

# **The Urban Book Series**

## **Series Advisory Editors**

Fatemeh Farnaz Arefian, University College London, London, UK

Michael Batty, University College London, London, UK

Simin Davoudi, Newcastle University, Newcastle, UK

Geoffrey DeVerteuil, Cardiff University, Cardiff, UK

Karl Kropf, Oxford Brookes University, Oxford, UK

Marco Maretto, University of Parma, Parma, Italy

Vítor Oliveira, Porto University, Porto, Portugal

Christopher Silver, University of Florida, Gainesville, USA

Giuseppe Strappa, Sapienza University of Rome, Rome, Italy

Igor Vojnovic, Michigan State University, East Lansing, USA

Jeremy Whitehand, University of Birmingham, Birmingham, UK

## **Aims and Scope**

The Urban Book Series is a resource for urban studies and geography research worldwide. It provides a unique and innovative resource for the latest developments in the field, nurturing a comprehensive and encompassing publication venue for urban studies, urban geography, planning and regional development.

The series publishes peer-reviewed volumes related to urbanization, sustainability, urban environments, sustainable urbanism, governance, globalization, urban and sustainable development, spatial and area studies, urban management, urban infrastructure, urban dynamics, green cities and urban landscapes. It also invites research which documents urbanization processes and urban dynamics on a national, regional and local level, welcoming case studies, as well as comparative and applied research.

The series will appeal to urbanists, geographers, planners, engineers, architects, policy makers, and to all of those interested in a wide-ranging overview of contemporary urban studies and innovations in the field. It accepts monographs, edited volumes and textbooks.

More information about this series at <http://www.springer.com/series/14773>

Lucia Capanema Alvares  
Jorge Luiz Barbosa  
Editors

# Urban Public Spaces

From Planned Policies to Everyday Politics  
(Illustrated with Brazilian Case Studies)

 Springer

*Editors*

Lucia Capanema Alvares  
Programa de Pós-Graduação em  
Arquitetura e Urbanismo  
Universidade Federal Fluminense  
Niterói, Rio de Janeiro  
Brazil

Jorge Luiz Barbosa  
Programa de Pós Graduação em Geografia  
Universidade Federal Fluminense  
Niterói, Rio de Janeiro  
Brazil

ISSN 2365-757X

The Urban Book Series

ISBN 978-3-319-74252-6

<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-74253-3>

ISSN 2365-7588 (electronic)

ISBN 978-3-319-74253-3 (eBook)

Library of Congress Control Number: 2017963844

© Springer International Publishing AG, part of Springer Nature 2018

This work is subject to copyright. All rights are reserved by the Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed.

The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use.

The publisher, the authors and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, express or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made. The publisher remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

Printed on acid-free paper

This Springer imprint is published by the registered company Springer International Publishing AG part of Springer Nature

The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

# Foreword

Any critical discussion of urban public spaces requires that it be done through multidisciplinary perspectives. This is expertly done by Lucia Capanema Alvares and Jorge Luiz Barbosa in *Urban Public Spaces: From Planned Policies to Everyday Politics—Brazilian case studies*. As the world's population has become increasingly urban, we have witnessed a reduction of urban public spaces. Whether this is because of government action or inaction or advances in information technology, we are seeing a reduction in the amount of opportunities for public interaction. To truly understand the many dimensions of how people use urban public spaces and how public policies (directly and indirectly) affect the availability and use of such spaces, we must explore this fascinating area of inquiry through discussions in such interrelated topics as public policy, urban design, architecture, economics, environmental studies, sociology, landscape architecture, and urban planning.

It is important we acknowledge that urban public spaces are more than simply the parks in a city. There are many types of spaces. They can be community gardens, public markets, public buildings, streets, shopping malls, schools, public squares, plazas, parking lots, etc.

As illustrated by the various contributors to this book, there is a myriad of benefits associated with urban public spaces. Their availability can help create a sense of community by offering people an opportunity to come together for various reasons such as recreation, supporting community commercial efforts, viewing art displays, having concerts and dances, and even protesting. They might start out one way and then act as a conduit for something else. They may start as temporary spaces for one purpose and then evolve into permanent spaces with multiple purposes. This goes along with the notion that cities are not static entities. They evolve over time and, as such, urban public spaces evolve as well. Conversely, a lack of urban public spaces can cause conflict and a lack of trust in government.

The various chapters in the book clearly show that citizens and government may have differing views about urban public spaces. Citizens may feel that government economic development policies are forcing them to relocate to areas with little urban public spaces. As such, the citizens will need to be creative in developing

their own public spaces. This is clearly evident in the case of favela residents. To these residents, government policies that worsen inequality heighten tensions between the government and the citizens.

This is a powerful book that offers readers unique insights into the creation, availability, and use of urban public spaces in Brazilian cities. It is a timely and significant addition to the research on urban public spaces. It is a well-researched and documented book that should be read by practitioners, faculty, students, and citizens interested in understanding of issues associated with urban public spaces.

San Diego, USA

Roger W. Caves  
Professor Emeritus of City Planning  
San Diego State University

# Preface

Dear reader, this book presents a collection of contributions about the public space in different theoretical, conceptual, and methodological approaches. The styles are plural for multiple reasons, among them the questions that mobilize the writers as they read the public space in the contemporary city and the intellectual interlocutions they seek in each original writing context. Despite those differences, what prevails is an understanding about the relevance of analyzing the uses and appropriations of the city by social subjects and groups as they represent difference. The similarities between the chapters can also be noticed, and this is no coincidence. The authors understand the city as a place to share life experiences; as such, places of public use should be thought of and understood as concept and as social practice. Together, they suggest a scope of research centered on observation, description, and analysis of the city and of the political actions that enhance the public spaces as locus of the public sphere.

In opposition to the analysis that identifies the fall of the public man in the city, either due to violence, to urban models of self-enclosure in the form of private condominiums and shopping centers, or to limited mobility, we depart from the premise that the city is a public space created and lived in contradictory forms and conflicting processes. Hence, rather than seeing it as something in extinction or decay, we see the need to understand the complex constitutive dynamics of citizenship exercise. To build new ways of thinking, the public space is, therefore, to propose an understanding of the social, economic, and environmental conditions as a path to comprehend the struggles and demands for equity and dignity in the contemporary urban world.

This volume is about understanding, contextualizing, and carrying out critical analyses of the policies intended and/or implemented by the various public and private actors in urban public spaces, as well as the daily, or eventual, politics exercised by the organized civil society and by citizens. There are undoubtedly a myriad of actors to consider in their multiple roles and in their multiple space-temporal scales of events.

The intrinsic objective is to unfold an understanding of urban public spaces that not only recognizes, but also values the differences, inequalities, and the multiple forms of exclusion and segregation in the city. These are all factors of affirmation and/or denial of an urban citizenship imposed on the inhabitants of contemporary cities. The goal here is to ask ourselves about the social relations, institutions, concepts, and practices that contribute either to a city of utopia where all differences take place or to an accentuation of inequalities, segregation, and exclusion; it is, at last, to understand how each city brings these marks to its public spaces and how the latter conforms equalities/inequalities that produce conflict and/or cooperation.

The very concept of urban public spaces is open and under construction within the encounter of landscape studies and the social sciences, and based on physical, environmental, and social practices, aiming at a transdisciplinary wish.

In landscape studies, urban open spaces are defined as spaces free of buildings, all of them: backyards, gardens, streets, parks, forests, and urban beaches or empty spaces. They form a pervasive fabric, without which one cannot conceive the existence of cities; they are everywhere, more or less processed and appropriated by society. In the social sciences, public spaces take the character of meeting places, sites of individual and collective manifestations, struggle, conflict, and symbolic appropriations, while social practice intrinsically brings the public sphere realm—the very *vita activa*—that can only happen in public spaces. Physical and environmental practices, on the other hand, point out that urban open spaces systems can be fairly complex, given other juxtaposed systems, as circulation and infrastructure, and/or socioeconomic and cultural systems, ranging from land values to memories.

It is in the meeting point of such studies and practices that the concept emerges. In this volume, urban public spaces will mean those places of free access to the people, falling mostly in areas free of buildings, but not limited to them. They are the public sphere locus, where one can observe social interactions as well as the relationships between built and free elements, and between people, goods, and natural flows.

Despite the newly spread ideologies arguing that the informational era cancels distances, transforming the world into a “global village,” urban public spaces will always constitute a concrete wholeness in which society develops itself; this development is indeed a socio-spatial process: There is no history or technique detached from concrete spaces. The public life sphere is realized in concrete spaces as it has been demonstrated worldwide by recent popular movements (such as the “Arab Spring” and the numerous “Occupy” protests).

A critical perspective also requires contextualization of UPS policies and practices under the capital and labor structure; rather, and using the ideas of Lefebvre, Harvey, and others, the struggle being waged in urban space is ultimately between capital in its various forms and labor. Large contractors, the financing system, multinational corporations, real estate speculators, and a whole myriad of capitalist actors have and exert direct and indirect interests in the city and, therefore, in urban public spaces. At the other side is the work force, which has in space not only its production means, but also its reproduction means, depending on itself to exert

many of their activities and survive. The third major component of the equation is the State, which, although theoretically could support any side, has consistently sided with capital.

In order to approach such a daring goal, some of the most important authors working with urban public spaces in Brazil were asked to share this endeavor with the editors. The book is divided into two complementary parts; the first one is about people: It discusses how humans express themselves in spacetime and how differences are dealt within the encounter, individually and/or collectively, more genuinely or more manipulated by the mainstream media and the corporate capital. While all four chapters, to different degrees, picture hegemonic situations pushing citizens to edgy positions, they all argue for a city of rights and envision a way out of the current settings through cultural expressions and appropriations of our urban public spaces. The second part is about space. And people. The three authors discuss how public policies toward urban public spaces can hinder or help appropriation, participation, and care for these spaces, either by promoting/restraining the encounter or by totally disregarding space as a basis for the right to the city.

It is from the perspective of the content and practice meetings that Lucia Capanema Alvares and Jorge Luiz Barbosa open the collection with the Chap. 1 “A Multidimensional Frame for Analyzing Urban Public Spaces Policies and Politics”. They examine, under the logic of the appropriation of open public spaces, how citizens conform the city and how the city conforms the inequalities of places, possibilities, and behaviors. As an analytic tool, they offer a model with four local content dimensions—socioeconomic, sociocultural, socio-environmental, and political-administrative, and an external dimension. Through these dimensions, they explore how people relate to the chores of organizing daily life activities while engaging in conflicts that confront inequalities in their meeting places, and in the sites of individual and collective manifestations, of struggles, and of symbolic appropriations of public spaces; all of them process inherent to late capitalism now in vogue (led by large corporations, globalization, and the tourism industry). The authors seek to debate the concepts and social practices that contribute to a city of utopia, where all differences can be seen and dealt within public spaces and where free individuals can present themselves and engage in a *vita activa*.

Ana Fani Alessandri Carlos focuses on the presence of the body in the public space through sociocultural demonstrations. Chapter 2 “The Power of the Body in Public Space: The Urban as Deprivation of the Right to the City” analyzes the process of occupying streets and squares in Brazil as a means to reaffirm the public space; this process unfolds itself into struggles for the city, driven by the need to appropriate urban space in order to accomplish “another life”, in which the deprivation of rights experienced by a significant part of society can be overcome. The diverse forms of occupation can be interpreted as the capacity to resist in daily life and in opposition to the hegemonic production and reproduction of capital.

Jorge Luiz Barbosa and Iaina Damasceno Pereira, in their Chap. 3 “Reinventing Public Spaces: Politics of Oneself and Politics with Many Others”, analyze public space as a set of multiple powers and acts of self-disclosure spatially situated that becomes real when social subjects seek political recognition. These powers are

expressed in being, in living, in experiencing, in being-in-the-world, and in self-disclosing vis-à-vis the material and symbolical socio-spatial conditions of men and women in their diverse urban experiences. In the authors' arguments, political action gains the meaning of living in society, because subjects affirm their own differences in the possibility of the others' differences. They bring to surface a debate on public spaces where the presence of subjects in the city—with their struggles and demands for visibility, and their consequent differences affirmation—can be the guarantee unit of shared rights.

In Chap. 4 “A Cornered Democracy: The Echoes of the 2013 Demonstrations in Rio de Janeiro and the Architecture of a Crisis”, Lia Beatriz Teixeira Torraca innovates in her critical assessment by considering the geopolitical dimension of public spaces, especially when discussing the violent conditions of exclusion of differences and of the different considered undesirable. In the visible and invisible walls that impede and separate social subjects, the relations of exception that fragment society and shatter cities are inscribed. The author also draws attention to the power of art and culture to overcome a democracy trapped by urban inequalities. The public spaces occupation movements in Brazilian cities, highlighting those that took place in July 2013 and their consequences to the country, demonstrated a crisis of the urban order and of reality construction by the mainstream media, bringing new political perspectives to the resignification of public spaces and of the political democracy itself.

Ângelo Serpa's, Chap. 5 “Leisure and Work in Contemporary Urban-metropolitan Space: Perspectives, Tendencies and Utopias”, assumes the premise that the production of leisure spaces is dialectically and inseparably linked to the production of work spaces in the current context. The author seeks to characterize the economic, political, social, and cultural transformations of capital–work/work–leisure relationships in the contemporary world, starting from the consolidation of the industrial society and the modern era. He then presents a specific case study of working-class neighborhoods in Salvador and Feira de Santana which concerns the work and leisure of micro-entrepreneurs, small business owners, and consumers. Mainly based on the concepts of “creative idleness” and “telework”, the discussion is amplified to think about the changes in capital–work/work–leisure relationships and their impacts on the public spaces of our cities and metropolises.

Eugênio Fernandes Queiroga, in his Chap. 6 “Open Public Spaces and the *vita activa*”, dwells on the public relevance of open public spaces in Brazil's large- and mid-sized cities in contemporary settings. Distinguishing the concepts of public sphere, public spaces, and open spaces, the author presents a system of concepts that allows a better understanding of the theme, providing useful insights into the potentiality of multi-functional (and temporary) space-times that can be applied toward the development of public policies genuinely interested in improving the quality of urban spaces. Through examples across the country, he stands up for an urban planning paradigm that is more inclusive, more distributive, and more participatory.

Vera Regina Tângari presents, in the Chap. 7 “Open Space Systems in Rio de Janeiro: The Public and Private Spheres Reflected in the Urban Landscape”, preliminary results of her team research project on the role of open spaces in the urban landscapes. These spaces have an important role in the shaping the urban morphology, in the urban fabric layout, and in the definition of centralities that focus around and along the circulation and permanence systems: streets, avenues, squares, and plazas. On the other hand, they are determined by the contradictions of a process of occupation that expresses the high concentration of income and resources in some sectors and areas, and the omission of public governance in others. These contradictions result in an imbalance in the supply, accessibility, and appropriation of open spaces by the population, directly affecting the quality of the physical environment and the conditions of sociability that can occur in open spaces, and more specifically those belonging to the public sphere.

Cristóvão Fernandes Duarte, Chap. 8 “The “Reinvention” of the City Through the Favelas” addresses the importance of popular territories in the cultural production and the vitality of Rio de Janeiro. The author indicates that while favelas started as temporary and precarious settlements they became, in less than a century, large popular neighborhoods, endowed with great cultural visibility and showing a clear critical consciousness regarding the segregationist and excluding processes associated with their origin. The author discusses the resistance demonstrated in favelas, and their accepted leading role in the production and reproduction of spaces for the poor in the city of Rio de Janeiro. According to the author, the solution is to recognize that favelas legitimately represent the “re-invention” of the city itself, understood as a place for gathering and exchanging among different individuals.

If in the 1970s self-help and auto-construction meant opening the door to governments’ withdrawal from investing in slums, in postindustrial times, marked by worldwide neoliberal policies of accumulation by dispossession, as Harvey has put it in several occasions, and the withdrawal of most international aid (including that coming from foreign NGOs), Duarte sees now a different, bottom-up solidarity that actually turns slums into livable and viable places. Opposing the forced evictions paradigm, the slums that are able to stay put provide a living example of the social potential of conflicts by proposing a dialogue with the formal city and by gaining support from various sectors. In so doing, they recreate spaces of political and economic life in the city and re-establish the public sphere. Not relinquishing their fair share of public investments, the oldest and therefore better-established slums are telling us that the Third World poor do not need advice or direction, but respect for and confidence on their way of being in the world.

In the last chapter, testing the proposed model as a privileged analytical tool, Lucia Capanema Alvares tries to unveil how the content chapters are knitted together in real life and how Brazilian urban public spaces stage global phenomena in their own Third Worldliness, sometimes mimicking them, sometimes surprising us all.

As “the insights to be gained from the standpoint of the global South have increasing relevance for radical planning in the era of global neoliberalism” (Miraftab 2009, p. 33), we, together with the authors, hope all readers will enjoy this trip to urban public spaces in Brazil.

Niterói, Brazil

Lucia Capanema Alvares  
Jorge Luiz Barbosa

# Contents

<b>1 A Multidimensional Frame for Analyzing Urban Public Spaces Policies and Politics</b> .....	1
Lucia Capanema Alvares and Jorge Luiz Barbosa	
<b>Part I About People</b>	
<b>2 The Power of the Body in Public Space: The Urban as a Deprivation of the Right to the City</b> .....	27
Ana Fani Alessandri Carlos	
<b>3 Reinventing Public Spaces: Politics of Oneself and Politics with Many Others</b> .....	43
Jorge Luiz Barbosa and Ilaina Damasceno Pereira	
<b>4 A Cornered Democracy: The Echoes of the 2013 Demonstrations in Rio de Janeiro and the Architecture of a Crisis</b> .....	57
Lia Beatriz Teixeira Torraca	
<b>5 Leisure and Work in Contemporary Urban-Metropolitan Space: Perspectives, Tendencies, and Utopias</b> .....	73
Ângelo Serpa	
<b>Part II About Spaces. And People</b>	
<b>6 Open Public Spaces and the <i>Vita Activa</i></b> .....	91
Eugênio Fernandes Queiroga	
<b>7 Open Space Systems in Rio de Janeiro: The Public and Private Spheres Reflected in the Urban Landscape</b> .....	109
Vera Regina Tângari	

<b>8 The “Reinvention” of the City Through the Favelas . . . . .</b>	<b>127</b>
Cristóvão Fernandes Duarte	
<b>9 In the Guise of a (Global) Comprehension: A Multidimensional Analysis of Urban Public Spaces Through Selected Authors . . . . .</b>	<b>141</b>
Lucia Capanema Alvares	
<b>Index . . . . .</b>	<b>159</b>

# Contributors

**Jorge Luiz Barbosa** Programa de Pós Graduação em Geografia, Universidade Federal Fluminense, Niterói, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

**Lucia Capanema Alvares** Programa de Pós-Graduação em Arquitetura e Urbanismo, Universidade Federal Fluminense, Niterói, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

**Ana Fani Alessandri Carlos** Department of Geography, University of São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

**Cristóvão Fernandes Duarte** FAU-UFRJ, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

**Ilaina Damasceno Pereira** Afro-Brazilian Studies Center, Rio de Janeiro State University, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

**Eugênio Fernandes Queiroga** Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism, University of São Paulo (FAU-USP), São Paulo, Brazil

**Ângelo Serpa** Department of Geography, Institute of Geosciences, Federal University of Bahia, Salvador, Brazil

**Lia Beatriz Teixeira Torraca** Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

**Vera Regina Tângari** Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil