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Guillermo Jajamovich, Puerto Madero en movimiento: un abordaje a partir de la circulación de la Corporación Antiguo Puerto Madero (1989-2017), Buenos Aires: IEALC, 2018, 160 pp., available for download at teseopress.com.

The last time I went through the *Perimetral* flyover, a three-mile elevated expressway that bypassed the port area of Rio de Janeiro, was shortly before its scheduled demolition as part of the programme of works associated with the 2016 Olympic Games. Pointing to the derelict landscape and construction sites below us the taxi driver explained: “They are going to change it all, it will become just like Buenos Aires”. This was for me one of the first indications of how the official discourse was reaching the general public and how references like the renewal of Buenos Aires’ waterfront served to legitimate the vision that was presented. After all, Puerto Madero ‘became the postcard of a modern Buenos Aires’ (p.109), it earned international accolades and pioneered an apparent successful self-financing formula of large-scale urban transformation in the region.

‘Puerto Madero en movimiento’ is the culmination of Guillermo Jajamovich’s decade-long research on the multiple significance of this regeneration project within Argentina and abroad. As he states, Puerto Madero cannot be located only within its boundaries but is also present in the numerous debates about project-led approaches that animated professional practice since the 1990s, in the speculative plans of large-scale projects envisioned in planning departments around the globe, and also in the portfolio of experts offering know how on project financing, management, urban design or heritage conservation. Far from showing a rosy picture, the author demonstrates how the project was also marred by scandals and criticism, issues that its promoters had to address to keep the gradual programme of works going forward.

The book is structured in two parts. The first part centres on the early 1990s when Puerto Madero was then an ‘importing site’ of references about renewal programmes from other places. It analyses the involvement of policy makers from the city of Barcelona as consultants to the regeneration project. Rather than exploring the episode as a one-way direction in the flow of ideas, the author situates the engagement in multiple and temporal scales. It traces, for instance, how actors on both sides of the Atlantic were entangled in political, professional and personal networks stretching many decades. These, however, were not sufficing to guarantee the implementation of the ‘foreign plan’ as local practitioners fiercely contested the proposal and were successful in reaching a compromise. The analysis also situates how narratives about Barcelona’s achievements fitted within the context of structural adjustment policies during President Carlos Menem’s government favouring privatization and public-private partnerships. The project that materialized played a relevant role in support to his government and economic programme.

The second part focuses on the transformation of Puerto Madero into an ‘exporting’ site since the late 1990s, constituting itself as a planning model and a new reference for ‘policy tourism’. This led to numerous agreements being established with programmes elsewhere; within Argentina, with other Latin American cities and beyond the continent. An unusual factor partly explains the continuous circulation of

Puerto Madero's expertise; the remit of the development corporation was changed to allow its participation through assistance to or direct development in other projects, both at home or abroad. The corporation then became a revolving door of policy makers and practitioners who capitalised on their knowledge to be involved in other development projects. The book then turns to the involvement of the corporation in the *Mendoza-Madero* redevelopment programme in the western city of Mendoza. Despite the prestige of the reference upon which its promoters directly alluded to, the context was markedly different from that of the Argentinean capital and presented a series of challenges for the implementation of the project.

In this analysis of the circulation of planning models and expertise, Jajamovich successfully combines conceptual frameworks from planning history and from the policy mobility literature. This is demonstrated through a rich longitudinal investigation; the forensic mapping of actors, events and conflicts; and a critical analysis of urban politics. The book provides an in-depth study of a paradigmatic case of urban transformation that both mobilized knowledge as it disseminated planning practices. It is a valuable intervention in current debates in the urban studies and an insightful contribution to analyses of contemporary Latin American urbanism.

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