

Do big cities attract or repel? Hostile architecture in the public space of a tourist attraction in São Paulo

As grandes cidades atraem ou repulsam? Arquitetura hostil no espaço público de um atrativo turístico de São Paulo

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ABSTRACT

Hostile architecture is an urban design strategy used in public spaces to prevent the permanence of certain social groups and is presented through physical devices installed on garden walls, near building entrances or through urban furniture. Public space is a place of collective use, free access and essential for tourism. This is where tourists circulate and get their first impressions of the city. It is assumed that the implementation of hostile architecture devices in public space can affect the well-being of everyone, including tourists. In the case of a space that is under the jurisdiction of public authorities, would it be possible to think of ways to prohibit this type of implementation? This article aims to investigate the presence of hostile architecture typologies in the public space of large cities and explore public policies that prohibit their implementation. The spatial outline is Avenida Paulista - one of the most famous tourist attractions in São Paulo, where around 1.5 million people pass through every day. This is exploratory-descriptive research. The results indicate that Brazilian creativity is present in the typologies of hostile architecture and prevent the permanence of any type of person in public space, regardless of their origin. Furthermore, the feeling of well-being and welcome that was previously perceived at Paulista Avenue, due to the free access between the front setbacks of the lots and the sidewalks, was lost with the installation of glass railings and walls.



Keywords: Hostile architecture; tourism; hospitality; public space; public policies.

INTRODUCTION

People attract people. Bringing people together, attracting them, captivating them, and instigating them are synonyms for “attracting” and this is what large urban centers do all over the planet. According to Glaser (2011), cities are the greatest invention of our species and have been the driving force behind innovation since the era of Plato and Socrates. According to the author, the secret to the success of cities like Tokyo, London, New York, and Bangalore comes from their ability to produce new thinkers, since urban centers encourage greater proximity between people and allow them to work, travel, and study together. Thus, these cities bring together talent, making proximity to other people possible for knowledge to spread and improve (Glaeser, 2011).

From a tourism perspective, the potential already exists in large cities. According to Vargas (1997, p.8), these places allow people to participate in leisure, consumption and cultural activities, facilitate attendance at cultural and business events, and enable appreciation of the urban landscape, whether through architecture, the city's historical landmarks, or through its road network and renovated spaces. Furthermore, it is in an urban environment where people can coexist with different environments and people, enjoying the art of encounter and having contact with the new and the unknown. In this sense, the author concludes that these are the possibilities that the urban environment offers naturally and that constitute the raw material for tourism activity (Vargas, 1997).



Furthermore, places with high concentrations of people help to reduce some urban costs that are shared by thousands of visitors and regulars. The urban scale makes it possible to absorb and justify certain high infrastructure costs, such as transportation and entertainment (Lopes, 2007). And access to all of this translates into a more educated and productive workforce, something that is welcome from the point of view of individual progress and the economy.

And it is in this direction that, to a certain extent, the central guidelines of the Strategic Master Plan of São Paulo point (Law 16.050/2014), which foresees that population density should be concentrated in places with ample public transportation. The intensification of land use and occupation is best applied in areas with urban infrastructure (water, electricity, sewage, telephone and piped gas networks) and with public facilities (hospitals, daycare centers and schools). To this end, the plan proposes increasing the limits for building density along the so-called “urban structuring axes” (Severini, 2014).

The idea is that these portions of the territory promote conditions for the implementation of residential and non-residential constructions with high population and building densities, ensuring landscape and urban qualifications in a manner articulated with the public transportation system. The Urban Transformation Structuring Axis Zones (ZEU) were created in the Zoning Law (n. 16.402/16), which aims to consolidate the parameters established by the Strategic Master Plan (PDE) of São Paulo, especially to encourage mixed use. It seeks to attract a population that lives in more peripheral regions of the city to live in more central regions, with urban infrastructure.

In July 2024, the new text of the Strategic Master Plan of São Paulo was approved, increasing the area of influence of the urban structuring axes (Law 18,157/2024).



Paulista Avenue, one of the most well-known and beloved avenues among the people of São Paulo, is in a ZEU area. In addition to housing residences, offices, hotels, clubs, shopping centers, cultural facilities, institutional buildings and radio stations, the street is also well-served with urban infrastructure. The diversity of uses and urban activities ensures a flow of people day and night. The wide sidewalks, the presence of a bike path in the central strip and the variety of public transportation options contribute even more to making the avenue an attractive and dynamic place. With this, the ZEU also benefits tourists, as they will have access to a multitude of attractions and services implemented in a single urban stretch. Therefore, the benefits of ZEU do not stop there. According to the Urban Management website, the ZEU favors the relationship between people and the city by encouraging landscaping and urban development, which ensures better interaction between public and private spaces. In this area, for example, “occupation qualifying parameters” are encouraged, such as: active facade, public enjoyment, widening of sidewalks and lot fencing limits (Severini & Vargas, 2017). It is therefore assumed that there is a concern with urban design and with the way in which public space receives tourists and residents.

However, this is not the case. Avenida Paulista does not have an urban design that is favorable to the enjoyment of its visitors. In his doctoral research, Ferraz (2013) reported the lack of street furniture especially benches to sit on, and the lack of shaded areas that compromised the “comfort” of Avenida Paulista. However, everything indicates that, in addition to being uncomfortable, the urban design of the street is also hostile.

For many people, sidewalks, the side setbacks of public buildings, public benches or even low walls are the solution found, albeit temporary, for housing.



Federal Decree No. 7,053/2009 establishes, in its art. 1, the legal concept of homeless population:

Art. 1. The National Policy for the Homeless Population is hereby established and shall be implemented in accordance with the principles, guidelines and objectives set forth in this Decree. Sole paragraph. For the purposes of this Decree, the homeless population shall be considered to be a heterogeneous population group that has in common extreme poverty, interrupted or weakened family ties and the lack of regular conventional housing, and that uses public thoroughfares and degraded areas as a place to live and provide for sustenance, whether temporarily or permanently, as well as shelter units for temporary overnight stays or as provisional housing.

The presence of homeless people is not only seen on Paulista Avenue or in the ZEU. According to data from *Rede Nossa São Paulo*, approximately 30,000 people are homeless in the capital of São Paulo. The creation of the “Guide to Ministerial Action in Defense of the Rights of Homeless People” (CNMP) in 2015, organized by the Federal Government through the Public Prosecutor's Office, shows the relevance of the topic. From a social, legal and juridical point of view, the CNMP presents important data and information showing how the issue of homeless people is complex and multidisciplinary. For this reason, this research aims to address the topic from an architectural and urbanistic point of view to warn that urban design is also a form of reception.

Given this problem, this article aims to investigate the presence of hostile architecture typologies in the public spaces of large cities and explore public policies that prohibit their implementation. The spatial context is Paulista Avenue, between two subway stations.

The work was structured in four parts. The item “Hostile Architecture: concepts, foundations and terminologies” addresses the theoretical aspects related to the theme, covering issues related to hospitality and hostility from an urban



perspective. Then, in the item “Public Policies that Prohibit the Use of Hostile Architecture Techniques” investigates public policies that seek to prohibit the installation of this type of urban design. Subsequently, the methodologies used in the work are addressed, with emphasis on the classification of Faria's dissertation (2020). Soon after, the results of the field research are presented and discussed. Subsequently, some considerations are outlined.

HOSTILE ARCHITECTURE: FUNDAMENTALS AND TERMINOLOGIES

According to Ferraz (2013), it is not possible to say if a certain urban area is hospitable or not. This happens because (urban) hospitality is the result of a combination of sensations derived from two types of attributes: intangible and tangible. The intangible attributes are subjective, immeasurable and individual. Each person, through their memories, phases of life and particular tastes, recognizes itself with the city they are visiting. Tangible attributes on the other hand are physical and measurable and are intrinsically linked to physical interventions that qualify public space and encourage exchange and coexistence between people (Severini, 2013). This is where urban design stands out, since the presence of street furniture, street afforestation and public lighting can contribute to the hospitable condition of a city (Severini & Vargas, 2017). However, when the city opts for another type of urban design, the effect can be the opposite of hospitality – the hostility.

The term “hostile architecture” refers to an urban design strategy that limits, distances, and segregates people. The technique uses physical devices installed in public spaces to restrict encounters and make it difficult for people



to interact. “The size and shape of benches, the iron spikes installed on the parapets of public buildings, the stones installed under bridges, and the fences surrounding fountains and water features” are examples of this type of architecture, according to Severini & Nunes (2022, p. 78).

The term “aporophobia” is also used to represent this type of urban design. But it can go further, as the term is broad. The terminology of the word comes from the Greek “á-poros”, which means poor, helpless, without resources, and “obos” which means fear, phobia, terror. Aporophobia can be interpreted as rejection and/or hatred for the poor. The Spanish philosopher Adela Cortina (2020), who popularized the term, states that, in many situations, what we classify as “racism” or “xenophobia” should have another name: “aporophobia”. For Cortina, we do not reject foreigners if they are tourists or famous people, we reject them if they are poor. By reaffirming the success of tourism in Spain (it is the country's main source of income), the author challenges us by exposing how the “xenos” (foreigner) can receive both hospitable and hostile attitudes. However, Spanish people try to welcome tourists in hotels, shops, apartments and at the beaches and “explain to them in detail the most appropriate route when they ask for an address, and even accompany them to the correct place” (Cortina, 2020, p. 16). On the other hand, this attitude of welcoming foreigners is not as fundamental when compared to other cases of people who also come from abroad, but in this case, they are not tourists, not willing to spend money, but rather political refugees and poor immigrants. According to the author:

It is impossible not to compare the enthusiastic and hospitable welcome given to foreigners who come as tourists with the merciless rejection of the wave of poor foreigners. They close the doors to them, erect fences and walls, and prevent them from crossing borders (Cortina, 2020, p. 17).



One of the first authors to report this type of architecture was Mike Davis in his book "Quartz City – Excavating the Future of Los Angeles". In 1993, the author reports that the universal and inescapable consequence of this crusade for city safety is the destruction of accessible public space. When denouncing "sadistic street environments", Davis (1993) states that the quality of any urban environment can be measured by the existence or lack thereof of convenient and comfortable places for pedestrians to sit. According to the author, one of the most common examples is:

Barrel-shaped bus stop bench, which provides minimal surface for uncomfortable sitting, while making it completely impossible to sleep on. Such "bum-proof" benches are being widely introduced on the fringes of the underworld (Davis, 1993, p. 213).

According to Graham (2016, p. 171), when discussing the "new military urbanism", states that "street furniture is redesigned as a way to inhibit the comfort of the homeless; and social welfare subsidies are reduced to punish groups considered irresponsible, disrespectful, lazy or unsightly" (Graham, 2016, p. 171). Per the author, "strategic commercial-financial centers are increasingly surrounded by medieval-style city walls, as well as security zones created with smart closed-circuit cameras, checkpoints and roadblocks" (Graham, 2016, p. 172).

Addressing London's "anti-homeless spikes," Petty (2016) ends up bringing to the discussion other important issues on the same topic, such as poverty in large and wealthy cities, changes in public spaces, urban morphology, and the presence of homeless people in urban areas. According to the author, the explicit presence of this type of hostile architectural device revealed to the public how cities are built for the benefit of those who are able to adhere to



sociocultural norms, dominant policies, and legal codes, often to the detriment of those who cannot.

Using the term “unpleasant design”, Savicic and Savic (2012) organized a book with articles to develop a critical perspective on patterns of this type of design that surrounds public and private spaces with the intention of ensuring the monitoring and surveillance of behaviors even without the explicit presence of authorities, thus being considered silent agents. Per the authors:

Unpleasant design has specific target groups and operates mainly across demographic strata. Congregation of marginal groups are often the target of obnoxious design implementations. Young people, drug users and homeless people are often the official reasons for “obnoxious” installations in public space (Savicic and Savic, 2012, p. 04).

Faria (2020) states that hostile architecture is related to material phenomena of securitization and control of public space that can be named in other ways, such as: architecture of fear, anti-beggar architecture, architecture of panic, defensive architecture, architecture of violence, penitentiary architecture and unpleasant design (Faria, 2020, p. 30). According to the author:

All these terminologies are related to the fear of others or crime, the need for surveillance and control or the social affirmation of status, materialized in elements of patrimonial protection, uncomfortable furniture, fortifications and spatial delimitation, which generate socio-spatial segregation, social exclusion and aesthetic changes in the urban landscape (Faria, 2020, p. 30).

After carrying out extensive fieldwork in the city of Curitiba, Faria (2020) states that there are forms and functions of hostile architecture. 448 spaces with installations considered hostile architecture were found in the author's



research. The total area of the perimeter studied was 3.58 square kilometers. This means that there are 125 hostile architectures per square kilometers in the study area. The author found eleven types (forms) of hostile architecture classified as: pins, spikes, iron arches, railings, plant arrangements, grids, glass walls, furniture, inclined planes, hybrids and particular types. Regarding the function, Faria (2020) found four basic restrictions of hostile architecture: sitting, lying down, sheltering and accessing a certain space.

Taking an urban area of the capital of São Paulo as a case study, Cintra (2019) goes beyond the search for hostile architecture devices and explores other urban elements that also contribute to hostility in the city. Per the author, the increasingly high walls, the metal bars installed in residual spaces, the benches with partitions and/or slopes that make them uncomfortable, or even the lack of furniture in places with high demand are examples of hostile architecture. Per Cintra:

Hostile architecture occurs in environments that inhibit people from staying, both due to the presence of concrete elements and the lack of infrastructure that provides conditions for socializing or resting. Limiting the use of public spaces can be the objective or just the consequence of this type of architecture, although it is harmful in both cases. In other words, even if they are not designed for this purpose, they can lead to an emptying of public spaces, as in the case of walls implemented as a form of protection against invasions, but which in practice can result in an unsafe environment for pedestrians (Cintra, 2019, p. 09).

“To prevent the presence of unwanted people.” This is the justification that many public managers and civil society itself use to implement interventions of this type, as they believe that this prevents crime and brings more security to the area. This is not true. Apparently, history confirms that the exclusionary and segregating path of large cities does not bring positive results. Imbalance only



grows. According to the website of the Institute of Applied Economic Research (IPEA), there are approximately 282 thousand people living on the streets in Brazil.

Camargo (2004) suggests that hospitality takes place in times and spaces, with the acts of welcoming, hosting, feeding and entertaining occurring in domestic, public, commercial and/or virtual spaces. Urban hospitality is derived from public hospitality and treats public space as the space of reception. However, unlike other hospitality spaces, public space is an open space, with no opening hours and no reservations required. Furthermore, public managers, residents and tourists share the role of urban hosts (Ferraz, 2013). All this complexity of hospitality within the city can be perceived by the terminology of the word itself (hospitality), which refers to duality and reveals the complex relationships between hospitality/hostility. For Grassi, the concept of “guest” is linked to the term “foreigner”. After all, in Greek, the same word, “xenos”, means guest and foreigner. According to the author, being a foreigner is meeting four criteria: 1) being unknown; 2) coming from outside; 3) to be passing through; 4) to not be in accordance with the customs of the place, strange (Grassi, 2011).

Just like “foreigners” (xenos), homeless people also enjoy the city and public spaces, not to entertain themselves but to try to survive. They are there temporarily. According to data from the CNMP (2015), most of these people earn their income from activities in the informal market related to the urban environment. According to the Guide, 27.5% are recyclable material collectors, 4.1% are car park attendants and 6.3% are construction workers. As for their origin, the research revealed that most of these people come from urban areas (72%), from the same place or regions close to where they are,



which shows that the rural exodus is no longer significant in this context (CNMP, 2015, p.8).

If the city aims to be hospitable, inclusive and safe, it cannot engage in dialogue with just one of the agents producing urban space (Paiva, 2016), but with everyone, including excluded social groups (Severini; Panosso Netto; Oliveira, 2021), even if this must be done by decree.

PUBLIC POLICIES THAT PROHIBIT THE USE OF HOSTILE ARCHITECTURE TECHNIQUES

Recognized for his fight for the most needy, Father Júlio Lancelloti became known for the episode in which he removed the stones installed under the Dom Luciano Mendes de Almeida viaduct, in the east side of São Paulo, in order to prevent beggars from settling there. The priest, coordinator of the “Pastoral do Povo de Rua” in São Paulo, removed the cobblestone blocks with a sledgehammer on February 2th, 2021, and placed flowers on the floor. The event became well-known, and the following phrase spread on social media: “Less stones, more flowers”. This warning led Senator Fabiano Contarato to draft a text of Law (No. 488/2021) to amend another Law – The City Statute No. 10.257/2001, with the purpose to prohibit the use of hostile architecture techniques in open spaces for public use. According to the opinion prepared for this Law:

The proposal presents in the City Statute a general urban policy guideline aimed at promoting comfort, shelter, rest, well-being and accessibility in the enjoyment of open spaces for public use, their furniture and their interfaces with spaces for private use. It also prohibits the use of hostile architecture techniques, intended to keep homeless people and others away (Opinion No. 52, 2021 – PLEN/SF).



The City Statute (Law 10,257/2001) establishes and regulates a series of mechanisms and procedures for the institutionalization of public policies for urban development. By regulating and controlling land use, the legislation brought the democratization of access to urbanized land to the national legal framework. In this way, it seeks to avoid distortions that could influence speculative retention and inadequate management of territorial space. The Federal Law regulates articles 182 and 183 of the Federal Constitution and establishes a series of convergent instruments for the institutionalization of urban development policies. One of the principles of the City Statute is the fair distribution of benefits and burdens arising from the urbanization process, since it establishes that the public authorities must act in favor of the collective interest.

Furthermore, the City Statute gave municipalities more autonomy. In return, the Law began to require the preparation of Master Plans in some situations, including cities that are part of metropolitan regions and areas of special tourist interest.

The Master Plan is a basic law that aims at urban development and expansion with the intention of ensuring the well-being and quality of life of the population and preserving the environment by guaranteeing sustainable urban development. In this sense, although the Júlio Lancelloti Law (PL 488/2021) has been approved, it is the responsibility of each municipality to evaluate whether this Bill should be incorporated (or not) into its Master Plan.

Inspired by the attitude of Father Júlio Lancelloti, Rio de Janeiro city councilman Chico Alencar (political party - PSOL) was one of the authors of the bill that would prohibit the installation of obstacles that aim to impede the free movement and permanence of people. Although bill no. 41/2021 was



approved by the City Council on August 18, 2021, it was vetoed by Mayor Eduardo Paes on September 16 on the grounds that the proposal would be unconstitutional since “the definition of urban and construction standards is the responsibility of the Chief Executive, since it is a regulatory matter of urban policy.”

According to reports from business owners, the population itself has not yet realized the importance of this law. According to the “Jornal Diário do Rio”, the bill would transform the state capital into the “World Capital of Begging” and has angered residents’ associations throughout the city. According to Horácio Magalhães, from the Friends of Copacabana, “this bill is truly absurd and seems to try to criminalize initiatives that condominiums often seek to protect their own safety and that of their residents, due to the inertia of government actions”.

In the city of Santos, about 100 kilometers from São Paulo, a Bill was drafted with the same guidelines as the capital of Rio de Janeiro. Article 1 of the Bill (Law no. 15/2022), drafted by PSOL councilwoman Débora Camilo, but which has not yet been voted on in plenary, determines that:

It is prohibited, in open spaces for public use, in their furniture and in their interfaces with spaces for private use, the use of hostile architecture techniques that have as their objective or result in the removal of homeless people, the elderly, young people and other segments of the population (Bill no. 15/2022).

But depending on the opinion of 02/21/22 (Process 177/2022) of the Legislative Secretariat of Santos, prepared by attorney Mariana Buy dos Santos, everything indicates that the law will not be approved. The opinion states that the law “is unfeasible from a formal aspect, since it deals with a matter related to urban standards in the territory of the municipality, which is required to be conveyed through a complementary law”.



The mayor of the capital Recife, João Campos of the PSB, was the first to sanction the Padre Júlio Lancelloti Law through Bill No. 23/2022, approved in the 2nd discussion at the regular meeting on December 5, 2022, in the Plenary of the City Council. Authored by PT councilwoman Liana Cirne, the measure is another step forward in the defense of the homeless population that is added to the Municipal Policy of Comprehensive Care for the Homeless Population (Law No. 18,968/22), which aims to guarantee social assistance services and public programs aimed at this population. The Bill is part of “Recife Acolhe” (Recife welcomes), a program launched by the mayor at the beginning of his administration and made up of six axes: expansion of services; housing; food security; education, employment and income; donation and institutional.

Although the proposal from the capital of Pernambuco is a step forward, the bill does not provide for punishments, nor does it set aside a budget for inspection. Perhaps that is why Law 01-00534/2022, by councilman Dr. Sidney Cruz, from political party Solidariedade, is so important, as it “establishes the Program to Combat and Raise Awareness of Aporophobia in the Municipality of São Paulo”. According to the Sole Paragraph of Art. 1º. “For the purposes of this Law, aporophobia is considered to be the practice of acts of intolerance or that offend the dignity or decorum of a person due to their condition of poverty and social vulnerability”. Art. 4º. states that the Municipality of São Paulo:

Art. 4. The Municipality of São Paulo shall promote awareness-raising activities on aporophobia, ways to combat it and report it through:

- I - Lectures and seminars in the public elementary and high school network of the Municipality of São Paulo.
- II - Preparation of informative materials on the subject.
- III - Media campaigns broadcast on television networks and newspapers of wide circulation.
- IV - Preparation of educational material in the form of videos and booklets to be broadcast on the websites and social networks of municipal agencies.



No one wants to live on the streets. According to data from the CNMP (2015), the main reasons that can lead to this situation include: unemployment, lack of family ties, loss of a loved one, violence, loss of self-esteem, alcoholism, drug use, and mental illness. Thus, one of the consequences of the intense process of social exclusion is the homeless population, who do not have enough income to obtain adequate housing space and, without alternatives, use the city streets as their home. This is because the occupation of urban land is based on the capitalist logic of private appropriation of space through payment of the value of the land. According to the Methodological Report of the João Pinheiro Foundation (2021), the estimated housing deficit for Brazil in 2016 was around 5.657 million households, of which 4.849 million are in urban areas and 808 thousand in rural areas.

In the case of the capital of São Paulo, it seems that neither the Strategic Master Plan nor the zoning have been able to increase the population density on the regions with infrastructure, since the value of land in São Paulo is still very high and is not enough to help solve the housing deficit. However, the housing shortage in the country is long-standing and involves several aspects and disciplines. What can be done for now is to analyze whether the urban design strategies used in these areas contribute to attracting or repelling people, either tourists, residents or homeless people.

Hospitality is rooted in the symbolic and mystical dimension (Budel, Severini & Rejowski, 2023). The city is the place of human construction, of the collective. And it is this place of living together that defines the feeling of belonging, and, consequently, the feeling of integration and social participation. The qualification of public space is essential for welcoming, and this can be done through a series of physical interventions that demonstrate welcoming (Severini & Vargas, 2017).



Data collected from a survey on the perception of hospitality in Rio de Janeiro indicate that interaction with the local population influences the intention to recommend the city as a tourist destination and that aspects related to basic infrastructure, which include urban design, provide better interaction between tourists and the local society (Valduga, Costa, & Breda, 2022). This proves what Baptista (2008, p.6) states, that “talking about hospitality means, precisely, taking into account the multiple implications present in this dual human relationship: the relationship with the place and the relationship with the other”.

Some public administrators have demonstrated to be true urban hosts. Implemented in 2014 in the city of Vancouver, Canada, the bench called “Find Shelter Here” has a part of the backrest that lifts up and is fixed by means of a French brace, forming a roof. Since the city has a rainy climate all year round, the architects designed a public bench that transforms into a kind of shelter and helps raise awareness among the population about the need to do something for those most in need.

METHODOLOGY AND COLLECTION OF RESULTS

This research has a qualitative approach. According to Chizzotti (1995, p.79), “the qualitative approach is based on the idea that there is a dynamic relationship between the real world and the subject, a living interdependence between the subject and the object, an inseparable link between the objective world and the subjectivity of the subject”. Therefore, it can be stated that knowledge is not limited to a list of isolated data, connected by an explanatory theory; the subject-observer is an integral part of the knowledge process and interprets the phenomena, attributing a meaning to them (Chizzotti, 1995). Thus, as the “object is not an inert and neutral data, it is



possessed of meanings and relationships that concrete subjects create in their actions" (Chizzotti, 1995, p.79).

Regarding the objectives, the research is exploratory-descriptive. Exploratory because it deals with a little explored topic aiming to provide greater familiarity with the problem, with a view to making it explicit. Descriptive because it describes the characteristics of a certain phenomenon and aims to discover the frequency with which the phenomenon occurs (Gil, 2008).

The field research proposes an integration of data obtained through bibliographic, documentary (presented in the previous items) and field research. The field research was carried out on a stretch of Paulista Avenue, located in the city of São Paulo, more specifically between the Trianon-Masp and Brigadeiro subway stations.

Two inspections were carried out: January and February 2024, covering the section of Paulista Avenue between Casa Branca Street (near the Trianon-Masp subway station) and Maria Figueiredo Street (Brigadeiro subway station). The route, approximately 1 kilometer on each side, consisted of observing and recording the buildings between both sides of the avenue. Using the material, hostile architecture devices were classified according to Faria's criteria (2020). They are pins, spikes, iron arches, railings, plant arrangements, grids, glass walls, furniture, inclined planes, hybrids, and special types.

In field research, data collection techniques and methods require special attention from the researcher as an observer. During the surveys, field notes were made based on a satellite photo taken from Google Earth and photographs taken with the authors' own cell phones. The photograph portrays characteristics and fragments moments, for this reason, the photographic



document is considered for its historical value and for its own elements of direct reality that are conveyed by its visual arrangement.

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Opened in the late 19th century, Paulista Avenue was once home to the mansions of coffee barons. After undergoing numerous renovations (Toledo, 1987), the avenue now boasts numerous iconic buildings that are a reference for the city and the country. Among them are the MASP, FIESP, Itaú Cultural, Conjunto Nacional and Gazeta buildings. Around 1.5 million people pass through the avenue every day, including residents, workers and tourists. The avenue is among the most recommended destinations by major tour operators. On the Tripadvisor website, Paulista Avenue is the second most recommended attraction. On Google's website, the avenue appears on the main page in the "what to do in São Paulo" category and has a score of 4.8 and around 4 thousand reviews indicating that the avenue is an "excellent" place. But are the urban aspects of the avenue capable of accommodating everyone? Does its public space provide the conditions for São Silvestre athletes to rest after running 15 kilometers? Or for workers to rest after lunch? Where do people sit between one show and another during the "Virada Cultural Event"?

Along the stretch covered, the following hostile architecture devices were found a) 8 pins; b) 2 spikes; c) 5 railings; d) 4 plant arrangements; e) 8 railings; f) 10 glass walls; g) 6 inclined planes; h) 4 hybrid and i) 1 special type. The "iron arches" and "furniture" devices were not found, following the classification of Faria (2020). Figure 1 maps and classifies the hostile architecture devices installed in the public space of a specific stretch of Paulista Avenue.



Figure 1 – Field research path and location of hostile architecture devices



Source: Google Earth worked on by the authors

Next it is possible to view and understand in detail each type of device and how they prevent or hinder people from staying in public spaces.

- a. **Pins:** these are iron bars installed linearly in display cases, walls, thresholds, niches, edges, or any recess that is conducive to permanence. According to Faria (2020, p.91), "pins vary significantly both in terms of their shape and in terms of the spaces where they are installed" and "in their simplest arrangement, they present a series of bars of identical heights and arranged in a linear manner".

In Figures 2, 3 and 4, it is possible to see the pins installed on both the walls of buildings and the windows of commercial establishments. They prevent people from sitting on the walls or resting on the storefronts. When installed next to the windows, people can still see the products during the day, but the devices prevent unwanted people from staying there if they need a place to rest.

Figures 2, 3 and 4 - Pin-type hostile architecture devices



Source: Authors, 2024

Figures 5, 6 and 7 - Pin-type hostile architecture devices



Source: Authors, 2024

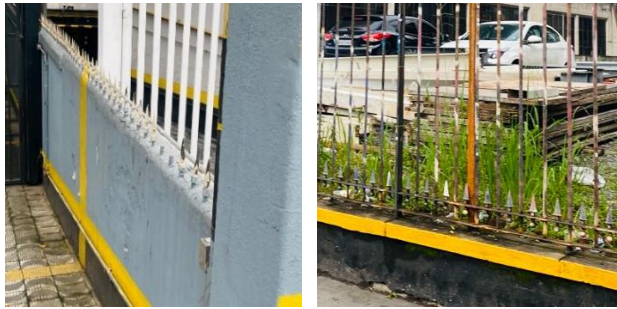
Figures 8, 9 and 10 - Pin-type hostile architecture devices



Source: Authors, 2024

- b. **Spikes:** Like pins, spikes are distinguished from pins only in relation to their upper, pointed and piercing end (FARIA, 2020, p. 94). This device is like those that hinder access to walls and gates.

Figures 11 and 12 – Spike-type hostile architecture device



Source: Authors, 2024

- c. Railings:** railings function in a similar way to pins and skewers and iron arches, restricting resting activities such as sitting and lying down.

According to Faria (Faria, 2020, p. 96), “the main difference between railings and pins is the height of the metal bars. While pins are small, railings are taller”. Thus, these devices “in addition to obstructing seating surfaces, sometimes hinder or prevent access to some spaces, surrounding flowerbeds, gardens, and recesses in building facades” (Faria, 2020, p. 96). Figures 13, 14, 15 and 16 exemplify the use of railings both to prevent people from staying and to segregate space.

Figures 13, 14, 15 and 16 - Railing-type hostile architecture device



Source: Authors, 2024

- d. Plant arrangements:** Plant arrangements, according to Faria (2020, p.99), include plants, vases, flower beds, planters and other compositions involving vegetation. According to the author, it is a type of hostile architecture that allows for countless configurations

and formats. In the following Figures, it is possible to see how this type of device prevents people from staying, resting or even approaching private spaces.

Figures 17, 18, 19 and 20 – Plant Arrangement-type hostile architecture device



Source: Authors, 2024

During the inspections, other types of plant arrangements were observed, here called horizontal plant arrangements. Planted on walls or flower boxes, horizontal plant arrangements also prevent people from staying and resting.

Figures 21, 22 and 23 - Horizontal Plant Arrangement-type hostile architecture device



Source: Authors, 2024

- e. **Fences:** According to Faria (2020), these are the most restrictive elements of hostile architecture. This is because fences not only restrict access to space, but also restrict other activities considered uncomfortable, such as sitting, sleeping and taking shelter.

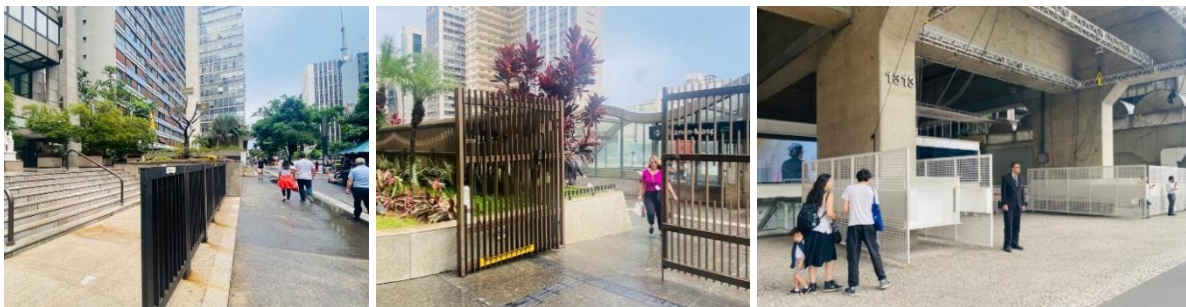
Figures 24, 25 and 26 – Fence-type hostile architecture device



Source: Authors, 2024

The following figures show that, in addition to controlling people's access, the fences also physically separate public space from private space. In some cases, in addition to the fences, security guards are stationed at the entrance to the buildings controlling who can and cannot enter the front setback of the building.

Figuras 27, 28 e 29 – Fence-type hostile architecture device



Source: Authors, 2024

Figures 30 and 31 – Fence-type hostile architecture device



Source: Authors, 2024

- f. **Glass walls:** As observed in field research, glass walls are the devices identified in greatest number. According to Faria (2020), glass walls are transparent enclosures placed in front setbacks to prevent access to certain areas. They function as fences.

Figures 32, 33, 34 and 35 – Glass Wall-type hostile architecture device



Source: Authors, 2024

Figures 36, 37 and 38 - Glass Wall-type hostile architecture device



Source: Authors, 2024

It was also observed during the inspection that the installation of glass walls next to the guardrails has the clear intention of preventing people from resting, who, due to the lack of urban furniture, especially benches to sit on, could use the guardrails for this purpose. For Faria (2020, p. 109), "although they are used largely to enclose and inhibit access to certain areas, glass walls are also installed over seating surfaces and around gardens".

Figures 39, 40 and 41 - Glass Wall-type hostile architecture device



Source: Authors, 2024

- g. **Inclined planes:** According to Faria's classification (2020, p. 111), inclined planes are thresholds, windowsills, and other elements built diagonally to the horizontal plane to prevent comfortable sitting or lying down". Although very common in the underpasses of large city overpasses, inclined planes are subtle, often imperceptible, because they are built with the same cladding as the buildings where they are placed. This is the case in the study area, where they are present in almost all flower boxes, except for those with an attached concrete bench.

Figures 42, 43 and 44 - Inclined plane-type hostile architecture device



Source: Authors, 2024

Figures 45 and 46 - Inclined plane-type hostile architecture device



Source: Authors, 2024

- h. **Hybrids:** This variety, according to Faria (2020), combines two elements of hostile architecture in a single installation. The hybrid devices collected during the research have glass gratings or walls combined with plant arrangements. They appear to function as a double barrier to prevent anyone from touching, feeling or remaining in the spaces in which they are located. The author attributes that these device modifications may be more restrictive, as they completely or partially hinder access to public space.

Figures 47, 48 and 49 - Hybrids-type hostile architecture device



Source: Authors, 2024

- i. **Special types:** According to Faria (2020), this typology includes rarely occurring hostile architectures, found on few occasions and with different shapes. During the inspection, only one device was found that can be classified as a particular type. It is a chain installed in front of a sloping wall that prevents people from remaining in the location.

Figure 50 - Special-type hostile architecture device



Source: Authors, 2024

According to Petty (2016), the use of spikes or pins does not seek to solve the problem of homelessness or punish it, but instead seeks to remove homeless people from view, making it difficult for them to meet others and trying to prevent them from participating in the production of urban space. Thus, although homelessness in public spaces is not formally criminal, it is still undesirable, and the use of hostile architecture is a means of expressing this in each society (Petty, 2016).

The presence of glass walls and fences is in line with attempts at social control through invisible urban design techniques and strategies (Savicic & Savic, 2012). According to the authors, the growing desire for controlled environments also considers the way in which citizens react to them. Agents of “unpleasant design” that manage people’s behavior without the explicit presence of authorities.

CONCLUSION

Given the extreme vulnerability of homeless people and their lack of access to fundamental rights, this research sought to show that certain urban design strategies can be very cruel and discriminatory, preventing the only way these people have found to sit, access, lie down, take shelter or rest. In the studied section, it can be said that there are few resting areas. And the few areas that exist are uncomfortable due to the presence of hostile architectural devices, affecting the well-being of everyone, whether they are tourists or homeless people. As Faria (2020, p. 58) says, “without places to pause and rest, the permanence and contact between people also tend to decrease”.

According to Grassi (2011), the figure of the guest is a figure of ambiguity. And this can be seen in the most varied forms of use of the public space of one of the most touristic avenues in the capital of São Paulo. If, on the one hand, the guest is welcome and desired, whether in the form of a tourist, resident or visitor to new developments in an Urban Transformation Structuring Axis Zone - ZEU, he is repelled and mistreated, almost an enemy, if he is in the form of a beggar or a homeless person.

The devices installed along the studied stretch - which is a ZEU - contradict one of the premises of zoning, since it is intended to favor relationships between



people and the city. These devices interfere in the qualification of public space in such a way that relationships are clearly disadvantaged, since they repel the homeless individual and prevent the guest from fully enjoying urban spaces.

Despite Faria's (2020) detailed classification, it was possible to see that the typologies of hostile architecture can be "personalized" depending on the location and creativity of each person, as could be seen in the implementation of "horizontal plant arrangements" and "particular types". The field research also indicated that these devices could push away tourists and residents. The presence of "pins", "spikes", "railing" and "glass walls" next to the guardrails make it difficult for people to stay on the sidewalks, whether to sit, talk or just watch the rhythm of the road. And this is aggravated by the lack of benches to sit on the wide sidewalks of the avenue, as already observed by Ferraz (2013).

Furthermore, the massive presence of "railings" installed along the lot's alignment, next to the public sidewalk, affects the harmony between public and private spaces. The type of building is in the middle of the lot, that is, there is a frontal setback. And this setback could serve to give amplitude through a sensation of widening the sidewalk. Despite the need for a clear separation between public and private spaces, this frontal setback can be used as an extension of the sidewalk, but the presence of "railings" and "glass walls" now provides a feeling of confinement that is only made worse by the wide street. Fortunately, it is still possible to find lots that have not yet installed this type of enclosure. The most emblematic case is the Gazeta staircase (Paulista Avenue, 900) where the steps of the staircase serve both as a rest area and as a place to enjoy the view. The entrance of some buildings still resist and the boundaries between public and private spaces are tenuous.



Figures 51 and 52 – Examples of buildings that interact with public space



Source: Authors, 2024

The research also helps to raise awareness about the importance of prohibitive public policies. They are necessary not only to prevent the implementation of hostile architecture techniques in public spaces, but also to raise awareness among the population itself. In this sense, the public policies of the capital of Pernambuco stand out, which took an important step in incorporating Bill 48/2021 into its Master Plan, and the drafting of Bill 01-00534/2022 of São Paulo, which, even without having been voted on in plenary, aims to raise awareness about aporophobia. Aversion to the poor needs to be revised and give way to empathy, compassion and solidarity.

Paulista Avenue could adopt a welcoming stance and welcome all people who pass through its (public) space, whoever they may be. And this could start by prohibiting the installation of hostile architectural devices and by raising awareness among its residents and business owners. If it is, in fact, one of the city's main tourist attractions, it needs to set an example. Only then will we one day be able to be proud of the well-known São Paulo hospitality, genuine and unconditional.

Limitations were identified in the study, mainly related to the scarcity of specific documents on the consequences of implementing hostile architecture devices in tourist cities. This points to the need for a broader and more in-depth

expansion in the investigation process of how the topic has been addressed by public managers and also by society itself. For future investigations, extensive research on how Law No. 488/2021 has been implemented is recommended in order to analyze its possibilities and limitations.

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