

Dansero E., A. Mela, C. Rossignolo, (2015), *Legacies of Turin 2006 eight years on: Theories on territorialisation in the aftermath of the Olympic Games*, in: Viehoff, V. and Poynter, G. eds. *Mega-Event Cities: Urban Legacies of Global Sports Events*, Farnham: Ashgate, pp. 99-108, ISBN, 978-1-4724-4017-4.

**Turin 2006's Legacy after eight years:
Theories on territorialisation in the aftermath of the Olympic Games**
Egidio Danseroⁱ, Alfredo Melaⁱⁱ, Cristiana Rossignoloⁱⁱⁱ

Introduction

Over the last twenty years the critical debate on mega-events has increased significantly (Girginov, 2013; Gold and Gold, 2011; Lenskyj and Wagg, 2012): mega-events have become a popular object of research in urban and regional studies that however do not always reflect adequate theoretical studies. The interest comes from the acknowledgment, perhaps too often uncritically, of a positive role of mega-events in the urban and territorial policies, as catalysts and accelerators of urban change and renewal (Essex and Chalkley, 1998). This potentially positive role comes out from the study of success stories celebrated at international level, to the extent of imposing themselves as “good practices”. In fact, the organizers regularly attempt to overstate the positive impact and underrate the negative effects (Sandy et Al, 2004), even if there is a large series of failures and behind the “lights” of the success stories more than a few shadows are hidden, related to gentrification, social exclusion and displacement, environmental destruction, conflicts (Cashman, 2010; Dansero, Del Corpo, Mela, Ropolo, 2011; Essex and Chalkley, 2004; Hayes, J. Karamichas, 2011; Hiller, 2000; Lenskyj, 2002; Spilling, 1998) and “with huge sunk costs” (Davidson and McNeill, 2012, p. 1626).

Among many issues addressed, this chapter intends to propose a reflection about the territorialisation of the Olympic Games, as a moment of outstanding production of territory, à la Raffestin, at different scales and in symbolic, physical and organizational terms. This perspective allows, in our opinion, a more complex view of the mega-event with regard to the dynamics and the policies of the host cities and regions, supporting the critical reflection of the idea of “planning legacy”. In assessing the Olympic legacy, if the immediate effects represent a field already known and studied, then it becomes crucial to take into account those variables, in terms of territorialisation, that might take place over the following years.

In 2006 the XX Olympic Winter Games came to Turin, that used the event to give a further and decisive thrust to its Post-fordist transition. Turin, eight years on from its Olympics, is an interesting field for understanding the long-term impacts (legacies) on local territories and environments, with special attention to the different scales involved: on one hand the city - Turin and its metropolitan area - and on the other the mountains - the Alps. From this point of view, the beginning of the global economic crisis for Turin

ⁱ CPS, Dipartimento di culture, politica e società, Università degli studi di Turin, Turin, Italy, egidio.dansero@unito.it

ⁱⁱ DIST, Interuniversity Department of Regional and Urban Studies and Planning, Politecnico e Università di Turin, Turin, Italy, alfredo.mela@polito.it

ⁱⁱⁱ DIST, Interuniversity Department of Regional and Urban Studies and Planning, Politecnico e Università di Turin, Turin, Italy, cristiana.rossignolo@polito.it

has represented and is still representing a break in the urban development thereby implying that local/global relationships need to be reconsidered.

This chapter is organized as follows: the first paragraph presents some reflections on the mega-event as a process of territorialisation, seen as “production of territory”. The following four paragraphs concern the case study - the Turin Olympic Winter Games - through some specific issues: the *new* geography between the city and the mountains, the territorialisation process and the legacy for the city, the change of the city image, the legacy following the global economic crisis. In the conclusions there are some more reflections on the relationship between the Olympic territorialisation and the new geopolitical trend for hosting mega-events.

1. The territorialisation of the mega-event

A key element of the mega-event is its “extraordinary” nature that fits inside, and often over, the relatively “ordinary” territorial transformations. In this perspective the reflection on mega-events raises the issue between the ordinariness and extraordinary nature: between a “before”, an “after” and “during” in which there are specific plans to manage the temporary system linked to the event. The mega-event can be interpreted as the construction and the consequent activation of an Olympic territory which in reality is a temporary spatial system, intended to last for the duration of the event, which rests and is superimposed on the hosting territory. If mega-events are by nature only transitory, it is therefore essential to carefully plan to produce truly lasting legacies (Chalkley and Essex, 1999; Moragas et Al., 2003).

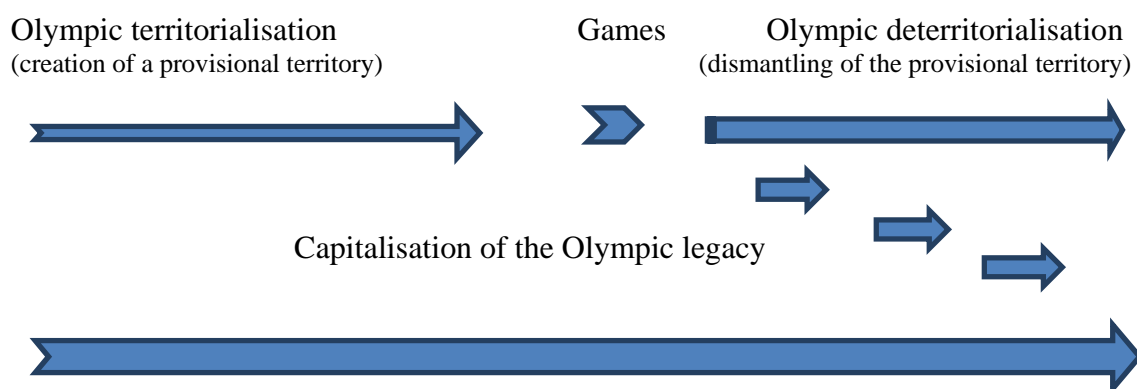
A mega-event, and the Olympics in particular, can be seen as a process of territorialisation, or in other words, as a production of territory, which is in turn a space produced by the action of a player who carries out a program: a space to which human energy and work has been applied, with anthropological value (Raffestin, 1980; Raffestin and Butler, 2012). Olympic territorialisation takes place on different scales, from the process that leads to the selection of the host site, to the latter’s transformation to make it suitable for hosting the event, the period of deterritorialisation that often follows the event and coincides with the dismantling, and sometimes the abandonment, of some of the infrastructures associated with it, and to the re-territorialisation which may occur when the territory that hosts the event is able to appropriate its legacy in full (Dansero and Mela, 2007).

The Olympic mega-event structures space, differentiating it by selecting certain localities and discarding others. It requires that space be transformed in order to adapt it to its needs and in doing so it acts as a standardizing impulse. However, the relationship is ambivalent, as the encounter between the Olympic world and the locality chosen in the “common place” of the mega-event is primarily a relationship of force between the plurality of players that see this “common place” as their best bet for implementing their strategies. The Olympic mega-event both seeks and consumes spatial differences, but it can also end up by producing them, à la Raffestin (1980, but also the “Theme issue: Claude Raffestin” in *Environment and Planning D*, edited by Klausen, 2012). This depends on the uncertain outcome of the “negotiation” between the standardizing tendencies of a supra-local player – the IOC, the sponsors – which tries to impose its restrictive view of a territorial complexity that it is not always able to metabolize and make part of its own perspective, and local strategies and resistance on the other hand, which in turn are the outcome of a

conflict between different visions of the territory and its potential for change. This territorialisation can be seen as an encounter – and clash – between different territorialising acts, and takes place on several levels.

The T-D-R cycle is specifically produced by the mega-event and can thus be interpreted as the production of a “project territory” modelled on the mega-event’s needs. Olympic territorialisation, moreover, inasmuch as it is the production of new territory, is interwoven with the “normal” dynamics of change that are already operating in the “context territory” through a combination of T-D-R cycles that are independent of the mega-event (figure 1).

Figure 1 - The T-D-R cycle (Dansero e Mela, 2008)



“Ordinary” territorial dynamics (territorialisation, deterritorialisation, reterritorialisation)

Regarding the territory’s symbolic transformation, this is expressed through names (the stadium, the boulevard, the Olympic villages) that can often last well beyond the event, but can also be an opportunity for building strategies that identify the name for a variety of symbolic and material purposes (marketing the event, justifying the projects involved, or creating a “territorial quality stamp”).

There can be no doubt that reification, or in other words the material transformation of the territory, is the most obvious aspect of Olympic territorialisation, and the one that tends to last longest through the construction of infrastructures that are directly connected with the event (the sports and tourist facilities) or support it (the road systems connecting the venues), as well as all the other material changes that surround it.

Finally, the Olympic territory is shaped by distributing functions, activities and people in a space so that it can be effectively managed. This spatial organization can be extremely complex and highly articulated.

The risks, now a familiar topic in the debate that surrounds the Olympic legacy, but which still lurk as threats when preparing bid files, when carrying out the Olympic program, and above all when managing the aftermath of the event, consist in producing an excess of territorialisation, which rather than eliminating earlier territorial shortcomings (in public services, mobility, etc.), can lead to heavy debts for the future in terms of reusing buildings. Conversely, “around the world, most Olympic cities have seen many of their facilities demolished or else left underused or in disrepair” (Davidson and McNeill, 2012, p. 1628).

The focal point of our argument concerns the territorial appropriation of the mega-event that is the ways in which a host territory can settle the dialectic between extraordinary event and the ordinariness of the society-environment-land relationship. These reflections find contact points with what Hiller theorised (2003) where he identified the Olympics as a phenomenon of interest in the spatial sciences because they affect the normal process of urban decision. There is a contrast between the logic and objectives of the Olympic circuit and the host city: while the mega-event planners are interested in the short term, the host cities put emphasis on the long-term and post-event.

2. Turin 2006: a new geography between the city and the mountains

Referring to the theoretical frameworks described in the previous sections, related to the processes of territorialisation of the events, and using a wide series of studies related to the analysis of Games spatial impacts, before the event, or to the evaluation of actual impacts, after it (Cashman and Horne, 2013; Bondonio, Guala, Mela, 2008; Crivello, Dansero, Mela, 2006; Dansero and Mela, 2012; Guala and Crivello, 2006), we can now try to analyse the tracks imprinted on the territory by the legacy of the Turin Olympic Winter Games.

A first consideration concerns the spatial dimension of the Olympic territory. As is known, the Winter Olympics may involve territories of different scale: some Games were heavily concentrated in space, while in other cases these involved a rather broad and complex spatial system. In general, if the organisation of the Summer Games is strongly correlated to the value of the host country and often of its capital, on the contrary the Winter Games above all concern a region (Chappelet, 2010).

In fact, examining the list of host cities for the Winter Games, “since 1964 these have no longer been awarded to small towns in the mountains but to cities with several thousand inhabitants, sometimes at a fair distance from the ski runs: Innsbruck, Grenoble, Sapporo, Sarajevo, Calgary, Nagano, Salt Lake City and Turin” (Chappelet, 2010), and now we can also add Vancouver and Sochi. This is the case of Turin, where the organization of the Games led to a close relationship between the city and two main Alpine valleys.

It is however worth noting that the main distinctive features of Torino 2006 can be seen in spatial terms (Dansero, Mela, 2012), with the explicit construction of the hosting territory through the integration of different areas and networks that had never been thought of together before. The “Olympic region” (figure 2), in the strict sense, was a significant portion of the Province of Turin comprising of Bardonecchia to the West, Torre Pellice to the South and Turin to the East (Dansero and Puttilli, 2012).

As Essex and Chalkley (2011) show that Olympics were a instrument of wider regional integration: this involved the construction of a heterogeneous, and in many respects new territory, as it did not coincide either with the administrative subdivisions or with homogeneous areas in terms of socio-economic development.

In 1998 Turin saw its candidature as a sterling opportunity to step up the pace of post-Fordist reterritorialization, easing the transition away from the old “one-company town” to a model based on a plurality of different roles. The Olympics seemed to be able to speed up the Master Plan projects (1995) along the rail line that cuts across the city (“the backbone”), a new north-south avenue with a mixture of urban restructuring and event facility projects arranged strategically along it. Most of the event facilities have been located in the southern sections of the rail line (Lingotto and Piazza D’Armi). On the

other hand the Alpine towns saw the mega-event as a chance to boost their competitiveness in winter tourism through image-building efforts and by extending and improving their infrastructures and accommodation facilities. It follows that Olympic territorialisation should build on the long-standing economic base and place-specific resources of these areas, with their concentration on snow sports, renewing their infrastructures and the attractions they can offer to tourists.

Figure 2 – Turin 2006: the Olympic region (TOROC, 2006, www.torino2006.it)

The “regionalisation” of the Olympics, has been one of the short-term results in terms of the central role that the Games assigned to an urban space located at a significant distance (as much as 90 kilometres) from the mountains, and of the rediscovery of a historic relationship between Turin and the Alps (Bontempi, 2006). However, the spatial dimension that had formed during the organization of the Olympics and which favoured a close relationship between the city of Turin and the mountains quickly dissolved in the following period. In particular, the activity of territorial governance, imposed by the organizational needs for about seven years, immediately stopped when those needs ceased and the strategic guidelines of the city and Alpine areas returned to being distinct if not opposed in many ways. Many factors have intervened to produce this effect. Some of them are connected with the Winter Olympics: in particular, the widespread perception among the Alpine population of an imbalance between the city and the mountains in the media representation of the Games. Turin has been accused by some Alpine stakeholders of having spread the image of a purely urban event, obscuring the role played by the Alpine valleys and thereby decreasing the possibility of obtaining the benefits of a new positive image for these areas. Other causes of divergence between the city and the mountains concern problems not associated with the Olympic event. To this regard, the conflicts related to the construction of high-speed railway between Turin and Lyon (part of the Mediterranean Corridor) have particular importance. In this case a large part of the Alpine population accuses the city of favouring the construction of an infrastructure that will not have a positive impact on the areas crossed by the railway, but that could only cause economic and environmental damage.

Therefore, evaluating the more recent processes referred to the Olympic territory as a whole it could be said that the deterritorialisation effects have been effective in a short time and “ordinary” territorialisation dynamics have had a prevalent role. A similar consideration could be made by focusing the attention only on the Alpine territory: although the organization of the Games has allowed the renovation of the ski resorts, the tourism model of the valleys has remained essentially unchanged, continuing to rely almost exclusively on a tourism related to the winter season and the snow sports. So, the dismantling of the Olympic territorialisation until now has not been followed by a process of reterritorialisation. In particular, the problems related to the reuse of the two large facilities - such as ski jump trampolines in Pragelato and the bobsled track in Cesana – are unsolved: these facilities in fact have had no future from the beginning and are, as expected, largely redundant in terms of both use and exchange value (Legambiente, 2006).

3. Turin 2006: the territorialisation process and the legacy for the city

Conversely, if we limit the evaluation of the territorialisation processes only to the city of Turin (figure 3), the judgement concerning the Olympic legacy must be more nuanced and involve a distinction between different aspects. In fact, looking at the long-term trends it can be recognized that the Olympics have contributed significantly to the advancement of territorial transformations that the city administration intended to promote. This applies, in particular, to the recovery of former industrial areas located along the “central backbone” of the city and the reorganization of the system of sports facilities. However, the Olympics have had a strong importance, especially as a “catalyst” of processes that started for political decisions not related to the event. The Olympic legacy, therefore, is visible in all of the changes that have been accelerated by the needs related to the Games’ organisation, even more so than in the areas that were actually built as Olympic venues. Taking this into account, it could be argued that the Olympic territorialisation has contributed to an overall reterritorialisation of the urban system, interacting in a complementary way with “ordinary” dynamics.

Concerning the areas directly affected by the Olympic works, it is possible to observe that, after the conclusion of the Games, each of them has followed specific paths, as determined both by the characteristics of the works or by other dynamics, deriving from differing projects.

The events of the Turin Olympic Village, in the south of the city, which hosted 2,500 people during the Olympics, are of particular interest. The affected area was more than one hundred thousand square meters and the center of it was the structure of the former General Fruit Market, which dates back to 1934. A pedestrian bridge, built in shapes such as to make it a symbol of the event, linked it to the Lingotto, which housed the headquarters of Turin 2006. Soon it became evident that the buildings that had housed the athletes were in a state of decay, which made it difficult to give them a new destination. More recently, these homes were occupied by refugees, largely in response to outbreaks developing in Libya in 2011. Currently, there are about 400 inhabitants. Public offices are present in other buildings; one of them was recovered thanks to a project, which led to the creation of 42 new low-cost apartments that host families, singles, college students and people with temporary housing problems.

Figure 3 - Turin 2006: the urban space (LARTU, 2006)

The case of the Media Village, in the north part of the city, is quite different: the buildings that had hosted nearly 1,500 journalists have been converted into 426 apartments of public property, destined to a population of low social status. This complex of buildings is part of a new neighborhood, “Spina 3”, an old district of steel production, an area of more than 1 million square meters. Although the district as a whole is characterized by a meaningful degree of social heterogeneity, the buildings show a remarkable concentration of social problems (Bianchetti and Todros, 2009 Olagnero and Ballor, 2010).

Nevertheless, the presence of policies that promote active citizen participation and conflict mediation have led to an acceptable degree of social integration in the neighborhood (Conforti et Al., 2012).

Therefore, the two abovementioned cases have led to different outcomes: in the first the deterritorialisation of Olympic space has left a noticeable void in the area and the processes of reterritorialisation have encountered strong difficulties, in the second the process was more gradual because the “ordinary” dynamics of recovery of an industrial area have resulted in new and substantial investments and have stimulated social integration policies. This is also the case for, the other Media village – in the north-east part of the city. The village was designed and engineered primarily to the post-Olympic user requirements, mainly including students and academics. Four buildings were realized for a total of 280 rooms and 330 beds, used as university residences from 2007 as part of the project for the new university campus in the former Italgas industrial area.

4. Turin 2006: the image change

What has been said so far concerns the material dimension of the transformation of the Olympic territory, namely that of “reification”. The symbolic dimension did not necessarily follow a parallel path; however it is necessary to distinguish between changes that affect the city as a whole and those that refer to specific locations involved in the Olympic event.

From an overall point of view, there is no doubt that Turin has profoundly changed its image after 2006; the Olympics, therefore, have emerged as a turning point for the city’s image among its inhabitants and the general public. Although the data related to tourism have shown a significant but not striking growth in this sector, the surveys carried out a few years after the Games have revealed that Turin is widely regarded as a city of culture, art, food and a good quality of life (Bondonio and Guala, 2012). Also regarding these changes it may be observed that the Olympics have acted as a catalyst within a process of cultural change to which various factors contribute in a synergic way. However, in the most widespread representations in the population, the Olympics often appear as a decisive factor, which is seen as a synthesis of all other processes.

Nevertheless, the symbolic traces left by the Olympics on places of particular relevance for the event have often proved somewhat fleeting. Only a few places carry the memory of the Games in their names; among these is the stadium that hosted the opening and closing ceremonies, which is now designated as the “Olympic” stadium and hosts the matches of the Turin F.C. team. The city’s other football club, Juventus, now has a stadium of their own property, where the stadium built for the World Cup in 1990 previously stood. The different symbolic connotations of both stadiums are now widely due to the rivalry between the two clubs, much more than to the symbolic legacy of the Games. Among other Olympic symbols, the area designated for the athletes’ awards, the “Medals Plaza”, was a temporary installation within one of the most important historical sites of Turin, Piazza Castello, and therefore with its dismantling the consolidated symbolism of the place has immediately resumed its dominant role. The same process of symbolic deterritorialisation of the Olympic space regarded other elements of the urban furniture, for instance images of the mascots; there are now few traces of them, mostly in peripheral areas.

In short we can say that the symbolic changes to the city owe much to the Turin 2006 event, but at the same time a few of them bear a direct trace of the Olympic symbolism, with its specific content related to winter sports, international competition, passion and so on. This was to be a part of a wider place branding strategy that was to recreate a creative, vibrant, cosmopolitan image of the city, as opposed to its reputation of a city with a heavy industrial crisis related to Fiat (Vanolo, 2008).

5. Turin 2006: the legacy following the global economic crisis

In assessing the Olympic legacy, the global economic crisis – which began after a couple of years from the event - has represented and is still representing a new break in the urban development and also affects the reflection on Turin's event and the evaluation of the long lasting effects of the Games.

On the one hand in the public debate the idea that the Olympics have been a crucial event is strongly present; it is recognized that they helped to present Turin as a city projected into the post-industrial world, which has been able to become independent from the exclusive link with the automotive industry, while maintaining a vocation as a technological city capable of great organizational efforts. However, on the other hand, the financial crisis of 2008 gave strength to the arguments of those who oppose the organization of major events, claiming that their economic balance can not be positive in a period when the resources for public investment are rapidly declining and the possible economic effects of mega-events are always uncertain and may occur only at a distance of several years. Thus, many argue that in this phase mainly the countries with emerging economies are interested in organizing mega-events, for reasons of national prestige. Nor is it a coincidence that Italy in 2012 decided not to put Rome forward as hosting candidate for the 2020 Olympic Games.

Although these arguments are mainly related to future events, to some extent they also retrospectively change the image of the Winter Olympics in Turin 2006, from the point of view of a part of the public opinion. This opinion is strengthened by the fact that the debt pro capita of the city of Turin is the largest among the Italian cities (about 3,500 Euros at the end of 2010), although in reality direct investment for the Olympics weigh only 7% of the total debt (Bondonio, Guala, 2012). Above all, there is however a widespread impression that the beginning of the crisis only two years after the Olympics reduced the potential effects of the event on the city and that, in any case, this kind of experience, with similar investments, can not be repeated for a long period. Thus, the Olympics of 2006 tend to be seen as the culmination of a long and fruitful phase of transformation of the city, followed by a new period of uncertainty whose outcome is not easy to predict.

Conclusions

The lessons for urban planning to be learnt from the Turin Olympic Winter Games refer to the theme of the cycle of T-D-R: consideration of the post-event utilization of facilities must not be left as an after-thought, but should instead be a prime consideration in the infrastructure planning. In fact, both tangible and intangible effects do not occur mechanically, but they have to be planned for and must be integrated into long-term

development strategies thereby securing effective processes of reterritorialisation thereby implying that local/global relationships need to be reconsidered.

If the recent global crisis requires the rethinking of the territorialisation of the Olympics, it is therefore right to ask what happens now in terms of legacy.

Up to 1992, the number of bidding cities remained generally low, but over the past two decades, the growing interest at national and international level in relation to mega-events has produced new forms of competition to host them, whether they are sport, cultural or political. We can consider the comparison for the location of the 2012 Summer Olympics if we compare the city at the top of the international urban hierarchies - such as London, Paris, New York to which other world cities were added, such as Moscow and Madrid. The growth of this interest shows that mega-events are a great opportunity for a host city or country to exhibit its specialist know-how and capacity for innovation, but it is interesting also to note that until ten years ago host cities were predominantly in Europe, and to a minor extent, in North America and Asia, that was a concrete sign of economic development (Essex and Chalkley, 1998).

In the competition for hosting mega-events a new geo-economic and geo-political element has emerged in the last few years: it can be noted that a geographical turnaround which sees the BRICS dominate this scene, as the effect of the increasing economic hegemony (Müller, 2011, 2012, Müller and Steyaert, 2013). In this context, “with global events impinging on local decision-making, the Olympic Games and other mega-events turn urban politics into urban *geopolitics*” (Müller and Steyaert, 2013).

It can, at first, be pointed out that this turnaround is to be found in the recognition of the big event as a statement outside of a certain powerful identity. In fact, as Caffrey (2008, p.808) observes: “games allow each state’s proxies to compete without killing each other.”

The past experiences of mega-events of the old continent were more closely linked to the image of the host city, such as for example, models of big urban transformation of Barcelona in 1992 and London in 2012. Now things are different, as Müller explains:

“Among bidders, the strong growth of emerging markets has created the necessary capital and infrastructure base as well as technical know-how to put together and finance sophisticated applications that meet and exceed the requirements of governing bodies such as the IOC and FIFA. At the same time, due to the sovereign debt crisis, Western states have become less willing to foot the substantial public bill of mega-events. [...] On the selection side, awarding mega-events to emerging countries contributes to opening up new markets with considerable growth potential, which is of particular interest for the corporate sponsors that fund the lion’s share of these events. What is more, host cities in these economies often have less financial and planning constraints in hosting mega-events.” (2012)

Moreover, there is a noticeable shift towards hosting mega-events outside Western Europe and North America. This trend should be seen as today’s new forms of affirmation of the States in big growth: the Olympic Games in Beijing (2008) and in Rio de Janeiro (2016), the Olympic Winter Games in Sochi (2014) and in Pyeongchang (2018), the FIFA World Cup in South Africa (2010), in Brazil (2014), in Russia (2018) and Qatar (2022). Cornellissen (2010) and Müller (2012) maintain that this new trend demonstrates that the emerging states seek spaces to show signal achievements and diplomatic stature and the hosting cities are no longer looking for jobs and investment.

The 2008 Olympics in Beijing seems to be emblematic: in fact, it was recognized as an event of great relevance not only in sports, but also on the geopolitical and geo-economic levels, both global and local. Adopting the slogan “One Games, One World”, China attempted to show its integration into the international community, having completed a

competition for modernization. For example, Haugen (2005) studied Beijing's candidacy, reconnecting it to the international literature on the "production sites" and interpreting the Olympic phenomenon from a multilevel perspective that aimed at highlighting the comparison between power groups and their representations of the city.

In these countries, the construction and deployment of a strong international image seems to prevail over the more material impacts on growth or infrastructure in these settings (Berkowitz et al., 2007; Müller, 2011). We can consider for example the case of the Olympic Winter Games in Sochi in 2014 that "serve as an instrument to show to the world that Russia, besides being an energy superpower that likes to flex its military muscle, should also be taken seriously as a global player in the game of leisure and tourism" (Müller, 2011, p.)

Some experts, however, have pointed out that this new geopolitical trend in the emerging markets could bring some risk linked to the prevalence of the political purposes that "often feature a more hierarchical planning culture, less pressure on financial resources, less concern for environmental issues and more profound urban transformations in a push for modernisation than cities in the West" (Müller, 2012, pp, Abramson, 2007; Stanilov, 2007).

If this analysis is valid, it could imply a possible future divergence between emerging and mature economies on the issue of Olympic territorialisation. The former countries could see the organization of a mega-event above all as a geopolitical choice and, at a same time, as an opportunity to attract foreign capital to their main urban centres: thus the Olympic territorialisation would play the role of a media showcase that imposes itself on the standard spatial dynamics in a rapid and sometimes forceful way. On the other hand, older developed countries might see this type of territorialisation more as a risk than as an opportunity; as a consequence they may forego bidding or try to define - even by negotiating with IOC - a "softer" and more sustainable model of event, not only with regard to its impact on the environment, but also to its economic dimension and relationship with the spatial needs of the host cities.

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