

FROM MARVELOUS CITY TO OLYMPIC CITY: THE IMAGE OF RIO DE JANEIRO AS TOURIST DESTINATION

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ABSTRACT

Rio de Janeiro, known as “The Marvelous City”, was recently brought into the spotlight as a consequence of the Olympic Games when a new image of the city as “The Olympic City” was globally publicized. To reflect on the transformation of Rio de Janeiro’s image, from “Marvelous City” to “Olympic City”, this article resorts to Social Sciences, especially to sociologist John Urry’s works among other authors from the Tourism and Mobilities field. Such theoretical repertoire is fundamental to approach the concepts of “tourist gaze” and tourist destination analysed on the first part of the article. It also served as basis for the comparative analysis of the tourism industry advertising posters of the 1910s and 1970s and the scenes from the Opening ceremony for Rio 2016 Olympic Game.

KEYWORDS

City image; marvellous city; olympic city; Rio 2016; tourist destination

DE CIDADE MARAVILHOSA À CIDADE OLÍMPICA: A IMAGEM DO RIO DE JANEIRO COMO DESTINO TURÍSTICO

RESUMO

Tradicionalmente chamada “Cidade Maravilhosa”, o Rio foi recentemente posto em destaque pelos Jogos Olímpicos quando uma nova imagem da cidade, a “Cidade Olímpica”, foi midiaticizada em escala global. Para a tarefa de refletir sobre a transformação da imagem do Rio de Janeiro de “Cidade Maravilhosa” em “Cidade Olímpica”, esse artigo foi buscar nas Ciências Sociais, em especial nos trabalhos do sociólogo John Urry, entre outros autores das áreas do turismo e das mobilidades, o repertório teórico fundamental para tratar dos conceitos de “olhar do turista” e de “destino turístico”, abordados na primeira parte do artigo e que serviram como base para uma análise comparativa entre cartazes publicitários da indústria do turismo, criados entre as décadas de 1910 e 1970, e as cenas da Cerimônia de Abertura dos Jogos Olímpicos Rio 2016.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Cidade maravilhosa; cidade olímpica; destino turístico; imagem da cidade; Rio 2016

INTRODUCTION¹

In recent decades, the issue of Rio de Janeiro's image has become particularly important for the city. Due to its central role in Brazilian history over its 200 years of existence, this has always been a concern for local residents. However, it has gained more dramatic contours lately. Feelings of pride, revolt, mobilization, commotion, catharsis, disappointment and conformism emerge simultaneously from time to time in the face of important episodes and social events that have occurred in the city since the 1990s, such as the Earth Summit (also known as ECO92); the Candelária massacre, in 1993; Pope John Paul II's and Pope Francis' visits in 1997 and 2013, respectively; the notorious filming of Michael Jackson's music video *They don't care about us*, directed by Spike Lee, in Santa Marta Favela², in 1996; the 2007 Pan American Games; the Confederations Cup in 2013, and controversial FIFA World Cup of 2014, among other events, not to mention the Summer Olympic Games, Rio 2016, which gave Rio de Janeiro the additional *status* of being the first Olympic City of South America.

This combination of paradoxical experiences that mix spectacular megaevents with ecological and social tragedies such as the epidemics of Dengue and Zika virus, have marked the city's troubled chronicles. It is as if each of these episodes meant a definitive *referendum* about the dwell ability of Rio de Janeiro, with a continuous dispute between its conditions of international seaside resort and that of megalopolis.

On these occasions, discussions about the city's destiny arise on various forums (from the tourism industry, government and non-governmental organizations, and civil society to the local and global media), exposing the local community's discomfort who feel increasingly distant from the "tropical paradise" stereotype on which Rio's image was gradually built. And because of the enormous media exposure of the city, these experiences are reflected in the self-esteem of the Brazilians themselves, and keep on the world's imaginary the idea that Rio is a unique scenario in its ability to dramatize, in contemporary times, the most immemorial shock of the archetypal concepts of human culture: those of "heaven" and "hell".

And it was from the perspective of the "paradise", seen through the lenses of the foreign tourist, i.e., the tourist gaze in Urry's terms (2001), that Rio de Janeiro was presented at the exhibition "Rio de Janeiro as destination – Travel posters, 1910-1970, Bernardo collection"³ that took place at the National History Museum (MHN) of Rio de Janeiro, from 16 November 2015 to 20 March 2016. Formed of 40 posters of airlines and sea companies researched for over four decades in major tourist centres such as Paris, London and New York, the exhibition brought to light a set of documents that represents the "classical" stage of the "Marvelous City" tourist and visual narrative.

¹ This text is related to a communication presented at the Communication and Culture Working Group of the XXVI Encontro Anual da Compós, Cásper Líbero Maria Alice de Faria Nogueira & Luiz Flavio La Luna Di Cola, São Paulo - SP, 2017, Juin 6-9.

² The music video was filmed at Dona Marta, a favela in Rio de Janeiro, and at the Pelourinho, in Salvador, Bahia, and directed by Spike Lee. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QNJL6nfu__Q

³ Retrieved from <http://www.museuhistoriconacional.com.br/mh-2015-009.htm>

The posters – used by shipping companies to market their first travel routes between Brazil and Europe, as well as French, Italian, Scandinavian and English airlines, which used Rio de Janeiro as a background for the marketing of their flights to South America – designed the Marvelous City with all its natural splendor, exotic landscape and architectural cosmopolitanism.

This set of posters was the starting point for some reflections about how this tourist gaze, a foreign gaze at first, has been for decades the basis of the image of Rio de Janeiro as a tourist destination and natural paradise in nature and hospitality, a “Marvelous City” worth seen and visited and, in some sense, “experienced” personally; and also as this image was largely accredited by the internal public as a faithful representation of the local dwellers (known as “cariocas”) and the local lifestyle.

After almost a decade of infrastructure and urban mobility works, among other changes made in the urban space to host the Pan American Games (2007), the FIFA World Cup of Football (2014) and the Summer Olympics (2016)⁴, could Rio de Janeiro still be described as the “Marvelous City”?

This question was the main element that motivated the study about the changes in the image of Rio de Janeiro as a tourist destination that guided this article. The reflection proposed here also comes from the interest of discussing, from the perspective of the Media and Communication studies and its links with Tourism Studies, which was the historical role of advertising and the media in the construction of this “tourist gaze” on the city. In this sense, it is important to say that the purpose of this article is less about the social implications of the political choices that were made to prepare the city to host the Olympic Games, even if they are important in the historical context in which the advertising pieces were created, distributed and read, and more about how the images of Marvelous City and Olympic City were built, which sometimes seem to be complementary and, on other occasions, conflicting.

To answer this question, a comparative analysis was made between the posters of the MHN exhibition and the images of the Opening Ceremony for the Summer Olympic Games, Rio 2016, at the Maracanã Stadium on the night of August 5, 2016⁵.

Broadcast on television and online, the opening ceremony of the Rio 2016 Olympic Games was seen by an estimated audience of 2.5 billion people worldwide⁶ and based on the headlines of local and global media⁷, fully reverted the negative expectations on Rio’s ability to host an event of this magnitude, amidst a national political and economic crisis, with strong echo in Rio de Janeiro state’s economy.

⁴ For more information about investments in infrastructure projects and the legacy of the Olympic Games in Rio, see Gaffney, C. (2016). Transforming Rio - for the benefit of whom? Retrieved from https://www.academia.edu/26009728/Transforming_Rio_-_for_the_benefit_of_whom and also Peres, A.C. (2016, August 1). Cidades invisíveis. What is behind the projects linked to the megaevents and how this affects the rights to health and urban life. *Radis*, 167. Retrieved from <http://www6.ensp.fiocruz.br/radis/revista-radis/167/reportagens/cidades-invisiveis>

⁵ Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N_qXm9HY9Rob

⁶ Retrieved from <http://esporte.ig.com.br/olimpiadas/2016-08-17/audiencia-coi-rio-2016.html>

⁷ Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-36996133>

As will be seen throughout the text, the Olympic Games put Rio de Janeiro again on the headlines of the main newspapers and world media websites, by means of a new set of globally mediatized images that, despite all social inequalities and political and economic problems, presented a new image of the city, namely: a space of coexistence that includes greater diversity of people, lifestyles, artistic manifestations, types of architecture and urbanity such as the favelas, and gave the city the status of “Olympic City”.

This comparison between images of Rio de Janeiro city that cover almost 100 years of city propaganda was considered from a visual analysis in which the historical context of production, disclosure and reception of the message has an important role in the result. In this sense, the methodological approach used, even if implicitly in the analysis, was to think how Rio de Janeiro has been seen and appreciated from the modernisation of the means of transport and the massification of tourism that occurred in the early 20th century until these days. This scenario of tourist mobility puts millions of people in circulation, especially through sports megaevents, such as the World Cup and Olympic Games.

THE MEDIA AND THE TOURIST GAZE: THE CONSTRUCTION OF A PLACE’S IMAGE AS A TOURIST DESTINATION

According to data disclosed by the administration of Rio de Janeiro, the city received 1.170 million tourists, including 410 thousand foreigners⁸, during the Rio 2016 Olympic Games. This number of international visitors (almost twice as much the number of foreign tourists visiting Rio during the World Cup in 2014) follows the growth trend indicated in the last World Tourism Organization Barometer (UNWTO)⁹, which states that international tourist arrivals worldwide grew by 4% between January and June 2016 compared to the same period last year. This growth can be explained largely by the economic recovery in Europe and the United States in 2016 and the strong presence of China in the tourist market.

In the case of Brazil, it is also worth noting the number of domestic tourists who visited the city during the Olympics: 760.000. And as the numbers of the WTO Barometer show, the number of Brazilian tourists have grown: in 2015, 105.3 million people used air travel in Brazil, despite the political and economic crisis of the period. From the amount mentioned, 97.9 million travelled within the country and 7.3 million flew to international destinations¹⁰. This is the largest number of passengers since 2005, when the National Civil Aviation Agency (ANAC) began to perform this audit. As stated by the Secretary General of the WTO, Taleb Rifai, “tourism has proven to be one of the most resilient economic sectors worldwide”. The fact that travel continues to be a strong activity, despite the global economic crisis, suggests two questions of interest to this article: what makes a place to be considered a tourist destination; what is the role of the media and advertising in the imaginary construction of this place as a place for visiting.

⁸ Retrieved from <http://agenciabrasil.ebc.com.br/rio-2016/noticia/2016-08/em-17-dias-de-olimpiada-rio-recebeu-quase-12-milhao-de-turistas>

⁹ Retrieved from <http://media.unwto.org/press-release/2016-09-26/international-tourist-arrivals-4-first-half-2016>

¹⁰ Retrieved from <http://media.unwto.org/press-release/2016-09-26/international-tourist-arrivals-4-first-half-2016>

According to Urry (2007), the issue of place is central when we talk about both corporeal and virtual or imagined displacement or mobilities. In the case of tourism, specifically, it is the place that defines travel and the choice of destination is marked by the difference from what one experiences daily. In this sense, tourism activity does not only concern moving from one place to another, even if this is one of its main features, but rather speaks about social practice, culturally marked by the historical context. In modern-contemporary society, tourism activity gains new contours and becomes perceived as disruptive, of deviation and contrast between what we call the routine of daily life and the “mundane”. From the nineteenth century, travelling to see places or objects disconnected from work or business becomes a central characteristic of mass tourism in modern societies:

if people do not travel, they lose status: travel is a marker of status. It is crucial element of modern life to feel that travel and holidays are necessary. ‘I need a holiday’ reflects a modern discourse based on the idea that people’s physical and mental health will be restored if only they can ‘get away’ from time to time. (Urry & Larsen, 2011, p. 6)

Based on this idea of escaping from work and tensions of daily life, people engage in the choice of places that are naturally – or become – considered as tourist destinations, of which history, geography, culture, among other characteristics of their own or (re) created, repel or attract different types of tourists or even residents. These places become “*loci of affection*” (Urry, 2007) – “in a sense that people need to see it for themselves, be immersed in it, feel its affective record” (p. 253).

Over the years, some places were treated as places of destination and contemplation, such as the places of religious pilgrimage, health treatment, cultural development and educational progress, such as those visited in the “Grand Tours” of the 17th to the 19th centuries. These “Grand Tours” carried out by English noblemen at first and then by European bourgeois families, historically helped to develop the notion of “tourist gaze” which, according to Urry (2007), refers to a look trained in contemplating the place.

According to Urry and Larsen (2011, p. 14), it was around 1840 that the tourist gaze was developed based on the unique and peculiar combination between the increase in the collective means of transportation and the desire to travel, on the one hand; and the technical development of the photograph and its mass reproduction on the other. In this sense, the tourist gaze has emerged related to new technologies and the media, mainly photography, through which the images were mediatized – or, in Urry’s terms, “Kodakized” – and that, from its circulation, gave visibility to the places. Illustrations, photographs and postcards, travel leaflets, advertising pieces, advertisements and posters, such as those of the Berardo Collection analysed here, were all means used to spread and circulate the images of the places and, directly or indirectly, build the tourist’s contemplative gaze. All this publicity made the places become attractive not only to be seen in the photos and posters, but to be known personally. The role of the media in this sense was didactic to build the image of the place as a tourist and travel destination.

However, as Urry and Larsen state: “there is no innocent and pure gaze”.

The “tourist gaze” is not a matter of individual psychology but of socially patterned and learnt “ways of seeing” (Berger, 1972). It is a vision constructed through mobile images and representational technologies. Like the medical gaze, the power of the visual gaze within modern tourism is tied into, and enabled by, various technologies, including camcorders, film, TV, cameras and digital images. (Urry & Larsen, 2011, p. 2)

As something related to the culture and social practices of a time, the tourist gaze is therefore built within a historical context – and by different groups and their characteristics such as gender, social class, race and age – which, together with the development of the media and the means of transportation, becomes decisive in its constitution as a (sort of) gaze.

At this point it is interesting to put the question of the image as regards what, here, is conceptualized as the tourist gaze. According to Lasbeck (2003), image is the “impression” caused by the discourse in the receptor dimension, which marks the real or probable existence of what was presented:

image is the commonly used term to designate visual or mental, graphic or verbal representations of something that exists or could exist. It provides both for real objects and beings, and for fictional, operating in these cases, as an expression of real or probable existence. However, we are interested to reveal “image” as “impression”, something that, like a mirror, reflects and refractures the light. If the speech gives the expression of information elements grouped in texts, the image, its counterpoint, it would be the place of the impression caused by the action of the discourse. (Lasbeck, 2003, p. 26)

In this sense, it is necessary to draw attention to the fact that the tourist gaze, being socially systematized by the media in a cultural and historical background, is the expression of this “impression” caused by what is shown discursively. Thus, the gaze becomes an image and, in the case of the subject of this article, plays a decisive role in the way the city of Rio de Janeiro is perceived, including locals, who appropriated this foreign tourist gaze over time.

But returning to the question of place, however strong the role of advertising and the media in the construction of the tourist gaze, over time many places considered as tourist destinations fell in decline in travel circuits, as a result of changes experienced in the historical and social contexts. And as a direct consequence of the changes in context, the way visitors appropriate these places is also changed, as:

places are not fixed, given or unchanging but depend in part upon the practices within them. Those relations [between people and places] have to be affectively performed. Places entail various kinds of performances (as shown in Sheller, Urry, 2004), and therefore without those performances over time that place will change and become something. (Urry, 2007, p. 254)

By stressing the issue of performance as important constituent part of what it would be to do tourism, Urry and Larsen (2011, p. 14) propose to rethink the importance of the sense of vision and traditionally tourism related, in comparison to the other senses that become also fundamental in the practice of the “sightseeing”, emphasizing the existence of a “hybrid” mode of looking that brings the body and technological devices (such as video and photographic cameras, in addition to, most recently, the inseparable and omnipresent cellphone), which the authors name as “tourist gaze 3.0”.

By extending the concept of the tourist gaze, the authors emphasize not only the questions of performance and use of technological mediation, but mainly the individualist bias of this fruition with the place. This individualization of tourism creates what Feifer (1985) calls the “post-tourist” subject, that individual traveler who, unlike the mass tourist – who walks in groups, in a safety bubble and who does not risk to see beyond what the guide presents him or her – is not interested in this “staged authenticity”, as stated by MacCannell (1976), distanced, clean, ascetic and without risk, produced by the tourism industry and mediatized on a global scale.

The question of authenticity and real in tourism practice is much greater and deeper than this text supports, but it is important to make clear that while the mass tourist seeks for a discursively authenticity prepared by advertising and the media, as well as currently, by thousands of images transmitted on social networks, the post-tourist seeks the authenticity of the place in an encounter with the “other” personally and in loco, and not by photos and videos previously seen, or in guided visits whose interaction is all staged and controlled and, therefore, understood as inauthentic.

Freire-Medeiros explains this issue putting emphasis on the search for authentic via interaction between the tourist and the place which, in some way, is in line with the question of performance and hybrid practices. According to the author:

in the new millennium, such authenticity no longer refers to transcendental experience, but to a territory colonized by media references. The emphasis, I would say, is no longer based on contemplation, but on interaction – this is what the tourist market announces as practical experiences. (Freire-Medeiros, 2007, p. 1)

As we shall see in the next session, in the case of Rio de Janeiro, the favela, poverty, the artistic expressions “of the margin”, such as samba and, more recently, funk and *passinho* dance, have never been really detached from the tourist scene of the city, even when the main attraction of Rio was its exotic nature and the hospitality of its people. However, it is indisputable the gain in importance of the periphery in national tourism over the last few years, especially Rio’s local tourism, where the favela, for example, has gained status of local affection and tourist destination, following the post-modern trend of performance tourism, in which the traveler lives the experience of culture and place like a native.

RIO DE JANEIRO: FROM MARVELOUS CITY TO OLYMPIC CITY

The Brazilian application for the 2016 Olympic Games began to be postulated in the early 1990s in the presidential term of Fernando Collor de Mello (1990-1992). The former president's idea was to propose Brasilia as a candidate for the 2000 Olympic Games, taking advantage of the 40 years anniversary of the city and the 500 years of the discovery of Brazil. According to Rubio and Mesquita (2011), this idea had the support of the Bank of Brazil's Marketing Director, as the public bank usually supports sports in Brazil, as well as the rich businessmen of Brasilia, especially the local real estate sector:

this makes us believe that the Brasilia 2000 Olympic Project, more than a public project for the city, was a private enterprise, mobilised by private interests without a technical basis for its realization. It is worth pointing out that this application did not have the support of the Brazilian Olympic Committee that already wished to launch the city of Rio de Janeiro, the former federal capital and the main Brazilian tourist destination, for this purpose. (Rubio & Mesquita, 2001, p. 77)

Despite the failure of Brasilia, in 1996, Carlos Arthur Nuzman, president of the Brazilian Olympic Committee (COB) at the time, conducted the first candidacy of Rio de Janeiro to host the 2004 Olympic Games. Brazil at that time began to experience certain economic stabilisation with the Real Plan, implemented by then President Fernando Henrique Cardoso. However, according to Rubio and Mesquita (2011), sports activity was little valued in the country and was not yet organised enough to apply for Olympic City.

Until the victorious campaign of the Rio 2016 Olympic Games, other applications were proposed to the IOC: for 2004, which ended happening in Athens; and for 2012, which was held in London. The entire process of Rio's application for the 2016 Olympic Games happened during Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's administration. Lula was the President responsible for the creation of the Ministries of Sports and Tourism, which, according to Rubio and Mesquita (2011, p. 79), contributed to "the transformation of the sports both institutionally and in performance". In addition to this institutional organization in favor of sport, there was also a whole political, social and economic effort at the federal, state and municipal administration levels for the affirmation of Brazil and, by extension, of Rio de Janeiro as a place with strategic and business potential beyond its "exuberant natural features".

Cesar Maia, three times Mayor of Rio de Janeiro, was a precursor to this idea when, in 1992, he stated that the city's image should be worked out from its economic, social and political capacity to be a global city and not only because it is "naturally beautiful"¹¹. For Maia, the cultural industry, of which sports megaevents are part, should be used to boost the image of Rio de Janeiro as a global city. With their strength of investment and mobilization, these megaevents would make the city the preferred *locus* of the industry in

¹¹ Article published in *O Globo* newspaper. February 12, 1992.

the world. Thus, in the former mayor's opinion, Rio de Janeiro would amplify its power of attraction as destination: ranging from entertainment and leisure to business.

Agreeing with Maia, in 1994, economist Carlos Lessa, then coordinator of the Strategic Plan for Development of Rio de Janeiro, pointed to the anachronism of the city's image as a "tropical paradise" as the city has been portrayed since the 19th century. For Lessa, the best strategy to develop the image of "Rio as a product" would be the total recast of the city's identity: "Rio should be offered in all its complexity", he said¹². Both views of Rio over these decades underline the position of the city as a place not only to visit and contemplate but also a place where global companies should invest their money.

The city's marketing campaign (city branding), developed with the aim of strengthening Rio's image as Latin American cosmopolitan metropolis, was a major communicational action in the local and global spheres. But it also launched the city as a "product", as we can see a whole effort to change the landscape of Rio de Janeiro for something that reflected all its urban complexity and diversity. But regardless of any market effort to "sell" the city from a business point of view rather than just entertainment, more urban rather than a natural aspect, in one way or another, Rio's beauty and the locals' hospitality were used as part of the communication, both in the advertising posters of the last century of the Berardo Collection, as well as in the Opening Ceremony for the Rio 2016 Olympic Games, strengthening an image in which the city is a place to see and be seen, to be appreciated, a place "to be", in other terms, a place of affection to be consumed as a tourist destination.

In short, the media has always been involved in the construction of a socially systemized tourist gaze, of a collective image that has been changing in parallel to the changes of the historical socio context.

However, the idea of construction of an image of Rio de Janeiro as a tourist destination is not recent. According to Freire-Medeiros, the genesis of the city's invention as a tourist destination was in the 1920s (2009, p. 320), with the appearance of the first luxury hotels on the sea front such as Copacabana Palace, in 1923, and the very incorporation of the beach as a privileged place for residents and visitors (Castro, 2001; O'Donnell, 2013). However, still according to the author, it was the Christ the Redeemer, inaugurated in 1931, that gave the city the cosmopolitan feel that was missing, providing it with one of the strongest and most famous tourist symbols in the world:

[the opening of Christ the Redeemer] was not about representing what the nation and its capital city were, but rather celebrating what they aspired to be: the balanced combination between secularity and religion, between the dazzling nature of the mountain and the human intervention condensed in the sculpture. The tourism industry and the cinema industry, both in formation at the time, benefited from these public events and investments that both singled out some of the city's own predicates and included it in the hall of cosmopolitan cities. (Freire-Medeiros, 2009, p. 321)

¹² Article published in *O Globo* newspaper, October 16, 1994.

At this point, we present the first posters of the Berardo Collection that opened the exhibition at MHN, in Rio de Janeiro. The first one (Figure 1) was created in 1910 to promote the travels of the English Royal Mail to South America. The image shows the Guanabara Bay full of ships and smaller boats revealing an intense flow of tourists in the city with the intention of showing it as an attractive place to visit. The natural landscape is shown in a peculiar and disproportional way, with the Sugar Loaf – without the cable car – in the forefront, and the Corcovado hill right behind it, still without the Christ statue, completing the landscape set which, according to the guide of the exhibition, defined the city.

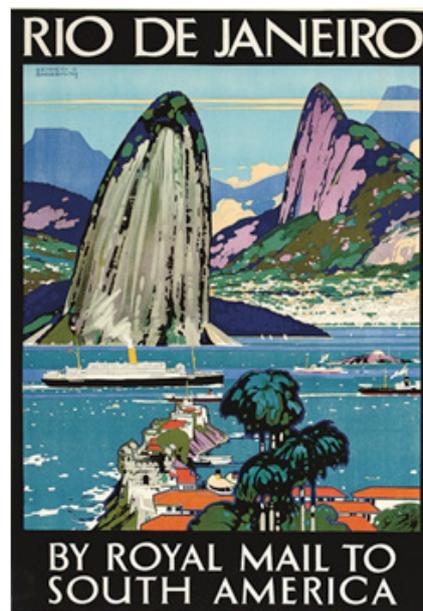


Figure 1: *Rio de Janeiro by Royal Mail to South America*. Kenneth Shoesmith. UK, c. 1920
Source: Berardo Collection. Courtesy National History Museum, Rio de Janeiro

The point of view of this first poster was that of the tourist in the *cockpit* of the ship, arriving to the city via the Guanabara Bay. With the progressive increase in air travel, the design of the posters begins to show Rio's landscape seen from above. This distant and eminently panoramic vision was immediately adopted as classical and is still used today in postcards, magazines, tourist guides, films and other media products. The posters created by Air France (Figure 2) and Pan American Airlines (Figure 3), both circa 1940, as well as KLM and Varig, also exposed, reinforced the idea that Rio de Janeiro is "blessed by God", with exuberant and unique nature, confirmed by the statue of Christ the Redeemer contemplating the city.

Between the 1950s and the 1960s the technical development of air aviation gives *glamour* to travel and more than ever Rio de Janeiro is an important destination of the air carriers' Atlantic crossings. "Advertising approached art to value the ideal of travel", reads the exhibition's brochure (2015, p. 25) and the posters of the 1950 and 1970 period clearly show the renewal not only of styles, but also of the illustration techniques – some enriched with graphic images – and also a more persuasive approach to the poster's commercial objectives.

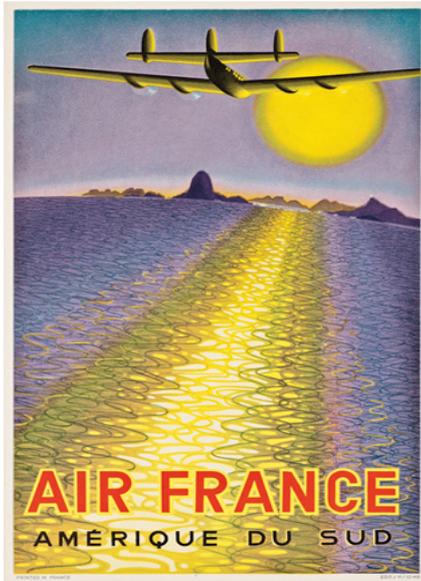


Figure 2: Air France. *Amérique du Sud*. Victor Vasarely. France, c. 1940
Source: Berardo Collection. Courtesy National History Museum, Rio de Janeiro

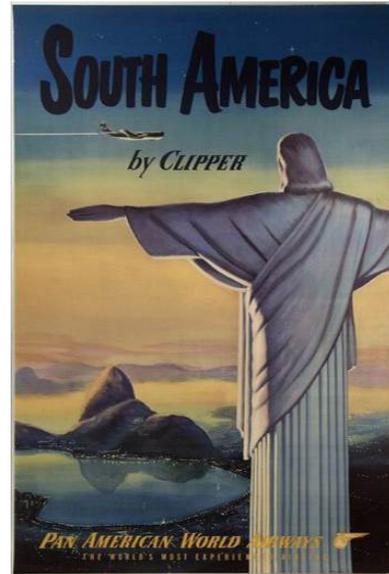


Figure 3: *South America by Clipper*. USA, c. 1940
Source: Berardo Collection. Courtesy National History Museum, Rio de Janeiro

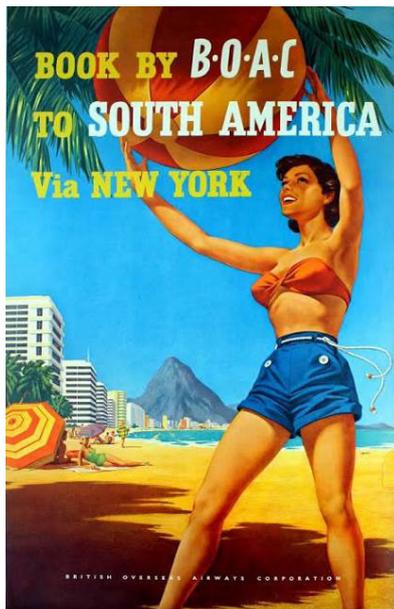


Figure 4: BOAC *South America*. Hayes UK, c. 1960
Source: Berardo Collection. Courtesy National History Museum, Rio de Janeiro



Figure 5: *South America by SAS*. Scandinavian Airlines System. Otto Nielsen. Denmark, c. 1950
Source: Berardo Collection. Courtesy National History Museum, Rio de Janeiro

With regard to the landscape, besides the natural beauty, the Carioca way of life was also an element of the singularity of the city, especially the joy of people at the parties and the carnival described in the posters as one of the main characteristics of the locals, pointing to the tendency of a more performatic experience of the city that characterizes the 3.0 tourist. At that time, also, the female figure was promoted as the incarnation of

the city and, in this regard, “Rio de Janeiro is no longer defined only by the natural landscape and became represented as a way of living”, says the exhibition brochure.

Two good examples of this period are the BOAC posters for South America, 1950 (Figure 4), or the relaxed modernity of Copacabana and its party people represented in the SAS-Scandinavian Air Lines (1950) created by Otto Nielsen (Figure 5). In these images the collective discourse concerns one Rio de Janeiro whose image is, without doubt, that of a tourist destination, a place to be.

Thus, until the 1970s, the image of Rio built and mediatized locally and globally – therefore, the vision that tourists had about the city –, was made of the natural beauty, carnival parties, sympathy and hospitality of the locals, not necessarily in this order. Even though it is not part of the posters of the Berardo Collection, the subject of this article, it is important to comment that during the 1970s, in the period known as “years of lead” of the military dictatorship, the posters that disclosed Rio and, by extension, Brazil in the International Fairs of the tourism industry showed women on the beach, with minimal bikinis and sensual positions. In this sense, the idea of the city being the female incarnation has reverberated for an appeal that surpassed the beauty itself, both of the people and the place, for something with a more sexual connotation. According to Gomes:

Brazilian public tourism marketing, in the 1970s-1990s (by then Brazilian Company of Tourism created in 1966, today Brazilian Institute of Tourism), constructed the “Brazilian woman” as a tourist attraction (Gomes, 2009) by using images of women associated with natural landscapes (notably the beaches) or cultural events (such as carnival) in tourism dissemination content. Embratur consolidated the image of Brazil linked to erotic and exotic. (Gomes, 2013, p. 876)

But in the context of the creation of the aforementioned Ministry of Tourism, since the 1990s there was an entire marketing effort to update the image of Rio and in the 2000s, during the first term of President Lula’s administration, the *naïf* narrative of tropical paradise was reinvented by adding to Rio’s image its “complexity”, as Lessa mentioned. As we will see below, the Opening Ceremony for the Olympic Games, not by chance entitled “The New World”, opened the doors of the “The Olympic City”, at least in the communication aspect analysed here. “Let the magic images of the Marvelous and Olympic City remain forever in the memory. Rio is ready for the sports celebration”, as stated by the Mayor of Rio de Janeiro and host to Rio 2016, Eduardo Paes, in the opening paragraphs of the brochure of the ceremony.

Distributed to all the spectators at the entrance of the event, the multilingual guide of the Opening Ceremony brought the script of what was happening in the Maracanã Stadium field, the stage for the “sports party”. The guide’s presentation text made clear what it was about: a (re)presentation of Rio de Janeiro and, by extension, of Brazil, created, produced and controlled by Brazilians and directed for the consumption of a global audience. In line with the perspective of the new tourist gaze 3.0, mediatized performatic, the past as “lost paradise” would not be denied, but it would not be the key aspect to be disclosed as the conception of the show, now considered the cheapest in the history

of the Olympic Games, was to resignify Rio's image globally. In this sense, the trope of paradise was used as an initial marker for a mythic time that inspired the future (and the present) of the city:

our ceremony will not trump powers and conquests. Let us celebrate our spirit and aim in the future – not only ours, but of the world. Let us celebrate Pindorama¹³, the enormous Garden that the world can be again. We launch here a new symbol of peace – peace with the planet – and the challenge of transforming the future. (Ceremony Guide, 2016)

The script of the show was, in fact, created as a rite of renewal, re-assembling the original purity of *Terra Brasilis* and then following the path of life, from microscopic beings (Figure 6)¹⁴ to the first people to inhabit the Forest: “the forest peoples” (Figure 7). According to the brochure, the arrival of European colonizers imposed a geometrization of the earth (Figure 8):

over time, civilizations replaced the complex geometry of nature with the human geometry. Flowers have given rise to cities, roads, farming, mining, industrialization, to what we are today. We built our identity by redesigning nature, a metaphor of the deleterious effects of civilization on nature. (Guide to the Ceremony, 2016)

The urban growth of the city was visually presented by the favelas (Figure 9), funk music and *passinho* dance. At this point of the ceremony, the notion of Rio's authenticity was updated, revealing the periphery and the culture of those who are on the margins and who today renew the carioca lifestyle. The city's nature and beauty were replaced by a characteristic urbanity represented by an aesthetic originally related to the so-called ‘Northern zone’, which includes the peripheral suburban neighborhoods of the metropolitan area and where most of the favelas of the city are located.

Compared to the posters of the Berardo Collection, it is possible to state that the image of the Marvelous City, with its paradise beauty of the beaches of the South Zone and the Guanabara Bay, gave rise to the Olympic City, urbanized and performatic, the city of the favela, whose lifestyle and artistic manifestations, such as funk music, *passinho* dance, as well as the graphite, gained prominence and were globally marked as an important part of the new image of Rio as Olympic City.

And also, within this notion of global and the role of the media with a systemic tool of the tourist gaze, it is also possible to quote the updating of the “Girl from Ipanema” that since its launch, in 1963, is the maximum representation of the woman of Rio of Brazil. First represented by a woman playing on the beach in the poster of BOAC, the female incarnation of Rio de Janeiro was updated in the image of the world-famous model Gisele Bündchen parading “full of charm”, as says the lyrics by Tom Jobim (1927-1994), in one of the most broadly-mediatized scenes of the ceremony (Figures 10 and 11). The

¹³ “Mythic name of the land free of all evils, according to the indigenous people here”, as informs the text of the Guide.

¹⁴ All images of the Opening Ceremony for the Rio 2016 Olympic Games used in this paper were retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N_qXmgHYgRob.

invitation of a world-famous model not only for her beauty, but also for her successful career, to represent Rio de Janeiro in an event of this media amplitude, gives a clue of the market effort of the organization of Ceremony in giving Rio de Janeiro the status of global city, naturally beautiful and good for business, a tourist destination and also a place for investment and innovation.

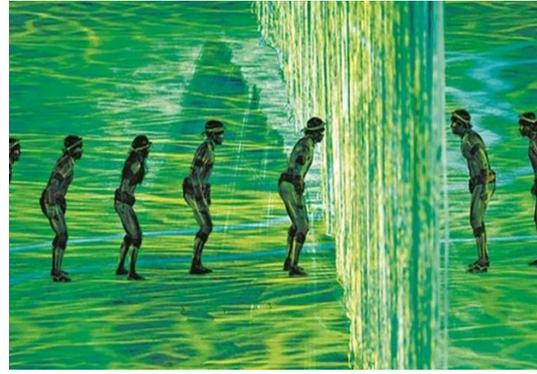
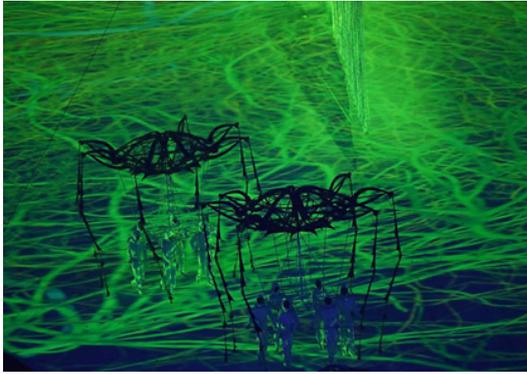


Figure 6 and Figure 7: Microscopic beings and the Forest People
Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N_qXm9HY9Rob



Figure 8 and Figure 9: City geometrization and the architecture of favelas
Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N_qXm9HY9Rob



Figure 10 and Figure 11: Gisele Bündchen/Girl from Ipanema and Tom Jobim
Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N_qXm9HY9Rob

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Without the city's main tourist icons — the statue of Christ the Redeemer, without the Sugar Loaf and its cable car, without the design of Copacabana, without football and samba —, the Opening Ceremony for the Rio 2016 Olympic Games presented the world a new Rio de Janeiro. During the three-hours show, the city was presented as a creative, diverse, urban and innovative place, and that included the very way that the Ceremony's organizing committee surpassed all the budget cuts — and the political crisis the country was going through and still is — to perform an event that cheered Brazilians and moved the global media. “Our budget was 20 times lower than that of Beijing (2008) But it makes sense not to spend a fortune on the ceremony. We are in crisis and there are better places to spend that money than the Opening of the Games”, stated Fernando Meirelles, one of the artistic directors of the spectacle (Boykoff, 2016, p. 236).

This new image of Rio de Janeiro was not entirely unknown to the post-tourists who had been visiting the city to see the favelas and peripheral neighborhoods. But for mass tourists, who choose their destination based on media images, the image of the city and its locals portrayed during the ceremony was surprising and reversed the expectations by presenting an excellent image of the country and the host city, as stated by Jen Chaney, from American magazine *The New Yorker*, published in *O Globo* newspaper¹⁵.

The strangeness of the media and the global audience is due to the fact that many narratives of Rio de Janeiro were created without considering the perspective of their inhabitants. As seen on the posters of the Berardo Collection, such narratives made the landscape, life, arts and hospitality of the people of the so-called “marvelous city” go global — but not without stereotypes. “These images have influenced the international tourist's gaze and became an important part of the way Cariocas see their own city”, says Freire-Medeiros (2009).

Compared to the Berardo Collection posters, the Opening Ceremony for the Rio 2016 Olympic Games reversed the point of view and showed the world the image of Rio de Janeiro from the perspective of those who experience the city: the exuberant nature was there, along with the hospitality and strength of the people; but also, the urban artistic manifestations, the *favelas*, the rap and *passinho* dance, without leaving the *samba*, the *bossa nova* and the tropical scenery behind. The cosmopolitanism of the 1950s, of Ipanema and Copacabana, that is, from Rio by the sea, was “mixed” with a cosmopolitanism of the margin, in Santiago's terms (2004), which decentralises the global and places the periphery as the starting point of a new world, as was well summarised in the title of the ceremony.

In this sense, as regards the study of Rio de Janeiro as a tourist destination, based on a historical perspective made through a comparative analysis between the posters of the Berardo Collection from 1910 to 1970, and the images of the Opening Ceremony for the Rio 2016 Olympic Games, it is possible to state that the spectacle of August 5, 2016 was the final advertising piece that dedicated the entire marketing and communication

¹⁵ Retrieved from <https://oglobo.globo.com/rio/eficiencia-na-abertura-dos-jogos-pode-marcara-uma-virada-no-animo-na-imagem-nacionais-19866223>.

effort made since the 1990s by the three government spheres of the country, to mark the city not only as a place of tourist affection and entertainment, but also, as a place of culture, economic and social production.

From the results obtained both in the local media and, especially, in the global media, the opening spectacle was successful in its objective of incorporating the title of “Marvelous City” the image of “The Olympic City”. As a result, a new tourist gaze rises from a more urban and performatic view of Rio – and nothing more performatic than sports competitions –, despite all the economic and political crisis experienced since 2013 that threatened the very realization of the Rio Olympic Games in 2016.

Finally, although this article was not focused on the social issues related to the so-called “legacy of the Games”, as regards the improvements in architecture and public spaces, including urban mobility infrastructure, it is impossible not to mention that six months after the Games, the same media that praised the party, reported the ruins that became the new or refurbished sports equipment used in the Olympics and Paralympics¹⁶: “the Olympic Village has become a ghost town”, said Business Insider magazine. In 2017, not even iconic Maracanã Stadium escaped the crisis and had its energy disconnected for lack of payment. This and other problems were disclosed in a video on YouTube¹⁷.

According to Boykoff (2016), the history of the Olympic Games shows that host cities tend to be negatively impacted, both socially and economically, in the face of the perspectives marketed by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) when choosing the location of the Games. Rio de Janeiro was no exception and most of the investments made in the city, apart from the Olympic Boulevard and the metro line 4, are deteriorating amidst an unprecedented economic and financial crisis both at the state and municipal level.

Thus, for better or worse, it is possible to state that the status of hosting the Summer Olympic Games in 2016, stays with the city and becomes part of the complexity of Rio de Janeiro, which Lessa referred to in his article of 1994.

Translation: Patrícia Matos

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