

Planning for Megaevents, dual dedications of Legacy and Delivery

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Mega-events as 'hallmark event' (Essex&Chalkley 1998) are considered as a means of image building, and catalyst for urban economic regeneration and development through strategies of attracting global investment, high employment multipliers and local tax revenues (Owen 2002). Critics, however, emphasise that running a 'spectacle' and achieving local regeneration are tasks which are not easily reconciled (Eisinger 2000), since the consumers of the spectacle are mainly middle-class (Gornostaeva 2011), and the ultimate consequences of city renewal by means of sport/consumption-led regeneration will be gentrification, prising-out and displace local small businesses and the disadvantaged populations (Vigor, Mean et al. 2004, Cohen& Watt 2017).

I suggest that there are common dynamics behind the controversy of hosting the Mega Events which has plagued almost everywhere in the world to a greater or lesser degree, as the contradiction between two concurrent and tacit conceptions of the Mega Events. Delivery: the conception that understands the games as a project that should get done on time and perfect alongside, and as the counterpoint, legacy, which conceives Mega Event as a tool of redistributing the benefits to the citizens. The combination of legacy and delivery or public-sector (gift) and private-sector (profit) in one phrase seems awkward at best and an outright oxymoron at worst, while can be only explained by the market base city development. Therefore, the aim of this paper presentation is to review and analyse the whole process of Mega Event planning and legacy building which has been set to deliver the whole event and engage the locals to the benefits, while reflecting them on recent urban discourses, and the theories embedded them.

Keywords: Mega Event, delivery, legacy, city planning, project management

Introduction

In recent years, cities have focused great attention on leveraging the global resources offered through hosting mega-events such as the World Cup and the Olympic Games(Müller 2015). Mega-events can be defined as onetime occasions with a fixed duration that attract large numbers of visitors and have worldwide reputations (Horn 2007; Hall 2006; Gold and Gold 2008). They can also be regarded as major infrastructure provision opportunities and are accompanied by substantial 'drama' (Roche 2000, 1) and a high level of international scrutiny (Flyvbjerg 2013). The drama and media exposure of these 'hallmark events' (Essex and Chalkley 1998), causes them to be considered as a chance for placemaking, a process which includes both shaping the image of host cities, and acting as a catalyst for urban economic regeneration and development through attracting global investment (Gratton Shibli and Coleman 2005; Hall 2006; Smith and Fox 2007). However, the idea of utilising a mega-event to pursue mass intervention by the state has been opposed by some scholars, who criticise the negative effects of such strategies on the trajectories of urban development and policy-making processes. Their concerns relate to the record of cost overruns, schedule slips, oversized infrastructures, and 'over-promising' about the benefits and optimistic futures for host cities (for example, Müller 2015; Boykoff 2014; Cottle 2011; Gaffney 2010; Hayes and Horne, 2011; Shin and Li 2013). In addition, there is some evidence suggesting a triggering effect of mega-events on social polarisation and the displacement of existing working-class populations by middle-class residents (Bound 1996; Hiller 2000; Horne 2007; Watt 2017). Consequently, the mega-event issue has also become a worldwide platform for opponents who call attention to the destructive dimensions of strategies related to place making through mega-events, in terms of the erosion of democratic accountability and the overlooking of marginalised groups (Gruneau and Horne 2015). These critics have produced a great deal of debate about the legitimacy of hosting mega-events and their ultimate benefits.

The goal of this paper is to provide a fresh understanding of the Olympic Games through clarifying the dilemma caused by the dual nature of mega-events, in terms of projects and urban leverage. I suggest that there are common dynamics behind the controversies attaching to the hosting of mega-events which plague almost every location worldwide to a greater or lesser degree. I call this the contradiction between the dual requisites of legacy and delivery. In these two concurrent and tacit conceptions of mega-events, delivery is the notion that understands the Games as a project that should be completed perfectly and on time; it exists alongside the counterpointing requisite of legacy, which conceives a mega-event as a tool for distributing and redistributing benefits to citizens. The



combination of legacy and delivery as being an issue of 'public sector (goods) and private sector (profit)', covered by this one phrase, seems awkward at best and an outright oxymoron at worst, when only explained by the market base of city development. On the one hand, there is the desire and intention to create the greatest possible spectacle, and to put forward the best possible image of the city to the world; on another is the commitment actors have towards environmental, social and economic benefit for cities and their citizens. This duality results in the forming of two characteristics – the two-fold nature of mega-events – and each of these (delivery and legacy) should be examined according to recent narratives and the theories embedded in them.

The legacy aspect of mega-events

Despite numerous attempts to define the concept of legacy within the recent literature on mega-events (MacRury 2008; Agha et al. 2012; Chappelet 2012; Malfas et al. 2004), the term is still complex, ambiguous and multi-faceted. Preuss (2004) conceptualises legacy as a three-dimensional concept, and this is a useful tool for developing a plural understanding of this complicated construct. He suggests that legacies can be planned or unplanned, positive or negative, and tangible or intangible. Although most pre-event studies focus only on planned, positive and tangible dimensions, the same legacy may be viewed positively or negatively, depending on who is making the assessment. Being focused on legacy in terms of all and any outcomes, Cashman (2013) argues that legacy is what remains when the Games have finished and can be interpreted as 'aftermath'. In other words, legacy is "all that may be considered as consequences of the event in its environment" (Chappelet 2012, 77).

Officially, the IOC provides a list of broad meanings of Olympic legacies that it recognises and indeed promotes in order to help bid cities to frame their strategies. These include: a) economic impacts of the Games on host cities over time; b) cultural impacts connected to social values which host cities may wish to highlight, such as multicultural inclusivity; c) social debate created in the context of the development and reuse of Games infrastructure; d) political legacies arising through efforts to promote 'peaceful', skilled and fair sporting contests; e) education relating to the Olympic mission; and f) 'sustainable development' (IOC Olympic studies 2013, 2–4). These categories suggest a wide range of possible outcomes, not all of which may figure to equivalent extents in cities' bids. The IOC points out that although some of these Olympic Games legacies may be 'tangible' or quantifiable, such as Olympic Village infrastructure or numbers of volunteers, others may be 'intangible', for example, the value of inspiration to athletes or a sense of belonging accruing through participation. The requirement for cities to deliver more than simply physical change is clearly important both for the IOC and citizens.

Within the city context, legacy could be considered as a process of passing on through the generations – the handing down of a 'gift', or the inheritance of knowledge, property or particular attitudes. This goes beyond the definition of the term 'legacy'; rather, it offers a narrative of a "prescribed set of outcomes as a means for thinking and linking past, present and future trajectories of a city in its developmental path" (MacRury and Poynter 2008, 17). While it is critical to track those potentialities of legacy which go beyond planned outcomes, it is also critical to recognise that different sorts of outcome may have different durations and geographies of impact within cities' developmental trajectories (Gaffney 2010). For instance, one of the immediate aftermaths of an Olympic Games could be increased levels of tourism for a host city; however, such increases may prove difficult to sustain. The 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games is considered the first and only Olympics to have generated long-term tourism legacies (Li and Blake 2009). Benefits such as a boosted construction industry may be felt at the level of the city, but simultaneously, costs may be borne by localities in terms of rising property values, for example. Local people may additionally experience disadvantages through being dispossessed of their homes and livelihoods in order to make way for the scale of development that hosting a Games has come to imply. These facts raise important questions about the temporality of legacy and who is in a position to benefit.

In light of the record of cost overruns of previous mega-events (Flyvbjerg and Stewart 2012), and the impression that host cities can be disadvantaged by holding a mega-event, the issue of use of public funds creates considerable controversy. This controversy focuses on whether huge investments of this type return the money spent to citizens through delivering the claims and promises made. During the last decade, therefore, the idea of harnessing a mega-event to a broader urban agenda that moves beyond the interest of finance, developers, inner-city reclamation and the tourist industry has emerged in the mega-event literature (Hiller 2014). Critical writing on the subject conceives legacy not just as a set of predicted outcomes to be capitalised upon, but rather as a narrative of unfolding and continuing multiform achievements. These achievements are seen as generative and driven by a momentum born of economic stimuli, infrastructure development and the elaboration of 'soft' factors and affirmed values of communities and other stakeholders in the life of the city.

Thus, legacy has become even more contested, being perceived as a symbol of the tension between pro-growth factions and locals who feel excluded from the benefits of the event. In order to untie this 'knot', MacRury and Poynter (2008) categorised the current concepts and practice of legacy as two different and contrasting narratives: legacy as 'commodity' and legacy as a 'gift'. The concept of legacy as a commodity can be located in the wider



perspective of organisational assumptions underpinning the physical aspects of mega-events, which in the context of cost-benefit planning is a supplementary part of mega-event delivery (to be further explained in the next section). Here, it is enough to say that the legacy agenda, used as the legitimisation 'story' attached to the whole setting-up mission, focuses on manifesting the benefits of mega-events as being the city's benefits, by building new transportation infrastructure, parks and facilities. On the other hand, legacy as 'gift' is a necessarily tacit discourse defined from the city planning/urban sociology perspective. It is not just about the outcomes, positive or negative, of mega-events that 'happen' to citizens, but should responds to the demands, that are made by people for their share of an event. The ideology behind legacy as 'gift' (MacRury and Poynter 2008), which can be more accurately stated as the 'right of the citizen to the event', is based on equal distribution of the benefits of legacy and on bottom-up development of the legacy agenda. This idea of the 'right of the citizen to the event' behind the concept of legacy is based on the theoretical framework of 'right to the city' discourses which, in order to apply them in my analysis, I outline in this chapter.

Legacy building based on the 'right to the city'

The importance of legacy as an intentional positive benefit for the public is an official requirement of both the IOC and host cities' national governments. This necessity can be explained through diverse but relevant discourses presented in the 'right to the city' concept. Although, Lefebvre's concept of "the right to the city" (1996, 147–151) was initially considered rather a revolutionary concept and a plea for a new and radical kind of urban politics, it is now widely accepted and used in reformist agendas. The application of this model presents an analytical tool for rationalising the importance of preserving public interests, such as legacy, within all the hosting processes of mega-events, including specifically the Olympic Games.

Lefebvre claims that the city should be created by its citizens through their acts of participation or "appropriation"; that is, through everyday routines and capacities used to realise their social needs, and not only through using "dominant strategies and ideologies" (1996, 174 and 154). Lefebvre suggests that 'right' in this context pertains to 'the interests of the whole society', but would be intended to privilege 'those who inhabit'. It can be regarded as a form of ownership, but one which, at least in philosophical terms, is differentiated from the processes of legally acquiring land and property by exchange.

Along similar lines, Amin and Thrift argue that the 'right to the city' is "the right to citizenship for all, the right to shape and influence" (1995, 154). The focus of their work is on how to apply this principle in practical terms. The 'right to the city', they argue, "cannot draw on the politics of urban design and public encounter alone, but also requires rights-based and other institutionalized actions at national and urban levels to build capacity and capability across the social spectrum" (Amin and Thrift 1995, 154). In other words, it is not enough to allow people to participate in decision-making processes; people's existing capacities and their "capabilities" – defined in terms of the opportunity to realise the things they value (Sen 2009, 231) – also need to be developed so they can perform their citizen roles more effectively. The solution they propose, and which they refer to as a 'politics of the commons', does not begin with formalised rules of engagement, but rather with the recognition that the different interests people have and contributions they can make constitute valid practices of citizenship, and that these are what a mature democracy should seek to support and cultivate.

Agreeing on Legacy

To sum up, rather than accepting one of these definitions of legacy as a 'best-fit', or producing a composite definition, legacy has assumed a complex range of meanings in the discourse of the sports mega-event and in the evaluation of its implications for urban regeneration and economic development. It is not to be confused with the 'narrower' evaluation which uses rigid statistics of socio-economic impacts and whose focus is primarily on the costs and benefits of the mega-event itself. The focus here is to combine direct Games-related impacts with a broader examination of the additional or indirect contributions to the economic and social context of the host city. In this sense, 'hard' and 'soft', 'tangible' and 'intangible' legacies are interwoven. The effort here is to distinguish a 'commodity' concept of legacy, understood as a series of concrete outcomes planned and developed by the state, from a more thorough reality of legacy which encompasses generated mobilisation among citizens and the extent to which impacts are shared and negotiated, and which reflects the more normative discourses of the 'right to the city' by defining the right of people to the legacy of the event.

The delivery aspect of mega-events

Hosting a mega-event means embarking on large-scale programmes that require delivering a set of transportation, venue and accommodation projects on time and integrating a diversity of resources with efficiency. The delivery mission is a powerful force in practice in mega-events, and it usually follows a different orientation from the legacy agenda. The public–private aspect, regulation, budget complexity, the immovable timeframe and exceptional public visibility creates a 'state of emergency' and 'action-generating capacity' temperament (Grabher and Thiel



2014). The former is a tactic used to overcome the multiple milestones that could emerge out of routine local political and administrative procedures, and the latter is the strategy which develops to facilitate swift adaptation to the challenges imposed to the city (Grabher and Thiel 2014). However, to understand better the delivery-derived dynamic, we first need to consider a mega-event as a particular type of major project, so that its management concerns can be positioned within the relevant literature of temporary organisations, project management and the major project.

Temporary organisation

The notion of organisation can be defined as the "social units of people that have been structured and managed to meet a need or to pursue collective goals" (Business Dictionary, 2016). The relations between these units of people are concrete enough to be characterised as 'organisation' rather than 'community', and the theory of organisation attempts to explain organisational structures, relationships of organisations with the external environment, and the ways that "an organisation can cope with rapid change" (Perrow 1991, 134). The theory of organisation offers a variety of paradigms used to analyse the organisational structure of mega-events. One defines these structures as temporary, complex collections of firms, institutions and occupational groups and a second can be used to characterise the conjugations and interdependencies among people and organisations.

One of the main organisational attributes of mega-events is their temporality as a linkage node between the private sector and public bodies. The main responsibilities and operations of a mega-event exist as an 'organisation with institutional termination' (Lundin and Söderholm 1995; Grabehr 2002). This particular form of administrative body enables mega-events to follow an organised (collective) course of action aimed at evoking a non-routine process while relying on longer-term structures and permanent organisations. It includes temporary contacts between 'permanent' systems creating inter-organisational temporary organisations with perceived time limits as a form of a functional organisation and as an agency for managing uncertainty (Turner and Müller 2003; Grabher and Thile 2015).

Project

The considerable need for speed and flexibility of a project alters the classical notion of organisation towards a specific fluid form that is more responsive to rapid technological changes and the global market. Therefore, a project, as a one-off venture of a temporary organisation (Hobday 2000; Grabher 2002; Grabher 2004), is usually a special task, programmed by a committee or action group(s), appointed to address a problem or handle a requested action (Lundin and Söderholm,1995) and constrained by specific time and budget (Hobday 2000; Grabher 2002). The usual concept of a project, which certainly applies to the case of a mega-event, is as a plannable and unique task, limited in time, complex in implementation and subject to evaluation. The Olympic Games is one of the best examples of a spectacle project (Lundin and Söderholm 1995), and is run by the project-based organisation of the IOC and awarded as an opportunity to each host city. As a permanent body, the host city handles the high risk and uncertainty of delivering the Olympic Games on time through assigning to it a temporary organisation responsible for delivery.

In going beyond the basic notion of a project, it is essential to consider events such as the Olympic Games as inherently risky, with the risk resulting from long planning horizons and complex interfaces (Flyvbjerg 2003) which are critical sources of vulnerability for delivery. While the public perception is focused on the single event, the practitioners involved are well aware that the record of mega-events has largely been written as a chronicle of planning failures, financial disasters, reputational damage and infrastructural ruin which have led to significant operational and organisational risks (Grabher and Thiel 2014). Therefore, as an organisation, the practitioners involved in delivery need to integrate the necessary skills, knowledge and networks for dealing with non-routine tasks and limitations in costs and time. Within the project ecology of mega-events, the risks of misleading forecasts of demand and cost for the development and management of transportation infrastructure projects and venues are considered very high. Additionally, the "hyperpoliticisation" (Jennings and Lodge 2010, 165) of global events heightens the risk that even small disturbances can cause lasting reputational damage (Grabher and Thiel 2014).

Therefore, being involved in manging at such high risk project, significant career fame and prominent position in labour market (Grabher and Thiel 2015). To understand how the human resources (carrying the necessary knowledge and skills) of mega-events are mobilised, we should understand their 'project ecology' (Grabher 2002). The term 'relational space' of mega-events refers to the systematic ecology between the permanent contexts of institutions, corporate ties and the personal networks within the dedicated organisations (Grabher Thiel 2014). It denotes the effect of career lift of new comers on reshuffling the elite structure.

Within this project ecology, risk management becomes the primary concern of the whole event in terms of predicting the cost of all manner of possible eventualities. The massive risk burden of staging a mega-event has



resulted in the development of a widely held belief that state actors are unable to deliver the same levels of efficiency as those found in the private sector (Giddens 2009; Raco 2014). This inexorably leads to a process "in which experts participate in creating their markets by identifying new risks ever to manage their expertise" (Cutler 2010, 178). This necessarily involves a sorting process, as only a small number of major multinational developers have the capacity and the proven track record to be able to take on major development contracts (Raco 2014). The role of private developers as organisers and managers of increasingly complex assemblages of specialist consultants becomes normalised, and there is a strong belief among both public and private-sector bodies that skilled and well-resourced experts can act as guarantors of quality and efficiency in development practices (Raco 2016).

Therefore, assigning the project part of a mega-event to private sector project management consultants means the mobilisation and concentration of qualified professionals into single-project organisations, and these recruits mainly via particular channels, namely predecessor projects, personal networks and permanent organisations, to both increase speed and reduce uncertainty (Grabher and Thiel 2015). The small number of people with mega "project capabilities" (Grabher 2004, p3) could be the likely explanation for the realities of the mega-project labour market, which comprises a transnational elite circle, usually very different from the policy rhetoric of 'inclusive' and 'devolved' planning that is found in many mega-event strategies and plans. Event-induced gentrification contributes to elite capture and is a phenomenon that has become a familiar sight in most of the mega-event host cities that harness such events for urban regeneration, from Atlanta (Rutheiser 1997) and Sydney to Vancouver (Lenskyj 2008), London (Watt 2013) and Rio (Gaffney 2010). In Stratford in East London, where the Olympic Park is located, the Olympic Games accelerated gentrification and the displacement of existing residents (Watt 2013, 2017).

Conclusion: the dilemma of legacy commitment versus delivery concerns

The whole process of Olympic planning and legacy building are about both delivering the event and engaging locals in its benefits. This critical review has concentrated on the paradoxical nature of mega-events, giving different narratives of the two-fold intentions of mega-events: the direct benefits (actual legacy) of host citizens on the one hand and delivery on the other. Although there is some analysis which puts forward the paradoxical features of mega-events, for example within the literature on legacy in terms of 'gift' versus 'profit' (MacRury 2008), and within the literature of major projects in terms of decision rationality versus action rationality (Ibert 2015), other literature typically concentrates on either legacy or delivery, but not both. There is, therefore, a lack of dialogue between those who emphasise the benefits that attend successful Olympic delivery and those who work on its aftermath.

The legacy assessment literature looks at mega-events within the context of an urban process and the way that the legacy agenda is formulated and practised for the indirect benefit of local citizens. The concept of this analysis and the views of its critics are rooted in the paradigm of the 'right to the city'. The literature mostly indicates the differences between the rhetoric of legacy and the facts, pointing to the values and priorities that alter in relation to the conflict between locals and corporate interests. The other strand of literature is dedicated to the project-management aspect of mega-events, and there is much attention paid to the delivery process in terms of the innovation and learning, network expansion and reconfiguration potential that would take place in the particular platform of the project organisation of mega-events. While, the implications of considering mega-events as a chance to show how to be successful in delivering (under the conditions of complexity, risk, time pressure, and media exposure) has created a particular mechanism of "to-do management initiative and high expert arrangement based on preventing any meddlers defined as those who have limited knowledge of 'reality' of planning process. Therefore, elite capture curtails public oversight and participation" (Müller 2015, 11). At the same time, planning for mega-events turns into a technocratic process of delivery. Thus, it seems that democratic demands become risks that threaten to delay the planning and construction process of the event (Raco 2014; see also Andranovich et al. 2001; Hiller 2000).

Therefore, it can be hypothesised that when a mega event awarded to a city, the global sensitivity and delivery commitment of event became critical, and the whole Olympic Games agenda graviated towards the delivery aspect. In contrast, legacy promises were framed as a limited part of the project's goals for delivery. Therefore, in reality, Mega Events are very incline to prioritise 'delivery' over 'legacy', which means highlighting the benefit of some stakeholders over the many of locals in host cities.



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