Accumulation by Dispossession through Sports Mega-Events

The case of Vila Autódromo and the creation of the Rio 2016 Olympic Park

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Abstract
The theoretical framework of accumulation by dispossession allows for a critical examination of urban development projects within neoliberalism (Harvey, 2009; Swyngedouw, Moulaert & Rodriguez, 2002). Within the same neoliberal paradigm, sports mega-events have come to play a significant role for urban regeneration and policy-making (Hall, 2006). Meanwhile attending to the well-documented cases of mass-evictions and reduction of standard housing rights as a recurrent consequence of cities hosting such events (Blunden, 2012), we believe that such a critical examination is arguably important in order to do justice to these kinds of urban regeneration projects. In this paper we analyse, by a case study approach, how mega-events amplify and accelerate the process of accumulation by dispossession. We attend to the development of the Olympic Park and Olympic Village, Barra da Tijuca, in preparation for the Rio 2016 Games, as well as the neighbouring community of Vila Autódromo. By analysing different types of source material, we discuss how the mechanisms of privatisation and entrepreneurialism are reflected in our case; understood as two important mechanisms that facilitate the process of accumulation by dispossession (Harvey, 2009).

Keywords: neoliberalism, accumulation by dispossession, entrepreneurialism, privatisation, mega-event, urban development project, eviction, informal settlement.
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1 Introduction

Rio de Janeiro has been selected as the city to host the final of the FIFA World Cup 2014 and the Summer Olympics in 2016. These two events are commonly referred to as sports mega-events, for which Michael Hall (2006, p.59) provides us with a definition: “[mega-events], otherwise referred to as hallmark or special events, are major fairs, festivals, expositions, cultural and sporting events which are held on either a regular or a one-off basis. Mega-events have assumed a key role in urban and regional tourism marketing and promotion as well as wider urban and regional development strategies”. The prefix ‘mega’ has been added to ‘event’ or ‘project’ to underline the large amount of capital and labour that they come to absorb (Swyngedouw, Moulært & Rodriguez, 2002; Hall, 2006). Hall (2006, p.59) further argues that “mega-events can be regarded as one of the hallmarks of modernity and have long managed to integrate industrial and corporate interests with those of government with respect to urban development and imaging”. For the time these events last, they are the focus of attention in media, politics and economics, increasing movements of capital, companies’ revenues and the publicity for the host cities (Hall, 2006).

Thus, since the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles, sports mega-events like the Olympics and the World Cup have been presented by authorities and the media as great opportunities for regional economic growth (Gratton et al., 2001). Prior to this period, these events were commonly seen as economic burdens for the hosting cities (Gratton et al., 2001). From then onwards, these events are attributed with potential economic benefits, arguing that such events will attract inward investments to a city and provide thousands of jobs, compensating the often extremely high costs of hosting the competitions (Gratton et al., 2001; Hall, 2006). This potential profitability is in ‘economic impact theory’ related to the ‘regenerative’, ‘multiplier’ or ‘spillover’ effects that compensate the large investment (Crompton, 2001; Gratton et al., 2001). Furthermore, applied in an economic discourse on development in third world countries, these mega-events have sometimes even been declared as policies for poverty reduction in cities of the global south (Lee & Taylor, 2005; Matheson & Baade 2004).

Nevertheless, this vision of the events has generated criticism by some authors. On one hand, these regenerative effects of mega-events on regional economies have been contested by various researchers, which have reviewed urban economic impacts of such events, showing that the promises of long-term job-creation and economic growth are variable and often difficult to ascertain (Humphreys & Prokopowicz 2007; Whitson & Horne 2006; Owen 2005; Black & van der Westhuizen 2004; Matheson & Baade, 2004; Home & Manzenreiter 2004; Whitson 2004; Emery 2001; Jones 2001; Higham 1999; Pillay & Bass, 2008).

On the other hand, authors like Schimmel (2001) have criticised ‘economic impact theory’ for describing cities as uniform entities that represent the common interests of all its residents, regarding all citizens as uniform beneficiaries of these events. Brenner & Theodore (2002, p.355) characterise this “uneven development as endemic to capitalism as an historical-geographical system, constituting a basic geographical medium through which intercapitalist competition and class struggle are fought out; and
it is an evolving spatial-institutional scaffolding within which processes of devalorization and revalorization unfold”. Following this critical theory approach, Swyngedouw, Moulaert & Rodriguez (2002) argue that urban mega-events have been an important part of such neoliberal uneven development process, while other researchers have argued that sports mega-events have the potential to reproduce and amplify ‘ neoliberal’ mechanisms, which these researchers consider to be a source of uneven geographical development (Hiller, 2000; Schimmel, 2001; Hall, 2001; 2006; Gaffney, 2010; Vanwynsberghe et al., 2013).

In connection to the uneven geographical development, Blunden (2012) concludes — after comparing several case studies— that the “normal outcome of the Olympics” is “deterioration of affordability and increase in eviction/relocation for low to median-income residents” (p.530). A report by the international NGO Center of Housing Rights and Evictions on the subject of mega-events and housing rights in 2007 supports Blunden’s claims by providing well-documented examples of the direct impacts of sport mega-events and the Olympics on local communities in the form of forced evictions and repressions on standard housing (Cohre, 2007). According to their recordings, over 20 percent of the global forced evictions in 2004 were caused by mega-events (Cohre, 2007, p.16). In relation to the legacy of the Olympic Games in this context, the publication reaches the following conclusion:

Overall, from the first city studied in this publication, Seoul (host of the 1988 Olympics), to Beijing (the upcoming host of the 2008 Olympics 20 years later), we can see patterns of forced evictions preceding the hosting of the Olympic Games. In most Olympic host cities we can also see evidence of escalating housing costs, leading to a reduction in the availability of affordable housing (particularly evident in Barcelona, Atlanta and Sydney) and absolute declines in the level of public housing stock and low cost housing in general (evident in every Olympic Host City studied, from Seoul to London). In each case, those who are particularly vulnerable to the effects of these impacts are the marginalised groups such as low-income earners, those with insecure tenure, and ethnic minorities (for example, the urban poor in Seoul, low-income earners and the elderly in Barcelona, African-Americans in Atlanta, tenants on short term tenure in Sydney, the Roma in Athens, the poor in Beijing, public housing residents, Romani Gypsies and Travellers in London, and migrants in Beijing (Cohre, 2007, p.16)

In the case of Brazil, mass-evictions were confirmed by a UN-report as early as 2009, relating these to the construction of new infrastructure for the 2014 FIFA World Cup and the 2016 Summer Olympics (Rolnik, 2009). The same report concludes that most of the people affected by these evictions are to be found among the country’s many ‘favela’ dwellers¹ (Rolnik, 2009).

**Problem statement:** According to Harvey (2009), uneven geographical development plays a central role in the dynamics of capital accumulation; and one of the forms of

¹ From here on, we will use the terms ‘favela’ and ‘informal settlements’ interchangeably. We find neither one to be fully satisfactory. On the one hand, we acknowledge that ‘favela’ has common negative connotations to words such as slum and shanty town. One could also argue that this word does not pay attention to the diversity within and among these neighbourhoods (Perlman, 1979). On the other hand, we find ‘informal settlements’ to be a complicated term with juridical meaning. One could argue that ‘informal’ does not pay attention to the diversity in (legal) land and housing rights among dwellers in these neighbourhoods.
capital accumulation is accumulation by dispossession (Harvey, 2009). Since sports mega-events have the potential to reproduce and amplify uneven geographical development through the use of certain neoliberal mechanisms (Gaffney, 2010; Harvey, 2009), we argue that these events have also the potential to accelerate and amplify the process of accumulation by dispossession. Whereas previous case studies and research establishing the “increasing on evictions” linked to preparations for sports mega-events (Blunden, 2012) do not posit their findings within the process of accumulation by dispossession, we will attempt to fill this gap by describing these trends in our thesis. Thus, the thesis will focus on these processes within the neoliberal project, as the main drivers behind the evictions in the favelas. The concept of ‘accumulation by dispossession’ will be explained in more detail in the later section of our ‘theoretical framework’ (4.).

The analysis of concrete mechanisms of the neoliberal project will provide the necessary information for evaluating the trends that help or mould this specific accumulation by dispossession process. The focus will be set then on two mechanisms commonly explored by different authors within critical urban theory as basic features in neoliberalism (Harvey, 2006; Purcell, 2008; Dannestam, 2008; Swyngedouw et al., 2002): entrepreneurialism and privatisation. These two mechanisms will form the base of our analysis for establishing how the accumulation by dispossession process is formed here and how it is related to evictions.

Case study: Due to the limited time and space for this thesis, the study is restricted to a specific area in Rio de Janeiro. In the neighbourhood of Barra da Tijuca, 30 kilometres from downtown Rio, the main new infrastructure for the 2016 Olympics will be constructed. This cluster of new infrastructure is called the Olympic Park, and it will be located next to a neighbourhood of informal settlements called Vila Autódromo, and a couple of kilometres from the Olympic Village, another important development for the Games. The geographical proximity between the Olympic developments and Vila Autódromo is the main initial motive for choosing this case. We will motivate in depth the reasons for the selection and delimitation of the case when we present it in the method section (2).

Epistemological standpoint: The limited space of the thesis makes necessary to set an epistemological standpoint for the analysis of our case. We are aware of the fact that different approaches can be useful for the analysis of mega-events. Depending on the focus, the information provided by each approach can be valuable regarding certain aspects of these events, but we decided to use critical urban theory as our theoretical framework. In line with Brenner (2009), we consider that “each of the four elements within critical urban theory —its theoretical character; its reflexivity; its critique of instrumental reason; and its emphasis on the disjuncture between the actual and the possible— requires sustained engagement with contemporary patterns of capitalist urbanization”. Thus, we consider that this approach helps our aim of conducting a critical research on mega-events as neoliberal projects, which can offer valuable information on their relationship to evictions. Using critical urban theory as our main analytical framework, we will focus on the accumulation by dispossession process previously stated.
Aim: The introduction leads to the aim(s) of the study. According to a UN-report in 2009, forced evictions have been happening in Brazil in connection to the preparations for the upcoming sports events (Rolnik, 2009). For personal motives we wanted to gain more knowledge on this issue. But it is not only to satisfy curiosity that we have chosen to pursue this study. It also follows from what we view as social motives and for the purpose of contributing to the understanding of a social problem (Blaikie, 2009, p.47). We assume that forced evictions are a social problem and we wish to contribute to a deeper understanding of the patterns and dynamics linked to them. Finally, this study has also an academic purpose. As we have decided to do a case study, we expect to gain deeper knowledge on how evictions occur in one selected favela in connection to main infrastructures of the Rio 2016 Olympics. The academic purpose of this study is not to draw any general conclusions applicable to every mega-event and every informal settlement, but to contribute to the research subject field by providing distinctive and contextual knowledge from our case study, which can offer new tools and understanding for analysing other similar cases.

1.1 Research questions

How do mega-events amplify and accelerate the process of accumulation by dispossession in this case? To be able to answer this question, we need to answer a second research question: how are the neoliberal mechanisms of entrepreneurialism and privatisation implemented in this case?

2 Method

2.1 Methodological approach

As we want to investigate a previous and contemporary phenomenon (in our case, the process of accumulation by dispossession) from a new perspective and within its real life context, we argue, supported by Yin (Yin, 1994, p.13) and Blaikie (2009), that a case study approach will help us to do so. Our research tries to “produce understanding rather than an explanation, by providing reasons rather than causes” (Blaikie, 2009, p. 89) of importance to our research question, which we will do in the analysis. In order to do this, the analysis requires to focus “on actors, motives and meanings” for our case study inquiry and for the collection of data (Blaikie, 2009, p. 89).

2.2 The scope of our research

VanWynsberghe et al., (2013, pp. 2075-2076) characterise a case study as “a transparadigmatic and transdisciplinary heuristic that involves the careful delineation of the unit of analysis”. The focus will be set on the informal settlement Vila Autódromo and the developments for the Olympic Park and the Olympic Village for the Summer Olympics 2016. The case was delimited attending to a geographical criteria based on the proximity between the two developments and the informal settlement. The main reason for choosing the Olympic Park and the Olympic Village was that they are specific and essential developments for holding the Games, while the main reason for choosing Vila Autódromo as the informal settlement related to these projects was its proximity to
these developments. This informal settlement is located in-between the Olympic Park and the Olympic Village, next to the first one and a couple of kilometres from the second, which makes this favela directly linked to developments related to these mega-events and relevant to answer our research questions. A second reason for choosing Vila Autódromo is that we were informed, first by the media and later by reading previous research (Sorensen, 2013), that threats for eviction have intensified since the city won the bid for the Olympic Games.

Our research follows a community case study approach that includes a “broadened” scope of research (Berg & Lune, 2004). In our case this “broadened scope” translates into an in-depth investigation of both Vila Autódromo and the Olympic projects mentioned. We believe that such a broadened case study allows for a more “[...] holistic description and explanation” (Berg & Lune, 2004, p.251). The reason for this broadening of scope is our realisation that different areas of social life are interconnected and that “[...] often one of them cannot be adequately understood without consideration of the others” (Berg & Lune, 2004, p.252). At the same time, we do not suggest that our perspective is exhaustive. The more we learn about the situation surrounding our case, the more we agree with what Sorensen (2014) stated in the interview we had with him: that there are ”many different angles to what is happening in Vila Autódromo”.

2.3 Measures for collecting data

We will collect information that identifies the main actors, their interaction and their interests in the area. Our research will be qualitative and in our case study approach we will make use of a variety of measures to gather our data (Berg & Lune, 2004). These measures can be divided into two kinds of sources for collecting data: primary and secondary sources. We have created a table presenting all sources and for what specific aspects of our object of study each source has been considered.

2.3.1 Primary sources

Primary sources “[...] involve the oral and written testimony of eyewitnesses [...]]” (Berg & Lune, 2004, p.237). In our case, the primary sources consist of official documents and key informants interviews and questionnaires.

- **Official Documents**

  As our research evolved, and in line with previous research on neoliberal mega-events, our first main body of primary sources is formed by three kinds of documents: (1) official documents from the authorities directly related to the projects of the Olympic Park and the Olympic Village, and to housing issues; (2) official documents by private companies in charge of these two developments; (3) official document produced by AMPAVA (Association of Vila Autódromo Residents): Plano Popular created by the collaboration of civil actors and organisations. This document was regarded as providing residents’ and activists’ perspectives on the local development linked to our case (Plano Popular, 2013).
• **Questionnaires**
  Other primary sources were provided by questionnaires (see Appendix, Questionnaire). When selecting the subjects for the questionnaires we grouped them into two different categorical groups, depending on the information that we expected to collect and their linkage to the case: (1) researchers that have studied the mega-events in Brazil and/or Vila Autódromo; (2) authorities related to the projects in the frame of the mega-events or in charge of housing policies.

• **Interview**
  We held a personal interview with Danish researcher Malte Sorensen, who did a research on Vila Autódromo’s Plano Popular. Interview was unstructured and open. It was held in May 03 2014. (Sorensen, 2014)

The initial plan was to carry out a fieldwork in Brazil but, for diverse reasons, that was not feasible. Due to the impossibility of meeting all the interviewees, all questionnaires were sent via e-mail, which reduced the amount of primary data collected. The limited information collected through primary sources made it necessary for an adaptation, which meant that we chose to increase the number of secondary sources included for our research. In conclusion, with these primary sources we have collected first hand experiences and information related to our case study. For the interview and questionnaire with researchers who have done fieldwork in Vila Autódromo, we focused on their perspective on how the evictions are taking place, their experience of the situation in the field, and their perspective on how the projects of the Olympic Park and Olympic Village affect the favela. From the companies and authorities we tried to collect information on their relationship to Vila Autódromo, how they decide on the evictions, and how they frame the actions and developments that affect Vila Autódromo (Appendix, questionnaire). For a detailed overview of all the primary sources for this research, see the table on the next page (Table 1, primary sources).

2.3.2 **Secondary sources**

Secondary sources “involve the oral or written testimony of people not immediately present at the time of a given event” (Berg & Lune, 2004, p.237). We gathered info from researchers, residents, authorities, companies and activists, collected by media or other actors like social movements or NGOs. We are also aware that secondary sources have to be considered carefully, since they can be biased. During the initial stage of our research a complementary motivation for our decision to include Vila Autódromo in our object of study came up: in contrast to other favelas in Rio, as Sorensen points out (2013, pp.33-34), a number of academics have attended to the development in this favela recently. At the time when we realised that we would not be able to go to Barra to do fieldwork, we decided instead to make use of the existing fieldwork that previous researchers had already done in this community (Olausen, 2012; Sorensen, 2013; Braathen et al., 2013). This decision attended, first
of all, to the limited time we had for completing this thesis (10 weeks) and to the fact that we were having a broadened case study approach, which we felt would

Table 1: Primary Sources

Official Documents and information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EOM: public enterprise managing the projects related to the games</td>
<td>Info on the projects, costs, budget and actors involved</td>
<td>website</td>
<td>year 2014</td>
<td>Cidadeolimpica, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMH, housing department of the municipality of Rio de Janeiro</td>
<td>Info on the program Morar Carlota</td>
<td>website</td>
<td>year 2011</td>
<td>SMH, 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazilian Olympic Committee</td>
<td>Candidature file for the Rio 2016 Olympic games</td>
<td>Report found online</td>
<td>year 2009</td>
<td>Brazilian Olympic Committee, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The International Olympic Committee</td>
<td>&quot;IOC tells Rio 2016 that there is not a moment to lose&quot;</td>
<td>website</td>
<td>23/04/2014</td>
<td>IOC, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carvalho Hasenk</td>
<td>Plans of the company and involvement in the development</td>
<td>website</td>
<td>year 2014</td>
<td>Carvalho Hasenk, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riomais</td>
<td>Info on the development plans and accountant info of the company for the year 2013</td>
<td>website</td>
<td>year 2014</td>
<td>Riomais, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iiapura</td>
<td>Info on the development</td>
<td>website</td>
<td>year 2014</td>
<td>Iiapura, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlos Paschal: President of the Pura</td>
<td>Description of plans for the area</td>
<td>Presentation found online</td>
<td>November 2012</td>
<td>Paschal, 2012</td>
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</table>

Questionnaires:

<table>
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<th>Source</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Einar Braathen</td>
<td>Professor who have done field work and research on Vila Autódromo</td>
<td>e-mail</td>
<td>Reply received in March 2014</td>
<td>Braathen, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-municipality of Barra da Tijuca</td>
<td>Sub-municipality where our case is located</td>
<td>e-mail</td>
<td>Reply in March 2014, only question 9 and 10 answered</td>
<td>Barra da Tijuca, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EOM</td>
<td>Public enterprise managing the projects related to the games</td>
<td>e-mail</td>
<td>Reply in April 2014, some general info, without answering the questions</td>
<td>EOM, 2014</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Interviews:

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<th>Source</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mads Sorensen</td>
<td>Research on Vila Autódromo's Plane Popular</td>
<td>Personal interview</td>
<td>23/04/2014</td>
<td>Sorensen, 2014</td>
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</table>
include much additional and time-consuming research. When using secondary sources it will be clearly stated, and anytime a source opinion is used it will be mentioned. As common for community case studies (Berg & Lune, 2004, p.262) we will also make use of maps, which will be presented in the text body. Thus, we can group our secondary sources as follow:

- Fieldwork studies done by previous researchers
- Multimedia/YouTube videos
- Information from activists websites
- News from the media

For a detailed overview of all the secondary sources for this research, see the table on the next page (Table 2, secondary sources).

3 Theoretical framework

The main theoretical framework for this study will be provided by critical urban theory. As argued in the introduction, this approach offers the necessary tools for analysing and describing the trends and patterns in the case from a critical point of view. Within this tradition, David Harvey (1987; 2006; 2009; 2013) has been one of the most important authors identifying the processes behind the neoliberal project. The role of urban development for capital surplus absorption, the process of commodification and the process of accumulation by dispossession constitute some of his most important contributions. As explained in the introduction, this thesis will focus on his concept of accumulation by dispossession (Harvey, 1987; 2006; 2009).

3.1 Accumulation by dispossession

In The 'new' imperialism: accumulation by dispossession, Harvey (2009) develops Marx’s theoretical concept of ‘primitive accumulation’ in capitalism. Here, Harvey (p.74, 2009) argues that “[a] general re-evaluation of the continuous role and persistence of the predatory practices of ‘primitive’ or ‘original’ accumulation within the long historical geography of capital accumulation [...] is very much in order”, meaning that such practices continue to form a key aspect of today’s capitalism. He underscores his argument in the subsequent sentence: “Since it seems peculiar to call an ongoing process ‘primitive’ or ‘original’ I shall, in what follows, substitute these terms by the concept of ‘accumulation by dispossession’” (p.74, 2009). This process works as a main driver to assure the continuation of the neoliberal project as a class project and it finds its translation into many neoliberal processes and policies (Harvey, 2006). During this 'neoliberal,' period in the history of capitalism (Harvey, 2006), the enhancement of ‘neoliberal policies’ have contributed to the creation of new mechanisms for accumulation by dispossession (Harvey, 2009). Thus, within neoliberalism, this process of accumulation by dispossession is carried out mainly through practices of privatisation, commodification, financialization, entrepreneurialism, private-public management, manipulation of crises and state reforms (Harvey, 2009), which allow some wealthy sectors to generate rents by appropriating public assets or expelling
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<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fieldwork studies by previous researchers</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rio de Janeiro: Favelas purple and recent social mobilisation</td>
<td>Research sent by Frans Brakken, one of the authors.</td>
<td></td>
<td>year 2013</td>
<td>Brakken et al., 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Planning as resistance to forced removals: The Olympics in Rio de Janeiro</td>
<td>Research on Vila Autódromo's Plane Popuz by researcher Mette Sørensen</td>
<td>Online Master Thesis</td>
<td>year 2013</td>
<td>Sørensen, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Information from activists websites</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>ReconnWith</td>
<td>NGO social media on social and political issues in the city of Rio</td>
<td>Blog</td>
<td>2011; 2012; 2014</td>
<td>Cosentino, 2011; Steiker-Ginsberg, 2013, 2014; Magalhães, Varese &amp; de Pente, 2014; Steiker-Ginsberg &amp; Pante, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Multimedia</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cassius37</td>
<td>Plans for the Trans-olimpica highway/explained by an engineer working for the Municipality. Although the source is non-official, the video has the official logo and features. This made us think that it is an official video not available now through official sources.</td>
<td>Youtube Video</td>
<td>January 2012</td>
<td>Cassius37, 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>News from the media</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estadão: São Paulo newspaper</td>
<td>Article that reports on relationship between Mayor Paes and campaign donors.</td>
<td>Online newspaper</td>
<td>year 2011</td>
<td>Junqueira &amp; Sighossy, 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Today</td>
<td>Interview with IOC Vice President</td>
<td>Online newspaper</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Whitaker, 2014</td>
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low-income classes. Eviction of informal residents for liberating land to be developed would be an example of these dynamics.

Due to the limited scope of this thesis, since we are doing a case study of a very specific area and a very specific topic, of the previously mentioned practices, we will focus on privatisation and entrepreneurialism. The next sections will explain these mechanisms as the main tools used in our case study for analysing the mega-events as a neoliberal phenomena and their influence in Vila Autódromo.

3.2 Neoliberal Mechanisms for Accumulation by Dispossession

The previously mentioned process of accumulation by dispossession is a rather abstract concept, which requires a research on more concrete dynamics inside the neoliberal project to understand how this process expands and accelerates. For our research, we focus on entrepreneurialism and on privatisation for two reasons:

1. We consider that the other mechanisms, like financialization or manipulation of crises, are broad processes that for a good analysis would require a bigger scope than the one provided by our case study. We do not deny the importance of these other mechanisms in our case, but we consider that privatisation and entrepreneurialism can be more independently delimited for studying our case.

2. We argue that privatisation and entrepreneurialism are central for helping the accumulation by dispossession process in our case, because the role played by authorities (mainly from the municipality) within these mechanisms is fundamental, as it is basic for the development of mega-events.

3.2.1 Entrepreneurialism

This has been identified by many authors as one of the most distinctive characteristic of neoliberal governance (Harvey, 2006; Purcell, 2008; Swyngedouw et al., 2002). The reason for focusing here on this aspect is based on the specificity of the mega-events, where governance is basic due to the central role played by authorities in the developments and in the regulation of the informal settlements. Dannestam (2013, p. 365) explains that local governance “conveys the idea that public decisions rest less within hierarchically organized bureaucracies, but take place more in long-term relationships between key individuals located in a diverse set of organizations located at various territorial levels”. This vision points out the difference between governance and government, or as Harvey (1989) put it, the transit from managerialism to entrepreneurialism. This transition derived in a tendency to outsource state functions to non-state or quasi-state institutions and it has become the common mode of neoliberal governance (Purcell, 2003). According to Harvey (2013), neoliberalism has created systems of governance that integrate state and corporate interests, so the disbursement of surplus through the state favours corporate capital and upper class. This neoliberal governance do not conform a unified set of modes and rules, but a set of policies, social practices and attitudes that help to guarantee the continuation and the development of the previously mentioned dynamics of favouring corporate capital and upper class
We consider that an analysis of the entrepreneurial form of neoliberal governance can offer valuable information to describe how mega-events help to amplify and accelerate the process of accumulation by dispossession in our case. “Urban entrepreneurialism refers to the introduction of growth-oriented policies and new organizational modes within local governments. The term […] is used to denote a situation where activities of city governments are influenced by the private sector” (Dannestam, 2008, p.355; Harvey, 2013). According to Swyngedouw et al. (2002), this model of governance leads the planners to try to find market opportunities and to support private enterprises to take advantage of these opportunities. This is often translated into public obsession for economic growth (Foster and Clark, 2012) and exogenous pressure from companies to authorities in order to increase this economic growth (Swyngedouw et al., 2002). Private enterprises, in cooperation with the authorities, see in macro-projects a valuable tool to increase the good perception of the city, thanks to the effect that these projects have in city branding, making it attractive not only for tourists, but also for foreign investment (Baeten, 2012). A common feature in entrepreneurial governance is the creation of local ‘growth coalitions’ (Stone, 1987) that seek to intensify land use for profit (Schimmel, 2001, p.264). Construction is probably the main sector for entrepreneurialism, in connection to the importance of land for producing rent and as a main source for capital surplus absorption. The mega-events have turned into one of the most important kinds of macro-projects thanks to their capability to mobilize resources, to the effect on city branding and to the need for fast development, which offers a good opportunity for contractors to pressure authorities to comply their wishes in order to finish the works on time (Gaffney, 2013).

Thus, entrepreneurialism enhances the dependence and interconnection between the public and private sector (Baeten, 2012). The privatisation of services and the constant contact between authorities and private companies can result in interference by private companies in policy making, since they come to hold a strong position among the politicians, who in turn can be dependent on them.

One of the consequences of this neoliberal entrepreneurial governance is a limitation of participation and reduction of democracy (Harvey, 2006). As Purcell (2008) illustrates, within neoliberalism, democratic procedures, especially in terms of control and transparency, are considered inefficient and bureaucratic, since they can delay the development of projects, when not putting them at risk due to the inclusion of different interests.

In spite of the rhetoric of involvement of the population in the pursuit of the common good, the reality is far from that. As a consequence of the entrepreneurialism, decisions are taken by authorities in consultation with private companies. Outsiders are not tolerated and if there exists forms of participation, those are highly formalized and guarantee that the existing elite will maintain key power, taking advantage of this entrepreneurialism for its own benefit and even preventing newly emerging elites to enter the established networks of governance (Swyngedouw et al., 2002). Thus, the projects are being presented to the population, that only have the possibility of organizing themselves to stop the plans, as Purcell (2008) analysed in his research. In consequence, the in camera decision procedures potentially subvert democratic
principles of transparency and community participation in urban planning (Lenskyi, 2008; Owen, 2002 in Scherer, 2013).

3.2.2 Privatisation

Privatisation of public assets has been identified by many authors as an important mechanism of the neoliberal project (Harvey 2009; Baeten, 2012). Due to the reduction of state intervention and prerogatives, state loses part of its capability to provide services. Thus, it is common that the provision of public services is privatised for the sake of efficiency and deficit reduction (Brenner & Theodore, 2002). Therefore, these services are subject to an economic logic that in some cases can reduce their quality, their universality and accessibility for parts of the population (Bakker, 2008).

However, the most obvious object of privatisation, especially in the case of mega-events and in relation to the process of accumulation by dispossession, is land.

As Harvey reflected (2013), neoliberalism promotes the creation of rent by a process of commodification of any product, service or transaction. Privatisation of land becomes the most important asset in this sense, due to its speculative component; this speculative component is based on the projection of an expected increase of value and due to the fact that the possession of a piece of land turns monopolistic and unique (Harvey, 2013). On the other hand, authorities following neoliberal governance see in the privatisation of land a valuable asset for achieving fiscal balance (Brenner & Theodore, 2002). Thus, the interests of the two main actors in the previously mentioned neoliberal governance—private companies and public authorities—come together to benefit from it. Thus, privatisation of public land has been a constant of neoliberal urban policies, mainly for the development of residential or commercial purposes, which in turn have become one of the main purposes of the sport mega-events nowadays (Gaffney, 2013). On many occasions, due to the close relationship between companies’ interests and authorities, the public land is privatised for low prices, when not for free, as a compromise for developing some infrastructure (Baeten, 2012).

Besides privatisation of public services and privatisation of land, another existing mode of privatisation, relevant for our case, is privatisation of space or, as Brenner and Theodore (2002) described it, the creation of privatised spaces for elite/corporate consumption. Through this process of privatisation, neoliberalism transforms the build environment and reduces the presence of public spaces that are privatised for commercial and/or residential purposes (Brenner & Theodore, 2002).

We recognize that all these three modes of privatisation are relevant for our case, especially the last two, since the first one (privatisation of public services) is out of the scope of our case study. Privatisation will be then our second focus, as it is mentioned by Harvey (2009), as one of the mechanisms that take part in the accumulation by dispossession process, since these privatisations usually mean the conversion of various forms of collective property rights into exclusive private property rights.
4 Object of Study

In this section we will briefly describe the object of our case study. The presentation will be a mere description of the two Olympic projects considered for our case (Olympic Park and Olympic Village) and of the informal settlement (Vila Autódromo).

4.1 The Olympic Park

Barra da Tijuca is the scheduled centre of most of the city’s Olympic events and has recently been undergoing vast spatial redevelopment as a consequence of this. The largest venue cluster planned is the Barra Olympic Park, which intend to eliminate the Jacarepaguá racetrack for building the sportive buildings. There were plans for demolishing the circuit already in the early 2000s. The track remained open but with half the land closed to accommodate the construction of a velodrome and aquatics centre for the 2007 Pan American Games. In fact, the removal of the racetrack has been done already and the development has started. The Park will hold competitions in 15 disciplines, like basketball, handball, tennis, aquatic sports or track cycling. Besides all the sport venues, the Park will also accommodate an observation tower, the International Broadcast Centre, the main Press Centre for the Games and a four-star hotel. The construction of the Olympic Park will take up an area of 1,18 million m². (Cidadeolimpica, 2014)

4.2 The Olympic Village

The Olympic Village (Vila dos Atletas) will be separated from the Vila Autódromo, the Jacarepaguá lagoon and the Olympic Park by the Trans-Olimpica highway. It will be 5 kilometres from the coastal beaches and next to the upper-class neighbourhoods already existing in the area. The construction of the Trans-Olimpica intends to give the athletes residing in the Village quick access to the main sportive venues in the Olympic Park.

The development of the Athletes Village started in 2012 and it is due to be finished in December 2015. For its construction, the city has contracted Ilha Pura, a project-based company formed by Odebrecht Infraestutura and Carvalho Hosken (Ilhapura, 2014). The Athletes Village will occupy 200,000 m² and will consist of 3,604 apartments in 31 buildings of 17 floors and it will serve 18,000 athletes. The Village will include a 72 thousand m² Park and a 20,000 m² pond designed by a Brazilian “starchitect” firm along with a range of luxurious facilities (Cidadeolimpica, 2014). After the Games, the houses will be grouped into condominiums to be sold. The area of the Village is the first phase of a more extensive project called Ilha Pura, which will occupy 823,000 m² and that plan to develop in a period of 10 years high-class housing for up to 50,000 people, in a land that belongs to one of the developers, Carvalho Hosken (Paschoal, 2012).
4.3 Vila Autódromo

Vila Autódromo is an informal settlement by the Jacarepaguá lagoon in Rio de Janeiro. The favela is 30 kilometres from the inner city, in one of the wealthiest areas and with lesser class variation in the city, Barra da Tijuca (Olaussen, 2012 p.56). The neighbourhood was named after the Jacarepaguá racetrack (autódromo in Portuguese), located next to the area. The land where the community is settled is public, since it is part of the racetrack that belongs to the State of Rio, although it is administered by the municipality (Olaussen, 2012 p.53). There were some fishermen living in the area at the time when some construction workers, who worked on the urban developments in Barra da Tijuca’s coastline, settled there in 1967 (Olaussen, 2012 p.51). The area was populated in different periods; some of them with people evicted from other favelas, and in 2013, according to the Residents’ Association (AMPAVA), there were approximately 350 documented lots and an estimated 600 families living in the community.

During the settlement’s existence, public authorities have scarcely invested in the area. The community lacks access to a centralized sewage system and proper waste management services. Due to sewage and garbage from the neighbouring apartment blocks, despite collective efforts by the community, the surrounding Jacarepaguá lagoon suffers from serious pollution levels, which kills a lot of the local fishery. However, the region still bears rich vegetation and according to a recent case study by the Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research “there is a high environmental awareness among the residents who are active in the ecological preservation of the area” (Braathen et al. 2013). Some basic public services such as solid waste collection and public bus services are provided by the public authorities whilst others, including road construction, have been upheld by the joint effort of the community. There are no schools or kindergartens nor hospitals or health clinics in the area. There exist a few
small bars, cafés and a grocery shop. For all other services it is necessary to leave the area (Braathen et al., 2013).

The use of the site for housing purposes has been recognized by the State of Rio de Janeiro (the owner of the land) since the 1970s, and as a consequence of local political struggles the state have issued land titles for families who had been living in the neighbourhood for decades. According to the MOREI programme released by the Pereira Passos Institute, approximately 90% of the houses are owned by the residents themselves (Braathen et al., 2013). Many of the residents are charged with land property tax. However, the favela has several times been threatened with removal since the early 1990s (Sorensen, 2013; Braathen, 2013; Olaussen, 2012), but since most of the community members have been granted land titles, they have been able to refuse to accept the land offered by the city for their resettlement. This makes the situation for the residents slightly different from many other favelas in Brazil, where dwellers have no legal property rights (Sorensen, 2014; Braathen et al., 2013).

Figure 2: Aerial view of Vila Autódromo and Olympic Park (Júlio César Guimarães/UOL, 2013). Photograph edited by the authors.

5 Analysis

This section will analyse the effects in Vila Autódromo of the developments linked to the Olympic Park and the Olympic Village, considering the object of study previously described and the information collected in the research. For structuring this analysis we will follow the two mechanisms for accumulation by dispossession described in the theoretical framework (4.2). We will try here to answer our second research question².

² How are the mechanisms of entrepreneurialism and privatisation implemented in this case?
This will provide the information needed to answer our first research question, which we will answer in the discussion.

5.1 Entrepreneurialism

The collected information shows many similarities with the entrepreneurialism described in the theory section. In the next subsections we will analyse the form entrepreneurialism takes around the developments for preparation of the Games.

5.1.1. Public-Private Partnership

The close relationship between private and public interests in entrepreneurialism (see section 4.2.1) finds its translation in our case in the creation of the Municipal Olympic Enterprise (Empresa Olimpica Municipal or EOM in Portuguese), the entity in charge of managing all the developments implemented by the Municipality (Cidadeolimpica, 2014). The enterprise is theoretically 100% public but the EOM does not have the economic power to pay for the projects by itself. The investments for all the projects related to the Olympic Games are officially 60% private and 40% public (Cidadeolimpica, 2014). Thus, the model follows a public-private collaboration model, a typical governance model that favours entrepreneurialism (Purcell, 2003). The model for the development of the Olympic Park and the Olympic Village is similar to the one implemented in the Pan American Games organized in Rio in 2007: public authorities tender the project, choosing between different bids usually presented by consortiums of development companies. The consortium making the winning bid has to cover the costs for developing the area, according to the plans presented by the public authorities. Once the Olympic and Paralympic Games are over, the developing companies recover the ownership of the developments to do with them as they wish (Cidadeolimpica, 2014).

In the case of the Olympic Park, the City has signed a public-private partnership (PPP) with a private consortium of developers called Rio Mais, whose member enterprises are: Odebrecht Infraestrutura (the biggest construction company in Brazil), Andrade Gutierrez and Carvalho Hosken (Riomais, 2014a). This agreement gives to the private consortium the land in ‘concession’ for 15 years. The developers are contracted to construct the Olympic Park infrastructure and facilities —estimated at 1,4 billion BRL (ca. 461 million €), according to Riomais (2014a). In return, the City gives to the consortium the concession of land —which holds an estimated value of 30 Billion BRL (ca. 9,8 thousand million €) (Riomais, 2014b)—, along with the transfer of about 800 thousand m² of the area which will not be used for the Olympics (Magalhães, 2012). On that site, investors can build houses and shops. In addition, the City will pay an additional 525 million Reais (ca. 172 million €) over 15 years to the consortium for the maintenance of the entire area (Riomais, 2014a; Magalhães, 2012).

The case of the Olympic Village is slightly different (see section 4.2), since the land belong to one of the members of the Ilha Pura consortium, but it follows the same model as the Olympic Park.

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3 How does mega-events amplify and accelerate the process of accumulation by dispossession in this case?
These two developments are conceded to the same two companies (Odebretch and Carvalho Hosken), which have their headquarters and significant investments in Barra da Tijuca (Carvalho Hosken, 2014). One of the construction companies, Carvalho Hosken, owns portions of the land and states very clearly on its website its interest in the development of Abelardo Bueno and Salvador Allende avenues, the ones surrounding Vila Autódromo (Carvalho Hosken, 2014). The situation reported by researchers and activists reinforces the interconnection of public and private interests and how these can have influence on authorities and public decisions. The researcher Malte Sorensen (2014) and the journalist/activist Renato Cosentino (2011) announced that, according the Brazilian Superior Electoral Court⁴, the ten biggest donors for Mayor Paes campaign were real estate and construction companies. And according to the newspaper Estadão (Junqueira & Boghossian, 2011), the Mayor had to call off the purchase of the land where Parque Carioca —the development to resettle people evicted from Vila Autódromo— has been built after it was discovered that it was bought for 19,9 million Reais (ca. 6,5 million €) to two of the biggest donors to Paes’ campaign. In the same news source the Mayor was quoted saying that it was a mistake and that the process would be done properly, paying the price stipulated by official experts (Junqueira & Boghossian, 2011). Obviously, these articles do not prove corruption and these connections are not openly done, but they show at least the close relationship between the development companies and the municipal authorities. When politicians depend financially on some companies their situation can be less independent, therefore they could be subject to considerable pressure and influence by the companies that back them up.

Figure 3. Normal flows of influence in entrepreneurialism for the case of Vila Autódromo and the Olympics (figure by the authors).

⁴ We were unable to find the original source from the Superior Electoral Court.
5.1.2. Lack of democracy

Entrepreneurialism has been understood to have negative effects on residents’ involvement in the urban development process (Purcell, 2008). Regarding this, it is important in our case to consider the relationship between the civil society in Vila Autódromo and the institutional authorities. Self-organization in the community has existed for a long time (Sorensen, 2013; 2014; Braathen et al., 2013). An important actor in this regard is the Association of Residents and Fishermen Vila Autódromo (AMPAVA), initially formed in 1987 (Braathen et al., 2013). The community of Vila Autódromo has faced recurrent threats of removal since 1992 (Braathen et al., 2013; Olaussen, 2012; Sorensen, 2013; 2014). AMPAVA has worked closely with public defenders, social movements, NGOs and social media in order to mobilize against evictions and for their right to live on the site (Sorensen, 2013, 2014; Braathen et al., 2013). Through their work, the community has avoided the recurrent threats of clearance (Sorensen, 2014; Braathen et al., 2013; Olaussen, 2012). As a response to recent removal threats (Braathen et al., 2013) AMPAVA elaborated and presented the Plano Popular in 2011/12 (Sorensen, 2013): a collaborative project between AMPAVA, social movements and experts from two local universities (Sorensen, 2013). The Plano Popular is an alternative plan for upgrading the community and includes ideas on “housing upgrading, sanitation, infrastructure and environment, for public services, and for the economic as well as cultural development of the community” (Braathen et al., 2013). According to Braathen’s (2013) field research, this plan was delivered to the Mayor, Eduardo Paes, in August 2012, one month prior to the municipal elections. However, this study (Braathen et al., 2013) also tells us that neither did the Mayor and Municipal Housing Department (SMH) review the document before the elections nor have they given any formal statement or response about the Plano Popular since. Instead, the authorities presented a new plan for relocating the residents of Vila Autódromo (Braathen et al., 2013). The residents were presented with “Parque Carioca” and the construction for this resettlement started swiftly (Sorensen, 2013). 900 housing units in apartment condominiums were to be constructed one kilometre away from Vila Autódromo, as “new” dwellings for the “relocated” community members (Sub-prefeitura da Barra da Tijuca, 2014): initially, the project was officially intended for the relocation of 280 families affected by road construction and that are forced to leave. Nevertheless, anyone from Vila Autódromo can join and move or get compensation if they voluntarily decide to move (EOM, 2014). According to EOM (2014), at 30 April 2014, 170 of these families decided to move out. The Plano Popular (2013) is presented with an estimated cost for upgrading the community of 13,5 million Reais (ca. 4,4 million €). Meanwhile the Parque Carioca is presented with a considerably higher estimated cost of 105 million Reais (ca. 34,5 million €) (EOM, 2014). According to previous research, the residents’ wishes represented by AMPAVA have been met with either silence or reluctance, both with reference to this community plan (Sorensen, 2013; 2014; Braathen et al., 2013) and with reference to the city master plan (Braathen, 2014-04-24). According to Braathen et al. (2013), the Mayor reaffirmed the decision to remove Vila Autódromo during an official visit to the future Olympic Park in November 2012 (Braathen et al., 2013). Braathen et al. (2013) further state him saying that the “relocating” was a participatory process made in dialogue with the community. However, according to Olaussen (2012) and Braathen et al. (2013) the decisions were
taken by the municipality without consultation with the community that got to know the decisions once they were published in the media.

Several homes were marked for removal in June 2013 (Sorensen, 2013; Braathen et al., 2013). Researchers like Braathen et al. (2013) and Sorensen (2013) argue that this strategy of “scattered removal has been a well-known psychological weapon adopted to weaken resistance in Rio favelas” (Braathen et al., 2013, p.54). According to Braathen et al. (2013), leaders of the community contacted the Public Defender’s Office immediately, who in turn put pressure on the municipal authorities on the basis that residents had not given their consent of land use. A court order was carried out which prohibited the demolition of any homes. Since then, authorities have had to yield to the requirements of the community members. Braathen et al. (2013) informs us that the plan for full removal has been revised, attempting to remove about ‘half’ of the community (278 families) “in order to provide private elevated access for athletes and journalists onto the Olympic Park” (Braathen et al., 2013). RioOnWatch reports that the first evictions and demolitions started in March 2014, although they were stopped by a federal judge that considered the demolitions illegal until it is clear which families have signed for relocation (Magalhães et al., 2014; Steiker-Ginzberg, 2014).

Braathen (Braathen, 2014) tells us that the authorities have prioritized the “interests of the property developers and service providers”. As mentioned earlier, this lack of democracy is directly connected to entrepreneurialism (Purcell, 2008). The decisions are taken through negotiation processes by the public authorities and private enterprises in camera (Scherer, 2013). The population has been left out of the decision and they are not consulted on the different issues, as Vila Autódromo residents are not consulted about the plans for the area. In spite of continuous claims for transparency by the authorities and the EOM, authorities are reluctant to provide certain information that is difficult to find: when we asked in the questionnaires to authorities about land ownership and prices paid for the land, they refused to reply and the municipality referred us to the EOM, while the EOM referred us to the municipality, which shows little willingness to provide this kind of information (Appendix, questionnaires).

Besides, the pressure for finishing the infrastructures on time is significant in the case of mega-events in general (Gaffney, 2013), which provides another excuse for reducing democratic standards of transparency and accountability. Any local circumstances that enfolds during the process of preparing for the event better be surpassed, rather than being given the right to restructure and influence the overall preparation process. As much as the municipality has legal obligations towards the residents in Vila Autódromo which due to social mobilizations have become an issue which cannot so easily be overruled (Sorensen, 2014), the host city is also contracted with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to “[...] provide guarantees to execute the project as a whole. The contract with the host cities becomes law, thus obliging the hosts to deliver on the promises made in the dossier” (Gaffney, 2013). A lengthy planning and construction process has already led the IOC to put repeated pressure on the city government to complete its promises made in the bid on-time (IOC, 2014). IOC’s Vice President said in an interview to a news source in late April 2014 that the delays in the preparations for Rio 2016 Olympics are “the worst I have experienced”, further announcing that “the
IOC has formed a special task force to try and speed up preparations [...]” (Whiteside, 2014). In regards to the authorities in Barra da Tijuca and Rio imposing less participatory and forceful planning and construction processes, the problems related to these mega-events must thus to a certain degree be considered as structural problems embedded within the contract as such (Hiller, 2000; Vanwynsberghe et al., 2013; Gaffney, 2013).

5.2 Privatisation

Land assets are the main focus of attention regarding privatisations in our case. As explained in section 3, land is the most valuable asset for privatisation by corporations. In this sense, two types of privatisation can be identified in our case: privatisation of public land and privatisation by appropriation of private/public land for speculative interests. Although the procedures are different, the consequences are similar in terms of loosing of public land to be used for the generation of private rent (Hedin, et al. 2012).

5.2.1 Privatisation of public land

In the first of these two scenarios, by privatisation of public land we refer to the appropriation/concession of public land to private companies, in many cases for a reduced price or for free. In the case of the Olympic Park, the consortium is awarded with a concession for 15 years, for the commercial exploitation of the infrastructure (Riomais, 2014a). As previously mentioned, when we questioned authorities about land ownership and prices paid for the land, they refused to reply and the municipality referred us to the EOM, while the EOM referred us to the municipality (Appendix, questionnaires). According to an article in O Globo (Magalhães, 2012), the main newspaper in Rio, the municipality also gives ownership of 800 thousand m$^2$ of the racetrack that will not be used during the Games, and the municipality will furthermore pay 525 million Reais (ca. 172 million €) for the maintenance during those 15 years. In spite of being presented as a good way of avoiding considerable public deficits (Cidadeolimpica, 2014), the consequences are substantial losses of public land, one of the most valuable public assets for creation of rent by private corporations (Baeten, 2012; Hedin et al. 2012). Moreover, the model might also leave some burdens on direct investments, since the municipality will pay for the maintenance. An example close to our case illustrates this: the Vila Pan. The Vila Pan was built as an Athletes Village for the Pan American Games in 2007 and later transformed into a residential complex. Due to faulty construction and that the Vila Pan is located on unstable ground, problems have appeared not only in the buildings but in the roads and public areas, forcing the municipality to spend additional money on repairing them, reaching 33 million Reais (ca. 10,8 million €) for these works, according to local news reports (Filipo, 2013).

5.2.2 Privatisation by appropriation of private/public land for speculative interests

The second type of privatisation reveals a more complex process. Vila Autódromo is located on public land (Braathen et al., 2013). After long occupation and mobilization in Vila Autódromo residents acquired rights for living in the area but not for the land,
which remains public (Olaussen, 2012). These rights make eviction legally more complicated, so what is happening in Vila Autódromo is a re-privatisation of land by using the state.

The pressure for removal from authorities on Vila Autódromo is not new. According to Olaussen (2012, pp.57-60), Vila Autódromo has faced up to four rounds of removal threats since the 1970s. The first three were started by the municipality and stopped by a conjunction of social movements and the State of Rio, owner of the land. Environmental reasons and the risk of natural disaster were the main reasons argued by the authorities to justify the removal threats (Olaussen, 2012).

During the second half of the 2000s threats of eviction have appeared with explicit linkage to the preparations for sport mega-events and according to Sorensen’s (2013) field studies the threats have intensified since 2009. It started with the “construction of equipment” for the Pan American Games in 2007 and afterwards by a proposed road widening for the Olympic Games (Olaussen, 2012; Braathen et al., 2013). The need for building a media centre for the 2016 Olympic Games was the new pretext in 2010 (Olaussen, 2012; Braathen et al., 2013). The plans for the media centre construction were moved to the city centre, but the removal threats remained (Olaussen, 2012). It was then argued that the settlement had to be demolished due to the construction of the Olympic Park, even though the actual master plan stretched only to the area where the race track has been, without including the area of Vila Autódromo (Braathen et al., 2013; Riomais, 2014a). Subsequently the pretext became that a “perimeter of security” needed to be created in this area which surrounds the Olympic Park. The latest threat of removal is linked to the construction of the Trans-Olympic highway (Braathen et al., 2013). An official video rendering animation of the construction explained by Eduardo Fagundes, engineer working for the municipality, shows the road taking a sharp curve before going straight through the site where Vila Autodromo lies (Cassius537, 2012). According to journalist/activist Steiker-Ginzberg (2014) random evictions started to take place in March 2014.

The above represents an ensemble of pretexts which have been presented since the early 2000s in order to justify the removal of Vila Autodromo. All these pretexts referred to preparations for the different sports mega-events. The very fact that new and remote pretexts are being produced constantly is a good reason to be suspicious about their legitimacy and their truthfulness. In contrast to the officially told pretexts, previous researchers have suggested that there are in fact strong interests from private property developers and other investment groups behind these threats, different from the official pretexts (Braathen, et al., 2013; Sorensen, 2014). The use of the site for construction of luxurious condominiums after the Games is suggested as a main interest of some of these developers (Braathen, et al., 2013; Sorensen, 2013). We argue that privatisation appears as a clear mechanism in the later threats of removal, since the area will be part of the Olympic Park, which will be conceded to the private consortium for its exploitation for 15 years. The land is kind of held privately by the informal residents which are threatened to be evicted by the authorities: not for the repossession of the land under public control, but in order to transfer it to private companies. This corresponds to
an attempt for privatisation by appropriation of private/public land, from the possession of the residents to the interests of the private consortium.

6 Discussion

The study of the case of the Olympic Park and the Olympic Village for the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio and their linkage to the informal settlement Vila Autódromo can help us to answer the research question asked at the beginning of the thesis: how these upcoming sport mega-events amplify and accelerate the process of accumulation by dispossession. The material analysed in the previous section describes how the development of these works follows the trends of neoliberal mechanisms in terms of entrepreneurialism and privatisation identified by authors like Swyngedouw et al., (2002), Purcell (2008) or Marcuse (2009).

Thus, the developments linked to the Summer Olympics 2016 repeat neoliberal mechanisms identified in other studies about similar events, like the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver (Vanwynsberghe et al., 2013), the Olympics in Beijing in 2008 (Broudehoux, 2007) or the Summer Olympics 2012 in London (Scherer, 2013). Without analysing these other cases in depth, we argue that our research shows enforcements of these characteristics, while in the other cases at least one of the dynamics was missing or not as developed as in our case. Thus, in London, the Games were entirely covered by public funding (Scherer, 2013); in Beijing, probably due to the specificities of its political system, privatisations were limited (Broudehoux, 2007); in Vancouver, the lack of democracy linked to entrepreneurialism was limited by mechanisms to increase residents involvement (Vanwynsberghe et al., 2013).

The critical urban theory approach followed in our thesis offers a valuable theoretical framework to understand how these mechanisms of entrepreneurialism and privatisation worked in our case and how they relate to the process of accumulation by dispossession. Based on our analysis we argue that, in our case, mega-events amplify and accelerate this process based on two aspects: *legitimisation* and *fast capital accumulation*.

1. The case of Vila Autódromo shows how the mega-events provide *legitimisation* for the implementation of the neoliberal mechanisms mentioned in the analysis, becoming fundamental for accelerating and expanding the accumulation by dispossession process. Thus, the discourse for avoiding profound public deficits in relation to the development of the Games justifies the expansion of entrepreneurialism, through the creation of public-private partnerships for the construction of infrastructure. The analysis showed the close interconnection between private and public interests, although we lack information in order to ascertain the level of influence that private companies have on public decisions. Some authors like Baeten (2012) and Purcell (2008) have shown the central role of private companies as main initiators of large-scale urban projects in order to maximize their benefit. This could be the case here as well, considering that the companies are involved since the presentation of the bid for the Games (Brazilian Olympic Committee, 2009); however, this cannot be established with the data we have and it would demand further research.
Moreover, mega-events, through the pressure to complete the Olympic constructions on time posed by the Olympic Committee (Gaffney, 2013) and followed by authorities in our case, also legitimate a lack of democracy as a consequence of the implementation of entrepreneurialism. As reflected in the theory section, within entrepreneurialism, as Purcell (2008) expressed, democratic involvement and control is considered inefficient and slow. Decisions are taken by the elite through the use of entrepreneurialism, like for example in the case of the EOM, which manages the projects and works as the linkage between the developers and the authorities. Meanwhile, the complaints from the residents in Vila Autódromo are being left out of the decisions procedure, especially regarding the evictions, which demonstrates restrictions on democratic involvement in this case.

Nonetheless, the main legitimisation in the frame of mega-events, appears to be in connection to privatisations, which work more directly as the main tool for the accumulation by dispossession process enounced by Harvey (2006). On one hand, in the Olympic Park we have a situation where vast areas of public land are being transferred for private exploitation, the classical model of land privatisation outlined by Harvey (2006). On the other hand, a re-privatisation of occupied public land in Vila Autódromo describes how the mentioned mechanisms disposes the less wealthy or underrepresented from one of their most valuable assets. In this sense, the history of removal threats in Vila Autódromo shows the constant interest for clearing the area. All the threats resulted unsuccessful until the preparation for the Games. Although in the initial plans Vila Autódromo was not part of the Olympic developments, the proximity to these works provide series of excuses that were substituting one by the other until the one which appears to be successful, the Trans-Olímpica highway. The Olympic Games seem to offer the legitimisation needed to carry on with this removal. Where the previous environmental reasons were unsuccessful, the constructions of the Olympic Park and of the Trans-Olympic highway offer the excuse to finally achieve the removal, at least of parts of the favela. The common good and the need for offering a good image of the city appears to provide the legitimisation that finally can remove the residents from the area.

One last aspect that should be considered for legitimisation is stigmatization (Wacquant, 2007). Stigmatization is seen here more as a tool than as a process or consequence of neoliberalism. We argue that stigmatization of favelas could make evictions easier by providing ground for legitimising them before the public opinion, for example in the form of criminalization (Olaussen, 2012). This tactic of criminalization was tried at the beginning of the development works for the mega-events, and Vila Autódromo, as an area next to the Olympic Park, was suddenly tagged as a security threat without having high crime-rates or organized crime related to drug dealing, unlike other areas of Rio (Olaussen, 2012; Braathen et al., 2013). After a community-led struggle and resistance, such accusations were disputed and finally disallowed as legal cause for removal (Olaussen, 2012; Braathen et al., 2013). Nevertheless, contrasting to many other studies on public discourse and police brutality on favelas in Rio (e.g. Perlman, 1979; 2010), we did not find in our case study and in the information provided by our sources any further criminalization. Possibly, the active self-organized community and the relevance that Vila Autódromo has had in the media made these strategies more complicated.
Whatever the reason, we consider this a very interesting topic for further research but broader than our scope here.

One last remark must be made here: the role played by the media for legitimising or, at least, justifying both these strategies of stigmatisation — e.g. the use that the media make of the different police operations storming the favelas picturing them as dangerous areas (Wacquant, 2007) — and the developments of the Games as a boost for economic growth and for improving city branding (Hall, 2011). Some researchers (Sorensen, 2014) and activists (Cosentino, 2011) have also pointed out the position of these media as main supporters of the development companies interests, especially because of their financial dependence on them, since they are the main buyers of advertising spaces. In our fieldwork we experienced some example of the connection between the authorities and the media: in the interview with the sub-municipality of Barra da Tijuca, to answer our question about what would happen if some residents in Vila Autódromo had to be removed, they referred to an article in O Globo, the biggest newspaper in Rio, where Parque Carioca was presented almost as a paradise where new residents were very thankful to the municipality (Wrede, 2014). Of course, all this does not prove any linkage but we think that it provides interesting ground for further research beyond the aim of this thesis.

In summary, the Games become a powerful source of legitimisation for the implementation of the neoliberal mechanisms entrepreneurialism and privatisation, provoking and accelerating the process of accumulation by dispossession. The process is implemented by the fast privatisation of significant portions of land and by creating the conditions for a dependence of private corporations by public authorities, which see in the companies the best actors for accomplishing the mission of having the city ready for the Games. In the end, private companies’ power is so important that they can pressure to accelerate the accumulation by dispossession process, not only of land but also of services (for example the payment by the municipality for the 15 years maintenance concession of the Olympic Park).

2. The Games also offer the opportunity for fast accumulation of vast amounts of capital. The developments of the Olympic Park and of the Olympic Village must be ready for the beginning of the competitions, which creates the opportunity for fast accumulation of capital. The model followed for the development of the works, through entrepreneurialism in the form of PPP, makes necessary to give incentives to the private companies for involving them in the developments. Thus, advantages that go far beyond the duration of the Games are provided. A good example is the Athletes Village, which form the first phase of a much bigger project, Ilha Pura. The development of the Athletes Village and its transformation into high-class condominiums after the Games is important by assuring the process of accumulation in regards to two aspects: (1) the need for having the development ready assures that the public sector will create the best conditions for it, even by investing extra money if there is a risk of not finishing the developments on time; (2) the branding created by the Olympics (Hall, 2001), together with the location in a high-class neighbourhood, are good reasons to think that the selling of the apartments will be a success, that contributes to the success of the rest of the Ilha Pura development.
The Games amplify the possibilities of capital accumulation through these vast investments, which in our case turn into accumulation by dispossession, by evicting residents from Vila Autódromo. Even though privatisation of land can be a clear process of accumulation by dispossession, as Harvey assesses (2009), it is not the only one. One of the processes he specifically mentions, quoting Marx, is the commodification and appropriation of the commons into private rights (2009). In the plans for development of the areas next to Vila Autódromo, this pattern can be identified by the creation of gated communities. The best example in our case is again the creation of the Athletes Village as part of a much larger development project, Ilha Pura. It could be argued, since the land belongs to one of the companies, that accumulation by dispossession of land cannot be found here, but a different process of accumulation by dispossession can be identified. An appropriation of the space through its development into gated communities that expel those who do not live in the community creates a dispossession of areas that would be part of the commons, e.g. streets. Besides, we can see in the development of high-class areas as one of the motives for clearing those low-class areas that can provoke a decrease in the value of the land, with the subsequent decrease in the price of the developments.

Moreover, as a result of privatisation and entrepreneurialism, this process of commodification leads to the substitution of use value by exchange value: the residents are using the land —in fact in Vila Autódromo, residents cannot sell it because they do not own it— but they are evicted for a company to develop the area with the expectation of generating higher rents. These processes lead to speculation around land and housing, which has turned out into a process of gentrification in some informal settlements in Rio de Janeiro (Harvey, 2013). This process is clearer in other areas of the city than in Vila Autódromo, but it is a possible tendency in case the residents manage to avoid eviction. Moreover, some residents in the favela Morro da Providência have reported in a short documentary (Yara Brasil, 2012) that the improvements implemented by the municipal program Morar Carioca (SMH, 2014) —a program launched in the frame of the development of the sports mega-events for improving public spaces, transportation and security— have led to a rise of housing rent, expelling low-income residents that are not able to pay those rents; such an influx of capital and outward migration of low-income residents to make room for middle/high-income residents is the essential characteristic of a classical gentrification process (Hedin et al., 2012). In other cases, as Harvey (2013) have shown, when low-income residents acquire property rights they feel the pressure of selling their houses as this is their best source of income. In the end, the gentrification process expels low-income residents and reinforces uneven geographical development. This process cannot be identified in Vila Autódromo yet, since the community is supposed to be removed, but it would be interesting to research if this outcome develops once the community is surrounded by high-class neighbourhoods, in case the community can finally avoid eviction.

7 Conclusion

In conclusion, we argue that sport mega-events, in our case Rio 2016 Olympic Games, amplify and accelerate the process of accumulation by dispossession explained by
Harvey (2009) as one of the dynamics of capitalism in general, and neoliberalism in this case. This amplification and acceleration is, in our case, promoted by the implementation of two mechanisms that are interrelated: entrepreneurialism and privatisation. These mechanisms are not exclusive of sport mega-events and, as many authors have explained (Harvey, 2013; Baeten, 2012; Swyngedouw et al., 2002; Purcell, 2008), can be generally identified within the neoliberal project. What makes them important in the case of mega-events is that these events provide strong legitimisation for these mechanisms and a good opportunity for fast investments in the urban environment, which makes entrepreneurialism and privatisation very valuable tools for accelerating and amplifying the accumulation by dispossession process. The need of finishing immense infrastructures for the common good without generating public deficits is the main way of legitimising the implementation of these neoliberal mechanisms: entrepreneurialism —through PPP involving the main developers— and privatisation of public/private land in Vila Autódromo —through the use of the municipal apparatus to clear the area. At the same time, these mechanisms increase the importance of developers and local authorities’ dependence on private-corporate interests. These interests have to be satisfied in order to involve them in the development projects. In our case, this has lead to weakening effects on the democratic involvement of the local community organization, AMPAVA, in the planning process of the development of their neighbourhood, Vila Autódromo. In the end, this process of accumulation by dispossession becomes evident in the eviction of residents in the area of Vila Autódromo in order to attend the interests of some of the most powerful corporate property developers in Barra da Tijuca, which benefit from the privatisation and the entrepreneurial neoliberal mode of governance.
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Tourism, 2(2), 82–90.


APPENDIX

1. Questionnaires

Authorities and private companies:

1. What do authorities expect of the World Cup/Olympics in terms of economic development for the city? And in social development? And in the Favelas?
2. What is the main objective of the development works? (Related to new infrastructures for the events)
3. What kind of new developments are the most common? Public spaces or private spaces? New houses?
4. Did the company have to pay anything for the ground for the development?
5. Does the company get money from the State/Region/Municipality for starting the development works?
6. What are the criteria to choose between the different bids for the developments?
7. Is there any law stating how the procedures of the developments are related to events?
8. How are the developments funded? Are they covered 100% by public or private? What % each?
9. How are the areas for development being chosen?
10. Who are the initiators of the works?
11. What happen if some residents have to be relocated? How is that carried out?
12. Is there any specific law regulating how relocations have to be handled?
13. What is the role of authorities in the development works? How do authorities control the development works?
14. What is the relationship between authorities and companies?
15. What will become of the Olympic facilities after the Olympics? How will they be used?

Researchers:

1. What has been the focus of your work on the developments in connection to the upcoming mega-events in Rio?
2. Do you think that the developments as part of the Olympics and the World Cup are benefiting the whole population of Rio? Please develop your thoughts.
3. What are the down-sides of these mega-events according to you?
4. Do you think the planning process for the Olympic Park and the Olympic Village is carried out in a just and sustainable way? Please explain.
5. Are the mega-events leading to more equal or unequal distribution of land and resources in Río de Janeiro according to your studies? In what way
6. What is your opinion on the Municipal Olympic Enterprise/Empresa Olimpica Municipal organisation in charge of the developments of the Olympic Park and the Olympic Village?