

## **Sport Mega-events, ambitions and disappointments: a never-ending history of conflicts and struggles?**

### CHAIR

Orlando Alves dos Santos Junior

*Federal University of Rio de Janeiro - UFRJ, Brazil*

*orlando.santosjr@gmail.com*

### PANEL MEMBERS

Jules Boykoff

*Pacific University in Oregon, EUA*

The Olympic Games in the Twenty-First Century: Celebration

Capitalism and Its Discontents

Christopher Gaffney

*University of Zurich, Suíça*

Flows, circulation and accumulation: the perverse logic of the event

Gilmar Mascarenhas de Jesus

*State University of Rio de Janeiro – UERJ, Brazil*

The making of Olympic City and the signs of crisis in the globalitarian model

Leticia Osório

*Ford Foudation in Brazil*

## **The Olympic Games in the Twenty-First Century: Celebration**

### **Capitalism and Its Discontents**

Jules Boykoff

*Pacific University in Oregon, EUA*

### **Introduction**

This paper features two main parts. First, I elucidate the theory of “celebration capitalism,” the affable cousin to Naomi Klein’s “disaster capitalism.” I argue that celebration capitalism helps us organize our thinking on the modern Olympics and best

captures the political and economic dynamics at the heart of the modern Games.<sup>2</sup> Second, I explain how celebration capitalism played out at the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics, the 2012 Summer Games in London and the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia. I conclude by linking celebration capitalism to the upcoming Rio 2016 Summer Games.

### **Celebration Capitalism**

The 1984 Los Angeles Olympics were the first full-fledge corporate capitalist Games. By 1984, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) had, under the guidance of President Juan Antonio Samaranch, started to become the business behemoth we know today. The Los Angeles Games were the first Olympics to be fulsomely sponsored by the private sector. Yet, I argue the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics should be viewed as a neoliberal blip on the wider terrain of celebration capitalism's development. The LA Games famously generated a profit of \$222 million, but that doesn't take into account the hidden public surpluses like transportation infrastructure, policing, and security.

In the early 1980s the IOC felt it needed to diversify its revenue streams so it wasn't so reliant on television-rights money. There was also the desire to control the marketing of the Games and to squelch renegade firms' ambush marketing efforts. With this in mind, in 1983 the IOC established The Commission for New Sources of Financing. Two years later, and in the wake of the markedly commercial LA '84 Games, the IOC founded "The Olympic Programme" (TOP), which later became the "Worldwide Partner Program." Today, corporate sponsors have become ubiquitous at the Olympics. The 1984 Olympics and the corporate sponsorship program have led many to argue that the Olympic Games are a picture-perfect example of neoliberal capitalism—or neoliberalism. Neoliberal capitalism is marked by privatization, deregulation, and the financialization of the economy. The idea is to deliberately dismantle the social welfare state while snuffing out Keynesian principles and programs. Neoliberal capitalism's much-recited mantra is to let the market decide.

However, the Olympics themselves are not fundamentally a neoliberal affair. To

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<sup>2</sup> For a more detailed explanation of the theory, see Jules Boykoff, *Celebration Capitalism and the Olympic Games*, London and New York: Routledge, 2013.

be sure, the modern Games emanate neoliberal capitalism in several ways. The Olympics have become much more commercialized as private capital has taken on a higher profile in regards to corporate sponsorship. Also, private security firms have assumed a larger role policing the Games. Yet, the public routinely pays for a large majority of Olympic costs, rather than privatizing them, and corporate sponsors hold a privileged position for future pacts—the free market does not “decide.” Rather than deregulation, we see a stringent regime of rules and regulations emanating from the IOC. Rather than economic financialization, where fictitious funds are ferreted away in abstract configurations, we get public debt, strict payment schedules and all. In fact the Olympics Games are a prime example of “celebration capitalism,” a specific formation of capitalism that in many ways slices against the neoliberal zeitgeist.

To understand celebration capitalism we first have to consider Naomi Klein’s “disaster capitalism.” In *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism* Klein explains how neoliberal capitalists capitalize on catastrophe. With “disaster capitalism,” the goal is to exploit social trauma. Disasters—like wars, hurricanes, military coups d’état, terrorist violence, and severe economic downturns—spark collective states of shock that can soften up the citizenry to extract significant concessions. In the aftermath of disaster, capitalists team up with their collaborators in government to install neoliberal policies rooted in privatization and deregulation where they previously did not exist.

In reality, capitalism is a nimble shapeshifter, and our present moment features an array of actually existing capitalisms. The two I’ll discuss today are disaster capitalism and celebration capitalism, which both occur in states of exception: catastrophe and exuberance respectively. Both modes of capitalism carve a path for politicians and their economic allies to advance policies that would be impossible during normal political times. And both disaster capitalism and celebration capitalism undercut democratic processes. However, while disaster capitalism leads to the weakening of the state and the installation of neoliberal policies, celebration capitalism deploys state actors as strategic partners, putting forth public-private partnerships—rather than full-on privatization—as the dominant mode of economic transaction. In the context of the Olympics, these public-private partnerships are frequently lopsided: the

public pays more, and takes on more of the risk. Disaster capitalism and celebration capitalism complement each other, teaming up as a devastating one-two punch, with celebration capitalism clearing a path for disaster capitalism, and vice versa.

In the context of the Olympic Games, celebration capitalism exhibits six essential elements. First, it occurs during a state of celebratory exception where the normal rules of politics can be temporarily suspended. Second, the IOC and the mass media combine as a linchpin in creating and trumpeting a political-economic spectacle. The IOC plays a pivotal role choreographing the spectacle, feeding narratives and images to the machine. A third dimension is festive commercialism that rallies public backing for the Games. Fourth, celebration capitalism depends on the formation of public-private partnerships that are often lopsided in favor of private entities in terms of input and risk. In short, the public pays and the private profits. The public is fed a steady stream of promises about how the Olympics will bring an economic boon, but independent academic economists have consistently demonstrated that this is simply not the case. Fifth, celebration capitalism is buoyed by the feel-good claims of environmental and social sustainability. In the 1990s, the IOC added sustainability as another vital arrow in its rhetorical quiver. Finally, celebration capitalism gives a big boost to the security industry and local policing units responsible for preventing terrorism, corralling political dissent, and safeguarding the festive spectacle. The security structure designed to thwart terrorism can also be deployed to suppress or intimidate acts of political dissent

### **Celebration Capitalism in Action**

Celebration capitalism exhibits these six central features, but it takes distinctive form depending on the political and historical context. Next I take a look at how celebration capitalism has played out with the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics, the 2012 London Summer Games, and the 2014 Olympics in Sochi, Russia. I conclude by talking about how celebration capitalism relates to the Rio 2016 Games.

### **Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics**

When it came to Olympic financing, Vancouver promoters went along with celebration capitalism's rhetorical formula: understate the costs and overstate the benefits. This came as no surprise, since heavy-hitters from Vancouver's moneyed

classes were the bid's hard-drivers, and they stood ready to benefit. Originally, boosters estimated the Olympic price tag at about \$1 billion. By the eve of the Games, costs had expanded to \$6 billion. Once the post-Games Olympic hangover wore off, estimates soared to a sobering \$8-to-10 billion. When private developers failed to complete the Olympic Village, the public was forced to step in and pay. The Village was supposed to be the crown jewel of Olympics-inspired development and a money-maker for the city. Instead it hemorrhaged public funds.

Military-grade security measures have become standard procedure for host cities during sports mega-events, and Vancouver was no exception. In Vancouver's Olympic bid, the security budget was estimated at \$175 million, but eventually it skyrocketed to more than \$1 billion. The Olympics prompted the formation of the Vancouver Integrated Security Unit, an assemblage headed by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and comprised of more than 20 policing agencies. In the end more than 17,000 security agents descended on the Olympics. More than 1,000 surveillance cameras were installed to monitor movement. Helicopters and CF-18 Hornet fighter jets patrolled from above, while below police with semi-automatic weapons attended events and anti-Olympic demonstrations. Security officials obtained a military-grade weapon called a Medium-Range Acoustic Device, or MRAD, though after pressure from activists and civil libertarians, it was forced to disable its weapons function.

In terms of sustainability, a report from the University of British Columbia's Centre for Sport and Sustainability, greenhouse gas emissions increased steadily during the delivery phase of the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver and rose eight-fold\_during the Games themselves. Moreover, the expansion of the Sea-to-Sky highway linking Vancouver to Whistler passed through Eagleridge Bluffs, jeopardizing plant and animal life in this unique forest ecosystem—including a well-established Douglas fir stand and endangered red-legged frogs.

This environmental destruction instigated political activism. Much of the protest was led by First Nations activists. Compared with other provinces, First Nations peoples in British Columbia have a distinctive relationship with the government. Whereas indigenous peoples across other Canadian provinces signed treaties with colonial settlers, in British Columbia such treaties were rare. By and large indigenous

people had not ceded the lands on which the late arrivers had settled. This unique situation afforded strategic leverage to indigenous peoples in Canada: First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. This history also gave rise to one of the most widespread anti-Olympics slogans from Vancouver: “No Olympics on Stolen Native Land.”

### **London 2012 Summer Olympics**

London’s bid estimated the total costs of the Games at \$3.8 billion. But by 2007 that figure had ballooned to \$15 billion. Activist Julian Cheyne ran an independent cost tally that put the total at \$21 billion. A Sky Sports investigation calculated the price tag to be \$38 billion. London Mayor Boris Johnson harangued the “doom mongers” for raising questions about the economics. All the while, boosters ignored an official government report that found hosting sports mega-events “*appear to be more about celebration than economic returns.*”

The public-pays-private-bails theme crystallized in the construction of the Olympic Village where athletes were housed during the Games. The Olympic Village was to be financed by a private developer but the 2008 economic collapse and attendant credit crunch led private capital to abandon the project, leaving the British government in the lurch. In Spring 2009, Olympics organizers were forced to admit the Village would be “fully nationalized”—in other words, paid for by British taxpayers. London organizers ended up selling the Village at a taxpayer loss of £275 million to the Qatari ruling family’s property firm.

Significant sums of money were spent on militarizing the public sphere. The Ministry of Defense stationed Rapier and Starstreak surface-to-air missiles in various locations across London, including atop apartments in residential neighborhoods. During the Games, the city’s airspace was patrolled by Typhoon fighter jets and Puma helicopters, replete with trained snipers who had the option to use lethal force. The Metropolitan Police acquired more than 10,000 plastic bullets and set up mobile stations to facilitate swift deployments and bookings. The *BBC* reported that Olympic security had obtained a Long Range Acoustic Device (LRAD), the military-grade weapon battle-tested in war zones and big brother to the MRAD purchased for Vancouver 2010. In addition, more than 18,000 military personnel policed Games venues, thanks to the fact that in the weeks prior to the opening ceremony, G4S, the

private security firm entrusted to supply bag-checkers and other security personnel, announced it would fall short of its promised 10,000 guards.

Also, to the chagrin of many in London, more than 250 miles of V.I.P. traffic lanes were reserved not just for athletes, medics, and I.O.C. officials, but also for corporate sponsors. Regular folk were not allowed. Speaking of sponsors, the London Games were a corporate bonanza. Eleven “Worldwide Olympic Partners” (Acer, Atos, Coca-Cola, Dow, GE, McDonald’s, Omega, P & G, Panasonic, Samsung, and Visa) supplied the IOC with approximately \$1.1 billion, with each firm furnishing about \$100 million. And while these corporations received a lot of attention in London, we ought to remember that, true to celebration capitalism, corporate sponsors were responsible for only about 12% of the overall cost of the London Games, with taxpayers left to pay a bulk of the remaining 88%.

London 2012 organizers began something new called a “sustainability partner” sponsorship program that included BP, BMW, BT, Cisco, EDF Energy and GE. Dubious corporate sponsorships gave rise to an innovative activist action: the Greenwash Gold Campaign, which focused on BP, Rio Tinto, and Dow. Activists produced three short, snappy, animated films on BP, Dow, and Rio Tinto, and asked people to vote on who deserved the gold medal for greenwashing. With the Deepwater Horizon oil disaster along the Gulf Coast fresh in the public mind, BP was a prime bull’s-eye for greenwashing.

### **Sochi 2014 Winter Games**

The Games were Russian President Vladimir Putin’s pet project. He played a vital role in securing the bid and views the Games (as well as the 2018 soccer World Cup, which Russia will also host) as a chance for Russia to shine on the world stage. But he won negative media attention when he signed anti-gay legislation into law in the summer of 2013. The law forbids “propaganda of non-traditional relationships to minors.” Violators are subject to large fines, while foreign nationals can be deported under duress after being detained for two weeks.

But more quietly, celebration capitalism proceeded apace in Sochi, taking on distinctly Russian characteristics. Sochi bid documentation initially projected Olympic costs to be \$10.3 billion, but since then the five-ring price tag jumped to \$51 billion,

making them the most expensive Olympics ever—and more than all previous Winter Olympics combined. Public-private partnerships took distinctly Russian form. The Russian state essentially strongarmed the financing of the Olympics. Russian capitalists who capitalized off the oligarchic bacchanalia of the Yelstin years were allowed to keep their billions on the condition they furnish millions to finance the Games. As such, private investment—which at first glance appears substantial—is misleading. The goal of private contributions was not so much to generate profits as to ingratiate firms with the federal government. One example of a prominent oligarch that has stepped up to finance the Games is Vladimir Potanin. Potanin, who heads a large metals company, (Norilsk Nickel) began constructing his Roza Khutor ski resort even before Sochi was awarded the Games. He supplied \$2.5 billion. Corruption in Sochi was rampant. Some estimate that a whopping \$30 billion in Olympic spending was lost through corruption. One road connecting Sochi venues cost an astonishing \$200 million per kilometer.

The Russian government declared 2013 to be the “Year of the environment” and the IOC announced that Coca-Cola, a longtime Worldwide Olympic Partner, would receive a “Sustainability Award” for its work in the Black Sea region and Dow would be an “Official Carbon Partner” tasked with minimizing Sochi 2014’s carbon footprint. Nevertheless, in 2010 Greenpeace and the World Wildlife Fund severed ties with Russia’s state-owned construction firm Olympstroy, which the NGOs blamed for dumping heavy metals and industrial waste. In 2009 the Russia-based group Environmental Watch on North Caucasus lodged complaint that the natural gas giant Gazprom was despoiling a protected nature reserve in order to build the road connecting Sochi to the Olympic Ski Complex. A few years later, in February 2013, the group issued an open statement to the IOC asserting that deforestation and the release of toxic effluents had degraded the natural landscape in the Sochi region. In December 2013, one of the group’s leaders—a vociferous critic of the Games—was handed a suspicious three-year jail sentence for “destroying property.”

In the lead-up to the Olympics, Russia passed an array of laws to squelch dissent. One law mandates that “politically active” NGOs that receive funding from outside Russia must register as a “foreign agent.” Another law features a vague

definition of “high treason” that civil libertarians are concerned could be applied to any Russian who collaborates with foreign groups—especially political activists. In August 2013, Putin issued a decree that banned non-Olympic “gatherings, rallies, demonstrations, marches and pickets” in Sochi between January 7 and March 21, creating a one-month buffer on either side of the Games. He also announced there would be “protest zones,” but the closest one was miles from the nearest Olympic site.

On top of this, the region around Sochi is a geopolitical tinderbox, one of the world’s hottest conflict zones. As such, Russian security officials confront a slew of serious challenges. For starters, Russia is in a longstanding disagreement with Georgia over Abkhazia, which sits approximately 25 kilometers southeast of Sochi. Sochi is also situated near the precarious provinces of Chechnya, Dagestan, and Ingushetia, where anti-Russian sentiment roils. Less than a year before the Games were to commence, Russian officials received a grim reminder of the separatist wars of Chechnya and Dagestan when Doku Umarov, a high-profile Chechen rebel, implored his fellow militants to “do their utmost to derail” the Olympics, which he viewed as “satanic dances on the bones of our ancestors.”

### **Rio 2016 Olympics**

As with previous bouts of celebration capitalism in the context of the Olympics, Rio’s price tag has escalated, from an estimated \$10 billion to what some credible economists estimate will eventually reach \$20 billion. The impending impeachment of Brazilian President Dilma Rouseff has pulled political attention away from the Olympics. This has benefited people such as Rio Mayor Eduardo Paes who has used the Olympics as a trampoline for his political career. But many people across the city are not as sanguine about the Games, including the approximately 77,000 people displaced by Rio 2016, including residents of favelas like Vila Autódromo. While the poor are marginalized and displaced, well-connected political and economic elites are cashing in on the Games (e.g. people like Carlos Carvalho of Carvalho Hosken, the firm responsible for constructing the Olympic Village). Despite the candidature file’s grand promises about cleaning up the water in places like Guanabara Bay, nothing of the sort has happened. The Games may well be the most greenwashed in the history of the mega-event. The Games has prompted protests across the political spectrum,

including fightback from the Comitê Popular da Copa do Mundo e Das Olimpíadas. The global media will be on hand to monitor protests, false promises, and policing practices.

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So as we nestle in to watch the next Olympics let's remember that behind the spectacle of athletic prowess and global harmony, brass-knuckle politics and brute economics reign. Many of us will enjoy the Olympic Games by rooting for our favorite athletes. But that doesn't mean we can't demand more out of the IOC so the Olympics can begin to live up to their rhetoric as "building a better world through sport." Changing the entrenched tenets of celebration capitalism is a good place to start. Thank you.

## **Flows, Circulations, Accumulations: the Perverse Logic of the Event**

Christopher Gaffney

*University of Zürich*

### **Introduction**

The organisation and governance of circulations through infrastructure is occupying an ever more central position in social science analyses of urban political economy. Larkin (2013: 328-330) has focused on the relationality of urban infrastructures, suggesting that they are "objects that create the grounds on which other objects operate" and that "discussing an infrastructure is a categorical act. It is a moment of tearing into those heterogeneous networks to define which aspect of which network is to be discussed and which parts will be ignored". The implication is that by choosing infrastructure as a point of departure for critical analysis, we make political choices, turning towards (and away from) specific elements of the urban. In so doing, scholars have examined infrastructure as elements and products of urban circulation (Usher, 2014), policy mobilities (Wood, 2015), economic change (Notteboom and Rodrigue, 2012), technology (McNeill, 2015), and techniques of government (Swyngedouw, 2004). While most of these analyses make explicit the relationships between flows and circulations through an analysis of social and physical

infrastructures, there is a generalised absence of scholarship that examines the centrality of circulations to the specific accumulation regime of a given urban political economy. I hope to fill this gap in the literature by examining the relationships between circulation and accumulation within the context of Rio de Janeiro's mega-event cycle (2005-2016).

In particular, I analyse the function of infrastructure within the accumulation regime of a sports mega-event. I suggest that the ordinary and extraordinary rendering of circulations in the extra-legal context of the event allows for a subsequent capture of rent on the part of the interdigitated actor-networks that come together to produce, perform, and consume the event itself. While this paper will not deal explicitly with the burgeoning literature on infrastructure, it will contextualise the role of infrastructure rendering within contemporary debates regarding the political economy of the mega-event cycle (Black, 2007; Close *et al.*, 2007; Horne, 2004; Müller, 2015).

Before entering into the details of my argument I will first explore the two component elements that sit at the core of the paper's title: circulations and rendition. The first term is critical to Foucauldian analyses of power, particularly in urban centres (Elden, 2007; Usher, 2014). While it will be impossible to go into details regarding the structural concepts of circulation such as discipline, security, and governmentality, I will make the case for circulation as being at the core of urban power dynamics and thus one of the critical components of an urban political economy of the mega-event.

Secondly, *rendition* is a concept integral to treatments of the production of urban space (Gottdeiner, 1985; Lefebvre, 1992; Light and Smith, 1998), sitting within the Lefebvrian triple dialectic that relates conceived, produced, and lived spaces. I will suggest that the *ordinary rendering* of urban space and circulations through design and planning (conceived space) structures the quotidian accumulation practices of residents, while the *extraordinary rendition* of those elements has as its goal the capture of rents for a limited actor-network. The key spatial dynamic of the mega-event is one of extraordinary rendition, a double movement that happens through the production of conceived space and direct action in lived space –situations are conditioned by the demands of (and acquiescence to) the event. By exploring the processes and mechanisms under which this happens I hope to show how the extraordinary rendition

of circulations is *the* essential practice of the mega-event accumulation regime, producing urban circulations that become naturalised (or ordinary) infrastructural elements in the urban landscape once the event has passed.

### **The importance of circulations**

As Foucault features in his analysis of the emergence of a police force (and the simultaneous development of the modern *urbe*), the measurement and control of urban circulations was essential to the development of urban political economy and the regulation of market forces (Foucault, 2009). As these mechanisms expanded and grew more complex over time, sovereign political and economic power was exercised through the development and maintenance of circulatory mechanisms, infrastructures, and techniques of analysis and control. In discussing the mechanisms of an emergent governmentality, Foucault comes to rest on the *milieu*, “the space in which a series of uncertain elements unfold...the medium of an action and the element in which it circulates. It is therefore the problem of circulation and causality that is at stake in his notion” (Foucault [2004]2007: 20-21). Furthermore, the milieu is, “that in which circulation is carried out” (ibid. 21). So the question of circulation, as seen through the space of the milieu, is that through which a territorial sovereign, “tried to affect, precisely, a population” (ibid. 21). Or as Dillon and Lobo-Guerrero suggest, the regulation of circulation became the “space of operation for biopoliticized security practices” and the “problematic of biopolitical security apparatuses is fundamentally that of securing the contingent freedom of circulation” (Dillon and Lobo-Guerrero, 2008: 280-282). Circulation, then, is both the principal and physical medium through which biopower is exercised in the context of the city.

Welch compliments these perspectives by suggesting that the organisation of circulation is a means of organizing the flows and vectors of power (Welch, 2008). And within a political economy framework, because circulation depends on production and production presupposes circulation as its “developed moment”, then circulation (as the milieu upon which security is focused) needs to be understood “within the totality of capitalism” (Aradau and Blanke, 2010: 9 – 10).

So it is through circulations that biopower is exercised and capitalism functions. Circulations are therefore critical to the understanding of urban dynamics, including

processes of securitization, control, and governance. If Foucault's milieu is the space of circulation, then the "the deployment of mechanisms of security...is a political technique that will be addressed to the milieu" (ibid. 23). That is, security and governance are largely directed to the production, maintenance, control, and measurement of circulations. Thus, the rendering of circulations is equivalent to the production and governance of the milieu, one of the key elements through which sovereign power is developed and exercised, as well as one of the fundamental sites of exercising control over populations.

While Foucault's observations were directed at the emergence of early-modern Western European towns, many of the conceptual frameworks can be applied to the contemporary metropolis. As with the incremental sophistication and expansion of discipline and security apparatuses that conditioned the expansion of the milieu, the same kinds of security dispositifs organise and govern circulations within the modern metropolis. The impacts upon urban centers become faster and deeper with globalisation, leaving ever-deeper imprints. This is particularly true when coalitions of actors seek out large scale events that are designed to bring major transformations in a compressed time frame. Bid coalitions (local actor networks) seek to increase flows of information, people, and capital to and from the host city (Gaffney 2017). These flows must be transformed into circulations so that capital accumulation can come to fruition.

The circulatory qualities of infrastructure have become a key site of investigation for analysis of the instruments, mechanisms, technology, and targets of governance (Carse, 2014; Daró, 2011; Graham and Marvin, 2001; Kaika, 2005; Renzi and Elmer, 2013; Swyngedouw, 2004). Thus, in order to pursue an emergent political economy of a mega-event, then we must consider the ways in which infrastructure is secured, the ways in which the milieu of the mega-event functions to render circulations, and the temporal and spatial dimensions of the event itself.

### **Ordinary and Extraordinary Renditions**

Exploring the meanings of the word *rendition* is a prelude to developing the paired concepts of *ordinary rendition* and *extraordinary rendition of circulations*. The English *render* comes from the French *rendere*: "a return especially in goods or

services due from a feudal tenant to his lord”(Websters.com 2017). The sense of “giving up,” “delivering,” or “handing over” that is at the root meaning of render is etymologically linked to *surrender*, an admission of defeat in war. In law, *rendition* is also considered to be the act of surrender or handing over of persons or property, particularly across political jurisdictions through processes such as extradition. Rendition also extends to jurisprudence, either by delivering a judicial decision or through the execution of a judicial order. In design and architecture, render means to draw, represent, depict, or reproduce and is perhaps the most commonly used form of the word today. My use of the term will encompass all of these meanings, connecting them to the generalized structural conditions of urban political economy.

As I have discussed elsewhere (Gaffney, 2013, 2016), a mega-event bid coalition (actor-network) renders the aspirant Olympic City through the production of dossiers, academic, government, and industry reports, bid documents, and marketing tactics as part of a years’ long process of inserting a city or country into the mega-event accumulation regime (see also, Feddersen et al., 2007; Lauermann, 2015; Shoval, 2002). The urban, design, and architectural renderings of urban space (what would be Lefebvre’s’ representational space) are accompanied by discursive framings of the “Olympic City” or “FIFA World Cup host” that are precisely calibrated to appeal to the aesthetic tastes, cosmopolitan fantasies, and practical necessities of mega-event rights holders: FIFA, the IOC, and the BIE (Bureau International des Expositions).<sup>2</sup>

The rendering of the event city undertaken by the bid coalition is predicated upon a *status quo ante* circulatory framework in the proposed host city. These pre-existing circulations will most likely have been produced through “ordinary renditions of circulation” – that is, they have likely occurred through whatever qualifies as non-exceptional conditions of urban governance in the particular context. For the purposes of my argument, I am assuming that

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<sup>2</sup> For clarity and simplicity, I will use the Olympics as a paradigmatic place-holder for all mega-events.

all pre-Olympic cities that have had their circulations ordinarily rendered. While this is clearly not always true (Italy's 1934 World Cup and Berlin's 1936 Olympics come to mind), I define ordinary rendition as a condition of infrastructural provision, use, agency, and action consistent and coeval with the prevailing political economy of a city and its governance framework that occurs through longitudinal urban planning documents, functioning regulatory agencies, and idiosyncratic, yet banal, renditions of circulatory mechanisms.

When an actor-network / coalition coalesces around the event (Feddersen and Maennig, 2012; Gusmão de Oliveira, 2015; Hiller, 2000), the "extraordinary rendering" of the mega-event city through the bid documents is predicated upon the use, modification, or upgrade of these pre-existing circulatory pathways: roads, train systems, broadcast capacity, airports, tourist sites, hotels, sports venues, etc. Thus, under a state of non-exception, urban circulations are ordinarily rendered and rents are directed ordinarily – not necessarily justly or optimally or unchangingly. A brief example from Rio de Janeiro will illustrate.

In Rio, the ferry, metro, train, highways, and bus lines (as well as phone, water, and electricity) are operated as private concessions. The state typically finances the construction of infrastructure projects but following a series of privatizations in the 1990s no longer has the institutional capacity to build or operate circulatory infrastructure. Thus, prior to the emergence of a series of sports mega-events, the public authorities (in conjunction with real-estate firms, bus companies, and civil construction firms) proposed, contracted, financed, and auctioned off urban circulatory pathways that conformed (theoretically) to the demands and projections articulated in urban planning documents such as the City's Master Plan or the State's Metropolitan Transportation Master Plan. The conditions in which these pre-event urban circulations were ordinarily rendered (even though they were fraught with conflicts of interest, collusive practices, and poor quality), defining the conditions of urban mobility in the metropolitan region (Lessa, 2001; da Matta et al., 2010).

My point here is that the ordinary rendition of circulations – realized through planning documents, construction contracts, and physical infrastructures (which

cannot be separated from their social and political networks) – are fundamental to the *ordinary conditions* that define a given urban political economy. The economic, political, and social relationships that structure flows and circulations in the context of capitalist modernity comprise a field of study unto themselves, perhaps most eloquently articulated by the Brazilian geographer Milton Santos through his exploration of the dialectic of *fluxos* and *fixos* (Santos, 1996). Santos notes that one of the structural conditions of the modern world is a heightened demand for fluidity that opens the possibility for the ever more rapid and deep circulation of ideas, people, messages, products, and capital that act in service of hegemonic powers. The very condition of fluidity is predicated upon fixed technical networks – infrastructure – that are in constant search of greater efficiency. Thus, “fluidity is, at the same time, a cause, a condition, and a result (Santos, 1996:267)”.

In this assessment, further developed by Harvey (1991), Santos highlights the transformative and performative roles of fixed infrastructures upon flows. As flows are transformed into circulations through the building and management of infrastructure (Santos, 1996: 266–279), they feed into and off of forms of production which, “presuppose circulation as its developed moment while circulation realizes the value that is the result of production” (Aradau and Blanke 201). Therefore, security (and the governance of circulations in particular), needs to be understood within the totality of capitalism (Moore, 2015). As a wide array of authors have emphasized in recent years, the accumulation regime of the mega-event, or *Celebration Capitalism* (Boykoff, 2013), cannot and should not be separated from macro-economic analyses (Baumann and Matheson, 2013; Malkoutzis, 2012; Preuss, 2004; Zimbalist, 2015).

In the next section I will examine the particular case of Rio de Janeiro, demonstrating how the realisation of a decade of sports mega-events extraordinarily rendered circulations in the metropolis. This happened in four distinct ways that follow from the definitions I have laid out above: 1) the projection of urban spaces associated with the events (urban design and architectural rendering) created an Olympic Imaginary that was later brought into fruition through a series of extra-legal mechanisms and specific state and non-state interventions in urban space; 2) the contracting and construction of event-related infrastructure allowed for the capture of

public monies through corruption and collusion, extraordinarily rendering capital into the accounts of Brazil’s mega-event coalition; 3) FIFA and the IOC were able to maximise their profits through the extraordinary rendition (capture / surrender) of circulations during the events; 4) the resultant change in urban circulations has allowed for a continued capture of rents on the part of some constituent elements of the decaying (or disarticulating) event coalition while limiting the accumulation potential of the majority by circumscribing (through omission and direction) their ability to circulate, and thus accumulate, in the city.

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