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**Large Urban Projects and Tourism  
Identifying and Assessing the Boundaries of  
Urban Tourism in São Paulo (Brazil)**

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## **LARGE URBAN PROJECTS AND TOURISM: IDENTIFYING AND ASSESSING THE BOUNDARIES OF URBAN TOURISM IN SÃO PAULO (BRAZIL)**

This essay investigates São Paulo as study case on the context of a worldwide “new urban policy”, regarding the so called “large scale urban development projects” (Swyngedouw et al, 2002) as “spaces of neoliberalism” (Brenner; Theodore, 2008). One of the issues pursued is tourist attractions geographical distribution *vis-a-vis* the boundaries of urban interventions, in the scope of contemporary urban planning paradigms. The theoretical framework relies on urban entrepreneurialism and city marketing strategies, as well as urban tourism theories and the commoditization of urban culture. Accordingly the city of São Paulo evolved into the dominant industrial center in Brazil within the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the appeal of urban landmarks had grown, particularly as instruments to promote the city image as an *avant-garde* metropolis. Curiously, urban projects in São Paulo – not applied accordingly to the global practices – barely focus on tourism opportunities, which can be confirmed when tourist attractions are mapped within the boundaries of some urban interventions: the downtown is particularly disregarded despite the concentration of tourist attractions. It may be concluded that tourism as urban strategy in São Paulo is not seriously combined into the current urban planning paradigms, reducing opportunities for an integrated approach.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Since mid-1950 a “global restructuring” has been observed, associated to a deepening of economic internationalization under USA hegemony, besides an increase of investment in countries less developed, particularly in the process of industrialization through replacement of importations and industries of rich countries in search of better factors of production (cheaper labor force, incentives, etc.) (Nobre, 2000: 7). Global recession of the 70’s led to markets deregulation as well as contestation of Keynesian model and welfare State benefits, including urban policy. Since then, an “adjustment” has been observed towards “flexible accumulation” and international division of labor, phenomena conditioned by oil crisis (which required a search for cheaper means of

production) and improvement of technologies (Harvey, 2005). During this process, forms of integration between countries have been more clearly defined through a process of “financialization of economy” (Chesnais, 1996), a process facilitated by financial markets deregulation.

As a result, there is a logic of real estate market freeing up operation focused on attraction of new businesses to the city, from an understanding that certain aspects of cities should be presented as assets. The “proliferation of cities marketing techniques” aims at grabbing the attention of potential investors within a context in which, progressively, cities start to compete among themselves (Gary, Watson, 2003: 511).

The profile of current urban projects derives from review of modernist planning principles (functionalism, rationalism, totality, etc.). As answers to the crisis of comprehensive plans (typical of Fordist era), the great and emblematic project emerges as an alternative that combines flexibility advantages and focused actions, besides being covered by an impressive symbolic ability. Thus, the project “captures a share of the city and turns it into a symbol of restructured/revitalized metropolis, formed by a powerful image of innovation, creativity and success” (Swyndedouw et al., 2002: 215).

Therefore, in a reality of competition, which resembles military fights, strategies used presuppose selection of best chances for success (Güell, 1997; Compans, 2005). In the field of urbanism, it means electing portions or slices of urban fabric, which will be given the role of strategic element and will not only give competitiveness to the city in the external sphere, but also will spread waves of improvement in the intra-urban scale.

A clear expression of this trend (“triggering of reactions”) is “flexible urbanism of projects”, which exacerbates the idea of “urban acupuncture” widespread by Solà-Morales – an idea that would come to be incorporated by Jaime Lerner in Curitiba, establishing the city as reference in urban planning, even though it is a “myth” (Oliveira, 2000). Following this line, the instrument of urban project “in order to be effective is concentrated and timely, limited in its time and space of intervention” (Solà-Morales, 2003: 152). Micro-scale interventions are expected to “trigger determined and predictable reactions of private agents, leveraging processes of restructuring, revitalization and urban renewal” (Compans, 2007: 124).

In the turning of the 20<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> century, these projects can be understood as the materialization of “emerging landscapes”, characteristics of “the post-industrial city, derived from mega global transformations in economy, society and space” (Gospodini, 2006: 324). Trying to understand particularities of “new mega-projects”, Orueta and Fainstein (2009), suggest that “such interventions tend to be located in spaces that, as result of urban restructuring, have lost their previous usages, but present potentiality of new profitability in a post-fordist urban economy. Usually they are developed within a context of public-private partnerships, often of mixed usage, and search to subsidize needs of corporate businesses, as well as tourism and leisure services. (Orueta, Fainstein, 2009: 760)”.

Indeed, particularly Spain would have been the pioneer in the application of this model in the European continent, pointing out measures undertaken by Barcelona during the Olympic Games of 1992 (Güell, 1997: 11). For some years – particularly after the “Barcelona model” (Capel, 2009; Monclús, 2003) – and in the context of a “late capitalism” (Jameson, 2007), one notes certain dispersion to other regions (for instance, Latin America and Asia), with the aggregation of other elements and great importance given to media aspects, valuing of large events and growing availability of leisure and entertainment spaces. Particularly in the case of Latin America, readings on particularities of these “spaces of neoliberalism” (Brenner, Theodore, 2008) still lack an integrated insight, which could lead to more comprehensive inferences or reflections to all region – although some approaches have been taken since the 90’s (Lungo, 2005; Carmona, 2005; Mattos, 2008).

From the reading of international experiences, urban projects can be categorized, in general, as follows:

Location	Description	Relation with tourism	Examples (Latin America)
<b>Recovery of historical monuments</b>			
Inner center, coincidental original settlement	Intervention of historical heritage with recovery in urban lost centrality and have gone through a degradation process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historical heritage as tourism appeal</li> <li>• Range of support services, with reconversion of structures (hotels, restaurants, stores)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quito (Ecuador)</li> <li>• Salvador, Recife, Porto Alegre, Rio de Janeiro (Brasil)</li> <li>• Cartagena (Colombia)</li> </ul>
<b>Interventions in waterfronts</b>			
Waterfronts (in general, maritime), close to historic downtown	Transformation or adaptation of usages of port structures (with or without ports deactivation). Heritage element normally is reference in constructive programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Range of tourism services and zones of tourism enjoyment</li> <li>• Connection with sector of cruises (ports for tourism)</li> <li>• Macro-landscapes generation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Puerto Madero (Argentina)</li> <li>• Santos and Rio de Janeiro (Brasil)</li> <li>• Valparaíso (Chile)</li> </ul>
<b>Emerging of new centralities</b>			
<i>Interventions for large events</i>			
Between the inner-city and the outskirts	Implantation of structures to large events, usually international ones (sports, cultural or commercial)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction of milestones-icons (support to city marketing)</li> <li>• Attendance of visitors (during events)</li> <li>• Urban icons generation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Olympic Park (Rio de Janeiro)</li> <li>• Stadia and urban works (Brazil-World Cup 2014)</li> </ul>
<i>Corporative Urban Expansion</i>			
City edges	Development of huge real state enterprises, associated to flexibilization of urban legislation and increase of infra-structure (ex: transportation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Range of tourism services (business tourism)</li> <li>• Urban icons generation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Las Condes (Santiago/Chile)</li> <li>• Barra da Tijuca (Rio de Janeiro/Brazil)</li> <li>• Santa Fé (Mexico City)</li> <li>• Berrini/Marginal Pinheiros (São Paulo/Brazil)</li> <li>• Miraflores (Lima/Peru)</li> </ul>

Table 1: Main categories of large urban projects  
(Allis, 2012)

Within an international context, Brazilian reality has not yet experienced such enterprises, which would result in large and well-finished urban projects from the point of view of their material and institutional structuring. What one notes is that truncated intentions and materializations in Brazilian cities seem to reproduce social contradictions and divisions of Brazilian social-spatial formation<sup>1</sup>. Considering that in Brazil occurred a large-scale urbanization only during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the interventions of urban requalification represent a recent process (interventions in historical centers with focus on tourism in the Northeastern States, constitution of new business districts in the outskirts of main large cities, occasional interventions in waterfronts of some coastal cities, etc.).

In any way, the comprehension and the usage of urban projects in contemporary urban management is an open subject without consensual definitions, which ends up generating imprecision in its theoretical approach – and even in the way local agents refer to them, mainly public managers. Furthermore, there are contrasts between the reality of European countries and the USA compared to what has been seen in other parts of the world, mainly Latin America and Asia, which have assimilated, rapidly and enthusiastically, large urban projects as mechanisms of urban management over the last years.

## **URBAN TOURISM AND LARGE URBAN PROJECTS IN THE CONTEMPORARY ERA**

Theoretical approaches on urban tourism articulate constraints and particularities of tourist practices in cities against the dynamics of their process of urbanization (present or past), mainly in large urban areas, where they are not clear and pure motivations of visits (as perhaps it is the case in coastal resorts or in old cities with their characteristic historical nucleus). This is because the diversity of urbanization, by itself – is different from a “tourist urbanization” (Mullins, 1991; Lucchiari, 2004) – and gives rise

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<sup>1</sup>With variation in focus of approach, mentions to tourism are recurrent in studies on the process of contemporary urbanization, mainly the ones on urban, productive and spatial restructuring (Brenner, Theodore, 2002; Harvey, 2005; Gospodini, 2001; Muñoz, 2008), in which large urban projects appear as mechanism of urban management from a neo-liberal bias.

to several mediations between landscape idiosyncrasies of the city and visitors motivations, which use to be multivariate.

The main efforts to understand urban tourism take into consideration issues of contemporary urbanization – particularly in their interface with urban policies and practices of planning and management, usually with observations focused on developed countries, mainly USA, Western Europe and Australia (Page, 1995; Judd, Fainstein, 1999; Pearce, 1999, 2001, 2003; Bull, Church, 2001; Costa, 2001; Law, 2001; Coles, 2003; Haylar et al, 2008; Selby, 2004a, 2004b; Spirou, 2011). In Brazil, some important studies have been developed on distribution of attractions and hotel chain (Teles, 2006; Spolon, 2006), tourism of events (Braga, 2005) and institutional aspects and tourism management, having as reference the city of São Paulo (Araújo, 2005, Carvalho, 2011).

Indeed, tourism is only one of the city's functions, the reason why the concept of tourist urbanization (Mullins, 1991) is not enough to provide wide understanding of urban tourism, once it is a sector that includes itself into urban economy. As a consequence, spatial effects are often subtle and blended into urban dynamics. Therefore, the several types of “tourist city” (Page, 1995) are not suitable to the study of tourism in large cities, once tourism will never be the basis to their revenues, even when this sector increases its participation in economy and spatial dynamics.

As a result, in dynamics of space usage there is always a mix between residents and tourists (as well as of their “spatial behaviors”), which enjoys structures and services within the same urban context, being that this relation varies according to certain circumstances. Thus in contemporary urban experiences, tourists and residents can play similar roles and enjoy experiences within the same spaces in combined manners (Selby, 2004a; 2004b; Maitland, 2010).

These considerations are indispensable when one studies the areas of cities that have gone or are going through interventions focused on activities of urban leisure and entertainment. That's why important urban interventions, if not justified by tourism, consider the activity as one of their supports – both in the symbolic (construction of emblematic images) and economic aspect (concentration of services and spaces of tourism activities in certain areas of the city).

Based on these approaches, three aspects emerge, which are recurrent in urban projects, with different emphasis, but not exclusionary: i) magnitude and impacts of structures, and their territory extension, in contrast with routine of precedent contexts; ii) transformation of usages in public spaces, although their programs lead to conflicting views (for instance, physical-spatial segregation for selected usages in the usage of urban space); iii) emblematic outline of projects, in which iconic architecture serves as material support to imagery references in urban landscape, gives support to advancement of plans and serves the interests of city marketing.

It is important to notice that in most cases, urban projects are not turned exclusively to tourism development, but entail tourist practices, or take advantage of their possibility to political rhetoric favorable to their achievement. On the other hand, it is becoming more and more common that tourist activities should be considered as important purpose of these projects due to possible economic and political gains within the framework of cities. Depending on the urban project, and in which context it is established, interfaces with tourism are more visible: measurements of recovering and rehabilitation of historical heritage in inner city are usually coupled with cultural tourism activities; but new centralities in general are focus of business and events tourism, given the spatial connection with certain economy sectors (especially tertiary). Therefore, the interface between urban tourism and large urban projects can be observed in the following aspects:

- a) Urban projects emerge as an answer to urban policies based upon entrepreneurial principles, so that interventions are stratagems to subsidize new productive activities of contemporary city, where tertiary sector is above the others (even though effectively de-industrialization process is not an absolute truth to all countries)
- b) Urban projects in general are materialized to a certain extent by spectacular architectural projects, usually signed by worldwide known architects (such as Jean Nouvel, Norman Foster, Santiago Calatrava). Thus, the “label” by itself is already part of cities’ differentiation strategy in inter-urban competition;
- c) Although urban projects are not defined for tourist development, the activity is almost always considered part of proposals, despite of the appeal. Thus,



depending on the emphasis, objective connections with tourism are given by service of tourist attractions and landscapes (for instance, in waterfronts) or by mix of usages (services of attention to tourism in areas defined as urban project, like accommodation, gastronomic offer and places of entertainment);

- d) The notion of urban project applies both to occasional interventions defined by constructions alone and more steady mechanisms of action over portions of the city fabric. Usually, both situations are mutually complementary. However, it is possible that isolated interventions end up being taken as projects epitomes (for instance, Guggenheim Museum for Ría 2000, in Bilbao, or Sony Center complex, for the case of PotsdammerPlatz).

It is not yet possible to accurately identify forms and roles of large urban projects in middle and long terms. However, activities of tourism and related matters could be inserted as adornments to justify new enterprises – following the line of a “new urban culture” and of “aestheticization of everyday life” (Featherstone, 1995: 98) – or as strategic axis for making feasible city marketing actions or city branding.

## **RESEARCH SETTING AND METHODOLOGY**

### *Research setting: São Paulo as urban tourism destination*

São Paulo can be considered one of the most important metropolises in the world and one of the most significant urban centers in Latin America, articulating national spaces of several countries of the region to worldwide markets of commodities, people, services and information. Within this context, the metropolis presents memorable experiences since the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century for the analysis of large urban projects and their interface with urban tourism, even though, in comparison to best known global experiences (USA, England, Spain, Germany, France, etc.), material and spatial results present noticeable differences, result of particularities of their social-spatial and economic formation.

After 300 years as peripheral and poor “muddy” village (Toledo, 1981), in first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the city of São Paulo began its journey to primacy in

national urban net, mainly as result of resources applied in its industrialization. Since the construction of São Paulo Railway – SPR (1857), conceived to facilitate exportation of coffee through Porto de Santos, rail network expanded until it reached several thousand miles (Kühl, 1998). With coffee price drop-down in the international market (particularly after New York's crash of 1929), capital accumulated in coffee culture was gradually converted to industry sector, which was concentrated in the province's capital. During this process, the city underwent scale transformations (due to implementation of industrial logic in its urban fabric) and management paradigm changes.

During the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, urban interventions focused on occasional actions (Liberio Badaró street and the future Anhangabaú park), a set of “fragmentary interventions”, “that transformed *paulista* capital, by analogy, into a kind of ‘Saint Petersburg’ of the tropics, cosmopolitan and modernized” (Pereira, 2010: 39). More than satisfying interests of ruling classes, these interventions prepared the city to its affluent economic representation as the city turned from a provincial village to an important national and international economic center – competing clearly with the capital of the country at that time, Rio de Janeiro.

Between 1920 and 1940, the population of São Paulo doubled, from 579,033 inhabitants to 1,326,261, with an average growth of 4.23% per year. It was also during this time that the city had a huge industrial boom: from 1933 to 1939, the annual growth rate exceeded 14%, a lot higher than the 11.2% of national average, so that in mid 50's, it was already consolidated as the major industrial center in the country (Araújo, 1991 apud Nobre, 2000: 64).

The installation of industrial establishments got even more intense during the 40's, due to reorientation of agriculture capitals policy for industry, and the replacement of importations, particularly during Second World War. From the 50's to the 60's, the population of São Paulo bigger than the population of the country's capital, which was going to move to Brasilia in 1961.

From the 50's, the city saw the implementation of a series of urban structures that were consolidated as landscape milestones and space facilitators of business tourism, many of them still considered urban references. The catalyst element from a political

and social point of view, which proved itself to be in favor of these interventions, were the celebrations of the city's fourth centennial in 1954.

Between the decades of 1950 and 1980, the metropolis grew spectacularly, reaching almost four million inhabitants and expanding its territorial basis to neighbor cities – a process strengthened by internal migrations (mainly from the northeast region of Brazil), turning into an immense and problematic metropolis. During that phase, the main general plans of urban management were proposed. In 1972, the Zoning Law was approved and defines until today the management of city territory. It was also during the decade of 1970 that the subway system was inaugurated and the first initiatives of inner city revitalization started to be restructured. In 1988, the Development Plan was approved, and during the 90's several Urban Operations were proposed and implemented, which operate as exception areas to Zoning, through mechanisms of constructive potential selling to real estate market agents. These urban instruments were responsible for significant changes in several areas of the city since de 80's, normally associated to corporate real estate market. In 2002, the Strategic Development Plan was implemented (already incorporated in the experience of Unified Urban Operations, according to what is previewed in the City's Statute), which nowadays is being updated through community participation with thematic meetings in the neighborhoods.

During the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, coordinated efforts were made to consolidate the city as the largest “business corner” of the country, as far as organization of events and industrial and commercial fairs are concerned. This orientation interfered in actions of territory management, once a series of urban equipment were built during that period, in line with the growth of tertiary sector, as in the end of the century, industrial activity started to spread to the interior of the State and to other parts of the country. It is from that period the construction and inauguration of Anhembi Park (1970), one of the largest events complexes in the world, whose managers, over the years, assimilated also the functions of planning and tourism management (ratified during the 90's by city law), entity that consolidated itself as São Paulo Turismo S/A in 2006.

In this context, tourism obtained some consistency, mainly by demand of business travelers who flocked to the main city in the country, coming from other states or abroad, as the city began to articulate national market with international flows of capitals. However, from the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, the “culture” factor started to stand out in the field of interventions conducted mainly in the inner city – gradually abandoned as financial center since de 70’s (in favor of other areas of the city, like the so called “southwest vector”, formed by Paulista, Brigadeiro Faria Lima and Engenheiro Luís Carlos Berrini avenues, more recently). During more recent periods, interventions related to historical heritage entail and stimulate tourism development motivated by leisure activities, counting on international financing to projects in the city center.

The number of tourists in São Paulo increased 14% from 2007 to 2010. Most of these people are domestic tourists (residents in Brazil). Nowadays, the main motivation of São Paulo’s visitors is business and events, with 77%, followed by leisure (9,6%) and 13,3% in other secondary segments such as studies, health, visiting friends and relatives, among others. One should notice that business tourism is the one with highest participation of foreign visitors (almost 15%) (PLATUM 2011-2014, 2011: 61-62). As complementary activities – done in parallel to the main reason for the visit – it is worth emphasizing gastronomy and shopping, practiced by 56% São Paulo’s tourists.

In 2010, the average hotel occupation rate reached 68,4% and, as far as the daily rate, from 2007 to 2010, one observes an expressive increase (27%) and the collection of Service Tax (ISS) of group 13 (taxes and fees paid by companies of tourism sector, hotels, events and the like) was over 150 million reais in 2010, compared to a little more than 110 million reais in 2008 (OBSERVATÓRIO DO TURISMO DE SÃO PAULO, 2011). Furthermore, public events of huge magnitude provide moments of exposure and visibility to the city – such as Virada Cultural (similar to *Nuit Blanche*, in France). In this line, events of international concern also attract city broadcasting – which public managers insist on calling “spontaneous media” – such as the Race of São Silvestre, the Brazilian stage of Formula Indy, with a street circuit in São Paulo, the Gay Pride Parade on Paulista avenue and in the inner city. Expanding this argument, one can understand the importance large sports events have to cities that search global visibility, particularly the sporting (Soccer World Cup, Summer and Winter Olympics, Pan

American Games and other regionalized events, etc.) and cultural ones (which, in Europe, have their most elaborated version in Cultural Capitals).

### *Methodology*

From an urban point of view, São Paulo also represents huge problems in structural issues (like public transportation and housing), although its territorial spread and population increase have been adjusting since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, entailing measurements of endogenous growth. In this process, tourism emerges as strategy in local management, particularly on the basis of domestic demands. However, efforts of urban management do not confer specific attention to tourism, so it is important to notice the degree of relationship – and in which parameters – of certain urban projects in São Paulo (of any type or scale) with tourism.

For this purpose, two lines of research have been conducted:

**Historical:** i) Historical information gathering on the characteristics and the speech present in local media (newspapers available in São Paulo's Database of Grupo Folha da Manhã) between the 50's and the 90's, related to some urban interventions; ii) Secondary data collection on the conception and the evolution of Unified Urban Operations (from the 80's up to now) in São Paulo, with emphasis on identification of legal and operational elements related to tourist development.

**Empirical:** i) Selection and mapping of top priority tourist attractions from their publication in main tourist guide (Lonely Planet, Fodor's, Michelin) and official Tourism websites (SPTuris and Brazil's Ministry of Tourism) according to the perimeter of Urban Operations

Data collection occurred between the years 2010 and 2011, being that historical researches were done in press media of São Paulo Database, with focus on identifying which and how interventions were presented from the 50's on.

As for the research with tourist attractions, it was undertaken a selection of those with major recurrences in main tourist guides (digital), mapping them according five different categories (starting with those that are promoted by at least two guides).

## **LARGE URBAN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS AND URBAN TOURISM IN SÃO PAULO**

Tourism in large cities, particularly São Paulo, does not seem to present neither dynamism of tourism of other global metropolises, nor the same difficulties and solutions in their process of urbanization. Urban condition and tourism of São Paulo have been determined by other parameters, compared to large urban centers – particularly in Europe and in the USA.

On the other hand, it is noticeable that the city undergoes important transformations that articulate it with global economy, so that *paulistana* tourist activity presents characteristics of global tourism. There are elements clearly global, but at the same time, nuances essentially local that still define practices and possibilities of tourism – as spontaneous urban activities (fairs, events, particular landscapes, etc.).

In São Paulo, from this relation between tourism and large projects we can identify two distinct historical approaches: the first one that goes from the 50's to the 80's; and the second, that goes from 1990 until the present date.

### *Large urban projects and the modern roots of tourism in São Paulo: 1950-1980*

Until the 80's, some large urban works had relation with the construction of the tourist city image, initially by its economic weight, in the field of business tourism. These interventions can be considered a harbinger of relation between urban projects and tourism: isolated, but with great symbolic and even functional impact on tourism reality of the city. There wasn't a common denominator between these enterprises, except the fact they represented the anxiety of city that grew non-stop – and this became explicit in the excited language that circulated through the media at that time.

In the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, during the 400<sup>th</sup> celebrations of São Paulo's foundation, Ibirapuera Park was built, with architectural project signed by Oscar Niemeyer, Brazilian most famous architect. Ibirapuera Park was conceived and built in a moment of

euphoria around urban modernization of São Paulo. The city was already going through a process of industrialization and reached Rio de Janeiro in terms of population and the territory occupation, in open verticalization, was already obtaining areas increasingly distant from the historic center. Thus, the celebrations of its 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of foundation were the opportunity to revere “paulistas origins”, although valuing city’s material renewal directly aligned with modernist architectural conceptions (Allis, 2012: 150). Museu Paulista (MASP), built according modernist Brazilian style, also dotted one of de most important urban landscapes (Paulista Avenue) after 1968.

Ibirapuera Park – today the main urban park of São Paulo and one of the most visited tourist spots –, besides the relevance to Brazilian modernist architecture, has hold one of the most important fairs in the city since the 70’s, when Anhembi Park was built, on the banks of Tietê River, that had been rectified years before, being placed highways in both banks (still today one of the main transit routes of the city).

Anhembi Park Exhibitions Hall was inaugurated in 1970, in an area four times larger than the Ibirapuera Park where, until then, big events and fairs in the city had taken place. The construction of this space, “a bold and magnificent idea” – next to others in the same Anhembi Park, like the Conventions Palace and the Anhembi Hotel – was seen as a “vital need, once our history, in all its sectors had reached great progress” (Folha de São Paulo, 1970).

As far as structures are concerned, two points were very recurrent in press reports at that time: technology of construction (“looking like work of fiction”), aligned with patterns of modernist architecture; and technology of services, projecting new formats of fairs and conferences (“largest air-conditioned area in the world”). The view of the park, in this case, was summarized in the “achievement” of erecting a structure that would cover 70.000 square meters, 260 m wide and 14 m high, without forgetting foreign technical assistance of Canadian expert Cedric Marshall – “who had projected a similar structure, but four times smaller, to Expo-68 in Montreal” (O Estado de São Paulo, 1970).

Also, in what may be seen the complementary offer of the city, Hotel Hilton represented a transition from family hotel business to the arrival of international services. Its inauguration in 1971, on Ipiranga Avenue was accompanied by some

euphoria due to the meaning of belonging to an international chain. Up to that point, traditional hotels had fulfilled the function of receiving a visitor, with services that kept hardiness and a certain parochialism of a 19<sup>th</sup> century São Paulo. Thus, the arrival of “São Paulo Hilton luxury” stood in contrast with “one-hundred-year-ago small inns of the Capital” (O Estado de São Paulo, 1971), which was seen as a factor of modernization in the metropolis.

As the manifestation of an undeniable phenomenon in São Paulo, the Hilton Hotel of Ipiranga Avenue was closed in 2004, and the building was hired to São Paulo Court of Justice (Spolon, 2006: 187), although other unities of the chain in São Paulo were kept, such as Hilton Morumbi. Therefore, if this enterprise in the 70’s represented a contrast to meanings of hotel business in the city, nowadays the opening of a hotel of same flag in one of the areas of strongest real estate development in São Paulo indicates that, effectively, hotel business in the city takes a road very similar to the one of real estate sector. Not exactly the same can be seen in other services and tourist facilities, such as attractions, whose present distribution seems to be detached from real state capital influences, as it will be discussed further on.

In that period, built cultural heritage wasn’t yet an important reference neither to urban interventions nor to tourism – being, indeed, understood as symbol of delay and of a past to be forgotten. It was the industrial city and its business tourism. In the recent urbanization process, while generating urban icons, the city left tourist milestones to contemporary tourism.

#### *Large urban projects and the increase of tourism in São Paulo: 1990-*

Already from the 90’s, the landmark of urban policy was transformed, producing, among other instruments, Urban Operations (Unified). It was also in this period that Anhembi Events and Tourism was commissioned to execute the city’s policy of tourism – including the proposition of Municipal Tourism Council (COMTUR), Municipal Tourism Fund (FUTUR) and Municipal Tourism Plan (PLATUM). The very rigid definition of urban operation perimeters, where exceptions to urban norms were applied, was not created in order to promote tourism development – even though in some cases (Faria Lima and Água Espraiada), the production of urban icons, even not objectively tourist



attractions, permeates images of the city, which are promoted also in tourist publicity campaigns.

Urban operations are mechanisms of management that generate additional constructive potential in areas with restrictive zoning, through commerce of certificates (*CEPACs*), whose resources generated should be applied, by the city government, in the urban operation perimeter itself (usually in road or urban landscaping works). In São Paulo, this instrument was originally implemented during the 80's, but it was in the 90's that they gained fuller expression, promoting more remarkable spatial transformations (Table 1). Only in 2001, the Statute of Cities would legitimate *unified urban operations* as mechanism of territorial management for all the country. Nowadays, São Paulo has other operations proposed, but none of them presupposes measurements of support to tourist development, which indicates a segregation of urban policy and tourism policies.

Name	Year	Possible relation with tourism
Urban Operation Anhangabaú	1991	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Valuing of built heritage</li> </ul>
Urban Operation Faria Lima	1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expansion of hotel sector</li> <li>Generation of corporate landscapes</li> </ul>
Urban Operation Água Branca	1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practically none</li> </ul>
Urban Operation Centro	1997	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Valuing of built heritage</li> </ul>
Urban Operation Água Espraiada	2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expansion of hotel sector</li> <li>Generation of urban icons</li> <li>Emerging of new corporate business district</li> </ul>

Table 2: Unified Urban Operations in São Paulo  
(Castro, 2006; Allis, 2012)

On the other hand, a movement that had started in the 70's (with limited actions and views) grew in the 90's and is in full operation nowadays: concentration of initiatives for recovering the city center, such as Procentro, Programa Monumenta-IADB, Turismo no Centro and Nova Luz. Not without many questioning from social, political and architectural points of view, the interventions in the inner city confirm practices of heritage monumentalization as strategy of economic development for decayed inner city areas. In this context, tourism gets more explicit. It is the city insertion in a backward-looking logic, but without ignoring the effervescence so characteristic of real estate sector (over Southwest Vector).

### *Tourist attractions spatial distribution in the scope of Operações Urbanas Consorciadas*

Of 52 top priority tourist attractions, most of them found themselves out of Urban Operations limits. However, the downtown presents a different reality: the Operação Urbana Centro and other areas of special projects (Turismo no Centro, PROCENTRO, Nova Luz and Programa Monumenta-IADB) include a large concentration of attractions. One can notice that attractions with more visibility (that is, with mention in at least five selected tourist guides) are unevenly distributed through all parts of the city, with some concentration in the inner city, and Paulista/Ibirapuera region, besides the South Zone (Zoo Park).

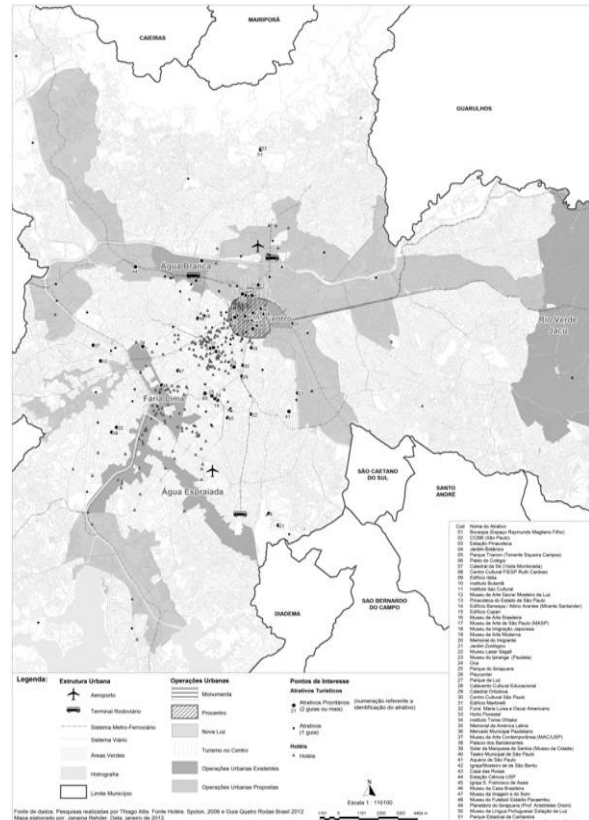
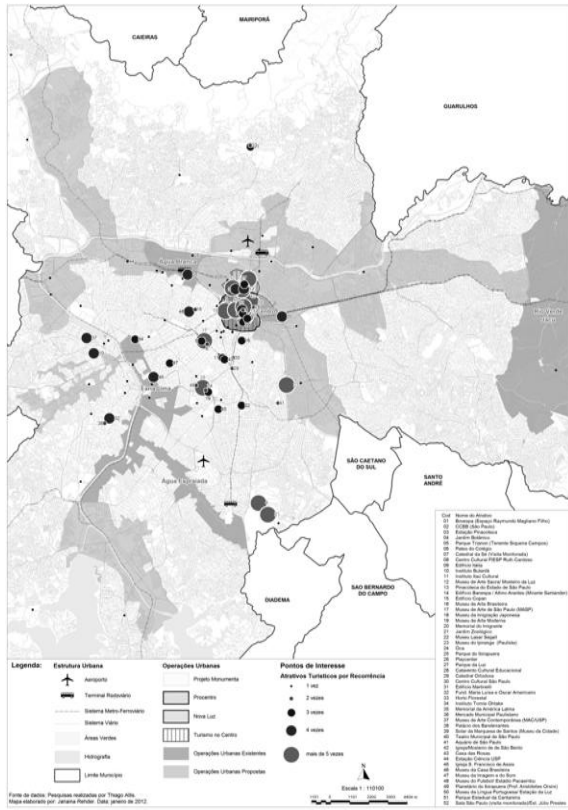
The Operação Urbana Centro was one of the first to be proposed (1991) and, from a tax point of view, brought minimum results (that is, the selling of constructive potential was not consolidated, once the interest and the possibilities for urban consolidation in the center were reduced). However, from all Urban Operations already proposed, and/or implemented until today, this is the only one that somehow has considered tourism as one of its lines of action, basically in the perspective of heritage valuing for tourist purposes.

Tourism development in the region has had some impetus, not much because of OUC Centro, but due to other measurements, being that the most recent one é *Programa Turismo no Centro*, undertaken by SPTuris in a perimeter that considers two districts of the inner center. It is a project that has done an inventory of attractions and tourist services and has resulted in a series of proposals, but without a systematic follow up of actions (neither the indication of responsibilities in other instances of City Government).

When analyzing the distribution of local hotel chain, one notices a slightly different phenomenon: a volume of hotels distributed, more often, inside the perimeter of many urban operations. However, the downtown loses prominence, which can be explained by decadence of services and its own decay – which ends up being less important as far as hotel offer is concerned.

The largest concentration of hotel equipment in the perimeter of urban operations (mainly Faria Lima) can be explained by the fact hotels were all through the 90's a kind of outstanding real estate investment. In addition, these areas – including Paulista

Avenue (which is not target of any urban operation) – can be considered important business districts of São Paulo, that shift from the original downtown towards southwest, compounding the so-called “southwest vector” (Augusta Street- Paulista Avenue- Brig. Faria Lima Avenue- Eng. Luís Carlos Berrini Avenue-Marginal Pinheiros)



## FINAL REMARKS

If urban tourism, as discussed by authors presented here, is a product of “global restructuring”, where capital and industry move to undeveloped countries we cannot establish a direct relation between such movement and the advancement of tourism in São Paulo – except in some aspects, for instance, the construction of hotel facilities or the so-called entrance of São Paulo in the “advanced tertiary”, that would be responsible for the attraction of a great number of business tourists. Thus, no matter how much the metropolis of São Paulo is strongly connected to global economy – and unquestionably influenced by it – the pattern of capital reproduction is result of very specific factors and facilities. Therefore, when real state and even financial capital gain

space in São Paulo, tourist reality will not have to meet the same requirements of those observed in large “global cities” such as London, New York or Paris.

São Paulo cannot be considered a city in process of des-industrialization, in view that, no matter how much industrial production has decentralized to other parts of the state and of the country, nowadays there has been a process going on of capitals concentration.

Except for inner city, the idea of urban decadence as reference to large urban projects, in São Paulo, doesn't make any sense – which does not exclude the fact that certain parts of urban fabric are have been to a process of functional obsolescence.

Nonetheless, many of current urban icons can somehow be considered urban projects of reference in the city; some had their own dynamics of conception and implementation (with certain buildings of reference, both public and private), others led made room larger programs. Anyway, urban policies in São Paulo do not necessarily mean development of urban tourism and planning of cities management. Therefore, specific policies of tourism should be able to identify, interpret and incorporate aspects that have to do with current spatial reproduction of the metropolis once much of this dynamics has been defined through mechanisms and instruments of management similar to large projects.

Generally speaking, one can say that the idea of “tourist urbanization” doesn't make sense when tourism is studied in large metropolises, having as reference consolidated urban realities – in contrast to tourist development in areas where the urbanization process has not yet been consolidated. Still, as it has also been made clear, if tourism is not the only justifier of urban projects – that almost always have been tied up in operations of great real state interest – , it is an element that embodies new forms of urban culture, where experiences of consumption and outdoor urban experiences seem recurrent.

Therefore, it is included in the category “urban tourism” not only aspects related to conventional tourist (the one who comes from another place, stays in hotels and comes back home), but also to local urban reality.

Taking São Paulo as reference, even if the official entity of tourism has had 20 years of operation, the theme of tourism appears incidentally and imprecisely in urban

policies (exception made to chapter dedicated to tourism in the Strategic Master Plan of 2002). SPTuris focus its attention on tourism promotion – including campaigns that present São Paulo as “creative city” – and, occasionally tries to structure new products. Anyway, it has possible to identify some essential characteristics of contemporary urban projects: strong scheme of construction of urban images promotion as a way of implement a competition among cities, strict territorial delineation (with specific legal apparatus), clear relation with demands of real state market, use of “designer” architecture –with signature of architects of “star system” – or monumentalization of heritage as banner of projects, incentive to tourism as direct and indirect activity.

Taking into consideration priority attractions and perimeters of these urban projects, we can confirm two situations: as Unified Urban Operations do not aim at developing tourism, the main tourism centralities, defined by concentration of attractions, are at odds with their perimeters. However, the situation is different in the Center, which outlines the second situation. Both Urban Operation Center and other initiatives incorporate, with different emphasis, tourism as strategy – even if it implies in superficial views, stereotyped and partial of tourism.

Urban projects in São Paulo (at any time and of any nature), do not incorporate tourism as central aspect, but this does not mean necessarily they hinder the development of certain sociability within the scope of urban tourism. One concludes that these interventions, in connection with those held in São Paulo (very different from what is seen in global plan), are not indispensable for urban tourism, once urban experience, in all its variances, might be enough for the development of the activity.

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