

Article

The Reconfiguration of Urban Public–Private Spaces in the Mall: False Security, Antidemocratization, and Apoliticalization

Luis Alfonso Escudero Gómez 

Department of Geography, University of Castilla-La Mancha, 45071 Toledo, Spain; luisalfonso.escudero@uclm.es

Abstract: In cities across the world, public spaces are being reconfigured, and their functions are being appropriated by private areas, such as shopping malls. The aim of the present article was to analyze this problem and, more specifically, to study shopping centers as secure spaces in cities, as well as the antidemocratic and apolitical nature of such malls. The study takes a positivist approach, beginning with the existing theoretical framework and using data from case studies to generate findings. The theoretical framework is established through a review of the literature, while the case study data are drawn from an analysis of news content from digital media and from autoethnography. The findings suggest malls are perceived as safe spaces, also in addition to being home to minor offenses, as well as a number of tragic events and crimes. Additionally, a growing number of demonstrations and political acts are being staged inside malls, which are seen as symbols of consumption and the neoliberal capitalist system. The owners and managers of shopping centers condone and permit the least conflictive acts and ban and repress the remainder, on occasions with the support of state security forces. The relocation of civic life to malls reduces the use of public spaces and erodes the value of the public sphere. The article ends by proposing public actions to reverse this process.



Citation: Escudero Gómez, L.A. The Reconfiguration of Urban Public–Private Spaces in the Mall: False Security, Antidemocratization, and Apoliticalization. *Sustainability* **2021**, *13*, 12447. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su132212447>

Academic Editor: Pedro Guimarães

Received: 22 October 2021
Accepted: 9 November 2021
Published: 11 November 2021

Publisher's Note: MDPI stays neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.



Copyright: © 2021 by the author. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Keywords: city; mall; shopping center; public space; private space; apoliticalization

1. Introduction

“Behind the station, I had also noticed weird parallelepipeds with salmon, ochre, and grayish-brown stripes, which made me think of a futuristic Babylonian city—in fact it was the Bords de l’Orne shopping center, one of the prides of the new municipality; all the major trademarks of modern consumerism were represented there, from Desigual to The Kooples; thanks to this center, even the inhabitants of Lower Normandy were granted access to the modern world” [1] (2020, p. 104).

At a global level, public spaces in cities have undergone a process of reconfiguration, while the rise in mass private property has also multiplied, as already reported in the 1980s by Shearing and Stenning [2]. They have been replaced by private spaces, which, on assuming the functions that were once typical of open civic spaces, have been described as quasi-public spaces [3], pseudo-public spaces [4], or quasi-communal spaces [5]. According to Gottdiener, quasi-public spaces are “the ersatz urban pedestrian culture of the controlled, manipulated, and thoroughly commercialized themed environment.” [5] (p. 148). Public spaces are where many of citizens’ and cities’ ordinary [6] and extraordinary events take place. Indeed, they are essential elements for the functioning of a democratic society [7]. Public spaces are what make urban centers living entities [8]; they are unique and, if they lose prominence, so will the central areas of cities. This process is already underway. The emergence of new centralities in cities, the abandonment and neglect of historical centers and public spaces, and the predominance of the use of cars as the norm in urban mobility are elements that have extended hand in hand with urbanization across the world; they provide fertile ground for the proliferation of private spaces assuming the functions of private ones. This is the case of shopping malls, which are now home to many social

interactions, thereby privatizing public spaces and further exacerbating social divisions given that the mall experience is limited by the economic capacity to access the goods and services on offer. They form part of a global process in which increasing numbers of people make less use of public spaces or use them only in the case of absolute need, while they shift their free time, leisure activities, and social interactions to private spaces, such as shopping centers. Traditional main streets have been replaced by malls with antiurban tendencies of deep-rooted car dependency and sophisticated private control [9].

The demise of public spaces places that enable free interaction between citizens has been a focus of thought and concern for decades [10–17]. The aim of this article was to delve deeper into the idea of the urban commons and how they are being encroached upon and excluded, following the theory of Banerjee [18]. The specific purpose of this research is to focus on malls, where a commercial logic coexists with spaces for social participation that generate collective identity. Nonetheless, the relationship that truly matters to their owners is that visitors become customers and the highest sales volume possible is achieved. This reconfiguring of public space into private in shopping centers contradicts the principles of the right to the city [19], and the critical analysis of this process falls within the concepts of social justice and the fight for public space espoused by Mitchell [15], as well as that of the sustainability of cities.

The goal of this article is to contribute a theoretical analysis of the appropriation of public spaces by malls (Figure 1), as well as a deeper understanding of the problems addressed, to be published in the special issue of the journal *Sustainability*, entitled “Cities and Retail: Sustainable Transformation of Retail in Urban Environments”. The article falls within the scope of the works proposed for the Special Issue and is included in its set of proposals, not as an independent, isolated work.

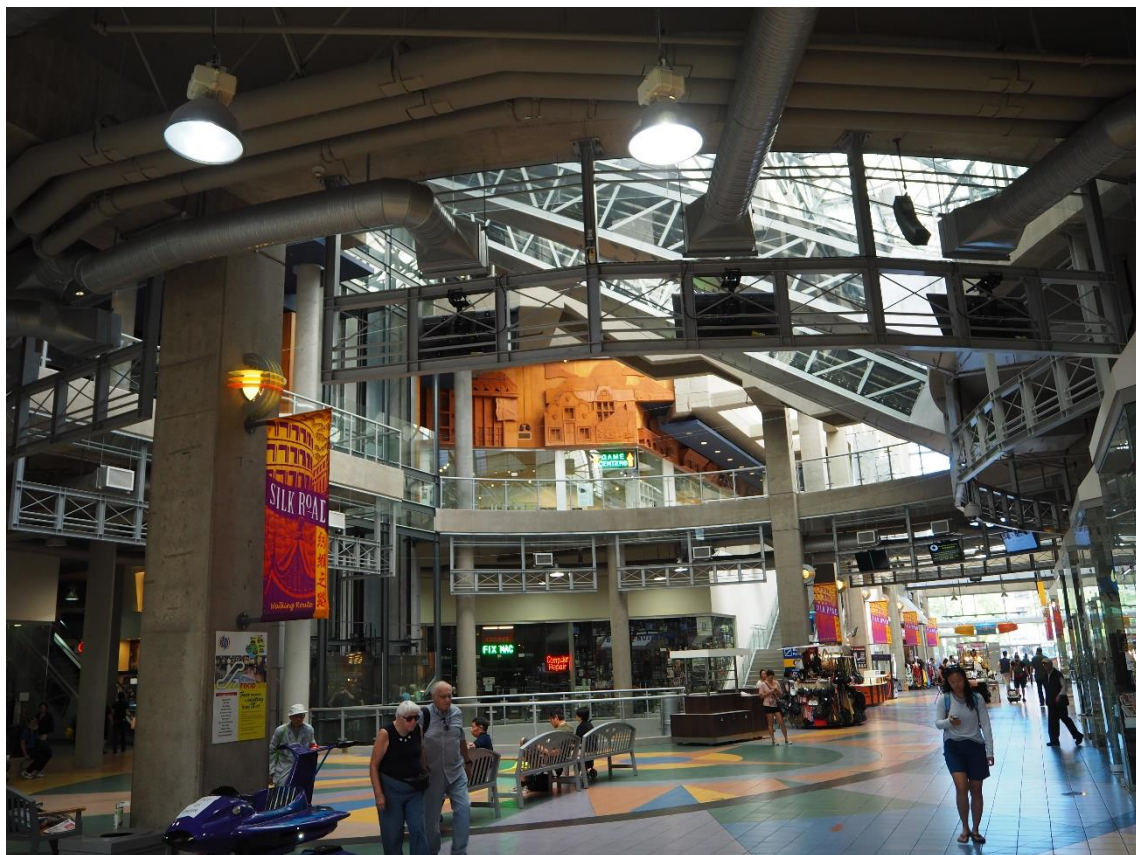


Figure 1. The Village Mall shopping center in Vancouver, being used as a public space (people walking around, sitting on benches, whiling away the time, etc.). Photograph by L.A. Escudero, 8 August 2016.

Thus, the main aim leads to the development of two specific objectives in the research and article: the analysis of shopping centers as safe places in the city, and the antidemocratic and apolitical nature of these complexes and how this diminishes the value of the public sphere in cities and their sustainability. After meeting these objectives, the conclusion adopts a propositional approach, supporting social justice and the recovery of public spaces. The primary practical contribution of this research could be considered to be the academic understanding of the issue addressed and the possible implementation of the suggested proposals by public urban policymakers.

The article is structured as follows: introduction, methodology, results and discussion, and conclusion. The results and discussion section deals with the two specific research aims through two subsections on the false security of shopping centers as a key factor in their appropriation of public spaces and the antidemocratic and apolitical character of malls.

2. Methods

The question of public spaces is a mature subject of study and, as such, is apt for a theoretical study that seeks a deep understanding of the problems involved, as is the case of the present work. The article takes a positivist approach, beginning with the current theoretical framework and using data from case studies to generate results. The theoretical framework draws on a review of the literature, and data from multiple case studies are the fruit of the content analysis of digital media and autoethnography. Hence, the universal and the particular are combined through the use of content analysis, observation, and desk-based research. Observation and documentary techniques are, thus, utilized.

Similarly to Cudny and Appleblad [20] in their research on public spaces, this study uses a mixed-method approach, with an analysis of the scientific literature as the central research method, for both the theoretical framework and the discussion of the results. Given the unmanageable number of the available publications, rather than an exhaustive review of the literature, a review of selected literature was conducted. Drawing on the available literature, the article reviews two core references or keywords in conjunction: mall and public space (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Word cloud with the key terms used in the bibliographic search. Source: own elaboration.

The literature review is complemented by documentary research based on an analysis of digital media. Content analysis of traditional media, especially the daily press, is highly popular in scientific research [21–24]. From 2012 to the present (2021), the author made use of a Google worldwide news alert with the keywords “mall” and “shopping center”, published in English and, secondarily, in Spanish. News articles were searched for, at the global level, related to safety and security problems and political protest actions and demonstrations in malls, which provided specifically selected cases. News items were selected that contained information and key examples in line with the aims of this research.

As in the work by Torabi et al. [25], the paper does not present a traditional comparative case study; rather, it uses the cases to illustrate its conceptual framework. For this reason, rather than conducting a single systemic study, information has been gathered on multiple cases at a global level. These are the different examples that appear in the results and discussion section.

Autoethnography, which involves drawing on the researcher's previous experience [26], was also used in the study. This technique entailed an analysis of the phenomena based on the author's own experience. An observational study is applied, grounded in the observer's ability to interpret what is happening and why [27]. Over decades, the author of the present work has compiled personal observations, field notes, and photographs of malls. The findings of the observation, together with the literature review and the digital media analysis, underpin the results of this article in both its textual and its visual discourse, the latter by means of the photographs selected from the author's own collection.

In conclusion, as in previous studies [20], the work presents a theoretical elaboration, illustrated with a number of case studies taken from the literature, personal observations, and an analysis of Internet resources.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. *The False Security of Malls: A Key Factor in Their Appropriation of Public Spaces*

Safety is a crucial aspect of the wellbeing of the members and resources of any society. Shopping centers are a way to escape from the predominant problems of cities: pollution, disorder, insecurity, marginalization, etc. Security is one of the essential elements of shopping centers [28]; hence, these entities are very concerned with ensuring safety and security and preventing any type of criminal offense [29]. The high rate of delinquency in many city centers and the growing worldwide threat of terrorism have made security a major concern in managing and designing malls [30], as well as one of their greatest attractions. Wakefield [31] provided a detailed description of the developments in the commercial world that have driven the development of private security and examined the security teams in operation in shopping centers. McCahill [32] analyzed the introduction of visual surveillance technologies (CCTV) in various spaces, including malls. The challenge for shopping malls is to create an environment that is both safe and entertaining [33].

Indeed, shopping centers provide safe spaces. The safety they provide is one of their great attractions and one of the reasons for their prominence. The lack of security kills all things public, while the mall is now viewed as a place to socialize in a safe space [34] rather than the fearful world outside. As long ago as 1978, the director George A. Romero made a horror film in which a mall was the metaphorical refuge in which to survive the attack of the zombies. In the television series *Fear the Walking Dead*, the fictitious Bridgeview Mall complex is used as a safe space after the apocalypse of the living dead. In the current context of a growing perception of insecurity in public spaces, where the streets are a source of fear and the threat of the unknown, shopping centers offer the comfort of safety. They provide what Rybczynski [35] calls safe urbanity, a place where people feel they are watched over.

The above is especially significant in socially conflicted regions. Despite being private spaces with rules of conduct and access, as analyzed in the next subsection, malls provide pleasant, safe spaces where social encounters can be engaged in by a broad community of people that materially lack such conditions [36]. In scenarios with a considerable rise in insecurity, shopping centers take the place of traditional public city spaces. Hanif et al. [28] underline this role of malls in Lagos (Nigeria). In places and countries where insecurity and violence have marked or mark daily life and where public civic spaces are viewed with fear, shopping centers are seen as safe places and attract individuals that have sufficient financial resources to consume inside them, as well as people that use these safe spaces located within dangerous cities to engage in social interactions. Malls provide a safe environment in contexts where the public authorities have been less effective in doing so in public spaces.

The outcome is a vicious circle, where, the more people go to malls, the less use is made of public spaces, which end up empty and abandoned. Hence, there emerges a perception of insecurity, and increasing numbers of people prefer to go to the mall, with the interrelationship among public space, fear, and conflict resulting in the progressive dereliction of the former. Public space becomes empty space. With cities becoming depopulated, duller, and more dangerous [16], shopping malls provide safe, clean, comfortable spaces in which to meet up. They are places to shop, eat, gather, and meander, which are envisioned as perfectly safe and cast against the all-consuming danger of urban centers [37]. They represent Foucault's concept of heterotopia, creating a perfect, meticulously arranged space, whereas public spaces are messy, badly constructed, and jumbled [38].

Giddens [39] underlined that the degeneration of local communities is driven by the disappearance of secure public spaces, streets, squares, parks, and other areas where people can feel safe. Against this backdrop, malls provide a safe, controlled leisure environment, separated by distance and architectural barriers from the unsafe, chaotic, and decadent city, where exposure to the risks of a hostile, insecure city can be avoided. In short, when delinquency threatens the enjoyment of a city's public spaces, shopping malls emerge as a desirable substitute in which citizens can enjoy the same experience [5].

Yet, are malls actually safe spaces? The safety of shopping centers is now more perceived than evidenced, not only because their concentration of economic activities makes them attractive places for shoplifting, but also, as often happens, the crime is of a higher dimension, involving violent acts. Having taken on the role of urban centers and as they bring together large numbers of people, malls have become the object of appalling acts of violence (Table 1). As long ago as 1987, a department store in Barcelona (Spain) was the object of a bloody terrorist attack, and, in 1992, a car-bomb attack was launched against the Camino Real shopping mall in Lima (Peru). In more current times, they have been the targets of global terrorism, as in the bloody case of Nakumatt Westgate in Nairobi (Kenya) in 2013, and of national terrorist organizations, such as the attack on the Andino shopping center in Bogotá (Colombia) in 2017. They have also been the targets of irrational shootings and stabbings carried out by individuals, such as the cases of the Olympia shopping center in Munich (Germany), the Cielo Vista mall in El Paso (Mexico), and Arndale shopping center in Manchester (UK) in 2019, with many seriously wounded but no fatalities [40], as well as the attacks in Terminal 21 in Nakhon Ratchasima (Thailand), also known as Koratn, in 2020, and those in the King Soopers Grocery Store supermarket in the Sunrise Center mall in Boulder (USA) in 2021. This succession of acts of terror and violence has occurred in different malls across the world.

Table 1. Sample of deadly violent attacks in malls around the world, from the attack on the (2013) to the present (2021). Source: own preparation, drawing on the references cited in the table.

Date	Place	Mall	Incident	Type	Number Killed	Further Information
21 September 2013	Nairobi, Kenya	Nakumatt Westgate	Shooting and kidnapping	Attack by a terrorist organization	72	[41]
22 July 2016	Munich, Germany	Olympia	Mass shooting	Attack by an individual	9	[42]
17 June 2017	Bogota, Colombia	Andino	Bomb	Terrorist attack	3	[43]
3 August 2019	El Paso, USA	Cielo Vista	Mass shooting	Attack by an individual	23	[44]
8–9 February 2020	Nakhon Ratchasima, Indonesia.	Terminal 21	Mass shooting	Attack by an individual	17	[45]
22 March 2021	Boulder, USA	Sunrise Center	Mass shooting	Attack by an individual	10	[46]

Malls are not necessarily safe from accidents, either, as demonstrated by the tragic fire in the Winter Cherry complex in Kemerovo (Russia), where 64 people were killed, 41 of whom were children [47], highlighting the danger of such incidents in these spaces.

Furthermore, shopping centers attract thousands of customers every day, who bring large sums of cash and credit cards and leave with costly purchases, making them a magnet for delinquents [48]. Özaşçılar and Ozturk [49] studied the problem of shoplifting in malls in Turkey. Ceccato [50] conducted an empirical study on a shopping center in Stockholm (Sweden), identifying 5768 criminal events between January 2014 and May 2015, representing 11.2 cases per day and approximately one every hour. Of these, 68% were acts of public disturbance, 17% of violence and threats, and 16% were thefts and shoplifting. These acts increased at weekends. A total of 64% of events happened in micro-places in the shopping center, in the food court, in the entrances, and in certain functional places.

Despite all the evidence and the tragic events that have occurred inside malls at global level, they continue to be viewed as safe places, given that the image of security is more important than its substance [51]. According to Gottdiener [5], the key point is that the public perceives shopping centers as safe. They are crucially seen as a paradigm of safety compared with streets or cities, with their own security personnel and protective measures in their interior, in contrast to urban public spaces that are open and dangerous [30,41,51–54].

Nonetheless, the absolute control over what happens inside malls does not prevent the occurrence of criminal acts. Security does not justify the excessive control given that robbery and theft can occur at any time, as can other criminal acts and even serious violent crimes. Restrictions, guard services, and constant surveillance do not ultimately prevent offenses and criminal acts. This over-security, however, encourages visitors to engage in leisure activities and consumption, promotes the control of other nonconsumption activities, and, as addressed in the next subsection, gives rise to the apolitical and antidemocratic nature of these spaces.

Lastly, the pursuit of a fully controlled environment has generated negative collateral effects. The virus of closed, heavily guarded spaces such as malls has spread to open cities, where security cameras, armed patrols in parks and squares, and restrictions are transforming the amiable profile of cities, reminding their inhabitants that crime is just around the corner [55]. However, in contrast to malls, a counterproductive effect has been noted in public spaces, where surveillance and control generate perceptions of fear and feelings of insecurity and unease.

3.2. *Malls as Antidemocratic, Apolitical Spaces That Degrade the Public Sphere*

Public space is the physical place where the public sphere is enacted. The values associated with public space, as an accessible site open to a variety of uses and a place of collective engagement and interaction, are of great significance. They are areas of sociability that permit interaction and engagement [56]. Additionally, as shown by Amin [57], a society's collective culture and civic affirmation in urban life are constructed in urban public spaces. In such spaces, the public sphere is created, controlled, and challenged [58]; moreover, focusing on values such as diversity and pluralism, it is developed in common spaces because they offer real opportunities for discussion, as well as spontaneous and unprogrammed deliberation between those with diverse viewpoints on the world [59]. For this reason, public spaces can be understood as political sites [60]. Shiffman et al. [61] highlighted the role of public spaces as the place for political battles.

Public space has an important political significance as a place to demonstrate, invade, barricade, etc. Occupying public space and demonstrating are the best ways to express force and challenge those in power [62]. Public spaces are areas of democratic resistance and resilience [63], which connect with urban emancipation [64]. Most of the major uprisings of the last 15 or 20 years have indisputably been rooted in urban events in public spaces. The use of squares and streets for social protests and movements has facilitated, for example, the political protests against the austerity measures implemented after the Great Recession [65] and the *indignados* movement in countless Spanish cities [66]. This is the case of the several

month long occupation of the iconic Puerta del Sol—a traditional showcase for acts of protest and resistance (see, for example, [67])—in Madrid in 2011 (Figure 3). Urban squares have a unique significance and key importance as places to hold multiple civic events [68]. A square is a site in which, and from which, political activity flows [15].



Figure 3. Occupation of the Puerta del Sol in Madrid by the *indignados*. Photographs taken by L.A. Escudero, 8 June 2011.

The demise of public spaces and the new roles of private spaces are related to the decline in the public spirit and collective dialogue [69]. Shopping centers, as substitutes of public spaces, are effectively eroding the public sphere [70]. Clough and Vanderbeck [71] stated that malls are mere simulations of public space within which some of the most important aspects of the public realm are systematically denied, including the right to political action.

Malls are antidemocratic places under private, totalitarian control. However, as they are private property, this is legally permissible. In the private sector, property owners can

do as they wish within their property, safeguarding their rights and interests. Access to a private space does not mean this space can be used freely. These complexes enjoy the privilege of selecting and excluding behaviors. These quasi-public spaces are, in effect, facilitating private ministates [72]. As mentioned, the pedestrian flow is under constant surveillance. Additionally, while streets and squares typically never close, shopping centers have opening hours (Figure 4). A mall is an exclusive and exclusionary space and, if an individual diverges from the rules when inside it, they may be punished [73]. Under these exclusionary rules, begging, sleeping, or eating food from outside is prohibited, and such actions are cracked down on. These behaviors are considered problematic because they encourage a fall in consumption [74].



Figure 4. Opening hours at the mall in Churchill Square, Brighton. Photograph taken by L.A. Escudero, 16 November 2019.

Furthermore, the mall follows an agenda furnished by the management and without consideration of the visitor, which highlights specific values in a superficial and utilitarian way, typically including family, friendship, or love (Figure 5). They also tend to promote seasons of the year, summertime, holidays, and Christmas. The mall management shapes their meanings, uses, and purposes. However, this is all done under a framework that leans toward commercialization. That is, these events and festivities provide a scenario for the act of shopping, performed by its actors, i.e., the customer/consumers.

Public space can be conceptualized as a political category and be placed at the center of the debate on democracy. By contrast, malls, being private spaces, are antidemocratic, as characterized by Sorkin [75]. The problem is that individuals spend their free time in these complexes, where many democratic activities are forbidden and where the overarching framework is consumption. Visitors to shopping centers take on the role of customer/consumer, whereas, in public squares, they are citizens. In addition, malls do not have the same significance for their customers and workers.



Figure 5. Love sculpture in the Majorca Fashion Outlet. Photograph taken by L.A. Escudero, 7 December 2020.

These complexes are apolitical places where political demonstrations and social protest of any type is impeded. This functionality vanishes in shopping centers. Whereas, in squares and streets, we find the space for popular movements of both celebration and protest [68], in malls, any activity of the latter type is usually expressly forbidden. Practices that are characteristic of civic public spaces, such as public debate and rational criticism between different social groups [76], are not possible in a mall. Activities such as organizing a gathering, handing out political leaflets, or asking people to sign a petition are generally not allowed in shopping centers. Pamphlets are forbidden, as are political meetings or any event not organized and/or approved by the management. Malls are not spaces for political interaction. Political beings expire there. For this reason, Soja [77] concluded that shopping centers are jeopardizing the freedoms of association, expression, and politics. While public spaces are home to learning and engagement in public and political life, in private shopping complexes, individuals only learn what has been permitted or selected in order to stimulate consumption [78].

Nonetheless, contradicting the above, shopping centers are now also spaces in dispute, following the concept of Low and Lawrence [79], as geographic locations where conflicts in the form of opposition, confrontation, subversion, and/or resistance involve actors whose social positions are defined by their different control of resources and access to power. Resistance movements are growing within malls, configuring situations, groupings, and actions against the imposition of the dominant power. As in public spaces [80], these may be a question of very small, subtle, and even trivial moments, but may also represent a more sophisticated discontent when large groups organize social movements and coordinate

actions, be they peaceful or violent—which should not be confused with the criminal violence that mainly specific individuals and some terrorist organizations have carried out in a number of shopping centers, as previously discussed.

This has been the pattern over recent years, and, given the urban center role and the symbolic value that malls have acquired, despite their prohibition, social protests have taken place inside them. Certain groups and individuals perceive the mall as a symbol of the capitalist economic system and its neoliberal stances, as well as of the social segregation of the city. Once defined in this way, they emerge as areas that are ripe for protest. These spaces are being disputed in the city as political arenas, being turned into receptacles for multiple social imaginaries by citizens and civil organizations, who use them as a community space in which to spread their ideas [36]. In this regard, the role of social media in summoning people to protests has been key. The physical characteristics of malls, the architecture that underlines their isolation and their quality of being recognizable landmarks in the city, as places in which people can assemble given their appropriated role as urban centers, make them the perfect scenario for today's social demonstrations. Silva [81] showed that, since the 2008 crisis, shopping centers have constantly been used in Portugal as places for protest, typically against precarious working conditions, and that similar actions have taken place over the last ten years in other European countries, albeit with an immediate response from the private security forces of the corresponding mall or the police.

An example of this new condition of disputed spaces can be found in demonstrations in defense of democratic rights in Hong Kong in 2019. The pro-democracy movement staged protests in a number of shopping centers (Elements, New Town Plaza—it is significant that the mall defines itself as an urban square, V Walk . . .) linked to Chinese enterprises and/or those that housed stores with connections to continental China such as Huawei. Occupation of Hong Kong shopping complexes has also been organized on social media, with mass sit-ins of individuals with no intention of shopping. These actions were violently repressed by riot police, who used tear gas and rubber bullets and arrested demonstrators [82]. Previous to these events in Hong Kong, the Central World shopping complex in Bangkok was occupied by protestors against the Thai military dictatorship, with the demonstrators being violently ejected.

Another special case was that of the *rolezinhos* movement in Brazil. Young people from the disadvantaged *favela* slums organized mass occupations of shopping centers in various cities between 2013 and 2014 [83]. Coordinated on social media, hundreds or thousands of youths from the poorest areas of cities came together to gather in these complexes [84]. The response of the operators of the affected Brazilian shopping centers ranged from banning access to minors to requesting the police set up an armed defense against the siege of their establishments [85]. The level of repression, thus, grew from not letting them in or having security guards eject them, to fines and police action, until finally the state security forces were called in to violently remove them from the mall. The case of the *rolezinhos* corroborates the thesis posited by Button [86] on the use of legal tools from private space to ensure compliance with private orders (and public ones, to a lesser extent), together with the obsession of image to deter “deviant groups”. Indeed, McCahill [32] underlined how CCTV has been used to target minority groups in malls.

Shopping centers are also gradually becoming places in which to stage protests by means of performances [87] which are now organized inside these malls, despite being banned. In malls in Santiago (Chile), for example, unannounced and ephemeral theatrical performances are held, the unexpected appearance of which suggests symbolic guerilla strategies. Popular demonstrations of discontent, which in the past sought to arrive at, or near, La Moneda Palace, the symbolic epicenter of political power in Chile, now focus on the Costanera Center [88]. For example, on 7 March 2016, a group of feminists burst into the Costanera Center, perceived as a phallic symbol and emblematic of neoliberal capitalism [89]. Another case occurred in 2014, this time in Colombia, in the Avenida Chile

mall in Bogotá, a mass kissing event was organized with the participation of hundreds of couples to protest against the ejection of a young homosexual couple for kissing [90].

Lastly, alternative uses are being made of malls, challenging the norms of consumption, as has happened in the Manado Town Square mall—another case of a shopping center self-identifying as an urban square—in the Indonesian city of the same name, where spontaneous *rumah kopi* community gatherings take place in one of the cafés every Wednesday, the *Eid al-Fith* religious celebration is organized in the food court, school competitions are held, etc. [91].

In this new reality, as evidenced by the cases discussed above, shopping centers are increasingly being used as places for dispute. However, acts of protest damage their image and have a negative impact on sales and profits. Consequently, the owners of these complexes, through the management companies, synthetically adopt one of two positions, tolerating or prohibiting, which are correspondingly applied by permitting or repressing. The private spaces of the mall embody the contradictions inherent in liberal democracies that seem to vacillate between coercion and openness [92]. The promoters and managers of shopping centers seek to conceal or minimize the conflicts.

Malls tolerate, permit, and, at times, even appropriate protests, when they see that doing so avoids the creation of a negative image or may impede a greater conflict. For example, in the El Jardín mall in Quito (Ecuador), a person was ejected for playing chess in the food court, resulting in a protest that spread rapidly on social media. In response, the complex managers publicly apologized and organized a simultaneous chess match, while also installing a giant chessboard in the mall [93]. This was a partial victory, however, as the management ultimately had the last word, and the board was removed several times with the excuse of organizing events for festive occasions [94]. A similar case occurred in a store at the RÍO Shopping mall in Valladolid (Spain), which banned breastfeeding. Protests were organized on social media and staged in the shopping center [95]. As a solution, the mall opened two breastfeeding rooms and promoted their use [96]. González [97] noted that shopping centers in the metropolitan area of Bilbao allow breastfeeding on benches and the sofas in their corridors, despite the presence of specially equipped rooms for this purpose.

Social behaviors that, in principle, are banned inside malls but which are not considered sufficiently serious for intervention to be needed, are also tolerated and permitted. An example of this permissiveness was examined by Wang [4] in China, where dog owners use malls' open-air spaces to walk their pets or pensioners temporarily transform these areas for popular nighttime square-dancing sessions. The Ballonti and Max Center malls in the metropolitan area of Bilbao have opted for the security services to turn a relatively blind eye, avoiding repressive measures, to the presence of dogs, the use of scooters, or visitors entering cordoned-off areas [97].

Nonetheless, the increasing number of political actions taking place in malls may lead to serious confrontations and conflicts. For example, the protests in Pietermaritzburg (South Africa) calling for the release of the country's former president Jacob Zuma ended in the Brookside Mall being set alight [98]. Whenever any type of act, gathering, or demonstration is considered damaging by the management, malls rigorously enact prohibition measures, using their private security services and, in extreme cases, calling on the state security forces to disperse the conflictive individuals.

However, if malls assume the normal functions of public spaces, to what extent can they ban and repress acts such as demonstrations or protests? Gray and Gray [72] and Gray [3] provided a theoretical analysis, for the case of the United Kingdom, of the legal implications of private space hosting a public that, at least in theory, is free and open. Gray and Gray [72], from a legal perspective, evidenced the way in which the operation of the private law of trespass is inevitably and increasingly qualified by the paramountcy of human rights considerations and condemned how, in quasi-public spaces, an "arbitrary exclusion rule" is being applied rather than a "reasonable access rule". In the United States, this question has been taken to the courts. In 1968, the Supreme Court of the United States, in the case of *Amalgamated Food v. Logan Valley*

Plaza, and after the mall prohibited workers from picketing (see video on Quimbee [99], <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mEAdwvhFNeQ> (accessed on 1 November 2021)), drew on the concept of functional equivalence to extend the right of freedom of expression to all the country's shopping centers. Nonetheless, subsequent judgments (for example, *Lloyd v. Tanner*, in 1972) questioned the use of functional equivalence in the case of malls. In *Hudgens v. NLRB*, 1976, the Supreme Court confirmed that the 1968 judgment was overruled. Lastly, the individual states have the right to enact stricter legislation in the matter [100]. Accordingly, in 2004, six states (California, Colorado, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Oregon, and Washington) ruled that shopping centers are, at the very least, quasi-public spaces, where certain forms of expression should be allowed. Meanwhile, 11 states (Arizona, Connecticut, Georgia, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and Wisconsin) decided not to require malls to behave as public spaces [101]. At a global level, as shown by the cases mentioned in Brazil, Hong Kong, Portugal, Thailand, etc., repression is the permitted and exercised response to demonstrations that create conflict in shopping centers.

4. Conclusions

Malls are one of the private spaces that are now taking over the functions of public ones. People frequently visit shopping centers; not only do they shop inside them, but they also engage in social interrelationships that were previously conducted in city streets and squares. A key factor in this reconfiguration from public to private spaces is the safety and security of malls. They are perceived to be safe spaces, as opposed to the dangers lurking outside, in the city. In fact, they are hyper-surveilled constructions, but this control does not prevent the offenses typical in any store, such as thefts or shoplifting, being committed, nor does it stop them being the target for terrorist acts and violent attacks. This supposed security also fails to avoid serious accidents, such as fires. The overcontrol is unjustified, as it does not actually make malls secure spaces. However, it does create an image of security that attracts visitors that can afford to spend money inside them, especially in areas where citizen security is an acute problem.

Despite malls being used as public spaces, that is not their purpose. Shopping centers are antidemocratic places, governed by regulations legally imposed by their owners and operators, and they are apolitical places, where demonstrations and acts of protest are forbidden. Nonetheless, given that they have taken over the functions of urban centers, and given their role as spaces in which to consume, they have acquired a symbolism that associates them with power and neoliberal capitalism. Consequently, they are becoming sites of conflict, especially thanks to the ease with which actions can be organized on social media. Inside malls, there has been a growing occurrence of acts ranging from protest performances or alternative uses to outright political demonstrations, invasions, and occupations.

Many acts demonstrate that shopping centers are now spaces in dispute, and, although they might continue to be white and shiny, they have not succeeded in remaining immune to conflicts and confrontations. Malls have responded to this new reality by adopting one of two positions: tolerating and permitting or prohibiting and repressing. The most conflictive acts are eventually dissolved by either the mall's private security service or the state security forces.

In short, malls form part of today's individualistic leisure society, and their substitution of public spaces is a further step toward the depoliticization of society. Their restrictions, the social segregation of consumption, and their over-surveillance represent the disappearance of the public sphere. The conclusion is, as suggested by Gottdiener [5], that, if most city residents regard streets as being increasingly more unsafe, then urban culture, which depends on the open interaction of people in public, will enter in decline. Despite the rise in transgressions, it is clear that most visitors to shopping centers are destined to be a function of the system and no more than customers/consumers, not free citizens in a public space.

The very essence of the urban, the democratization of public space, is lost. For this reason, this work concludes with a proposal for public actions that might reverse this process:

- Actions should be undertaken to create new civic spaces, to deprivatize or to limit the private use of the existing ones and to ensure that citizens may safely use and move around in public spaces.
- Public spaces that are secure and perceived to be so are vital, rather than militarized or over-surveilled places that limit their use by the community, their right to gather or spend time there, increasing the feeling of fear.
- Security governance policies are needed that take into account the diversity of the cultural, historical, political, and social conditions in each urban area.

Simulated and commodified environments are no substitute for open cities with public spaces for social action. For the right to the city and social justice, it is essential to attain an enriching public space that allows for the expression of political awareness.

Like all research, this study is not without limitations. The problem of urban public-private spaces was addressed exclusively through the optic of shopping malls. The work also did not directly examine the current evolution of public spaces and their own process of privatization. To holistically understand the problem, the reader will need to build upon this study by consulting other academic publications. Indeed, future studies are needed to delve into the evolution of the process and continue theorizing on the issue.

Funding: This research was funded by Ministerio de Ciencia, Innovación y Universidades, Agencia Estatal de Investigación and European Regional Development Fund, grant numbers RTI2018-096435-B-C22 and RTI2018-093296-B-C22.

Institutional Review Board Statement: Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement: Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement: Not applicable.

Acknowledgments: The author sincerely thank the anonymous reviewers for their very constructive comments which helped strengthen the paper. The author is also grateful to the editor of the special issue “Cities and Retail: Sustainable Transformation of Retail in Urban Environments”.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

References

1. Houllebecq, M. *Serotonin*; Whiteshield, S., Translator; Penguin Random House: Barcelona, Spain, 2020.
2. Shearing, C.D.; Stenning, P.C. Private Security: Implications for Social Control. *Soc. Probl.* **1983**, *30*, 493–506. [[CrossRef](#)]
3. Gray, K. Regulatory property and the jurisprudence of quasi-public trust. *Singap. J. Leg. Stud.* **2010**, 58–86. Available online: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=1729735> (accessed on 1 November 2021).
4. Wang, Y. *Pseudo-Public Spaces in Chinese Shopping Malls: Rise, Publicness and Consequences*; Routledge: New York, NY, USA, 2019.
5. Gottdiener, M. *The Theming of America*, 2nd ed.; Westview Press: Boulder, CO, USA, 2001.
6. Mehaffy, M.; Elmlund, P. The private lives of public spaces. In *Companion to Public Space*; Mehta, V., Palazzo, D., Eds.; Routledge: New York, NY, USA, 2020.
7. Kingwell, M.; Turmel, P. Introduction rites of way, paths of desire. In *Rites of Way: The Politics and Poetics of Public Space*; Kingwell, M., Turmel, P., Eds.; Wilfrid Laurier Press: Kingston, ON, Canada, 2009; pp. ix–xvii.
8. Grube-Cavers, A.; Carvajal Sánchez, I. The role of shopping centers as simulated public space: The shopping center Centro Mayor, Bogotá, Colombia. *UDCA News Sci. Dissem. J.* **2014**, *17*, 258–291. [[CrossRef](#)]
9. Rao, F.; Dovey, K. Shopping and urbanity: Emerging assemblages of main street, mall, and power centre. *Plan. Theory Pract.* **2021**. [[CrossRef](#)]
10. Sennett, R. *The Fall of Public Man*; Alfred Knopf: New York, NY, USA, 1977.
11. Meyerowitz, J. *No Sense of Place*; Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK, 1985.
12. Habermas, J. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*; MIT Press: Cambridge, MA, USA, 1989.
13. Kelbaugh, D. *Common Place*; University of Washington Press: Seattle, WA, USA, 1997.
14. Chaney, D. *Fictions of Collective Live*; Routledge: New York, NY, USA, 1993.
15. Mitchell, D. *The Right to the City: Social Justice and the Fight for Public Space*; The Guildford Press: Nueva York, NY, USA, 2003.
16. Gehl, J.; Gemzøe, L. *Public Spaces, Public Life*; Danish Architectural Press: Copenhagen, Denmark, 2004.

17. Mehta, V.; Palazzo, D. (Eds.) *Companion to Public Space*; Routledge: New York NY, USA, 2020.
18. Banerjee, T. The idea of the commons: Challenges of enclosure, encroachment, and exclusion. In *Companion to Public Space*; Mehta, V., Palazzo, D., Eds.; Routledge: New York, NY, USA, 2020.
19. Lefebvre, H. The right to the city. In *Henri Lefebvre. Writings on Cities*; Kofman, E., Lebas, E., Eds.; Wiley-Blackwell: Cambridge, MA, USA, 1996; pp. 147–159.
20. Cudny, W.; Appelblad, H. Monuments and their functions in urban public space. *Nor. J. Geogr.* **2020**. [[CrossRef](#)]
21. Corbetta, P. *Social Research: Theory, Methods and Techniques*; Sage: Thousand Oaks, CA, USA, 2003.
22. Luke, D.A.; Caburnay, C.A.; Cohen, E.L. How much is enough? New recommendations for using constructed week sampling in newspaper content analysis of health stories. *Commun. Method. Meas.* **2011**, *5*, 76–91. [[CrossRef](#)]
23. Brennen, B. *Qualitative Research Methods for Media Studies*; Routledge: New York, NY, USA, 2012.
24. Torres, H.; Alsharif, K. Reflecting on resilience in Broward County, Florida: A newspaper content analysis about Hurricane Wilma recovery. *Int. J. Disaster Risk Reduct.* **2016**, *19*, 36–46. [[CrossRef](#)]
25. Torabi, A.; Dedekorkut-Howes, A.; Howes, M. A framework for using the concept of urban resilience in responding to climate-related disasters. *Urb. Res. Pract.* **2021**. [[CrossRef](#)]
26. Adams, T.E.; Jones, S.H.; Ellis, C. *Autoethnography: Understanding Qualitative Research*; Oxford University Press: New York, NY, USA, 2015.
27. Kitchin, R.; Tate, N.J. *Conducting Research into Human Geography, Theory, Methodology & Practice*; Prentice Hall: Harlow, UK, 2000.
28. Hanif, S.D.; Micheal, O.E.; Jasmie, U.I.; Aanuoluwa, O.; Ifeoluwa, A. Security as a design consideration for shopping mall design in Nigeria: A case of Lagos. *Int. J. Innov. Sci. Res. Technol.* **2021**, *6*, 320–329.
29. Savard, D.M.; Kennedy, D.K. Crime and Security Liability Concerns at Shopping Centers. In *Corporate Security in the 21st Century: Theory and Practice in International Perspective*; Walby, K., Lippert, R.K., Eds.; Palgrave Macmillan: London, UK, 2014; pp. 254–275.
30. Coleman, P. *Shopping Environments: Evolution, Planning and Design*; Architectural Press: Oxford, UK, 2006.
31. Wakefield, A. *Selling Security*; Willan: London, UK, 2003.
32. McCahill, M. *The Surveillance Web*; Willan: London, UK, 2002.
33. Kajalo, S.; Lindblom, A. The role of formal and informal surveillance in creating a safe and entertaining retail environment. *Facil* **2016**, *34*, 219–232. [[CrossRef](#)]
34. Newton, M. *Shopping Mall (Object Lessons)*; Bloomsbury Academic: London, UK, 2017.
35. Rybczynski, W. *City Life: Urban Expectations in a New World*; Scribner: New York, NY, USA, 1995.
36. De Simone, L. Consumir para producir la ciudad: Arquitectura de consumo y urbanismo de retail en la ciudad chilena [Consume to produce the city: Architectures of consumption and retail urbanization in Chilean cities]. *UC Ann. Archit.* **2019**, 61–63. Available online: <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5ce1c57d1ecba20001733cda/t/5e2523b3c77df972908855d0/1579492306754/07-De+Simone.pdf> (accessed on 1 November 2021).
37. Esri; Geiling, N. The death and rebirth of the American mall. *Smithsonian Magazine*, 25 November 2014. Available online: <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/death-and-rebirth-american-mall-180953444/?no-ist> (accessed on 21 October 2021).
38. Foucault, M.; Miskowicz, J. Of other spaces. *Diacritics* **1986**, *16*, 22. [[CrossRef](#)]
39. Giddens, A. *The Third Way: The Renewal of Social Democracy*; Polity Press: Cambridge, UK, 1998.
40. ABC. Three Hospitalised after Mall Stabbing in Manchester. 2019. Available online: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-10-11/five-wounded-after-mall-stabbing-in-manchester/11596188> (accessed on 21 October 2021).
41. Mirgani, S. *Target Markets—International Terrorism Meets Global Capitalism in the Mall*; Transcript: Bielefeld, Germany, 2017.
42. BBC. Munich Shootings: What We Know about the Olympia Shopping Centre Attack. 2016. Available online: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36879067> (accessed on 21 October 2021).
43. News Wires. Three Killed in Colombia Shopping Centre Blast. 2017. Available online: <https://www.france24.com/en/20170618-three-killed-colombia-shopping-centre-blast-bomb-andino> (accessed on 21 October 2021).
44. Gaytan, S.; Borunda, D.; Freudenthal, B.; Montes, A.; Martinez, A.; Kolenc, V. El Paso Shooting Updates: 22 Killed in El Paso Walmart Shooting Near Cielo Vista Mall. 2019. Available online: <https://eu.elpasotimes.com/story/news/crime/2019/08/03/el-paso-police-report-shooter-walmart-cielo-vista-mall/1910012001/> (accessed on 21 October 2021).
45. CNA. One Gunman, Four Locations, 29 Dead: How the Mass Shooting in Thailand Unfolded. 2020. Available online: <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/asia/thai-soldier-shooting-rampage-timeline-what-happened-korat-776341> (accessed on 21 October 2021).
46. Zialcita, P. Video of King Soopers Shooting Won't Be Played in Open Court Ahead of Trial. 2021. Available online: <https://www.cpr.org/2021/08/23/king-soopers-shooting-video-not-playing-before-trial/> (accessed on 21 October 2021).
47. BBC. Kemerovo Fire: Russia Crowd Condemns Officials over Disaster. 2018. Available online: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-43552165> (accessed on 21 October 2021).
48. Bromley, R.D.; Stacey, R.J. Feeling unsafe in urban areas: Exploring older children's geographies of fear. *Environ. Plan. Econ. Space* **2012**, *44*, 428–444. [[CrossRef](#)]
49. Özaşçılar, M.; Ozturk, H. Shoplifting in shopping malls in an emerging market: Evidence from Turkey. *J. Appl. Secur. Res.* **2021**. [[CrossRef](#)]

50. Ceccato, V. Are Shopping Centers Risky Places? Proceedings of the Webinar Series “Risky Places for Crime”, Safeplaces Network-Nottingham Trent University. 2 September 2021. Available online: https://www.sakraplatser.abe.kth.se/wp-content/uploads/sites/13/2020/12/Ceccato_Tarandi_etal_shoppingcenter2sept2021.pdf (accessed on 21 October 2021).
51. Goss, J. The “magic of the mall”: An analysis of form, function, and meaning in the contemporary retail built environment. *Ann. Assoc. Am. Geogr.* **1993**, *83*, 18–47. [[CrossRef](#)]
52. Anselmsoon, J. Effects of shopping centre re-investments and improvements on sales and visit growth. *J. Retail. Consum. Serv.* **2016**, *32*, 139–150. [[CrossRef](#)]
53. Ceccato, V.; Tcacencu, S. Perceived safety in a shopping centre: A Swedish case study. In *Retail Crime*; Ceccato, V., Armitage, R., Eds.; Palgrave Macmillan: Cham, Switzerland, 2018; pp. 215–242.
54. Lee, B.; Groves, D. Attributes that influence mall development and operations. *Vis. Leis. Bus.* **2020**, *22*, 4. [[CrossRef](#)]
55. Vidal-Koppmann, S. Diseño urbano y control del espacio. De la ciudad privada a la ciudad blindada [Urban design and the control of space: From the private city to the surveilled city]. *Scr. Nov.* **2014**, *17*, 18.
56. Tchoukaleyska, R.; Enright, T.; Lehrer, U. Public space beyond the city centre: Suburban and periurban dynamics. *Can. J. Urb. Res.* **2019**, *28*, 1–4.
57. Amin, A. Collective culture and urban public space. *City* **2008**, *12*, 5–24. [[CrossRef](#)]
58. Blomley, N. Introduction. In *The Legal Geographies Reader*; Blomley, N., Delaney, D., Ford, R.T., Eds.; Blackwell: Oxford, UK, 2001; pp. 3–5.
59. Németh, J. Defining a public: The management of privately owned public space. *Urb. Stud.* **2009**, *46*, 2463–2490. [[CrossRef](#)]
60. Houssay-Holzschuch, M.; Teppo, A. A mall for all? Race and public space in post-apartheid Cape Town. *Cult. Geogr.* **2009**, *16*, 351–379. [[CrossRef](#)]
61. Shiffman, R.; Bell, B.; Brown, L.J.; Elisabeth, L. *Beyond Zuccotti Park: Freedom of Assembly and the Occupation of Public Space*; New Village Press: New York, NY, USA, 2012.
62. Routledge, P. *Space Invader: Radical Geographies of Protest*; Pluto Press: London, UK, 2017.
63. Hou, J. Public space as a space of resistance and democratic resilience. In *Companion to Public Space*; Mehta, V., Palazzo, D., Eds.; Routledge: New York, NY, USA, 2020.
64. Knierbein, S. Public space and the political—Reconnecting urban resistance and urban emancipation. In *Companion to Public Space*; Mehta, V., Palazzo, D., Eds.; Routledge: New York, NY, USA, 2020.
65. Kaika, M.; Lazaros, K. The spatialization of democratic politics: Insight from indignant squares. *Eur. Urb. Reg. Stud.* **2016**, *23*, 556–570. [[CrossRef](#)]
66. Hughes, N. “Young people took to the streets and all of a sudden all of the political parties got old”: The 15M movement in Spain. *Soc. Mov. Stud.* **2011**, *10*, 407–413. [[CrossRef](#)]
67. Remacha, B. La “Noche Violeta”: Un Grito Feminista Toma las Calles Tras “un Verano de Barbarie” Por la Violencia Machista [The “Violet Night”: Feminist Protest Takes to the Streets after “a Barbaric Summer” of Male Violence against Women]. 2019. Available online: https://www.eldiario.es/sociedad/emergencia-feminista-vox-puerta-sol_1_1352075.html (accessed on 21 October 2021).
68. Saldarriaga, A. The plaza de Bolívar of Bogotá: Uniqueness of place, multiplicity of events. In *Ordinary Places, Extraordinary Events: Citizenship, Democracy and Public Space in Latin America*; Irazabal, C., Ed.; Taylor and Francis: London, UK, 2008; pp. 126–143.
69. Banerjee, T. The future of public space: Beyond invented streets and reinvented places. *J. Am. Plan. Assoc.* **2001**, *67*, 9–24. [[CrossRef](#)]
70. Chiodelli, F.; Moroni, S. Do malls contribute to the privatization of public space and the erosion of the public sphere? Reconsidering the role of shopping centres. *City Cultur. Soc.* **2015**, *6*, 35–42. [[CrossRef](#)]
71. Clough, N.L.; Vanderbeck, R.M. Managing politics and consumption in business improvement districts: The geographies of political activism on Burlington, Vermont’s Church Street Marketplace. *Urb. Stud.* **2006**, *43*, 2261–2284. [[CrossRef](#)]
72. Gray, K.; Gray, S.F. Civil rights, civil wrongs and quasi-public space. *Eur. Hum. Rights Law Rev.* **1999**, *46*, 46–102.
73. Flores Castillo, M.A. The mall as a public space. The case of La Florida, Santiago. In Proceedings of the XI Seminario Internacional de Investigación en Urbanismo, Santiago de Chile, Chile, 2–6 September 2019. [[CrossRef](#)]
74. Backes, N. Reading the shopping mall city. *J. Pop. Cult.* **1997**, *31*, 1–17. [[CrossRef](#)]
75. Sorkin, M. (Ed.) *Variations on a Theme Park: The New American Cities and the End of Public Space*; Hill and Wang: New York, NY, USA, 1992.
76. Salcedo, R. When the global meets the local at the mall. *Am. Behav. Sci.* **2003**, *46*, 1084–1103. [[CrossRef](#)]
77. Soja, E.W. *Seeking Spatial Justice United States of America*; University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis, MN, USA, 2010.
78. Sennet, R. The open city. In *The Endless City*; Burdett, R., Sudjic, D., Eds.; Phaidon: London, UK, 2007; pp. 290–298.
79. Low, S.; Lawrence-Zúñiga, D. (Eds.) *The Anthropology of Space and Place Locating Culture*; Blackwell Publishing: Oxford, UK, 2004.
80. Sharp, J.; Routledge, P.; Philo, C.; Paddison, R. *Entanglements of Power*; Routledge: New York, NY, USA, 2000.
81. Silva Graça, M. The new (public) space: On cities shopping centers demonstrations and the future of public uses. *J. Commun. Lang.* **2018**, *48*, 191–207.
82. Creery, J. Hong Kong Protesters Occupy Sha Tin’s New Town Plaza as Mass Strike Grips City; Hong Kong Free Press: Hong Kong 2019. Available online: <https://hongkongfp.com/2019/08/05/hong-kong-protesters-occupy-sha-tins-new-town-plaza-mass-strike-grips-city/> (accessed on 20 October 2021).

83. Pinheiro-Machado, R.; Nunes, R. Les *rolezinhos* sont “bons à penser”: Marques, consommation et ségrégation dans la société brésilienne [The *rolezinhos* are “good at thinking”: Labels, consumption and segregation in Brazilian society]. *Temps Mod.* **2014**, *678*, 60–72. [CrossRef]
84. Zalianik Schillkrut, Y. Los “*rolezinhos*”: Cuerpos que (se) movilizan desde la periferia hasta el centro (comercial) [The *rolezinhos*: Bodies mobilizing from the outskirts to the (shopping center)]. *Polis* **2019**, *54*, 154–166.
85. De Simone, R.L. The Latin American shopping centre: Cultural translation, symbolic adaptation and typological evolution of commercial architecture in Latin American cities. In *Acculturating the Shopping Centre*; Gosseye, J., Avermaete, T., Eds.; Routledge: London, UK, 2018; pp. 64–90.
86. Button, M. *Security Officers and Policing Powers, Culture and Control in the Governance of Private Space*; Routledge: London, UK, 2007.
87. Hatuka, T. Performing protestability: The dynamic between protests and public spaces. In *Companion to Public Space*; Mehta, V., Palazzo, D., Eds.; Routledge: New York, NY, USA, 2020.
88. Zalianik Schillkrut, Y. Cuerpos insumisos en el centro comercial [Rebellious bodies in the mall]. *Passagens* **2020**, *11*, 78–93.
89. Fotos Ciudadanas. Feministas Funan al Costanera Center por Simbolizar “Capitalismo Neoliberal” con un “Falo” [Feminists protest against the Costanera Center as a phallic symbol of “neoliberal capitalism”]. 2016. Available online: <https://www.biobiochile.cl/noticias/2016/03/08/feministas-funan-al-costanera-center-por-simbolizar-capitalismo-neoliberal-con-un-falo.shtml> (accessed on 20 October 2021).
90. Dávila, A. *El Mall: The Spatial and Class Politics of Shopping Malls in Latin America*; University of California Press: Berkeley, CA, USA, 2016.
91. Gosseye, J.; Avermaete, T. Introduction. A malleable type: Acculturating the shopping centre. In *Acculturating the Shopping Centre*; Gosseye, J., Avermaete, T., Eds.; Routledge: New York, NY, USA, 2019; pp. 1–18.
92. Miller, J.C.; Laketa, S. The ‘magic of the mall’ revisited: Malls and the embodied politics of life. *Prog. Hum. Geogr.* **2019**, *43*, 910–926. [CrossRef]
93. Chalá, P.; Villacrés, M. Comunicación secundaria de crisis: Cuando los públicos pusieron en jaque a Mall El Jardín [Secondary communication of crisis, when the public challenged the El Jardín mall]. *Estrateg.* **2018**, *5*, 137–157.
94. Jerves Córdova, O. El centro comercial como espacio público, entre la identidad y la participación: Un estudio de caso en el Mall El Jardín en Quito-Ecuador [The mall as a public space, between identity and participation: A case study on the El Jardín mall in Quito (Ecuador)]. *Eidos* **2021**, *17*, 129–138.
95. Elcomercio.es. Primark Cabrea las Madres Lactantes, que Organizan una Quedada en Sus Tiendas [Primark Infuriates Breastfeeding Women, Who Organize a Protest in Their Stores]. 2013. Available online: <https://www.elcomercio.es/20130822/mas-actualidad/sociedad/primark-cabrea-madres-lactantes-201308222117.html#:~:text=Ante%20la%20falta%20de%20respeto,agosto%20a%20las%2018%3A30%20> (accessed on 20 October 2021).
96. RÍO Shopping. Available online: <https://www.rioshopping.com/> (accessed on 20 October 2021).
97. González Durán, S. “Pasar la tarde” en el Centro Comercial. ¿Es el C.C. un espacio público? [“Spending the afternoon at the mall. Is the mall a public space?]. In *Crisis y Cambio. Propuestas desde la Sociología [Crisis and Change. Proposals from a Sociological Perspective]*; Cairo, H., Finkel, L., Eds.; Universidad Complutense: Madrid, Spain, 2014; pp. 496–505.
98. eNCA. Brookside Mall in Pietermaritzburg on Fire. 2021. Available online: <https://www.enca.com/news/brookside-mall-set-alight> (accessed on 20 October 2021).
99. Quimbee. Amalgamated Foods Employees Union V. Logan Vallen Plaza, Inc. Summary. 2017. Available online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mEAdwvhFNeQ> (accessed on 20 October 2021).
100. McPheron, I. From the ground to the sky: The continuing conflict between private property rights and free speech rights on the shopping center front seventeen years after Pruneyard. *North. Ill. Univ. Law Rev.* **1996**, *16*, 717–755.
101. Underhill, P. *Call of the Mall*; Simon & Schuster: New York, NY, USA, 2004.