

## PART II

# **Phenomenology and Historicisation of the Spectacle: from Debord to the Spectacle 2.0**



## CHAPTER 7

# Rio de Janeiro: Spectacularization and Subjectivities in Globo's city

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### 1. Introduction

*'The whole life of those societies in which modern conditions of production prevail presents itself as an immense accumulation of spectacles. All that once was directly lived has become mere representation'*, said Guy Debord in the opening statements of his 1967 book *The Society of the Spectacle*. Today, we can easily say that it is the whole life of the cities where post-modern conditions of production prevail that presents itself as an immense accumulation of spectacles. This is particularly true in Rio de Janeiro. The city has turned 'global' as it has become kind of a 'property' of the Globo group, the largest media conglomerate in Brazil and one of the biggest in the world: real life is actually further and further removed into the realm of representations, which presents an opportunity to strengthen that media corporation.

In recent years, some of the processes of spectacularization of the city once analysed by Guy Debord are not only under the spotlight of the news of the group in their different media outlets, but are also portrayed as having been 'accomplished' by the Globo Group. A new stage in urban monumentalization, for example, gained visibility as early as 2010, with the announcement of the

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#### How to cite this book chapter:

Szaniecki, B. 2017. Rio de Janeiro: Spectacularization and Subjectivities in Globo's city. In: Briziarelli, M. and Armano, E. (eds.). *The Spectacle 2.0: Reading Debord in the Context of Digital Capitalism*. Pp. 121–134. London: University of Westminster Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.16997/book11.g>. License: CC-BY-NC-ND 4.0

creation of two museums to be built in a partnership between the City of Rio de Janeiro Administration and Fundação Roberto Marinho, a family foundation linked to the same business group. In effect, the revitalization of the port area has, as landscape landmarks, the Rio de Janeiro's Museum of Art, the Museum of Tomorrow and the waterfront that stretches from the seacoast Conde<sup>1</sup> to the restored warehouses, ready to host events. It is necessary, however, to consider the transformations that are under way beyond the landmarks of the architectural and urban landscapes.

The creation of the Port's Creative District marks the start of a productive mobilization for the creative city (Landry 1992) and the creative classes (Florida 2002) that implies many processes of eviction from the area on one hand and, on the other, new forms of exploitation in the networks. Thus, new forms of labour (Benkler 2006), often 'free labour', are added to urban spectacle. Customarily, the pace of the urban Rio ['carioca'] way of life has always been set by the schedules of traditional events, such as the New Year's Eve and the Carnival. Now it is submitted to the constraints of staging of mega-events such as the World Cup and the Olympic Games and of working for tourism instead of serving the local population to the point where cariocas are asking themselves whether Rio is a city to 'leave' or to 'live'.

Monumentalization of the landscape is one aspect of the spectacularization of the city, the other one is the productive mobilization of the territories. The first is more related to space by urban planning (Debord, 1992), the second to time, and not only to forms of precarious labour that makes us work 24 hours a day but also depending on the mega-events calendar with its spectacular pseudo-cyclical time (Debord, 1992). The resistance to these processes became an enormous challenge. Can a city escape the total spectacularization process and keep itself as productive and politically democratic?

## 2. From the New Museums to the New Cultural Urban Scenario

As said before, since 2010 the O Globo Group has announced the creation of three new museums. Designed by famous architects, their architectural projects contribute to the construction of the urban space as a scenario, which constitutes a spectacularization of environmental planning (Debord 1992: 130). Two of these museums are situated in the port area: The Rio Art Museum (MAR) and the Museum of Tomorrow. Back then, the important partnership established between the City of Rio de Janeiro Administration and Roberto Marinho Foundation, attracted some attention, but also other aspects stood out. Behind the initiatives, it was possible to notice the intention to give a new meaning to an area considered degraded and also to start a new cycle for Rio de Janeiro as a whole. The intention could not have gone unnoticed by those who had been studying and comparing the Creative Industries to the so-called Culture

Points<sup>2</sup>, cultural experiences recognized by the Ministry of Culture under Gilberto Gil, in order to find the different territorial features and the visibilities of the two models for cultural and creative production and urban planning.

While the creativity organized by some contemporary museums – since the Guggenheim in Bilbao at least – is very much engaged in the effort to mark the landscape with new and immense cultural equipment and, in this case, tends to be aligned with the spectacular representation of the political, economical and media powers, 'Culture Point' is a public policy in dialogue with civil society that seeks to value autonomous organisations that make already existing venues the principal location for the cultural production and social life of their actors. While the creativity organized around these new museums tends to be linked to the spectacle – culture produced by a few and intended for mass consumption – Culture Points are not only *for* people, but are rather *of* people, of citizens organized as productive and political actors, rather than separated as producers and consumers, and politically alienated. This means that its symbolic production resists the spectacle mode and tries to affirm itself as a collective experience, lived more than represented. It is a cultural and creative production that can generate revenue for the players involved in it, but its meaning lies beyond the mere commercial trade. The possibility for a city to escape the total spectacularization process and keep itself productive and politically democratic depends on the ways such production and politics are organized – a result of public-private partnerships or of more autonomous forms – and more specifically on the type of work – employed or self-employed, with or without social welfare assurances, 'free'. Still with no possibilities to provide definitive answers, let us look at the continuity of the processes.

The spectacularization of the carioca landscape followed its course with the inscription of Rio as a World Heritage site for its 'Urban Cultural Landscape'<sup>3</sup> (UNESCO category) and with increasingly explicit actions on the part of O Globo Group. In its 'Marketing Projects' supplement of 19/10/2012, the 'New Centre of Rio de Janeiro' was presented as an urban project of infrastructure and services, financed by real estate and with the goal of attracting corporate, commercial and hotel investment, all crowned by attention to the local cultural heritage. The image shown on the first page of the supplement, with a headline that read 'Wonder Port – Express to the Future will leave from the Port Area' is a collage that brings in the foreground the Museum of Tomorrow (still under construction at that point) done with computer software and, in the background, a mixture of the historical centre (represented by the São Bento Monastery) and modern centre (with Rio's first skyscraper – the A Noite building – and by the first smart building of the city – Rio Branco 1) extracted from photographs. This collage is clearly a construction of a new image for Rio de Janeiro. The city simultaneously seeks to associate itself with cities that have become successful in the process of globalization through a 'revitalization' of its waterfront areas whilst it seeks to distance itself from the primary tourist consumption wave – whether of the Sugar Loaf or the Christ the Redeemer, or from its

beaches and beauties—for the benefit of a Creative Rio. The construction of such an image also seeks to move the city away from the label of unsafe place, given to it for many years, although this could become a mirage if it is done in an arbitrary or authoritarian manner. Or it may become an affirmation of the spectacle, that is, the assertion that the only mode of existence possible in Rio de Janeiro is one in which social relations are insistently mediated by image (Debord 1992, p. 4) – in this case a global urban landscape instead of a singular urban experience.

Barely two weeks had gone by from the publication of the emblematic image of the ‘new city centre’ when, in early November 2012, Globo reported the construction of a Y-shaped pier near Warehouse 2, next to Praça Mauá [Square]. The spotlights were all on, in a barrage of almost daily articles during a month and a half (Szaniecki 2013). The focus of the criticism was on the construction by [company] Companhia Docas do Rio de Janeiro of a pier where ships as much as 70 metres in height could dock, when the building standards set for the area have a 15-metre limitation. The Y-pier would then block the view of São Bento Monastery which is part of the historical heritage of the city, a listed building and, moreover, of the Museum of Tomorrow, built by a partnership between the City Hall and the Roberto Marinho Foundation. Technical arguments (conditions for ship movements and the impact on the surrounding areas), administrative arguments (consultations among the appropriate authorities on the tender and authorization procedures) and economical arguments (overprice in the resource sheet) were rapidly created and used by Globo but none proved to be good enough to justify the non-obstruction of the view of those important cultural elements of the city, centre pieces in the project that aimed at revitalizing the port area. Apparently dissatisfied, Globo then resorted to an aesthetic argument – the impact it would have on the carioca landscape – and on December 17 published a full-page article that challenged the City Hall on that: ‘Controversy at the Docks: How much is the landscape worth? – City Hall changes position on the Y-pier and produces a torrent of criticism from architects.’ To press the City Hall, Globo mobilised the opinion of several specialists, until it finally achieved its goal, that is, the non-construction of the Y-pier.

Needless to say that, if the public authorities were pressed, the population was not even consulted at all on the processes that concerned them, such as the eviction of dwellers and the installation of a cable car service in the region. The Museum of Art of Rio opened in 2013 and the Museum of Tomorrow opened in 2015. The urban operation of the Wonder Port came to life with the successive opening of the refurbished Mauá Square, of the Conde Waterfront, and of the VLT (Tram Service). There was much celebration at each opening, but also some anxiety as the Olympic Games neared and the work they required experienced setback after setback. Already branded as the Creative City, with the last touches to the Olympic Boulevard<sup>4</sup>, Rio was all set to live its moment as an Olympic City. According to Riotur (Rio’s tourist authority), the Olympic Boulevard was visited by four million people and it was publicized as ‘an

absolute success'. All the temporalities of the city seem to have been subjected to the single time of consumption: the spectacular time in which the city seems to consume itself (Debord 1992, 133). But, once the Olympic and Paralympic Games were over and once the city administration elections got under way, the contrast was clear for all to see between the success of that spectacle and the unattended needs of the population such as housing, basic sanitation, health, education, and urban mobility. A Wonder Port perhaps but to (or for) whom?

### 3. The Creative Territory: Real Estate Speculation and the Spectacle of 'Free Labour'

So far, we have seen an enormous urban operation under way. Named Wonder Port, it presents itself as a public and private partnership; we were able to learn a little more about the partners involved – the 'stakeholders'. Throughout the days of the Olympic Games they were provided with a spectacular stage to publicize their names and logos in the many sports and cultural activities. This 'spectacular stage' is simultaneously a 'spectacular time' that turns our urban life rhythms into a clocked consumable time and a 'spectacular environmental planning' that turns our urban life spaces into a distant consumable scenario. This is the time and the territory of the mega-events.

According to mainstream media, the Olympic Boulevard was a huge public success but, as the party ended, the population started to ask: what is the legacy of all that? The questions came from movements such as the People's Rio Cup and Olympic Games Committee<sup>5</sup> as much as from the Academy<sup>6</sup>. When looking at the 2016 Olympic Boulevard, many cariocas feel like those who lived in New York's East Harlem borough in the 50s and 60s, as they looked at the lawn that had been planned for them (Jacobs 2003). The question 'Who said we wanted a lawn?' becomes 'Who said we wanted an Olympics Boulevard? A VLT—a tram? A cable car?' A fact stands out, that is that the fundamental player was left outside the public – private partnership (PPP): the organised civil society as well as those not-so-well-organised segments that took to the streets in demonstrations since June 2013, a crowd with a multitude of demands.

Still the spectacle of political representation moved on, unflinching, and, as a mirror, the spectacle of the urban commodification did the same, strictly abiding to their schedules and time frames. '*All that once was directly lived has become mere representation*' as Debord would have said faced with this cycle of mega-events. Although the Wonder Port has two strong anchors in the museums described above, the cultural circuit lies way beyond them. In a leaflet on Culture and Creative Industries<sup>7</sup> published by the Wonder Port in its site, the following equipment items and events are listed: The Valongo and the Empress Docks, The Citizen Action Cultural Centre, The Pretos Novos Cemeteries, the José Bonifácio Cultural Centre, The Spectacle Factory, The Utopia Warehouse, The Afro-Brazilian Incubator, The Bhering Factory, The Flavours

of the Port, The Mauá Agenda – Art in the Conceição [Morro] Hill, and the Port Area's League of Samba Blocks. The list of these items and events at the Wonder Port site probably points to merely a territorial presence, without necessarily meaning their economic inclusion, that is, without meaning that they enjoy the benefits provided by public power or by private companies related to the Wonder Port. And it is quite the contrary, as some not only face hardship to keep their activities going, despite the importance of their traditions or of their most recent innovations, but are eventually appropriated to legitimise the revitalization project. Initiatives that recognize themselves under the umbrella of 'creative industries' probably have attracted greater interest and more funds due to their more direct link with the economy. By 'direct' it is understood that culture has a function that is primarily social and symbolic and, only after that, is economic, while creativity is seen as a renewing element of economies and a revitalizer vector for cities. In the end, it is a rather unequal circle, as regards its players and assets. Once the party was over at the Olympic Boulevard, the question that rises is: how to keep alive the spectacle, the circuit that feeds it and that, in turn, is also fed by it? The Port's Creative District is one of the initiatives born of the discourse that it is necessary to keep on developing that region and the city as a whole after the Olympic Games, although the discourse does not include the discussion of the very sense of what is understood as 'development'.

What is the Port's Creative District? It is an initiative of creative companies of the Wonder Port area, says the definition in Facebook. The official site is down,<sup>8</sup> but Globo informs us that the district gathers tens of companies and hundreds of creative professionals in a partnership with the Port of Rio de Janeiro's Urban Development Company.<sup>9</sup> The CDURP,<sup>10</sup> in its turn, is the administrator for City Hall in the Wonder Port Urban Operation and is in charge of the articulation between the remaining public and private agencies and the New Port Utility.<sup>11</sup> The latter, consisting of construction companies such as OAS, Odebrecht, and Carioca Engenharia, executes the work. The structure of the public and private partnership becomes clearer in the concrete gains obtained by the civil construction industry, but remains shady as regards the intangible and specially imagetical assets the Globo group wants to accumulate from the Wonder Port. Some clues can be found in the special Globo supplement named 'Marketing Projects' published on 27/08/2016. The mix of news and publicity of the Wonder Port described as the 'creative' cradle of Rio<sup>12</sup> is once again illustrated with a paradigmatic image: the shot from above the roofs of old port warehouses reminds us of factories and, looking at them, we have no doubt that they became important but maybe insufficient spaces for the production of shows and events of the Globo group. The creation of the Creative Port District will allow all the port area to become a huge productive territory, of a new kind. Beyond the publicizing of these materials, the participation of companies from the Globo group,<sup>13</sup> and the Roberto Marinho Foundation extends from the production of contents for the museums to the organization and realization of events as Rio Design Week.<sup>14</sup> And here, it is important to split the analysis



of this expanded creative industry of the twenty-first century in Rio de Janeiro into two elements:

### *3.1. At first a 'creative' configuration*

Firstly this 'creative configuration' points to a new opportunity for the city of Rio de Janeiro. But it became possible at the cost of one of the basic items that makes up a territory, a city: housing. In the official words of CDURP, the port area that 'once served as a support area to port operations, of an essentially industrial nature, became idle, growing empty spaces and leaving many buildings under-used or abandoned'. This discourse on the 'urban emptiness' denies the fact that many people used to live there and finds an echo in the words of some creative actors when they say that, for the area not to 'die' after 19:00, people should be brought in to live there.<sup>15</sup> And these words are often legitimized by the Academy. When approaching the 'power of place' (Florida 2002, 215), for example, Richard Florida wonders what leads people to choose to live and work – to cluster – in some places. The reasons listed and commented on by Florida are: strong job market, lifestyle, social interaction, diversity, authenticity, identity, and quality of the place. Do you want strong job market, lifestyle, social interaction, diversity, authenticity, identity, and quality of the place? Visit us, consume, or even move to Rio de Janeiro. This is the recipe to attract tourists and the creative class that enchants private and public powers by valuing the benefits but without mentioning the losses imposed by the process to the local population. The consequences for the city's population are severe: some get in while others leave, some stay while others are evicted. The 'creativity', according to the concept of public and private powers that use it, determines not-creative-at-all forms of control of the cities and of their populations. However not all share these perceptions or at least have changed their positions. The President of the Rio Heritage of Humankind Institute (Instituto Rio Patrimônio da Humanidade) and of the City Council for the Protection of Cultural Heritage, Washington Fajardo, recently started to voice his concern, for example, with the risk of 'property facing the new pedestrian boulevard on the Conde Waterfront remain empty with the expectation of a price hike that might never happen and with the resulting deterioration of the renewed neighbourhood'.<sup>16</sup> Therefore, he defended a housing policy – the Local Carioca Programme – for the area. To be implemented, this programme should be approved by the City Chamber of Representatives of Rio de Janeiro, but may not necessarily have the support of those who in recent years were evicted from their homes.

We will not go too deeply into the debate but cannot overlook recording the processes of capturing the practices of resistance. For example, it was in 2008 that I came across the Women are Heroes project of French photographer JR in the Providência Hill. Years later, in 2012, during a visit of European researchers to Rio de Janeiro, I got to know the work of the photographer and dweller of

the Providência Hill, Mauricio Hora, who, inspired by JR's project made black and white photographs of those dwellers threatened with eviction by the Rio de Janeiro's Housing Department (SMH). The large-format pictures were posted on the walls of the houses and gave international visibility to the situation. Five years later, JR photographs the passers-by at the Olympic Boulevard and artist Kobra is invited to produce an artwork that measures 3,000 square metres in the same area. Other artists are listed in the site with no mention of contractual relations.<sup>17</sup> Urban art works add value to the 'Wonder Port' brand with no reciprocal benefit apart from the promise of visibility to the artist. While reviewing JR's recent photographs, it becomes clear that urban art perfectly matches a context marked by the abandonment of traditional port activities and by the re-taking of spaces for housing purposes, such as was the case of several occupations<sup>18</sup> of that area. The urban art that used to operate as an alert, showing the presence of dwellers in the houses that were about to be demolished by the SMH in the Providência Hill, now seems to camouflage the evictions on account of the works of the city. This use of urban art reduces the resistance to spectacular urban planning. The immense industry of a new kind is already in full operation in the carioca domain, but the mixture of functions – services and housing – and, especially, the social mix that should mark the 21<sup>st</sup> century metropolis is still a very vague promise.

### 3.2. *And here we reach the second point*

The evictions affect the less privileged classes and not always sensitize the others. It is therefore necessary to also study the new kind of work and often the new kind of exploitation that this twenty-first century type of industry, in its carioca version, realizes. In order to analyse the new kind of work based on knowledge, on culture and on creativity, and its corresponding exploitation and expropriation, in territories and in networks, it would be necessary to retrace the path of an entire counterculture that gained visibility with free software movement and later became generalized with free culture. Richard Stallman is one of the theorists and activists of the first movement and Laurence Lessig of the second. Lessig is one of the founders of the Creative Commons and defender of the flexible distribution of culture goods. For Matteo Pasquinelli, Lessig's free culture is '*an useful critique to the copyright regime and at the same time an apology to a generic digital freedom, at least until Lessig says the evil word: taxation.*' (Pasquinelli, 2012). It was certainly necessary to find mechanisms to reward authorship, but those based on intellectual property seem to favour the rentism that characterises contemporary global capitalism. Despite being innovative, Creative Commons may introduce the economic parasitism presented by Pasquinelli and the ambiguities of 'free' labour introduced by other authors.

To understand this parasitism, one must go back to the very notion of common. In *Commonwealth*, Hardt and Negri bring two distinct definitions:

the first and most traditional is related to natural goods – it is the natural common – while the second is a dynamic notion that involves at the same time the product of labour and the means of future production – it is the artificial common made up of the languages we create, the social practices we establish, the modes of sociability that define our relationships, and so on. This form of common does not submit itself to a logic of scarcity, like the first. Expropriation of this second form of the common is the key to understanding the new forms of labour exploitation. After approaching the two forms of the common – natural and artificial – the authors begin to address different ways of expropriating the common. In traditional industrial production, capital plays an essential role in the process of organization and production. It gathers the workers in the factory, gives them the tools to work together, and provides them with a cooperation plan and enforces such cooperation. In contemporary forms of production, cognitive work and affective work usually produce autonomous cooperation that is not related to the capitalist command, from the more limited circumstances such as telemarketing centres or food services to the freest ones in the creative sector. Capital captures and expropriates value by exploiting what is produced, in a sense, externally to it. Creative work tends to be autonomous. When crossing it, capital becomes even more predatory. We produce ‘free’ work in exchange for promises of visibility. The force of this expropriation is based on this ambivalence.

Gerald Raunig, for instance, questions the idea according to which the degradation of cultural work would take place only by imposed processes, from outside onto the producing subjects (Raunig, 2008). Raunig reverses, one by one, the criticisms made, in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, by Adorno and Horkheimer (2002, 94–137), to the cultural industries. In opposition to the culture industries described by those authors, creative industries are not organized as large communication and entertainment companies, but as small business networks by producers of communication, fashion, design, and popular culture, clustered in districts and articulated by networks. Differently from the culture industries, creative industries are ephemeral and based on projects: they are project-institutions that at first emerged based on the rejection of subordinated labour and on self-determination. We find here an important ambiguity: if on the one hand creativity is one's self-creation, on the other hand the continuous demand of the producing subject – of one's creativity, one's intelligence and one's social media – leads to a scenario of precariousness in economical, social-cultural and even psychological terms. Each one depends on one's own creativity to live or survive. Here, according to Raunig, the effective loss of autonomy as predicted by Adorno and Horkheimer does take place. The contemporary worker and especially the creative worker is in reality a self-employed person, with no social protection, who jumps from one project to another, and is many times forced to become a small company or corporate person to be then sub-contracted by mid-sized and large communication and entertainment conglomerates and, in the case of Brazil, also by NGOs and

‘cultural foundations’ that are actually funded by public money converted into private financing, miraculously transformed into a public-private partnership.

We are less and less faced with the old forms of exploitation and increasingly with this ambiguity of the ‘free’ labour that characterises creative industries. Guy Debord said that ‘The spectacle is not a collection of images, but a social relation among people, mediated by images’ (Debord, 1992) and this is particularly true in the creative economy. It could be said that ‘image’, or rather ‘visibility’, is the currency of exchange between creative actors and some productive forms of organization, media and museums among them. The spectacle takes the form of a promise of ‘visibility’. But the visibility is asymmetric: while one side is remunerated by global flows, the other receives nothing. There is no job, no salary, no contract and even less social protection but only a promise of ‘visibility’ under infinite modalities of labour precariousness. An integrated system of production/promotion (Compton, 2004).

We presented the relation between the large museums described at the beginning of this article and the creative districts with events, from the huge one such as the Olympic Games to the small ones such as the Design Week. Labour related to them may develop ambiguous conditions of submission and freedom, and then generate economic and even existential precariousness. What this huge carioca industry is producing is subjectivity. It is a global subjectivity that, in the case of Rio de Janeiro, corresponds to Globo’s subjectivity. The episode of the Mauá Pier versus the City Hall showed that it imposes itself even upon the government authority. This immense twenty-first century creative industry is a totally integrated system of urban monumentalization, productive clusterization and subjectivity control in the networks that articulates all these dimensions. The creative ‘Global’ city promises to be the absolute realm of contemporary spectacle: Spectacle 2.0. It requires a creative critique and a critical creativity (understanding critique not as a mere reaction and refusal, but creation, autonomy, and an opening of possibilities) that may comprise different kinds of conflicts and dissents.

#### 4. Final Considerations

Just before the Design Week event started (again, ‘organized’ by Globo) some players such as the ESDI – Superior School of Industrial Design, CAPO, the Carioca Design Centre, Matéria Brasil and Ativa Peçaço organized themselves to hold a common event: the Parallel Circuit. Amongst the activities, there was a gathering organized in Praça dos Estivadores<sup>19</sup> [Dockers’ Square] with cultural actors who have been working there for decades, creative professionals recently set up and dwellers of the borough. It is not possible to describe here the entirety of the debate, but we can point that out it was an important exchange between the traditional cultural agents and the new creative actors about their role in today’s processes of urban transformation and a

strong critique from some of them of the spectacular manner with which the Wonder Port refurbished the so-called Historical and Archaeological Circuit for the Celebration of African Heritage – The Valongo Docks, the Suspended Gardens of Valongo, the present Dockers' Square [Praça dos Estivadores] or the former Largo do Depósito, Pedra do Sal, Centro Cultural José Bonifácio and the Pretos Novos Cemetery – leaving aside the carioca building of Afoxé Filhos de Gandhi, which has been there since its foundation in 1951. The contrast between the completely degraded two-floor house and the spectacularized surroundings is clear for all to see. The cultural actors complained of the disregard of the government and also of the use – by the creative actors and the tourists and for merely recreational purposes – of spaces that, for the mainly Afro-descendant community of the area, are spaces of religious life and sometimes of painful memories as is the case of the Valongo docks and the present Dockers' Square but also of practices of resistance as in the case of the samba of Pedra do Sal and of the Afoxé Filhos de Gandhi. For them, what the lack of a refit of the headquarters of the Afoxé shows is that the creation of the Historical and Archaeological Circuit for the Celebration of African Heritage celebrates what is dead and, in a calculative way, keeps aside everyone and everything that resists the process of spectacularization of culture and of the city itself. It is a circuit of an inert and sometimes or somehow impotent memory. However, the Ativa Peçaço #1 gathering seems to have opened, in its own horizontal and plural dynamics, a possibility for commons among actors directly involved in productive and political activities and beyond public-private partnerships and representations and then, who knows, the possibility for a live and resistant memory to endure.

What is the problem with the PPPs (Public Private Partnerships) on which this spectacular urban project is based? The problem is that its rhetoric does not always correspond to a financial and fiscal reality: what is held as 'private' is frequently based on tax exemptions and is therefore, in a certain way, 'public'. The severity of the problem extends further when the PPP-based administration covers the whole city. In this case, the terms become even more significant: we are no longer acting citizens in a common urban space-time, but spectators of partnerships between the public authority and the corporate management, from which we are systematically excluded. The right to the city, and the struggle for it, face processes of urban commodification as Henri Lefebvre pointed out in the 1960s and David Harvey did more recently. However, our point is not to reinforce the polarization between public and private, but to insist on the fact that PPPs do not include common people in their decisions, which leads to an even more complex theme which is the corruption within the very system of representation, where the relations of private interests – chiefly those of construction companies – hand in hand with the interests of public authorities – leads to the exclusion of the citizens. Or rather, it is the exclusion of the ordinary citizens (not only the voter, but citizens in their daily actions) from the PPPs that leads to the corruption of the entire system. Urban commonality is

no abstraction. It can start to be built in a gathering in Dockers' Square between a population that is being gentrified, that is, expropriated not only from their productive space but also from their existential territory on one hand and, on the other, organizations of a creative youth involved in project-companies. It may be created by resistance to different sorts of expropriation. Some of them are more traditional as in the case of the gentrification of the cities, while others are more recent as in the case of the 'free' labour so characteristic of the creative industries, and of which we made some quick analyses.

The brief retrospective from 2010 to 2016 done here, from the first steps of a new project for the city until its effective execution under the conducting of the works that were ended with the Olympic Games, meant to bring a contribution to the reflection on the ambiguities of 'free work', but also on the possibilities of commons (beyond the PPPs) in Rio de Janeiro of the twenty-first century. We saw along these years how a media group makes this city the territory and the network of a monstrous industry of subjectivity, with little capacity for the government to contain it. The theme of the 'Spectacle' is not new, but new are the manners of separation and expropriation, not only of labour but of life itself, which is more and more 'mediated' than actually experienced in its multiple dimensions. Resist what? There is no synthesis or solution, but only struggle.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> To honour Luis Paulo Conde, mayor of Rio de Janeiro from 1997 to 2001.
- <sup>2</sup> <http://outraspalavras.net/posts/rio-dois-projetos-para-uma-metropole-conhecimento/>
- <sup>3</sup> <http://g1.globo.com/rio-de-janeiro/noticia/2012/07/rio-recebe-o-titulo-de-patrimonio-cultural-da-humanidade.html>
- <sup>4</sup> <http://www.boulevard-olimpico.com> e <http://bit.ly/2dgUurc>
- <sup>5</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/ComitePopularCopaRJ/?fref=ts>
- <sup>6</sup> <http://agenciabrasil.ebc.com.br/rio-2016/noticia/2016-08/movimentos-sociais-questionam-legado-dos-jogos-olimpicos>
- <sup>7</sup> <http://www.portomaravilha.com.br/conteudo/portomaravilha/cultura.pdf>
- <sup>8</sup> <http://www.districtocriativo.com.br>
- <sup>9</sup> <http://g1.globo.com/rio-de-janeiro/olimpiadas/rio2016/noticia/2015/08/districto-criativo-do-porto-e-criado-para-buscar-negocios-apos-rio-2016.html>
- <sup>10</sup> <http://www.portomaravilha.com.br/cdurp>
- <sup>11</sup> <http://www.portonovosa.com/pt-br/estrutura-acionaria>
- <sup>12</sup> 'Once refurbished, the Port Area attracts businesses, tourists and dwellers' is the headline in the Globo newspaper of 27/08/2016: [oglobo.globo.com/epaper/viewer.aspx](http://oglobo.globo.com/epaper/viewer.aspx)
- <sup>13</sup> <http://grupoglobo.globo.com>
- <sup>14</sup> <http://eventos.oglobo.globo.com/semana-design-rio/2016/>

- <sup>15</sup> <http://www.rioetc.com.br/muito-prazer/muito-prazer-distrito-criativo-do-porto/>
- <sup>16</sup> <http://oglobo.globo.com/opiniaio/precisamos-falar-de-politicas-habitacionais-19677047> (9/7/2016) e <http://oglobo.globo.com/opiniaio/vender-inteligencia-19484857> (11/6/2016)
- <sup>17</sup> <http://portomaravilha.com.br/noticiasdetalhe/Galeria-arte-urbana-%C3%A9-aberto:4597>
- <sup>18</sup> The occupations: Chiquinha Gonzaga, Zumbi dos Palmares, Quilombo das Guerreiras, and Flor do Asfalto.
- <sup>19</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/events/290977531266724/>

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