

# **The staging of globalized urban enclaves in peripheral metropolis: the touchdown of traveling city models in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro**

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In the wake of the neoliberal turn of the late twentieth century, the discourses of politicians, businessmen, policymakers, scholars and other relevant social groups have been widely pervaded by the enthusiastic imaginary of globalization and market efficiency. In this context, the search for a positive integration into the global economy has played a pivotal role in shaping developmental strategies, political agendas, institutional and regulatory reforms and spatial planning paradigms at different geographical scales. More than being merely one more realm affected by a changing economic environment, urban development was frequently pointed out as a field which could play a strategic role in fostering the adaptation of places to a emerging economic scenario.

In this context, the creed in the potential role of cities and urbanization processes in opening new pathways for the overcoming of crisis tendencies, the revival of economic dynamism and the promotion of social cohesion has led to a massive proliferation of normative discourses addressing the issue of urban development. One could distinguish these discourses between a group of more programmatic ones, which focus on building an imaginary of desirable patterns of urban development, and a group of more instrumental ones, which revolves around the identification of the supposedly most suitable planning tools and policy arrangements for the pursuit of a given developmental path.

Large scale urban redevelopment projects in major Brazilian cities are fertile fields to study the influence exerted by the global circulation of urban strategies, regulatory frameworks and ideologies over the production of space. The paradigms of urban planning and the regulatory tools employed within urban projects in Brazilian cities have been undergoing qualitative changes in the wake of globalization and the rise of neoliberalism. Urban redevelopments are generally supported as strategic actions for the insertion of cities in a post-industrial economy led by services, being widely assimilated as ways of making urban morphologies suitable for the deployment of new urban functions and economic activities. Many interventions of this kind are particularly representative of the ideological power of travelling urban imaginaries such as the "global city" and the "creative city".

Large scale redevelopment projects also figure as catalysts of the mobility of policy arrangements and regulatory tools aligned to globally diffused patterns of city-making, such as public-private partnerships and financial instruments related to real estate. More than merely featuring as passive destinations of pre-established models, these projects also function as platforms in which the latter are refashioned and suited to local conditions, and utterly exported to other places. If regulatory arrangements employed in these projects assume different forms according to contingent local conditions, one may identify within them an underlying rationale embedded in models and conceptions circulating at the global scale.

The ability of these formulations to act as hegemonic discourses rests on a complex combination of global and local features. At the same time as they subscribe to the abstract,

faceless and amnesic logic of globalizing utopias, they emphasize the different social, geographical and historical conditions of each specific place as potentially strategic elements for their insertion in the global economy, knitting together the sense of socio-spatial identity and the assimilation of difference as an economic asset. By bringing aspects related to cultural identities and subjectivities into the core of economic reasoning, global-urban developmental strategies emerged as strong devices of social control.

This work focuses on two large scale redevelopment projects promoted in the two major Brazilian cities. The first is the "Consorted Urban Operation Agua Espraiada", a project launched in 2002 in São Paulo within an area that could be regarded as a "frontier" between upper and working class neighborhoods. The second is "Consorted Urban Operation Porto Maravilha", a project launched in 2009 in an area previously occupied by port and industrial activities that has faced economic decline for many decades. The first aim of the paper is to show how both of these projects were deeply influenced by globally diffused models of urban development. The second aim is to analyze how regulatory frameworks first travelled from São Paulo to Rio de Janeiro in the context of the formulation of "Porto Maravilha", and then how the model developed for its implementation is being imported by São Paulo for the formulation of new urban interventions. The third aim is to show the conflictive dimension of these projects, analyzing the frictions between globally oriented strategies of urban development and locally rooted dynamics of everyday life. I argue that these projects are leading sources of gentrification at the local scale, and also drivers of increased uneven development at the urban and metropolitan scales.

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Paper presented at the RC21 International Conference on "The transgressive city: Comparative perspectives on governance and the possibilities of everyday life in the emerging global city" Mexico City, 21-23 July 2016. <http://rc21-mexico16.colmex.mx/index.php>