Towards Cultural Centrality in Mega-Event Urban Legacy: The Case of Porto Maravilha and the Rio 2016 Olympic Games

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TOWARDS CULTURAL CENTRALITY IN MEGA-EVENT URBAN LEGACY:
The case of PORTO MARAVILHA, Rio 2016 Olympics

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INTRODUCTION

Understanding the importance of culture in city planning is vital in order to cater for local identities and cultural heritage that exist globally. Surprisingly, this topic has received relatively little attention in literature concerned with legacy of mega-events (Chappelet, 2012; Silvestre, 2008). It is therefore unsurprising that debates on whether urban legacy of mega-events is a fact or fairy tale, and whether (if it exists) this legacy is more positive or negative, are ongoing. In this chapter we put forward a case for greater cultural centrality in approaches of urban legacy evaluation, to better unpack, capture and evaluate its less tangible (i.e., soft) dimensions. Furthermore, we argue for placing the importance on cultural preservation as an important component in the planning and implementation of cities' developments for mega-events, in order to avoid the loss of local cultural heritage and stimulate positive cultural change. Mega-events are points in time when two forces that facilitate dynamic cultural change – globalisation and gentrification – converge; the varied impact of this convergence needs greater exploration to enable legacy planning and creation.

Whilst both these forces have been identified to facilitate a range of positive change processes, extant literature also highlights that they trigger a backlash from local populations linked to concerns over erosion of local cultural authenticity and uniqueness (Wimmer and Glick Schiller,

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2002; Robinson, 2001; Beck, 2000; Bauman, 2000). Multiple mega-events have been heralded as potential strategies for urban entrepreneurial growth and boosterism (Hiller, 2000). At the same time, many note that gentrification can potentially lead to a detrimental impact on local cultures and heritages (Lees, Shin and Lopez-Morales, 2016; Watt, 2013; Andranovich, Burbank and Heying, 2001). Thus, planning and safeguarding cultural legacy of a mega-event needs to incorporate a careful negotiation of cultural transformation and preservation.

In this chapter we first examine the cultural impacts of urban development stemming from planning and hosting mega-events, focusing particularly on cities associated with the Olympic Movement, and on how balancing cultural transformation and preservation needs of host locations associated with the Olympic Movement can be better assessed and achieved through integration of two urban development perspectives – gentrification and creative cities. Our argument is that city planning programmes and stimulation of the creative industry diversification can form an important part of cultural legacy construction goals. We contextualise the issue of cultural legacy creation through analysing the case of urban development in Porto Maravilha (Rio de Janeiro) as an example of reinvention or transformation of city's cultural identity catering for preservation of local heritage.

MEGA-EVENTS AS NEXUS OF URBAN CULTURAL CHANGE

By definition, mega-events (MEs) are associated with elevated global visibility. Thus, bidding, planning and/or hosting MEs often involve "large-scale transformations of cities and regions" (Kassens-Noor et al., 2015 p.1). The notion of legacy is closely linked to the impact made by these transformations on infrastructure, economy and lived experiences of populations in MEs locales. While transformations to sociocultural infrastructures and host locales' image are commonly identified as an important aspect of MEs legacy, harnessing MEs to an agenda that moves beyond economic interests is relatively new (Clark, 2008; Hiller, 2000). Consequently, so far attempts to unpack the key cultural change processes that can be triggered/exacerbated in the pursuit of MEs have been limited. This is a critical omission from a MEs legacy perspective, since MEs embody a platform for convergence of two key processes associated with cultural change: globalisation and gentrification. The impacts of these processes on sociocultural dynamics of societies and lived experiences of individuals vary significantly.

Early studies concerned with cultural outcomes of globalisation have predicted an onset of cultural homogenisation whereby cultural differences between nations and countries will be eroded giving way to adoption of global culture defined as a transnationally-shared set of cultural values, symbols,

images and models of lifestyle originated from the West (Marsella, 1998; Kearney, 1995; Levitt, 1983). More recent studies assert that the cultural effects of globalisation are far more complex and diverse (Iwabuchi, 2010, 2002; Bauman, 2000; Beck, 2000; Appadurai, 1996). That is, emergence of global culture is considered one, but by far not the only cultural consequence of globalisation. From a cultural dynamics perspective globalisation created a platform for continuous and intensive inter-cultural exchange whereby a range of mutually contradicting cultural evolution processes may, paradoxically, occur simultaneously (Holden and Glisby, 2010; Craig and Douglas, 2006). Specifically, several studies warn of the 'backlash' effect of cultural globalisation arguing that, rather than promoting similarities, emergence of global culture urges individuals to favour preservation of their local identities to ensure differentiation from 'cultural others' (Bhawuk, 2008; Korff, 2003). Conversely, another stream of studies uncover a process of 'glocalisation' whereby global culture is (re)interpreted, adapted and integrated with local cultural norms and lived experiences of individuals to form a new, hybrid form of culture (Ritzer, 2003). From this perspective, the key cultural consequence of globalisation is that in postmodern realities it facilitates co-existence of two notions: cultural being – individuals and groups sharing cultural codes and ways of living; and cultural becoming – (re)discovery of and response to cultural difference (see Hall, 1990). In the context of MEs, this translates into the need for a careful balancing of harnessing and preserving a host's unique cultural identity (i.e., 'being') with boosting socio-economic and cultural development to showcase the host's emerged or ongoing (i.e., 'becoming') prominence in the global community (Hiller, 2000).

The application of a globalisation perspective to the examination of cultural transformations brought about to the host locations by planning and hosting MEs can be further unpacked through the concept of gentrification. As such, gentrification encapsulates the notion of contemporary world great cities evolution, categorising how the physical, economic, social and cultural dimensions of their transformations impacts the local populations (Bidou-Zachariasen, 2006). It provides a fruitful lens to systematically examine the positive and negative aspects of hard (tangible) and soft (intangible) transformations to host locations' cultural landscapes triggered and facilitated by MEs. Specifically, applying extant gentrification research to the context of MEs' legacy it is evident that urban developments facilitated by MEs impact cultural landscapes of host communities in a more visible (e.g., areas' reconstructions, development of new sport/cultural facilities) and invisible yet equally if not more significant manner. That is, convergence of sought global visibility and positioning and gentrification can result in loss of cultural traditions, memories and community spirit and/or development of new cultural ideas, image and identity (Gratton and Preuss, 2008; Hiller 2003; Chappelet, 2012). With this focus in mind and using the Olympic Games as an

example, we next consider how cultural aspects of ME-linked urban development legacy can be planned, captured and examined through the lens of gentrification, and introduce the concept of creative cities as an alternative frame of analysis able to account for some of the limitations emanating from the gentrification paradigm.

URBAN LEGACY OF OLYMPIC GAMES THROUGH TWO LENSES

Hosting a ME brings to the city great changes (Mules, 1993; Hughes, 1993; Roche, 1992). That is, the planning of future Olympic areas can work as a development catalyst because in many cases obsolete areas are chosen which possess difficult social and urban integration issues. For this characteristic, Olympic Games have also been called by some Regeneration Games (Cochrane and Tickell, 1996). The urban regeneration processes of Olympic areas usually permit the development of new landmark structures in public and private areas of the host city where the aesthetics and functionality of infrastructure create new image and identity (Monclús, 2012). In implementing these changes the host city is a subject satisfying sociocultural and functional interests of multiple stakeholders. On one hand, the host is required to ensure that the interests of the International Olympic Committee are met (e.g., sporting facilities that support athlete development). On the other, it works to satisfy objectives of national and local governments for improving the nation/city image, cultural fabrics of communities, generating new tourism income streams (Hiller, 2006; Monclus, 2012). However, alignment of urban development and cultural heritage goals is not always successfully achieved (Richards and Wilson, 2005, Tweed and Sutherland, 2007). In seeking to unpack how cultural aspects of MEs' urban legacy can be better understood, planned and accounted for we review cultural impacts of urban development for Olympic Games by considering their role in facilitating gentrification and the promotion of creative cities.

Cultural aspects of mega-event urban legacy through the lens of gentrification

The linking of MEs such as Olympic Games and urban regeneration processes used to be a way to resolve or highlight challenges perpetuated by urban degeneration (Andranovich et al., 2001). Associated with this new urban form arises the process of gentrification. The concept of gentrification arises as a central issue of new urban forms when describing the example of old Londoners neighbourhoods and the way they were occupied by the middle classes (Glass, 1964). Currently this concept is associated with contemporary notion of the great world cities and their consequent urban transformations revealing social, physical, economic and cultural facets (Bidou-

Zachariasen, 2006). More recently it has been acknowledged that the process of gentrification is geographically variegated, taking on different forms in areas across the globe (Lees, Shin and Lopez-Morales, 2015). The urban alterations occurring due to gentrification affect both the physical and social features of localities which can lead to the deconstruction of identity. This movement gives rise to physical changes through new housing typologies, new sites of consumption stimulated by the increased value of the real estate sector, usually accessible only for a middle or upper economic class (Silvestre, 2008; Smith, 2003).

Different perspectives exist when discussing this impact, particularly when comparing the experiences of sports bodies, development organisations and government with that of local residents. MEs often are associated with the displacement of people, affecting the poorest residents in order make way for construction of ME venues (Hiller, 2003). From this viewpoint, a range of cultural aspects of a host's urban culture such as place identity, traditions etc. can be negatively affected (Gratton and Preuss, 2008). Such interpretation of gentrification is sometimes referred to as "creative destruction" when associated with global MEs (Gruneau and Horne, 2016:16). Therefore, ME-linked gentrification can be viewed in opposite ways. On the one hand joining the resolution and practice of a process of urban construction fostering positive physical developments, and on the other promoting (un)cultural construction through the discontinuity of the locals traditions and customs, fostered by gentrification processes.

The possible positive-negative duality of MEs cultural impacts related to the gentrification process is evidently significant in ME legacy evaluations for almost all host cities of Olympic Games. For example, Whitson and Macintosh (1996) argue that in Vancouver, host of the 2010 Winter Olympic Games, the city became divided into two different cities after the regeneration took place. One for tourists characterised by culturally innovative, sophisticated and attractive recreational spaces, and the other occupied by a large proportion of the city's population who could not afford the high cost of living in the new city. Such forced movement of people and cultural identifiers dictated by the Olympic Movement generally is a negative consequence from the perspective of cultural identity and heritage preservation of local communities. Similarly, urban development of Beijing for the Olympic Games in 2008 whereby part of traditional neighbourhoods were removed in order to build new quarters, erased the local culture, traditions and the memories of a place and of its people, promoting the discontinuity of local identity (Zhang and Zhao, 2009). Although for some the impact of gentrification that has taken place as a consequence of Olympic Games remains overtly negative, it is also possible to argue the opposite, i.e., that the developments have provided both economic and cultural benefits to the gentrified areas. Beijing has benefitted from improved transport, housing and sporting infrastructures which have remained in place beyond the Games. In

Vancouver the Richmond Olympic Oval skating track has been transformed into a community facility, to encourage development of sport culture among local populations.

In sum, while much attention has been paid to the multifaceted physical, economic, social, environmental impacts of gentrification brought about by MEs (which may be positive or negative), evaluation of cultural impacts of ME-linked gentrification remains underexplored. Yet, since ME-linked gentrification may result in displacement of local people, which in turn creates pressures on other areas of cities, and trigger creation of new surroundings likely focused on creating a globally-appealing image, there is a potential for cultural fabrics of urban spaces to be irreversibly altered (Porter, 2009; Watt, 2013). At the same time, while considerations of ME-linked gentrification impacts assume a predominantly negative stance, it is possible to consider these events through another lens, that of creative cities, to foster a more positive outlook on the potential cultural legacy that can be generated by urban development.

Cultural aspects of mega-event urban legacy through the lens of creative cities

The global competitive environment processes that have evolved over the last century have had a remarkable impact on cities around the world to make themselves known through attractive elements and values. Among the many facets of globalisation, various interests around the restructuring of the territory in its entirety, in order to answer to the uses dictated by contemporaneity of space and time, have been considered (Robertson, 1995; Giddens, 1991). In light of transformative processes that can be facilitated by MEs in host urban environments, a paradigm that enables appreciation of and accounting for people's use of place to derive, foster and negotiate the global and local aspects of their cultural identities becomes pertinent.

MEs hosted by the major world cities contribute to transformation of cities' identities through creation or adoption of symbols, messages promoting particular values as in the case of Olympic cities. If the hosting cities are to be the loci of cultural identity for communities, hosting MEs should be seen as an opportunity to promote, preserve and even innovatively develop local cultures as examples of communities that live and work in these cities. These communities therefore become essential stakeholders in dynamics of cities' cultural components facilitated by urban development through practices and beliefs followed. Hence, these stakeholders are core for locally-based cultural and social paradigm provided by MEs.

According to Landry (2000), the concept of *Creative City* encapsulates an emergent creative process in urban areas helping growth through their own unique and distinctive cultural resources. That is, creative city is focused on how the cities evolve and reflect their cultural identities and how new creative economies emerge through a cultural policy deployed by the cities. Culture is viewed as central to stimulating the economic industries in the urban agenda and consequent creation and provision of job opportunities by attracting creatively minded and entrepreneurial people seeking quality, culturally vibrant lifestyle (Florida, 2002). Indeed, perspectives grounded in the creative city paradigm (such as Fantasy cities – Hannigan, 1998; Entertainment Machine – Clark and Lloyd, 2000) argue that urban development from the perspective of "cultural resources" (Landry, 2000) works as a catalyst of city regeneration whereby new and re-used entertainment infrastructures like museums, theatres and creative spaces are integrated to stimulate urban and regional economic development (Gruneau and Horne, 2016; Evans, 2011). Such perspective is akin to that of the 'cultural goods' legacy attributed to MEs (see Preuss, 2007) that, although postulated conceptually, so far received little concerted development. Thus, we posit that application of creative cities concept to examination of cultural aspects of ME-linked urban development legacy offers a fruitful perspective for achieving the balance between preservation of local cultural identities and boosting cultural promotion of ME host locations. In the next section we integrate gentrification and creative cities perspectives in a case study of cultural legacy of Porto Maravilha, an urban development emerged through Rio's hosting of the 2016 Olympic Games.

THE URBAN CULTURAL LEGACY OF RIO 2016: PORTO MARAVILHA

Porto Maravilha (PM) is a government backed project which belongs to the Legacy Plan of the Rio de Janeiro Olympic Games 2016. PM was created through the regeneration project of the port area located in the central city of Rio. Regeneration works commenced in 2009 and is considered as one of the largest transformation areas, seeking to build and develop the city's ability to attract the interest of major economic investments (CDURP, 2015, 2016).

The PM region bore great economic international and national importance and influence at the end of the twentieth century. However, the end of industrialisation led to a physical and social degradation of the region. Existence of historical landmarks from the early seventeenth century in the area meant that this was an area of concern when considering where to create areas for cultural protection in the port area (CDURP, 2015, 2016). In recent years, the old industrial and port areas have engaged with a new paradigm of sustainable development led by urban regeneration projects boosted by the Olympics: PM emerged through public and private supported urban transformation

informed by the need to meet the requirements of an Olympic city and the agenda of cultural heritage preservation (Botella, 1995; Hiller, 2006; CDURP, 2015, 2016).

Allied to sustainable urban development strategies which form part of a 5 million square meters of project area with an investment of R$ 8.2 billion in long-term strategic planning, transformations included: changes in the road system, public transportation, restructuring of streets and avenues, neighbourhoods reconstructed, public and private local services and preservation of national artistic culture. This transformation benefitted circulation of pedestrians through opening of new boulevards and squares. and the use of public transport with implementation of VLT (Light Rail), following the demolition of one of the most imposing highways in Rio de Janeiro (Elevado da Perimetral), and the construction of new traffic areas away from the central area (Praça Mauá- see CDURP, 2015).

Several remaining landmarks of the eighteenth century symbolising important moments of Brazil's history characterised by the arrival points of goods and slaves in the old Valongo Pier and the Hanging Garden of Valongo (which were recently rediscovered) were integrated to create a Historical and Archaeological Circuit of African Heritage Celebration. A number of projects were planned and implemented with a particular attention to city valorisation through creative cultural innovation anchored in heritage and future gazing, –such as the Art Museum of Rio and the Museum of Tomorrow. A number of regeneration initiatives concerning neighbourhoods around the Olympic project targeted both social and economic sustainable development agenda (i.e., the neighbourhoods of Saúde, Gamboa, Conceiçao, Santo Cristo and São Cristóvão), with a view to improve conditions of living, work, leisure and mobility while introducing new cultural and educational infrastructures (CDURP, 2016; Wanis, 2015). Importantly, some of these transformations were anchored in the preservation of urban heritage – for example, rehabilitation of the most old and abandoned warehouses to give life to the "City of Samba" project and concerted support through programmes such as *Rio Criativo* and *Porto Maravilha Cultural* that combine the aims of promoting the local culture and regional/national creativity and the city image for the international market (Wanis, 2015; Lopez, 2013).

Emergence of these projects and initiatives illustrates that integration of cultural innovation and preservation agendas can act as complementary driving forces for urban economic and creative revitalisation while balancing the potentially conflicting convergence of the global and the local paradigms associated with MEs. Some early support for this approach is provided by emerging economic indicators: according to Lopez (2013) 4,1% GDP increase for the State of Rio de Janeiro was provided by stimulating the creative cultural promotion, generating jobs opportunities, promoting social inclusion, cultural diversity and human development. The sustainability of urban

planning and the capacity of social inclusion is becoming a new attractive area for residents and its users. This inclusion could be provided by feelings of pride and union perceptions among locals and the external users (Howard and Crompton, 2005). Thus, the cultural centrality of Porto Maravilha regeneration work has potential to enhance cultural, heritage and creativity aspects of the Rio Olympic legacy (CDURP, 2015, 2016; Wanis, 2015). Furthermore, preservation/reinvigoration of historical and heritage spaces boosts cultural sustainability whereby impacts of a sporting ME are not constrained to the focus on sport facilities infrastructures but include the real estate market, culture, leisure and tourism (Horne, 2010; Gruneau & Horne, 2016; Wanis, 2015).

At the same time, "creative destruction" (Gruneau & Horne, 2016:16) is also an observable impact of PM development. Valorisation of its areas was followed by an increased cost of living, resulting in unsustainable permanence of "old" residents of lower income and, consequently, the directly-attributable human displacement through expropriation, as well as "silent removals" which gradually replace the poorest of that region (Pacheco, 2011). Mezzadra and Neilson (2013) claim Rio 2016 as an example of this type of destruction process in urban practices through the territorial appropriation of favelas and gentrified neighbourhoods to improve the real estate and financial investments.

CONCLUSION

The case of PM raises several important questions concerning the sustainability of cultural legacy of the Rio 2016 Olympics, and, more broadly, of MEs: how can MEs stimulate the creation of new cultural centrality associated with the global visibility without interfering or destroying cultural identities of local communities? And who benefits from the production of spaces with a global outlook facilitated by MEs? The double-edged sword represented by MEs brings new ways to consider the impacts characterised by winners and losers (Preuss, 2006) specifically, regarding the cultural strategies applied in the global hosting cities. Hence, it is important to recognise that remaking cities via large-scale events could achieve more social benefits if the urban planning process took place alongside the existing local plans with special attention on low-income neighbourhoods. French and Disher (1997) claim that the Atlanta Olympics created a great expectation around the city benefits but the result was focused mainly on large-scale urban improvements without integrating the existing patterns of the city development. The authors suggest that the Olympics are a catalyst of economical linkages around the city, but highlight the difficult task of connecting this global economic resource through the most critical urban problems. In this respect, the inclusion of local communities in public discussion and support around the

transformations that probably will affect them is very important for success of its sustainable legacy for residents and guests alike. For future studies, a thorough consideration of the cultural consequences of MEs for the host community is necessary, to mediate the negative aspects of ME-linked gentrification. Instead, preservation and promotion of local culture(s) should be acknowledged as a central goal to maximise the use of MEs as opportunities for cultural promotion at both local and global levels. In essence, these MEs should foster a long lasting cultural legacy for host cities, inclusive of all stakeholders affected.

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