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**The Branding of *Porto Maravilha*:
Reimagining Spaces, Memory and Culture in Post-Olympics Rio de Janeiro**

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

What makes a place unique? How to describe that intangible feeling that makes us belong somewhere, be it as residents of a lifetime or as visitors collecting moments? Places touch us through their shapes, textures and materials, molding and being molded by our everyday. With walls that absorb our struggles and dreams, streets worn out by our battles and celebrations, and buildings that keep secrets of our shames and glories. Places tell a story of what we want to be, of projected desires, in a never-ending palimpsest of history, memories and reinvention. Like a diary of our journeys, our words are written in architecture, behaviours, spaces and social bonds to be passed on to future generations. We will here glimpse at the very long diary of a quite unique place in the city of Rio de Janeiro: its port.

1. General Description

This research will analyse the recent revitalization project of a central port area in the city of Rio de Janeiro (Brazil), focusing on its branding goal of renewing the city's image as a competitive destination within contemporary global tourism practices. Officially launched in 2009, the *Porto Maravilha* (Marvelous Port) project is intrinsically linked to major international events recently hosted by the city — namely the 2014 FIFA World Cup and the Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

For more than two centuries, Rio de Janeiro's port was the main entrance of African slaves into the Americas, receiving around 20% of all such captives (Cais do Valongo, n.d.). It was also a place for big slave trade markets, colonial businesses and housing. After the abolition of slavery in Brazil, in 1888, it became the area where former slaves settled and where African culture was able to bloom and mix more

freely. This led to creative and cultural contributions which are now the core of Rio de Janeiro's identity — for instance the world-famous music style *samba*, which originated from informal musical gatherings in the area.

With an extremely rich past as a crucial area during the early centuries of Rio de Janeiro's history, the docklands slowly became overshadowed by economic and social changes that shifted businesses, housing and government investments in general to other areas of the city. Decades of negligence saw an increase in poverty and violence, while historical buildings and monuments were simply abandoned, demolished or poorly preserved.

Although through time the port has had structural changes to adapt to new functions, attempts to revitalise and modernise the area only really started being put to action by the beginning of the 20th century. Most famously under the supervision of then mayor Pereira Passos, with an eurocentric, beautifying and sanitarian view of urban modernisation that led to the forced removal of impoverished and mainly afro-descendant communities (Diniz, 2013). It was during that period that the first *favelas* (Rio de Janeiro's notorious slums) were formed. Patrimonialization and preservation were not a priority, and important historical sites were landed and/or built over.

In 2009, after being selected to host the 2016 Olympics and Paralympic Games, as well as major matches in the 2014 FIFA World Cup, the municipal government of Rio de Janeiro published a detailed strategic plan for urban changes in the city to be put to action in the period between 2013 and 2016. Called "Post 2016: A more integrated and competitive Rio", the plan was reviewed and republished in 2013¹. The plan has the ambitious goal to position Rio as "the best place in the Southern Hemisphere to live, work and visit" (Rio de Janeiro Municipal Government, 2013, p. 11). Amongst the dozens of initiatives is the *Porto Maravilha* project, aimed at rehabilitating the port area's "economic, social and

¹ An English version is available at: <https://goo.gl/BiKZ5Z>

cultural potential" (Rio de Janeiro Municipal Government, 2013, p. 116), while maintaining the commitment to preserve and value local historical memory.

The overall municipal strategic plan has a wide range of initiatives targeted at developing the city, from the areas of healthcare, education and housing to security, sustainability, transportation and more. However, two economic initiatives are of particular interest to this research, since they are directly linked to the image of the *Porto Maravilha* project: the *Rio Capital do Turismo* (Rio Tourism Capital) and *Rio Capital da Indústria Criativa* (Rio Creative Industries Capital). Both of them considerably count on the revitalisation of the port area in order to successfully transform Rio de Janeiro into a creative city that is more attractive to tourists. Both initiatives are also linked to the economic goals of making Rio "the largest tourism hub in the Southern Hemisphere" and "the leading capital for the development of the Creative Industries in Brazil, focusing on Design, Fashion, the Scenic and the Audiovisual Arts" (Rio de Janeiro Municipal Government, 2013, p.12).

Considering the area's past and the project's attempt to commodify local culture and heritage, mainly for touristic purposes, many discussions arise. It is the case, for instance, of tensions regarding cultural appropriation and the reinterpretation of the past. Who has the voice to retell local history? Are there any hidden interests that may influence the outcome? Were local groups, especially the ones involved in Afro-Brazilian political claims, consulted? Having that in mind, the questioning of issues surrounding the development of tourism based on a tragic past of slavery will be inevitable. To what extent can this be considered a form of dark tourism²? It will be thus necessary to address the effects of postcolonialism in this whole scenario, as well as matters of authenticity and performativity involving both local communities and the tourists themselves.

² Dark tourism is seen as a niche within cultural tourism practices. It relates to a market of people interested in visiting sites associated with death, suffering or violence, such as war battlefields, concentration camps, torture dungeons and cemeteries. Some famous dark tourism destinations include the Auschwitz concentration camp, Chernobyl ruins, the London Dungeons and the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum in Cambodia (Jamal & Robinson, 2009; Lelo & Jamal, 2013).

One of the main goals of the *Porto Maravilha* project is to renew Rio de Janeiro's touristic options and therefore its image as a travel destination. It is indispensable, therefore, to analyse what the traditional touristic image of the city is and how the cultural and creativity initiatives in the port area may change it. Is the local population being engaged by such initiatives or are they prioritizing the visitor class? What are the effects of these cultural initiatives in the local lifestyle and in the city's image abroad?

Finally, the increase of mass tourism practices in many cities all over the world have shown that, if not well managed, negative effects may outshine the positive over time (Jamal & Robinson, 2009). Considering that it is through the port that most touristic cruise ships arrive, it is unavoidable to consider the obstructive outcomes the project may bring. In what ways an increase of mass tourism may affect local communities? Are any precautions being taken?

2. Existing Research

The *Porto Maravilha* revitalization project has raised the curiosity of many academics since it was first released, in 2009. Until now, mostly Brazilian scholars or institutions have published articles on the subject, which means they are often written in Portuguese, although many of them were also translated to English and/or Spanish. For practical purposes, I chose to focus on existing research that is somehow close to the cultural approach I intend to use for this work, ignoring fields that analyse the project in political, economic or more technical quantitative terms.

Brazilian geographer Nelson Diniz (2013, 2015), for instance, discusses the disparities between the concepts of urban revitalization and urban renovation and how they were used both in the conception and in the execution of the project. He argues that the *Porto Maravilha* project makes use of a mix of both concepts and discusses the possible outcomes of such strategies, regarding gentrification, neoliberal entrepreneurship and public-private funding interference. Monié and Da Silva (2015), on the other hand,

discuss the *Porto Maravilha* project through a broader perspective of a global phenomenon of similar urban interventions that redefine functional and spatial dynamics between port and city. The authors criticise the dysfunctional integration between commercial strategies and urbanistic operations of local development, citizenship, social projects and social memory.

Within the fields of cultural studies and social sciences, the project has also attracted the attention of a great number of researchers. Pio (2013 and 2014), looks at *Porto Maravilha* with an interest in the heritage preservation and cultural policies adopted by the project. He sees a paradigm shift between this project and the previous attempts to revitalise the port area, going on to argue that ideological changes influence cultural policies, for example, with changes in the perception of modernisation, as well as an increased attention being given to patrimonialization and to marketing discourses of creativity. Guimarães (2013) focuses specifically on the African heritage of the port area, opting for an anthropological perspective. She addresses the many conflicts that were brought to light during the execution of the *Porto Maravilha* project between divergent discourses, property ownership and ethnic territory within an urban context.

Santos and Benevides (2014), in turn, use mediatic coverage and advertising to analyse the process of imagery construction surrounding the port area during its transformation. By doing so, they try to grasp how the urban interventions in the docklands may influence the representation of the entire city. Finally, the work of Jaguaribe (2011) focuses particularly on the branding of Rio de Janeiro as *Cidade Maravilhosa* (Marvelous City) and how the interventions in the city for the 2016 Olympic Games, aim at reinventing the city's image, letting out a view of an idealised goal. My research, in contrast with her work, will have a more specific focus on the *Porto Maravilha* project alone, while making use of critical discourse analysis and having a standpoint of five years difference, with the project already concluded, instead of merely conceptualised.

Most of the perspectives presented above will certainly intersect with my research and will serve as reference. However, the main focus of my work will rely on the branding strategy of the *Porto Maravilha* project in forming the perception of Rio de Janeiro as a creative city attractive to contemporary tourists and investments. Despite the mentioned intersections with many of the arguments that will construct my overall view of the project, I believe that my focus on tourism studies and city branding will justify this research as academically relevant, since I was not able to find an existing research with the same perspective. Moreover, as it will be further discussed in the methodology, the research will make use of critical analysis discourse in order to further understand the changing imagery of the area.

Last but not least, the uniqueness of this research relies also in its timing. All existing research was made before the Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games, which was not only what brought the project into existence, but also when its real inauguration happened: when the new branded image was seen (in person or through broadcasting) by a huge global audience. The Olympic Games were the big stage for the worldwide presentation of the new Rio de Janeiro. By taking place after the games, my research will benefit from quantitative and qualitative data about tourism practices during the event, as well as from mediatic material that will give me a better understanding of the global perception of the city's image.

3. Research Question

I was able to identify two main forces through which the cultural rebranding process of the port area is taking place. First, by hosting major events related to the creative industries; including cultural events in the fields of design, cinema, architecture, media and arts in general. Second, by investing in the establishment of cultural landmarks in the area, such as museums and heritage sites.

This research will thus be structured around these two 'rebranding forces', which is the term I will use to refer to them throughout the process. With that in mind, I will make use of the methodology detailed further ahead to try to answer my research question: **how is the official discourse of the main institutions involved in the *Porto Maravilha* project contributing to the effort to brand the area as a cultural and creativity hub?**

This issue unfolds thereafter into the following subquestions:

1. How does the discourse of a local big event contribute to the image of the port area as a cultural and creativity hub?
2. How does the discourse of an institution responsible for a local cultural landmark contribute to the image of the port area as a cultural and creativity hub?

4. Methodology

The perception of a city's imagery is constructed by a combination of discourse (be it by marketing campaigns, tourist advertising or official websites) and more concrete changes, such as infrastructure, historical preservation and revitalization initiatives. This combination has the capacity of altering the "community's material and symbolic capital, and thus have an impact upon collective representation" (Broudehoux, 2001, p. 274). This is why, in my attempt to understand how the official discourse of the main institutions involved in the *Porto Maravilha* project contribute to the effort of branding the area as a cultural and creative hub, I will use a mixed-method approach, combining literature review and critical discourse analysis. The first will allow me to trace an understanding of the social and cultural context in which these discourses are inserted, as well as the concrete changes that accompany them. This is fundamental since, as Fairclough (1989) points out, discourse practices and social practices are connected, having a close dialectical relationship. To be able to successfully establish a critical

discourse analysis, it is crucial to first understand the sociocultural context in which said discourse arises, for language is both influential and a consequence of social processes.

As was already mentioned, through preliminary investigation on the *Porto Maravilha* municipal project I was able to identify two main forces that give direction to the effort of changing the perception of the port zone. First, by hosting major cultural events in the area, and second, by establishing and capitalizing on cultural landmarks. For this research, I have chosen one representative for each of these rebranding forces, which are justified by their local relevance and/or attachment to the *Porto Maravilha* project. I will then critically analyse the discourse present in selected pages of their official websites. Each analysis will be preceded by a theoretical and cultural contextualization in order to enrich and justify my critical goals. This contextualization will serve as a "global explanatory framework" (Fairclough, 1995) to contrast with the discourses found in the selected material.

First, as the representative of an influential cultural event in the area I have chosen ArtRio, which is an international art fair that gathers artists, art collectors and some of the main galleries in the world. It happens annually and is able to attract huge crowds: the 2015 edition brought around 52.000 visitors to Pier Mauá, a warehouse complex in the port area (ArtRio, n.d.). The organizers of this fair remain active all year due to a goal that goes beyond the event itself: to serve as a hub for local artists, supporting exhibitions and new galleries while also promoting young talents and fomenting art and culture consumption amongst Brazilian audiences. I have chosen this event not only due to its status as one of the biggest art fairs in South America, but because, by having six editions held in the port zone, it has been influencing the perception of the area as a cultural hub since 2011.

Second, as a representative of cultural landmarking in *Porto Maravilha*, I have chosen the African Heritage Circuit, a visitable route of six important historical landmarks of Afro-Brazilian presence in the area, including many archeological discoveries that were made during construction work of the revitalization process. This choice was made considering both the historical and cultural attachment

to Rio de Janeiro's port region, as well as the heritage commoditization for touristic purposes in the form of guided tours. Moreover, it will allow me to critically explore the sociocultural past, present and future of the *Porto Maravilha*, enriching the analysis of their discourse.

In order to analyse the online communication material of both institutions, I will make use of critical discourse analysis within the perspective proposed by Norman Fairclough (1989, 1992, 1995 and 2003). He sees the use of language as a form of social practice, which is in turn attached to cultural and historical contexts. Language can be used to reproduce, reimagine or challenge existing social interactions and, by doing so, it may privilege or undermine certain interests, reinforcing the notion of discourse as a result (and creator) of power relations. Fairclough's model for analysis also heavily relies on the concepts of interdisciplinarity and interdependency in order to find connections, patterns or contrasts that might have passed unperceived by a merely descriptive analysis of discourse. This method seems fitting as a tool to try to answer the aforementioned questions of this research especially because "adopting critical goals means aiming to elucidate [such] naturalizations, and more generally to make clear social determinations and effects of discourse which are characteristically opaque to participants" (Fairclough, 1995, p. 28).

Fairclough sees discourse analysis as three-dimensional, which means that any discursive event is, at the same time: a piece of text (attending to a descriptive analysis of language — grammar, syntax and so on), an instance of discursive practice (attending to an interactive analysis with the text's process of production and social connections of interpretation) and an instance of social practice (attending to a social analysis of the text's production/distribution/consumption circumstances, its effects and institutional or organizational issues behind it). With his "boxes diagram" it is possible to visualize and better understand how interdependent these three mentioned dimensions of discourse are (Figure 1).

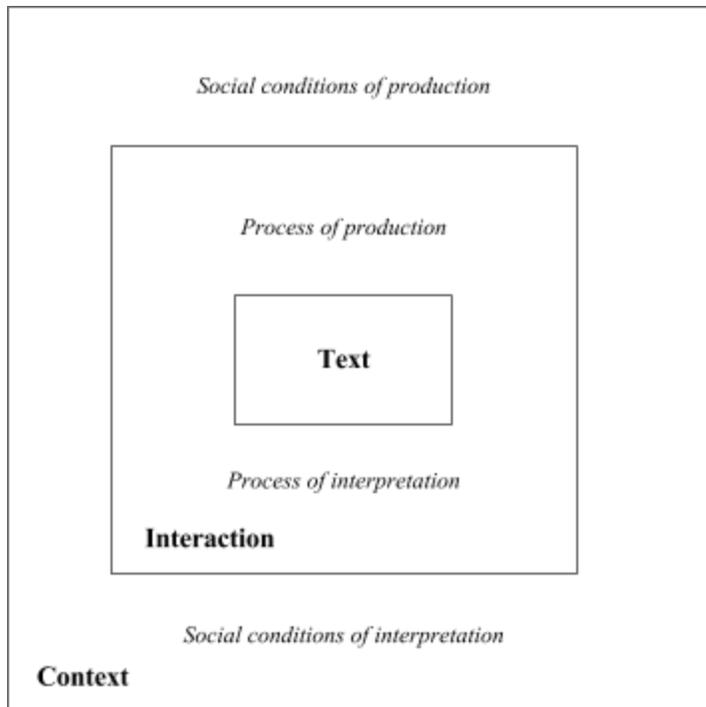


Figure 1. Reproduction of Fairclough's visual diagram of the three dimensions of discourse (Fairclough, 1989, p. 25).

Corresponding to each of these three dimensions, Fairclough offers three steps for critically analysing discourse (1989, p. 26). First, the description, which would correspond to the smaller box and is the stage for assessing the formal properties of the text. Second, the stage of interpretation, corresponding to the intermediary box, where one should examine the relationship between the text and its interaction with production and interpretation processes. Finally, the stage of explanation, corresponding to the bigger overarching box, which is concerned with the relationship between the previous stage (interpretation) and a broader, 'global' social context of production and interpretation, as well as resultant social effects.

For my analysis, I will be particularly focused on the ability of discourse to influence or change social relations and, therefore, on traces of agency behind said discourse, which may allow a parallel between the discourses of ArtRio and the African Heritage Circuit, and the identified branding discourse found in the official *Porto Maravilha* project. In order to do that, the social contextualization of such

discourses becomes indispensable, considering that the denaturalization and critical assessment of discourse involve "showing how social structures determine properties of discourse, and how discourse in turn determines social structures. This requires a 'global' (macro/micro) explanatory framework which contrasts with the non-explanatory or only 'locally' explanatory frameworks of 'descriptive' work in discourse analysis" (Fairclough, 1995, p. 27).

The choice of using websites to analyse the official discourses of the chosen institutions is justified by the fact that websites, more than ever, mediate the relationship between tourist and destination, as it is highlighted by Hallet and Kaplan-Weinger (2010). Moreover, the use of language through visual and written text in official websites aims at constructing and promoting a certain identity, involving recognition and acceptance by both producer and audiences. Therefore, the representations present in their discourses may be seen as the "codified and authorised versions of local culture and history" (p. 2). Finally, the use of official websites to critically contrast and question the branding discourse found in the municipal strategic plan seems fitting because "although these texts are specific to their locale and to those responsible for the respective websites on which they appear, they share common goals that become transparent through the work of discourse analysis" (Hallet & Kaplan-Weinger, 2010, p. 5).

CHAPTER II

THE *PORTO MARAVILHA* PROJECT: A BRAND NEW RIO

This chapter aims at identifying the main rebranding goals present in the official municipal strategic plan "Post 2016: A more integrated and competitive Rio" (Rio de Janeiro Municipal Government, 2013) regarding the port zone of Rio de Janeiro. These goals will serve as a comparative basis to critically analyse the discourses of the selected institutions around which this research is structured. However, before determining what the rebranding plan wants to change in the image of the city, it is first necessary to understand how it is traditionally perceived. I will do so by investigating previous municipal efforts to promote tourism in the city, iconic symbolic representations (by both media and tourism agencies), postcolonial influences, as well as changes in global tourism practices in general, which shape the target audience of this rebranding effort: the 21st-century tourist.

1. Rio de Janeiro as 'Marvelous City': the tropical paradise discourse

Rio is and has long been Brazil's primary tourist destination, attracting almost 50% of all visitors to the country. Not only that, tourism represents one of the most important sources of income in the city (Broudehoux, 2001). In this context, image construction and management become extremely relevant for socio economic initiatives taken by the city's government, and even at the federal level, since the country's image abroad is strongly entwined with Rio's most memorable sights and symbols.

The construction of a solid, relatable and, above all, attractive local identity has become crucial in a world of globalized economies and cultures, where cities increasingly compete not just for investments, but for fluxes of mass tourism and other forms of cultural consumption. Concepts like city branding, urban identity and city marketing can be seen as established contemporary trends, significantly shaping

economic, cultural and political investments. The building of such identity goes beyond natural or historical attributes that may be attractive on their own, involving the management of perceptions, heritage production, spectacularization, resourcing to the imagery of both locals and foreigners and, inevitably, a "remapping" of the city by celebrating certain areas while neglecting others (Jaguaribe, 2014; Iwata & Del Rio, 2001). Accordingly, Broudehoux points out that image-making of cities is thus centralized on "what is to be promoted and valued, and in whose interest", where geographical, spatial and visual strategies are used to establish social differentiation and "to set the terms of membership in society and symbolize 'who belongs where'." (Broudehoux, 2001, p.275).

The relationships between space and society have a defining role in the construction of a place's identity. While the building of a city's physical environment may depend on human idealization and action, the built environment itself also shapes human perception and construction of meaning, thus influencing collective consciousness of the city they inhabit. Still deriving from Broudehoux's (2001) arguments, cultural identity construction is constituted by people's consciousness of the place they live in, as well as their interactions with the material and immaterial surrounding. This way, "local history and collective memory, embodied in the walls and streets of the city", as much as physical and rhetorical alterations of the urban environment are a central part in the construction of urban identity, and thus in city branding strategies (p. 275). Having that in mind, the understanding of Rio de Janeiro's imagery as urban identity requires first an investigation of the ways space and society have interacted through the years, taking into account physical characteristics, changes and interventions of the city's environment, and the social relations and rhetorics behind it.

Rio's image has always been primarily attached to the beach lifestyle and the famous topography that provides a beautiful encounter of mountain and sea, enlivened by a rich tropical flora. It is important to note, nevertheless, that the distinguished status attributed to Rio's natural landmarks today is a result of a series of gazes throughout the centuries, which, as Jaguaribe (2014) proposes, followed a "variety of

interests, discourses and agendas". While colonial Portuguese gazed at the landscape with intentions of "conquest and economic gain", slaves arriving by the thousands on Rio's port shared a mere first glance at the new and strange continent holding their fate. In the nineteenth century, European voyagers sought "the exotic gaze", while scientists' look was directed towards mapping, categorizing, testing and discovering fauna and flora. By the twentieth century the topography was reproduced in photographs, movies and music gaining different subjective connotations and cultural meanings, thus multiplying the gazes towards it (Jaguaribe, 2014).

Although Rio's natural landmarks play a great part in the symbolism behind the city's perceived uniqueness and identity, the combination of many other aspects are also responsible for constructing its recognized imagery. I here use the term *imagery* as urban imaginary in the sense proposed by Jaguaribe (2014), as the "assemblage of symbols, signs, practices, representations, life experiences, memories, and forms of imagination that compose the texture and the profile of cities." (p. 5). The perception of Rio's identity through its wonderful natural attributes plays a part in the more romanticized idealizations of the city, similar to (tourism) discourses on *tropical paradises* as evocative of connotations such as leisure, relaxation, sensuality, adventure, exoticism, and escapism, which can be seen as influenced by postcolonial discourses, as it will be further discussed.

This kind of perception that primes topographical featured as idealized, flawless paradise over other aspects of reality (such as social injustices, urban modernity, economic interests and more) contributes to the enduring branding of Rio de Janeiro as 'Marvelous City' (*Cidade Maravilhosa*)³. As Marvelous City, Rio's branded identity is built over the enhancement and romanticization of its positive and mainly natural attributes, praising the topographical beauty, the 'exotic' wonders, the tropical weather and the receptivity and *joie-de-vivre* of the locals. Considering Tucker and Akama's (2009) discussions of tourism as postcolonial expression, the aforementioned perspective is set in accordance with the notion

³ The expression, widely adopted as Rio's nickname, was first coined in the homonymous 1934 carnival march composed by André Filho, which glorifies the city as a naturally beautiful place full of happiness and wonder (Fratucci *et al.*, 2015).

that city branding, in the form of tourism marketing, more often than not tends to perpetuate colonial relations of power and discourse. It resonates with eurocentric travel narratives that feed on the idealization of an untouched wilderness and a romanticized tropical "Other"⁴. More significantly, it feeds on established colonial relationships that set the role of both tourists and locals in their interactions, perpetuating a dynamic of the superiority of the explorer (in culture, race and gender) and the presumed subservience of the local, expected to smile and eagerly serve (Tucker & Akama, 2009). It is important to stress that such relation of power and discourse works both ways, directing the gaze, the behaviour and the expectations of the tourist, as well as influencing the self-perception of the local, which will in turn be reflected in the constructed urban identity and in the way the city will brand itself, as is the case of the Marvelous City imagery.

A less romanticized perspective of the city's urban imaginary considers its singularization, as Jaguaribe suggests, also as a result of "the sedimentation of history, the haunting of the past, and the collective rituals nurtured by re-invented traditions - the subjective/artistic imagination [that] also endows the everyday with meaning and memory" (2014, p. 4). More importantly, such a perspective should consider the intentionality behind spatial valorization of areas in detriment of others as well as the building of remarkable architectural sites or patterns with the goal of producing uniqueness and symbolic capital to the city's imagery. For example, the overall waterfront-based spatial configuration of the Rio de Janeiro through time offers a clarifying example of how physical urban interventions follow discourses of local identity construction, while influencing it at the same time in a symbiotic relationship between space and society. Iwata and Del Rio (2004) in their study on the role of the waterfront in the construction of Rio's urban imaginaries, argue that water is a defining force that shapes physical developments and

⁴ The tropical paradise discourse was pretty established as early as 1922, as can be perceived in this entry on a local newspaper, relating a tourist experience during the International Exhibit of the Centenary of Brazil's Independence, that took place during that year: "Among the distinguished visitors was the famous French aviator René Fonck, who 'demonstrated his enchantement with Brazil: **this is a marvelous country. The land is beautiful, the men are cordial and the women are stunning. Paradise in short.**' (*Correio da Manhã*, September 1, 1922)" (Jaguaribe, 2014, pp. 26-27 — bold mine).

lifestyles around it. Moreover, they distinguish the beach as the main influence in the formation of a collective identity based on the way of life emerged from the relationship of citizens with the sea and the surrounding topography. A few significant urban changes in the history of Rio can be related to such intentionality and are worth mentioning in this research.

The first major urban renewal strategy can be attributed to the modernization efforts that took place at the turn of the nineteenth century under the administration of then mayor Pereira Passos. By then, Rio de Janeiro was the capital of the newly founded Republic, but still carried in its core the structural marks of the imperial and colonial rules. Much to the discontent of the ruling elites of the time, the city was perceived as unattractive (and even repulsive) to foreign investment, tourism and immigration flows due to its extremely precarious sanitary conditions, outdated problematic infrastructure, and general insalubrity. A big modernization project of urban renewal was thus to take place under Passos supervision with the goal of establishing Rio as a modern urban centre ready to participate in the European economic order (Broudehoux, 2001)⁵. The project was anchored in a beautifying, eurocentric and sanitizing discourse, which ended up building over, covering up and spatially dislocating what did not match the ruling elite's idea of modernization, including colonial buildings and spaces, as well as 'unwanted' populations of marginalized former slaves and impoverished communities. On a critical note, Jaguaribe (2014) and Broudehoux (2001) point out that the Pereira Passos modernization efforts reflected the desires of an image-conscious elite, eager to project Rio as a modern, progressive and Europeanized city, while putting in evidence the disregard for latent social issues and structural backwardness, often pushed

⁵ The *Bota-Abaixo* (Bring it Down) project, as it became popularly known, can be seen as one of the first significant urban intervention initiatives with the clear goal of interfering with Rio de Janeiro's perceived imagery, making use of discourse and symbolic spatial and architectural renewals to do so. Inspired by Haussmann's then recent renovation of Paris, the embellishment project reproduced its architecture and urbanization styles, with the opening of big public spaces, broad boulevards, parisian-style buildings, and improvements in infrastructure and public transportation. The project can be seen as the first major rebranding effort in the city, and one that took into consideration the attempt to boost tourism for the first time, since, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, touristization of Rio had already started to take place, mainly with the widespread perception of sea water baths first as therapeutical activity prescribed by doctors, and later as recreation and representative of a privileged lifestyle (Iwata & Del Rio, 2004).

to invisibility and ignored as part of the past, never the present or future of the city. Much like a new coat of paint over a crumbling house.

Since the Passos reforms and throughout the twentieth century, the city slowly modernised itself and started to gain international attention. In the period between the 1940's and 1960's Rio's urban imaginary was strengthened with the worldwide representation of the city through popular culture. In 1942, the movie *Saludos Amigos*, produced by the Walt Disney company, was released and featured images of Brazil and Rio de Janeiro's landscape, with references to Samba, dance, local culture, foods and drinks; and even introduced a new character, named Joe Carioca, who would impersonate the perceived hospitality and happiness of the real *cariocas* (the term used to designate Rio's inhabitants). The boom of the *bossa nova* music style in the 1950's and 1960's brought a certain sophistication to the image of the city abroad and significantly enhanced the perception of the bohemian attitude of the *carioca*, with songs that praised Rio's South Zone waterfront (mainly Copacabana and Ipanema), beautiful women, and a relaxed, easygoing lifestyle (Iwata & Del Rio, 2004).

The *bossa nova* movement also contributed to the perception of the *carioca* lifestyle as one of the most relevant symbols of the city within local collective identity and as city branding. As Iwata and Del Rio (2004) suggest, "the new Ipanema-influenced *carioca* was cordial, urbane, and easygoing, well informed and sophisticated much like a Baudelaire's neo-flaneur that combines 'informal behavior with intellectual sophistication' (Lessa 2000, 389)" (p. 178). The *carioca* imagery as part of Rio de Janeiro's aura became so strong that it can be seen in present-day tourism communication as one of the city's main assets. On Rio's official tourism website, Visit.rio, the *cariocas* are listed as part of what makes Rio unique and are thus described:

[...] Cariocas are easygoing, spontaneous, and authentic. We applaud the sunset at the beach, we take hose

showers in the terrace, and we experiment with music, cinema, art and photography. We go to bars to have a nice chat, we go to samba circles and, above all, we never abandon the carioca way of life.

(What Makes Rio Special, n.d.)

The transition of the federal capital to Brasilia in 1960 and the military coup in 1964 (followed by twenty-one years of military dictatorship in the country), led to a deep crisis of the city's cultural, political and economical relevance. By the beginning of the 1990's, the city suffered with great levels of social injustice, lack and deterioration of infrastructure, economic disparity, growing violence and a general worsening of living conditions, strongly impacting the Marvelous City imagery that had been consolidated at home and abroad by the middle of the century.

Faced with this scenario, a second major urban renewal strategy can be attributed to the municipal and federal government's attempt to restore the city's prestige and reflect a positive image to renovate the its economy. As Broudehoux (2001) points out, the 1990s decade was marked by a "massive image-making programme" and, inspired by the revitalization of Barcelona for the 1992 Olympics⁶, Rio began to project its role into the future, looking at urban improvements also as a long term investment to compete for hosting such mega events, seen as a large-scale opportunity to promote the city in the global market for investments and tourism.

Besides many changes in infrastructure and social programs⁷, a large-scale advertising campaign was launched to sell Rio's positive image abroad, while another was targeted at the local audience in an effort to stimulate civic pride (Broudehoux, 2001). If, until the end of the 1980's, promotional touristic

⁶ The case of the Barcelona's urban renewal for the 1992 Olympic Games is commonly seen as a success regarding local economic revamp strategies based on major events. The city was able to project a positive image and became an extremely popular tourist destination since then (Quinn, 2009; Richards & Wilson, 2004).

⁷ One of the initiatives, the *Projeto Orla* (Shoreline Project), was directed at remodelling the "city's main beachfronts with new paving, lighting, urban furnishing and food kiosks", also seeking to give the neighbourhoods around them a sense of identity and visual uniformity (Broudehoux, 2001). Improvements around the most recognizable and visited sites of the city had a clear goal of encouraging tourism growth and a lot of focus was given to aesthetics, security, circulation and public transport in those areas.

material insisted on the reproduction of the same tours and sights (mainly the Sugar Loaf, Corcovado, Maracanã stadium, and Copacabana and Ipanema beaches), from the 90's on, cultural, architectural and "alternative" routes started to be part of the city's urban imagery and thus part of the branding strategies. The professionalization and spectacularization of Carnival by late 1980's through official parades to be televised and displayed worldwide also contributed to diversify Rio's tourist offers, turning the samba music style and dance, once perceived as low culture, into one of the most memorable symbols of the city. Fratucci *et al.* point out that, from the 1990's on:

[...] the city's agencies discover new possibilities of products to be traded. Supported by the strengthening of the environmental movement and the concept of local basis sustainable development, operators are able to offer to city's visitors at least two other options of tours: rides to Floresta da Tijuca and tours to Rocinha slum.

(Fratucci *et al.*, 2015, p. 13)

The diversification of tourist offers and the broadening of the tourist space beyond the previous confinements of the city's South Zone can be seen as a response to a wider context of changes within global tourism practices. Following globalization patterns and the demand for new tourist options, tourism sectors fit into the "ongoing process of market segmentation and product differentiation" (Jamal & Robinson, 2009, p. 6). The more experienced traveller of the twenty-first century, with more access to information and image representations of tourist attractions all over the world, increasingly seeks unique and authentic experiences that diverge from beaten *clichés*.

To conclude this brief investigation of the traditional urban imagery attributed to Rio de Janeiro, it is indispensable to mention the role of two other major symbols attached to the city's identity: sensuality (mainly through the female body) and violence. The first can be perceived as part of the tropical paradise

discourse and its postcolonial influences⁸. It is not uncommon to see the use of sexualized images of women in bikinis to promote sunny beach destinations. Beautiful tanned female bodies are part of the symbolic universe behind the tropical paradise imagery, which tends to target at and be influenced by Western tourism interests, thus commonly perpetuating colonial discourses of power relations, feeding on remains of imperialist imagination regarding "cultural, racial and gender superiority" (Tucker & Akama, 2009). Colonial gender relations are of prime relevance in the discussion of female sexualization in tourism narratives of the tropical former colonies. As Europeans explorers set the terms of relationship with the newly conquered lands, the subservience expected from locals had further implications when directed towards women, in the form of sexual exploitation. Much like natural supply and mineral riches, the provision of women was commonly seen as yet another resource of the land. Moreover, it can be argued that local culture and customs found in native populations, including the lack of clothes to cover the body for example, when put in contrast with conservative and religious European moral values of the time, contributed to the perception of women of colonized countries as sexually liberated, provocative and "in offer". Reminiscences of this kind of imperialist narratives are translated into tourism communication of tropical destinations, putting in evidence not only the expectations of the targeted audience, commonly presumed as "white, western, male and heterosexual" (Tucker & Akama, 2009, p. 510), but also the way such discourses are incorporated by local collective consciousness, determining the self-perception, behaviour and even branding of the place. Tourism narratives, in this sense, "replay mythologies and offer signposts of place identification" (Jaguaribe, 2014, p. 8). This becomes clear when we consider the fact that, until mid 1990's, official promotional material still heavily sold female sexualization as part of the tourism discourse of Rio de Janeiro. This kind of marketing narrative only started to change, at least from

⁸ The postcolonial dynamics between European countries and their former colonies can be related to Edward Said's concept of *orientalism* (1978), which refers to the Western's patronizing perceptions and representations about Eastern culture. The Eastern 'Other' is thus portrayed as "exotic, mysterious, and sensual, but also cruel, despotic, and sly" (Tucker & Akama, 2009, p. 505). This kind of discourse is based on a perceived superiority of Western culture and a misleading, pejorative representation of Eastern populations, mainly in Arabic culture.

the part of official communication channels, with the realization of the dangers and deprecation brought by the stimulation of sex tourism, including the appalling numbers of child sexual exploitation by international visitors in the city, and in the rest of country (Figueiredo & Bochi, n.d.).



Figure 2. Advertising by Embratur (Brazilian Tourism Institute), in 1983⁹.

Violence is also a significant part of Rio de Janeiro's urban imagery. With the economic decline of the city in the period between late 1960's and the 1990's, criminality followed other social problems and grew considerably, aggravated by increased poverty, social injustice and the lack of investments in security and education. According to Embratur, Brazilian Tourism Institute, by late 1980's the image of the city was so connected to violence and sexual exploitation that the number of visitors continually dropped, and in the period of just three years, between 1988 and 1991, it had dropped in half (Grandelle, 2011). Spatial distribution that follows idealized urban identities through time also play a crucial role in the establishment of violence as a symbolic part of Rio de Janeiro, mainly due to the formation of the *favelas*. As economic investments and elites made their spatial trajectories throughout the centuries, mainly around the waterfront, impoverished communities were constantly marginalized and pushed into invisibility in informal settlements lacking all kinds of basic infrastructure. However, it is interesting to

⁹ Mantovani, F. (2014, February 27). *No passado, Brasil já teve material oficial de turismo com apelo sexual*. Retrieved February 12, 2017, from <https://goo.gl/IBnLRY>

note that such communities served, and still serve, as basic workforce for the more valued areas of the city's South Zone. This way, due to Rio's unique topography, many *favelas* grew on the hills surrounding the waterfront, thus providing a striking visual contrast between rich and poor, prestige and marginalization.



Figure 3. Rocinha, Rio's biggest *favela*, engulfs the exclusive beachfront neighbourhood of São Conrado far ahead, one of the most expensive square-meters in the city¹⁰.

Due to decades of negligence and lack of public investment, the *favelas* became famous for the extreme poverty levels and uncontrolled violence. Shocking crime rates spread the image of Rio as a violent city worldwide, reinforced by successful popular culture products such as the movies *City of God* (2002) and *Elite Squad* (2007). Slowly, and mainly since the 1990's, more positive sides of the *favela* culture started to be incorporated in urban identity construction and in tourism practices. This phenomenon could be attributed to the consolidation of a broader conceptualization of culture as 'a whole way of life', incorporating everyday practices (Hartley *et al.*, 2013). This way, *favela* culture becomes an alternative symbolic source for Rio's urban imagery, as both high and popular culture become essential in providing symbols "used to underpin the 'brand image' of cities" (Richards & Wilson, 2004, p. 1932). Moreover, the incorporation of *favelas* in Rio's tourist offers can also be justified by changes in tourism practice. With the growing democratization and frequency of global travel, there is an increased demand from tourists for different, unique experiences, thus resulting in more complex narratives being promoted

¹⁰ Favela life: Rio's city within a city. (2014, June 09). Retrieved February 12, 2017, from <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-27635554>

by destinations, as well as in the rise of "niche tourism" practices, with examples like film-, music- or fiction-based tourism, sports tourism, dark tourism and more (Jamal & Robinson, 2009). In this scenario, the *baile funk* (a type of party based on the *carioca funk* music style originated from the slums) increasingly became part of the city's collective identity through the 2000's and soon made its way to tourist offers, being now featured in the city's official tourism website, Visit.Rio:

Originated in the suburbs, the funk and charme balls conquered the hearts – and the feet – of cariocas from the North and the South Zones. These rhythms and their electronic beats are a source of excitement and controversy: with lyrics that discuss dancing, and that are playful and erotic, the funk rhythm was declared by law a cultural movement, and has taken over the world with its vivaciousness, turning the funk balls into a place to meet up with friends and into touristic attractions.

(What Makes Rio Special, n.d.)

Guided tours to the *favela* soon started to be organized and offered to international tourists, taking advantage of the controversial interest in the reputation of violence and poverty of Rio de Janeiro's slums. The Favela Tours claim is to offer authentic and everyday-life experiences, greatly desirable in the 21st-century global tourism context. Big jeeps go in and out the more pacific *favela* communities carrying tourists packed with cameras ready to register the unfamiliar culture. The resemblance with the popular African safari tours does not go unnoticed, as locals often refer to the Favela Tours as "gringo safaris", that explore the poverty wilderness instead of the natural wildlife. This kind of comparison makes clear the postcolonial tones behind this kind of tourism narrative. It enacts colonial relationship as the favela culture is seen within the gaze of the exotic; as primitive and wild in contrast to Western perception of the civilized. The myth behind the primitive versus civilized narrative invites tourists to explore the *favelas* with a sense of discovery and adventure. Also behind the tours is the narrative of authenticity, as the *favela* is seen through the predominance of realist codes, while the natural assets, beaches and carnival, on

the other hand, are seen through the romanticized perspective of the wonder, present in the Marvelous City discourse (Jaguaribe, 2014). Moreover, the myth of authenticity highlights the performativity behind tourist-local interactions. As the visitors arrive with pre conceptualized expectations of the encounter, *favela* inhabitants are put in the position to perform certain roles and play out such expectations, hoping to provide a pleasant experience and thus maintain the positive economic outcome that the tours bring to the communities.

2. Official Strategic Plan Analysis: Identifying Branding Goals

The urban interventions made during the 1990's and early 2000's inspired by the event-led revitalization of Barcelona achieved the goal of making Rio de Janeiro the host of the Olympic Games in 2016. Faced with this new challenge, municipal government elaborated a new Strategic Plan called "Post 2016: A more integrated and competitive Rio", launched in 2009 and reviewed in 2013, which includes a series of programmes and initiatives aimed at preparing the city's infrastructure for the event, as well as positively projecting Rio as an attractive tourist destination (Rio de Janeiro Municipal Government, 2013).

In reviewing the Strategic Plan material, I specifically focused on the branding efforts that are connected to the *Porto Maravilha* project in the port zone of Rio, which is the central subject of this research. Until now, this chapter has tried to trace the way Rio de Janeiro is traditionally perceived and the main symbols and narratives of its urban imagery. I here argue that the focus on the port area as a new catalyst of the city's branding strategies represents a break from previous efforts. First of all, with the spatial, demographic and economic transformations of the city throughout the centuries, the docklands and surrounding historical centre were for long neglected in detriment of the valorization of the urban imagery attached to the Southern beachfront. The port's apprehension was intrinsically linked to the area's colonial and imperial past, which did not fit the modernizing aspirations that dictated investments for the

last two centuries. In the contemporary context, however, the port zone represents a unique opportunity to revitalize and reboost Rio's image, offering the chance to broaden the city's tourist offer, going beyond the beaten tropical paradise *clichés* of the South Zone, due to its rich historical and cultural past and its valuable heritage commoditization opportunities. Moreover, the revitalization of the port area maintains the traditional tourism and urbanization strategies based on the waterfront, while at the same time diversifying the branding narrative, with the inclusion of cultural, architectural and historical assets. The *Porto Maravilha* project's attempt to diversify and broaden the city's imagery while at the same time maintaining certain aspects of its traditional identity becomes evident when we consider the use of the term '*maravilha*' in its name, clearly referring to the established *Cidade Maravilhosa* (Marvelous City) discourse. Finally, the encouragement to develop creative economy in the area can also be seen as a way to update the city's image, placing it in accordance with contemporary global branding discourses that celebrate and value creative locales as attractive within international fluxes of tourism and investment (Richards, 2009).

The critical analysis of the discourse of the selected institutions involved in the revitalization process of the port area will be done having in mind the integrated branding goals present in the "Post 2016: A more integrated and competitive Rio" Strategic Plan (Rio de Janeiro Municipal Government, 2013). The identified branding goals that will serve as a comparative basis to the critical discourse analysis are listed below:

- I. Make Rio be seen as "the best place in the Southern Hemisphere to live, work, and visit" (p. 11).
- II. Position the city as the "leading capital for the development of the Creative Industry in Brazil focused on Design, Fashion, the Scenic and Audiovisual Arts" (p. 12).

- III. Position Rio de Janeiro as the "the largest tourism hub in the Southern Hemisphere", celebrated for "high value cultural productions and global influence" (pp. 12, 13).
- IV. "Strengthen the city's Port Region as a cultural centre, increasing its important iconic content – historical, social, and cultural – with public or private initiatives", while also improving environmental and living conditions making the area attractive to tourists, inhabitants and companies (p. 195).
- V. "Provide increased access of the population to a larger variety of cultural assets and values by means of expanding the public infrastructure for cultural activities, adopting the concept of 'access and meeting', focused on promoting integration and increased sense of belonging among the population" (p. 195).
- VI. Make the city acknowledged "as a welcoming venue for major events, hosting forums, making crucial decisions on matters related to global sustainability and the economic development of emerging nations" (p. 13).
- VII. Better distribute the highly concentrated cultural options of the city, making them more accessible to lower-income sectors of society. Do so by preserving and improving the conditions of museums and cultural centres, as well as increasing the number and frequency of the activities offered by them (p. 194).

The selection of the seven goals listed above was made considering only the initiatives that are somehow connected to the *Porto Maravilha* project, while also having in mind the ways in which the

Strategic Plan intersects with contemporary views of place branding. The influence of the latter in the conceptualization of the plan becomes clear when we consider, for example, the instrumentalization of culture as a revitalization strategy commonly adopted by many cities around the globe (Richards & Palmer, 2010). This choice puts in evidence an awareness of the importance of symbolic and experience economies in contemporary global context of intra-city competition. Furthermore, the first goal displayed on the list resonates with what was highlighted by Richards and Palmer (2010) as a recurring motive for place branding: "to promote themselves as attractive places to live, work, visit and invest" (p. 32). Finally, discourses of 'creative city', 'sustainable development' and 'heritage preservation', which are recurring concepts in contemporary place branding studies (Richards & Palmer, 2010; Jamal & Robinson, 2009; Zukin, 1998; Lash & Urry, 1994), can also be spotted in the listed goals, placing Rio de Janeiro's municipal efforts in accordance with what can be placed as as global city marketing trends.

The critical discourse analysis of the port area's selected institutions (ArtRio and African Heritage Circuit) that will follow in the next chapters will take into consideration the above listed goals of the municipal Strategic Plan in order to identify intersections that may or may not exist between them. They will serve as a comparative basis for the analysis, relating the institutions' discourses with a broader branding context that was promoted and conceptualized by local authorities, thus evidencing the chosen management model based on public-private partnerships — the main model used by most recent urban renewal projects (Richards & Palmer, 2010). As a result, the use of the municipal Strategic Plan as a comparative basis seems to me an inevitable choice for a convincing investigation on how the discourses of the selected institutions contribute to the effort to brand the area as a cultural and creative hub.

CHAPTER III

EVENTS

1. Theoretical framework

The aim of this chapter is to investigate the impact of events on place branding and to critically analyse the discourse of the ArtRio annual fair within the context of a cultural event-led strategy in the *Porto Maravilha* project. In order to do so, it is first necessary to clarify some theoretical concepts that will be used in the process.

First of all, the concept of *place branding* is used in reference to the implementation of articulate strategies with the intention of managing the resources, reputation and image of a particular place, be it a city, neighbourhood, a region or an entire nation (Dinnie, 2011). The existing literature around place branding comes mainly from an intersection between marketing and urbanism disciplines. Due to this complementary dynamic, the branding of a place can, in many aspects, be similar to that of a corporation. As is pointed out by Dinnie (2011), the complexity of place branding in terms of marketing strategies is primarily attributed to the diversity and range of stakeholders that must be targeted. This means that the chosen brand must speak to and address the needs of a great variety of groups at the same time, including, for example, tourists, local residents, policy makers, environmentalists, professionals from different sectors, foreign and local investors, entrepreneurs and various kinds of consumers. Dinnie (2011) goes on to highlight that behind the conceptualization of place branding and its growing relevance lies a number of discourses that become accepted worldwide. For example, economic and behavioural changes behind globalisation and its consequent intra-city competition is one of those discourses (Keating & Frantz, 2004). Another dominating discourse is that of 'creative cities', coming from the prevailing work of Richard Florida (2002), which suggests that, in order to revitalize areas and economies, policy makers

should act to attract a creative class of talents, producers, trendsetters and consumers. Although partially criticized by a number of authors, the creative city discourse is widely accepted, and the encouragement of a "vibrant cultural life is seen as a prerequisite in branding a city to appeal to the creative class" (Dinnie, 2011, p. 4).

Richards and Wilson (2004), when referring to Hannigan, suggest that "a successful brand should be instantly recognisable, play on the desire for comfort and certainty and provide a point of identification for consumers in a crowded market-place" (p. 1932). Complementarily, Dinnie (2011) argues that a strong brand can overcome the difficulties of having multiple target audiences by organising itself in many 'sub-brands' under a major overarching 'umbrella brand', always having in mind the place's potential and favorable attributes that are able to represent its uniqueness.

Now moving on to the conceptualisation of events, it will be applied in this chapter mainly as a culture-based strategy linked to the branding of places. However, a definition is necessary, and I will thus base my use of the term on the definition quoted by Quinn (2009):

Janiskee explained that festivals and events can be understood as 'formal periods or programs of pleasurable activities, entertainment, or events having a festive character and publicly celebrating some concept, happening or fact' (1980:97). The festive and public celebratory characteristics noted in this definition are important because festivals and events have long existed as significant cultural practices devised as forms of public display, collective celebration and civic ritual.

(Quinn, 2009, p. 485)

On another take, Bennett and Woodward highlight the role of festivals as liminal spaces which are "removed from the more mundane process of everyday life", being therefore an opportunity for the "experimentation with identity and the articulation of identity politics that may often be less feasible and acceptable — and in some cases socially circumscribed — in everyday settings" (2014, p. 11). In the

authors' view, events and festivals represent a means of experimenting with identity, while providing the participants access to cultural capital and encouraging both individual and collective construction of meaning and a sense of belonging. Cultural capital here is understood under Bourdieu's (1984) formulation as a set of knowledge and skills related to symbolic elements, involving a person's taste, preferred activities and frequented environments, giving him or her a certain status within social groups. Consumption and access to cultural capital is, therefore, at the core of the discussion around the instrumentalization of events for culture-led image-making.

Conversely, considering the use of events as a cultural rebranding strategy, I will take into account their potential to encapsulate identities, foster a sense of place and togetherness, stimulate local pride, promote tourism and, in a broad sense, influence the perception people have of a certain location (Quinn, 2009). Moreover, for the critical discourse analysis, I will consider events as being "embedded in diverse spatial, cultural, social and political environments", which are in most cases part of specific agendas, where power dynamics take place and may thus be questioned (Quinn, 2009).

As a broader context behind the spread of city branding as a response to intra-city competition I am here considering the rise of the symbolic and the experience economies. The first can be defined as "the process through which wealth is created from cultural activities, including art, music, dance, crafts, museums, exhibitions, sports and creative design in various fields." (Zukin, 2004, quoted by Richards & Palmer, 2010, p.1). As for experience economy, the concept was first developed by Pine and Gilmore (1999) and it accounts for the increased demand for the consumption of experiences rather than just products and services alone, leading to branding and marketing strategies that consider the potential for public engagement, leisure, and unique authentic encounters.

A few other concepts are also worth mentioning. The concept of 'festivalisation' (within a city branding perspective) is related to the growing desire of cities to become eventful. By investing in boosting their calendars with a continual stream of events, cities are able to diversify their

communication, bringing rhythm and a lively atmosphere to the urban life (Richards & Palmer, 2014). As suggested by Richards and Palmer, festivalization (also found in literature as 'boosterism') involves the idea of the 'city as a stage' when events and festival become crucial in supporting the experience economy, as its eventfulness is able to establish a cultural consumption pattern. Associated with the idea of 'city as a stage' is the concept of 'spectacle'. Based on the work of Debord (1994), 'spectacle' is here considered as mediated displays of images in an intrinsic social relation with a public audience. The author's use of the concept is linked to a critical take on mass consumerism and the market economy under what he calls 'the society of the spectacle'. Although relevant, this critical take will not be used in the development of this chapter for it escapes the focus of this research.

Finally, the selection of the journalistic material used to support arguments throughout this chapter was made having in mind the reputation and audience reach of the news outlets, as well as linguistic barriers. Since this research is written in English, the journalistic material used to support claims over international image portrayals of Rio was limited to English-language media outlets. However, preference was given to those with a relevant international influence beyond their countries of origin.

2. The impact of events on place branding

The increased global competition between cities disputing a favorable position in the international marketplace for flows of tourists, investments and qualified workforce has made it necessary for urban leaderships to strategize ways to make their locales 'stand out from the crowd' as distinctive and attractive. In this context, city branding gains prime status in urban planning and revitalization efforts. Due to the rise of the symbolic and the experience economies, such image renewal projects have been increasingly directed towards a cultural approach. Both phenomena increased the pressure for the repositioning of destinations as "consumption spaces" (Zukin, 1998) of cultural products and experiences. As a consequence, an instrumentalization of culture can be perceived in most urban renewal efforts, seen, for

example, in the form of heritage commoditization, the hosting of festivals and events, the construction of museums, galleries and malls, the development of cultural tourism offers, and the revamping of economies through the creative industries.

Within those strategies, the building of distinctive architectural landmarks or signature buildings can be considered the most traditional approach in attempts to develop an identifiable image and thus a competitive advantage. However, as intra-cities competition in the globalised world grows, events end up playing a bigger role in urban image construction strategies, mainly propelled by their comparative lower costs, easier planning, flexibility, and 'atmosphere-building' through momentary special encounters (Quinn, 2009; Richards & Wilson, 2004, Getz, 2008). Events are able to create temporary experiences of 'togetherness', while also attracting tourists and promoting a certain image. The short temporality of festivals and events also provide flexibility to place branding strategies and allow for the communication of multiple discourses. As Richards and Wilson (2004) suggest, "by hosting a series of different events, a city may profile itself in a number of different potential markets" (p. 1932). In addition to that, if a built signature landmark may attract a visitor to see it once, different events can not only bring a lively atmosphere to such landmarks, but also make people go to the same place multiple times. Moreover, events' role in place branding is enhanced by their usually intrinsic degree of 'spectacularization', described by Jaguaribe (2014) under Guy Debord's formulation as "a form of visual/narrative representation and enactment of the public realm to the consumption and production of images" (p. 15).

The *Porto Maravilha* project is clearly very strongly based on an event-led strategy — from its initial conceptualisation as an infrastructure legacy of the Rio 216 Olympic Games to its consolidation as a hosting space for the city's main cultural events, such as ArtRio, Rio Fashion Week, Rio Design Week, Rio Film Festival, ColaborAmerica¹¹, gastronomy fairs, music concerts, parties and more (Porto Maravilha, n.d.). As it was already discussed in the previous chapter, the Rio de Janeiro's urban

¹¹ ColaborAmerica is an annual international festival aimed at gathering social and digital innovators in order to promote a new economy in Latin America (ColaborAmerica, n.d.).

reconstruction projects that started in the 1990's and continued through the 2000's were inspired by the urban renewal efforts that had taken place in Barcelona. Rio's plans to boost its image, economy and tourism started therefore to orbit around the long term strategy to host major sports events such as the FIFA World Cup and the Olympic Games, hoping for the same positive outcomes achieved by the Spanish city. This is not an uncommon strategy. Many cities around the globe have fiercely competed for many decades for a chance to host such hallmark events due to their potential to attract big investments, leave infrastructure and economic legacies, as well as the enormous global audience they attract, both through international broadcasting and through tourism. As it is highlighted by Richards and Palmer (2010), the large investments for the bidding and eventually for the successful delivery of major events have become a pattern between both poorer and wealthier cities, seeking to "secure maximum economic and image benefits from their events" (p.35).

With the announcement of the hosting of 2014 FIFA World Cup matches and the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2016, Rio de Janeiro gained *momentum* in its image reconstruction plans and big investments started flowing in its direction. It was under this scenario that the *Porto Maravilha* project was conceptualised as an infrastructure legacy of the Olympics. Improvements were planned regarding public transportation, the built environment and the overall economical and social use of the area (Rio de Janeiro Municipal Government, 2013). Cultural landmarks were established, some based on the historic and architectural heritage of the port and some based on a desired future image of a creativity hub, including two new museums: the MAR (Rio Arts Museum¹²) and *Museu do Amanhã* (Museum of Tomorrow¹³). The significance of these landmarks for the local branding, including the mix of modernization and preservation of the past, will be further discussed in Chapter IV.

Having a perspective of the aftermath of the mentioned events, it seems to me inevitable to provide a critical input. Although hosting mega-events like the Olympics and the football World Cup has

¹² My own translation. The acronym originally stands for "Museu de Arte do Rio", in Portuguese.

¹³ Translation of the museum's name, present on the English version of their website (Museu do Amanhã, n.d.).

for long been seen as a good investment, the positive outcomes may actually be hard to measure (Richards & Wilson, 2004). Considering the costs of improving the city's overall infrastructure, managing social and political difficulties, and the building of venues that follow very specific guidelines from the IOC (International Olympic Committee) or FIFA (International Football Federation Association) and which may be of no practical use by the city afterwards, the payback of the investment usually comes from the impact of the city's image advertised abroad, a possible infrastructure legacy and tourism income during the event. Regarding these outcomes, it is fair to say that Rio de Janeiro has struggled with all three.

Considering the image of the city portrayed abroad, worldwide worry was spread even before the events began. In 2014, the FIFA World Cup was met with big and sometimes violent protests all over the country denouncing corruption scandals with money used in the construction of stadiums, FIFA's unfair tax deals and the priority given to the event in detriment of investments in the country's precarious health and educational systems (Watts, 2014). In 2016, the Rio de Janeiro Olympic Games was met with similar protests, enhanced by recent political and economic turmoil brought by a controversial presidential impeachment, forced evictions of local communities to give space for Olympic venues, and the disastrous financial state of the municipal government (Phillips, 2016). If that was not enough, worries about the actual viability of the Games by big news outlets worldwide started to paint quite a negative image of the city, pointing out the delay in many of the venues constructions, the precarity of the facilities, dangerous levels of pollution in waters to be used for sailing competitions and a possible outbreak of the Zika virus (Barbara, 2016; Watts & Vidal, 2016; White, 2016).



Figure 4. Protester holds sign telling FIFA to "go home". The stickers read "World Cup for whom?", as many perceived the event as a spectacle for tourists while the local population is left without basic investments in health and education (Watts, 2014).

Although in the end no cases of Zika contamination were reported (Tavernise, 2016), venues were finished in time and competitions were executed as planned, the impact of the event on Rio's image abroad is still controversial (Watts, 2016). As it is highlighted by Richards and Wilson (2004), the image impact of events is hard to measure and surveys tend to focus on economic aspects or the number of visitors, which are thus commonly perceived as a success parameter. Data collected during the event and later published by Brazilian Ministry of Tourism seem to paint a favorable impact in that sense. During the Olympic Games, the city received 1.2 million tourists (Portal Brasil, 2016) and there was a 38% increase in foreigners' expenditure compared to the same period of the previous year (Ministério do Turismo, 2016). Even though these numbers are quite positive, it is fair to say that a bigger tourism boost was expected, since most competitions saw a great number of empty seats as international tourists largely backed out after negative reports on Zika and violence dangers (Ansari, 2016).

Some of the information collected through the surveys can give a hint of the city's image perception by foreign visitors, however, they are insufficient to draw empirical conclusions about the real impact of the 2016 Olympic Games on the image of Rio de Janeiro abroad. Having in mind Richards and Wilson's (2004) suggestions on how to better measure the image impact of events, it is to my understanding that the insufficiency of the data in this case can be attributed to two main reasons. First, the questions in the survey were not framed under a specific intention to uncover image impact and

instead had a broader approach, focusing mainly on the lived experiences, quantitative and economic aspects. Second, the understanding of the impact of Rio's branding in the Olympics is something that must be measured in the long term. The data was collected during or immediately after the event, at airports and terrestrial frontiers, as visitors were leaving the country (Ministério do Turismo, 2016). The answers may have thus been subjected to what Richards and Wilson (2004) identify as an enhancement of both community pride and destination image following an event, being referred to by different authors with terms such as 'the halo effect', 'the showcase effect' and the 'feelgood effect' (p. 1932).

In any case, a few conclusions can be drawn from some of the information present in the report released by the Brazilian Ministry of Tourism, summarized in the tables below (Tables 1 and 2). For example, the imagery of Rio's natural tropical wonders remain strong as the favoured activity of international visitors in the city was going to the beach. Moreover, it is reasonable to say that the idealization of the *carioca* lifestyle and possibly even reminiscent of postcolonial discourse of locals' *joie-de-vivre* and eagerness to serve might be present (in both local and foreign imagery), as the best ranked aspect of Brazil was the 'hospitality of the locals', with a 98.6% positive evaluation by international tourists. Public security during the Games, a sensitive point considering the city's fame for being crime-ridden, was also positively evaluated by 88.4% of foreign visitors.

Table 1. International tourist profile:

Nationality	21.2% United States, 14.8% Argentina, 4.8% England, 4.7% France
Age	83.5% were 25 years-old or more
Gender	64.4% male
In Brazil for the first time	56.5%
Main activity	77.3% going to the beach

Table 2. International tourists' evaluation of their trip:

87.7%	Want to visit Brazil again
83.1%	Said the trip satisfied or exceeded expectations
98.6%	Positively evaluated locals' hospitality, making it the best evaluated aspect of Brazil in the questionnaire
96.2 %	Positively evaluated Rio's nightlife, making it the best evaluated touristic infrastructure in the questionnaire
88.4%	Positively evaluated public security

Selected data from the report released by the Brazilian Tourism Ministry (Ministério do Turismo, 2016).

Furthermore, although quite positive, the data collected from the survey represents only the impact of the event over a presential audience. As it was mentioned before, one of the benefits of hosting a hallmark event like the Olympics is the enormous attention brought by worldwide mediatic coverage and the broadcasting of the competitions. Measuring the overall perception of the city's image abroad would require a large study on international media reports about the city, before and after the Games, and the long term impact of such portrayed images on a global audience. Moreover, as highlighted by Richards and Wilson (2004), "the complexity of measuring image is added to by the wide range of factors that can influence image formation" (p. 1934).

Difficulties like these to grasp the actual benefits of mega-events, added to the risk of failure to deliver the expectations of a global audience, raise the question if they are really worth it as a city branding strategy. A broader discussion thus emerges with the case of the Rio 2016 Olympics, as it contests the commonly established perception that holding major events is a positive investment. It appears that this kind of mega-event-led strategy is no longer so desirable when we see cities like Hamburg, Rome and Budapest dropping their bids to host the 2024 Olympic Games, as that the outcomes may not compensate the investments (BBC News, 2017). As Nocera (2016) points out, "cities that hold Olympics rarely, if ever, break even on the Games. In Rio's case, it won't even be close". With a big

investment made, the worry that the payback (in tourism, image-enhancing and infrastructure) will not be reached is inevitable¹⁴.

Apart from tourism boost and image impact, the benefits coming from an infrastructure legacy are also questionable. Although improvements in transportation, new public spaces and the revitalization of the general urban built environment can be seen as positive outcomes, the construction of highly expensive Olympic venues may become a burden in many cases, as future maintenance costs and lack of practical usability by the city's population may lead to the complete abandonment of the multimillion-dollar structures (Staufenberg, 2016). In Rio de Janeiro's case, the dereliction scenario can already be seen only six months after the Olympic Games.



¹⁴ An example that makes clear the grave worry directed towards the management of Rio's image abroad during the Olympics is the way local authorities dealt with the case of American swimmer Ryan Lochte, who lied to international media about being robbed at gunpoint in order to cover up a night out of heavy partying and property damage at a gas station. The lie, that was later uncovered by security camera footage, touched a very sensitive topic of Rio's branding efforts: the city's violence notoriety. In response, extreme measures (and unusual for the situation) were taken, with the star-athletes involved being forced out of the airplane to testify at a police station, thus making a spectacularized example of the swimmers to be covered by international media (Romero & Schmidt, 2016).

Figure 5, 6, 7 and 8. Images from Rio 2016 Olympic venues only six months after the event¹⁵. Major investments could not save the city from financial crisis and its endemic problems with corruption, poverty and violence. On the right bottom, signs read "Memory cannot be removed" and "Stop removing. Ethnic exclusion and social cleaning games", revealing racial tensions while referring to the forced eviction of several impoverished communities to give space for venues and structures of the Olympic Games.

Exorbitant construction costs in detriment of social investments, tainted by scandals of corruption and overbilling, added by the forced eviction of local communities marked the Olympic infrastructure legacy with negativity in the eyes of *cariocas* (Nocera, 2016). This situation resonates with a sense of *displacement*, which Quinn (2009) pins down as a potentially damaging aspect to be taken into account in event planning. The term refers to the disregard of local residents' needs, inputs and beliefs while trying, in turn, to accommodate and please a 'visitor class'. This way, if an event fails to account for the desires of locals, it may end up undermining place promotion instead of enhancing it. Referring to authors Misener and Mason, Quinn alerts to how events may "transiently reproduce space in ways that disrupt or at least alter local ways of living in place" (p. 493), which can be a positive thing or, if done wrong, catastrophically negative. It is possible to say, therefore, that a *displacement* can be found in the execution of the Rio 2016 Olympic Games, when (1) local communities were forcibly evicted to give space for venues; (2) many local residents were alienated from or financially unable to participate in the event, even though competitions often had large amounts empty seats (Watts, 2016); and (3) extremely high investments with uncertain economic return are made while local residents are claiming for money to be spent in basic services such as health care and education.

Given this brief critical input on the effects of recent mega-events on Rio de Janeiro's branding strategies, I now move back to the *Porto Maravilha* project, the main focus of this research. Even though the revitalization of the port area is directly linked to the Olympic Games, a major sports event, I will analyse it as a culture-led events strategy. I am, therefore, making a differentiation, in that the *Porto*

¹⁵ Knowlton, E. (2017, February 13). Here is what the abandoned venues of the Rio Olympics look like just 6 months after the Games. *Business Insider*. Retrieved February 23, 2017 from <https://goo.gl/nI4vuy>

Maravilha as an infrastructure is a legacy from a major sports event, and the *Porto Maravilha* as an active public space is part of a revitalization strategy based on culture, thus including cultural events.

3. Cultural events

As suggested in the beginning of this chapter, the instrumentalization of culture as a means of consuming cities has become an important urban renewal tool as symbolic and experience economies grow and establish themselves in the world order. The *Porto Maravilha* project was idealised in great part as a spatial revitalization effort based exactly on the centrality of culture as a catalyst of image construction, economic revamp and tourism boost. Infrastructural development of the area has followed this centrality with the construction of museums, cultural centres and heritage preservation (Rio de Janeiro Municipal Government, 2013). Although relevant in providing spaces for cultural consumption, such built structures can also be considered, to some extent, inflexible in terms of branding and image-making. Investments on emblematic architectural landmarks alone do not guarantee a durable attractiveness nor a full cultural potential. Moreover, as more cities adopt similar strategies to profile themselves in the global market, there is an increased risk of standardization, leading to an image pattern instead of the desired uniqueness (Richards & Palmer, 2010). That is where cultural events come in as a means of flexibilizing branding discourses through time, overcoming seasonality and providing a source of symbolic and experience variety in the long run, considering that they are able to "add an intangible component to the physical culture of the city" (Richards & Palmer, 2010, p. 21). The many advantages of cultural event-led strategies, as suggested by Richards and Palmer (2010), include the potential of festivals and events to add life to the city streets, contribute to the development of local communities, renew citizens pride in their hometown, increase tourism (beyond seasonality), stimulate certain economic sectors, provide recreational and educational opportunities, raise the city's international profile and give

overall rhythm and atmosphere to the urban fabric. They can make certain areas be perceived as fashionable and 'cool' (p. 4), thus revitalizing and reprofiling them within local dynamics.

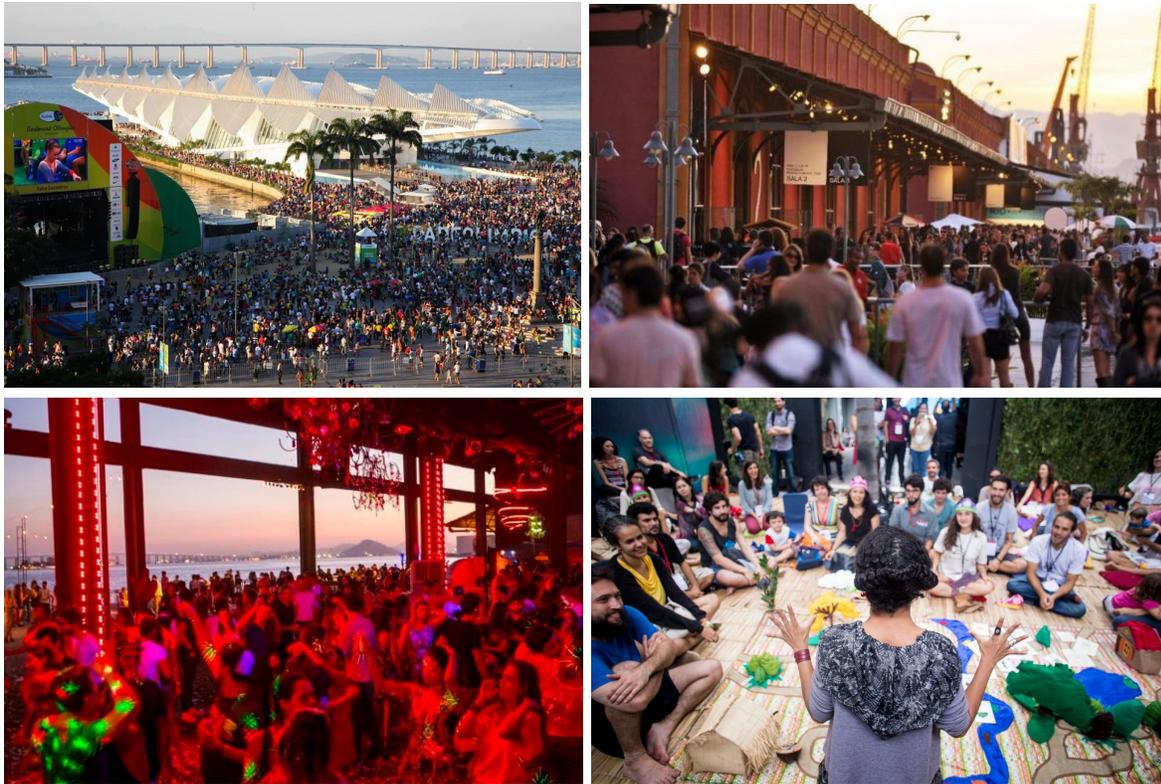
The importance of events in the cultural rebranding project of Rio de Janeiro's port area becomes very clear when we consider its final spatial configuration after reconstruction. Large public spaces were established or revived, such as the Pier Mauá (which covers a great extend of the area's waterfront), the Orla do Conde (another stretch of shoreline) and the Mauá square, gathered by the surrounding areas of the Rio Art Museum (MAR) and the Museum of Tomorrow (*Museu do Amanhã*). Moreover, the repurposing of big old warehouses into spaces for events, workshops, performances and conferences can be included in this strategy, thus evidencing a trend in urban renewals of transforming spaces from their previous production functions into consumption and performance uses, as suggested by Zukin (1998).



Figure 9. Map with main spaces for hosting events in the port area, including museums, stretches of the shoreline, squares and spacious warehouses.

The big inaugural display of the area as a cultural hub in the eyes of a vast international audience was with the establishment of the Olympic Boulevard at Mauá square, as a sort of central headquarter of all Olympic Games activities for the general public (Figure 10). A large screen was set with live broadcasting of competitions, accompanied by cultural attractions throughout the port area, including

concerts, street performances, scenic balloon rides, food trucks, street art and more. Although until this point I could not find qualitative data on image impact of the month-long event, based on the number of visitors it is possible to say that the Olympic Boulevard was an attendance success, attracting over four million people and breaking the record as "the biggest Olympic live site in the history of the Olympic Games" (Olympic Boulevard, n.d.).



From the top left: **Figure 10.** Crowd gathers at the Olympic Boulevard, set on Mauá square, during the Rio 2016 Olympic Games.¹⁶ **Figures 11 and 12.** Rio Fashion Week¹⁷ and popular party¹⁸ held at renewed warehouses. **Figure 13.** Workshop during ColaborAmerica event¹⁹.

Due to its role within a major event that attracted thousands of international tourists to Rio de Janeiro, the Olympic Boulevard can be seen as the big inauguration of the branding discourse that positions the *Porto Maravilha* as a cultural events hub in the city, when it comes to a global audience and

¹⁶ Oliveira, R. (2016, August 10). *Praia de carioca, Boulevard Olímpico atrai multidões com saltos, voos e samba*. Retrieved February 23, 2017, from <https://goo.gl/bVfU6X>

¹⁷ Fashion Rio movimentada galpões do Pier Mauá. (2012, November 4). Retrieved February 24, 2017, from <https://goo.gl/PQRXKy>

¹⁸ Bailinho Festa. (2015, January 11). Retrieved February 24, 2017, from <https://goo.gl/FJgGat>

¹⁹ Mídia Ninja. (2016, November 18). Retrieved February 24, 2017, from <https://goo.gl/PPA4Wx>

potential international tourists. For the locals (and smaller, targeted international audiences), the branding discourse had already started to be built, as meaningful cultural events and festivals were already taking place in the area before the Olympics. Big and culturally relevant events like Rio Fashion Week, Rio Design Week, ArtRio, gastronomy festivals, creative economy workshops and conferences, music concerts, 'trendy' parties and theatrical performances have been attracting big crowds for a while now, bringing life to the renewed structures of the port area (Figures 11, 12 and 13). The main spaces used for such events are the repurposed warehouses along the Pier Mauá, whose official website emphasizes the cultural event-led revitalization discourse, thus aligning itself with the Strategic Plan developed by the municipal government:

The centennial spaces designated as a landmark by the Instituto do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional (IPHAN – Brazilian National Historic and Artistic Heritage Institute) receive the best cultural and entertainment options of the city, besides attracting companies seeking convenience in business and the perfect location for their events. **An event that takes place at Pier Mauá is immediately associated with the new image of a successful Rio de Janeiro, that begins to rediscover²⁰ its urban center.** [...] The place bet on **diversity** and has been receiving a wide variety of events: concerts, festivals, sporting, social and corporate events, fairs, exhibitions, plays and musicals.

(About Events, n.d. — bold mine)

This kind of discourse can shed a light on "the instrumental use of events to achieve wider policy ends" (Richards & Palmer, 2010, p. 35) — in the case of *Porto Maravilha*, the policy end is the revitalization and rebranding of the area through culture. Moreover, the hosting of a continual stream of

²⁰ The use of the word "rediscover" implies that the urban center (which includes the port region) was previously forgotten, detached from the active urban life in other areas of the city, as if it was left in the past while the rest of the city modernized itself. This sense of discovery, reclaim and rescue of the port area is constantly used in the *Porto Maravilha* project's communication and it will be further discussed in Chapter IV of this research.

events leads to a 'festivalisation' of the city (Quinn, 2009; Richards & Palmer, 2010), which adds rhythm to the urban fabric, also allowing for a diversity of identities, experiences and touristic offers.

Rio de Janeiro's most recognisable event is still the traditional Carnival parades. The establishment of the *Porto Maravilha* as an eventful area not only can increase the city's tourist offer, but it also provides alternative points of identification that help to diversify the traditional identity of the city, moving beyond the worldwide famous Carnival parades and other typical symbols associated with the city (as discussed in Chapter II). Event-led strategies based on cultural expression, such as the one present in the *Porto Maravilha* project can "contribute to the birth of non-mainstream urban identities. They consolidate subcultures and create togetherness among amateurs of a common field", as is suggested by Silvanto and Hellman, referenced by Richards and Palmer (2010, p. 1).

Having in mind the above discussions on the impact of events in city imagery construction and the overall context of Rio de Janeiro and the *Porto Maravilha* project in that sense, I will proceed to analyse the discourse of the cultural event that I have identified as the most prominent in the rebranding process of the port zone: ArtRio.

4. ArtRio: description of research material

ArtRio is an international arts fair that takes place annually in Rio de Janeiro, being considered one of the biggest in South America. According to its official website (www.artrio.art.br), the fair mixes, in the same space, the works of renowned artists and young less known talents, not only from selected galleries in Brazil, but all over the world. The works of art are thus divided into two programs: Panorama, for well-established galleries in the international circuit, and Vista, for less known galleries, with experimental curatorship. All of its six editions were held at Pier Mauá warehouses and a seventh edition is being programmed for September 2017. The last edition had 73 participant galleries and was able to attract more than forty-nine thousand visitors. The fair is organized by the cultural production company

BEX and, although the fair lasts only a week, the organizers remain active all year long, serving as a hub for local galleries and young talents while stimulating art production and consumption in the city. They promote seminars and talks circuits, workshops, urban interventions, arts publications, and social programs with educational and artistic activities in association with local NGOs. They also stimulate cultural exchange and networking by participating in the main arts events all over the world (Quem Somos, n.d.).

For the critical analysis of ArtRio's discourse, I will use pages and content found on their official website: www.artrio.art.br. As seen on the figures below, a fixed header on top of the homepage centralizes the navigation options and remains the same as the viewer clicks on the links and changes pages. Two small icons with the Brazilian and the American flags are present on the gray area of the header and indicate that the visualization of the website is possible in two languages: English and Portuguese (see Figures 13 and 14). Above the flag icons, there are links for exclusive access areas, one for VIPs and another for Exhibitors. On their left there are links for general information about ArtRio, an 'About Us' (*Quem somos*) section with general information about the organizers, a 'Press' (*Imprensa*) section with press release content and the contact of their public relations department, a 'Partners' (*Parceiros*) section indicating all the fair's sponsors, producers and partner companies, a 'Contact' (*Fale Conosco*) section with email addresses and a space for comments, and, finally, links to their official social media profiles on Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Pinterest, Google+ and Vimeo. On the black area of the fixed header, there is the ArtRio logo, with the number 17 close to it indicating the next edition to be held this year, 2017. Above it, there are the logos of the two main partners and sponsors, the Brazilian Ministry of Culture, and Bradesco, a Brazilian bank. Finally, on the right bottom of the header, the viewer can find the main navigation menu, divided in three options: 'Content' (*Conteúdo*), 'Connections' (*Conexões*) and 'International Fair' (*Feira*).

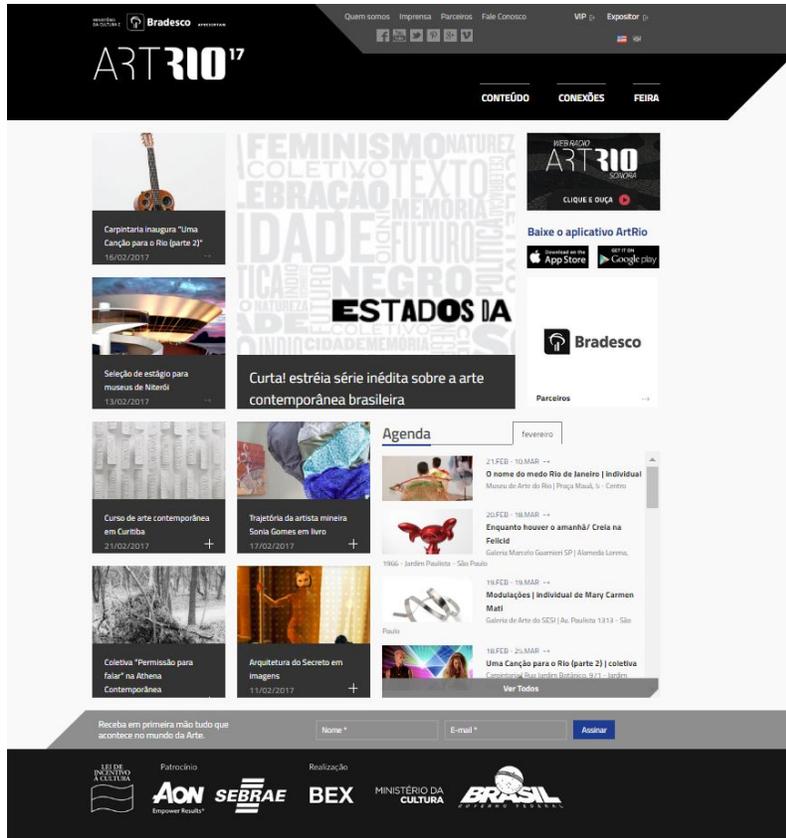


Figure 13. ArtRio's website homepage. Portuguese version.

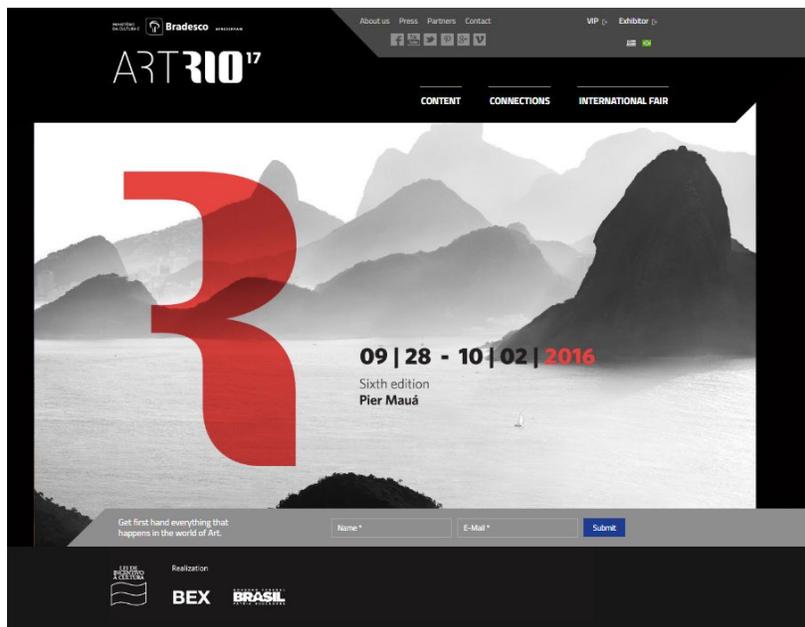


Figure 14. ArtRio's website homepage. English version.

Like the homepage in general (including the page's contents, links, and partners list at the footer), the subitems of the menu options vary from the Portuguese to the English version — the Portuguese version being more complete. The first option, 'Content' (Figure 15), concentrates information about all kinds of content produced or recommended by ArtRio and its drop-down menu contains the five following subitems (on the more complete Portuguese version): '*Agenda*' (Calendar), with monthly summary of upcoming arts-related events; '*Notícias*' (News) with arts-related news about various artistic fields; '*Vídeos de Arte*' (Arts Videos) with short videos of around five minutes produced by ArtRio with renowned professionals involved in the artistic world; '*Circuitos*' (Itineraries) with curated itineraries of arts-related points of interest in Rio de Janeiro, including public art works, architecture, galleries and urban interventions; and, finally, the subitem '*Webradio*', an online radio for artworks related to sound and music.

Portuguese	English
<p>CONTEÚDO</p> <p>AGENDA</p> <p>NOTÍCIAS</p> <p>VÍDEOS DE ARTE</p> <p>CIRCUITOS</p> <p>WEBRADIO</p>	<p>CONTENT</p> <p>VÍDEOS DE ARTE</p> <p>ITINERARIES</p>

Figure 15. Drop-down menus of '*Conteúdo*' (Content) option.

The second option of the main navigation menu, 'Connections' (Figure 16), gathers information about ArtRio's activities made through partnerships and its drop-down menu contains the six following subitems (on the more complete Portuguese version): '*Conexões*' (Connections) with a summary of all the activities; '*Prêmio FOCO Bradesco ArtRio*' (FOCO Bradesco ArtRio Award) with information about the award given to emerging artists; '*Intervenções Bradesco ArtRio*' (Bradesco Interventions), an urban intervention project that happens parallel to the ArtRio fair and seeks to bring art to public spaces; '*ArtRio Social*', with information about educational and artistic activities promoted in partnership with NGOs

from Rio de Janeiro; '*Palestras*' (ArtRio Talks), which highlights current and future seminars, workshops and talks about arts given by big names in the market; and finally, '*CIGA*', which stands for Integrated Art Galleries Circuit, a project in partnership with Bradesco and the Brazilian Ministry of Culture that promotes special programs happening in galleries all over the city during the week of the ArtRio fair.

Portuguese	English
CONEXÕES	CONNECTIONS
CONEXÕES	FOCO BRADESCO ARTRIO AWARD
PRÊMIO FOCO BRADESCO ARTRIO	BRADESCO INTERVENTIONS
INTERVENÇÕES BRADESCO ARTRIO	ARTRIO SOCIAL
ARTRIO SOCIAL	ARTRIO TALKS
PALESTRAS	
CIGA	

Figure 16. Drop-down menus of '*Conexões*' (Connections) option.

The third and last option of the main navigation menu, 'International Fair', provides information about the ArtRio fair, with a list of galleries and artists (Figure 17). The subitems on its drop-down menu are: '*Feira*' (The Fair), with a brief description of the event; '*Galerias*' (Galleries), with a list of the participant galleries of the last edition; '*Artistas*' (Artists) with a list of the participant artists of the last edition; '*Conversas ArtRio*' (ArtRio Talks) with the schedule of the talks that took place on the 2016 edition; and, lastly, the English version has an extra subitem called 'How to get to the fair' with the directions to the event's location.

Portuguese	English
FEIRA	INTERNATIONAL FAIR
FEIRA	THE FAIR
GALERIAS	GALLERIES
ARTISTAS	ARTISTS
CONVERSAS ARTRIO	ARTRIO TALKS
	HOW TO GET TO THE FAIR

Figure 17. Drop-down menus of '*Feira*' (International Fair) option.

5. Critical discourse analysis

For this analysis of the ArtRio website's discourse I am here considering the argument proposed by Quinn (2009) that "Events are socially and politically constructed phenomena that require deconstruction to fully understand how and why they function as they do. Outcomes are rarely inevitable or natural, but rather are reproduced in particular ways in order to achieve particular sets of meanings" (p. 497). Therefore, in order to understand social and political constructs behind the event's discourse a thorough questioning is necessary. What are the interests behind the event? Who would benefit from those interests? What kind of power relations are present? How is the discourse positioned in a broader social, historical and cultural context? The layout of the content is also relevant: which kinds of information are being highlighted and which are missing? For what reason? How is the content grouped and distributed within the website? Is the discourse trying to normalize or contest certain social practices?

Taking a general look at the ArtRio website, the first thing to be taken into consideration is the difference between the Portuguese and the English versions (see Figures 13 and 14). While both have a simple, 'clean' layout, with the prevalence of the colours black, gray and white (with the eventual contrasting red emphasizing the event's logo), the disparities between the two are very striking. In both, the simplicity of the design seem to serve as a way to push the content to the foreground as the most important feature, making the visual impact less relevant. However, in the Portuguese version the overall content seems to be given a lot more importance than in the English one. On the Portuguese homepage, the center is filled with links and pictures of the latest arts-related news promoted by the website, a space for a monthly calendar with the latest activities and events in the city and neighbouring locations, links to their Webradio and the available ArtRio mobile app for download. The English version, on the other hand, features only a big black and white picture of Rio de Janeiro's topography with outdated information about the sixth edition of the event, which took place in 2016. When clicking on the picture,

section '*Feira*' (International Fair) which describes the fair as a stimulating hub that supports local exhibitions, encourages collectionism, support the public's training and, more importantly, creates "an artistic legacy for the Brazilian people who, eager consumers of art and culture, visit the fair in large numbers." (The Fair, n.d.). ArtRio, therefore, positions itself locally as an authority figure when it comes to art, holding the power to centralize artistic and cultural life in the city and even educate the public to some extent with their training, workshops and seminars. This positioning leads to a discussion on the role of experts in the arts field, the effects that curatorship has on perceptions of high and popular culture, and to what extent this kind of discourse is inclusive or elitist, as will be further addressed. Contrastingly, international users of the website are targeted as potential exhibitors, as the only link on the homepage goes to an application request page. Without information on the current news and events happening in the city, it can be said that foreigners are not perceived by ArtRio as engaged participants on the day-to-day cultural life of the city, at least not in a direct way, considering the website's content layout in the English version. The outdated information that is still focused on the 2016 edition also highlights the attachment of international targets exclusively to the fair and not all the year-long activities produced or recommended by ArtRio. They are seen as seasonal targets, while locals receive continual communication updates.

Moreover, another interesting point of separation between local and international audiences is that information about applications — which is presented in the English version as the main link of the homepage — is not so easily found in the Portuguese version. In fact, by going through the Portuguese version of the website I could not find a link to be redirected to the application request page. All I could find was an e-mail address provided in the '*Fale Conosco*' (Contact) section on the page's header (see Figure 19). Why is the application not made as obvious to locals as it is to foreigners? That leads me to conclude that they either contact local exhibitors directly or that they have other platforms for communicating with Brazilian galleries and artists. It is also possible that, since the Portuguese version is

frequently updated, links to the application will appear in the homepage when the process is once again open, this time for the 2017 edition.

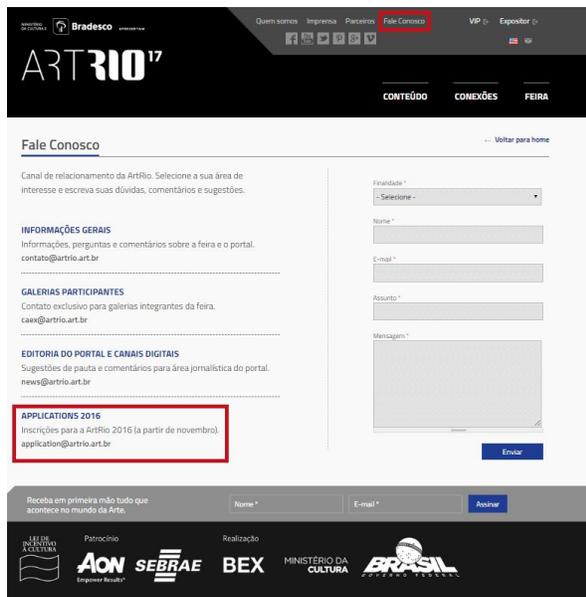


Figure 19. E-mail address for applications provided in the 'Fale Conosco' (Contact) section of the website's Portuguese version.

A second analysis regarding the language of the website's content is the absence of a Spanish version. Considering a number of factors, including Brazil's geographic position, the claim present on the website that ArtRio is one of the main arts events in Latin America and the fact that a significant number of the participant galleries are from Spanish-speaking countries, it seems unusual that a Spanish version is not provided. Moreover, considering the potential impact of the event on tourism by attracting visitors, data from the Brazilian Ministry of Tourism shows that, in 2015, 54% of international tourists in the country were from the South American neighbours, with Argentina as first on the rank, and Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay as third, fourth and fifth respectively — the United States holds the second position (Nascimento, 2016). For an event that positions itself as international and a reference in arts events in Latin America, the negligence of the geographical (and cultural) proximity with South American neighbours may seem like a missed opportunity. It may also put in evidence a broader social context in which the English language is perceived as the universal standard for international communication, as

well as the position of the United States as having significant soft power over the continent (hence the choice of the American flag icon instead of the United Kingdom to symbolize the English language).

Finally, a last language-related remark can be made considering the '*Imprensa*' (Press) section, where press releases are only available in Portuguese. This strengthens the previous argument that there is a division of the audience, as locals are targeted as potential visitors to the fair, while foreigners are mainly targeted as exhibitors or executing more institutional functions, like participating as speakers at seminars, interviews and workshops for instance. The disponibility of press releases exclusively in Portuguese means that they are there to be used by Brazilian media outlets, thus destined to reach a local audience. The lack of releases in other languages means that attracting attendees from other countries to the fair is not a priority for ArtRio. An argument can be made in favour of such strategy when we consider that events in general "largely depend on locally sourced audiences" and that its tourism appeal will come exactly from "how engaging they are for local communities" (Quinn, 2009, p. 495). Therefore, prioritizing local audiences does not necessarily mean neglecting the event's potential to attract tourists, it can be a long-term strategy based on a more consolidated image that is rooted in local engagement.

Moving further from the the target audience, which can be considered the consumption aspect of the event, the understanding of the power dynamics behind the website's discourse can only be complete with the consideration of its production aspects, meaning the people and institutions involved in organizing and communicating the event. The creator and producer of the event is the cultural production company BEX, whose main project is ArtRio. The company does not have it's own website, so information about it can only be retrieved from the online presence of their productions. It was founded in 2009 and, according the ArtRio's website section '*Quem Somos*' (About Us), "the organization promotes fairs, publishes art-related materials and attracts international collectors, critics and curators to Brazil" (n.d.). Besides their main product, ArtRio, the company is responsible for all the related activities, including the Rio Design Fair, that runs parallel to ArtRio. Equally relevant in the production aspects of

the events are the partnerships that make it viable. Bradesco, one of the five biggest banks in Brazil, is the largest sponsor of the event and government policy incentive is given by the Ministry of Culture. Both their logos are constantly shown attached to the ArtRio logo as presenters of the event.

By supporting or sponsoring events, companies usually have their own interests, the most common being the association of the event's imagery and positive consumer experience onto the brand. Therefore, it is possible to infer that, by being the main sponsor of ArtRio, Bradesco wishes to have its brand associated with arts and culture as a major player in the city and in the country. This argument is strengthened by the recurrent appearance of Bradesco's name and logo all over the website. In addition to that, the bank's clients receive special discounts for the fair's tickets, which can also be seen as an image enhancing strategy since it encourages customer loyalty by positioning Bradesco as a facilitator for cultural experiences. A possible interest beyond marketing strategies could be having government incentive in the form of tax reliefs, for example, in return for investing in national culture and thus fomenting economic growth.

Bradesco's role in the event is so big that the brand even gives its name to two of ArtRio 'Connections' projects: the 'FOCO Bradesco ArtRio Award' and the 'Bradesco Interventions'. The bank stands alone as the main private sponsor of the event. This leads to the conclusion that there might be a certain financial dependency in the relationship between ArtRio and Bradesco. If an event has a varied source of income for its production, the potential withdrawal from one of the sponsors is less damaging than when it is dependent on fewer sources, as is the case. The potential withdrawal of Bradesco as a sponsor could mean that ArtRio would not be able to counter that loss with the other, less significant sources of financial support, putting in risk its viability. The financial dependency on one major sponsor may also mean less resistance towards the bank's demands in terms of benefits from the partnership, like image exposure or even content production. For example, the bank is already featured as curator of a considerable amount of the cultural itineraries available at the website. While recommending the visitable

locations, the itineraries' maps feature visual markings of all the nearby Bradesco agencies and ATMs (Figure 20). Although I could not track if this has already happened, it is possible that this opportunity to directly produce content on ArtRio's website could be taken a step further in the future to suggest locations on the itineraries that somehow benefit the bank directly.

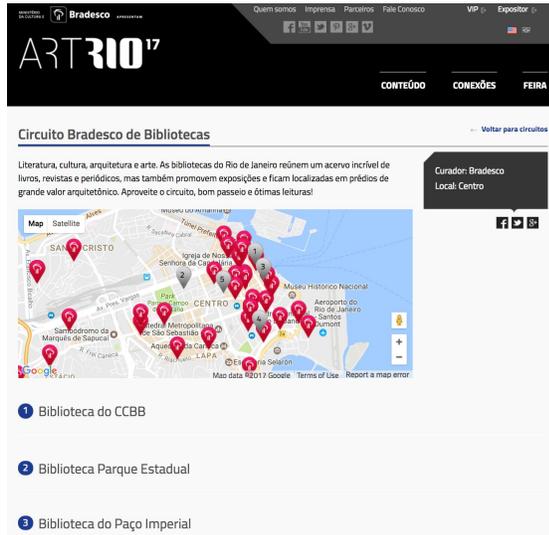


Figure 20. One of the itineraries curated by Bradesco. The map shows the suggested locations in numbered gray pins and the bank's spatial presence is highlighted by red pins with Bradesco logo, arguably more visually impacting than the actual itinerary.

As for the Brazilian Ministry of Culture, their interest in supporting the event may be connected to the established public agenda of the municipality of Rio de Janeiro and supported by the federal government, as was discussed in Chapter II, of transforming the port area into a cultural hub, fomenting the creative economy in the city. While quoting Shin, Quinn (2009) highlights that economic interests behind cultural events are immersed in political dynamics, which may involve transformations in the city's image and its urban space (p. 494), as is the case of the *Porto Maravilha* project. By supporting the realization of ArtRio through their Incentive Law, the Brazilian Ministry of Culture is aligned with a municipal and federal efforts, and its motives can be linked to most of the Strategic Plan branding goals listed at the end of Chapter II — more obviously to goals V and VII, which account for broadening Rio de Janeiro's cultural options, increasing the frequency of and public access to cultural activities, and consolidating the port region as a creative and cultural center.

Bradesco and the Ministry of Culture are not the only supporters of the event. A complete list of sponsors, partners can be found on the '*Parceiros*' (Partners) section of the website (Figure 21). Within the sponsors and supporters, it is possible to infer that most of them (AON, Heineken, Minalba and Pirelli), by being profitable companies of products or services, have the marketing interest to reach new potential consumers and strengthen their brands by associating them with the imagery of the ArtRio event and, therefore, to cultural production and consumption in the city.

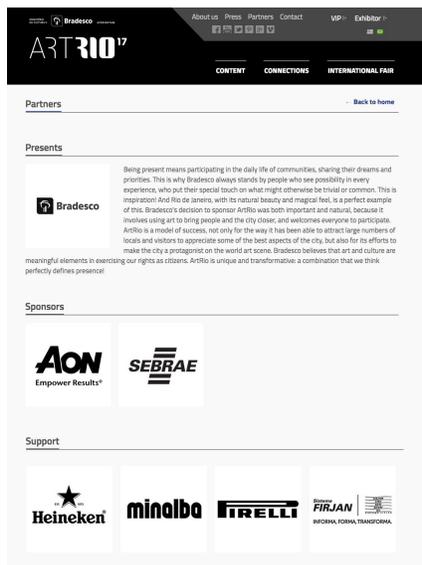


Figure 21. List of presenters, sponsors and supporters on the 'Partners' page of ArtRio's website (the same in English and Portuguese).

Two names on that list, however, contrast with the others and are worth a closer look: SEBRAE and FIRJAN. The first is an autonomous social institution, and the name stands for Brazilian Support Service of Micro and Small Enterprises. The second, FIRJAN, stands for the Industries Federation of the Rio de Janeiro State. They are both nonprofit organizations (NPOs) with similar goals of fomenting and supporting entrepreneurial development. The presence of these two names as partners of ArtRio put in evidence a side of the event that is linked to encouraging artistic production, aiming at developing this market in the city (and in the country). Moreover, I would argue that it aligns ArtRio with two broader and globally accepted discourses: the revitalization of cities and/or urban areas (1) through

entrepreneurship and (2) through investments in the creative economy. The first fits into the idea of 'entrepreneurial city' discussed by Richards and Palmer (2010), which marks a shift from urban managerialism to urban entrepreneurialism. This way, events — as well as developing urban consumption spaces — become increasingly managed by public-private partnerships, which can be perceived in the ArtRio production with the presence of the Ministry of Culture along with a number of private sponsors and supporters. On a broader level, the *Porto Maravilha* project itself also follows the same strategy, as municipal and federal government pair up with different private organizations to promote the planned changes in the port area, like the dealership with 'Concessionária Porto Novo' to manage and carry on urban constructions, and the partnership with *Federação Roberto Marinho* in the construction and overall management of both new museums, MAR and Museum of Tomorrow, just to mention a few examples. This strategy is also made clear in the listed IV goal extracted from the Strategic Plan: "strengthen the city's Port Region as a cultural centre [...] with public or private initiatives".

Second, the presence of SEBRAE and FIRJAN as partners of the fair shows that the creative sector is playing a central role in entrepreneurial and economic growth strategies. The investment in the creative economy is also aligned with the 'creative city' discourse (Hartley *et al.*, 2013), through which investments in culture, improved lifestyles (including tolerance and diversity), urban infrastructure and entertainment are perceived as capable of attracting creative talent and promoting economic growth (Richards & Palmer, 2010). The idea of investing in creativity in order to attract a "creative class" is mainly based on the well-established work of Florida (2002) and it is widely accepted in city branding strategies as a way to reinvent economies and become more attractive in the global market of investments and tourism. The discourse put in evidence by the partnership with SEBRAE and FIRJAN is also related to the second Strategic Plan's listed goal, which aims at positioning Rio as the leading capital for the development of the Creative Industry in Brazil, therefore raising the city's GDP and the number of people employed in the sector.

Another relevant discussion that emerges from the analysis of ArtRio's website is the extent to which the event can be considered inclusive or elitist in terms of local engagement with culture. On the top right of the webpage's header, it is possible to find two links with restricted access. While the link to an 'Exhibitor' exclusive area is understandable, for the content and online tools directed to them must vary from the general audience, the relevance of a 'VIP' area is not so clear. First of all, who are those 'very important people' and what is the criteria for differentiating them? No information about it is given anywhere in the website, and the link redirects the user to a restricted page that requires e-mail and password for enabling access. This separation leads to the thought that there is a selective group of people that is influential in the curatorship of the event and the website's content. This thought is strengthened by positioning of ArtRio as an expert and authority figure when it comes to local arts market, which can be perceived in some of the discourse present in the website. For example, the sentence next to the newsletter registration box that reads: "Get first hand everything that happens in the world of Art". By using the expression "first hand", it becomes implicit that ArtRio is at the top of what is happening in the art market, being part of a selective group that decides what is worth sharing or not.

Conversely, the role of experts and curators in the art world has been the subject of discussion for a long time. Its is related to the conceptualization culture itself, involving the division of high and low/popular arts as well as other more inclusive perspectives that see culture as expression of everyday life. Hartley *et al.* (2013) point out that academics like Matthew Arnold, for example, considered expertise as indispensable for determining the value of a cultural product, and this kind of rationale became so embedded in the commonsense that it still remains determinant in arts-related discourse. Others, like Raymond Williams, have contested this idea, considering culture as a 'whole way of life' and not attached to anyone's particular taste or perception of valuable, fine aesthetic. The curation of the best galleries or artists to participate in ArtRio entails a certain judgement of value and therefore an implied expertise in order to determine the works that are deserving of a space in the exhibition. Furthermore, the

curation involves a division between the more established galleries in the international arts circuit of modern and contemporary arts which participate in the Panorama program, and the less known galleries with experimental work placed in the Vista program. That leads me to wonder, first, on what terms the judgement of value is based upon, and second, why this separation is necessary. One possible answer is that there is a matter status involved and, although they share the same space in the event, the organizers decided to mark that difference between renowned, well-established names and newcomers by creating the two programs. Additionally, the names chosen for the programs may also give a hint on what lies behind that separation. While the word 'Panorama' refers to a wide view and can be associated with a broad, overarching contextualisation, 'Vista', which can be translated as 'View', refers to a more focused, punctual perspective. Therefore, the Panorama works could be seen as pertaining to a macro level of the arts world, a more broadly accepted artistic context, while Vista works could be seen as expressions in the micro level, with more independent, experimental productions. The art works from Vista could be seen, therefore, as particular worldviews within a broader, established panorama.

On another side of the elitism discussion, besides having a fairly accessible entrance fee — 30 Brazilian Reais (around 9,5 Euro) and 15 Brazilian Reais (around 4,75 Euro) for students and discount holders — ArtRio also has quite a few initiatives that aim at making artistic activities more inclusive by expanding access, promoting cultural engagement and shedding light on new talents. It is possible to say that their 'Connections' projects are aligned with the seventh listed Strategic Plan's goal that seeks to "better distribute the highly concentrated cultural options of the city, making them more accessible to lower-income sectors of society". First, with the 'Bradesco Interventions', which promotes urban interventions that take art works into public spaces, and the 'CIGA' project of galleries circuits parallel to the fair, ArtRio is able to expand their impact to other areas of the city, while at the same time centralizing their activities in a "new" area (the recently renewed port zone), away from the mainstream cultural circuits, usually concentrated in the city's wealthier South Zone. Second, with the 'ArtRio Social'

projects, lower-income communities are reached and are able to participate more actively in the city's cultural life. Third, the 'FOCO Bradesco ArtRio Award' endorses and promotes local young talents that are not yet included in established artistic circuits. Lastly, the 'ArtRio Talks' project stimulates general artistic education and the lectures are often free and open to the public, encouraging interest in artistic production. It must be pointed out, however, that although these projects are considered inclusive, the role of experts is still determinant since they all rely on some kind of curatorship based on a judgement of what kind of artworks or artistic views will be awarded or made accessible through the urban interventions and the social and educational programs.

On a final note, it is important to consider that the ArtRio discourse is rooted in a broader context of 'city festivalisation'. By having annual editions, the event gives rhythm to Rio de Janeiro's cultural life. Moreover, by remaining active all year and constantly promoting and advertising arts-related events happening in the city and close locales, ArtRio fosters the idea of eventfulness and a steady cultural consumption pattern. Considering that events are able to stimulate a sense of togetherness, strengthen community pride and create local 'vibrancy' (Richards & Palmer, 2010), ArtRio once again aligns itself with the municipal Strategic Plan considering the fifth listed goal, that includes the aim of "promoting integration and increased sense of belonging among the population".

6. CONCLUSION

With the critical analysis of ArtRio's website discourse, and bearing in mind the 'global explanatory framework' discussed in the beginning of this chapter, it is possible to conclude that the fair's main positioning is that of a local authority when it comes to the world of art. The role of artistic hub is constantly emphasized, with ArtRio seeking to be seen as a central player in the city by connecting artists and galleries, informing "first hand" what is happening in the art world, educating the general public and

strengthening the arts sector in the country. ArtRio is thus branded as an expert in the judgement and promotion of what is to be considered the best and most relevant in the contemporary artistic market.

Considering the differences in the website's content according to the selected language, it becomes clear that local and international users are not targeted in the same way by ArtRio. While locals are seen as a potential audience and subject of engagement in Rio de Janeiro's artistic scene — receiving constant and updated content about arts-related activities —, international users of the website are seen as potential exhibitors of the fair, with the main content of the homepage redirecting to an application request and being updated only when necessary, close to the event's start. Moreover, this difference also shows that attracting international tourists is not a priority in the organization of the event, at least not as a direct strategy. This argument is further supported by the availability of press releases only in Portuguese and by the absence of a Spanish version of the website, which would appeal to South American neighbouring countries, where the majority of Brazil's international tourists come from. More than an apparent missed opportunity in tourism, the lack of a Spanish version highlights an international strategy that does not fully explore the potential advantages of creating a stronger continental bond that is reinforced by geographical and cultural proximity.

The existence of touristic intentions behind the event, however, cannot be dismissed. By promoting local engagement and consolidating ArtRio as the main hub for arts-related activities in Rio de Janeiro, the event can be considered as rooted in place instead of provoking *displacement*. By prioritizing locals, the tourism appeal may come exactly from how important and engaging the fair is to the city's residents (Quinn, 2009). If that is the case, ArtRio can be considered in alignment with the Strategic Plan's goal III, by contributing to the establishment of Rio as a tourism hub.

Surveys or data on the impact of the fair on the image of the port area could not be found. As was discussed in the beginning of this chapter, image impact of events is not so easily measured and other more easily obtained data are commonly seen as success parameters (Richards & Palmer, 2010). For

example, the title of one of the press releases provided in the website's *Imprensa* ('Press') section states that the public's attendance and the number of negotiations between galleries in the 2016 edition prove the strength of the arts section in the country. This clearly exemplifies how more easily measurable quantitative data — like how many people showed up, how many artworks were bought or how many deals were closed between galleries — usually dominates the perception of success in events, while studies on the audience's experience and image impact are neglected. Nevertheless, given the fact that the fair has already held six editions at the Pier Mauá warehouses, the dimension of the event in terms of public and exhibitors, as well as the amount of activities and content produced and promoted by ArtRio all year long it is undeniable that they are a major player in the cultural revitalization of the port area. This is confirmed by the fact that the event is listed on the *Porto Maravilha* project's official website as one of their institutional partners (Parceiros, n.d.), thus confirming not only its cultural relevance, but its alignment with a specific local agenda that is embedded in spatial reconfiguration and cultural consumption.

The alignment of the ArtRio event with the local agenda behind the *Porto Maravilha* project can be better perceived by the ways it overlaps with the listed goals retrieved from the Strategic Plan (Chapter II). First of all, the reliance on public-private partnerships to produce the event (the main supporters are the Brazilian Ministry of Culture and the bank Bradesco) is clearly in accordance with goal IV. Second, the fair stimulates the local arts and culture markets, and the partnership with institutions like FIRJAN and SEBRAE put in evidence an entrepreneurial model of strengthening the creative economy, as suggested by goal II. Third, the fair has many inclusive projects that seek to make arts more accessible to the general public: from the low-cost entrance fees, to urban interventions in public spaces, social programs and free lectures. Moreover, by promoting and producing arts-related activities all year long, ArtRio is able to increase the number and frequency of cultural activities in the city. All these initiatives are in accordance with goals V and VII taken from the Strategic Plan. Finally, the fair contributes to the

festivalisation of the port area and the imagery of an eventful city. Considering the power of events to enliven built structures and promote a community sense of belonging, as suggested by Quinn (2009) and Richards and Palmer (2010), ArtRio is once again put in alignment with the Strategic Plan, more specifically with goals V, VI and VII.

ArtRio also helps broaden the city's symbolic references. It adds to the expansion of Rio de Janeiro's traditional urban imagery, as discussed in Chapter II, by moving past the tropical paradise discourse. It also contributes to the establishment of other internationally relevant cultural events, beyond the world-famous Carnival parades. Additionally, by being held at the Pier Mauá warehouses, ArtRio brings artistic offers to a non-mainstream area of the city, enriching Rio's cultural repertoire beyond the South Zone beachfront and other traditional tourist sites.

Finally, the event's attachment with the port zone acts as a symbolic and image-making component in the *Porto Maravilha* project, much like the new (or renewed) cultural landmarks, which will be the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV

CULTURAL LANDMARKS

1. Theoretical framework

This Chapter's aim is to understand the role of cultural landmarks in urban renewal strategies, more specifically in the one promoted by the *Porto Maravilha* project. Focus will be given to cultural heritage landmarks, which will provide a context to critically analyse the discourse present in the online communication of the African Heritage Circuit. In order to do so, a few theoretical concepts used in the process must be clarified.

Considering the purpose of this Chapter, it is necessary, in the first place, to define what is here understood as *heritage*. I will be basing the use of the concept on Orbaşlı and Woodward's (2009) conceptualisation. The authors quote Graham *et al.* (2006) to define heritage as "what contemporary society chooses to inherit and pass on", which does not necessarily have to be a physical place or object, but can also be immaterial, intangible meanings signified by emotions, spirituality or a particular symbolism (p.315). With an argument that is similar to Vassalo and Cicalo's (2015) view of heritage sites and monuments as *polyphonic*, Orbaşlı and Woodward go on to say that "cultural heritage will represent different meanings for different people and different groups in society. These will be often based on their own cultural values and those they attribute to the physical relics of the past." (2009, p. 315). The authors also recognise the contemporary attachment of the definition to the tourism industry, where heritage can be an interpretation of history that is commodified and "packaged" for touristic purposes. In that sense, it is related to another concept explored in this Chapter: the *commoditization of culture*. According to Tucker and Akama (2009), the concept implies that "what were once personal 'cultural displays' of living

traditions or a 'cultural text' of lived authenticity becomes a 'cultural product', which meets the needs of commercial tourism." (p.514).

If heritage implies the signification of marks from the past, it becomes inevitably linked to the *conservation* of such. For coherence, I will continue to rely on Orbaşlı and Woodward's take on the subject, as they see conservation as "the process of understanding, safe-guarding and, where necessary, maintaining, repairing, restoring, and adapting historic property to preserve its cultural significance", which will therefore frequently involve "making balanced judgments in respect of historic evidence, present day needs and resources available, and future sustainability" (2009, p. 316). The authors highlight that conservation philosophies may greatly vary from culture to culture, although standards set by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco), are increasingly accepted and adopted worldwide.

Bearing in mind the fact that most of the historical relevance of Rio de Janeiro's port region is attached to the functions defined by its colonial past, including the role as the major entrance of African slaves in the Americas, the conceptualization of the term *postcolonialism* also becomes necessary. According to Tucker and Akama (2009), the term refers to "a reflexive body of Western thought that seeks to reconsider and interrogate the terms by which the duality of colonizer and colonized, along with its accompanying structures of knowledge and power, has been established and is perpetuated" (p. 504). Importantly, the authors highlight that this is not a fixed term, and its conceptualisation can vary a lot depending on the type of use. However, they quote Slemon (1991) to suggest that, more than a reference to a condition of colonial independence, the use of the concept gains relevance

when it locates a specifically anti- or postcolonial discursive purchase in culture, one which begins in the moment that the colonizing power inscribes itself onto the body and space of its Others and which continues as an often occluded tradition into the modern theatre of neocolonialist international relations.

Finally, when referring to the centuries of geographical displacement of Africans brought by transatlantic slave traffic, I will be using the concept of *African diaspora*. I will base my use on the conceptualization developed by Vassalo and Cicalo (2015), which connects the term to the process of forced displacement of African captives and the consequent formulation of hybrid and heterogeneous sociopolitical bonds in other geographical contexts. Moreover, the authors argue that a contemporary framing of the concept implies a broader understanding, transcending notions of frontiers and national states. Quoting Clifford (1994), the authors argue that the concept manifests itself through a "shared history of displacement, suffering, adaptation and resistance" thus moving beyond mere transnationalism and producing meaningful sociopolitical battles as a "community in the context of its historical displacement" (Vassalo & Cicalo, 2015, p. 242-243)²¹.

2. Reimagining history and memory

As culture establishes itself as the driving force of tourism practices, local policies give increased priority to creating, preserving and advertising cultural offers, seeking economic and image benefits, while being equally influenced by the establishment of the symbolic and experience economies around the globe. This way, cities, regions and countries centralize their branding efforts around transforming self-aware cultural uniqueness into attractions for tourist consumption, parallely shaping and consolidating national/regional identities. Richards (2003), argues that the intensified culturalization of tourism in the last decades can be traced along the growing significance of signs in the production and consumption of tourist sites. The author points out that the phenomenon is further stimulated by the

²¹ My own translation. The original extracts, in Portuguese, read: "[...] história compartilhada de deslocamento, sofrimento, adaptação e resistência", and "[...] de uma comunidade no contexto do seu deslocamento histórico". (Vassalo & Cicalo, 2015, p. 242-243)

broadening of the definition of culture itself as a 'way of life'; by the increased need to reassert local identities; and by the growth of nostalgia in the face of accelerated lifestyles and disorientation feelings associated with modernity. As a consequence, the importance of heritage preservation grows, as does the establishment of monuments, landmarks and cultural experiences. From the 1980's to early 2000's, the number of cultural attractions in Europe, for example, is estimated to have grown by over 100% (Richards, 2003). A widespread increase in the number of museums can be perceived, accompanied by the creation of cultural tours and signature buildings, frequently designed by renowned architects, in order to develop a unique image for the city/country as a cultural destination amongst the highly competitive global tourism market (Richards & Palmer, 2014).

In this scenario, local heritage preservation and cultural landmarking policies become intrinsically linked to tourism, which will thus play a defining role in the financing and establishment of such sites, as well as in dictating *what* will be conserved and *how* (Orbaşlı & Woodward, 2009). While conservation philosophies may differ from one culture to the other, as was mentioned before, the increased influence of international agencies, like Unesco, sets an universal standard for cultural and urban practices of preservation, strengthening debates around social, economic and environmental sustainability of heritage consumption; consolidating the perception of cultural heritage as 'inheritance of humankind' instead of local exclusive property; and drawing attention to the representation of minorities, ethnicities and historically underprivileged shares of society (Orbaşlı & Woodward, 2009; Pio, 2014; Vassalo & Cicalo, 2015).

Furthermore, the dissonances around heritage preservation are enhanced by the fact that it is subjected to multiple interpretations by different social groups, which may have contrasting understandings of its significance. Regarding the cultural value attributed to heritages, Orbaşlı and Woodward (2009) suggest that the most common associations are "historic, architectural, aesthetic, rarity, or archeological" and that other, less tangible, values also have defining influence over a site's cultural

uniqueness, relating to "the emotional, symbolic, and spiritual meanings of a place" (p. 315). Not rarely, different perceptions of value are disputed in the official framing of monuments, landmarks and places. It is, therefore, important to note that the significance of a heritage site may change through time, and that it will reflect the current societal views that define it. Some buildings may lose their value (and heritage status) over the passing of years, while others may gain new relevance with the 'rescue' of particular symbolism or with the adaptation for new functions (Orbaşlı & Woodward, 2009, p. 315). In that sense, Kopytoff's (1986) notion of the "cultural biography of things" can be helpful to understand how the *social trajectory* of a building/monument/place is determinant in the recognition of its value as heritage, considering the way and purpose to which it was built, the social uses it has had over time, and even its possible commoditization and decommo-ditization processes.

Before moving on to the cultural strategies of patrimonialization and landmarking in Rio de Janeiro, a few other remarks proposed by Orbaşlı and Woodward (2009) are worth mentioning. First, considering the link between heritage preservation and tourism, a common conflict of interpretation comes from the different perspectives between local communities and tourists (p. 317). In accordance with the notion of *tourist gaze* developed by Urry (1995; 2002), visitors may have particular expectations and ways of viewing certain sites that contrast with the locals' interpretation, being usually based on preconceptions mediated by marketing strategies or mediatic portrayals of the destination. Correspondingly, the tourist gaze may see value in everyday practices that are not deemed culturally significant by local communities. This way, the interest of tourists in a particular site may raise local awareness of its value and contribute to processes of patrimonialization or heritage commoditization (Orbaşlı & Woodward, 2009, p. 317). A second important remark from the authors is that heritage also engages with negative points of history, not only celebrative or pride-enhancing memories, and can thus serve as a means of confronting the past, as it will be further discussed in this Chapter. With the rise of niche tourism practices, such as dark tourism (Seaton, 2009), a heritage that refers to a negative past may

be perceived as more authentic, not tainted by marketing strategies, while also serving on a local level as an instrument for identity construction and political narrative disputes. Finally, although cultural tourism represents a profitable economic resource, the impacts brought by an increased touristic presence may cause irreversible damage to heritage sites, specially to more fragile monuments like exposed archeological ruins, resulting in loss of value or even permanent closure to visits (Orbaşlı & Woodward, 2009, p. 322).

As seen on the analysis of the *Porto Maravilha* project and the municipal Strategic Plan developed in the previous Chapters, the current discourse of the Rio de Janeiro municipality is linked to an instrumentalization culture, which can be perceived in strategies that aim at diversifying cultural offers, valuing local heritage, stimulating the growth of the creative economy, attracting cultural events and boosting tourism. The creation of two new museums, an aquarium, the restoration of multiple historic buildings and the establishment of heritage-based touristic routes in the region highlights the centrality of culture in the urban renewal efforts. The *Museu do Amanhã* (Museum of Tomorrow)²² represents the epicenter of the desired cultural projection of the renewed area. With a privileged location at Mauá square, receding into the Guanabara bay, the science museum had its futuristic-style structure designed by internationally renowned architect Santiago Calatrava, thus making it not only a new cultural offer, but also a visual, iconic architectural landmark (see Figure 22). The symbolic status of the museum and the touristic intentions behind its construction are made obvious in the discourse of then mayor Eduardo Paes, who said in an interview that the *Museu do Amanhã* represents the "cherry on the cake", the major icon of the port revitalization, incorporating a new brand for the city at the same level as other symbols, like the

²² According to the official website, *Museu do Amanhã* is "a science museum that promotes exploration, reflection and planning of possibilities for the future. [...] Museum of Tomorrow examines the past, considers current trends, and explores future scenarios for the next 50 years, approached from a perspective of sustainability and conviviality." (Museu do Amanhã, n.d.).

Maracanã stadium, the Christ Redeemer statue and the Lapa aqueduct²³.



Figure 22. Public lines up during the inauguration of the *Museu do Amanhã* (Museum of Tomorrow), designed by architect Santiago Calatrava²⁴.

Another relevant cultural investment in the area was the creation of MAR (Rio Arts Museum), also located at Mauá square. On its official website, the museum states that its exhibitions "bring together historical and contemporary art dimensions through long- and short-term national and international exhibitions", while also having an educational mission through *Escola do Olhar* program in partnership with local public schools (Museu de Arte do Rio, n.d.). As seen on Figure 23, two buildings with heterogeneous profiles were interconnected to form the new museum: the Dom João IV mansion, from 1918, in eclectic architectural style, and the neighbouring building in modernist style, formerly used as a bus terminal (Museu de Arte do Rio, n.d.). This architectural choice seems to incorporate quite clearly the

²³ My own translation of the quote extracted from Pio (2013, p. 16). The original, in Portuguese, reads: "Essa aqui é a cereja do bolo. Isso aqui é o ícone maior da revitalização da Zona Portuária. Isso aqui vai ser uma marca nova para a cidade, como são os Arcos da Lapa, como é o Maracanã, como é o Cristo Redentor. Isso aqui vai ser certamente uma nova marca da nossa cidade".

²⁴ Image retrieved March 13, 2017, from <https://br.pinterest.com/pin/475200198162506323/>

the revitalization project's approach towards local cultural assets: to value the area's historical past while at the same time articulating it with the present (Pio, 2013) and reaching towards the future by revamping the area's economy, giving new uses to old structures and promoting general cultural renewal.



Figure 23. Two interconnected buildings form MAR in a symbolic articulation between past and present, evident in the revitalization project's discourse. The modernist building on the left serves mainly the *Escola do Olhar* educational programs.²⁵

Patrimonialization and conservation of historic areas of Rio's port zone are also a huge part of the *Porto Maravilha* cultural strategy. Seen as a means to rebuild the area's identity and to expand the city's cultural tourism offers beyond the "Marvelous city" discourse, history plays a crucial role. Brazilian sociologist Leopoldo Guilherme Pio (2013; 2014) has thoroughly analysed the patrimonialization strategies in the revitalization project of Rio's port area. This research will, therefore, greatly rely on his valuable inputs in order to have a better understanding of the context in which the African Heritage Circuit is inserted.

²⁵ Image retrieved March 13, 2017, from <http://www.museudeartedorio.org.br/pt-br/multimedia/imagem>

Pio (2014) proposes that the *Porto Maravilha* project represents a paradigm shift regarding municipal approach in dealing with historic areas of the city. He argues that, until the current revitalization project, the conservation of the historic assets of the city was guided by what he calls a *rhetoric of loss*, in that heritage is seen as a preservation strategy induced by the fear of losing historical and identity references. History is thus perceived as an inexorable process of destruction and loss that must be conserved through patrimonialization in order to preserve physical proof of past events (Pio, 2014, pp. 2, 6). This rhetoric can be clearly perceived in previous urban renewal efforts in Rio de Janeiro. Reforms made in the 1980's and 1990's, for example, were guided by the risk of losing cultural identity and thus sought to protect certain areas and buildings from the advancements of the city's modernization. The Pereira Passos reforms in the early twentieth century (discussed in Chapter II) had a more selective discourse in terms of what was valid physical historical reference, worthy of recuperation and maintenance, while showing no mercy in demolishing whatever did not fit into the project's eurocentric and modernizing desires. It was during that time, that the *Cais da Imperatriz* (Empress Wharf), which had already been built over the *Cais do Valongo* (Valongo Wharf) — one of the main arrival sites of African slaves in the city — was completely demolished, giving space to a public square. As Jaguaribe (2014) points out, those reforms saw certain aspects of the past as "a tangible presence of a poor colored population, as unsanitary conditions, and the decrepitude should be abolished to make way for the transformation of the city". This way, "Passos razed to the ground the crumbling colonial houses that sheltered the urban poor in downtown Rio", as well as important cultural monuments (p. 22). I would argue that the *rhetoric of loss* proposed by Pio (2014) in the case of the Passos reforms, is used not only as conservation urge in the fear of losing some historical references, but contrastingly as a way to deliberately "lose" and erase certain aspects of the past that did not fit a political agenda.

Regarding the *Porto Maravilha* project, Pio sees a paradigm shift with the inclusion of rhetorics of *history recognition* and *memory conquest* in the municipal patrimonialization model (2014, pp. 2, 7).

By recognition he means the critical reevaluation of aspects of the past that were previously ignored or poorly addressed by official history. Moreover, the recognition is followed by the politicization of cultural identities through the redeeming power of memory (p. 2). This does not mean that the *rhetoric of loss* was replaced. The risk of losing local historic reference remains a driving force for heritage conservation initiatives by the city's government. This established rhetoric, however, is updated by a sort of political responsibility attributed to cultural heritage sites: to reveal forgotten elements of history, and to promote debates around the reinterpretation of the memory of specific groups, mainly social minorities. Patrimony starts to be seen, therefore, as a right and an instrument for political claims (Pio, 2014, p. 7). With the assimilation of a new purpose for heritage preservation, the *Porto Maravilha* project put great effort in "rescuing" (a term often used in their official communication²⁶) the rich Afro-Brazilian heritage of the port area, successively ignored or erased in the past decades²⁷, which will be more thoroughly addressed later on this Chapter.

Further developing his argument, Pio (2014) suggests that, by opening the possibility of the reinterpretation of the past, the meaning of the present is also changed — thus revealing the political power of heritage policies. The potential to change present establishments can be used to back sociopolitical claims, to enhance civic participation and to influence identity construction by creating or

²⁶ A few examples of the use of the term on the *Porto Maravilha* website include: the title of their section about cultural programs "Valuing and **rescue** of the port region's heritage" (Programa Porto Maravilha Cultural, n.d. — my own translation; bold mine); and an article about an exhibition at the *Pretos Novos* institute, with passages like "*Mãe Preta* exhibition **rescues** the memory of slavery, motherhood and feminism", and "The work contributes to the debate about memorialization of slavery, which gained force in Rio de Janeiro since the discovery of the Valongo Wharf archaeological site, in 2010, with the **rescue** of a part of the history of the city and Brazil, that was buried until then." (Notícias, 2016 — my own translation; bold mine).

²⁷ That is not to say that the initiative to 'rescue' the Afro-Brazilian heritage came from local authorities. There was constant pressure from local associations involved with the claims and struggles of the Black community in Rio de Janeiro, as well as from archaeologists, anthropologists and academic community. Many things conspired to the centrality given to African heritage in the *Porto Maravilha* project: including the valuing of cultural diversity as a globally promoted discourse, more emphatically by international agencies like Unesco; the shift of paradigm in the patrimonialization model in Brazil; recent archeological discoveries (such as the accidental revelation of the *Pretos Novos* cemetery); and the perceived tourism potential of 'distinguished' and 'authentic' experiences that dare explore negative points of history (Vassalo & Cicalo, 2015; Pio, 2014; Guimarães, 2013).

strengthening community bonds. Not surprisingly, conflicts often arise around the institutionalized meaning of the monuments, with different actors questioning decisions on *what* to conserve, *how* and, more importantly, to whose interest.

If, on one hand, memory in this approach can be seen as fragmented, representing particular claims and specific identities rooted in local categories; on the other hand, it is also a holistic perspective that "integrates different temporalities and elements of memory in a single cultural system, to create a broad identity, supposedly shared by diverse social groups. What matters in this rhetoric is to build a natural continuity between past, present and future" (Pio, 2014, p. 3)²⁸. This temporal continuity can be perceived quite frequently in the *Porto Maravilha* cultural initiatives. For example, in the symbolic integration of buildings from different eras to form MAR, in a dialogue between past and present, further extended by the futuristic perspective proposed by the neighbouring *Museu do Amanhã*. The curatorship of MAR exhibitions also reflects this arguments, since it claims to provide "a transversal reading of the history of the city, its social fabric, its symbolic life, conflicts, contradictions, challenges, and expectations" (Museu de Arte do Rio, n.d.). Moreover, the overall approach of the project towards the area's cultural potential seeks to establish a unifying temporal continuity: parallel to the highlighting of the rich past of the historical center, many structures are given new functions according to present demands (like the Pier Mauá warehouses) and great investment is made to attract big companies and creative industries startups in an attempt to shape the area's future (Porto Maravilha, n.d.).

One final point to be made before focusing particularly on the Afro-Brazilian heritage of the port area, is that the cultural initiatives promoted by the *Porto Maravilha* are strongly influenced by Unesco. In 2012, Rio de Janeiro became the first city to receive Unesco's title of World Heritage Site under the Cultural Landscape category, after an application made in a joint effort between the city's government and

²⁸ My own translation. The original text, in Portuguese, reads: "Trata-se de uma perspectiva holista, que integra diversas temporalidades e elementos da memória em um único sistema cultural, para produzir uma identidade ampla, supostamente compartilhada por diversos grupos sociais. O que importa nessa retórica é construir uma continuidade natural entre passado, presente e futuro" (Pio, 2014, p.3).

IPHAN, the National Historic and Artistic Heritage Institute (Unesco, n.d.; ABRAMPA, 2012). With the archeological recovery of the Valongo wharf and part of the Empress wharf by the *Porto Maravilha* project, the two parties have once again joined forces and applied for another recognition from the international agency to declare the site a World Cultural Heritage, considering its value to humankind as a symbol of the African diaspora in the Americas (Vassalo & Cicalo, 2015; Guimarães, 2013). But the influence of Unesco in the project is not only in terms of the globally disputed title of World Heritage, which can highly increase a city's tourism visits (Orbaşlı & Woodward, 2009). One of the organisation's missions is to engage nations to actively promote "a cultural environment rich in diversity and dialogue, where heritage serves as a bridge between generations and peoples" (Unesco, n.d.).

It can be argued that the *Porto Maravilha* project is influenced by Unesco directly and indirectly. The influence is direct when it aspires to the organisation's official recognition and comply with the demands that come with applying for a World Heritage status. The indirect influence can be seen with the assimilation of the discourse promoted by Unesco which highlights the civic power of heritage and cultural landmarking, becoming an increasingly accepted discourse worldwide. Vassalo and Cicalo (2015), for example, point out that the growing institutional recognition of the multicultural and ethnic-racial diverse nature of Brazil in the past decades can be attributed to the influence of Unesco's ongoing global discourse around cultural diversity valorization²⁹. A direct influence can be seen (apart from the World Heritage applications), for example, in this extract from MAR's official website:

²⁹ The official acknowledgement of the cultural and ethnic diversity of Brazil can also be related to critical postcolonial influence since, as Tucker and Akama (2009) point out, the "bringing together of people from a diverse range of racial and cultural backgrounds" that was promoted by colonialist rules may lead to independent, decolonized nations to eventually present themselves in terms of heritage preservation and cultural tourism as "multiethnic and multicultural, thus transcending a straightforward colonizer/colonized dichotomy." (p. 514).

As recommended by UNESCO, MAR has activities that involve collecting, recording, researching, preserving and returning cultural property to the community — in the form of exhibitions, catalogs, and multimedia and educational programs.

(Museu de Arte do Rio, n.d.).

An example of a more indirect influence can be seen in the way the project understands culture and the role of heritage preservation. By seeing culture in a broader sense, as a way of life, "[...] historical elements of the cities are dissociated from the notion of monument and become increasingly entwined with the urban fabric"³⁰ (Pio, 2014, p.12). The official communication of *Porto Maravilha*, for instance, frequently states that the project promotes the re-encounter of the port area with the city (Porto Maravilha, n.d.), as if the port was somehow previously detached from the modern urban fabric of Rio, frozen in the past, an untouched heritage with no threads pertaining the city's contemporary life. Moreover, the valuing of cultural diversity promoted by Unesco, besides serving as a means to strengthen identities and civic empowerment, can also be connected with the notion of *intercultural city* suggested by Richards and Palmer (2010), where "the diversity of urban populations is a factor increasingly emphasised as a creative resource for cultural, social and economic development" (p. 16). A concrete expression of this discourse in the *Porto Maravilha* project can be seen in the creation of the *Etnias* (Ethnicity) mural, first idealized as a cultural attraction for the Olympic Boulevard during the 2016 Games (See Figure 24). The 2.500 m² graffiti mural — officially the biggest in the world — was painted by Brazilian artist Kobra and displays colourful portraits representing native ethnicities of each of the five continents that participated in the

³⁰ My own translation. The original text, in Portuguese, reads: "[...] elementos históricos das cidades se desvinculam da noção de monumento e se confundem cada vez mais com o traçado urbano" (Pio, 2014, p.12).

Olympics (Porto Maravilha, n.d.). According to the artist, "the idea is to show the importance of tolerating differences, the union of people, traditions and religions"³¹ (Kobra na Orla do Conde, 2016).



Figure 24. *Etnias* (Ethnicities) graffiti mural by Brazilian artist Kobra at *Orla do Conde*³². The portraits represent the native populations of the five continents participating in the Olympic Games.

More than representing cultural diversity, the choice of native ethnicities to represent each continent clearly shows the project's assimilation of Unesco's socio political responsibility attributed to culture as an instrument to give voice and identity reference to historical social minorities. Similarly, it can be argued that a power to integrate and harmonize social relations is attributed to such cultural initiatives, creating a perceived consensus over memory — although, in many cases, such consensus is but superficial and conflicts over interpretation and ownership still occur (Pio, 2014).

³¹ My own translation. The original, in Portuguese, reads: "A ideia é mostrar a importância de tolerar as diferenças, da união dos povos, dos costumes e das religiões" (Kobra na Orla do Conde, 2016).

³² Image retrieved February 25, 2017, from <http://epoca.globo.com/colunas-e-blogs/viajologia/noticia/2016/08/boulevard-olimpico-da-rio-2016-traz-novas-cores-ao-velho-cais-do-porto.html>

3. Afro-Brazilian heritage in the port area

Much of the Brazilian heritage of slavery and immigration can be traced back to the Rio de Janeiro port. Being considered the main entrance of African slaves into the Americas, the port represents a rich field for the recuperation of Afro-Brazilian heritage in the context of the instrumentalization of memory as a way to strengthen social identities, provide historical reference to minority groups, and confront racial tensions embedded in contemporary Brazilian society.

There is no official record of when transatlantic slave traffic started in Brazil, but it is estimated that since its discovery by the Portuguese, in the beginning of the sixteenth century, until 1856, one out five enslaved persons in the world had stepped over Rio de Janeiro soil (França, 2015, p. 1). For a long time, studies based on the collection of records in Brazilian ports have estimated that Rio had received a little over one million African slaves, while other ports in the country received 2.6 million (França, 2015, p. 1). However, a recent project carried out by Emory University, in the United States, is developing a detailed database of transatlantic slave trade³³ and shows that the relative number of entrances in the country might be a lot bigger than what was previously assumed. Studying records from other locations, the researchers found out that many captives were not registered on their first arrival port, in Brazil, but rather on their final destinations. With the inclusion of those records, the researchers estimate that the country has actually received around 4.8 million African captives and that 2 million of them disembarked in Rio de Janeiro (França, 2015, p. 1).

Upon arrival, those who were sufficiently strong after enduring the inhumane conditions of the journey were put for sale on the big slave trade markets set in the area. The captives were then detached from their cultural or linguistic groups and mixed with other tribes — in order to avoid communication and organisation amongst them — and put for sale to take on forced labour for the benefit of their new

³³ The project, entitled *Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database* can be accessed on the website www.slavevoyages.org.

owners. Those who arrived sick or weak were left in quarantine in the so called *Lazaretos*; while those who did not resist the journey were unceremoniously buried in cemeteries conveniently established close to the harbour (Guran *et al.*, 2016).



Figure 25. Illustration of slave market in Rio de Janeiro by German painter, Johann Moritz Rugendas, circa 1822 – 1825.³⁴

This role as a slave trade epicenter in the Americas strongly marked and still marks the area. From the colonial rule until the beginning of the Republic, Afro-Brazilian culture was consolidated and slowly entrenched itself in the national identity, with contributions in the country's traditions, religions, habits, gastronomy, language, music, rituals and the arts in general. By the nineteenth century, the Rio de Janeiro's port area could already be considered majoritarilly Afro-descendants. African captives that were not sold in the markets were left to abandonment and, soon enough, African communities started to be

³⁴ Image retrieved from the official application report for the recognition of *Cais do Valongo* as a World Heritage, coordinated by a joint effort between the municipal government of Rio de Janeiro and IPHAN, the National Historic and Artistic Heritage Institute (Guran *et al.*, 2016).

formed and established in the neighbourhood. Rio de Janeiro's port became a sort of stronghold for Afro-Brazilians, who then established cultural and religious practices based on the communitary bond of their African ancestry (Guran *et al.*, 2016). The *Cais do Valongo* (Valongo Wharf), the major entrance of slaves from the end of the eighteenth century until 1831, when transatlantic slave traffic was officially forbidden, became a reference point for the surrounding communities that were formed in the port, configuring a broad region that became known in the beginning of the twentieth century as "Little Africa" (Vassalo & Cicalo, 2015; Guran *et al.*, 2016).

In a report coordinated by IPHAN and the Rio de Janeiro municipal government requesting the status of Unesco World Heritage to the *Cais do Valongo*, Guran *et al.* (2016) formed a work team of archaeologists, anthropologists, historians and architects, producing a rich description of Afro-Brazilian life in the port, as well as a strong case for the area's heritage value as an emblematic monument of the international African diaspora memory. The work team highlights, for example, that the *Pedra do Sal* (Salt Rock) has a long history of African resistance, with communities that would shelter freed or runaway slaves, slave descendants and those that arrived from other states, migrating to the big city. It thus became a place of both residence and defiance, with African-based religious cults, black artists gatherings, and festive and mutual-support organisations (Guran *et al.*, 2016, p. 112).

By the early twentieth century, musical gatherings were strongly established as a cultural form of resistance and it was in the surrounding areas of the *Cais do Valongo* and *Pedra do Sal* that the now praised and celebrated music style samba took roots as a communitary bond against systemic oppression. Affirmation of black culture happened in the "samba circles" — now an emblematic part of the city's cultural lifestyle — as well as in religious drumming and dancing rituals of *Candomblé*³⁵ (Guran *et al.*).

³⁵ *Candomblé* is an Afro-Brazilian religion based on the syncretism between the imposed European Catholicism and African-based religions, mainly from Angola. By integrating Catholic saints to their religious cults, slave communities were able to adapt and maintain some of their own traditions, language, mythologies and rituals, masking it from the censorship of the owners and the empire, who insisted on the catechization of the African captives (Sansi, 2016).

The value of the African cultural contribution in the port area, however, took a long time to start being recognized. Still according to the work of Guran *et al.* on the port area's heritage:

At that time [early twentieth century], however, African heritage in the Afro-American culture was far from been seen with pride. It was a time when the dominating scientific line of thought advocated the hierarchy of human races and put Africans and their descendants in an inferior position. The traditional festive and religious practices of the black population were seen as manifestations of savagery and primitivism. In that sense, the modernizing and sanitarian actions of the republican governments were based on policies of repression against Afro-descendants culture and the concealment of black culture in the city.³⁶

(Guran *et al.*, 2016, p. 105)

With the intensive urban renewal reforms promoted in the beginning of the twentieth century, most famously by Pereira Passos, many black communities were dissolved as the colonial houses that sheltered them were destructed. According to Brazilian historian Carlos Eugênio Soares (2013), those communities fled to the nearby hills further consolidating the Afro-Brazilian culture in communities like the *Favela* hill — which would later have its name used to refer to the impoverished slum communities in the city —, *Pedra do Sal*, the *Cabeça de Porco* Tenement and others. The early twentieth-century urban reforms brought down the *Cais da Imperatriz* (Empress Wharf) — which had already been built over the *Cais do Valongo* in 1843, in honour of the arrival of princess Teresa Cristina, to be married to then emperor D. Pedro II —, thus once again showing the disdain for African cultural and historical references. Besides forced evictions, cultural disintegration, and an attempt to erase the colonial past, Passos

³⁶ My own translation. The original extract, in Portuguese, reads: "Naquela época, entretanto, as heranças africanas na cultura afro-americana estavam distantes de serem vistas como motivo de orgulho. Era um tempo em que o pensamento científico dominante preconizava a hierarquia das raças humanas e colocava africanos e seus descendentes em posição de subalternidade. As práticas festivas e religiosas tradicionais da população negra serão vistas como manifestações de selvageria ou primitivismo. Nesse sentido, as ações modernizantes e higienizadoras dos governos republicanos vão se pautar por políticas repressivas à cultura afrodescendente e de ocultamento da cultura negra na cidade." (Guran *et al.*, 2016, p. 105).

sanitizing initiatives also included the forced vaccination of the impoverished communities in the area. The popular uprisings that succeeded the extreme measures became thus known as *Revolta da Vacina* (The Vaccine Rebellions), when government forces were confronted by local residents (Guran *et al.*, 2016, p. 107). As Jaguaribe (2014) complementarily points out, “aside from the hygienic reasoning behind the sanitary measures, the norms and impositions of the municipality were also tinged by a desire to curtail popular culture, rowdiness, and Afro-Brazilian manifestations of culture in an attempt to instill a model of Europeanized bourgeois civility.” (p. 18).

Throughout the decades of late twentieth and twenty-first centuries, Afro-descendants presence spread more significantly to other areas of Rio, as the city grew and modernized itself, and black communities slowly conquered civil rights and more powerful roles in society. This, however, does not obliterate the fact that, until today, these communities still greatly suffer with and fight against massive impoverishment, lack of opportunities and sociopolitical representation, and the ever-present racism, a troubling inheritance of centuries of subjugation. As already mentioned in Chapter II, following the economic and prestige crisis of Rio de Janeiro between the 1970's and 1990's, the port area was constantly neglected in terms of social improvements and investments. Guimarães (2013) argues that “until the turn of the 21st century, Rio de Janeiro's Port Zone was predominantly classified by the city's moral geography as a region of prostitution, drug traffic and *favelas*.” (p. 210). The central role given to the port in the urban renewals of the 2013-2016 municipal Strategic Plan (initiated in the period 2009-2012) represents a turning point for the revitalization of the area, as well as for the resignifying, confrontation and institutionalization of Afro-Brazilian historical and cultural heritage.

More than investments and infrastructure improvements brought by the *Porto Maravilha* project, the previously discussed paradigm shift suggested by Pio (2014) regarding official perception of heritage and landmarking represent a unique opportunity for the reinterpretation and the empowerment of African memory and, consequently, Afro-descendants communities. Vassalo and Cicalo (2015), while detailing

the process that led to the officialization of the *Cais do Valongo* as part of Unesco's international Slave Route³⁷, point out that the excavation of the archeological site could only be done in the first place due to a unique momentum, when a specific context allowed it to happen. Archaeologists and academics had already requested to explore the area before, but were never granted the permission nor the financial support. Initially, the *Porto Maravilha* project had established big reforms on the area's sewage and electricity networks and the construction of a new street. It was after the insistence of interested researchers and local Afro-Brazilian communities that the old wharves area was finally excavated, in 2011. Not surprisingly, rich archaeological and historical findings were made. The Valongo and the Empress wharves were found in good conservation state, with the latter leveled 60cm on top of the other. A great number of artifacts and objects linked to colonial and slavery quotidian was also found (Vassalo & Cicalo, 2015, p. 247).

Because of the position of the two wharves, one on top of the other, a choice had to be made regarding the site's conservation (see Figure 26). The decision to prioritize the Valongo wharf can be associated to the paradigm shift proposed by Pio (2014), potentialized by civic responsibility to confront and reassess the memory of previously neglected or contested parts of history. According to Vassalo and Cicalo (2015), academics and black communities involved in the process saw in the overlapping of the wharves an unique symbolism of colonial power relations of dominance: the Empress wharf, representing the colonizing white European nobility, being built over, 'crushing', the Valongo wharf, a major reference of African slavery and an emblematic site of black resistance over the years. Local communities of Afro-descendants and black rights movements started to organise around the conservation process, becoming active participants in the decisions and interpretations made throughout the establishment

³⁷ The Unesco's Slave Route was created in 1994 and recognizes valuable memorials and heritage sites worldwide related to the transatlantic African diaspora. The aim of the project is to "encourage new research in neglected regions, to define new approaches for the teaching of this history, to elaborate new guides for the identification, preservation and promotion of sites and itineraries of memory related to the slave trade and slavery, to promote the contributions of people of African descent to the construction of contemporary societies and finally to preserve written archives and intangible heritage related to this history." (Slave Route, n.d.).

process of the heritage site. Traditional ceremonial 'washings' of the site started to be scheduled and other ritualistic or cultural traditions started to be organised around the newly established monument, like tributes in honour of ancestors and important revolutionary figures, as well as *capoeira*³⁸ circles (Vassalo & Cicalo, 2015).



Figures 26 and 27. On the left, the excavated area of the Valongo and Empress wharves, now a visitable archaeological site and part of Unesco's Slave Route since 2013. On the right, Afro-descendants community performs ceremonial rituals in honour of the ancestors that walked the Valongo wharf stones.³⁹

The patrimonialization process of the Valongo wharf was carried out by diverse groups: the municipal government, an academic community of mainly archaeologists, anthropologists and historians, and representants of local Afro-descendants communities. There is therefore, an overall consensus over the importance of the site as an important historical and cultural mark in the port area of Rio de Janeiro regarding the past of slavery and its effects on the formation of Brazilian society. There was also consensus that the site should be applied for the position of World Heritage due to its relevance in the African diaspora into the Americas. The site became part of Unesco's Slave Route in 2013 and, as requested by the organization, became also a site for ethnic tourism, further included in the African Heritage Circuit in the port area, the subject of this Chapter's critical discourse analysis.

³⁸ *Capoeira* is an Afro-Brazilian cultural manifestation developed by slaves, involving a mix of dance, music and fighting maneuvers. It was listed by Unesco as an Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2014 (Unesco, n.d.).

³⁹ Both images were retrieved from http://portomaravilha.com.br/cais_do_valongo

The transformation of the African heritage of the port area into tourist attractions can also be seen under a critical postcolonial perspective, considering "the potential of tourism to be used by postcolonial states to readdress the social, cultural and political problems of domination which have arisen through their experiences of colonialism." (Tucker & Akama, 2009, p. 513). This way, tourism of heritage and cultural landmarks that represent a 'conquered' memory against colonial discursive dominance over official history can have the potential to stimulate counter-narratives and act as reference of "being and becoming" (Tucker & Akama, 2009).

4. African Heritage Circuit: description of research material

The Historical and Archaeological African Heritage Circuit was established in November 2011 through a municipal statute, which also designated a curating working team to develop guidelines on the protection and signification of the landmarks of the Circuit. Six landmarks were selected having in mind their role in reinforcing the importance of African presence not only in the port region but in the configuration of Brazilian society and in the global context of the African diaspora. The first landmark of the Circuit is the archaeological site of the Valongo and Empress wharves, which is part of Unesco's Slave Route and currently an applicant for the World Heritage title, as mentioned before. Its relevance in the Circuit lies on its role as a slaves' disembarking and marketing area. The site also has a symbolic relevance as an emblematic place of resistance for the African and Afro-descendants communities that were later formed in the port region.

The second landmark is the *Pedra do Sal* (Salt Rock), an embankment built by slaves used originally as a place to unload the salt brought by ships docked at the port. By the eighteenth and mainly the nineteenth centuries an Afro-Brazilian community was consolidated around the area. It became a center for African cultural and religious practices, as well as for sheltering, resistance and community bond of the black, impoverished communities that served as workforce of the docklands, even after the

abolition of slavery. Dance rituals, *Candomblé* cults, drumming and musical circles took place at *Pedra do Sal*, with the gathering of important black culture figures and artists, leading to the recognition of the place nowadays as the birthplace of samba. While narrating the turbulent process initiated by local residents in the past decades to landmark the area as a *quilombola*⁴⁰ ethnic territory, Guimarães (2013) highlights that the battle for ethnic recognition involved

the plea for recognition of an ethnic territory in an urban context; the construction of a history of territory occupation based on a mythological narrative; and territorial demarcation based on a cultural heritage conceived as the remnant symbol of a generic 'black city' and, therefore, one without presumed heirs.

(Guimarães, 2013, p. 211)

The area represents not only a communitary resistance during colonial and slavery times, but also a place of resistance against constant attempts of forced evictions throughout the decades, including recently with the *Porto Maravilha* project and the gentrifying effect feared by the residents. The *Pedra do Sal* was officialized a national cultural heritage in 1984 by Inepac (State Institute of Cultural Heritage), however, a group of descendants of the original African communities of the area claims the inheritance of the material and immaterial patrimony. Fearful of possible evictions brought by the current revitalization and gentrification, they aim at transforming the site into a space of encounters of Afro-descendants in the region, celebrating their contribution to the port with the memory of samba, *Candomblé* and black labour (Guran *et al.*, 2016, p.113).

⁴⁰ *Quilombolas* were communities where African resistance took place and places where "runaway slaves lived during the colonial era". The most iconic of such spaces was the Quilombo dos Palmares, in the Northeast of Brazil, led by the emblematic revolutionary figure, Zumbi dos Palmares. A recent legal definition sets that political subjects could be entitled to the permanent ownership of the previously occupied land based on their ethnic recognition. The rhetoric used for that definition was "the right to memory" with the intention of conserving sites where "historical processes of dispossession had taken place". (Guimarães, 2013, p. 211).

The third landmark of the African Heritage Circuit is *Jardim Suspenso do Valongo* (Hanging Garden of Valongo). In this site, big slave markets were set with neighbouring shops and "fattening" houses where newly arrived captives were taken to gain weight in order to increase their value. With the Passos reforms, a landscape architect was hired to build a hanging garden in the area. Recent archaeological excavations uncovered several artifacts that narrate quotidian life during its function as a street of slave trade. A few steps away from the area is the fourth landmark of the Circuit, the *Largo do Depósito*, where stores owned by members of the business elite who controlled slave trafficking were set (Circuito da Herança Africana, n.d.).

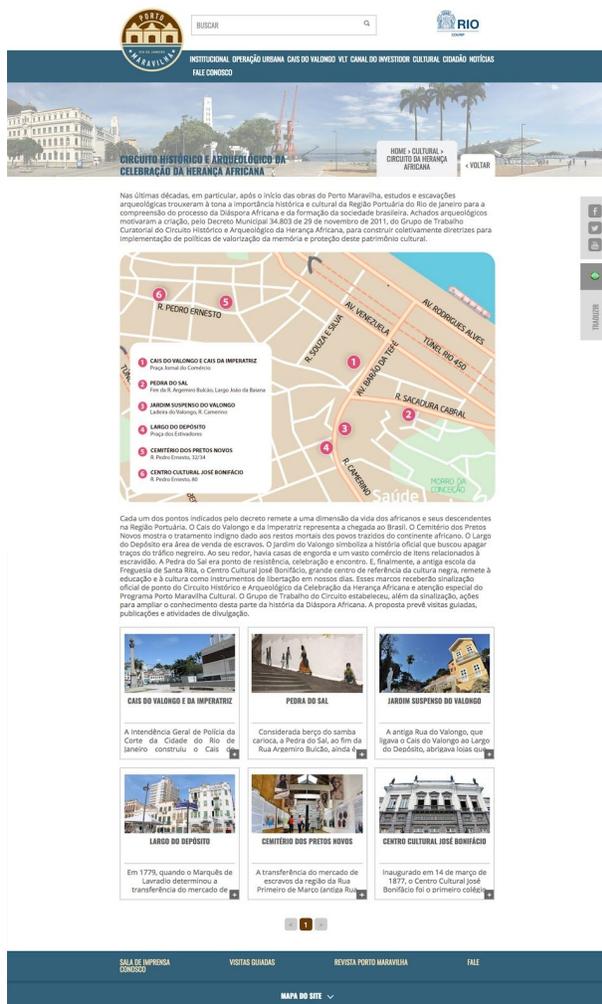
The fifth landmark is the *Cemitério dos Pretos Novos* (New Blacks Cemetery). In 1996, when doing some standard reforms in their house, a couple of residents were faced with the discovery of a significant number of human bones. It was like this, by accident, that the location of the cemetery where the newly arrived captives (referred to as "new blacks") who did not survive the journey from Africa were discarded unceremoniously. The house where the discovery was made is now the *Pretos Novos* Institute serving as a cultural center of African history, with courses, workshops and a library. According to Guran *et al.*, it is estimated that until 1831, when the Valongo Wharf was deactivated, around 20 to 30 thousand people from all ages, starting as young as 3 years-old, were buried there, making it possibly the biggest slave cemetery in the Americas.

Guran *et al.* suggest that the mortal remains found in the New Black archeological are "the testimony and the concrete proof of the terrible crime against humanity that was the transatlantic slave traffic and the slavery of Africans in the New World, giving them a unique character. They offer a powerful materiality of the crimes inherent to the trade of enslaved Africans." (2016, p. 97)⁴¹.

⁴¹ My own translation. The original extract, in Portuguese, reads: "As ossadas do sítio arqueológico Pretos Novos fornecem o testemunho e a prova concreta do terrível crime contra a humanidade que foi o comércio transatlântico negreiro e a escravização de africanos no Novo Mundo, o que lhes confere um caráter único. Elas oferecem uma poderosa materialidade aos crimes inerentes ao tráfico dos africanos escravizados." (Guran *et al.*, 2016, p. 97).

The sixth and final landmark is the José Bonifácio Cultural Centre, the first public school of Latin America, built with the purpose of educating the impoverished residents of the port area. It is now a cultural center with a long history of promoting and gathering studies and activities of the Afro-Brazilian culture (Circuito da Herança Africana, n.d.).

For the critical analysis of the African Heritage Circuit's discourse, I will use their online communication, which can be found as a section with a few pages on the *Porto Maravilha* official website: www.portomaravilha.com.br/circuito_africa. The webpage can be accessed in two versions, Portuguese and English (see Figures 28 and 29).



Figures 28 and 29. On the left, the Portuguese version of the African Heritage Circuit section on the *Porto Maravilha* website; and its English version on the right.

On the Portuguese version, the six landmarks of the Circuit are listed in small squares under an introductory text, linking to pages with further information about each of them. On the English version, on the other hand, the landmarks are listed as a continuation of the text, with a picture preceding each description as the user scrolls down the main page. The maps of each version, although visually different, have the same information.

The African Heritage Circuit section can be found as a subitem on the option 'Cultural' at the heading's blue main menu bar, in Portuguese (Figure 30). On the English version, the main menu is not translated and the available content in English is presented as a list of squares that link to the referring pages, including the African Heritage Circuit (Figure 31).

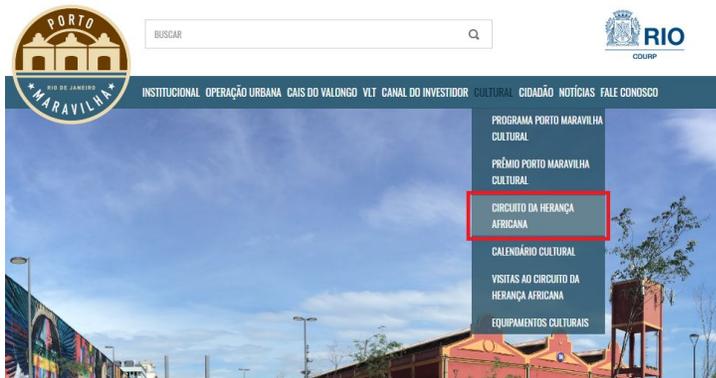


Figure 30. The link to the African Heritage Circuit page on the main menu option "Cultural", as a subitem (highlighted in red).

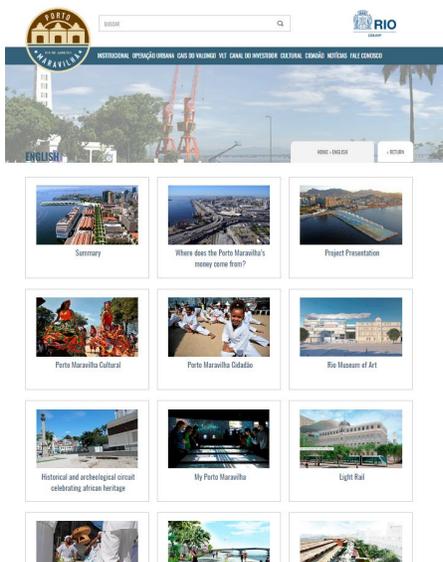


Figure 31. English version of the *Porto Maravilha* website does not have a translated main menu and lists the content available in English in squares on the main page that link to the referred translated pages.

5. Critical discourse analysis

Even before the page's visual characteristics, what immediately draws my attention is the fact that the African Heritage Circuit does not have a website of its own. Rather, it is featured as a section in the *Porto Maravilha* website, a project with a broad reach, as was mentioned before, including initiatives in urban mobility and general infrastructure, and which is ran by CDURP (Urban Development Company of the Rio de Janeiro Port), a concession under the municipality of Rio de Janeiro. This puts in evidence a strong attachment with the local government, as well as with the *Porto Maravilha* project particularly. It leads me to think that the Circuit is not seen by local authorities as an independent cultural offer, with its touristic potential fully explored. The direct attachment with the *Porto Maravilha* project limits, in my view, the possibilities of the Circuit both in its production and in its relationship with the public, since it is through websites that most people access information about places — be it with touristic intentions, for cultural and historical research or in order to engage in promoted activities or civic participation.

While this arrangement, on one hand, proves the central role given to culture and the African Heritage Circuit by the *Porto Maravilha* project, on the other hand, it restricts the Circuit's potential and public visibility. It is given a secondary attention that could have been greatly improved by the creation of an exclusive website, concentrating and giving more space for content (videos, academic studies, articles, activities calendars) and links to related institutions, activities and community organisations.

Another important remark in that sense is that the arrangement of the Circuit as a section of the revitalization project's website causes the content related to the area's African heritage to be disperse around the website's sections and not concentrated in a unique space. On the 'Institutional' option of the main menu, for example, the user is able to access articles and academic studies about the revitalisation project, many of which include historical and anthropological perspectives on the Afro-Brazilian presence in the port region. Another option of the main menu is '*Cais do Valongo*', with more detailed information

about the archaeological site of the Valongo and Empress wharves, much of which is missing in the description of the landmark in the actual African Heritage Circuit section. Moreover, the information about guided visits to the Circuit is not gathered in the same section, instead, it is presented in a different subitem of the 'Cultural' option in the main menu (Figure 32).

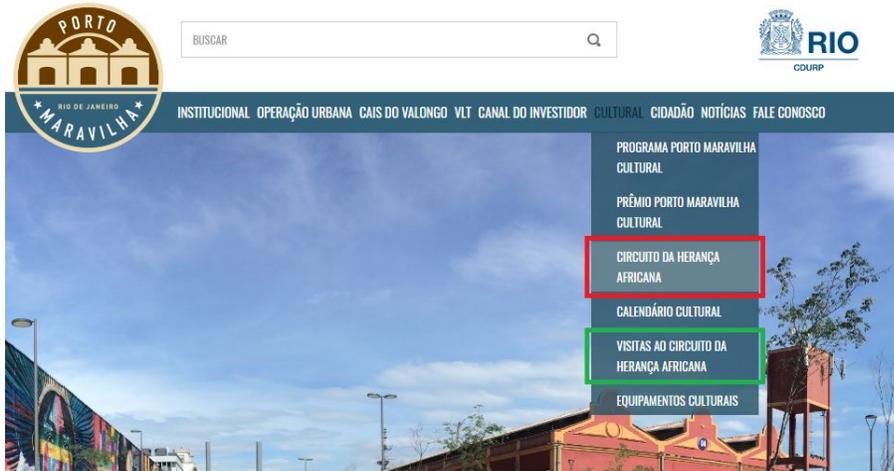


Figure 32. The link to the African Heritage Circuit section is highlighted in red and the section with information about the guided tours is highlighted in green.

Regarding the two languages in which the site is available, Portuguese and English, similar arguments used in the analysis of the ArtRio website can be made. The Portuguese version, having more content, has a more engaging relationship towards the (local) audience, while the English version only has a few sections translated. The choice of the English language to communicate with international audiences and the use of the United States flag to represent it are present, like in ArtRio's case. However, the lack of a Spanish version in this particular case, more than a missed opportunity in tourism (like with ArtRio), shows a lack of consideration for the immense relevance of the African Heritage Circuit in Latin America, considering the configuration of the slave trade system that had Rio de Janeiro as the main entrance of captives in the continent. Much of the symbolic power of the Circuit's landmarks is closely relatable to other colonized and enslaved societies and could equally serve as historical and identity reference as it does for Afro-Brazilian communities. The project could have been greatly enriched by investing in strengthening this geographical and cultural bond, leading to possible exchanges with other

countries and, why not, maybe one day even be able to extend the African Heritage Circuit with heritage routes encompassing other countries in the continent.

As for the African Heritage Circuit section specifically, although the layout differs, the content provided in the Portuguese and English versions are the same. The maps indicating the location of the landmarks are visually different from one version to the other, but the content is the same. The map of the Portuguese version is a bit 'cleaner' and more easily read, but the reason behind this difference is not clear (see Figures 28 and 29). Also, the title of the page on the English version is not well formatted in the web design, cutting off the last words (Figure 33). It can be argued that these facts show a certain lack of polishment and attention to detail in the English version, indicating that international audiences are probably not a priority.



Figure 33. Page title of the English version is cut by the misformatted design.

Moving on to the content provided in the African Heritage Circuit page, I would say that the description of the landmarks are quite small and not very detailed. With so much history behind each of them, it seems insufficient that they would be summarized in one or two small paragraphs, as is the case — with the exception of the Valongo Wharf, which has a section of its own on the website's main menu, thus not in the same section as the Circuit's overview. This once again shows how the arrangement within the *Porto Maravilha* website, instead of having one of its own, limits the Circuit's discourse. Even though it is an extremely rich field for content, full of details and historical, archaeological, sociological and anthropological discussions revolving around it, the African heritage of the port area is not sufficiently addressed because of the secondary position it is given under a bigger project. The *Pedra do Sal*

description, for example, does not mention the area's *quilombola* status, the conflicts around its patrimonialization, and the symbolic value of the embankment to the nearby communities as a place of resistance and cultural development. It does not problematize the systemic oppression suffered by the related communities and, instead, it gives a generic overview of what the landmark is, where it is located and how it gained its name.

The Valongo Wharf description, in turn, does not even mention its participation in Unesco's international Slave Route and its candidacy for World Cultural Heritage. Moreover, the very interesting process through which the archaeological excavation finally took place — as is described by Vassalo and Cicalo (2015), for instance — is not explored, nor is a more complete social and historical contextualization. The participation of the Afro-descendants communities is also not described in detail. The entry limits itself to mentioning that the archaeological site “was recovered as a result of the Porto Maravilha re-urbanization project and is now part of an open, protected monument, meeting a longstanding demand of the Black Movement.” (Circuito da Herança Africana, n.d.). By only saying that the recovering of the Valongo Wharf *met the demand* of the Black Movement, it fails to inform what other demands the movement may have, thus misleadingly implying that they have sufficiently reached a consensus in the subject.

Furthermore, along with the creation of the African Heritage Circuit through a municipal statute, it was also determined the creation of a work team for its curation. However, there is no information about this curation team anywhere in the website. As described by Guran *et al.* (2016), the team gathers representatives from the municipal government, the Black Movement, Afro-Brazilian organizations, archaeologists, anthropologists and historians, as well as important local Afro-Brazilian religious and cultural figures. On the introductory text of the Circuit, the only mention is that "The Workgroup, in addition to defining signage, has devised initiatives that will disseminate knowledge of this chapter of the history of the African Diaspora. The proposal calls for guided visits, publications and publicity activities."

(Circuito da Herança Africana, n.d.). There is no information about who are the participants of the workgroup, what is their role in the Circuit's production and what are (and where can be found) the publications and publicity activities proposed by them.

Regarding the guided tours, they are available only four times per month, with a limited number of visitors each time. This could mean an alignment with a discourse of sustainable tourism that draws attention to the possible negative impacts of overcrowding tourism around fragile archaeological monuments (Orbaşlı & Woodward, 2009). Another interesting aspect of the tour of the Circuit is that it ends at José Bonifácio Cultural Center, a well established hub for Afro-Brazilian culture. It can be argued that the decision to finish in this location can be seen as an invitation to visitors to get involved in the activities promoted by the center and engage with civic actions aimed at tackling racism and empowering black communities⁴².

One last analysis to be made is regarding the introductory text of the African Heritage circuit page. The text begins by stating that "Archeological studies and excavations conducted in recent decades — particularly after work began on Porto Maravilha — have shown how the history and culture of Rio de Janeiro's Port Region can shed light on the African Diaspora and the shaping of Brazilian society." (Circuito da Herança Africana, n.d.). This sentence implies that, only recently, with the archaeological studies, the relevance of Rio's port region in the African diaspora and in the Brazilian society was 'discovered'. It attaches a new found significance of the area to the *Porto Maravilha* project, ignoring the fact that academics, local communities and Afro-Brazilian movements have for long been insisting on the

⁴² The tour itself, therefore, creates a narrative. Although touching a dark part of history and telling a narrative of suffering, the tour finishes off with a hopeful end, represented by the Cultural Center's current role in promoting the valuing of Afro-Brazilian culture and history. The categorization of the Circuit as a form of dark tourism is thus shaken by this happy, conciliatory end, uncommon in the narratives of sites inscribed in such niche tourism practices. However, a counter-argument can be made when we understand the José Bonifácio Cultural center as a symbol of the ongoing struggles of Afro-descendants, still suffering with racism and poverty, and fighting for civic equality and reparation. In that sense, the Cultural Center places the Circuit's narrative of slavery and oppression as the root of the struggles of the present — the tragedy, therefore, is ongoing, unfinished.

recognition of the area's cultural and historical value, and even requesting the excavations for years. Describing the Circuit, the text goes on to say:

The former Valongo and Empress Wharves represent the slaves' arrival in Brazil. New Blacks Cemetery bears witness to the deplorable end assigned the mortal remains of peoples brought from the African continent. In the public square known as Largo do Depósito, Africans were sold into slavery. The Hanging Garden of Valongo symbolizes official history and its attempts to wipe out any traces of the slave traffic. Around it stood "fattening houses" and shops that did a bustling trade in slavery goods. Pedra do Sal was a place of resistance, celebration and gathering together. Lastly, the old Freguesia de Santa Rita school, which later became a major hub of black culture as the José Bonifácio Cultural Center, represents education and culture as instruments of freedom in our day.

(Circuito da Herança Africana, n.d.)

The use of elements of different historical periods in order to create a unified narrative, can be related to the continued temporality of the *Porto Maravilha* cultural initiatives that was mentioned in the beginning of this Chapter. According to Pio (2014), it is possible to see through this description that different characters, objects, places and temporalities are integrated in a "single classificatory system of the past", thus producing a narrative out of specific past events in order to create a unifying narrative that affects the present, where the heritages are given the potential to integrate and harmonize social relations (pp. 8-9).

6. Conclusion

Pio (2013) suggests that the revitalization of historic areas can become a symbol of what a city is idealizing to be, and that "through the analysis of the strategies and discourses present in such initiatives, [it is possible] to perceive in which ways the values and cultural goods are used in the legitimation and

orientation of revitalization projects, as well as in the re-elaboration of the image of Rio de Janeiro"⁴³ (p. 9). Bearing in mind the critical discourse analysis of the African Heritage Circuit online communication and the global framework developed in the beginning of this chapter, a few conclusions can be made.

First, that the African Heritage Circuit is part of a paradigm shift regarding the way local authorities understand and deal with heritage conservation. Moving beyond a *rhetoric of loss* and adding to it the notions of historic recognition of ignored aspects of the past and the importance of memory as a civic right in the sense of providing historical and identitary reference to social minorities (Pio, 2014). Moreover, the Circuit is integrated with other cultural initiatives of the *Porto Maravilha* project through rhetoric of temporal continuity, as was previously discussed, where the past, represented by the historical weight of its landmarks, meets the present and the future, represented by the requalification and building of structures for current and future use, as well as the museums MAR and *Museu do Amanhã*. Another way that this temporal rhetoric can be perceived is in the way that the Circuit integrates elements from different historical periods to build a single narrative.

Complementary to that, the seventh listed goal of the Strategic Plan mentions the intention to promote a "sense of belonging among the population". It can be argued that the Circuit does that by using heritage and memory as an instrument to promote historical and identitary references and community bond amongst the Afro-Brazilian population, as well as by adopting a conciliatory tone regarding the city as a whole.

A second conclusion is the intrinsic attachment of the African Heritage Circuit with the *Porto Maravilha* project, considering that its official online communication is arranged as a section in the revitalization project's website, with related content spread disorderly throughout other sections. While on one hand this highlights the importance given to this cultural initiatives in the context of the urban

⁴³ My own translation. The original text, in Portuguese, reads: "A partir da análise das estratégias e discursos presentes em tais iniciativas, pretendemos perceber de que maneira valores e bens culturais são utilizados na legitimação e orientação dos projetos de revitalização, bem como na reelaboração da imagem da cidade do Rio de Janeiro" (Pio, 2013, p. 9).

renewal project, on the other hand in limits the Circuit's potential for online content production and public visibility. Moreover, by being confined into the *Porto Maravilha* website, owned through a concession of the municipal government, the discourse of the African Heritage Circuit is shaped by a power dynamic that sees the municipality in a dominating position in detriment of the other participants in the production and management of the Circuit, including groups of academics, the Black Movement and other organisations related to the claims of Afro-Brazilians.

This way, the municipality (or agencies linked to the public power) has the voice to shape the Circuit's discourse according to its own interpretation and agenda. For example, there is not much information about the representatives that participate in the curating work team, nor is there any reference to the conflicts of interest and interpretation that surpassed the the landmarking process of the many of the Circuit's integrating sites. For example, the past and ongoing conflicts over ownership and interpretation at the *Pedra do Sal* landmark, as well as the struggle of local communities against evictions brought by the *Porto Maravilha* reforms and the gentrifying effect that accompanies it. These and other conflicts or claims are masked by the official communication by the portrayal of a consensus discourse on the website. Although there was, in fact, consensus between the parties involved in many aspects, including the relevance of the landmarks in the context of the African diaspora, the candidacy of the Valongo Wharf as a Unesco World Heritage and the creation of the workgroup to curate the circuit, this does not mean that all the demands of the groups involved were sufficiently met. This could be connected with what Pio (2014) defines as the creation of a "myth of social consensus 'for a greater good'", where heritage is given a civic use by being attributed the power to integrate and harmonize social relations, thus masking cultural, identity and political tensions (p. 15).

Furthermore, by being too closely attached to the revitalization project and the municipal power, the African Heritage Circuit is somehow isolated from further connections with other sectors of society, which could have been improved by an exclusive website of its own, with links and connections to other

related institutes, activities, events and more, besides having more space for the strikingly lacking amount of content for such a rich field of research.

A third conclusion reached in this chapter is influence of Unesco in the cultural landmarking strategies of the *Porto Maravilha* project. Besides strategies based on the recognition of Unesco-related titles and guidelines, the international organisation's discursive influence can also be seen, for instance, in the celebration of cultural diversity seen in the Ethnicities graffiti mural, as well as in the recognition of the local Afro-Brazilian heritage's instrumentality as a way to empower and give reference to a social ethnic minority⁴⁴. On a related note, the lack of a Spanish version of the website misses the opportunity to broaden this cultural bond and expand the reach of the localised historical assets and the discussions and emotions they arise.

Finally, one last conclusion is that a tourism strategy for the African Heritage Circuit does not seem to be fully developed, therefore failing to contribute more directly to the third goal of the municipal Strategic Plan listed on Chapter II, which aims at positioning Rio as the largest tourism hub in the Southern Hemisphere. I would argue that the lack of an exclusive website for the Circuit, with increased and more developed related content, gets in the way of fully exploring the touristic potential of the landmarks by limiting the amount and arrangement of information, as well as the public visibility.

However, by strengthening the city's port region as a cultural centre with historical, social, and cultural offers, and thus better distributing the city's cultural offers away from the traditional South Zone, as proposed by the goals IV and VII of the Strategic Plan, the Circuit's touristic potential is further explored.

⁴⁴ Even though the choice to prioritize Afro-Brazilian culture in the heritage preservation strategy of the historic center and the port area can be seen as a celebration and respect for cultural diversity, some criticism can still be made in that sense. The mentioned lack of transparency regarding the ownership and interpretation conflicts, for example, as well as the fact that the website's discourse fails to reinforce the determining role that the past of slavery and oppression has had in the current unfavorable situation of black communities in the city.

Complementarily, while it could be initially thought that by engaging with a negative and shameful aspect of the city's history the touristic potential of the Circuit would be compromised, on a further consideration, the increasing search for authentic experiences and niche tourism offers, makes it actually attractive in the global tourism market. Increased interest in dark tourism, as well as ethnic tourism, can be seen as a favorable to the Circuit's attractiveness. Ethnic tourism interest is further stimulated by the inclusion of the Valongo Wharf in Unesco's Slave Route. Moreover, the consolidation of the Circuit as a cultural offer that engages with uncomfortable and previously neglected parts of the local history enriches the city's branding narrative beyond the "Marvelous City" discourse. It moves away from the romanticized rhetoric of paradise and wonder, by embracing the tough reality of the past in all its negativity and shame.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

This research has tried to investigate the influence of the *Porto Maravilha* project on the recent rebranding strategies of Rio de Janeiro. The focus was mostly on the initiatives *Rio Capital do Turismo* (Rio Tourism Capital) and *Rio Capital da Indústria Criativa* (Rio Creative Industries Capital) proposed by the municipal Strategic Plan, “Post 2016: A more integrated and competitive Rio” (Rio de Janeiro Municipal Government, 2013). With that in mind, I have concluded that the most relevant cultural strategies that fit into those initiatives were those related to promoting events and establishing cultural landmarks in the city's port region, thus leading me to chose ArtRio and the African Heritage Circuit as the main institutions taking part in this rebranding effort.

Before critically analysing how the discourse of these two institutions contribute to the revitalization project's intention to rebrand Rio as a cultural and creativity hub, it was necessary to first establish what is the traditional image of the city and subsequently analyse how the *Porto Maravilha* project tries to change (or enhance) it.

Through literature review, it became clear that the traditional imagery of Rio is intrinsically associated with the tropical paradise discourse of the Marvelous City, which romanticizes its natural assets, tropical climate, the happiness and hospitality of the locals, as well as the sensuality of the women. In this context, the city is often promoted in a narrative of wonder, exoticism, adventure, wilderness and sensuality, within a discourse that replays postcolonial mythologies to a commonly presumed "white, western, male and heterosexual" target audience (Tucker & Akama, 2009, p. 510). This established imagery, however, becomes tainted by the inevitable association of negative aspects like violence, sexual

exploitation and poverty with the city's image worldwide, following Rio's economical decline in the 1970's and 1980's.

In recent decades, mainly since the 1990's, the city's urban imagery narrative grew more complex and diverse, relying less on the romanticized gaze, and incorporating aspects of reality and everyday life. The *carioca* lifestyle became connected to Rio's image and considered a tourist attraction of its own. The symbolic spectrum of the city starts to move beyond more traditional elements, like the South Zone beachfront, the Christ Redeemer statue on Corcovado hill, the Sugar Loaf and the Maracanã stadium. Architectural, historical and cultural aspects of the city are further explored, following globalization patterns and the demand for new tourist options, in an "ongoing process of market segmentation and product differentiation" (Jamal & Robinson, 2009, p. 6). In this context, cultural and social aspects of the city that were previously deemed negative or as 'low culture' start to integrate Rio de Janeiro's narrative. This can be seen with the incorporation of the city's *favelas* and its cultural manifestations in the official identity and tourism narratives.

With the analysis of the municipal Strategic Plan released in 2009 and reviewed in 2013, it was possible to identify, through its established goals, how the city is trying to change its urban imagery, in a strategy that had the Rio 2016 Olympic Games not only as the reason for its creation, but as the main global stage for the new desired image. The first thing to notice about the plan's cultural strategies is that it has the port area as the epicenter of such investments, with the *Porto Maravilha* project as the promoter of its revitalization. Amongst the goals linked to the cultural revitalization of the port is the wish to transform Rio into the capital of the creative industries and the largest tourism hub in the Southern Hemisphere. The plan also clearly states the goal to broaden and diversify the city's cultural offer, making them less concentrated in the South Zone, thus consolidating the port region as a new cultural center, exploring the area's historical assets, increasing access to culture for the lower-income population, welcoming major events, and increasing the number and frequency of cultural activities. The analysis of

these goals leads to the conclusion that the most recent Rio de Janeiro's municipal government's discourse aims at approximating the city's urban imagery to themes related to creativity, cultural diversity and cultural tourism, attaching its economic potential to the cultural and historical singularities of the city (Pio, 2014, p. 14).

The first cultural strategy analysed was the use of events not only to increase the number and frequency of cultural activities in the port region, but also to bring life and rhythm to the newly revitalized structures. The "global explanatory framework" (Fairclough, 1995) developed before the critical analysis of ArtRio's discourse has showed that the port's revitalization, first as an infrastructure legacy, is linked to a major sports event — the 2016 Olympic Games — and, second, as a recently enlivened public space, is linked to the promotion of a series of cultural events in the area. These strategies show that events are commonly perceived as atmosphere-building, promoting a sense of belonging and community bond through momentary feelings of *togetherness*. Attracting cultural events also provide cities an opportunity for a more flexible communication considering the relative low costs and multiplicity, which can thus target different markets. As for major events, although usually seen as a good investment in terms of bigger returns for the city, the analysis of the Rio 2016 Olympics' aftermath has shown that the positive outcomes are actually hard to measure and that the investment may not completely pay off. The compliance with strict guidelines from the organising institutions (FIFA and IOC), the difficulties to measure image impact and the possibility of failure to solve structural problems in time for the event are some of the reasons why many cities are no longer seeing major events as the best option for their rebranding strategies. Rio has struggled with all these aspects, adding to them a strong sense of *displacement* among the residents, considering the forced evictions that came with the event's preparations, the priority given to visitors and the negative way that the enormous investments made for the event were seen by locals, deemed superficial compared to the lack of investments in more urging matters like health, education and public services in general.

The critical analysis of ArtRio's website discourse has shown that the fair positions itself as a major artistic hub in the city, bringing artists and galleries together and promoting arts consumption and engagement within the general public. The website's discourse puts the fair in an expert position, as part of the decision-making in terms of what is relevant in the art world. Added by the fact that ArtRio is able to attract big crowds and that it remains active all year, it contributes to the *Porto Maravilha* project's intentions to transform the port region into a cultural center, increasing the number and frequency of the cultural offers. Interestingly, the differences between the two linguistic versions of the website, English and Portuguese, has shown that international audiences are mostly targeted as exhibitors, with less content available and less engaging activities. This could suggest that the intention to boost (international) tourism is not a priority in the fair's communication, being further enhanced by the lack of a Spanish version, considering Brazil's geography and the official data on international tourists' profile. This would mean a missed opportunity in terms of the revitalization project's goal to turn the city into a tourism hub. However, it can be argued that by prioritizing locals, the tourism appeal may come exactly from how important and engaging the fair is to the city's residents (Quinn, 2009).

The event further contributes to the municipal Strategic Plan by establishing public-private partnerships (the two main sponsors are the bank Bradesco and the Brazilian Ministry of Culture), by stimulating entrepreneurship and the creative economy (through partnerships with SEBRAE and FIRJAN), and finally by increasing access to the arts by the general public, including lower-income communities (through their fair price entrance fees and their Connections programs, that take arts to public spaces and poorer communities, and offer free lectures and workshops). It can be concluded that ArtRio broadens the city's symbolic references, taking it beyond the Marvelous City discourse and the spatial concentration in the city's South Zone. It seems to positively contribute to the branding of the port area as a cultural and creativity hub.

The second cultural strategy analysed was the use of cultural landmarking and heritage preservation to broaden and renew Rio de Janeiro's cultural offers. The global explanatory framework developed before the critical analysis of the African Heritage Circuit's discourse has shown that monuments and landmarks are usually *polyphonic* (Vassalo & Cicalo, 2015), being subjected to multiple interpretations by different social groups, thus often leading to conflicts over ownership and the official framing of their cultural or historical relevance. As perceptions of value are variable, the significance and meaning of heritage may change through time. The *Porto Maravilha* project has relied on the instrumentalization of culture to pursue its branding goals. The creation of the *Museu do Amanhã* (Museum of Tomorrow), for example, represents the major visual symbol of the cultural landmarking of the port area. The signature architecture of the museum provides a memorable symbolic reference to Rio's urban imagery, while its futuristic design and curatorship provide a narrative of optimism regarding the area's modernization and revitalized status. There is a clear articulation between past, present and future in the cultural landmarking initiatives at the port region. The MAR (Rio Arts Museum) for instance, integrates two heterogeneous building from different historical periods, while its curatorship provides a transversal reading of the city's history.

Furthermore, the heritage preservation strategies of the *Porto Maravilha* project represent a paradigm shift in the way local authorities deal with the subject (Pio, 2014). Although it still sees the risk of losing historical references as the main drive for conservation initiatives, the rhetoric is added by a civic responsibility attributed to cultural heritage sites: to reveal forgotten elements of history, and to promote debates around the reinterpretation of the memory and identity reference of specific groups, mainly social minorities. Heritage is given the power to harmonize and integrate social relations, building a temporal continuity between diverse elements of the past in a single narrative that is articulated to the present and the future. The choice to focus on the Afro-Brazilian past of the port area highlights these discourses in the *Porto Maravilha* project. The exploration and 'rescue' of the relevance of Rio de

Janeiro's port in the global context of the African diaspora puts in evidence a wish to promote multiculturalism, as well as to diversify and add a level of authenticity to the city's cultural offers, embracing its already existing singularities. Considering the colonial and republican past of slavery and systemic oppression, the establishment of African heritage landmarks opens a dialogue between the effects of the past in the current situation of Afro-descendant communities, providing historical and identity reference and serving as symbols for sociopolitical claims.

The investigation of the cultural landmarking initiatives of the revitalization project has also shown the influence of international agencies, mainly Unesco, in the project's strategies and discourse. The organisation's guidelines are often put to action, and its official recognition in the form of titles is also greatly valued, as can be seen with the inclusion of the Valongo Wharf in the international Slave Route and its candidacy for the status of World Cultural Heritage.

The critical analysis of the African Heritage Circuit's online discourse has shown that its intimate relationship with the *Porto Maravilha* project and thus with the municipal government can be seen as constraining. The lack of an independent website limits the Circuit's discourse to the prevalence of the municipal power influence over the contributions of other interested agents involved in its production and management, such as the Black Movement, representatives of the academic community (mainly archaeologists, historians and anthropologists) and Afro-Brazilian cultural organisations. It also limits the amount and organisation of the content. The Circuit's online discourse fails to give voice to dissonant perspectives over the landmarks, thus promoting a desired consensus over their interpretation.

The tourism interests behind the Circuit are also not fully explored, since information about the guided tours is not clearly arranged, the English version of the website seems to show a lack of polish and, importantly, the content is not translated to Spanish, thus failing to relevantly reach out to a Latin American audience that shares the historical weight of a colonised past based on African slavery. The African Heritage Circuit, as a tourist attraction, can be seen under the spectrum of dark and ethnic tourism

practices, since it engages with a tragic and oppressive past against African ethnicity. Bearing in mind the increased relevance of these niche practices in the global tourism market, the Circuit positively contributes to the Strategic Plan's goal of promoting tourism and establishing the port as a cultural center, engaging with its history and offering non-mainstream cultural offers. However, as was concluded, this tourism potential does not seem to be fully developed. The engagement with negative and previously neglected parts of the local history also enriches the city's branding narrative beyond the romanticized "Marvelous City" discourse, embracing crude aspects of reality.

On a last note, there are a few overarching discourses that came up quite often during this research. It is thus possible to say that both the event-led and heritage-led strategies of the *Porto Maravilha* project aspire to and are inserted in a broader context where the notion of *creative city* is increasingly accepted and adopted around the globe. Hartley *et al.*, while quoting cultural economist David Throsby, suggest that

The concept of creative city describes an urban complex where cultural activities of various sorts are an integral component of the city's economic and social functioning. Such cities tend to be built upon a strong social and cultural infrastructure; to have relatively high concentrations of creative employment; and to be attractive to inward investment because of their well-established arts and cultural facilities.

(Hartley *et al.*, 2013, p. 45)

A growing focus on urban quality of life and the sectors and activities that support it has led to the valuing of the creative economy as drive of economic revamp, cultural relevance and competitiveness in the global market of investments, tourists and qualified workforce. The widely accepted work of Richard Florida (2002) has called attention to the importance of attracting a creative class as essential in the formation and consolidation of 'creative cities', as well as the investment in the creative clustering of businesses and small enterprises. The *Porto Maravilha* project has some initiatives in that sense,

considering for example the association of ArtRio with the business-supporting organisations SEBRAE and FIRJAN, and the ColaborAmerica event, aimed at gathering social and digital innovators in order to promote a new economy in Latin America, which took place in the port area in 2016. Moreover, an investment in attracting creative businesses to the port area can also be perceived, especially in the form of creative collectives that serve as hubs, co-working spaces, consultants, accelerators and incubators of smaller enterprises related to culture and creativity. A few examples are the collectives Rio Criativo, GOMA, and Coletivo do Porto. Due to time and framing restrictions, this research was not able to analyse the entrepreneurial aspects of the cultural strategies promoted by the port's revitalization project. Further academic investigation on this topic would relevantly complement this research and is very much encouraged.

Moreover, it is important to point out that the same restrictions have led to many interesting aspects of the *Porto Maravilha* project to be left out. Given its dimensions within Rio de Janeiro's urban planning, it also involves many complex and interdisciplinary aspects. For example, the effects on the city's economy, political controversies, a management model based on public-private partnerships, the area's gentrification, environmental issues and further racial and socio-cultural tensions. Although extremely relevant in the overall understanding of the project and the city's urban identity, these discussions go beyond the scope of this research. Another enriching input would have been the collection of quantitative and qualitative data regarding the image perception of the area as a cultural and creativity hub, as well as the opinions of residents about the changes promoted in their neighborhoods.

On a critical reflexion of this work, it is important to point out that, the need for a defined framing lead to a very particular view on the subject. The critical analysis, therefore, has relied solely on discursive practices of only two selected institutions, while focussing only on their online communication. The actual experiences *in loco* were missed out, the human interactions and the discourses present on the museums, the events and the landmarks were not analysed. Interviews and data collection were not

conducted to have a more direct input of the discourses of those involved. The very complex aspects of the port's history and the development of Rio's cultural identity also had to be framed, leaving out interesting details.

Nevertheless, the framing of this research, being justified by its relevance in the *Porto Maravilha* project, was able to provoke very interesting discoveries on the subject, as well as relevant arguments and conclusions. This research has positively surprised me with the amount of subjects that led on to further questionings and insights at every corner, as much as unlikely connections one might not have considered on a superficial glance. With this work, I hope to instigate further academic investigation on the subject and, therefore, I emphatically encourage new inputs and analyses that could relevantly complement, contest or enrich the arguments here presented.

That is why I believe, in conclusion, that the *Porto Maravilha* project presents a very interesting and rich field for the study of place-making in the contemporary globalised scenario. Although the revitalization of neglected areas through the instrumentalization of culture and creativity is a common branding strategy, Rio de Janeiro's port has shown itself quite unique. With singular interactions of memory, past and social bonds, this place stands out as a filter through which its people are starting to project an ideal of the future. If, in its creation, the port was a receiver of ships set to discover and explore the inner lands, it now sets itself as the one to embark on a navigation: one towards a reimagined identity, with the weight of history not as an anchor, but rather, as a propeller.

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