luxury retailing spaces in this paper happened because it creates a great impact in the area where it consolidates itself, and this impact is felt not only by their target public, who acquire a new centrality (Corrêa, 1995) to shop, but also for people who are not the first demographic target group, which starts the conflicts mentioned above.

Brazil is a country that hit the spotlight in a global scale during the past decade, courtesy of a period of economic development (Aguiar De Medeiros, 2015) and the fact that it held two major sports events (FIFA World Cup and the Olympic and Paralympic Games). This potential scenario for an economic expansion is noted when analysing the numbers of the luxury market: an increase in the revenue originated by luxury companies: in 2009, the sector generated US\$ 6.230.000.000 of profits for the companies in that segment; in the year 2012, the amount was US\$ 10.550.858.036 (MCF Consultoria & GfK, 2013)

As the economic crisis hit economies in a global scale, it was noted that there was a slight change in the amounts purchased in this market in Brazil, as mentioned in the study “Global Powers of Luxury Goods”, where the Brazilian market is defined as “with a weak economy and widespread government corruption, the dire state of affairs in Brazil is having a dampening effect on the luxury market, and consumers are becoming more conservative with their purchases” (Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited, 2017).

But even with the reduction of sales based in a different consumer behaviour in Brazil, the study mentions that the luxury brands are adjusting their prices to align themselves with the global trend, which stimulates more locals to shop in Brazil, and not only when they go abroad. Also, it was noted that with the economic crisis, Brazilians are travelling less to international destinations, so they tend to shop more in the stores situated in the country. In the end of the Brazilian market analysis, the company states “Brazil continues to be an important market for luxury goods as it is home to a large number of wealthy people, and as the market is not yet mature, there is still a lot of potential for growth.” (Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited, 2017).

The market for luxury goods is highly connected to the network of services and informations of the global cities (Sassen, 2002), since they are produced in specific locations and distributed in different societies, with distinct values and behaviours. The international luxury consumer behaviour does not change abruptly when they cross physical national borders, and there is a strong similarity between segments of consumers in different countries than those within the same country (Wiedmann, Hennigs, & Siebels, 2007), as, maintaining their individuality originated and kept by their own cultural backgrounds and societal values, consumers converge tastes and references, thanks to the growth in the scale of the mass media signs and scale, the easiness to exchange symbols and communication in a global scale and the mobility of people (Cornwell & Drennan, 2004).

In Brazil, there are particularities that help shape the internal market, its trends and how do international trends are acquired by locals, but the focus on this paper will be in the spatial distribution of this phenomena, and how does it manifests itself in the urban reality of the three cities mentioned, since the Brazilian scenario is seen as a strongly competitive market in the luxury segment.

To begin this discussion it is important to discuss what is luxury, to fully understand its implications in a spatial scale, and the dynamics and controversies it sparks. Luxury is a highly discussed concept and phenomena, and there are quite a few variations on what is and how does it is perceived by society (Allérès, Gama, & Mouclier, 2000; Danziger, 2005; Silverstein, Fiske, & Butman, 2005; Wiedmann et al., 2007) The notion that will be used in this article is the modern luxury, by Lipovetsky & Roux (2006) that states that luxury is nowadays more connected to the global economic network than in the past, so their products can now reach a wider group, and that luxury is the most prestigious level that a brand can achieve within its public. (Wiedmann et al., 2007). Luxury is also perceived as something frivolous, extravagant and flamboyant, although it is used to imply that the owner of luxury products has a “good taste”, allowing the carrier of the product to differentiate themselves from other groups, who are not perceived in the same light. (Loureiro & Araújo, 2014)

The releasing of luxury products by mass-production brands seems like a manoeuvre for them to attain the status associated with this segment and surpass it to their products (Silverstein et al., 2005), in an attempt to make the brand more attractive for an upper-class consumer and to associate its image with this universe, aggregating more symbolic value to its products marketed towards the middle and lower-classes customers, who would perceive the brand as a part of this luxury world and therefore, would hold it in their highest regards, seeing the act of purchasing an item from the brand as a form of attaining a part of this coveted luxury status, even when this connection is not blunt.

Looking for a way to materialise this phenomena, there is a particular relation that develops in the current times: it is still seen as an element of social distinction, however its prestige can now be extended for a greater public, with the expansion of the array of products sold by the brands (such as *parfums*, leather goods, etc.), creating a category called quasi-luxury (Lipovetsky & Roux, 2006), to supply this demand for luxury goods in a mass-production *modus operandi* (Silverstein et al., 2005). Lipovetsky & Roux (2006) discussed that we are in a scale of luxury that can be called the marketing luxury – luxury brands are chasing results in a manner that is seen in the mass-production market, by creating shocking and transgressive publicity, speeding up the time to release new products, shortening the lifespan of products and creating manners to cheapen the beauty products to attract a wider clientele. (Lipovetsky & Roux, 2006).

To apply this concept to the spatial scale, it was studied the consumers behaviour from specific locations and neighbourhoods, in an effort to understand this dynamics: the luxury brands are looking to supply a demand from a certain type of consumer, but

their supply is not only chased and noted by their clientele – their presence is ingrained in the social imaginary, being reached by different social groups, in various manners. (Danziger, 2005; Loureiro & Araújo, 2014; Wiedmann et al., 2007; Yoo & Lee, 2009) The spatial structures of this relation (such as the brands' stores, shopping centres, strip malls, etc.) could be considered the spatial scale of this phenomena, and it too does affect a larger group of people, and not only the ones who are the target for the luxury market.

The research was conducted in the timespan of two years, starting in March 2015 and ending in March 2017, which were divided majorly in four parts:

1. Creating a strong bibliographic basis using authors from different areas and converging them to the geographical standpoint, providing a multi-field foundation for the posterior analysis. (Started in March 2015 and ended in January 2017)
2. After the assortment of methodological tools that would be used to achieve the purposes of the research, the second step was to define the places and consumers mapped, to create the links between consumers' behaviour and spatial phenomenas and set the informations to look forward to when heading to the field works and the interviews. (Started in July 2015 and ended circa July 2016)
3. After piecing together all those points, this step consisted in the field works and interviews with workers and consumers that composed the luxury market in the three cities, to fully understand the relationship between the points of interest and their public and to draft the ethnographic profiles based on the informations collected. (March 2016 until January 2017)
4. With the data obtained during the field work, it was needed to process the data, clearing what was useful to the research and what was unnecessary, and with that in hand, refining the ethnographic profiles, mapping areas that would be discussed and connecting them into a converging point that would serve as a starting point to a deeper analysis. (December 2016 to March 2017)

As noted, the steps overlapped, as they were constantly needed to be revisited and remade, giving that in each step or field work, new challenges were presented because of each place's particularities.

Considering the importance of this phenomena and the weight that the retail spaces carry, they were selected to be anchors for this analysis of the spatial conflicts and relationships that develop in those areas. The methodology used in this paper was divided between case studies (of similar consumption structures in Brazil, such as malls and commercial streets in the three cities), phenomenology (to better understand luxury consumption and how it would connect with the geographical analysis) and ethnography (to create the materialised link between the two concepts mentioned before). (Boni & Quaresma, 2005; Bourdieu & Accardo, 1999; Castells, 2010; Cerbone, 2013; Corrêa, 1995; Kamakura & Mazzon, 2016; Lima, 2007; Merleau-Ponty, 2013; Nakano, Campos, & Rolnik, 2004; Pintaudi, 1987; Pintaudi & Frúgoli Jr., 1992; Santos, 2001, 2004, 2006).

All the consumer profiles, consumption tendencies and behaviours in this paper were acknowledged to help construct an ethnographic profile of the public who circulates in that area, considering that their demands helps shape that specific centrality in the city. (Corrêa, 1995). The profiles were created based on interviews with professionals who work in the luxury stores in the retail spaces mentioned, analysis of the social presence of members of that group, interviews with consultants specialised in the national luxury market and the collected content was crossed with spatial and governmental data, with the intention of mapping this centralities and the conflicts surrounding them (Boni & Quaresma, 2005; Bourdieu & Accardo, 1999).

The importance of the creation of those ethnographic profiles of consumers was to create a profile that would be incorporated into the spatial structures studied, and therefore to the neighbourhoods and city areas discussed. It was built to comprehend the different faces of luxury consumption in the Brazilian society – what were the core values shared between these groups and the luxury consumer abroad, what particularities would they have when the spatial factor was analysed – what differences would occur in the retailing preferences between the ethnographic profile of the consumer of South Zone of Rio de Janeiro and the Cidade Jardim consumer in São Paulo, for example?

Since it was a difficult market to find reliable information, the need for non-structured interviews was crucial, to provide key points for the analysis, such as the comprehension of the symbolic code of behaviours shown in these places as signs to subtly identify the luxury consumers – and the posterior using of those to subtly (or not-so-subtly) segregate those who did not carry this set of behaviours from those spaces, creating spatial conflicts on the use of the structure.

The workers were approached in two different manners: for private consultants, the contact was made previous to my arrival at the cities, via email, and booking an appointment with them. With store clerks and managers, the contact was started only there, when visiting the retailing spaces, as the intention was to obtain a raw information, without previously made statements, and the depth of informations was determined by the openness of the salesperson – some of them gave detailed information (even creating visual references using products from the store), and others would give short and generic answers, so each interview was unique in a way. There was no previously defined number of interviews per mall, as there was no possible prevision of data collected per person, so it had to be an open number, to guarantee that the maximum possible data was gathered. In total, the number of workers interviewed was circa 70 in all three cities and 2 customers only, as they were much more difficult to reach.

All personnel spoken were kept anonymous, to keep their privacy – this was an important measure, to obtain information that would not be easily disclosed publicly. The majority of salespeople keen to speak were males (although females often contributed with the research), in their mid-30s to 50s, Brazilians (no foreigner was spotted working at the stores), their average income was not asked during the

interviews, they had an average of 5-10 years working at the luxury market, and the openness changed in each city. The most difficult to obtain informations was Brasília, which was explained by private consultants outside the city, because it is the centre of the national government, so it tends to keep it more private because a big portion of the luxury purchases are made by people linked with the governmental activities (which could not be confirmed with numeric data, as it is a sensitive topic, but was openly mentioned during the interviews with workers outside Brasília).

São Paulo came in second in difficult-ness because of the cultural profile of the city – it is a busy city where people usually are in a rush and in a more strict mood, which was perceived during the interviews, however after this first “clash”, workers there were very helpful and eager to collaborate with the research. Rio de Janeiro was the easiest to gather information, as the locals have a more laidback and friendly profile, which reflected on them, overall, being the more open to talk and providing detailed informations. It is worth noting that in both cities they offered key informations about the distribution of luxury consumers and how did their purchasing behaviour changed in different parts of the country based on their cultural backgrounds.

Also, there were interviews conducted with luxury consumers and non-luxury consumers who frequented those spaces, although it presented a small part of the interviews in this research, therefore not being used so broadly as the ones with the workers of this market. The intention with this was to understand what were their personal preferences when shopping and what symbols did they cherish (with luxury consumers) and how did they feel when they were walking around on those places (non-luxury consumers, usually heading to those malls looking for entertainment options, services or more accessible stores).

The interviews provided a strong basis to elaborate the ethnographic profiles, which were created using two key components: their geographical location and their consumers’ behaviour – how did they perceive a brand, what did they look for when shopping, which luxury brands were cherished in each place and which ones were despised (providing a crossing point using the notion of personas, the brand’s advertising and its geographical acceptance in the cities and their local cultures). These were not stated in this article because the main focus was on the spatial implications of these phenomena, so only the ethnographic profiles are mentioned.

Even though the analysis was maintained inside the Brazilian territory and in just three capitals, there were the following criteria to select the three cities discussed:

1. The size of their luxury market (being the three chosen considered the top three markets in the country)
2. The amount of luxury streets/commercial real estates (to define which addresses and neighbourhoods would be studied and visited during the field trips).

To answer those questions, an extensive bibliographic research was made, analysing private consulting reports from Brazilian and international companies, data collected

from real estate reports, a methodic analysis of each shopping centre of the cities and what was their target (stated in their websites), the stores in each mall, the prevalence of stores affiliated with the respective luxury foundations from five countries (Brazil, Italy, United Kingdom, France and Spain) and after that, the average income and price per square meter of the surrounding neighbourhoods of each mall pinpointed.

The discussion was divided in three cities, to offer a better understanding of the phenomena. São Paulo concentrates three shopping centres that can be considered luxury retail centralities, which are Cidade Jardim, JK and Iguatemi. Rio de Janeiro has the second biggest market, with two centralities in the city: Zona Sul (with street stores in Ipanema and a shopping centre in Leblon) and Barra da Tijuca (with the Village Mall). Both concentrate a very different type of client, and a big number of tourists, as Rio remains the most visited city in Brazil for leisure time (Brasil, 2016).

Brasília has the smallest of the three luxury markets, when compared to São Paulo or Rio de Janeiro, but it is discussed in this paper because it is the capital of Brazil, gathering an elite group based on its governmental connections, and also attends a part of the elite group of consumers from the Midwest area as well. For this combination of reasons, it became the biggest luxury hub outside the southeast region of the country.

1. The spatialisation of social inequality in Brazilian cities

To understand how these objects and spaces acquire a symbolic status that maintain their role as the keys to an exclusive and coveted group, it is important to understand the particularities of the Brazilian scenario and society. Even though we have an upper class that splurges when shopping and chases international symbols of wealth to consolidate themselves as part of this global elite, our socioeconomic scenario has a poignant inequality and a strict social mobility (N. do V. Silva, 2000), that is reflected in the spatial distribution of elements in Brazilian cities and how does the social actors interacts with them.

As people ascend in this system of classes, they tend to look forward to use objects and adopt behaviours that would give them the recognition as members of the elite. (Yoo & Lee, 2009) In the urban configuration, this position is materialised in the form of real estate in specific cities and neighbourhoods.

As these clusters of luxury were created, real estate market moved the lower classes citizens out of these areas and, depending on their income, they were pushed to live in a very particular spatial configuration that exists in every Brazilian metropolis: the *favelas*. (Leitão, Barboza, & Delecave, 2014; Nakano et al., 2004; N. dos S. Oliveira, 2011; Pequeno, 2008).

Favelas are an urban phenomena very familiar to Brazilians. It is a neighbourhood,

sometimes spread in areas that the capital did not had strong interest, with poor infrastructure for its residents, which creates a deficiency in their access for these services (Carlos & Pires, 2008; Magalhães, 2015; Travassos, Viacava, Fernandes, & Almeida, 2000).

According to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistic, a “subnormal agglomerate” (the term used by them in the Brazilian Census), is a group of at least 51 houses that attend the following criteria: construction in irregular areas (such as private properties or state’s territory that was not designated for this use) or an area that lacks on basic infrastructure, such as electrical power, sewage and clear water system and waste management.

At first, in cities that concentrated a major portion of the population of the country, such as São Paulo, favelas were settlements for low-income residents situated in the middle of the city, and therefore, near the jobs available. During the last half of the nineteenth century, the government tore down the *favelas*, forcing its residents to seek housing in the outskirts of the city, in steep hills or swamped areas, and offered few public housing options, leaving the majority of residents to rebuild their homes where they could, and not on government designated areas (Correia, 2006; N. dos S. Oliveira, 2011; Pequeno, 2008). There were *favelas* that were originated later, in the outskirts of some cities as a result of governmental policies, or in the central areas as a result of a decentralisation process (Corrêa, 1995) that moved upper and middle-class residents towards other parts of the city.

In present days, *favelas* are the main spatial manifestation of the social inequality that is so poignant in the Brazilian society. This scenario left a deep mark in every aspect of the Brazilian society and its manifestations, including the spatial dynamics of the major capitals. In some cities, they are located far away from the upper-classes centralities, and in others, they are close neighbours.

Independent of the geographic proximity of those areas, they present a dichotomous relation in the spatial dynamics of the cities. In the next chapter, this particular relationship will be shown in three major Brazilian capitals: São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Brasília. Each chapter will discuss the city and their subdivisions will discuss the commercial structures.

In São Paulo, the scenarios were divided on each mall (Cidade Jardim, Iguatemi and JK Iguatemi), because of their importance in the city culture – the malls are considered the centre of São Paulo’s social life, reuniting a plethora of entertainment options and providing controlled environments (in aspects such as weather, public safety or parking availability). As it received the first shopping centre in the country, the culture of shopping centre is already very ingrained there. Combined with a lack of available open spaces at the city, which happened when its buildings started growing up and the city started its rapid expansion, the shopping centre arriving at the city provided a brand new version of its local neighbourhoods centres. This key role as this centre was constantly mentioned during interviews with locals and workers of the malls, hence why they were the focal points of this city.

Rio de Janeiro has a different relationship with these centres – they are not seen as the first entertaining option for its residents, as this post belongs to its natural resources (such as the beach), the division by shopping centre proved to be deficient. The division based on neighbourhoods (Ipanema/Leblon and Barra da Tijuca) showed the whole complexity of the structures, and was highly suggested by local workers, as the consumers from one neighbourhood would shop in the other areas' mall, creating an interposition of groups that would not allow the creation of ethnographic profiles, hence why this is detailed when discussing the city of Rio de Janeiro in this paper.

In Brasília, the division was by its malls and department stores, as the division of neighbourhoods would not give a precise analysis, since the residents of other high-income areas usually reach to those places to purchase their luxury items. The ethnographic division of consumers was made after an interview with a manager from a traditional luxury department store, which had 10+ years in the luxury market of Brasília. This gave the understanding that the two ethnographic groups usually merge into the same places, not having any physical distinction, which did not happen in the other two cities – the groups usually crossed paths at the same place, but they had their “own” major spot, that concentrated themselves, which in Brasília was different, as there was no “major spot” for both groups. As an already upscale area surrounded the Magrella department store and its influence was smaller than a bigger commercial complex, the interest point in the paper was the Shopping Iguatemi, which stands at a small distance from an impoverished area named Varjão.

2. São Paulo

São Paulo is the biggest city in the country, concentrating 12.038.175 residents (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística, 2010) in the year 2010. It is divided in 31 boroughs with 96 districts, and it is the centre of the luxury market in the country, working as a hub and a thermometer of the Brazilian market for luxury companies that want to start their activities in the country.

In the year 2016, a field research was made to map the luxury retail centralities in the city, and it was noticed three major centres: the Shopping Cidade Jardim, JK Iguatemi and Shopping Iguatemi. The first one is situated in the Morumbi borough, and the other two are in the Pinheiros borough. Since they are located in different districts, they will be shown in two groups.

2.1 Shopping Iguatemi and JK Iguatemi

The Shopping Iguatemi is the oldest in the country, founded in 1966, and was the precursor of the modern shopping centre architectural plant in Brazil. Situated in the Jardim Paulista district, it became a centrality for high-income residents, as they set residences in its adjacent areas, and also became a touristic point for architecture enthusiasts for its history.

The JK Iguatemi mall was open in 2012, located 2,5km away from the Shopping Iguatemi, in the Itaim Bibi district. Even though they are situated in a short distance (both shopping centres are located in the Pinheiros borough) and the area between them is filled with upscale residences and commerces, they tend to attract different groups of consumers.

The Shopping Iguatemi is consolidated amongst upper-class residents, and works as a place to shop for luxury goods and for services that would be consumed in the streets of the city, such as supermarkets, banks, convenience stores, gyms, phone repair shops and travel agencies. This arrangement of services transforms the shopping centre in simulacra of a city centre, minus the unpredictable and uncontrollable factors that are found in the streets. (Ortigoza, 2010). All the social interactions spotted *in loco* have the same common denominator: the people socialising there came from a specific group of upper-class citizens, who reside in that borough (as told by salesperson who works in that shopping centre).

The difference between the two shopping centres appears in this aspect. In interviews conducted with salespersons in both places, the public who visits the JK Iguatemi was defined in two groups: the shoppers from the luxury brand were defined as mostly tourists, who came to visit a relative living in the city, and uses the occasion to shop for products that they cannot find in their hometown. The second group is composed of residents of São Paulo, that do not necessarily live near the shopping centre, but head there to consume within the entertainment options provided, such as the cinema and the restaurants. Since they do not walk around the mall, it gives the idea of a commercial centre with a low flux of consumers, which was mentioned by every salesperson interviewed.

Since the JK Iguatemi mall is fairly new (inaugurated in 2012), it did not consolidate itself as a luxury centrality (Corrêa, 1995; Santos, 2004), not holding the same amount of social activities spotted on Shopping Iguatemi nor having a strong income of costumers shopping there. As both malls are located in coveted areas, surrounded by luxury residential buildings, there was no direct conflict with the instalment of the shoppings centres mentioned.

2.2 Shopping Cidade Jardim

The Shopping Cidade Jardim is situated in the Morumbi borough, on the opposite side of the Marginal Pinheiros from the other two shopping centres and it was inaugurated in 2008. On the top of the shopping centre, there are nine residential buildings built for high net worth residents, who created an unparalleled scenario in the country: a vertical neighbourhood with privileged access to the shopping centre and its resources, and the shopping centre offers a big diversity of services to attend these costumers. Also part of the project, are two commercial towers, but they will not be discussed in this article since they are not luxury retailing spaces nor created the biggest impact in the region.

It was built near a favela, called Jardim Panorama. The JHSF Company, who built the complex, bought the homes from low-income residents who lived in the area, and with the land, created this fortress-like temple of luxe. The public transportation access is very difficult, having few buses and no connection to the metro lines. When arriving by bus, there are no signs indicating the entrance, which in that level occurs only by one elevator in the docks area, built for workers only.

The access for pedestrians to the shopping centre is very difficult, being made only by that single workers' entrance, and walls of at least two pavements' height surround the shopping centre. Surrounding the building, there are private security doing rounds and carrying heavy armament. It is important to mention that the price per square meter is one of the highest in the city. In a research using ZapImoveis, one of the biggest real estate websites in the country, the average price in the Parque Cidade Jardim was of R\$ 20,000 per sq/m (in comparison, the most expensive borough in the year 2017 was Vila Nova Conceição, with R\$ 16.124 per sq/m).

In interviews with workers of the luxury retail market, it was mentioned that the residents of the buildings above mainly frequent the mall, being perceived as an extension of their living rooms. Its use is mostly to supply their demands, and they engage in acts of socialisation and consumption as if it was in the centre of a neighbourhood.

Since it is a very strict and small group that gain their access by living in a vertical mansion with a high cost, they tend to be a very tight knit community and not keen to meet with anyone who is not inserted in that group, hence the easiness for the residents to access the shopping centre and the difficulties for pedestrians or neighbours who do not drive a car (which is often associated with a higher income in Brazil).

The flux created by that mall is vertical, and it has a unique character since it is the only place in the research with this character. Residents take the elevator to go down to the mall, shop for their necessities, go to the gym, walk to the restaurants and then take the elevator up to their homes. There is also a unit from the Albert Einstein hospital inside the complex, schools of arts and crafts for kids and a spa exclusive for residents. Even though this complex has a vivid social dynamic, it is disconnected from the adjacent areas, as seen by its relationship with the favela Jardim Panorama. Situated near outside the complex, it was a settled long before the mall, in 1957, and remains an area with a lack of urban infrastructure up until the present days.

As the structure was built, the JHSF Company mentioned that they would have a program to capacitate residents from the Jardim Panorama community to work at the complex, and they would build schools of sports and courses for the residents, but this connection was never effectively made (Savassa, 2014).

The residents from the favela that were in the terrain where now is the complex were

expropriated at the time of the construction, receiving R\$ 40,000.00 and no guarantee from the government that they would be relocated anywhere, since the State of São Paulo did not interfere in the negotiations, in a manoeuvrer supporting the high-end complex, and the remaining residents suffer a strong pressure from the real estate prices, as the area surrounding the favela is now composed of high-end condos.

The case of the Cidade Jardim mall is the most notorious due to the complexity of the project and its size, but it was a recurrent topic that the shopping centres were used as centralities for *paulistanos*, in a similar manner as the parks and commercial streets of the city centre were in a past time, and this is found in almost any stratum of the society. This became somewhat cultural in the city, and one of the strongest characteristics of *paulistanos'* social behaviour, so it did not come as a surprise to find the luxury market building and occupying these simulacras (Baudrillard, 1994)

3. Rio de Janeiro

Rio de Janeiro is the cultural hub of the country. For 197 years it was the capital of Brazil. It is home of the biggest Brazilian broadcasting company, major football teams, fashion brands and it is the biggest touristic destination in Brazil. Its cultural patterns dictate the trends in fashion, music, entertainment, movies and soap operas. It has a strong division in three areas: the north zone, south zone and west zone.

In São Paulo, the consumption patterns are fairly similar in all neighbourhoods analysed, so the focus was on the retailing spaces. In Rio de Janeiro, the two zones have a strongly different consumers' behaviour, and the retailing spaces do not concentrate this information as well in São Paulo, so the focus will be different. In São Paulo, the shopping centres were often used as places to gather together and engage in social activities, and in Rio de Janeiro it is not the same, since *cariocas* tend to gather in other places, such as the beaches and clubs. Considering only the relationship with the malls would generate a lack of comprehension, it will be focused on the consumption behaviour and social behaviours using ethnographic profiles to try to build this scenario.

The north zone is composed of working class neighbourhoods, and even though it is in the city of Rio de Janeiro, has a different cultural pattern, so it will not be discussed in this article because the target group to be analysed resides in the south and west zones.

The south zone was occupied by high-income residents since the last quarter of the XIX century, because of the urban policies of the time – more specifically, the designation of the tramlines, which created new vectors of expansion of the city outside its already overcrowded centre. As the interests converged, from the tram companies and the local government of the time, these lines guided the occupation of the areas outside the city centre, defined by the quality of the trams and the permeability of the trams

with the city centre.

The low-income residents were pushed to the northern areas of the city and the scenic, beachfront areas were designated to the wealthier residents. This was consolidated later, in the period between 1903 and 1906, with the urban modifications developed by the mayor Pereira Passos, inspired by the Haussmann works in the late XIX century Paris. (Ferreira, 2009; Freire-Medeiros, 2009; S. S. R. de Oliveira, 2012; N. dos S. Oliveira, 2011; Valladares, 2000)

The first favela in the city surged in 1897, at the city centre, and spread through the south zone with the expansion of the tram lines, as the workers accommodated themselves near the construction site and after it was done, if they did not find any positions in other sites, they had to build their homes near the places where they found jobs. This explains the urban configuration of Rio de Janeiro nowadays, and why there are plenty of high-income neighbourhoods a few minutes away from consolidated favelas.

In Rio de Janeiro, one of the main wealth symbols is the physical shape of a person's body. Like in other countries, skinny is a media-encouraged look, but in Rio de Janeiro there is two dominant shapes: the South Zone stereotype is skinny, with toned muscles but nothing too apparent, lightly tanned, using a light and natural-looking makeup, similar to a body coveted in the fashion industry for a runway model. In the West Zone, it is a whole different shape: a strong body, with big and apparent muscles, heavy makeup, long hair and a tanned complexion, similar to the figure shown by fitness models on Instagram. It is important to mention that they are stereotypes created based by interviews with workers of the two areas and by empirical observation in commercial places and centralities of both areas (such as restaurants, cafés and plazas), with the pure intention of helping to elaborate the ethnographic profile of the clients by creating a guidance to elaborate a visual image of them.

The two aesthetics have something in common: both need a considerable amount of money to be achieved. Gym fees, nutritionists, endocrinologists, personal trainers, beauty treatments in specialised clinics, dentists, and the free time to tan and work out on the beach during the day. It all demand a complex structure, and showing that someone can afford to not go to work and instead use this time to take care of their appearance, is a sign of wealth. The use of objects is not as valued there (as in São Paulo or Brasília), and the reason mentioned by workers interviewed in the city was the concern with muggings and the violence in general, since Rio de Janeiro has a strong problem in this topic.

3.1 South Zone

The south zone is they key inspiration for the soap operas and the whole *carioca* way of life that is sold worldwide as a laidback, fashion spirit. It is composed of a few neighbourhoods, but the focus on this work will be the Leblon and Ipanema area. Those are the places with the highest price per square meter in Brazil, and are very

coveted for their status as worldwide touristic destinations and their status. There are families who live there for generations, and it makes them part of a strict group of traditional families, whose elitist position remotes back to the Portuguese crown times, but also *nouveau riches* who made their money and moved there.

In Ipanema, there are luxury boutiques at the Garcia D'Avila Street. The only Louis Vuitton street store in Latin America is situated there, and there is the NK Store, a multi-brand store with international and Brazilian luxury brands. Even though it is the most expensive price per square meter for commercial spots (Cushman & Wakefield, 2015), there are not many international luxury brands, but it has flagship stores from Brazilian brands who benefits from the status of having a spot in a coveted street in a worldwide famous neighbourhood. It is situated approximately 1,6km away from a favela.

In Leblon, there is the Shopping Leblon, inaugurated in 2006, who holds some international luxury stores, such as Dolce & Gabbana, Salvatore Ferragamo, Versus and Burberry. It is situated in a very coveted and notoriously expensive neighbourhood, but its direct neighbour differs from the rest of the Leblon. Right behind the Shopping Leblon, there is a council-housing complex built in the 1950s, named Cruzada de São Sebastião. Ten buildings were created, in an effort from the government and the Catholic Church, led by bishop Dom Helder Câmara, to give proper housing for people living in an impoverished area nearby (*favelas*).

Its project was to bring former favela residents to apartments with infrastructure, and for them to supply the demand for lower income jobs in the Leblon area, creating diversity inside the Leblon area and stimulating the socialisation between those two opposites social strata. As the military dictatorship progressed, they moved out the bishop to another part of the country, as he was perceived as a “communist”, and this was the only project of this nature in the upper-class areas of Rio de Janeiro.

When the Shopping Leblon was built, it compromised itself to work with the impoverished community, giving job opportunities and creating a school to teach specific skills and sports, in a similar project from the Shopping Cidade Jardim. Analysing the reports made by the mall administration, during the period between 2006 and 2015, there were actions taken to interact with that community except in the year 2014, when there were no records (Bulnes, 2017)

Even suffering by problems commonly found in the favelas, the Cruzada de São Sebastião is strongly influenced by its wealthy surroundings, showing signs of a puissant gentrification process, evicting former low-income residents and attracting a middle class group, who wants to live in the Leblon area but cannot afford the cost of living in other parts of the neighbourhood.



Figure 1: Aerial view of the area. The Shopping Leblon is the white structure and the Cruzada de São Sebastião is composed of the ten buildings aligned behind the mall.
Source: (T. Silva, 2013)

This dichotomy between upper-class areas with high net worth residents and favelas with low-income residents living without basic urban infrastructure is a traditional mark in the urban dynamics of Rio de Janeiro, specially in the south zone. As a result, when the elite creates centralities, it tends to segregate people by building walls and restricting the access for a pre-approved group, but this cannot be created in retailing spaces, so the barriers are invisible, formed by a set of rules, behaviours and use of specific symbols, which knowledge and acquisition of said items is passed between members of that group.

When people does not fit that pattern, they tend to be harassed in different degrees. From being looked down on to being explicitly expelled and prohibited to access the malls, the range of actions is subjective and protected by the malls' internal regimes.

In 2016, there was a polemic phenomena nationwide called *rolezinhos*. Low-income teens arranged a meeting on the internet and it took place in specific malls (and some of them were upscale malls, such as the JK Iguatemi in São Paulo) and public spaces to engage in social activities, as the space of the mall was considered a place for people to gather together and find entertainment – a habit that transcend social divisions, as it is commonly done by different groups of people in Brazil.

The response of the malls was fast and incisive, restricting their access with a plethora of measures, from putting security guards to follow them up until getting judicial authorization to close their doors and apply a steep financial penalty for anyone from the *rolezinho* that entered the building, or restrict the access inside for workers and

upper-class citizens, which were categorised based on a subjective criteria that would not be explicitly described for the public, but had allegations of racial undertones, since the majority of people barred were young, African-Brazilian citizens, as stated on the media at the time. This information was not confirmed by the malls nor approached at the time the research was conducted, mainly because it was a phenomena happening concurrently and did not had scientific studies conducted at the time, yet.

While in São Paulo the clash of opposite social strait is more difficult to happen due to the distances and the fact that upper-scale boroughs are generally surrounded by middle-class areas, creating a belt involving those places and making more difficult for lower-income residents to access said upscale commercial centres, in Rio de Janeiro this clash is constant, due to the proximity of upper-class areas and favelas, being within metres from each other in some parts of the city, and this phenomena is seen only in this area, of all of the three cities mentioned in this paper.

Upper-class consumers do purchase their luxury items in the places mentioned before (Garcia D'Avila street and Shopping Leblon), but they also visit the Village Mall, which is located in the west zone, in the neighbourhood of Barra da Tijuca.

3.2 West Zone

Seven administrative regions compose the West Zone of Rio de Janeiro, but the focus of this paper will be in just one: Barra da Tijuca. It is known as a booming neighbourhood, with plenty of gated communities for high-end mansions or apartment buildings, and it developed a whole different cultural pattern, when compared to the other coveted area of the city who congregates high income residents (the south zone). Barra da Tijuca (or "Barra", for locals) was projected by Lúcio Costa in 1969, in a similar project that he made for Brasília – heavily influenced by modernism and the Athens Charter, it prioritised large avenues, with plenty of green areas, preserving the natural resources and the mobility of the residents (Le Corbusier & José Luis Sert, 1942).

As a result, edifications followed a different pattern there. Instead of a dense block of buildings that gather together a big contingent of residents in a small, verticalised neighbourhood, at Barra da Tijuca the edifications were tall, but had plenty of open areas around them, avoiding a dense block of tall buildings.

The principal commercial spot for luxury products is the Village Mall. Inaugurated in 2012, it attracted notorious international luxury stores such as Louis Vuitton, Valentino, Burberry, Dolce & Gabbana and Versace, to name but a few. It was built to supply the demand from the client from Barra da Tijuca, which wants a luxury hub in their neighbourhood. There were conducted field trips there to analyse the profile of the client from that area in the year 2016, with interviews with salespeople and managers that work there.

During the field researches conducted in 2016, it was mentioned that the *barrense* (name given for the residents of the Barra da Tijuca) client could be classified as a

nouveau riche consumer (Lima, 2007). Usually they had a modest upbringing and earned a great amount of money with their professional activities, so they are very proud about their money and spending habits.

As a result, it is a customer who likes to show off their possessions. As told by salespersons during the field trips carried to Rio de Janeiro, this customer prefer to purchase items who have a flamboyant logo, that would be easily recognised by people from different social groups, not only those who are familiar with the brands (like the south zone consumer). They carry big purses with a visible logo, chunky jewellery, high heels, long hair and are very expansive in their social activities.

It is important to make a point about the two types of consumers' behaviour mentioned: even though they have their differences in their mannerisms and the products they purchase, both use this phenomena as a way of maintaining their position as a member of the elite, behaving in what would be defined as "conspicuous consumption": subtly showing their wealth and power, consolidating their position inside an exclusive and coveted group of the society (Veblen, 1994).

The media portrays the barrense behaviour and appearance as the coveted pattern for the *nouveau riches* from the whole country – in soap operas, when a character earn a substantial amount of money, they change their clothes for the ones seen in this consumer, and since the influence of soap operas is seen in every state of Brazil and it is watched by people from different social classes, this behaviour is notoriously recognised by a larger group than the one from the south zone.

4. Brasília

The capital of the country is a young city. Founded in 1955, it attracts a big contingent of people from another states, creating a mix of cultures and social behaviours. Its luxury market is concentrated in a few neighbourhoods situated in the central area of the state. According to the Distrital Household Sample Survey, who works as a local census, the highest earning administrative regions in the year 2015 were, in order, Lago Sul, Park Way, Sudoeste/Octogonal, Plano Piloto, Jardim Botânico and Lago Norte (Governo do Distrito Federal, 2015).

In Rio de Janeiro, there was a division regarding the behaviour of two groups of clients, which were the traditional (south zone) and the *nouveau riche* (Barra da Tijuca). In São Paulo, the division was clear when analysing the physical structures of luxury consumption (the shoppings centres). In Brasília, this division works in another unique way. The difference between the consumers behaviour in Brasília is not strongly defined by their neighbourhood, so this division will not be used in this area. The retailing centres are not a good anchor point, since there is only one shopping centre in the city that is defined as a luxury centrality and one department store.

Brasília has one shopping centre that will be defined as a luxury retail centrality, which is the Shopping Iguatemi Brasília. At the time of its inauguration, it sparked a gentrification process in the surrounding area. The Centro de Atividades do Lago Norte, a commercial area designed to supply the demand of the residents of the area, was quickly turned into mixed use buildings, with commercial stores on the first floor and small apartments on its next floors, aimed to attract a young high-income clientele.

The other luxury retail centre in the city is the Magrella multibrand store, at the Lago Sul. It is a department store that sells clothing items, accessories, jewelry, household items, shoes and purses for both men and women, and has international designers in its shelves. It will not be discussed in this article because it is already located in the most expensive neighbourhood in the city, so its gentrification impact was not relevant. In the spatial scale, it can be highlighted the Shopping Iguatemi Brasília, that is currently the only luxury centrality in the city that offers a similar scale of the impact mentioned in the two cities discussed before.

4.1 Shopping Iguatemi Brasília

The Shopping Iguatemi Brasília is a shopping centre from the same group that built and controls the Iguatemi São Paulo and the JK Iguatemi, discussed before in the paper. Located in the Lago Norte area and inaugurated in 2010, it has international luxury stores, such as Louis Vuitton, Dolce & Gabbana, Gucci, Burberry, Hugo Boss and Christian Louboutin, serving as a hub for those brands to expand their activity in the Brazilian territory outside the Rio de Janeiro-São Paulo axis (for Burberry, it served as the beginning of its operation, being the first store of the brand in Latin America).

The mall was built in the Lago Norte administrative region, at the Centro de Atividades area. The administrative region was created in 1994, by the District Law nº 641/94, and the use of the Centro de Atividades area was regulated by the Supplementary Law nº 621/02, authorising the construction of residential buildings, mixed with commercial stores, revoking the past legislation that discussed about the theme (Decree nº 13.255/91, Decree nº 13.743/92, Decree nº 15.117/97, Decree nº 18.731/97, and the Decree nº 19.458/98).

The area was originally conceived to serve as a commercial centre for the residents of the Lago Norte area and surrounding regions, and it followed this profile for quite a few years. From 1994 through the early years of 2007, it started to change its profile, by suffering from a steep and incisive process of gentrification. The spike on the price per square meter was of 300% in the period between 2009 and 2011 (Amorim, 2011), and there was a change on the profile of the stores there: businesspeople that operated small stores that offered non-expensive services were seeing their rent rise and not being able to sustain it, closing their doors and leaving up space for new commercial centres, targeting the new affluent residents. (Amorim, 2011).

The construction of the Shopping Iguatemi Brasília served as a key factor in the process of changing the area's character. Residential buildings were created targeting a middle

and upper class, and there was a new vector of flux of consumers heading up on the north side of the city to purchase luxury products. The Shopping Iguatemi Brasília was created with the idea of becoming a luxury centre in the city, bringing traditional international luxury brands and investing in architectural elements that symbolised this distinctive character.

It possesses a rather complex relationship with a neighbouring administrative region named Varjão. Situated 1.5km in the northeast direction from the shopping centre, the Varjão area is one of the poorest in the Federal District, with an average residential income of R\$ 2.274,00 in the year 2015 (in comparison, the Lago Norte area where the mall is, has an average residential income of aaR\$ 12.598,00 at the same period.) (Governo do Distrito Federal, 2015).

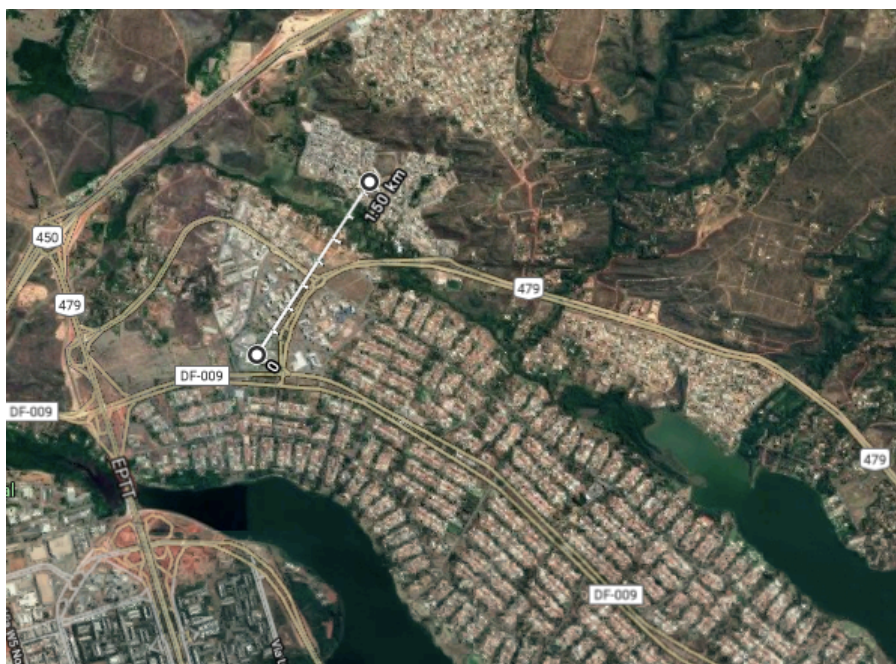


Figure 2: Distance between the Shopping Centre Iguatemi (marked as the starting point) and the Centre of Varjão, in Brasília/DF.

Source: created by the author in 2018 via Google Maps.

The Varjão area is not a close neighbour such as the examples seen in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, but the proximity with the mall does affect it. As discussed before, there is an unspoken and complex group of symbols and behaviours in luxury centralities, as a way of clarifying who belongs into that group, and this happens as well in Brasília, in this centrality. The access is primarily by car, although there are pedestrian accesses. However, the public transportation options are scarce, in an effort to attract a higher-end clientele (in a similar manoeuvre as the Shopping Cidade Jardim, in São Paulo) and difficult the access of people who does not possess a car (as mentioned before, having a car is considered a status in the Brazilian society, often associated with higher classes).

People that do not partake in the specific unspoken code of behaviour and appearance,

often feel uncomfortable in luxury centralities, varying their perception of unbecomingness, but it being a constant feeling while there. As seen in observations *in loco*, people that could be judged differently from that pattern often were chased discreetly or always kept on eye by private security. The code of rules of the mall states that it is forbidden to walk in a group larger than 5 people, and also that is not permitted to stroll around the mall without shoes, bathing suit or shirt and the presence of informal sellers or people that would approach the clients, which are measures that can permit a plethora of interpretations, leaving an open space for the administration to remove a person that would be consider not in harmony with the ambiance.

Even though it has a notorious proximity with the shopping centre, the Varjão residents do not fit into that code mentioned above, and therefore their presence there is not stimulated there. It is important to mention that shopping centres usually do not charge a fee to enter their premises, however the selection of their target and possible exclusion of an undesired group can be made by controlling spatial factors, such as location (making it more difficult for a group to reach the mall), by applying that subtle code of behaviour and creating legal premises that could justify a possible action towards this group.

Although the luxury market in Brasília is smaller than in the other cities mentioned and its client is familiar with the process of shopping for their products in another cities and countries, the luxury market in Brasília does show a big potential to become a strong centrality in the long term, since there are high-ranking government posts in the city, which generate a steady flux of clients for these brands. However, there is a need to keep a keen eye on how does it will develop, in an effort to reduce gentrification and the expulsion of lower classes from their residences and places of socialisation.

Conclusion

Brazil has a rich market for luxury products. Even though its economy faces periods of economical and political crisis that affects the reliability of the national market, it keeps a steady demand for selected items and brands, mainly supported by an elite group spread across the territory. (Campolina Diniz & Vieira, 2016; Gratius & Segre, 2014; Melo, 2016; Nunes & Melo, 2017; Rodrigo-Caldeira, 2017; UNITED NATIONS IN BRAZIL, 2017) These items carry a symbolic value, granting their carrier the status of being part of a coveted group in the society, because their symbols were created and its status are maintained by the cultural pattern found in the world in the current days (Douglas & Isherwood, 2004; Harvey, 1992; McCracken, 1991).

In Brazil, the luxury consumption manifests itself in a cross-societal manner and in different scales in those groups, as it does not manifest only by the sole acquisition of a product. Upper class consumers in general tend to purchase their fashion products and use them as symbols to consolidate their position of power in an economic unequal

country.

To be able to analyse this phenomena and understand how it manifests itself in the Brazilian society, the research was conducted in four phases: the first was to identify what were those spatial and social inequalities and why they were associated with consumption.

The second step was to research theories from a wide variety of authors of different fields (such as business administration, publicity, sociology, philosophy, urbanism and economy, to name but a few). This second step was fundamental to understand the phenomena of luxury consumption in different fields, how they interact, how it manifests in a spatial scale and later, to gather the tools that would be used in a field work, to filter which informations would be collected and why the use of interviews with workers and consumers of the area.

The using of interviews was a key factor to discover new informations. Since it is a market known for its discreetness, the information easily available did not had the spatial scale that was needed to differentiate its nuances and how it changed from each city, which would provide a poor analysis and would not be interesting to bring it to a geographic scale, as it is seen that even in a municipal scale, there are particularities on its customer and how these malls and streets manifests its influence within their neighbourhoods.

The data collected allowed to create ethnographic groups, that helped the understanding of the luxury consumers' habits, and in a second moment, to spatialise them, creating a link between geographical spaces and consumer behaviour, which was a key factor to analyse how these spatial structures influence their neighbourhoods. Without the knowledge of the consumer behaviour, it would be difficult to surpass the barrier of the superficiality on the already known subtle segregation between groups in those spaces.

This type of consumption manifests itself on the Brazilian scenario in different manners – within its target, it is used as symbols of power and wealth, consolidating the position of power of the person in their social group. For those who cannot afford the products, there is a specific type of consumption being held, which is to purchase cheaper items from those brands or just stroll around and be seen in those spaces and posting it on social media, which can be used as a form of gathering a piece of that notorious status. It is highly important to note that the using of social media to showcase this power is not restricted to this group.

In Brazil, the retailing spaces of the luxury market reflect the social inequality and the problem of the urban violence. The majority of the places mentioned in this work are difficult to be reached by public transportation, commonly associated with low-income residents in the Brazilian society, and with the exception of the Garcia D'Avila street in Rio de Janeiro, they all are in controlled environments, with private security and written codes of behaviours that allow the expulsion of people "behaving badly" (a

subjective concept that can mean a person committing a crime or just not wearing shoes, to give an example). Some of them have physical barriers that discourage the access for pedestrians (such as not having an entrance at the sidewalk level), but this is an exception in the architecture of those malls.

As the malls are installed in the neighbourhoods, there are some spatial impacts that occur as a consequence. The price for residences nearby rise, as the mall is a centre for commercial activities, which is highly valued for being considered a centre of commercial activities and services. (Padilha, 2003; Pintaudi, 1987). As the prices rise, traditional residents that cannot afford the increase in housing pricing have to move away, sparking a gentrification process in the area.

Gentrification is a worldwide phenomenon, however when it is analysed through the particularities of the Brazilian society, it gets another dimension. In one place mentioned (Shopping Cidade Jardim), there is a favela next door of the complex. In a space of less than one kilometre, there are residences lacking basic structures and vertical mansions of 1.888 sq/m. (A. de Oliveira, 2016; Paloni, 2012; Savassa, 2014). This proximity was also seen in Rio de Janeiro, with the Shopping Leblon and the Cruzada de São Sebastião (which is seen by the shopping centre's windows at the top floor).



Figure 3: View from the Favela Jardim Panorama to the building complex of Cidade Jardim, including the Shopping Cidade Jardim, in São Paulo/SP

Source: (A. de Oliveira, 2016)

The consequences of this proximity are the instalment of physical (as seen by the photo above) or unspoken barriers to avoid the mixing of these groups inside the space

of those malls. This symbolic barrier was mentioned in publications of authors of different fields, such as Sociology, Marketing and Geography, to name but a few, and later confirmed through empirical observation in loco and during interviews with people who work within this market. (Lima, 2007; Padilha, 2003; Pintaudi, 1987)

As those malls presented entertainment options for different social groups, there were a wide variety of people that could be found there. From luxury consumers (which will be called “targets”) from people that could not afford to shop there, but would go chasing entertainment options or to shop for fast-fashion options when available, the difference was clear as crystal in the manner that they would be treated. When seeing people dressed in a simpler way, they would be looked down upon, followed by the mall security or even, in extreme cases, being denied the access onto the mall (as happened with the *rolezinhos*).

The conflicts vary with the urban dynamics of each city. Rio de Janeiro had the biggest proximity, being that 2/3 of the malls studied were less than two kilometres away from impoverished areas. São Paulo came second, with only one mall being less than one kilometre away from a *favela*, and Brasília, which one mall stays one and a half kilometres away from a nearby-impoverished neighbourhood. These can be explained by the urban configuration of each city – Rio de Janeiro having the closest proximity due to its urban history, São Paulo having middle-class neighbourhoods between the majority of its luxury malls and impoverished neighbourhoods, and Brasília having a green area between the mall and the low-income area, which has its boundaries highly controlled by the planned configuration of the city.

The form of displaying those symbols vary between the two ethnographic groups before mentioned – consumers originally from wealthy families that were born and raised into this universe tend to purchase products that have no logo or are made by luxury brands not known by the public outside this universe, requiring a previous knowledge of the luxury market to be recognised, that is acquired by the study of those symbols – a phenomena that can be related to the conspicuous leisure. (Veblen, 1994). Wealthy consumers that were not born into their wealth (commonly defined as *nouveau riches*), usually tend to reach towards products that are easily recognisable as luxury items by people that are not necessarily inserted in this market – monogram bags and golden symbols were mentioned by salespeople when asked how to describe a bag for this segment of public. It can be explained by the fact that their social group is not necessarily inserted in this market, and also because they did not had the knowledge background acquired by traditional wealthy consumers, via their years of conspicuous leisure.

The Brazilian middle class also purchases luxury items, although in a scarcer rhythm than the other two groups, via the acquisition of personal luxury goods and beauty products, such as make up and body fragrances. (Danziger, 2005), however they were not discussed in this paper because even though they make for the largest amount of sales and revenue in this market, they are not the main ethnographic profiles portrayed in Brazilian culture of luxury consumers. (Bulnes, 2017; Deloitte Touche

Tohatsu Limited, 2017; Silverstein et al., 2005).

The places studied in this paper did not had only luxury consumers – plenty of non-luxury consumers frequently go through those spaces, looking for entertainment (such as cinemas, restaurants, supermarkets or just strolling on the corridors of the malls) or to buy things, in luxury or non-luxury stores. In field works, it was spotted that a substantial part of consumers was not partaking in the behaviours that characterised the ethnographic groups of those places.

Even though their presence was notorious, it was mentioned in a few interviews with the luxury market workers and a few non-luxury consumers that there was a clear barrier between them and the target from those retail spaces, posing the non-luxury consumers as somewhat of intruders in that space, even if there was no written rule for this exclusion. Also, when speaking with non-luxury consumers, they would feel somewhat embarrassed when given those looks (which was commonly appointed when speaking with African-Brazilian citizens, which portrays a race question on this topic, that was not deeply discussed through this paper).

As the luxury market consolidates itself as a coveted gathering of symbols and status, in a notoriously unequal society, it is bound to surpass the barrier to physical barriers. Although in none of the places mapped in the research there was a spoken or physical barrier to non-luxury consumers, there were symbols of exclusion manifested in two areas: subtle and explicit.

The subtle exclusion was the looks given by luxury consumers and workers to non-luxury consumers who were at the places investigated, as stated previously during interviews and observation *in loco*, creating an atmosphere of unspoken embarrassment for those not fitting there. Also, this concept can be applied when security personnel follow people around the mall (although both concepts are not exclusively Brazilian, being seen worldwide).

The physical exclusion consisted in measures adopted by the malls to verbally/legally restrict the access from people to the mall, or their permanency there. The example that got the biggest media coverage was the *rolezinhos*.

The Brazilian luxury market imposes changes in the spatial distribution of the three cities mentioned, and its impact is seen by the conflictual relationship it settles with low income areas that are adjacent to shopping centres built to attend these groups, such as the cases of the Shopping Cidade Jardim in São Paulo and the Favela Jardim Panorama, the Shopping Leblon and the Cruzada de São Sebastião and the Shopping Iguatemi Brasília and the Varjão administrative region.

The structures of the cities and the cultural backgrounds change from each state and region, and this reflects in the consumers' behaviours in every state. Since this three cities concentrated the biggest revenue of this segment in the country (MCF Consultoria & GfK, 2013), they were the focus in this article, but future studies can

stretch this analysis of consumers behaviour for another regions, while analysing the importance of the geographic phenomenas associated, such as spatial distribution and availability of these products and the cultural paradigms stated in other cities.

Another reason for the selection of Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo and Brasília was the role they play in the Brazilian scenario: Rio de Janeiro is the cultural capital of Brazil, dictating trends that are spread all over the country; São Paulo is the economic centre, that concentrates this segment and serves as a primary city for international brands to enter the Brazilian market; Brasília is the political capital of Brazil and concentrates an elite group that behaves in a different manner than the other two cities, which can be analysed when studying the impacts of the luxury market in a young city. This selection of cities can be used as a starting point in an analysis, for a person who has interest in discovering more about the Brazilian luxury marketing, but should not be restricted to only them, as the regional particularities makes the Brazilian scenario a rich and complex topic, worth its analysis.

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