Abstract

The Olympic Games 2016 brought different kinds of impacts for one of the biggest Brazilian cities, Rio de Janeiro. As a result of the preparation of the city for the 2016 Olympic Games, especially under the argument of urban mobility projects, hundreds of families were evicted from their homes and big changes were made in the territories. These communities, in partnership with social movements claim for the right of access to information and communication, denouncing the lack of voice they have in the process in different ways of communication, including publications. In this context, media play an important role as one of the power forces, in a scenario of mass media concentration in the hands of few families in the country. The case of the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), in the West Zone of Rio de Janeiro, is one evidence of the situation. This article is a combination of results from a research conducted in 2015 with the support of the NGO Article 19 (Artigo 19 in Brazil) about the Access to Information Law in Brazil applied to the case of the BRT Transolímpica, observation and participation methods in the territory and a final approach that includes the perspective of media and social-environmental conflicts. The article proposes a look of media as part of symbolic power that constitute dominant narratives on social and environmental problems, challenges and discourses and present the concept of social-environmental conflict in the context of the West Zone of Rio de Janeiro, as a consequence of these symbolic powers in the scenario of the Olympic Games 2016.

Keywords:
Olympics; media; right to information; social-environmental conflicts

Introduction

The total budgeted for the Rio de Janeiro 2016 Olympic Games will be about R$ 39 billion (about US$ 12 billion – 30% more than forecasted), according to the Olympic Public Authority, a public body created to take care of the megaevent. The biggest part of this amount is headed for infrastructure works and, especially, urban mobility. And, even more specifically, the majority of the projects happen in a very specific area of the city, the West Zone, distant from
the city Centre, concentrated in neighborhoods as Barra da Tijuca e Recreio, where most of Olympic Games competitions will happen. In this context we find the BRT Transolímpica work, one of the mobility infrastructure projects, connecting 9 neighborhoods of the city at a cost of R$ 1,6 billion. As the other BRT systems (Bus Rapid Transit), BRT Transolímpica has a big impact in the city. It has 26 kilometers of extension, crosses a big area of environmental conservation called Parque Estadual da Pedra Branca, considered one of the biggest urban native forests in the world (12.500 hectares of extension) and a completely crowded urban area, causing people’s evictions.

Since 2012, when the works started there, the work has been questioned in both social and environmental issues. Although, these issues remain out of a broader public debate, while conflicts arise in the territory. This article proposes a look to the dominant narratives related to the Olympic Games in Rio, reinforced by the media, its role as part of a symbolic power, taking its definition by Bordieu (1989). More than just define it as a symbolic power, the aim is to find it where it is not pointed, not recognized, and, therefore, even more efficient in terms of keeping power relations and symbolic ways of legitimation of domination (BORDIEU, 1989, pg 11).

Back to the situation in Rio de Janeiro, the main goal of this article is to contribute to highlight the distance between the dominant narratives and counter-narratives, here complemented with data source and observation in the territory, besides references. The article leads to a conclusion that points a very important word is being silenced in the mainstream discourses of the Olympic Games. This word is conflict. And not just a social conflict, as better addressed by some references presented in this paper, but also environmental conflicts (ACSELRAD 2010 and ZOUHRI, 2014), taking environment as a dimension overlooked even by the critique made of the megaevent in Rio de Janeiro.

The impacts resulted from BRT Transolímpica in Rio de Janeiro are just a part of the landscape in the city of Rio de Janeiro just before hosting the Olympic Games 2016. In total, more than 67.000 people were evicted from their homes in the city of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in about five years (Azevedo and Faulhaber, 2015), part of them in the West Zone of the city. It is regarded as consequence of two megaevents, as the World Cup also happened in the municipality of Rio de Janeiro in 2014. However, lots of information about the urban mobility infrastructure plan that are missing. There is no detailed information about each one of the major works that can be found in any of the official websites of public bodies. In opposition to

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3 Direct data, obtained from the Municipal Administration, through the Access to Information Law in May, 2015, part of the study “Rio 2016: Violations to Access to Information in the case of BRT Transolímpica”, Article 19, launched in July 2015.

4 A pre-version can be accessed in this link: https://issuu.com/morula/docs/smh2016_issuu
what is stated in the Law 12.527/2011, that regulates and guarantee Access to Information by all Brazilian citizens⁵. During the last years, social movements in the city of Rio de Janeiro, inhabitants from affected communities, academic researchers, NGOs and other civil actors struggle for information about the huge changes that are happening as it will be explained in the present article.

The majority of people affected by evictions are poor people living in areas that are impacted by land speculation, as it is possible to see in the book launched by Azevedo and Faulhaber (2015), “SMH 2016: Remoções no Rio Olímpico”. The official argument for the mass evictions, by different levels of public power, from the local municipality to the federal government, is: it is a necessary and an inevitable consequence of urban changes that will make the city able to held megaevents, as the World Cup in 2014 and the Olympics 2016. The official discourse was built through the promotion of the economy and growth in the city, sustainable legacy and shared benefits, with similarities with other narratives applied to megaevents in different parts of the World (Gaffney, 2013; Boykoff and Mascarenhas, 2016).

However, there is a lack of access to information and to communication (Sen, 2014)⁶ than can be perceived by counter-narratives emerged in this context. In response to these discourses, affected communities struggle for their rights of housing, participation in decision-making processes, communication and information. Social movements and organizations that fights for human and social rights, in different approaches, denounces a violent process with different implications in the city of Rio de Janeiro, increasing segregation, racism, sexism and lack of environmental justice. In this process, other narratives gain space, as a result of a silencing process by different levels of the government, acting in favor of private interests, and legitimated by the traditional media outlets in the country. Each one of these processes are detailed in the Dossier Mega-Events and Human Rights Violations in Rio de Janeiro, by World Cup and Olympics Popular Committee of Rio de Janeiro (2015)⁷, one of the main references about human and social rights violations related to the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro.

⁵ Official website by the Brazilian Federal Government about the law: http://www.acessoainformacao.gov.br/assuntos/conheca-seu-direito/a-lei-de-acesso-a-informacao
⁷ The World Cup and Olympics Popular Committee of Rio de Janeiro is an articulation which gathers popular organisations, syndicates, non-governmental organisations, researchers, students, those affected by the interventions for the World Cup and the Olympics, and diverse peoples committed with the struggle for social justice and the right to the city. This data is part of the last edition of a Dossier of Violations, launched in November, 2015. Avaiable on: https://comitepopulario.files.wordpress.com/2016/03/dossiecomiterio2015_eng1.pdf. Visited in June 6th, 2016.
In this scenario, the proposal in the present article is to have a close look to these other discourses and confront them with different sources of data and observation in the territory, taking this mobility work in Rio de Janeiro, BRT Transolimpica, in the West Zone of the city, as the starting point. One of the main goals is to understand the impact of the lack of the right to information and the lack of communication in the public sphere not just as instruments, but as central factors of social and environmental conflicts, as both perspectives are involved in the case.

This article is a result of one year and a half of working made by the author in different parts. It began in 2015, when the author was responsible for the content of an important source of data for this article, a report called “Rio 2016: Violations in the access to information in the case of BRT Transolimpica”8. The period of this study was between March and June 2015 with the aim of testing the level of access to information about Rio de Janeiro in different bodies of public power. The main instrument of the report was a recent Brazilian law, called Law of Access to Information. In total, 54 solicitations of information were made to different public bodies, in order to test the level of transparency of the government related to the Olympic Games. This was combined with a methodology of participation that involved two different communities affected by evictions in consequence of BRT Transolímpica: Vila Autódromo, in Recreio, and Vila União de Curicica.

The last part of this work is a current period of analyses of the content, relating observation in the territory, data sources and academic references to build and questioning the main elements and concepts involved in this situation. As most of studies that connect social and environmental issues and trying to combine knowledge learned from the field and from academic analyses, this article has an interdisciplinary approach. However, the starting point are power relations analyses, taking the Political Ecology field as a main approach and a critique of the mainstream environmental discourse, but also looking to territorial dynamics as an expression of the concept of accumulation by dispossession, by David Harvey (2004). In this present paper, media is not just taken as an instrument of disclosure of discourses but also as a component that is part of complex power relations in Rio de Janeiro.

BRT Transolímpica: Access to information violated by the government

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8 Original name in portuguese “Rio 2016: Violations in the access to information in the case of BRT Transolímpica”. The study was launched in July 2015 by the NGO Article 19. The researcher Camila Nobrega Rabello Alves, author of the present article, was responsible for the Research and Text of the Study, coordinated by Mariana Tamari and with support for the Research by Larissa Lacerda.
We were caught by surprise, when the municipal administration marked our homes. We went desperate. I questioned myself: “Where am I going? What is happening? There was no information” (Member of the community Vila União de Curicica, whose identity was preserved, ARTICLE 19, 2015, pg 17)

In June 2015, the NGO Article 19 launched the study “Rio 2016: Violações ao acesso à informação no caso do BRT Transolímpica” [Rio 2016: Violations in information access in the case of BRT Transolímpica]. The author of the present article was part of the study, conducted in the city of Rio de Janeiro from March to June 2015. And this report is an important data source here, as most of public information about the infrastructure projects are still not transparent and accessible by Brazilian citizens.

The Transolímpica BRT threatens over 1,300 people in three different communities. In early 2013, the development went through a process of environmental licensing much questioned by the State Public Ministry, which, among other aspects, pointed out the fractioning of the project and the insufficiency of information on social impacts coming from the construction works. Since 2012, the Popular Committee of World Cup and Olympics point the lack of public debate and information about those affected. Assessments and urbanisation works in communities of the districts of Curicica and Jacarepaguá, which would be in the pathway of the road works, were interrupted without residents having access to official information about their situation. With the works well advanced and the route still uncertain for the region’s residents, removals have already started (Dossier of Violations, 2015).

With this evidences presented by social movements, the proposal of the research by Article 19 was to analyse the transparency of public institutions in relation to the works of the BRT Transolímpica, in the Western Zone of Rio de Janeiro, based on the Information Access Law – LAI (Law number 12,527/2011). The study’s results show, however, a scenario of total absence of transparency of the public powers in relation to the development, which is presented by the Municipal Administration of Rio de Janeiro as one of the largest legacies of the 2016 Olympics for the city, with repercussion on local media (ARTICLE 19, 2015, pg 33).

The method of the study was based on the Information Access Law. All the procedures presented in the law for any Brazilian citizen to have access to information were followed. In total, 54 information requests were sent to institutions of the municipal administration, Rio de Janeiro state and federal government bodies. Less than 80% of the requests were adequately answered (ARTICLE 19, 2015, pg 19).

The BRT Transolímpica will connect two of the main sporting centres of the Olympics – the Olympic Park at Barra da Tijuca and the Complex at Deodoro. Areas of the Western Zone were transformed into permanent construction sites, with the aim of accelerating the
implementation of the BRT. It is a grandiose project, responsible for the removal of hundreds of families and for significant alterations in the urban space and the environment. However, despite of all the procedures forecasted in the Information Access Law and followed by the team involved in the study, and their fulfilment of legal steps demanded by the LAI, over three months, the main information concerning the project of the BRT Transolímpica were denied.

The study was developed over a period of three months, from March to June 2015. The analysis on the enforcement of the Information Access Law was divided into two parts. Firstly, the information divulged on the websites of the institutions involved on the enterprise was analysed, as part of the active transparency. Searching for information on the official websites, the researchers found absence of basic information required by the law (ARTICLE 19, 2015, pg 19). Besides that, the study points the use of a propaganda language instead of proper and transparent public information, wrongful linking to online request forms that did not work, telephone numbers which were not answered, among others. One of the researchers describes 2.5 hours in the telephone struggling to try to register a solicitation of information. In the end, she is not able to register that.

The second part of the study referred to a Passive Transparency, according to the Information Access Law. It means it is related to information that are not necessary available, but can be asked by any citizen. To test this, 54 information requests were sent to the three levels of government, municipal, state and federal, i.e. concerning responses of the government to specific questions asked by citizens. For each information request a form was given, each filed separately. In some departments of the municipal and state governments, the applicant was pressured to explain the motive of the request, to give more data than expected and other demands. None of these demands were described in the Law, which intends to guarantee to the citizen the freedom to request information without presenting specific reasons.

The request proceedings were closely observed in each case. As the response rate was very low, in many cases there was the need to file an appeal procedure at superior levels to access the information. In the majority of cases, this was unsuccessful.

The final result of the study points out to a serious situation of information access obstruction and disrespect to the federal law perpetrated by governmental institutions, although the characteristics were different in the municipal, state and federal levels. (IDEM, pag 21 and 22). Some examples, there were cases like the one of the Municipal Housing Office (SMH), which was asked about the details of the removal plan of families for the construction of the Transolímpica. Despite being notoriously known as responsible for marking houses for
removal of families in certain areas, the SMH answered that it did not have any information, in a clear disrespect of the Law.

Another important example is the State Environmental Institute (INEA) responsible for environmental licensing for the developments. Specific documents about the Transolímpica were requested by the researchers during the study. The only thing the institute provided was whole reports, without any guidance for their understanding. The applicant was forced to analyse more than four thousand pages to find the information needed for the research. After a week analyzing the documents, some important things were found, as various documents attached to the environmental license process questioning the impacts on Pedra Branca Park, the number of evictions and lack of discussions within the communities. In the end, the institution denied access to some of the copies (ARTIGO 19, 2015, pg 42 e 43).

Some of the main questions remain unanswered, even after three months of work by the report team. The development of the BRT Transolímpica is under responsibility of the municipal government, funded by public resources and with a high impact on the population and the environment, which is reason enough for an ample debate with the civil society. The research concluded, however, that in practice the situation is very different. According to the analyses of the report, the result is the disclosure of a critical situation of lack of transparency and restriction of public information about a development that is already modifying the urban space and the lives of its inhabitants, under the justification of preparations for a sporting mega-event (ARTICLE 19, 2015, pg 47). According to the results of the dialogues with the affected communities, there were evidences that even people directly affected by these developments, such as the residents of communities like Vila Autódromo, in the Recreio district, and Vila União de Curicica, do not have access to the most basic information about the Transolímpica Works.

Finally, a consultation was performed with residents of areas affected by removals related to the developments. The consultation happened in June 2015 and brought up a scenario of uncertainties and disrespect to the people’s basic rights, confirming the situation of lack of transparency found by the research team (ARTICLE 19, 2015, pag 16). According to the inhabitants of the communities Vila Autódromo and Vila União de Curicica, there is a huge lack of information about the Transolímpica project.

During the consultation, that happened in Vila União de Curicica also with participants from Vila Autódromo, the inhabitants told the researchers that the word “information” was one of the central problems they were facing (Idem, pg 17). They did not know how many people would be evicted, when and felt completely apart of decision-making process. They reported
that lots of people were there, either representants of the government measuring their houses, taking pictures and other things. However, when they asked questions by themselves, the majority was not answered. At the same time, both communities reported many visits from traditional media representants to register the processes, taking pictures and etc. But the usual way of reporting on the community, according to themselves, would not include their questions on decision making process or more the entire context of conflicts in the territories, questioning the lack of information by the government.

The research also shows that, when receiving a negative answer to an information request, the citizen of Rio de Janeiro does not have many alternatives. Few people know that, in 2012, the present mayor Eduardo Paes revoked a municipal decree that gave the power of ruling on second instance appeals to the Comptroller General Office of the Municipality (ARTICLE 19, 2015, pg 49). The conclusion of the study was that if there is no information, the popular participation in the debate about this topic is compromised and, therefore, any real possibility of influence by the population in the decision process. The absence of transparency found by the research is an opposition to the right to access information. It is worth noting that the effectuation of the Information Access Law is not only a right per se, but concerns the effectuation of all other rights, such as the right for adequate housing, education, health and the assurance of transparency of public management at all levels, allowing for mechanisms of social overview of all citizens of a city. 9 And, with no access to information, the right of communication is also impacted. It impacts the way the population see the situation and the limits of participating/changing this.

As an additional information, none of the mainstream media vehicles in Rio de Janeiro reported about the launch of the study and about the data that are part of the report, showing lack of information in the public bodies.

The sustainability discourse about Rio 2016 Olympic Games

“Since the moment in which the choice of Rio de Janeiro as the 2016 Olympics host was announced, the mainstream media, politicians and several analysts have been emphasising the opportunities from investment growth in the city, highlighting the possibilities in solving large problems such as those in urban mobility and the recovery of degraded spaces for housing, commerce and tourism, as in the case of the harbour area. The population of the city, however, has already realized that the project Rio Olympic City,

which comprises the developments for the 2014 World Cup, and the 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games, as well as large projects such as Porto Maravilha, will not bring the promised benefits.” (Dossier Mega-Events and Human Rights Violations in Rio de Janeiro, 2015, pg.8)

The West Zone of Rio de Janeiro, where BRT Transolímpica is located, will concentrate most of the Olympic competitions in 2016 and is presented by the Municipal and Federal Administration as “heart of the Rio 2016 Games”\(^\text{10}\). According to the Federal Government, a total area of 40,000 m\(^2\) was built for sport activities in the region, mostly concentrated in one only neighborhood: Barra da Tijuca\(^\text{11}\). If on the one hand there is no access to information by Brazilian citizens and participation spheres, as showed before, the official propaganda had lots of space. Since the choice of Rio de Janeiro was announced, the local government, with the support of the federal government – started a big propaganda discourse emphasizing the opportunities for investment growth in the city, presenting the West Zone as an area of expansion. The mainstream media became an important element to spread the word, highlighting the Olympics as a possibility of solving large problems, such as those in urban mobility\(^\text{12}\) (DE ALMEIDA and MARCHI JUNIOR).

Besides the propaganda of these promised benefits for the city inhabitants, another rhetoric took part in this context: the sustainability of the mega event. The Brazilian candidacy to the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Olympics involved a series of commitments with sustainability. Some of them can be seen in the Sustainability Governance Plan of the Municipal Government of Rio de Janeiro (Plano de Gestão da Sustentabilidade dos Jogos Rio 2016) released in March 2013\(^\text{13}\). The plan main focus are conservation projects, minimization of the impacts of the Olympics, innovations, sustainable materials for construction and the promise of reducing impacts in ecosystems. The role of media (according to an interpretation by the local

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\(^{10}\) Extracted from the website cidadeolimpica.com.br, created by the Municipal Administration of Rio de Janeiro to be a transparent communication with the population. However, a careful analysis of the website shows the use of it as a piece of propaganda instead of being an efficient instrument of communication.

\(^{11}\) Most of important facilities of the Olympics will be centralized in Barra da Tijuca, presented as “one of the most beautiful areas of the city”, as it is possible to see in the website created by the government to inform about the Games. Disponível em: http://www.brasil2016.gov.br/pt-br/olimpiadas/instala%C3%A7%C3%ADes/barra. Acessado em 2/5/2016


government) is highlighted in the plan’s guidelines as one of the most important actors, defined by the Municipal government as “Clients of the Games”.  

Orlando Alves dos Santos Jr. and Daniel Todtmann Montandon (2011) analyse the general Master Plans of the Brazilian municipalities. According to it, ideas connected to conservation of environmental areas, with no combination with population that are already living in some places - sometimes for generations -, are the central guide. At the same time, there is no discussion or participation of the population in the decision making process about access to natural resources or discussions on collective management of the territories. Instead of that, in the process of planning the cities, the environmental narrative is usually taken as an isolated issue or combined with environmental laws to legitimate the removal of communities and their resettlement in distant areas, ignoring their relations with the territory and with the city. It has been happening in Rio’s West Zone, causing social-spacial exclusion and segregation, which has intensified with the Olympic Games urgency. (Santos Junior and Montandon, 2011, p.41)

These are impacts that were already seen in other cities that hosted mega events and they are usually connected to the notion of legacy, enhancing Capital expansion to areas not yet explored (Malfas et all, 2004), or in the process of land speculation, as in the example of Rio de Janeiro. The history of the territory is also something that is has not been taken into account. The West Zone of the city has an agrarian history made of migrants from many Brazilian rural areas that established there and started to grow food for the rising city. This history is also plenty of struggles for the rights on land and political organization associated to other peasant movements in the country, and workers movements in the city (dos Santos e Ribeiro, 2007). Most people living in communities in the West Zone nowadays, called in that past as Sertão Carioca, inherited not only the territory but also the cultural costumes and collective practices on land and natural resources, as cultivating food gardens. These things are disappearing, as people are been evicted from the territories.

In reaction to official discourses celebrating the legacy of large-scale infrastructural improvements and economic benefits, alternative media have recurrently reported a series of adverse outcomes of such mega-events. They point rising land values and rent increases fueling displacement of residents, slum clearance implying violent evictions and forced relocation, 

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The definition of the group in the document is: stakeholders directly involved in the achievements of the Olympics. According the Municipal Administration, they are, ranked as here: 1) Athlets, 2) National Olympic and Paralympic Comitees, 3) Olympic and Paralympic Families, 4) Media,5) Broadcasters, 6) Public 7)Comercial Partners; 8) Work Force; 9) International Sport Federations
militarization of public spaces, bypassing of laws and planning measures, temporary suspension of assembly and association rights, enormous public expenditures in structures of arguable utility, and public indebtedness to cover inflated expenses (Cohre 2007, Rolnik 2009).

Resistance of some communities in the West Zone and, more specifically in Barra da Tijuca began in the decade of 1990. Ten years later, the issue was back in the news with a series of articles published at O Globo newspaper, the biggest in Rio de Janeiro, called “Ilegal, e dai?” - in english “Illegal, and so what?” - (COMPANS, 2007), that was started in 2005 talking about a supposed omission of the Municipal Administration of no-evictions combined with an expansion of popular houses that was an obstacle in the growing of this part of the city as a touristic symbol. As one of the evidences on how media is part of structural power, the result was another turn of evictions.

Media processes are part of the material world, and part of the ‘social construction of reality’ (Berger and Luckmann, 1968). In the case of Brazil, there are some peculiarities, as it represents one of the most concentrated mass media outlets in the World (MOREIRA, 2016). However, there is still a lack of studies of media in the context of the megaevents in Rio de Janeiro. The intricate links between the Olympics and urban change have been theorised in diverse critical ways in academic literature, including readings of Olympic city-making in terms of enforcement of neoliberal entrepreneurialism (e.g. Hall 2006, Vainer 2011), gentrification through large-scale redevelopment projects (e.g. Coaffee 2011), reproduction of growth-machine politics (e.g. Castro 2011), and acquisition of symbolic capital through city branding politics (e.g. Broudehoux 2007).

The country is marked by media concentration in the hands of a few groups. And statistics show that mass media outlets achieve more people than water services, sewage system and energy (CABRAL, 2015, pg. 18). How could we ignore this situation?, asks the researcher Eula Dantas Taveira Cabral in a recent paper. As a consequence of this big structure and constant expansion in territorial dimensions, including regional and local ramifications, media companies perform influence in different sectors and levels of Brazilian society, as in public policies (as an eg.). Talking about Rio de Janeiro, the city is the base of the biggest media conglomerate of the country, called “Globo”. The TV Globo, one of the companies that is part of the conglomerate, achieves more than 95% of Brazilian houses that have a TV, radio or read newspapers in the whole territory.15

15 There are a lot of information on this topic been published in Brazil in this moment, although normally not focused on the topic of the environment. See the document “Concentration of the mass media and the challenge of
Instead of sustainability, a look to the urban changes in the West Zone as a social-environmental conflict

The observation and data from the territories show there are conflicts of interests and counter-discourses involving social and environmental aspects, which leads us to better understand what kind of narratives are part of the main discourse, and which ones are been neglected. In this combination of observation of the territory, data analysis and media context, it is possible to see that some dimensions are been silenced as part of this complex scenario in the city of Rio de Janeiro, affected by different ways that build a symbolic power (BORDIEU, 1989, pg 7), including the media.

If the sustainability discourse is a constant part of public discourse, other approaches of environmental issues are away of the debates. Looking for the results of the study on access to information presented before and all the references that point human rights violations and huge impacts in the environment caused by the BRT Transolímpica works, it is possible to have evidences of counter-narratives. Following the approach of symbolic power (BORDIEU, 1989) here approached to power relations including the media, it is important to highlight its power to guarantee a process that has been deeply analysed called accumulation by dispossession (HARVEY, 2009). And more than that, there is a dimension of this process that deserves more attention, the accumulation by symbolic dispossession, which could help to define the absence of discourses, criminalization of social movements and invisibilization of narratives that result on symbolic violence in media context (2012).

Instead of sustainability, some of these narratives point to another way of understanding the environment and the relation of people, territories and natural resources.

The present article argues another approach to situations observed in the West Zone of Rio de Janeiro, after analyzing the data and grassroot struggles. Taking a look in the recent discussions on the critique of the neoliberal framework of environmental issues, there is a new category that is interesting to the context of the Olympics. It is the concept of social-environmental conflict that can be defined in different ways. The urbanist Henri Acselrad considers as social-environmental conflicts situations involving different social groups with divergent ways of settlement, use and meaning of the territory, being originated when at least

one of the groups experiences a situation that threatens its land occupation and living by undesirable impacts. The last can happen in the soil, water or live systems, as consequence of other groups activities (ACSELRAD, 2004, p.26).

According to Scotto (1997), social-environmental conflicts are disputes that involves, in implicit or explicit ways, the access to environmental resources and social tensions between collective and private interests. These conflicts would emerge from appropriation of spaces and land or of collective resources by specific social actors, attending to individual – or groups – interests. Scotto also points that the identification and analysis of the main actors involved in the conflicts are basic needs in order to study social-environmental conflicts.

For Andrea Zhouri, in many situations, conflicts also arise when the meaning and the use of a certain territory by a specific group occurs to the detriment of the meanings and uses that other social groups may employ for assuring their social and environmental reproduction and also their lives. (ZHOURI, 2014, p.7)

Taking the impacts in the communities in the West Zone of Rio de Janeiro, as displacements in the name of environmental conservation, huge impacts in Pedra Branca Park and conflicts in the level of information as presented here, this concept can evidence important things. Both the perspective from Acselrad of “mean divergent ways of settlement, use and meaning of the territory” and Scotto definition of “appropriation of spaces and land or collective resources by specific actors” suit for a deeper reflection on the urban changes happening in response to the Olympic Games plan. Taking as a starting the lack of access to information, it is possible to see that there is a combination of rights violations that end on affecting peoples possibilities of influence on decisions concerning to social and environmental issues, even in the point of deciding what means environment as a collective meaning.

In Brazil, the literature about environmental iniquities and environmental conflicts has systematically increased over the past ten years. Initial concerns addressed what was perceived as an uncritical social science approach towards so-called “environmental issues” (Carneiro 2005). The loss of land and environmental resources affects, in fact, the most vulnerable social groups in Brazil and in Latin America, increasing inequalities and the frequency of environmental conflicts in the continent.

Some researchers that have been investigating urban changes in Rio de Janeiro in the context of the Olympic Games also point Media as an important element, side-by-side with international multilevel organizations and agencies for international cooperation (COSENTINO,
The consequences are not isolated. There are some theoretical points that help us to connections with global processes, without forgetting special characteristics from each place.

Conclusions

Megaevents are a big topic in the last years and provoke different perspectives of analyses from the impacts it cause in different contexts connected to capitalist ways of accumulation by dispossession worldwide. Some consequences seem to be part of a global perspective and other are more connected to local scenarios. In this article, especially taking the literature already available about other cities in the world that hosted mega events, there are evidences that Rio de Janeiro is crossing situations that already were registered in other places, as evictions, environmental impacts, imposition of international discourses and unequal power relations.

On the other hand, there is a local context that brings us other perspectives to be observed. The first one presented in this article is the lack of access to public information that lead to lack of participation and other kinds of human and social rights violations. The second element presented is the combination of lack of information with lack of communication in context of mass media concentration and almost no space for alternative narratives and its responses in the format of alternative media and other means of resistance. Both are investigated here in an specific territory, the West Zone of Rio de Janeiro, more specifically highlighting the BRT Transolímpica case. The case brings not just social but also environmental issues as part of the dispute of narratives on the mega event.

The article looks for media as part of the built of dominant discourses on the Olympics, trying to present it for the public as a collective benefit and using the discourse of sustainability as part of the general image of the mega event. However, it shows a perspective normally neglected in dominant narratives that conceives the case of urban changes in the West Zone of Brazil as part of social-environmental conflicts, a category that has been recently used – and largely in Brazil – to explain disputes related to managing territories, according to different ways of understanding the environment, land rights, participation in public decisions and access to environmental resources as part of public debate. Media appears as a very central element in the context of Rio de Janeiro in this process of building consenses and dominant perspectives of the environment – sometimes importing international views and overlooking local discourses, impacts and voices. Therefore, it points media as a power force that has to be addressed both to better understand processes connected to mega events in different territories, taking the case
of Rio de Janeiro as an example. The article leaves new questions on the definitions of symbolic power and the study of media as part of a political actor in the process of accumulation by dispossession also as a symbolic meaning.

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